

Westmorland and Furness Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Feedback On Baseline Blueprints

Report from:	Westmorland and Furness Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Report Author:	David Stephens – Strategic Policy & Scrutiny Advisor
Wards:	All
Key Decision:	No

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1. This report summarises the feedback on the Baseline Blueprints provided by the Westmorland and Furness Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee at it's informal session on the 6th July 2022.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Shadow Executive take into account the feedback from the Shadow Scrutiny Committee in their decision-making.**

3.0 Summary of Feedback

- 3.1 The Interim Head of Service made members aware of the timeline and phasing of implementing the blueprints and ensuring the council was safe and legal on Vesting Day.
- 3.2 Members felt that where there is a proposal to host a service initially with a transition period to separate services then a specific end date for that transition period be agreed by Shadow Executive(s).
- 3.3 Members expressed the view that contracts should not be an impediment to the separation of services and there would need to be very clear legal or technical reasons which would compel a shared or hosted service.
- 3.4 Questions were raised around the hosting arrangements for the Resilience and Emergency Planning function, it was clarified that it was proposed that the Local Resilience Forum would stay on a Cumbria wide footprint to align with blue light services. The team is

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small and primarily supports the LRF in dealing with incidents which usually cross boundaries.

- 3.5 Education services should if possible be separated with any hosted model being placed on a transitional basis. Members expressed similar views about Children's' Care models where they felt all members would benefit from more information to better understand the frameworks within which these services sit.
- 3.6 Members reflected on the new Integrated Care Systems and the importance of considering how we can partner to improve the integration of services and engagement with the Integrated Care Partnership for Morecambe Bay (and for North Cumbria which will cover Eden)
- 3.7 Members also recommended that clarification be provided on the rationale for hosting QA and Partnerships (Children's') teams and whether this would be on a transition basis.
- 3.8 Members raised a number of questions over how the hosted authority for those services where this model is proposed, will be decided, what criteria will be used. Whilst it was clarified that budget and staffing will be taken into consideration concerns remained that as these are mainly County services where staff are predominately based in Carlisle the majority would be hosted by Cumberland. There was therefore in the view of Members a risk to budget sustainability for Westmorland and Furness. It needs to be clear that whichever authority is not the 'host' it is getting fair share.
- 3.9 Hosted / Shared Customer and Digital services should be kept under review rather than an assumption that these remain hosted on a permanent basis. It will be inevitable that as time passes there will be greater demand for local discretion of how these services are managed.
- 3.10 Consideration should be given to how the LGR risk register aligns with the blueprints. Members reflected on the importance of the Shadow Scrutiny Committee seeing the register to help it focus on those key 'challenged' areas.
- 3.11 It was clarified that the discussions around the rationalisation of estates would be looked at post vesting day, but the importance of customer access would be a key principle.
- 3.12 Members queried the timeline for the Staff Allocation Framework and at what point the staff would be made aware of which authority they would be employed by to deliver on the blueprints.
- 3.13 Members asked to see the budgets alongside the blueprints when that information was available so that there was a clear idea on how much Westmorland and Furness Council will be managing directly and how much will be shared with Cumberland Council.

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- 3.14 Members asked for a summary of when service contracts and grants are due to end or be recommissioned, and what the future plans are for each provider. Particularly for Third Sector organisations who are managing risk, losing staff due to the uncertainty of LGR, and not able to match fund council monies to draw down new money into the authority.
- 3.15 Members asked that clarification be provided on Adult Learning and why this was proposed as a hosted service.
- 3.16 A request was made to continue the process of engagement of members, residents, customers and partners to ensure Westmorland and Furness Council is delivering on what is needed, that improvement of services is prioritised, and that the council is continually working towards excellence.
- 3.17 Members welcome the engagement and support received from Interim Head of Paid Service and other officers as well as the approach adopted by the Shadow Executive to take the views of Scrutiny into account.

Contact Officers

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