

Test Valley Prosperity Board

Report of the Leader and Strategic Regeneration and Partnership (North) Portfolio Holders

Recommended:

That the amended Partnership Board structure and arrangements, as outlined in section 6 of the report, be approved and the Test Valley Borough Council office-holders listed at section 6.5 of the report be appointed to the Partnership Board.

SUMMARY:

To reflect Hampshire County Council's prosperity board structure, it is necessary to update the existing partnership arrangements in order to facilitate the delivery of shared strategic priorities.

1 Introduction

1.1 The Council has a strong and long-standing working relationship with Hampshire County Council. This relationship has been formalised by establishing structured partnership arrangements. These arrangements have evolved over recent years. This report recommends that the current structure be updated to reflect the County Council's new approach.

2 Background

2.1 In December 2021 Cabinet agreed to establish a partnership board to help guide the delivery of the Andover masterplan. This partnership board would formalise the existing working relationship at an advisory and consultative level with key partners.

2.2 In June 2022 a new structure was introduced which introduced the County Council's strategic partnership model for working across district authorities rather than specific town regeneration schemes. This allowed for a more proactive and collaborative approach to engagement with the aim to maximise resources and capacity in both organisations.

2.3 Since that decision, the County Council has adopted a new model for engagement and partnership working. The County Council's Prosperity Partnership is a strategic partnership that brings together stakeholders with an ability to influence and drive a sustainable and resilient economy. The scope of the Prosperity Partnership includes activities in relation:

- Provision of strategic infrastructure
- Local based regeneration and place-based strategies

- Use of strategic assets to unlock investment opportunities
- Sector support and business development
- Skills, recruitment, and retention
- Research, development and innovation
- Net zero and net environmental gain

2.4 To reflect this approach the Council needs to update its framework for joint working with Hampshire County Council and other partners. This will continue to be the forum to discuss wider socio- economic issues such as health and issues such as service provision (e.g. library and museum services).

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

3.1 The 2023-27 Corporate Plan 'A Place for Everyone - Supporting our Communities to Thrive' aims to progress long-term strategic projects, such as the regeneration of our town centres, economic growth and being able to influence our partners so that together we can deliver the best outcomes and quality of life for communities across Test Valley. The recommendation would enable this to be achieved.

4 Consultations/Communications

4.1 The principle of the proposed approach has been discussed with senior officers and Councillors of both Councils. Wider engagement with other key stakeholders would occur in due course.

5 Options

5.1 The options for consideration are whether to amend the partnership board model with Hampshire County Council and others (option 1) or not (option 2).

6 Option Appraisal

Option 1

- 6.1 To best achieve the benefits for the communities of the Borough it relies on the strength of its partnership and the working arrangements between the various decision makers and delivery bodies. The previous and current structures allowed for greater co-ordination of making the most of the opportunities when they arise across the Borough.
- 6.2 By amending the current board structure to complement the County's Prosperity Board model it allows progress to continue in a structured way across the Borough and afford this Council the earliest possible insight into potential opportunities (funding or otherwise) for co-operation and co-ordination on issues likely to influence strategic issues particularly those linked to economic growth, regeneration, health, and infrastructure.
- 6.3 It is proposed to replace the existing model of an overarching Borough wide board and two strategy groups ('delivery' and 'engagement') with a single Prosperity board. This board would consider issues from across the Borough where they fall within the scope of helping to deliver a sustainable and resilient economy (as set out in section 2). As the borough's placed based initiatives,

such as Andover Vision and Romsey Future, have HCC representation on them there would be opportunity to refer issues to the Prosperity Board for consideration.

- 6.4 The board will be advisory in nature only. Formal decision making will rest with the relevant party and will be made in accordance with its normal processes and procedures.
- 6.5 The composition of the Prosperity Board is an important factor with the need to establish the correct balance and numbers to ensure that momentum can be maintained. The membership, which comprises Councillors from both the County Council and Borough Council, would be:-
- the Leader of the Council
 - the Deputy Leader of the Council
 - the Borough's Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Partnership (North)
 - the Borough Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Partnership (South)
 - the Leader of the County Council
 - two County Councillor representatives
- 6.6 It will be necessary as projects progress to engage and work with other partners to secure successful delivery of strategic priorities. Sitting beneath the Prosperity Board will be a series of project specific operational boards. These will provide updates and identify any matters that require joint working for progress to be made.

Option 2

- 6.7 Not introducing this new model would mean it is at odds with both Councils' approach to strategic collaborative working. The existing model would allow the Council's to still continue to work together but would lose the potential for greater, more structured progress to be made. There is also the risk of having to react in a less planned way with the potential consequence of missing opportunities. It is for this reason that this option is not recommended.

7 Risk Management

- 7.1 An evaluation of the risks indicates that the existing controls in place mean that no significant risks have been identified at this time.

8 Resource Implications

- 8.1 The recommendations contained within this report can be met from within existing resources and budgets.

9 Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation. The proposed board will have no legal or decision-making powers. Each constituent organisation will take any decision in accordance with its own legal obligations and procedures.

10 Equality Issues

10.1 There are no equality issues arising from this recommendation.

11 Other Issues

11.1 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate

11.1.1 Through introducing this new partnership structure, it will help facilitate the delivery of many infrastructure improvements that assist in addressing climate change and completing a sustainable town centre redevelopment

11.2 Property Issues

11.2.1 Specific proposals may raise property issues. For examples the Andover and Romsey masterplan both include land where the Council is the key landowner.

11.3 Wards/Communities Affected

11.3.1 The prosperity board would influence, support and help deliver projects across the Borough.

12 Conclusion

12.1 To enable the continued close working relationship with Hampshire County Council, it is proposed that the existing arrangements are updated to reflect the new structure for the Borough.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	None	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Leader and Strategic Regeneration and Partnership (North)) Councillor P North			
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