



CABINET REPORT

Report Title	WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE GROWTH DEAL
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Cabinet Meeting Date:	12 th September 2018
Key Decision:	No
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	Yes
Service Area:	Planning
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Cllr J Hill
Ward(s)	All

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to secure agreement for the submission of a Growth Deal for West Northamptonshire

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is **recommended** that Cabinet;
- a) Approves the principle of submitting an outline application for a West Northamptonshire Growth Deal; and
 - b) Delegates authority to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning to finalise the details of the submission.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 As part of the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor, Northampton and its environs have the opportunity to contribute towards the Government's ambitious targets for housing and employment growth. Coupled with this is the opportunity to negotiate a Growth Deal including various freedoms and funding to support growth.
- 3.1.2 Given the close working already developed in relation to the Joint Core Strategy, and the Local Government Review process, it is proposed to submit a bid for West Northamptonshire, including Northampton Borough, South Northamptonshire and Daventry District Councils.
- 3.1.3 There are also likely to be similar submissions from North Northamptonshire, and from the Unitary authorities of Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Oxfordshire and Peterborough/Greater Cambridge have already signed deals.
- 3.1.4 There is the opportunity to submit an application before the Autumn Statement, due in October. If successful, the details of the Growth Deal would then need to be negotiated and agreed by the Councils.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The partners recognise that planning the right level and type of growth in West Northamptonshire will take time and effort. This is particularly the case because of the likely reorganisation of local government covering the area.
- 3.2.2 Therefore it is proposed that the Growth Deal will have at least two stages. These will (a) relate to acceleration of existing commitments, and (b) provide a clear foundation for agreeing additional commitments resulting in the delivery of higher levels of growth in the future.
- 3.2.3 Between 2019 and 2050 – reflecting the timescale for the development of the Cambridge – Milton Keynes - Oxford Arc – in current local housing need assessments, West Northamptonshire would need to provide 2,267 units per year, amounting to 70,277 units over the period.
- 3.2.4 The target set by the Growth Deal will be to achieve 100,000 units over that period, an increase over local housing need of 42%.
- 3.2.5 To achieve this will require steps above and beyond those required for 'business as usual' planning, including major investment in infrastructure and opening up new housing markets and housing delivery models. This is expected to include a small number of new settlements, such as at Brackley West, Cosgrove/Deanshanger and on a proposed North – South Rail line, running north of Northampton. Appropriate sustainable locations will be confirmed through the development of the Strategic Plan.
- 3.2.6 In return for agreeing to accelerated and additional housing growth, the Councils expect to receive agreement on a variety of various Planning freedoms, including (amongst others);

- A local requirement to maintain a three year, as opposed to five year land supply, which would allow the Councils to protect their existing allocations and not face appeals on unsustainable sites on this ground.
- A local variation to the Planning Delivery Test, allowing a higher threshold of housing delivery against local need, meaning that the presumption in favour of sustainable development would not be applied to West Northamptonshire in 2021/2 as currently looks likely to happen.
- Extension of the requirement to have a 5 year review of Strategic Plans, meaning that the effective life of the Joint Core Strategy would be extended beyond its current cut-off date of December 2019, resulting in the ability to resist proposals for development on unallocated sites for longer.
- Agreement that the emerging Growth Deal is guaranteed to meet the Duty to Co-operate.
- Agreement of a timescale for delivery and milestones, including agreeing a statutory Strategic Plan.

3.2.7 Negotiation on the details of the Growth Deal will also include significant funding towards;

- An initial £75m Infrastructure and Affordable Housing Fund to support investment in the transport network needed to deliver housing and employment growth, and to ensure that a variety of housing types and tenures are delivered to meet local needs.
- An initial £9m Capacity fund to develop the evidence base needed and technical support.

3.3 Choices (Options)

3.3.1 Support the submission of a Growth Deal. This will potentially access significant funding in order to support housing and employment growth, and therefore is the recommended option.

3.3.2 Not submit a Growth Deal. This is not the recommended option, as it would not take advantage of the opportunities offered by being an active partner in the Growth Corridor, whilst still potentially being expected to deliver more growth.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 By proposing additional housing growth, the Growth Deal exceeds the targets adopted in the Joint Core Strategy. Therefore the proposals will need to be supported by a new statutory Strategic Plan for the area and allied non-statutory plans for delivering infrastructure.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Delivering the Deal and development will require significant staff resource. However, this could be funded through the Capacity Fund.

4.2.2 Failure to deliver the accelerated and additional housing, or the adoption of the Statutory Strategic Plan to agree numbers and allocations could result in the Growth Deal being terminated before the end of the intended period. Therefore the Deal will need to include provisions to cover this situation, in particular with regards to the funding packages.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The Council will need to be satisfied with the provisions of the Growth Deal, including the Governance arrangements for allocating the funds.

4.4 Equality and Health

4.4.1 There are no implications from this report.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Officers and Councillors at all three Councils have been supportive of the Growth Deal proposal, which has also been supported by senior Civil Servants at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 The action proposed in the report will help meet the following priorities in the Councils Corporate Plan;

- Housing for Everyone: By helping to maximise the supply of new homes and providing choice of housing types and tenures.
- Northampton Alive: By creating a vibrant and sustainable town for the future.

4.7 Other Implications

4.7.1 No other implications.

5. Background Papers

5.1 No background papers

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