The Proposal for Greater Essex – Essex County Council’s ambitious vision for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – has been approved for consideration by the Government.

The proposal was debated by the council’s Cabinet and all Essex County Council Members during extraordinary meetings held today (Thursday 18 September).

Following debate, Full Council and Cabinet approved the proposal. The council will now submit the proposal to government in line with its 26 September deadline .

Leader of the council, Councillor Kevin Bentley, said the approval of the proposal marked "a moment in history".

He said during Full Council: “This is a momentous day in the life of Essex County Council, what remains in the life of Essex County Council, all the district councils as we know them and unitary councils in Essex.

“It’s no secret I have been a long proponent of Local Government Reorganisation, and indeed introducing a Mayor.

“I personally believe, and know many people in this room believe, that this is the best future for the residents of Essex, the way we run local government and the way we secure funding and investment in the future.”

Other councils in Greater Essex have developed different proposals based on four and five unitary councils.

However, Essex County Council has used extensive evidence to inform its proposal which points to fewer councils being able to achieve the greatest benefits.

The Proposal for Greater Essex has resident priorities at its heart, while also ensuring the new councils will be financially sustainable and fit for the future.

A three-unitary model for Essex will offer the highest financial benefit. This includes a net benefit of £86 million after five years, a payback period of less than three years and one-off implementation costs totalling £74 million. These figures are based on solid independent modelling.

All councils are following their own governance and publication schedules for the respective proposals. All proposals must be submitted to Government by 26 September.

The Government will review them and decide which proposal or proposals for Greater Essex will be put forward to public consultation.

This consultation is expected to launch in the autumn and will give residents across Greater Essex the opportunity to have their say on the future of local government in the region.

The Proposal for Greater Essex is available to view here: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/three-councils>

More information and proposals from other councils in Greater Essex are available here: <https://www.essexlgrhub.org/>

**Cllr Peter Schwier  ISEP**