

Local Regeneration and Growth Partnerships with Hampshire County Council



A New Approach

19th October 2022

We have been through 3 stages in the development of a new approach for Local Regeneration and Growth Partnerships across Hampshire

I. Discovery

We have conducted a series of interviews (c 20) with representatives from the Districts, Boroughs, Unitaries and Directorates involved in the Regeneration and Growth Partnerships activity, in order to better understand the current ways of working and existing relationships.

I:I interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

- Stuart Jarvis
- Gary Westbrook
- Richard Kenny
- Frank Baxter / Dominic McGrath
- Laura McCulloch
- Emma Noyce
- Tim Martienssen
- Phillip Walker / Jude Robinson
- Peter Colenutt
- Rebecca Thompson

Phase 1 interviews included:

- Eastleigh Borough Council
- Test Valley Borough Council
- New Forest District Council
- Winchester City Council
- Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council
- East Hampshire District Council
- Havant Borough Council
- Rushmoor Borough Council

Phase 2 interviews included:

- Fareham Borough Council
- Hart District Council
- Southampton City Council
- Isle of Wight Council

*Gosport/Portsmouth failed to respond to set up an interview despite multiple attempts

2. Case Study Analysis

Research and gained insights into what four other Councils are doing in this space, outlining what the key lessons learned, how it relates to Hampshire and how it can inform Hampshire's future approach to Local Regeneration and Growth Partnerships.



**Oxfordshire
County Council**



**North Yorkshire
County Council**



**Warwickshire
County Council**



**Lincolnshire
County Council**

3. New Approach

Combining the discovery findings and case study insights to develop a new approach to Local Regeneration and Growth Partnerships across Hampshire. The approach sets out what should be in scope and highlights ways to increase levels of co-production, co-design and co-delivery against the local growth and regeneration strategies.

To ensure the new approach is a sustainable success for both the County Council and District / Borough Councils, we need to create the right conditions, this requires a focus on two core areas:



**Strategic Alignment
and Prioritisation**



**Operational
Delivery**

A Summary of Key Findings from Internal and External Interviews

A high-level summary of the key findings from the current state assessment is outlined below, informed by interviews with officers from the County Council and externally.

Internal Findings

Internally within the County Council, regeneration and growth priorities appear to be inconsistent. This leads to a lack of clear communication on what the collective priorities for the council are and the impact on the ability to allocate resources effectively. There are currently over 80 local regeneration forums with HCC representation.

Most councils have their own regeneration and cultural strategies, focused on place-based needs, making it difficult to establish one consistent county wide view. However, Districts and Boroughs are liaising with each other as the strategies are being developed but are not communicating this information back to the county council.

Meetings generally run on an ad-hoc basis with no set agenda and it is felt there is limited clarification of officer roles, responsibilities and expected ways of working. Current relationships and communication between the County and across the district and borough council varies, especially surrounding authorisations and planning of engagements, resulting in inconsistencies and often duplication of work.

Need for more regular senior attendance at key meetings with clear role allocations, both internally and externally, to ensure required individuals are present and decisions can be made at pace. Representation of LPAs in key meetings is inconsistent across District and Boroughs, with most running on an ad-hoc basis, especially the 106 master planning and education steering group.

External Findings

It is perceived by some councils that current arrangements are ad hoc and reactive with the county council, while others feel that good partnership working is happening but it is contingent on the individuals involved. It was repeatedly stated that they felt the county takes a **paternalistic approach to collaboration** and it demonstrates a “top down” leadership style with “no bottom” input.

Councils lack clarity on how to appropriately approach the County Council on regeneration plans, placing a **reliance on pre-existing personal relationships,** limiting proactive interaction.

Generally, **councils do not feel the County listens to their voices or provide them with the rationale to better understand the decisions they make** with regards to regeneration plans, depleting the trust between each party. There is a common perception of a ‘top-down’ approach with councils feeling ‘done to’.

There is an appetite for the leadership from across the councils to come together and produce a strategic approach to establish clear roles, responsibilities and goals; enabling greater coordination of efforts for regeneration and growth.

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There are good working relationships with CC because of who you know. If you didn't already have those pre-existing relationships, it would be difficult to navigate the landscape and it would take much longer to build relationships

The County Council struggle to prioritise where to put resources. There is no strategic approach to delivering growth in the area

Ideally, we should enter into a set of collaborations about case, co-design, co-production and have a regular seat at the table within the councils when thinking about strategy and delivery

To be more strategically joined up across the County, it's about minimising barriers for issues to occur so we can react quickly and understand how we can make processes and ways of working as simple as possible..

”

Key Case Study takeaways to inform the New Approach



Whilst all case studies are looking towards different stages of structural change, each council has experienced and worked to overcome similar challenges regarding ways of working, collaboration and culture, on both an individual county-level and in relation to external, cross-boundary partnerships, which should be considered when creating Hampshire's future approach to sustainable Regeneration and Growth.

Strategic Overview



All authorities must be aligned to the overarching Regeneration and Growth Strategy, ensuring that area engagement plans maximise resources whilst reflecting both local and county priorities.

Place Based Focus



Considering the socio-geographic differences across the County, it is essential to recognise a 'one size fits all' approach to Regeneration and Growth is not sustainable. A continuous presence is needed between the County Council and Districts/Boroughs to keep all up-to-date with priorities and bridge the gap between strategic and operational needs.

Collaborative Governance



Clear and confirmed governance structures are paramount in maintaining fair, transparent and purposeful relationships across the county. Each council should have a direct line of contact with county directorates as well as a consistent approach to maintaining external relationships to ensure residents within each area are exposed to equal opportunities.

Reaffirmed Responsibilities



Consistent collaboration is key in county-wide movements, therefore, meetings and forums should only run with a designated purpose and agenda. Only required attendees should be present, ideally including a senior member of the council and a CC officer, allowing for strong, fast-paced decision making; minimising additional noise and duplication of conversations/work.

Community Culture



Transparent and trusting working relationships/culture underpin effective partnerships across a County, encouraging all councils to work together towards a common vision. Alignment of behaviors and embracing a difference of opinion facilitates proactive, challenging conversations whilst opening up honest communication streams.

An overview of the New Approach to Regeneration & Growth...

To ensure the new approach is a sustainable success for both the County Council and its partners, we need to create the right conditions, this requires a focus on two core areas:

1



Strategic Alignment & Prioritisation



Changes to current ways of working are needed to address the ongoing strategic and operational challenges across the county. To deliver on Hampshire's regeneration and growth strategy, it is paramount to consider **how** we want to work to encourage the most effective collaboration. The new approach will outline how both the County Council and Councils should work together, differently, to **promote trust** and deliver outcomes.

2



Operational Delivery



Adjustment to the existing operational delivery model is required to address the noted hierarchical disconnect across the County Council and Councils. Within this, it is important to consider **how** we will manage future decision making, planning and objectives. The new approach will outline how these governance arrangements may look across the County, ensuring all parties are aligned and working towards a shared purpose.

These two main areas of focus are supported by **three key ways of working** for the new approach:

Creation of joint strategic agenda to regen & growth by aligning councils on their priorities.

Creation of re-focused roles to bridge the gap and focus on County-wide regeneration.

3

A simplified but effective governance structure creating the conditions to focus on prioritised regeneration & growth.

New Ways of Working - ① Strategic Alignment & Prioritisation

Changes to current ways of working are needed to address the ongoing strategic and operational challenges for growth and regeneration across the county. To deliver on Hampshire's regeneration and growth strategy, it is paramount to consider how we want to work to encourage the most effective collaboration and **reflecting the needs of residents across Hampshire**. The new approach will outline how both the County Council and partners will work together, differently, to promote trust and deliver outcomes.

Step 1

Strategic Engagement

This first step is all about getting ready for success. Before any governance is put in place, **bi-lateral conversations** should take between senior leaders and members from the County Council and District/Borough Authorities discuss and create a joint strategic agenda and align on priorities for regeneration and growth.

Step 2

Alignment

This engagement should work towards a confirmed strategic approach/agenda. It should identify and set out individual and collective growth/regeneration priorities for all.

What strategic alignment and prioritisation is...

- ✓ Understanding **what is achievable** and required by all organisations to create a vibrant county
- ✓ Making sure the **priorities across authorities are clearly understood and communicated** from senior leadership through to the respective officers
- ✓ Having the **mechanisms in place to achieve what is set out** by the County Council and District Authorities for regeneration and growth

What strategic alignment and prioritisation is **not**...

- × **The County Council setting its own exclusive agenda for regeneration and growth** without providing the District and Borough Authorities with the opportunity to give their input
- × It is not about the **setting the vision for regeneration and growth** but how the priorities will be delivered to achieve the strategic agenda
- × About organising more meetings but **enabling leadership to come together to shape the future of regeneration and growth** across Hampshire in a collaborative way

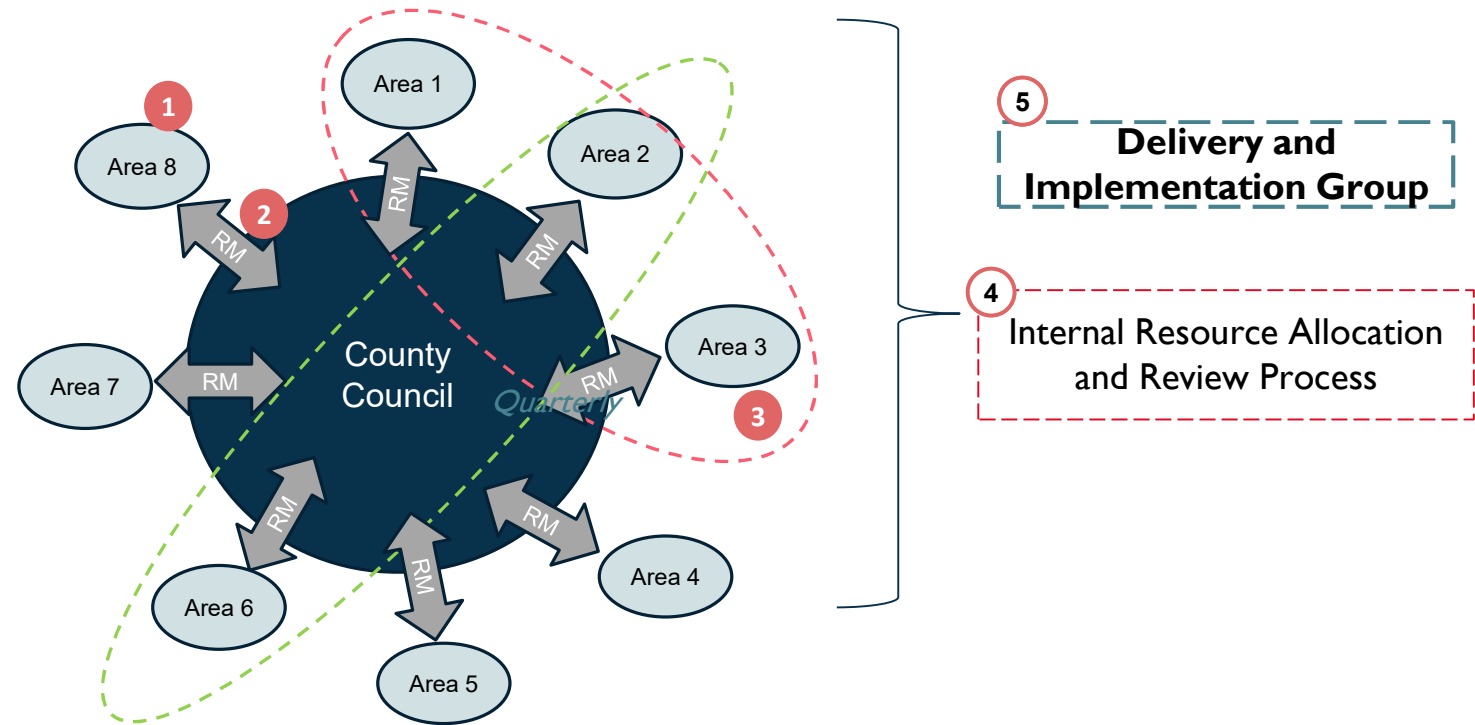
What are the outcomes of this way of working?

1. Ensuring that collectively **all organisations involved in the partnership are clear and aligned on the different priorities**, regardless of which Directorate, District or Unitary and how we will collaborate to deliver on this agenda.
1. **We will understand individual and collective priorities which will inform how we will achieve the ambition for growth and regeneration together across Hampshire**. In turn this will enable us to have a consistent collective message when looking **to attract more funding and inward investment for Hampshire**.

Place Based Co-Delivery - Operational Delivery

In order to enable the **delivery of the joint strategic priorities**, we are proposing that **once bi-lateral arrangements have been established** Councils each work with a Relationship Manager (RM), who will support place-based regeneration whilst acting as an independent contact point between areas and the County Council.

There will be future opportunities to align individual partnerships to share learning, expertise and manage interdependencies. This may be around aligned geographies and/or thematic priorities.



1 Local Authority - once the strategic approach has been agreed and communicated through the Strategic Engagement steps, operational delivery will be aligned to each area / partnership. It will be important to consider the different levels of partnerships across the multiple geographical layers and understand where focus is needed to support the ambition for local regeneration and growth.

2 Relationship Managers (RM) - Each district/borough has an allocated RM who provides strategic oversight, coordination and continuity for regeneration engagements, bridging the gap between organisations and helping to manage interdependencies.

3 Working Groups - The RMs form their own communication network, meeting to discuss place-based working, needs and resources with reference to thematic or place based interdependencies; eliminating a single point of failure. Priority engagements and potential future area engagements are connected to the County Councils internal governance.

4 Internal Review - RM connect prioritised engagements with the County Council's internal governance for resource allocation.

5 Delivery and Implementation - County Council strategic officers, RMs and relevant delivery lead officers utilise internal governance (e.g. Corporate Infrastructure Group) to discuss ongoing and approved regeneration engagements, checking on progress and strategically aligning work across the broader area.

It is essential that councils utilise technology to connect and share information across the partnership. It was felt by some councils that the use of new and existing technologies has especially in recent months, provided some of the answers for how best to engage across District and Borough Authorities. There is potential to aggregate data and insight to better inform strategic and operational decision-making.