

REPORT TO WOULDHAM PARISH COUNCIL 3rd MARCH 2026

By the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Councillors for

**Aylesford North and North Downs Ward
Councillors Dave Davis, Alex McDermott and Roger Dalton**

TRENPORT FUTURE?

1. You should note that Trenport went into administration on 17th December last year. The future of any of their sites lacks certainty at present.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION & DEVOLUTION

2. The 14 Kent councils submitted 5 preferred options to the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government (DHCLG) by the 28th November deadline.

3. Those options are shown below, with the councils that supported each option.

4. DHCLG have not reduced the number of options from those submitted and have gone out to consultation with all five.

5. The financial support for local councils to promote this consultation is pitifully small.

6. The full public consultation started on 5th February and runs until the 26th March.

7. Anybody wanting to submit to the consultation should go to:

8. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-reorganisation-in-kent-and-medway/proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation-in-kent-and-medway>

9. The Timeline for implementation of the new unitary authorities is:

a. Consultation ends 26 March 26

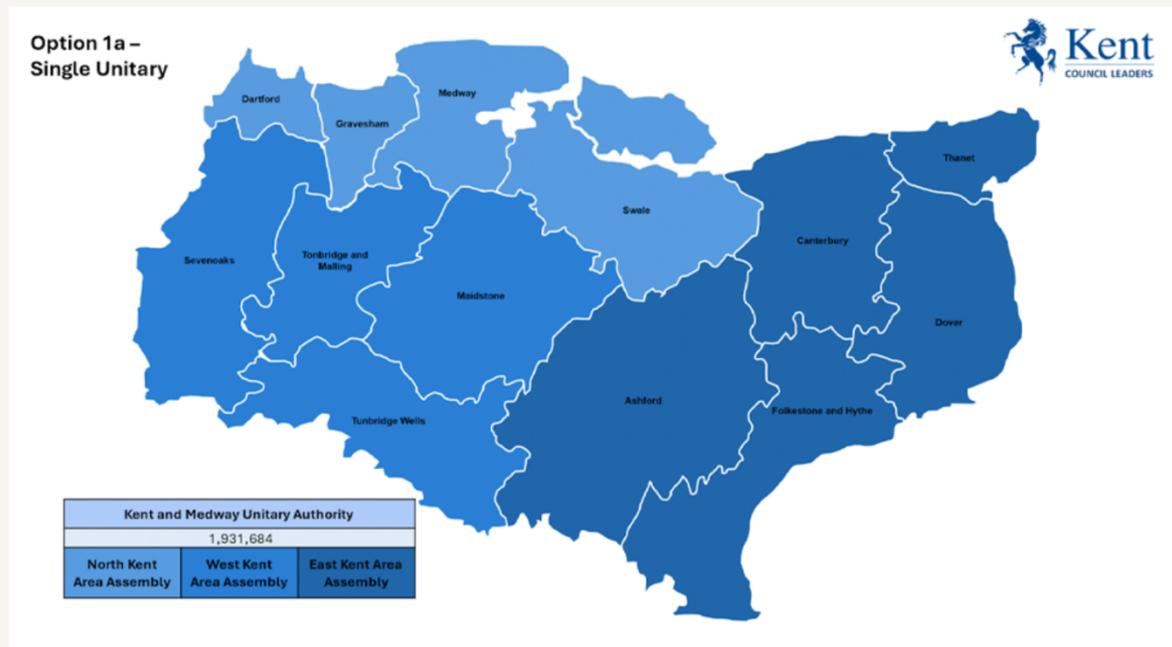
b. Summer 26 Secretary of State's final decision Summer 26.

c. May 27 Elections to "shadow" unitary authorities.

d. Future devolution potentially involving a directly elected Mayor for Kent is expected to follow once reorganisation is complete.

10. The next five pages have the options submitted to DHHCLG. TMBC's preferred Option is 3b.

Option 1a



- [View Business Case 1A](#)
- [View Appendix 1](#)
- [View Appendix 2](#)
- [View Appendix 3](#)
- [View EqlA](#)

The proposal for a single unitary council covering Kent and Medway to include three area assemblies covering the north, east and west of the county has been supported by:

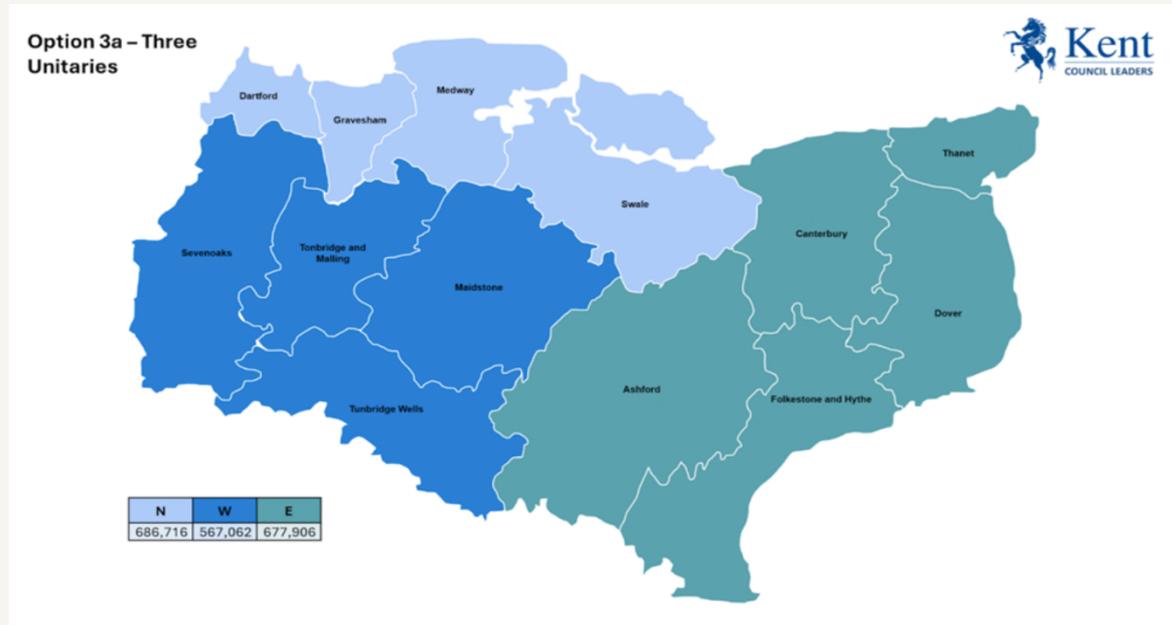
- Kent County Council

11. Option 1a will be limited to about 83 Councillors. The present size of KCC.

12. Whilst the 3 assemblies exist they will be larger than the present district councils with considerably less power. There will be a massive reduction on democratic representation with this option.

13. Whilst this covers the West Kent District it will be far more powerless than Option 3b

Option 3a



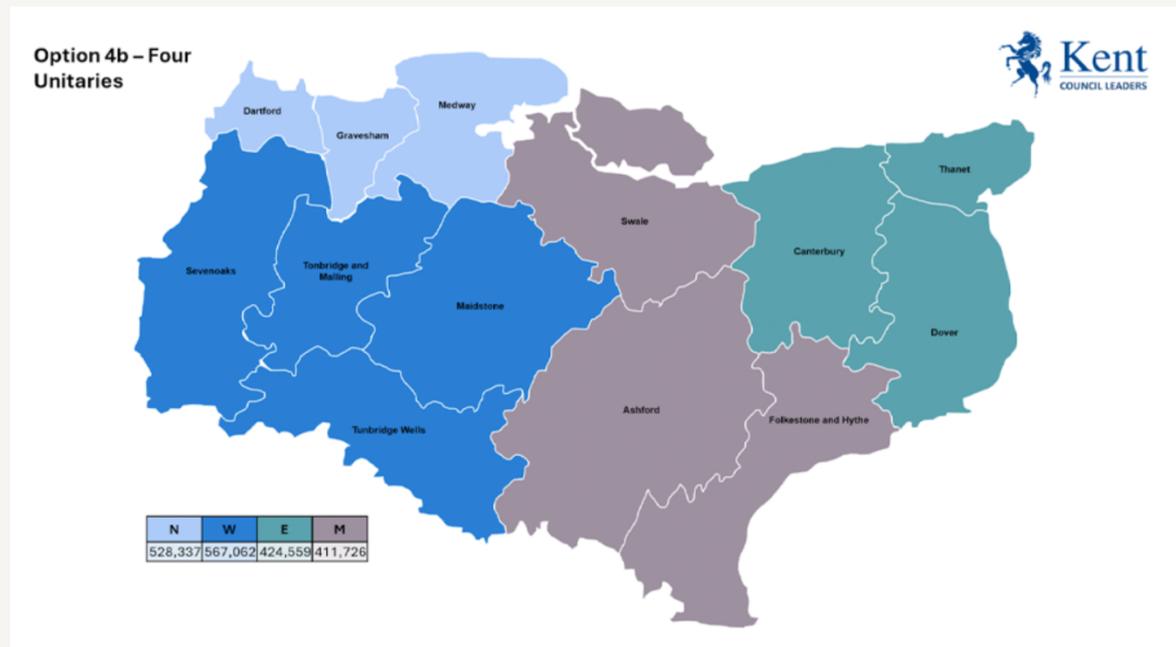
[View Business Case 3a](#)

The three unitary option, consisting of Dartford, Gravesham, Medway and Swale in the north; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells in the west and Ashford, Canterbury, Thanet, Dover and Folkestone and Hythe in the east has been supported by:

- Folkestone & Hythe District Council
- Maidstone Borough Council
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

14. This option follows all other local boundaries police, fire, ambulance and comes closest to satisfying the governments requirements. It comes closest to equal sized unitaries although these are all a larger that the DHCLG suggestion of 500,000 residents. It has the largest number of councils supporting it. However 4 of those 5 make up one of the unitaries.

Option 4b



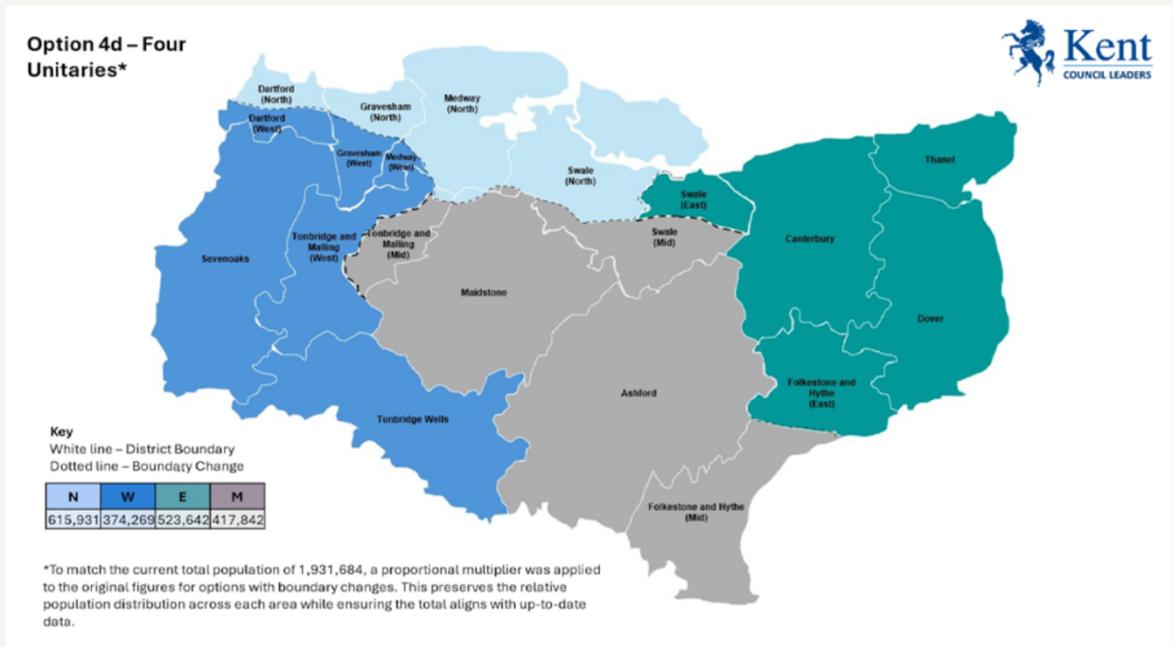
[View Business Case 4b](#)

The four unitary council option which stuck to existing boundaries and consisted of Dartford, Gravesham and Medway in the north; Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells in the west; Swale, Ashford and Folkestone and Hythe in the middle of Kent and Canterbury, Thanet and Dover in the east has been supported by:

- Dover District Council
- Swale Borough Council
- Thanet District Council

15. This option does give us the West Kent option we prefer but we feel this would be a weaker version for the whole of Kent.

Option 4d



[View Business Case 4d](#)

Option 4d would reorganise Kent and Medway into four new unitary councils. North Kent would bring together Medway, Gravesham, Dartford, most of Swale, and small parts of Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone. East Kent would combine Canterbury, Thanet, Dover, eastern Swale and part of Folkestone & Hythe. West Kent would unite Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge & Malling and Sevenoaks. Mid Kent would cover Maidstone, Ashford, southern Swale, parts of Tonbridge & Malling and part of Folkestone & Hythe.

It has been supported by:

- Medway Council
- Ashford Borough Council
- Canterbury City Council

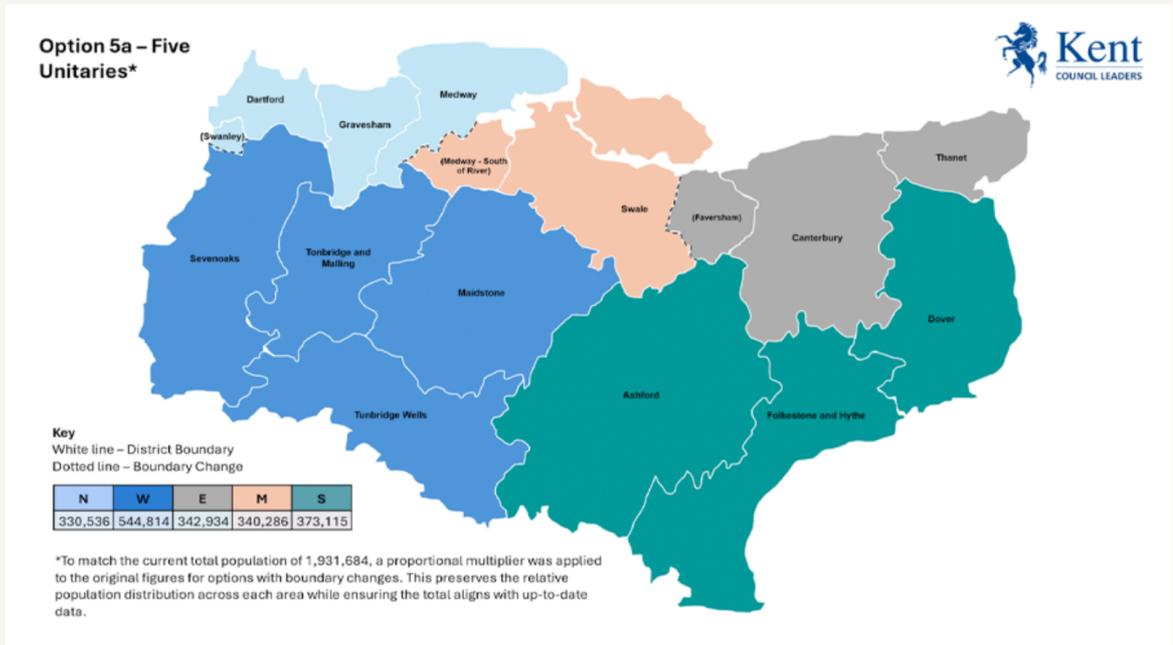
16. This is Medway's preferred option. It will require breaking up Swale, Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling and does not follow police or other local boundaries.

17. It will totally disrupt the East Bank of the Medway putting Blue Bell Hill into North Kent and Eccles and Aylesford Village into Mid Kent.

18. The boundaries of Burham Parish will need to be redrawn for Burham PC will have to deal with 3 unitary Authorities¹

19. This future West Kent will be much weaker in negotiations with the rest of Kent in any proposed Mayoralty.

Option 5a



[View Business Case 5a](#)

Option 5a proposes five unitary authorities for Kent. It would see a council for north west Kent that would take in the existing Gravesham and Dartford boroughs and Swanley which currently sits under Sevenoaks District Council. It would also extend eastwards, taking in areas currently under Medway Council up to the River Medway, and southwards to Snodland. Mid Kent would be formed of the rest of Medway and the rest of Swale. West Kent would combine Sevenoaks, excluding Swanley, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells. East Kent would be made up of the Faversham part of Swale, Canterbury and Thanet. South Kent would combine Ashford, Folkestone & Hythe and Dover.

It has been supported by:

- Dartford Borough Council
- Gravesham Borough Council

This is in all probability a non-starter that breaks up Medway.