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AT A MEETING of the Extraordinary County Council of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY  
COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Thursday 9 January 2025

Chairman:

\* Councillor Keith Mans

- \* Councillor Ann Briggs
- \* Councillor Nick Adams-King
- \* Councillor Prad Bains
- \* Councillor Lulu Bowerman
- \* Councillor Jackie Branson
- Councillor Ryan Brent
- \* Councillor Steven Broomfield
- \* Councillor Pamela Bryant
- \* Councillor Graham Burgess
- Councillor Joanne Burton
- \* Councillor Fran Carpenter
- \* Councillor Roz Chadd
- \* Councillor Peter Chegwyn
- \* Councillor Adrian Collett
- \* Councillor Mark Cooper
- Councillor Rod Cooper
- \* Councillor Tonia Craig
- \* Councillor Alex Crawford
- \* Councillor Debbie Curnow-Ford
- \* Councillor Tim Davies
- Councillor Christopher Donnelly
- \* Councillor Alan Dowden
- \* Councillor David Drew
- Councillor Barry Dunning
- \* Councillor Liz Fairhurst
- \* Councillor Michael Ford
- \* Councillor Steve Forster
- \* Councillor Jonathan Glen
- \* Councillor Tim Groves
- \* Councillor David Harrison
- \* Councillor Marge Harvey
- \* Councillor Pal Hayre
- \* Councillor Juliet Henderson
- Councillor Edward Heron
- \* Councillor Dominic Hiscock
- \* Councillor Keith House
- \* Councillor Zoe Huggins
- Councillor Wayne Irish
- \* Councillor Adam Jackman
- \* Councillor Gavin James
- \* Councillor Andrew Joy
- \* Councillor Mark Kemp-Gee
- Councillor Melville Kendal
- \* Councillor Rupert Kyrle
- \* Councillor Peter Latham
- Councillor Alexis McEvoy
- \* Councillor Lesley Meenaghan
- \* Councillor Derek Mellor
- \* Councillor Rob Mocatta
- \* Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
- \* Councillor Kirsty North
- \* Councillor Phil North
- \* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer
- \* Councillor Sarah Pankhurst
- Councillor Tanya Park
- \* Councillor Stephen Parker
- \* Councillor Louise Parker-Jones
- \* Councillor Neville Penman
- \* Councillor Stephen Philpott
- \* Councillor Jackie Porter
- \* Councillor Roger Price
- \* Councillor Lance Quantrill
- \* Councillor Stephen Reid
- \* Councillor Patricia Stallard
- \* Councillor Elaine Still
- \* Councillor Kim Taylor
- \* Councillor Tom Thacker
- \* Councillor Michael Thierry
- \* Councillor Martin Tod
- \* Councillor Andy Tree
- \* Councillor Jacky Tustain
- \* Councillor Rhydian Vaughan MBE
- \* Councillor Malcolm Wade
- \* Councillor Malcolm Wallace
- \* Councillor Jan Warwick
- \* Councillor Jonathan Williams
- \* Councillor Bill Withers Lt Col (Retd)

Also present with the agreement of the Chairman: Honorary Aldermen Keith Chapman and Roy Perry.

## **5. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Ryan Brent, Joanne Burton, Rod Cooper, Chris Donnelly, Barry Dunning, Edward Heron, Wayne Irish, Mel Kendal, Alexis McEvoy and Tanya Park, and from Honorary Alderman Patricia Banks.

## **6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

The following Members declared a personal interest in item 4 on the agenda, English Devolution White Paper, as members of other local authorities within Hampshire: Councillors Nick Adams-King, Ann Briggs, Graham Burgess, Peter Chegwyn, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Pal Hayre, Keith House, Zoe Huggins, Gavin James, Rupert Kyrle, Rob Mocatta, Kirsty North, Phil North, Louise Parker-Jones, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Jackie Porter, Michael Thierry, Martin Tod, Andy Tree, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace and Jonathan Williams.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman reminded members of the need to keep within speech time limits during debate.

## **8. ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER**

The Council considered a report of the Chief Executive on the implications and opportunities for the County Council of the English Devolution White paper including consideration of committing to devolution, preparing proposals for local government reorganisation and requesting the Secretary of State to delay the County Council's election in May.

The Chairman proposed a variation to Standing Orders to adjust the length of speeches and use the timings as for the budget sequence, which Council agreed.

The Leader advised that an addendum to the report had been published amending recommendation c) and he explained this was to reflect that delivery

of Local Government Reorganisation was not solely the responsibility of the County Council.

The amended recommendation c) is set out below:

*The County Council confirms its commitment to developing proposals for unitary councils across the area to be included in the proposed combined authority for the Solent and Hampshire area.*

The Leader proposed taking recommendations and any amendments individually as recorded votes. The Chairman put the proposal to the Council and it was agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 22.

In introducing the report, the Leader explained that the County Council was facing a profound and significant decision that would fundamentally change the delivery of local government in Hampshire. While there were still many unknowns, the government had made it clear that this route was mandatory, and therefore proactive engagement with the process was essential to maintain some control and align future proposals with the needs of residents.

The Leader outlined the proposals for devolution, including the introduction of a directly elected Mayor and creation of a combined authority which would bring greater powers and influence, and the Mayor would have a seat on the Council of the Nations and Regions. Details of the powers to be devolved from the government were outlined in paragraphs 26 and 27 of the report, and the Leader provided examples of benefits and scope for improved services for residents the transfer of powers from central government to a strategic level would provide, without geographic barriers. If accepted onto the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) a consultation with residents would be conducted, followed by government orders to facilitate the election of the new Mayor in 2026.

Participating in the Devolution Preparation Programme (DPP) would also allow the longest preparation time for local government reorganisation.

The government required a one-year postponement of elections to ensure sufficient capacity and stability for delivering a combined authority. Government legislation mandates a one-year delay, with primary legislation needed for any other period.

The Chairman invited questions from Members and several key points were covered.

Questions included how the pre-election period would impact the devolution process, the process for negotiation and consultation with residents, and the risks of devolution. The Leader explained that if the 2025 County Council election were to go ahead, consultations could not begin until after the new administration was formed, which would reduce the timeline significantly for devolution work and the government had suggested delaying the election to avoid these issues. It was noted that the outcome of the application to join the DPP was expected by the end of January, and the Leader confirmed that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would manage and conduct the consultation process. He acknowledged there were

risks and expressed his view that the benefits of devolution outweighed the risks. He also explained that a shadow council would be created as part of the process for local government reorganisation.

There was a question about whether the election could be deferred for less than one year and the financial implications of setting up the new arrangements. The Leader clarified that any delay of less than 12 months would require primary legislation and that the County Council would receive £2 million to establish the combined authority, with an expectation that existing resources of constituent authorities would be utilised.

Questions were raised about the cost of a Mayor and whether a combined authority would save money for residents. The Leader explained that the new arrangements would not create additional costs but would provide more power and tailored decision-making. A question was raised about the involvement of residents' voices in the discussions. The Leader assured that residents' voices would be heard through the MHCLG consultation.

There was also a question about the implications of not postponing the elections and the likelihood of being added to the DPP. The Leader indicated that they would not be added to the DPP if the elections were not delayed.

Finally, there was a question about the legislative requirements for delaying elections and the impact on by-elections. The Leader explained that the government was not proposing primary legislation for this delay and that by-elections would proceed as usual if vacancies arose.

The Chairman invited Councillor House, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, to speak. In accordance with Standing Order 17, Councillor House moved an amendment to the recommendations, seconded by Councillor Tod.

The amendments are set out below:

Add as **highlighted**

Delete as crossed-through

a) The County Council is committed to the creation of a Combined Authority across the wider region incorporating **Hampshire County Council**, Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council, in accordance with the expression of interest submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister on 30 August 2024.

b) The County Council will request to be included in the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) as a fast track to delivering devolution for our area.

c) The County Council confirms its commitment to delivering proposals for unitary councils across the area to be included in the proposed combined authority for the Solent and Hampshire area, **provided**  
**(i) the County and its District and Unitary partners not being constrained by a 500,000 population threshold;**

**(ii) other partners including the National Park Authorities and Town and Parish Councils are fully engaged and their needs taken into account;**  
**(iii) considering if existing District boundaries may be breached to allow for the strongest community and economic ties to create coherent local government arrangements; and**  
**(iv) any proposals for local government reorganisation adequately consider how to ensure the sustainable operation of any new authorities in the absence of exceptional financial support from government or a level of write off.**

~~d) As a consequence of joining the Devolution Priority Programme the County Council will request to Government a 12 month postponement of the County Council elections due to take place in May 2025 to provide a necessary stable platform on which devolution proposals can progress at pace in 2025 to ensure the benefits of devolution for the area are realised as quickly as possible.~~

**The County Council requests from government a short delay within 2025 of the elections due to take place in May 2025 if this facilitates devolution proposals proceeding at pace to ensure any benefits of devolution for the area are realised as quickly as possible.**

Councillor House acknowledged the complexity of the situation and emphasised the need for a measured approach. He noted that past attempts at devolution had not succeeded due to various reasons. He expressed concerns about the limited powers and funding being offered, highlighted the importance of influence and supported devolution on balance. Regarding local government reorganisation, Councillor House questioned whether it would bring decisions closer to people and emphasised the need for long-term thinking. Finally, he stressed the importance of maintaining elections to uphold democracy.

The Chairman invited the Leader of the Independent Group, Councillor Tree, to speak. Councillor Tree acknowledged the independence of members to make their own choices, including on amendments. He noted the benefits of devolution and looked forward to details on mayoral powers and funding. He expressed concerns about boundary changes, particularly regarding transport and travel, and the impact on large urban and rural areas. He noted the longstanding Hampshire geographic boundary and the potential for other areas to join a combined authority in the future. Councillor Tree emphasised that delaying elections should be a last resort, highlighted the importance of public voice and striving for a positive outcome for residents in the long term.

The Chairman invited the Leader of the Labour Group, Councillor Taylor, to speak. Councillor Taylor highlighted the considerable benefits of devolution, particularly in addressing climate change and economic wellbeing. She noted significant deprivation in her electoral division and welcomed a strategy to tackle it across the whole region. She emphasised the urgency of being part of the DPP to maximize funding opportunities and expressed her view that local government reorganization was inevitable and necessary. Councillor Taylor supported delaying elections, citing existing precedent and lack of negative comments from residents in the past. She believed the substantive recommendations would deliver the needed outcomes and was supportive overall.

During the debate that followed, a number of perspectives were shared and concerns raised and are summarised below:

- Acknowledgement that both devolution and reorganisation were inevitable, with the main issue being the timing.
- Reluctant agreement with the devolution plan, noting that devolution and reorganisation were closely linked and that changes would happen quickly.
- Emphasis of the need for careful consideration of future geographic boundaries to prevent inappropriate division of communities.
- Noted the confusion caused to residents by the two-tier system and the need for more open-minded and creative thinking to avoid unnecessary upheaval.
- Emphasis of the financial challenges, including the high costs of adult and children's care.
- Acknowledgment of past opposition to reorganisation, which was becoming a necessity.
- Concern about the risk of taking decision-making away from local people and the accountability of a Mayor.
- Concern about losing well-run local authorities and creating large, remote bodies with little evidence of effectiveness.
- Lack of information from government about funding.
- The need for funding and powers to support vulnerable populations and the importance of strong local government.
- Potential impact on smaller towns and parishes, the need for a democratic mandate, and the importance of considering the interests of staff whose lives might be affected by the changes.

There was some support for delaying elections to ensure capacity for change, and a view that the proposal was the least worst option in terms of unlocking the benefits of devolution and improved service delivery and outcomes for residents in the longer term.

The Leader concluded the debate by thanking members for their reasoned and professional contributions. Acknowledging the fast pace of the process, he agreed that more time for discussions would be preferable but noted the necessity of proceeding with the current option to maximise available time. He highlighted the importance of addressing cross-boundary issues and acknowledged valuable points made by members regarding deprivation, governance, and the need for a well-structured Mayoral role.

The Leader also emphasized the importance of considering the most vulnerable residents and ensuring their needs were at the forefront. He explained that there would be future decisions on final plans, providing opportunities for further input and adjustments. He expressed gratitude to the officers involved in work so far and the Leaders of Portsmouth City, Southampton City and Isle of Wight Councils.

The debate concluded with acknowledgment of the quality of the discussion and the work of the Leader and officers.

The Chairman put the amended recommendations, followed by the substantive recommendations to the vote, as follows:

Amended recommendation A

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (19): Prad Bains, Peter Chegwyn, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alan Dowden, Tim Groves, David Harrison, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Gavin James, Sarah Pankhurst, Louise Parker-Jones, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Martin Tod, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace and Jonathan Williams.

AGAINST (46): Nick Adams-King, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Stephen Parker, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Andy Tree, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Jan Warwick and Bill Withers

The Amendment was lost.

Substantive recommendation A

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (64): Nick Adams-King, Prad Bains, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, Alan Dowden, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Tim Groves, Marge Harvey, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Gavin James, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Sarah Pankhurst, Stephen Parker, Louise Parker-Jones, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Martin Tod, Andy Tree, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace, Jan Warwick, Jonathan Williams and Bill Withers.

AGAINST (1): Peter Chegwyn

ABSTAIN (1): David Harrison

The recommendation was agreed.

Substantive recommendation B

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (65): Nick Adams-King, Prad Bains, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, Alan Dowden, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Tim Groves, David Harrison, Marge Harvey, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Gavin James, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Sarah Pankhurst, Stephen Parker, Louise Parker-Jones, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Martin Tod, Andy Tree, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace, Jan Warwick, Jonathan Williams and Bill Withers.

AGAINST (1): Peter Chegwyn

The recommendation was agreed.

#### Amended recommendation C

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (21): Prad Bains, Peter Chegwyn, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alex Crawford, Alan Dowden, Tim Groves, David Harrison, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Sarah Pankhurst, Louise Parker-Jones, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Patricia Stallard, Martin Tod, Jacky Tustain, Malcolm Wallace and Jonathan Williams.

AGAINST (42): Nick Adams-King, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Adrian Collett, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Gavin James, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Russell Oppenheimer, Stephen Parker, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Andy Tree, Rhydian Vaughan, Jan Warwick and Bill Withers

ABSTAIN (1): Marge Harvey

The Amendment was lost.

#### Substantive recommendation C (as in the Addendum to the report)

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (51): Nick Adams-King, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, David Drew, Liz



Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Marge Harvey, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Sarah Pankhurst, Stephen Parker, Louise Parker-Jones, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Jackie Porter, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Andy Tree, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Malcolm Wallace, Jan Warwick and Bill Withers.

AGAINST (11): Prad Bains, Peter Chegwyn, Adrian Collett, Tonia Craig, Tim Groves, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Gavin James, Roger Price, Martin Tod and Malcolm Wade.

ABSTAIN (4): Mark Cooper, Alan Dowden, David Harrison and Jonathan Williams.

The recommendation was agreed.

#### Amended recommendation D

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (18): Prad Bains, Peter Chegwyn, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alan Dowden, Tim Groves, David Harrison, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Gavin James, Louise Parker-Jones, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Martin Tod, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace and Jonathan Williams.

AGAINST (47): Nick Adams-King, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Marge Harvey, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Sarah Pankhurst, Stephen Parker, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Jan Warwick and Bill Withers

ABSTAIN (1): Andy Tree

The Amendment was lost.

#### Substantive recommendation D

The outcome of the recorded vote was as follows:

FOR (47): Nick Adams-King, Lulu Bowerman, Jackie Branson, Ann Briggs, Steven Broomfield, Pamela Bryant, Graham Burgess, Fran Carpenter, Roz Chadd, Alex Crawford, Debbie Curnow-Ford, Tim Davies, David Drew, Liz Fairhurst, Michael Ford, Steve Forster, Jonathan Glen, Marge Harvey, Pal Hayre, Juliet Henderson, Zoe Huggins, Adam Jackman, Andrew Joy, Mark Kemp-Gee, Peter Latham, Lesley Meenaghan, Derek Mellor, Rob Mocatta, Arun

Mummalaneni, Kirsty North, Phil North, Russell Oppenheimer, Sarah Pankhurst, Stephen Parker, Neville Penman, Stephen Philpott, Lance Quantrill, Stephen Reid, Patricia Stallard, Elaine Still, Kim Taylor, Tom Thacker, Michael Thierry, Jacky Tustain, Rhydian Vaughan, Jan Warwick and Bill Withers.

AGAINST (19): Prad Bains, Peter Chegwyn, Adrian Collett, Mark Cooper, Tonia Craig, Alan Dowden, Tim Groves, David Harrison, Dominic Hiscock, Keith House, Gavin James, Louise Parker-Jones, Jackie Porter, Roger Price, Martin Tod, Andy Tree, Malcolm Wade, Malcolm Wallace and Jonathan Williams.

The recommendation was agreed.

RESOLVED:

The County Council agrees and recommends to Cabinet that:

- a) The County Council is committed to the creation of a Combined Authority across the wider region incorporating Isle of Wight Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council, in accordance with the expression of interest submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister on 30 August 2024.
- b) The County Council will request to be included in the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) as a fast track to delivering devolution for our area.
- c) The County Council confirms its commitment to developing proposals for unitary councils across the area to be included in the proposed combined authority for the Solent and Hampshire area.
- d) As a consequence of joining the Devolution Priority Programme the County Council will request to Government a 12 month postponement of the County Council elections due to take place in May 2025 to provide a necessary stable platform on which devolution proposals can progress at pace in 2025 to ensure the benefits of devolution for the area are realised as quickly as possible

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Chairman,