

From: Linden Kemkaran, Leader of the Council
Amanda Beer, Chief Executive Officer

To: **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Cabinet Committee, 23 March 2026**

Subject: For information item: KCC's response to the Government's consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Kent and Medway

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary:

The Government has opened a statutory consultation (5 Feb–26 Mar 2026) on five proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Kent and Medway, including KCC's own proposal (1a).

KCC will submit a single response in support of option 1a and outline KCC's main concerns with the alternative multiple-unitary options. Additional comments are provided on proposals involving boundary changes (4d and 5a). The response is included as an appendix to this report.

Government intends to use consultation findings to inform their decision on which model, if any, to implement, with a final decision on LGR in Kent and Medway expected in the summer.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- (1) **Note** the response to the Government consultation to be submitted by Kent County Council which is shared with the Committee for information.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Government launched its statutory consultation¹ on the options for Local Government Reorganisation in Kent and Medway on 5th February 2026. All five of the proposals submitted to Government from Kent and Medway councils – 1a (submitted by KCC), 3a, 4b, 4d and 5a – are being consulted on.

¹ [Local government reorganisation in Kent and Medway - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

- 1.2. The consultation is being led by the Government and is open to the public. The Government have also invited named consultees to respond to the consultation, including other impacted local authorities in Kent and in neighbouring areas; as well as a broad range of partner organisations including representatives from health, safeguarding, policing, education, infrastructure, business and the Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector.
- 1.3. This report informs the Cabinet Committee of KCC's response to the consultation.

2. Consultation response

- 2.1. The consultation questions mirror the criteria for LGR proposals set by the Government which guided the development KCC's Strategic Business Case for LGR.
- 2.2. KCC will submit a single consultation response in support of option 1a, aligned with KCC's policy position and drawing on the arguments set out in the Strategic Business Case in favour of a countywide footprint for local government in Kent and Medway.
- 2.3. The response also sets out KCC's primary concerns with the other options, also drawing on the policy position and arguments set out in the Strategic Business Case. KCC's key concerns including the disaggregation of countywide services, financial sustainability across all areas of the county and concentrated pressures on the East of the county are relevant to all the alternative options.
- 2.4. There is a specific question about boundary changes where those have been proposed. In Kent and Medway this is relevant to options 4d and 5a and KCC's response refers to those proposals specifically in order to answer that question.
- 2.5. The consultation response is included as an appendix to this paper.

3. Next steps

- 3.1. The consultation closes at 11.59pm on 26th March 2026. KCC will submit its response to MHCLG prior to this deadline.
- 3.2. Government intends to use consultation findings to inform their decision on which model, if any, to implement (or modify and implement), with a final decision on LGR in Kent and Medway expected in the summer.

Recommendations

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- (1) **Note** the response to the Government consultation to be submitted by Kent County Council which is shared with the Committee for information.

Relevant Director:

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: KCC's proposed response to the Government's consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in Kent and Medway.