

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Options Appraisal

Potential three-unitary model

14th July 2025





Rushcliffe
Borough Council

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1. Purpose and approach

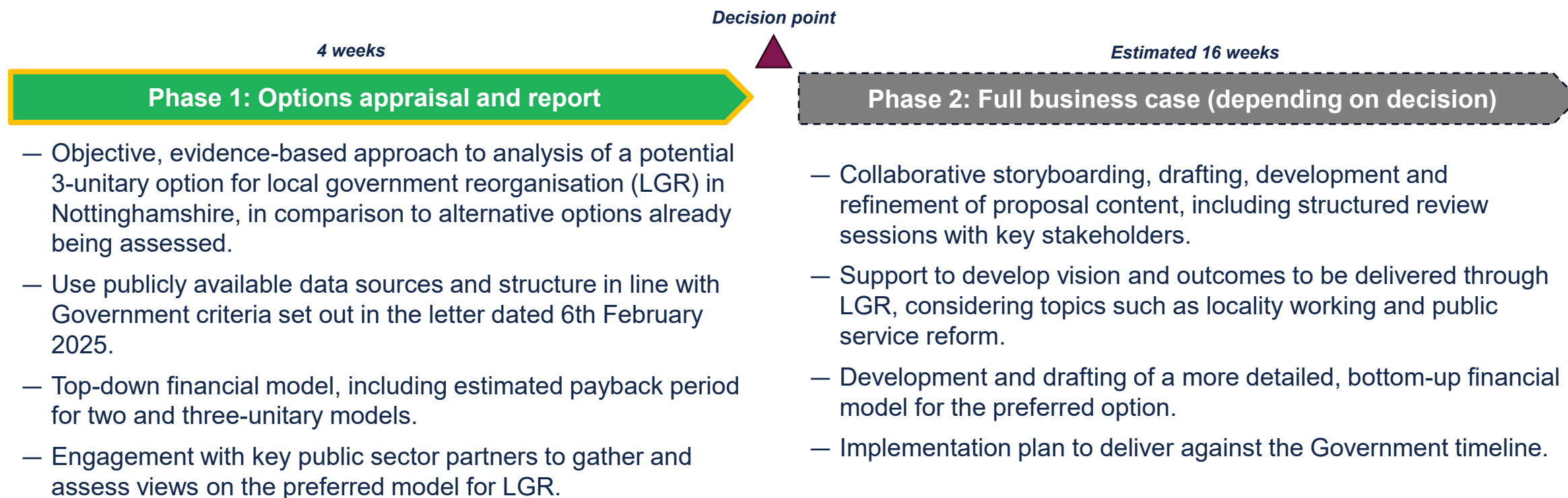




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Scope of work: Phase 1 and potential Phase 2

An options appraisal, focussed on a three-unitary model and summarised in this report, has been completed to enable the leadership of Rushcliffe Borough Council to determine whether to proceed to the development of a full business case for submission to Government.

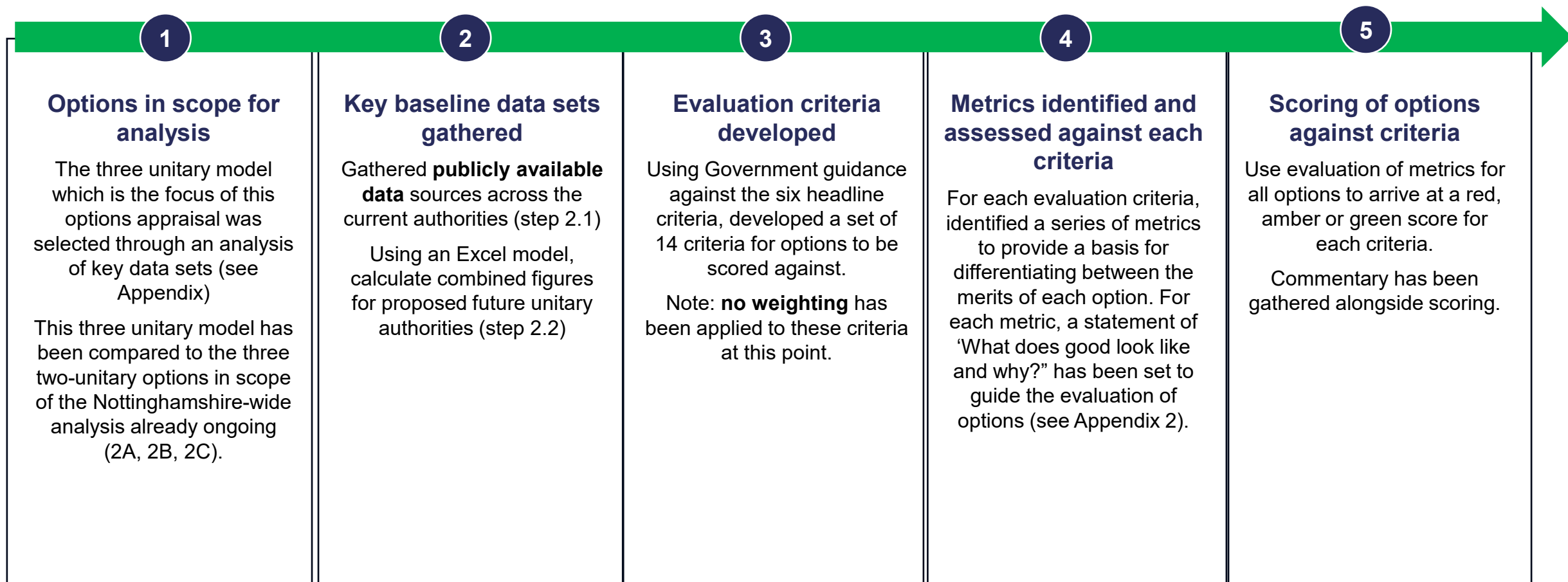




Summary of approach to options analysis

A summary of the approach taken to complete this options evaluation exercise are set out below.

Each step has a supporting page with additional detail.



Step 1: Options in scope for analysis

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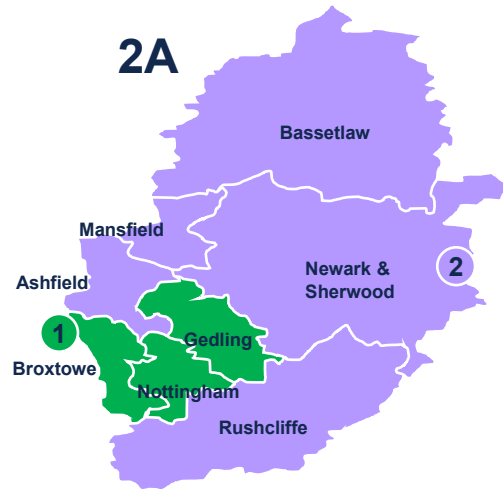
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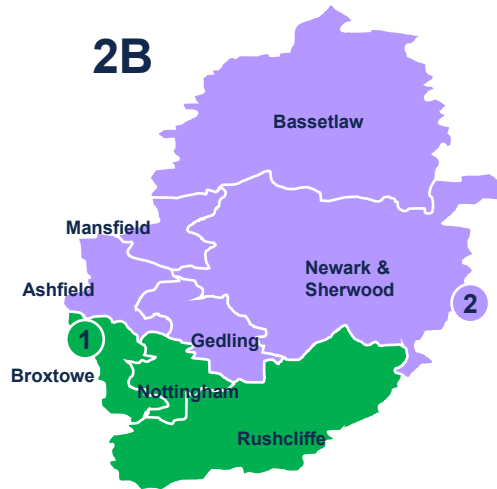
Options being analysed in analysis being performed on behalf of all nine authorities

2A



	1	2
Population	561,011	612,759
GVA per Capita (£)	27,957	22,428

2B



	1	2
Population	566,302	607,468
GVA per Capita (£)	30,817	19,712

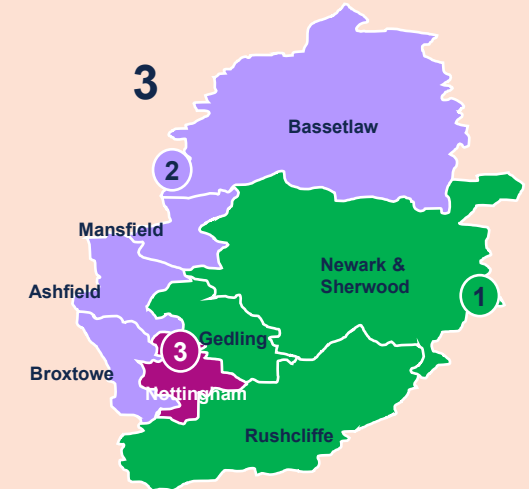
2C



	1	2
Population	329,276	844,494
GVA per Capita (£)	34,855	21,255

Core focus of this scope of work

3



	1	2	3
Population	368,585	475,909	329,276
GVA per Capita (£)	21,951	20,716	34,855



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Step 2.1: Key baseline data sets gathered

Publicly available data has been gathered to support the case. The table below shows baseline data across all current Council areas including total figures across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils. Please refer to the Appendix for all data sources.

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Metric	Nottingham City (unitary)	District and Borough councils							Nottinghamshire County Council	Total / Average
		Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Rushcliffe		
Population (2023)	329,276	128,360	122,286	113,172	118,563	112,091	126,168	123,854	844,494	1,173,770
Geographic area (sq km) (2023)	74	109	639	80	119	76	651	409	2086	2,161
Population density (people per sqkm) (2023)	4,412	1,172	191	1,413	988	1,461	194	303	817	1,267
Total GVA (£ million) (2022)	11,477	2,895	2,608	2,478	1,729	1,878	2,865	3,497	17,950	29,427
GVA per capita (£) (2022)	34,855	22,554	21,327	21,896	14,583	16,754	22,708	28,235	21,151	22,864
65+ Population (2023)	38,732	25,553	27,217	24,711	25,917	22,139	28,823	27,034	181,394	220,126
Deprivation score (2019)	0.20	0.15	0.12	0.10	0.10	0.16	0.11	0.06	0.11	0.12
Homelessness Rate (per 1,000 Households) (Apr-Jun 2024)	3.38	1.16	1.22	0.34	0.74	1.28	0.45	1.10	0.90	1.21
Unemployment rates (%) (Oct 23-Sept 24)	6.58	4.79	4.19	3.98	3.79	4.67	3.34	2.55	3.90	4.24
Total Crime Rate per 1,000 Population (2024)	118.4	79.5	78.3	TBC	TBC	97.5	68.3	TBC	80.9	88.4
Housing Delivery Test Measurement (2023) (%)	115%	86%	354%	88%	109%	176%	188%	173%	168%	161%
Council tax base (number of band D equivalent properties) (2024)	71,062	34,682	39,238	35,568	39,664	31,290	42,720	47,769	270,934	42,749
Council Tax band D (average) (£) (2024-26)	2,656	2,562	2,567	2548	2482	2494	2626	2,394	2,525	2,541
Retained Business Rates (£m) (2024-25)	62.2	19.9	20.3	31.0	10.5	11.0	18.1	11.6		128.2
Non-Earmarked Reserves (£m) (2023-24)	17.6	27.4	2.5	6.1	13.5	15.5	32.7	2.6	327.3	445.2
Net revenue expenditure (£m) (2023/24)	231.4	15.3	15.3	11.1	12.3	13.4	21.3	14.5	590.9	924.9
Financing Costs (£m) (2023/24)	30.9	3.4	0.6	3.2	4.1	2.3	4.2	2.0	19.7	70.2
Financing Costs as % Net revenue expenditure (2023-24)	13%	22%	4%	29%	33%	17%	20%	13%	3%	7%



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Step 2.2: Key data sets: future unitary options

An Excel model has been used to calculate combined figures for proposed future unitary authorities. The table below shows the key data sets applied for each of the 6 identified options.

* Including County Council allocations

Metric	Option 2A		Option 2B		Option 2C		Option 3		
	Br,Ge,NC	As,Ba,Ma,NS,Ru	Br,NC,Ru	As,Ba,Ge,Ma,NS	NC	Remaining	Ru,NS,Ge	Ma,As,Br,Ba	NC
Population (2023)	561,011	612,759	566,302	607,468	329,276	844,494	368,585	475,909	329,276
Geographic area (sq km) (2023)	275	1,887	565	1598	75	2,087	1,181	906	75
Population density (people per sqkm) (2023)	2,042	325	1,004	380	4,412	404	312	525	4,412
Total GVA (£ million) (2022)	15,684	13,743	17,452	11,975	11,477	17,950	8,091	9,859	11,477
GVA per capita (£) (2022)	27,957	22,428	30,817	19,713	34,855	21,255	21,952	20,716	34,855
65+ Population (2023)	89,369	130,766	90,477	129,649	38,732	181,394	81,774	99,620	38,732
Deprivation score (2019)	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.20	0.11	0.09	0.13	0.20
Homelessness Rate (per 1,000 Households) (Apr-Jun 2024)	2.21	1.04	2.27	0.97	3.38	0.90	0.76	1.01	3.38
Unemployment rates (%) (Oct 23-Sept 24)	4.78	3.91	4.37	4.16	6.58	3.90	3.23	4.41	6.58
Total Crime Rate per 1,000 Population (2024)	69.50	64.15	68.85	64.71	118.41	46.55	23.37	64.50	118.41
Housing Delivery Test Measurement (2023) (%)	109%	182%	126%	167%	115%	158%	158%	158%	115%
Council tax base (number of band D equivalent properties) (2024)	146,295	195,702	154,400	187,596	71,062	270,934	130,154	140,779	71,062
Council Tax band D (average) (£) (2024-26)	2,562	2,528	2,533	2,547	2,656	2,525	2,501	2,543	2,656
Retained Business Rates (£m) (2024-25)	84.8	81.8	85.9	80.0	62.2	103.7	40.3	63.4	62.2
Non-Earmarked Reserves (£m) (2023-24)*	101.8	251.6	92.4	261.1	17.6	335.8	151.6	184.2	17.6
Net revenue expenditure (£m) (2023/24)*	417	508	423.1	502	231	694	306	387	231
Financing Costs (£m) (2023/24)*	43.6	26.7	41.6	28.7	30.9	39.5	18.9	20.6	30.9
Financing Costs as % Net revenue expenditure (2023-24)*	10%	5%	10%	6%	13%	6%	6%	5%	13%



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Step 3. Evaluation criteria developed

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Fourteen evaluation criteria have been defined by direct reference to Government guidance in the letter dated 6th February 2025 and the guidance provided by Government in June 2025.

The letter includes clear requirements to be included within LGR proposals. These have been used to develop the evaluation criteria shown here where they enable comparison between options.

Some of the government requirements are not included in the evaluation criteria where they have been deemed to be statements of requirements for proposals rather than differentiating factors for LGR geographies.

Evaluation criteria defined to structure options analysis

Headline Government Criteria	Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base 1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs 1.3 Single tier governance structures
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle 2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money 2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities 2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing
3. High quality and sustainable public services	3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation 3.2 Public service reform and better value for money 3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	4.1 Local identity, culture and historical importance 4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	6.1 Enabling strong community engagement



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Step 4: Metrics identified against each criteria

For each of the 15 evaluation criteria, a series of metrics have been identified. Each of these has been included in the analysis on the basis that it provides a potential means for differentiating between options.

For each metric identified, a statement of 'What does good look like and why?' has been set to guide the evaluation of options.

Example metrics identified: Evaluation Criteria 1.1 - Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base

Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
Gross Value Added (GVA) per Capita	Balanced GVA per capita between unitaries, suggesting balanced levels of productivity and positive implications for the distribution of economic prosperity.
Total Gross Value Added (GVA)	Each unitary has a sufficient GVA to generate tax and there is balance between unitaries, meaning good long-term prospects for all future authorities.
Council tax base (number of properties at Band D equivalent)	All authorities with a sufficient number and profile of properties to provide a Council tax base which can sustainably support services, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
Business rates tax base	All authorities with a strong Business rates tax base sufficient to provide all unitaries with a strong, stable economic foundation, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.

This example is one of 14 evaluation criteria included in this report.



Step 5: Scoring options against criteria

For each metric across all 14 evaluation criteria, a Red, Amber, Green ('RAG') approach has been taken to provide a summary view of how each option performed against "what good looks like".

Green = Option meets the definition of 'what good looks like'

Amber: Option partially meets the definition of 'what good looks like'

Red: Option does not meet the definition of 'what good looks like'

The greens, ambers and reds across each of the metrics have then been used to arrive at a score of '1', '2' or '3' across the evaluation criteria.

'3' = Option meets the combined definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria

'2': Option partially meets the definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria

'1': Option does not meet the definition of 'what good looks like' across the evaluation criteria

Example scoring against evaluation criteria: Evaluation Criteria 1.1 – Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the economic prospects of Nottingham City are a key factor. The City has significantly higher GVA per capita than other potential unitaries.The two new unitaries proposed under the three-unitary model are well balanced and will enable a more targeted economic growth strategy for each unitary (e.g. East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw, with Nottingham City remaining a major economic centre).

This example is one of 14 evaluation criteria included in this report.

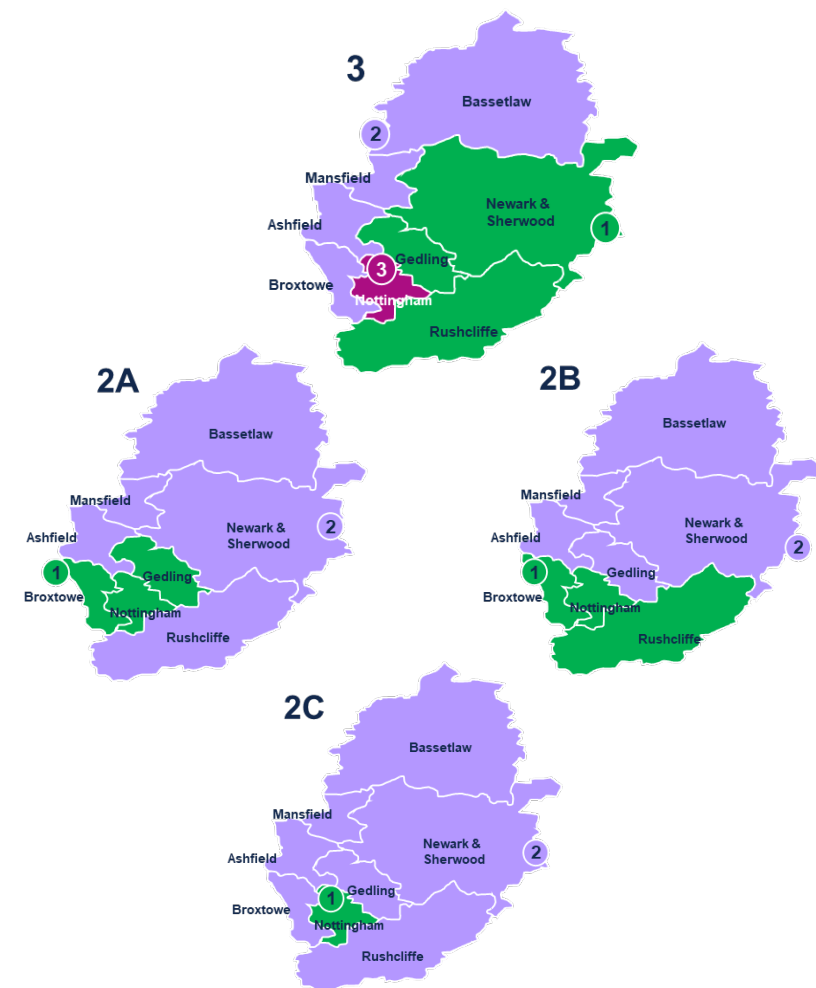
2. Options evaluation results





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Summary scoring by evaluation criteria



Headline Government Criteria	Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option			
		3	2A	2B	2C
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2
	1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	2	2	3	1
	1.3 Single tier local government structures	3	3	3	2
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	2	3	3	2
	2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	1	3	3	2
	2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	2	2	2	3
	2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	1	3	3	1
3. High quality and sustainable public services	3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	2	2	2	2
	3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	2	2	2	2
	3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	2	2	2	2
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	4.1 Issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance	3	2	1	2
	4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	3	2	1	3
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	3	3	3	2
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	3	2	2	1
Total		31	33	32	27
Rank		3	1	2	4



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Headline criteria 1: Establishing a single tier of local government

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the economic prospects of Nottingham City are a key factor. The City has significantly higher GVA per capita than other potential unitaries. The two new unitaries proposed under the three-unitary model are well balanced and will enable a more targeted economic growth strategy for each unitary (e.g. East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw, with Nottingham City remaining a major economic centre).
1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	2	2	3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the three-unitary model (and option 2C) the ability of Nottingham City to deliver housing growth despite its high population density is a key factor. The City has a strong housing delivery test measurement of 115%. The three-unitary model enables stronger transport connectivity, and lower travel times across future unitaries. Option 2B has a more sensible geographic split in terms of travel than options 2A or 2C and has more balanced population density than option 2C. Option 2C leaves a challenging geography for travel and service delivery in the 'County' unitary, whilst also leaving Nottingham City with potential challenges in delivering housing growth given it will not have access to green belt sites.
1.3 Single tier local government structures	3	3	3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All options have population numbers that would enable an effective local government governance structure to be established, with reasonable population ratios and council numbers compared to comparator unitary authorities across the country. Option 2C would be the most imbalanced of all options given the geographic scale of the City versus all other district areas of the County.



Headline criteria 2: Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	2	3	3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government set a guiding principle of 500k but also communicated that there is flexibility based on local circumstances. The three-unitary model is reasonably well balanced on population, with populations ranging from 329k to 476k – all with significant scale and potential for growth. Options 2A and 2B are all well balanced with populations between 561k and 613k, clearly meeting the governments guide level of 500k. Option 2C is imbalanced with one unitary significantly larger than the other, and well over the 500k guiding principle: 844k vs 329k.
2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	1	3	3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the three-unitary model and option 2C, LGR efficiencies are limited to the County Council area, with Nottingham City remaining unchanged. Option 2C being slightly more efficient in terms of savings with creation of 2 new unitaries. Options 2A and 2B have greater opportunity for LGR-associated efficiency, with Nottingham City Council participating in LGR. Arguably in a three-unitary model, long-term focus on outcomes and improvement can be delivered through a more local model. It is clear that the disaggregation of reserves alone will leave Nottingham City significantly imbalanced with other authorities (determining the status of option 3 as red)
2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	2	2	2	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation complexity, risk and cost is reduced with option 3 as it leaves Nottingham City Council unchanged. However, implementation costs associated with splitting County Council services and establishing the two new Councils will be incurred during transition. Option 2C minimises transition costs by keeping current County and City footprints unchanged. Transformation opportunities exist in all potential future authorities.
2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	1	3	3	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key challenge for the three-unitary model (and option 2C) is the financial position of Nottingham City Council, following the issuing of a Section 114 notice in November 2023. It could be argued that the City could benefit from joining with more financially healthy neighbours and receiving a proportion of current County Council reserves. However, it can also be argued that LGR has the potential to impact NCC's recovery journey. Options 2A and 2B provide more even distributions of reserves and debt, but in all cases the unitary containing the City remains more financially challenged.



Headline criteria 3: High quality and sustainable public services

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	2	2	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three unitary model will involve fragmentation of current County Council services, but does not cause disruption to Nottingham City, which is on an existing improvement journey. Option 2C avoids County Council or City service fragmentation but does not provide as much of an opportunity for improving Nottingham City service delivery and leaves a less manageable geography for local service delivery. Options 2A and 2B, whilst maintaining the same number of upper tier authorities, will involve significant change and potential disruption to current service delivery.
3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	2	2	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ability to drive public service reform will be largely determined by the strategies adopted by each of the individual new Councils. Arguably the 3 unitary model can enable more effective localism, forming three more local unitaries with a more consistent, coherent identity. Options 2A and 2B combine the City with rural areas; combining areas with fundamentally different identities and priorities of residents.
3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	2	2	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three unitary model allows Nottingham City to continue its improvement journey without disruption but will entail a split of current county level services. Option 2C minimises disruption to County level services but has less associated opportunity for potential improvement in Nottingham City services. Options 2A and 2B involve significant disruption to current service delivery.



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Headline criteria 4: Working together to understand and meet local needs

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
4.1 Issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance	3	2	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three unitary model preserves identities across rural district authorities by allowing them to remain separate from Nottingham City. The two unitary model poses a greater risk to a meaningful sense of identity to Districts currently bordering the City. Option 2C suggests a large geography which is likely to present challenges in retaining a meaningful connection to local identity Options 2A & 2B challenge bringing rural areas into a City identify with stronger sentiment from residents and Councillors against option 2B.
4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	3	2	1	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within more rural District and Borough council areas there is evidence of strong preferences for remaining separate from Nottingham City. This strength of feeling is most evident within Rushcliffe. Partner organisations understandably wish to remain apolitical but have expressed views that fewer organisations to coordinate across will drive administrative efficiencies, whilst needing to retain the ability to engage at a local/neighbourhood level.



Headline criteria 5: Supporting devolution arrangements

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	3	3	3	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was created through a devolution deal and involves Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Derby City Council and Nottingham City Council all working together to support the region as a whole. The total population of the Combined County Area is c2.3m. Derbyshire currently has around 1.1million residents, compared to 1.2m in Nottinghamshire.Intelligence indicates that a two-unitary model is likely to be proposed in Derbyshire. Assuming a two or three unitary model in Nottinghamshire, that would mean either four or five future members of a Combined County Authority. The decision to form either two or three unitary authorities in Nottinghamshire will not significantly impact the function of the strategic authority.Option 2C presents potential challenges for governance of the future strategic authority given the imbalance in size of the two Nottinghamshire unitaries.

Headline criteria 6: Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option				Summary analysis
	3	2A	2B	2C	
6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	3	2	2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The three unitary model preserves identities across rural district authorities by allowing them to remain separate from Nottingham City and enables greater community engagement through more manageable unitary geographies. Two unitary models poses a greater risk to losing a meaningful sense of identity and community engagement, particularly for Districts currently bordering Nottingham City. The large geography suggested by option 2C presents challenges in retaining the quality of community engagement currently delivered by District Councils.



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LGR Options Appraisal – stakeholder views

Stakeholder engagement has taken place as a key input to the options appraisal process. Whilst stakeholders have not stated a direct preference for a particular option, some highly valuable inputs have been gathered which will inform ongoing planning.

Key stakeholders engaged

- Stakeholder interviews have taken place as part of the options appraisal. Given time constraints, key partners across health and emergency services have been prioritised, with questions focussed on the following:
 - What matters most to you for future local government delivery, including in relation to partnership between health and local government?
 - Do you have a preference for a particular geographic option?
 - Are there any risks associated with a three-unitary model that you would want to see mitigated?
- At the point of drafting, discussions have taken place with senior representative of Nottingham & Notts Integrated Care Board , Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner's Office and Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Key themes noted

- Partners place a great deal of value in their current working relationships with all current authorities, including their more strategic relationships with the County and City, and their place-based working with Districts and Borough Councils.
- Stakeholders generally see local government reorganisation as an opportunity to further strengthen partnership working across Nottinghamshire.
- Regardless of the model selected, key relationships and partnership working will need to take place at a neighbourhood level.
- It was noted that for some more strategic functions, a lower number of unitaries may ease administration and avoid duplication. However, opportunities were also noted to shift some strategic working to the combined authority level over time.
- It was requested that during business case stage, analysis should be undertaken on patient flows and how this can best be integrated into the proposed model.

3. Financial model: LGR costs and savings





Finance Model Approach – 2 and 3 Unitary Options

The finance modelling completed at the options appraisal stage is for comparative purposes only and does not take any account of specific design choices made within any of the options.

Decision point

Phase 1: Options Appraisal

Top-down financial model to enable comparison between options

The work during Phase 1 is based on a top-down financial model using publicly available data and evidence from past local government reorganisation programmes to assess the headline financial impact of a three-unitary model in comparison to two-unitary options.

Phase 2: Business Case

Bottom-up financial model for three unitary model

If a business case is developed for a three-unitary model, a more detailed bottom-up exercise will be completed, with data to be gathered from across the councils.

Structure of Phase 1 financial model

Implementation costs (one-off)

Estimated investment required to receive the benefit of the potential savings.

Revenue savings (annual)

The annual efficiency benefits achievable by removing duplication, consolidating services, and operating at greater scale, and the additional recurring expenditure that results from dividing upper tier services into multiple new upper tier authorities (where relevant).

Payback period and 5-year net benefit

The savings and costs calculated for each option have then been phases to show payback period and the cumulative benefits over a 5-year period.

Further details of the financial methodology and key assumptions are included in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs



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Options appraisal: Finance modelling results

Below is a summary of the results of the financial modelling carried out to support the options appraisal, comparing the three unitary model to the two-unitary models already being analysed.

LGR Option	Key features of model driving level of costs and benefits	Implementation costs (one-off) (£m)	Revenue savings (annual, recurring) (£m)	Net annual impact after five years (£m)	Estimated payback period
2A, 2B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings potential exists across the whole of Nottinghamshire, including Nottingham City No recurring disaggregation costs because there are the same number of 'upper tier' authorities as currently Implementation complexity and costs are relatively high due to splitting of County and creation of new unitary including Nottingham. 	(34.6)	27.7	92.8	Within 2 years
2C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings only relate to Nottinghamshire County Council area No recurring disaggregation costs because there are the same number of 'upper tier' authorities as currently Implementation complexity and costs are minimised as current upper tier geographies remain 	(19.0)	21.0	77.5	Within 1 year
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings potential is reduced as Nottingham City is excluded from LGR. Recurring disaggregation costs exist due to County Council split. Implementation costs are reduced due to leaving Nottingham City as-is. 	(24.9)	5.3	-	5 years

The finance model is driven by a set of assumptions and inputs. These are referenced in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs



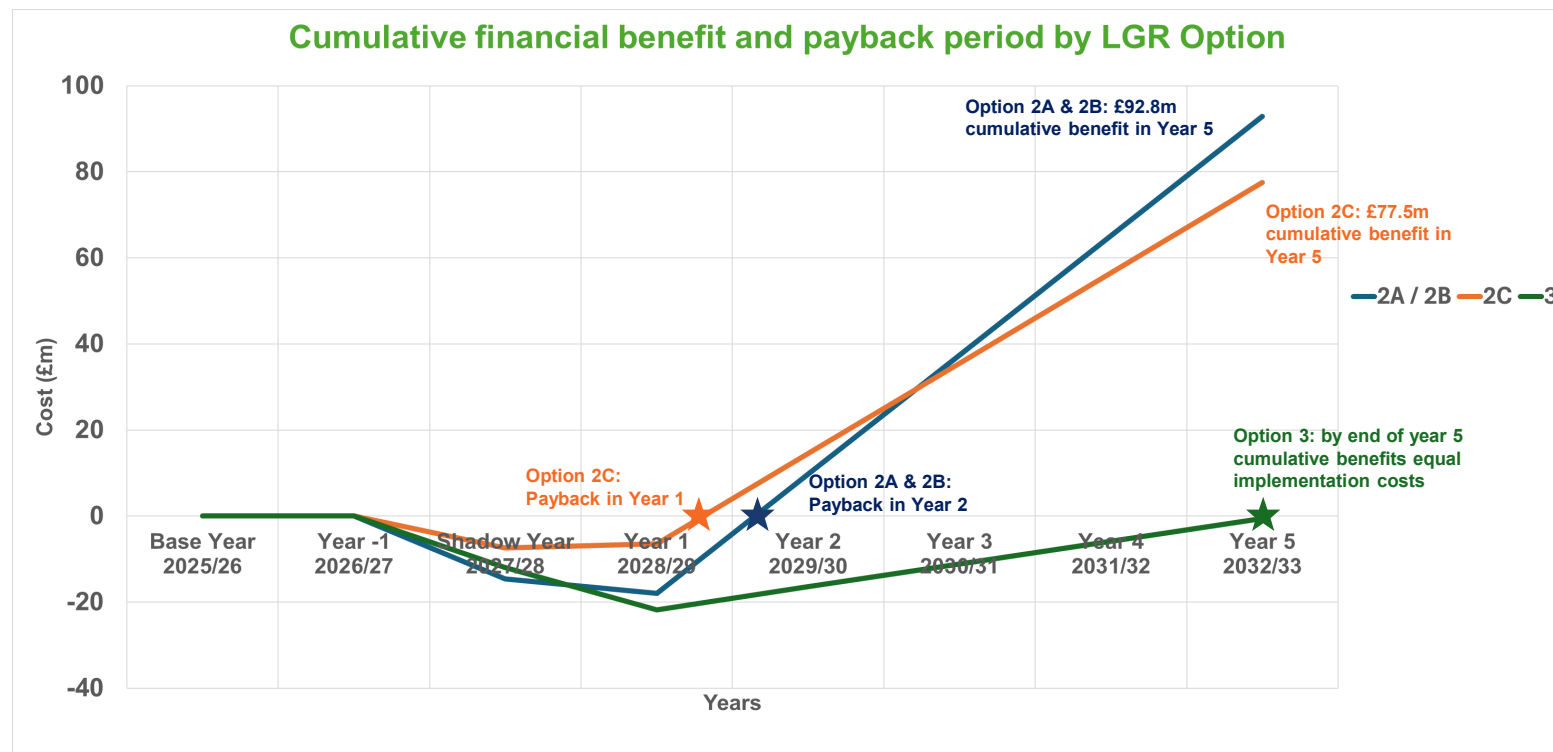
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Cumulative financial benefit and payback period

The chart below shows the cumulative financial benefit for each of the options up to 5 years post formation of new authorities.

Analysis indicates for Options 2A and 2B cumulative savings will exceed implementation costs within 2 years. Option 2C will deliver a net benefit within 1 year due to lower implementation complexity and cost, but Options 2A and 2B ultimately delivering the higher financial benefit.

For Option 3, the payback period is projected to take longer, with cumulative savings from reorganisation expected to exceed costs from Year 5 onwards.



The finance model is driven by a set of assumptions and inputs. These are referenced in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs

4. Key considerations informing decision to proceed





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Key considerations for a potential three-unitary model

Through the completion of Phase 1 analysis and engagement, six key topics have been identified which will be key factors for leadership of Rushcliffe Council to consider in order to determine whether to proceed to development of a business case for the three-unitary model.

1

Identity and sense of place

2

Economies of scale and financial benefits

3

The growth potential of Nottingham

4

Nottingham City debt levels and financial resilience

5

Implementation complexity and risk

6

Political reality

Key considerations relating to each of these six topics have been summarised on the following pages.



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Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (1) Identity and sense of place

A three-unitary business case would stress the importance of authorities being grounded in identity and sense of place. The articulation of the specific identities of the two new, more rural proposed authorities will need particular focus with collaboration of partners and stakeholders across the County.

Key points to consider

- What is the specific story to be told about the common identity of (1) Rushcliffe, Gedling and Newark & Sherwood and (2) Ashfield / Bassetlaw / Broxtowe / Mansfield?
- How can partners and stakeholders across the area be engaged to help shape the narrative for these proposed future geographies?
- What model of local democracy and place-based working could be delivered within the three-unitary model?
- What further public and stakeholder engagement will be delivered to help shape the proposed model?





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Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (2) Economies of scale and financial benefits

Based on financial modelling carried out during Phase 1, it will be challenging for a three-unitary business case to argue that it will be the leading option from a financial benefits perspective. However, a bottom-up financial model within a full business case could make an argument for a more favourable financial position based on design decisions around services and council delivery models.

Key points to consider

- The Government has set out that 500k population size is the guide for authorities to consider when looking at future authority formulations. However, it is accepted that arguments can (and will) be made for lower population sizes based on a good rationale from local leaders. Arguments could be made, including using population growth projections, that each of the three unitaries proposed will be operating at sufficient scale to deliver efficiently.
- Could some services or functions be delivered across the two more rural authorities, thereby increasing efficiency and reducing implementation complexity?
- What functions could be delivered at a Combined Authority level in order to minimise duplication of strategic functions?
- Can an argument be made that more localised working will result in improved outcomes for residents, thereby reducing demand and improving the financial position of councils in the long term?

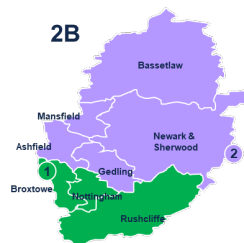


Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (3) The growth potential of Nottingham

The potential for economic growth and housing growth for Nottingham is expected to be a key consideration for the Government. By leaving the current Nottingham City unitary authority unchanged, a question that a business case will need to be addressed is how growth in the City can be unlocked.

Key points to consider

- Is there the potential for Nottingham City to deliver significant housing growth, even within its current boundaries?
- How can other unitary authorities and the Strategic Authority work in partnership with Nottingham City to support economic growth?
- What engagement will take place with Nottingham City and others to support positioning of a growth story for Nottingham?





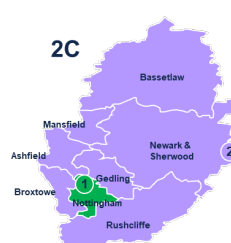
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Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (4) Debt levels and financial resilience of Nottingham

The City of Nottingham has widely recognised financial challenges, including high levels of debt and low levels of reserves. A business case for a three unitary model would need to tell a compelling story about the long-term financial resilience of the current Nottingham City authority, given that a three-unitary model would leave the financial position of the current authority as-is.

Key points to consider

- Nottingham City Council issued a S114 notice in November 2023 on the basis that it could not set a balanced budget for 23/24. Commissioners have now issued their second progress report and significant challenges remain. Usable reserves of just £17.6m and financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure of 13% both present risks in relation to financial resilience of the City.
- Nottingham City Council leadership, including Commissioners will have their own views on which LGR option will be most beneficial from the City's perspective. This view is likely to carry some weight in Government evaluation.
- The long-term financial prospects of the City may be substantially improved due to the Fair Funding Review, which is expected to result in funding being redirected towards areas with greater levels of deprivation.





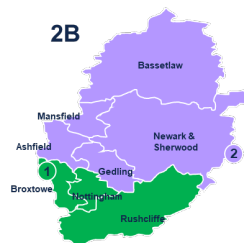
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Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (5) Implementation complexity and risk

Generally, local government reorganisation complexity and cost increases as the number of proposed unitaries increases. However, as the three-unitary model leaves the current Nottingham City unitary authority as-is, it can reasonably be argued that implementation complexity is lower than for Options 2A and 2B, which involve Nottingham City in reorganisation.

Key points to consider

- Could it be argued that leaving Nottingham City untouched by LGR is helpful given the improvement and recovery journey that Nottingham City is currently midway through? Under models 2A and 2B, local government reorganisation would need to become a central focus for Nottingham leadership over the next 2-3 years, which has the potential to be an unwelcome distraction.
- Can implementation complexity and risk of a three-unitary model be further reduced through shared service or alternative delivery model choices within the current County Council area?





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Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (6) Political reality

Rushcliffe leadership will need to take a view of the likelihood of a three-unitary model ultimately being selected by Government. Government are likely to consider the number of authorities backing specific options.

Key points to consider

- The chances of a proposal being successful are reduced if Rushcliffe is the only authority arguing for a three-unitary model. Might any other authorities provide backing to a three-unitary model once details are made public?
- Given the ongoing intervention at Nottingham City Council following issuing of a Section 114 notice, Nottingham City Council's position on a preferred option is likely to carry weight in Government evaluation.



Appendix 1: Data sources





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Appendix 1: Data Sources (1/2)

Dataset	Link
Estimates of the population for England and Wales	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/estimatesofthe_populationforenglandandwales
Standard Area Measurements for Administrative Areas (December 2023) in the UK	https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/da8590c5f55f4664b32Ad4339f43419c/about
Statement of Accounts	https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/iumhajfe/final-statement-of-accounts-2023-2024-signed-with-audit-opinion.pdf https://www.ashfield.gov.uk/media/clpiwcv5/statement-of-accounts-2023-to-2024.pdf https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/mz0kzy43/statement-of-accounts-23-24.pdf https://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/media/qmqjn0e4/broxtowe-bc_statement-of-accounts-2023-24-final_encrypted_.pdf https://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/Audited%20Statement%20of%20Accounts%20and%20Annual%20Governance%20Statement%202023-24.pdf https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/downloads/file/6572/draft-mansfield-district-council-statement-of-accounts-2023-2024 https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/nsdc-redesign/documents-and-images/your-council/access-to-our-information/council-spending/statement-of-accounts/website-version-statement-of-accounts.pdf https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/cnkdgobd/statement-of-accounts-23-24-final-inc-audit-report.pdf
Council Tax Rates Band D	https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/information-for-residents/council-tax/general-information-about-your-council-tax/bands-and-charges/ https://democracy.ashfield.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=18186#:~:text=Ashfield%20District%20Council's%20basic%20(band,Tax%20by%20an%20excessive%20amount, https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/council-tax/your-council-tax-explained/ https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/counciltax/howmuchiscounciltaxandhowisitspent/ https://www.gedling.gov.uk/resident/counciltax/howmuchiscounciltaxandhowisitspent/ https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/council-tax/much-council-tax-1/2 https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/media/nsdc-redesign/documents-and-images/your-home/council-tax/information-on-your-council-tax/council-tax-2025/Council-Tax-Charges-2025-to-26.pdf https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/council-tax/how-much-will-i-pay/council-tax-band-charges-202425/
Regional gross domestic product: local authorities	https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/datasets/regionalgrossdomesticproductlocalauthorities
Tables on homelessness	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-homelessness
Life expectancy for local areas of Great Britain	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandlifeexpectancies/datasets/lifeexpectancyforlocalareasofgreatbritain?utm
Mapping income deprivation at a local authority level	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/mappingincome deprivationatalocalauthoritylevel



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Appendix 1: Data Sources (2/2)

Dataset	Link
LI01 Regional labour market: local indicators for counties, local and unitary authorities	https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/datasets/li01regionallabourmarketlocalindicatorsforcountieslocalandunitaryauthorities?utm
Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/datasets/policeforceareadatatables
Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2023-measurement
Local authority revenue expenditure and financing England: 2023 to 2024 individual local authority data - outturn	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-revenue-expenditure-and-financing-england-2023-to-2024-individual-local-authority-data-outturn
Council Taxbase Local Authority Level Data 2024	https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F67cab2ba8247839c255ae419%2FCouncil_Taxbase_Local_Authority_Level_Data_2024.ods&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK
National non-domestic rates collected by councils in England: forecast 2024 to 2025	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-non-domestic-rates-collected-by-councils-in-england-forecast-2024-to-2025
Updated financial analysis: evaluating the importance of scale in proposals for local government reorganisation	https://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/updated-financial-analysis-evaluating-the-importance-of-scale-in-proposals-for-local-government-reorganisation/
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Nottingham	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Nottingham Insight
Nottingham Local Transport Plan	Local Transport Plan Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottingham SEND Service	Special Educational Needs Service - Nottingham City Council
Retained Business Rates	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-non-domestic-rates-collected-by-councils-in-england-forecast-2024-to-2025

Appendix 2: Finance model approach and assumptions





Finance Model Approach: Implementation costs

Approach

Implementation cost calculations are based on the level of costs identified and incurred in comparable local government reorganisation programmes, adjusted for the respective sizes of the Councils on a population basis. Implementation costs have been identified and estimated in key areas and all categories have been benchmarked against recent local government reorganisation cases (costs forecast and incurred).

Inputs

The implementation calculations uses projected numbers and population numbers from benchmarked local government reorganisation cases from the following areas:

- Cornwall
- Wiltshire
- Dorset
- BCP Council
- Buckinghamshire
- Somerset
- York & North Yorkshire West
- York & North Yorkshire East
- North Northamptonshire
- West Northamptonshire
- Cumbria North
- Cumbria South
- Hertfordshire South West
- Hertfordshire North East

The implementation calculation then uses the population numbers for each proposed unitary in options 2A, 2B, 2C and 3D to calculate the per capita implementation figure.

Timing assumptions

The implementation calculation assumes that implementation costs will be incurred across the shadow year and then over a two-year period following Day 1 of the new authorities. The model then assumes no implementation costs for the years beyond this.



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Financial Model Approach: Implementation costs

As part of implementation cost benchmarking, categories of implementation costs have been identified to provide an indication of the expected breakdown of costs, for any of the LGR options.

Implementation cost category	Description	Estimated % of Total Implementation Costs
Workforce - Exit	Compensation paid to employees as a result of restructuring/redundancies, including redundancy payments, pension strain, TUPE, salary harmonisation, and other contract termination fees.	46%
Workforce - Development	Additional costs to upskill and reskill employees to adapt to new roles and responsibilities.	5%
Transition - Team	Implementation programme team including: Legal, Contract Negotiation, Project and Programme Management, and specialist support.	13%
Transition - Culture and Communications	Costs to develop communications, branding, training, and public information in relation to new authorities. This should inform the public, stakeholders, and employees of proposed changes and address concerns.	4%
Transition - Processes	Work required to harmonise processes, and facilitate effective service transition. This includes specific constitutional changes and developments, democratic transition, and new policies and procedures.	8%
Consolidation - Systems	Alignment of systems and digital infrastructure, including merging systems, data migration, commonality of cyber security, and training for new systems.	7%
Consolidation - Estates and Facilities	Reconfiguration of buildings, costs of disposal, and termination fees on leases.	8%
Contingency	Additional 10% contingency to allow for prudence in estimates.	10%



Finance Model Approach: Revenue savings

Approach

Net savings calculations outputs the annual efficiency benefits achievable using a per capita approach and by removing duplication, consolidating services, operating at greater scale and consideration of disaggregation costs where applicable. Disaggregation costs are only considered for the three unitary option only as there would be a change in the number of 'upper tier' authorities after reorganisation. The output is then used to project net savings/costs across the 5-year payback period. All categories have been benchmarked against recent local government reorganisation cases (costs forecast and incurred). The modelling has been done on the proposed two and three unitary options.

Inputs

The net savings calculations uses projected savings, disaggregation and population numbers from benchmarked local government reorganisation cases from the following councils:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| - Cornwall | - York & North Yorkshire West | - Hertfordshire South West |
| - Wiltshire | - York & North Yorkshire East | - Hertfordshire North East |
| - Dorset | - North Northamptonshire | |
| - BCP Council | - West Northamptonshire | |
| - Buckinghamshire | - Cumbria East | |
| - Somerset | - Cumbria West | |

The savings calculation then uses the population numbers for each proposed unitary in options 2A, 2B, 2C and 3 to calculate the per capita savings figure.

Assumptions

The net savings calculation assumes that savings realisation will begin with a 10% realisation in the shadow year, progressing to 50% in year 1 and reaching full realisation by year 2. The savings figure are then fully realised from year 2 to year 5 during the payback period. Given there is no net gain/loss of councils during this process, loss of economies of scale, duplication of governance structures and transition costs are factored as nil. For option 2C, the savings calculation calculates savings figures only relating to the Nottinghamshire County area as it is expected there will be no changes to the Nottingham City Council structure/operations.



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Finance Model Approach: Revenue savings

As part of benchmarking LGR revenue savings, categories of savings have been identified to provide an indication of the expected breakdown of savings, for any of the LGR options.

Cost Category/Item	Description	% of Total Savings
Optimising Leadership	Reviewing the number of managerial roles to eliminate duplication and enhance operational efficiency, by merging similar responsibilities into fewer and more impactful positions.	20%
Right Sizing the Organisation	Determining the right size of the organisation, proportionate to the services that are being delivered, offset by the costs of new technology and upskilling individuals. Reducing overall workforce through role consolidation and automation.	24%
Consolidating Corporate Services	Consolidating back-office functions, such as Human Resources (HR), Finance and Information Technology (IT) to streamline operations, enhance efficiencies and unlock savings.	10%
Service Contract Consolidation	Understanding current and joint service arrangements between Councils, and what savings (or costs) may be incurred on consolidation. Determining the optimum sourcing arrangements for contracts that are either currently outsourced or could be outsourced. This will need to consider both financial and operational efficiency and will consider existing arrangements with third parties.	10%
Procurement & 3rd Party Spend	Centralising procurement to determine resultant costs/savings through relative purchasing power and renegotiating terms with suppliers. Where appropriate, consolidating similar contracts for service delivery, presents an opportunity to renegotiate terms and achieve economies of scale with suppliers.	10%
Proportionate Democratic Services	Reviewing the costs of democratic services (elections, committee support, etc.) to be proportionate to the new authority. Reducing the number of councillors and governance costs (e.g. committees, elections).	4%
Improved Digital & IT Systems	Implementing unified digital platforms, automating repetitive tasks, streamlining workflows, and eliminating manual processes, can lead to significant time and cost savings. Unified platforms and systems rationalisation reduce licensing, support, and admin overheads.	9%
Asset & Property Optimisation	Reviewing property portfolio to ensure alignment with the council's overall objectives and community needs.	9%
Customer Engagement	Enhancing customer contact facilities, determining the needs of citizens in the new authority and developing a proportionate customer contact centre, where appropriate including self-service through digital channels, to improve customer engagement, satisfaction and drive operational efficiencies and cost savings.	2%
Consolidating Fleets & Optimising Routes	Exploring consolidation of fleets and any route efficiencies, to reduce costs and minimise environmental impact. Reducing fleet size and improving vehicle routing to lower transport costs.	2%

Appendix 3: Key metrics and factors by criteria



Key metrics and factors by criteria:

(1) Establishing a single tier of local government

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	Gross Value Added (GVA) per Capita	Balanced GVA per capita between unitaries, suggesting balanced levels of productivity and positive implications for the distribution of economic prosperity.
	Total Gross Value Added (GVA)	Each unitary has a sufficient GVA to generate tax and there is balance between unitaries, meaning good long-term prospects for all future authorities.
	Council tax base (number of properties at Band D equivalent)	All authorities with a sufficient number and profile of properties to provide a Council tax base which can sustainably support services, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
	Business rates tax base	All authorities with a strong Business rates tax base sufficient to provide all unitaries with a strong, stable economic foundation, with a reasonable balance between authorities.
	Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
	Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
	Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.
1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	Council Tax harmonisation / difference in Band D rates	Councils within a unitary have low to no difference between council tax rates. The least difference between councils within a unitary would provide minimal administrative and resident disruption in harmonising rates.
	Functional economic areas and travel to work areas	Alignment with functional economic areas / travel to work areas (TTWAs), allowing all unitaries to form clear and coherent economic strategies and plans.
	Ability to drive economic growth	Future unitary geographies should allow all areas to deliver strong economic growth and take advantage of the opportunities presented by devolution.
1.3 Single tier governance structures	Councillor to electorate ratio	Ability to establish a councillor to electorate ratio within each authority that allows for a workable number of councillors and maintains an acceptable ratio of councillor to electorate.

Key metrics and factors by criteria:

(2) Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
2.1 Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principle	Population size	Population of 500,000 or more as a guiding principles for all future unitary authorities.
2.2 Efficiencies to improve council finances and taxpayer value for money	Estimated savings through integration	No increase to the number of authorities delivering current upper tier services, enabling savings arising from economies of scale to be maximised
	Long term savings potential	Ability to take advantage of economies of scale in all future authorities and to invest in the transformation required to deliver service improvement and achieve long term financial sustainability.
	Avoiding duplication of statutory roles / management teams	No increase to the number of authorities delivering current upper tier services, on the basis that this does not introduce the need for additional statutory roles. Duplication of roles due to more authorities suggests the need to hire additional resources/management and relies on available expertise.
2.3 Transition costs and transformation opportunities	Transition costs and complexity	Minimising the complexity and costs associated with establishing new local authority structures
	Need for boundary reviews	Minimising the need to change existing boundaries, which is expected to be a time-consuming process for the boundary commission, with unprecedented levels of demand given the number of areas simultaneously going through local government reorganisation.
	Transformation opportunities	Scale and capacity within each new authority to deliver transformation and therefore service improvement and savings
2.4 Putting local government finances on a firmer financial footing	Non-earmarked reserves	Balanced between Unitaries, without any authorities at a level of reserves which would impact the ability to deal with financial shocks.
	Debt affordability - financing costs as % net revenue expenditure (NRE)	No unitaries exceeding 10% for debt financing as a percentage of net revenue expenditure. Whilst there is no single accepted level, 10% is sometimes quoted as a manageable level of financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure (NRE). A balance of financing costs as a percentage of net revenue expenditure across authorities suggests a serviceable debt portfolio and prudence within capital financing.

Key metrics and factors by criteria:

(3) High quality and sustainable public services

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
3.1 Improving service delivery and avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation	Scale to deliver service improvement	Capacity and ability to operate at scale to support service delivery improvement and transformation across all future authorities.
	Forecast demand for key services	Balanced between unitaries, avoiding disproportionately high demand in each unitary which can lead to excessive pressure on key services, including Adult Social Care, Children's Services and SEND.
	Deprivation levels	Avoiding higher levels of deprivation and demand being clustered within individual unitaries Large differences would suggest areas with significant service delivery challenges, impacting resource allocation and financial planning.
	65+ Population	Balanced proportion of older people between unitaries, avoiding excessive pressure and strain on services in one area
	Avoiding service fragmentation	Avoiding splitting of current top tier service structures. Options should aim to minimise service fragmentation, which risks a reduction in service quality.
	Manageable geography for service delivery	Travel within all future unitary geographies is manageable for service delivery teams that allows service delivery to be conducted effectively.
3.2 Public service reform and better value for money	Predicted spend for key services	Manageable predicted spend for all unitaries and balanced between unitaries, avoiding disproportionately high spending in each unitary, which suggests excessive cost pressures.
	Enabling localism and place-based public service reform	Appropriate geography for service delivery and place based public service reform in each unitary. Place based public service reform will require the ability to operate in neighbourhoods and localities with community partners at a more local level than any proposed unitary geographies.
	Alignment with public service partner geographies	Configurations that do not split current public service delivery geographies will be able to work more efficiently and effectively together for the benefit of residents and communities.
3.3 Impact on crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness	Impacts on Adult Social Care services	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Children's services	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Special Educational Need & Disability (SEND) service delivery	Options should aim to minimise disruption and fragmentation of upper tier services where possible. Where there is a significant change, there should be a clear rationale for how quality of service delivery can be improved through delivering on the new footprint.
	Impact on Homelessness services	A joined-up approach which enables close working to with partners to prevent and tackle homelessness by responding to residents in need and securing effective supply

Key metrics and factors by criteria:

(4) Working together to understand and meet local needs

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
4.1 Local identity, culture and historical importance	Sense of identity	Unitary geographies reflects factors including culture, sense of place, common geographical features and historical links between areas.
	Travel to Work Areas (TTWA)	Unitary boundaries minimise splitting of existing TTWA areas. Unitary boundaries that align with established travel to work areas would represent areas where the majority of residents live and work, indicating a greater sense of place and community.
	Maintaining history and tradition	All unitary options should preserve local tradition and sense of history, in order to maintain important connections between communities and local government.
4.2 Views expressed through local engagement, and ability to address any concerns	Views expressed through engagement	Proposals should align as far as possible with the views expressed through engagement with both the public and partners. Where concerns are raised there should be confidence that these can be adequately mitigated.

Key metrics and factors by criteria: (5) Supporting devolution arrangements

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
5.1 Sensible population ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority	Population ratios between members of a strategic authority	<p>Balanced population ratio between all unitaries within a future strategic authority.</p> <p>Unitaries should seek balanced population sizes resulting in even power balance in authorities.</p>

Key metrics and factors by criteria:

(6) Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Criteria	Metrics / factors	What does good look like and why?
6.1 Enabling strong community engagement	Ability to deliver strong community engagement	A manageable geographic area and appropriate level of scale (i.e. not too large) with the ability to meaningfully engage with local communities, enabling effective communication, and effective representation.

Appendix 4: Selecting a three unitary model





Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Selecting a three-unitary model

On several factors, the selected three unitary model was deemed to be score marginally higher than the alternative, largely based on balance.

Govt criteria

1. Establishing a single tier of local government

2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

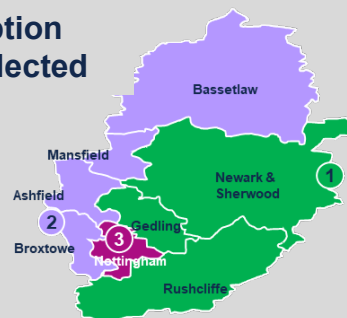
3. High quality and sustainable public services

4. Working together to understand and meet local needs

5. Supporting devolution arrangements

6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Option selected



- More balanced in terms of geographic area and population density
- Slightly more balanced total GVA
- Allows for clearer economic growth focus in each unitary authority (East Midlands Freeport in Rushcliffe and Fusion Power Plant in Bassetlaw)

- Slightly more balanced in terms of population

- More balanced distribution of deprivation levels, 65+ population and homelessness
- Good connectivity through the Robin Hood line which connects Bassetlaw to rest of “West” unitary.
- More manageable geographics areas required for effective service delivery

No significant arguments noted either way

- Slightly more balanced in terms of population, and representation in Strategic Authority

- Could be argued that the more balanced geographic split gives the potential for better community engagement in each of the two new unitaries
- Transport links (particularly Robin Hood rail line) connect Bassetlaw with Districts in the West.

Option disregarded



- Could be argued that the smaller ‘West’ unitary is more grounded in a community, with Bassetlaw more similar to rural areas to the East of the county (identity)