

FULL COUNCIL

9 JANUARY 2025

Present:

Councillors Atkins, Buscombe, Clarence, Daws, Dawson (Chair), Foden, Hall, Hayes, Jackman, Keeling, Lake, MacGregor, Major, Morgan, Nutley, Nuttall, C Parker, P Parker, Parrott, Radford, Rogers, Rollason, Ryan, Sanders (Vice-Chair), Smith, G Taylor, J Taylor, Thorne and Williams

Apologies:

Councillors Bradford, Bullivant, Cox, Farrand-Rogers, Goodman-Bradbury, Hook, James, Mullone, Palethorpe, Purser, Steemson, Swain, Webster and Wrigley

Officers in Attendance:

Trish Corns, Democratic Services Officer
Martin Flitcroft, Director of Corporate Services
Christopher Morgan, Trainee Democratic Services Officer
Amanda Pujol, Head of Customer Experience and Transformation
Phil Shears, Managing Director
Paul Woodhead, Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer

78. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

79. ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The Managing Director presented the agenda report on the proposed changes set out in the English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024, particularly those relating to local government.

The report focused on the four main points:

- a) Principal Authorities and local government reorganisation
- b) Strategic Authorities and 'devolution by default'
- c) The expansion of powers and funding for mayoral areas
- d) Changes to strategic planning

The chart set out at page 3 of the agenda report, and the appended joint statement issued by the leaders of the eight district councils were particularly referred to.

It was proposed by the Leader and seconded by Cllr Williams that the recommendation as set out in the agenda report be approved with an

amendment to add the words *with residents and business* at the end of recommendation 2.

An observation was made by some Cllrs that the words *delegated powers* at recommendation 4 could limit the views of all Cllrs being fully taken into account in negotiations and discussions.

The meeting therefore adjourned for a short break for Group Leaders to agree wording for recommendation 4 of the agenda report.

The meeting reconvened.

The Leader proposed an amendment to recommendation 4 to delete the words *delegated powers* from line 1, and to add the words *with a framework and reporting mechanism to be agreed*. This was agreed by the seconder of the original proposal above.

It was proposed by Cllr Macgregor and seconded by Cllr J Taylor that the words *as an only option* be added to recommendation 3a. to demonstrate that the council wishes to consider all unitary options for Teignbridge.

This was put to the vote and CARRIED by 13 votes for, 11 against and 5 abstentions.

The substantial motion was then put to the vote, and it was unanimously,

RESOLVED

That Council:

1. Notes the proposals arising from the English Devolution White Paper, including the proposed introduction of a new devolution framework and the plans for local government reorganisation.
2. Endorses the Leader to write to the Government outlining the Council's support for genuine devolution, whilst raising concern for the proposed pace of change which allows little time for detailed option analysis and consultation with residents and businesses.
3. Supports the joint statement issued by the leaders of the eight district councils in Devon to oppose:
 - a. A single Unitary Council solution for Devon as an only option; and
 - b. The postponement of the County Council elections in May 2025.
4. Endorses the Leader and Managing Director to continue negotiations and discussions around the form and geography of future principal authorities and report back to Full Council as appropriate, with a framework and reporting mechanism to be agreed.

The meeting started at 10am and finished at 11.58

CLLR R DAWSON
Chair