

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM DELIVERY TIMETABLE

### Introduction

The timetable sets out the key steps needed in order to establish the new eleven council model by 2015. It is indicative only of the range of complex issues that will need to be addressed and like any timetable may require adjustment from time to time. The timetable will be closely monitored by the Executive Committee which will receive regular progress reports.

Task	Target Date
<b>Boundaries</b>	
Paper to Executive seeking agreement to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the modifications to the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner's Final Recommendations Report (June 2009); and</li> <li>• the draft Local Government (Boundaries) Order, the Final Recommendations Report and a Statement of Modifications being laid in the Assembly</li> </ul>	February 2012
Laying in the Assembly the draft Local Government (Boundaries) Order, the Final Recommendations Report and a Statement of Modifications.	March 2012
Seeking Secretary of State's agreement to elections in May 2014	July 2012
<b>Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill</b>	
Executive agreement to the final policy content of the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill in light of responses to policy consultation and subsequent Executive decisions. It is proposed that the Bill will make provision for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the establishment of transition committees to take forward initial preparations for the move from the current 26 councils to the 11 new councils (anticipated that no subordinate legislation is necessary);</li> </ul>	June/July 2012

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the provision of shadow arrangements between June 2014 and March 2015 to ensure that the new councils are in a position to take on their full responsibilities effectively from 1 April 2015;</li> <li>• the creation of the agreed number of new district councils and dissolution of the current 26 local government districts;</li> <li>• the provision of strong, modern, statutory governance arrangements that will provide for proportionality in the allocation of positions and in membership of committees; a system of checks and balances to ensure protection for the interests of minority communities; and greater openness in the operation of councils and their decision-making;</li> <li>• placing a bar on double jobbing at council and assembly levels respectively;</li> <li>• the establishment of an ethical standards regime to include a mandatory local government code of conduct;</li> <li>• the introduction of community planning and well-being powers to enable councils in partnership with other public service providers and departments to address the needs and aspirations of the community;</li> <li>• the introduction of modern and effective service delivery and performance improvement arrangements;</li> <li>• the establishment of a statutory partnership relationship between central and local government;</li> <li>• transitional provisions to provide for the transfer of functions, staff, assets/liabilities etc from the current 26 councils to the new councils.</li> </ul>	
<p>Executive agreement to the introduction in the Assembly of the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill</p>	<p>Sept/Oct 2012</p>
<p>Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill to be introduced in Assembly</p>	<p>Oct/Nov 2012</p>
<p>Programme of subordinate legislation, guidance, etc to be taken forward to give effect to the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill. This will include subordinate legislation on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shadow arrangements - to specifying the powers and responsibilities of shadow councils, to impose a duty on outgoing councils to co-operated and provide information to</li> </ul>	<p>Mid 2013-March 2015</p> <p>(see below for details of when subordinate legislation to be</p>

<p>shadow councils; to set out the procedures for first meetings of the shadow councils; to specify the duties/tasks to be carried out during the shadow period (e.g. appointment of a Chief Executive and senior staff; striking a rate for the next financial year; production of a business plan for the next financial year); setting out procedures for production of final minutes of council meetings, joint committee meetings, etc in respect of the outgoing councils.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new governance arrangements - to set out, where a council opts for the proposed executive arrangements, the demarcation of those functions which may be the responsibility of the executive and those that may not; and the procedures in relation to access to meetings of and information relating to executive decision-making.</li> <li>• the new ethical standards regime – to make detailed provision about the investigation, adjudication and appeals procedures; to specify the range of penalties which may be applied; to provide for the membership, appointment, procedures etc of council standards committees; and to make provision about the functions of monitoring officers;</li> <li>• community planning – to specify the bodies which must participate in community planning.</li> </ul>	<p>made)</p>
<p>Subordinate legislation for shadow arrangements to be made</p>	<p>By January 2014</p>
<p>Subordinate legislation to be made on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new governance arrangements;</li> <li>• ethical standards regime;</li> <li>• specified bodies which must participate in community planning;</li> </ul>	<p>By January 2015</p>
<p>Finalisation of key model protocols, codes and other guidance</p>	<p>March 2015</p>
<p><b>Severance and Councillors’ Remuneration</b></p>	
<p>To make the Local Government (Councillors’ Remuneration Panel) Regulations – to provide for the establishment of an independent panel to consider and make recommendations on the system and level of allowances payable to councillors in the context of local government reorganisation.</p>	<p>December 2012</p>

<p>Establish Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations on the allowance which should be payable to councillors post-reorganisation (taking account of their new functions and responsibilities)</p>	<p>Mid 2013</p>
<p>To make regulations to provide for the award of severance payments to councillors who decide not to seek re-election to the new councils – this will include provision to determine eligibility; for applying for a severance award and for calculating the amount of individual severance awards.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	
<p>Develop a communications strategy:</p> <p>Strategically there is a need to win back stakeholder and public confidence and to counter accumulated cynicism. It is important to quickly get the focus back on to the positives of reform and benefits to the citizen and to win support. A strong, co-ordinated and consistent communications effort will be critical to what is a huge change management project impacting on diverse audiences including media and political figures at local and Assembly level. Re-building effective networks, reliable contacts and relationships and, engaging stakeholders are some of the practical measures.</p>	<p>April / May 2102</p>
<p>Establishment of principal workstreams:</p> <p>There are a number of interfaces to this. In addition to what we need to do within DOE there will be overlap with work other departments have to do and diverse areas in which we need to work closely with existing and emerging councils and various representative bodies.</p>	<p>March 2012</p>
<p>Transferring functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• completion of discussions with Ministerial colleagues;</li> <li>• recommendations to the Executive;</li> <li>• re-engagement of transferring departments, detailed planning and synchronisation of effort and action;</li> <li>• involving existing and emerging councils in the designing the best way forward including the mapping of transferring functions, related decision making processes and responsibility levels and test beds such as pilot schemes.</li> </ul>	<p>March 2012</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>Rolling programme commencing March 2012</p> <p>Rolling programme commencing March 2012</p>

Refresh economic appraisal on costs and benefits of local government reform (being undertaken to reflect the changed financial situation and revised reform timetable.)	September 2012
<p>Establishment of key implementation structures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Local Government Reform Joint Forum</u>  <p>This Forum runs in parallel to the existing collective bargaining machinery for local government. It is a Joint Employer/ TUS body which operates under an independent chair. It is specific to local government reform and negotiates related changes in employment terms and conditions underpinned by the 10 Executive Guiding Principles for staff impacted by RPA. For example vacancy controls, recruitment practice and staff transfer schemes.</p> </li> <li>• <u>Regional Transition Committee</u>  <p>Chaired by the Minister, the Committee is designed to provide high level political leadership and act as the driver for implementing local government reform. Key tasks will include co-ordinating, supporting and monitoring the programme across central and local government.</p> </li> <li>• <u>Voluntary Transition Committees</u>  <p>Crucial to local operational delivery and responsible for providing the basic programme infrastructure to allow convergence work to commence in the council groupings.</p> </li> <li>• <u>Statutory Transition Committees</u>  <p>Will become responsible on a statutory basis for aiding the process of convergence, embracing the work of the VTCs around work planning, governance, service delivery and structural reform – whilst deciding on the priorities of the merging councils for presentation to the Shadow Councils.</p> </li> </ul>	<p>In Place</p> <p>March/April 2012</p> <p>February 2012</p> <p>May 2013</p>
Election of Shadow councils – they will effectively be councils in waiting with the powers to make key decisions on appointing senior staff, striking rates and approving business and financial plans for the new Councils commencing in April 2015.	June 2014
Shadow councils assume operational powers and	April 2015

responsibilities; existing councils wound up	
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Regional Transition Committee Secretariat  
Department of the Environment  
April 2012