

## Submission FAQs

Here are some frequently asked questions about our interim plan for local government reorganisation which was submitted to government on 21 March 2025.

### **1. What about Leicester City Council's proposal for local government reorganisation? Are you proposing any boundary changes?**

Information about the Leicester City Council proposal was released on 19 March 2025. We are currently reviewing the proposals. A statement was issued on behalf of the district council and Rutland County Council leader on 20 March about this.

Our interim plan does not contain any proposal to change the city boundary but we accept there will need to be further conversations about this issue.

### **2. Will Council tax go up or down following reorganisation?**

Council tax rates will need to be amended in areas with new authorities. It means some rates may go up or down depending on where you live but it is not expected that rates will change significantly for taxpayers.

### **3. How many councillors would there be under your interim plan?**

The current total number of county, city and borough/district councillors in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland is 384. Under our interim plan, that number would be reduced to 214, with 80 councillors for each of the proposed new unitary councils in the north and south, and the city continuing to have 54.

### **4. Doesn't reducing the number of councillors damage democracy, local accountability and representation?**

The government is driving this agenda to reduce the number of councils. Our interim plan is the only proposal which will retain a council close enough to communities to understand them and advocate for them.

Grassroots democracy would be enhanced, and subject to local views, opportunities would be explored to create town or parish councils in key settlements.

### **5. Will people lose their jobs?**

There is likely to be a reduction in the number of senior leadership positions. The vast majority of employees will continue to work for a council.

### **6. How will you save nearly £43 million a year?**

As the interim plan explains, the savings will be made through a variety of factors including a reduction in the number of senior leadership positions and councillors, procurement efficiencies from the economies of scale and the potential opportunities for the rationalisation of some assets or properties.

## **7. Will there be costs associated with creating new councils?**

The transition costs are estimated to be around £18.9 million spread over a five-year period. This would cover costs such as external support to manage the transition. This initial cost would be recovered over a period of time as the interim plan sets out it will deliver a saving of £43 million each year.

## **8. Will you be closing any of the main council offices?**

Whatever council structures are introduced in the future, councils will need offices and properties to operate services from.

Under our interim plan we are committed to ensuring councils have a strong, visible presence in our communities. There could be opportunities to rationalise assets including properties across all existing councils but that would require much further consideration.

## **9. Where would each council's main office/Town Hall be?**

These are only interim plans and full plans will be developed in the coming months, following significant and extensive engagement. Decisions like these would likely rest with any newly-created council.

## **10. How would you ensure there was minimum disruption to social care services and therefore ensure there were no negative impacts on vulnerable children and adults?**

When looking at Ofsted ratings, the position regarding children's services is currently mixed across the three services provided by Leicester City Council (requires improvement), Rutland County Council (Good) and Leicestershire County Council (Outstanding).

Given the significant imbalance in scale across the three existing social care authorities, whatever future council structures are decided by Government, maintaining the status quo is unlikely and change will need to take place regardless.

The benefits of our interim plan is it provides opportunities to reform and improve provision more consistently across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Our approach would rebalance capacity and demand across all three social care services with opportunities for learning and best practice to be applied to each.

The balanced scale of social care authorities proposed would better facilitate opportunities for prevention and early intervention.

Social care is a place-based service, reliant on strong partnerships with health, education, the voluntary and community sector and market providers – our proposal has partnership and collaboration at its core.

### **11. You can't break up social care or break up 'outstanding' social care services**

Only one part of social care in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland is rated as outstanding by Ofsted and there are examples of social care services being successfully separated, for example in Cumbria.

The proposal we are putting forward has a number of benefits as outlined above.

### **12. Why is your proposal the right one?**

Our interim plan sets a clear path to:

- Keep councils connected and accountable to local communities
- Simplify services for residents, businesses, and partners
- Protect and support the vulnerable and focus on prevention
- Deliver devolution and economic growth
- Boost efficiency, saving nearly £43 million a year

It has been built on a foundation of collaboration, evidence and engagement,

Our interim plan is the only one which would create three balanced unitary councils, which meets the Government's criteria.

### **13. Why is a single county unitary the wrong option for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland?**

From the evidence and data gathered and the options considered, our view is that a single county unitary for Leicestershire would be too big, too remote and too cumbersome to respond effectively to the needs of local communities. Other concerns about the proposal include:

- It would weaken the community's voice by being too remote
- It is highly unbalanced when linked to Leicester in terms of population (775,000 for Leicestershire vs 373,000 for Leicester).
- It is less logically connected to economic drivers outside the county boundary
- It would not deliver devolution. The County Council has indicated its approach would be for local government reorganisation before devolution can be considered. Our plan is capable of securing devolution alongside LGR therefore unlocking the benefits much earlier.
- No meaningful way to deliver at a hyper-local neighbourhood level.
- The single county unitary does not provide a solution for social care across the whole of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland as it would retain three

imbalanced services. Our proposal retains three social care authorities and rebalances capacity and demand between them, creating an opportunity for the transfer of learning and improvement across the region. They would also operate at a scale which would better enable integration with other services, early intervention and prevention.

- Misses an opportunity for a reset, refresh and reinvigoration of local government in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

**14. Why are some Lincolnshire councils proposing to include Rutland in a proposed new council structure in Lincolnshire, yet Rutland County Council is submitting an interim plan with Leicestershire district councils?**

The district and borough councils in Leicestershire and Rutland County Council submitted an interim plan to government for new council structures on Friday 21 March. The eight councils are committed to carrying out further work on the plan over the coming months with a view to submitting a full proposal to Government in November. The partnership between the Leicestershire district councils and Rutland County Council remains strong, but given Rutland's status as a small unitary authority bordering several two-tier areas, it was always possible that it might be included in more than one set of interim plans at this stage in the reorganisation process.

**15. Will there be a referendum?**

No. The Government has outlined the process and there is no requirement for a referendum.

**16. Who makes final decision?**

Government will make the final decision. There is more information on the process on the [Local Government Association website](#)

**17. Are the different proposals being put forward by councils all at the same stage?**

Yes. The Government asked for interim plans to be submitted by 21 March. We have submitted our plan, and it is expected that the county council, city council and other councils across the country will have submitted their plans to Government. The Government has asked for full plans by November.

**18. What if councils don't agree on one plan?**

Government has said it wants councils to collaborate and reach a consensus. The seven district councils in Leicestershire and Rutland County Council have been working together and have developed an interim plan built on a foundation of collaboration, evidence and engagement. The Government has indicated it anticipates there may be

different plans put forward but there is no clear indication how those will be managed by Government. Ultimately it will be a government decision.

**19. How quickly could all this happen?**

Our proposal recommends that devolution and local government reorganisation run concurrently with an Elected Mayor for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland being in place in April 2028. That means new councils could be in place by 2028. In reality, it will take years to align services as this is incredibly complex.

Residents will be kept informed about any changes to services but there is no plan to reduce services, it will largely be about streamlining them and making them better for residents and communities.

**20. What about council tenants?**

Any councils with housing stock (some are managed by other providers) would simply transfer the stock to the new council. For tenants, their landlord will be a different council, but their home and status as council tenants will stay the same. We are committed to ensure tenants are kept fully informed about the process.

**21. Would rents rise?**

Not in relation to this. Rent increases would continue to be considered annually as part of usual processes.

**22. Will Rutland retain its name in any way?**

We fully recognise the importance of preserving Rutland County's historic ceremonial county status.