

**Agenda Item: 7.
One Nottingham Board**

Title of Paper: “Unitarisation” and the Metro Strategy

Date: 9th November 2018

1. Purpose

This paper provides an explanation and an update of the discussion around a Unitary County Council and its relationships with Nottingham City Council. The ON Board is receiving a “heads up” of this debate.

Secondly, it contains an update on the Metro Strategy.

2. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the initiatives, and to contribute to the debate at the appropriate times, either through ON or through the respective agencies.

3. Background

The following explains the discussion around a Unitary County Council and its relationships with Nottingham City Council.

Nottinghamshire County Council has just completed its public engagement about Nottinghamshire resident’s views on a single tier local government. The deadline for the public to contribute to this consultation was the 31st October 2018.

Nottingham City Council wrote to the County Council expressing the view that should Notts County Council choose to progress this engagement through to discussion and consultation about local government re-organisation; the City Council will want to look at what the “natural” boundaries of Nottingham are.

In order to do this the City Council will begin to build a case based on the following:

A comment regularly made about the Nottingham City Council area, is that it is under bounded, a significant part of the Urban Area is not in the council area, and instead it is in Notts; but clearly identifying with Nottingham. Reading the letters pages in the Nottingham Post over recent years provides a snap shot of this confusion.

Comparisons with the other core cities - Nottingham has a much lower percentage of people working in the city who live in the city, 48.7, in comparison with 70% of other Core Cities’ population. This means that people who use local authority services don’t pay Council Tax for the services and equally there is no accountability through elected officials.

There is now a momentum growing across England for Unitarisation. In recent years, 11 County Council proposals have been approved by central government.

In the event that the County Council begins consultation in the New Year on unitarisation, the City Council political leadership will commence a consultation on the boundaries of Nottingham City.

Nottingham City Council will be consulting on the options that are available to it. Current

legislation allows local government reorganisation to take place on the current local authority boundaries. It is possible to go for a boundary review beyond this, however, this is a much more involved statutory process which would have to be conducted by the boundary commission, but it could lead to a much different local authority arrangement involving the city's suburbs.

On Board members who have a county presence may wish to write to the Notts County Council CEO, Anthony May expressing your views on the present debate before it moves any further forward.

4. The Metro Strategy

The Metro Strategy continues as a coalition of the willing. The central point is about any agencies in the conurbations, who want to work together, may do so. The strategy is a collaboration; it is primarily about two authorities working together on a number of priority projects. It is worth noting that there are no proposals for devolution, or a combined authority, contained within this proposal.

There has been a short pause in the development of the strategy after the Derby City Council elections. Derby asked for some time for the new majority party to consider the strategy, which it has now done, and they continue to be on board with the Strategy.

The Metro Growth board continues to be chaired by David Williams of Geldards. It's membership is made up of the following businesses; Geldards, Boots, Rolls Royce, Trent Barton, Toyota, East Midlands Airport, the three university vice-chancellors, the Chamber of Commerce, both City Councils and Gedling Borough Council. Other local authorities have been attending as observers.

By the time the ON Board meeting takes place, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce are due to have launched their manifesto in parliament. At that event, David Williams is due to outline the Metro strategy's four priorities:

1. Better access to the airport.
2. Transforming cities. Better contact between the two cities, Toton, East Midlands Airport, the Enterprise Zone and new housing development.
3. Derby Innovation Park; Infinity Park Enterprise Zone with an advanced manufacturing research centre and the establishment of an innovation hub.
4. The Nottingham Convention Centre, potentially next door to the National Ice Arena.

In November/December, both marketing agencies will be hosting a joint promotion event for the Metro Growth Board.

The Growth Board is now beginning to think about skills, how it reflects the needs of young people in the cities, and has acknowledged the need for a lifetime skills strategy.

5. Contact Details

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