

**BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL, LANCASTER CITY  
COUNCIL, SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**#BACKTHEBAY**



**21 December 2020**

## **COUNCILS AGREE BAY AUTHORITY BID SUBMISSION**

Dear Stakeholder,

You may have already heard that our three councils, Barrow Borough Council, Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council, have overwhelmingly voted in favour of formally submitting a bid to Government for a new Bay unitary authority.

Combining the three votes, our councillors backed the proposal by a huge margin - with 110 for, 8 against and 7 abstentions.

Our engagement with residents, businesses and organisations on the proposal also demonstrated significant support for The Bay and the feedback from you has helped to shape our final proposal, which was submitted to Government on 9 December.

Our online survey, independent opinion poll and virtual engagement events for hundreds of key stakeholders, businesses, community and youth groups and parish and town councils gathered more than 4,000 responses, letters of endorsement and supportive comments over the three-week consultation.

Independent polling of more than 1,000 adults by polling company Survation showed 60% of people believe the area would be best served by a unitary council for Morecambe Bay. Only 30% favoured a county-wide unitary for Cumbria and separate arrangements for Lancashire.

A joint survey by the three councils gathered nearly 3,000 responses. It showed 85% of people in the area favoured a Bay authority over a county-wide unitary.

Our local engagement was, by some distance, the most comprehensive of any of the four bids submitted to Government on proposals for local government reorganisation in Cumbria. We would like to sincerely thank you for playing your part in this process and for helping us to understand our communities' thoughts about the proposal.

The results are a strong endorsement of our proposal and we are very grateful for your contribution. The full proposal that you helped us to shape presents a powerful case for a new unitary council for the Bay, focussed on the cohesiveness of the area and its communities.

It shows how by working together with a range of organisations in the Bay area, the new council will drive positive change on shared priorities including building community power and engagement, reducing inequality and improving wellbeing, building community wealth and tackling the climate emergency.

We firmly believe that if local government is reorganised, joining up Barrow, Lancaster and South Lakeland offers the best solution for residents, businesses and organisations in the three areas and that by creating a second unitary in the north of Cumbria - consisting of Allerdale, Carlisle, Copeland and Eden council areas - the two unitaries would be on a footprint that follows 'natural geography'. This would result in two sustainable unitary authorities that have the ability and resilience to be financially viable, represent a significant population and have a real voice at regional and national level, providing a platform for wider regional co-operation and unitary solutions.

We have held discussions with key partner organisations and have identified what would need to be addressed in the implementation of the proposal. The proposal concludes that proposed arrangements are deliverable.

We have been delighted with the very positive response to our proposal and that so many people have taken the time to engage with us, learn about the proposal and share their views.

What is clear is that this proposal has caught the imagination and just about everyone that we have spoken to agrees that it is an exciting prospect, an opportunity to improve residents' quality of life, environment and economy across the Bay area.

We don't want to lose that momentum and enthusiasm, so will be continuing to work hard to prepare and develop our case. We hope that you will continue to be involved in further discussions early in the New Year – we are committed to involving and discussing the proposal with our communities at every stage.

Government will now consider the proposals submitted and will determine which, if any, option/s it wishes to take forward for further public consultation.

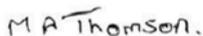
You can read the Bay unitary full proposal document and public opinion survey results on our website: [www.southlakeland.gov.uk/thebay](http://www.southlakeland.gov.uk/thebay)

We will be in touch again soon about the next stages of the process. Your views and comments on the proposal are welcome and will help us to further shape its development:

- Email: [thebay@southlakeland.gov.uk](mailto:thebay@southlakeland.gov.uk)
- Write: The Bay Proposal, South Lakeland District Council, South Lakeland House, Lowther Street, Kendal, LA9 4DQ.

Thank you again for your contribution.

Yours sincerely.



Cllr Ann Thomson  
**Leader, Barrow**



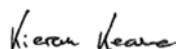
Cllr Dr Erica Lewis  
**Leader, Lancaster**



Cllr Giles Archibald  
**Leader, South Lakeland**



Sam Plum  
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Kieran Keane  
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**CEO, South Lakeland**