

ITEM NO. 14

REPORT TO THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 10 DECEMBER 2018

Meeting: Council
Date: 10th December 2018
Subject: Unitary proposals for Leicestershire - update
Report of: Beverley Jolly – Joint Chief Executive
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Bannister – The Leader
Status: Decision
Relevant Ward(s): All wards

1 Purpose Report

- 1.1 To update members on the current position regarding Leicestershire County Council's ("the County Council") proposals for developing a unitary structure for Leicestershire and specifically to consider if it wishes to make representations to the County Council on the proposals.

2 Recommendations:

- 2.1 **To consider whether the Council wishes to submit representations to the County Council on the proposals detailed in the report to Cabinet on 16 October 2018; and**
- 2.2 **If the Council resolves that it wishes to submit a representation it agrees the content and authorises the Joint Chief Executive (BJ) to submit the agreed representation on behalf of the Council.**

3 Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 To consider the County Council's proposals regarding its proposals for a unitary structure for Leicestershire and whether the Council wants to submit a formal representation on the options to the County Council.

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 The implementation of either a single or two unitary authority (ies) in Leicestershire would have a major impact on the way in which services are delivered.
- 4.2 It would be important to ensure that fair and balanced local representation is retained

- 4.3 Any decision by Harborough District Council on these proposals should be in the best interests of the people living and working in Harborough District.

5 Key Facts

- 5.1 The County Council resolved to progress work on the development of a unitary authority structure for Leicestershire at its Cabinet meeting on 6 July 2018. On 3 September 2018 this Council's Executive considered a report on the proposals. A copy of the report and its appendices, which include the County Council cabinet report of 6 July 2018, is attached as Appendix A.

- 5.2 At its meeting on 26th September 2018 the County Council resolved, inter alia, to set up a cross party group to consider the proposals for a new unitary structure of government in Leicestershire and to advise the Cabinet on the next steps including a timescale for consultation. The terms of reference for the working group/party envisaged consideration of the views and representations of stakeholders' and, if it wishes, to consider any alternative proposals put forward by a District Council(s). A copy of the County Council Minutes is attached as Appendix B.

- 5.3 The County Council Cabinet met on 16 October 2018 and considered a more detailed report of the Chief Executive, which set out its outline proposals for unitary structure. There are two options: a single unitary council or two unitary councils for Leicestershire. The detail of the proposals, including the establishment of Area Committees, is set out in the report which is attached as Appendix C. A copy of the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting is attached as Appendix D.

- 5.4 Members are asked to consider the detail of this report, particularly the attached appendices which set out the detail of the County Council proposals and what if any representations it wishes to submit to the County Council. Members should note that the proposals were not considered by the County Council on 23 November 2018 as anticipated in the Cabinet report of 16 October 2018.

6 Legal Issues

- 6.1 The legal issues are set out in paragraph 5 of the report to the Executive dated 3 September 2018 attached as Appendix A.

7 Resource Issues

- 7.1 The resource issues are set out in paragraph 6 of the report to the Executive dated 3 September 2018 attached as Appendix A. A detailed financial analysis will need to be carried out at a later stage in the consultation process.

8 Equality Implications

8.1 There are no direct equality implications at this stage; however a full Equality Impact Assessment will need to be completed for any detailed proposals that result from the options appraisal.

9 Impact on the Organisation

9.1 Any firm proposals to move to either one or two unitary authorities within Leicestershire would have a major impact on the organisation. Resources would need to be committed to the assessment and planning of the change at the same time as continuing to deliver quality services.

9.2 Reorganisations tend to also put transitional duties on the councils involved requiring them to take necessary steps for the further transfer of functions, property, rights and liabilities and to co-operate with each other to further the purposes of the reorganisation requirement.

10 Community Safety Implications

10.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

11. Carbon Management Implications

11.1 None as far as this report is concerned.

12. Risk Management Implications

12.1 The County Council proposals will need to be reviewed in tandem with a full options appraisal of all the alternative governance arrangements. However at this point the district/borough councils in Leicestershire have put this work on hold and have committed to investigate a more collaborative approach to service delivery across the County area.

13 Consultation

13.1 Consultation with the local community, partners and stakeholders is an essential part of the process.

14 Options Considered

14.1 The Council can decide if it wishes to submit any representation to the County Council proposals.

15 Background Papers

15.1 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 as amended by the Cities and Local Government devolution Act 2016.

Previous report(s): None

Information Issued Under Sensitive Issue Procedure:

Ward Members Notified:

Appendices:

Appendix A – Executive report – dated 3 September 2018

Appendix B – Leicestershire County Council Minute 26 September 2018

Appendix C – Leicestershire County Council Cabinet Report dated 16 October 2018

Appendix D - Leicestershire County Council Cabinet decision Notice dated 16 October 2018