

Towards the Cornish Governance Proposition

Objective:

Best value governance of public sector service delivery for Cornwall (and Isles of Scilly if it wishes to participate) building on existing assets, including the LAA and Strategic Partnerships

Principles:

1. Separate strategy from delivery
2. Embed democracy
3. Promote subsidiarity

Method:

1. Assume transformation of Cornwall Council to form a directly elected, small (about 30 members) overarching body with 5 areas of competence:

1. Strategy for Cornwall (& IoS as appropriate)
2. Budgeting
3. Commissioning
4. Performance management
5. Promotion/advocacy for Cornwall

2. Convene a standing conference of all service delivery agencies - health, local government, all education (incl. LSC) and other services. Task the conference to evolve an area-based integrated delivery structure, guided by the three key principles.

During this process approach the DCLG and Treasury to lead on behalf of all Government departments in contributing to the plan by considering functions, powers and duties which would be transferred to Cornwall in order to make the new approach work.

The standing conference should

- i. technically appraise options for merging 'back-office' systems (eg IT, personnel, finance, performance management) and form a plan.
- ii. Consider how democracy can be embedded in the delivery structure
- iii. Design structural relationships and accountabilities between the overarching body and the delivery tier.
- iv. Form a clear business plan in partnership with the Government which tests best value
- v. Commission advice as necessary to aid the positive development of the Proposition

Isles of Scilly:

During formation of the delivery structure, and following in-principle decision, should the proposition be accepted by partners to form the overarching body, discussions be offered to the Isles of Scilly on the level and format of any involvement it might wish. This might include participation in the overarching body by taking a seat(s) in that Body's democratic arena; inclusion in certain aspects of delivery; orientation as a delivery area with special arrangements where appropriate (reflecting similar existing arrangements eg planning, fire, social services). Every effort should be made to include the Isles, but only on the basis that the Isles retain its cultural, constitutional and administrative integrity.

Consensus:

A Cornish Governance Proposition should be formed as the outcome of the Standing Conference by a chosen date (this should be identified in discussion with the Government). When complete, the Proposition should be placed before all existing democratic bodies (CCC, DCs and PCs - including IoS, as appropriate) for endorsement. All other public sector governance bodies (Health Trust Boards, Governors of Colleges, etc) should consider endorsement. It should be placed before the LSPs (including Cornwall Economic Forum, Voluntary Sector Forum, etc) and a public information exercise be undertaken which might be in the form of an informal referendum - a one question survey comparable to that undertaken at the beginning of the Objective 1 campaign.

Having completed this exercise successfully, the Cornish Governance Proposition should be formally presented to the Secretary of State at DCLG.