

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL	FULL COUNCIL	5 FEBRUARY 2018	14

A LANCASHIRE COMBINED AUTHORITY

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

At the Full Council meeting on April 11th 2016 it was resolved that Fylde Council would become a constituent member of a Shadow Lancashire Combined Authority and be involved in the submission of proposals to the Secretary of State to establish a formal Combined Authority with a potential devolution deal. Any terms of a devolution deal would be required to be brought back before Council for agreement. This report provides an update on the arrangements between the Lancashire authorities since April 2016 and recommends that Fylde no longer engages in the current proposals for a Lancashire Combined Authority.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Fylde Council no longer agrees to be a constituent member of the Lancashire Combined Authority in its current form or be part of the Shadow Combined Authority.
2. That after over two years of planning the Combined Authority model has failed to gain the necessary unanimous support amongst all Lancashire Authorities and is unlikely to do so
3. That Fylde Council continues to work with all Lancashire authorities to establish alternative options for working together on strategic regional initiatives

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

At the Full Council on April 11th 2016 it was resolved:

1. The contents of this report be noted
2. The response to the public consultation on the Combined Authority proposals included as Appendix 1 be noted
3. Fylde Council agrees to become a constituent member of a Lancashire Combined Authority and submit proposals to do so to the Secretary of State
4. In the interim period, Fylde Council agrees to form a shadow Lancashire Combined Authority
5. Any proposals for a Devolution Deal with the Government be brought back to Full Council for agreement

At the Full Council meeting on December 14th 2015 it was resolved:

1. The contents of the report on a Combined Authority be noted

2. The contents of the Lancashire Governance Review and recommendation therein be noted
3. The contents of the draft Scheme for a Combined Authority be noted
4. Fylde Council agrees to take part in the public consultation in January/February which will seek views on the formation of a Combined Authority for Lancashire
5. Fylde Council agree to consider the feedback from the public consultation and notes that, following this, those authorities who wish to form a Lancashire Combined Authority will submit a proposal to the Secretary of State for consideration.
6. Fylde Council agrees in principle to becoming a constituent member of the Combined Authority for Lancashire
7. The council's meeting on April 11th 2016 gives final consideration to becoming a constituent member of a Lancashire Combined Authority.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services (Value for Money)	√
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council (Clean and Green)	√
Working with all partners (Vibrant Economy)	√
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live (A Great Place to Live)	√
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit (A Great Place to Visit)	√

REPORT

1. Since 2015 local authorities across Lancashire have been considering the option of establishing a [Combined Authority](#). Regular meetings have been held between most of the Lancashire authorities to discuss the implications of establishing a Combined Authority for Lancashire which has included detailed research and shared best practice from across the country.
2. Progress has been limited as a result of concerns expressed by some Leaders regarding the prospect of a directly elected mayor, the Combined Authority being seen as an additional layer of local government and a number of issues that have resulted in different positions being taken by different authorities such as transport infrastructure, regional planning etc.
3. To date the Lancashire Combined Authority remains in shadow format, there has not been a successful application to the Secretary of State to establish a legal Combined Authority and there is no proposal for a devolution deal. One of the challenges from the outset is that at least one local authority has not been engaged in the process and several, whilst remaining nominally members of the Shadow Combined Authority, have adopted a watching brief including Fylde.
4. Despite the extensive research, discussion, shared best practice and various initiatives since 2015 it has not been possible to deliver a Combined Authority for Lancashire and therefore a Devolution Deal is not possible. A number of other local authorities have subsequently withdrawn from the process in recent months reducing further the prospect of a Combined Authority for Lancashire. It is also not possible to report to this Council any tangible benefits that have emerged for Fylde as a result of being a member of the Shadow Combined Authority.
5. It is disappointing that this approach has not been successful despite all the hard work because it is essential that local authorities across Lancashire work together on strategic regional initiatives. However, with the withdrawal of other authorities from the process along with the creation of a potential additional tier of governance that would require finance and other resources, Fylde should withdraw as a member of the Shadow Combined Authority in order to focus resources on working with Lancashire colleagues to consider alternative arrangements for working together on strategic regional issues.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None arising directly from this report
Legal	None arising directly from this report
Community Safety	None arising directly from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising directly from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising directly from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising directly from this report

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Leader	cllr.sfazackerley@fylde.gov.uk	January 2018

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Full Council Report Agenda Item	April 2016 & December 2015	www.fylde.gov.uk
Combined Authorities (background and general information)	Current regularly updated	https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/devolution/combined-authorities