

Council

8 July 2021

Report of the Chief Executive

VISION DERBYSHIRE – PHASE 4 IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on work taking place with Derbyshire Councils on Vision Derbyshire, to seek approval for the Council's involvement in Phase 4 development and implementation and to approve proposals for the Council to become a participating member of the new Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee from September 2021 onwards.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council notes progress on the development of the Vision Derbyshire approach and recent Phase 3 developments and achievements
2. That Council considers and notes key actions currently being undertaken during Vision Derbyshire Phase 3a to develop an ambitious programme of work in advance of Phase 4.
3. That Council considers and approves Vision Derbyshire Phase 4 proposals for the forthcoming period as set out in the report.
4. That Council approves active participation in Vision Derbyshire Phase 4 and the associated costs of taking forward the programme of work, the maximum cost of which currently stands at £52,350.
5. That, subject to the approval of recommendation 4, Council approves a supplementary revenue estimate of £32,350 for 2021/22.
6. That Council approves proposals for the establishment of the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee to be in place from September 2021 onwards.
7. That Council endorses and approves proposals for the Council to become a full participating member of the proposed Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee.
8. That Council nominates a Member to act as the Council's lead representative on the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee.
9. That further reports be presented to Council updating Members on the work of Vision Derbyshire and the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee.

WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

STRATEGIC LINK

The 'Vision Derbyshire' non-structural reform initiative will enable the Council to explore more collaborative forms of working across traditional boundaries in an effort to improve the outcomes for Derbyshire Dales' residents and businesses.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is the fourth report to be presented to members in the space of 18 months, outlining the work on Vision Derbyshire. As members will be aware, over the last two years, Councils across Derbyshire have been working towards a new collective and ambitious vision and model of local government collaboration, integration and shared leadership, which has looked beyond traditional partnerships and focused on achieving the greatest public value for local people and communities.
- 1.2 Phase 1 of the approach which commenced in July 2019 (reported to Council January 2020), saw all ten Councils in Derbyshire – the County Council, City Council and eight District and Borough Councils – working together to develop a shared set of priorities and to agree to strategically collaborate on the improvement of outcomes for people and places, to speak with one voice as a county, to provide a viable alternative to unitarisation and to coordinate resources better and more sustainably.
- 1.3 Phase 2 of the approach (reported to Council on 15th July 2020), saw the County Council and eight District/Borough Councils (now excluding Derby City), pursue the further development of Vision Derbyshire, an approach to non-structural reform and a case for change and proposition to central government focused around four key ambitions as follows:
 - **Seize innovation** - pioneering skills and technologies for a sustainable future economy
 - **Establish relentless ambition** - creating opportunities for everyone in Derbyshire and making these visible:
 - **Build proactive communities** - harnessing the energy in Derbyshire's communities and empowering people to make change:
 - **Live and work sustainably** - committing to a zero-carbon footprint in our tourism, wider economy and ways of working
- 1.4 A number of enablers, including: leadership; culture; strategy; technology; workforce; customers; and assets, to support and embed collaboration, were also identified during the development of Phase 2, alongside estimated organisational and wider system benefits that could potentially be achieved if the new approach were to be taken forward.
- 1.5 New formal governance arrangements, to support effective decision making, were also identified during this phase as being crucial in taking the approach forward, in addition to a number of asks and offers to Government to support the realisation of ambitions.
- 1.6 In October 2020, a report to Council provided an update on Vision Derbyshire in the context of the awaited Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper, with reports at the time suggesting that this would pave the way for widespread local government reorganisation. At this meeting, Council agreed that Vision Derbyshire was the preferred option of local government reform in Derbyshire at the current time.
- 1.7 Since that time, work has actively been taking place to further develop the Vision Derbyshire approach. In October 2020, Leaders and Chief Executives of eight Derbyshire Councils (all Derbyshire Councils excluding Derby City Council and South Derbyshire District Council), agreed to progress and commence implementation of Vision Derbyshire proposals, translating the case for change and proposition to central

government, developed during Phase 2, into a practical programme of work across the following five work streams:

- Strategic and Tactical Development
- Building a Team
- Accelerated Delivery Programme
- Governance Model
- Communications and Stakeholder Engagement

1.8 Vision Derbyshire Phase 3 (October 2020 – June 2021) has sought to:

- Maintain the momentum successfully built up during earlier phases, extending engagement to a broader range of Members, employees and partner organisations through agreed implementation and delivery proposals
- Mobilise delivery in order to accelerate the implementation of agreed priorities initially focusing on a number of early start areas aligned to the four agreed ambitions areas
- Develop draft governance proposals for Vision Derbyshire through the development of new Joint Committee arrangements
- Build a broader short and medium-term delivery programme to meet agreed ambitions.

1.9 Phase 3 has seen significant progress being made in a relatively short period of time and has been successful in demonstrating the true potential of the approach. During Phase 3, Leaders and Chief Executives supported by Lead Officers from across the range of participating Councils, have been given responsibility for identified thematic programmes of work. This has accelerated shared leadership and accountability and developed trust and collective buy in to the approach.

1.10 Phase 3 has also seen the design and development of joint programmes of work to support identified priorities and this has presented opportunities to showcase activity and the benefits of the model in delivering improved outcomes for people and place for example through the county wide Business Entrepreneur Scheme and new approach to improve Homelessness services.

1.11 Engagement sessions specifically aimed at broadening wider Elected Member involvement have taken place between January and March 2021 with all four Derbyshire Dales political group leaders being invited to briefing sessions, thus providing a basis for the fostering of even closer working relationships through a clearer understanding and involvement in Vision Derbyshire implementation which will deliver benefits on the ground.

1.12 Rapid progress has been made on governance with Lead Officers, from a number of participating Councils, involved in the Governance Working Group, which has been led by James McLaughlin, designing and developing proposals for new formal governance arrangements through a new Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee which are presented in this report for consideration and endorsement.

1.13 Work to develop communications and engagement of the approach, which will be vital as activity on the ground emerges, has also taken place with an initial focus on the development and design of a new Vision Derbyshire brand through a partnership with the University of Derby.

1.14 Phase 3 has ultimately put in place the foundations and architecture for future phases of the Vision Derbyshire approach and this will put Derbyshire Councils in a strong position to rapidly accelerate future proposals.

2 CURRENT POSITION

2.1 Vision Derbyshire has been driven forward and involved a significant investment of time, hard work and goodwill from participating councils and their leaders, executive officers and lead officers. The future of the approach is now at a critical stage of development.

2.2 At a meeting of Vision Derbyshire Leaders and Chief Executives in March 2021, proposals to take forward the approach were approved and Phase 3a, which commenced in April 2021 is now underway. Phase 3a seeks to take advantage of the significant progress made during Phase 3 putting in place plans and making the necessary preparations for the delivery of a wider, ambitious programme of work as part of Phase 4 proposals. The key aims of Phase 3a are to:

- Scope out and develop detailed programme delivery plans for the four thematic ambition areas ensuring these are developed and in place in advance of Phase 4 implementation.
- Identify and scope out the key enablers and potential shared services which can be further developed through the Vision Derbyshire approach.
- Secure the buy-in and involvement of participating councils to new formal governance arrangements.
- Identify and secure resources for the creation of dedicated joint programme support.
- Broaden involvement through additional Elected Member, and a series of new Senior Management Team, engagement sessions across participating Councils to support the development of programme delivery plans.
- Re-engage with central government and other key stakeholders to identify opportunities to maximise opportunities for Derbyshire to support identified ambitions and priorities.

2.3 It is anticipated that all necessary plans and activity will be completed in readiness for the launch of Phase 4 at the end of September 2021.

3 PHASE 4 VISION DERBYSHIRE PROPOSALS

3.1 Phase 4 Vision Derbyshire proposals seek to build on the foundations and architecture built during previous phases whilst clearly focusing on programme delivery specifically aimed at achieving better outcomes for local people and places across Derbyshire. Phase 4 of the Programme will seek to:

- Confirm detailed implementation proposals developed during Phase 3a and commence delivery of agreed short and medium-term programmes of activity focused on achieving the four Vision Derbyshire strategic ambitions.
- Establish a new joint Vision Derbyshire programme team, tasked with accelerating and supporting the implementation of delivery plans and proposals.

- Build on the success of Phase 3, further extending and deepening the engagement and involvement of Elected Members, senior managers and partner organisations through agreed implementation and delivery proposals.
- Establish the new Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee embedding new decision-making processes across participating councils.
- Build a broader longer-term delivery programme to meet agreed Vision Derbyshire ambitions.

4 PHASE 4 DELIVERY PROGRAMME

4.1 Detailed delivery programmes for each of the four thematic ambitions are currently in development and will be in place by September 2021.

4.2 Key priorities for each of the ambitions which are set out below:

Ambition	Priorities
Seize Innovation	Business Entrepreneur Scheme
	Smart Towns Programme
Achieve Relentless Ambition	Careers
	Skills and Employment Research
	Festival of Business
	Social Mobility
Communities	Homelessness
	Independent Living
	Domestic Abuse
Live and Work Sustainably	Climate Change
	Shared Planning Policies

4.3 A high-level plan, which sets out key activity identified to date, alongside Leader, Chief Executive and Lead Officer leads is attached at Appendix A for consideration.

4.4 The benefits of progressing the Vision Derbyshire approach are significant, both in terms of the potential offered by the approach and the benefits that will be accrued through associated programmes of delivery.

4.5 A key principle of the approach is to provide a viable alternative to local government reform, putting in place arrangements and a model to position Derbyshire at the forefront of any national developments including securing a potential devolution deal and maximising additional resources into the county. The national landscape has recently shifted, with a move away from 'Devolution and Local Recovery' to 'Levelling Up'. However, there are significant opportunities for Derbyshire Councils through Vision Derbyshire in this shift, to present a credible model to Government, particularly given the recent review of Local Enterprise Partnerships and the advent of any potential new arrangements that will have to be in place. The need to mobilise as a group of Vision Derbyshire Councils in this debate, will be critical in ensuring that vital resources and funding are drawn into the county. Phase 4 proposals set out in the report will ensure that the necessary governance and structures to deliver

at pace are in place once the White Paper is published and any new proposals and funding streams for future 'Levelling Up' activity is announced.

- 4.6 There are also significant benefits to be gained through a rationalisation of existing partnership structures and approaches. New governance arrangements will enable a clear focus and accountability for key programmes of work which will streamline current arrangements, reduce duplication, and ensure resources can be effectively organised and deployed. Rationalisation will be essential given limited capacity and expertise and reducing public sector resources.
- 4.7 The case for change developed through Phase 2 of the approach set out potential benefits of taking forward Vision Derbyshire as a group of Derbyshire Councils – these include potential organisational benefits estimated at between £20 million to £66 million and wider system benefits estimated at approximately £1.08bn that could be achieved.
- 4.8 Whilst these figures are indicative at this stage, it is clear that developing a joint approach to a number of complex challenges facing organisations at the current time; both in terms of programmes of activity which improve outcomes for people and place; and proactive joint working on key enablers, will undoubtedly result in better outcomes for people and place and savings.
- 4.9 Any benefits associated with Vision Derbyshire activity will need to link to agreed programmes of work as these develop and progress over forthcoming months.

5 PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE GOVERNANCE - VISION DERBYSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE

- 5.1 The creation of new formal governance arrangements to support effective decision making is a critical factor in delivering future Vision Derbyshire ambitions. Formal governance is important in ensuring that Derbyshire Councils can work effectively, maximise opportunities for collaboration and enable agile and flexible decision making. Understanding the level of commitment to the approach is also essential in identifying the appetite of Derbyshire Councils to progress to Phase 4 and beyond over the forthcoming period.
- 5.2 A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the Governance Working Group during Phase 3 on the development of governance proposals. Draft proposals, for the establishment of a Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee, have been developed and were considered by Leaders and Chief Executives of the current participating Derbyshire Councils at their meeting on 12 March 2021. Leaders and Chief Executives were tasked with considering proposals within their own organisations and identifying any potential issues and challenges in advance of proposals being brought forward for approval.
- 5.3 The final articles and procedure rules for the proposed Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee are now attached at Appendix B, for consideration and approval by the Council. These provide a framework for the Joint Committee to operate as the future decision-making body for matters where Derbyshire councils will work collaboratively and demonstrate a collective political commitment and will to the approach moving forward. The articles set out the main purpose of the Vision Derbyshire Joint

Committee, which will:

- Provide collective leadership for Derbyshire.
- Progress shared ambitions for the area.
- Work together to tackle the issues and challenges outlined in the case for change; and
- Enable agile, timely and effective decision making.

5.4 The Joint Committee, on behalf of the participating authorities, will be responsible for improving the delivery of functions already within the remit of local authorities through statute or through specific collaborative work to improve the economic, environmental or social wellbeing of the areas within Derbyshire from the following broad definitions:

- Shared service arrangements.
- Incorporating existing partnership arrangements within the Vision Derbyshire model.
- Areas for collaborative system changes across authorities.
- Specific thematic projects and priorities.

The flow charts which are set out in Appendix C to this report, identify the likely flow of decision making that will be required under the four areas highlighted above.

5.5 The Joint Committee will initially have full responsibility for the approval of agreed Phase 4 delivery programmes and budgets and resources allocated to the full programme of work. It is likely that the first task of the Joint Committee will be the sign off, of the detailed delivery programme as outlined in the report.

5.6 In the first instance, the Joint Committee will also have responsibility for previously agreed thematic areas of work such as climate change and social mobility. As the approach develops, the Joint Committee will take on responsibility for existing partnership arrangements such as the Joint Committee for Economic Prosperity and associated programmes of work.

5.7 As Phase 4 progress from September 2021, the Joint Committee will take on new areas of work and responsibility as these emerge and develop. The further exploration of agreed enablers will for example, identify potential areas and opportunities for taking forward shared services which are likely to result in efficiencies to those Councils participating in the approach.

5.8 The articles and rules of procedure set out in Appendix B recognise that authorities do not have to participate in all aspects of the Vision Derbyshire approach and may choose to become involved in individual projects associated with the model. The intention is to be inclusive without removing the individual sovereignty of any local authority within Derbyshire. However, all authorities understand that the governance arrangements provide a framework to reach the intended outcome of a model that will enable local authorities in Derbyshire to work collaboratively to deliver efficient and effective services with improved economies as an alternative to a government led reorganisation of local government in the county.

- 5.9 The articles and rules of procedure also recognise that not all Derbyshire Councils are currently in a position to progress Vision Derbyshire within their organisations as a full participating member. Councils who choose to be a full participating member will have full voting rights and will have a shared role in designing, developing and shaping the future of the approach as well as full involvement in the development of all programmes of activity should they wish.
- 5.10 In developing governance arrangements, provision has been made to ensure that the door to ongoing involvement in the approach remains open to all Derbyshire Councils, recognising that not all Councils may choose to be involved as a full participating member moving forward. Those Councils who choose not to be active participating members will be designated as non-participating members. Non-participating members will continue to have a seat round the table but will have limited voting rights which will be agreed and exercised by participating members.
- 5.11 All Derbyshire Councils are now being asked, and will now need to consider, whether they wish to progress their involvement in Vision Derbyshire moving forward as either a participating or non-participating member, the implications of which are set out above.
- 5.12 The Council is now asked to consider proposals as set out in the report in relation to its future involvement in Vision Derbyshire and the proposed Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee. The establishment of governance arrangements through the Joint Committee, formalises Vision Derbyshire as an approach and as such it is therefore recommended that the Council becomes a full participating member and nominates a Member representative.

6 TAKING FORWARD PROPOSALS

- 6.1 Whilst significant progress has been made on the development of the approach to date, it has become increasingly apparent that the ability to accelerate delivery is currently limited due to the lack of capacity. This is particularly the case at a project and programme delivery level. The lack of resource at what has been a critical time for local government in terms of the recent pandemic has slowed the delivery response.
- 6.2 Proposals to adequately resource Phase 4 ambitions and plans, initially for a twelve month period, are set out below and create the following programme resource:
- **Programme team** – comprising combination of team members to facilitate delivery
 - **Programme budget** – funding to support the buy in of specialist expertise and support
 - **Communications budget** – funding to support branding, design, campaigns, social media activity etc.
 - **Equipment, travel and subsistence** – to support the activities of the programme team
 - **Accommodation** – in kind support from host agency/agencies

6.3 Proposals for the Programme Team include the creation of the following roles:

- 1 x Grade 14 Programme Manager fixed term
- 4 x Grade 11 Senior Project Officers (one per ambition theme)
- 1 x Grade 11 Communications Officer
- 1 x Grade 6 Admin Support

6.4 The total cost of taking forward resourcing proposals is £436,248. Subject to approval of proposals, it has been agreed that the costs of preparing for and taking forward Phase 4 proposals, should be shared across authorities using the following split across councils:

Council	£
County Council 40% split	174,499
District and Borough Councils 60% split (Costs dependent upon the total number of Councils joining)	261,749 (32,719 per council if eight councils) (37,393 per council if seven councils) (43,635 per council if six councils) (52,350 per council if five councils)
Total	436,248

6.5 The maximum cost of supporting Vision Derbyshire proposals for the Council is therefore £52,350 based on the involvement of five Derbyshire Councils. This figure will reduce should a greater number of Councils agree proposals to become a full participating members. Involvement in Phase 4 presents a unique opportunity for the Council to participate in the further development and implementation of an innovative and collaborative approach for Derbyshire and a delivery programme which will support the achievement of key Council priorities which will ultimately benefit local people in the Derbyshire Dales and Derbyshire as a whole. The ability to pool resources on the programme is likely to deliver significant benefits across a range of activities.

6.6 It is recommended that the Council approves the authority's active and continued involvement in Vision Derbyshire and the associated costs as set out in the report. It also recommended that Councils involvement the Vision Derbyshire.

6.7 Wider engagement with Leadership Teams within participating Councils, both at an Elected Member and Senior Management Team level, will continue to be vital moving forward and a key action which will feature strongly through future phases of the approach. It will be important to ensure that the authority is engaged in proposals as they emerge and develop over forthcoming months to maximise the benefits for local people and communities in the Derbyshire Dales. Identifying the key actions which the Council will need to undertake, and the resources and capacity required to participate fully in both the development and future implementation of proposals will also be important.

7 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The total cost of taking forward Vision Derbyshire proposals is £436,248. A breakdown of costings is set out below:

Programme Team	£296,248
• 1 x Grade 14 Programme Manager fixed term	£47,181 (plus £13,211 oncosts)
• 4 x Grade 11 Senior Project Officers (1 per theme)	£32,913 x 4 = £131,652 (plus £36,863 oncosts)
• 1 x Grade 11 Communications Officer	£32,913 (plus £9,216 oncosts)
• 1 x Grade 6 Admin Support	£19,697 (plus £5,515 oncosts)
Programme Budget	£100,000
Equipment, Travel and Subsistence	£10,000
Communications Budget	£30,000
	Total - £436,248

7.2 The maximum cost to the Councils of supporting current proposals as set out in the report are £52,350. Budget provision of £20,000 has already been included in the 2021/22 revenue budget to support Vision Derbyshire initiatives. Any additional costs would have to be met from the General Reserve. This use of the General Reserve to meet 'one-off' expenditure in exceptional circumstances" is consistent with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. The cost of ensuring the Council can actively participate in the development and implementation of proposals are currently unknown and will therefore be the subject of a separate report to Council as further detail emerges. The financial risk is assessed as low to medium.

8 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 permits councils to make arrangements for two or more authorities to discharge functions jointly, so long as it is a function that the law reserves to a specified committee.

8.2 Participating councils may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities and/or their executives to exercise functions which are not executive functions in any of the participating councils or advise the Council. Such arrangements may involve the appointment of a joint committee with these other local authorities.

9 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 In preparing this report, the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equalities, environmental, climate change, health, human rights, personnel and property.

10 CONTACT INFORMATION

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11 BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Report to Council : New Vision for Derbyshire – Non-Structural Reform 16th January 2020

11.2 Report to Council : New Vision for Derbyshire – Non-Structural Reform (Phase 2) 15th July 2020

11.3 Report to Council : Vision Derbyshire and Local Government Reform 8th October 2020

12 ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A : Vision Derbyshire High-Level Plan of Activity

Appendix B : Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee – Articles and Procedure Rules

Appendix C : Decision Making Flowcharts