

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	CABINET	
<b>DATE:</b>	19 November 2025	
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Councillor Noordad Aziz, Chair of the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	Susan Gardner, Policy and Scrutiny Officer	
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Local Government Reorganisation Recommendations of the Committee	
<b>EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)</b>	<b>No</b>	Not applicable
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	<b>No</b>	If yes, date of publication:

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To inform Cabinet of recent consideration given by Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the Local Government Reorganisation and the Council's preparations to submit a proposal to Government by the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

## 2. Recommendations

That Cabinet note that the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee support:

2.1 The Council's proposal for a three unitary authority model for Local Government re-organisation in Lancashire;

2.2 The postponement of the 2026 Local Elections for Hyndburn; and

2.3 That it also be noted, that the Leader of the Council thanked the Chief Executive, the Policy Manager and the Executive Director, Resources, for their hard work in preparing the report and representing the Council at regional meetings.

## 3. Reasons for Recommendations and Background

- 3.1 The Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution introduced the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2025, following the publication of the English Devolution White Paper on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- 3.2 The new Bill announced how the Government would facilitate a programme of local government reorganisation for two-tier areas and for those unitary councils where evidence of failure or size was impeding their ability to deliver sustainable and high quality services to residents.
- 3.3 Government had set a timescale for Lancashire Councils to produce their preferred options for local Government re-organisation by the 28th November 2025.
- 3.4 At the Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025 Members were provided with a report on Local Government Reorganisation and updated on the Council's preparations to submit their proposal to Government. Members of the Committee were requested to give consideration, using the evidence set out in the business case, for the Council's proposed option for three unitary authorities. Opportunity for further consideration is also being provided for Members at Full Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> November before a final decision is made by Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- 3.5 Members had been provided with the business cases for all of the different options proposed by the Lancashire district councils, Lancashire County Council and the two unitary councils.

#### **4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection**

- 4.1 That Cabinet do not agree with the recommendation for three unitary authorities and chose an alternative option.
- 4.2 That Cabinet decide to continue with the Local Elections in 2026. The Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered that the postponement of the Elections would provide a smoother transition to the creation of a new authority with less disruption.

#### **5. Consultations**

- 5.1 The Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, Councillor Munsif Dad and the Policy Manager were in attendance to present the Council's proposal and business case supporting the creation of three unitary authorities and to respond to the questions and comments of Members of the Committee.
- 5.2 The Committee was provided with a number of documents, the Executive Summary and the Business Case for the three unitary authority business case, with a summary of the alternative models.

5.3 There is further opportunity for public consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in February 2026.

## 6. Implications

<b>Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)</b>	Financial implications would be long term in respect of transition costs and would depend on the Government decision on which unitary model is the preferred option.
<b>Legal and human rights implications</b>	None immediately.
<b>Assessment of risk</b>	Future risks would depend on the preferred option.
<b>Equality and diversity implications</b> <i>A <a href="#">Customer First Analysis</a> should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	N/A

## 7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

7.1 Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2025  
[- Hyndburn Borough Council](#)

Council – 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025 – 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2025 - [- Hyndburn Borough Council](#)

## 8. Freedom of Information

8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.