



TO COUNCILLOR:

R H Adams
N Alam
S S Athwal
L A Bentley
G A Boulter
L M Broadley
F S Broadley
M H Charlesworth
J K Chohan (Mayor)

H E Darling
M L Darr
J K Ford
D A Gamble
F S Ghattoraya
C S Gore
S Z Haq
G G Hunt
P Joshi

R V Joshi
J Kaufman
C D Kozlowski
K J Loydall
C J R Martin
R E R Morris
I K Ridley
C A M Walter (Deputy Mayor)

I summon you to attend the following meeting for the transaction of the business in the agenda below.

Meeting: Full Council
Date & Time: Tuesday, 28 October 2025, 7.00 pm
Venue: Civic Suite, Brocks Hill Council Offices, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester, LE2 5JJ
Contact: Democratic Services
t: (0116) 257 2775
e: democratic.services@oadby-wigston.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

Council Offices
Oadby
20 October 2025

Anne E Court
Chief Executive



Meeting ID: 3013

ITEM NO.

AGENDA

PAGE NO'S

Meeting Live Broadcast | Information and Link

This meeting will be broadcast live.

Press & Public Access:

A direct link to the live broadcast of the meeting's proceedings on the Council's Civico platform is below.

<https://civico.net/oadby-wigston/22825-Full-Council>

1. Calling to Order of the Meeting

The meeting of the Council will be called to order to receive Her Worship The Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

2. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence from Members to determine the quorum of the meeting in accordance with Rule 7 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that any declaration of interest should be made having regard to the Members' Code of Conduct. In particular, Members must make clear the nature of the interest and whether it is 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary'.

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

4 - 7

To read, confirm and approve the minutes of the previous meeting in accordance with Rule 19 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

5. Action List Arising from the Previous Meeting

There was no Action List arising from the previous meeting.

6. Motions on Notice

To consider any Motions on Notice in accordance with Rule 14 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

7. Petitions, Deputations and Questions

To receive any Petitions, Deputations and, or, to answer any Questions by Members or the Public in accordance with Rule(s) 11, 12, 13 and 10 of Part 4 of the Constitution and the Petitions Procedure Rules respectively.

8. Mayor's Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Mayor in accordance with Rule 2 of Part 4 of the Constitution.

a. Official Mayoral / Deputy Mayoral Engagements

8 - 10

9. Leader's Statement

To receive any statement from the Leader of the Council in accordance with Article 2.9.2(ii) of Part 2 of the Constitution.

10. Local Government Reorganisation - Draft of Current Proposal (October 2025)

11 - 42

Report of the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service.

11. Review of Political Proportionality and Membership of Council Bodies (October 2025)

43 - 53

Report of the Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer (Solicitor).

12. Appointment of Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group

54 - 57

Full Council

Tuesday, 28 October 2025, 7.00 pm

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Agenda Item 4

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL HELD AT CIVIC SUITE, BROCKS HILL COUNCIL OFFICES, WASHBROOK LANE, OADBY, LEICESTER, LE2 5JJ ON TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.02 PM

PRESENT

C A M Walter Deputy Mayor (in the Chair)
R H Adams Deputy Mayor's Assistant



Meeting ID: 2920

COUNCILLORS

N Alam Leader of the Opposition
S S Athwal
L A Bentley Deputy Leader of the Council
G A Boulter
L M Broadley
F S Broadley
M H Charlesworth
M L Darr
J K Ford Deputy Leader of the Opposition
D A Gamble
F S Ghattoraya
C S Gore
S Z Haq Leader of the Council
P Joshi
R V Joshi
J Kaufman
C D Kozlowski
K J Loydall
C J R Martin
I K Ridley

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

S A E Ball Finance Manager / Deputy Section 151 Officer
S J Ball Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer (Solicitor)
A E Court Chief Executive / Head of Paid Service
K Robson Democratic & Electoral Services Officer

24. CALLING TO ORDER OF THE MEETING

The meeting of the Council was called to order to receive the Deputy Mayor.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from the Mayor, Councillor J K Chohan.

A further apology for absence was also received from Councillors H E Darling, J K Ford, G G Hunt and R E R Morris.

It was moved by the Deputy Mayor, seconded by the Leader of the Council, and

BY GENERAL AFFIRMATION:

Full Council

Tuesday, 23 September 2025, 7.00 pm

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and Wigston Borough Council, Brocks Hill Council
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~ Page 4 ~*

Councillor R H Adams be appointed as an Assistant to the Deputy Mayor (in the Chair) for the duration of this meeting only.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Leader of the Council declared a pecuniary interest with regard to item 12 of the agenda, insofar as she had a beneficial interest in the subject property to which the proposed Planning Revocation Order related and therefore confirmed she would leave the Civic Suite during consideration of the same.

27. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

By affirmation of the meeting, it was

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 July 2025 be taken as read, confirmed and approved.

28. ACTION LIST ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

There was no Action List arising from the previous meeting.

29. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

29a. SLURRY SPREADING ON FIELDS

The Council gave consideration to the Motion on Notice (as set out at page 8 of the agenda reports pack) slurry spreading on fields.

It was moved by Councillor M H Charlesworth, seconded by Councillor N V Joshi, and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The motion be approved.

30. PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

30a. LAND AT ELLIS FARM, KILBY BRIDGE

The Head of Built Environment, on behalf of the Leader of the Council, provided the response (as set out on page 10 of the agenda reports pack) to the Question on Notice (as set out on page 9 of the agenda reports pack) as posed by Councillor M H Charlesworth in relation to land at Ellis Farm, Kilby Bridge.

31. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

31a. OFFICIAL MAYORAL / DEPUTY MAYORAL ENGAGEMENTS

By affirmation of the meeting, it was:

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

The list of Official Engagements attended by The Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor be noted.

32. LEADER'S STATEMENT

The Leader of the Council presented a statement outlining her recent work and meetings she has attended, the administration's plans and an overview of recent decisions taken since the previous meeting of the Council, together with fielding questions in relation to her statement. This included an update as to the position on Local Government Re-organisation, and her wider observations and concerns regarding recent anti-migration activity.

33. BUDGET SETTING APPROACH FOR 2026/27 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE

The Council gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 13 – 16 of the agenda reports pack which provided information on the approach for setting the 2026/27 budget and updated Members on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP)

It was moved by the Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor I K Ridley and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The Budget Approach for 2026/27 be agreed; and**
- (ii) The updated MTFP budget gaps be noted.**

34. REVIEW OF POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY AND MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL BODIES (SEPTEMBER 2025)

The Council gave consideration to the report and appendices (as set out at pages 17 – 21 of the agenda reports pack) and the addendum (as set out at pages 3 – 11 of the agenda update) which asked Members to consider the most up to date position regarding the review of political proportionality and the implications upon membership of Council bodies.

It was moved by the Deputy Leader of the Council, and seconded by the Leader of the Council and

RESOLVED THAT:

The report and addendum be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Full Council on 28 October 2025 following discussion of the same at the Constitutional Working Group on 24 September 2025.

Votes For	17
Votes Against	3
Abstentions	1

35. PROPOSED REVOCATION OF PLANNING PERMISSION 25/00204/FUL - 117A GARTREE ROAD, OADBY

Having declared a pecuniary interest, the Leader of the Council left the Civic Suite and took no part in the debate on the item of business and voting thereon.

The Council gave consideration to the report (as set out at pages 22 - 25 of the agenda reports pack) which asked Members to approve a Planning Revocation Order to revoke planning permission 25/00204/FUL.

It was moved by the Leader of the Opposition, seconded by Councillor C S Gore and

DEFEATED THAT:

To ensure openness and transparency, the Council requests its external auditors or any other relevant independent body to undertake a comprehensive investigation into the circumstances surrounding this event, recognising that this represents a serious breach of planning procedure, with findings to be published in a public report.

Votes For	3
Votes Against	17
Abstentions	0

A recorded vote on the above amendment was requested however failed to secure the agreement of half the Members present.

It was moved by the Deputy Leader of the Council, seconded by Councillor D A Gamble and

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED THAT:

- (i) The making of a Revocation Order under section 97 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to revoke planning permission 25/00204/FUL be approved;**
- (ii) Officers be authorised to complete all associated statutory publicity, notification and procedural requirements in relation to the making of Revocation Order; and**
- (iii) the Revocation Order be confirmed (and the permission revoked) if no objections are received by the Secretary of State from any interested person(s) following the expiration of the relevant notice period.**

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.17 pm

Events attended by the Mayor, May 13th 2025 – Present (as of 20.10.25)

MAY

31	OWBC – Raheema Caratella	St. Wistan's Day Festival
31	Rishu Walia, Brits Desi Society	Desi Pride in the United Kingdom

JUNE

08	Oadby & Wigston Lions Club International	<i>We'll Meet Again</i> Concert
11	Leicestershire Lieutenancy Office	Meeting with the Lord Lieutenant & Leicestershire County Council Chairman
18	North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College	Arts Exhibition & Fashion Show
19	Geoff Maltby, Strategic Lead, Active Together	Leicestershire & Rutland School Games Summer Festival
21	Langmoor Primary School	70 th Anniversary Celebration
23	OWBC	Armed Forces Flag Raising
29	Punjabi Arts & Literary Academy (PALA) UK	International Punjabi Conference

JULY

03	Leicester Grammar School	Annual Achievement of Celebration
08	The High Sheriff of Rutland & The High Sheriff of Leicestershire	Osprey Cruise
15	University of Leicester	Summer Graduations
24	OWBC	Green Flag Photograph
28	MHA Aigburth Residential Care Home	Opening of New Residential Lounge

AUGUST

09	High Sheriff of Leicestershire	Garden Party
14	Leicestershire Lieutenancy Office	Service to Commemorate the 80 th Anniversary of VJ Day
15	OWBC	VJ 80 th Anniversary/Commemoration Flag Raising Ceremony
15	Angela Pitches, St Peter's Church, Oadby	VJ Afternoon Tea
30	OWBC – Raheema Caratella	Oadby Food Festival

SEPTEMBER

13 Ms Martha Jones
27 Rupa Joshi – O&W Hindu Community
29 Framework Knitters Curry Night

Well-fest,, Blaby Park Road, Wigston
Navratri 2025
Cuisine of India

OCTOBER

02 Leicestershire Police
03 Nupur Arts
15 OWBC Comms
17 Leicester Cathedral
18 Leicestershire & Rutland British Legion
19 Melton Borough Council

Inter-cultural event 2025
Nartan Festival Launch
Launde Primary School Air Quality Project Photo o0p
A service in lament of homelessness
Festival of Remembrance
Mayor's Civic Service

Events attended by the Deputy Mayor, May 13th 2025 – Present (as of 20.10.25)

JUNE

21	Langmoor Primary School	70 th Anniversary Celebration
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AUGUST

9	Nigel Herbert, Chairman, Aylestone Lane Allotment Association	Aylestone Lane Allotment Day Event
15	OWBC	VJ 80 th Anniversary/Commemoration Flag Raising Ceremony
30	Amber Mason – Discovery Trust	Community Fun Day



Full Council	Tuesday, 28 October 2025	Matter for Information
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Report Title:

**Local Government Reorganisation -
Draft of Current Proposal (October 2025)**

Report Author(s):

Anne Court (Chief Executive Officer / Head of Paid Service)

Purpose of Report:	The Leaders and Chief Executive of the districts/boroughs and Rutland have continued to meet to progress the final proposal. The current draft of the final Local Government Reorganisation Proposal Summary for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (North /City/South) is attached to this report at Appendix 1 . The Leader requests an early review by Council of the current draft of the final proposal.
Report Summary:	This report outlines the work undertaken by the District and Borough Councils in Leicestershire and Rutland County Council to produce the draft final Local Government Reorganisation Proposal for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. It also details the public consultation that has been carried out and how this has informed the final submission.
Recommendation(s):	Council is asked to review the current draft of the final proposal and prior to final endorsement at Full Council on 19 November 2025 for submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government by 28 November 2025.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Anne Court (Chief Executive Officer / Head of Paid Service) (0116) 257 2602 anne.court1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2642 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk Colleen Warren (Chief Finance Officer / Section 151 Officer) (0116) 257 2759 colleen.warren@oadby-wigston.gov.uk David Gill (Legal Consultant) (0116) 2572626 dave.gill1@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Economy (SO3) Our Environment (SO4) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	"Our Borough - The Place To Be" (Vision) Customer & Community Focused (V1) Proud of Everything We Do (V2) Collaborative & Creative (V3) Resourceful & Resilient (V4)

Report Implications:-	
Legal:	The Local Government Reorganisation proposal engages statutory processes under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, requiring ministerial approval and an implementation order to dissolve existing councils and establish new unitary authorities. Legal implications for the Council primarily relate to ensuring lawful consultation, governance continuity, asset and staff transfer arrangements, and compliance with data protection and equality duties throughout the transition to any new structure.
Financial:	The implications are as set out at section 8 (paragraphs 8.1-8.4) of this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Decreasing Financial Resources / Increasing Financial Pressures (CR1) Political Dynamics (CR3) Effective Utilisation of Assets / Buildings (CR5) Organisational / Transformational Change (CR8) Economy / Regeneration (CR9)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	An Equalities Impact Assessment is included at Appendix 7 of the Full Draft Proposal documents.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	Full Draft Proposal Documents - Local Government Reorganisation Proposal Summary for Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (North/City/South) (https://www.northcitysouth.co.uk/draft-proposal)
Appendices:	1. Draft Local Government Reorganisation Proposal Summary for Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (North/City/South) 2. MHCLG Feedback Letter (3 June 2025) 3. MHCLG Assessment Criteria (February 2025)

1. Background

- 1.1 On 16 December 2024 the Government published its English Devolution White Paper. This outlined a very clear ambition for every area in England to move towards setting up a Strategic Authority, formed when two or more upper-tier authorities combine, led by an elected Mayor. The White Paper outlined the powers and funding which could be devolved to such authorities, including those relating to transport, strategic planning, skills and employment, business support, environment and energy, health and public safety.

- 1.2 The Government also set a clear expectation that in two-tier areas, such as Leicestershire, local government be reorganised with new Unitary Councils established to replace District, Borough and County Councils. They stated that this would lead to better outcomes for residents, save significant money and improve accountability.
- 1.3 The White Paper explained that new Unitary Councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. It stated that for most areas this will mean creating Councils with a population of 500,000 or more but recognised that there may be exceptions to ensure that new structures make sense for an area, including for devolution, and decisions will be on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.4 It was made clear in the White Paper that the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens and communities will be prioritised above all other issues. In addition, new Councils are expected to take a proactive and innovative approach to neighbourhood involvement and community governance so that citizens are empowered.
- 1.5 It was recognised that all levels of local government have a part to play in bringing improved structures to their area through reorganisation, including by sharing information and working proactively to enable robust and sustainable options to be developed and considered. It was stated that there is an expectation that all Councils in an area will work together to develop Unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area, rather than developing competing proposals. In addition, there is an expectation that all Councils in an area will work with relevant government departments to bring about these changes as swiftly as possible.
- 1.6 Councils were invited to work collaboratively with other local authorities in their area to develop a proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a draft Plan to be submitted by 21 March 2025 and a full plan by 28 November 2025. Following the publication of the White Paper, the District and Borough Council convened a meeting of all 10 councils in early January 2025 with a view to establishing whether a unified and collaborative approach to evaluating the options and responding to the aspirations of the White Paper was possible. Unfortunately, despite this and subsequent efforts, it was not possible to secure agreement to this approach from all 10 councils. But the 7 district/borough councils and Rutland County Council did commit to a single and collaborative approach to reviewing the evidence, evaluating the options, and working toward a shared position, in line with the Government's expectations.
- 1.7 It is anticipated that elections for shadow Unitary Councils will be held in May 2027, with new Unitary Councils going live on 1 April 2028. Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Rutland County Council and each of the Districts and Boroughs will continue to operate until the go live date for the new Unitary authorities.
- 1.8 On 6 February 2025 Council agreed to delegate to the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive Officer the authority, to undertake such work as is considered necessary in response to the White Paper and subsequent approach from government to ensure Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and its residents are represented as far as possible in ongoing discussions with the government.

- 1.9 Further guidance was provided in a letter from the Minister of State for Local Government and Devolution to all Council Leaders in Leicestershire on 15 January 2025. This outlined the criteria against which proposals will be assessed.

2. Interim Proposal

- 2.1 Discussions took place with all local authorities across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) and a joint proposal was submitted to Government on 21 March 2025 on behalf of all the districts and boroughs and Rutland County Council.
- 2.2 In developing this initial proposal, the districts, boroughs, and Rutland focussed on how best to unlock the benefits of Devolution for our area and deliver the right approach for LGR.
- 2.3 Alongside the Devolution focus and Government guidance the following were used as design principles. That any new unitary councils should:
- Strike the right balance between size and maintaining a strong local connection to communities
 - Deliver savings and sustainable organisations
 - Reflect the way people live their lives and work
 - Retain local democratic accountability
 - Ensure a strong focus on neighbourhoods, and community partnerships
 - Preserve local heritage and civic identities
- 2.4 Starting from first principles meant looking at a range of options including:
- 1) Two Unitaries: Single County Unitary / City
 - 2) Three Unitaries: North / South (Rutland) / City
 - 3) Three Unitaries: North (Rutland) / South / City
 - 4) Three Unitaries: East (Rutland) / West / City
- 2.5 Maps were generated for each, and considered the following variables:
- Population
 - Workforce
 - Economic inactivity
 - Job density (ratio jobs/workforce)
 - Self-containment: commuting
 - Deprivation
 - Proxy for adult social care (pension credits)
 - Proxy for children's services (children in poverty)
 - Housing (temporary accommodation pressures)
 - Financial balance: local authority debt and income
- 2.6 The Leaders and Chief Executives of the districts/boroughs and Rutland regularly met to progress the interim proposal. Regular briefings with the wider membership and staff were held throughout the process. Briefings also took place with local MPs ahead of the submission.

3. Public and Stakeholder Engagement to Inform Interim Proposal

- 3.1 Public and stakeholder engagement was carried out to inform the draft interim proposal. Feedback from the public was obtained via an online questionnaire which received over 4,600 responses. That online survey found:
- Extensive support for the three-council proposal
 - Significant opposition to a single unitary authority
 - Enthusiasm to get the future boundaries with Leicester to a level that suited both the City and its wider geography
 - The crucial importance of local representation and identity
 - Challenges to really achieve cost savings and efficiency
- 3.2 The north/south configuration with Rutland in the north was found to offer the best balance in terms of population sizes. It was also found to best reflect the way people live and work in the area, align better with housing and service demands, and support existing strong links between towns in the north and south, and their relationship with the wider economy.
- 3.3 This proposal is referred to as the North, City, South proposal, reflecting the areas these new unitary authorities would serve.
- 3.4 Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council both submitted their own proposals. The County proposing a single unitary for Leicestershire, excluding Rutland, with no changes to the city boundaries. The City submission proposes a significantly extended city boundary and a unitary authority that rings around the city including Rutland.

4. Progress Since the Interim Plan Submission

- 4.1 Following submission of the draft proposal to the government, feedback was received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) on 3 June 2025 (attached at **Appendix 2** to this report). This highlighted several areas where additional information would be welcomed including the approach to debt management, the management of the risks of disaggregating services and the impact of each proposal on services such as social care, children's services, SEND, homelessness and wider public services. MHCLG also stated that they would welcome more detail on the rationale for any proposals which would result in setting up authorities serving less than 500,000 population.
- 4.2 Finally, government encouraged the authorities to work together to develop a robust shared evidence base to underpin final proposals which, wherever possible, should use the same data sets and be clear on assumptions. It was made clear that it would be helpful for final proposals to set out how data and evidence support outcomes and how well they meet the assessment criteria (attached at **Appendix 3** to this report). They suggested that those submitting proposals may wish to consider an options appraisal to demonstrate why their proposed approach best meets the assessment criteria in the letter compared to any alternatives, and a counterfactual of a single unitary.
- 4.3 In response to MHCLG's recommendation for consistent datasets across proposals a

dedicated data workstream was set up. Efforts to align data with Leicester City and Leicestershire County Council (LCC) included negotiations for data-sharing agreements, whilst protracted, were eventually resolved, albeit we have different proposals to them. The workstream has produced standardised datasets, to support the options appraisal and financial modelling, addressing LCC's call for transparency.

- 4.4 To support final proposals for reorganising local government across a Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland geography, the District and Borough councils of Leicestershire, along with Rutland County Council, have established several workstreams to collaboratively address our approach to issues of significance for the development and implementation of Local Government Reorganisation plans, covering strategic proposal development, organisational proposal development, target models for proposed unitary authorities, and enablement of the reorganisation process.
- 4.5 Each of the eleven workstreams operate under a designated primary liaison officer – typically a Chief Executive, or senior officer from one of the contributing councils. Officers from authorities participating towards the North, City, South proposal contribute on areas of expertise as representatives of their authorities. Workstream meetings take place with varying frequency, holding weekly, fortnightly, or monthly meetings, with key updates reported to Chief Executives and Leaders as required.
- 4.6 The Leaders and the Chief Executives and other senior officers have continued to meet regularly since submission to support the development of detailed proposals for the creation of three unitary councils – North, City, South.

5. Public and Stakeholder Engagement to Inform the Final Proposal

- 5.1 A comprehensive public and stakeholder engagement programme was undertaken; this commenced on 9 June and ran until 20 July 2025.
- 5.2 Independent engagement experts Opinion Research Services (ORS) were commissioned to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders, from residents, businesses and partner organisations to the voluntary sector and our town and parish councils.
- 5.3 A dedicated website (www.northcitysouth.co.uk) was created and various quantitative and qualitative methods including open questionnaires, focus groups, workshops, telephone interviews and face to face meetings were utilised.
- 5.4 Over 6,400 people across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland shared their views to help shape proposals for how local services could be delivered in the future. ORS reviewed and collated the feedback received from the engagement and presented this to the authorities. A summary will be appended to the submission to MHCLG.
- 5.5 Key findings included:
- Over half (56%) of individual questionnaire respondents agreed with the proposal for three unitary councils
 - Around three fifths (61%) of individual questionnaire respondents agreed with the areas covered by the North, City, South proposal, it was generally considered the most

logical division of Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland.

- Considerable opposition to the city expansion - overall the strongest opposition was seen across the various deliberative activities in relation to a potential expansion of Leicester City Council's boundaries

- 5.6 Although the North, City, South interim proposal set out that no boundary change is being proposed, participants were still asked to consider a future change, and respondents were asked to consider if Leicester City Council boundaries were to change in future whether a larger or more limited expansion should be considered.
- 5.7 Overall, a clear majority (86%) of questionnaire respondents preferred that only a limited expansion of the city boundaries should be considered, while a much smaller proportion (6%) felt that a larger expansion should be considered. Just under one in ten (8%) had no preference. The telephone survey respondents also favoured a limited expansion (64%). Of those respondents who left comments in the open-ended text question, some 31% expressed disagreement with any form of city expansion. There was also considerable opposition to the potential expansion of Leicester City's boundaries across the qualitative engagement sessions.
- 5.8 The overall findings in the ORS public and stakeholder engagement report have informed the final submission document, particularly in terms of the question of boundary changes but also extensive support for the 3 unitary, North, City, South proposal on the basis of maintaining local accountability and helping to retain local identities.
- 5.9 Financial modelling over the summer shows there is no strong business case, including financial rationale, for changing the city boundary. Full details of the options appraisals are set out in Section 2 of the attached proposal.

6. Key Components of the Revised Proposal

- **Devolution Readiness:** The model supports the Strategic Authority by delineating strategic and delivery roles and creating a structure with appropriate size ratios and geographies to support the MSA. Data sources include the 2021 Census, 2028 population projections and service demand proxies (e.g., pensioner credits, children in poverty, temporary accommodation costs) together with the extensive engagement set out above and financial modelling. We propose to progress the MSA at pace in parallel with the creation of new authorities unlike the other proposals for LGR in our area which sidetrack the MSA until new local government structures are implemented.
- **Supporting Economic Growth, Housing, and Infrastructure:** The North unitary will drive innovation through assets such as Loughborough University, while the South will foster enterprise growth through Mira Technology Park and the wider M69 growth corridor. Independent economic analysis has been commissioned from the Economic Intelligence Unit using the Oxford Economic Forecasting Model.
- **Creating financially resilient councils which are the right size to secure efficiencies:** The proposal offers the right balance between scale and physical geography to ensure sufficient financial resilience, while maintaining an ability to deliver services effectively and remain accessible to our diverse communities. Financial modelling projects annual efficiency savings of over £44 million through Workforce efficiencies, Procurement efficiencies, Income equalisation, Democratic savings, and Asset rationalisation. More detail showing the financial assumptions underpinning this

approach is set out in Sections 3, 5 and Annex 2 of the proposal. To validate the model, it underwent rigorous scrutiny by independent, experienced former Section 151 officers from non-Leicestershire councils as well as current Section 151 officers from existing councils.

- **Transformed and Prevention -focussed Services to achieve high-quality, innovative and sustainable public services:** The model adopts a prevention-focused approach, which sets out a path to reducing demand through locality focused service planning, which dovetails with the emerging agenda driven by the NHS 10-year plan for the new Integrated Care Board (ICB) structures in Leicestershire and Rutland. Our approach delivers a prevention framework of understanding and measuring population health by looking at both health outcomes and health factors, such as behaviours, clinical care, social and economic conditions, and the physical environment. We have engaged with a representative group of councils delivering social care services across small geographies, building on the findings of the PeopleToo report which demonstrates that unitary authorities with a population of 350k and below, perform better in terms of key areas of expenditure across Adult Social Care and Children's Services. Our model has also been informed through the data sharing between LLR on adult and children's social care.
- **Responding to diverse communities and validating local places and identities:** Through independent engagement with over 6,000 survey respondents, focus groups and interviews, our approach has facilitated very significant resident input. Our Neighbourhood governance proposals have been shaped in the light of this feedback to address concerns about local identity and service continuity.
- **Enabling Strong Democratic Accountability and Community Engagement:** Ensuring local connection and meaningful influence and engagement, aligned to neighbourhoods, enshrined in the Council's governance processes and providing an appropriately scaled civic infrastructure linking local areas and the unitary authorities.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 The final decision regarding which, if any, of the proposals will be implemented will be made by the Secretary of State. They can choose to do this with or without modifications.
- 7.2 Prior to making an order to implement a proposal all local authorities affected by the proposal (except the authorities which made it) will be consulted, along with other persons considered appropriate by the Secretary of State.
- 7.3 While the Secretary of State has not confirmed when a final decision is expected, if a decision was made to implement any proposal, officials would then work with organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to move to elections to new shadow unitary council. As set out earlier in the report, it is currently anticipated that these could be held in May 2027.
- 7.4 A shadow authority is one that is elected to carry out the preparatory functions of a new unitary council/s until the day that it formally comes into effect. This is commonly called "vesting day." At this stage it is envisaged that vesting day would be 1 April 2028. All existing councils across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland would continue to operate and deliver services until vesting day.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The submission sets out the high-level assumptions and financial modelling that has been undertaken to support the submission. The submission is the best estimates that can be

made at the point of publication of the financial position of the unitary option.

- 8.2 Ultimately LGR and devolution will have significant financial implications for the operation of local government across Leicestershire. The full plan includes a full business case and sets out detailed analysis of the financial and non-financial impacts of final submission, including estimated costs of implementing the new Councils.
- 8.3 There are costs associated with preparing a proposal for a single tier of local government. These costs will be on top of existing service pressures and do not take into account leadership time and other opportunity costs which are currently being absorbed; however, the costs will increase significantly over the next 18 months as work is undertaken to establish the new Councils to begin operation from 1 April 2028.
- 8.4 Finance implications and opportunities for savings are set out in Sections 3 and 5 of the final draft report.

9. Full Draft Proposal Documents

- 9.1 Whilst the Draft Local Government Reorganisation Proposal Summary for Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (North/City/South) only is produced as **Appendix 1** to this report, the Full Draft Proposal and its accompanying appendices are available at:

<https://www.northcitysouth.co.uk/draft-proposal>

Appendix 1 SUMMARY DOCUMENT

NORTH 
CITY 
SOUTH 

North, City, South: Big enough to deliver, close enough to respond

Summary of the North, City, South Proposal

North, City, South is a bold vision to reset, reimagine and reinvigorate local government in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

Developed by the Leicestershire district and borough councils and Rutland County Council, the draft plan proposes sustainable and simpler council structures designed to deliver services that local people and businesses need and deserve.

The model proposes three unitary councils:

- North Leicestershire and Rutland (416k)
- South Leicestershire (403k)
- Leicester City (404k)

The proposal is in response to the Government's instruction to reduce councils in the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland area and create a mayoral-led strategic authority as part of its devolution agenda to give power and funding to the regions.

The eight councils submitted an interim plan to Government in March and have now published a more detailed draft.

Each district council and Rutland County Council will now consider the proposal, and further amendments will be made ahead of the Government's final proposal deadline of 28 November 2025.

This summary document aims to help residents, businesses and stakeholders understand some key elements:

Three equally sized councils

Well balanced, with similar populations

Delivering devolution at pace

Aim to create a mayoral strategic authority in 2027 to unlock investment

Accelerate economic growth

Three-unitary approach has the potential to stimulate significant growth.

Prevention-focused services

Neighbourhood Partnerships would bring public services closer together to tackle problems early, improve lives and reduce demand

Saves £44 million a year

Creating strong, sustainable unitary councils

Connected to communities

Councils at the right size to remain close to residents

Retain Leicester's existing boundary

Avoids complex, costly and unpopular changes to city boundary



Driving devolution and economic growth

The North, City, South plan calls for mayoral elections in May 2027 to bring powers and funding to the area as soon as possible, something local businesses have told us needs to happen.

The plan says three well-balanced unitary councils better fit the mayoral strategic authority model and would offer clear division between strategic oversight and service delivery.

Economic modelling shows the three unitary council approach would:



have the potential to deliver significant **growth**



support the creation of **219,000 jobs** by 2050



generate **£8 billion** to the public purse thanks to business growth

Neighbourhood Partnerships and the prevention agenda

The North, City, South model outlines how core council services such as social care and housing could work more closely alongside the NHS, police and the voluntary and charity sector, as part of Neighbourhood Partnerships.

The partnerships would:



comprise local ward members, parish councils, service teams, and partners (health, police, fire, VCS, businesses, town/parish councils) – supported by a Neighbourhood Co-ordination Team



identify local priorities and draw up Neighbourhood and Community Plans to tackle them



support healthier, independent lives and also reduce demand and support financially sustainable councils

The model envisages nine or 10 partnerships in the north and south, with fewer in the city.

Sustainable, viable councils and services

The North, City, South model aims to make initial savings but also deliver long term financially sustainable councils.

The plan would deliver over **£44 million of savings a year** by measures including:

-  a reduction in staffing costs
-  procurement efficiencies
-  rationalisation of some assets or properties

The plan's 10-year financial strategy aims to turn the 10 councils' £100 million collective budget gap into a budget surplus..

The financial modelling has been tested by eight council finance teams plus independent financial experts.

Service delivery and transformation

To reduce 10 councils to three, some services will need to be merged to cover new areas, such as north and south Leicestershire. This will allow them to share resource, reduce duplication and increase resilience. These services could include housing, waste collection, planning, and customer services.

Other services which cover the county of Leicestershire, such as social care and highways, would need to be separated. Merging and separating services presents challenges, but experience from other places shows it can be done safely, and the North, City, South model offers an opportunity to transform them and bring improvements.

By working as part of Neighbourhood Partnerships, public services can be aligned and tailored to meet the needs of local communities.

existing employees will form the backbone of the new councils and have pledged to support them positively through this period of change, outlining a commitment to:

- Avoid compulsory redundancies where possible
- Provide support and wellbeing resources for affected staff
- Use redeployment, trial periods, and pay protection to ease transitions
- Follow a fair, transparent, and inclusive process for any restructuring

Social care

Social care services provide support for both adults and children and look after some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

These services do incredible work under huge pressure and represent one of the biggest challenges for councils that are striving to provide the best possible care in the most sustainable and cost-effective way.

The plan builds on existing delivery while focusing on early intervention in neighbourhood areas to meet local needs – providing people with the right support at the right time, before their needs escalate.

This prevention focus is not just about improving lives, but the financial case is also important as it reduces future demand.

It is well evidenced that for every £1 invested in earlier preventative support, councils can **save £3.17** in future social care costs.



Governance

Communities will continue to have a strong voice through their local unitary councillor, with the three councils being of a size to enable them to remain close to residents.

There would be 196 unitary councillors across the three councils, reduced from the current 384 across the 10 councils. They would represent communities alongside town and parish councils and new Neighbourhood Partnerships would also support local accountability and governance.

The proposed even spread of councillors is set out here:

North Leicestershire and Rutland:



72 councillors (Ratio 4,036 electors per councillor)

Leicester City



54 councillors (Ratio 4,742 electors per councillor)

South Leicestershire



70 councillors (Ratio 4,152 electors per councillor)

Strong support for North, City, South

The eight councils held a significant engagement exercise between June and July 2025 with over 6,400 people sharing their views. The independent process ensured transparency and fairness.

It showed strong support for the three-unitary model. In the open questionnaire:

- **56%** backed the idea of creating three unitary councils
- **61%** agreed with the proposed North, City, South boundaries

Opposition to expanding city boundary

The engagement exercise showed there was strong opposition to the city council's proposed boundary extension. Around 40% of open-text comments specifically expressed disagreement with any form of boundary expansion, highlighting deep concerns about the impact on local communities.

The North, City, South draft proposal concludes the city council's proposal to expand the city boundary would:

- be expensive and complex to implement
- not significantly improve the city council finances
- be hugely unpopular with communities

Appraising options

The North, City, South proposal examined five options for future council structures and considered a range of factors including population balance, economic growth, financial efficiency and place identity.

It concludes North, City, South as the recommended model. It discounted creating a single unitary council for Leicestershire and Rutland as it would have a significant population imbalance, not fit as well with the mayoral strategic authority, and could be slow to respond to the needs of communities.

Find out more and read the full draft proposal, and our FAQs, at
www.northcitysouth.co.uk/draft-proposal



**NORTH
CITY
SOUTH**



3 June 2025

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

INTERIM PLAN FEEDBACK: LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND

To the Chief Executives of:

Blaby District Council

Charnwood Borough Council

Harborough District Council

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Leicestershire County Council

Melton Borough Council

North West Leicestershire District Council

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council

Leicester City Council

Rutland County Council

Overview

Thank you for submitting your interim plans. The amount of work from all councils is clear to see across the range of options being considered. For the final proposals, each council can submit a single proposal for which there must be a clear single option and geography and as set out in the guidance, we expect this to be for the area as a whole; that is, the whole of the area to which the 5 February invitation was issued, not partial coverage.

Our aim for the feedback on interim plans is to support areas to develop final proposals. This stage is not a decision-making point, and our feedback does not seek to approve or reject any option being considered.

The feedback provided relates to the following interim plans submitted by Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland councils:

- The District, Borough and Rutland's case for 'Three Unitary councils in a Future Leicestershire and Rutland'
- The Leicester City Council Local Government Reorganisation – the Case for Change – interim submission

- The Leicestershire Council interim plan – English Devolution White Paper: Developing Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

We have provided feedback on behalf of central government. It takes the form of:

1. A summary of the main feedback points,
2. Our response to the specific barriers and challenges raised in your plans,
3. An annex with more detailed feedback against each of the interim plan asks.

We reference the guidance criteria included in the invitation letter throughout, a copy can be found at: [LEICESTERSHIRE, LEICESTER AND RUTLAND – GOV.UK](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/leicestershire-leicester-and-rutland-devolution). Our central message is to build on your initial work and ensure that the final proposal(s) address the criteria and are supported by data and evidence. We recommend that final proposal(s) should use the same assumptions and data sets or be clear where and why there is a difference.

We welcome the work that has been undertaken to develop local government reorganisation plans for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. This feedback does not seek to approve or discount any option, but provide feedback designed to assist in the development of final proposals. We will assess final proposals against the guidance criteria provided in the invitation letter and have tailored this feedback to identify where additional information may be helpful in enabling that assessment. Please note that this feedback is not exhaustive and should not preclude the inclusion of additional materials or evidence in the final proposals. In addition, Alex Jarvis has been appointed as your MHCLG point person and is ready to engage with the whole area to support your engagement with government.

Summary of the Feedback:

We have summarised the key elements of the feedback below, with further detail provided in the Annex.

1. We welcome the steps you have taken to come together to date to prepare proposals and we note the intention for the area to reconvene post the May County Council elections. We expect local leaders to work collaboratively and proactively, including by sharing information, to develop robust and sustainable proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area, as per criterion 4:
 - a. **Effective collaboration between all councils across the invitation area will be crucial; we would encourage you to continue to build strong relationships and agree ways of working, including around effective data sharing. This will support the development of a robust shared evidence base to underpin final proposal(s).**
 - b. **It would be helpful if final proposal(s) use the same assumptions and data sets.**

- c. It would be helpful if final proposal(s) set out how the data and evidence supports all the outcomes you have included, and how well they meet the assessment criteria in the invitation letter.
 - d. You may wish to consider an options appraisal that will help demonstrate why your proposed approach in the round best meets the assessment criteria in the invitation letter compared to any alternatives.
- 2. The criteria ask that a proposal should seek to achieve for the whole area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government (see criterion 1). **For clarity, each council can submit a single proposal for which there must be a clear single option and geography which should cover the whole of the invitation area (Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland), not partial coverage. As noted in the invitation, it is open to you to explore options with neighbouring councils in addition to those included in the invitation. Where final proposal(s) have implications for a neighbouring invitation area you should consider the impact of your proposals on the whole of the neighbouring invitation area. In addition, we would expect to see engagement and effective data-sharing between council(s) in the invitation area and council(s) in the neighbouring invitation area that are directly impacted. If one or more council(s) in a neighbouring invitation area support the proposal(s) put forward, we would also expect to see this reflected in proposal(s) submitted in response to the letter to the neighbouring invitation area, including a clear single option and geography covering the whole of the neighbouring area, not partial coverage.**
- 3. We note that Leicester City Council indicates that it will not be viable in its current form after 2027/28. **Consideration of how financial risks, such as this, will be managed would be welcome in final proposals.**
- 4. In some of the options you are considering populations that would be below or above 500,000. As set out in the Statutory Invitation guidance and in the English Devolution White Paper, we outlined a population size of 500,000 or more. This is a guiding principle, not a hard target – we understand that there should be flexibility, especially given our ambition to build out devolution and take account of housing growth, alongside local government reorganisation. **All proposals, whether they are at the guided level, above it, or below it, should set out the rationale for the proposed approach clearly.**
- 5. New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements. **Across all local government reorganisation proposal(s), looking towards a future Strategic Authority, it would be helpful to outline how each option would interact with a Strategic Authority and best benefit the local community, including**

meeting the criteria for sensible geography in the White Paper and devolution statutory tests.

Response to your requests for support from government

Please see below our response to the specific barriers and challenges that were raised in your interim plans.

1. The position of Rutland

You highlighted the need for clarity regarding Rutland County Council's preferences towards local government reorganisation. As above, Rutland is part of your invitation area and it is open to Rutland to submit proposals in response to the 5 February invitation letter for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, which cover the whole of the invitation area, not partial coverage. **If one or more council(s) in a neighbouring invitation area support the proposal(s) put forward, we would also expect to see this reflected in proposal(s) submitted in response to the letter to the neighbouring invitation area (Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire), including a clear single option and geography covering the whole of the neighbouring area, not partial coverage. We would expect to see collaboration between councils in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire to further develop proposals, and to ensure that the implications of both areas' plans are fully considered within any proposal(s) submitted by council(s) in either area.**

2. Boundary Changes

You have requested feedback on the implications of boundary changes on timescales for local government reorganisation, as well as what approach should be taken to proposed boundary changes in the November submission. As the invitation letter sets out boundary changes are possible, but "existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for proposals, but where there is a strong justification more complex boundary changes will be considered".

The final proposal(s) must specify the area for any new unitary council(s). If a boundary change is part of your final proposal, then you should be clear on the boundary proposed, which could be identified by a parish or ward boundary, or if creating new boundaries by attaching a map.

Proposals should be developed having regard to the statutory guidance which sets out the criteria against which proposals will be assessed (including that listed above). If a decision is taken to implement a proposal, boundary change can be achieved alongside structural change. Alternatively, you could make a proposal for unitary local government using existing district building blocks and consider requesting a Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) later. Such reviews have been used for minor amendments to a boundary where both councils have

requested a review – such as the recent Sheffield/Barnsley boundary adjustment for a new housing estate. PABRs are the responsibility of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England who will consider such requests case-by-case.

3. Clarity on the population criteria

You have asked for clarity on the 500,000 population criteria. As set out in the Statutory Invitation guidance and in the English Devolution White Paper, we outlined a population size of 500,000 or more. This is a guiding principle, not a hard target – we understand that there should be flexibility, especially given our ambition to build out devolution and take account of housing growth, alongside local government reorganisation. All proposals, whether they are at the guided level, above it, or below it, should set out the rationale for the proposed approach clearly.

We recommend that final proposal(s) should use the same assumptions and data sets or be clear where and why there is a difference.

4. Direct Ministerial engagement

We note the request to have direct engagement and ongoing dialogue with decision makers across government. Government is committed to supporting all invited councils equally while they develop any proposal(s). Alex Jarvis has been appointed as your MHCLG point person and is ready to engage with the whole area on issues you wish to discuss further ahead of the deadline for final proposals on 28 November 2025.

5. Request to rule out options so as not to incur additional costs

The interim plans are not a decision-making point; decisions will be made on the basis of full proposals. This feedback does not seek to approve or discount any option or proposal, but provide feedback designed to assist in the development of final proposals.

6. Weighting applied to assessment criteria

You asked whether government will be weighting the criteria against which final proposals are assessed. The criteria are not weighted. Our aim for this feedback is to support areas to develop final proposals that address the criteria and are supported by data and evidence. Decisions on the most appropriate option for each area will be judgements in the round, having regard to the guidance and the available evidence.

7. Access to other Government departments

You asked for access to and facilitation of discussions with other government departments, emphasising the importance of direct communication with key departments to test operating models and understand positions on policy. Alex Jarvis, your MHCLG point person, will be able to support your engagement with other government departments, and MHCLG colleagues will continue to work with HM Treasury on issues regarding local government reorganisation.

8. Request for temporary protection from any impacts of funding reforms

We acknowledge the requests for temporary protection from any impacts of upcoming local government funding reforms.

Government recently consulted on funding reforms and confirmed that some transitional protections will be in place to support areas to their new allocations. Further details on funding reform proposals and transition measures will be consulted on after the Spending Review in June.

We will not be able to provide further clarification on future allocations in the meantime but are open to discussing assumptions further if we can assist in financial planning.

9. Working together and data sharing

We expect local leaders to work collaboratively and proactively, including by sharing information, to develop robust and sustainable proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area.

10. Timeframe for local government reorganisation, devolution and interaction with local elections

You have requested clarity on the timelines for the local government reorganisation programme and the impact on local elections. As set out in the White Paper, we expect to deliver an ambitious first wave of reorganisation in this Parliament.

The Government will work with areas to hold elections for new unitary councils as soon as possible as is the usual arrangement in the process of local government reorganisation. We anticipate that, on the most ambitious timelines, there could be elections to 'shadow' unitary councils in May 2027, ahead of "go live" of new councils on 1 April 2028.

Our expectation is that any local authorities dissolved as a result of local government restructuring will cease to exist on the date that new councils "go live". The role of a shadow authority is to take all the necessary steps to prepare for the assumption of full local government functions and powers on vesting day and

ensure continuity of public service delivery on and after this date. It does not have a role in carrying out the functions of predecessor councils except for where this is expressly provided.

We are clear that reorganisation should not delay devolution and plans for both should be complementary.

11. Stability of local government finances

We note your concerns around local government finances and the risk that a delay to local government reorganisation and wider devolution could prevent cost efficiencies being made. Ministers have committed to reforming the way in which local authorities are funded through a multi-year settlement from 2026-27, fixing local audit and creating a sustainable way to fund social care.

As set out above, Government recently consulted on funding reforms and confirmed that some transitional protections will be in place to support areas to their new allocations. Further details on funding reform proposals will be consulted on further after the Spending Review in June. We will not be able to provide further clarification on future allocations in the meantime but are open to discussing assumptions further if we can assist in financial planning.

We would welcome further information about the situation locally, and you are encouraged to discuss the impact on local government reorganisation progress with your MHCLG point person.

12. Capacity/resources to mobilise and implement a successful transition

You have identified that local government reorganisation will be reliant upon adequate capacity and resource being available to support developing proposals and the transition. £7.6 million will be made available in the form of local government reorganisation proposal development contributions, to be split across the 21 areas. Further information will be provided on this funding shortly.

In terms of transitional costs, as per the invitation letter, we expect that areas will be able to meet transition costs over time from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects. We note the estimate of your transition costs and comment further on this in the table below

13. Clarity on timetable and feedback

You asked for clarity on the timetable for local government reorganisation, particularly for feedback to support your work to continue at pace. This is our

feedback to support you to develop final proposal(s), and we are open to providing ongoing support to your work towards the 28 November submission deadline. Alex Jarvis has been appointed as your MHCLG point person and is ready to engage with the whole area on issues you wish to discuss further.

14. Devolution Engagement

You requested that the district and borough councils be engaged in discussions on devolution in order to reflect the current position on devolution in final proposals for local government reorganisation. The invitation letter sets out that new unitary structures should support devolution. As you will be aware, it is envisaged that the new unitary authorities created through the local government reorganisation process would become the constituent members of any future MCA in the region.

We are encouraged by your continued support for devolution for your area. It is for areas to propose robust devolution proposals, and consensus is needed from all the relevant authorities for these proposals to go ahead. All such proposals will be assessed against the criteria set out in the English Devolution White Paper. District councils, ahead of local government reorganisation, should play an active role in devolution arrangements, via engagement with their upper-tier authorities. We expect all councils in an area to work together and to share information.

15. Continuation of Ceremonial rights

Separately to interim plans, questions have been asked in regards to Rutland's ceremonial status and ceremonial rights more generally; there is no intention that the priorities set out in the English Devolution White Paper will impact on the ceremonial counties or the important roles that Lord Lieutenants and High Sheriffs play as the Monarch's representatives in those counties, and ceremonial counties will be retained. Where local government reorganisation might affect ceremonial privileges, we will work with local leaders to ensure that areas retain their ceremonial rights and privileges.

ANNEX: Detailed feedback on criteria for interim plan

Ask – Interim Plan Criteria	Feedback
Identify the likely options for the size and boundaries of new councils that will offer the best structures for delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services across the area, along with indicative efficiency saving opportunities. Relevant criteria: 1 c) Proposals should be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve, including evidence of estimated costs/benefits and local engagement & 2 a-f) - Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks & 3 a-c) Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens	We welcome the initial thinking on the options for local government reorganisation in Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland and recognise that this is subject to further work. We note the local context and challenges outlined in the proposals and the potential benefits that have been identified for the options put forward. Your plans set out your intention to undertake further analysis, and this further detail and evidence on the outcomes that are expected to be achieved of any preferred model would be welcomed. For the final proposal(s), each council can submit a single proposal for which there must be a clear single option and geography and, as set out in the guidance, we expect this to be for the area as a whole; that is, the whole of the area to which the 5 February invitation was issued, not partial coverage. You may wish to consider a fuller options appraisal against the criteria set out in the letter to provide a rationale for the preferred model against alternatives. Proposals should be for a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs, including future housing growth plans. All proposals should set out the rationale for the proposed approach. Where there are proposed boundary changes, the proposal should provide strong public services and financial sustainability related justification for the change. Given the financial pressures you identify it would be helpful to further understand how efficiency savings have been considered alongside a sense of place and local identity. We welcome the initial financial information provided. In final proposal(s) it would be helpful to include a high-level financial assessment which covers transition costs and overall forecast operating costs of the new unitary councils. Referencing criteria 1 and 2, you may wish to consider the following bullets that it would be helpful to include in a final proposal:

	• high level breakdowns, for where any efficiency savings will be made, with clarity of assumptions on how estimates have been reached and the data sources used, including differences in assumptions between proposal(s) • information on the counterfactual against which efficiency savings are estimated, with values provided for current levels of spending • a clear statement of what assumptions have been made and if the impacts of inflation are taken into account • a summary covering sources of uncertainty or risks, with modelling, as well as predicted magnitude and impact of any unquantifiable costs or benefits • where possible, quantified impacts on service provision, as well as wider impacts We recognise that financial assessments are subject to further work. The bullets below indicate where further information would be helpful across all options: • data and evidence to set out how your final proposal(s) would enable financially viable councils across the whole area, including identifying which option best delivers value for money for council taxpayers • further detail on potential finances of new unitaries, for example, funding, operational budgets, potential budget surpluses/shortfalls, total borrowing (General Fund), and debt servicing costs (interest and MRP); and what options may be available for rationalisation of potentially surplus operational assets • clarity on the underlying assumptions underpinning any modelling e.g. assumptions of future funding, demographic growth and pressures, interest costs, Council Tax, savings earmarked in existing councils' MTFS • financial sustainability both through the period to the creation of new unitary councils as well as afterwards We welcome the information in your interim plans on the disaggregation of services. For proposals that would involve disaggregation of services we would
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	welcome further details on how services can be maintained where there is fragmentation, such as social care, children's services, SEND, homelessness, and for wider public services including public safety. Under criterion 3c you may wish to consider: • how each option would deliver high-quality and sustainable public services or efficiency saving opportunities • what would be the impact of proposals on the shared social care services between Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council? • what would the different options mean for local services provision, for example: • do different options have a different impact on SEND services and distribution of funding and sufficiency planning to ensure children can access appropriate support, and how will services be maintained? • what is the impact on adults and children's care services? Is there a differential impact on the number of care users and infrastructure to support them among the different options? • what partnership options have you considered for joint working across the new unitaries for the delivery of social care services? • do different options have variable impacts as you transition to the new unitaries, and how will risks to safeguarding be managed? • do different options have variable impacts on schools, support and funding allocation, and sufficiency of places, and how will impacts on schools be managed? • what impact will there be on highway services across the area under the different approaches suggested? • what are the implications for public health, including consideration of socio-demographic challenges and health inequalities within any new boundaries and their implications for current and future health service needs? What are the implications for how residents access services and service delivery for populations most at risk? We would encourage you to provide further details on how your proposals would maximise opportunities for public service reform, so that we can explore how best to support your efforts.
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Include indicative costs and arrangements in relation to any options including planning for future service transformation opportunities. Relevant criteria - 2d) Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.	We note the estimated transition costs included in all plans, and the initial thinking on service transformation and back-office efficiencies. We would welcome further clarity in final proposal(s) on the assumptions and data used to calculate transition costs and efficiencies (see criterion 2d). As per criterion 2, the final proposal(s) should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects. • within this it would be helpful to provide more detailed analysis on expected transition and/or disaggregation costs and potential efficiencies of proposals. This could include clarity on methodology, assumptions, data used, what year these may apply and why these are appropriate • detail on the potential service transformation opportunities and invest-to-save projects from unitarisation across a range of services - e.g. consolidation of waste collection and disposal services, and whether different options provide different opportunities for back-office efficiency savings? • where it has not been possible to monetise or quantify impacts, you may wish to provide an estimated magnitude and likelihood of impact • summarise any sources of risks, uncertainty and key dependencies related to the modelling and analysis • detail on the estimated financial sustainability of proposed reorganisation and how debt could be managed locally We note the financial pressures that councils are facing. It would be helpful if additional detail on the councils' financial positions and further modelling is set out in detail in the final proposal(s). We would encourage you to work together and recommend that all options and proposals should use the same assumptions and data sets or be clear
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	where and why there is a difference (linked to criterion 1c).
Include early views as to the councillor numbers that will ensure both effective democratic representation for all parts of the area, and also effective governance and decision-making arrangements which will balance the unique needs of your cities, towns, rural and coastal areas, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England guidance. Relevant criteria: 6) New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.	We welcome the initial assessments made across all interim plans on the options for and importance of democratic representation. We note where early views on councillor numbers have been provided which we will be sharing with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). There are no set limits on the number of councillors although the LGBCE guidance indicates that a compelling case would be needed for a council size of more than 100 members. New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment. Additional details on how the community will be engaged specifically how the governance, participation and local voice will be addressed to strengthen local engagement, and democratic decision-making would be helpful. In final proposal(s) we would welcome detail on your plans for neighbourhood-based governance, the impact on parish councils, and the role of formal neighbourhood partnerships and area committees.
Include early views on how new structures will support devolution ambitions. Relevant Criteria: 5) New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements. Specifically 5b) Where no CA or CCA is already established or agreed then the proposal should set out how it will help unlock devolution.	We welcome the consideration of devolution in your plans. We also note the reference to the option for Rutland to join with authorities in Lincolnshire as part of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA). Across all local government reorganisation proposal(s), looking towards a future Strategic Authority, it would be beneficial to provide an assessment that outlines if there are benefits and disadvantages in how each option would interact with a Strategic Authority and best benefit the local community, including meeting the criteria for sensible geography in the White Paper and devolution statutory tests. If an option of Rutland joining GLCCA is being considered, further information would be helpful on the implications for the governance arrangements in

	GLCCA. Also, consideration of the impact on the remainder of Leicestershire and Leicester would be welcome. We would also appreciate consideration of how this would best benefit the local community, including meeting the criteria for sensible geography in the White Paper and devolution statutory tests. We would also recommend you consult with the GLCCA mayor.
Include a summary of local engagement that has been undertaken and any views expressed, along with your further plans for wide local engagement to help shape your developing proposals. Relevant criteria: 6a&b) new unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment	We welcome the engagement that has taken place to date across all interim plans and how these views have been reflected. We would encourage you to continue with your plans for engagement locally in a meaningful and constructive way with residents, the voluntary sector, local community groups and councils, public sector providers and business to inform your proposal(s). For proposals that involve disaggregation of services, you may wish to engage in particular, with those residents who may be affected. It would be helpful to see detail that demonstrates how local ideas and views have been incorporated into the final proposal(s) including those relating to neighbouring authorities where relevant.
Set out indicative costs of preparing proposals and standing up an implementation team as well as any arrangements proposed to coordinate potential capacity funding across the area. Relevant criteria: Linked to 2d) Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking	We welcome the indicative costs that are set out in plans and recognise the work to consider the costs of preparing proposals and standing up an implementation team. Further clarity on how you arrived at the estimated costs and more detail on the underlying assumptions and data that have informed these figures would also be helpful. We would welcome further detail in your final proposal(s) over the level of cost and the extent to which the costs are for delivery of the unitary structures or for transformation activity that delivers additional benefits. £7.6 million will be made available in the form of local government reorganisation proposal development contributions, to be split across the 21 areas. Further information will be provided on this funding shortly.

forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.	
Set out any voluntary arrangements that have been agreed to keep all councils involved in discussions as this work moves forward and to help balance the decisions needed now to maintain service delivery and ensure value for money for council taxpayers, with those key decisions that will affect the future success of any new councils in the area. Relevant criteria: 4 a-c) Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.	We note the intent for all councils to reconvene following the recent May local elections to continue discussions on a way forward for local government reorganisation in the area. Effective collaboration between all councils in the invitation area, and the proposed Mayoral Strategic Authority area will be crucial; areas will need to build strong relationships and agree ways of working, including around effective data sharing to further develop proposals. Should Rutland County Council wish to be included in proposals submitted by a council(s) in Lincolnshire, we would expect collaboration between councils in Leicestershire and Lincolnshire to further develop proposals, and to ensure that the implications of both areas' plans are fully considered within any proposal submitted by councils in each area. This will enable you to develop a robust shared evidence base to underpin final proposals (see criteria 1c). We recommend that final proposals should use the same assumptions and data sets or be clear where and why there is a difference.

SCHEDULE

Guidance from the Secretary of State for proposals for unitary local government.

Criteria for unitary local government

- 1. A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.**
 - a) Proposals should be for sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base which does not create an undue advantage or disadvantage for one part of the area.
 - b) Proposals should be for a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.
 - c) Proposals should be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve, including evidence of estimated costs/benefits and local engagement.
 - d) Proposals should describe clearly the single tier local government structures it is putting forward for the whole of the area, and explain how, if implemented, these are expected to achieve the outcomes described.
- 2. Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.**
 - a) As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more.
 - b) There may be certain scenarios in which this 500,000 figure does not make sense for an area, including on devolution, and this rationale should be set out in a proposal.
 - c) Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that council taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money.
 - d) Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.
 - e) For areas covering councils that are in Best Value intervention and/or in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support, proposals must additionally demonstrate how reorganisation may contribute to putting local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing and what area-specific arrangements may be necessary to make new structures viable.
 - f) In general, as with previous restructures, there is no proposal for council debt to be addressed centrally or written off as part of reorganisation. For areas where there are exceptional circumstances where there has been failure linked to capital practices, proposals should reflect the extent to which the implications of this can be managed locally, including as part of efficiencies possible through reorganisation.

3. Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.

- a) Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services.
- b) Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money.
- c) Consideration should be given to the impacts for crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness, and for wider public services including for public safety.

4. Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.

- a) It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way and this engagement activity should be evidenced in your proposal.
- b) Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.
- c) Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed.

5. New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.

- a) Proposals will need to consider and set out for areas where there is already a Combined Authority (CA) or a Combined County Authority (CCA) established or a decision has been taken by Government to work with the area to establish one, how that institution and its governance arrangements will need to change to continue to function effectively; and set out clearly (where applicable) whether this proposal is supported by the CA/CCA /Mayor.
- b) Where no CA or CCA is already established or agreed then the proposal should set out how it will help unlock devolution.
- c) Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities.

6. New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

- a) Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged.
- b) Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement.

Developing proposals for unitary local government

The following matters should be taken into account in formulating a proposal:

Boundary Changes

- a) Existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for your proposals, but where there is a strong justification more complex boundary changes will be considered.
- b) There will need to be a strong public services and financial sustainability related justification for any proposals that involve boundary changes, or that affect wider public services, such as fire and rescue authorities, due to the likely additional costs and complexities of implementation.

Engagement and consultation on reorganisation

- a) We expect local leaders to work collaboratively and proactively, including by sharing information, to develop robust and sustainable unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area to which this invitation is issued, rather than developing competing proposals.
- b) For those areas where Commissioners have been appointed by the Secretary of State as part of the Best Value Intervention, their input will be important in the development of robust unitary proposals.
- c) We also expect local leaders to engage their Members of Parliament, and to ensure there is wide engagement with local partners and stakeholders, residents, workforce and their representatives, and businesses on a proposal.
- d) The engagement that is undertaken should both inform the development of robust proposals and should also build a shared understanding of the improvements you expect to deliver through reorganisation.
- e) The views of other public sector providers will be crucial to understanding the best way to structure local government in your area. This will include the relevant Mayor (if you already have one), Integrated Care Board, Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Authority, local Higher Education and Further Education providers, National Park Authorities, and the voluntary and third sector.
- f) Once a proposal has been submitted it will be for the Government to decide on taking a proposal forward and to consult as required by statute. This will be a completely separate process to any consultation undertaken on mayoral devolution in an area, which will be undertaken in some areas early this year, in parallel with this invitation.

Interim plans

An interim plan should be provided to Government on or before **21 March 2025**. This should set out your progress on developing proposals in line with the criteria and guidance. The level of detail that is possible at this stage may vary from place to place but the expectation is that one interim plan is jointly submitted by all councils in the area. It may be the case that the interim plan describes more than one potential proposal for your area, if there is more than one option under consideration. The interim plan should:

- a) identify any barriers or challenges where further clarity or support would be helpful.
- b) identify the likely options for the size and boundaries of new councils that will offer the best structures for delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services across the area, along with indicative efficiency saving opportunities.
- c) include indicative costs and arrangements in relation to any options including planning for future service transformation opportunities.
- d) include early views as to the councillor numbers that will ensure both effective democratic representation for all parts of the area, and also effective governance and decision-making arrangements which will balance the unique needs of your cities, towns, rural and coastal areas, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England guidance.
- e) include early views on how new structures will support devolution ambitions.
- f) include a summary of local engagement that has been undertaken and any views expressed, along with your further plans for wide local engagement to help shape your developing proposals.
- g) set out indicative costs of preparing proposals and standing up an implementation team as well as any arrangements proposed to coordinate potential capacity funding across the area.
- h) set out any voluntary arrangements that have been agreed to keep all councils involved in discussions as this work moves forward and to help balance the decisions needed now to maintain service delivery and ensure value for money for council taxpayers, with those key decisions that will affect the future success of any new councils in the area.



Full Council	Tuesday, 28 October 2025	Matter for Information and Decision
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Report Title:

Review of Political Proportionality and Membership of Council Bodies (October 2025)

Report Author(s):

Samuel Ball (Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer) (Solicitor)

Purpose of Report:	Following further debate and discussion at the meetings of Full Council on 23 September 2025 and the Constitutional Working Group (CWG) on 24 September 2025, the purpose of this report is to: review, revise and allocate seats on affected Council bodies in accordance with the statutory requirements on political balance as they apply to both constituted political groups and ungrouped Independent Members; and to adopt, as part of the Council's Constitution, the proposed Political Balance Procedure Rules, providing a clearer, more consistent, and transparent framework for future reviews of political proportionality and membership of Council bodies.
Report Summary:	The report outlines the review of political proportionality following changes in the Council's composition. It proposes adopting new Political Balance Procedure Rules to ensure a transparent and consistent framework for future reviews. The rules were developed after discussions at the Constitutional Working Group, which agreed on reserving seats for ungrouped Independent Members and making minor adjustments to Council Body sizes for equitable representation. The revised political composition allocates 55 seats to the Liberal Democrat Group, 17 to the Conservative Group, and 17 to ungrouped Independents across 11 politically balanced Council bodies. Changes include increasing some Council body sizes and reducing others by either +1/-1 so to achieve equitable and balanced representation.
Recommendation(s):	A. That the Political Balance Procedure Rules (as set out in Appendix 1 to the report) be noted and approved; B. That the new political composition of the Council, and revised proportionality arrangements in relation to the allocation of seats on Council bodies by political grouped Members and ungrouped Independent Members (as set out at section 2 of the report) be noted; and C. That the revised number of seats on each affected Council body, and the necessary removals and appointments of Members from/to those affected Council bodies for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26 (as set out at sections 2 and 3 of this report) as may be proposed and seconded at the meeting be resolved.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Samuel Ball (Legal & Democratic Services Manager / Monitoring Officer) (Solicitor) (0116) 257 2643 samuel.ball@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Corporate Objectives:	Not applicable.

Vision and Values:	Not applicable.
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	Failure to adhere to the relevant provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 (as modified and amended accordingly) may result in the Council acting beyond its powers.
Financial:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Political Dynamics (CR3) Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications arising from this report. EA not applicable.
Human Rights:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications arising from this report.
Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	As the author, the report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	• Local Government and Housing Act 1989 • Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 • 'Review of Political Proportionality and Membership of Council Bodies (September 2025)' to Full Council on 23 September 2025
Appendices:	1. Proposed Political Balance Procedure Rules (October 2025)

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 23 September 2025, Full Council considered a report and addendum concerning the Council's statutory duty to allocate seats on Council bodies following changes to its political composition, particularly in relation to ungrouped Independent Members. The full contents of that earlier report and addendum are not reproduced here, but is listed as a background paper(s) should Members wish to refer to them to provide further context.
- 1.2 At that meeting, Members resolved to defer determination of the matter until this meeting of Full Council, to allow for further discussion and consideration by the Constitutional Working Group ("the CWG") at its meeting on 24 September 2025. At the meeting of the CWG, further discussions took place, and a broad consensus was reached as follows:
- 1.2.1 To reserve a proportionate number of seats for ungrouped Independent Members, with allocations reconciled against the total number of seats across all politically balanced Council bodies once political group entitlements have been calculated;

- 1.2.2 When applying proportionality and undertaking any rounding exercises, the most equitable and practical approach is to make minor adjustments (+1/-1) to the overall size of Council bodies where necessary to achieve balanced representation; and
- 1.2.3 An officer-led process, facilitated by the Monitoring Officer, is to be used to manage an expression of interest exercise to determine the preferred Council body appointments of ungrouped Independent Members which is to be respected.

- 1.3 In light of these discussions, the CWG requested that a set of Political Balance Procedure Rules ("the Rules") be drafted to codify this approach and to provide a clearer, more consistent, and transparent framework for future reviews of political proportionality and the membership of Council bodies. The draft Rules were circulated to Members of the CWG, and, no comments having been received, are now attached at **Appendix 1** for approval.

2. Review of Proportionality Arrangements

- 2.1 On the basis that the Rules are approved by Members, the review, revision, and allocation of seats on Council bodies should proceed as set out in the remainder of this report.

2.2 Politically Balanced Council Bodies

- 2.2.1 The following Council bodies are politically balanced:

Council Body	Current Seats
Development Control Committee	14
Policy, Finance & Development Committee	14
Service Delivery Committee	14
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	10
Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group*	8
Audit Committee	7
Capital Projects Sub-Committee	7
Constitutional Working Group*	7
Armed Forces Working Group*	4
Children & Young Peoples' Forum*	4
Total(s)	89

* Whilst the following are not formal committees, these Council bodies are (and have been ordinarily calculated in accordance with political balance calculations.

- 2.2.2 The total number of seats across all politically balanced Council bodies is currently 89.

2.3 Political Balance of the Council

- 2.3.3 To calculate the number of seats each political group is entitled to:

- The number of Members in each group is divided by the total number of Members (26);
- This number is multiplied by 100 giving membership of each group as a percentage (%);
- The total number of seats available across all Council bodies is multiplied by this %; and
- This number(s) is then rounded to the nearest whole number to give the seat numbers.

2.3.4 The revised composition of the Council, and the proportion of seats allocated by political group, is shown in the following table:

Members (26)	No.	%	Proportion of Seats Available	Rounded To
Liberal Democrat Group (LD)	16	61.54%	54.77	55
Conservative Group (CON)	5	19.23%	17.12	17
Ungrouped Independents (UI)	5	19.23%	17.12	17
Total(s)	26	100%	89.01	89

- 2.4 The political proportionality rules that apply in allocating seats on politically balanced Council bodies, set out in section 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act, apply only to political groups (i.e. 55 to the Liberal Democrat Group and 17 to the Conservative Group).
- 2.5 Once seats have been allocated to the political groups, the Council is then under a duty to allocate the remaining seats (17) to Members who are independent of political grouping. In effect, this does proportionately reserve seats to ungrouped Members in the same way.
- 2.6 **Allocation of Seats and Sizes of Council Bodies**
- 2.7 Using current 89 as the total number of seats across all politically balanced Council bodies, the following table shows the total number of seats each political group and ungrouped independents is entitled to for each, using the calculated proportions above.
- 2.8 To calculate the number of seats grouped and ungrouped Members are entitled to:
- (i) The number of seats on each body is multiplied the % across all available bodies; and
 - (ii) This number(s) is then rounded to the nearest whole number to give the seat numbers;
- 2.9 As a result of rounding, this will require an increase or decrease in the size of the body.

Development Control Committee (14)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 14 =$	8.62	9
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3
Figures rounded require an INCREASE ↑ in size to			15

Policy, Finance & Development Committee (14)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 14 =$	8.62	9
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3
Figures rounded require an INCREASE ↑ in size to			15

Service Delivery Committee (14)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 14 =$	8.62	9
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3

UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 14 =$	2.69	3
Figures rounded require an INCREASE ↑ in size to			15

Licensing & Regulatory Committee (10)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 10 =$	6.15	6
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 10 =$	1.92	2
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 10 =$	1.92	2
Figures rounded require NO CHANGE – in size			10

Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group (8)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 8 =$	4.92	5
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 8 =$	1.54	2
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 8 =$	1.54	2
Figures rounded require an INCREASE ↑ in size to			9

Audit Committee (7)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 7 =$	4.31	4
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
Figures rounded require a DECREASE ↓ in size to			6

Capital Projects Sub-Committee (7)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 7 =$	4.31	4
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
Figures rounded require a DECREASE ↓ in size to			6

Constitutional Working Group (7)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 7 =$	4.31	4
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 7 =$	1.35	1
Figures rounded require a DECREASE ↓ in size to			6

Armed Forces Working Group (4)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 4 =$	2.46	2
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 4 =$	0.77	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 4 =$	0.77	1

Figures rounded require NO CHANGE – in size	4
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Children & Young Peoples' Forum (4)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 4 =$	2.46	2
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 4 =$	0.77	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 4 =$	0.77	1
Figures rounded require NO CHANGE – in size			4

2.10 With each political group and ungrouped Independents being allocated seats with its proportional entitlement rounded accordingly, the changes are shown in the following table:

Council Body	Seats	LD	CON	UI
Development Control Committee	15 ⁽⁺¹⁾	9 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁺³⁾
Policy, Finance & Development Committee	15 ⁽⁺¹⁾	9 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁺³⁾
Service Delivery Committee	15 ⁽⁺¹⁾	9 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁻¹⁾	3 ⁽⁺³⁾
Licensing & Regulatory Committee	10 ⁽⁰⁾	6 ⁽⁻¹⁾	2 ⁽⁻¹⁾	2 ⁽⁺²⁾
Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group	9 ⁽⁺¹⁾	5 ⁽⁻¹⁾	2 ⁽⁰⁾	2 ⁽⁺²⁾
Audit Committee	6 ⁽⁻¹⁾	4 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁺¹⁾
Capital Projects Sub-Committee	6 ⁽⁻¹⁾	4 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁺¹⁾
Constitutional Working Group	6 ⁽⁻¹⁾	4 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁺¹⁾
Armed Forces Working Group	4 ⁽⁰⁾	2 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁰⁾	1 ⁽⁺¹⁾
Children & Young Peoples' Forum	4 ⁽⁰⁾	2 ⁽⁻¹⁾	1 ⁽⁰⁾	1 ⁽⁺¹⁾
Total(s)	90	54	18	18

3. Revised Removal and Appointments of Members to Council Bodies

3.1 The revised political balance of the Council affects the following Council Bodies:

3.1.1 The Liberal Democrat Group **LOOSE** one (1) seat on:

- Development Control Committee
- Policy, Finance & Development Committee
- Service Delivery Committee
- Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group
- Audit Committee
- Capital Projects Sub-Committee
- Constitutional Working Group
- Armed Forces Working Group
- Children & Young Peoples' Forum

3.1.2 The Conservative Group **LOOSE** one (1) seat on:

- Development Control Committee
- Policy, Finance & Development Committee

- Service Delivery Committee
- Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- Audit Committee
- Capital Projects Sub-Committee
- Constitutional Working Group

3.1.3 The is one (1) **VACANCY** for the Conservative Group on:

- Development Control Committee
- Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group

3.1.4 The Ungrouped Independents **GAIN**:

(i) three (3) seats on:

- Development Control Committee
- Policy, Finance & Development Committee
- Service Delivery Committee

(ii) two (2) seats on:

- Licensing & Regulatory Committee
- Place Shaping & Climate Change Working Group

(iii) one (1) seat on:

- Audit Committee
- Capital Projects Sub-Committee
- Constitutional Working Group
- Armed Forces Working Group
- Children & Young Peoples' Forum

3.2 The necessary removals and appointments of Members from/to those affected Council bodies at set out at sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.4 of the report for the remainder of the municipal year 2025/26 may be proposed, seconded and resolved before or at the meeting itself and in accordance with the proposed Political Balance Procedure Rules as may be approved.

1. SECTION 10 - POLITICAL BALANCE PROCEDURE RULES

1.1 Overview of the Political Proportionality Rules etc.

- 1.1.1 The legal requirements for political proportionality in the allocation and review of seats on Council bodies are set out in the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990 ("the Regulations"), made under sections 15, 16 and 17 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ("the 1989 Act"). The requirements are as follows.
- 1.1.2 After a Member(s) has notified the Monitoring Officer that they have joined or left a political group, the Council is, as soon as practicable, required to review its political balance, to allocate seats on specified bodies in accordance with that political balance, and appoint Members to those Council bodies in accordance with the wishes of the political group(s).
- 1.1.3 The Council must allocate seats on committees so as to give effect to the political balance rules unless it resolves otherwise without any Member voting against (i.e. by unanimity).
- 1.1.4 The allocation of seats must conform to the principles of proportionality contained in sections 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act. There is a duty to give effect to the following principles, as far as reasonably practicable, in the priority order as shown:
- (i) "Not all the seats on the body are allocated to the same political group;"
 - (ii) "A majority of the seats on a body are allocated to a group if it comprises a majority of the total membership of the authority;"
 - (iii) "Subject to (a) and (b) above, that the number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the total of all seats on ordinary committees as is borne by the number of members of that group to the total membership of the authority;" and
 - (iv) "Subject to (a) to (c) above, that the number of seats on a body allocated to each group bears the same proportion to the number of seats on that body as is borne by the number of members of that group to the total membership of the authority."
- 1.1.5 For the purposes of political balance, a group must comprise at least two Members to be formally recognised as a political group. The political proportionality rules under sections 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act therefore apply only to political groups so constituted.

- 1.1.6 Where the Council has Independent Members who are ungrouped, section 15(3) of the 1989 Act is modified by regulation 16(2) of the 1990 Regulations to read as follows:

“15(3) Where at any time the representation of different political groups on a body to which this section applies falls to be reviewed under this section by any relevant authority or committee of a relevant authority, it shall be the duty of that authority or committee, as soon as practicable after the review, to determine the allocation to each of those groups of such of the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by that authority or committee as bear to the total of all of those seats the same proportion as is borne by the number of members of that group to the membership of the authority.”

- 1.1.7 Further and in addition to the above, where there are ungrouped Independent Members, section 16(2A) of the 1989 Act is modified by regulation 16(3) of the 1990 Regulations to take effect and provides:

“(2A) Where appointments fall to be made to seats on a body to which section 15 applies otherwise than in accordance with a determination under that section, it shall be the duty of the authority or the committee, as the case may be, so to exercise their power to make appointments as to secure that the persons appointed to those seats are not members of any political group.”

- 1.1.8 The implications of these changes to section 15(3), read and taken together with section 16(2A), is that once the proportional allocation to political groups has been made in accordance with the four principles in paragraph 1.4 above, any remaining unallocated seats must be reserved for and appointed to ungrouped Independent Members.
- 1.1.9 The only lawful departure from the requirements of sections 15 and 16 is by virtue of section 17 of the 1989 Act, which permits alternative arrangements to be made by resolution of the Full Council, provided that no Member votes against such a resolution.
- 1.1.10 Once the allocation of seats is determined, the actual appointment of individual Members to the allocated seats must be made in accordance with the wishes of the relevant political group, in line with section 16 of the 1989 Act and regulation 13 of the 1990 Regulations.

1.2 Practical Application of the Political Proportionality Rules etc.

To give practical effect to the statutory principles set out above, the following method shall be applied when reviewing and determining the allocation of seats on Council bodies. This process ensures that the distribution of seats properly reflects the overall political composition of the Council and that ungrouped Independent Members are represented in accordance with sections 15 and 16 of the 1989 Act and the 1990 Regulations.

(i) Determine total seats subject to proportionality

The first step is to identify and confirm the total number of seats across all Council bodies that are subject to political balance. These typically include all “ordinary committees” of the Council exercising decision-making or regulatory functions, together with any sub-committees or panels which the Council has, by local convention, resolved to treat as politically balanced. This total provides the baseline figure to which the proportionality calculations are applied.

(ii) Calculate proportional representation

Next, calculate the proportion that each political group forms of the total membership of the Council. This is achieved by dividing the number of Members in each political group by the total number of Members on the Council. The same calculation is then applied to determine the proportion of Members who are not part of any political group (“ungrouped Independent Members”). The proportions produced through this calculation establish each group’s and the independents’ entitlement to committee seats across all politically balanced Council bodies.

(iii) Apply proportions to total Council body seats

The proportions calculated at step (ii) are then applied to the total number of available seats to determine the aggregate entitlement of each political group and of ungrouped Independent Members. The statutory requirement to give effect to proportionality “so far as reasonably practicable” is achieved by rounding down fractional entitlements of less than one-half and rounding up those of one-half or more. Where this process results in a total greater or less than the number of available seats, adjustments must

be made to ensure the overall total matches the number of seats to be filled. This may, where necessary, include minor adjustments to the size of individual Council bodies to equitably preserve balance and proportional representation.

(iv) Practical arrangements for ungrouped Independent Members:

Once the number of seats to be reserved for ungrouped Independent Members has been determined, the Monitoring Officer will invite those Members to express their interest in serving on particular Council bodies. The Monitoring Officer will facilitate discussions to identify individual preferences and, where achieved, Full Council will give effect to these preferences as may be expressed. Where an ungrouped Member does not express interest in any of the available seats, those seats will remain vacant unless and until a subsequent nomination is made and approved by Full Council. Where the number of expressions of interest from ungrouped Independent Members exceeds the number of available seats, the allocation of those seats will be determined by the drawing of lots. This will be conducted transparently by the Monitoring Officer, at the meeting of Full Council at which appointments are confirmed.

Agenda Item 12



Full Council	Tuesday, 28 October 2025	Matter for Decision
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Report Title:

Appointment of Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group

Report Author(s):

Teresa Neal (Strategic Director)

Purpose of Report:	To establish a Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group to oversee the Council's compliance with new Consumer Standards introduced under the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023. These standards require a self-assessment and action plan to ensure safety, transparency, accountability, and community focus in housing services.
Report Summary:	It proposes a politically balanced Task Group of five Members to monitor progress, guide improvements, and liaise with the Regulator during inspections. The Task Group will operate until all actions in the self-assessment plan are complete, reporting twice yearly to the Service Delivery Committee. The Task Group's Terms of Reference and proposed membership details are as set out in the report.
Recommendation(s):	A. That a Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group be appointed and its Terms of Reference (as set out at Appendix 1) be approved; and B. That the Members of the Task Group (as set out section 3 of this report) be appointed accordingly.
Senior Leadership, Head of Service, Manager, Officer and Other Contact(s):	Teresa Neal (Strategic Director) (0116) 257 2601 teresa.neal@oadby-wigston.gov.uk
Strategic Objectives:	Our Council (SO1) Our Communities (SO2) Our Partners (SO5)
Vision and Values:	Customer & Community Focused (V1)
Report Implications:-	
Legal:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Financial:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Corporate Risk Management:	Regulatory Governance (CR6)
Equalities and Equalities Assessment (EA):	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Human Rights:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.
Health and Safety:	There are no implications directly arising from this report.

Statutory Officers' Comments:-	
Head of Paid Service:	The report is satisfactory.
Chief Finance Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Monitoring Officer:	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees:	None.
Background Papers:	None.
Appendices:	1. Proposed Terms of Reference (October 2025)

1. Background

- 1.1 Following the enactment of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has introduced four new Consumer Standards aimed at improving the quality and accountability of social housing services. These standards - Safety and Quality, Transparency, Influence and Accountability, Neighbourhood, and Community and Tenancy - apply specifically to services provided by the Council under the Housing Revenue Account.
- 1.2 While the RSH does not require immediate compliance with every element of these standards, it does expect local authorities to undertake a self-assessment and develop a clear action plan to work towards future compliance. To support this process, a dedicated Task Group is proposed to oversee the development and implementation of the self-assessment action plan, ensuring alignment with the expectations set out by the Regulator.

2. Information

- 2.1 This Task Group will play a key role in monitoring progress and guiding service improvements. Furthermore, when the RSH conducts its inspection of the Council, it may request to engage directly with members of the Task Group to assess the Council's approach and commitment to meeting the four new Consumer Standards.
- 2.2 The Strategic Director will act as Lead Officer, supported by the Chief Executive, and in their absence, the Head of Service for the Built Environment will attend meetings. The Lead Officer will meet with the Chair at least one week prior to each meeting. The group will remain active until the Regulator completes its inspection - anticipated within the next two years - and will report progress to the Service Delivery Committee twice yearly. The Task Group will conclude once all actions within the Self-Assessment Action Plan are completed.
- 2.3 The Task Group's full proposed Terms of Reference are attached at **Appendix 1**.

3. Membership

- 3.1 It is proposed the Task Group be politically-balanced and comprise of 5 Members as follows:

Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group (5)		Proportion	Rounded To
LD	$16 \div 26 (61.54\%) \times 5 =$	3.08	3
CON	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 5 =$	0.96	1
UI	$5 \div 26 (19.23\%) \times 5 =$	0.96	1
Total			5

Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group (5)		
<i>Liberal Democrat (3)</i>	<i>Conservative (1)</i>	<i>Independent (1)</i>
Garth (Bill) A Boulter (<i>Chair</i>)	To be confirmed	Frank S Broadley
Lee A Bentley		
Samia Z Haq		

Regulator of Social Housing Task & Finish Group – Terms of reference

Purpose and Remit of Group

- Following the introduction of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023, the Housing Regulator has established four Consumer Standards to improve standards across social Housing, these are:-
 - Safety and Quality
 - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
 - Neighbourhood
 - Community and Tenancy

These standards relate to Housing Revenue Account Services Only.

- The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) does not expect compliance with every aspect of the standards, however they do expect that a self-assessment is completed, and a plan of action is placed to achieve future compliance.
- The Task Group will oversee the self-assessment action plan to meet the requirements as set by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- When the RSH does come to inspect Oadby & Wigston Borough Council then they may ask to speak to members of this Task Group as part of that inspection.

Membership

- 5 Members will be appointed to the Task Group at Full Council
- The membership of the task group, wherever possible, will reflect the political representation of the council.

Accountability and Duration

- As a minimum the Lead Officer will meet with the chair of the Task Group at least one week prior to the Task Group meeting.
- The Chair of the Task Group will be nominated each year at the Annual General meeting.
- The Lead Officer is the Strategic Director who will be supported by the Chief Executive. Where the Strategic Director is not available to attend the meeting then the Head Of service for the Built Environment will substitute.
- It is expected that the Task Group will exist until all the requirements of the self-assessment action plan have been met.
- The Chair of the Task Group with the support of officers will report to Service Delivery Committee at least twice a year.

Working Methods

- The only papers for this meeting will be the Self-Assessment Action Plan.
- These terms of reference will be reviewed, and if necessary, updated at least annually.
- Minutes of the meeting will be provided; these will be sent out within ten working days of the meeting.