



# Devolution of Discretionary services The progress in Cornwall so far.....

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# Background

- Rurally dispersed population of 530,000
- Unitary in 2009 – previously Cornwall County Council and 6 District Councils
- 123 Cornwall Council Members
- History of “political coalitions” and of in-house service provision
- 213 Town and Parish Councils
- Vibrant VCSE community
- Low-wage economy / high % SMEs

# Current Context

- Cornwall Council facing £196M budget savings
- Pressure on discretionary community based services
- Some externalisation of services
- Closer working with TPCs / VCSE
- “One Public Estate”
- Infrastructure investment
- 160+ Agency Agreements with TPCs
- 50+ Neighbourhood Plans being developed
- 80+ Community assets listed
- 80+ Community Emergency Plans in place / being developed

# Preparing the landscape

- Create the right overall culture – build Trust
- Promote local collaboration
- Recognise that every community is different
  - Local ambition?
  - Local partnerships and collaboration?
  - Trust of local community?
  - Local capacity?
- Carrots work better than sticks
- Culture of peer support
- Recognise it takes time

# Developing the Culture

- Close working relationship with CALC and SLCC
- SLA with CALC
- Critical friend
- Joint training partnership
- Representation on Devolution Board
- Attendance at officer meetings
- Evidence to Devolution Policy Advisory Committee
- Support to Community Link Officers
- Thematic forums – Planning, Waste, Transport

# Capacity Building and Challenge

- Challenge around promoting need to improve capacity – promoting awareness
- Utilise European Funding
- Producing checklists / model specifications
- Creating local support peer support groups
- Communicate benefits and successes!
- Local accountability – complimentary representative and participative democracy
- New model(s) of governance and delivery
- General Power of Competency

# Cornwall's Devolution Framework



# Devolution Framework – 6 Options

- Option 1 – Influencing / Monitoring
  - Street Cleansing
- Option 2 – Joint / enhanced delivery
  - Environment, Traffic Enforcement
- Option 3 – Agency Agreements, Licenses
  - Grass cutting, roundabout sponsorship
- Option 4 – Delegated Delivery
  - Formal gardens, Libraries, One Stop Shops
- Option 5 – Services cessation
  - Public Conveniences, allotments
- Option 6 – Retained
  - Winter maintenance, coast protection



# Devolution Challenges

- Identifying “true” current costs – operational & management
- Conflicting priorities – income earning assets for individual services v. wider overall council savings
- Resources to undertake this work – an additional activity to the traditional ‘core offer’
- Negotiations take time and need continuity
- Capital injections can assist in driving proposals forward that might otherwise fall
- Balancing the views of social value v. capital receipts v. revenue costs

# Case study – Tintagel Visitor Centre



# Case study – Municipal buildings, Falmouth





# Case study – St Day clock



# Case Study – Jubilee Pool, Penzance





# Case Study – Portwrinkle



# Unintended Consequences

- Waste Contract
- To “value” or not to “value”
- “Swiss cheese” effect
- Car Park Orders and enforcement
- TUPE and pensions
- Insurability

# The Future?

- Changing role of Town / Parish Councils
- Changing role of Parish Clerk – Parish Manager?
- Raising appreciation of the role (£) of the Clerk!
- 4 year business plans?
- Govt. Funding – Our Place, Power to Change etc.
- General Power of Competence
- Arms length trading opportunities?
- Formal / informal mergers/ clusters?
- Different local aspirations, money, capacity, social capital differ



# In conclusion

- There are competing priorities within Cornwall Council, with partners and within the community.
- Long term v short term
- Devolution **TAKES TIME** and requires willingness, resources, time, capacity and skills that only some local councils possess
- Confidence grows incrementally within a community and lead to larger projects being tackled.
- The devolution process requires dedicated staff internally and community support externally.
- Each community is different!



**The Sky is the  
Limit!!**

# Contact details

## Website

- <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/devolution-giving-communities-more/>

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