

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL A MEETING – 25 JULY 2008**PROJECT SCOPING AND INITIATION**

- AGENDA ITEM:** 4
- SUMMARY:** **Setting out proposals for the aims and objectives of the individual work streams, and an indication of the broad scope of the projects.**
- ACTION REQUIRED:** **Agree aims and objectives, and work to develop formal Project Initiation Document.**

Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to begin the process of putting in place firm foundations for the development of the Panel A aspects of the overall local government reform and modernisation programme by setting out proposals for the aims and objectives, and defining in broad terms at this stage, the scope of the project. It should be viewed as the preliminary stage in preparing a formal Project Initiation Document to provide panel members and the Strategic Leadership Board with the necessary assurances in relation to management structures for the project, and against which they can monitor progress and make decisions.

Background

2. The decisions on the future shape of local government announced by the Minister of the Environment on 31 March 2007, following the review of the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration, represents a significant change management programme for local government. The Minister has agreed that the implementation of the overall programme will be managed at strategic level by the Strategic Leadership Board supported by three Policy Development Panels comprising elected members advised by senior local government officers and senior departmental officials.

3. Panel A has been tasked with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to governance, a council led community planning process, and relations between central and local government. Whilst there is the potential for the thinking on aspects of one policy area to impinge on the other areas the nature of these work strands is such that it precludes the definition of a single clear high level policy objective or strategic deliverable. Rather each of the strands will need to be viewed as an individual project stream within the overall programme with its own specific strategic deliverable, and its own management Terms of Reference.
4. Details on the membership and advisory / support arrangements for Panel A are set out in Annex A.

Project Objectives

Governance

5. The policy objective in relation to governance is the development of arrangements with appropriate checks and balances that are designed mindful of the need to ensure effective and inclusive local democracy, to protect the rights of minorities, to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination, and to promote the need of equality of opportunity. These would include arrangements to allocate Council Chairs, Deputy Chairs and positions on Council committees and to facilitate cross community decision making. The aim of the new council governance arrangements is to ensure the protection of the rights of all people in Northern Ireland, and provide for fair, transparent and efficient decision making.
6. In the context of this strategic policy objective it is proposed that the management Terms of Reference for this project be defined as:

'To bring forward proposals for governance arrangements that provide for effective, efficient and transparent decision making by Councils, with appropriate checks and balances, taking account of Councils additional service delivery and community planning responsibilities.'

Community Planning

7. The essence of Community Planning is a recognition that the needs of individuals and communities – if they are to be addressed successfully – must be addressed collectively, not separately. The policy objective for this strand is the development of an effective statute-based community planning process, lead and facilitated by local councils, that enhances civic leadership and that allows local councils, working in partnership with all sectors, to be at the heart of the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and communities and which continuously improve over time.

8. It is proposed that the management Terms of Reference be defined as :

'To bring forward proposals to effect the implementation of the duty of "Community Planning" and a power of "Well Being" to district councils in Northern Ireland, recognising local diversity and the need to devise approaches suited to local circumstances.

Central / Local Relations

9. The policy objective is the development of appropriate mechanisms to provide for the optimum partnership between central and local government in carrying out their separate but inter-related functions in the provision of efficient and effective citizen centred services.

10. To guide this project the following management Terms of Reference is proposed:

'To develop the framework to underpin the formalisation of relations between the Northern Ireland Executive and local government on matters of mutual interest and concern.'

Project Scope / Deliverables

11. In delivering on these objectives there are two key themes to the work that will need to be taken forward by the Policy Development Panel:
 - the development of policy proposals for consideration by the Strategic Leadership Board and ultimately the Minister which will form the basis for the primary legislative proposals for the reorganisation of local government; and,
 - the development of proposals for subordinate legislation, guidance (both statutory and non-statutory), pilot schemes where appropriate, etc to underpin the effective operationalisation of the primary legislative provisions.
12. Within each of these thematic areas there are a number of tasks that will need to be taken forward, both sequentially and in parallel, if the timetable for reform and modernisation programme, including the passage of the required primary legislation through the Assembly, is to be achieved.
13. The high level timetable for the passage of the primary legislation attached at Annex B provides a broad indication for the likely phasing of the work of the Panel. Over the coming months it will be necessary to focus on the development of the policy proposals to inform the legislation, although other aspects of the work e.g. in relation to the development of pilots, subordinate legislation and guidance may also be taken forward as appropriate. Following the completion of the policy development work the focus will shift to the work to underpin the operationalisation of the proposals.

Next Steps

14. In order to provide a structured base for the management and monitoring of the project it is recommended that the Panel tasks the Officer Group with the preparation of a detailed Project Plan setting out the agreed outputs, timescales for delivery, resourcing requirements, etc drawing on the discussions at the meeting, for circulation to members in advance of the next meeting.

PANEL A - MEMBERSHIP & ADVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

Elected Members

Cllr Joanne Bunting – Chair Yr1 (DUP)
Cllr Sean Begley – Vice Chair Yr1 (SF)
Cllr Peter Weir (DUP)
Cllr Paul Fleming (SF)
Cllr Jim Dillon (UUP)
Cllr Jim Speers (UUP)
Cllr John O’Kane (SDLP)
Cllr Pat Convery (SDLP)
Cllr Lynn Frazer (All)
Cllr John Matthews (All)

Local Government Officers

Liam Hannaway
John Briggs

NICS Senior Officials

David Sterling (DETI)
Mary McIvor (DFP)
Barry Jordan (DRD – Roads)
Jim Wilkinson (DOE – Planning)

Secretariat

DOE James Hutchinson
John Murphy
Damian McKeivitt
Lynn McCracken

NILGA Nora Winder

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (REORGANISATION) BILL
INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Policy development – research, consideration of options etc, Ministerial clearance	Jul – Nov 08
Policy Consultation Clearance	Dec 08 – Jan 09
Policy Consultation	Feb – Apr 09
Policy Finalisation and clearance	May – Sept 09
Legislation drafting and finalisation	Sept 09 – Feb 10
Bill: Clearance and Pre-Introductory Briefing	Mar – Apr 10
Bill: Passage through Assembly Stages	May 10 – Mar 11
Act: Operative Date	May 2011

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL B MEETING - 23rd JULY 2008

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND STANDING ORDERS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANELS

AGENDA ITEM: 4

SUMMARY: **Setting out the overarching Terms of Reference and Standing Orders for the establishment of Local Government Policy Development Panels.**

ACTION REQUIRED: **To note.**

Context

1. In taking forward the reform and modernisation of local government, following the Minister of the Environment's Statement to the Assembly on 31 March 2008, it has been agreed that the Department will work in partnership with local government to deliver the development and implementation of the programme. The pinnacle and driver of the overall programme is the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) which is designed to facilitate high level political leadership of the implementation process.
2. The SLB is chaired by the Minister of the Environment, with the NILGA President as Vice Chair. The Board includes 10 elected representatives (two from each of the five main political parties; one nominated by NILGA and one by the respective party), senior officials from DOE and the departments transferring functions to local government, and three local government Chief Executives.
3. It has also been agreed that the SLB will be supported in the development and implementation of the reform and modernisation programme by three Policy Development Panels (PDPs).

Policy Development Panels

4. Each PDP will be chaired by an elected member from the Strategic Leadership Board, assisted by an elected member as Vice-Chair. They will be supported by a secretariat provided jointly by the Department of the Environment (DOE) and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).
5. The primary role of each PDP is to provide overall direction and management of the policy development and implementation in relation to the specific work strands which have to be delivered, as agreed by the SLB.
6. The specific remit and functions of the panels will be to:
 - lead the development of policy, including timescales and resources, and to agree that programme with the Strategic Leadership Board;
 - ensure that the programme of work remains on track and report regularly to the Strategic Leadership Board on progress;
 - present recommendations on policy and implementation proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board for agreement;
 - ensure that policy proposals are subject to consultation and the relevant impact assessments;
 - ensure that requests to Strategic Leadership Board for financial resources are supported by an appropriate business case;
 - commission task and finish projects on key work areas; and,
 - develop, where appropriate, proposals for local pilots in specific geographic areas.

7. Each Panel will be responsible for developing and agreeing management Terms of Reference for the work strands or programme of work which it has been tasked to lead by the SLB.
8. Panel B has been tasked with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals for agreement by the SLB on:
- Performance Management
 - Service delivery
 - Improvement, E-Government, Shared Services, IS Strategy, CRM Strategy, Procurement

Secretariat Support

9. The Policy Development Panels will be supported by a Secretariat provided jointly by the Department of the Environment and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association.

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANELS

STANDING ORDERS

Membership of the Policy Development Panels

Elected members

1. The panel will be composed of two elected members from each of the five main political parties. The Chair of the panel will be a member of the Strategic Leadership Board, assisted by an elected member as Vice-chair.

Local Government Officers and Central Government Officials

2. The panel will be supported by three local government officers and senior central government officials.

Others

3. Others with expertise and/or experience relevant to the Panel may also be invited by the Chair to join the Panel on a permanent or ad hoc basis as appropriate.

Secretariat to the Panel

4. A joint secretariat will be provided by the DOE and NILGA.

Resignation from a Panel

5. A member may resign from the panel by giving written notice to the secretary of the Strategic Leadership Board who will notify the Chair of all panels and the Strategic Leadership Board of any such resignation. The appropriate political party should then reappoint a member within a one month period.

Meetings of the Panels

6. Panels will meet, with due regard to the timetable for Strategic Leadership Board meetings, as the panel may determine. The panel will determine venues for meetings.
7. The panel may invite any other person to attend meetings and may invite such a person or body to submit evidence and produce documents, or to speak.

Agendas

8. The Chair of the panel will determine the agendas for meetings.
9. Documents relating to the business to be taken at a panel should normally be made available to members at least five working days before the meeting to which they relate.

Minutes of meetings

10. Minutes of meetings will be produced by the panel secretariat for agreement by the panel. Once agreed the minutes will be placed on the Department of the Environment's and NILGA's websites, as will papers discussed at meetings.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL C**PROJECT SCOPING AND INITIATION****AGENDA ITEM:** 5**SUMMARY:** **Setting out the draft management Terms of Reference of Panel C and the scope of individual work stands.****ACTION REQUIRED:** **To consider the management Terms of Reference and scope of the Panel and agree to the establishment of working groups to make recommendations on the key policy and implementation priorities and related Project Plans.****INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this document is to begin the process of putting in place firm foundations for the development of the Panel C aspects of the overall local government reform and modernisation programme by defining, in broad terms at this stage, the scope of the project. It should be viewed as the preliminary stage in preparing a formal Project Initiation Document to provide panel members and the Strategic Leadership Board with the necessary assurances in relation to management structures for the project, and against which they can monitor progress and make decisions.

BACKGROUND

2. The decisions on the future shape of local government announced by the Minister of the Environment on 31 March 2007, following the review of the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration, represents a significant change management programme for local government. The Minister has agreed that the implementation of the overall programme will be managed at strategic level by the Strategic Leadership Board supported by three Policy Development Panels comprising elected members advised by senior local government officers and senior departmental officials.

3. Panel C has been tasked with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to 6 structural reform work strands.
4. Details of the membership and advisory / support arrangements for Panel C are set out in Annex A.

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

5. It is proposed that the management Terms of Reference of Panel C be defined as:-

"To lead the development of policy, for the structural reform work strands of the local government modernisation programme, to facilitate the effective and smooth transition from the current configuration of 26 council areas to the 11 new council areas which are to be in place in 2011. These structural reform work strands embrace Human Resources, Capacity Building, Finance, Estates, Regional and Sub Regional Design and the Transfer of Functions from central to local government.

It will be the responsibility of the Panel to:-

- lead the development of policy, including timescales and resources, and to agree that programme with the Strategic Leadership Board;
- ensure that the programme of work remains on track and report regularly to the Strategic Leadership Board on progress;
- present recommendations on policy and implementation proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board for agreement;
- ensure that policy proposals are subject to consultation and the relevant impact assessments;
- ensure that requests to Strategic Leadership Board for financial resources are supported by an appropriate business case;
- commission task and finish projects on key work areas; and
- develop, where appropriate, proposals for local pilots in specific geographic areas."

SCOPE OF PANEL C

6. It is envisaged that the scope of the Panel will embrace consideration of a range of key issues in each of the work strands. These are set out below along with the names of organisations and groups which could provide support and advice in formulating recommendations.

Human Resources

Key Issues

- Legislative provision for, inter-alia, staff transfer arrangements
- Existing staff complement baselines
- Model senior organisational structures
- Support of the Joint/Transition Committees in developing detailed structures for each of the 11 Councils
- Staff transfer schemes
- Staff redeployment schemes
- Severance/Compensation scheme
- Terms and conditions of service
- Pension provision
- Arrangements for selecting and recruiting key staff to be appointed by the Transition Committees
- Payroll and other HR systems

Organisations

- Local Government HR Officers
- NICS Officers from transferring function Departments
- Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives
- DFP Central Personnel Group
- NI Local Government Staff Commission
- NI Joint Council
- Public Sector People Managers' Association
- DOE/NILGA Joint Secretariat

Capacity Building

Key Issues

- Legislative provision
- Secure Funding
- Development of people (i.e. skills and competencies of elected members, officers and stakeholders)
- Development of organisations (i.e. systems and processes to meet organisational needs)
- Recruitment and retention
- Succession planning

Organisations

- Local Government HR Officers
- NICS Officers from transferring function Departments
- Local Government Training Group
- NI Local Government Staff Commission
- DOE/NILGA Joint Secretariat

Finance

Key Issues

- Legislative provision
- Current and future funding
- District and Regional Rate allocation
- Equalisation Grant calculation
- Specific Grant determination
- "Best Practice" financial structures
- Cross-cutting issues
- Working Relationships
- Transitional arrangements

Organisations

- Local Government Finance Officers
- NICS officers from transferring function Departments
- DFP Supply Division
- DOE Local Government Policy Division
- DOE/NILGA Joint Secretariat

Estates

Key Issues

- Legislative provision to transfer assets and associated liabilities
- Commissioning property asset condition surveys to help inform decision making
- Development of property asset and management approaches particularly in relation to the office estate
- Development of approaches in relation to other assets (e.g. vehicles, plant and equipment)
- Asset management performance indicators
- Future arrangements for procuring property services

Organisations

- Local Government officers with estate management responsibilities
- NICS Officers from transferring function Departments
- DFP Property Division
- DOE/NILGA Joint Secretariat

Regional and Sub Regional Design

Key Issues

- Identification and design of services to be delivered :-
 - directly by each of the 11 Councils
 - on a group basis
 - on a regional basis
- Coterminosity with other service providers (e.g. Health, Education and Police)

Organisations

- Local Government officers with service delivery responsibilities
- NICS officers from transferring function Departments
- DOE/NILGA Joint Secretariat

Transfer of Functions

Key Issues	Organisations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legislative provision to transfer responsibility for:-<ul style="list-style-type: none">- a range of specific functions from central to local government; and- related staff, assets and liabilities• Quantification of functions, staff, assets and liabilities• Ensuring that arrangements, for the effective integration of these functions and resources into the new councils, are developed in the work strands of Panels B and C	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NICS officers from transferring function Departments• DOE Local Government Policy Division• Local Government officers• DOE/NILGA Secretariat

KEY DELIVERABLES

7. There are two key themes to the work that will need to be taken forward by the Panel:-
 - the development of policy proposals for consideration by the Strategic Leadership Board and ultimately the Minister which will form the basis for the primary legislative proposals for the reorganisation of local government; and,
 - the development of proposals for subordinate legislation, guidance (both statutory and non-statutory), pilot schemes where appropriate, etc to underpin the effective operationalisation of the primary legislative provisions.
8. Within each of these thematic areas there are a number of tasks that will need to be taken forward, both sequentially and in parallel, if the timetable for reform and modernisation programme, including the passage of the required primary legislation through the Assembly, is to be achieved. It is currently envisaged that most of the legislative provision, relating to the work strands Panel C, will be encompassed in the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill. The timetable for this Bill is set out in Annex B

NEXT STEPS

9. In order to provide a structured base for the management and monitoring of the project it is recommended that the Panel tasks the Officer Group with establishing up to six working groups, as and when required. The working groups will each comprise the organisations and bodies set out in Section 6 above, to make recommendations on the key policy and implementation priorities and the development of Project Plans identifying the outputs, timescales for delivery, resourcing requirements, etc for consideration and endorsement at the next meeting.

ANNEX A

PANEL C – MEMBERSHIP & ADVISORY ARRANGEMENTS

Elected Representatives

- Arnold Hatch (UUP) - Chair *(See note below)*
- Myreve Chambers (DUP) - Vice Chair *(See note below)*
- Sean McPeake (SF)
- Mairead O'Dowd (SF)
- Helen Quigley (SDLP)
- Seamus Doyle (SDLP)
- Marion Smith (UUP)
- Alan Lawther (All)
- Anne Wilson (All)

Local Government Officers

- Tom McCall (Chief Executive of Newry and Mourne DC)
- David McCammick (Chief Executive of Antrim BC)

Senior NICS Officials

- Mary McIvor (DFP)
- Grace Nesbitt (DFP)
- Philip Irwin (DFP)
- Barry Jordan (DRD)
- Jim Wilkinson (DOE, Planning)
- Sharon Gallagher (DSD)

Joint Secretariat

- James Hutchinson (DOE)
- Nora Winder (NILGA)

NOTE - These are the elected members that will be the Chair and Vice Chair for the first year of the operation of the Panel. These positions will be filled in the subsequent two years as follows:-

	Chair	Vice Chair
Year 2	TBC (DUP)	Marion Smith (UUP)

ANNEX B

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (REORGANISATION) BILL INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Policy development – research, consideration of options etc,	Jul – Nov 08
Ministerial clearance	
Policy Consultation Clearance	Dec 08 – Jan 09
Policy Consultation	Feb – Apr 09
Policy Finalisation and clearance	May – Sept 09
Legislation drafting and finalisation	Sept 09 – Feb 10
Bill: Clearance and Pre-Introductory Briefing	Mar – Apr 10
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