

Swale Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Update for Area Committees

June 2025

Kent and Medway Councils jointly responded to the Government's invitation to develop a local government reorganisation proposal for the area, with an initial business case being submitted in March 2025. This initial business case included the consideration of a number of different geographic model options, all of which would require further work up based upon a series of questions to be resolved and further evidence gathering. Initial feedback has been provided by the Government, which is a check-in point, rather than a decision in terms of which model Kent adopts. The comments from Government included the key information that will need to be included in the final submission. It also recognised that Kent, as a major entry point to the UK, brings its own unique challenges which will need to be considered, along with the impact of any model on key services such as adult and children social care; children with special education needs and disabilities; homelessness and public safety.

The final submission needs to be made to Government by the 28th November, detailing the proposed unitary models, along with the evidence and justification for that proposal. Swale BC will be able to submit its preferred option, which may be different to other Councils views. Councillors will be asked to agree this at a Full Council meeting in November.

There is a lot of work to do before November, and the councils across Kent and Medway are working to appoint a strategic partner to help prepare the final submission. They will help by collecting data, insights and consultation feedback from all authorities in Kent, and help to form the final business case. Swale BC will heavily involved with this process and will be working with internal teams and our key external partners to ensure that our local context and risks are effectively captured.

In addition to working with internal teams and external partners, Swale BC are also working closely with town and parish councils, with the first workshops taking place in June to shape how this work will progress.

Alongside this, a countywide communications campaign will be launched at the end of June, focusing in ensuring residents are aware of changes taking place for local council services. This will be ahead of further campaigns at a later stage that would focus on impact on services once a final model is confirmed.

Swale Borough Council will also be undertaking engagement work from late Summer to capture our residents' views on priority services for the new Council. There will be an opportunity to take part in the process at the next round of Area Committees.