

## Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Statutory Consultation

To: Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee

Meeting Date: 29 January 2026

From: Chief Executive

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: Not Applicable

**Executive Summary:** To provide an update to committee regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) following Government confirmation of timelines for the statutory consultation process for all areas that submitted LGR options by 28 November 2025, which includes Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Cambridgeshire County Council is a statutory consultee for all the options submitted by councils in the area and this report recommends committee delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee, to prepare and submit responses to the Government's forthcoming statutory consultation.

**Recommendation:** The Committee is asked to:

- a) note the letter received by Leader of the Council, from Alison McGovern MP, Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness, on 17 December 2025 which sets out the indicative timeline for the statutory consultation on LGR for 14 areas, including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough; and
- b) delegate authority to respond to the statutory consultation to the Chief Executive in consultation with Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy Resources and Performance Committee.

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# 1. Creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire

- 1.1. The Strategic Framework 2023-28 sets out the council's high-level approach for achieving the vision of a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire through seven 'ambitions':
- **Ambition 1:** Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2045, and our communities and natural environment are supported to adapt and thrive as the climate changes
  - **Ambition 2:** Travel across the county is safer and more environmentally sustainable
  - **Ambition 3:** Health inequalities are reduced
  - **Ambition 4:** People enjoy healthy, safe and independent lives through timely support that is most suited to their needs
  - **Ambition 5:** People are helped out of poverty and income inequality
  - **Ambition 6:** Places and communities prosper because they have a resilient and inclusive economy, access to good quality public services and social justice is prioritised
  - **Ambition 7:** Children and young people have opportunities to thrive.
- 1.2. As the primary statement of the council's priorities, the Strategic Framework is the main reference point for everything the council plans and delivers for local communities. The issues discussed in this paper affect all services currently delivered by Cambridgeshire County Council, as well as those delivered by Peterborough City Council and the five district councils (Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council). This paper therefore concerns all seven ambitions and all elements of the vision, because it relates to the future of council structures in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that will be responsible for delivering local government services to residents of this region

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The English Devolution White Paper, published in December 2024, sets out a vision for reforming local government across England with two main areas of focus: an expansion of devolution to support the transfer of powers from central Government to newly created Strategic Authorities across all areas of the county, and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) that will lead to the abolition of two-tier councils and their consolidation into new single-tier, or unitary, councils by the end of the current Parliament.
- 2.2 Following the publication of the White Paper, on 5 February 2025, the former Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon MP, exercised his powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement Act 2007 by formally inviting the Leaders and Chief Executives of councils effected by the vision for reform to submit options for LGR in their areas. This letter set out criteria and guidance for the development of local options, as well as timelines for the process and key deadlines.
- 2.3 As an existing two-tier area Cambridgeshire County Council, the five district councils (Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Fenland District Council, Huntingdonshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council), as well as neighbouring Peterborough City Council were all invited to submit options for the creation of single-tier local government for Cambridgeshire.

2.4 Cambridgeshire County Council submitted an option to Government on 28 November 2025: 'Two Councils. One fairer future' which is also known as Option A. This option describes the formation of two new unitary councils for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough:

- Option A (submitted by Cambridgeshire County Council)
  - Unitary 1: Fenland, Huntingdonshire, and Peterborough
  - Unitary 2: Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire

2.5 A further three options for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were also submitted to Government in November:

- Option B (submitted by Cambridge City Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council)
  - Unitary 1: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, and Peterborough
  - Unitary 2: Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire
- Option D (submitted by Peterborough City Council)
  - Unitary 1: Peterborough and part of Huntingdonshire
  - Unitary 2: Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire
  - Unitary 3: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and part of Huntingdonshire
- Option E (submitted by Huntingdonshire District Council)
  - Unitary 1: Huntingdonshire
  - Unitary 2: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and Peterborough
  - Unitary 3: Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire

### 3. Main Issues

3.1 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 Cambridgeshire County 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.

- 3.4 It is recommended that authority to respond to the consultation should be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee and with the consultation responses drawing on the substance of the options appraisal undertaken by Cambridgeshire County Council in October 2025, the content of the 'Two Councils. One fairer future' option submitted in November 2028, and any relevant additional analysis of Option B, Option D and Option E.
- 3.5 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. As outlined in the statement to the house on 18 December, vesting day for the new unitary councils is expected to be 1 April 2028.

## 4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 There is no requirement to respond to the consultation, therefore Cambridgeshire County Council could choose not to respond, however as a statutory consultee, it is considered best practice to respond.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 The Government is expected to open a consultation in early February to seek views on the reorganisation options, which seeks to meet the terms of the 5 February 2025 statutory invitation for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to submit options for LGR. The consultation will be open for a short period of seven weeks. It is recommended that Cambridgeshire County Council submits a response to the consultation to share views on the other options submitted and that authority to respond should be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Strategy, Resources and Performance Committee.

## 6. Significant Implications

### 6.1 Finance Implications

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, any responses developed would be managed within existing budgets and capacity within the Office of the Chief Executive.

### 6.2 Legal Implications

There are no substantive legal implications arising from the proposed recommendation. The delegation proposed is consistent with the provisions of the council's Constitution.

Options for, and the implementation of, local government reorganisation are governed by Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Proposed amendments to the Act, to further facilitate the government's local government

reorganisation and reform options, are contained in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill currently before Parliament.

### 6.3 Risk Implications

There are no identified risk implications arising from this report.

### 6.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no specifically identified Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report.

## 7. Source Documents

7.1 Letter from Alison McGovern MP (attached)

7.2 [Ministerial Statement to the House of Commons](#)