

Appendix B

Local Government Reorganisation - notes of Working Groups held on Friday 12th March

Group 1 – East / West Option

- Will be a lot more efficient from three councils. We will have share of equipment, shared of services, shared knowledge, and localism.
- Where do Town/Parish Councils fit in. Some are running like businesses, inconsistency between them all. This will need to be delegated once Unitaries are formed.
- Some of the Services currently undertaken at County and Borough level, will be coordinated and will benefit from more efficient services, and savings can be achieved. Will get rid of a lot of division, frustration. This would require a cabinet decision once unitary established.
- Three district council model is enough to maintain localism. East/West for us would be the best option. People more familiar with what's going on in their areas
- Location and value for money - Mayoral model favoured by some but not others. Savings and benefits either way
- East/West easier to address problems, easier to shift services about.
- Assumption that East/West would lead to a mayoral model.
- Some people think mayoral system is not as democratic, decisions made/implemented by less people
- services would remain strategic, which would come down to local unitary level. General opinion, blue light services would remain at strategic, as in county now. Children's Services, waste collection remains localised. Localised flooding should be brought to unitary level, easy to identify area and more resources available.
- Local oversight on local assets, better maintenance in our communities and understanding the impact

Group 2 – One Unitary

- Group not happy with the existing arrangements with County. Current capacity with service delivery is stretched. Future is going to be demanding, depending on the demographic changes within the County.
- County indicating a saving of £96 million, Group questioned where is this saving going to come from.

- What degree of public support from the 6 districts, discussed at length the disruption that would occur. Overall members felt it this was a problem because the perception that people already feel towards the County Council with a degree of alienation in terms of the different delivery and so many decisions being based in Carlisle and the problem geographically occurring with that.
- Serious questions around value for money
- Business partnerships in the future particularly with the West. Bearing in mind the way current decisions are taken and whether this would be the recipe for future in terms of distance of control between the west or other areas.
- future investment and how inward investment would occur in the future and to what degree we would it be prioritised in the West, if again it was still a unitary authority that appeared not to favor the West.
 - local public services in terms of the police, fire etc. and concerns raised about the gaps in delivery because of the lack of geographical aspect, the knowledge, the localisation.
 - No clarity on Role of Police and Crime Commissioner
 - Geographical aspects of retaining where we are now. 600,000 figures in terms of the population, but the degree of alienation that exists within our County at the moment because of the lack of a system
 - In the end devolution will move downwards under town and parish councils. Town and parish councilors are untrained volunteers in many respects that are going to have a lot of work put on them and we question to what degree this bridge would work. The training, the finances, the venues, and everything that would be implicit in this format would move forward.
 - Staff redundancies could be high to achieve savings
 - Stronger as a county
 - One set of councillors, one set of services, easier for public to understand
 - Political issues magnified in a larger authority

Group 3 – North / South Option

- Better fit for Millom
- Positives – better aligned with Health footprint, although there are general concerns about health trusts.

- Concerned about splitting Copeland and Allerdale, particularly in terms of nuclear economic footprints
- Copeland has more in common with Allerdale and Carlisle than it does with South Lakeland and Barrow
- Much better alignment with East/West option than North/South Option in terms of infrastructure and Geography
- Improvements in being closer to the public for County Services, but would depend on central location for those services
- Negatives – Chaos in moving/splitting up county wide services. Less local accountability for the currently delivered district services
- Geography better for health services with north/south option
- Police footprint, possible opportunity for improvements
- Support for this proposal - Credible for geography

Group 4 – Bay Option

- No support, limited advantages. Will continue to have close relationship with Barrow Shipyard and Nuclear Projects but didn't see that working for the services
- Crosses geographical boundaries, Lancashire/Cumbria border a real barrier.
- Would take a great deal of work to change the services currently embedded
- Big negatives in Police and Fire Services. One is a precepting authority in Lancashire, in Cumbria it is covered by County Council. Police and Crime Commissioners with different precepting levels due to communities they represent.
- North and South look different ways for transport links.
- Health Boundary does extend that way and will have to be a working relationship regardless. Only working services working over that line
- Not enough in common with border crossing for members to support this option
- In the North, it was felt that Copeland has nothing in Common with Eden, not a credible geographical area
- Concern around staffing and councillor reductions