

Solent Combined Authority Governance Review: Stakeholder responses

As part of the governance review, the three local authorities engaged relevant stakeholders to seek initial views, to inform the decision whether to go to public consultation. In some cases, stakeholders span more than one local authority area; in these cases, a lead authority was identified to contact that stakeholder to reduce duplication. A total of 70 stakeholders were contacted by either Southampton City Council, or Portsmouth City Council on our behalf. A full list is provided in Appendix 2.

Engagement with these stakeholders commenced on 1st July 2016. Each stakeholder was sent a letter outlining the current proposals and asking for their views, as well as a two page summary and the full governance review document. A total of 17 responses have been received, a 24% response rate. Of those, 11 were supportive of the proposals:

- Aster Housing
- University of Southampton
- Go! Southampton
- Southampton Voluntary Services
- Hampshire Chamber of Commerce
- Solent LEP
- Stagecoach
- Red Funnel
- East Hampshire District Council
- Fareham Borough Council
- Havant Borough Council.

A further five did not confirm whether they supported or opposed the proposals.

- Southampton Secondary School Heads
- New Forest District Council
- Blue Star and Unilink bus companies
- First Hampshire Dorset and Berkshire
- South Hampshire Bus Operators' Association.

Bus companies have raised some concerns regarding bus franchising proposals. These proposals have resulted from the Bus Bill, and have been included as a part of every devolution deal signed by Government. It was included in the Solent proposal at the instigation of HM Treasury, and should a deal be approved and an Elected Mayor for Solent decide to progress this, there would be detailed consultation at that time.

A number of stakeholders, including Southampton Secondary School Heads, SVS, Red Funnel, and the New Forest District Council have noted that they required further information regarding the proposals. This will be provided as part of the formal public consultation.

Only one stakeholder opposed the proposals: Hampshire County Council. The County Council submitted a detailed response, raising concerns about the content of the Governance Review and asking a number of specific questions, including relating to:

- Potential expansion of the geographical area of the deal
- Relationships with non-constituent members including financial contributions
- Analysis of the proposals, including projected running costs
- Alternative options considered and evaluation criteria
- Business rates proposals and methodology, including compensation to neighbouring authorities for any infrastructure burdens arising from decisions made
- Details of the interim Mayor proposal
- Details of the proposed Public Services Board.

The three unitary authorities are working together to prepare a response to the points raised.

In summary, the engagement exercise demonstrated that the majority of stakeholders are supportive of proposals, and no significant reasons were raised to delay the public consultation.

did not raise any significant reasons not to pursue public consultation

	Yes	Would be happy to be invited to be a non-constituent member and agrees that it would deliver improvements for the Solent economy and the quality of life of locals.
	Yes	Supportive; they believe there is a compelling case to form a Combined Authority and welcome it as an initiative which attracts infrastructure funding into the local economy.
	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes the proposal • If District and Borough Councils take the opportunity to join a newly formed Combined Authority, they do so in the full knowledge that they will be considered as “constituent” participants and therefore have equal voting rights.
New Forest Council	Did not express an opinion	Too little time to consider thoroughly. the provisional view is that it is not possible from the information within the documents to determine whether your draft conclusion that the creation of a Combined Authority across the three councils will help deliver improvements for the Solent economy and quality of life for local people.

Portsmouth

Highbury College	Yes	Supportive of review conclusions and the issues raised in the review. Keen to play a part as we move forward.
Portsmouth CCG	Yes	Clear benefits to local health and care through the creation of a strong economy, business growth and education. Keen to engage during consultation process.
Portsmouth College	Yes	Supportive but concerned with timeframes. Keen to engage during consultation process.
University of Portsmouth	Yes	Supportive and welcome the opportunity to engage during consultation.

IOW

IOW Citizens Advice	No opinion expressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns about the concentration of authority; how public services will operate across the region; the impact on the Citizens’ Advice Service; and maintaining the profile of the Island. • Has the proposal considered that the official Travel to Work Area extends well beyond the proposed mayoral CA?
Island Roads	Yes	Have asked to be involved in the development of the key route network.
Vectis Housing	No opinion expressed	Concerns that key social and community issues faced by the Island will be addressed.
Police IOW	Yes	Supportive noting that any work in this area will be dealt with by ACC for local policing
IOW College	Yes	Supportive: interested in the potential of additional funding and developing local skills
First Provincial	Unconfirmed	Identify a number of concerns particularly with bus franchising, however supportive of the intentions set out in review to strengthen the integration of transport into the overall decision making and funding processes.

IOW Parish Councils	Mixed – 8 supportive 3 opposed 2 no position 1 no response	<p>Various, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not supportive – interests better served with a Hampshire Partnership • Does not support the concept of a Mayoral Combined Authority • Not enough time to consider • Concern around loss of influence • Positive – can retain sense of identity, but withdrawal from the EU may have an impact on the arrangement • Some opposition but limited options • Benefits and disadvantages: concerns about the costs • Hope that tourism and the Island’s strategic importance is a coherent and dynamic element in the framework • Concerns about what would happen to funding if Devolution did not go ahead • Queries in respect of planning matters/associate members/ the Island position
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