

BUSINESS CASE - SINGLE EAST KENT COUNCIL

Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) – 13 March 2017

Cabinet – 20 March 2017

Council – 22 March 2017

Cabinet – 23 March 2017

NEXT STEPS

If the decision is to proceed with the creation of a single East Kent district, an indicative timetable for progressing has been set out below (subject to further confirmation from the Department of Communities and Local Government):

Activity	Indicative Timings
Engagement with DCLG on draft business case	Early 2017
Each council to agree to proceed with business case subject to any engagement required / agreed	22 March 2017
Public consultation and engagement period	24 March – 19 May 2017
Executive decision by cabinet of each council whether to proceed with project for a new East Kent Council ^[1]	July 2017

From the July decision, these dates are subject to change through discussions with DCLG and the Boundary Commission. However, they give an indication of the process based on conversations to date with DCLG and the Boundary Commission:

Activity	Indicative Timings
<i>Proposals to create a new council submitted to DCLG (demonstrating clear political commitment from Districts involved)</i>	<i>July 2017</i>
<i>DCLG works with East Kent councils to formulate the Order</i>	<i>July to Autumn 2017</i>
<i>Secretary of State agrees order for formal approval by the four council's Cabinet/Council</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>
<i>Final Decisions by Secretary of State</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>
<i>DCLG to prepare necessary statutory instruments modifying existing legislation where required (in order to establish new organisation, wind up the old ones and make transitional arrangements)</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>
<i>Each council invited to give formal consent to creation of the new entity</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>

^[1] Cabinet will take views of Council before taking this decision.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Indicative Timings</i>
<i>New entity considered by Houses of Parliament</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>
<i>Secretary of State decision</i>	<i>Autumn 2017</i>
<i>Boundary Commission undertake electoral review (NB this is optional but preferred approach of DCLG – alternative is an Order that creates a new council, using temporary wards as basis for the first election, and subsequent election boundaries considered by Boundary Commission).</i>	<i>Autumn 2017 to Autumn 2018</i>
<i>Establish Implementation Executive or similar body (which will be the decision making body until members of the new authority are elected)</i>	<i>Nov / Dec 2017</i>
<i>Agree initial structure for the new council</i>	<i>Dec 2017</i>
<i>Likely TUPE consultation period commences (to be confirmed on the basis of legal advice)</i>	<i>Dec 2017 / Jan 2018</i>
<i>Implementation Executive commences recruitment of senior posts (externally advertised)</i>	<i>Early 2018</i>
<i>Implementation Executive agrees Council tax harmonisation discretionary order with DCLG</i>	<i>2018</i>
<i>Implementation Executive sets first year budget for the new authority and council tax rate</i>	<i>Late 2018/ early 2019</i>
<i>First year budget for the new authority and council tax rate confirmed by all Councillors</i>	<i>Late 2018/ early 2019</i>
<i>New council legally takes effect (Vesting Day)</i>	<i>April 2019</i>
<i>Elections to new council</i>	<i>May 2019</i>

Negotiations with DCLG

Discussions have been held through this process with DCLG and the four East Kent district Leaders will be recommending the following (if agreed to proceed post July):

1. As part of the Order, to propose to DCLG that a new East Kent Council should be based on a committee system and include local area working for planning and licensing, as a minimum.
2. That DCLG be asked to support this project through a contribution towards the transition costs for the project to reduce the impact on the Council tax setting for a new council.