City Council



Date of meeting: 20 November 2023

Title of Report: Withdrawal from the Heart of the South West Joint

Committee

Lead Member: Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader)
Lead Strategic Director: Giles Perritt (Assistant Chief Executive)

Author: Caroline Marr, Senior Policy Advisor

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Your Reference: 20.11.23 HotSWJC

Key Decision: No

Confidentiality: Part I - Official

Purpose of Report:

To present the case and seek approval to serve notice for the withdrawal of Plymouth City Council as a constituent member of the Heart of the South West Joint Committee (HotSW JC). As a results of serving this notice, and following similar decisions made by Devon County Council, Somerset Council and Torbay Council, the Joint Committee would be dissolved.

The proposal in this report specifically relates to the HotSW Joint Committee's governance arrangements only, and do not cover the HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership or the associated HotSW Joint Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations and Reasons:

Recommendation: That Council agrees to serve notice for its withdrawal from the HotSW Joint Committee and endorses the dissolution of the Committee.

Reason: Changes in Government policy and the forthcoming integration of functions and assets of the HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership into the relevant upper tier local authorities, means that the purpose of the HotSW JC has largely been superseded, and other partnership arrangements between the Constituent Authorities will deliver its aims.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To not serve notice of withdrawal. This option has been rejected – other constituent authorities are expected to bring forward a proposal to withdraw. The Committee's governance arrangements determine that "where a majority of the Constituent Authorities at any time agree (via formal resolutions) that the Joint Committee should be dissolved or terminated on a specified date then the Joint Committee shall cease to exist from that date."

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan:

Regional governance and leadership arrangements will continue to fulfil the Council's commitment to 'being a strong voice for Plymouth'.

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

There are no implications rising directly from this decision.

The Joint Committee is completely reliant on the Constituent Authorities for its resources, budget and running costs. Joint Committee members' costs and expenses are funded and administered by each respective Constituent Authority.

Financial Risks:

There are no financial risks arising directly from this decision.

The Administering Authority (Somerset Council) holds the balance of contributions from the Constituent Authorities. The current unallocated balance is \pounds 43,009. If the Joint Committee is dissolved, then any outstanding balance would be returned proportionally to each of the Constituent Authorities on the same percentage basis that they made contributions.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

There are no direct implications arising from this decision, other than a requirement for in-person attendance at Joint Committee meetings with associated travel implications.

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

Subject to the outcome of this decision the Constitution will be amended to remove reference to the Joint Committee.

Appendices:

*Add rows as required to box below

| Ref. | Title of Appendix | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box. | | | | | | | | |
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| Α | Heart of the South West Joint Committee - Proposal to withdraw | | | | | | | | | |

Background papers:

*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

| Title of any background paper(s) | Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) | | | | | | | |
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| | If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box. | | | | | | | |
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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Giles Perritt, Assistant Chief Executive

Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes

Date agreed: |0/|1/2023

Cabinet Member approval: Approved verbally.

Date approved: |0/|1/2023