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| **news release** **09 January 2025** **Sussex Councils agree to submit expression of interest on devolution** The Cabinets of the three Sussex upper tier Councils have today agreed to submit an expression of interest to be considered for the Government’s Devolution Priority Programme indicating support for a Sussex Mayoral Strategic Authority which could unlock new powers for the region.The Government’s white paper on English Devolution states that Mayoral Strategic Authorities will bring funding and local decision-making powers down from central government to deliver on economic growth, jobs and skills, housing and transport.A Mayoral Strategic Authority could give the people of Sussex a stronger voice in how national decisions affect them and greater power to shape major projects across the area.If the Government accepts the initial proposal for Sussex to join the devolution priority programme, the Government will run a consultation to obtain residents’ views.West Sussex County Council Leader, Cllr Paul Marshall, said: “We were pleased to receive the clarity needed from the Government which clearly identified the benefits an elected Mayor and strategic authority would bring to Sussex. By bringing powers down from central government on transport, infrastructure and health, we can join services and plans together that will enable more efficient and strategic decision making which will help boost our economy and the wellbeing of our residents and communities.”Cllr Bella Sankey, Leader of Brighton & Hove City Council said: “This is an exciting and significant step to unlock new powers and resources for communities across Sussex. I’m keen to move swiftly with the Government and all tiers of local government across the region to take advantage of the opportunities being presented to us.”Leader of East Sussex County Council, Cllr Keith Glazier, said: “This is historic for Sussex; bringing together the three authorities and our partners to discuss the future of local government in the area and the benefits to our residents, businesses, and communities it could bring. We have all looked closely at the Government’s white paper, together discussed its benefits and what it offers and believe that we have come to the right decision to put forward an expression of interest for a Strategic Mayoral Authority for Sussex.”The Government’s White Paper set out in detail the key areas that a strategic authority would be in control of to drive growth and provide support on shaping public services. These include:* Transport and local infrastructure
* Skills and employment support
* Housing and strategic planning
* Economic development and regeneration
* Environment and climate change
* Health, wellbeing and public service reform
* Public safety

**Notes to editors**The expected timeline following the submission of the proposal is:* A devolution consultation would be held before the end of March 2025.
* The results of the devolution consultation will be assessed in the Spring 2025 following which a Ministerial decision will be taken as to whether to proceed with a Mayoral Strategic Authority (prior to unitary re-organisation).  The Spending Review will then confirm future mayoral investment funds for new mayoral areas.
* relevant legislation will be laid before Parliament in relation to the creation of Strategic Authorities.
* In March 2026 notice of mayoral elections will be given for a Mayoral election in May 2026. A decision whether to move to a Mayoral Strategic Authority under the reorganised arrangements would follow.

The plans for devolution do not change the councils’ commitment to service delivery for communities across Sussex.There will follow a separate process of Local Government re-organisation:* A formal invitation to submit reorganisation proposals will be issued to all authorities in January.
* At the end of 2025 and in early 2026 Ministers will consider unitary proposals and delivery phasing with statutory consultations being undertaken on the first tranche of proposals.

Timelines for the remainder of the reorganisation process will be subject to the proposals received. -ends-**For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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