

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DISTRICT JOINT COMMITTEE –
GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE DEVOLUTION

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER, CITY SOLICITOR AND MONITORING
OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the establishment of a Lincolnshire District Joint Committee for the purposes of Greater Lincolnshire Devolution and that the Leader of the Council represents the City of Lincoln Council at the Joint Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1 A devolution agreement for Greater Lincolnshire was announced by the Government in November 2023 and subsequently agreed by Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council. These three authorities are the constituent members for the purposes of devolution and the creation of the Greater Lincolnshire Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA).
- 2.2 Following approval of the agreement at Council meetings of Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council, a public consultation exercise on the devolution proposal was carried out by the three constituent councils. The City of Lincoln Council's Council meeting considered the devolution proposal at its meeting on 16 January 2024, debated its content, and delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Town Clerk, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to respond to the consultation based on the debate held at the Council meeting.
- 2.3 The devolution agreement will bring additional funds into Greater Lincolnshire over the next 30 years, such funds totalling £720 million, as part of an overarching Greater Lincolnshire Vision 2025. The additional funding will be used in relation to economic development, transport, skills and education, and digital infrastructure across Greater Lincolnshire. It is important to emphasise that no local authority functions are being removed from any local authority in the area, other than transport functions, as agreed with the constituent councils.
- 2.4 In September 2024, Jim McMahon, Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution confirmed that the establishment of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority had been agreed in principle and Regulations would begin to be put in place.
- 2.5 It is anticipated that the new arrangements will come into existence late 2024/early 2025. This will then allow for the establishment of the MCCA with an election of a

Greater Lincolnshire Mayor taking place in May 2025. It is anticipated that the MCCA will operate in shadow form for a short period, working with political leadership, Chief Executives of the constituent councils and individuals from existing bodies to effectively support transition but will not be a legally constituted body. The Greater Lincolnshire Mayor would be expected to take office on the fourth day after their election.

3. The Purpose of the District Joint Committee

- 3.1 The three constituent authorities will lead on the new arrangements and the formation of the MCCA. For the purposes of devolution and the MCCA, the seven district and borough councils are non-constituent members.
- 3.2 However, it is recognised that the seven district authorities in Lincolnshire must still have a voice and be able to represent the interests of the district authorities at the MCCA. In developing the governance arrangements, both Government and the constituent councils place high importance on the MCCA working collaboratively with the seven district and borough councils across Greater Lincolnshire (“the district and borough councils”) and ensuring that they have a voice on the MCCA. The arrangements therefore allow for the establishment of a Joint Committee of the seven districts to provide a mechanism for participation at the MCCA.
- 3.3 The devolution deal document for Greater Lincolnshire published on 22 November 2023 (paragraph 23) refers to *the important role that district and borough councils have in levelling up Greater Lincolnshire and delivering the shared vision for the area. It is expected that a joint committee of these councils will be formed and that this joint committee will be designated by the Mayoral County Combined Authority (MCCA) as a nominating body for the purposes of nominating four non-constituent Members of the MCCA. The same joint committee could be used to nominate other elected members from the district and borough councils to other places of the MCCA including Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committees.*
- 3.4 The purpose of the District Joint Committee is to establish a collaborative platform for coordination among the non-constituent authorities and be a mechanism through which their interests are represented on the MCCA. The District Joint Committee will seek to enhance efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in the delivery of services and policies within the MCCA and promote the shared interests of the district authorities for the benefit of Greater Lincolnshire.
- 3.5 It is proposed that the District Joint Committee shall have the following scope, noting that a key role is to nominate four non-constituent members to participate in the MCCA and to nominate members to the MCCA’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Audit Committee:
 - To exercise oversight of the initial formulation and development of the MCCA
 - To approve or adopt any policy as required by the MCCA
 - To facilitate joint decision making on matters defined within the MCCA’s remit
 - Where appropriate to oversee the implementation of shared initiatives and policies
 - Encourage, promote and enable dialogue and cooperation between the seven non-constituent authorities

- To nominate four non-constituent members to participate in the MCCA, such members to reflect the view and position of the seven district authorities in their entirety
- To nominate members to the MCCA's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Audit Committee in line with the MCCA's requirements for those committees
- To consider any matters being discussed/proposed/implemented by the MCCA and provide collective feedback to the MCCA
- To approve appointment and/or representation of a Member(s) on external bodies or groups where appropriate.

3.6 It is proposed that the membership of the District Joint Committee be the Leader of each district authority, and in their absence, the Leader may appoint a substitute member to attend on their behalf.

4. Terms of Reference and Standing Orders

- 4.1 The District Joint Committee will require its own Terms of Reference and Standing Orders. The proposed Terms of Reference and Standing Officers have been drafted by the Monitoring Officers of the District Councils and are attached at Appendices A and B to this report.
- 4.2 The District Council Leaders and Chief Executives have been consulted on these documents and amendments made following comments received.
- 4.3 West Lindsey District Council shall provide democratic administrative support to the District Joint Committee.
- 4.4 The documentation may be amended to meet the needs of the Joint Committee and will be periodically reviewed by the District Joint Committee to ensure they remain fit for purpose and complement the evolution of the MCCA. It is proposed that any review and amendment of the Terms of Reference is considered by the Governance and Audit Committee.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 Let's drive inclusive economic growth

No impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

5.2 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality

No impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

5.3 Let's deliver quality housing

No impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

5.4 Let's enhance our remarkable place

No impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

5.5 **Let's address the challenge of climate change**

No impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

6. **Organisational Impacts**

6.1 **Finance**

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

6.2 **Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

As outlined in the report.

6.3 **Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

There are no impacts on equality, diversity or human rights arising from this report.

6.4 **Human Resources**

None directly arising as a result of this report.

6.5 **Land, Property and Accommodation**

None directly arising as a result of this report.

6.6 **Significant Community Impact &/or Environmental Impact**

None directly arising as a result of this report.

6.7 **Corporate Health and Safety implications**

None directly arising as a result of this report.

7. **Risk Implications**

7.1 **(i) Options Explored**

Council may decide not to participate in the District Joint Committee, but this will not provide a voice for the City of Lincoln and is not a recommended approach.

7.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach

No risks have been identified.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 That Council approves the establishment of a District Joint Committee of the Lincolnshire Districts for the purposes of devolution and participation at the Mayoral Combined County Authority.
- 8.2 That the Leader of the Council be appointed as the Council's representative at the District Joint Committee.
- 8.3 That the attached Terms of Reference (Appendix A) and Standing Orders (Appendix B) for the District Joint Committee be approved.
- 8.4 That the Chief Executive and Town Clerk and the City Solicitor, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be delegated authority to make any further review or amendment of the Terms of Reference and Standing Orders.

Is this a key decision?

No

Do the exempt information categories apply?

No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

2

List of Background Papers:

None

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