

Chief Executive Decision

Establishment of a Joint Committee in Somerset for the implementation of local government reorganisation

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch – Leader of the Council
Strategic Director: Jane Portman – Chief Executive Officer
Lead Officer: Jill Byron – Monitoring Officer
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Purpose of the Report

To confirm the recommendation of members of the District Executive relating to the approval for the establishment of a Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee (LGR Joint Committee) with Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council and Somerset West and Taunton District Council (collectively, with the addition of South Somerset District Council, the Constituent Councils), following a consultative meeting of the District Executive held on the 7th October 2021.

Public Interest

At the meeting of Full Council on Thursday 15 April 2021 it was agreed to make the following changes to the Council's Constitution:

- a) To continue to enable members to hold remote, virtual meetings using available technology;
- b) To amend Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council's Constitution to allow those remote meetings to function as consultative bodies and delegate decisions, including Executive and Quasi-Judicial decisions, that would have been taken by those meetings if the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 had continued in force to the Chief Executive (or the relevant Director in the Chief Executive's absence) in consultation with those meetings and those members to whom the decision would otherwise have been delegated under Part 3 of the Constitution;
- c) The delegated authority given under (b) will expire on 31 July 2021 unless continued by a future decision of this Council;

Further to the above, at the meeting of Full Council on 8 July 2021, it was agreed:

- a) To continue to enable members to hold remote, virtual meetings using available technology and to extend the delegation given on 15 April 2021 for a further 6 months, to 08 January 2022;

Decision Taken

The Chief Executive, following a consultative meeting of the District Executive on 7th October 2021, made the following decisions;

- Approve:**
- agree to establish the LGR Joint Committee with representation from the Constituent Councils, constituted in accordance with and having the delegated Executive functions set out in the Terms of Reference attached as Appendix 1.

Note: this decision will only come into full effect on 25 October 2021 after all the Constituent Councils have met and agreed to the Terms of Reference.

Reason

To seek approval for the establishment of a Local Government Reorganisation Joint Committee (LGR Joint Committee) with Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Somerset County Council and Somerset West and Taunton District Council (collectively, with the addition of South Somerset District Council, the Constituent Councils).

Background

To enable the decision making process to continue, it was agreed that Councillors continue to receive decision-making reports. They will form a view which will be communicated to the Chief Executive. The decision will be formally made by the Chief Executive (or relevant Director) during the current coronavirus restrictions.

Financial Implications

These are contained in the body of the Agenda report.

Background Papers

District Executive Agenda report:

<https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=2977&Ver=4>
