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To: [section 40](#); [section 40](#); [Edward Knowles](#); [Taryn Pearson-Rose](#); [Sally Hopper](#); [Steven Pilsworth](#); [section 40](#); [Owen Mapley](#); [section 40](#); [section 40](#); [Quentin Baker](#)
Subject: Private & Confidential
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Dear all,

Apologies in advance for the download of information, but I'm keen not to be a block on work progressing.

Following a range of fast paced conversations over the last few days, the following is a summary and my proposed next steps in preparing HCC to initiate the conversation and eventual proposal to Government on Local Government Reform (LGR) in Hertfordshire. It goes without saying this is strictly confidential.

Government Context

Announcements expected on LGR by Simon Clarke (Minister of State (Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government)) at the Local Government Association Virtual Conference 2020 on **Fri 3 July** ([https://lgaevents.local.gov.uk/lga/frontend/reg/thome.csp?pageID=310467&eventID=910&CSPCHD=002001000000p2tVpMV179Rpl6r_gQe1mjiv4a4BfZTitLj\\$ta](https://lgaevents.local.gov.uk/lga/frontend/reg/thome.csp?pageID=310467&eventID=910&CSPCHD=002001000000p2tVpMV179Rpl6r_gQe1mjiv4a4BfZTitLj$ta))

We expect this will fire the starting gun for a new round of proposals to be submitted to Government on LGR. Will it require us, or invite us to make bids? will the announcement include minimum or maximum population limits? will it require Mayors? who knows, but I am confident there will be enough in the speech to get us underway.

Simon Clarke is attending a CCN call tomorrow, so we might get more details from David following that.

Leaders Expectations

Following a 1:1 with David I can confirm the following.

[PWC LEADING] That a A4 (short) document is produced covering the following points:

1. The aspiration – move with pace to establish a new single unitary council for Hertfordshire
2. Background – high performing, partnership working, shortcomings of the two tier system, meeting the challenges of growth and infrastructure delivery, saving taxpayers money, Government policy
3. Why one unitary – savings, scale, capacity and avoiding disaggregation of highly regarded people services associated with two or more unitaries
4. Why now – contribution to the recovery, local growth and taking advantage of the devolution of powers – a key agenda for the government
5. Financial and transformation benefits – PwC, reducing the number of councillors across the two tiers
6. Why One Unitary - strategic geography, coterminous with police, LRF, HLEP, the ICS (plus West Essex for the time being), FRS (HCC is the Fire Authority).
7. Enhanced local focus and joined up services benefitting residents.

Chief Executive Expectations

In support of the above Owen has also provided a further strategic perspective we need to weave in:

Three global issues are the stand out things that have changed the macro landscape:

1. Pandemic response/recovery/renewal;

2. Climate Change (and COVID has shown the art of the possible re radical change even whilst recognising economic pain in some sectors);
3. BLM including how it is a visible and urgent manifestation of wider issues about social inequalities and injustice.

There are lots of other things that remain strategically important: Good Growth; Population Health & closer collaboration with NHS, continued rigorous financial mgt etc, but they all sit within this global macro context.

We have an opportunity to develop a strategic narrative and response to these global events that makes them all directly relevant to Hertfordshire and how our place of places develops over the next 6-12 months AND next 5-15 years, at the same time as linking them directly to the government's priorities around economic recovery and growth, house building and leveling up.

All of that shapes the strategic context in which the LGR and ICS footprint agenda becomes part of the way that we can simplify an overly complex delivery model for citizens, sharpen strategic focus and joined up delivery, improve local engagement and involvement (Area Action etc), save money for the taxpayer, focus the Herts voice to business and government.....whilst being entirely consistent with the existing compelling Herts co-terminosity.

Alignment with others

[KEY QUESTION - ALL] Is there a strategic advantage in us aligning our approach , offer to Government, engagement with Surrey? They are further ahead than us at present, but can probably catch up if there was an advantage.

Elections

David confident that discussion around LGR on the lead up to the May 2021 County Elections would be a positive plank for the administrations manifesto. However, there would need to be a level of political orchestration to avoid any 'blue on blue' battles going on with Conservative led Districts developing counter proposals to the formation of a (single) Unitary body.

Communications

[TARYN] We now need a HCC senior comms lead allocated to this Group. They need to be involved in both officer and political meetings so they remain up to date on the very latest thinking and be well ahead of the public communication requirements.

[SALLY] Ditto we need to equally think about staff communication.

HCC Governance

[QUENTIN] Can you research what sort of governance we will need around HCC submitting a LGR proposal to Government and at what point it is required. Cabinet decision? Council?

Next Steps

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED] A meeting to be set-up between **DW / OM / SC / PWC plus 1 x LGR Project Group rep** to review **draft MP document** and agree a timeline of events. This **needs to take place prior to the 3 July**.

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED] A meeting to be set-up between **Cabinet / OM / SC / PWC** plus 1 x LGR Project Group rep to bring them up to speed on the national context and our proposals around LGR in Herts. Thinking opening script for David, PWC impartial presentation, and then opening for debate and SC closes with seeking agreement on next steps. Purpose of course is to achieve Cabinet backing to going public. This **needs to take place very soon after the 3 July**.

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED BUT DO NOT BOOK YET] A meeting to be arranged with all the **Hertfordshire MP's**. In terms of timeframes subject to no issues with any of the above, then David will expect **this to take place in July**.

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED BUT DO NOT BOOK YET] A meeting to be arranged with all

Hertfordshire Conservative Group Leaders for David to brief them on his proposals

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED BUT DO NOT BOOK YET] A meeting to be arranged with all **Herts CE's for OM & SC** to brief them on HCC's proposals

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED BUT DO NOT BOOK YET] A meeting to be arranged with all **Hertfordshire Group Leaders** for David to brief them on his proposals

[RD / AC - MEETING REQUIRED BUT DO NOT BOOK YET] A meeting to be arranged with a range of key **Hertfordshire stakeholders (LEP, Health, Business, Police, etc.)** for David to brief them on his proposals.

A lot now to do in short order. I will now be establishing a proper Project team to drive this work forward and provide a SPOC for PWC.

Regards,



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