

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet

DECISION NO:

25/00101

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key decision to be taken by Cabinet.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Kent County Council Local Government Reorganisation: Strategic Business Case Submission to Government

Decision:

Cabinet agrees to:

- APPROVE the KCC Strategic Business Case for Local Government Reorganisation in Kent and Medway;
- DELEGATE authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to take the required actions to submit the finalised Strategic Business Case Submission to Government by the 28 November deadline.
- DELEGATE authority to the Chief Executive to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to negotiating and entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Kent County Council (KCC) has the option to submit a Strategic Business Case setting out its preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Kent and Medway following a statutory invite from Government on 5 February 2025.

KCC has undertaken preparatory work since the February invitation, both through a joint options appraisal (completed by KMPG on behalf of Kent Council Leaders) and through an internal options appraisal conducted by KCC. Having considered the findings of both the internal and joint options appraisals, the proposal is to submit an independent Strategic Business Case to Government for the single-unitary option covering Kent and Medway, incorporating three Area Assemblies.

One of the primary reasons KCC is proposing to support a single unitary for Kent and Medway is because it is considered to be the most financially viable option, in both the short and the long term. Modelling predicts that recurring financial benefits will be delivered quicker than they would be in the other multi-unitary options, providing greater scope for reinvestment into services for residents. Given the significant and unique challenges that Kent faces due to the county's disparities and its

nationally important position as the gateway to Europe, it has also been determined that a single unitary is the only viable option for LGR in Kent and Medway as it maintains countywide scale and avoids the service delivery risks that could come with the disaggregation of key services. Finally, the model aligns well with Government's criteria for LGR and will allow the benefits of developing a single tier of local government in Kent and Medway to be realised.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Cabinet Committee considered updates on the LGR workstream in July and September 2025.

The draft proposal for KCC's Strategic Business Case will be considered by the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Cabinet Committee at its 3 November meeting. In addition to Cabinet Committee consultation, significance of this issue in terms of its impact on KCC and the county of Kent, the proposals will also be debated at Full Council on 6 November, to support the Executive in finalising the Strategic Business Case for submission.

Resident and stakeholder engagement is currently underway – summary findings will be presented to the Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Cabinet Committee on 3 November by way of an interim report, with a full summary provided as part of the decision documentation going to Cabinet on 19 November.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

An internal options appraisal was conducted earlier this year to assess the relative opportunities and challenges of each option against the Government's criteria, helping the Council to make an informed decision on LGR in Kent and Medway. The findings of the options appraisal, including details of the alternative approaches to LGR and possible configurations for revised Local Authority arrangements across Kent and Medway, were presented to the Cabinet Committee for Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation on 28 July 2025 and can be accessed [here](#).

While due consideration was given to the above referenced alternatives, the administration considers that the financial dis-benefits of the other options presented do not represent good value for money for Kent and Medway taxpayers.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date