

Devolution - Government delays decision on LGR in West Sussex

The government has today (16th July 2026) confirmed a further delay to its decision on local government reorganisation for West Sussex. We now expect the decision in October 2026.

The below statement is from HDC's website:

Our understanding is that the overall government timetable for reorganisation remains, with elections to a new shadow council or councils expected in May 2027. The shadow council will manage the transition to the new arrangements. The new council will formally take on responsibilities for delivering services in April 2028.

Until that point, all eight existing councils in West Sussex will continue to operate as usual and deliver their services without any immediate changes for residents or partners.

Detailed work to prepare for the government decision has been undertaken with a strong collaborative approach between all West Sussex Councils. Following this further delay, we will consider the delivery implications, continuing to work closely together on our next steps.

Further information on how the transition will be managed will be provided as plans develop. Councils will continue to work closely with stakeholders to shape how the new council will operate and how services will be delivered.

Horsham District Council Leader Cllr Martin Boffey commented: "The news today that the government has decided to delay its local government reorganisation decision for West Sussex is both frustrating and disappointing.

"Our priority remains to continue to work collaboratively with the government and our local authority partners to secure the strongest possible outcomes for Horsham District residents and communities.

I would implore the government to change tack, engage constructively and respectfully with West Sussex Councils in ways that it has not done thus far, and to help ensure any new organisation is a success.

"We continue to hope that the final outcome will be based on the needs of our communities and delivering services for local people in the most sustainable way. But this can only be achieved if the government recognises that local councils know their areas better than Whitehall or Westminster. We need to be part of this decision rather than a victim of it."

Councils across West Sussex remain committed to keeping residents and partners informed throughout the reorganisation process.