



Report to Cabinet

Subject "Showing the Way" – the Nottingham Conurbation Area Agreement

Date 2 November 2006

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1. Purpose of the Report

§ To inform members of latest developments in relation to the Nottingham Conurbation Area Agreement and related Core Cities and Three Cities issues.

2. Background

Members will recall that the Borough Council has been working with Nottingham City Council, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Borough Councils, Nottinghamshire County Council, Greater Nottingham Partnership and other agencies on the development of a Conurbation Area Agreement for Nottingham. The issue was reported to Cabinet on 1 June 2006 and 3 August 2006.

The Conurbation Area Agreement is one element of the Core City and wider "Three Cities" city regional agenda currently being developed primarily, but not exclusively, to address issues of economic competitiveness.

A final version of the Conurbation Area Agreement ("Showing the Way") has recently been produced to support a presentation given to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in late September. A copy of the Executive Summary is attached at **Appendix A** – the full version is available for reference on the Council's Intranet (in the section "Get Informed").

3. Proposals

"Showing the Way" covers both core city/conurbation issues and the wider "three cities" matters. The former is arguably of more immediate interest to the Borough Council, though the latter may also have implications over time.

On conurbation issues, the document proposes building on existing successful partnership arrangements such as those in place for strategic transport and a range of economic development/skills issues delivered across the conurbation by various agencies.

Proposed governance arrangements for the Greater Nottingham Executive, which would oversee these matters in future, would take the form of a Joint Committee of Local Authorities, drawing on existing political leadership. Starting with economic development and transport responsibilities, the Joint Committee may over time take responsibility for wider strategic issues devolved up from local government as well as economic development and skills issues devolved down from central government.

The proposals were well received by the Secretary of State at the presentation in September at which a mix of officers and members from participating authorities were present. In a letter, the Secretary of State she has largely complimented the presentation and ideas put forward in it and has urged the partners to progress them further, with a particular emphasis on more developed governance proposals, including links with Local Strategic Partnerships in the area.

Issues around core cities are expected to feature in the (at the time of writing) imminent Local Government White Paper. Officers are therefore minded to make further progress on these issues as soon as possible after the White Paper is published.

4. Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource issues arising from the report at present, although there could be long-term implications for both the Council and the Borough more widely which will be borne mind as the initiative develops

5. Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the report.