

**Report of James Rogers, Assistant Chief Executive, Customer Access and Performance**

**Report to Executive Board**

**Date: 14 December 2011**

**Subject: Commission on the Future of Local Government**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The Commission is exploring the concept of Civic Enterprise as a way to respond to the extreme change and challenges facing local government. This paper provides background information so that councillors can consider the best way for Leeds to play a prominent role in the 'call for evidence' and for Leeds to increasingly use the concept of Civic Enterprise as a way to help deliver the ambitions for the city and for the council.
2. Following its first meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011, the Commission agreed that the next step was to "call for evidence". This is now taking place both nationally and locally and aims to gather a wide variety of examples of innovative ways of working that bring the concept of Civic Enterprise to life.
3. The Commission presents a significant and timely opportunity for local government to play an active role in contributing to the definition of its future role. It is hoped that the Commission will ultimately influence ministers and other key stakeholders.

**Recommendations**

Executive Board is asked to:

- Note the work of the Commission
- Engage with the process and receive further updates as the Commission progresses.

## 1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1. This report is to update Executive Board with the work of the Commission on the Future of Local Government, which Leeds has initiated. The Commission is exploring the concept of Civic Enterprise as a way to respond to the extreme change and challenges facing local government. This paper provides background about the early work of the Commission, so that councillors can consider the best way for Leeds to play a prominent role in the 'call for evidence' and also for Leeds to increasingly use the concept of Civic Enterprise as a way to help deliver the ambitions for the city and for the council.

## 2.0 Background information

- 2.1. The current national policy context forms the significant backdrop to this work and there is a background policy context briefing should members require it. It is fair to say that the changes facing local government are unprecedented and that this is prompting debate about the fundamental nature and purpose of the sector. These changes are societal, financial and economic, as well as policy based and legislative, including: Open Public Services, the Localism Act, the Education Bill, the Health and Social Care Bill and the Welfare Reform Bill. This Commission will create a forum to discuss how to positively respond to these challenges through the concept of Civic Enterprise.
- 2.2. The purpose of the Commission is to reassess the role of local government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and put forward practical actions that aim to revitalise local democracy and public service. This will provide a framework for the reinvention of local government, allowing the sector to meet current challenges and remain relevant and able to meet the needs and aspirations of citizens.
- 2.3. A key task of the Commission will be to take the concept of Civic Enterprise and test its practical application across a broad range of services to identify genuine opportunities for new ways of working between the public, private and third sectors.
- 2.4. This concept is based on the premise that services built on real partnership between the public, private and third sectors will lead to an enhanced quality of life for local people. This means pooling the sectors' combined strengths to bring greater efficiency and dynamism to service delivery while ensuring fairness and accountability throughout and ensuring that each sector learns from the expertise and strengths of the other.
- 2.5. The Commission, though initiated in Leeds, has its own identity and is not focusing solely on the Leeds context. The focus is national in order to create a blueprint on behalf of the sector that can be used in discussion with ministers and other stakeholders.
- 2.6. The Membership of the Commission is as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Title and organisation</b>
Cllr Keith Wakefield (Chair)	Leader, Leeds City Council
Tom Riordan	Chief Executive, Leeds City Council
Cllr Gordon Matheson	Leader, Glasgow City Council
Jon House	Chief Executive, Cardiff City Council

Will Hutton	Executive Vice Chair, The Work Foundation
Dame Jo Williams	Chair, Care Quality Commission
Lord Laming	Expert in Children's Social Care
Prof Sir Tim Brighouse	Ex-London Schools Commissioner
Prof David Begg	Chairman, Commission for Integrated Transport
Lord Victor Adebawale	Chief Executive, Turning Point
Tony Travers	Director, Greater London Group at the LSE
Emma Maier	Editor, Local Government Chronicle
Andrew Murphy	Retail Operations Director, John Lewis Partnership
Baroness Margaret Eaton	Ex-Chair, Local Government Association
Helen Bailey	Chief Executive, Local Partnerships
Sally-Anne Greenfield	Chief Executive, Leeds Community Foundation
Christine Adshead	Partner, PwC
Prof Michael Arthur	Vice-Chancellor, University of Leeds
Simon Parker	Director, New Local Government Network
Rashik Parmar	Chief Technology Officer, North East Europe, IBM
Phil Collins	Chair, Board of Trustees, Demos
Dr Mike Grady	Principal Adviser, Marmot Review Team
Patrick White (Observer)	Director of Policy, Department for Communities and Local Government

### 3.0 Main issues

- 3.1. The first meeting of the Commission took place on Wednesday 9 November 2011. There was good attendance at the event and the level of debate indicated that the focus of the Commission is right and that it is timely. Where members of the Commission were unable to attend, they have been contacted by telephone to secure their input, and the response during these conversations was extremely positive and constructive.
- 3.2. The Commission agreed that the next step was to “call for evidence” and this is now taking place. Commission Members will be using this to share with their colleagues and networks and it has also been distributed via a range of media contacts. This information is available via the website: [www.civicenterpriseuk.org](http://www.civicenterpriseuk.org).
- 3.3. Importantly, the Commission offers great opportunities for Leeds to both showcase examples of good practice where we are already working closely with partners, business and the third sector to make the ethos of civic enterprise come to life. It is also an opportunity for Leeds to elevate to a national level the issues, opportunities and challenges that would benefit from being addressed and which we are unable to resolve easily at a local level.

3.4. The work of the Commission is being organised into three broad phases, as follows:

- Phase 1 which includes the first meeting is about clarifying the approach and scope of the work of the Commission then issuing a call for evidence around the theme of Civic Enterprise.
- Phase 2 is about identifying the key issues being raised as a result of the evidence received and starting to work up outline propositions for early consideration by the Commission at their second meeting.
- Phase 3 is pulling together all the evidence and finalising, in consultation with Commission members, the report findings and recommendations; it is also about ensuring the final report which will be 20-30 pages long with approximately 10 major recommendations, is supported by a well researched, practical library of resources to help others to understand not only what has already achieved elsewhere but how this was made possible so it can be replicated.

## **4.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 The Commission is currently in the consultation and engagement phase, both nationally and locally, for example, the Area Committees, Scrutiny Boards and the Leeds Initiative Partnership Boards. The call for evidence is welcoming simple and concise submissions, ideally no more than two pages, around the following areas of interest:

- a) What challenges or obstacles exist to working in this way? How would you suggest these are overcome? How can councils unlock the potential of other sectors to help meet social objectives?
- b) What is the future role of local government? In particular, how does the democratic mandate remain relevant and credible as the drive to deliver local solutions for local communities grows? How does local government need to change the way it operates to develop sophisticated partnerships with all sectors to unlock their potential?
- c) To what extent does the way local government provides its services matter to this agenda? Can councils use their own provision to unlock resources (defined broadly) from others?
- d) What new services or investments should councils make to address social challenges, and what is the best way to make and manage those investments? Can local government's ability to raise capital be a part of its future role?
- e) What is the role of business in delivering the civic enterprise model?
- f) What is the role of the third sector in delivering the civic enterprise model?

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 At this stage there are no specific issues other than trying to ensure that the call for evidence comes from all sectors, with particular emphasis being placed on hard to reach groups, and covers how equality and diversity issues are tackled.

## **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The Commission offers the opportunity to find new ways to deliver the ambitions of the city and the council.

## **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 The Commission is being managed from within existing resources and against the financial backdrop will limit spend wherever possible. The Commission is being supported across its membership, particularly through Glasgow and Cardiff City Councils, DCLG and the LGC, as a way of sharing work and resources.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 At this stage there are no specific implications.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are risks associated with delivering the Commission, such as lack of engagement both nationally and locally, lack of buy in from stakeholders and the complexity of the scope. The team are working to mitigate the impacts of these risks.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 The work of the Commission could be tremendously beneficial to the local government sector and the city of Leeds and support the delivery of improved outcomes for our citizens. It will be an ongoing challenge for the Commission to stay focused on producing practical recommendations, but this is a significant and timely opportunity for local government to play an active role in contributing to the definition of its future role.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 Executive Board is asked to:

- Note the work of the Commission
- Engage with the process and receive further updates as the Commission progresses.

## **7.0 Background documents**

7.1 None