

| Report of | Meeting | Date |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| The Chief Executive (Introduced by the Leader of the Council) | Executive Cabinet | 22 nd February 2007 |

MAXIMISING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER - IMPROVING TWO-TIER WORKING IN LANCASHIRE

PURPOSE OF REPORT`

1. To update Members following the December Executive Board meeting on maximising opportunities in the local government white paper and set out a proposal to improve two tier working in Lancashire.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2. The new Corporate Strategy contains a project to “maximise the opportunities of the Local Government White paper.”

RISK ISSUES

3. The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

| | | | |
|------------|---|------------------|--|
| Strategy | √ | Information | |
| Reputation | √ | Regulatory/Legal | |
| Financial | √ | Operational | |
| People | √ | Other | |

4. Risks will be considered in full as specific proposals emerge and regular reports will be provided to Executive Cabinet and to Council.

BACKGROUND

5. The new Local Government White Paper was published at the end of October. It sets out a number of key issues for Chorley. It is important that the Council carefully considers the opportunities for Chorley in full, ensuring we are positioned to improve services and ensure value for money services. The Chief Executive has attended all the political groups to outline the opportunities in more detail.

THE KEY ISSUES

6. The headlines of the Local Government White paper are as follows:

- The White Paper heralds a new relationship between central and local government and citizens.
- There will be a reduction in national targets overall
- There will be more freedoms and powers given to local government.
- There were opportunities for a limited number of unitary bids by 25th January 2007.
- There will be an opportunity for a limited number of two tier pathfinder bids
- All councils in a two-tier context need to explore ways of improving two-tier local government regardless of whether they are selected as a pathfinder.
- Services need to become more locally accountable.
- There are stronger roles for local neighbourhoods.
- Potentially there will be new political leadership models.

7. The following councils submitted unitary bids by 25th January:

- Preston
- Lancaster
- Burnley and Pendle

It is unclear whether any of these bids will be approved as the criteria for unitary bids includes the premise that the new unitaries have to be self-financing within five years and that there has to be no disruption to the surrounding areas. In Lancashire this will be very difficult to achieve.

Members will recall from the report to Executive cabinet in December that Chorley is leading on an proposal to improve two-tier working in Lancashire. This proposal is attached for information. The main aims of the bid are as follows, TO:

- Improve the quality of services to local people
- Reduce public confusion
- Ensure there is less duplication of effort
- Mean fewer organisational disputes
- Bring about more efficiency and value for public money
- Give greater local control, accountability and governance to Chorley on services, eg highways, youth and community services, public regulation, etc...

The Leader of the Council chaired a meeting in Chorley with the districts and the County Council to sign off the attached proposal.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

8. No direct implications at this stage.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

9. No direct implications at this stage

RECOMMENDATION(S)

10. It is recommended that Executive Cabinet support the following recommendations:

- The Council continues discussions with Lancashire County Council and the other districts with a view to progressing the Improving Two -Tier Proposal (attached).
- The Council's Director of Policy and Performance chairs a meeting of officers across Lancashire to progress the proposals.
- The Council submits a bid to the North West Improvement Network's Communities of Interest programme for resources to support the development of the bid.
- That the Leader of the Council regularly updates the Executive Cabinet and members of the Council on the progress of the bid and the potential implications for Chorley Borough Council.

DONNA HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

| Background Papers | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Document | Date | File | Place of Inspection |
| Local Government White Paper | 6 th Feb 2007 | *** | Members Room |

| Report Author | Ext | Date | Doc ID |
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| Donna Hall | 5104 | 6 th Feb 2007 | ADMINREP/REPORT |