

Brighton & Hove City Council

Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda Item 32

Subject: Local Government Reorganisation Update

Date of meeting: 22nd September 2025

Report of: Chair of Place Overview & Scrutiny

Contact Officer: Name: Natalie Sacks-Hammond

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Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Key Decision: No

For general release

Note: Urgency

By reason of the special circumstances below, and in accordance with section 100B(4)(b) of the 1972 Act, the Chair of the meeting has been consulted and is of the opinion that this item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Note: Reasons for urgency

The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 3, Access to Information Procedure Rule 5 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were that the proposals to central government were still under development.

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 This report provides an update to Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on Local Government Reorganisation following the public engagement phase which was live from 25th July – 25th August 2025.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee to note and comment on the proposed submission on LGR to central government ahead of Cabinet approval.

3. Context and background information

- 3.1 The Government is planning a major reorganisation of how councils work. Under these plans, County and District Councils, such as neighbouring East

Sussex County Council and Lewes District Council, will be abolished and replaced by new unitary councils. These proposals are intended to strengthen local leadership, improve service integration, and ensure long-term financial resilience

- 3.2 On 3 June 2025, the Government formally invited councils in East Sussex and Brighton & Hove to submit final proposals for Local Government Reorganisation.
- 3.3 A public engagement exercise with residents of Brighton & Hove commenced on 25th July and remained open for a month. It presented four options for comment:
- Option A: Strengthening the Eastern Edge This proposes incorporating East Saltdean, Telscombe Cliffs, and Peacehaven. It reflects natural patterns of travel, service use, and community overlap with the city's eastern boundary.
 - Option B: Extending to the Eastern Downs Building on Option A, this includes the parish of Kingston, enabling greater continuity with rural downland communities and service networks.
 - Option C: Uniting the Coastal Corridor Extends Option B by incorporating Newhaven, creating a more coherent coastal geography with shared economic and transport links, particularly along the A259 corridor.
 - Option D: Coast and Downs Partnership Combines all of the above, presenting the broadest illustrative footprint 7 and the greatest potential for achieving scale, service integration, and financial resilience.
- 3.4 The Cabinet report presents the preferred options for Local Government Reorganisation in Sussex and the reasons behind this. You can access the Cabinet report at appendix A.
- 3.5 The proposal must be submitted to MHCLG by 26 September 2025, with Cabinet due to consider Brighton & Hove's proposal on 25 September 2025.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee can make specific comments to Cabinet if they wish, which will be shared with Cabinet members in advance of their meeting.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 Not relevant for this report but there has been a lot of engagement in Local Government Reorganisation including being presented at Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 5th June 2025 and 31st July 2025. Please see Cabinet report for details on this.

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 Finance implications are addressed in the Cabinet report

Name of finance officer consulted: John Hooten
16/09/25

Date consulted:

7. Legal implications

7.1 The legal implications are addressed in the Cabinet report.

Name of lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date consulted 100925:

8. Equalities implications

8.1 See Cabinet report

9. Sustainability implications

9.1 See Cabinet report

10. Health and Wellbeing Implications:

10.1 See Cabinet report

11. Conclusion

11.1 Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee notes the report and passes any comments on to Cabinet.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

1. LGR Cabinet report
2. Appendix 1: Representative Councils for a Devolved Sussex_ a five unitary proposal
3. Appendix 2: LGR engagement document – July to August 2025

