

CABINET

MONDAY, 21 JULY 2025 - 5.00 PM



PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor S Count, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor S Imafidon, Councillor C Seaton and Councillor S Tierney

APOLOGIES: Councillor G Christy, Councillor Mrs D Laws and Councillor S Wallwork

Due to the meeting of Council ending later than anticipated, Cabinet commenced at 5.45pm.

CAB16/25 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION UPDATE

Members considered the Local Government Reorganisation update following the debate at Council.

Councillor Boden said it had been an interesting debate and fair to say that there was no great enthusiasm shown for local government reform. The options available do not receive much approval but of those options, where preference was given, it seems that more choose Option C to join FDC with Peterborough City Council and East Cambs. However, there is no financial information or business case to be able to support any of the options, but clearly members want to see Fenland's identity preserved as much as possible.

Councillor Count said he did engage in the council debate, but he would like to reiterate that whilst some members expressed a preference, the fact is there are three options, and he would like Councillor Boden to be fully empowered to carry on looking at everything until more information comes out from the business plans. In respect of there being a potential fourth option, he had believed that proposals had to come from constituent councils but was surprised to read that proposals can come from major stakeholders such as combined authorities, mayors and local MPs. This seems wrong on so many levels, and ultimately, he fears that government aspirations will outweigh any considerations that members have.

Councillor Tierney said whilst he will not vote for any of the options because he does not want to show any support for LGR, his preference is Option C. If members are worried about free parking and controlling council tax, then East Cambs have a similar approach to FDC and aligning with them will give both authorities a reasonably strong voice together to push for the things that benefit Fenland residents. Councillor Mrs French expressed her agreement.

Councillor Boden said this process has been undertaken today because whilst FDC's constitution gives Cabinet responsibility to decide which recommendation to put to Central Government, it is so important a matter that the voice of Council should be heard before Cabinet makes its decision. That decision will not be made today, but when it is it will be important to listen to all members of Council beforehand.

Proposed by Councillor Boden, seconded by Councillor Seaton and AGREED to note the feedback from Council on the three proposals and provide a steer to the Leader to support ongoing dialogue within the LGR process.

5.52 pm

Chairman