



TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2022

A DEVOLUTION DEAL FOR SURREY

Purpose of report:

To provide the Committee with an opportunity to engage with and contribute to the council's approach to developing and securing a devolution deal for the county. This report and accompanying annex set out the context behind this work, some of the potential key areas of focus for a deal, and the council's approach to developing the proposal collaboratively.

Summary:

1. The Government's Levelling Up White Paper, published in February 2022, presents a rare opportunity for the council to engage with Government in pursuit of a devolution deal for Surrey.
2. In the Queen's speech on the 10 May 2022, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill was announced which will write the Government's flagship levelling up plans into law. It will make it a legal duty for the Government to report its progress on lessening inequality between different parts of the UK and give local leaders fresh powers. The Bill will enable all of England to have a devolution deal by 2030 and includes guidance on relevant factors such as governance arrangements.
3. A deal has the potential to bring greater local control through new powers, freedoms and flexibilities, that better enable the council to deliver for residents and strengthen work already underway to tackle inequality and ensure that No One is Left Behind.
4. On 26 April 2022, Cabinet considered a paper titled 'A Devolution Deal for Surrey'. It outlined the key implications of the Government's Levelling Up White Paper for Surrey, particularly in relation to the devolution framework, and set out some initial ideas for further exploration and development which could form the basis for a County Deal. Select Committee members are encouraged to review the Cabinet paper as background reading ahead of this agenda item.

5. Cabinet endorsed the importance of working with stakeholders to develop and deliver an effective devolution deal for Surrey, including engaging other tiers of local government through the Surrey Delivery Board, comprising the Leaders and Chief Executives collectively of 11 District and Borough Councils, representatives of Town and Parish Councils (through Surrey Association of Local Councils, SALC) and the County Council, which in parallel with the strategic Surrey Forum, will provide the partnership governance for a deal in Surrey.
6. It is important that all Surrey County Council (SCC) Members are given the opportunity to fully engage in developing a devolution deal for Surrey through both informal and formal mechanisms. The cross-cutting nature of the proposals that are being considered for inclusion mean that it does not sit entirely within the remit of a single select committee. Therefore, to allow members the greatest opportunity to engage with this topic, an open invite was extended to the Select Committee Chair's & Vice-Chair's Group to attend this public meeting for this item.
7. The slide deck contained in Annex 1, A Devolution Deal for Surrey, builds on the content of the Cabinet report to set out initial proposals for a county deal for Surrey. The intention will be to use the slides as the basis of this agenda item at the committee on 14 June to encourage a discussion about the proposed approach.

Recommendations:

8. It is recommended that the Select Committee consider the proposed content of the county deal, in particular:
 - 6.1 Does the Select Committee have any comments on the approach being taken to the development of a County Deal for Surrey?
 - 6.2 Having regard to Level 1 and 2 devolved powers, does the Select Committee have evidence to support the inclusion of additional specific proposals?
 - 6.3 Can the Select Committee suggest ways in which the County Deal for Surrey can be communicated and socialised more widely?

Next steps

9. It is unclear how soon the Government will enter further negotiations with new areas to agree county deals. Therefore, this work is preparatory so that the council is in the strongest position possible when entering negotiations.
10. An update on progress in developing proposals for a Devolution Deal and key partner engagement will be brought to a future cabinet meeting.

11. It is intended that once any deal is negotiated with Government it can be scrutinised through the Communities, Environment and Highways Select Committee, before going to Cabinet for approval, and then to full Council for final agreement.
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Sources/background papers

- Annex 1 – Non-Representative Stakeholder Comments Devolution Deal for Surrey
- [Surrey County Council Cabinet Report](#) – 26 April 2022
- [Levelling Up White Paper](#)

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