

APPENDIX 4

Equality Impact Assessment

Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance Notes before completing this form.

Name of policy/function/project/service area to be assessed:

Liverpool City Region Strategic Governance Review

Brief description of proposal to be assessed:

Liverpool City Region Cabinet on 21 June 2013 agreed that a review of strategic governance arrangements should be undertaken. One of the drivers for this review was to make sure that the City Region is well placed to secure greater influence over key levers affecting local growth, including freedoms, flexibilities and funding which would otherwise remain under the control of Whitehall. This approach builds on the commitments identified in the Liverpool City Region Deal which was agreed with Government in Summer 2012.

Two pieces of work are being undertaken. Firstly, a formal review of governance of the City Region is being conducted as set out by primary legislation. Based on the current available evidence, it recommends that the City Region pursue the option of creating a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to provide strategic leadership and decision making on economic development, housing, transport and employment and skills. Secondly, a report outlining how a Combined Authority might operate, including the draft legal scheme needed to create the Combined Authority, will be produced building on existing joint work to promote growth and create jobs.

The purpose of the review is to determine:

- Whether the area covered by the local authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral can properly be seen as constituting a functional economic area for the purpose under consideration in the review; and
- Whether the existing governance arrangements for economic development, regeneration and transport are effective or would benefit from changes, including establishing a Combined Authority.

The governance review has considered the options available and in relation to each option, evaluated the likely improvement in:

- The exercise of statutory functions relating to economic development, regeneration and transport in the area;
- The effectiveness and efficiency of transport in the area; and
- The economic conditions in the area.

Cabinet considered the proposals in August. During August and September feedback from stakeholders on the strategic governance review and the potential operation of a possible Combined Authority has been collected through a series of stakeholder events and online publicity, including neighbouring authorities, businesses, Elected Members and external partners. Responses will be considered by Cabinet and Council and if updated reports are approved, a proposal will be submitted to Government.

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Date of assessment:

4 September 2013

Brief description of the anticipated outcomes of the proposal:

A strong Combined Authority, based on the functional economic area, would enable decisions to be made jointly by the democratically elected Leaders and/or the Elected Mayor in each of the six local authorities, together with the Chair of the LEP. It would provide a visible, stable and statutory City Region-wide body which could act as the Accountable Body to attract further funding to the Liverpool City Region to support economic growth, alongside any additional powers which may be devolved from Government. The Combined Authority would not be a 'super-Council' adding another layer of bureaucracy. It would be a lean and efficient organisation drawn from existing resources.

Anticipated outcomes of this proposal, if pursued, include:

- Bring together the strategic decision making powers and processes for statutory functions and investment priorities relating to economic development, regeneration, transport and related initiatives across the natural economic area; strengthening accountability for the delivery of targets and meeting established strategic priorities;
- Remove the need for issues to be considered or ratified by numerous bodies and authorities, which is time consuming and inefficient, requiring multiple reports;
- Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the related functions by providing integrated decision-making, a clearer read across between the different policy strands of activity and increasing opportunities for co-design and collaboration. For example, vesting multi-modal transport policy functions with the Combined Authority would ensure that policies are integrated with economic development, employment and skills and housing, funding is aligned to agreed priorities, and delivery is efficient;
- Enable all constituent partners to accomplish and achieve a bigger impact for the City Region's residents, businesses and the economy as a whole through a more effective and efficient deployment of tightening public sector resources connecting the City Region's assets to our people and communities;
- Secure long-term effective engagement with business and other sectors, including employment and skills providers and registered housing providers by formalising the existing relationship with the LEP and providing a place for the private sector at the 'top table' of decision making; and
- Provide opportunities to align strategic capacity and support services to deliver economies of scale. For example, combining Accountable Body arrangements and expertise which is currently dispersed across all six local authorities, Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority and the LEP. In the future, this could include the arrangements for devolved major transport funding and the single pot for economic investment, including EU funds and assets as appropriate.

A Combined Authority would also provide a robust decision making process to improve the economic wellbeing of the constituent local authorities as part of a stronger Liverpool City Region economy. Bringing strategic decision making into a City Region-wide body with open and transparent leadership with responsibility for strategy setting, long-term vision, outcomes and the alignment of priorities for the City region, will make information at City Region level more accessible. It will be crucial, however, to ensure that relevant and proportional equality

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analysis informs the strategic decisions undertaken by the combined Authority and this should include information from each local authority area in addition to the cumulative impact on the City Region. A process will need to be established at an early stage in the formation of the Combined Authority that ensures equality is appropriately considered as part of policy development and the further development of the proposed areas and that is also incorporated as part of the strategic decision making process in a way that this is well documented and accessible. The six local authorities have experience of meeting legislative requirements and a suitable model, based on current best practice, should be developed that meets the requirements of the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty.

If the proposals for the Combined Authority approach are agreed and pursued, detailed analysis by protected characteristic will be undertaken, as appropriate, as part of the development of the intelligence base as more detailed plans emerge and strategies are developed. Individual EIAs will then be produced as required.

Impact

Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts (i.e. potential for discrimination, disadvantage or disproportionate treatment) and any neutral impacts and the evidence you have taken into account to reach this conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic. Where an impact is unknown, state so, and identify what steps will be taken to address any gaps in data:

At this stage in the process, impacts are neutral, however, further analysis will be undertaken as more detail emerges and policies and strategies are developed.

Characteristic	Impact			Explanation	Evidence
	Positive	Negative	Neutral		
Age			X		
Disability			X		
Gender Reassignment (Transgender)			X		
Sex (Gender)			X		
Race			X		
Religion/Belief			X		
Sexual Orientation			X		

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Pregnancy and Maternity			X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership			X		
Social and Economic Status			X		

Consideration of Alternatives

Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative effect identified above (attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data, reports, etc):

N/A

Consultation

Brief description of any consultation with stakeholders and summarise how it has influenced the proposal. Please attach evidence or provide link to appropriate data or reports:

An officer-led working group was tasked with undertaking the review, comprising senior officers and relevant experts from each of the constituent local authorities, Merseytravel and the LEP. This included the following activities:

- Review of economic evidence to test the rationale for working across the Liverpool City Region geography as a functional economic area. This included a review of previous strategies and identification of key information to assess the economic conditions of the area.
- Desk research of the current governance arrangements and structures.
- Workshops to collect views and evidence from stakeholders in each constituent authority, Merseytravel and the LEP to consider the functions or activities that could benefit from strengthened collaborative governance arrangements.
- One-to-one interviews with stakeholders including MPs, LEP members, Chambers of Commerce and neighbouring local authorities, to collect views on the draft proposals.
- Options assessment based on this evidence.

Monitoring Arrangements

Briefly describe the monitoring arrangements/systems that will be put in place to monitor the effects of this proposal:

This process is on going as detailed below and the EIA updated as required.

Reporting and Publication

Where will this Equality Impact Assessment be published and reported?
On the Council website as an appendix to the Cabinet report.

Date: September 2013

Proposed implementation date of project/proposal:

Proposal to be considered by individual Cabinets, MITA and Councils 12 -26 September 2013
Submission to Government: 30 September 2013

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Government review and statutory consultation October 2013 – March 2014
Councils to confirm membership March 2014
Potential start date for possible Combined Authority April 2014.

Funding considerations: This model would not have any additional resource implications for constituent councils and is expected to be at least cost neutral.