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Jim McMahon OBE MP
Minister for Local Government and English Devolution
Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham St
London
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28th March 2025

Dear Jim,

As four of Surrey's six Liberal Democrat Members of Parliament are writing to fully endorse the Interim Proposal submitted by Surrey's Borough and District councils for local government reorganisation.

There is no doubt that local government, especially in our county, is broken and needs reform. That is why Surrey was selected to be in the first wave of local government reorganisation.

The borough and district council's Interim Proposal is for three unitary councils for Surrey each with a population of approximately 400,000 people, divided into the divisions established by the most recent boundary, which was due to come into effect for the now cancelled elections for Surrey County Council, and each represented by three councillors. This model enables substantial savings of at least £20 million per year. It also balances this efficiency with keeping a strong, effective and responsive local connection to Surrey's communities - from the urban in the north of the county to the rural in the south. The importance of this strong democratic connection was made by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government in her statement to the House of Commons on 5th February 2025.

We view this process of local government reform as an opportunity to address the serious financial issues of the county while also strengthening our local economies. However, this is only possible if the new councils formed have geographic and economic synergy that give each council a genuine sense of identity and enhance the ability to foster local economic growth.

The vast majority of borough and district leaders in Surrey, from across the political spectrum, agree on this approach. This aligns with the Secretary of State's requirement that this process be one of collaboration and collective agreement.

We urge the Government to commit to creating three unitary authorities in Surrey.

Yours sincerely,

Zöe Franklin
Guildford

Will Forster
Woking

Helen Maguire
Epsom & Ewell

Dr Al Pinkerton
Surrey Heath

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