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## SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

### Meeting of The Council

**Date: Wednesday, 8th January, 2025**

**Place: Council Chamber - Civic Suite**

**Present:** Councillor R Woodley (Chair)  
Councillors Sam Allen, S W Allen, S Ayles, M Borton, K Buck, L Burton, C Campbell, O Cartey, P Collins, J Courtenay, D Cowan, T Cox, M Davidson, A Dear, M Dent, F Evans, M Faulkner-Hatt, N Folkard, I Ferguson, D Garston, I Gilbert, S Habermel, J Harland, L Hyde, A Jones, D Jones, P Kinsella, R Longstaff, J McMahon, R McMullan, C Mulroney, K Murphy, C Nevin, J Norman, M O'Connor, D Poulton, D Richardson, K Robinson, M Sadza, L Salter, M Terry, S Wakefield, N Ward, J Warren and C Webster

**Start/End Time:** 6.30 - 7.57 pm

#### **113 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Badger, Berry, Moyies, Nadeem and Nelson.

#### **114 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

#### **115 Minutes Silence**

The Council remained silent for one minute as a mark of respect to Mr Howard Briggs, former Councillor, Mayor and Honorary Alderman, who sadly passed away recently.

#### **116 Progressing Devolution in Essex**

The Council considered a report of the Executive Director (Strategy and Change) setting out the implications of the English Devolution White Paper published on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024. The report also sought endorsement to respond by 10<sup>th</sup> January 2025 to the invitation from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to be considered for the Devolution Priority Programme.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be recommended to approve the recommendations set out in the report to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025, with the addition of recommendation 4:

1. That a letter be submitted to the Government on 10 January 2025 that:

(a) Requests that the Council (alongside Essex County Council and Thurrock Council) be part of the Government's Priority Programme for Devolution.

(b) Sets out the Council's commitment, working with partners, to develop a proposal for local government reorganisation for submission to Government as an interim proposal in March 2025 and a full proposal in Autumn 2025.

2. That the Leader of the Council determines the content of the final letter to Government.

3. That the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Chief Executive, Executive Director (Finance and Resources), and Director of Law and Governance, undertake the initial phase of work needed to comply with the Government's approach and 2025 timetable.

4. That all substantive proposals, for both local government reorganisation and devolution, be brought back to Council for debate and discussion.

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_