
THE EAST ANGLIA DEVOLUTION AGREEMENT

Committee: Special Council

Date: 13 April 2016

Author: Chief Executive

[Q249]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 Ratification of 'The East Anglia Devolution Agreement'.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Members are requested to:

(i) ratify 'The East Anglia Devolution Agreement' as set out in Appendix 1;

(ii) instruct the Chief Executive and Leader of Council to ensure the inclusion of key infrastructure projects and priorities (as set out below) in the current and future devolution deals for East Anglia:

- Ely Southern Bypass
- Soham Railway Station and doubling of track
- Ely North Junction
- Newmarket Curve
- Junction A14/A142
- Community Land Trust (CLT) development and related infrastructure
- A10 upgrade
- improvements to cross country links East and West;

(iii) request the Chief Executive reports back to the Council in June to update members on the implementation of the recommendation 2.1(i) and (ii) as detailed above.

3.0 **BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1 The Leader of Council, together with Leaders of 21 other local authorities and New Anglia LEP, signed the agreement as set out in Appendix 1. Signatories are required to report the agreement to their respective Councils for ratification or otherwise. Cambridge City Council and the Greater Cambridge and Peterborough LEP did not sign the agreement.

3.2 'The East Anglia Devolution Agreement' sets out the framework for the devolution of powers and resources to Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk specifically:

- **Governance** – a new directly elected Mayor who will chair The East Anglia Combined Authority. All participating local authorities will be represented on the combined authority through membership of the Mayors Cabinet. The Mayor and the combined authority will be scrutinised by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- **Finance and Funding** – the devolution deal includes new un-ring fenced funding under a single pot (£900m over 30 years, £30m per annum) for infrastructure and economic growth; £175m capital grant (out to 2020/21) for the delivery of new homes and devolved budgets for Key Route Network of roads and local transport.
- Additional devolved responsibility in key priority areas, specifically:
 - Housing and Planning, eg creation of Mayoral Development Corporations, Joint Investment and Assets Board to include central government, NHS and MOD land.
 - Transport and electronic communications eg management and maintenance of a new Key Route network of local authority roads, franchising bus services, establishment of a Statutory Transport Body (STB).
 - Flood defence and coastal management.
 - Learning and Skills eg local commissioning by the Combined Authority and full devolution of funding.
 - Apprenticeship eg responsibility for the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers.
 - Employment eg integration of employment service.
 - Business Support
 - Health and Social Care.

3.3 The timetable for implementation is summarised below. It is unclear what the implications of one of the signatory authorities not ratifying the deal, it is hoped that this matter will be clarified in the progress report to Council in June.

- April-June – consideration by signatory local authorities on the ratification of the devolution deal
- Early July – initial government sign off for statutory consultation
- July-August – consultation process (Governance)
- August – deadline for representations to Secretary of State

- September – participating Councils to formally sign off governance and delegation
- October – draft Orders to Parliament
- December – formal Orders
- Early 2017 – shadow combined authority
- May 2017 – election of Mayor

3.4 The Council has a number of issues in considering the ratification of the agreement, specifically:

- an assessment of the likely benefits of the devolution deal to East Cambridgeshire and the delivery of its agreed corporate priorities;
- an assessment of the effectiveness status quo in relation to both resources and governance in delivering the necessary infrastructure to support the Councils strategic ambitions;
- consideration of the proposed geography and governance of the devolution deal;
- opportunities for future devolution deals to extend the transfer of powers and resources and the redesign of the delivery of public services;
- timing – a number of local authorities will not consider ratification until June (near the deadline date), particularly in authorities where there are reservations about key aspects of the deal and those requiring further assurances from Government. It is unlikely that the fundamental governance and finance aspects of the deal will be revised, although there are a number of strands of work, which require further clarification and detail over the forthcoming months including detailed governance arrangements and expansion of the infrastructure 'ask'.

4.0 ARGUMENT/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 A true evaluation of the benefits will only be realised during the implementation phase pre and post 2017 and subsequent devolution deals, which can be negotiated with Government. Nevertheless, from an East Cambridgeshire perspective, it is worth setting out key criteria, specifically:

- the benefit to our local community and to residents;
- additional funding secured for key infrastructure and corporate priorities eg Community Land Trusts;
- opportunity to establish partnerships with Norfolk and Suffolk local authority partners;

- more effective delivery of key infrastructure projects;
 - implementation of 'subsidiarity' to ensure effective local delivery, where appropriate;
 - opportunities to develop and secure more effective governance structures within the devolution area.
- 4.2 Key to realising these benefits is to ensure that the key infrastructure priorities of our area are reflected in the priorities of the combined authority and elected Mayor including maximising the opportunities for CLT development (involving the trading company). These are included in the recommendations (ref: 2.1 (ii)).
- 4.3 The Chief Executive will update Council in June on progress towards implementation of the deal and will report any significant changes to the deal document.
- 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)
- 5.1 The report and the appendices identify the significant financial benefits of the devolution deal. It is still uncertain whether there will be a requirement for short term funding (in addition to staff time) and the ongoing operational costs of the Mayor and the combined authority.
- 5.2 There is no requirement for an EIA at this stage.
- 6.0 APPENDICES
- 6.1 Appendix 1 – The East Anglia Devolution Deal – March 2016

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	Room 103 The Grange Ely	John Hill Chief Executive (01353) 616271 E-mail: john.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk