

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MIDSUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Head of Corporate Organisation	Report Number: JSC/02/14
To: Joint Scrutiny Committee	Date of meeting: 5th February 2014

SCOPING OF SCRUTINY REVIEW ON LOCALISM AND EMBEDDING OF THE LOCALISM ACT

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To enable Members to establish the scope of a Scrutiny Review on Localism and the embedding of the Localism Act

2. Recommendations

That the Joint Committee agrees the proposed scope of the review and undertakes the review.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications identified from this report.

4. Risk Management

- 4.1 The nature of this report is such, that a risk management assessment is not needed

5. Consultations

- 5.1 Discussions have been held with the Head of Service Communities and the Head of Service Housing.

6. Equality Analysis

- 6.1 This scoping document has no direct equality and diversity issues but the review should include consideration of whether there are any issues in relation to Localism within the Districts

7. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

- 7.1 The scoping document has no specific partnership implications although consideration of partnership working should form part of the review.

8. Key Information

- 8.1 The Localism Act 2011 received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The Act seeks to hand power back to local authorities and local communities offering new freedoms and flexibilities to achieve local ambitions.

8.2 The aim of the review is to look at the impact of the Act on the council's and its communities. A proposed scoping document is attached as Appendix 1 to form the basis for discussion at the meeting.

9. Appendices

	Title	Location
A	Joint Scrutiny Committee – Localism Review Scoping Document	Attached

10. Background Documents

None

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Joint Scrutiny Committee – Localism Review Scoping Document

<p>Review Topic (name of review)</p>	<p>Assessing the impact of the Localism Act 2011 on the communities of Babergh and Mid Suffolk</p>
<p>Lead members</p>	<p>Either Cllrs. Ebrune/Antill; or nominated members</p>
<p>Officer Support</p>	<p>Christine Roofe , Project and Research Officer</p>
<p>Rationale Key issues and reason for the review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable Joint Scrutiny members to gain a greater understanding of the rationale for, detailed provisions and impact of the Localism Act 2011. • Member perception that the legislation has had a limited impact in the area in the period since royal assent. • To provide the councils with an objective assessment of the challenges and opportunities offered by the Act.
<p>Purpose of the review/Objective (quantify the outcomes the review will seek to achieve)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To determine the impact of the Localism Act on individuals, communities and the councils in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are communities more resilient? ○ are the councils/other public bodies doing less or doing things differently? ○ are there more community initiatives underway (than prior to the Act)? • To identify the barriers to communities in using the Localism Act...: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ are communities fully aware of the act, its powers, potential and how to use it? ○ do communities need its powers (i.e.: what couldn't they have done without it)? ○ does it make any issues more complex? ○ is there any funding/additional support necessary to enact the powers? • To identify potential opportunities offered by the Localism Act re: strategic priorities...: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ what government support is there for any particular elements of the Act? ○ will elements of the Act make achieving any of the strategic priorities easier?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ is there enough community capacity to make the most of the Act and, if not, how are the councils helping?
<p>Success measures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timescale for the review • Sticking to the scope • Outcomes of the review deliver the objectives
<p>Background information</p>	<p>The Localism Act 2011 received Royal assent on 15 November 2011. The Act seeks to devolve more decision making powers from central government back into the hands of individuals, communities and councils.</p> <p>The act covers multi faceted range of issues with a particularly focus on the new general power of competence, community rights, neighbourhood planning and housing. The key elements of the act are grouped as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new freedoms and flexibilities for local government • new rights and powers for communities and individuals • reform to make the planning system more democratic and more effective • reform to ensure decisions about housing are taken locally
<p>Methodology/ Approach (what types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence and why)</p>	<p>Approach</p> <p>Evidence gathering to determine :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) What the Act set out to achieve b) The detailed provisions c) The impact (current picture) <p>Review of the evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust analysis of the evidence to provide an objective assessment of the impact of the Act • Robust process for developing conclusions/recommendations from the evidence <p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review- Localism Act and guidance/review papers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping exercise (Babergh/Mid Suffolk impact) • Gathering community information (Local member feedback /Community Voice Officer advocacy role/Stakeholder organisations) • Review of national picture (differing approaches) • Developing analytical model • Analysis of the evidence • Developing evidence based conclusions and recommendations
Resource requirements	Determine officer and Joint Scrutiny Member roles
Project parameters	Determine timescale, milestones, risks and budgetary implications
Specify Witnesses/ Experts/ Stakeholders (who to see and when)- subject to review as evidence becomes available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Community representatives • DCLG perspective (Civil servant) • Stakeholder organisations (SALC/CAC etc) • Relevant officers (i.e. Community Voice Officer) • Lead members
Specify Evidence Sources for	<p>The Localism Act 2011 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted</p> <p>A plain English guide to the Localism Act https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf</p> <p>Reflections on the Localism Act , University of Birmingham Institute of Local Government studies: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/government-society/inlogov/news-events/reflections-localism-act.pdf</p> <p>Green paper 2010: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5951/1793908.pdf</p> <p>An example of some research on innovative projects undertaken in the spirit of localism in Yorkshire and Humber</p>

		http://www.involveyorkshirehumber.org.uk/resources/rural-network-yhrn-/on-the-ground-the-localism-act-in-practice/
Specify Visits (where and when)	Site	Local ward members in their communities SALC

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