

Meeting of the City Council

23 September 2015

Report title	Approval of the Combined Authority Governance Review and Scheme	
Referring body	Cabinet, 15 September 2015	
Councillor to present report	Cllr Roger Lawrence	
Wards affected	All	
Cabinet Member with lead responsibility	Councillor Roger Lawrence, Leader of the Council	
Accountable director	Keith Ireland, Managing Director	
Originating service	Transformation	
Accountable employee(s)	Rachel Ratcliffe Tel Email	Programme Officer, Combined Authority 01902 551969 rachel.ratcliffe@wolverhampton.gov.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	Cabinet	15 September 2015

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Council is recommended to:

1. Approve the current draft of the Scheme (Appendix 1) and Governance Review (Appendix 2)
2. Approve delegation for the final approval of the Governance Review and Scheme to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Managing Director (to allow the timescales to be achieved).

Recommendations for noting:

The Council is asked to note:

1. A paper outlining the Devolution Deal progress to date (appendix 3)

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A governance review and scheme are required to be submitted to the Department of Communities and Local Government and Secretary of State to request the formation of a Combined Authority. The governance review assesses existing governance arrangements and seeks to establish whether a Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) exists in the proposed geography. The scheme outlines the functions and membership of the proposed Combined Authority. Both of these documents have been created in conjunction with Leaders, Chief Executives and LEP Chairs across the region over a number of weeks.
- 1.2 A Combined Authority is not a 'super council / authority' or a merger of local authorities. Whilst a combined authority is a legal entity, each local authority retains its own local identity and powers. Any 'asks' of government will always be predicated on the needs of the locality each local authority represents and wishes to secure economic benefits for.
- 1.3 Following the Queen's Speech in May 2015, the Government has confirmed its commitment to provide the legislative framework, via the proposed Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill, to deliver future devolution deals for local government. This political commitment follows on from the creation of Combined Authorities for Greater Manchester, Sheffield City Region, West Yorkshire, Liverpool City Region and the North East. Furthermore, this legislation will provide the legislative framework to deliver the devolution agreement signed between government and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in relation to devolved powers and budgets.
- 1.4 Broadly, a Combined Authority provides local authorities with the opportunity to collectively:
- secure greater resources from government over the long-term (ten years+);
 - engage with government on issues and functions that cross local authority boundaries (such as transport, economic development, skills, business support, inward investment and employment)
 - be consulted and ultimately influence the delivery of national programmes to address local need
- 1.5 On 16 September 2015 Cabinet will consider a report on the Combined Authority Governance Review and Scheme and will recommend final approval of these documents to be delegated to the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Managing Director.
- 1.6 Copies of the report have been deposited in the Members' room and can also be accessed online on the Council's website by following the link:

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MIId=4791>

Councillors are asked to refer to the report when considering the recommendations of Cabinet.

1.7 Cabinet will be asked to approve the recommendations contained within the report that are now referred to full Council for approval.

2.0 Implications

2.1 The financial, legal, equalities, environmental and human resource implications are discussed in the body of the Cabinet reports.

3.0 Schedule of background papers

3.1 Cabinet Report 16 September 2015.