

Sheffield City Region: Proposed Expansion of the Combined Authority

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Council Meeting
27 July 2016

Background

Combined Authority:

- 2 Economic Prosperity Joint Committees - Derby/Derbyshire (D2) and Nottingham/Nottinghamshire (N2) – established Sept 2013
- Proposed 2 Combined Authorities (CA) approach for D2 and N2 - submitted April 2015
- Existing SCR CA comprising 4 constituent South Yorkshire councils plus 4 Derbyshire and 1 Nottinghamshire non-constituent councils

Background

Devolution:

- All 19 D2N2 Leaders continued negotiating CA and Devolution Deal for the area – Sept to Dec 2015
- Published in draft – December 2015
- Shared with Government – January 2016
- CA and Devolution paused by Government
- SCR Devolution Deal (for the 4 South Yorkshire Councils) – signed Oct 2015

Background

Legislation:

- Cities & Local Government Devolution Act 2016
 - Legislation to introduce an Elected Mayor
 - Parliamentary processes - June to December 2015
 - Last minute amendments - December 2015
- Chesterfield Borough Council and Bassetlaw District Council agreed to be full members of Sheffield City Region – March 2016
- Expansion subject to approval of SoS

SCR CA Proposals

- Proposed expansion of existing SCR CA to include Chesterfield and Bassetlaw
- DCC - no significant input prior to papers being circulated by SCR for meetings on 20 and 27 June 2016 including key documents:
 - Part 1 – Governance Review
 - Part 2 – Scheme
- Research data only made available at start of the public consultation - 1 July 2016

SCR CA Process and Timescales

Statutory Tests:

- Based on evidence of functioning economic geography
- The Secretary of State must be satisfied that the following criteria are met:
 - Will likely improve the exercise of statutory functions
 - ‘Appropriate’ consultation been carried out and is adequate

SCR CA Process and Timescales

Statutory Tests:

- The Secretary of State must also have regard to whether:
 - Will secure effective and convenient local government
 - Reflects identity and interests of local communities

SCR CA Process and Timescales

- SCR CA Expansion consultation – 1 July to 12 August 2016
- Submit Governance Review and Scheme to Secretary of State in September with a summary of the consultation
- Secretary of State will lay orders before Parliament in October 2016
- Parliament approval in December 2016
- Mayoral elections in May 2017

SCR CA Process and Timescales

- Secretary of State must have regard to local scheme but:
 - Is free to put forward what he wants – e.g. additional areas for inclusion in the CA
 - Can vary from the proposed SCR Governance Review and Scheme
 - Has to consider consultation responses or undertake consultation himself
 - Can receive direct representations from others including the County Council

Implications for Derbyshire

- If Chesterfield becomes a full constituent member, the County Council will automatically be a constituent member of the SCR CA – whether it wants to or not
- On election, Sheffield City Region CA/Mayor would immediately take over responsibility for some services in Chesterfield
- Mayors – General Powers of Competence

Implications for Derbyshire

- Services that Sheffield City Region CA/Mayor would take over responsibility for in Chesterfield:
 - Major roads
 - Funding for capital maintenance and road safety on all roads
 - Transport planning, public transport and concessions
 - Skills for employment
 - Influence over major planning and investment projects

Implications for Derbyshire

- Current discussions with SCR highlight significant areas requiring clarity – e.g. transport authority, key route networks highways asset management plan and transfer of assets
- Complex issues that haven't yet been worked out
- “Transition arrangements” - but no clarity in consultation and scheme about what the implications are

Implications for Derbyshire

- Potential increases in Council Tax (subject to future 'policy decisions')
- Disaggregation of services currently delivered on a county-wide footprint
- Possible changes to current D2N2 LEP funding – Chesterfield portion paid directly to SCR LEP?
- Clarity needed on mayoral/CA powers over non constituent members

Implications for Derbyshire

- Changes to services in Chesterfield will impact on people living in other parts of Derbyshire
- Government has indicated that more powers could be available to combined authorities in future - not part of current consultation – tip of the iceberg?

Implications for Derbyshire Partners

- Impact on D2N2 LEP – membership and funding
- Impact on other Districts and Boroughs
- Impacts on other public sector partners with county-wide delivery boundaries, such as:
 - FE Colleges and training providers
 - Health and Wellbeing
 - Police
 - Fire and Rescue
 - Jobcentre Plus

Wider Implications

- Midlands Connect
- Midlands Engine
- HS2 delivery
- Local Government Reorganisation

Issues and Concerns

Key Issues:

- The proposals being put forward are not in best interest of all Derbyshire residents/communities
- No convincing evidence that the proposals meet the statutory tests
- D2 and D2N2 economy performing well – South Yorkshire economy has areas of concern e.g. housing land supply, deprivation, skill levels and productivity

Issues and Concerns

Identity:

- Economy of Derbyshire best served by keeping governance and delivery arrangements intact
- Chesterfield is an intrinsic part of Derbyshire, culturally and economically
- Chesterfield people do not identify with South Yorkshire

Issues and Concerns

Complexities and Unknowns:

- Complicated issues, the answers to which are unknown at this stage
- Lack of clarity about how the new arrangements will be delivered – more effective and convenient?

Issues and Concerns

Consultation:

- Fundamentally flawed and unlawful
- Excludes residents of Derbyshire outside Chesterfield
- Asks generalised questions rather than on the specific proposals such as voting rights
- Contains no reference to other options – it is the SCR or nothing

Issues and Concerns

Consultation:

- Falsely suggests that the County Council has had significant input to the proposals
- Misleading suggests that 'independent' research supports the proposals
- Does not allow consultees to express views on whether or not the inclusion of Chesterfield within the SCR is sensible or rational

Issues and Concerns

The Evidence:

- Economic position/interdependencies between Chesterfield and South Yorkshire are overstated
- The evidence is stronger for a Derbyshire Functional Economic Geography
- Proposals ignore integrated and interdependent approaches already in place

Issues and Concerns

Voting:

- Unequal voting arrangements e.g. DCC would have no voting rights on statutory function (transport budget)

County Council – Actions

- Evidence proving:
 - Strong Derbyshire functional economic geography
 - Efficient and convenient local government
- Proactive communications activity to:
 - Provide a Derbyshire perspective
 - Raise awareness across Derbyshire
 - Demonstrate local identity
 - Fight for Derbyshire and to keep Derbyshire together

County Council – Actions

- Pre Action Protocol letter sent to SCR, copied to Secretary of State and Chesterfield Borough Council as potential interested parties, raising concerns about the inadequacies of the consultation process and asking for it to be stopped

County Council – Actions

- Engaging with Sheffield City Region on how powers would be transferred
- Remaining fiercely ambitious for Derbyshire and Derbyshire people
- Strengthening governance arrangements for Derbyshire with Nottinghamshire
- Written to new Secretary of State to pursue ambition for Derbyshire

County Council – Next Steps

- Respond formally as part of consultation – to Sheffield City Region and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- Council debate will help inform that response...

Thank You