**West of England Devolution Deal**

**Draft Note of Briefing for Bath City Forum - 1st June 2016, Kaposvar Room, Bath**

In attendance

Van DuBose

Cllr Michael Evans

Patrick Rotherham

Cllr Peter Turner

Cllr Bob Goodman (Chair)

Robin Kerr

Cllr June Player

Cllr Patrick Anketell- Jones

Cllr Joe Rayment

Caroline Kay

Matt Humberstone

Jeremy Boss

Sally Harris

Nigel Sherwen

Rosie Phillips

Cllr Colin Blackburn

Cllr Matthew Davies

Apologies received

Christopher Roache

Cllr Sean McGall

Penny McKissock

Cllr Andrew Furse

Cllr Rob Appleyard

Cllr Lyn Patterson

George Samios

Cllr Fiona Darey

Presenting

Cllr Tim Warren, Leader, Bath & North East Somerset Council

Cllr Jo Farrar, Chief Executive, Bath & North East Somerset Council

David Trethewey, Divisional Director Strategy and Performance, Bath & North East Somerset

Welcome and Introductions

Cllr Goodman, Chair of Bath City Forum, welcomed everyone to the meeting and highlighted the importance of this issue. This special session had been arranged as a briefing for the Forum in advance of a report being presented to Council on this issue on 29th June.

Update on Devolution Deal

A [presentation (linked)](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_devolution_briefing_bcf_01.06.16.pdf) updating those present on the current situation with regard to the Devolution Deal in the West of England, and next steps, was made by David Trethewey, Cllr Tim Warren and Jo Farrar.

Following this presentation, the following issues were highlighted by those present:

* The links between this and the £25m City Deal linked to the Enterprise Area. It was confirmed that this was protected if the Devolution Deal was progressed.
* It was confirmed also that the decision as to whether to proceed would be made at the Council meeting on 29 June
* The question was raised as to whether additional powers would be granted to in the Deal with regard to moving traffic offences. It was highlighted that consideration could be given to this at a later stage
* Over 19 education provision and links with Bath City College and the Connecting Families scheme were raised
* A query was raised as to how West Wiltshire would link in as it was part of the Bath Housing market but not this Devolution Deal area. Cllr Warren emphasised that no aspects of this Deal or its boundaries would hinder our work with Wiltshire. He is involved in regular meeting with colleagues in Wiltshire.
* The future vision for the future of health and social care, with particular reference to the need to a “bottom up” approach, was highlighted
* It was emphasised that our Devolution Deal proposal was based around the economy and growth. The Deal did not contain provision for Councils giving any of their existing powers and if this were to happen it would be done would only voluntarily and where the Councils wished to do so
* The funding is not inflation-linked. However, there was the potential for phasing the funding available, including bringing forward allocations, to achieve the best outcomes. It was confirmed also that this would be a 30-year Deal and that “leaving” the Deal would not be a straightforward process
* It was clarified that the legislation pertaining to any elected Mayor would require a 4-year term beginning in 2017. In response to a query, it was confirmed that this would not coincide with nay elections within local authorities within the proposed Deal area.
* The question was raised as to whether the term “Elected Mayor” had to be used in this context. It was clarified that this phrase was required within the Deal. The elected Mayor would report directly to the Treasury in relation to devolved funding,
* It was confirmed that the cost of any elected Mayor would be drawn from funding currently allocated to the LEP.
* There would be an Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the combined authority.
* In relation to next steps, Cllr Warren identified that his understanding was that Bristol and South Gloucestershire were broadly in favour of the devolution approach, whereas North Somerset had greater reservations. In relation to Bath & North East Somerset, whilst there was currently no overall consensus, constructive discussion on the Deal was very much under way.
* In response to queries about what would happen if one authority of the 4 did not wish to be involved, Cllr Warren confirmed his understanding that the other could go ahead with the Deal and would therefore receive a higher proportion of the moneys available.
* An issue was also raised as to how potentially to maximise turnout for any election for any elected Mayor
* In response to a query about the disadvantages of not being involved in this Deal, it was felt that devolution was currently at an early stage and that being involved at this stage would provide future opportunities and allow us to shape arrangements
* Robin Kerr highlighted that FoBRA was in favour of this Deal.

A show of hands then took place in regard to the proposed Devolution Deal, with 16 showing in favour, two showing undecided and none fully against.

Cllr Goodman thanked all those present for the discussion and confirmed that the key points mad would be fed into the decision-making process