

Local Government Re-organisation in Cheshire – Partnerships and Local Working Transition Planning

Introduction

As part of transition planning arrangements for Local Government Re-organisation in Cheshire, a Partnerships and Local Working workstrand and associated programme has been identified. The purpose of this report is to update the Partnership on progress to date and future arrangements for the progression of this work.

Programme Board

Working to the joint (Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East) Joint Implementation Team, a Partnerships & Local Working Programme Board has been established under the leadership of Chris Hardy, Managing Director, Chester City Council. The Programme Board comprises the existing Partnership Business Unit with the addition of Chris Hardy and Cathy Boyd. This Business Unit currently supports the co-ordination of partnership working across the county area. It was felt sensible to utilise this 'infrastructure' rather than build a separate team, which would have led to duplication.

Lead:	Chris Hardy	(Chester)
Members:	Sean Daley	(Ellesmere Port & Neston)
	Lisa Green	(Cheshire County Council)
	Alison Armstrong	(Cheshire County Council)
	Clare Babbs	(Chester)
	Andrea Mageean	(Chester)
	Helen Ward	(Macclesfield)
	Fiona Dunning	(Vale Royal)
	Kirstie Hercules	(Crewe & Nantwich)
	Craig Nicholson	(Congleton)
	Cathy Boyd	(Vale Royal)
	Gordon Hamilton	(CILG)

Individual Projects

Under the overall work programme, six initial workstreams or projects have been identified though it is recognised that some of these will consolidate as time progresses due to the inevitable overlaps within and across each one. Each project has a nominated lead whose responsibility to date has been to scope the parameters of their respective project and identify initial project teams to progress the detail of the work. The projects and project leads are as follows:

Partnership Frameworks	Leads - Clare Babbs and Craig Nicholson
Sustainable Community Strategies	Lead - Alison Armstrong
Local Area Agreements	Lead - Lisa Green
Community Engagement	Lead - Kirstie Hercules
Research & Intelligence	Lead - Gordon Hamilton
Area and Neighbourhood Working	Lead - Cathy Boyd

Where possible and in the spirit of the work programme, the Project Teams will include officers from all partner organisations across the county area.

To date the work programme has been handled as a joint transition project across both Cheshire West & Chester and Cheshire East in an attempt to make best use of the staffing resources available. However, it is envisaged that this work may need to be split sooner rather than later to enable each new unitary authority area to develop arrangements suitable and relevant to their own specific circumstances. Regardless of when this split occurs, it is anticipated that each new unitary authority will have a new LSP framework, Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement in place though the timeframe within which this should happen is subject to local discretion.

Each Project Team will, therefore, complete an initial analysis of their respective work area, present options for development and identify issues for discussion, agreement and/or resolution. The emphasis of this work will be to present sufficient information against which members of the Joint Committees or Shadow Authorities can make decisions.

Timetable and Key Milestones

Detailed MS Project timetabling of key tasks across all projects within the Partnerships & Local Working work programme has been completed though this will be subject to further development and confirmation as there are many interdependencies.

Attached in a separate 'pdf' document is the start of a process of identifying key milestones and dates by which decisions will need to be made to influence and shape the future direction.

Next Steps

Each Project Team is expected to complete initial work by mid-April so that all can come together in a workshop setting before the end of the month to share issues and produce a composite report for early consideration by the Joint Implementation Teams and Shadow Authorities. This work will also form part of the Member induction process for the new unitaries and will be an essential part of planning service delivery.

Recommendations

The Communities of Cheshire Partnership are asked to:

- (1) note and comment upon the content of this report; and
- (2) receive further updates at future meetings under a standing “LGR Transition Planning” agenda item.

Contact:

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