

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Review Group

MS Teams Meeting

29 September 2025

5.00pm- 6.05pm

In attendance:

Councillors: Smith (Chair) Alcock, Cleeve, Coles, MacDonald, Petrovic and Rolfe

Officers: Town Clerk

Apologies: None

1. Notes of meeting held on 19 August 2025

The notes of the meeting were agreed.

2. Update of Devolution /Local Government Review

The Town Clerk provided an update on recent activity since the previous meeting, including the consultations by the District and Couty Council that had taken place.

Assets and Services for Consideration

Further to the last meeting Councillor Coles and Petrovic had circulated to Councillors a list of District Council owned assets and play areas.

A discussion followed regarding inconsistencies in the management of public open spaces across Stratford-upon-Avon. Members expressed concern over the continuing confusion surrounding the division of ownership and responsibility between different tiers of local government and third-party contractors. The complexity of these arrangements was identified as a significant issue, particularly where the Town Council might be expected to assume responsibility without clear understanding of the long-term financial implications.

The Town Clerk advised that the current cost of maintaining play areas recently considered for transfer to the Town Council was

approximately £25,000 per annum. This figure demonstrated the high cost associated with both outsourcing and assuming direct ownership.

District Councillors advised that a Task and Finish Group had been established to examine future arrangements for the management of public open spaces.

There was firm agreement that the Town Council must remain fully engaged throughout the devolution and review process, ensuring it does not assume additional responsibilities without appropriate funding and equitable treatment within any future service arrangements.

Date of Next Meeting

20 October 2025 @ 5.00pm MS TEAMS