

COUNCIL – 24th FEBRUARY 2020

ITEM 8.2- POSITION STATEMENTS

COMBINED AUTHORITIES

To update the Council on the letter sent by the Leader of the Council dated 28th January 2020 regarding devolution and the opportunity to work with the government on its forthcoming Devolution Framework.

The Leader, or his nominee, has produced the following position statement:

It is widely agreed and evidenced that Leicestershire and the East Midlands do not compare well with other areas in terms of investment. It is also clear that other areas of the country are benefiting from greater investment through the devolution arrangements agreed with government. Therefore, if there is to be a further round of devolution, then it is important that we should engage with the government in order to help level up our area to ensure our residents do not miss out. As Leader of Charnwood Borough Council, I agreed a joint letter with all the other District and Borough Councils to the Secretary of State Robert Jenrick MP with an offer to work collaboratively on the forthcoming devolution framework.

As you may recall a proposal for a Combined Authority to cover Leicester and Leicestershire was submitted to the government in December 2015. That proposal has never come to fruition, but it is likely that the new government will progress a white paper on devolution. It is not yet certain what form this new devolution policy will take and therefore it is important that we engage at this stage and seek to shape the policy. As details of the policy emerge, we can begin to assess the opportunities and issues to ensure that we are well placed to respond.

We continue to work closely with those neighbouring authorities that share our wish to collaborate, to support businesses, and improve services to residents - and will continue that collaborative approach with our MPs and central government - we are very well placed to influence any developing devolution agenda.