

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing	Y	25/08/26
Relevant Group Head review	N/A	
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)	JT	28.8.26
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee	N	
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	AB	28/08/26
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O'Neil)	LH	24/08/26
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	LH	24/08/26
HR comments (if applicable)	N/A	

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date rec'd
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	L Heron	24/08/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T.Collier	25/08/26
Commissioner engagement		
	Delete as applicable:	No issues
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Extraordinary Council Meeting

17 September 2026

Title	Combined Foundation Strategic Authority consultation
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Gordon Mitchell, Interim Chief Executive
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	This item is not one of the Corporate Priorities or is listed in the Council's Transitional Plan but still requires full Council decision.
Recommendations	Council is asked to: 1. Agree to respond to the Combined Foundation Strategic Authority consultation; and 2. Agree the Council's response and authorise the Interim Chief Executive to submit the consultation response on behalf of Spelthorne Borough Council.
Reason for Recommendation	Spelthorne Borough Council is one of the named consultees in this consultation and it is a matter for the Council to agree the response (if any).

1. Executive summary of the report *(expand detail in Key Issues section below)*

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
The Government is running a consultation on the proposal to establish a Combined Foundation Strategic Authority over the local government areas of East Surrey Council and West Surrey Council	Spelthorne Borough Councils is one of the named consultees
This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps

Spelthorne Borough Council has to consider whether to take part in the consultation and agree the response (if any)	Consider this report and make a decision
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2. Key issues

- 2.1 The English Devolution White Paper (please see link in background papers) which was published in December 2024 and outlined plans to shift power from central government to local leaders and communities, creating comprehensive devolution coverage across England.
- 2.2 Subsequently the Government reaffirmed its commitment to devolution by publishing Cabinet Statement (please see link in background papers) in July 2026.
- 2.3 At an Extraordinary Council Meeting on 17 March 2026 Spelthorne Borough Council agreed to submit the formal expression of interest letter relating to the creating of the Foundation Strategic Authority for Surrey.
- 2.4 Establishment of the Combined Foundation Strategic Authority is supported in principle by both [West Surrey Shadow Council and East Surrey Shadow Council](#).
- 2.5 As a next step, the Government now launched a consultation seeking views on proposals to establish a Combined Foundation Strategic Authority comprising the East Surrey Council and West Surrey Council through secondary legislation.
- 2.6 The consultation is limited to named consultees only and is inviting views on the proposed establishment of a Combined Foundation Strategic Authority across Surrey.
- 2.7 The consultation invites feedback on the role that the Combined Foundation Strategic Authority could play in achieving outcomes across a range of policy areas, and also the proposed governance arrangements. A summary of the consultation document is set out below.
- 2.8 Devolution in England is delivered through strategic authorities, which enable groups of councils to work together at a wider geographic level. These authorities may designated as Combined Foundation Strategic Authorities, Mayoral Strategic Authorities or Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities. Each designation carries a defined set of powers, functions and funding under the framework established by the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026.
- 2.9 Strategic Authorities do not replace local councils, which will continue to deliver day to day services. In Surrey these services will be delivered by the new West Surrey Council and East Surrey Council from 1 April 2027.
- 2.10 As part of Local Government Reorganisation some functions currently delivered by Surrey County Council will transfer to the new unitary authorities. Such services as local transport and adult skills are considered more effective when delivered across a Surrey wide area. Therefore, subject to the outcome of the consultation, the Government is considering whether to establish a

Surrey Combined Foundation Strategic Authority from 1 April 2027 to deliver these strategic functions and drive broader benefits of devolution.

- 2.11 The following functions will fall within the remit of a Foundation Strategic Authority:
- i) Transport and local infrastructure
 - ii) Skills and employment support
 - iii) Housing and strategic planning
 - iv) Health improvement and health inequalities
- 2.12 A Surrey Combined Foundation Strategic Authority would receive ongoing funding from central government to support its establishment and operation. It would also assume responsibility for strategic funding streams, including devolved adult skills funding and consolidated transport funding from the Department for Transport, as well as funding for preparing spatial development strategy where applicable. In addition, the authority would have the option to introduce an Overnight Visitor Levy.
- 2.13 A Surrey Combined Foundation Strategic Authority could serve as the first stage of devolution in Surrey, with potential to progress to a Mayoral Strategic Authority, subject to local support, ministerial approval and legislative changes. The Government remains committed to extending mayoral devolution where areas are ready, establishing a Foundation Strategic Authority from 1 April 2027 would ensure that key Surrey wide functions continue to be delivered across the area instead of being divided between the two new unitary councils.
- 2.14 It is proposed that the new Combined Authority will be established across the area of Surrey and its legal name will be the Surrey Combined Authority.
- 2.15 Each of West Surrey Council and East Surrey Council, being the constituent councils, will appoint two (2) representatives to be constituent members of the Combined Foundation Strategic Authority. A chair and vice chair will be appointed from the constituent members each year. The Surrey Combined Authority would consist of four (4) constituent members and up to another four (4) non-constituent members and associate members to provide specialist expertise or represent partner organisations.
- 2.16 The constituent members will have a single vote each. Non-constituent members could be given voting rights at the discretion of the new Surrey Combined Authority. Associate members could not be given voting rights.
- 2.17 The Surrey Combined Authority will have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee and one Audit Committee to ensure effective audit and scrutiny of decision making.
- 2.18 The consultation consists of two questions, in each instance the consultees are required to indicate whether they;
- i) Strongly agree
 - ii) Agree
 - iii) Neither agree nor disagree
 - iv) Disagree

v) Strongly disagree

2.19 An explanation for each answer can also be provided.

2.20 Below are the two questions asked in the consultation:

- i) To what extent do you agree or disagree that working across the proposed geography through a Surrey Combined Foundation Strategic Authority will support the delivery of effective outcomes and services in the following areas: (a) transport and local infrastructure; (b) skills and employment support; (c) housing and strategic planning; (d) economic development and regeneration; (e) the environment and climate change; (f) health, well-being and public service reform; (g) public safety; (h) culture; (i) rural affairs and coastal communities; and
- ii) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed governance arrangements for the Surrey Combined Foundation Strategic Authority

2.21 Consultation responses will inform the Government's decision whether the statutory test has been met and whether the required legislation should be progressed.

3. Options appraisal and proposal

3.1 **Option 1.** The Council agrees that they would like to respond to the consultation; agrees the response and authorises the Interim Chief Executive to submit the response.

3.2 **Option 2.** The Council agrees not to take part in the consultation.

4. Risk implications

4.1 None arising directly from the recommendations in this report – should the proposal be approved, the Foundation Strategic Authority will come into being after this Council ceases to exist as part of the Local Government Reorganisation.

5. Financial implications

None arising directly for Spelthorne Borough Council from the recommendations in this report. Existing receive annual capacity funding of £250,000. The level of capacity funding that would be provided to a Surrey FSA has not yet been confirmed.

6. Legal comments

6.1 Legal implications are set out in the body of the report.

Corporate implications

7. Commissioners' comments

- 7.1 Commissioners have no comments.

8. S151 Officer comments

- 8.1 As stated in the report there are no direct financial implications arising from the report for Spelthorne Borough Council. In a letter on 26th June 2026 to Surrey councils, the Minister confirmed that existing FSAs receive annual capacity funding of £250,000 and that Government is exploring increasing this figure. The level of capacity funding that would be provided to a Surrey FSA has not yet been confirmed. In addition to capacity funding, an FSA is expected to administer and oversee a range of devolved funding streams associated with the functions it holds, including areas such as transport and skills. The scale, timing and scope of any future devolved funding allocations to Surrey have not yet been confirmed by Government.

9. Monitoring Officer comments

- 9.1 The Council's response to the consultation will assist the Government in determining whether the necessary legislation should be progressed. In the event that the proposals proceed, the governance arrangements, membership and powers of the Surrey Combined Authority will be set out in the relevant legislation.

10. Procurement comments

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report, but there is a potential for positive impact on account of improved strategic coordination and service planning across Surrey.

12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

- 12.1 There are no sustainability / climate change implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

13. Other considerations

- 13.1 None at this stage.

14. Local Government Reorganisation Implications

- 14.1 West Surrey Shadow Council and East Surrey Shadow Council are named consultees.

15. Timetable for implementation

15.1 The consultation closes on 20 September 2026.

16. Contact

16.1 Gordon Mitchell, Interim Chief Executive G.Mitchell@spelthorne.gov.uk

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers:

[English Devolution White Paper 16 December 2024](#)

[Cabinet Statement 31 July 2026](#)

Appendices: None.