

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY</b>  <b>REPORT OF GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMISSION</b>  <b>Devolution – The Prospects for Hackney</b>  Cabinet: September 2017 Council: October 2017	<b>Classification</b>  Public	<b>Enclosures</b>  <b>Appendix 1</b>  Devolution – The Prospects for Hackney Review Report
	<b>Ward(s) affected</b>  All	<b>Appendix 2</b>  Executive Response

The Governance and Resources Scrutiny Commission review *Devolution – The Prospects for Hackney* set out to explore the implications of London wide devolution for Hackney and how the borough could make the most of the opportunities.

The Commission was of the view devolution presented the potential for London's councils to implement a whole system approach across public sector services, creating the space for more preventative and joined up approaches. However, devolution would also bring areas of responsibility that councils were not experienced in managing with devolved powers that were likely to be followed by cuts in budget.

The review heard from a number of representatives from various national bodies and think tanks (Metro Dynamics, Centre for Public Scrutiny, New Local Government Network, Professor Travers: London School of Economics and Political Science, London Councils and the Professor of Further Education & Skills, University College London (Institute of Education) that have been involved in devolution or who have contributed to the devolution discussions at a pan London and national level.

The Commission found that the key issues related to devolution revolved around resources, power, accountability structures and public engagement. Even as the review concluded one of the key policy and implementation questions that remained unresolved was accountability structures for the devolved areas.

The progression of Hackney's pilot for health devolution gave us some pointers to the challenges in this area but the lack of clarity from Government is hindering the progress of devolution for London.

The absence of a detailed plan for London and the uncertainty from the Treasury about the areas that would be devolved in terms of responsibilities, budget and the complexities around accountability configurations, has meant that Hackney Council had not developed a holistic plan. The Commission recognised the Council needs to respond in an agile way due to the fluidity of discussion, variable geographies and proposals being agreed ad-hoc. The Commission made 4 recommendations and these focused on what the

Council could do. The Commission's recommendations centred on the development of a local plan and a set of principles - that will guide the Council's response to devolution discussions and its priorities for advanced areas of devolution. We also made recommendations about public engagement and accountability structures - to build on the work from Hackney's health pilot in this area for use by devolved service areas to hold the relevant people, departments and organisations to account.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Council is requested to note the Commission's report and the response to it from the Executive.**

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