



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
18 December 2014
10.00 am

<u>Item</u>
12
<u>Public</u>

LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES – UPDATE ON BOUNDARIES

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1. Summary

Local Joint Committees (LJCs) have been meeting regularly since 2009 to provide joined up governance between the different tiers of local government. Recently LJCs have been considering how best to support local commissioning and will be commissioning youth activities from April 2015.

A review has recently taken place on LJC boundaries with a view to creating a better fit with Place Plan areas and to better reflect the available staffing support resources. It is anticipated that some changes may be necessary to the LJC constitution in the future to better reflect the local commissioning environment and it is proposed that these changes are delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and local members.

2. Recommendations

To recommend to Council the following:

- i) changes to the geographies of LJCs as set out in Appendix 1 to this report:
 - Local governance within Shrewsbury will continue to be supported by the Shrewsbury wide LJC; however, the six individual area based Shrewsbury LJCs will no longer meet as formally constituted LJCs, although this does not prevent them continuing to meet as “Neighbourhood Forums” in response to local circumstances.
 - Loton & Tern, Burnell & Severn Valley, Longden, Ford & Rea Valley, and Strettondale LJCs are consolidated into three new LJCs:
 - a. Pontesbury, Minsterley, Longden, Ford, Rea Valley & Loton
 - b. Tern & Severn Valley
 - c. Strettondale
 - Highley LJC is joined by Chelmarsh Parish to align with the Highley Place Plan area

- Bridgnorth, Worfield, Alveley & Claverley, LJC merges with Brown Cleve LJC to form the Bridgnorth, Worfield, Alveley, Claverley & Brown Cleve LJC Zone to more closely align with the Bridgnorth Place Plan area
- ii) that the ability to make changes to the LJC constitution including further boundary changes is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and local members.

REPORT

1.0 Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

Within the challenging budget pressures faced by Shropshire Council, LJCs will support an effective approach to local commissioning within which the use of local assets - buildings, organisations and people – are maximised to the greatest local benefit. Supporting early help and prevention within local communities is a key driver for Shropshire.

Proposed changes to LJC boundaries provide the opportunity to strengthen local governance in support of local commissioning by supporting closer alignment with Place Plan boundaries.

2.0 Financial implications

The proposed boundary changes will reduce the number of LJCs currently supported from 31 to 23 easing the administrative burden and pressure on finite resources.

3.0 Background Information

The creation of LJCs and locality working was a key part of the business case for the introduction of unitary government in Shropshire in 2009.

LJCs are constituted in accordance with Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Apart from minor changes to geographies, to the constitution and to responsibilities for providing officer support, LJCs have continued in their original format ever since.

A review of LJCs is provided within a report to Council in April 2013. This report highlights the opportunity for LJCs to build on existing good working relations as the Council moves towards a model of local commissioning. It references the challenge to continue to make the model relevant and to consider how other stakeholders and decision makers can be involved.

In support of its local commissioning role we anticipate that LJCs will work with local Town and Parish Councils to support the development of robust Place Plans that can be used as an “evidence base” in support of local commissioning advice.

In this respect, it has become apparent that it would be more appropriate that LJC geographies should more closely align with Place Plan boundaries. The changes described within the recommendations and shown within **Appendix 1** go a little way towards this, while at the same time reducing the number of LJCs and their associated bureaucracy. However, we are mindful both of local sensibilities to boundaries and of individual local circumstance and rather than be dogmatic on this point wish to keep boundaries under regular review.

The proposed changes described within this report on boundaries have been discussed and agreed with local Shropshire Council Members. They have also been discussed at LJCs and with Parish and Town councils. Some reservations remain amongst local councils particularly within the Shrewsbury rural area, but the proposals outlined here are felt to be the best compromise available.

4.0 Conclusions

The prospered LJC boundary changes outlined within this report will strengthen local governance in support of local commissioning by more closely aligning with Place Plans boundaries. They will also provide some efficiencies by reducing the need for administration support.

It is anticipated that in the future some changes may be necessary to the LJC constitution and further changes to boundaries in order to better reflect the local commissioning environment. It is proposed that these changes are delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and local members.

<p>List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information) Local Joint Committees, Council, 18th April 2013 Future Commissioning & Provision of Youth Activities, Portfolio Holder decision, 2nd July 2014 Update – Future Commissioning and Provision of Youth Activities, Children and young People’s Scrutiny Committee, 22nd October 2014</p>
<p>Cabinet Member: Cllr Tim Barker</p>
<p>Local Members: All Members</p>
<p>Appendices: Appendix 1 – Proposed Local Joint Committee areas</p>