



Public Document Pack

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18 February 2025

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held in **Council Chamber & Blue Room, Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5LF** on **Thursday 13 February 2025 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Lury (Chair), Nash (Vice-Chair), Birch, Cooper, Greenway, Gunner, Pendleton and Stanley

A G E N D A – SUPPLEMENT – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

5. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME** (Pages 1 - 2)

To receive questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes).

The Public Question Time schedule is attached.

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POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE – 13 FEBRUARY 2025

AGENDA ITEM 5 – PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – ORDER IN WHICH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL WILL INVITE QUESTIONS BELOW RECEIVED IN WRITING IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

1. From Mr Jan Cosgrove – to Councillor Lury as Chair of the Policy & Finance Committee

THE FULL DETAIL OF THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED IS DETAILED BELOW

NOTE: The Chair will:

- Invite questions from members of the public who have submitted in writing their questions in line with the Council's Constitution.
- Explain that the questions received will be answered by the appropriate Members of the Committee.
- Confirm that Public Question Time allows Members of the public to ask one question at a time and that a maximum of one minute is allowed for each question.
- State that questions will be invited in the order in which they have been received and that if there is time remaining from the 15 minutes allowed for Public Question Time, questioners will be allowed to ask a supplementary question.

QUESTION ONE

From Mr Cosgrove to the Chair of the Committee

West Sussex County Council, along with East Sussex CC and Brighton & Hove Unitary, submitted a proposal on 10 January which, if successful, will create a Mayoral Authority for 1.7 million residents with each of the above first-tier authorities becoming Unitary Authorities. This would see the end of second-tier authorities like Arun, Adur, Chichester etc.

What is the view, if any, of the Council concerning this possibility, and also does it have any views on the future role of parish-level councils in terms of delivery in such a scenario, or, indeed, any alternative devolution proposal for this area (Arun)?

Response

Thank you Mr Cosgrove for your question.

I would, however, in reference to your first statement like to point out your assertion that all first-tier authorities will become unitary authorities is not correct. Some first-tier authorities may seek to become unitaries, but there is no guarantee they will be accepted by Government or that they will all seek to apply for such status. The fact is that counties, districts and boroughs will fall away without a county takeover as such. The Government is now proposing to run a consultation regarding Mayoral authorities, and we will construct a response as soon as we receive the document. The Government White Paper makes scant reference to Towns and Parishes, but I believe they will have a role to play in double devolution as the unitaries emerge. We are at a very early stage of unitary possible formations, although at least in this instance we will have a say, unlike with Mayoral authorities where only first-tier authority views were sought.