

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 25 APRIL 2016
REPORT ON: CHANGING FOR THE FUTURE - COLLABORATIVE WORKING
REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
REPORT NO: 135-2016

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To propose a programme of collaborative work in partnership with neighbouring Councils, to commence in 2016/17.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- i) approves the participation of Dundee City Council in a collaborative programme of work with Angus and Perth & Kinross Councils
- ii) agrees the 10 areas to be explored within the collaborative programme
- iii) remits the Chief Executive to provide update reports as the work progresses

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Christie Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, published in 2011, identified that public services would face the most serious challenges of modern times and that demands on public services would increase dramatically due to demographic issues and from not adequately addressing the causes of disadvantage and vulnerability. A key principle of the Christie recommendations was that, in order to meet these challenges, the whole system of public service should become more efficient by reducing duplication and by sharing services wherever possible.

4.2 The Accounts Commission report *An Overview of Local Government in Scotland 2016* (March 2016) states that the scale of the challenge in 2016/17 and beyond has significantly increased because of the local government funding settlement. This has substantial implications for services to the public, councillors and the local government workforce. It cites the case for a more strategic approach, longer-term planning and a greater open-ness to alternative forms of service delivery. It builds on the findings of the Christie Commission, not only identifying that collaboration on service delivery can help meet financial challenges, but that public services need to be transformed as community budgets become a reality. Greater integration across public sector partners is highlighted as a requirement in order to assess issues of high need and complexity.

4.3 Article X of the Policy & Resources Committee of 26 October 2015 approved the work streams and projects that would form Phase 4 of the Changing for the Future Programme. Within the Modern Council work stream, the Shared Services project was to consider opportunities for collaborative working with local partners and neighbouring Councils.

4.4 Collaborative working with our neighbouring authorities is not a new or untested concept, with several very successful partnerships running currently e.g. Roads & Street Lighting Partnerships, Tayside Procurement Consortium and Tayside Scientific Services. Tayside Contracts is our most established model of collaboration having been in existence for 20 years. This is a commercially based shared arrangement that operates under a Joint Committee comprising of elected members from each of the constituent councils, for the provision of catering, cleaning, roads maintenance, vehicle maintenance and winter maintenance throughout the Tayside region. It is proposed, in addition to new areas of exploration, that opportunities to develop this delivery model also be developed.

4.5 Collaborative activity with other local authorities has a part to play in supporting the step change required in the way services are delivered and providing greater value for communities. Sharing services can deliver cost savings through:

- reduced management costs
- process efficiencies
- rationalisation of assets
- standardisation and streamlining of working procedures and processes
- greater purchasing power

There is an opportunity to consider collaboration for a broad range of local government services, including transactional processes (e.g. administration and payroll), professional support services (e.g. procurement and human resources) and frontline services (e.g. waste management and customer services).

4.6 Discussions have taken place between the Chief Executive and Head of Chief Executive's Services and their counterparts in neighbouring Councils regarding exploring more collaborative opportunities. This led to an engagement meeting on 29 February, at which 10 areas were identified to be explored within a joint programme of potential collaborative opportunities as follows:

- Integration of Waste
- Economic Development and City Deal
- Children's Services
- Procurement and Commissioning
- Digital Transformation
- One Public Estate
- Roads
- Fleet/Transportation
- Corporate Services
- Developing Tayside Contracts

4.7 Through the developing arrangement between the three Councils and the supporting programme of work, the Council has a significant opportunity to explore shared services and collaborative prospects with our neighbouring Councils. More engagement meetings will be scheduled between the three Councils and other stakeholders, in order to develop the programme of work, with clear objectives and effective governance arrangements.

4.8 Where appropriate these areas will be considered relative to work that has already been undertaken and/or is being taken forward by Dundee City Council. Furthermore potential participation in this programme of collaborative work will not preclude consideration of prospects with other councils or further potential partners.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality and Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no issues in this regard to report on.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Executive Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Democratic and Legal Services and the chief officers responsible for the areas of work listed in Appendix 1 have been consulted.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Accounts Commission
Christie Commission

David R Martin
Chief Executive

18/04/2016