

REPORT OF THE
Chief Executive
PART I

1. ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER - RESPONSE TO GOVERNMENT'S DEVOLUTION CONSULTATION

- 1.1 Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton Councils applied to join the Devolution Priority Programme to establish a Mayoral Combined County Authority across these areas. On 5 February 2025, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) confirmed Hampshire and the Solent was one of six regions across England that has been accepted onto the programme.
- 1.2 A public consultation on the establishment of a Mayoral Combined County Authority in the area is the first key step of the Devolution Priority Programme; the consultation is led by the MHCLG and is required before taking a decision on whether to proceed with the making of the necessary legislation to enable devolution. It seeks views on the Proposed Geography, Governance Arrangements, Supporting the Economy, Improving Social Outcomes, Local Government Services, Improving the local natural environment, and Supporting the needs of local communities and reflect local identity.
- 1.3 The eight-week consultation, launched on 17 February 2025, seeks views from interested parties, including those who live and work in the area, on a proposal to form a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas in Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Isle of Wight Council, and Southampton City Council.
- 1.4 The County Council, as a proposed Constituent Authority, is expected to submit a response to the Government's consultation. A report has been prepared for Cabinet summarising the background to the County Council's devolution journey, the timeline provided by Government including key milestones in the Devolution Priority Programme and the proposed County Council response to the consultation. The report is appended here for Council to consider the proposed consultation response for submission.
- 1.5 The full report to Cabinet can be found at the following link and is appended to this Part I report: [Agenda for Cabinet on Friday 21 March 2025, 10.00 am | About the Council | Hampshire County Council](#)

RECOMMENDATION

With reference to the report annexed to this Council report, it is recommended that the County Council recommends that Cabinet agrees to submit the County Council's proposed response, as set out in Appendix A to the Cabinet report, to the consultation launched by the Government on 17 February 2025 in relation to

establishing a Mayoral Combined County Authority across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight and Southampton.