

New Executive Arrangements – Outcome of Consultation Addendum

Introduction and Comparison with Other Authorities

Following approval by Council on 19 November a consultation exercise on a new model of executive governance took place between 20 November and 6 December. This addendum to the report previously published gives further details of the activities that took place during the consultation period and the responses received together with details of the approach taken regarding the consultation by a number of other local authorities.

The consultation period ended on 6 December however any late responses received will be reported to Cabinet and Council on 9 December.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ‘the Act’ requires authorities to ‘take reasonable steps to consult local electors and interested parties’ about the available options before drawing up proposals for their future executive arrangements. Different deadlines for completion of the process for different types of authorities were given by Government in the Act. The deadline given for Leicester is 31 December 2010.

However following the general election and the proposed Decentralisation and Localism Bill further advice regarding the consultation required under the Act was received from Government in the form of a letter from Rt. Hon Grant Shapps MP in July 2010 which advised that:

“the case is strong for any consultation now about future governance arrangements to be the minimal cost option. It will be for each council to decide, but in our view no more than a small newspaper advert/article or press release on your website may be proportionate and right in these circumstances.”

A full copy of this letter is attached at Appendix A.

Local authorities have interpreted the advice in a number of different ways but since the letter most consultations have been more limited in scope.

Comparisons are given below of the approach taken and responses received by:
a - nearby unitary authorities who have undertaken consultation since the letter from Grant Shapps was received by local authorities in July 2010

b – the responses received by a number other authorities of a range of types which conducted consultation in 2009 or 2010.

a

Authority	No. of Responses	Notes
Derby	7	6 week consultation – advertised on Council consultation web page – 2 press releases issued – two articles published in a local newspaper. Council agreed Leader & Executive 17/10/10
Nottingham	0	4 week consultation – details included on the Council’s website and open to inspection at a Council building – public notice of consultation period given in a local newspaper. Recommendation to adopt Leader and Executive model to be considered by Council 13/12/10

B

Authority & No. of Responses	Consultation Period – Final agreement - Notes
Bath & NE Somerset – 48 responses	3 weeks – Council agreed Leader & Executive 16/11/10
Birmingham - 0 responses	4 weeks. – Council agreed Leader & Executive 1/12/09
Blaby - 10 responses	15 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 20/7/10
Bristol - 870 responses *	4 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 16/11/10
Camden – 108 responses	12 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 15/6/09
Charnwood – 32 responses	6 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 8/11/10
Coventry –	did not hold a consultation within the timetable so Strong Leader model adopted as per legislation
Hamersmith & Fulham – 32 responses	12 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 27/1/10
Kirklees – 89 responses	8 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 9/12/09
Lambeth – 23 responses	10 days - Council agreed Leader & Executive 21/10/09
Leeds – 719 responses	7 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 16/09/09
Manchester – 3066 responses **	7 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 7/10/09
Merton – 0 responses	20 weeks – Council agreed Leader & Executive 16/11/09
Milton Keynes - 51	6 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 16/11/10
Newcastle – 16 responses	c8 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 4/11/09
Peterborough – 68 responses	11 weeks - Council agreed Leader &

	Executive 13/10/10
Portsmouth – 2 responses	4 weeks – Council agreed Leader & Executive 23/11/10
Sefton – 22 responses	9 weeks - Council agreed Leader & Executive 22/10/09
Sheffield – 726 responses	8 weeks – Council agreed Leader & Executive 28/10/09
Worcester – 3 responses ***	Council agreed Leader & Executive 23/11/10

Notes

* of 870 responses 74.1% were in favour of an elected mayor, 23.3% were in favour of a Leader and Cabinet with 2.5% with no preference however ‘the judgement of full council was that the Leader and Cabinet model was more likely to bring about improvements in service delivery’

** £60,000 spent on consultation exercise in 2009

*** Consultation period not specified on website

Consultation Activity Undertaken in Leicester

Activity	Date	Notes
Survey conducted by Chamber of Commerce	Prior to commencement of Council consultation	Sent to 457 contacts in the City.
Article in LINK	Went to print 19/11.	As went to print prior to Council decision on 19/11 article explains background and states any consultation would be advertised on the Council’s web site.
Press releases		Articles published Leicester Mercury 19/11, 20/11, 26/11, 1/12, 2/12 BBC News website 19/11, 1/12 Citizens Eye 22/11, 23/11, 24/11
Page on Council Consultation site	20/11	Responses checked for validity by IP, address, postcode, need to restart browser to enter another preference. Opportunity also offered to respond via telephone, address or email.
Dedicated email address set up	20/11	

Staff email	22/11	Sent to all staff on the Council email system
Distribution of details to Voluntary Action Leicester contacts database	Sent by VAL	Sent to 1400 Voluntary Action Leicester contacts and host organisations
Voluntary and Community Sector Assembly	25/11	Participants notified – c90 participants. Significant number from City.
Radio Leicester debates	25/11 6/12	
You Tube video featuring the Leader	Posted 25/11	28 viewings as at 6/12 - 2pm.
Information included on Voluntary Action Leicester weekly e-briefing	Sent 26/11, 3/12	
Community Meetings publicity list Letters and response form sent where address only given. Emails sent where an email address was given.	29/11	1583 letters 741 emails
Consideration at Community Meetings	Westcotes – 30/11 Knighton – 29/11 Rushey Mead – 8/12	Rushey Mead meets after the consultation period – verbal feedback to be given
Mercury advert	30/11	Return slip and freepost address included
'Have Your Say' posters	30/11	Distributed to libraries / customer service centres.
Focus group for first time voters in May 2011	4/12	Took place Saturday 4/12 – Town Hall
Advertised via a banner on home page of leicester.gov.uk and other key landing pages	Throughout the consultation period	
Advertised on Staff Intranet		'Newspod' facility used twice

Messages posted on Twitter	Throughout the consultation period	All press releases were posted automatically on Twitter. Supported by posts by Communications and Consultations staff, which got re-tweeted by users inside/outside city. No stats but these were monitored daily by Communications staff.
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Notes

- A focus group involving Community sector representatives was arranged for 3/12 but cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.
- A freepost address was advertised for postal comments along.
- Comments were also accepted via telephone calls to Democratic Support
- Confirmation has been received that as at 2pm on 6/12 posters were on display in Braunstone, Central lending, Evington, Fosse, Highfields, Knighton, St Barnabas and Westcotes libraries

Validation

The Act requires the authority to consult local electors and interested parties but puts no restrictions on the definition of ‘interested parties’. However in order to protect against misuse a variety of validation processes have been put in place.

These include:

- Where people comment via the consultation page postcodes and the IP addresses have been collected. This has allowed an analysis of where a number of responses have been received from the same IP address. Where this has occurred further checks have been undertaken to see if there is a valid reason for this such as being from a PC in Council library for example. Secondly, each response is time-stamped, so any timestamps from the same IP address in concentrated periods will be especially closely scrutinised. Finally, the consultation system used is set up to make it not possible to vote more than once without either closing down the browser completely and restarting or by waiting at least an hour so as not to allow multiple votes within that period. It is technically possible to install a program to circumvent this but would require a detailed knowledge of ICT.
- Email and responses by paper and telephone are cross checked to avoid multiple returns and to check for abuse.

Where concerns have been raised by officers regarding validation these are detailed in the analysis.

Number of Comments Received

Full details of the responses received and views expressed are detailed in Appendix B

In response to the consultation a wide range of responses and comments have been received which reflect the nature of the process as a consultation on views rather than asking a closed question. In addition a number of representations have been received on behalf organisations or meetings and so represent the views of more than one respondent. In some cases those present at meetings or who are members of organisations which have responded collectively may have also expressed a view individually. The figures below relate to responses received at the close of the consultation at midnight on 6 December.

Total number of representations received*	774
Preference for Leader / Executive	344
Preference for Mayor / Executive	357
No preference	36
offered a different approach / did not specify	37

Analysis of Residence

Of the totals (above) of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City
288 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive
298 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive
32 chose option 3 'No preference'
22 offered a different approach / did not specify

Queried responses

Of the totals (above) queries were raised in relation to:

Received via Consultation Page – total queried 35
Leader / Executive – 26, Mayor 2, no preference 7

Received via 'Leaderormayor' email address

Three instances of more than one email being submitted from an individual were identified. One person emailed again to give their postcode, one emailed further after receiving a response to a query in their first email. One person emailed three times and their comments have been put together in the responses document. In each case, their preference has been logged only once.

Received via letter

One instance of a letter and email being sent in from one individual was identified. In this case, the comments were the same and the person's preference logged under their email response only, as this was the first received.

Received via telephone - – total queried 0

Received via letter to Community Meeting distribution – total queried 0

Received via Mercury return slip – total queried 0

Comments Received on Behalf of Groups / Meetings

Chamber of Commerce consultation

A questionnaire was sent to Chamber of Commerce members in the City. Of those who responded the majority supported the Mayor and Executive model.

Consultation with Young People

5 Young people attended the Focus Group which took place on 4 December. The session considered the issue fully. At the end of the session 4 young people expressed themselves in support of the Mayor / Executive model and 1 expressed support for the Leader / Executive model. Full details and reasons given for the views expressed are given in Appendix B

Highfields Area Forum

A meeting was held on Monday 29th November 2010. Following discussion the meeting expressed support for the mayor and executive model. Full details and reasons given for the views expressed are given in Appendix B.

Westcotes Community Meeting – no preference expressed. The relevant minute extract is included at Appendix B.

Knighton Community Meeting – preference expressed for Leader and Cabinet – The relevant minute extract is included at Appendix B.

Rushey Mead Community Meeting – To be considered at meeting to be held on 8/12. Details to be circulated when available.

HART - preference expressed for elected Mayor
Adhar Project - preference expressed for elected Mayor
The Shanti group - preference expressed for elected Mayor
Jumpin Jacqs – preference expressed for elected Mayor
Agape Church - preference expressed for elected Mayor
Daman Community - preference expressed for elected Mayor

Comments via the Consultation Page

Total received	No	Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
515		259	226	27	3

Of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City
222 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive
196 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive

23 chose option 3 'No preference'
 2 offered a different approach did not specify

Queried responses (following analysis of IP address) - 35
 Leader / Executive – 26, Mayor 2, no preference 7

Comments via the 'Leaderormayor' email address

Total received	No Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
86	14	48	0	24

Of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City
 8 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive
 27 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive
 0 chose option 3 'No preference'
 13 offered a different approach did not specify

Queried responses

Three instances of more than one email being submitted from an individual were identified. One person emailed again to give their postcode, one emailed further after receiving a response to a query in their first email. One person emailed three times and their comments have been put together in the responses document. In each case, their preference has been logged only once.

Comments received via telephone

Total received	No Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
10	4	3	0	3

Of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City
 4 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive
 3 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive
 0 chose option 3 'No preference'
 1 offered a different approach did not specify

Queried responses 0

Responses via letter

Total received	No	Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
22		0	21	0	1

Of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City

0 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive

20 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive

0 chose option 3 'No preference'

1 offered a different approach did not specify

Queried responses

One instance of a letter and email being sent in from one individual was identified.

In this case, the comments were the same and the person's preference logged under their email response only, as this was the first received.

Responses via letter to Community Meeting distribution

Total received	No	Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
69		20	39	7	0

Letters only sent to City residents

Queried responses 0

Responses via Mercury return slip

Total received	No	Preference for Leader / Executive (percentage)	Preference for Mayor / Executive (percentage)	No preference expressed	A different approach requested / not specified
72		47	20	2	3

Of those who gave a postcode and were resident in the City

34 expressed a preference for Leader / Executive

13 expressed a preference for Mayor / Executive

2 chose option 3 'No preference'

2 offered a different approach did not specify

Queried responses 0

Appendix A

Communities

And Local Government
The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Minister for Housing and Local Government
Department for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London, SW1E 5DU
Tel: 0303 444 3460
Fax: 020 7828 4903
E-mail: grant.shapps@communities.gsi.gov.uk
www.communities.gov.uk

7th July 2010
Dear Leader

Requirements to consult under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

I am writing to you about the requirements on your Council to adopt a new governance model from May 2011, and before doing so to consult your local electorate and interested parties in the area. Whilst it is for each council to decide how it will meet these requirements, I would wish to highlight the Government's view that councils need not incur any significant expenditure on these requirements, and our expectation in today's circumstances that all councils will pursue this at minimal cost.

These requirements are in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and necessarily remain in force unless or until that Act is repealed by fresh primary legislation. It is our intention to do this. For your council the requirements mean that you must resolve by 31 December 2010 to move to either the new leader and cabinet model or mayor and cabinet model, and before so resolving you must take reasonable steps to consult the local electorate and other interested parties in your council's area.

In considering how to approach these requirements you will wish to have regard to the circumstances of today, including both the priority of cutting out all wasteful spending and the Government's commitments to allow councils to return to the committee system, should they wish to and on elected mayors. We also intend to remove the necessity to elect a leader for four years. We intend to provide for these commitments in our Localism Bill to be introduced later in this Parliamentary session. This may mean that any governance model you adopt in May 2011 may be further changed within a year to so. Your decision about consultation will also be taken in the context of the greater transparency and openness agenda which I am confident you will be putting in place throughout your council.

Accordingly, the case is strong for any consultation now about future governance arrangements to be the minimal cost option. It will be for each council to decide, but in our view no more than a small newspaper advert/article or press release on your website may be proportionate and right in these circumstances.

Yours sincerely,

GRANT SHAPPS, MP