

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

English Devolution White Paper - KCC response to Government

Responsible Officer

David Whittle - CED SPRCA

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)

Amanda Beer - DCE

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

Strategy/Policy

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

SPRCA

Responsible Head of Service

Amanda Beer - DCE

Responsible Director

Amanda Beer - DCE

Aims and Objectives

On December 16 2024 the Government published the English Devolution White Paper which sets out the dual objectives of expanding the coverage of devolution to all areas of England and all remaining areas of two-tier local government to undergo a process of reorganisation into new single tier 'unitary' councils.

A follow up letter to Leaders on the same day from the Minister for Local Government and Devolution set out initial steps for implementation of the White Paper. This includes the creation of a Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) for those areas which wish to access the benefits of devolution early by committing to creating a Mayoral Strategic Authority and holding elections for a Mayor in May 2026, and to also commit to implementing local government reorganisation by either April 2027 or April 2028.

The Minister requires a response on whether areas wish to be considered for DPP status by 10 January 2025. A decision to apply for the DPP programme is considered an Urgent Decision (Decision Number - 25/0002 - English Devolution White Paper - KCC Response to Government).

For clarity, this EQIA is focussed on the application for DPP status, and may be amended or updated once further information on the DPP is known. Any future decisions on either devolution, the specific proposals for creating and MSA or local government reorganisation will be prepared if, and as when, required.

Section B – Evidence
Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?
Yes
It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?
Yes
Is there national evidence/data that you can use?
No
Have you consulted with stakeholders?
No
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?
Should Kent and Medway be accepted on the Devolution Priority Programme, there will then be a Government-led consultation in the early part of 2025, consultation and engaging with residents on the decision to create a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA). Exact details of the Government consultation are not yet know, but in applying to the DPP, local areas are committing to support the Government consultation process. Given the nature of the decision to create an MSA, it is expected that the focus will be on consulting residents, businesses, public sector and VCSE partners on an individual and collective (representational group) level.
Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?
No
Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?
Yes
Section C – Impact
Who may be impacted by the activity?
Service Users/clients
No
Staff
Staff/Volunteers
Residents/Communities/Citizens
Residents/communities/citizens
Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?
Yes
Details of Positive Impacts
The rationale for Kent and Medway seeking to be on the Devolution Priority Programme is to ensure that the benefits of devolution, including access to a greater range of functions, powers and resources that are not currently available to the council, are delivered as quickly as possible, with a particular focus on supporting economic growth, housing and infrastructure development. Likewise, the move to unitary council structures is intended to create a simpler, and more financially sustainable, local government sector in Kent and Medway that is able to both integrate services between the County and District level, but also work alongside a Mayoral Strategic Authority to deliver a programme of public services reform. The changes at a structural level are intended to benefit all Kent residents and therefore apply equally to those with protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act.
Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions
19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
No
Details of negative impacts for Age
Not Applicable
Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Not Applicable
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
No
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Disability
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Disability
Not Applicable
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable