

Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee Vision Derbyshire Review

Date:	5 October 2022
Key ambition area:	Whole Programme
Sponsors:	Emma Alexander
For publication:	Yes

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To outline proposals to undertake a light touch review of Vision Derbyshire three years on.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Note proposals to undertake a light touch review of the Vision Derbyshire approach and arrangements three years on.
- 2.2 Approve plans to appoint an independent third-party organisation to undertake the review.
- 2.3 Task the Vision Derbyshire Steering Group with coordinating the review process and reporting back to the next meeting of the Joint Committee in November 2022.
- 2.4 Approve proposals to review the current temporary hosting arrangements in light of key challenges in recruiting to the Vision Derbyshire programme team.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure the current Vision Derbyshire approach and hosting arrangements continue to be fit for purpose in the context of the developing East Midlands Devolution Deal.
- 3.2 To ensure that Vision Derbyshire achievements are identified and celebrated and that these form the foundations of future arrangements as they develop and emerge.

- 3.3 To recognise and address challenges in recruiting and appointing into the Vision Derbyshire programme team.

4.0 Report details

Background

- 4.1 In 2019, Derbyshire Councils came together to explore the appetite for future collaborative working in Derbyshire. Councils agreed that the new approach should look beyond traditional partnerships, towards a new and collective ambitious vision and model of collaboration, integration and shared leadership focused on achieving the greatest public value for local people and communities.
- 4.2 Developing a shared set of principles, a case for change and proposition to central government, the collaborative Vision Derbyshire approach initiated an accelerated delivery and implementation plan which has focused on a number of key projects and programmes and the creation of the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee.
- 4.3 It is clear the work undertaken on Vision Derbyshire has been a fundamental driver and uniquely positioned Derbyshire and Derby, as one of the first pathfinder areas to progress devolution proposals alongside Nottinghamshire and Nottingham. The subsequent East Midlands Devolution Deal, signed and published on 30 August 2022, is therefore testament to the work, dedication and collaborative efforts of participating and non-participating councils in Derbyshire to the Vision Derbyshire approach.

Vision Derbyshire Review

- 4.4 It is now over three years since work on Vision Derbyshire commenced. There have been a number of significant achievements during this time, in particular work on the Vision Derbyshire Business Development programme, the development of the Vision Derbyshire Climate Change Strategy and Planning Policy Guidance and the creation of the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee.
- 4.5 Whilst the approach has been successful and been taken forward by both participating and non-participating councils, there have been some challenges which have led to a number of councils not being in a position to formally sign up to the approach.
- 4.6 As work progresses on the Devolution Deal and the new East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority emerges, it will be important to ensure that the Vision Derbyshire approach continues to evolve to meet new

demands. This will be critical in ensuring that Derbyshire remains well positioned to maximise the benefits from the Deal as it moves into implementation.

- 4.7 To ensure that the Vision Derbyshire approach is fit for purpose for the future, it is proposed that a light touch review of current arrangements be undertaken over forthcoming weeks. It is recommended that the review, consisting of semi-structured interviews with the Leaders and Chief Executives of Derbyshire Councils, be commissioned to a third-party independent organisation tasked with gathering Councils views on current arrangements, challenges and opportunities and ambitions for the future. It will important that the review consider whether there should be any changes to the agreed principles of the Vision Derbyshire approach which have guided work to date, as follows:

- **Improve outcomes** – collaboration must enable us to improve outcomes for people and place
- **Speak with one voice** – collaboration must support us to speak to our residents, business, regional and national stakeholders with one voice
- **Better coordination** – collaboration must enable better coordination and use of resources, allowing us to make strategic choices according to the need of our place
- **Provide a visible alternative to unitarisation** – collaboration needs to represent a viable alternative to unitarisation, with greater flexibility to deal with strategic challenges of the future whilst maintaining appropriate local control
- **Deliver to be sustainable** – collaboration should be delivered within the means, both resource and financial, of all councils, to be sustainable.

A draft scope to support the review process is currently in development. A short tender exercise, coordinated by the Vision Derbyshire Steering Group will take place in early October 2022 with work on the review anticipated to take place at the end of October 2022/early November 2022. It is recommended that the results of the review be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Committee on 23 November 2022 for consideration and agreement of next steps.

Creation of Programme Resource

- 4.8 A report to the first Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee in April 2022, sought approval for the creation of a programme resource, comprising a small programme team and project fund, deemed to be critical in accelerating delivery of Vision Derbyshire ambitions.

- 4.9 Since April 2022, work to stand up the programme resource and recruit into the programme team has been undertaken by Chesterfield Borough Council, as the temporary host authority and Derbyshire County Council. This has been challenging, with the one year programme roles proving difficult to fill. The Vision Derbyshire Steering Group have explored a number of options, for example offering roles on a longer-term basis, however the current temporary nature of funding on offer from the majority of participating councils has meant that this option has not been possible to implement.
- 4.10 Given the nature of hosting arrangements, in place and subject to review after a six-month period and the development of the East Midlands Devolution Deal, it is recommended that further discussions take place to revisit current arrangements. The availability of additional programme resource to drive forward and implement agreed activity is essential and it is proposed that following a review of existing arrangements, a further report setting out a revised approach be brought back to the Joint Committee for consideration at its next meeting in November 2022.

5. Alternative options

- 5.1 Option 1 – Continue with existing approach. Whilst this is a viable option it does not take into account the changing devolution landscape and could result in existing arrangements not being fit for purpose.

6. Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

- 6.1 Commissioning a third party independent organisation to undertake the light touch review will incur costs, however these are likely to be relatively minimal given the proposed scope of the review and can be met from the Vision Derbyshire project fund.
- 6.2 To ensure value for money, the short tender exercise will seek quotes on delivering agreed and scoped activity from three providers. As outlined in the report, the commissioning process will be coordinated and overseen by the Vision Derbyshire Steering Group. It is therefore recommended that the costs of undertaking the review be met from the Vision Derbyshire project fund/resource.

7. Implications for consideration – Legal

- 7.1 Any proposed changes to current arrangements would need to be considered in line with the articles of the Joint Committee, agreed at the 4 April 2022

Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee, specifically Section B relating to functions and responsibilities.

8. Implications for consideration – Human resources

8.1 The Vision Derbyshire Programme Team, when in place, will be ideally positioned to support with the work required for the development and implementation of the deal. Working across the Devolution/County Deal and Vision Derbyshire programmes of work will be crucial to the successful delivery of both over forthcoming months.

9. Implications for consideration – Climate change

9.1 There are no direct implications in respect of Climate Change arising from this report

10. Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

10.1 There are no direct Equality and Diversity issues relating to this update.

11. Implications for consideration – Risk management

Description of the Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Impact	Likelihood
Inability to identify a third-party independent organisation to undertake review	High	Low	Commissioning process will be coordinated and overseen by the Vision Derbyshire Steering Group.	Medium	Low
Inability to recruit to programme team roles	High	High	Further discussions take place to revisit current arrangements identify the appropriate recruitment opportunities to secure appointments across the team	Medium	Low
Lack of engagement from other councils results in Vision Derbyshire being unable to deliver on its potential.	Medium	High	Light touch review proposed to gather Councils views on current arrangements, challenges and opportunities and ambitions for the future.	Medium	Medium

Joint Committee's remit cuts across existing decision making and/or adds unnecessary layers to decision making	Medium	Medium	A draft scope to support the review should look at identifying opportunities for rationalising partnerships	Low	Medium
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Document information

Report author
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Background documents
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.
None
Appendices to the report
None