	Andover Town Council English Devolution: to **review** and **approve** recommendations to draft a joint Council response to any forthcoming public consultation.	Item No. **13**
To: Full Council	**By:** Town Mayor	**Date of Report:** 8 February 2025

Recommendation:

That

- we agree that a joint Council response is appropriate; if so
- we nominate representative councillors to work, in a civil and respectful manner, with the Acting Town Clerk and the Town Mayor to draft a Council response as soon as the public consultation is published; and
- all councillors have the opportunity to review the draft response, by email if deadlines are critical, before it is submitted.

Background:

On 5 February 2025, Hampshire County Council was accepted onto the Government's fast track English Devolution Priority Programme, a significant milestone on the path the devolving powers away from central to local government.

The next step should be a government public consultation to gather people's input and feedback on the prospect of devolution in our area.

Consideration

It is crucial that Andover Town Council engages proactively with the public consultation to give an overarching view from our Town Council and staffing perspective. This does not prevent individual councillors from submitting their own individual response.

As per our draft mission statement and business plan, a joint Council response meets the Council's mission of Community First: Help make Andover a great place to live and work, and specifically, key priority actions of communication, transparency and delivering cost-effective services.

Financial implications

There is no cost to the Council in engaging with the public consultation.