

Strong Effective Local Government

Implementation – Transfer of Functions

Presentation to Strategic Leadership Board

10th April 2009

Context

1. Ministerial Announcement on the 31st March 2008

2. Agreed vision for local government

- Strong dynamic local government
- Accessible, responsive, VFM services
- Vibrant, healthy sustainable communities

3. Reality

- Transfer proposals fall somewhat short
- £100m (approx.) of budget transferring
- 1,000 people
- Tight timescale - Elections for new Councils 12th May 2011

4. The Challenge

- Transition to transformation
- Building the relationships
- Capacity to deliver
- Resources to deliver
- Devil will be in the detail in regards to what is to transfer
- A *Process* not an *Event*

Transfer of Functions Implementation Issues

- The Critical Question – the context for Transfer
- What is the purpose of Local Government
- Place Shaping
 - Services
 - Assets
 - Advocacy
- Need for common understanding across Regional Government of role of Local Government
- On the ground delivery, and local accountability eg enforcement
- Need for a joint conversation on the integration of initiatives and resources to make place shaping happen

***...Early recognition of the need
for further detail around the
transfer of functions...***

Progress to date

1. Established Transfer of Functions Working Group & Sub Groups
2. Constructive engagement /dialogue between central & local government
3. Started process to flesh out the detail around the transfer of functions (e.g. scope, resources, consequences etc)
4. Detailed Presentation to PDP C at its meeting on 19th March
5. Initial work has raised further questions
6. Vital to engage in a process over the next 12-18months to work through issues & answer necessary questions
7. Executive Sub Committee on LG Reform – political engagement

Purpose of Today

Objectives & Desired Outcomes

- Consider cross-cutting issues with regard to transfer of functions
- Consider those issues which require political direction
- Consider and agree initial proposals for marginal changes to transferring functions
- Consider and agree next steps for taking the process forward

Transfer of Functions Guiding Principles

- Functions to be delivered directly by councils with balanced central control
- No extra burden to ratepayer or differential impact on local rates at point of transfer
- Strong and responsive local government
- Single point accountability
- Resources will dictate success or failure

Implementation Issues

1. Budget & Resources

- Insufficient for majority of functions to transfer
- Under estimates of true costs to deliver functions – on-costs an issue
- Further due diligence work required
- Sustainability of funding uncertain – e.g. partly subject to CSR bidding
- Local government need to be engaged in CSR process as future custodians
- Early engagement & negotiations with DFP on funding model/package
- How to split budgets & resources across 11 councils

2. Integrated Service Delivery

- Recognise the connections and linkages between the transferring functions
- Clarity of roles and interrelationships between current departmental remits
- Need to integrate and deliver local services via councils

Implementation Issues

3. Policy Development - role of Local Government

- Strengthened relationship between central/local government – statutory based
- Greater role for local government in informing & shaping central policy development
- Connection with broader community planning agenda and future performance management

4. Consultation and Engagement

- Barnett Review – economic development policy
- New Tourism Strategic Framework for Action
- Enterprise Strategy – business development
- Review of the Local Enterprise Agencies – future role and remit
- Reform of the Planning Service – modernisation of the planning service
- Rural Development Programme – preparation for development of post 2013 programme
- Strategic reviews e.g. future of Local Enterprise Agencies

Implementation Issues

5. How future services will be delivered – PwC

- Premise should be that those functions to transfer should be delivered by the 11 Councils directly – keeping with the principle of strong local government and
- Series of co-production workshops scheduled for early April 2009
- Local Government engagement & input critical

Proposed Marginal Changes Non-Transfer Proposals

DRD Roads Sub Group

1. Salting Footways

- Considerable public liability risks and associated insurance costs
- Considerable costs to deliver
- No financial or asset transfer proposed
- Difficulty in separating public liability for footpaths and roads – accountability
- Existing arrangements adequate for Councils' involvement if so desired

2. Grass Cutting/Weed Spraying

- Considerable public liability risks
- Grass cutting intrinsically linked to road safety
- weed spraying intrinsically linked to road maintenance
- significant Health & Safety issues and disposal of residual waste difficulties
- scope to enhance such areas without any transfer

Non-Transfer Proposals

DRD Roads Sub Group

3. Gully Emptying

- part of the overall local roads maintenance package
- significant public liability implications - links to flood control
- Would result in greater bureaucracy and confusion for the citizen
- Additional middleman in the process

4. Street Lighting

- closely related to other highway maintenance and road safety functions
- significant public liabilities
- significantly under resourced
- massive under investment in replacing stock – capital replacement timebomb
- significant capital costs in separating local street lighting network from the strategic network
- create additional confusion for the citizen & reduce accountability
- councils can already contribute to improved lighting schemes – resource implications

DSD Sub Group

5. Travellers Transit Sites

- Policy decision taken (2003) to transfer to NIHE – EQIA proofed
- Non Transfer of Travellers Transit Sites to Councils endorsed by NILGA Executive

Proposed Marginal Changes New Transfer Proposals

DRD Roads Sub Group

1. On-Street Car Parking alongside Off-Street Car Parking

- Inefficient to split on-street and off-street car parking – should be 1 package
- Integrated service delivery
- Secures single point accountability

DSD Sub Group

2. Living Over the Shops Initiative

- Support town and city centre regeneration & neighbourhood renewal
- Potential integration with local economic development delivery
- Synergies with Local Development Planning which is to transfer to councils

New Transfer Proposals

DETI Sub Group

Inter-departmental discussions required in relation to:

- Integration of micro business support programmes across DETI and DARD and transferred to Local Government in a combined package.
- Linkages between Neighbourhood Renewal as presently constituted under DSD and initiatives targeted as Neighbourhood Renewal as under DETI.
- Need for synthesis of local physical regeneration programmes, including environmental improvement schemes, as currently delivered by DSD, DRD, DARD and NIHE with local economic development delivery.

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