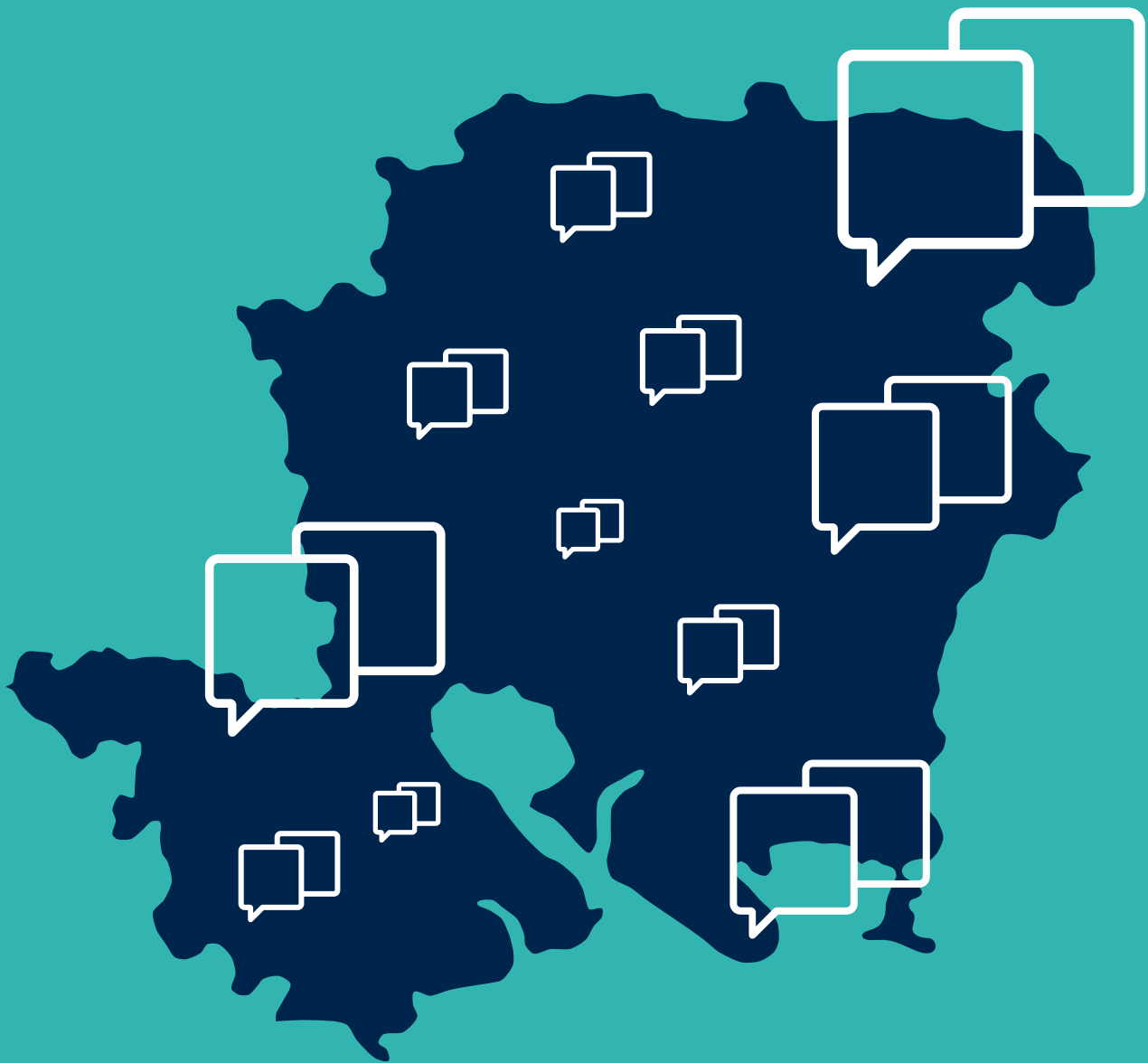


Serving Hampshire Consultation

Options for future local government
in Hampshire



Executive Summary



Hampshire
County Council

www.hants.gov.uk

About this consultation

Hampshire County Council is asking for your views on different ways that councils in Hampshire could change or be reorganised to help sustain the delivery of core council services in the future.

This includes how councils in Hampshire could receive more devolved powers and funding from central Government.

Similar to most other areas, the amount of money that councils in Hampshire receive from central Government is reducing. At the same time Hampshire's population is growing, which is placing more demand on council services. These changes mean that it could become more difficult to sustain core council services without making any change or reorganising.

Hampshire County Council does not have to recommend any changes or reorganisation to central Government. Instead, it could choose to propose to keep the status-quo. However, this could make it more difficult to continue to deliver services at current levels.

Any changes could affect you – for example, in terms of how much council tax you pay, the influence you have over how public money is spent, what council services you receive in the future, and the way services are delivered. **Hampshire County Council would like to listen to your views first**, before considering what recommendations to make to central Government about any change or reorganising.

This consultation concerns the county of Hampshire - the area covered by Hampshire County Council and the 11 district councils in Hampshire – not the cities of Portsmouth and Southampton or the Isle of Wight. However, some of the options for change in Hampshire do refer to the two cities and the Island.

Hampshire County Council has appointed independent researchers, Ipsos MORI, to process and analyse responses to this consultation.

Summary of consultation options

We recommend you read carefully the accompanying *Serving Hampshire Consultation Information Pack*. This contains detailed information on the options summarised below, including background information on the reasons for this consultation and the case for and against the options for how Hampshire councils could be changed or reorganised.

Hampshire County Council is asking for your views on the following options:

Option one – create one, or possibly two, combined authorities

Hampshire County Council and the 11 district councils could legally join together, with or without Portsmouth, Southampton or Isle of Wight councils. One, or possibly two, Combined Authority arrangements could allow some services to be run jointly such as those related to transport, and for more powers and funding to be gained from central Government.

Any Combined Authority or authorities would create an additional layer of government alongside existing councils, which would continue to provide services outside of those provided by the Combined Authority or authorities.

If residents favoured a Combined Authority model, options could include:

Option 1a: create a single Combined Authority called the *Hampshire and Isle of Wight Combined Authority* made up of Hampshire County Council, the 11 district councils in Hampshire plus Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and Isle of Wight Council.

Option 1b: create two separate combined authorities:

- ***Heart of Hampshire Combined Authority*** – covering part of Hampshire and made up of Basingstoke and Deane, Hart, New Forest, Rushmoor, Test Valley and Winchester district councils and Hampshire County Council.
- ***Solent Combined Authority*** - covering part of Hampshire and made up of Eastleigh, East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport and Havant district councils, Hampshire County Council and the councils of Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.

Central Government's preference is for a Combined Authority to be ***led by a directly elected mayor***, who would have decision-making powers. A Combined Authority approach could mean directly electing one, or possibly two, mayors in Hampshire. Combined authorities and directly elected mayors would operate in addition to the existing local councils.

Option two – Reorganise to a unitary council model

Hampshire County Council and the 11 district councils in Hampshire could also merge to create one or more new unitary councils. This would mean that residents would receive all council services from a single council only, rather than Hampshire County Council and their district council, which would be replaced by the new unitary council or councils. A unitary model could also include some, or all, of the existing unitary councils of Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

If residents favoured a unitary model, there are different ways this could be achieved. To examine these, Hampshire County Council commissioned consultancy firm Deloitte to undertake independent analysis of seven different options for reorganisation.

Based on this analysis, Hampshire County Council would like your views on the following options:

- **Option 2a: create a single unitary council for the existing Hampshire County Council area** – Hampshire County Council and the 11 district councils could be replaced with a new single unitary council for Hampshire, responsible for all council services across the area. The existing unitary councils of Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight would not be affected.
- **Option 2b: create three new unitary councils for the existing Hampshire County Council area and neighbouring areas of Portsmouth and Southampton** – Hampshire County Council and the 11

district councils in Hampshire, as well as the unitary councils of Portsmouth and Southampton, could be replaced by three new unitary councils responsible for all council services across these areas. The existing Isle of Wight unitary council would not be affected.

The new three unitary councils under option 2b would be:

- **Greater Portsmouth:** Portsmouth City Council, the district councils of Fareham, Gosport and Havant, and the services provided by Hampshire County Council in the area equivalent to these district councils, would merge to create a new Greater Portsmouth unitary council.
- **Greater Southampton:** Southampton City Council, the district councils of New Forest and Eastleigh and the services provided by Hampshire County Council in the area equivalent to these district councils would merge to create a new Greater Southampton unitary council.
- **North Hampshire:** The district councils of Winchester, Basingstoke, East Hampshire, Hart, Rushmoor and Test Valley and the services provided by Hampshire County Council in the area equivalent to these district councils would merge to create a new North Hampshire unitary council.

Hampshire County Council would like to hear your views on these options first, before any proposals are taken forward.

How to have your say

To provide your feedback, please complete the Response Form available online at **www3.hants.gov.uk/servinghampshire**.

Alternatively, you can request a paper copy by emailing **servinghampshire@ipsos-mori.com** or by calling **0808-2024-970**.

The consultation is open from 27 July and will close at 11.59pm on 20 September 2016.

Please note that responses received after this time will **not** be included in the findings report.