

## **South Derbyshire chiefs continue talks for devolution**

TALKS are set to continue as district council chiefs look to seal a devolution deal for South Derbyshire.

Chief executive Frank McArdle is seeking approval from members of the council to continue discussions with the Government over a combined authority with councils across Derby and Derbyshire and, as a result, a devolution of powers.

In a report, Mr McArdle set out the plans in which he would discuss proposals and bring them back before the council.

Mr McArdle outlined the 'significant' changes made to the proposals which the council initially supported.

This included that the combined authority 'is likely' to extend further than Derby and Derbyshire, with Nottingham also likely to be part of any deal. Significant powers will only be handed down by the Government if a directly elected mayor is appointed, and the scope of the devolution offer has now become 'broader'.

Mr McArdle said: "The activities of the proposed combined authority would contribute to the South Derbyshire Partnership's sustainable community strategy vision.

"This would allow us to seize opportunities to develop successful communities, while respecting and enhancing the varied character of our fast growing district.

"Progress continues to be made towards the devolution of government powers to a combined authority encompassing South Derbyshire.

"Negotiations are ongoing but in the light of the changing scope and nature of the likely outcome, a resolution is sought from members for the chief executive in consultation with the leader to continue to engage in discussions."

Speaking for Derbyshire County Council, council leader Anne Western said the last rounds of talks had been positive. She said: "Once again, our discussions with the Government have been extremely positive."

It is believed that an agreement on devolution between Derbyshire and Nottingham, which includes 19 local authorities, is now close.

The deal would mean that the combined authority would have a greater say in matters normally decided by the Government.

<http://www.burtonmail.co.uk/South-Derbyshire-chiefs-continue-talks-devolution/story-28122403-detail/story.html>