Seaford Town Council

Seaford Town Council's Response to the Local Government Reorganisation Consultation

Submitted: 09-Jan-26
Approved by Full Council: 08-Jan-26
Consultation link: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-east-sussex-and-brighton-and-hove-and-west-sussex

Proposal 1 - Consultation for 2 unitary councils:

1. **A single unitary authority:** Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden
2. **Brighton and Hove** to remain unchanged

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Strongly agree **Somewhat agree** Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree **Don't know**

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Strongly agree **Somewhat agree** Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Strongly agree **Somewhat agree** Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Strongly agree **Somewhat agree** Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

9. If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

The Proposal retains the existing historic links between the towns and villages of East Sussex, especially in the case of Seaford (and Newhaven) - for its historic links to Lewes, Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs.

It would utilise to best effect the existing strong partnerships between the current County Council and District and Borough Councils across the county to enhance local voice and accountability.

The proposal satisfies the Government's stated minimum population aspiration for a minimum of 500,000 population, and would prevent substantial wasted reorganisation costs caused by slicing up the county, by utilising the existing geographical boundaries for services that already exist across the footprint of the county.

This proposal is the least disruptive to the communities across East Sussex, and is supported by 5 out of 6 of the legacy councils, whilst also delivering the unitary model of local governance.

The Town and Parish Councils, particularly in Seaford, stand ready to work in close stakeholder partnership with the emerging unitary authority to help represent and advocate for their townsfolk at a hyper local level following the dissolution of the current District & Borough Councils.

10. I confirm that I have not provided any information that identifies an individual in the free text box.
Yes

Proposal 2 - Consultation for 5 unitary councils:

1. **Unitary A:** Brighton and Hove plus 4 wards and 1 parish from Lewes
2. **Unitary B:** Eastbourne, Hastings, Rother plus 5 wards from Lewes and 9 wards from Wealden
3. **Unitary C:** Mid-Sussex plus 34 wards from Wealden and 10 wards from Lewes
4. **Unitary D:** Chichester, Crawley, Horsham
5. **Unitary E:** Adur, Arun, and Worthing

This proposal is accompanied by a request for boundary change to split existing districts between new unitary authorities. Please answer the questions on the proposal including the modifications. We will also ask you an additional question on whether you think there is a strong justification for these splits.

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree **Strongly disagree** Don't know

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree **Strongly disagree** Don't know

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree **Strongly disagree** Don't know

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree **Don't know**

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree **Somewhat disagree** Strongly disagree Don't know

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree **Strongly disagree** Don't know

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree **Neither agree nor disagree** Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree **Neither agree nor disagree** Somewhat disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

9. If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal. Text box to add further comments

a) **It would separate Seaford (and Newhaven) from their near neighbours East Saltdean, Telscombe Cliffs and Peacehaven, who would be placed into Unitary A, administered from Brighton.**
b) **It would separate Seaford (and Newhaven) from their historic links to Lewes, who would be placed in Unitary C described as 'Mid-Sussex'.**
c) **It would pair Seaford (and Newhaven) with the distant towns of Hastings, Rye, Battle and Bexhill, in addition to Eastbourne, and seeks to suggest Seaford has more affinity to these towns than it does to its close Lewes**

District neighbours with which the town has worked and cooperated over decades

d) **It would create 5 unitary councils with populations of 300,000-400,000, not one of which would comply with the Government's published criteria of 500,000 population as a recommended minimum**

e) **It focuses heavily on "protecting the identity" of Brighton & Hove, whilst affording no such considerations to the historic towns within Lewes District.**

f) **It would carve up the Parliamentary constituency of Lewes into different unitary authorities.**

g) **It gives no consideration whatsoever to any of West Sussex being incorporated into the enlarged Brighton model.**

h) **It has no support from any other mid or top tier council, in contrast to Proposal 1 which is supported by 5 of the 6 councils within East Sussex**

10. This proposal is accompanied by a request that the Secretary of State considers boundary change. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal sets out a strong public services and financial sustainability justification for boundary change?

Strongly agree Somewhat agree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat disagree **Strongly disagree** Don't know

11. If you would like to, please use this free text box to explain your answer to question 10.
Text box to add further comments

The entire premise of Proposal 2 appears to be focused on "protecting the identity of Brighton & Hove" whilst affording no such consideration to the historic towns within Lewes District who have worked and cooperated closely for decades.

12. I confirm that I have not provided any information that identifies an individual in the free text boxes.
Yes

Proposals 3 and 4

The Town Council opted to not respond to Proposals 3 and 4, as these solely impact on West Sussex.