

## **DC Report for HPC Council Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> July 2025**

Cllr David Evans 6<sup>th</sup> July 2025

Hampshire County Council and East Hampshire District Councils are working together to assess four potential options for Unitary local government across Hampshire and the Solent.

County Council Leader, Cllr Nick Adams-King said: “Government wants a simpler, more efficient system of local government, one which delivers the best outcomes for local people. In response, we’re working on plans to ensure that any new councils created in Hampshire and the Solent prioritise the best interests of residents and a financially strong future by taking into account the large-scale services the County Council delivers.”

Leader of East Hampshire District Council, Councillor Richard Millard, said: “Our work to develop evidence-based options is progressing at pace. “We are now in a position to dig into the detail of four options and consider which best meets central Government criteria. “Once this next stage of robust analysis has been completed, we will propose a preferred option from these four, which will be considered by our councillors.”

The options and other information can be found at

[Hampshire County Council reviews early options for simpler, stronger, secure councils of the future | Hampshire County Council](#)

All options propose leaving the Isle of Wight as it is; a Unitary with a population of 140,000

### Option 1

- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, New Forest, Rushmoor, Test Valley, Winchester (population 948,000)
- South: Eastleigh, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth, Southampton (population 917,000)
- Isle of Wight

### Option 2

- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor, Test Valley, Winchester (639,000)
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton (697,000)
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth (529,000)
- Isle of Wight

### Option 3

- North: Basingstoke and Deane, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor, Winchester (772,000)
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton, Test Valley (564,000)
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth (529,000)
- Isle of Wight

### Option 4

- North-East: Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, Rushmoor (386,000)
- Central: Test Valley, Winchester, East Hampshire (386,000)
- South-West: Eastleigh, New Forest, Southampton (564,000)
- South-East: Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Portsmouth (529,000)
- Isle of Wight

All options create very large Unitaries. Decision-making will thus be rather less local especially as many parts of the County do not even have Parish or Town Councils.

Your District Councillors have had several briefings as the HCC/EHDC work has progressed.

The Government proposals seem not to include changing the roles and responsibilities of Parish Councils. We may find that these large Unitaries tend to push functions down on to Parish Councils whilst keeping decision-making within their bailiwick.

I hope that the new Unitary structures will enable decisions that affect local people and communities to accommodate the views and needs of the local people but this is a big ask.

I understand that HCC will be holding a briefing for Parish Councillors on 15 July.