

TITLE: Local Government Reorganisation Statutory Consultation

Committee: Full Council

Date: 24 February 2026

Author: Director Operations

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1.0 Issue

- 1.1. To request delegation to respond to the Governments Statutory consultation in relation to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. To delegate authority to the Director Operations, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to respond to the LGR statutory consultation.

3.0 Background/Options

- 3.1. On 16 December 2024, the Government published the *White Paper on English Devolution*, which sets out wide-ranging reforms to local government in England. The paper requires all remaining two-tier areas (those with both county and district councils) to reorganise into unitary authorities, while strengthening devolution arrangements. The White Paper can be accessed here: [English Devolution White Paper](#).
- 3.2. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough already benefit from devolved powers through the Combined Authority. This report, therefore, focuses solely on proposals for Local Government Reorganisation.
- 3.3. The Government intends to implement LGR in all two-tier areas and may also consider reorganisation where an existing unitary authority is underperforming or where current structures are deemed unsustainable.
- 3.4. East Cambridgeshire District Council jointly worked on an LGR proposal with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council called ‘The right size to thrive, local enough to care. Simpler Councils, Stronger Services’ also known as Option B.
- 3.5. Option B sees the creation of two unitary councils as follows:

Unitary 1	East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Huntingdonshire District Councils, Peterborough City Council, along with County Council functions
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Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions
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3.6. On 20 November 2025 the Council approved submission of Option B to government by the deadline of 28 November 2025.

3.7. A further three options were also submitted to Government:

3.8. Option A – Submitted by Cambridgeshire County Council:

Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Councils along with County Council functions
Unitary 2	Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils along with County Council functions

3.9. Option D – Submitted by Peterborough City Council:

Unitary 1	Peterborough City Council, parts of Huntingdonshire District Councils along with County Council functions
Unitary 2	Parts of Huntingdonshire District Council, Fenland, and East Cambridgeshire along with County Council functions
Unitary 3	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions

3.10. Option E – Submitted by Huntingdonshire District Council

Unitary 1	Peterborough City, Fenland, East Cambridgeshire District Councils with County Council functions
Unitary 2	Huntingdonshire District Council with County Council functions
Unitary 3	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District along with County Council functions

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

- 4.1. On 17 December 2025, Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness, Alison McGovern, wrote to Leaders of Councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to acknowledge the work undertaken to submit options and to set out expected next steps for Local Government Reorganisation in two-tier areas not included in the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP). The letter set out that a statutory consultation relating to the remaining 14 areas, including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, would be launched in early February 2026, although no specific date has been provided at this stage. The letter was followed by a Written Ministerial statement in the House of Commons on the 18 December 2025, which reaffirmed the overarching indicative timetable for Local Government Reorganisation, which would see new unitary councils come into being on 1 April 2028.
- 4.2. Through statutory consultation, the Government is seeking views on the LGR options submitted by councils to inform their decision on which option, if any, to implement. The consultation in early February is expected to include all options that meet the terms of the 5 February 2025 statutory invitation, with statutory consultees, residents and other interested stakeholder bodies all invited to share their views.
- 4.3. East Cambridgeshire District Council, as a named statutory consultee, along with other councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, will have the opportunity to respond to the consultation and to share their views on the options submitted. In line with the timescales of the LGR programme more broadly, the statutory consultation will run for a period of just 7 weeks.
- 4.4. It is recommended that authority to respond to the consultation should be delegated to the Director Operations in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader. The consultation response will draw on the substance of the options appraisal contained within the Option B proposal to Government, that was endorsed by Full Council in November 2025 and any relevant additional analysis of Option A, Option D and Option E.
- 4.5. Following consultation, the Government is expected to announce a decision on its chosen option for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in Summer 2026, ahead of the parliamentary recess. Vesting day for the new unitary councils is expected to be 1 April 2028.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications NO	Legal Implications NO	Human Resources (HR) Implications NO
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) NO	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) NO	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) NO

6.0 Appendices

None

7.0 Background documents

Full Council Meeting – 20 November 2025