Nottinghamshire County Council

Rushcliffe Borough Council

The **Greater Nottinghamshire**

Proposal for Local Government Reorganisation

Safer > Simpler > Stronger

Our vision for two next-generation councils

1. Foreword

The following messages set out a shared commitment to building a safer, simpler and stronger Greater Nottinghamshire - one that delivers better outcomes for residents, stronger local leadership and a modern, joined-up approach to public services. Together, we are ready to lead a once-in-a-generation reform that creates two next-generation councils, Nottingham Council and Nottinghamshire Council, designed around the people and places they serve.

Councillor Mick Barton
Leader, Nottinghamshire County Council
A stronger Nottinghamshire, full of opportunity and pride

For me, this is straightforward: it's about doing what's right for the people who live and work here.

Residents want councils that get things done - that fill potholes, keep streets clean, support schools and help families when they need it. This proposal will make that happen. It cuts out the confusion, focuses effort where it's needed most and builds councils that work for local people.

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal strengthens both city and county, so no one gets left behind. This proposal meets the Mayor's ambitions and will work for our health partners. It means more homes and more jobs in the right places, so everyone can live well and be best they can be.

This is about making all of Nottinghamshire stronger, fairer and better for everyone. It's a common-sense plan that puts residents and local businesses first.

Councillor Neil Clarke
Leader, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Working with you, shaping stronger communities

Rushcliffe residents are proud of their towns and villages, where community spirit and local pride run deep. This proposal is about keeping that local connection strong while building councils that have the confidence and capacity to lead regional growth.

From the communities of Bingham and East Leake to the urban edge of West Bridgford, our geography and identity connect naturally with the wider county.

It means more local voice and more choice - neighbourhoods able to shape decisions about their environment, services and future. It gives communities the freedom to take responsibility for what matters to them, supported by councils that listen and act.

Greater Nottinghamshire is about partnership - people, place and purpose working together for a stronger, more confident future.

Adrian Smith
Chief Executive, Nottinghamshire County Council
Proven to deliver, ready to lead

This proposal is about shaping the next generation of local government – rewiring local public services to work smarter, act faster and deliver real results for residents. It is an opportunity to reimagine how public services work across Nottinghamshire: simpler structures, stronger leadership, and a genuine partnership between city, county and communities.

Our talented public sector workforce know our communities inside out. By building on our collective strengths, we can build a partnership that brings local knowledge and connections, a record of strong financial management and highly rated children's and adult services. Together with our partners, we have the confidence and capability to deliver change safely.

This plan is ready to go - an implementation blueprint shaped by experience, local insight and ambition. It is about modern, digital councils that use technology and data to improve services, devolve decisions to neighbourhoods and build a future that works for every part of Nottinghamshire.

Adam Hill
Chief Executive, Rushcliffe Borough Council
Joined-up services that make a real difference

This proposal is about taking the best of local government and building something better. Across Nottinghamshire, there are great examples of what works - councils that deliver quality services, manage their finances well and understand their residents. Rushcliffe is proud to be one of those examples, recognised nationally for its sound management, innovation and high levels of customer satisfaction.

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal is our opportunity to take the best ingredients from existing councils and create two new, modern organisations that work seamlessly together. It will bring the right scale, the right geography and the right leadership to make local government simpler, more joined-up and more effective for residents and businesses.

Working alongside Nottinghamshire County Council, we can create councils that deliver consistent quality, better value for money and local services that people can be proud of.

Together, we are ready to deliver a safer, simpler and stronger future for Greater Nottinghamshire.

2. Executive Summary: Greater Nottinghamshire – safer, simpler, stronger: our vision for two next-generation councils

Greater Nottinghamshire is ready to shape the next generation of local government, with councils that are simpler to understand, stronger in delivery and safer for Government to back. The vision brings together the energy of a proud Core City and the strength of a county rooted in community, heritage and enterprise.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rewire local government around people and place. Two new unitary councils, Nottingham Council and Nottinghamshire Council, will replace nine existing authorities, ending duplication and confusion and creating one clear line of accountability in each area. This is more than structural change; it is a complete reset of how local public services work together, aligned with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), the Integrated Care System (ICS) and policing boundaries to form a single, coherent geography for public service reform.

In the future, residents will only need to tell their story once. Whether they need a care package, help with housing or support through their child's school, services will join up seamlessly behind the scenes. Local people will no longer be passed between departments or organisations. They will experience councils that are easy to reach, quick to respond and accountable for the things that matter, from fixing roads and keeping streets clean to improving schools, running libraries, building new homes, maintaining parks and supporting families.

These will be next-generation councils, using data, automation and AI to anticipate need and design services around people's lives. Shared information will allow early help, prevention and better outcomes, not repeat contact and frustration. Through smarter systems and clearer responsibilities, we will spend less on process and more on delivery, reducing costs, improving results and making every pound go further.

For residents, businesses and communities, the benefits will be tangible:

- One council to contact for everything local, ending confusion.
- One plan for each neighbourhood, led by a Neighbourhood Committee with real influence over priorities and funding.
- More choice and local ambition, with communities able to shape how services are delivered, from youth activities to green spaces.
- Shared responsibility between councils and residents, giving people and communities the power to take control of their own futures.

Through Neighbourhood Committees, people will have more say in decisions that affect their area, including how their parks are maintained, how their libraries are used and how streets and public spaces are improved. This will not only give communities influence; it will build confidence, connection and civic pride. Councils will convene local public services, but citizens will drive much of the change themselves, creating a model of shared responsibility that empowers people and communities to act.

These councils will have prevention at their heart, investing in families rather than managing crises. In the future, councils will not need to intervene to get children to school or to support healthy lifestyles because families, schools and communities will be equipped and motivated to do so themselves. Local democracy will be visible again, with councillors leading locally, listening to residents and working hand-in-hand with communities to shape their places.

The new councils will not only serve their residents better; they will create the conditions for sustainable growth and faster delivery. The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal brings together the core city of Nottingham and the wider county in a single, coherent geography that connects innovation with opportunity. It positions Nottingham nationally and internationally, harnessing its world-class universities and its digital, creative, life science and biotech sectors, while drawing on the county's strengths in logistics, advanced manufacturing, clean energy and agri-food. Together, they will accelerate housing delivery, unlock new development sites and link homes to jobs and transport through the Trent Arc corridor. This partnership will power investment across the East Midlands Freeport, Ratcliffe-on-Soar redevelopment, STEP Fusion project and Trent Valley Supercluster, creating a balanced, productive and sustainable regional economy.

By aligning with EMCCA's growth strategy and the ICS's focus on prevention and health equity, Greater Nottinghamshire will lead a whole-system transformation of local public services. It will make it easier for councils, the NHS, the police and local businesses to work together across a single geography, saving money, improving services and delivering results faster.

This vision is rooted in place, in neighbourhoods where residents feel proud of their streets, value their parks and libraries, and trust their councils to deliver. It is built on prevention, helping people and communities to thrive, not just cope. It is shaped around sustainability and opportunity, ensuring growth benefits every part of our region, from the city's innovation districts to our rural market towns.

Greater Nottinghamshire offers the right geography, the right leadership and the right opportunity to meet Government priorities. It is a low-risk, high-confidence proposal, financially sound, operationally ready and supported by a credible implementation plan. It will deliver visible improvements for residents and provide a clear, coherent structure for Government and partners to work with.

Above all, this vision is about the future: councils that work with their communities, not apart from them; a public sector that acts as one; and people who feel both supported and empowered to shape the places they live.

Greater Nottinghamshire will be known as the place where innovation meets inclusion, heritage meets hustle and pride in every community builds a stronger future for all.

How the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal meets the Government Criteria

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal covers the **whole of the area**, creating two new next-generation councils in a **single tier of local government**. Each Council covers a **sensible economic area** that can support EMCCA in meeting **housing supply** targets and need. Both the Nottingham Council and Nottinghamshire Council have a **balanced tax base**, with neither council dominant or disadvantaged.

The proposal is built on a **shared evidence base**, jointly created by the 9 Nottinghamshire Councils, independently appraised by PwC and CIPFA on behalf of the partnership. This would indicate that by year 3 the annualised savings through LGR and transformation would be **£122m**. Building on our track record of transformation and public service reform, we believe there is the potential for this to rise to a combined annualised total of **£189m savings** can be achieved by year 3, rising to an annual **£235m** for the 2 new councils over 5 years, recognising this would require additional investment to achieve.

Reorganisation will achieve more than creating **safer, simpler, stronger** councils. It presents an opportunity to reform local public services.

Both new Councils will serve populations that will enable them to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. The Nottingham Council will serve a **Core City population of 566k** who live in the more urban, younger, diverse and densely populated parts of our geography. The **Nottinghamshire Council will serve a population of 622k**, with more families and older people, living in sparsely populated towns, villages and rural areas.

A comprehensive implementation plan has been developed that is safe for Government to back, **simple to deliver, strong on credibility**. Importantly, a plan that can be delivered without unnecessary disaggregation, splitting districts or creating additional risk.

Commissioners have been engaged throughout and care has been taken to ensure a positive path to the future for the Council in Best Value intervention in our partnership. The two new **councils will be stronger and on a firmer footing**.

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal is rooted in community. Our proposals are grounded in the **outcomes our residents tell us are most important** and focused on implementing national **Government reforms** – from Families First, to SEND, housing delivery to neighbourhood health. We have built on our existing programme of Public Service Reform to design next-generation Councils, data fuelled and digitally enabled, that will work alongside our East Midlands Combined County Authority and our pan-regional Integrated Care Board.

Widespread engagement with our residents, businesses, voluntary and community sector, Town & Parish Councils, our strategic partners, our workforce, our Councillors and Trade Unions has **shaped the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal**.

Having worked so hard as founding partners to create EMCCA, this proposal demonstrates how our new Councils will contribute to the **Inclusive Growth ambitions** and leverage the regional 'heft' an established Mayoral strategic authority can bring. Our Mayor has asked that our proposals create viable Councils that will act in the best interests of the region, Councils that don't require change to EMCCA's governance, Councils that can deliver the Growth Plan and spatial priorities. **We have responded to all of our Mayor's asks**.

Importantly, our Mayor also requested that reorganisation safely achieves shadow elections in 2027 with new Councils in operation from April 2028. Our implementation plan and simpler approach will **offer guarantees to the Mayor we can meet that timetable**.

Our experience of working with families and communities tells us that strengths-based approaches, anchored in neighbourhoods are critical for public service reform. This is why we have placed **Neighbourhood Public Services at the core of our Greater Nottinghamshire** proposal. Stronger community engagement will deliver genuine opportunities for meaningful neighbourhood empowerment. This recognises that people want more choice and control over their local services and creates a safe, simple and strong framework to **rewire local public services from the bottom-up**.

We have used **existing district areas as the building blocks** for our new unitary Councils. More complex boundary changes have been tested and these do not demonstrably improve the public service delivery or financial case. Our simpler approach will reduce risk for our residents, achieve benefits sooner with a quicker and lower cost transition.

We have provided details of our initial **assessment of Councillor numbers** and an outline of how Neighbourhood Public Service Committees can provide **locally accountable governance structures** to engage and empower residents.

Local MPs have been invited to help shape our proposal and a number have, as has our **Mayor**, our **Integrated Care Board** and a number of other partners. The 9 Councils have worked in co-operation with a shared evidence base, common data set, a shared Programme Team and joint Member and Chief Executive oversight. Whilst we have arrived at different interpretations of the optimal geography, we are **committed to working together** to implement the successful proposal for the benefit of our 1.1m residents.

We have flagged some areas where further engagement with Government is sought and we look forward to working together to **create a Greater Nottinghamshire for everyone**.

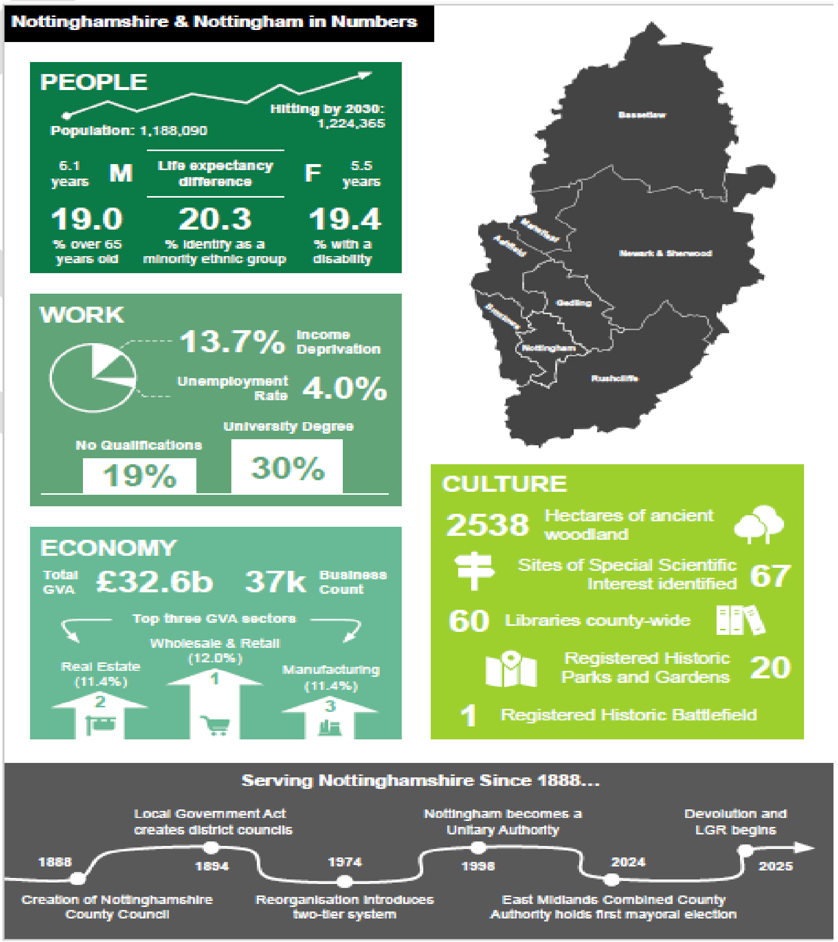
3. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire: Our People, Our Place, Our Potential

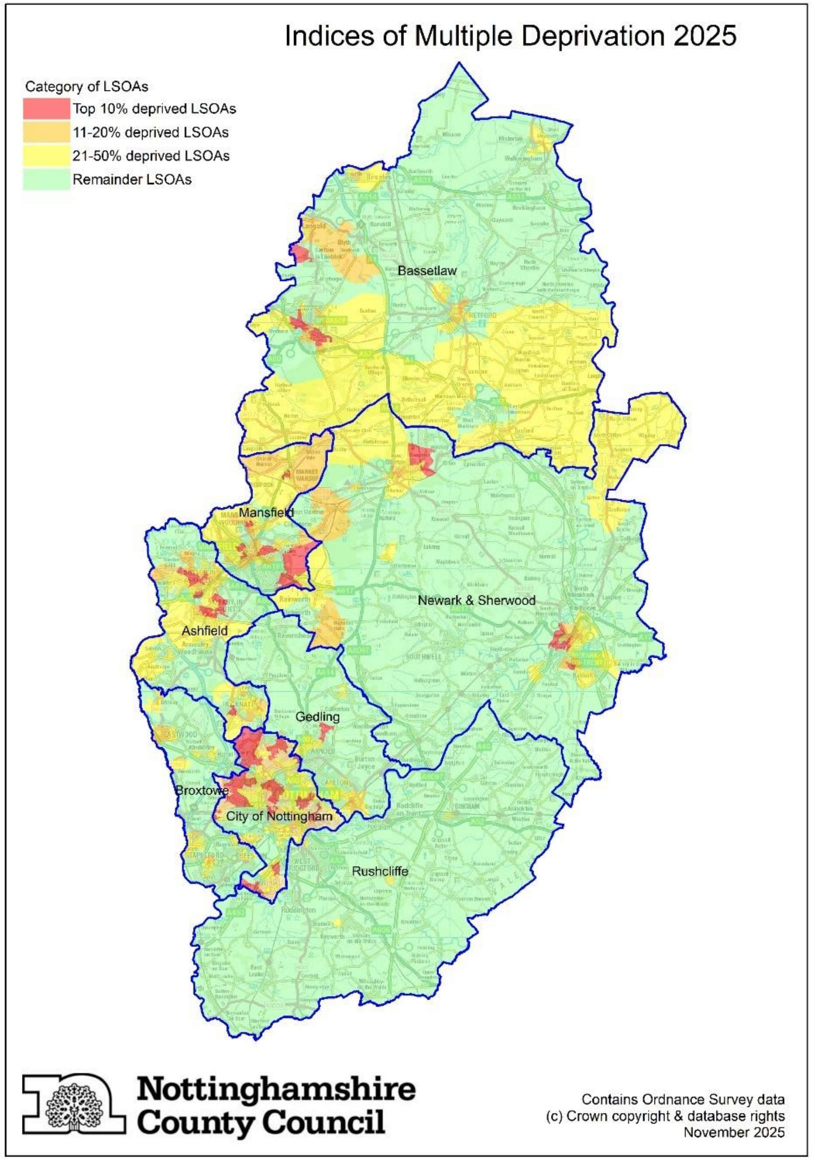
3a. Our People

In the heart of England, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire together form a vibrant region with a combined population of just over 1.18 million people. The area is a tapestry of urban and rural life, with 857,013 residents spread across the seven district authorities of Nottinghamshire County, and a further 331,077 living within the bustling boundaries of Nottingham City.

The region's diversity is most pronounced in Nottingham City, where 66% of residents identify as White, compared to 93% in the wider county. Nottingham City is home to a rich mix of cultures, with Asian/Asian British (15%), Black/African/ Caribbean/Black British (10%), and Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups (6%) communities. In contrast, Nottinghamshire County remains less diverse, with 88% of its population identifying as White British.

Age profiles reveal further contrasts. Nottinghamshire County has an older population, with 22% aged 65 and over, while Nottingham City's youthful energy is reflected in its higher proportion of working-age residents—nearly 70% are between 18 and 64 years old. Children under 18 make up about 20% of the population in both areas, mirroring national trends. Looking ahead to 2031, the region is set to experience a notable demographic shift. The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to rise by 21%, from 220,126 to 265,661. Meanwhile, the younger age groups (0–17 and 18–64) are expected to see modest increases of 2% and 3%, respectively.





Population density offers another lens on the region’s character. Together, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire average 550 residents per square kilometre—higher than the national average. Yet, when Nottingham City is excluded, the county’s density drops to 411 residents per square kilometre, below the national figure.

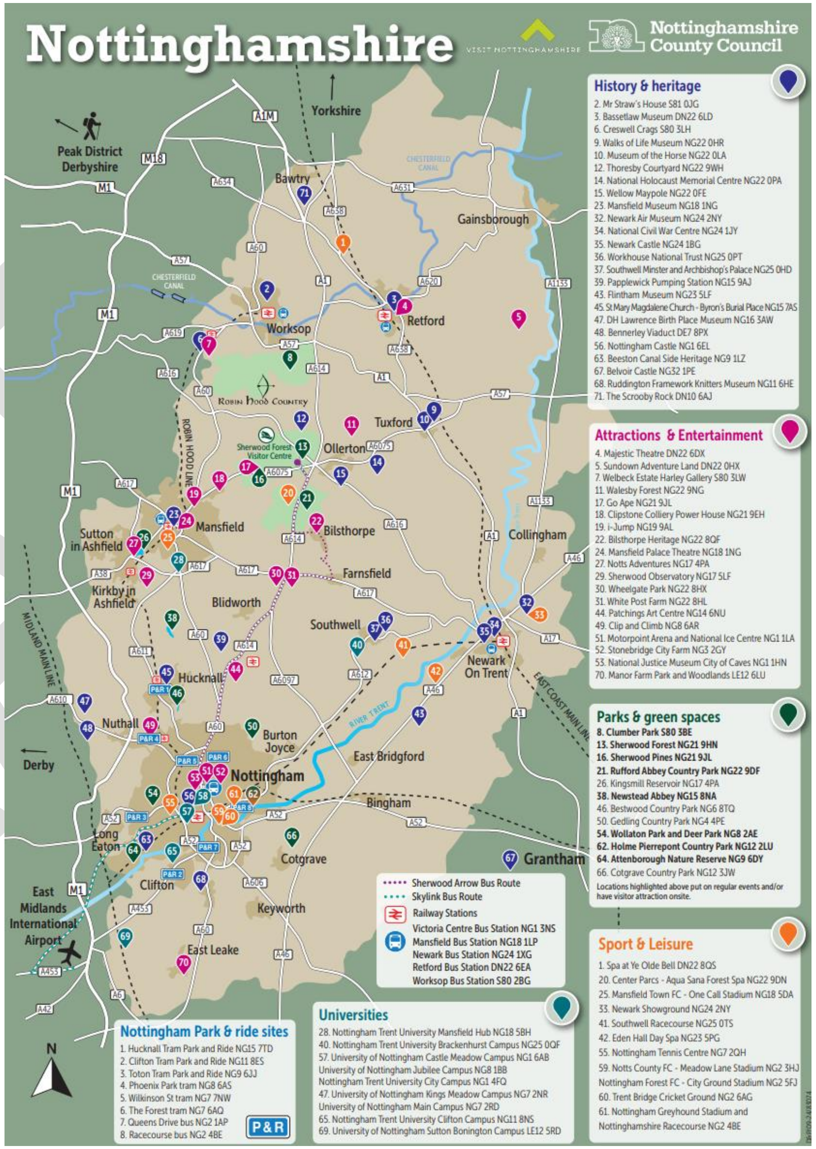
The built environment varies dramatically between the two areas. Nottingham is a city of bricks and mortar, with 86% of its land classified as built-up, while Nottinghamshire’s landscape is far more open, with just 12.2% built-up land. Urban living predominates, with 80.4% of the combined population residing in urban settings—100% in Nottingham City and 72.9% in the County.

The pattern of deprivation across the area has remained consistent, posing intergenerational challenges and impacting wider outcomes for people and communities. Both Councils have a lower rate of healthy life expectancy, fewer working age people in employment and lower average weekly wages than comparators. More children live in absolute or relative poverty across both areas and outcomes for people with additional and complex needs require improvement, for example both areas have more working age adults whose long-term care needs are met by admission to residential or nursing care. Whilst these represent sub-optimal outcomes for people, they also speak to challenges for our local economy and translate to financial pressures in the public sector and for the financial sustainability of local Councils. Whilst there are some similarities, this masks significant disparities across the area. Nottingham has the greatest levels of deprivation overall, but with Nottinghamshire experiencing inequality across the current County area - with Rushcliffe and Broxtowe having no lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the most deprived 10% nationally, versus areas like Ashfield and Mansfield who have 11.7% and 13.2% respectively.

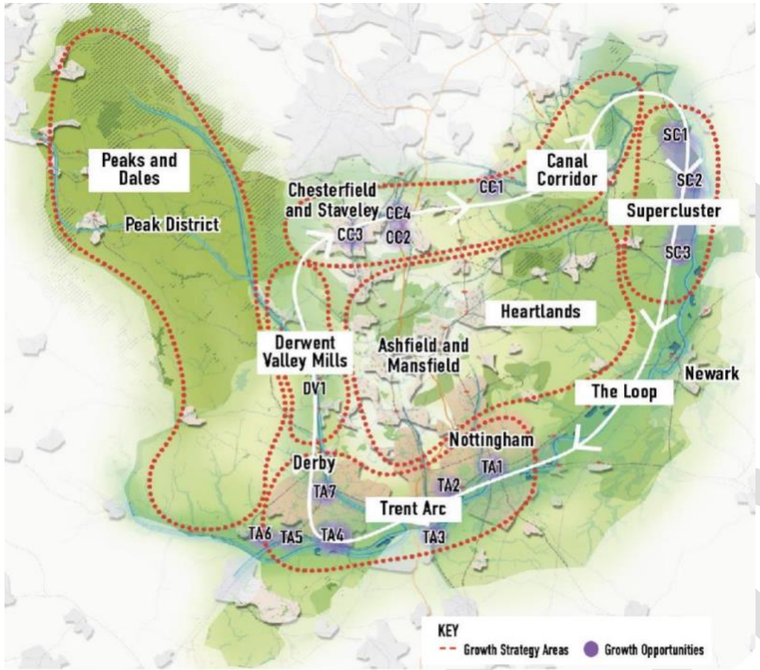
3b. Our Place

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are places rich in heritage, history, culture and sport and where innovation flourishes. From a wealth of professional sports teams and facilities that play host to both national and international competitions, to landmarks such as Nottingham Castle, Rufford and Newstead Abbeys, Holme Pierrepont, Southwell Minster, the Lace Market, Clumber Park and Sherwood Forest, both Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have an abundance of attractions and history that residents and visitors can enjoy and be proud of. Nottingham is a major cultural hub and creative centre for the East Midlands and is home to a range of nationally important cultural institutions, including the Nottingham Playhouse, Nottingham Contemporary and the Royal Concert Hall.

We benefit from strong partnerships with two local, high performing universities. The University of Nottingham is a research-intensive university, ranked in the World's 100 Best Universities, second in the UK for graduate employability and seventh for research strength. Nottingham Trent University (NTU), Modern University of the Year 2023, has specialisms in creative technologies, art and design, fashion, green sustainable construction, business, medical technologies and health, and sciences including forensics and sport.



EMCCA's Emerging Spatial Strategy



Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are well placed, with EMCCA, to maximise the opportunities for inclusive economic growth. Whilst our recent past is characterised by the transition away from traditional industries (e.g. coal, textile and clothing), we have seen small businesses and start-ups across a range of sectors, who are now providing the foundations for a strong and vibrant local economy that continues to grow and expand.

Both our urban and rural areas provide the space for innovation and growth. Nottinghamshire offers great opportunities to grow clean energy research and production, automated distribution, advanced manufacturing, materials development and digital and technology (including AI and data) sectors. Nottingham is a young, creative and entrepreneurial city with dynamic businesses in growing sectors and a diverse range of industrial strengths including the Creative and Digital, Health and Life Sciences, E-Sports, Low Carbon Clean Technology and Advanced Manufacturing sectors.

The Trent Valley Super Cluster, centred around three former power station sites in the northeast of the County is at the cutting edge of nuclear fusion technology and capability. The catalyst provided by public investment in STEP is a lever for billions of pounds of inward investment, housing growth and the creation of additional high skills jobs. The developing economic strengths along the M1 corridor and mid Nottinghamshire are part of an ongoing restructuring of the economy to leverage automated distribution, major hubs of advanced manufacturing and materials development, digital and technology (including AI and data). Allied to these developments are associated investments in high tech agriculture, utilising and enhancing the natural characteristics and assets of the Trent Valley. This opportunity also extends to the southern end of the Trent Valley and the East Midlands Freeport area, where the former power station site at Ratcliffe-on-Soar will be redeveloped as a southern hub for clean technology and advanced manufacturing.

3c. Our Potential

Our people and place create huge potential for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Ensuring that all people and communities are connected to the opportunities presented by living and working here is at the heart of our proposition. Improving people's life experiences and outcomes, creates a call to action to ensure that the next generation of unitary councils, working alongside the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) and other strategic partners, have at their core, a central focus on creating changes to improve people's lives, health, jobs, housing and local economies.

We have a track record of delivery. Both Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council were founding partners of the East Midlands County Combined Authority. Achieving this was based on a shared desire to shift the socio-economic trajectory of a region that had lagged behind for too long. Delivering the first County Combined Authority at pace demonstrates what we are capable of when we get alignment of vision, purpose and outcomes. As constituent Councils, we continue this journey, and this proposal creates two new Councils committed to mobilising local businesses, local anchor institutions and civil society to drive delivery of the shared missions set out in EMCCA's recently published Inclusive Growth Commission.

Local government reorganisation presents a key opportunity for us to reset the partnership landscape to better deliver together for our residents. For local people to benefit from inclusive growth, we need to work together to break down the barriers that stand in people's way of 'good work'. Barriers include a lack of affordable housing, poor health and wellbeing, and weak social connections. To achieve inclusive growth, we need to look beyond the immediate world of employment into the wider factors that also play a role. This is where a reshaped local government and health system have a key role to play in delivering these ambitions.

To deliver for the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, our proposal will create a compelling vision for change across the whole system, clear about the outcomes we want to see shift for our people and communities and finding innovative ways to operate across organisational boundaries to achieve this together. We have a responsibility to look across organisations to deliver good value to the taxpayer and to fully leverage our investment to achieve maximum impact for the 1.1m people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

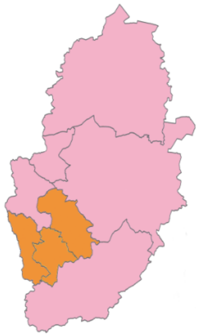
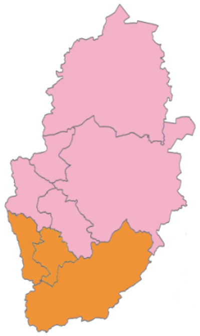
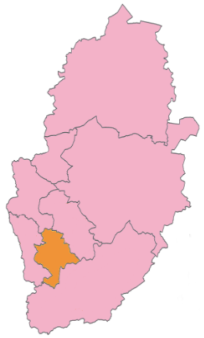
In order to deliver financially sustainable public services, our partnership in Nottinghamshire is already making the strategic shifts required in the system, focussing on community-based delivery, proactive prevention and a greater use of digital innovation. However, there is more to do. The challenges facing our communities cut across organisational boundaries. We know that issues such as health outcomes, quality and affordability of housing, financial resilience, community safety and wellbeing are deeply interlinked and require an organised public sector to deliver a coherent local system response. Local government reorganisation will provide the catalyst for greater financial sustainability, create the conditions to reduce fragmentation and inefficiencies and drive greater use of tech and digital.

4. Options Appraisal

Work to undertake an evidence based and considered approach to identifying the optimal size and geographical configuration for the new unitary councils was commissioned by all nine councils in January 2025. The intention was that the decision on a preferred option was clearly evidence-informed and data-driven to ensure outcomes are improved and residents' needs are met when considering the criteria set by Government.

The options appraisal is provided in Appendix A and comprises a comprehensive assessment of the three potential models for unitary local government structures that had been shortlisted in the initial analysis of options submitted as part of the interim plan. A wider set of options had previously been considered and discounted for failing to sufficiently meet the Government framework.

All councils initially agreed that the options appraisal should only consider options based on district building blocks, due to the additional costs, complexities and risks associated with implementation, that options involving boundary changes would create. The configuration of the three options considered are set out below:

1b **Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling**	1e **Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe**	2 **Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City**
		
1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. **Nottingham City remains the same** 2. The **rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

All councils concluded that, as the options analysis sets out, Option 2 should not be pursued as a preferred option as it does not meet the criteria set out in the Government's local government reorganisation framework.

Overview of Options 1b and 1e: Options Appraisal Summary

The options appraisal concludes that whilst the differences are marginal, Option 1b represents a "somewhat stronger fit against the MHCLG criteria compared to other options" (p34).

Option 1b

This option creates two new unitary councils and aligns to the criteria associated with identifying sensible geographies in that it would see the establishment of one Council serving a primarily urban area and another service primarily towns and rural areas. It also aligns to the requirement to consider how housing supply would be increased in that it provides room for the conurbation to grow.

It would not unduly create an advantage or disadvantage for one or other as part of the wider area and is comparable in terms of the financial analysis completed to date to option 1e. It would meet the requirement to establish new unitary councils serving 500,000 people or more and would deliver efficiencies and manage transition costs. It would also appear to satisfy the criteria relating to areas which include a council in Best Value intervention.

To some extent it would avoid the unnecessary fragmentation of key service areas and would ensure consideration is given to the "crucial services" as set out in the MHCLG framework. Including a greater proportion of rural areas with the city conurbation would require services to provide more tailored approaches and different models of community support. Consideration needs to be given to the benefit of creating two new unitary organisations where population densities and needs are more aligned rather than dispersing this further as would be the case in option 1e.

Finally, it would establish a reasonable basis to support current and future devolution arrangements.

Option 1e

This option would also create two new unitary Councils albeit they would blend some urban and rural areas. It would find it somewhat harder to satisfy the Government's criteria relating to sensible geographies for that reason. It would align to the criteria in terms of population, delivering efficiencies, providing the means to manage transition costs. It would appear to satisfy the requirements relating to areas which include a council in Best Value intervention. It is comparable in terms of the financial analysis completed to date to option 1b in that the costs and benefits are largely the same.

There are significant sources of future housing supply in the combination of Nottingham, Rushcliffe and Broxtowe to meet the new local housing need estimates and help offset the historic under delivery of housing in some areas which would likely be required by the strategic authority. Delivery of future growth and housing of the wider urban area / 'expanded city' would be controlled by one of the new Councils. However, this option excludes Gedling which is integral to the functioning geography of the Nottingham conurbation and would mean housing and growth decisions required to support economic needs of the conurbation would be made by the more predominantly rural new Council.

To some extent it would avoid the unnecessary fragmentation of key service areas and would ensure consideration is given to the "crucial services" named in the MHCLG framework. Some consideration would need to be given to development of service models that are able to function across two Councils that have a blend of rural and urban areas, one of which would include Nottingham city. Finally, it would also establish a reasonable basis to support current and future devolution arrangements.

Reaching a preferred option

No additional evidence has emerged since the options appraisal was published by Councils in July and September that changes the outcome of the options appraisal. More detailed work has since been undertaken collaboratively across the nine councils on the financial case, and this is included in section 6. Stakeholder engagement has been undertaken, summarised and responded to in section 7. A further independent options appraisal, undertaken by KPMG for Rushcliffe Borough Council published in July 2025 also concluded that 1b is the option that best meets government criteria. This is included in Appendix B. Both Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council believe that option 1b is the optimal geographical configuration for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and best meets the Government's criteria for the following reasons:

- It offers the most coherent, balanced and sustainable configuration for reforming local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and delivers new governance at the optimal scale: large enough to be strategic, yet local enough to remain connected to communities. It achieves a practical balance between urban intensity and rural reach, aligning service design with the way people actually live, work and travel.

- It reflects natural economic and social geographies, avoiding the artificial splitting of the Nottingham urban area or the dilution of rural identity and by contrast option on 1e would mix urban and rural areas, fragmenting service delivery and identity.
- It is coherent in geography, meets the financial sustainability criteria by ensuring a balance between the need for services and the ability of local populations to help pay for them, reflects local identity and natural communities, and maximises the potential for delivery of EMCCA's regional growth and devolution framework in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

We believe this option offers the best opportunity to improve outcomes, strengthen governance, and achieve long-term financial sustainability, enabling Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to lead the way in delivering modern, resilient and people-focused local government.

The City-Council Led option

Since the joint options appraisal undertaken by the nine councils, Nottingham City Council has subsequently proposed a model which disaggregates its three surrounding districts to create an expanded city, leaving the remainder of Nottinghamshire as a second unitary council. The independent options analysis which has been undertaken and is included as Appendix C, concludes there are marginal differences between the benefits to be derived from this option when compared with options 1b and 1e, but that there are likely to be greater costs and complexity associated with disaggregation. This level of disaggregation is unprecedented in local government reorganisation and would require entirely new statutory change order instruments. It is evident that with this level of complexity, risk cannot be quantified and a timetable cannot be assured. We take the view that this option does not meet the requirement for there to be a strong public service and financial-sustainability related justification that merits boundary changes.

The City Council recently published a report that stated a significantly improved budgetary position compared to their approved Medium Term Financial Plan which was used by the partnership to inform the financial case in March 2025. In light of this, an ask was made by the City Council that the LGR financial case developed by PwC was reviewed to reflect the City Council's updated debt position and modelling. This updated data has not been validated by partner s151 Officers and risks use of inconsistent, unvalidated data across proposals. The City Council update appears to draw on assumptions about the Fair Funding Review (FFR2.0). As MHCLG has not yet responded to the consultation, the assumptions remain unproven and any outcome will not be known until the provisional local government settlement later in the year.

It is welcomed that the City Council financial position is improving. Partner authorities agreed that the use of unaudited and unvalidated data to produce the business cases would undermine the financial analysis provided. A collective decision was taken to continue to use the last known published financial statements and public approved medium-term financial plans.

5. Our Proposal for You

5a. Greater Nottinghamshire – safer, simpler, stronger: our purpose and ambition for two next-generation councils

Greater Nottinghamshire is ready to shape the next generation of local government, with councils that are simpler to understand, stronger in delivery and safer for Government to back. The vision brings together the energy of a proud Core City and the strength of a county rooted in community, heritage and enterprise.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rewire local government around people and place. Two new unitary councils, Nottingham Council and Nottinghamshire Council, will replace nine existing Councils, ending duplication and confusion and creating one clear line of accountability in each area. This is more than structural change; it is a complete reset of how local public services work together, aligned with the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), the Integrated Care System (ICS) and policing boundaries to form a single, coherent geography for public service reform.

In the future, residents will only need to tell their story once. Whether they need a care package, help with housing or support through their child's school, services will join up seamlessly behind the scenes. Local people will no longer be passed between departments or organisations. They will experience councils that are easy to reach, quick to respond and accountable for the things that matter, from fixing roads and keeping streets clean to improving schools, running libraries, building new homes, maintaining parks and supporting families.

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- One council to contact for everything local, ending confusion.
- One plan for each neighbourhood, led by a Neighbourhood Committee with real influence over priorities and funding.
- More choice and local ambition, with communities able to shape how services are delivered, from youth activities to green spaces.
- Shared responsibility between councils and residents, giving people and communities the power to take control of their own futures.

Through Neighbourhood Committees, people will have more say in decisions that affect their area, including how their parks are maintained, how their libraries are used and how streets and public spaces are improved. This will not only give communities influence; it will build confidence, connection and civic pride. Councils will convene local public services, but citizens will drive much of the change themselves, creating a model of shared responsibility that empowers people and communities to act.

These councils will have prevention at their heart, investing in families rather than managing crises. In the future, councils will not need to intervene to get children to school or to support healthy lifestyles because families, schools and communities will be equipped and motivated to do so themselves. Local democracy will be visible again, with councillors leading locally, listening to residents and working hand-in-hand with communities to shape their places.

The new councils will not only serve their residents better; they will create the conditions for sustainable growth and faster delivery. The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal brings together the Core City of Nottingham and the wider county in a single, coherent geography that connects innovation with opportunity. It positions Nottingham nationally and internationally, harnessing its world-class universities and its digital, creative, life science and biotech sectors, while drawing on the county's strengths in logistics, advanced manufacturing, clean energy and agri-food. Together, they will accelerate housing delivery, unlock new development sites and link homes to jobs and transport through the Trent Arc corridor. This partnership will power investment across the East Midlands Freeport, Ratcliffe-on-Soar redevelopment, STEP Fusion project and Trent Valley Supercluster, creating a balanced, productive and sustainable regional economy.

By aligning with EMCCA's growth strategy and the ICS's focus on prevention and health equity, Greater Nottinghamshire will lead a whole-system reform of local public services. It will make it easier for councils, the NHS, the police and local businesses to work together across a single geography, saving money, improving services and delivering results faster.

This vision is rooted in place, in neighbourhoods where residents feel proud of their streets, value their parks and libraries, and trust their councils to deliver. It is built on prevention, helping people and communities to thrive, not just cope. It is shaped around sustainability and opportunity, ensuring growth benefits every part of our region, from the city's innovation districts to our rural market towns.

Greater Nottinghamshire offers the right geography, the right leadership and the right opportunity to meet Government priorities. It is a low-risk, high-confidence proposal, financially sound, operationally ready and supported by a comprehensive and credible implementation plan. It will deliver visible improvements for residents and provide a clear, coherent structure for Government and partners to work with.

Above all, this vision is about the future: councils that work with their communities, not apart from them; a public sector that acts as one; and people who feel both supported and empowered to shape the places they live.

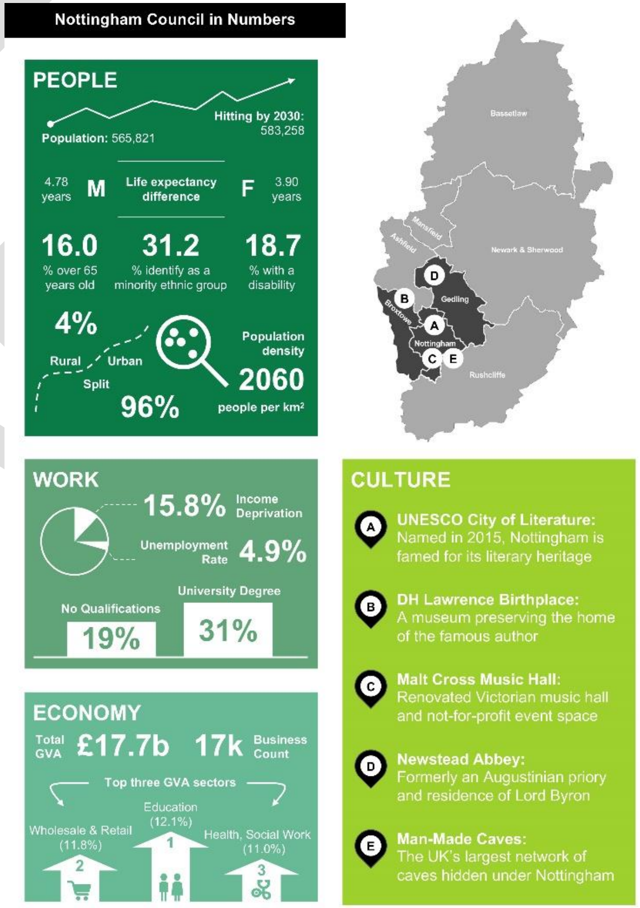
Greater Nottinghamshire will be known as the place where innovation meets inclusion, heritage meets hustle and pride in every community builds a stronger future for all.

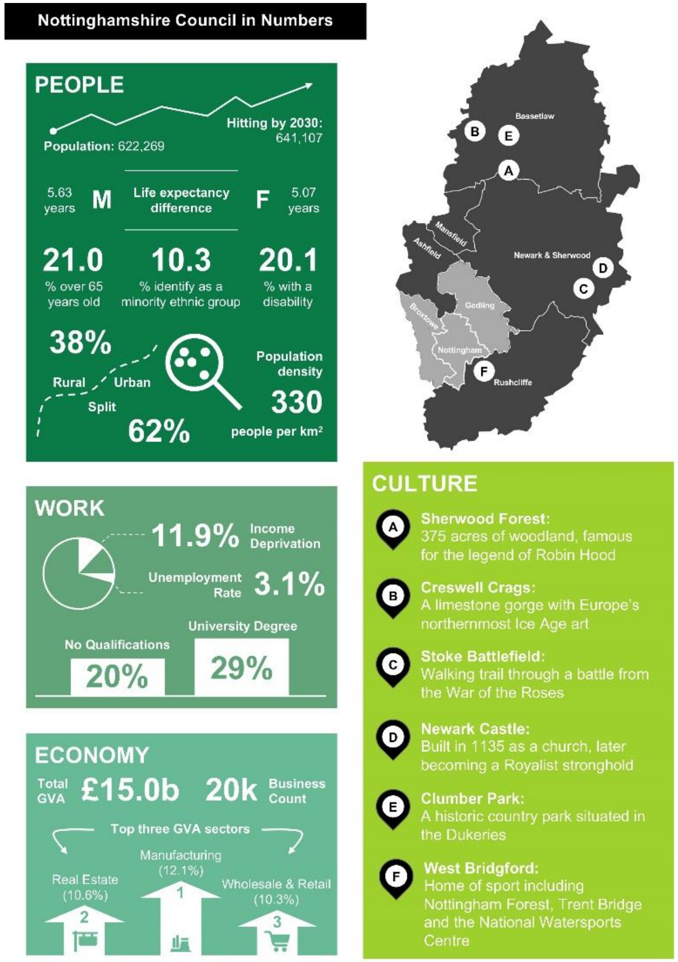
5b. Two new Unitary Councils for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Nottingham Council

Nottingham Council will unite Nottingham, Broxtowe and Gedling to form a single Core City authority. It will use the city's universities, innovation districts and cultural assets to drive growth and prosperity across the East Midlands. It will:

- Champion innovation, skills and inclusion through partnership with Nottingham's universities and creative industries.
- Lead regeneration and housing growth, professional services and connecting to EMCCA's MedTech and life sciences, digital and tech industries.
- Deliver digital-first public services, using data to personalise support.
- Strengthen civic and cultural leadership, ensuring Nottingham remains a beacon of opportunity and pride.





Nottinghamshire Council

Nottinghamshire Council will bring together Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood and Rushcliffe. Rooted in place, prevention and sustainability, it will connect market towns, villages and rural areas to the region's wider growth.

It will:

- Deliver early help and prevention through Family Hubs and hyperlocal Neighbourhood Public Services.
- Champion sustainable housing and infrastructure growth in the Clean Energy Supercluster.
- Support clean energy, food and logistics industries as part of the national green transition.
- Preserve Nottinghamshire's environment and heritage while building opportunity for the next generation.

Together, the two councils will deliver the right geography, the right leadership and the right opportunity to meet Government priorities.

They will:

- Replace nine councils with two new, accountable, next-generation unitary councils.
- Provide a low-risk, high-confidence solution aligned with EMCCA and ICS boundaries.
- Deliver simpler, better and more efficient services through joined-up local government.
- Empower communities and make prevention, sustainability and growth the shared purpose of every local partnership.
- Act as a single, coherent system with other public services, improving outcomes and reducing cost.

Residents will see continuity and improvement, not disruption, with services that are easier to reach, faster to respond and better connected to the things people care about most.

5c. Our proposition for neighbourhood working

Our vision is for integrated neighbourhood public services that are **rooted in communities and powered by place**. We will shift the dial on our relationship with people and communities, harnessing the power of community connection and revitalising our social contract with residents to create choice, control and grow social capital. Strong, engaged community and citizen voice will shape the priorities for place and solutions to meet local needs. Aligning community voice to strong place partnership arrangements and democratic structures will revitalise public trust in public services, ensuring people feel connected to and able to shape the decisions that impact them, their families and their communities.

In thinking about how future councils will deliver greater neighbourhood working, we have considered the many ways in which neighbourhoods are defined. Fundamentally, **the definition of neighbourhood must be meaningful to the people who live there** and who it represents. Whilst this proposal outlines some broad parameters for our developing model, considering existing administrative boundaries, with flexibility to reflect individual needs and create space for personal choice and control, the core task as we transition to a new model will be to work together with communities to create a shared and co-designed understanding of neighbourhoods.

Our approach to neighbourhood public services will:

- Strengthen local leadership and neighbourhood empowerment - through strong local democratic representation, the establishment of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees and a greater focus on community voice.
- Improve outcomes and the experience of local people and communities – through implementation of a new public service delivery model that is close to people, located in the community and focuses on the building blocks of good health.

Strengthening local leadership and neighbourhood empowerment

> *"Local government plays an essential role in convening local partners around neighbourhoods to ensure that community voices are represented and people have influence over the place and their valued community assets" (English Devolution White Paper December 2024).*

Proposed Democratic Structures

The creation of two unitary councils serving over 1.18 million residents of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire provides an opportunity to strengthen the representation of our residents, enhance the transparency of, and engagement in, local decision-making at the same time as increasing the democratic mandate of local councillors.

Residents across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are currently represented by 408 locally elected councillors, the majority of whom operate within a two-tier system. We know that people can find this current system challenging to navigate as they try to access support and services. In the new unitary councils, councillors elected by their residents will represent the full range of services, thus ensuring greater clarity and accountability.

Early modelling work alongside informal discussions with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has led to us to propose that there will be 187 councillors across the two proposed unitary councils, covering 76 wards. These wards are based on the current divisional and ward boundaries. They are areas known to, and recognised by, local residents, existing councillors and the Councils they currently serve. In addition, they meet existing criteria for defining a local community and are therefore considered to be sound building blocks for change. Maintaining the existing boundaries at this stage also ensures that the first elections to the two new Councils can be brought together efficiently and effectively.

Residents living within the proposed Nottingham Council area will be represented by 91 councillors (compared to 158 in the same geographic area currently). Residents in the wider area covered by the proposed Nottinghamshire Council will be represented by 96 councillors (compared to 250 currently). This represents between 4,226 to 4,881 electors per Councillor. These figures are similar to comparator authorities that have already transitioned to unitary status.

Through transition, we will work to ensure that the reduced number of elected representatives are supported, with the right capacity, training, digital tools and officer support. so that they can continue to effectively represent the views of their local communities and fully participate in potential roles available through a Leader and Cabinet model of local governance.

We feel that this presents the best option to ensure strong democratic representation for the people of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire at the launch of two brand-new unitary Councils. It enables us to embed our new governance arrangements, develop a greater understanding of the workload of the new unitary councillors, and provide stability for communities as we gain more insight into the needs of local neighbourhoods. In addition, we consider that this methodology provides a sound basis from which an LGBCE Review for each of the new Councils can take place during the 2027-2031 electoral cycle and anticipate any changes resulting from such a Review to be in the form of small adjustments rather than wholescale change.

Beyond 2028

Jonah, 52, has been involved in the local council for 6 years and understands the system well. He works hard to champion calls for stronger community safety for his area, but often finds it difficult to make change.

Jonah is able to focus more on what matters most to residents with clearer roles and stronger local forums through…

- **Stronger Neighbourhood Voice** – Neighbourhood forums are more directly connected to the council itself, making it easier to make the residents' voice heard and drive change.
- **Clearer Responsibilities** – With the transition to a unitary structure, Jonah has to adjust to a new level of his role as a councillor. He spends much more of his time now on campaigning for his residents and stakeholders, while administrative tasks and individual cases are dealt with by experienced service delivery teams.

Proposed Neighbourhood Governance Structures

The creation of new unitary councils offers the opportunity to develop new neighbourhood governance models which can strengthen democracy and give residents and communities more say over the decisions that impact their lives. We have heard through stakeholder engagement that residents want more decisions made at a more local level – that is a level much closer than our previous District and Borough Council boundaries; local to our residents means their neighbourhood. Subject to the forthcoming guidance indicated in the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, we propose to:

- Establish **Neighbourhood Public Service Committees** (NPSCs) within new unitary councils, rooted in community and reflecting natural neighbourhoods defined by residents. Initial thinking suggests that these will typically serve a population of 30,000-50,000, although further planning is required to develop the model and consider alignment with other geographical footprints such as GP practices and school catchment areas.
- NPSCs will be formally constituted, with elected councillors representing local areas, and will act as focal points for local partners (e.g., schools, health services, police)
- The model will be flexible and adaptable, accommodating growth and demographic change, and ensuring new communities have governance structures as they develop.

Our early thinking, shaped by feedback from elected Members is that:

- NPSCs will have devolved funds and influence mainstream council spending in defined areas, shaping and prioritising services such as parks, highways, community safety, planning, and grants
- NPSCs will work together to ensure that local residents' views inform decision-making and to maximise involvement in local partnership strategies that are on a larger geographical footprint – e.g. Neighbourhood Health Plans
- Committees will not replace Town and Parish Councils but will co-exist, sharing resources and collaborating to improve local outcomes.
- Voting members will be locally elected councillors, with annual elections for committee chairs.
- NPSCs will operate within council governance frameworks, with responsibilities for scrutiny, community investment, and influencing partner services.
- NPSCs will be as streamlined as possible, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication to fully realise the potential benefits of local government reorganisation

Case Study

The Lengthsman Scheme, which is coordinated across the Council's Highways Service is designed to provide Parish Councils and local community volunteers with the funding and tools to undertake small-scale works to resolve local, community-raised issues. Works completed under this scheme include small-scale grass-cutting, ensuring visibility of traffic signs and tidying roadsides. To support this work, community partners are provided with an annual grant, initial training and basic equipment. This not only extends the capacity for delivery across the network, it also ensures local community concerns are resolved.

The network also benefits from 46 community schemes across the County that respond in the event of flooding. Each community has agreed trigger points for action which could be flood water levels reaching a set marker or a road becoming submerged to kerb level. Once these trigger points are met, volunteers will act.

Beyond 2028

Andrew, 37, is the founder of a BioTech start up in Nottingham. He is looking to grow his business and is applying to the council for planning permission to build a new lab and office space.

Andrew's plans to expand his start-up are supported by a system that's more joined-up, locally focused, and easier to work with because of…

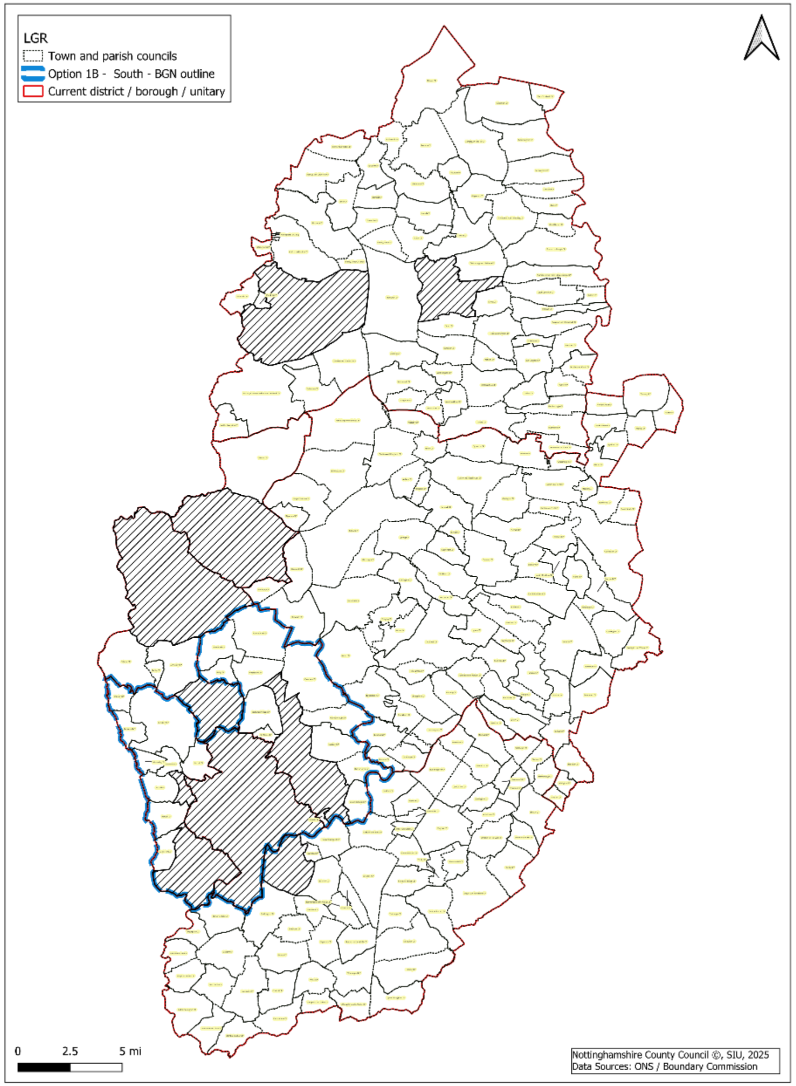
- **Single Access Point** – Andrew is able to easily contact the council for a variety of business needs, without having to work out which council is delivering which. Andrew gets a response to his queries quicker and by people who are connected to delivery.
- **Stronger Neighbourhood Voice** – Due to new democratic structures linked in with the council and budgets, Andrew is able to support his local business at neighbourhood forums, campaigning for town planning that makes sense with the local wants and needs.

Strengthening relationships with town and parish councils

The creation of a new unitary councils across Nottinghamshire, incorporating the establishment of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees, presents an opportunity to enhance and define the relationship with town and parish councils, further empowering local communities and strengthening local democracy. With over 161 town and parish councils across the county, these bodies are often deeply embedded in their communities, trusted by residents, and an important part of local democracy. In the creation of the proposed Nottingham Council, town and parish councils, alongside the new Neighbourhood Public Service Committees, will be key in ensuring that the needs of residents living in the rural areas of Broxtowe and Gedling are considered and prioritised alongside the needs of residents in the city and conurbation.

Engagement with town and parish councils has highlighted an understandably mixed picture in terms of preparedness for local government reorganisation and recognition of potential opportunities, but an appetite in some cases to explore the art of the possible. LGR provides an opportunity to collaborate closely with organisations such as the Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Rural Community Action Nottingham (RCAN), along with town and parish councils keen to embrace the new ways of working, as a ‘coalition of the willing’ to identify the successful ‘ingredients’ for an enhanced way of working, which include financial planning, capacity and expertise, community engagement and long term sustainability, and then seeking to co-develop successful community governance arrangements.

Town and Parish Councils - LGR with county option 1b.



These arrangements could see opportunities for local councils to consider, at their discretion, assuming responsibility for a wide range of community assets and the devolution of practical, everyday services that matter to communities. It will be vital to have clear rules, proper checks, and a shared commitment to making sure the arrangements are financially sound, for both the new councils and the town or parish council. Potential transfers won't be rushed; they'll be well planned and built to last, for those town and parish councils who wish to explore them.

Beyond 2028

Amir, 29, grew up near Newark. After leaving college, he started an apprenticeship in project management. Amir loves to volunteer with his family on the weekend. He spends a lot of time in Nottingham with friends, but wants to build a life in Collingham where he lives.

Amir's commitment to his community and career is matched by a system that gives him more ways to lead, connect, and grow through…

- **Community Empowered Activity** – A focus on building local communities provides opportunities/activities for Amir to get involved and make friendships. This also allows him to give back and organise a series of community events, such as a local litter pick himself
- **Neighbourhood Representation** – Councils initiatives to grow neighbourhood voice support Amir, an active community leader, to build a forum for residents and volunteers in Collingham through the local Neighbourhood Public Service Committee.
- **Specialised Unitary Councils** – Amir will be able to access specialised services for Newark and the wider unitary. The unitary will focus an identity around the Trent Supercluster, developing jobs in Amir's area of expertise. Long-term investment will allow surrounding areas to grow, building community and identity closer to home for Amir.

Linking national policy to neighbourhood implementation

Our vision is to embed local convening structures that create the opportunity for true devolution, building local governance that enables national and regional policy to be grounded in neighbourhood decision-making, integrated planning and public service delivery. Our proposal creates a stronger role for local people to have a voice, ensuring that policy is shaped and informed by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's residents. We have heard that some residents feel like they're asked regularly for views, sometimes with the same questions asked by different partners, with little tangible difference as a result. We want to see an 'ask once, act together' culture for our public service partnership, streamlining local decision-making and community empowerment so that there are coherent routes for partners to engage with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's residents and for those views to drive change. To achieve this, we would:

- explore opportunities to build on existing structures to strengthen strategic place partnerships to create collaborative spaces, bringing together partners who are able to make decisions about the allocation of partnership resources and models of service delivery. This will enable a more locally responsive system, geared to move from insight and planning to action more quickly, shifting the way we deliver integrated neighbourhood public services together as a partnership in real-time, to deliver a set of shared outcomes, informed by integrated neighbourhood plans
- establish a network of representative forums to strengthen the role of community voice in decision-making. These Forums will receive key data and information, using that evidence and working 'in the open' to agree priorities and co-design solutions. As we work to integrate public services around place, these provide the opportunity to bring together people from existing public service user forums e.g. GP Patient groups, Parent Councils in schools, and representatives from seldom-heard groups, creating a powerful, cohesive voice to inform decision-making.

National (government)	Government (legislation, guidance and policy reform)	
Pan / Regional	**2million +**	**Integrated Care Board Cluster** – commissioning strategic health services **East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA)** – strategic authority for D2N2.
"Local" (government)	**500,000+**	Two new **unitary, principal** authorities
"Neighbourhood"	**30,000-50,000**	**Neighbourhood Public Service Committees**, Integrated Neighbourhood Plans and Integrated Neighbourhood Service Delivery

Services close to people and located in the community

In the two new unitary councils, we propose to create a new public service delivery model that is close to people and located in the community, improving both outcomes and the experience of local people and communities. Our model will prioritise **prevention, early help and the building blocks of good health**. It will work to re-build community connection, creating the conditions for people to be healthy and well and to look out for one another. We will use our collective insights to ensure resource allocation is proportionate and is based on an understanding of local need and disadvantage, strengthening existing community provision where evidence shows it is showing a positive impact. We know that creating a shift towards prevention requires **strong, vibrant and sustainable community assets** that can work with public sector organisations to deliver purposeful, proactive prevention. We will learn from evidence of what works and strong community models, which have taken many years to develop, but provide a blueprint of what good local provision looks like, acknowledging that hyper-local provision cannot be consistent across the whole area.

This proposal acknowledges that the most significant opportunities to improve health and reduce health inequalities across Great Nottinghamshire arise from a coherent and joined up approach to the socio-economic environment that surrounds communities and shapes everyone's health. Just like a sturdy building requires all the bricks to be strong, good health and wellbeing throughout the life course relies on all the right building blocks being in place, such as secure jobs, fair pay, quality affordable homes, good education, strong community connections, and access to nutritious food and reliable transport.

The proposal provides opportunities and examples for public service reform which takes efficient and coherent action across this range of factors rather shifting from an individualistic, silo perspective to one that recognises and addresses the wider determinants of health collectively. It recognises the interconnected lived experience that communities have of intractable barriers to life opportunities which then impact on a wide range of outcomes. For example, that a lack of affordable and reliable access to public transport can limit the ability to take up and keep a good job, particularly in rural populations. Or that living in cold and damp housing leads to poorer health and increased levels of school absence for children, which impacts on their education.

Prioritising the building blocks of health

Source: The Health Foundation , 2024

Case Study: Cotgrave - an Integrated Neighbourhood Working approach to tackling health inequalities.

In 2023, Cotgrave—a former mining village facing significant deprivation—became the focus of an innovative Integrated Neighbourhood Working (INW) initiative. This approach brought together health, social care, and community services in a concerted effort to tackle health inequalities and empower local residents. The INW model was rooted in community-led solutions, seeking to ensure that essential services and opportunities were accessible within a short distance of people's homes.

The priorities for Cotgrave were shaped by local data and direct conversations with residents, ensuring that the initiative responded to real needs. During the first six months, the most common reasons for social prescribing were mental health challenges, social isolation, lifestyle changes, financial advice, and physical health concerns. To drive progress, the team adopted a 100-Day Cycle, setting clear priorities, building integrated teams, and testing new solutions in rapid succession.

Local Design Teams played a pivotal role, co-designing projects with the community and fostering a culture of change. Through this collaborative process, Cotgrave's residents were not just recipients of services—they became active participants in shaping the future of their community.

Sharing the physical assets of the public sector to create **inclusive community-based spaces**, accessible to all local organisations working in the area, will give the voluntary and community sector (VCS) space to grow. Utilising our open-access community spaces (libraries, leisure centres, family hubs, youth centres etc.) we will create welcoming places for local people to come together and access services and support on their own terms. Creating open and transparent local data and insight profiles and harnessing the power of community voice will enable VCS partners to even more effectively represent the needs of their communities to secure investment in neighbourhood-led solutions and services. We will take the time to invest in co-production and co-design, recognising that our pay-off will be solutions that deliver more sustainable impacts.

Building on the community assets across both unitary councils, we will strengthen our relationship with the voluntary and community sector, working as **equal partners with the sector** to create a consistent organising structure that enables the public sector to engage strategically with VCS organisations. This will enable us to work together within neighbourhood governance and public service delivery models, creating a more connected and sustainable community-based offer. **Community development** roles will key for our future way of working, ensuring that community members are empowered and supported to lead for their neighbourhoods, creating positive and sustainable change. Our funding model to the sector will shift, creating a more consistent, sustainable outcomes-based model with co-design and co-production at its heart.

People will experience an **integrated, place-based service delivery** model. The model will be designed to offer no wrong front door and create a clear and consistent place-based organising structure across the system, with the flexibility to meet local and individual needs. We will look to the whole partnership, understanding how school communities, neighbourhood policing and communities of faith or interest, would engage with a new place-based public service offer. In particular, our model would maximise the opportunities to align delivery to neighbourhood health, supporting the shifts from hospital to community and from sickness to prevention outlined in ‘Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England’, and taking the opportunity to embed the learning from Nottingham City’s engagement in the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme across the wider area. Our proposal would also seek to harness the opportunity presented by the move towards population-based NHS provider contracts to maximise their impact in a preventative space for people and neighbourhoods. Further information on the proposed fit between neighbourhood public services and the implementation of neighbourhood health can be found in Appendix D.

Holistic support that meets people's needs

Our future unitary councils will revolutionise the experience of people accessing services by creating place-based multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) that can share one assessment and plan to meet individual needs. Neighbourhood 'huddles', bringing together the skills, knowledge and expertise across the partnership, will employ a truly whole person/family and lead professional approach to understand and meet the needs of people accessing services and those who would benefit from a proactive, preventative offer. Strong data-sharing arrangements and an integrated, partnership data set will enable us to have **'one view' of the person**, understanding customer journeys and utilising machine learning and predictive analytical models to identify needs as they emerge, targeting resources effectively to prevent crisis and escalation into more statutory services. Huddles will draw together the expertise to allow public services to think holistically about how housing, health and social care, education, employment, food and financial security needs and social isolation are impacting peoples lived experiences and leading to poor outcomes. They will work collaboratively to develop creative solutions to meet individual needs, working beyond the boundaries of services or professional expertise to deliver a tailored response and providing the **right help at the right time** to deliver the best outcome for our most vulnerable residents. In our model, public services will be designed to deliver better outcomes now that cost less to the whole system in the long-term.

Services operating at a larger geographical footprint e.g. planning and public safety will be designed to ensure their delivery model still creates connection to the neighbourhood delivery model. Bringing together appropriate elements of regulatory services (environmental health, trading standards, licensing), community safety and emergency planning will create a more **agile and flexible delivery model**, utilising the expertise and intelligence across these services to understand local needs/risks. Tackling illegal and poor practices in local businesses will create a virtuous circle that enables legitimate businesses to thrive and go on to invest in their communities. Aligning spatial planning and public safety into our place-based public services model will create a more community-led, responsive system to tackle the wider contextual factors that lead to people feeling and being less safe, capturing this in integrated neighbourhood planning.

This model represents a shift for the public services workforce, moving towards leadership models that prioritise place and partnership, involving leadership of **multi-disciplinary teams** across the public service system. Matrix management models would guarantee that technical and professional expertise is maintained and developed across Council footprints. Teams would be supported to employ a liberated, relational and tech-enabled practice model, with consistent guiderails to ensure safe and lawful operations, but with the flexibility to self-organise around the needs and aspirations of the people and communities they serve and the excellent community and voluntary services that already exist. Services and support would be delivered in the places that make most sense to that community, by a workforce that deeply understands and cares for the people in their neighbourhoods, working together flexibly to develop evidence-informed solutions to meet local needs.

Beyond 2028

Fiona, 42, is a GP in Retford. She is working with someone who is struggling to manage tasks, like putting the bins out. Fiona wants to arrange assisted collection and make sure someone can check in on them weekly.

Fiona's role as a GP is supported by a system that helps her share responsibility and act early through…

- **Prevention First** – Investment into prevention means Fiona is able to raise the request for supporting her patient with daily tasks and carrying out wellbeing checks to the council. Her patient is able to do more due to this support and as a patient with fall risk, this reduces their chances of coming back to Fiona with injuries later.
- **Mutual Partnerships –** Realignment of partnerships means Fiona recognises that providing this support isn't best placed with her, so she refers this patient to the council. This helps balance the workload across the local partnership, supporting both the council and Fiona to do their role. This partnership gives Fiona the space to support in ways better suited to her profession.
- **Tech-Enabled Independence** – Fiona's referral for assisted collection triggers a pathway in the council that suggests other fall prevention opportunities, helping her patient stay safe and independent for longer

5d. How our new councils will improve outcomes

This proposal is about making a difference to people's lives, by focussing on the difference that the new unitary councils, working in partnership with each other, with EMCCA, with our partners in the NHS, fire and rescue, the police, schools, colleges and universities, the voluntary and community sector, can make to residents' outcomes. We see that there are many opportunities to be realised through Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and as such, there are five key outcomes which we are prioritising, with a sixth priority focused on how the new unitary councils will work in order to achieve the outcomes:

1. Giving Children the Best Start in Life
2. Supporting People to Reach their Full Potential
3. Driving Economic Growth
4. Delivering Secure Homes and Tackling Homelessness
5. Creating a Connected Place
6. Driving Operational Excellence

Each outcome is aligned with and contributes to the ambitions set out in the proposed Local Government Outcome Framework (LGOF). The proposal focuses on building on current best practice to improve quality and outcomes across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, identifying areas for improvement, and assessing how they can positively impact each of the outcome areas.

Outcome Area	Alignment to Priority Outcomes	Ambition
Giving children the best start in life	**Best start in life** - Improve early child health, family support and early education to give every child the best start in life	Reducing the number of children living in poverty
	Every child achieving and thriving - Support all children and young people to achieve and thrive in school, at home and in their communities	Improving the attainment, attendance and education, employment and training outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and

	Keeping safe and family security (Children's Social Care) - Keep children safe in secure and loving homes and help more families to thrive together **Child poverty** - Reduce and alleviate child poverty to improve children's lives and life chances.	disabilities (SEND), for children in care and for care leavers. Increasing the number of children with SEND in a mainstream school setting Supporting more children to be helped and protected so that where possible they can live safely at home. Enabling more children in care to live in fostering homes.
Supporting Adults to Reach their Full Potential	**Adult Social Care Quality** - Care users and carers experience high quality adult social care that is provided by a skilled workforce **Adult Social Care Independence** - Care users are supported to stay independent in their homes where possible, and have choice and control over their support **Adult Social Care Neighbourhood Health/Integration** - Care users are supported by joined-up health and social care services at a neighbourhood level **Health and wellbeing** - People live healthier lives for longer and health inequalities are reduced	Supporting more people to live for more years in good health. Improving the satisfaction / quality of life of carers who are supported by adult social care, including their access to social contact and information, advice and guidance. Enabling more young adults with a learning disability to live independently or with family

		Reducing the number of working age adults with long term care needs living in residential/nursing care.
Driving Economic Growth	**Economic prosperity and regeneration** - Foster local economic growth and prosperity **Transport and local infrastructure** - Communities are connected with improved, healthier and greener public transport, enabled by well maintained, enhanced and delivered transport infrastructure	Increasing average weekly pay Supporting more working-age people into employment Enabling more businesses to start ups and fewer to close down. Ensuring more household waste is sent for reuse, recycling or composting Improving roads, so fewer roads should be considered for maintenance.
Delivering Secure Homes and Tackling Homelessness	**Housing** - Everyone has access to a decent, safe, secure, and affordable home **Homelessness and rough sleeping** - Prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping	Reducing the number of children living in temporary accommodation.

	Multiple Disadvantage - Improve the lives of adults experiencing multiple disadvantage	
Creating a Connected Place	**Neighbourhoods -** People feel safe and included in their local community and are satisfied with their local area as a place to live **Environment, circular economy and climate change** - support a healthier, more resilient natural and built environment, including responding to the risks and impacts of climate change to the benefit of communities	Improving air quality, so we see fewer deaths caused by air pollution.
Driving Operational Excellence	**Data** – Improve data quality, access and use to support better decision making and performance monitoring. **Services** – Simplify and standardise core processes to deliver more consistent, efficient and responsive services. **People** – Strengthen digital and operational capabilities across the workforce to support continuous improvement and innovation. **Culture** – Embed a collaborative, learning culture that supports change, empowers our workforce and enables a flexible operating model.	

5.d.i Giving Children the Best Start in Life

We want every child and young person to grow up in a loving, stable home, surrounded by people who care for them and nurture their development. They should feel a strong sense of belonging in their communities, where their identities and experiences are respected and valued. Their environments—at home, in school, and in the community—should be safe and supportive, celebrating what it means to be a child or young person at every stage of development. Community spaces should be safe, welcoming and designed to support their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Our proposal aims to achieve this vision by rooting services in place and shaped by the communities they serve. By grasping the opportunity of the Families First Reforms and building a strong and inclusive system, we will not only improve outcomes for children but reduce the amount of money spent on high-cost services so that more can be reinvested into enhancing community-based services as part of our proposed neighbourhood public service approach.

Case Study- Family Hubs

A mum, overwhelmed by raising five children on a low income while coping with domestic abuse and her youngest child's autism, found support at the Family Hub. She arrived feeling anxious, isolated, and judged, but everything began to change when she was offered a one-to-one Confidence Course. With encouragement and consistent support, she started to rebuild her confidence and believe in herself again.

What made the real difference was the Family Hub's multi-disciplinary, co-located approach. Professionals from family support, health, autism services, domestic abuse support, employment, and education all worked together in one community space. This collaboration enabled coordinated support, reduced duplication, and built trust—making it easier for the mum to access help and feel empowered. The Family Hub became a safe, familiar place where she could get practical and emotional support from several teams at once.

Over time, she learned to manage her anxiety, advocate for her son, and secure support for him. She began volunteering, gained new skills, found employment, and transformed her family's life—taking her children on new experiences and pursuing further education herself.

Her words capture the impact: **"I feel free. I don't feel trapped anymore. I feel my feelings matter… I FEEL I MATTER."** Her children noticed the change too: **"Mum's happy now. We go out more and do fun stuff as a family."**

In order to address the challenge of ensuring more children and young people can help without requiring statutory intervention, in our proposal, **families in need of early support or help** will have access to multi-disciplinary Family Hubs within the neighbourhood public service model, where system partners across the public and third sector enable holistic support that reflects the realities of family life. These teams will operate as integrated ‘one-stop shops’, reducing duplication and ensuring that families don’t have to repeat their stories to multiple professionals. Support will be timely, coordinated, and preventative—designed to reduce future need and respond sensitively to the long-term impact of SEND, poverty, and neglect. They will build on existing Family Hubs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire; learning from what is working well and extending this out, tailoring to meet local needs. Creating two single tier unitary councils for the area will enable us to strengthen our approaches to keeping children safely at home, enabling better information sharing across children’s, housing, welfare, and community services. Children will be supported to remain within their family network when it is safe to do so, with parent/carers receiving wraparound support to meet the child’s emotional, educational and health needs from their local family hub and school.

Beyond 2028

Sarah and Michael have just agreed for their nieces Taylor (7) and Romany (9) to come and live with them rather than needing to go into Local Authority Care. The children have had a difficult and unstable few months, and their aunt and uncle are worried about getting them back into a home and school routine.

Local, joined-up support have helped Sarah and Michael feel more confident and connected in their roles as Kinship Carers

- **Joined-Up Services** – The family receive wraparound support from their local Family Hub Network, of whom the school is a member. Mental Health and Wellbeing support for the children and Parenting Support for Sarah and Michael leads to a steady improvement in school attendance and emotional regulation.

Local Support – Sarah and Michael attend a peer support group at the Family Hub, where they meet other kinship carers in situations similar to their own. They feel less alone with their challenge, and have a new network of people from whom they can gain advice and support.

Fostering Families will be enriched by the same localised support, giving children stability when they have come into the care of the local authority. This robust and reliable support offer will encourage more local families to be Kinship and Foster Carers for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Children. One opportunity for public service reform comes from embedding housing professionals within social care teams, which will strengthen support for children and families with complex needs and create the conditions to deliver better outcomes. Housing decisions—such as evictions or tenancy prioritisation—can deeply affect stability and often conflict with social care plans to ensure that disruption to family life is kept to a minimum when unexpected life events challenge family stability. Closer integration will allow earlier intervention, better coordination, and more informed decision-making. Similar benefits will be gained from the aggregation of Community Safety with Youth Service and Youth Justice Service to identify and prevent criminal exploitation, anti-social behaviour and youth violence.

Case Study – Family Support and Safeguarding

For families in need of more specialist help, Nottinghamshire has made progress with its Families First Reforms and has begun to roll out Family Support and Safeguarding multidisciplinary teams - where Substance Use, Mental Health and Domestic Violence Workers sit alongside Qualified Social Workers, Youth Workers and Family Support Workers in locality teams. Families with multiple and complex need can get the support they need to make progress and reduce risk, and through integration with Family Hubs can receive ongoing support in their communities to help sustain the changes made.

Bringing together people services with housing creates another opportunity for public service reform in that we will be able to improve pipeline planning for young people leaving supported accommodation and into independent living. Our care leavers will receive consistent, high-quality support as they transition to adulthood through integrated housing and welfare support.

Beyond 2028

Jay, 19, has recently transitioned out of supported accommodation. They are determined to live independently in their own flat in Mansfield, while managing a long-term health condition.

Joined-up planning and flexible digital tools have supported Jay's move to independent living and allow them to access…

- **Whole System Action –** Pipeline planning ensures Jay's move from supported accommodation is smooth, with tailored support for tenancy readiness, budgeting, and wellbeing. Housing professionals embedded within social care teams help Jay secure a safe, adapted home that meets their needs, reducing the risk of future crisis or reliance on residential care.
- **Digital Empowerment** – Jay also benefits from virtual family hubs and hybrid technology, allowing them to self-serve when appropriate, while still accessing in-person support at libraries, youth centres, and community spaces when they prefer.

Success will not just mean improved outcomes but will realise significant cost benefits. For example, there are young people currently being cared for in externally commissioned and costly children's residential homes, ready to move into Supported Accommodation, where places are currently taken by young adults ready and waiting for an independent tenancy. Joined up provision of services will enable strategic housing plans to improve the quality of life for many families. Commissioning to secure improved outcomes for children and young people in our care is already a priority across the area, with a mature and evolving integrated commissioning partnership already in place across the EMCCA footprint and delivering efficiencies and improved outcomes through shared frameworks such as the D2N2 Therapies and Children in Care arrangements. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have co-produced a SEND Joint Commissioning Strategy (2024–2027) with the ICB, setting consistent priorities for families across the region. Building on strong relationships and proven impact, the partnership is now exploring regional block contracts for specialist children's homes to further enhance sufficiency and stability. Through the successful aggregation of social care, housing, and planning services, public sector reform will support both unitary councils in their ambition to acquire and renovate additional properties to meet identified gaps in homes for Children in Care (e.g. child specific, solo placements, crisis beds, complex needs).

Education and Children with special educational needs and disabilities

Our commitment to local community-based working in this proposal will support the delivery of the anticipated SEND reforms. Children and young people with SEND should be able to learn at a school close to their home, alongside their peers, rather than travelling long distances from their family and community. Special schools will continue to play a vital role supporting those with the most complex needs. In the new Nottingham unitary this will involve children with the most complex needs having access to therapeutic support and specialist provision close to their home. In the Nottinghamshire unitary we will seek to reform SEND provision to be more place based, responding to local needs and utilising current district-based specialist provision to respond flexibly through outreach to mainstream schools' place-based SEND units. A network of locally based provision will be developed. Through a hub and spoke model this will improve equity of access to SEND provision across our rural areas whilst reducing the need for lengthy journeys for young people to access the provision that meets their needs and therefore reducing the pressure on local authority transport services.

Beyond 2028

Ilana, 11, attends primary school in Carlton and has speech and language difficulties and is profoundly deaf. Ilana and her family have just moved to Nottingham as they found it difficult to make friends and find support within the area in their previous location.

Connected and inclusive local services have enabled Ilana and her family to access…

- **Connected Services** – Ilana's school is connected to a multi-disciplinary Family Hub, a one-stop shop where her family can access speech and language support, deaf awareness resources, and housing advice, all without having to repeat their story to multiple professionals.
- **Integrated Neighbourhood Model** – Working closely with partners, Ilana was quickly connected to local services and community organisations. The Nottingham Deaf Society, working in partnership with the council and voluntary sector, provided a welcoming space where Ilana met other children like her, joined inclusive activities, and began to build lasting friendships.

A further opportunity for public service reform involves bringing together planning, housing and social care functions in the future unitary councils so that home adaptations are designed into new housing. This will support children and young people with disabilities to live at home for as long as they and their families want them to, reducing or delaying the need for residential care later on. This achieves both better outcomes for families, and a financial saving to the public purse. The strength of existing joint working relationships across the councils means the foundations exist to realise this opportunity in the new unitary councils as an early priority.

Our proposal will ensure that every child and young person has access to locally available high-quality further education opportunities, building on and supported by strong partnerships with local colleges, universities, training providers, schools and education providers. The shape of the new unitary councils will leverage the strong inclusive and well-established partnerships with institutions such as West Notts College to support more young people through further education and training from the expanded Nottingham City area. Through integrated transition planning, careers guidance, and place-based support, we will empower young people to pursue meaningful education, training, and employment pathways including apprenticeships and supported internships, especially for those with SEND, care experienced, or facing disadvantage to improve lifelong outcomes. Family Hubs and multi-disciplinary teams will work closely with FE providers to support transitions, deliver wraparound support and ensure that lifelong learning is accessible to all and that transitions into adulthood are smooth, supported, and ambitious.

The County Council has a proven track record of managing the cost pressures in Childrens Services whilst delivering services judged as ‘Good’ by Ofsted.

As we look to the future, we see further opportunities grounded in Public Service Reform and the implementation of national government reforms in neighbourhoods across the 2 new Councils. Using additional data and analysis from the IMPOWER benchmarking index, we believe there are additional financial benefits to be achieved.

Our estimated Public Service Reform benefits for children and family services are between £39.5m and £92.2m. These estimates are focused on savings to the costs of children’s services delivered by achieving better outcomes that cost less through complex transformation.

These opportunities are not reflected in the financial case for this proposal but exemplify the potential for additional savings to be realised through public service reform on the footprint of the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal.

5.d.ii. Supporting Adults to reach their Full Potential

We want every person in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, in communities where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them. Our aim is for all people to have the chance to live a gloriously ordinary life regardless of their age, disability or ill-health.

We aim to achieve this vision by rooting services in place and shaping them by the communities they serve, increasing the focus on the building blocks of good health and wellbeing, through our model of neighbourhood public service. This dovetails with the ambitions for Neighbourhood Health outlined in the NHS 10 Year Plan, and builds on progress made to date through Place Based Partnerships. The forthcoming Casey Review into Adult Social Care offers a timely opportunity to align our new unitary arrangements with national priorities for stronger leadership, clearer accountability, and improved outcomes for people and communities.

The development of a new adult social care system within the new unitary councils will see high quality, sustainable adult social care services that are easy to access, local responsive, and financially resilient, with improvements in people's experience of care and support, strengthened prevention, and resources focused where they make the greatest difference. As people live longer lives, we want to create a place where adults have a better quality of life for longer with shorter time and less reliance on statutory services.

Case Study – Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs)

Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) support improvements in the health and wellbeing of a defined local community, address health inequalities and tackle issues of health equity. Our approach is to start with relationships as the foundation - building relationships to foster a culture where partners work and learn together, to achieve the conditions where communities actively take control of their health and wellbeing.

The Bassetlaw Ageing Well INT has seen an increase of 11% in falls assessments and support through targeted work with people with moderate to severe frailty. The Bassetlaw Live Well INT has supported 172 people through integrated clinical and non-clinical interventions resulting in improvements across all wellbeing indicators.

The My Support Network, developed by the Newark and Sherwood Local Design Team, provides coordinated information and support to help people remain well at home. To promote healthy ageing and reduce isolation for those over 65 in Newark, Sherwood, and Ashfield, 9 Best Years Hubs with over 5000 attendances, with 81 volunteers supporting and over 70 advanced care plans completed.

The Mansfield Make a Start programme has helped 492 individuals via two hubs.

The Healthy Heart Clinic in Ashfield supported 64 people; half qualified for NHS Health checks, and 25% were identified with high cholesterol and are now receiving care.

Simplified care pathways with two unitary councils responsible for both housing and social care will reduce duplication and delay and enable better support for people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities through joint commissioning with the local NHS. It will enable a more comprehensive approach to early intervention and prevention, building on the current support offer from local Councils and the voluntary and community sector. This will mean that fewer older adults will require formal care and support as they will be provided with the right preventative support in the right place at the right time. It will also help to smooth the transition for young adults with care and support needs to working age.

Beyond 2028

Jeremy, 76, moved to Bingham when he retired with his wife, Ann. Since she passed away, Jeremy's health has deteriorated rapidly, finding it difficult to leave the house. He was moved into residential care, but more recently Jeremy has built up his independence and his health has stabilised.

Modern and Localised Adults Social Care have been able to provide Jeremy with…

- **Right Care at the Right Time -** Improved coordination between health and social care teams, made possible by pooled budgets, Jeremy received timely mental and physical health support. This helped him recover from his health decline and move out of residential care. He now enjoys a fuller social life and has reduced costs due to preventative care.
- **Connected Support** – Nursed noticed Jeremy needed physiotherapy to improve his ability to complete day to day tasks, like getting dressed by himself. This flexible approach to support has helped him out of intensive levels of support to be able to live more independently.

- **Local Access to Services** – Services are now located in places Jeremy naturally visits, like the local supermarket, post office, and community centre. This means Jeremy doesn't have to travel far or use complex systems to get help. It's made it easier for him to stay connected, maintain his independence, and be part of his community.

For prevention, a two unitary, single tier model will enable the pooling of budgets, joint bids for grant funding, and the creation of consistent early intervention support – with the removal of duplication. Given that we know that social contact and access to information, advice and guidance, particularly for carers, are challenges in both Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, we will look at co-ordination of Community Hub type provision through the Neighbourhood Public Service model, offering advice, training, wellbeing, digital care a support solutions and digital inclusion in local areas. We will think about ways to position services so that people can access them easily, which will mean delivering services from spaces such as schools, supermarkets, and libraries – places that people congregate naturally around. We will also work on digital means for people to access help, acknowledging that some people will need support to do so until they are confident using digital access, and that some people will not have digital devices to use.

Case study – Technology Enabled Care

Barry has a learning disability and difficulty communicating verbally. He lives in his own flat but has an overnight sleep-in worker just in case he needs support in the night. In the past, Barry left his home at night and was unable to find his way home. Additionally, there were also concerns that he may not act appropriately in the event of a fire. In recent months he has started to give non-verbal signs that he does not like having someone with him in his flat all the time, for example by closing his living room door when care workers have moved out of the room so that he can watch the television alone.

Barry liked superheroes so his support team explained that if he had a telecare system, he could press a button and this would summon someone like a superhero to help him. A telecare system was introduced with a call button for Barry, monitored smoke detectors and sensors on his exterior doors which automatically switched on overnight to alert a 24 hour monitoring centre if his door was opened and he left home. Barry's support team worked with him over several weeks so that he got used to pressing the button to call for help and understanding how this worked. Once everyone was happy, Barry's overnight support was gradually withdrawn, and a TEC activity monitoring system was also installed to assess the impact on Barry's behaviour on the nights he was left alone. For the first 2-3 nights he was alone the TEC showed that Barry was a little unsettled, but he then settled completely and eventually his overnight support ended. His support team subsequently reported that Barry was behaving more independently and was now indicating that he wanted to do more things by himself during the day.

The two new unitary councils will focus on promoting and developing independence skills for younger people with disabilities who live with ageing parents to gain independence skills as early as possible - opening the possibility of supported living rather than residential care.

Moving to a single tier of local government and greater integration with our local public services and community and voluntary sector partners will support a reduction in inequality and provision of more equitable services across the county. With closer alignment to local areas comes better understanding and tailoring of service delivery models for new and different needs where required in more rural and densely populated parts of the two unitary areas. In this way it will address inequity in terms of outcomes, such as life expectancy, for people who have disabilities or need to spend time in hospital.

With one commissioner for each single tier authority, the social care market can be more stable and strategically supported across both preventative and statutory care and support services, and it will be easier to negotiate fair rates, improve quality and invest in workforce development across the sector. This also creates for the potential for exploring joined up commissioning approaches across the area a whole.

We know that the availability of suitable homes for working age adults is a challenge across the area, leading to fewer adults with learning disability living in their own homes or with family than similar Councils. More young adults (18-64) also have their long-term support needs met through admission to residential or nursing care. The creation of new unitary councils offers the opportunity to address this, through the development of a more coherent housing strategy for the area as whole, an opportunity for public service reform, which will both improve outcomes and avoid cost.

A further opportunity for reform is the opportunity to simplify the partnership approach to securing pathways for people drawing on care and support into education, training and employment, bringing together the partnership with Further Education colleges, specialist colleges for people with disabilities, Job Centre Plus and local employers to generate occupational opportunities to help people to live well, socialise and combat loneliness and social isolation.

Beyond 2028

Felix, 52, lives in Worksop with his wife and two children, but has recently been made redundant as the company he worked for is shutting down. He's looking for a new opportunity and wants to do some training in new skills to help the job search.

A system that is more joined-up will be able to help Felix find opportunities to reskill and find a new position through…

- **Local Access to Services:** With a single unitary council for one area, Felix can easily contact the council through a central platform, and through key places in the community e.g. libraries & post office, where he might already travel to ask about training programmes.
- **Strategic Services** – Linked to EMCCA priorities, the new council helps Felix find training in in-demand skills. Investment is focused on what's actually needed in Nottinghamshire, rather than broad national targets, helping him prepare for industries with real opportunities nearby.
- **Integrated Services** – Alongside training, integrated services may mean Felix is recommended to access support on managing finances, helping him stay secure while he looks for work and plans his next steps.

We can also simplify working with the EMCCA through their inclusive growth framework, on planning for transport that is accessible and fit for purpose, enabling more people to travel to social groups, volunteering, and employment. This again improves outcomes and avoids cost through increased independence.

The County Council has strong track record of transformation and change in adult social care.

Building on our approach, with prevention, reablement, work with voluntary sector and strong market engagement, we have an emerging Public Service reform programme. Using the IMPOWER benchmarking index, we can see that there is further PSR financial benefit to be achieved through the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal post vesting day. The scale of the financial benefit has been modelled at between £28.3m and £66.3m across services for adults requiring care and support.

The approach to delivering financial benefit at this scale is through complex transformation programmes that focus on better outcomes that cost less, building independence for adults of all age, and working with the market and voluntary sector collaboratively.

These additional financial benefits have been modelled to illustrate the scale of the potential savings the two new Councils could achieve. They have not been included in the financial case but demonstrate the benefit of our public service reform model in the Greater Nottinghamshire Council.

Beyond 2028

Jenny, 55, has a cleaning business in Mansfield. She recently worked with someone who needed support to declutter their home to make it safe. Jenny enjoyed the work and the connection she made with them and wants to talk to the council about getting them some more help.

Responsive and community-focused services have made it easier for Jenny to…

- **Making Every Contact Count** – Jenny is able to raise her concerns with the council easily due to the simple website, getting the residents the support they need. Her messages to the council reflect other contact the council has received about this resident, developing a stronger picture of the situation and triggering more intense support.
- **Tailored Unitary Services** – In the more rural unitary, Jenny sees the council's workforce know the area and are responsive to the needs of those in remote locations. She works in a network of partners that visit residents and the strong community is agile to residents needs.

- **Flexible Funding for Real Needs –** With pooled budgets, the council has greater flexibility to respond to individual needs. This means Jenny's concerns can lead to timely, personalised interventions, whether that's home adaptations, social care, or community support, without being constrained by rigid funding streams.

5.d.iii Driving economic growth

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal will turn EMCCA's inclusive growth ambitions, into reality. The two new unitary councils will enable strategic local leadership, each building on their unique economic strengths. Through the opportunities that local government reorganisation presents, the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire partnership will create a better place to live, work, and thrive – in return we will make a significant contribution to the UK economy and act as strong, reliable partners for the Mayor.

One area is centred on the core city of Nottingham and the urban conurbation with the more urban districts on its existing borders. The other focused on Nottinghamshire's market towns, with their rural hinterlands. The expanded core city will be able to build on the digital, creative and cultural sectors and deliver a significant contribution to EMCCA's growth targets in this way. Complementary to this, the more rural Council will be able to focus on the growth opportunities from clean energy, advanced manufacturing and life sciences. In simple terms, this proposal splits the area into two sensible economic geographies that allow both areas to flourish but not at each other's expense.

This proposal will therefore result in improved 'place-based economic specialisation' and reflects EMCCA's strategy for sector-led, place-based growth. It will help deliver the National Industry Strategy here in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. We will be able to make a significant contribution to EMCCA's targets of raising the average annual productivity growth rate to 2% so that average earnings can rise by £5,700. We will be able to support more people to be in work, our neighbourhood approach particularly helpful in supporting people out of work through ill health. The new Councils will also work with partners to help people have skilled qualifications they need to progress close to home. This option will mean that all our residents see the positives from growth, all our businesses will be supported to thrive and our communities will feel the benefit of local government reorganisation.

Nottingham's success is a catalyst for Nottinghamshire's future success

Nottingham is one of the UKs core cities and home to two world class universities. Realising the city's growth ambitions is crucial to delivery of EMCCA's inclusive growth plans and puts the city's sustainable expansion as a core principle. Nottingham currently has identified its growth plans to create 12,000 new jobs by 2030, generating £500 million in additional GVA. It also seeks to secure £4bn of regenerative investment in the city to enhance quality of life and create a contemporary, clean and globally competitive centre. The two unitary councils we are proposing can help make this a reality and allow even further growth, be more ambitious and leverage the potential that Broxtowe and Gedling boroughs bring as part of a wider unitary including Nottingham.

Nottingham is already home to dynamic sectors like Creative and Digital, Health and Life Sciences, and Manufacturing. The city also boasts excellent educational institutions, impressive sustainable transport connectivity, an exciting regeneration agenda and a strong cultural, heritage and sporting offer. This proposal allows Nottingham to continue to focus on these strengths and in turn deliver EMCCA's growth plan (our local interpretation of the Country's Industrial Strategy).

In this option, the two universities will have the right conditions to drive **innovation** across the city and the broader sector benefits. The University of Nottingham (UoN) has recently launched an Innovation District (UoN Innovation Park) in Nottingham's city centre that connects research, industry and community. This option will ensure that Nottingham is a place where innovation is not only generated but also harnessed to make a difference locally, nationally and globally. The universities are place anchor institutions and the significant student population that live in and around Beeston (in Broxtowe), means the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal provides the framework for the full economic benefit to be felt across the city-based Council.

Furthermore, improved public transport links, such as tram extensions and revived rail routes, will connect residents across the wider Nottingham area to employment centres, reduce congestion, and open up new opportunities for all communities. Specific **tram extensions** within the newly formed city-based Council would connect Gedling residents to the city centre, where the current A60 road network is congested and creates a barrier to access education and work opportunities. Better connections to Broxtowe and Derby city will also be made easier through this partnership.

Beyond 2028

Kate, 64, runs a popular bakery in Nottingham. Her sales have been rocketing the past two years and she's looking to hire a new team of 5 people to set up a new bakery closer to the train station.

Strategic investment and growing commuter links are boosting Kate's business through…

- **Targeted Growth** – Sitting in the Trent Arc, Kate sees her customers increase as more and more workers are travelling between Derby and Nottingham. With EMCCA's targeted investment in the Trent Arc, tailored to the Nottingham area, local investment, planning, and community services have been designed to enable growth. Businesses have set up along the route and commuters are frequently stopping in Beeston to pick up a coffee on their way to work or as a destination for working lunches.

Nottinghamshire's growth potential will also flourish

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal also frames the Nottinghamshire Council area with the best chance to succeed. It will allow this unitary Council to build on the priority growth sectors that is part of the area's heritage and current strengths. The Nottinghamshire Council will focus on delivering inclusive growth across the main priority sectors of the clean energy, advanced manufacturing and visitor economy – all of which sit firmly in the areas economic specialisms.

Digital connectivity is a key enabler for sustainable and inclusive economic growth, as identified in EMCCA's growth plan. The Nottinghamshire Council will spearhead a digitally connected regional economy, fostering innovation in smart manufacturing, logistics, and public services. Investment in full-fibre and 5G connectivity could add £0.5 billion a year in GVA by 2030, supporting up to 4,700 new jobs. A thriving digital infrastructure will also boost small business productivity, enhance data-driven public services, and connect residents to opportunities in the knowledge economy. By including Rushcliffe into the more rural Council, this will ensure that the connectivity issues that the rural parts of the borough have will still remain a priority. Businesses in Gedling and Broxtowe will in turn benefit from the focus the Core City brings to improving capacity and network speed – benefiting directly from being part of a 'smart city'.

The creation of a **North–South Clean Energy Corridor** (linking EMCCA's Trent arc and Super Cluster areas) including Ratcliffe-on-Soar, Staythorpe, West Burton and Cottam. Work that is underway to position Nottinghamshire as a national leader in clean energy innovation and the STEP Fusion programme will be a catalyst for further complementary growth. This corridor will be supported by upgrades to key transport routes (e.g., A614/A6097) and new investment in housing, health, and education are intended to make sure that growth is both sustainable and inclusive. Nottinghamshire Council will continue to sponsor the growth potential of the Ratcliffe-on-Soar site and through the addition of the STEP fusion investment over the last few years, this proposal ensures that the momentum building quickly around these key new sectors are built upon, without any disruption or delay. Importantly, key relationships between people working on these projects will have the certainty of consistency to drive the inward investment required with partners in business, academia and Government.

Beyond 2028

Rohan, 59, is a mechanical engineer in Lincoln. He is looking for a new career move, to support his family as he saves for retirement. Rohan loves his current local neighbourhood in Lincoln and has recently finished paying his mortgage. He is a father of two, both of which have both moved to Bristol to study at university.

Strategic investment and improved infrastructure are opening up new career opportunities for Rohan through…

- **Coherent Inward Investment** – Living near the Trent Supercluster, Rohan benefits from supported transport links into the area. He is able to commute faster to work and, soon after, is able to get a job at a company located in Nottinghamshire. This is newly relocated company has chosen north Nottinghamshire as a base to be close to the STEP fusion programme and the clean energy growth opportunities.

Town Centre regeneration

Greater Nottinghamshire has the ambition, assets and sites to drive large-scale town centre regeneration but under the current system, delivery in some cases has been slow, or inconsistent. The proposed Councils will be ready and able to lead the way in regenerating city and town centres, that have been hindered by the current system.

The introduction of two new unitary Councils has the scope to rejuvenate our town centres, giving each area the skills and resources it needs to drive regeneration. By working with EMCCA, these Councils can coordinate their efforts across their areas, making regeneration more joined-up and effective. While the existing Councils have done well leveraging partnerships and government funds, moving to simpler, stronger all-purpose Councils presents a golden opportunity to unlock land, improve town centres, and attract investment in a much more strategic and impactful way.

The Combined Authority is pulling together an investment pipeline aimed at boosting inclusive growth. Both future Councils will seek to work with EMCCA to look at new delivery vehicles like Mayoral Development Corporations (MDCs). These MDCs would be able to assemble land, pull in investment, and get complex multi-partner projects off the ground, but they need to work at a large enough scale and cover functional areas to really make a difference.

We have heard from developers and investors in developing the Greater Nottingham proposal. They recognise the many strengths in the current arrangement, but look for greater simplicity, stronger Councils able to partner with the private sector and provide certainty and consistency. Building on recent work between the City Council and Homes England, the Nottingham Council would continue to target investment in high-impact areas like Broadmarsh and growth corridors such as the Trent Arc. The new Councils will make it easier to align both public and private investment, with clearer governance and streamlined decision-making. They'll also be better placed to attract long-term funding for housing, infrastructure, and commercial development.

The new model boosts place leadership and keeps Councils connected to local communities to understand and respond to their unique needs. Neighbourhood Public Service Committees and active Town Boards, like those in Mansfield and Ashfield, will play a key part, bringing together residents, businesses, and leaders to co-create long-term regeneration plans. Our Councillors and residents told us they want their town centres to feel safe, to be clean, with things to do and places to go they can enjoy. By integrating ‘place based’ services such as highways, street cleansing, management of public realm and public safety, we can help revitalise our town centres. The Greater Nottingham proposal provides a safer, simpler, stronger approach designed to speed up regeneration, target growth to the places that need it most, and deliver real improvements in quality of life and opportunity for local people.

Visitor economy is a key growth ambition for EMCCA, with expectations of increasing the number of visitors by 50%. This is ambitious, but the future Councils will help significantly to meet these targets. Both councils would build on the existing focus areas of Robin Hood and ‘Sport as a Spectacle’ in its Visitor Economy framework. This will rely on increasing people’s visits when they come to watch a professional sports match in the south of the county (world class football and cricket) or come to see the home of the legendary Robin Hood (in the north of the county). Plans are already being worked on to encourage overnight stays, linked trips and longer visits. By including Rushcliffe in the more rural Council, this work will be able to continue in a coherent way through the next few years of transition. This will allow the city to concentrate on city centre-based visitor activity, cultural and event planning. The impact on the whole of the economy would be significant, as data shows most people (90%) stay for the day and spend on average £52 per visit, compared to the 10% that stay overnight, who spend on average £257 per visit in the local economy.

As two next generation Councils collaborating with EMCCA, we can deliver inclusive growth

This proposal is centred on creating a partnership between Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, where there is a single, unified voice for the place with EMCCA. There will be a clear message that this region is open for business and both new Councils will have clear growth strategies and coherent areas of focus. This will be more attractive to new business and **inward investment** by providing clarity and will build confidence for private funders and investors.

A simpler, unitary structure means services will be designed around people and business, not bureaucracy, reducing duplication and ensuring quicker, more joined up decision-making. With resources better aligned and the opportunity to maximise efficiencies, the councils will offer business, developers and investors more certainty, stability and simplicity of support in partnership with EMCCA to turn the **Opportunity Escalator** into a reality.

EMCCA’s Inclusive Growth Commission recommended the ‘opportunity escalator’ as an approach to ensuring inclusive growth. By creating two new all purpose unitary Councils, we will reduce the complicated employment and skills landscape, as currently there are eight different local Councils all using the various funding streams to deliver a variety of training programmes and initiatives, over numerous providers. Whilst, we have a history of collaboration and joint commissioning across the county/city, the opportunity to support our residents to access the 'opportunity escalator' is much greater with only two Councils going forward. Barriers to access the 'opportunity escalator' including transport issues, poor health and low social capital could be better addressed. This will increase the chances of residents being able to move up the escalator and transition into better paid, more secure jobs through training and upskilling.

Beyond 2028

Alia, 27, is working as an accountant in Cotgrave but is looking for a new role. She wants to support her long term career in the area and is keen to build her skills for the future. Alia loves her community and wants to settle in Ashfield with her partner.

Focused local investment and opportunities for growth are helping Alia build a future in her community and open up…

- **Targeted Growth** – Living along the Trent Arc, Alia feels the push for economic growth near her area. The Option 1b structure allows each council to focus on specific growth areas, so Alia sees large investment into business near her. A new business sets up in the next town over that has a bustling finance department. Alia is able to join as a manager with room to promote after a few years, as she can access the 'opportunity escalator' and gets the training she needs to progress.

This option will deliver the government's National Industry Strategy through delivering EMCCA's growth plan, based on our areas' strengths and knowledge. It will unleash the true potential of the Core City of Nottingham, whilst also allowing the rest of the county to grow significantly, collaboratively, not competitively – this complementarity will be a core strength. Each new authority will have its own focused and coherent priority growth sectors and both Councils will have inclusive growth at their heart. The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal will sign up to and back EMCCA's inclusive growth framework and will ensure that growth works for everyone – not just those in high-growth sectors or the better paid jobs – by creating pathways into good jobs, supporting communities, and attracting investment.

The focus on high-value sectors across both new authorities, such as advanced manufacturing, life sciences, creative industries, and clean energy, will create jobs for the future with education settings and providers being encouraged to play their part in supporting residents through targeted training and apprenticeships. This partnership will allow Nottingham to fulfil the potential of its core city status and its success will help to ensure Nottinghamshire success. By allowing the work to continue to position Nottinghamshire as the clean energy leader, this will then further stimulate growth across the region.

5.d.iv. Delivering Affordable Homes and Tackling Homelessness

We are committed to being an active partner in delivering on the ambitions that the Mayor and the Government have set out. The Government is focussed on delivering 1.5m new homes along with the critical infrastructure that underpins economic growth and has set out revised housing targets for all local areas. Building the new homes needed by our growing and changing communities is important, but so too is ensuring we build homes, not houses, and that we improve quality of new and existing properties.

In delivering more housing and economic growth for the area, it is essential that we work closely with the Mayor and EMCCA. The strategic authority will drive housing growth through a combination of devolved powers, strategic investment, and targeted regeneration initiatives, reshaping how housing delivery responsibilities are managed across Nottinghamshire and the wider region. EMCCA's Growth Plan aims to deliver over 100,000 homes across the region, including 1,400 homes on brownfield sites by 2026 through a £16.8 million Brownfield Housing Fund. To achieve this and contribute to the Government's target of 1.5 million new homes, there are a number of major regeneration zones underway including Trent Arc and Supercluster, which collectively will unlock £4.6 billion in economic value and 52,000 new homes.

Wider partnerships with Homes England are also underway to revive stalled developments, such as the Chronos Richardson site in Nottingham, the Nottingham War Rooms, and Bowbridge Road in Newark, with the intention of delivering hundreds of new homes.

The latest data[1] for the number of new homes completed in each local authority in 2024/25 shows the size of the challenge to meet these targets by the new unitary authorities in this proposal. Under the revised targets set out by the Government, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would need to build over 2,100 more homes per year, an increase of 60% on 2024/25. The target for the area combined represents 52% of EMCCA's 10-year Growth Plan target for the region (10,860 per year by 2035).

In shaping this Greater Nottinghamshire proposal, we have taken this challenge and ambition from the Mayor to heart. To tackle this challenge and ensure we deliver on the ambition set out above, we will replace fragmented delivery with a joined-up, countywide housing strategy and integrated planning and development functions that align and accelerate affordable housing, regeneration, and infrastructure priorities. To do this we are committing to the following:

- Streamlining planning and delivery across local and regional government.

[1] Indicators of House building, UK: permanent dwellings started and completed by local authority - Office for National Statistics

- Focus on regeneration-led development on brownfield land and sustainable expansion in towns and villages with strong local identity.
- Adopt a "One Public Estate" model, strategically deploying public land for affordable housing and regeneration.
- Establish one shared digital housing register and allocations system, simplifying access for residents and ensuring transparency.
- Prioritise affordable and social rent homes, particularly for families and key workers.

The strategy will support the EMCCA's Local Growth Plan, Mayor's Transport Plan and the Spatial Development Strategy. As a result, we will see more than 52,000 new homes unlocked through strategic regeneration zones such as Trent Arc, Canal Corridor, and the Supercluster, the delivery of 1,400 brownfield homes by 2026, contributing to EMCCA's 100,000-home regional target and £4.6 billion in economic value generated through housing-led regeneration.

Delivering Affordable Homes

The creation of two new, next generation Councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire offers a transformative opportunity to address affordable housing needs across Greater Nottinghamshire. Affordable housing delivery will be a key priority for the new authorities, bringing opportunities to strengthen our approach and deliver the change that our economy needs. Both unitary authorities will enable housing supply to exceed housing need levels across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to support the East Midlands Mayor Inclusive Growth Plan to deliver over 100,000 homes across the region. This is aligned to help achieve the Government's mission to deliver 1.5 million homes nationally.

The two unitary Councils will provide for significant opportunities for future growth. The Nottinghamshire Council will bring large land availability together creating a countywide mechanism that can "super-charge" housing and economic development in the county. It creates a complimentary Nottingham Council focussed on urban regeneration and higher density developments with limited greenbelt release to support development where needed.

The East Midlands Inclusive Growth Plan includes the "Super Cluster" growth area that will be able to unlock investment and new jobs along with new housing growth. Improvements to the A6097/A614 that runs through the heart of the countywide authority area will also serve to support new housing growth through the spine of the Nottinghamshire Council area. The countywide authority will be able to focus on growth which makes the most of its strengths and assets in its rural communities, market towns and villages and industrial heartlands. Significant barriers to employment include lack of affordable housing and transport. So, the Nottinghamshire Council will be able to develop a model for a growing local economy by building homes that meet healthy homes standards, needed by a vibrant growing local workforce, and connected communities which overcome barriers to social inclusion and mobility through a revitalised county-wide transport approach.

The creation of a Nottingham Council will enable housing supply to be met without needing to place significant reliance on greenfield land, because of the large potential for additional residential housing development in Nottingham on brownfield land. Within this area there is a sufficient 15-year housing supply to promote urban place making allowing for urban regeneration to harness an “urban renaissance” with greatly improved sustainable travel. This will help maximise previously used land within the area and help realise the ambitions for the East Midlands Inclusive Growth Plan that includes the Trent Arc cluster alongside the neighbouring emerging South Derbyshire unitary Council.

The borders of both unitary Councils support non-competing growth strategies between the two areas, allowing for each to specialise and build reputation in different areas. This allows the new Councils to target investment fully towards focus areas, without having to compromise on budget and service focus.

We have listened to the feedback of the developers and investors we talked to about our proposal. By unifying planning, delivery, and asset management, this proposed option enables a strategic, joined-up approach that breaks down traditional silos and maximises the social value of public land through the one-public estate approach. The configuration of these two new Councils will allow for coherent and consistent strategic planning and delivery, best practice sharing, and the strategic deployment of land assets, prioritising social value and community outcomes. We are supportive of both large-scale regeneration and small-scale, community-led schemes, and will enable the implementation of a single digital platform for the housing register and a unified allocations policy.

The evidence base shows a significant and growing need for affordable housing, particularly for social housing and affordable rent, with acute affordability challenges in some areas. This proposal will mean we are better placed to maximise delivery, align housing with infrastructure, and ensure that specialist needs are met. In summary, this option will enable Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to move from fragmented, siloed delivery to a unified, strategic, and outcomes-focused approach, delivering more affordable homes, making best use of public assets, and ensuring that social value is at the heart of housing delivery.

A case study in delivering inclusive growth

The emerging proposals for significant redevelopment of the Trent Valley power stations is an example of how this option would benefit future development. All of the major, large scale clean energy production and AI growth zone sites from Ratcliffe on Soar to West Burton would fall within the planning remit of one Council. Through the Mayor’s Spatial Development Strategy, a planning policy framework could be adopted to allow the entire Trent Valley to become a home to green power and transform energy supply and distribution. In this way the emerging “Super

Cluster" proposal centred on the north Nottinghamshire sites of West Burton, Cottam and High Marnham could be extended into something bigger and better for the East Midlands and for the UK.

Equally having the entire Trent Valley under one Council allows a comprehensive plan for mineral development, biodiversity expansion and recreational development to be brought together which has never been possible under two tier and multiple Councils. This proposal would also bring together authorities covering the Sherwood Forest area and assist the continuation of visitor promotion centred on the ancient Forest and attractions around Mansfield, Worksop, Newark and Southwell.

In transport terms the A6047/A614 corridor improvement scheme linking the A46 at Newton with the A1 at Appleyhead is a case study of a transport project (now with Government funding approved) spanning the Nottinghamshire Council area, which will assist in releasing land for housing and would be managed by the single unitary authority under this proposal.

The Nottinghamshire Council will need to plan for the needs of a lower density population, more geographically dispersed. A new housing strategy can address how both the type of new housing being developed and the adaptation of existing housing will support healthy, active and independent living for older people in well connected, resilient communities. Nottinghamshire Council would intend to draw from existing best practice locally and learning to support an innovative approach to meeting the unique needs of its towns, villages and rural communities for affordable, safe and secure homes.

Leveraging wider devolution and investment for local benefit

We will use our stronger, unified voice as part of the 'heft' that a Mayoral strategic authority brings, we will secure investment and devolved funding that delivers long-term housing and regeneration benefits. The two new Councils will work together with EMCCA, coordinating access to integrated housing settlements and grant funding from central government to maximising opportunities for accelerating and increased housing delivery.

Greater stability in housing investment and regeneration funding will help ensure continuity of programmes despite market fluctuations and most critically, we will be better placed to provide the housing that local residents needs as well as providing certainty of the crucial services that some of the most vulnerable members of our local community need.

Supporting Independent Living and Vulnerable Residents

We will ensure housing supports people at every stage of life — from care leavers to older adults — enabling independence, wellbeing, and dignity. Expanding supported housing for adults with complex care needs and reducing reliance on institutional care settings is a priority for us. A coherent housing strategy across the whole area will actively support independent living, adapted housing, extra care, supported housing and downsizing accommodation; we can support people to downsize which means they can remain living independently and more capacity is created for families needing larger accommodation. This supports our aims to support people to live safely in their own homes in strong and thriving neighbourhoods for as long as possible. This reduces the use of residential care for working age and older adults which both improves outcomes and reduces cost.

We are also committed to standardising the experience for Nottinghamshire's care leavers by coordinating housing and council tax exemption policies and guaranteeing consistent access up to age 25 across both Councils.

We will also seek to fully Integrate housing with health, social care, and community services at the neighbourhood level, ensuring holistic support for vulnerable residents and improve housing quality, accessibility, and energy efficiency, contributing to healthier living environments for all.

Case Study: Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)

The transition from nine councils to two unitary authorities this proposal supports a more efficient, responsive, and integrated DFG service aligned with health and care priorities. LGR offers a pivotal opportunity to transform DFG delivery. Drawing on Leicestershire's successful Lightbulb model, this approach proposes:

- **Unified service delivery** through consistent policies, digital platforms, and integrated teams.
- **Proactive support** for hospital discharge, independent living, and urgent health needs.
- **Streamlined governance** enabling expansion into wider adult and children's services.

ARK Consultancy's review highlights disparities in resources and delivery across districts. A unified model would ensure:

- Equitable access and performance.
- Alignment with national Foundations review.
- Cost-effective, person-centred solutions tailored to urban and rural needs.

Delivering the Housing Growth Agenda through a new modernised Local Planning Authority

The creation of new safer, simpler, stronger Councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire offers an exciting opportunity to create a new, next generation local planning authority that will provide a highly efficient service, to achieve the positive outcomes of the growth agenda and positive place making.

The reorganisation will aim to simplify governance structures, to improve efficiency, and deliver better outcomes for communities and will lead to key benefits. It will give the opportunity to develop a Nottinghamshire professional planning academy to improve planning service delivery to ensure there is highly skilled and experienced planning professional to deliver future housing growth – replicating our effective models of recruitment pathways in other specialist fields. This will respond to the Government's drive to invest in the planning profession. The new larger planning teams will be able to absorb workload fluctuations and provide specialist expertise, such as minerals and waste planning as well as provide a compelling offer to planning graduates and talent in the sector.

This provides a new opportunity to help support and unlock sustainable economic growth through a streamlined integrated local planning authority with the capacity and strategic vision to drive development at scale.

Delivery of a planning service through a new unitary planning authority will consolidate functions, enabling a more coherent approach to spatial planning, housing delivery, and infrastructure investment. This alignment supports the ambitions of the Government's proposals to reform the planning system, which calls for simpler governance structures to accelerate growth and improve public services.

As planning processes will be simplified it will become a single point of contact for residents, businesses and decision-making reducing confusion and will improve planning capacity for major infrastructure and housing projects. This will help speed up the decision-making process along with providing opportunities for digital transformation and modern service delivery. This will result in higher quality planning applications and decisions. In approving applications, the new unitary planning teams will also ensure aspects of building control and planning enforcement are strengthened. This will offer greater assurance to Fire Service partners and residents, particularly those living in higher risk buildings.

In terms of policy, the new local plan will cover larger geographies which will enable strategic alignment and integration with other strategies for transport, environment and economic development to support long term growth and sustainability objectives. It will also align with EMCCAs Inclusive Growth Strategy and Spatial Development Strategies.

Broxtowe, Gedling, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe have, over recent years, worked jointly on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP). This collaboration was primarily driven by the Duty to Cooperate and the absence of a regional or sub-regional planning framework to address cross-boundary strategic issues – particularly Nottingham City's previous inability to meet its own housing needs. Gedling has recently withdrawn from the process due to specific local circumstances.

With the Duty to Cooperate set to end, and regional planning set to be reintroduced when EMCCA assumes the role of strategic planning authority, the need to address strategic planning matters at the local plan level will become less critical. EMCCA will be responsible for establishing future development requirements and the broad spatial distribution of new development. An important consideration in designing this reorganisation proposal is that recognition that should the Nottingham conurbation require future expansion, it will be EMCCA's role to determine where that expansion should broadly occur, regardless of where the boundaries between the two new unitary authorities are drawn.

The work to prepare and adopt the GNSP is scheduled to conclude prior to the establishment of the new unitary authorities. Following this, it is likely that the two new councils will wish to work with EMCCA to prepare their own new-style Local Plans under the reformed national planning system and to move forward and address some of the limitations and constraints of the system to date. The new Mayoral Spatial Development Strategy will provide a strategic planning framework to guide future growth across the wider Nottingham area and the strategic context for preparation of new local plans.

Under the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal, the Nottingham Council will be able to focus its local plan policies and proposals on urban renewal, brownfield regeneration, and more concentrated urban development. The Nottinghamshire Council will be better placed to prepare policies and proposals that support and, where necessary, grow its rural communities, market towns and villages and industrial heartlands. For example, its local plan will be able to establish a coherent and complementary planning framework for the significant redevelopment proposals emerging for the Trent Valley power station sites, including Ratcliffe-on-Soar, that are located within the new unitary authority.

Ensuring good quality housing

Bringing together Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's boroughs and districts under a unified housing management system offers significant advantages in strategic planning and service delivery. Two unitary authorities can develop and implement county-wide housing strategies that address affordable housing needs, homelessness prevention, and sustainable development more effectively than fragmented governance. This consolidation enables better coordination with other public services such as adult social care, planning, and public health, ensuring that housing policies are integrated into broader efforts to support community wellbeing.

The proposed geography would provide a Nottingham housing stock of 28,931, with the Nottinghamshire Council housing stock being 25,151. Condition across the whole stock is similar, along with average EPC ratings of C or D. The geography within this proposal provides clear synergies in managing housing stock that has shared characteristics in terms of the urban setting, including higher density homes concentrated in a smaller geographic area providing for a more streamlined delivery model due to centralised services, access to public transport, better connectivity and workforce to manage the estate. The Nottinghamshire unitary will deliver a unified housing management structure promoting efficiency and consistency with shared procurement, maintenance, and administrative systems to reduce duplication and lower costs, while modern digital platforms can streamline tenant services and improve responsiveness. Residents will benefit from consistent service standards across the county, and local delivery hubs can preserve community-specific knowledge and engagement. Overall, this approach strengthens accountability, simplifies governance, and enhances the ability to respond to housing challenges with agility and economies of scale.

Crucially, this unified approach also supports the delivery of better quality homes. With consistent standards and oversight, the new authority can ensure that all housing—whether new builds or existing stock—meets higher safety and quality benchmarks and full compliance with Awaab's Law. Centralised governance allows for faster response times, better monitoring, and more accountability, helping to prevent the kinds of health hazards that led to the tragic death of Awaab Ishak. By embedding these protections into a county-wide housing strategy, Nottinghamshire can raise the standard of living for all tenants and ensure that safe, decent housing is a right, not a postcode lottery.

Tackling Homelessness Through Integration and Prevention

We are committed ending the cycle of homelessness through prevention, early intervention, and joined-up services that leave no one behind. LGR will support a single unified transformation programme for housing and homelessness that will support ending the cycle of homelessness through a prevention framework that ensures consistent standards and equitable access, regardless of location.

National evidence tells us that a person centred, multidisciplinary and integrated approach is the most effective way of preventing and relieving homelessness and rough sleeping. The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal places this approach at the centre of addressing homelessness.

Homelessness is often thought to be an urban issue, but around 28,000 people are homeless in rural areas nationally—a figure that has increased by 73% since 2018. It has severe health impacts, with affected individuals experiencing much worse physical and mental health outcomes than the general population. The causes of homelessness are complex, involving structural factors like lack of affordable housing and rising living costs, as well as personal events and health issues; preventing homelessness for one year can save the public sector about £10,000 per person, given the annual cost is estimated at £38,736

Families with children living in temporary accommodation is a challenge in our area, with 210 households in temporary accommodation according to the latest published data for April-June 2025, including 96 families with children and 10 of those families had stayed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation longer than 6 weeks. Homelessness places a significant cost on families, and bed and breakfasts are widely recognised as unsuitable for households with children.

Homelessness prevention is a key indicator. Nottingham City has prevented 41.4% of homelessness and Nottinghamshire (all districts) has prevented 59.5% (MHCLG). The shift to two new unitary councils will result in a shift in distribution of homelessness to the City authority with the inclusion of the suburbs. The County authority will have more rural and market town homelessness that require different approaches to city homelessness.

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal is expected to provide better distribution of need across housing domains (households owed relief duty, households in temporary accommodation, households owed prevention duty and rough sleepers) between the two new unitary Councils compared to current geography, this was key evidence in the options appraisal that supports the geography underpinning this proposal.

Rural areas face specific challenges. Limited transport options, rural economic decline and the associated impact on wages and job opportunities, physical isolation, reduced access to support services, as well as the likelihood of homelessness being 'less visible' all mean that addressing and preventing homelessness in rural areas requires an approach that is particular to the needs and characteristics of the population and geography.

This proposal will improve outcomes and provide a more seamless approach to providing support. We envisage a joined-up approach to tackling homelessness for each of the two new unitary Councils, bringing together the existing strengths and learning from our partnerships and capitalising on existing assets to provide the diversity of accommodation required to offer services that support prevention and relief of homelessness.

There are 4 pillars that the two new unitary Councils will each need to develop

1. A cross-council Homelessness strategy that has a unified approach to the unique needs of the populations.
2. A Single Housing register that supports a single point of access and allocations.
3. A unified data, intelligence and innovation platform that supports resilience, pooling of homelessness resources and data sharing
4. Strengthening existing strategic partnership approaches to tackle the causes of homelessness and create space for joint working across the two Councils.

Pillar 1. A unified cross-council Homelessness Strategy with a "One Door" approach, ensuring every resident can access support through a single digital entry point per unitary council. Delivery of this ambition will be through a hub-and-spoke model for homelessness services to support the urban, rural and market town populations, combining local accessibility with strategic coordination to create a single homelessness pathway the new Councils.

Pillar 2. A key advantage of the unitary approach will be a single housing register and allocations policy supporting flexibility across the two proposed councils. Aligning local connection criteria enables more responsive support for those needing a fresh start. Rushcliffe Borough Council has strong performance in early intervention and low temporary accommodation use can be scaled across the new unitary councils. Existing collaboration via the Notts Housing Group provides a solid foundation for joint commissioning and multi-agency support.

Pillar 3. The One Door approach would provide consistent, responsive services that prevent homelessness, reduce rough sleeping, and provide rapid, effective wrap around support regardless of where they live. Partners and workforce would experience streamlined processes, strong local partnerships, and the ability to innovate and share best practice. The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal enables a countywide, integrated homelessness prevention and support service across the area. A unified strategy with joint commissioning and shared digital systems ensures:

- **Fair access**, localised solutions and better outcomes.
- **Centralised triage** and a hub and spoke model for efficient, responsive services.
- **Unified policies and platforms** to improve asset use and reduce reliance on agency workers.

Pillar 4. Across the new unitary councils there would be strengthening and building of the existing partnerships between housing, health, and social care teams through the Notts Housing Group and Integrated Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI). The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal offers the ability to create a unified, county-wide Navigation and Outreach Service to address rough sleeping and broader health determinants. Nottinghamshire's proven multi-agency RSI model integrates housing, health, mental health, and substance use professionals to deliver assertive outreach and coordinated care. The RSI model features central referral hubs, integrated assessments, and tailored responses—urban areas benefit from rapid specialist services that would be delivered by the Council. Rural areas would receive mobile outreach. Strong public health working at place level is in place and would support the identification of vulnerabilities like hidden rural homelessness and drive system-wide improvements.

The Greater Nottinghamshire proposal for a rural/market town approach supports local strengths, enables flexible service delivery, and fosters deep collaboration with public health and neighbourhood working. Councils with similar geographic challenges are grouped to tailor services and protect rural needs.

If the two new unitary councils can prevent half of those individuals experiencing homelessness it could yield a reduction in public costs of £220,000 per year with a significant health benefit to individuals. However, the annual figures of individuals rough sleeping are much higher and both rural and women's rough sleeping are vastly underrepresented in these figures, so potential savings are likely to be far higher. The proposal builds on existing successful approaches in Rushcliffe's model where a nurse specialist engaged a rough sleeper within 72 hours, leading to permanent accommodation. This would support more people into a safe and secure home.

Beyond 2028

Charlotte, 22, is a recent care leaver from Newark-on-Trent. Since leaving care, she has been unable to find suitable housing, so is living in a residential home.

Charlotte's move out of care has given her clearer options, wider reach, and a fairer shot at independence through…

- **Unified Housing Support** – Charlotte can access housing services through a single, integrated team and central referral hub. This means quicker, clearer guidance on affordable housing options and support.
- **Wider Access to Homes** – A digital housing register and unified allocations policy gives Charlotte access to a broader range of housing across the county, not just in Newark-on-Trent, improving her chances of finding a suitable and affordable home.
- **Better Planning and Infrastructure** – With a central planning hub, housing development is better aligned with transport, schools, and services, making it easier for Charlotte's family to settle in a well-connected neighbourhood.
- **Integrated People and Place services** – Housing is built into Charlotte's transition plan from care, helping ensure independent accommodation is ready when she is, reducing costs and improving outcomes.

5.d.v. Creating a Connected Place

Our vision is for integrated neighbourhood public services that are rooted in communities and powered by place.

Across both new Councils in this proposal, we want people to feel safe, connected and a valued part of their local community. Regardless of geographical boundaries, the region has a huge amount to offer, and we want people to recognise Nottinghamshire, and the wider East Midlands region, as somewhere great to live, work and visit.

This means there needs to be a focus on continuing to improve infrastructure, driving improvements in transport connectivity, preserving the natural space we are surrounded by and continually improve our natural and built environment.

Highways Services

A well-managed and developed highway network is a fundamental enabler to the economic vitality, connectivity, and resilience of Nottinghamshire. It is a critical enabler to increasing economic productivity, unlocking housing development, underpinning town centre regeneration, supporting active travel, improving public realm quality, and facilitating private sector investment. Our proposal, to establish two new Unitary Authorities, presents a significant opportunity to enhance the strategic delivery of highways services as a key cog in the overall system.

The removal of the two-tier system will deliver multifaceted benefits to the communities of the Nottingham region. These include:

Highways as a catalyst for development and regeneration: Integrating the Local Plan making and highways functions, which are currently fragmented across multiple councils and the two tiers of local government, will accelerate strategic planning and delivery of housing and economic development. Having two new Unitary Authorities, each responsible for Local Planning and housing allocation, whilst also being the statutory authorities for the functions of highway and flood risk management will result in better quality decision making whilst also providing significant regulatory relief for urban development. In particular, the bureaucratic processes of statutory consultation processes between councils/local authorities will be streamlined, resulting in fewer legal challenges to planning decisions, more resilient and better-connected housing development which can be delivered at a faster pace and for enhanced value for money.

Customer Experience: Consolidated service delivery will provide a highways "one-stop-shop" for communities, developers and investors, reducing confusion and improving customer satisfaction. Without the fragmentation caused by the two-tier system, the two new authorities will be significantly more accountable, agile and able to respond to community and customer demands. The two new authorities will also be able to share resources and provide cross-boundary support during sever weather events and other emergency incidents. This will ensure they put community wellbeing at the heart of their emergency response and recovery, whilst also providing clear and consistent public communication/information.

Operational Efficiency The economies of scope and scale created by our proposal will enable a reduction in duplication and management overheads whilst also delivering cost efficiencies by aligning the functions of highways maintenance, street cleaning, verge mowing, drainage maintenance and grounds maintenance. Via East Midlands Ltd, the County Council's wholly owned highways delivery company, would be well positioned to provide an integrated highways maintenance and construction services across both the new authorities proposed.

The proposed urban/rural split enables tailored and effective highways service delivery:

- The more urban nature of the proposed **Nottingham Council** area allows a focus on high-density infrastructure, integrated transport, and public realm improvements to support footfall and economic activity in the city and town centres.
- Given the more rural composition of the proposed **Nottinghamshire Council,** the emphasis will be connectivity, resilience, and access to market towns, with opportunities for landscape-sensitive infrastructure and active travel routes.

This geographic alignment will allow each authority to prioritise investment and service delivery based on local needs and characteristics, enhancing regeneration outcomes.

The proposal offers a strategic and integrated approach to planning for housing and economic growth, which is enabled by well-planned, quality highways infrastructure. It streamlines the regulatory planning processes to deliver sustainable and resilient communities, inclusive growth and town centre revitalisation across Nottinghamshire at an accelerated pace and greater value for money, making it a cornerstone of successful local government transformation.

Waste Management

The government's Simpler Recycling initiative aims to increase household recycling rates across the country to 65% by 2035[2].

In 2023/24, average household recycling rates in England were 42.3%. In Nottinghamshire, the rate varies dependent on location between 26.7% to 47.4%[3] highlighting the level of improvement required in the coming decade. This proposal demonstrates how the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal can support the two new Councils to reach this target.

The creation of two new unitary councils will enable a better strategic integration of waste services, creating single authorities with oversight of the services removing the fragmentation seen in two-tier systems, where strategic and operational misalignment can delay or complicate delivery.

Creating two unitary authorities under this proposal aligns with national agendas such as:

- Net Zero & Circular Economy: Supports environmental goals through integrated waste strategies.
- Public Service Reform: Promotes efficiency, accountability, and innovation.
- Simpler Recycling – providing a uniform and consistent approach to recycling across the country
- Infrastructure & Investment: Enables strategic planning and sustainable growth.

It will bring operational efficiency and cost savings through centralising of procurement, reduced administrative overheads and economies of scale. Examples from other areas e.g. Cornwall and Durham show long-term savings and improved service delivery.

Integrated waste authorities can also align disposal and collection strategies, invest in low-carbon infrastructure and accelerate adoption of smart technologies e.g. AI routing and automated sorting.

[2] Simpler Recycling in England: policy update - GOV.UK
[3] UK statistics on waste - GOV.UK

Creating two unitary councils will enable systems that will make recycling easier. Residents will be able to recycle the same materials whether at home, work or school. A universal standard will ensure that everything that can be collected for household recycling is collected. Through Simpler Recycling, all householders will receive a comprehensive and consistent set of waste and recycling services. This will enable householders to recycle as much waste as possible.

The new councils will be able to better plan depot locations, fleet electrification and develop circular economy initiatives creating savings from efficiencies that can be reinvested into infrastructure and innovation.

The unitary council areas outlined in this proposal will bring particular benefits to waste services as it specifically aligns with natural catchments, EMCCA spatial strategy, and builds on the existing partnerships between the councils.

The complexity of Waste Services and its existing contracts in Nottinghamshire creates both challenges and opportunities under LGR. To maintain contract integrity and avoid costly termination or complex novation, close cooperation between the new authorities will be required. This proposal therefore advocates the development of a shared Waste Authority model across Greater Nottinghamshire's new Councils, this enhanced strategic alignment already exists in the agreed Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Joint Waste Strategy and this would be used as the basis for the new model as part of this proposal.

Using modelling from the IMPOWER benchmarking index, we believe that there are financial benefits to be achieved through the integration of waste collection services under our preferred LGR model, including the potential to exceed national recycling performance across the Greater Nottingham area. This would enable proportionate reductions in residual waste collection and disposal infrastructure costs to deliver further savings via more efficient and fully integrated waste collection services. Additionally collection and packaging reforms will further reduce demand in residual waste collection and disposal functions.

Local Government Reorganisation on the geography proposed will enable prioritisation of the behavioural changes necessary to transform and maximise public access to the new delivery model described. The IMPOWER modelling suggest that alignment of waste collection and disposal functions and associated delivery of simpler recycling could deliver further efficiencies of between £8.3m and £19.4m.

Case study: Waste and Recycling – developing frontline "Community champions".

The move to a unitary Council offers a chance to align waste and recycling services, improving efficiency and consistency across the county. Our frontline crews—present in every neighbourhood—will become **community champions,** using mobile tech to report issues in real time.

From identifying potholes with under-vehicle cameras, flagging concerns about vulnerable households, or recognising and acting upon localised flood risks, they'll play a key role in prevention and early intervention across communities in every neighbourhood.

We'll build a multi-skilled, place-based workforce, coordinating tasks like road repairs, litter picking, and grass cutting under single road closures to reduce disruption and improve service delivery. That is real integration in neighbourhoods of the services that people care so much about on their doorstep.

By enhancing digital tools and data literacy, our workforce will make better decisions and provide faster, more accurate support. A "one front door" model will empower them to respond to neighbourhood needs while balancing outcomes with financial awareness.

Arts, Leisure and Culture

Arts, culture, and leisure services are vital enablers of positive social, educational, and health outcomes. They support economic opportunity via education, as well as a preventative approach to wellbeing by encouraging community participation and healthier lifestyles. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire already demonstrate strong, community-focused delivery in these areas. The proposed move to two new Unitary Authorities offers an opportunity to sustain and enhance these services through more strategic, joined-up delivery.

A key benefit is the ability to unify services previously split across a two-tier system, enabling equitable access by all parts of the Nottinghamshire community and a greater consistency of service provision and the outcomes across libraries, leisure centres, and cultural programmes. For example, creating a single heritage service in each authority—linking museums, archives, and libraries—would improve efficiency and community access. The model also allows for tailored provision and greater connectivity, based on the distinct needs of urban and rural communities created by the proposal. For example, the two Unitary Authorities will be well placed to work in collaboration with the East Midlands County Combined Authority to ensure public transport provision ensures equitable access to these important cultural facilities, regardless of where in the Nottinghamshire region people live.

Case Study: Inspire

Established in 2016, Inspire is a charitable trust delivering libraries, adult learning, archives, arts, and music services across Nottinghamshire County Council's current area. Operating independently from the County Council, it combines public service values with commercial agility, drawing in external funding and fostering community ownership.

Inspire's scalable infrastructure, strong governance, and partnerships with councils, schools, and national bodies place it in a strong position to provide a cost-effective solution for expanding cultural and learning services across the new council areas.

Natural Spaces and the Historic Environment

The creation of two new unitary councils in Nottinghamshire presents a major opportunity to enhance the county's natural and historic environments. Through the coordinated Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), the proposal supports improved public health, biodiversity, and community cohesion. Nottinghamshire's historic towns and rural landscapes, shaped by medieval development and less modern urbanisation, benefit from tailored planning approaches.

The proposed urban and rural focused councils allow for targeted, sustainable strategies. In the Nottingham Council urban areas, though more spatially constrained, can still enhance biodiversity and public access to green spaces. For the Nottinghamshire Council, rural areas offer potential for landscape-scale nature recovery, including woodland creation and biodiversity projects with landowners.

Greater Nottinghamshire's diverse natural features—such as the River Trent and National Character Areas—support this strategic approach. Overall, the proposal offers a more integrated, neighbourhood-sensitive model for green space planning, delivering long-term environmental, health, and social benefits.

Parks

Parks continue to be a well-loved and integral part of the fabric of all our communities. Their value extends beyond traditional playgrounds, taking place in varied environments that help build life skills, independence, and community connections.

This informs a broader vision for an inclusive, sustainable parks service that promote physical and mental wellbeing. The goal is to provide accessible, affordable opportunities for all, helping to reduce health inequalities. Addressing the differing needs of rural and urban communities is key: rural areas require improved transport and digital access, while urban areas benefit from integrating open spaces and parks with healthcare through GP referrals and social prescribing. This ensures the service continue to meet diverse community needs.

Management and maintenance of a consolidated parks estate by the proposed two unitary councils will deliver efficiencies of scale and scope. For example, parks and playgrounds have many similar assets to highways, such as footpaths, small built structures and areas of grass needing mowing. The proposed new councils will be able to create centres of excellence for asset management that will lead to cost savings during procurement and integrated service delivery.

Beyond 2028

Dianne, 67, loves to visit the area but lives in Loughborough. She frequently travels into Nottingham centre to explore the city. This year, her grandchildren are turning 7 and 9, so she's looking forward to taking them to Wollaton Park.

Dianne's regular visits to Nottingham become more valuable because…

- **Community Empowered Activity** – With community focussed leadership, the community has set up new societies and events for her to take part in, like the book club she has recently joined. Dianne loves to get involved in the Nottingham community, especially as she visits so often and is looking to now give back.
- **Strong Nottinghamshire Culture** – Dianne used to travel to Nottingham for the events and shopping but now comes in because of its strong focus on culture. She is proud to bring her grandchildren to the area.
- **Transport** – With less limitations across borders, connectivity has increased and has built an easier route into the area for Dianne. She can now travel into Nottingham, get further into the county, and travel with her grandchildren without needing a car.

Public Safety

We want to enhance public safety by creating more integrated, coherent service delivery, better alignment with hyper local community needs, and more targeted use of resources. It is acknowledged that crime, harm and risks vary significantly across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, reflecting diverse socio-economic conditions, population densities, and local challenges in different neighbourhoods.

Nottingham City experiences a disproportionately high share of crime within the region, accounting for 40.6% of all recorded offences in 2024/25 and over half of specific crimes such as robbery and drug offences. Serious violence rates, including homicide and possession of weapons, are notably higher than national averages, partly due to proactive policing strategies like dedicated knife crime teams. While domestic abuse rates in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are below national averages, the urban environment—characterized by high population density and economic disparity—contributes to elevated levels of violent crime, anti-social behaviour, and complex issues such as gang activity. The concentration of nightlife and commercial areas further increases the risk of public order offences and alcohol-related crimes, highlighting the need for robust law enforcement and targeted community safety initiatives.

In contrast, rural districts such as Newark and Sherwood or Rushcliffe face different public safety challenges. These areas generally have lower overall crime rates but are more susceptible to acquisitive and rural crimes, such as theft of farm equipment and livestock, as well as issues like flooding. The relative isolation and reduced police presence can make these communities attractive targets for organised crime, while barriers to accessing support services can exacerbate problems like domestic abuse and substance misuse. Suburban areas like Broxtowe and Gedling experience a mix of urban and rural crime patterns, including property crime and youth-related anti-social behaviour. This diversity in crime types and risk factors across the region underscores the need for a nuanced, place-based approach to public safety—one that addresses both the acute challenges of urban centres and the unique vulnerabilities of rural and suburban communities

A unified approach to protection and safety

This proposal supports better alignment of public safety services, enabling targeted interventions, improved resilience, and commercial growth through ventures like ARBA (Assured Regulatory Business Advice).

A unified protection and safety service in each unitary authority will combine a range of regulatory services including Environmental Health, Licensing, Community Safety, and Trading Standards to streamline inspection and enforcement, improve customer experience, and enhance business compliance and vitality. Businesses will benefit from a single point of contact and assured advice, with existing partnerships like ARBA ready for expansion. (ARBA is a joint working agreement between Rushcliffe Environmental Health and County Trading Standards teams to provide Primary Authority Partnerships services to business.). The service would integrate multidisciplinary regulatory teams aligned to geographical patches but with shared strategic leadership and management to further streamline the business relationships, inspections and processes, establish a single customer front door whilst improving outcomes and efficiency across teams. The flexibility and resilience of the team would allow capacity and capability to be scaled up and down depending on local and business needs.

The approach will allow a more holistic regulatory approach to tackling local community safety concerns such as targeting fraudulent businesses that transact counterfeit good/ services, create spaces for modern slavery, drug related crime, poor food safety practices, noise disturbance or antisocial behaviour. The approach would also build on current expertise seen in the Rushcliffe Borough Council multidisciplinary regulatory team approach and the County Council's Trading Standards team (who already hosts the nationally commissioned regional investigation unit, delivers some trading standards services on behalf of Nottingham City and maintains primary authority relationships with major local businesses like Boots and Wren.)

Case Study: Joint Enforcement Activity with Environmental Health and Licensing Authorities

Trading Standards has been actively collaborating with Environmental Health teams to address concerns surrounding the distribution of illicit tobacco products through retail outlets. Recent joint operations with Licensing in Mansfield have targeted premises suspected of selling illegal tobacco while holding valid alcohol licences, highlighting potential regulatory breaches.

Additionally, intelligence has indicated that certain retail premises may be used for non-commercial, domestic purposes—such as shop workers residing on-site. In response, coordinated inspections have been conducted alongside Environmental Health Housing Teams in Ashfield and Bassetlaw, concurrently with Trading Standards' investigations into illicit tobacco sales.

These multi-agency efforts underscore a strategic approach to tackling illegal trade and ensuring compliance with Trading Standards Regulations and Housing Regulations.

A Community Safety Partnership (CSP) will cover each unitary footprint (i.e. two CSPs in total) and benefit from hyperlocal approaches tailored to each authority's needs and Integrated Neighbourhood Public Service approach. For example, the Nottingham unitary CSP will focus on issues like serious violence, homelessness and youth violence, while the Nottinghamshire unitary will address acquisitive crime, ageing, isolation, rural impact and hidden deprivation. A public health approach will be embedded across both CSPs to ensure the 'causes of the causes' are identified and data-driven planning will support targeted interventions, improving outcomes in antisocial behaviour, domestic abuse, serious violence, and modern slavery. Stronger links will be developed into hyperlocal delivery of Integrated Neighbourhood Public Services to further integrate existing work of Community Safety Partnerships with local communities, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottinghamshire Police's neighbourhood policing approach and wider Health and Wellbeing Boards.

This proposal enables better alignment of the Community Safety Agreement (2025–2027) metrics (domestic abuse crime rates, serious violence incidents, youth justice entries, and perceptions of safety) with hyperlocal needs including rural crime, supporting integrated, preventative approaches that reduce reliance on costly services. It will also provide a strong platform for the forthcoming Duty to Collaborate (part of the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024) which will require statutory commissioning organisations to work together to commission victim support services for serious violence, sexual violence and domestic abuse.

Case Study: System approach to Domestic Homicide Reviews

The future centralisation of Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) processes will enable the new unitary councils to develop a single model which includes cost efficiencies by bringing reviews in house and ensures that the learning for DHRs is disseminated through the system. Cost avoidance methods will be undertaken in the County in 2026 and this will shape the future centralised approach. It is difficult to predict the future DHR rates, however there are advantages to reducing the current number of CSPs and pooling budgets to provide more resilience across the whole of Nottinghamshire for fluctuations in DHR demand and cost pressures.

Emergency planning and business continuity will be strengthened through a single council resilience team across both unitary councils, improving mutual aid and response coordination. The team would maintain geographical teams across each unitary, however have shared strategic leadership across Greater Nottinghamshire with a strong connection to the newly created Local Resilience Forum (LRF) hub for Nottinghamshire hosted by Nottinghmashire Fire and Rescue. This would build on the Nottinghamshire team model who currently deliver Emergency Planning Service Level Agreements (SLAs) for all seven districts and borough councils, with three having an extended SLA for a more comprehensive service.

The approach also aligns with potential regional changes under EMCCA, including the potential to develop a Multi-Agency Contingencies Unit which would align with Police and Fire and Rescue boundaries and have the potential to enhanced delegated duties to local Strategic and Tactical Coordinating Groups. The proposal supports aligning key risks within each unitary authority, for example the future Nottinghamshire Council being more focused around the flooding risks of the River Trent, animal health, safety at sports grounds with the future Nottingham Council needing stronger response around City centre risks such as antisocial behaviour and serious violence. Both councils will need to consider work of CONTEST and PREVENT to reduce the risk of terrorism locally.

5.d.vi. Operational Excellence

To realise our ambition for two modern, digitally enabled, and vibrant local authorities, we must fundamentally transform how local government operates. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) is more than structural change—it's a shift in how we operate at our core. A clear and cohesive Target Operating Model (TOM) will guide this transformation, aligning people, processes, technology, governance, and structures to deliver our vision and strategic objectives. It enables both future authorities to leverage their strengths while working strategically toward shared goals. This framework is essential to delivering our ambitions across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Design Principles

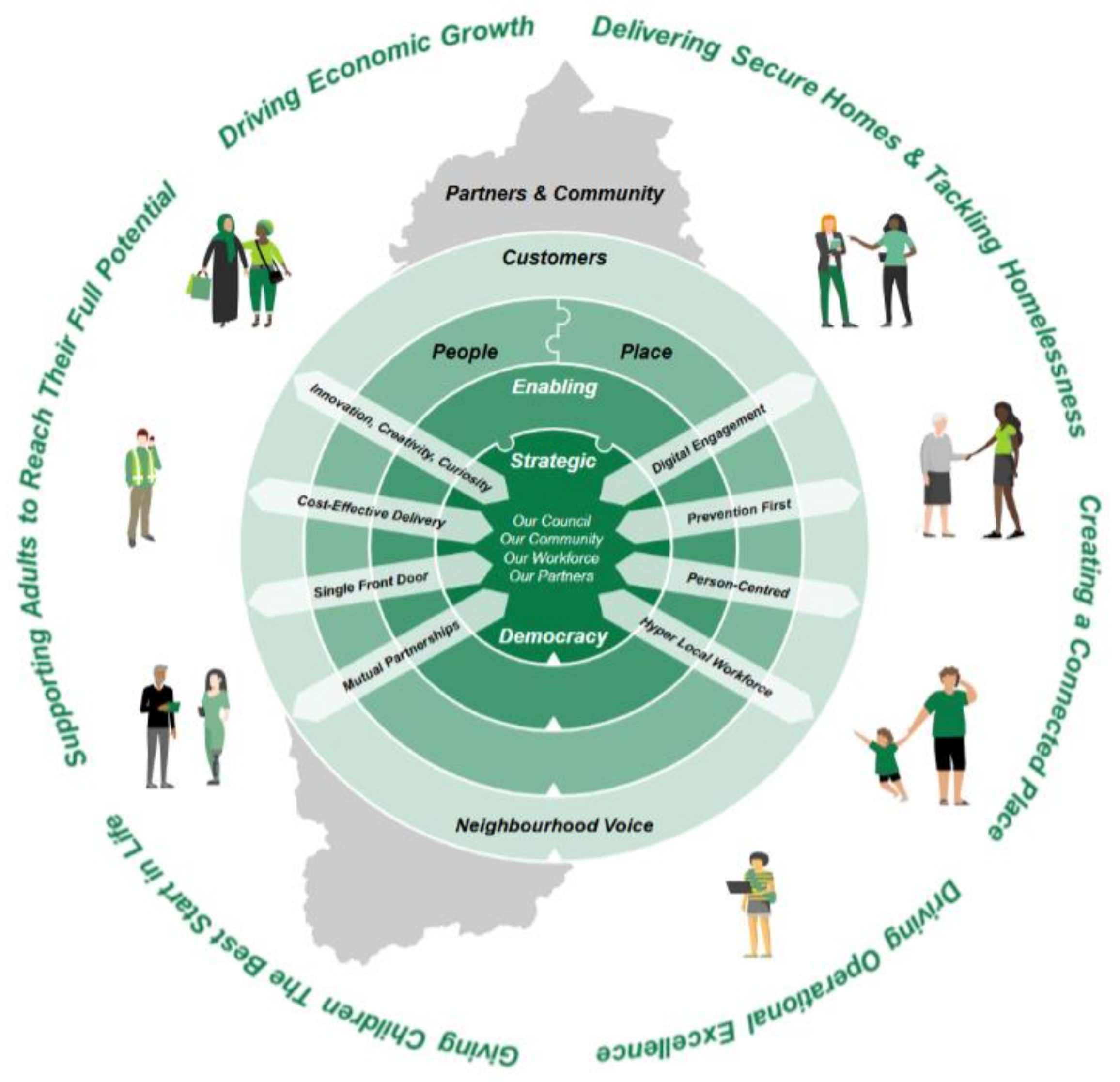
A set of design principles have been created to underpin all components of the two future councils. The principles will strategically direct our decisions as a more detailed operating model is designed.

Design Principle	Description
Prevention First	Prioritising early intervention and prevention, ensuring support is provided at the right time and right place to reduce long-term demand and improve lives. Working hand-in-hand with our partners to achieve our combined prevention goals.
Cost-Effective Delivery	Delivering services in the most cost-effective way, making smart use of resources, partnerships, and technology to maximise impact and minimise waste. Making the best use of public funds by prioritising spending, delivering services that offer clear value, and being transparent about costs and outcomes.
Digital Engagement	Digital self-service will be the primary starting point for all interactions, enabling residents to access support quickly and easily, reserving officer time for complex needs. Residents will not be left behind, whatever their digital ability.
Single Front Door	We will create a joined-up single access point for all council services, using human interaction where empathy, judgement, or tailored support is needed. Multiple contact options all routing through one unified front door.

Innovation, Creativity & Curiosity	We will be a creative organisation that embraces innovation, continuously seeking new ideas and approaches to improve services and meet evolving community expectations. We will support a culture of curiosity encouraging ownership and collaboration across services.
People-Centred Decision Making	We will do the right thing for each stakeholder balancing local responsiveness with a “One Council” approach. When needed services will be designed, prioritised and delivered locally, always aligned to shared values and standards.
Hyper Local Workforce	Building a workforce that reflects and responds to the unique needs of our communities, recognising the differences between rural and urban areas across the unitary. By recruiting, retaining, and deploying workforce locally, services will be delivered by people who understand the places and communities they serve.
Mutual Partnerships	Working flexibly and collaboratively with partners to ensure services are delivered by the right organisation at the right time, always focused on best outcomes for residents.

High Level Target Operating Model

The core components of our target operating model have been developed to enable the delivery of the ambitions in the proposal through two high performing councils. The work to date has been informed by workforce and community engagement, and this will continue as part of implementation planning.


Driving Economic Growth
Delivering Secure Homes & Tackling Homelessness
Creating a Connected Place
Driving Operational Excellence
Giving Children The Best Start in Life
Supporting Adults to Reach Their Full Potential
Partners & Community
Customers
People
Place
Enabling
Strategic
Our Council
Our Community
Our Workforce
Our Partners
Democracy
Neighbourhood Voice
Innovation, Creativity, Curiosity
Cost-Effective Delivery
Single Front Door
Mutual Partnerships
Digital Engagement
Prevention First
Person-Centred
Hyper Local Workforce

- **Communities and residents** are at the centre of our delivery model, connected through services delivered by our **Councils** and our **partners**.
- Our **strategic and enabling services** sit at the core of the Councils defining the organisations' future direction and how they will achieve their strategic goals. The strategic layer will bring the local community together with a strong external-facing role, connecting with EMCCA, wider partners, and supporting the local economy. Our enabling services will support our ability to deliver services and change effectively. This includes support such as governance, technology, HR, financial and information management, and process optimisation. This will be a proactive, innovative service that is led by data and focused on delivering the future vision of both councils.
- **The People & Place** layer depicts the direct delivery of services to communities. Reflecting our commitment to efficient, effective, and locally responsive service provision, shaped by the needs of people and places.
- Our approach to our **customer** is shaped by **Neighbourhood Voice, shown as a connecting thread,** linking the community to democratic structures and influencing every layer of the operating model. The focus will be on how residents and service users engage with the organisation. It ensures that customer interactions are streamlined, accessible, and aligned with the organisation's ambition to put residents at the heart of service design and delivery. A clearly defined Customer layer, with effective digital self-serve, triage, and prevention service will support residents to access the correct support while delivering financial benefits for the unitary councils.
- **Partners & Community:** This layer is integral and will involve interactions with key community stakeholders, such as the emergency services, health providers, hospital trusts, ICB and Parish Councils. It ensures the future councils' flexibility in their role, whether leading, supporting, or enabling services to be delivered by the right organisation at the right time.

Two of the key strategic and enabling functions where we see significant opportunities to have a transformative impact as we implement two new unitary councils are in Data, Digital and Information and Commissioning and Procurement. The opportunities are highlighted below:

Data, Digital and Information

Technology and data, will be central to delivering efficient, responsive services. The transition offers a chance to modernise systems, improve data use, and adopt digital tools that enhance insight, coordination, and decision-making.

A single digital front door will provide seamless, 24/7 access to services via self-service tools, AI, and familiar platforms like WhatsApp. Digital triage will guide residents to the right support, reserving human contact for complex needs. A connected (Customer Relationship Management) CRM will streamline service delivery, reducing hand-offs and enabling faster responses.

Services will be delivered through a unified, digitally enabled People and Place layer. Consolidated systems will improve integration, reduce duplication, and support proactive, community-focused delivery. Officers will use modern tools and cloud-based platforms, including AI and RPA, to automate tasks and focus on high-value work. A new digital framework will boost workforce capability, enabling employees to adapt and improve services directly. The new service will be based on a robust and cyber compliant service.

Smart infrastructure (e.g. Internet of Things IoT, Long Range Wide Area Networks LoRaWAN) will enhance asset visibility and support services like street lighting, gritting, and care alerts for vulnerable residents.

While both unitary council residents will share core digital national infrastructure (broadband providers), each will tailor technology to meet local needs. Greater system integration will ensure a seamless experience for residents, businesses, and visitors across boundaries. In the City, digital tools will support urban services and sectors like culture and hospitality. In the County, the focus will be on improving rural connectivity and using smart tech for service delivery and environmental monitoring. This shared yet flexible approach will enhance efficiency, improve services, and support long-term sustainability.

Commissioning and Procurement

To achieve the new unitary' councils' goals of *Cost-Effective Delivery*, *Prevention First*, and centring *Innovation*, the approach to commissioning and procurement will be critical, balancing:

- Collaborative and Inclusive Commissioning
- Value for Money
- Economic Growth
- Social Value
- Simplification
- Strategic Market Shaping
- Integrated and Holistic Services

This describes a function that works for the public good, unitary goals, and actively builds innovative ways of working. To set up this shift, we will work to:

1. **Create a culture of balance:** where contract arrangements are assessed by their social value alongside their cost; their equity with their impact. This is a tightrope of decision-making, where Commissioning and Procurement will be an intelligent function supporting the councils' visions.
2. **Use digital to get the best results:** where the function will move into the digital age, using digital platforms to streamline operations and magnify supplier engagement. We will use procurement dashboards for data-driven decisions, including highlighting when contracts are ending, where there is higher risk, or how frequently suppliers have been contacted.
3. **Build personal relationships to innovate:** the greatest social value and efficiencies come from trust-based relationships with providers, who understand us and our missions. We will move beyond transactional relationships to empower our Commissioning and Procurement function and suppliers to be creative in delivery.
4. **Deliver shared efficiencies:** where contracting is consolidated wherever possible to deliver shared services with greater value for money. We will simplify our contracts to bring together our market-shaping power. By pooling our budgets, we will be able to procure services at lower cost with stronger negotiations.
5. **Promote Alternative Delivery Models:** where unitary councils lean into novel ways of delivery services. We currently use Alternative Delivery Models across multiple districts to provide highways, library, and cultural services effectively and collaboratively. These models will allow us to bridge between areas and the two unitary councils to consolidate services even further where provision at scale is preferable.

Our workforce at the heart of the future operating model

In addition to the headline design principles and core components of the future target operating models, we have done some further thinking on the future ways of working that will be key to achieving the ambitions outlined in this proposal. They are informed by engagement work we have done with our workforce.

Leadership and Management

Leadership across the future Councils will be visible, inclusive, and system-minded, setting a consistent tone while recognising differences and fostering a sense of belonging. Leaders will be equipped to navigate complexity, support colleagues through change, and champion innovation and curiosity across services.

Leadership will be distributed, enabling agile decision-making and cross-functional collaboration. Leaders will champion inclusion and real impact for our residents, delivered through a highly competent workforce, possible because we genuinely support wellbeing and development. Strong leadership and a positive culture will drive a responsive, high-performing workforce aligned to our vision and committed to delivering public value. Managers will be supported to act as coaches and mentors, embedding reflective practice and continuous learning into everyday work. They will help the workforce grow in confidence, develop their skills, and reach their full potential, particularly through place-based leadership that understands and responds to local needs.

Case Study: East Midlands Leadership Transformation Programme (EMLTP)

As public sector partners, we face increasingly complex demands in delivering services within a challenging financial context, and multifaceted social and environmental settings. Change is now a constant feature of our environment and in this context, resourcing and developing talent pipelines can be very challenging.

We sought to bridge this gap by developing and procuring a leadership course for middle and senior managers across public sector organisations in the East Midlands, to build relationships, develop leadership capacity and capabilities and create opportunities to implement innovative solutions and work better together to deliver great outcomes across the region.

The EMLTP is a nine-month leadership development initiative for middle to senior managers. Delivered by Nottingham Business School (Nottingham Trent University) in collaboration with a regional steering group, the programme aims to build leadership capacity to address complex public service challenges. Current participants are from Nottinghamshire County Council, EMCCA, Nottingham City Council, Ashfield District Council, Fire, Police, NHS Trust and ICB. The programme covers core components needed for public sector leadership; Personal & Professional Development, Leading in Organisations and Systems, Communication and Change, Using Data-Driven Approaches, Innovation and Creativity.

The programme fosters collaboration, strategic partnerships, and system-wide thinking and ways of working, with specific projects set by the participating organisations to address real life challenges with a cross sectoral team and to work on solutions for system wide public sector issues.

The programme offers a unique opportunity to develop leadership confidence and drive public service reform across the region.

Workforce Model: Matrix and Place-Based Working

Our workforce is essential to delivering high-quality, responsive services. This is a unique opportunity to build two inclusive, community-rooted organisations with a shared culture of excellence, innovation, and continuous learning, both employers of choice with clear visions and strong local employment pipelines.

Our workforce will reflect the diversity of the communities we serve and be equipped to work across systems. To meet evolving community needs and deliver the neighbourhood model, the workforce model will be built on matrix and place-based working.

Matrix working will enable Officers to move across services and projects, aligning skills to need, encouraging collaboration to develop creative solutions for communities while supporting career growth through varied, meaningful roles.

Place-based working ensures our delivery model is close to our residents and located in the community. We will organise teams around local services and assets, improve deep understanding of local needs and enable a convenient, coordinated responsive approach. Local leadership will be empowered to navigate complexity and deliver joined-up services.

A **flexible employment framework** will use project-based roles and adaptable role profiles, valuing behaviours and experience alongside qualifications. Employees will be encouraged to work where they add most value, using local knowledge and making decisions close to the customer. Data and insights will inform place-based resource allocation responding to local need and disadvantage.

While the overall workforce vision will be shared across both new authorities, with a focus on inclusion, agility, and community connection, the approach will be shaped by the distinct characteristics of urban and rural communities.

The workforce strategy for the proposed Nottingham Council will reflect the diversity and density of city life. Recruitment pipelines will be strengthened through partnerships with Nottingham universities with a focus on inclusivity. Roles will be designed to reflect the lived experience of residents, with Officers working from neighbourhood bases rather than a central base, staying visible and engaged in local areas. Travel support may include discounted tram and bus schemes to suit urban commuting patterns.

The workforce model for the proposed *Nottinghamshire Council* will be built around flexibility and reach. Our workforce will operate across a wider geographic area, supported by touch-down centres in towns and villages to stay connected to communities. Partnerships with colleges and universities in Mansfield and South Yorkshire will help build local training and recruitment pathways, particularly in hard-to-fill roles. The employment offer will reflect rural realities, with support for lease cars, mileage reimbursement, and agile hybrid working to reduce travel time and improve access to services. Employment opportunities will focus on local areas where the workforce understand the needs of the communities while also improving economic employment opportunities in those areas.

This tailored approach will ensure both councils can attract, retain, and support a workforce that reflects the communities they serve and is equipped to deliver responsive, place-based public services.

By aligning people, skills, and leadership with the needs of a modern unitary authority, the proposition supports better service delivery, stronger recruitment and retention, and a healthier, more empowered culture. These benefits will be felt across both councils, both financially, through greater efficiency and reduced duplication, and non-financially, through improved job satisfaction, stronger community connections, and better outcomes for residents.

A practical example of this approach in action is the following case study, which demonstrates how place-based workforce planning and local employment pipelines are being used to address service needs and long-term recruitment challenges:

Case Study: Tackling social work workforce pipeline, employment outcomes and service needs.

The initiative aims to address persistent social worker shortages, particularly in Mansfield, Ashfield, and Bassetlaw, and reduce reliance on costly agency workers, which at the time was costing NCC over £7 million annually. To address this, we have developed a new BA (Hons) Social Work degree delivered by Nottingham Trent University (NTU) at Vision West Nottinghamshire College, Mansfield, in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC).

A programme has been set up to support up to 25 students per year, ready for employment from 2028, with NCC funding ten places annually through bursaries covering tuition and living expenses. The total cost per cohort will be significantly lower than funding agency social workers. The course will target local residents, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, offering a pathway into social work and enhancing workforce diversity and retention. This supports our proposed delivery model of a workforce that close to people and located in the community.

Existing training routes, including apprenticeships and postgraduate schemes like Approach, Think Ahead, and Step-Up, have improved recruitment but haven't significantly reduced agency spend. The new degree complements these efforts and aligns with NCC's People Strategy to invest in workforce resilience.

A "test and learn" approach will be adopted for the initial cohort which started in September 2025, with a review to inform future cohorts. Contracts will be introduced to ensure students remain with NCC post-qualification or repay the bursary.

This initiative is expected to yield long-term savings, improve workforce stability, and better serve local communities by developing a sustainable pipeline of qualified social workers in areas where we struggle to recruit.

Culture

Our culture will be built around community, collaboration, and continuous improvement, creating a shared sense of purpose across the workforce. We are committed to building two organisations that are employers of choice, recognised for excellent work practices, a positive culture, and exceptional leadership.

We will foster a culture that is:

- Honest, transparent, and rooted in integrity
- Curious and innovative
- Empowering and engaging
- Community-centred

This culture will support our test, learn, and grow approach, where employees are encouraged to explore new ways of working, use data and feedback to improve outcomes, and embrace change with confidence.

Approach to change

Our approach to change will be collaborative, working with people, communities and partners to co-design our future model to meet local needs and support the diverse drivers of change across the system. We will be strengths-based, building on the strong foundations and local assets that already exist across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. We will learn from others, benefiting from the knowledge of what has worked well elsewhere to accelerate successful delivery of change. We will work together with the workforce, utilising a test, learn and grow approach to enable iterative and timely change that is informed by the people working day to day in our communities, as well as communities themselves. Change will design in flexibility to meet local needs, but with common and consistent elements coming together to create the framework or scaffolding for coherence across the local area e.g. asset-based practice models, one public estate, etc.) We will adopt a comprehensive impact framework that blends quantitative outcomes with qualitative insights, working with partners and communities to co-design meaningful, shared indicators of success and using qualitative methods to capture the lived experiences of local people and the social value of our investment.

Civic pride and traditions

Local Government Reorganisation in Nottinghamshire presents both opportunities and challenges for the preservation of civic and ceremonial traditions, which are important for the local sense of identity.

Nottinghamshire is proud of the tradition and contribution of the Lieutenancy. Our Lord Lieutenant and Deputy Lieutenants are an important part of civic society and nurture our community's connection with the King. The Nottinghamshire Lieutenancy has a long heritage of supporting His Majesty the King and the Royal Family across the County. It also acts as a 'bridge-builder', connecting individuals, charities, businesses and networks, all of which contribute to our community's sense of belonging to Nottinghamshire.

Alongside its responsibility to represent the Crown, the Lieutenancy aims to support Nottinghamshire by serving the community and encouraging participation, voluntary activities, and achievement among all groups and sectors. Its focus includes promoting the county's people, culture, diversity, heritage, and history.

The law defines the County of Nottinghamshire as the ceremonial lieutenancy boundary, and we are pleased that this reorganisation will not change that. The decision as to which of the two new unitary councils provides the Clerk to the Lieutenancy, in accordance with the Lieutenancies Act 1997, will be made by the Lord Lieutenant. Currently, this support is provided by Nottinghamshire County Council, but future arrangements will need to be agreed with the Lord Lieutenant and the new administration(s) within the Nottinghamshire boundary. Typically, though not universally, this support is hosted by a County, City, or District Council.

Our proposal includes an expectation that, in addition to the Lieutenancy, we ensure that our other civic arrangements are protected. We will seek to work together with Government to ensure this happens. This includes the Lord Mayor of Nottingham and the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire. It is important to distinguish between the ceremonial Sheriff of Nottingham (a civic role within the City) and the High Sheriff of Nottinghamshire, which is a shrievalty appointment independent of any council, although the Lieutenancy and civic offices work closely with both the High Sheriff and the Undersheriff.

We would ask that charter status be preserved or maintained via transitional provisions so that the historic and ceremonial rights and privileges of local communities are preserved. For example, with our proposal to create a new Council to serve the urban population, we would wish to consider how the Lord Mayor's civic area would reflect the whole District building blocks of Gedling and Broxtowe, subject to appropriate approvals for the impact on the Royal Charter.

In addition, we note that the Local Government (Boundary Changes) Regulations 2018 make reference to the role of Aldermen. We assume similar provisions would apply under LGR to ensure that the rights and courtesies associated with the title of Alderman are carried over and honoured by the new authority.

6. The Financial Case

LGR presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to rationalise and make radical change to patterns and methods of service delivery. This proposal demonstrates that two sustainable and financially resilient Councils can be created from the nine current Councils. It further suggests that good and effective service transformation can result, resulting in radical improvements to the experience of residents.

The financial challenges faced by all Councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are well documented in respective annual budget reports and subsequent monitoring updates. Published Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) positions as of 31 March 2025 were used as a consistent baseline across all authorities to project the potential revenue budget position for the two new authorities. This results in a forecast budget gap of £83.6m in 2028/29 alone. A cumulative budget gap of £114m from 2025/26-2028/29 has been projected, and this is dependent upon the delivery of £74m of savings and earmarked reserve usage over the next two financial years. This modelling only reflects what is known or anticipated today. This structural deficit has arisen from the demand for, and cost of, services significantly outstripping available funding.

Significant activity is, of course, being undertaken by individual authorities to ameliorate this financial position over the life of their MTFSs which would further shape the projected financial position for the new authorities. Nevertheless, LGR will be undertaken in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in a context of significant financial pressure and uncertainty (including, for example, the potential variable impact of anticipated national policy changes such as the Fair Funding Review).

This demonstrates why transparency and strong oversight of financial commitments outside of current budget plans and decision-making will be essential throughout implementation. This will help set strong organisational and financial foundations for LGR, and to maximise the realisable benefits through streamlining local government arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The financial case is summarised below, and detailed in full in Appendices E and F.

Overall Financial Case

Potential day 1 financial position (c. 1st April 2028) (combined for both authorities)	
Total income	£1,242.3m
Total expenditure	£1,325.9m
Net position	-£83.6m
Reorganisation Costs and Benefits	
Gross annual reorganisation savings	£30.6m
One-off transition costs	£35.7m
Payback period	1.34 years
Cumulative net saving after 5 years	£80.5m
Transformation benefits	
Recurring annual transformation savings fully delivered by year 5 - Base	£67.6m
Recurring annual transformation savings fully delivered by year 5 - Stretch	£91.2m

Projected Unitary Authority Day 1 Positions

Potential day 1 financial position (c. 1st April 2028)	**UA 1** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**UA 2** *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*
Total income	£648.5m	£594.4m
Total expenditure	£672.1m	£653.7m
Net position	-£23.6m	-£59.4m

As stated above, the calculation of projected 2028/29 cumulative budget gaps is based on current MTFS positions as of 31 March 2025. Notwithstanding the potential impact of changes to individual forecast positions, it is likely there will be budget gaps and the potential cashable benefits from reorganisation will be required to plug these gaps in the first instance. This will also be subject to understanding the impact of Fair Funding Review particularly on the upper tier authorities given their people service challenges.

Potential Assets and Long-term Liabilities (c. 1st April 2028	**UA 1** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**UA 2** *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*
Total assets	£4.3 billion	£4.7 billion
Long-term Liabilities	£1.1 billion	£1.2 billion
Net Long Term Assets	£3.2 billion	£3.5 billion

Apportioned savings and costs of Local Government Reorganisation by Unitary Authority

The tables below set out the estimated costs and benefits of LGR for each proposed Unitary Authority. The benefits of local government reorganisation are calculated by modelling the savings realisable across four domains:

- **Workforce:** including reductions in Senior Leadership costs, and consolidation of FTE through consolidation of duplicated functions across front and back office and teams delivering frontline services to residents;
- **Third Party Spend (TPS):** reductions in addressable spend across service areas;
- **Democracy and member costs**: benefits from reducing the total number of councillors (and concomitant Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) and the number of elections required across the region;
- **Property:** benefits from reduced operational expenditure spend on rationalised assets.

UA	Annual gross saving	One off transition costs	Payback Period	Cumulative net saving after 5 years	Cumulative net saving after 10 years
UA 1 *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£23.5m	£21.4m	0.91 years	£68.0m	£185.5m
UA 2 *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£7.1m	£14.3m	3.03 years	£12.5m	£48.0m

It should be noted that the apportionment of benefits and costs across the two new unitary authorities is not equal. In particular, as UA2 would consist of an existing Unitary Authority in the form of Nottingham City Council, and the adjoining districts of Broxtowe and Gedling, the benefits this authority would receive *specifically* as a result of Local Government Reorganisation are by definition lower than for the unitary authority consisting of the aggregation of five district councils and 73% of the current Nottinghamshire County Council area and population. Nevertheless, while costs arising from salary alignment and redundancy costs would accordingly differ between the organisations, the wider process of establishing the new organisations and required models of service provision are of comparable scale and complexity and thus would require similar investment to manage the transition.

Type of transition cost	**UA1** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**UA2** *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*
External transition/design/implementation support	£4,270,000	£4,270,000
Internal programme management	£1,903,200	£1,903,200
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	£366,000	£366,000
Public consultation	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new councils	£610,000	£610,000
Redundancy costs	£3,902,683	£998,018
Salary alignment	£5,375,473	£1,246,258
Contingency	£3,387,927	£3,387,927
Total	£21,366,157	£14,332,277

Post-reorganisation transformation costs and benefits

LGR has the potential to be a catalyst for wider transformation that can realise additional financial and non-financial benefits. As part of the financial analysis, assumptions have been developed to quantify the potential benefits realisable through innovation in operating model and service delivery models through ambitious public sector reform following reorganisation.

Category	Base %	Stretch %	Rationale
Front office Officers	6.0%	10.0%	Additional workforce efficiencies, such as reduced average handling time and increased first-contact resolution rates, are realisable through redesign of customer interfaces and pathways, including implementation of digital and agentic AI technology.
Service delivery Officers	3.0%	5.0%	Reimagining of models of service delivery through implementation of Neighbourhood Public Service models, such as co-located health and social care teams, reducing service duplication and enhancing multi-disciplinary collaboration, leading to faster response times and improved resident satisfaction.
Back office Officers	7.0%	8.0%	Additional workforce efficiencies through reducing duplicative and repetitive activity across enabling and strategic functions, through redesign of operating models and implementation of digital and agentic AI technology.
Third party spend	2.5%	3.0%	Reduction in third party spend through innovation in procurement strategy and commercial management, including maximisation of alternative delivery models to further drive efficiency in external spend.
Income (sales, fees and charges / commercial)	1.3%	1.7%	Leveraging and strengthening commercial capabilities to increase income generation (including through alternative delivery models and Teckal companies and joint ventures).

UA	Transformation scenario	Annual gross saving	Projected costs	Payback Period	Cumulative net saving after 5 years
UA 1 *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**Base**	£33.9m	£16.2m	1.45 years	£110.0m
	Stretch	£45.6m	£25.8m	1.63 years	£145.5m
UA 2 *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Base**	£33.7m	£16.3m	1.47 years	£110.1m
	Stretch	£45.5m	£25.8m	1.63 years	£144.7m

As part of the full financial case, alternative transformation scenarios have been explored to model different phasing of transition costs over multiple years.

Summary of the base financial case

UA	Projected 28/29 Cumulative budget gap	One off reorganisation transition costs	Projected benefit from reorganisation	Projected transformation costs (base)	Projected transformation benefits (base)
UA 1 *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£43.5m	£21.4m	£23.5m	£16.2m	£33.9m
UA 2 *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£70.9m	£14.3m	£7.1m	£16.3m	£33.7m

The information above demonstrates that LGR could drive benefits from a reduction in duplicated roles across leadership, front office service delivery, back office internal and enabling services and strategic roles. There will also be potential benefit from reduction in addressable spend across all in-scope service areas, numbers of Councillors and streamlining of elections.

Risks and Considerations

The financial analysis provides a projected opening income, expenditure and balance sheet position for the two proposed unitary authorities, as well as quantifying the potential benefits realisable through LGR and additional post-reorganisation transformation activity. Necessarily, however, there are wider risks and considerations which may affect this projected position, which we will monitor closely throughout the implementation period in the run-up to vesting day for the new authorities.

Disaggregating the Nottinghamshire County Council ("NCC") budget

NCC represents approximately two-thirds of the total net spend of all 9 Councils. The size and scale of the organisation means that it has the flexibility to direct service resources to where demand is greatest and this is not always the same as the drivers of local tax and government funding streams. As such, any assessment of the financial sustainability and resilience of future unitary authority options must begin with a clear understanding of how NCC's budget is currently allocated across the county and how this aligns with the distribution of funding from council tax, business rates and grants. Similarly assimilating the risks and opportunities from the districts and the City Council has been assessed, which applies to key areas such as housing and homelessness.

To support this analysis, a collaborative approach across all S151 officers has been taken to disaggregate NCC's budget, ensuring transparency and shared understanding among all partners. The methodology has been subject to independent scrutiny and challenge and has revealed that the distribution of Adult Social Care expenditure is the most significant driver of financial surpluses and deficits across the county when compared to available funding as Adult Social Care accounts for the largest single area of expenditure within NCC (and Nottingham City Council). Spend on Adult Social Care is forecast to almost double between 2025 and 2040. This is driven by increases in both unit costs and demand. The largest spend outlays across all unitary formations are focused in the north of the county due to higher service need in Ashfield and Mansfield but wider changes in market conditions or demand across the area could also affect the financial and service delivery context the new authorities would operate in.

Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA)

The following district and unitary authorities within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire currently have an HRA: Nottingham City, Broxtowe, Ashfield, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Bassetlaw. Where there are existing HRA in place within current district or unitary authorities, these will need to be combined within the new unitary authorities. The proposed option of two unitary authorities provides an opportunity for operating the

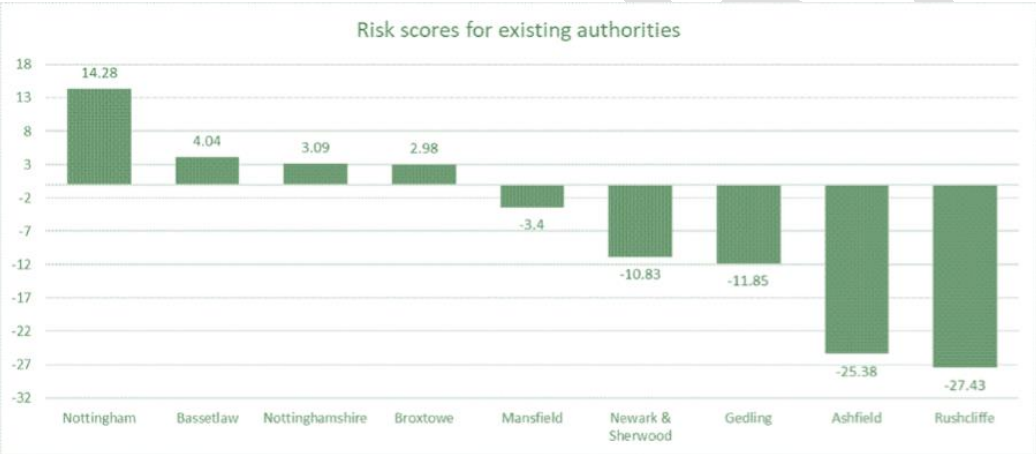
HRA at a larger, more efficient scale, increasing the flexibility to take a more strategic approach to housing management and meeting the needs and requirements of tenants.

Council tax harmonisation

A further consideration for ensuring financial sustainability of the new councils is the level of council tax income they require, and how this affects what residents will be required to pay in the future. Currently council tax band Ds differ across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. As part of reorganisation, the combined current council tax band Ds for City, district & borough and the County councils will need to be harmonised to a single set of charges for each unitary within seven years of vesting day. Unitarisation could potentially improve efficiency and effectiveness on tax collection. The new unitary authorities will, however, need to decide how to harmonise council tax for their areas. Modelling has been undertaken as part of the wider financial case to illustrate the potential options available.

Financial resilience

We have applied CIPFA ‘s Resilience Index over our existing Council footprint. As the analysis shows there is a significant range of Risk Scores, with the well-publicised issues around the City Council influencing their score. With an average score of 21 across all Unitary authorities it is still performing relatively well.



Applying the Index to the proposed Authorities shows an improvement in the Resilience, demonstrating that LGR will be of benefit to the population of the area:

New authority	Comprised of	Risk score	Top 3 risk metrics
Nottingham	Gedling, Broxtowe, Nottingham and 27% of Nottinghamshire CC	8.18	Reserves/Income, Growth Above Baseline, Overspend (£000)
Nottinghamshire	Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood, Ashfield, Rushcliffe and 73% of Nottinghamshire CC	7.07	Reserves Sustainability Measure, Unallocated Reserves, Change In Reserves

Both of these Councils show a significant improvement over the current situation but also, we understand compare favourably to Councils across the Country and well below the current average of 21 for Unitary authorities.

Fair funding

At the time of preparing this proposal, Government is evaluating the results of the Fair Funding Review (FFR). As we await the outcomes of the Review it has not been possible to model the impacts. However, all indications from the work that has been undertaken tend to suggest that overall the area of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are likely to be net beneficiaries, although this could change dependent on Government Policy changes as a result of the consultation on FFR. Whilst there will be gainers and losers from the calculations we have performed, the net position is considered to be favourable. That would result in further improvements to the already anticipated sustainable position of the two proposed authorities.

Assurance over the financial analysis

During the preparation of the financial case we have worked alongside CIPFA to sense check and provide assurance on the work we have undertaken. *As part of CIPFA's support, they used their experience from supporting previous reorganisations, reviews after the formation of new unitary councils and their template and supporting guidance to assess the reasonableness of the draft financial considerations in proposals. This included applying modelling principles, tolerances and an assessment of materiality in determining what was proportionate and should be included. It also included determining the reasonableness of the base information needed to consider costs and savings from transition to new councils and the incremental costs and differences between options. The MHCLG approved template produced by CIPFA has been completed for the proposals to provide a further sense check.*

Additional benefits that could be achieved through public service reform

The financial case for the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal assuming transformation stretch is achieved can be summarised as:

	Projected 28/29 Cumulative budget gap	One off LGR transition costs	Projected benefit from LGR	Projected transformation costs (stretch)	Projected transformation benefits (stretch)	Cumulative net saving after 5 years
The Nottinghamshire Council	£43.5m	£21.4m	£23.5m	£25.6m	£45.6m	£145.5m
The Nottingham Council	£70.9m	£14.3m	£7.1m	£25.9m	£45.3m	£144.7m

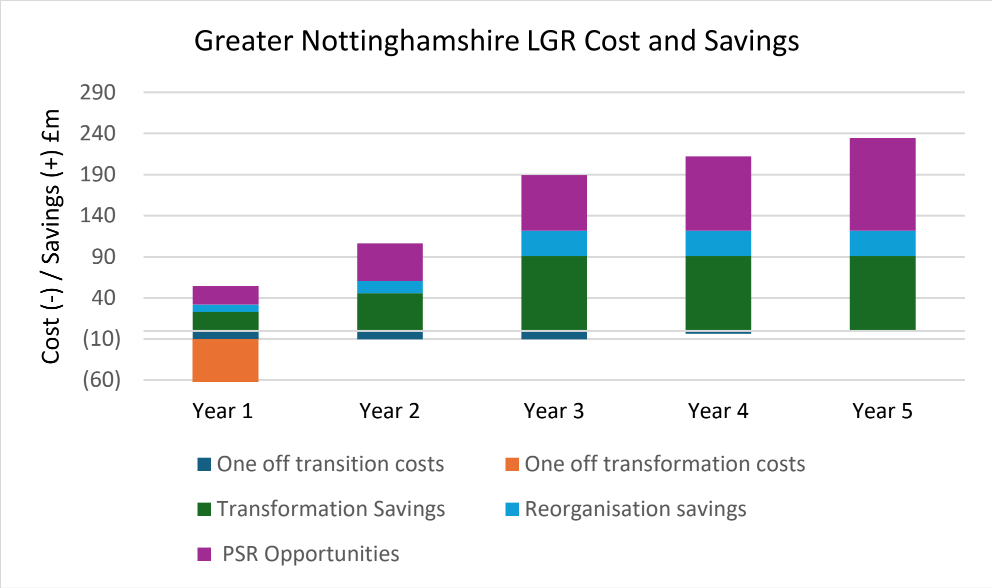
The case reflects the practical and efficiency savings that can be realised with fewer Councils as well as the benefits from working in larger, single tier authorities. In addition to these however this proposal believes that the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal offers greater opportunity go further and to utilise the experience in the local government partnership to make real and effective savings through public service reform.

The County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council have a reputation for financial prudence and a track record of good and effective service delivery across the full range of unitary council activities. By focussing on our knowledge, experience and track record in delivering Adult and Children's Services in particular, and based on the IMPOWER benchmarking index, we believe that further savings opportunities exist through our emergent Public Service Reform programme. Our vision for realising this opportunity is evidenced throughout this proposal and summarised below:

- Creating joined-up approaches to housing and social care that ensure aligned planning and delivery of services to further improve quality of life for people, through:
    - Closer working and a multi-disciplinary approach will increase the ability to identify earlier housing interventions and enable better co-ordination, decision making and tailored support.
    - Better planning and provision for children leaving care or moving into adult social care.
    - Having a clear approach to home adaptions to enable children and adults with disabilities to stay at home for as long as possible, rather than needing to move into specialist homes.
    - Ensuring the right balance and allocation of supported living housing and extra care to promote independence and improved wellbeing
    - Taking a whole area approach to planning, delivery of affordable housing, housing management and asset management.
    - Developing a unified place-based homelessness strategy.

- Developing community and place-based approaches that prioritise local need, deliver system-wide collaborative solutions, and strengthen relationships between Councils, Residents and Partners, including:
    - Community hub type provisions providing a co-ordinated approach and way to access a range of service in local areas
    - Strengthened partnership responses to care and support, particularly around access to education, training and employment
    - Greater integration with the Voluntary and Community Sector to maximise community support.
    - Opportunities to improve connectedness through improving public transport links.

Based on the comparison of current service outcomes and costs to statistical neighbours, IMPOWER's benchmarking index data indicates a potential opportunity to deliver productivity savings in the region of £94.9m to £221.8m across critical services, and between £67.8 to £158.5m when just considering social care services for children and adults. This data provides a broad indication of potential financial impact but is not included in the validated financial case as it is illustrative. The graph below shows the potential for additional savings through public service reform (PSR), over and above the validated financial case.



The implementation plan set out later in this proposal demonstrates the extent of our planning for transition from the 9 Councils of today to the 2 new Councils of the future. Our comprehensive plan for implementation offers a low risk, high credibility plan that is based on our experience of delivering successful complex transformation programmes and large-scale organisational change. To that end, we estimate that the combined impact of our proposed approach to implementation could achieve £189m annualised efficiency savings by year 3 post vesting day of the two new councils, rising to an annualised figure of £235m by year 5. In addition, our proposed approach to implementing the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal will save £550k from the one off LGR transition costs. Delivering the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal is not only safer, simpler, stronger but also at a lower cost.

Whilst these additional PSR financial opportunities do not form part of the financial business case we do believe they demonstrate the potential for real and large-scale opportunity from our Greater Nottinghamshire proposal.

7. Local Engagement

As part of our response to the Government's statutory invitation for proposals on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement was undertaken. This was designed to meet the Government's criteria for meaningful consultation with local partners, businesses, and communities, ensuring that the views of those most affected by potential changes were heard and considered.

The Government's guidance emphasises the importance of seeking local views, addressing any concerns, and evidencing how proposals will improve local governance. In response, we adopted a structured and inclusive engagement approach to gather a wide range of perspectives from across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Public engagement

All the nine current local Authorities across Nottinghamshire and Nottingham agreed to work together to coordinate and develop this important element through a public engagement survey, delivered through an independent organisation, Public Perspectives.

The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through each councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website, as well as outreach events and engagement with stakeholders.

The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support and was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14 September 2025.

In addition to the survey, during the engagement period, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses. This represents less than 1% of the population of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The highest proportion of respondents to the survey proportionally were from Rushcliffe (25%) followed by Broxtowe (22%). The survey report and addendum is included in appendix G and H.

Supplementary Engagement – strategic stakeholder engagement

In addition to the public survey, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council undertook supplementary engagement, with strategic stakeholders. These included representatives from the education sector, business and development communities, voluntary and community sector organisations, and public service partners. Senior officers, including Chief Executive leads, facilitated direct engagement through formal meetings, interviews, and written submissions to explore the implications of LGR on service delivery, partnership working, and local priorities. Appendices I and J outline engagement undertaken.

Supplementary Engagement - Community-Based Engagement

To ensure local voices were captured, engagement was undertaken with more locally based stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils, grassroots voluntary organisations, and local businesses. The engagement programme included:

- Over 665 young people consulted through 45 focus groups across all districts
- Targeted sessions with education leaders, SEND professionals, and alternative providers.
- Engagement with voluntary and community sector (VCSE) organisations via focus groups and interviews.
- Consultation with developers and business leaders at a questions and answers event. Also views sort from a questionnaire sent to businesses currently supported by the County's Economic Development business advisers.
- Member engagement workshops and surveys, alongside outreach in local areas
- One Joint and multiple separate engagement sessions with Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council workforce, both in-person and online
- The Mayor, MPs and Commissioners
- Trade Union briefings

Summary of the Findings

A summary of the key issues to address arising from the engagement exercises taken together were:

- **Boundary Coherence:** Ensure there is geographic logic and alignment with operational structures e.g. policing, education.
- **Financial Transparency**: Address concerns about Nottingham City's finances and cross-subsidisation
- **Local Representation:** Safeguard the communities' voice, especially in rural areas
- **Partnership Continuity:** Maintain effective collaboration with VCSEs, businesses, and public services
- **Youth Engagement:** Involve young people meaningfully in shaping reforms
- **Operational Readiness:** Plan for shared services, system integration, and workforce transition
- **Urban–Rural Balance:** Tailor services and governance to diverse community needs
- **Communication & Engagement:** Ensure transparency, early consultation, and inclusive decision-making
- **Cultural Identity:** Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood to remain as key cultural reference points for the new Councils

a. Public Engagement Survey Findings

The following table provides a summary of the key points and issues to address arising from the public engagement survey:

Theme	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
Sense of Place and Identity	• Residents identify strongly with Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire, and local towns • Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood are widely referenced cultural landmarks • People rarely identify with their local authority's name, preferring geographic or cultural references	• Through the core focus on the delivery of neighbourhood services, based upon neighbourhoods that residents recognise as "home", The new councils well ensure that the places and communities that mean most to residence are recognised and valued

Theme	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
Priorities for the design of the future councils	• Core services (roads, clean streets, crime) • Value for money • Local responsiveness • Neighbourhood engagement.	• These priorities are written through the proposal, particularly the focus of the sections on Neighbourhood Public Service which aims to improve local responsiveness as well as strengthen neighbourhood engagement. There is a focus on core services in the Connected Place section, whilst the financial case focuses on value for money.
What makes somewhere a good place to live	1. Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy 2. Maintaining roads and pavements 3. Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime 4. Public transport, roads and parking 5. Refuse collection, recycling, parks, sports and leisure facilities	• The section on Creating a Connected Place has a strong focus on those services identified that make somewhere a good place to live.
Priorities for improvement	1. Maintaining roads and pavements 2. Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime 3. Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy 4. Public transport, roads and parking 5. Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles	• As above, the section on Creating a Connected Place has a strong focus on those services identified that make somewhere a good place to live. The neighbourhood public service model outlined focusses on the building blocks of good health.
Most important for the new councils	1. Providing good value, reliable services 2. Meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area 3. Saving money and using Council Tax wisely 4. Ensuring services work together 5. Working with local neighbourhoods and communities	• It is the overarching ambition of the proposal to create two new unitary councils that provide good value, reliable services that meet the needs of the whole area of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Opportunities are identified to save money, and the model of neighbourhood public service delivery outlined is based upon services working well together to meet people's needs, informed by structures that enable local decision-making.

Theme	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
How to involve people in local decisions	1. Working directly with neighbourhoods 2. Public meetings or drop ins 3. Local councillors visiting communities 4. Online surveys & polls 5. Social media and feedback	• The proposal includes a model for working more directly with neighbourhoods and proposes an outline for a future neighbourhood governance structure to be developed. Further development work will take place on this with residents as part of implementation planning.

Comments, concerns and suggestions regarding the "1b" option	• Concern that proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair due to:
	    • Exclusion of some neighbouring areas (eg West Bridgford, Hucknall)
	    • Inclusion of outer lying and more rural areas with less links to the city
	• Concern over joining with Nottingham City
	• Urban-rural imbalance
	• City supporting rural areas
	• County-wide council too large and diverse
	• Some explicit support relating to geography and combining areas with common links, and in the potential benefits of efficiencies, cost-savings, streamlined local government and potentially improved services and outcomes.
		• It is government policy and criteria that require the 9 councils in Nottinghamshire to reorganise and to establish a larger unitary authority involving the city area. While this concern cannot be avoided, the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal aims to address it through thorough planning for governance, finance, and service quality.
		• Government guidance is for proposals to be built on district building blocks unless there is a *"strong public services and financial sustainability related justification…due to the likely additional costs and complexities of implementation"*. Including Broxtowe and Gedling in the city unitary is considered sensible due to their population's connection to the city, while Rushcliffe's more rural character and separation by the River Trent suggests it should remain distinct.
		• The development of the neighbourhood public service model outlined in this proposal, supported by new models of neighbourhood governance, will be key in ensuring that the needs of all residents in both urban and rural areas are met through the proposed unitary councils.

b. Supplementary Engagement Findings

The following table provides a summary of the key points and issues to address arising from engagement with stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
General Public	• Recognition of the need for reform, particularly among those dissatisfied with the current system • Perceived unfairness in boundaries and lack of geographic coherence in respect of the areas surrounding the city • Distrust in Nottingham City Council's financial management • Loss of local identity and representation, especially in rural areas • Scepticism about promised benefits i.e. cost savings, service improvements • Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood were frequently cited by residents as important cultural reference points when describing where they live, especially to people unfamiliar with the area particularly mentioned by residents in rural areas or towns not immediately adjacent to Nottingham City.	• The rationale and evidence base for proposed changes is in the *Options Appraisal* section. • Plans to strengthen local engagement mechanisms to maintain community voice in larger councils is in the *Our proposition for neighbourhood working in Greater Nottinghamshire section..* • Concerns about cross-subsidisation and transparent financial planning are addressed in the *Financial Case*, specifically regarding reduction in overall costs, asset & property rationalisation and the Fair Funding review.
Education Sector – Schools, Colleges	• Strong partnerships with schools and SEND teams • Importance of partnerships to support learners with additional vulnerabilities • Fair and effective EHCPs, safeguarding, and support services • Retain district-level teams for local responsiveness.	• Intent to build on existing strong relationships with education partners is set out on in the section on • Intent to consider implications for critical services including those for children with SEND or social care needs is set out in the implementation plan.

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
Voluntary & Community Sector	• Widespread uncertainty due to limited communication, fears of losing trusted local relationships, and potential service disruption • Organisations emphasised the value of existing partnerships with District and Parish Councils, highlighting the importance of local knowledge and responsiveness • Fear of centralisation would dilute local representation and reduce accessibility, particularly for rural and vulnerable communities.	• Plans to strengthen local engagement mechanisms to maintain community voice in larger councils is in the *Our proposition for neighbourhood working in Greater Nottinghamshire section*.
Developers and Construction Business Sectors	• Concerns about boundary changes disrupting strategic alliances and access to funding • Strong support for shared services (e.g. highways, waste) to reduce duplication and improve efficiency • Risk of inconsistency in contracts post-merger • Support for local area committees and revised meeting systems to maintain agility • LGR must align with EMCCA priorities (e.g. Freeport, STEP Fusion) • Fears of funding delays due to structural uncertainty.	• Plans to develop neighbourhood governance structures is outlined in *Our proposition for neighbourhood working in Greater Nottinghamshire section*. • The implementation plan will incorporate consideration of opportunities for shared services. Some opportunities are identified in the Connected Places section. • Proposal section on economic growth reflects alignment with EMCCA priorities
Businesses Supported by NCC Advisers	• Value local advisers, enterprise support partnerships, and current grant schemes • Streamlined application processes and a single, accessible 'front door' for support • More grants for digital upgrades, employment, and sustainability	• The commitment to supported businesses is outlined in the section on Driving Economic Growth.

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
	• Help businesses reduce carbon emissions and invest in green technologies • Maintain district-level presence to ensure local knowledge and relationships are not lost.	
Nottinghamshire Police	• Strongly favour LGR models that align with existing policing boundaries to: • Preserve established safeguarding and community safety partnerships • Maintain consistency in performance reporting and data comparison • Ensure seamless service access and accountability for residents • Minimise disruption to operational structures and resource deployment. • Do not advocate for a specific LGR model but stress the importance of considering public safety and operational practicality in any decision • willingness to engage in ongoing dialogue with stakeholders to support effective service delivery under any future governance structure.	• This proposal uses the districts as building blocks hence will minimise disruption through implementation. • The section on Public Safety details the opportunities to strengthen joint work in this area through the proposal • Commitment to partner engagement in developing future structures through implementation plan.
Young People	• Mental Health emerged as the top priority across all districts, with calls for early support, calm spaces in schools, and reduced academic pressure • Youth safety concerns included anti-social behaviour, drugs, and the need for better lighting and police presence • Transport was a major issue, especially in rural areas—young people want cheaper, more reliable services • Youth Spaces were seen as vital for wellbeing and inclusion	• The proposal incorporates a focus on early help through proposed neighbourhood public service structures, a key focus on public safety, and mechanisms to strengthen people's voices in local decision-making. We have added in mental health as a priority within the area of focus for neighbourhood public services. • Opportunity through implementation planning to do some further engagement work with young people to

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
	• Cost of Living & housing, environmental concerns, and homelessness were also raised • Young people want a stronger voice in decision-making, with transparent feedback loops ("You said, we did").	design their involvement in future neighbourhood governance structures
Town & Parish Councils	• LGR is viewed primarily through a risk lens, with opportunities less explored • Considered there was Low proactive planning and limited strategic discussion at parish level • Lack of clarity around roles, responsibilities, and impact of LGR • Concern that the digital engagement limited broader community input • Felt there was ambiguity around grants, council status, and public perception under LGR • Uncertainty about costs, debt, precept increases. • Loss of identity reduced decision-making power. • LGR could be strain on capacity as volunteer reliance • Challenge of Integration i.e. IT, branding, elections, forums • Concern over association with city finances. • Uncertainty about LGR's impact on partnerships.	• The proposal includes a section on working with town and parish councils to shape the joint working including neighbourhood governance arrangements. Proactive work with town and parish councils will be a key priority under the next phase of planning as part of the "democracy" workstream outlined in the implementation plan.
Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC)	• Felt preparation was uneven across districts; RBC and Gedling benefit from RCAN support and external support from NALC and RCAN was essential for successful transformation • Asset transfer opportunities exist but require addressing skills and capacity gaps • Unitary councils must lead on shaping local democratic structures	• The proposal includes a section on working with town and parish councils to shape the joint working including neighbourhood governance arrangements. Proactive work with town and parish councils will be a key priority under the next phase of planning as part of the "democracy" workstream outlined in the implementation plan.

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
	• Neighbourhood Committees need clearer definition within governance arrangements • Digital engagement tools like "Go Collaborate" offer scalable consultation models.	
Parkwood Leisure (management company for Rufford Country Park and provider of Rushcliffe Leisure Centres)	• Pre-vesting implementation planning is critical • Risk that larger contracts may exclude medium-sized providers • Need to balance resource allocation across urban and rural areas based on need.	• These points will be considered as part of implementation planning.
NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS & ICB	• Importance of continuity in relationships and seamless service alignment • Need to define and validate 'neighbourhoods' with communities • Team structures should be community-centric, not organisation-centric • Voluntary sector should be central to a supportive, not directive culture • Neighbourhood focus and broader determinants of health are key.	• This feedback has shaped the section of the proposal: *Our proposition for neighbourhood working in Greater Nottinghamshire section,*as well as the early thinking around matrix working model under the Operational Excellence section.
Elected Members	• Strong focus on improving core local services e.g. road maintenance, housing, education, anti-social behaviour, transport, and support for local businesses • Emphasis on connected communities and enhancing Nottingham's reputation • Mixed views on reducing the number of councillors—concerns about increased workloads and reduced local representation	• Feedback has shaped the emphasis on specific outcomes within the proposal, particularly in respect of public safety and creating connected places. • Feedback has shaped the early proposal for democratic structures including neighbourhood governance committees, but it is recognised that there is significantly more work to do to fully develop this

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal

	• Support for Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs) to:
	  • Focus on local issues (e.g. parks, events, road maintenance)
	  • Collaborate with partners (e.g. police, NHS, schools)
	  • Have their own budgets but not influence strategic planning or overall budgets.
	• Recognition of differing service demands in urban and rural settings
	  • Urban areas: higher needs for waste services, social housing, and infrastructure
	  • Rural areas: concerns about equitable access and representation.
	• Difficulty reaching older residents (digitally excluded) and young people (low participation).
		model therefore this will be key workstream taken forward as part of implementation planning.

Workforce	• LGR presents opportunities to:
	  ○ Improve leadership consistency and internal communications
	  ○ develop integrated teams and inclusive leadership programmes
	  ○ Streamline governance and decision-making
	  ○ Enhance digital systems, data integration, and AI use
	  ○ Plan for system migration and continuity.
	• There should be an emphasis on Community-centric design and co-production, Holistic wellbeing (housing, education, transport). inclusivity, digital access, and green spaces with hyperlocal service alignment and cross-sector collaboration
		• This feedback has shaped the section of the proposal: *Our proposition for neighbourhood working in Greater Nottinghamshire section,*.as well as the design principles and key features of the future council operating models.
		• A number of the points raised relate to implementation and so will be addressed in the relevant phase of activity. We are committed to maintaining regular workforce engagement throughout the design of and transition towards new unitary councils.

Stakeholder	Key Points	How we address these points in our proposal
	• Risks were seen as job security, service disruption, funding competition, and governance clarity • Urban vs. Rural considerations were raised including a need for tailored service delivery and decision-making and a desire for local influence, transparency, and hybrid engagement.	

8. Planning for implementation and wider transformation and public service reform

This section sets out a high-level overview of the key phases of activity to ensure a safe transition to Vesting Day and then onto wider transformation in order to take advantage of all the opportunities that local government reorganisation presents.

A Partnership Approach to implementation

We propose a joint governance arrangement towards implementation, with representatives of the nine councils playing lead roles in different workstreams where they hold specialist expertise. We are committed to working together during the process of establishing the new councils to enable the sharing of knowledge, expertise and best practice around the effective delivery of all the services that the new Councils will be delivering. This approach will harness existing knowledge around how services can best be delivered to meet local needs.

We recognise the complexity of this transition, bringing together multiple districts, disaggregating county services, and integrating an existing unitary council into two coherent unitary structures. Partnership governance will ensure that these complexities are managed collaboratively, drawing on the strengths of each organisation and maintaining service continuity for residents. Whilst all councils are equal partners in the implementation, given the differentiated budget, risk and statutory service responsibilities held by each of the nine councils, we propose a proportionate approach to identifying lead roles and responsibilities for implementation. Within this, we propose that Nottinghamshire County Council can play a leading role, convening the implementation arrangements. This recommendation is based on:

- Organisational effectiveness: We want the programme to be led by organisations which hold externally validated accreditations in key functions such as Legal, ICT, Finance, Health and Safety, demonstrating the technical capabilities required to deliver significant change.
- Proven transformation capability: the programme needs to be led in a way that builds on successfully delivered major organisational changes, including large-scale employee transfers and service transitions without disruption.
- Established system leadership: A number of organisations in our system are in intervention and/or have interim leadership in place. The programme will need clarity and coherence during a complex change process.
- Strong talent pipelines and high levels of workforce confidence in management relationships: Trade Union feedback will be sought to help manage workforce transition effectively.

Our proposal is predicated on all Councils playing an active, constructive and valued contribution. Our experience of creating EMCCA demonstrated collaboration was key, and we have learned a great deal through that process. We would propose to replicate that successful model in implementing the Greater Nottinghamshire Proposal, with a shared transition programme team.

Governance Structure

There is real complexity in our current operating circumstances, with a unitary Council under Best Value intervention, differential performance in statutory services and two tier local government. As such, in our implementation planning, we have given careful thought to how best to minimise risk to our residents, particularly those vulnerable children and adults in receipt of statutory services, and how best to guarantee an efficient and effective transition.

We believe we know our area and our context best. During our work with MHCLG on our devolution programme, we successfully and effectively worked with officials on drafting of the secondary legislation that brought the first ever Combined County Authority into force. Learning from this, we have worked with Browne Jacobson to develop a proposed draft of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (Structural Changes) Order 2026 to accompany our Greater Nottinghamshire proposal – this is in Appendix K.

The draft SCO has been carefully produced with a view to setting out not just the areas envisaged as single-tier local government areas following reorganisation but the process for transition. We strongly believe that reorganisation should happen in a way that minimises risk and cost to residents. For that reason, we make a case that the legal vehicles for the creation of the Nottinghamshire Council and the Greater Nottingham Council are built on the legal foundations of the current upper tier councils, whilst emphasising that we are indeed proposing to create two 'new' unitary councils through this process, with new political and managerial leadership, new operating models and ways of working as next-generation unitary councils.

We recognise that this approach has typically been used where former County councils became unitary councils on the same geographical footprint. Nevertheless, we believe that the Greater Nottinghamshire reorganisation proposal is sufficiently simple that the same approach can be taken. Our external legal advice gives us confidence that this approach is lawful and consistent with current legislation (see in particular the breadth of section 11,12 and 15 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

By establishing the two new unitary councils in this way, we would be able to:

- **Avoid additional transition costs** by avoiding the need to establish new legal entities
- **Streamline the transition process** for workforce and services between all authorities, assuring us around pace of delivery
- **Reduce friction** during the transition for contracts, procurement, and alternative delivery methods

- **Ensure clarity** of governance per unitary, meaning that hyper local decision-making can be built in from the start with strong accountability
- **Simplify** the transition of the Nottinghamshire Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) as the Administrative Authority would continue under Nottinghamshire County Council

Implementation Considerations relating to crucial people services

A key challenge in implementing proposals for Greater Nottinghamshire is the complexity of disaggregating and aggregating social care services, particularly where operating models, commissioning arrangements, and system maturity differ. This complexity will be present regardless of the chosen model, it would however, be further exacerbated by any approach that disaggregates districts or boroughs.

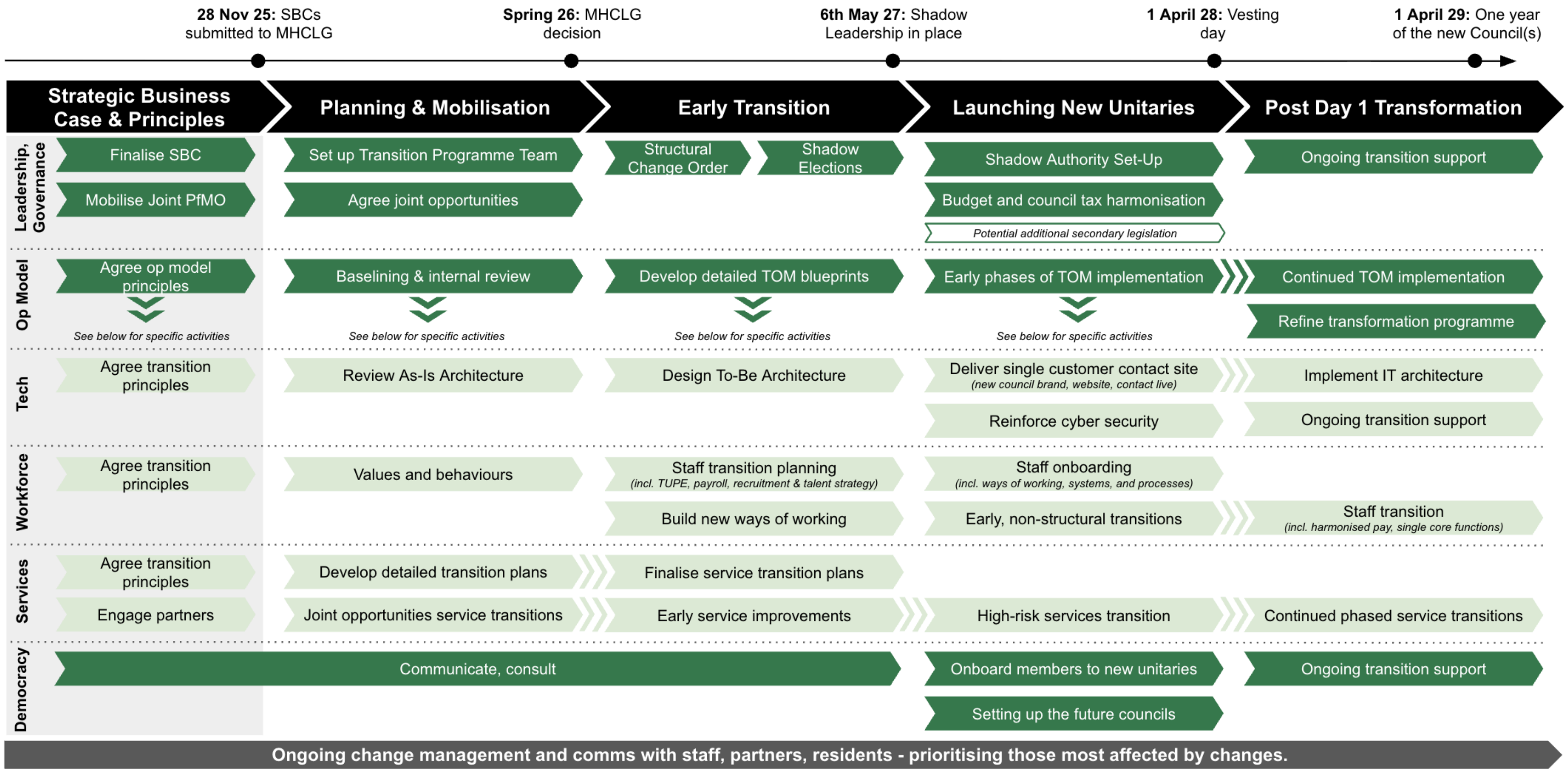
Children's services within Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire currently have different Ofsted judgements: Nottingham City is rated inadequate (July 2022), with improvements overseen by commissioners and a full reinspection pending, while Nottinghamshire was rated good for overall effectiveness and outstanding for leadership in 2024. Ongoing interventions in Nottingham City mean the Local Area Partnership has not yet been inspected for SEND by Ofsted/CQC. In January 2023, Nottinghamshire's Local Area Partnership was judged to have systemic failures, but by July 2025, monitoring inspections confirmed effective action had been taken.

Nottinghamshire County Council People Services (Children and Adults) have a strong record of leadership, financial management, and partnership working, particularly examples are the Integrated Care System, Better Care Fund, and integrated neighbourhood teams. These strengths position us to lead future improvements across the area.

Decisions on local government reorganisation must consider the impact on national reforms, including the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, Families First Partnership Programme, SEND reforms, Integrated Care Boards, and the forthcoming Casey Review into Adult Social Care. Stable leadership, clear accountability, and consistent practice standards will be essential during this period of change. Risks—particularly around workforce stability, provider confidence, and continuity of care—should be managed through a phased, co-designed transition plan, clear communication, and retention of experienced Officers.

Key strategic partners, including the Police, Integrated Care Board, NHS providers, district and borough councils, and the voluntary sector, already operate across Greater Nottinghamshire. Establishing single, system-wide governance arrangements for both adult social care and children's services will enable early joint planning, provide strategic oversight, and support safe transition to new arrangements. Cross-authority governance will offer a stabilising framework, unify leadership and practice standards, and help retain expertise and workforce confidence during organisational change.

Implementation Plan



Implementing this proposal requires sequenced planning and transformation to achieve the best results. We have divided implementation into five key phases, each tackling a different aspect of reorganisation so that Day 1 and beyond is a success.

- **Up to 28th November 2025:** Strategic Business Case & Principles. *This activity has been completed as part of this proposal.*
- **28th November 2025 to Spring 2026:** Planning & Mobilisation
- **Spring 2026 to 6 May 2027:** Early Transition
- **6 May 2027 to 1st April 2028:** Launching New Councils
- **1st April 2028 onwards:** Post Day 1 Transformation

Each phase has concentrated activity across an indicative 6 workstreams, from programme management and internal delivery to change and models of service delivery as well as stakeholder engagement and communications

- **Leadership & Governance:** *Management covers the internal management of the transformation process and leadership of the organisations overall. As a core programme management team, this workstream includes coordinating strategic comms and engagement with residents, businesses, partners, and members. This workstream also focuses on structural and leadership changes under the reorganisation process (e.g. Shadow Elections) and undertakes gateway reviews between each phase of implementation.*
- **Operating Model:** *Operating Model covers any changes to the way the council operates internally and externally with its different functions and partners. This workstream will coordinate activity across the Technology, Workforce, and Services workstreams (below).*
- **Technology:** *Technology refers to any system-wide technology transformation, including data and system architecture.*
- **Workforce:** *Workforce activities to support transformation for employees, including onboarding, communications, and actual transition between organisations.*
- **Services:** *Services cover the changes for People & Place services. This will focus on the actual transition, prioritising services for vulnerable people before Day 1, and on direct communications for those who will be most impacted by the change.*
- **Democracy:** *Support, engagement and communications as well as logistics to support Members and create the right democratic governance and oversight arrangements for all stages of implementation.*

Phase 2 - Planning & Mobilisation: 28th November 2025 to Spring 2026

We recognise the need to begin the transition process as soon as possible to be able to successfully reach Vesting Day in 2028 and create the conditions for longer term transformation and public service reform. We will use the time before now and the formal decision from Government to begin preparations, including agreeing goals and principles of how we will work immediately after an option is chosen as well as preparing for some of the system implementation challenges.

Leadership & Governance

- Transition Programme Team (TPT): We propose to set up a cross-authority Transition Programme Team that the County Council would be willing to resource and host, to work with all other councils and oversee reorganisation. This will be responsible for the other workstreams, including coordinating engagement with MHCLG. The initial TPT will divide following the MHCLG decision into two teams across the two proposed Continuing Authorities, who will work together to coordinate activity. This will involve representatives from all councils for each respective unitary boundary.
- Agree Joint Opportunities: The TPT will first convene to assess where early transformation, within or between councils and other partners, could be carried out before the decision from Government to support reorganisation regardless of the option chosen. For example, councils could begin to rationalise their contracts internally and undertake an activity analysis to assess where service synergies could be made.

Operating Model

- Baselining & Internal Review: To plan and prioritise transformation activities, we will conduct a baselining exercise across councils and establish how our current operating models align. This review will cover all core aspects for the operating model, including structure, workforce, performance processes, service best practice and opportunities for public sector reform.

Technology

- Review As-Is Architecture: The time between the preferred option submission and a decision from Government will be utilised to map out the current technology architecture of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils. This will set the grounds for transition planning, highlighting where streamlining will be more complex. A core activity here will involve systematic contract rationalisation. With an ongoing

SAP transformation in the County, plans will be developed for keeping activity going while looking into where the transformation could be extended to help rationalise technology systems.

Workforce

- Values and Behaviours: Following on from the development of organisational principles, the workforce workstream will design the organisation values and behaviours desired in the unitary structures. This should be co-designed across councils to ensure that decisions here can be applied to any option that could be selected.
- Communication: We have a proven track record of workforce engagement in shaping the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal. It would be our intention that this engagement continue so that our talented, skilled and experienced workforce remain committed to delivering high quality services day to day, whilst shaping and planning to mobilise the new Councils in the future.

Services

- Develop Detailed Transition Plans: Services will be the most visible, high-risk part of local government reorganisation. Detailed plans for transition will be developed where possible before pre-decision to ensure the transition process is underway as quickly as possible.
- Joint Opportunities Service Transitions: The time before a decision being published will be used by the TPT to find opportunities for councils to collectively prepare for reorganisation. These will include changes which can be implemented before Summer 2026 and reduce transformational load later in the timeline. This could include coordinating contracts across the area or collaborating on services in areas that will be grouped into a unitary regardless of the option - e.g. across Nottingham and Broxtowe, or Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Bassetlaw.

Democracy

- Communicate, Consult: Members have a critical and democratic role in providing leadership to and having oversight of all stages of implementation and we will continue to engage with and support Members as planning progresses. Communications will concentrate on the detailed planning for transition and the pending elections. There will also be regular updates at relevant democratic and committee meetings, where concerns, and risks can be aired and addressed. Prior to the MHCLG decision, this will be led by each council respectively with their own Members.

- Design, Deliver: Members will play a crucial role in the upfront design of robust and effective Neighbourhood Governance Models building on their deep understanding of the unique challenges and priorities that are faced in their areas.

Ongoing Engagement

- We will engage with our residents, partners, and workforce at every stage. On an ongoing basis, we will communicate the existing options to our residents, partners, and officers to keep them informed on our future plans. We will specifically engage our partners to explore how we can best transition without disrupting services and to work together to realise the ambition we have set out in this proposal. Following a decision, we will update our workforce to keep everyone informed and engaged in developing the plans to realise our vision and the immediate transition plan for 2027-2028.

Phase 3 - Early Transition: Spring 2026 to 6th May 2027

Once the MHCLG decision has been published, we can begin transformation at pace. In the Early Transition phase, we will set up the legal structures needed to move to a two unitary structure. We will use the previous phase's plans, principles, and review work to develop detailed plans and shift some services to the new structure where possible.

Leadership & Governance

- Structural Change Order (SCO): The leadership of the relevant councils and the Transition Programme Team will liaise with MHCLG to ensure the SCO reflects our shared priorities to develop the right legislation for this change. This will include the boundaries of the new councils, the number of Councillors, and the legal structure of the new councils.
- Shadow Elections: we will prepare for the Shadow Authority elections that are expected to take place in May 2027.

Operating Model

- Develop Detailed Target Operating Model (TOM) Blueprints: Once a decision has been published by MHCLG, we will develop a detailed plan for the future operating model, taking into account current set-up and future ambitions. This will design future governance structure, process design, workforce shape, and preserve any existing best practice.

Technology

- Design To-Be Architecture: After an option has been selected, the team will then design the future architecture, aligned to the chosen unitary divide. This will include data architecture, communication methods, and shared systems. This is an area of significant opportunity to align business systems across the legacy organisations and ensure that fragmentation and inefficiencies are tackled early creating a better customer experience.

Workforce

- Workforce Transition Planning: Once a decision has been made, the workforce transition workstream will begin planning the officer transition. This includes considerations for: pay harmonisation, TUPE, Officer and management structure, location.
    - Recruitment and Talent Strategy: In a period of major change, retention and long-term talent strategies are critical. The workstream will use this planning opportunity to boost retention during transition and ensure that recruitment and promotion processes reflect the core skills required by a unitary council.
- Building New Ways of Working: As we develop plans for workforce transition, we will work internally to build new organisational values and behaviours set out in our principles work in the previous phase. The workforce transition workstream will set out methods to support these values, rewarding key behaviours and creating an identity for the new organisations.

Services

- Finalise Service Transition Plans: The detailed delivery plans above will be tailored, finalised, and agreed by all parties to kick off the transition process.
- Early Service Improvements and identification of opportunities for public sector reform or system change: While the wider transition is being mobilised, we will work to move low-risk services that are already shared between some councils. We will transition and extend existing shared services early, following the MHCLG decision, including alternative delivery methods such as Inspire and Via. These are services provided through a charity or commercial function that are operated by councils.

Democracy

- Communicate, Consult: Members will be engaged in the design and development of the operating model. Members will have a leadership role in the governance and oversight of the transition and implementation of organisational change and any changes to service delivery.
- Design, Deliver: Members will continue to play a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of our Neighbourhood Governance Models.

Ongoing Engagement

- We will engage with our residents, partners, and workforce at every stage. Following an MHCLG decision, we will communicate the chosen option to all groups, including a transition plan. More detailed plans will be shared with groups that come into regular contact with the council and may face more significant changes to their daily lives. For example, we will ensure that those who receive Adults, Childrens, and Housing services are aware of the changes going on.

Phase 4 - Launching New Local Authorities: 6th May 2027 to 1st April 2028

One year into the transition process, we will shift to focus on change and public service reform at pace. We will use the detailed planning of the previous phase to kick off transitions in operating model, technology, and services. We have brought forward all transitioning for high-risk services to mitigate any risks on Day 1. This includes all preparations for Day 1, such as setting up single customer access so that contact on Vesting Day is as easy as possible.

Leadership & Governance

- Shadow Authority Set Up: The Shadow Authority and supporting internal teams will set up core political governance within the new structure and begin the appointments process for senior officer roles.
- Budget and Council Tax Harmonisation: The Transition Programme Teams will develop the budget harmonisation framework for the new unitary structures, ensuring there is a balance between funding streams and level council tax within each area.
- *Potential additional secondary legislation: This could be required for a variety of reasons that would arise during the planning and transition process, for example pension realignment.*

Operating Model

- Early Phases of TOM Implementation: This is the beginning of the transition process, implementing key areas of the design, phased by complexity and risk. Internal organisation structures will begin transitioning to the two unitary structures. This includes the activities below: implementation of tech strategy and cohering systems, onboarding and transitioning of some employees.

Technology

- Deliver Single Customer Contact Site: Taking the transition as an opportunity to reform how we contact our residents and other stakeholders, we will implement a single front door before Day 1 to capture Day 1 queries and triage future contact. Given the complexities of back-end data and system architecture, front end components will be prioritised here including building on the MyNotts app to provide seamless digital access.
- Reinforce Cyber Security: A large-scale transformation like reorganisation may increase the risks of cyber-attacks during and after Day 1. We will mitigate this risk by reinforcing our cyber security approaches, systems, and education.

Workforce

- Employee Onboarding: Our workforce need to be confident they know who they report to and who their teams are before Day 1. Proactive communication will support employees onboarding to our new organisations, teams, and ways of working. This will require a nuanced workforce communication strategy, especially as the change experienced by colleagues outside of the current unitary could be substantial. Here, we will encourage self-serve to manage further common questions.
- Early, Non-Structural Transitions: Any early opportunities for internal workforce transitions will be carried out as soon as possible before Day 1. This will ease the level of change experienced on Day 1 and allow the councils to begin developing their own cultures sooner rather than later. This could include, for example, officers from shared services that operate in a different setting to the two unitary councils. Up to Tier 4 of the workforce will be appointed by Day 1.

Services

- High-Risk Services Transition: As the key priority for continuity, high-risk services will transition to the new unitary structure as soon as possible. This will include Children's Social Care, Adults Social Care, and Housing Repair Services. These will be transitioned before Day 1, with some reform activities underway, so there is no disruption in continuity of care.

Democracy

- Induction programme for newly elected Councillors: A Shadow Authority is established, with a new constitution, democratic structures and local governance in place. Through our Member engagement, Councillors have told us about their support needs. This will be provided for Members in their new roles through a comprehensive induction programme working in partnership with partners such as the Local Government Association where appropriate to ensure there is a comprehensive understanding of all statutory responsibilities and that we build on best practice from across the sector.
- Setting up the new local authorities: With Members elected, we will create the structures and supporting resources needed for the new councils to support community and council democratic processes. This will include coordinating meeting spaces for the larger council meetings; supporting links to Town and Parish Councils; and developing launching stronger Neighbourhood Governance Models with a view to involving partners and local community based organisations. Close working with Town and Parish councils will ensure local insights and expertise are integral to the new authorities.
- Building on existing strong relationships will ensure local voices are heard and communities are represented at the hyperlocal level.

Ongoing Engagement

- We will engage with our residents, partners, and workforce at every stage. At this stage, we will regularly share transition plans with all groups and contact individuals directly who use council services.

Phase 5 - Post Day 1 Transformation: 1st April 2028 onwards

After Vesting Day (1st April 2028), all councils in the area will transition to the two unitary councils. Workforce and Services will be moved to the newly designed structures - transitioning the majority of organisations on Day 1, with follow up changes in the next 12 months. Further transition will take place after Vesting Day, e.g. to bring together technology systems within each unitary. We will continue to transform services following Vesting Day and build a stronger, unified culture within each organisation.

Leadership & Governance

- Ongoing Transition Support: The Transition Programme Teams will continue to coordinate Day 1 transitions and post-Day 1 transformation to ensure services are stable and operating at their best by April 2029.

Operating Model

- Continued TOM Implementation: We will continue to implement the TOM for those with longer term transformation timelines or that were deprioritised for Day 1.
- Refine Transformation Programme: Given changing realities across the council reorganisation, Day 2 will provide a strong opportunity for reflection. The operating model transformation team will use this to refine the post Day 1 implementation programme, evaluating where further support or time is required.

Technology

- Implement IT Architecture: Post Day 1, we will continue technology transformation with a renewed focus on digital and we will rationalise our IT infrastructure and build on existing cloud-based strategy.
- Ongoing Transition Support: We will continue to support the transitioning council areas on and after Day 1 as systems move between organisations and data transfers to centralised platforms.

Workforce

- Workforce Transition: On Day 1, all Officers will transition to the new unitary structure. On-the-day and ongoing support will be provided to ensure every member of our workforce is confident in their role.

Services

- Continued Phased Service Transitions: All further services will be transitioned either on or after Day 1. Visible services will be a priority for Day 1 to ensure residents know their council structure has changed and understand the new contact streams. Further transformation of services will continue to implement the propositions in this proposal, following a clear transformation plan developed before Day 1.

Democracy

- Ongoing Transition Support: From Day 1, the Transition Programme Team and wider council leadership will be focussed on continuing to support Members to lead complex change. This includes communicating transition plans, briefings on services that could previously have been outside of their remit (e.g. for a member transitioning from County or District Councils to the unitary structure) and a forward look at wider transformation.

Ongoing Engagement

- We will engage with our residents, partners, and workforce at every stage. On and after Day 1, we will host regular contact to remind residents, partners, and employees of the transition and what to expect next. We will use a single helpline to ensure contact on Day 1 is simple and accessible for any concerns and to address unforeseen disruption.

Making Day 1 a Success

We will bring our collective and long-standing experience in major transformation to implement reorganisation that is:

- Visible,
- Safe,
- Seamless,
- and Coherent.

How we will make Day 1… Visible

- On Day 1, we will prioritise overt changes so residents and stakeholders feel the effect of the change and can see that they are now being served by two new councils. We will radically improve our customer experience providing seamless digital access building on the MyNotts app. This will act as supporting comms to all residents who may not interact with the council regularly. We will ensure all residents know who their council is and how to contact them on Day 1.

How we will make Day 1… Safe

- We will prioritise having high risk services transitioned to the new unitary structure by Day 1. Childrens, Adults, and Housing Repair services will be in operation by Day 1, so reform changes will not affect service.
- We will make sure any pressing contact will be simple and accessible through a specific hotline for Day 1 as communication pathways shift.

How we will make Day 1… Seamless

- Across the partnership we have a proven track record of transformation both internally and supporting other councils. For example, a recent transition to Vertas for school catering was completed without a single school meal being missed due to strong contingency and pre-transition planning. This involved the transfer of 2000 employees between organisations, with 97% being paid correctly on Day 1. Rushcliffe BC successfully relocated approximately 200 employees via a detailed change management programme to a new facility at Rushcliffe Arena. Such change management programmes have informed this implementation plan and will provide drive and rigour to future, detailed planning.
- Internally, 80% of our workforce report they are confident in their relationship with their line manager. We have a history of supporting strong talent pipelines and retention in fluctuating workforces which includes in areas such as social care and other roles where there is high demand for these skills nationally. We will bring this experience into our workforce transition planning, ensuring that every member of our workforce is confident in who their line manager and team is before Day 1.

How we will make Day 1… Coherent

- Maintaining and building on our system leadership experience across Nottinghamshire is a priority for us. This will be used to lend strength and simplicity to our relationships with partners throughout the transition, benefitting from a single voice before, during and after new structures are fully implemented.
- The consultation and convening the partnership councils have already conducted has helped use develop this robust approach which will account for the complexities across our area.

Requirement for Successful Transformation

Investment

While the long-term efficiency and effectiveness of restructuring to two unitary councils in the Nottinghamshire area will benefit the local population for years to come, the initial transition costs are not insignificant. As transition costs will sit alongside normal running costs in an already tight fiscal environment, early investment will be required to support the reorganisation programme.

Transition costs cover a range of activity including:

- **New unitary set up and close down costs:** Spend to design the new UAs and manage the change (including training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT & Systems costs:** Spend on new and upgraded systems to support the new UA structure.
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** Resources needed to run the transformation programme (eg. Project Management).
- **Redundancy costs:** Payments and support for employee reductions due to structural changes.
- **Contingency:** A buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and complexity.

A full breakdown of transition costs is included in the financial case (Section 6).

Skills and Infrastructure

Significant capacity will be required for the transition to support across the core workstreams.

Many will be transitioning to a new scale of organisation, with increased complexity across the board. We will use our internal programme management capabilities to guide the transitions but require specialised skills in:

- Major programme management across the two unitary councils
- IT design and implementation skills and capacity
- Organisation design and development for both operating model and workforce transformations

9. Asks of Government

In order to ensure the success of local government reorganisation and unlock the potential of the new councils to become 'next generation' Councils, we respectfully set out a series of asks for Government engagement and support. These proposals are designed to enable the new councils to deliver the highest quality public services, drive innovation, and respond effectively to the needs of our communities.

Support for devolution

Firstly, we endorse the requests previously made by the Mayor to the Secretary of State for EMCCA to be given Established Status. This will strengthen leadership, coherence, and capabilities in the region. It will harness the full potential of the Government's English devolution agenda and send a clear signal to investors that the Government, Mayoral Strategy Authority and local Councils have a shared commitment to the region, with clear plans in place.

The East Midlands has a shared interest with national government in bringing forward the full benefits and flexibilities as early as possible. This is needed to demonstrate a full and shared commitment to deepening devolution and delivering prompt, and meaningful change for the East Midlands. EMCCA could utilise and benefit from Integrated Settlement flexibilities from 2026-27 in a number of ways. We support EMCCA's view that Established status can help in unlocking the growth potential of the Trent Arc by allowing up to 10% of our Investment Fund to switch from capital to revenue, by converting 10% of Transport for City Regions (TCR) capital to revenue will allow us to provide better bus services and fare incentives, with similar approaches for the Brownfield Housing Fund allocation and consolidating skills and employment funds into a single pot. Furthermore, a multiyear settlement investment in housing retrofit would improve the quality of people's homes and boost the supply chain, and securing the benefits of investment in flood protection would be enhanced through a multiyear settlement for EMCCA to develop high-quality projects.

Funding arrangements

We welcome progress made by MHCLG and Treasury in the Fair Funding Review and in rolling specific grants into the Local Government settlement. Through the tapestry of Combined Authorities there is a further opportunity that more specific grants can be rolled into main grant with the flexibility given to the Combined Authority to drive and deliver on growth, transport, infrastructure, housing and town centre improvements, removing the need and additional cost of annual bids for grant. This should also provide an opportunity for Government to roll more specific grants into main grant for unitary councils and as the overall number of councils will be less. The ability to use updated data analysis should be the driver for the distribution of all funding for local authorities whilst maintaining flexibility for use and meeting need at the local level.

Approach to implementation

In terms of structural change, we propose the adoption of our model set out in our implementation plan and supporting appendix for an efficient and effective legal vehicle for transition. Continuing authority status as the legal mechanism to transition from nine councils to two new will be simpler, more efficient and cost less, expose our programme and our residents to less risk, and increase confidence of deliverability to timetable.

Neighbourhood governance

We seek Government engagement regarding the role of Neighbourhood Committees in the planning process. Strengthening these committees would amplify the voice of local people and Councillors, whilst maintaining the integrity of Planning Committees as quasi-judicial bodies.

In support of democratic participation, we ask Government to consider actions that would widen opportunities for people to stand for election, such as bringing forward pension eligibility for Councillors and other enabling measures. For example, shifting to evening meetings can make council roles more accessible to working people, a practice already common in unitary councils.

Delivery of national reforms

We ask for the extension of the Neighbourhood health pilot and the Test, Learn, Grow programme that are currently being delivered in Nottingham City to both new councils and across the entire locality, supporting innovation, learning and improved health outcomes for all residents.

Civic arrangements

We further ask for Government support with respect to the lieutenancy and civic functions, ensuring that these roles continue to contribute effectively to local leadership and civic pride.

Assessment of financial cases

We request a detailed Government assessment of the financial assumptions, transitional costs, and risks associated with implementing significant boundary changes during local government reorganisation, to ensure decisions are fully informed and sustainable.

Children's services

We are collectively committed to improving outcomes, help and protection for children and families. We invite Government to sponsor the County Council in becoming the appointed Sector Led Improvement Partner to our colleagues and partners at Nottingham City Council's Children Services, should they remain subject to an Inadequate graded judgement by Ofsted in 2026. This partnership would enable the cross fertilisation of proactive 'outstanding leadership' locally and drive consistent outcomes for children and their families across the greater

Nottinghamshire footprint whilst also allow for early progress towards disaggregation, thereby reducing long-term risk to children and families. Should this be agreed, it would further be an opportunity to work collaboratively on implementing DfE reforms proactively.

With regard to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), we believe there is a case to be made for an appropriately timed reinspection and seek clarity and support from Government in this respect.

Standards in local government

Finally, we urge Government to prioritise bringing forward the legislation around standards, which was referenced in the white paper but has yet to be included in a Bill. Such legislation will help maintain the highest standards of conduct and accountability in local government.

Together, these asks form a coherent package designed to maximise the effectiveness, inclusivity, and future-readiness of our new councils, and we hope Government will work collaboratively with us to realise this vision.

10. MHCLG Checklist

Invitation Letter – Guidance & Criteria (05/02/2025)	Relevant section within the proposal
Criteria 1 – A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.	This is set out as headlines in Section 2., **Executive Summary**, noting that both councils have a balanced tax base with neither dominant nor disadvantaged. It is also referenced in Section 4., **The Options Appraisal**, and is expanded upon in the full options appraisal (Appendix A). Further information is set out in the full financial case section regarding council tax modelling (Appendix E).
a. Proposal 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.	This is set out as headlines in Section 2., **Executive Summary**, with specific reference to working with EMCAA to meet housing supply targets and need, and our commitment to developing our services with and for communities. It is also referenced in Section 4., **The Options Appraisal**, and is set out in more detail in section 5.d.iv; **Delivering Affordable Homes and Tackling Homelessness.**
b. Proposals should be for sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.	Evidence and analysis is set out in the options appraisal section, specifically on and is expanded upon in the full options appraisal (Appendix A). Outcomes to be achieved are set out in section 5. Evidence of estimated costs/ benefits is set out in section 6., **The Financial Case** and in the full financial case (Appendix E). Evidence of local engagement is set out in Section 7., **Local Engagement** on pages and in the **Member Engagement Report (Appendix J)** and **LGR Stakeholder Engagement (Appendix K).**
c. Proposals should be support by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to	The proposed two new councils are described in Section 5a., **Greater Nottinghamshire – safer, simpler, stronger: our purpose and ambition for two next-generation councils** Governance structures

achieve, including evidence of estimated costs/benefits and local engagement.	are described in Section 5c., **Our proposition for neighbourhood working**. The way that we will achieve desired outcomes is also set out in Section 5c, and in Section 5d.,
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.	
Criteria 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.	Section 5b., **Two new Unitary Councils for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire**, states that Nottingham Council will be 565,821 rising to 583,258 by 2030. Nottinghamshire Council will be 622,269, rising to 641,107 by 2030.
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.	Not applicable.
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.	Section 5d.vi, **Operational Excellence** sets out our ambition to deliver services in the most cost-effective way and making the best use of public funds, particularly referencing data, digital and information and commissioning and procurement. Evidence of financial benefit from transformation is set out in section 6., **The Financial Case** and in the full financial case (Appendix E).
d. Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service	The full financial case (Appendix E) explores transformation scenarios to model different phasing of transition costs and also

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.	identifies additional transformation stretch targets to maximise potential public service reform savings. Section 8., **Planning for implementation and wider public service reform** references how we propose to reduce transition costs through a Continuing Authority model. In section 6.,
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.	This is set out as headlines in Section 2., **Executive Summary** which confirms that **Commissioners have been engaged** throughout and care has been taken to ensure a positive path to the future for the Council in Best Value intervention in our partnership. **The Financial Case** describes how both councils will achieve financial viability and the transformative activity required.
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.	This is addressed in **The Financial Case** which describes how both councils will achieve financial viability and the transformative activity required.
Criteria 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.	Hyper-local service delivery and governance is evidenced in Section 5c., **Our proposition for neighbourhood working.** Avoiding unnecessary fragmentation is referenced in Section 4., **The Options Appraisal** and is expanded upon in the full options appraisal (Appendix A).

b. Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money.	Opportunities for public service reform are set out in section 5., describing a complete reset of how local public services work together, reducing duplication and achieving good outcomes (and therefore reduced costs) through the right support delivered at the right time.
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.	Consideration of crucial services is set out in Section 5., **Our Proposal for You**, with particular reference to the following sub-sections: 5.d.i: **Giving Children the Best Start in Life** pages 5.d.ii: **Supporting Adults to reach their Full Potential** pages 5.d.iv: **Supporting Independent Living and Vulnerable Residents** and **Tackling Homelessness Through Integration and Prevention** 5.d.v: **Public Safety** Impacts are also considered in the implementation plan.
Criteria 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 (including a: meaningful and constructive engagement should be evidenced).	

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.	All 9 councils agreed to commission an external partner, *Public Perspectives*, to conduct a local engagement exercise to inform final proposals. (Appendices G and I). A joint website was also set up to keep residents informed of progress. This can be accessed here.
b) Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.	Consideration of regional diversity can be seen in Section 3a., **Our People**; the **Options Appraisal** concluded that the Greater Nottinghamshire model recognises the differences in local identity between the largely urban and the largely rural councils, and how this can be leveraged to shape targeted service delivery (Appendix A). Our heritage, history, culture and sport are referenced in Section 3b., **Our Place** . In Section 5b., **Two new Unitary Councils for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire** we describe the key cultural differences between the two councils and how the model will leverage these. There is also a section on Civic Pride and traditions.
c. Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed.	Section 7., **Local Engagement**, describes the stakeholder engagement that has been conducted both collectively across the 9 councils, and also by both Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council. Broader detail is included in the **Engagement Appendix** (I) and the **Members Engagement Appendix** (J)
Criteria 5 - New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements (including b: how the proposal will unlock devolution where no CA or CCA exists currently).	
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	The East Midlands Combined County Authority is referenced in Section 3c., **Our Place**; the **Options Appraisal** concludes that the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal 'maximises the potential for delivery of EMCCA's regional growth and devolution framework in

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.	Nottingham and Nottinghamshire' in Appendix A; Section 5.d.iii., **Driving economic growth** describes in detail how the model will support the delivery of EMCCA's inclusive, sector-led, place-based growth ambitions and Section 5.d.iv., **Delivering Affordable Homes and Tackling Homelessness** sets out the opportunity work with EMCCA to secure investment and devolved funding and develop a new local planning authority to deliver housing growth and critical infrastructure targets.
C. Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities.	As set out in the **Executive Summary**, the proposal has responded to all of the Mayor's asks with regards to creating viable principle Councils that don't require change to EMCCAs governance and can deliver growth and spatial priorities
Criteria 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.	Hyper-local service delivery and governance is evidenced in Section 5c., **Our proposition for neighbourhood working**, which describes the establishment of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs).
b. Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement	Section 5c., **Our proposition for neighbourhood working** describes how local leadership and neighbourhood empowerment will be delivered through strong local democratic representation, the establishment of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees working alongside existing Town and Parish Councils, and greater focus on community voice.

11. Appendices

Appendix A: PwC LGR Options Appraisal (July 2025)

Appendix B: KPMG LGR Options Appraisal (July 2025)

Appendix C: PwC LGR Options Comparative Analysis – Nottingham City (September 2025)

Appendix D: Neighbourhood Public Service and Neighbourhood Health

Appendix E: PwC Financial Case

Appendix F: CIPFA Financial Case Template

Appendix G: Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LGR Engagement Report September 2025

Appendix H: Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LGR Engagement Report – Methodology and Clarifications October 2025

Appendix I: DRAFT Stakeholder Engagement Report

Appendix J: DRAFT Member Engagement Report

Appendix K: Draft Structural Change Order – to follow

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Local Government Reorganisation

July 2025

Nottingham City Council

Nottinghamshire County Council

Bassetlaw District Council — North Nottinghamshire —

Ashfield District Council

Broxtowe Borough Council

Gedling Borough Council

Mansfield District Council

Newark & Sherwood District Council

Rushcliffe Borough Council

Contents

Options Appraisal for Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils in line with the requirements of the Government's English Devolution White Paper published in December 2024.

1. Executive Summary

PwC supported the production of this report (which details the results of collaborative discussions between the councils) and:

- *Assisted with the options appraisal of the different formations of unitary council we have considered.*
- *Conducted financial analysis of those unitary options.*

For the avoidance of doubt, PwC's input was provided solely with our interests in mind, for our use only, and may not be relied upon by any other party.

Executive Summary: Summary

This document provides and options analysis for local government reform (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It support and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025.

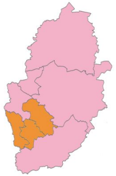
Phase 1 (January - March 2025)

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This has led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

1b
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling



1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling**
2. **The rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

1e
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe**
2. **The rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City

1. **Nottingham City remains the same**
2. **The rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

Phase 2 (May - June 2025)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework.

The additional analysis prepared has particularly focussed on:

- **Sensible economic area**
- **Sensible Geography**
- **Impact on crucial services**

Each of the three options offer different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and 1(e) (as set out on page 33) were found to provide the strongest alignment to the set criteria.

The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in degree of alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

This document sets out how each of the three options aligns to the MHCLG criteria and includes updated financial modelling to reflect a review of the assumptions which has been discussed with s151 officers over the course of the last few weeks.

Executive Summary: Updated financial analysis

The financial analysis, methodology and assumptions applied have been shared, tested and talked through with s151 officers. All councils have accepted the financial analysis as complete with each s151 officer providing assurance on the model and underlying assumptions. This analysis is to support the options analysis stage only. Significantly more work will be needed for a financial case that supports a full proposal.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Comparative purposes only **Option 3:** Single Unitary Authority	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Executive Summary: Process to date

Following the publication of the White Paper, significant activity has taken place in order to agree a local response, to test potential models for reorganisation, to document the outcomes of that analysis, and to present a comprehensive set of information for Chief Executives and Members to consider. The process followed is set out below:

Page 7	Page 22	Page 27	Page 31	Page 63	Page 72
Background & Context	**Case for Change**	**Options analysis to March 2025**	**Options Appraisal post March 2025**	**Financial Analysis**	**Implementation**
The potential benefits for councils in the area in both national and local contexts were explored using locally agreed criteria and the criteria provided by MHCLG.	The case for change examines opportunities to address inefficiencies and disconnections in the current two-tier system and evaluates the potential opportunities that could be driven by local government reform.	The approach undertaken to shortlist options to take forward to implementation. The shortlist was discussed by the Leaders / Mayor of the nine councils.	Qualitative assessment of the options were combined with comparative analysis of local economies, geography and deprivation to consider the alignment of options to MHCLG criteria.	A high level financial analysis was undertaken to evaluate the potential benefits, costs and savings associated with creating new unitary authorities.	This section sets out the considerations for implementation and the likely timescales as well as the potential outlining the activities and resources required.

2. Background and Context

2a. National Context

National Context: Devolution and reform

The **English Devolution White Paper** published in late 2024 by MHCLG, outlined a shift in the approach and ambition for reorganising and decentralising power to Local Government in England

The White Paper sets out as the default an enhanced Devolution Framework clarifying the powers available to each type of Authority and the aspiration regarding the types of powers and funding arrangements that will exist in future. This was a distinct shift from previous approaches, built around a bespoke devolution ‘deals’. This new approach seeks to empower local authorities to address existing financial sustainability and local service challenges by:

- Allowing for increased powers to be vested in local and regional government supported by new funding frameworks and integrated funding settlements;
- Structuring these new entities to cover larger geographies, but to retain logical boundaries which avoid ‘islands’ between reorganised areas, and which resonate with local identity;
- Implementing these radical changes at pace, accelerating delivery of benefits.

Reorganisation:
The transition to unitary authorities will ultimately remove the ‘two tier’ model of delivery from the map. This will involve the creation of new unitary councils which take the place of the current county, city and districts.

Devolution:
Creation of Strategic Authorities which will coordinate and commission services at a regional level. This could include the collaboration of multiple unitary authorities to provide a strategic regional authority. The White Paper includes specific ambitions and incentives for these authorities to drive economic growth and lead on strategic planning and transport.

National Context: “*a once in a generation opportunity*”

Government has set out their ambition to make the most of a ‘*once in a generation*’ opportunity to improve the way that local and regional government operated in England. The aim is to create the conditions for economic growth, reduce duplication and fragmentation and create greater efficiencies in public spending and service delivery.

Transform service delivery: LGR should be a catalyst for transformation, beginning with the establishment of new unitary councils. This provides a rare opportunity to redesign ways of working from the ground up and to deliver greater consistency across all services. It also allows for the opportunity to share the best of what is done currently, and to deploy it at scale to support broader public service reform.

Increased efficiency: There is duplication and fragmentation across local government as a result of the way the two-tier system has developed over a number of years. LGR creates an opportunity to address this by consolidating common functions, bringing together services that are currently split across more than one tier, make better use of new and emerging technology and reduce the volume of systems or assets that are currently in place.

Establish a stronger voice for the place: There is an opportunity to develop a stronger, more unified voice for the area which supports its growing presence on the regional and national stage. Government has already expressed its view about the importance of unitary local government as part of the devolution agenda, and in future models of system-wide delivery or integrated funding.

Enhance connections with communities: LGR presents an opportunity to create event better connections with local communities, better understand their sense of belonging, and to design models of service delivery that are effective. A number of the unitary councils established during previous rounds of LGR have adopted similar new arrangements, using the raised profile of democratic accountability to promote and enhance the connection with their communities.

Growth & Prosperity: Continued accelerated growth which reaches all parts of the area requires a strategy that builds on regional priorities and opportunities. The conditions for future prosperity will be influenced by new infrastructure and investment which that require a place-based approach across a wider geography. This is a key priority for regional and local government who will need to work together in different ways to achieve this.

National Context: MHCLG ambitions for local government reform

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria correspondence to all 21 two-tier areas across England on 5th February 2025.[1] Set out below is a summary of that criteria. The department shared some additional clarifications in June 2025 as part of the response to the interim plan.[2]

Criteria 1

Establishing a single tier of government for the whole area

Sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base.

A sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.

Proposals need to be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes.

There is a need to 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.

Criteria 2

Improve efficiencies, capacity and withstand financial shocks

New councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more. There may be scenarios in which this does not make sense for an area, including on devolution.

Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that council taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money.

Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets.

Criteria 3

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

Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services.

Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money.

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.

Criteria 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

It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way.

Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.

Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed.

Criteria 5

New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements

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, 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. Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities.

Criteria 6

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

Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged.

Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement.

2b. Local Context

Local Context: Existing two-tier local government

Local government across Nottinghamshire has seen major changes in governance arrangements over time.
In 1992, unitary authorities were created, and by 1998, Nottingham City Council regained full responsibility for local services, while the county continued to operate a two-tier system with District councils.

1888

Creation of Nottinghamshire County Council
The Local Government Act 1888 established Nottinghamshire County Council for rural governance. Nottingham became a county borough.

1894

The Local Government Act
This act created urban and rural district councils, further refining local governance and replacing older parish vestries.

1974

Local Government Reorganisation
This introduced a two-tier system, with Nottinghamshire County Council overseeing strategic services while district and borough council managed local matters.

1998

Nottingham Becomes a Unitary Authority
The City of Nottingham regained unitary authority status, separating from Nottinghamshire County Council and restoring control over key services

2024

East Midlands Combined County Authority
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils become constituent members of the EMCCA which held its first Mayoral election in May 2024.

2025

Devolution and LGR white paper
The Leaders / Mayor from all nine councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire began reviewing options for local government reform.

Local Context: The ambition to drive public sector reform

In response to the White Paper shared on 16th December 2024, and in advance of the statutory invitation being received from MHCLG, the nine councils agreed a series of local priorities which are set out below:

How people live their lives

- Covers a credible geography – reflecting how places function economically and how people live their lives
- Reflects community identity and makes sense as a "Place" including spatial characteristics
- Enables sustainable operational delivery for public services
- Seeks to improve connectivity especially for communities that most need support

Financial and fiscal sustainability

- Financially sustainable local authorities, which are resilient to longer-term economic or policy changes by balancing income and need
- Delivers value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Delivers financial benefits which outweigh the cost of change
- Risk informed with effective mitigation measures
- Considers the future Council Tax base and equalisation across new authority areas

Offers the potential for public service reform that improves outcomes and experiences for residents

- Enables solutions to challenges impacting on residents' outcomes and which risk long-term financial stability
- Provides safe and resilient support, help and protection and care to vulnerable children, families and adults
- Aligns with EMCCA to enable creation and delivery of services for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire
- Considers alignment with all other key strategic partners
- Maximises opportunity to enhance delivery through innovation

Enables strong, local accountability and connection to communities and neighbourhoods

- Ensures services are easily accessible for all
- Strengthens the role of local democratic leadership
- Builds trust with local communities
- Seeks the active input and engagement of residents, businesses and employees

Local Context: East Midlands Combined County Authority

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has a strategic purpose to address economic, planning and infrastructure needs at a regional level. Further devolution deals under the proposed strategic authority framework will provide a means to unlocking additional central government (integrated) funding arrangements and greater powers with delivery responsibilities sitting with new unitary authorities.

EMCCA's Background

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024.

The EMCCA is a partnership of local authorities working across the region to leverage devolved funding.
An elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers is in place. This creates the conditions for greater local autonomy and will over time gain further strategic powers and devolved central government funding.

What constitutes the EMCCA?

In November 2022, a devolution deal was agreed by the four upper-tier councils:

- Derbyshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Derby City Council
- Nottingham City Council

This secured a £1.1bn investment package, spread over a 30-year period, alongside devolved powers around transport, housing, skills and adult education, economic development and net zero.

EMCCA's Priorities

EMCCA's shared ambition for the region focuses on:

- Growing the region's economy through targeting investment to drive growth
- Improving transport links for better connectivity
- Increasing housing availability
- Enhancing skills development to create demand and supply within the region
- Supporting green initiatives
- Improving health outcomes

East Midlands Combined County Authority

Local Context: Role of EMCCA and new unitary authorities

Determining how the new councils will work with EMCCA will form part of the full business case. Several factors should be considered when defining this relationship including MHCLG criteria, existing and future aims and objectives and community expectations of each body as well as the opportunity for wider public service reform.

The role that unitary authorities will play in service delivery, within the context of the newly created EMCCA, will need to be agreed during implementation. Initial factors for considerations are outlined below:

(1) Criteria: *What does 'one layer of local government for the whole area' imply?*

MHCLG Criteria 1 requires proposals to achieve the establishment of a single tier of local government. For Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, EMCCA will set the strategic direction, and the new councils will have an operational focus.

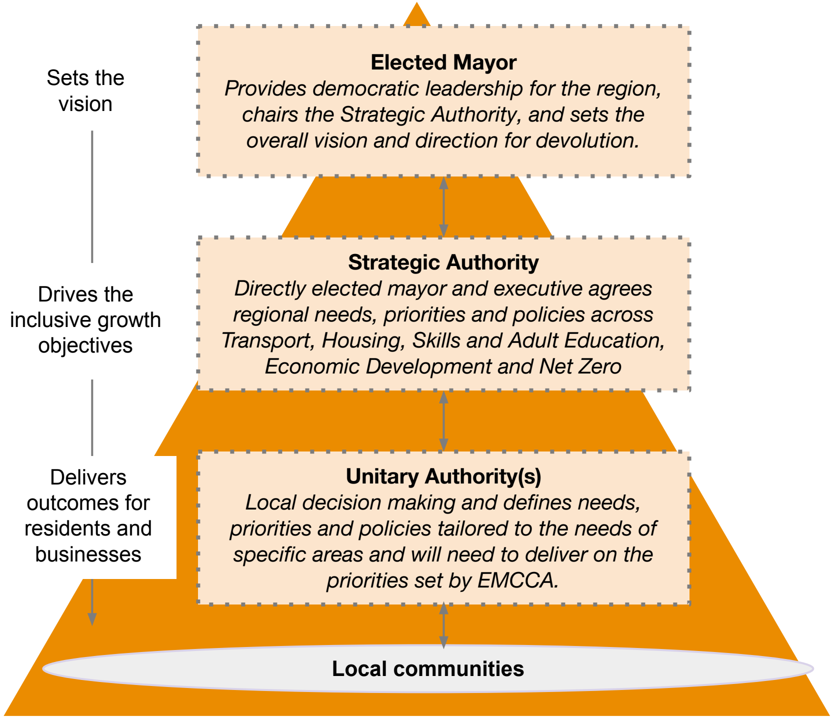
(2) Purpose: *What are the aims and objectives of each body?*

EMCCA has powers relating to transport, housing and skills – alongside leading the economic strategy of the region. Several key aims have been identified within the EMCCA Strategic Framework that sets out an initial broad vision rooted in 'inclusive growth'. The Strategic Authority will set the growth agenda and lead decisions on the direction of spatial planning, transport and skills provision.

This will be overseen by the EMCCA Inclusive Growth Commission, which sets out the view that growth is essential to creating successful communities that are people-centred and focus on education, wellbeing, public safety, healthcare, infrastructure, housing and assets.

(3) Community: *What would a resident expected of each body?*

Residents will expect councils to continue providing vital services to their community and championing their towns, rural communities and cities, whilst EMCCA will be expected to deliver transport links, business development and employment opportunities that support places and inclusive growth.



Local Context: Geography, population and council spend

Set out below and across the next four pages is a snapshot of the context in which all nine councils are operating which has fed into the comparative analysis undertaken, aligned to local and MHCLG criteria.

Nottinghamshire is currently served by multiple tiers of local governance. Nottinghamshire County Council is responsible for education, social care and highways, while seven district and borough councils provide services such as housing, waste collection and local planning. Nottingham City Council operates as a unitary authority, distinct from Nottinghamshire County Council, managing all local government functions within its boundaries.

The county is represented by 11 parliamentary constituencies, many of which closely align with district and borough boundaries.

Nottinghamshire shares a boundary with several neighbouring counties: Derbyshire to the west, South Yorkshire to the north, Lincolnshire to the east and Leicestershire to the south. EMCCA is comprised of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and the cities of Nottingham and Derby.

Nottinghamshire County

Population: 844,494
Total annual net spend: £1.2bn

Bassetlaw

Population: 122,286
Total annual net spend: £21.2m

Mansfield

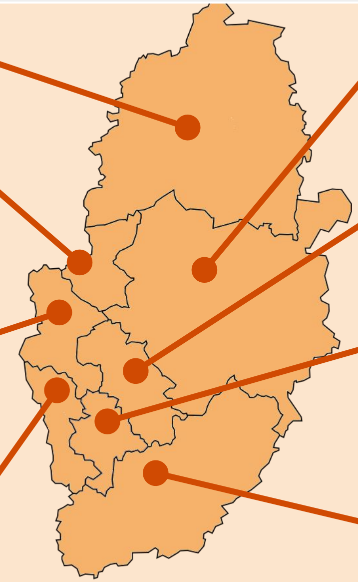
Population: 112,091
Total annual net spend: £15.2m

Ashfield

Population: 128,360
Total annual net spend: £22.0m

Broxtowe

Population: 113,172
Total annual net spend: £14.7m



Newark and Sherwood

Population: 126,168
Total annual net spend: £22.6m

Gedling

Population: 118,563
Total annual net spend: £15.6m

Nottingham City

Population: 329,276
Total annual net spend: £632.9m

Rushcliffe

Population: 123,854
Total annual net spend: £16.8m

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid- 2023: local authority boundary edition
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25

Local Context: Place & Demography

Nottinghamshire has a diverse socio-economic profile, with place and demographic trends indicating contrasts between urban and rural areas as well as across those places which are historically industrial compared to those which are experiencing growth in new sectors. It is important that any reorganisation considers the diverse place and demography across the wider area.

19.0% of the Nottinghamshire population is aged over 65, and is projected to rise by over 30.0% by 2034. Bassetlaw has the highest proportion of over 65's, while Nottingham City has the lowest.

Gross disposable income is highest in Rushcliffe, at £23,828, and lowest in Nottingham City, at £15,015. This compares to a national average of £20,425.

Bassetlaw has the lowest population density within the area at 110 people per square km. Nottingham City is the most densely populated as 4,338 people per square km.

The further education and skills participation is highest in Nottingham City, at 6,545 per 100,000 population, and lowest in Rushcliffe, at 4,435 per 100,000 population.

Ethnic diversity varies, with Nottingham city the most diverse (65.9% white; 14.9% Asian, Asian British or Welsh; 10.0% Black, Black British or Welsh, Caribbean or African) and Bassetlaw the least.

Nottingham City has the highest proportion of its population claiming out of work benefits, 6.3%, and Rushcliffe the lowest at 2.1%.

Nottingham City is facing economic challenges as a result of growth constraints, whilst northern districts are more deprived and some districts such as Rushcliffe have older populations overall.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid- 2023: local authority boundary edition
[2] ONS Census: Gross disposable household income (2021)
[3] Nomis Population Density (2021)
[4] ONS Census 2021: Further Education and skills participation
[5] ONS Census Ethnic group, England and Wales
[6] ONS Claimant Count (2024)

Local Context: Economic Geography

Latest data on Gross Value Added (GVA) demonstrates strong ties in the manufacturing and wholesale / retail trade sectors, with at least one of these sectors being a significant part of each district's economy. Any new unitary authorities will need to carefully consider the sectors it intends to nurture, the type of inward investment it will seek and what type of economy would be created as a result. EMCCA clearly has a significant leadership role in this.

Local Authority City / District	Largest in GVA terms (2022)		2nd largest in GVA terms (2022)		3rd largest in GVA terms (2022)	
	Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
Ashfield	Manufacturing	19.4%	Human health and social work activities	18.5%	Construction	13.6%
Bassetlaw	Manufacturing	20.8%	Wholesale and retail trade	12.3%	Human health and social work activities	11.1%
Broxtowe	Manufacturing	24.2%	Real estate activities	12.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Gedling	Real estate activities	18.2%	Manufacturing	15.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	14.9%
Mansfield	Wholesale and retail trade	16.8%	Real estate activities	11.6%	Manufacturing	11.6%
Newark & Sherwood	Manufacturing	12.6%	Real estate activities	11.4%	Information and communication	9.9%
Nottingham	Education	13.7%	Human health and social work activities	12.4%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Rushcliffe	Professional, scientific and technical activities	22.9%	Real estate activities	13.3%	Wholesale and retail trade	10.7%

Sources:
[1] ONS - Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region

Local Context: Transport and Connectivity

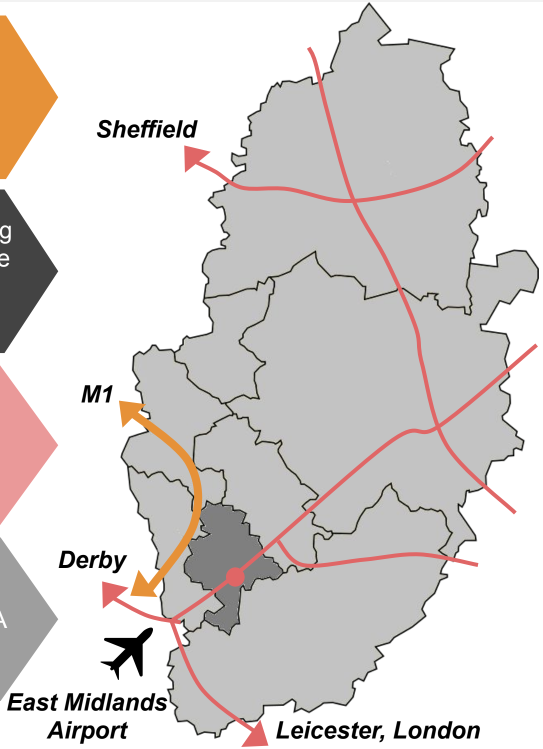
Nottinghamshire's transport network is designed to support economic hubs and growing commuter flows. Greater investment is required to enhance connectivity and mobility. It is important that any reorganisation efforts consider the existing transport and infrastructure arrangements.

Transport data reveals significant commuting patterns, particularly the dominance of Nottingham as a key employment hub, attracting 73% of workers from within the city, 42% from Gedling and 35% from Rushcliffe. Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood are also major employment centers, with 55% of Mansfield's workforce living locally and 59% of Newark and Sherwoods' workforce employed within the area. However, smaller employment flows exist across districts, demonstrating localised economies with some regional mobility.

Transport infrastructure supports current movements, with the M1, A1, and major rail links providing connectivity. Though transport is challenging in rural areas where one-third of the population resides. Increasing vehicle use is evident, with Nottinghamshire's road traffic rising from 3.9bn miles in 2020 to 4.8bn in 2023, while Nottingham's traffic grew from 885m miles to 1.1bn miles in the same period. Strategic planning for transport and services after LGR will be crucial to maintaining connectivity and overall will be the responsibility of EMCCA.

Nottingham City Council has secured over £250m since 2019 to enhance its transport network. Key programmes include Transforming Cities for better connectivity, the Bus Service Improvement Plan for greener buses, Future Transport Zones for innovative mobility, the Levelling Up Fund for safer streets, and the Active Travel Fund to promote walking and cycling. These support the city's long-term transport vision.

In the context of LGR, transport planning must remain coordinated and efficient to support economic connectivity and service integration. Many transport projects, such as Transforming Cities and the Bus Service Improvement Plan, are currently delivered in partnership between Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils. A shift to two unitaries, for example, would require a strategy to avoid duplication, ensure efficiency, and coordinate investment across the area. EMCCA will have a leadership role in this as the Strategic Authority.



Sources:
[1] [Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2026]

Local Context: Strategic Partnerships

Strong partnerships exist across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire which provide the basis to drive better outcomes and wider public sector reform. The majority operate within coterminous boundaries. Some examples of these are set out below.

Regional Government

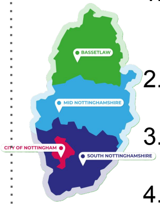
The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024, with the Mayor elected in May 2024.

Initial devolved funding arrangements and powers are in place governed by an elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers. There is an opportunity for EMCCA to become a strategic authority under the arrangements set out in the White Paper.

Health Partners

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS): This partnership brings together the wider system to commission and deliver integrated health and care services, including primary care across the whole Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area.

Within Nottinghamshire, there are four Place Based Partnerships (PBPs):



1. Bassetlaw Place Based Partnership *(also part of South Yorkshire ICS)*
2. Mid Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
3. South Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
4. Nottingham City Place Based Partnership

Private Sector & VCSE

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Alliance: Established in July 2022, this alliance comprises VCSE organisations across the region, acting as a single point of contact to generate citizen intelligence from the communities they serve. The alliance collaborates with statutory partners to improve outcomes for residents.

Since 2016, Arc Partnership - a joint venture between Nottinghamshire County Council and SCAPE - has delivered 3,511 community projects and secured £394m in investment. It provides property design, consultancy, regeneration, and asset management services.

Community Safety

There are a range of community safety partnerships across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs): County/City Councils are required to participate in CSPs, which involve collaboration with police, fire services, health services, and other agencies to develop strategies for reducing crime and improving community safety e.g. the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership. Also, in two-tier areas there is a statutory requirement to have a strategic county coordinating group, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB).

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire has one police force, which is split into 12 smaller neighbourhood policing areas, allowing local officers to work closely with communities.

3. Case for Change

Case For Change: Opportunities

Local government reform in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire presents an opportunity to address inefficiencies in the current two-tier system, which creates duplication, administrative complexity, and inconsistent service delivery.

Opportunities

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have already embarked on a journey to devolution as part of EMCCA and LGR offers an opportunity to underpin this with a local structure that supports and complements the regional authority. A new unitary authority which encompasses an expanded city area would create space to grow, in turn providing opportunity to align urban planning and services. For example, with 6,565 additional homes required in Nottingham City over the forecast period 2022/27, reorganisation may enhance housing provision by balancing resources across a larger geographical area and tax base.

A simplified governance model would consolidate local service delivery under two new unitary authorities. This approach can enhance efficiency and consistency across a wider geography and community, ensuring seamless, equitable and cost-effective provision of key services. It also provides clarity for residents on where responsibilities for delivery of local services lies, and the respective layers of democratic representation.

Building on the Progress of EMCCA

Strengthening Regional Governance 1
LGR can help ensure that local councils work more efficiently with EMCCA, avoiding fragmented governance and complex decision-making processes.

Attracting More Investment 2
EMCCA can unlock significant funding and access to regional and national investment, while a streamlined local government structure simplifies bidding and fund management and delivery once funding is secured.

Supporting Economic Growth 3
Aligning LGR choices with the regional strategy and economic vision by simplifying the two-tier system decision-making and implementation.

Enhancing Democratic Accountability 4
LGR creates clearer governance, strengthening local authority ties with EMCCA and ensuring transparent, accountable decision-making for residents and businesses.

Case For Change: Limitations in the current system

Rising financial pressures on local councils highlight the urgent need for governance reform, with unitary authorities bringing together services with opportunities for future transformation, offering a pathway to improved stability, efficiency, and accountability.

Limitations

The current two-tier system can be confusing for residents and businesses regarding the responsibility for service provision (*see page 25*), and creates considerable customer demand in redirecting and supporting enquiries. Multiple district councils increases the challenge of coordination, and while collaboration across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is generally productive and positive, delivering complex services such as housing, planning and economic growth is more challenging across multiple organisations. The recent reliance on bidding processes for central government funding places local areas in a competitive rather than collaborative space, resulting in potential gaps in service delivery, or in unequal provision of support across the area.

There are wider partnership challenges as the number of organisations that need to be involved in decision-making processes or operational delivery is significant. This is a system-wide issue and not just limited to local government arrangements.

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Escalating challenges in Financial Stability

Nottingham City Council is under a Best Value Intervention Framework review due to financial challenges. To comply with the Best Value Duty, it developed a framework within its ‘Together for Nottingham’ plan, aimed at improving service delivery and meeting statutory obligations. Rising demand for key services, particularly adult social care, alongside economic pressures has intensified financial strain. In 2024/25, the council required £41.0m in Exceptional Financial Support to balance its budget. To address ongoing challenges, it proposed £17.9m in savings and income measures for 2025/26, focusing on financial stability while maintaining essential services.

Projections at the time of this analysis indicated a budget pressure of £27m in 2024/25 for Nottinghamshire County Council, with more significant pressures identified in subsequent years. To address financial challenges, the council has proposed various service efficiencies aimed at maintaining value for money while delivering its priorities.

There is also a live consultation on Fair Funding 2.0 which is likely to result in changes in funding levels for all councils in the area.

Case For Change: Services

The existing two-tier system has the potential to lead to service duplication. Local Government Reform offers a chance to simplify services, optimise resources, and enhance outcomes for residents. The types of local authorities and the services provided by each district are outlined below.

Type	Name	Community Safety & Trading Standards	Economic Develop-ment	Education & Schools	Highways Roads & Transport	Housing	Licencing & Public Protection	Parks, Leisure & Culture	Planning & Building Control	Public Health	Social care	Waste disposal / recycling	Waste Collection
Unitary Authority	Nottingham City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County Council	Nottinghamshire County	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	*	✓	✓	✓	
District Authority	Ashfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Bassetlaw	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Broxtowe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Gedling	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Mansfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Newark & Sherwood	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Rushcliffe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

* Nottinghamshire County Council provides planning and building services in the form of Strategic Planning

Case For Change: Democracy

Democratic services across Nottinghamshire, the city and districts manage a significant amount of electoral services activity, including rolling registration, election administration and supporting committees of their respective councils. Unitary councils would result in one set of local elections per authority (as currently take place in Nottingham City):

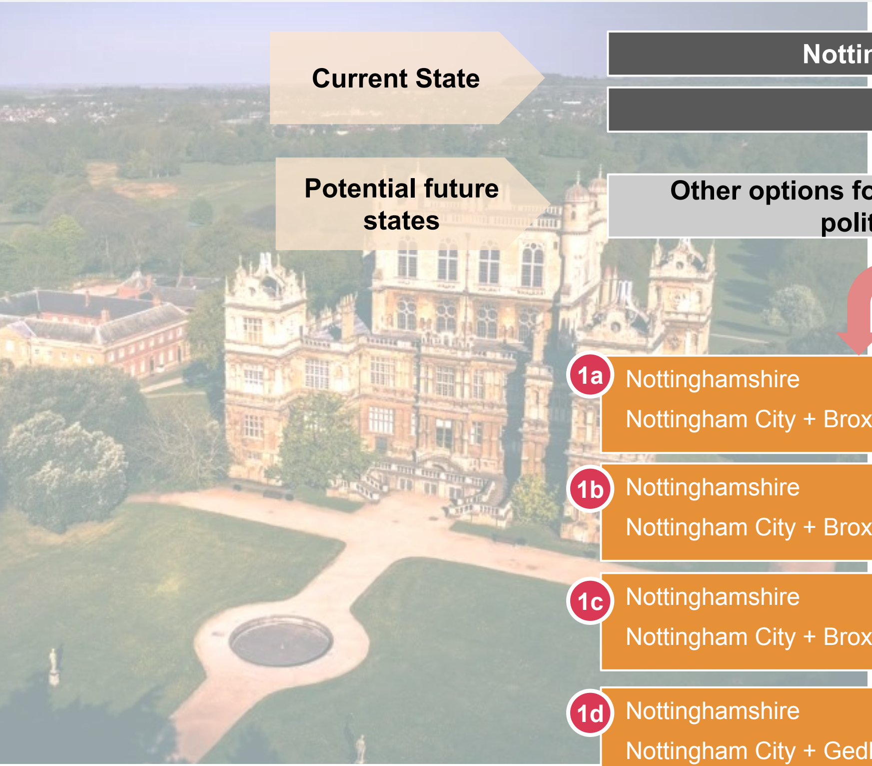
Local Election	Number of Councillors[3]	Election Cycle[3]	Last Election[1]	Votes Cast[1]	Number of electors per council member[3]
Nottinghamshire County Council	66	4 years	2025[2]	287,388[2]	9,404[4]
Nottingham City UA	55	4 years	2023	55,879	3,633
Ashfield	35	4 years	2023	29,594	2,662
Bassetlaw	48	4 years	2023	27,738	1,868
Broxtowe	44	4 years	2023	42,154	1,922
Gedling	41	4 years	2023	31,259	2,185
Mansfield	36	4 years	2023	22,191	2,266
Newark & Sherwood	39	4 years	2023	27,844	2,371
Rushcliffe	44	4 years	2023	39,926	2,095

Sources:
[1] Electoral statistics for the UK 2023; [2] Sum total of votes casted (2025)
[3] Various Sources (2021-2025); [4] The Local Government boundary commission

4. Options analysis to March 2025

Summary of Options: Overview

A number of two unitary authority options were identified to be part of the initial options appraisal activity taking into account the MHCLG framework and local criteria.



Current State

- Nottinghamshire County Council
- District Councils
- Nottingham City Council

Potential future states

- Other options for change discounted for political reasons
- Two Unitary Authorities

Multiple remaining options

Option	Unitary 1	Unitary 2
1a	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe
1b	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling
1c	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe
1d	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Gedling
1e	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe
1f	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Rushcliffe
1g	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe
2	Nottinghamshire	Nottingham City

Methodology and Approach: Overview

The process for appraising the initial eight options and distilling to a shortlist of three is set out below. The detail of each of the four lenses of the comparative analysis is set out on the following page.

1 Longlist of options

An overview of all the potential options for LGR will be initially outlined.

Multiple unitary options covering different geographies

2 Option Distillation Approach

- Collective engagement with CEX, Leaders & Mayors
- Individual engagement with Senior Officers
- Individual engagement with each CEX and respective Leader / Mayor
- Assessment of fit to local & MHCLG criteria

Comparative Analysis

- Lens A – Geographic Synergy
- Lens B – Financial Viability
- Lens C – Comparative Analysis
- Lens D – LGR Benefits & Costs

3 Shortlist of options

At this stage, a preliminary shortlist of options to take forward for implementation will be outlined.

- Option
- Option
- Option

Comparative Analysis: Overview

Each option was analyses through a series of 'lenses' the detail of which is set out below. The summary of the comparative analysis can be found at Appendix C.

Lens A

Geographic Synergy

Geographic Analysis

Analysis of publicly available data to understand the geographic synergy of the two unitary authority options. This will include an understanding of each District's proportion of rural and urban populations, each Authorities Mosaic Segmentation Profiles and the average time to key services.

Lens B

Financial Viability

Analysis of financial data from individual councils

Analysis of publicly available information to understand the financial viability of two unitary authority options. This will include understanding existing positions on debt to reserve ratios, and measure both current and future Council Tax take in relation to demand for both Adult and Children Social Care.

Lens C

Comparative Analysis

Other relevant information

Analysis of other relevant data points in line with the criteria such as population, deprivation and housing to identify which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Lens D

LGR Benefits & Costs

Outcomes of financial modelling

Our financial analysis will be used to assess the benefits and costs of your local government transformation, demonstrating the benefits, costs and savings related to the implementation of a two unitary authority system.

5. Options analysis post March 2025

Summary of Options: Options to take forward (1/2)

As set out in the previous section, the first phase of options analysis distilled eight options to three which were included in the interim plan submitted to Government in March.

Current State

Nottinghamshire County Council

District Councils

Nottingham City Council

Potential future states

Other options for change discounted for political reasons

Two Unitary Authorities

Multiple remaining options

1a
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe

1b
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

1c
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe

1d
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling

1e
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

1f
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Rushcliffe

1g
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe

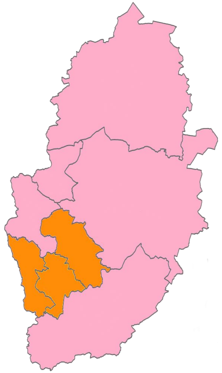
2
Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City

Key: Proceed to Interim Plan

Summary of Options: Options to take forward (2/2)

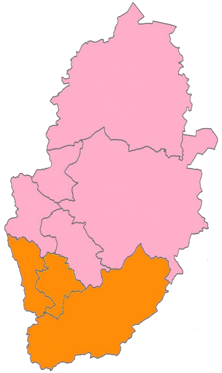
The three options set out in the interim plan are described below.

1b
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling



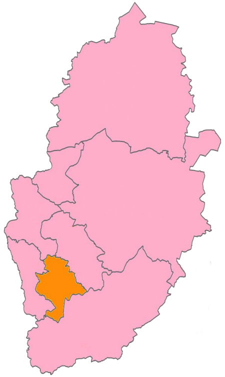
1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling**
2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

1e
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe



1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe**
2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City



1. **Nottingham City remains the same**
2. The **rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (1/3)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed that further analysis should be undertaken by the nine councils to enable Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case for local government reorganisation.

Each option demonstrates varying degrees of alignment with the MHCLG criteria and presents distinct strengths and risks. Key factors that have been considered include financial sustainability, service coordination, and sensible geographic and economic configurations.

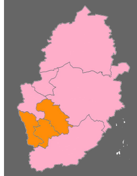
Assessment against MHCLG Criteria + **Domain Analysis**

- 01 Sensible single tier of local government
- 02 'Right-sized' local local government
- 03 High quality, sustainable services
- 04 Meets local needs
- 05 Supports devolution arrangements
- 06 Local engagement and empowerment

- 1(b) Sensible economic breakdown
- 1(c) Sensible geographic breakdown
- 3(a) Improves local government & service delivery
- 3(b) Opportunity for public service reform
- 3(C) Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk on crucial services

Relative alignment of LGR criteria among options:

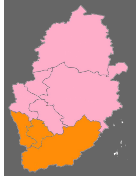
High alignment | Medium alignment | Low alignment



Option 1(b)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

This option demonstrates a somewhat stronger fit against the MHCLG criteria compared to other options. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and aligns with the City's demography and geography, potentially creating a more even requirement for service delivery and equal population / debt-to-reserve ratio based on analysis.

01 02 03 04 05 06



Option 1(e)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria. It is a marginally stronger fit on travel to work and housing market areas, has a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, (to 1b) and is comparable in terms of the financial analysis completed to date. The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the more diverse Mosaic characteristics, potentially leading to a requirement of different services models across the place.

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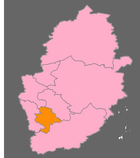


Option 2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria of the three options under further consideration. It would provides the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas, a significant population and debt-to-reserve imbalance which is the highest amongst all options, significant challenges in coordinating and financing services, and may leave communities that identify with the city in a different geography.

01 02 03 04 05 06

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (2/3)

Additional analysis was completed focussed on key MHCLG criteria including 1(b), 1(c) and 3 as highlighted below. This and previous analysis completed has helped inform the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria.

Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option 2
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic breakdown: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic breakdown: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	Low
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Low
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	Medium
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	Low
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (3/3)

Each LGR model offers different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and (e) would provide the strongest alignment to the MHCLG criteria. Whilst the analysis concludes that Option 2 is the least appropriate option, it also sets out that the differences between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

Summary of domain analysis

Sensible Economic Area (SEA) (1a)
The differences in degree of fit are marginal. Option 1(e) (< 1 percent) provides a slightly stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA) but also will have the complication of housing delivery for the urban conurbation being delivered across two authorities.

Sensible Geography (1b)
Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) producing two more balanced authorities in size with a wide mix of housing supply sources and reflects existing joint workings on GNSP.

Critical Services (3)
Option 1(b) is overall the preferred choice due to its demographic and geographic similarities. Additionally, it provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand of crucial services.

Criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
1 *Sensible single tier of local government*	*Strong alignment with SEA criteria but fragments travel to work/housing areas; urban capacity constraints and green belt review could impact future growth beyond current plan*	*Stronger alignment with SEA criteria marginally more than Option 1(b) (<1 percent); wide mix of housing supply resources but supply will be require cross council collaboration.*	*Greatest fragmentation of travel to work and housing market areas and weakest alignment to sensible geography; supply figures look strong through difficult to increase supply in long-term (no green-belt)*
2 *'Right-sized' local government*	*Equal population level (603k vs 661k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserves ratio (53.5 vs 16.6); financial resilience likely to be met despite imbalance and only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e)*	*Equal population level (611k vs 653k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserve ratio (47.1 vs 17.5); though is the option with the lowest difference on this factor between authorities*	*Significant population imbalance and highest amongst all options (352k vs 912k); financial resilience a concern as debt-to-reserve reaction significantly unbalanced (83.9 vs 16.5)*
3 *High quality, sustainable services*	*Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND; has the best demographic and geographic makeup for service delivery.*	*Provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness and ASC; there are challenges around SEND as Rushcliffe has a lower demand with varying geography and demography.*	*It creates unitaries with an uneven distribution of services; The demand for homelessness, ASC and SEND is the most varying under this option.*
4 *Meets local needs*	*Combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and most similar clustering of Mosaic segments across both authorities; able to tailor services to specific demographics*	*Combines authorities that are most different in terms of rural / urban settings, with the city-based conurbation authority becoming predominantly rural; difficult to tailor services to specific demographics*	*Combines authorities that are highly alike in terms of rural / urban setting; arguably less likely to satisfy criteria as may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different and rural geography*
5 *Supports devolution arrangements*	*Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (603k for Nottingham City and 661k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)*	*Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (611k for Nottingham City and 653k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)*	*Combined authority already exists though does not meet requirements for a sensible population (352k for Nottingham City and 912k for Nottinghamshire by 2035) and minimum threshold of 500k population*
6 *Local engagement & empowerment*	*Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries though not completely coterminous; new channels required to engage communities*	*Existing efforts to prepare GNSP demonstrates joint engagement and some overlap with Hospital Trusts though not completely coterminous; mix of rural/urban communities requires bespoke channels*	*Consolidation of rural communities allows for concentrated focus on specific community issues; size of rural / mixed urban unitary could make it challenging to maintain depth of local engagement*

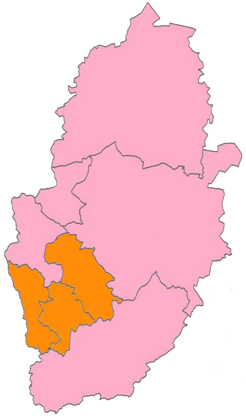
Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Alignment to MHCLG criteria: H M L

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 1(b)

This option demonstrates the strongest fit against the MHCLG criteria overall. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings amongst all options and aligns with the City's demography and geography, offering a balanced distribution of service delivery, equal population and debt-to-reserve ratio.

1b **Two Unitary Authorities:**
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

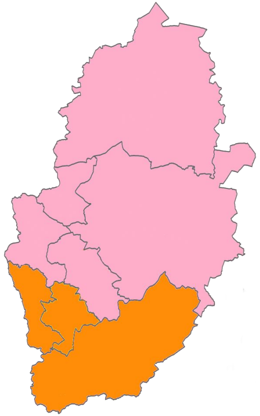
Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	Presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria than Option 2 though is not an optimum fit as fragments both the travel to work and housing market areas in Nottingham; though only marginally more more than Option 1(e) (< 1 percent).[1 (22)] Similarly, it presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria than Option 2, though less than Option 1(e).[2 (22)] Whilst Option 1(b) has the lowest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs,[2 (12)] constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.[2 (20)] Deprivation levels are relatively equal though the spread between authorities is wider in Option 1(b) than 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling average deprivation score at 26.5, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 20.7.[9]
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level though marginally less than Option 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire would have 661,460.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to criteria 2 - is likely to be met with this option, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 53.5, with the Nottinghamshire authority standing at 14.0.[8] Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, this option is only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e).
Criteria 3	Strongest fit with Criteria 3 given the similar demographics and geography between Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham City meaning minimal impact to service delivery given infrastructure, town centres, travel and crossover to facilitates. Ensures a balanced distribution of demand for SEND services, minimising impact on resources, workforce and caseload.[3 (8,11)] Additionally, this option offers the most equitable share of Children's Social Care Expenditure (51% & 49% for the County and City authority respectively).[12 (8)] It also has potential to deliver ASC services to areas with greater commonality of needs.[4 (9)] Potential risks of Option 1(b) include potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services 10 [(14)] and possible impact on provider services due to asset relocation.[4 (10)]
Criteria 4	This option presents the strongest alignment with criteria 4 when considering local identity. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options (i.e. Urban Minor Conurbation and Rural Town/Fringe).[5] It also has the most similar clustering of demographics across both Unitary Authorities when considering mosaic characteristics, which are mainly Aspiring Homemakers, Senior Security, Rental Hubs, Domestic Success and Rental Hubs (non-exhaustive).[6] Given the similar grouping of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority could best tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic.[5]
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5. It supports effective governance arrangements with the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham City conurbation projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire to have 661,460.[7]
Criteria 6	There is some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography, though there would be a need to consider if new channels / approaches will be required to strengthen engagement with communities. Gedling, Broxtowe and Nottingham residents also share similar urban characteristics, challenges, and infrastructure needs - enabling more targeted and aligned engagement approaches.[6]

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Criteria Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Criteria Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 1(e)

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria with a marginally stronger fit with travel to work and housing market areas than Option 1(b). Whilst there is a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, and similar levels financial resilience, the city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the least similar Mosaic characteristics, potentially needing different service delivery models and a potential imbalance in terms of demand.

1e **o Unitary Authorities:**
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	Stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria, providing the strongest fit with travel to work areas, housing market areas and NHS hospital trust areas, though only marginally more than Option 1(b) (< 1 percent).[11 (23)] Similarly, it presents the strongest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria overall,[2 (22)] despite having the greatest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs.[2 (15)] This is due to existing collaborations on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and the ability to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt to address the housing needed, producing two balanced planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources. Deprivation levels are relatively equal between the two authorities and is the option with the lowest difference, with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe average deprivation score at 24.7, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 22.3.[9]
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level and is the option with the lowest difference between authorities, with the city authority projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire having 653,127.[7] Additionally, financial resilience- is likely to be met, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 47.4, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's 17.5. Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, it is the option with the lowest difference between authorities.[8]
Criteria 3	Demographics and geography differ in the city authority, with Rushcliffe being more similar to Bassetlaw and Newark with large rural areas and an older adult populations.[4 (17)] Whilst no noticeable service enhancement opportunities have been identified for ASC[4 (12)] or SEND, this option may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City.[10 (15)] For Children's Social Care, Option 1(e) would provide a fairer share of the tax base across the two new unitarties.[12 (9)] However, whilst the disaggregation of Rushcliffe from the county to city authority would have little impact in terms of demand (i.e. children in care), income would be significantly reduced for the county authority. The percentage point gap of 6% between the share of children's total expenditure is 3 times that of Option 1(b).[12 (9)] The key risk to service delivery is further exemplified through the loss of revenue for SEND service in Rushcliffe, as it has a lower rate of children with EHCPs or special provisions which would result in an imbalance between service demand and income needed.[3 (9)]
Criteria 4	This option presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(e) combines authorities that are the most different in terms of rural / urban settings.[5] The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural, whilst the county-based authority would remain predominantly rural.[1 (23)] Of all three options, it also has the least similar Mosaic characteristics across both authorities.[6] Given that Option 1(e) would combine authorities that are most different in terms of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority might not be able to tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic in the same way that Option 1(b) could.
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5 as there is already an existing combined authority within the Nottingham City conurbation. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham city conurbation projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 653,127.[7]
Criteria 6	Some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography. The rural mix of rural and urban populations within the city-based authority would will present unique needs and therefore potentially new and bespoke channels will be required.

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
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4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
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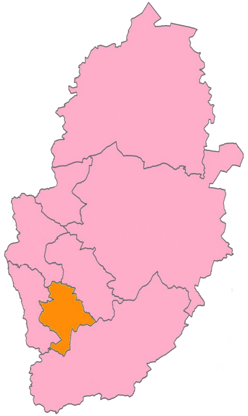
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 2

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria. It would create councils with the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas and a significant population imbalance. It would also confine the City to existing boundaries rather than creating the conditions for growth.

2 **Two Unitary Authorities:** Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages (Key: Footnote (Page))
Criteria 1	This option presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria of all three options, providing the lowest degree of economic self-containment 1 [(10)] and the greatest fragmentation of travel to work areas, NHS hospital trust areas and the Inner Nottingham housing market areas.[1 (6, 15, 13)] Similarly, it presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria, as the ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City.[2 (17)] Whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time (e.g. absence of Green Belt land).[2 (19)] Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs have a significant shortfall and requires the highest number of houses to be identified across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.[2 (18)] The contrast in deprivation levels are the highest amongst all options, with Nottingham City's average deprivation score at 34.9, significantly higher than Nottinghamshire's 19.[9]
Criteria 2	This has the weakest alignment with criteria 2, as it presents a significant population imbalance and the highest difference amongst all options, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035, fewer than Nottinghamshire's 912,182.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to the criteria 2 - is a concern, as Nottingham City's debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 83.9, exceeding Nottinghamshire's 16.5.[8] This imbalance increases financial vulnerability when compared to Option 1(b) and Option 1(e), and has the highest difference amongst all options.[8]
Criteria 3	Option 2 does not meet criteria 3, as it establishes unitaries with heightened viability issues and service imbalances.[3 (11)]There is a high social care cost imbalance in this option as the projected social care-to-council tax spending ratio is 1.12 for Nottingham City and 0.83 for Nottinghamshire.[4 (15)] This would cause financial strain due to high care demands paired with a limited tax base. While this option presents a greater GP availability, it is not enough to outweigh its structural weakness.[4 (15)]
Criteria 4	Option 2 presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options.[5] Arguably, Option 2 would less likely to satisfy the requirement as it may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different geography.
Criteria 5	This option presents the weakest alignment with criteria 5. Whilst it may support effective governance arrangements between the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy, it does not meet the requirements for a sensible population size ratio, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 912,182.[7] This would not meet the threshold for a population of 500,000 or more.[7]
Criteria 6	Community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment will need to be supported. This option retains the need for continuous, strong, coordination between the City and County authorities for any major incidents that affects both areas. It may not fully capitalise on the benefits of aggregation that a single larger authority could offer for truly region-wide threats.[11 (Pg.24)]The sheer size of the rural/mixed urban-rural unitary could make it challenging to maintain the depth of local engagement and partnership.[5]

1. Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
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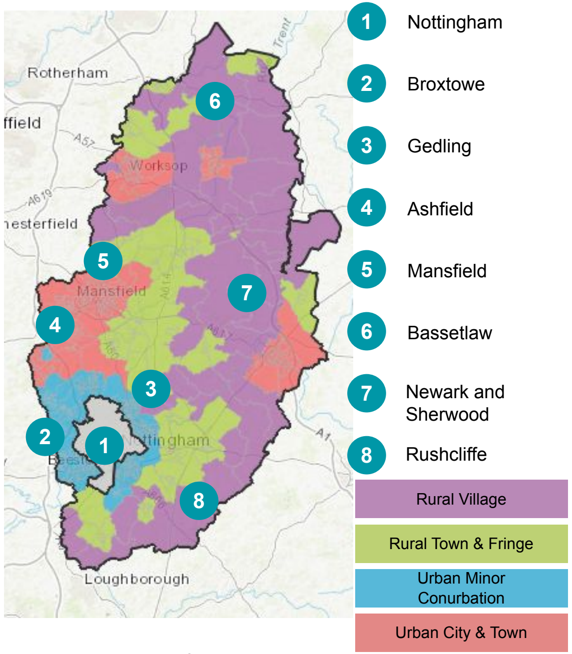
Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis of 11 core cities in the UK

The table below shows the percentage distribution between rural and urban areas within the UK's eleven core cities. Option 1(b) most closely aligns with the average city demographic offering an urban density of 96.1% against the UK average of 98.41%, which is greater Option 1(e) (87.6%).



Average proportion of rural population
[Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory]

11 core cities	Rural %	Urban %
Bristol	0%	100%
Liverpool	0%	100%
Manchester	0%	100%
Nottingham (currently)	0%	100%
Birmingham	0.10%	99.90%
Glasgow [1]	0.40%	99.60%
Belfast [2]	0.43%	99.57%
Newcastle	2%	98%
Cardiff [3]	3%	97%
Sheffield	4.10%	95.90%
Leeds	7.50%	92.50%

The primary focus is a comparison of the percentage of rural and urban areas within each city, highlighting the predominance of urban regions. A key observation is that Option 1(b) is more aligned with demographic characteristics of a typical UK city, with an urban density of 96.1%, whilst Option (1e) would have the least urban density of all UK cities at 87.6%.

Option	Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
Option 1(b)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
Option 1(e)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	

Source: [1] Rural Urban Classification 2011 lookup tables for local authority areas; [2] Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2022; [3] Belfast Local Development Plan 2023; [4] Wales Government website

5a. Sensible Economic Area

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (1/4)

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1a in creating a sensible economic area. There is no HMG definition of sensible economic area for local government meaning analysis has considered 'functional economic area' criteria.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1a requiring proposals to consider what would be a sensible economic area.

There is no established definition of a 'sensible economic area' for local government, though such an area should consider alignment of political and administrative structures with the actual economic behaviours and interactions of residents as far as is possible. A 'functional economic area' can act as a proxy for 'sensible economic area; using a range of factors such as TTWAs.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

Key considerations for sensible economic areas within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMA) were defined in a May 2021 report which analysed whether the Nottingham Inner and Outer HMAs could be considered FEMAs. It concluded that the five 'Core HMAs form a self-contained FEMA' and that 'an argument can be made that the Outer HMA is also a self-contained FEMA.'
- The 'kickstarting growth' mission aims to enhance living standards, supported by authorities putting in place policies across a sensible economic area.[2] Profiling conducted by the Office of National Statistics highlighted the economic challenges in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, emphasising the need for administrative boundaries that better align with sensible economic areas.
- The evaluation of boundaries has focussed on long-term alignment with the functional economy (50 year horizon), prioritising fit with economic function over alignment with short-term policy, whether local, regional or national.
- Reflecting the overall economy of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, all six authorities proposed under the 3 options would have higher than UK average inactivity rates, lower than average levels of enterprise formation, GDHI and productivity (GVA per head) – indicating the importance of sensible economic areas for local government to support long term prosperity of citizens and sustainability of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1a Sensible economic area	*Travel to work areas*	Medium	High	Low
	Economic self containment	Medium	High	Low
	Housing market area	Medium	High	Low
	Service market for consumers (NHS Hospital Trusts)	Medium	High	Low

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Sources:
[1] Nottingham Core HMA and Nottingham Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study
[2] Kickstarting Economic Growth

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (2/4)

Whilst none of the options provide a 'perfect fit' against Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs), Option 2 provides the least coherence with TTWAs whilst Options 1b and 1e would most strongly represent a 'sensible economic area' given the lower levels of fragmentation.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. ***Travel to Work Areas[1]:*** Alignment with Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area; covering self-contained labour markets that reflect areas where people live, work and commute. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Greater Nottingham, Worksop & Retford and Mansfield TTWAs, which also incorporate areas outside of the county (See Figure 1). Assessing the percentage of each TTWA population that resides in each current authority, Option 2 provides the least coherence with current TTWAs, whilst Option 1e marginally provides the strongest fit with the Nottingham TTWA for the Nottingham City conurbation and with the County based TTWAs for the Nottinghamshire authority. This is due to approx 8,600 Gedling authority residents that work in the Mansfield TTWA who would be living and working in the same authority under this option. However, assessment of the three options against TTWAs alone is insufficient given none provide a 'perfect fit', though though further analysis informs the degree of fit from fragmentation levels.

Option 2 would result in the greatest fragmentation of all options; particularly for the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe absorbed into the Nottinghamshire authority. This is evidenced through assessment of the overall patterns of travel between authorities, which shows that the first choice work destination for residents from these authorities (and Nottingham) is Nottingham. Further evidence of fragemention within Option 2 is evidenced by the number of residents that commute to work from outside their home authority versus those that work and work within the same authority, with Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe authorities having the lowest percentage of residents that work work within the new Nottinghamshire unitary authority. This suggests that Option 2 does not represent a sensible economic area given the level of fragmentation.

Options 1b and 1e would provide the lowest degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2. Option 1b presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Rushcliffe residents whilst Option 1e presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Gedling, leaving more residents working outside their home authority than in within it. Whilst the degree of fragmentation is slightly more significant for Gedling residents in Option 1e versus Rushcliffe residents in Option 1b, either option could represent a sensible economic area given the low levels of fragmentation across all authorities.

Figure 1: ***Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)***

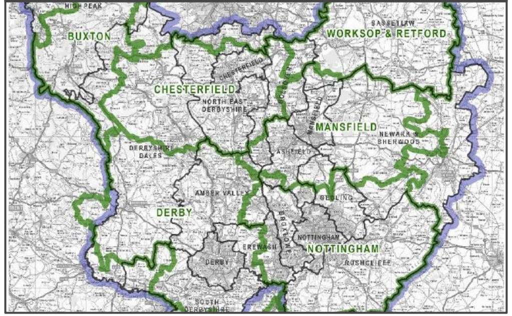
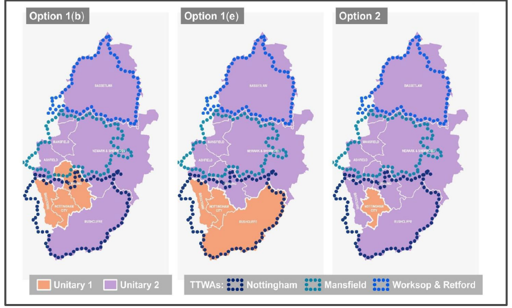


Figure 2: ***Submitted Options and Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)***



MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (3/4)

Options 1a and 1b have the highest degree of economic self-containment and most strongly align with Housing Market Areas and NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries; whilst the degree of difference is marginal, Option 1e would more strongly represent a ‘sensible economic area’

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. ***Economic self containment:*** The overall percentage of workers living within each new authority that also work within that authority can be used to indicate the degree of economic ‘self-containment’, with a higher percentage indicating a greater self-containment. Options 1b and 1e are comparable, exhibiting a medium-degree of self-containment across both the Nottingham City conurbation (71.3% and 71.1% respectively) and Nottinghamshire (60% and 61% respectively). Option 2 exhibits the lowest-degree of self-containment across all options at 64% for Nottingham City and 58% for Nottinghamshire.

II. ***Housing market area:*** Alignment with local Housing Market Areas (HMA) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 1); covering ‘whole council’ areas and linking places where people live, work and move home. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Nottingham Inner, Outer and Northern (Sheffield and Rotherham) HMAs, with the majority falling within the Nottingham Inner / Core. None of the proposed options align perfectly with the HMAs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, though Option 2 would provide the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. Options 1b and 1e provide the strongest alignment to the Nottingham Inner HMA, though would fragment the residents of Rushcliffe and Gedling respectively and equally. Further analysis of each HMA population that would reside in each of the proposed new authorities indicates that Option 1e would marginally provide a better fit with the HMA geographies than Option 1b, though only by ~0.5 per cent (70.89 vs 70.41 percent).

III. ***Service market for consumers:*** Alignment with existing health service structures can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 2). Option 1e suggests the strongest alignment between proposed authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, including the Nottingham University Hospitals for the Nottingham City conurbation and Sherwood Forest Hospitals and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals for for Nottinghamshire. This is supported by analysis of Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs) where more than 50% of patients attended an NHS Trust Hospital, which indicates there is significant alignment between NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, Travel to Work Areas and Housing Market Area geographies.

Figure 1: ***Submitted Options and Housing Market Areas (HMAs)***

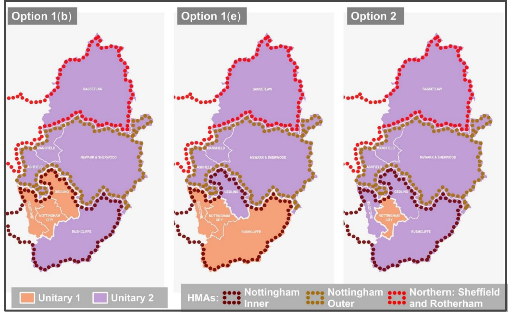
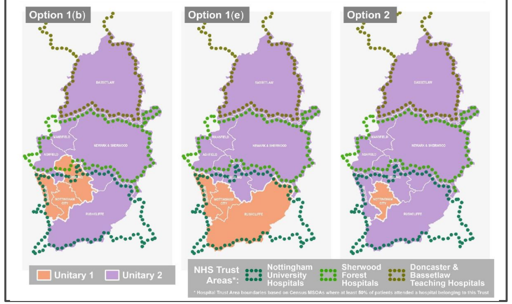


Figure 2: ***Submitted Options and NHS Hospital Trust Areas***



MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (4/4)

Additional analysis suggests that Option 2 represents the least sensible economic are and whilst neither Option 1(b) or (e) represent an optimal fit as they both fragment travel to work and housing market areas, Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with TTWA and HMA's

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Travel to work areas (TTWAs)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50) to a lesser degree than Option 1(e) would for Gedling residents (-15.1). However, has a lower share of Nottingham TTWA population (65.2%) than Option 1e would (66.7%)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Gedling residents (-15.1), more than Option 1(b) does for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50). However, has a higher share of the Nottingham TTWA population (66.7%) than Option 1b would (65.2%)	Least coherence with the Nottingham TTWA, particularly for Broxtowe (3.9), Gedling (2.7) and Rushcliffe residents (9.30). The Nottingham City authority would have the lowest share of the Nottingham TTWA population of all options (38%)
Economic self containment	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.3%) and Nottinghamshire (60%) though differences are marginal to Option 1(e).	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.1%) and Nottinghamshire (61%) though only marginally better than Option 1(b).	Lowest degree of economic self-containment for both the Nottinghamshire (58%) and Nottingham City (64%) authorities of any of the three options.
Housing market area (HMA)	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.41%), suggesting a strong fit with HMA geographies. This however is marginally less than 1(e) (70.89%).	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.89%), suggesting the strongest fit with HMA geographies. This is marginally more than 1(e) (70.41%).	Provides the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe
Service market for consumers	Medium alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. and Sherwood Forest Hospitals.	Strongest alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the majority of the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. Hospitals.	Lowest alignment, with Nottinghamshire covered by three NHS Hospital Trust Areas including Nottingham Uni. Sherwood Forest and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals.
Summary	Provides a lesser degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2 hence representing more of a sensible economic area, though the degree of fragmentation is slightly more than Option 1(e)	As with Option 1(b), represents significantly more of a sensible economic area than Option 2, with the degree of fragmentation being slightly less than Option 1(b), though this is marginal when assessed against all criteria.	Provides the lowest degree of economic self-containment for both authorities and greatest fragemention of travel to work, Housing Market and NHS Hospital Trust area(s), representing the least sensible economic area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5b. Sensible Geography

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (1/4)

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1b in helping to increase housing supply and meet local need.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1b requiring proposals to be for a sensible geography.

The assessment assumes that reference to "meeting local need" refers to how well options fare in meeting local housing needs; particularly in respect of affordable housing solutions for those unable to access market housing for sale or rent, for gypsy, Roma and traveller groups and those with specialist housing needs.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

Key considerations for planning and housing within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- There are existing Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) that have worked together to determine Housing Market Areas and address strategic housing needs for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities; LPAs have worked within these groups for several years and have strong working relationship levels with shared strategic planning evidence based and common strategic planning policies.
- The spatial overview of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire together with the evidence led work undertaken on differing housing and economic market areas both point to a difference between the north and south of Nottinghamshire which suggests that in order to plan effectively for housing, future unitary authorities in Nottinghamshire should be organised to reflect these different characteristics.
- Collectively across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as a whole, there appears to be sufficient sources of supply to meet future requirements; though both Ashfield and Broxtowe are currently required to prepare and implement an action plan designed to raise the level of housing delivery in their respective district as delivery is not meeting required.
- By the time new unitary authorities are created, the landscape of planning for housing will change as the East Midlands Combined Authority (EMCCA) will be given powers related to planning for future housing supply as part of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS)

Assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1b Sensible geographic breakdown	*Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply*	Medium	Medium	Low
	Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	Medium	High	Low
	Impact on meeting local housing needs	High	High	Low
	Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	High	High	High

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (2/4)

Updated analysis has assessed long-term issues around housing delivery through assessment of the 2024 published housing need figure for each authority over a 15-year period. This has been compared to current identified supply as set out in the latest published housing supply documents from each authority.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. ***Impact on potential to increase long term housing and meet local needs***: Option 1e sees the greatest difference in the number of homes needed and available over the next 15 years. Whilst Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe have significant sources of housing supply to meet local housing needs estimates with little need to allocate further strategic housing land at present, Nottinghamshire and the remaining council areas have a sizeable housing need to meet. The analysis notes however that there are significant opportunities to allocate further land to address this housing need in areas outside the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt, though this is dependent on a future Spatial Development Strategy.

The housing need per capita analysis from Phase 1 measured the demand for new homes by comparing forecasted housing requirements to the population,

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

Updated analysis prepared by Heads of Planning has assessed the combined effect of housing needs and supply across the three options

Option		15 year local housing need (dw/pa)	Known housing supply over next 15y (dw)	Difference between need and supply
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	38,430	43,700	+5,270
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	47,845	43,790	-4,055
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	41,905	50,600	+8,695
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	44,370	36,890	-7,480
2	Nottingham City*	19,305	26,700	+7,395
	Nottinghamshire	66,970	59,035	-7,935

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (3/4)

Assessment of prioritised options against the criteria considered how options would align with the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, the Trent Arc Cluster and available geography to allocate development without significant compromise to the existing (current) Green Belt policies. This could of course change as regional and national spatial planning policy is amended.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. ***Impact on potential to increase long-term housing and meet local needs (con't):*** Option 1b sees the smallest difference in housing need and supply, with Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling able to meet housing supply without significant reliance on greenfield land. The success of this approach however is dependent on (a) continued development of brownfield sites in Nottingham City and (b) amendment of the Green Belt boundary within Gedling and Broxtowe to accommodate housing growth on less valuable Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire and remaining council areas cover such a large geography the identification of further sites would not be problematic. The ability to increase housing supply in Option 2 is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City, and whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time. Nottinghamshire remaining council areas have a significant shortfall and require the highest number of houses to be identified.

II. ***Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans:*** Alignment with the current Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) and minimising the separation of strategic growth locations between authorities were noted as key considerations for this criteria. In particular, grouping authorities which have major proposals for "Trent Arc" was specifically noted as strategically important. Option 1b would see several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area be split between the two authorities; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply. By contrast, Option 1e reflects existing joint planning efforts evidenced through development of the GNSP, and would provide a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Regional Spatial Development Strategy and Mayoral Spatial Development Strategy. Option 1e would however require both councils to develop a shared vision for the northeastern part of the built-up area of Nottingham, which to date has formed a functional housing and economic market area for the purposes of strategic planning. Whilst Option 2 would require no changes to the Nottingham City authority and allow it to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects and focus on its own needs, greater demands would be placed on the Regional Spatial Development Strategy with sufficient guidance to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham as a conurbation beyond the boundaries of the city. This presents a unique challenge if Nottinghamshire Authority wishes to purse a different development strategy; one which the other options do not need to resolve.

III. ***Impact on meeting Local Housing Needs:*** Existing collaborations formed to assess housing needs as part of the GNSP were noted as a key consideration for this criteria, as evidenced in Options 1b and 1e. Both options offer a shared strategy for increasing affordable housing on development sites through the release of land in the Nottingham Derby Green Belt as Grey Belt and provide a wide geography for the other Unitary Authority to accommodate the specific housing needs of its area. By contrast, Option 2 does not afford Nottingham City the same opportunity to meet its specific housing needs given the absence of a Green Belt and need to work with a surrounding larger authority. Whilst the size of Nottinghamshire would provide more opportunities to meet its housing needs, addressing the specific needs in localities across the region might be an ongoing challenge.

IV. ***Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning:*** Specialist knowledge and experience exists within the present Nottinghamshire County Council and needs to be retained. Option 1b and 1e would allow staff to be retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two Unitary Authorities and provided as a commissioning service to the other Unitary Authority. This approach aims to preserve expertise and ensure consistent policy advice and application processing across both Unitary Authority. Option 2 would see the Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire Unitary Authority without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan). All options present minimal impacts.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (4/4)

Considering the above assessment of planning in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and the three options under consideration as to the appropriate geography to assist in increasing housing supply, Option 1e would best meet the MHCLG Criteria 1(b)

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply	*The least difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; excess of +5,270 in Nottingham conurbation and a gap of -4,055 in Nottinghamshire, though almost entirely dependent on Green Belt policies*	*The greatest difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; Nottinghamshire authority having sizeable housing need to meet (gap of -7,480) versus the Nottingham conurbation (excess of +8,695)*	*Ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land in Nottingham City; supply figures look strong however difficult to increase in long-term due to reduction in sources of supply. Nottinghamshire has significant shortfall.*
Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	*Several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area would be split between the two UAs; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply.*	*By contrast, Option 1(e) reflects existing joint planning efforts through GNSP, and provides a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Development Strategies; would require a joint vision for NE part of Nottingham*	*Option 2 would allow Nottingham City to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects, though greater guidance needed by Regional Development Strategy to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham City conurbation; a challenge not faced by other options*
Impact on meeting local housing needs	*Nottingham City conurbation to increase affordable housing through the release of Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodate needs of its area.*	*As with Option 1b, Nottingham City conurbation to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though the quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodation needs of its area.*	*Unlike Options 1(b) and 1(e), Nottingham City restricted in the long-term given absence of Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire to have more opportunities though required to meet specific needs across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.*
Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire UA without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan).*
Summary	Constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.	Councils already collaborating on GNSP and can utilise urban capacity of Nottingham City with opportunity for Greenfield release, producing two balance planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources	Initial urban capacity will eventually be utilised and long-term housing growth for Nottingham would need to be accommodated in Nottinghamshire, which may hinder accelerated housing growth in the whole area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5c. *Crucial Services*

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Additional analysis of the three options has been prepared by officers across all councils to assess how options meet MHCLG criteria 3 to improve service delivery or mitigate negative impact on crucial services.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 3 requiring proposals to be to improved delivery of, or mitigate risks to negative impact on crucial services.

There is likely to be national funding changes given the current Fair Funding consultation however, this options analysis has taken place in the context of knowledge of current and forecast demand and funding. Potential wider national and regional policy changes have not been able to be factored in at this stage.

Impact on crucial services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on crucial services*

Key considerations for Crucial services within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Addressing homelessness requires coordinated efforts across public services like health, social care, and probation. Preparation for local government reorganisation is essential to align financial resources and services with community needs. Each authority in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has strategies for homelessness, it is important to align on strategies and priorities for improved outcomes.
- Around 13,000 people receive long-term support, with increasing needs and cost driven by factors like post-covid effects and government policies. Safeguarding concerns have risen, particularly financial abuse, linked to deprivation. The city faces high levels of deprivation and disability, impacting life expectancy and demand for support. Efforts are underway to digitise social care and develop shared care records. The net budget for social care is influenced by self-funders depleting assets, particularly in more deprived areas. Future legislation, such as NHS reforms and Mental Health Act changes, will affect service delivery and funding.
- Balancing the distribution of SEND services to meet regional demands and prevent disparities in resource allocation is key. Potential reforms impacting social care, homelessness, and SEND services must also be addressed. Managing high-demand and costly SEND provisions is challenging due to inadequate statutory funding. It is crucial for councils to collaborate during transitions, handle funding deficits, and prepare for national SEND reforms to ensure effective service delivery in the proposed unitary structure.
- The proposed reforms and future legislations under Children's Social Care offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform the systems and improve outcomes for children and families.

Initial assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
3b Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services	*Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements*	High	Medium	Low
	The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	Low	Low	Medium
	The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	Medium	Low	High*
	Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	Medium	Medium	Medium

Note: * This indicates that Option 2 provides a low risk to the different unitary arrangements

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 1/3)

Based on an assessment of the options using relevant data shows that the differences between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) are marginal. Option 2 has greater variance and has higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

1(b): Under population there is a fairly even split, with a slightly higher count in the county. Council tax contribution is higher from the county (57%), yet they receive only 42% of the grant funding, indicating an imbalance. City + Broxtowe + Gedling get a larger proportion of the grant funding (58%) despite contributing less in council tax, potentially because of higher needs or deprivation indicators. Additionally, expenditure on adults is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable service responsibilities. The social care to council tax ratio is relatively equitable at 0.94 for City + Broxtowe + Gedling and 0.97 for the rest of the area. The GP patient per practice is more evenly distributed than other options. For the unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Gedling the number of requests are marginally less than the rest of the County. A similar trend can be seen in number of people receiving long-term support. However, under health distribution the % of households in highest 2 deciles is an average of 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Gedling in comparison to the rest of the county which is at an average of 17.6%. This option demonstrates a balanced distribution of care and service responsibilities and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for equitable, sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Under population both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe generate less council tax (46%) but receive greater grant funding 56%. The rest of the county generates more local revenue but receives less external support, which is typically more affluent areas. Expenditure on Adults' services a higher cost can be seen in the rest of the county (53% vs 47%). This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and costs. The social cost rations are City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe is 0.87 whereas the rest of the County is 0.92, lower ratios indicate more cost-effective service delivery relative to council tax base. The GP patients per practice split is also relatively similar ensuring less pressure on the infrastructure of City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. The unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe has a greater number of new requests in comparison to the rest of the county. The same trend can be seen for people receiving long-term support. The health distribution split is greater under this option than 1b. The % of households in the lowest decline is 71.4% and % of households in the highest two deciles is at 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. It is at 27.14% amd 7.62% respectively for the rest of the county.

Option 2: Nottingham City accounts for only 22% of the council tax base despite comprising about 28% of the population. The city receives 43% of the grant funding and there is greater reliance on central funding in the City making it more financial vulnerable. For Adult Social Care the county bears 74% of the costs and the City only 26%. Under projected spending pressure the city spending-to-tax ratio is 1.12 which means that the spending on social care would exceed council tax income by 12%. Whereas for the county the ratio is 0.8 which means the spending is less than income tax. The city would be financially overstrained, with high care needs but a limited tax base. Splitting the city from the rest of the county may disrupt integrated services such as social care and health. It fails the crucial services test as it makes it harder to deliver and coordinate key services. This option indicates a greater GP availability but this is't enough to outweigh the structural weakness of option 2. Under this option the split for new requests, people receiving long-term support and health distribution is greater than that seen in both Option 1(b) and 1(e).

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 2/3)

Assessment of the options against the other sub-criteria are set out below including the risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Though Option 1(b) and 1(e) have slight variations, 1(b) is preferable due to geographical and demographic factors.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) the two unitaties would be providing services to areas with greater commonality of needs - predominantly urban, in the city-based unitary of NBG, and to towns and villages, in the county. Option 2 provides the opportunity to scale service delivery for functions such as AMHP Care Quality and provider services. It will also help avoid the cost, time and risk involved in disaggregation of services. It will ensure that residents continue to receive services from colleagues that is consistently good.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) there is a presence of numerous self-funders in Gedling and Broxtowe, combined with a reduction in council tax income, could potentially worsen funding challenges, as these regions have a less of a call on the net budget. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e), Mansfield and Ashfield exhibit the highest demand for all services, including safeguarding, mental health, physical support, and hospital discharge. Countywide services, although small are facing high demand, highlight the challenge of disaggregation in areas such as safeguarding, AHMP, shared lives and short breaks. Similarly, under Option 1(e) there are many self-funders in Rushcliffe and as previously stated when combined with loss of council tax income can lead to funding challenges as they have less call on the net budget. Additionally, the transition of residents to the new unitary structure alongside Nottingham City may lead to discrepancies in service quality due to differences in quality of experience, service costs and the potential for poor continuity of care as there are variations in services and service levels between the county and the city. Under option 2 no risks were identified that do not already exist in the service. Option 2 is neutral on outcomes and delivery given it would be status quo.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Under Option 1(b) the potential impact on provider services arises from the possibility of assets could be situated in a different council from those where the residents utilising them currently reside. Newark and Rushcliffe are experiencing a shortage in nursing and residential care, while Mansfield and Ashfield face an increased number of care quality concerns, necessitating greater capacity. Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there are significant variations in recruitment and retention across the county, with Rushcliffe identified as a recruitment hotspot. Market sustainability is challenged by disparities in provider costs, particularly in bed-based care for working-age adults, with Ashfield's average residential rates being considerably lower than those in Rushcliffe. Similar variations are evident in the costs for those aged 65 and over, Bassetlaw residential cost rate is £102pw less than Rushcliffe (£5k pa) this is further impacted by levels of client contributions. Nursing capacity has significantly diminished in Mid-Nottinghamshire since February 2023, resulting in the loss of 145 nursing registered beds. The complexity of health and system footprints makes apportionment by district difficult, spanning three hospital trusts. Although home care rates show no significant hourly differences across districts, social care record disaggregation and integration with the City Council could present a challenge potentially requiring system replatforming of the Mosaic system. Under Option 1(e) the potential impact on daycare services ending up in a different council that where residents are using them currently. It can also impact hospital discharges and other provider issues. Option 2 maximises the opportunity of working in partnership on a Nottinghamshire footprint with services that are county based. It also for neighbourhood partnerships as efforts are focused on a new relationship as opposed to disaggregating partnerships and adding in the complexity of contracts.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Adult Social Care 3/3)

Option 1(b) and Option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and align with strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over Option 1(e) due to its alignment with the geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

Conclusion: The analysis concludes that while there is a notable risk associated with disaggregation and quality of service delivery, Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar levels of risk. The uneven distribution of contracts, assets, and services across the city leads to increased costs and risks when disaggregating services, although this disparity does not significantly affect the risk levels between options 1(b) and 1(e). Effective financial modeling is essential to manage the costs and resources required for these options, addressing system integration and wider issues comprehensively. The assessment suggests that Option 1(b) and option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and contributions, considering strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over 1(e) strategically due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of The City, particularly for more urban areas like Broxtowe and Gedling, which are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (1/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

Children Looked After: Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar pictures of need for children's social care, with broadly comparable caseloads in each of the options. However Option 2 results in a greatly imbalanced picture, with 639 children looked after by the City unitary authority, while 905 children will require the support of the new 'Nottinghamshire' unitary authority. Similar trends can be seen for number of referrals, the total for Nottinghamshire is 7,410 whereas the total for Nottingham City is 3,926. Option 1(b) suggests that referrals received would be broadly equal (50% for both) whereas Option 1(e) offers sees slightly more referrals in the wider 'county' area (48% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe and 52% for the rest of Nottinghamshire). Option 2 has the greatest difference where Nottinghamshire receiving 65% of the proposals and Nottingham City receiving 35%. This needs to be seen in the context of fragmentation, where resources and staff will require reallocation and the continuity of care for these children will be compromised by reorganisation.

Characteristics of family need: Nottinghamshire sees similar characteristics to much of the country in that neglect is the most common reason for engagement with children's services. However Broxtowe and Gedling record historically high incidences of physical abuse, consistently recording average rates that are 80-90% higher than Rushcliffe over the past three years,. Additionally, Broxtowe reports higher instances of sexual abuse in comparison to Gedling and Rushcliffe. Overall, the levels of all types of need in Broxtowe and Gedling indicate greater alignment with Nottingham City than with Rushcliffe.

Family risk factors: Options 1(b) and 1(e) also differ from Option 2 in terms of the risk factors which result in referral to children's services. Over the past three years, Broxtowe and Gedling have experienced the highest rates of alcohol misuse among parents, with average rates of 48 and 54 per 10k, compared to 25 per 10k in Rushcliffe. There is also a significant disparity in drug misuse among children, with Broxtowe and Gedling reporting 17 instances per 10k, in comparison to Rushcliffe reporting 6 per 10k. Parental drug misuse is notably higher in Broxtowe and Gedling by 70-80%, compared to Rushcliffe. Domestic abuse cases are more frequent in Broxtowe and Gedling, at 22-23 cases per 10k compared to just 11 per 10k in Rushcliffe.Overall, Broxtowe and Gedling exhibit similar levels of alcohol abuse, drug abuse and domestic violence, with Rushcliffe consistently showing rates that are significantly lower than these areas.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (2/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

Contextual Safeguarding: Levels of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) have been dropping across Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the past three years although the rate in Broxtowe remains almost double that in Rushcliffe. In Gedling the rate is higher than both other districts. Levels of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) have also reduced across all three districts, although average rates in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the three-year period are similar and two to three times higher than in Rushcliffe. Overall, levels of CCE and CSE in Broxtowe and Gedling are aligned to those in Nottingham City.

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) the two new unitary authorities will be providing services to footprints with greater commonality of needs which is mainly urban areas, in the city-based unitary of Nottingham City + Broxtowe and Gedling, and to towns and villages in the county. This option offers a more balanced split of Children's Social Care expenditure at 51% for the rest of Nottinghamshire and 49% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling. Under Option 1(e) there is an opportunity for a fairer share of tax base across the two new unitary authorities. Finally, Option 2 would avoid any unnecessary fragmentation of CSC. A key factor in determining the success of any arrangement will be engagement with partners such as schools, health providers and the police who are critical in recognising, referring and supporting local authorities in keeping children safe and well.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (3/3)

Assessment of the prioritised options against the other four factors considered: The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Option 1(b) better aligns with the stated criteria.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Option 1(b) results in a greater risk of disaggregation of services and a need to consider programmes such as Family First implementation. Under Option 1(e) if Rushcliffe is disaggregated from the county area to an expanded city area it would have little impact in terms of demand for either new authority. However, relative differences in tax base would present issues in funding delivery. Option 1(e) has a share of children's total expenditure that is three times that of Option 1(b). Opton 2 provides little risk other than the current challenges facing Nottingham City which include current cost pressure and no increase in tax base.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Option 1(b) brings together areas which are similar to each other. Those delivering CSC in the City, Broxtowe and Gedling currently serve large urban conurbations. This option offers the best alignment of service. In Option 1(e), assets may be located in the other authority which would impact, for example, children going to special schools. This is a challenge as spaces are generally filled by the current County service with any surplus places offered to the City. Under this scenario, the situation could be reversed as it would challenge Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe to deliver services to more rural communities that border another county (Leicestershire). Option 2 would disadvantage Nottingham City due to the current tax base, population/demographic and level of needs which would have a significant impact on delivery of CSC. This option offers the least change, disruption and impact to services as CSC is an upper tier function and there no change to the existing footprint.

Conclusion: Option 2 does not meet the MHCLG criteria as it does not establish sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base. It creates an imbalance which could be an advantage for Nottinghamshire County Council and disadvantage for Nottingham City. Although there is very little difference in the distribution of overall levels of need between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) , Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in levels of need, family risk factors, and contextual safeguarding than Broxtowe and Rushcliffe do. Additionally, children with universal, targeted or specialist SEND needs in Gedling have greater commonality, connection, proximity, association, identity, access and transport links with Nottingham City than those in Rushcliffe. Therefore, Option 1(b) offers a better alignment with the MHCLG criteria.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Children with SEND 1/2)

Assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis, comparison of different unitary arrangements.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

SEND measures: Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) the number of initial requests for an EHC Plan in the calendar year 2024 is relatively similar. Under Option 2 the number of requests in Nottingham City is 2,296 in comparison to the rest of the county at 579. Option 2 would create a greater split. For new EHCP demand, Option 1b has a more balanced distribution in comparison to 1(e) or 2. A similar trend can be seen for number of children subject of an EHCPs as of January 2025 and the proportion of children subject to it.

Education measures: Under education measures number of persistently absent pupils (10%+) the numbers are relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e) whereas Option 2 has more variance as Nottingham city has 9,760 whereas the rest of the county has 21,190. For number of severely absent pupils (50+%) a similar trend can be seen. Additionally, for number of permanently excluded pupils and proportion of pupils with one or more suspensions figures for all options are similar to one another.

Additional measures: Option 1(b) and 1(e) present relatively similar figures across all categories. The largest difference can be seen under Option 2, where 71% of the under 17 population resides in Nottinghamshire in comparison to the City. Similar challenges can be seen in number of state funded primary, secondary and special schools and pupil headcount in these institutions. The analysis compares Gedling and Rushcliffe districts using secondary school locality and pupil numbers to determine their characteristics as more "City-like" or "County-like." Gedling has 6,885 secondary pupils attending six schools, with 89% attending schools in postcodes bordering Nottingham City directly (NG4, NG5), indicating strong integration and proximity to the city. Conversely, Rushcliffe has 8,004 pupils across seven schools, but only 48% attend schools near the city boundaries due to physical separations like the River Trent. Many Rushcliffe pupils attend schools further from the city, highlighting its more "County-like" characteristics. Thus, Gedling children's services have closer connections and are more aligned with urban dynamics than Rushcliffe.

1(b): Expenditure on children's services is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable responsibility for delivering services. This option would see a balanced distribution of needs and service delivery, and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. Children's service is relatively evenly distributed. This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and financial burden

Option 2: The data suggests that this option has the greatest imbalance imbalance of SEND services and provision split across the two areas. The split for % of share of childrens' total expenditure is 60% for the Country and 40% for the rest of the county.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Children with SEND 2/2)

Detailed assessment of the prioritised options against the other factors considered: the opportunities,risks and potential impact on delivert. Option 1(b) best aligns with the goals of LGR.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there is an opportunity to work collaboratively to support children with SEND across both unitaries. Option 2 will enable the locality-based SEND improvement approach to continue for all children and young people with SEND. Additionally, there would be continued improvements to statutory delivery. The distribution of schools and their relationship with new authorities is key to managing future SEND need effectively.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) a new plan for 150 additional specialist school places in Broxtowe aims to address the need for special education capacity, though it might have a limited effect on the overall sufficiency across Nottinghamshire and could particularly benefit Nottingham City. Under Option 1(e) a significant loss of revenue fund statutory SEND services from Rushcliffe which has lower rates of children with EHCPs or specialist provision than other areas of Nottinghamshire. Option 2 maintains the current provision.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Option 1(b) has less impact on delivery in comparison to the other models as level of demand for SEND services in Broxtowe and Gedling are in the average band. Under Option 1e there would be a need for joint working with a shadow authority to put a plan in place for SEND sufficiency which could lead to significant impact on availability of provision. Additionally, local authority statutory teams would see very little impact. Option 2 would main the current provision.

Conclusion: Option 1(b) best aligns with local government reorganisation criteria, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads. Although both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) present a risk to the sufficiency of specialist SEND provision, this risk could be managed through collaborative efforts between authorities during the shadow authority period. Option 1(e) also aligns well with reorganisation aims, but faces challenges due to lower SEND demand in Rushcliffe, leading to an imbalance between service demand and the income needed to meet it. As a result, the impact on SEND sufficiency might be more pronounced than in Option 1(b). Option 2 does not fulfill the reorganisation objectives, as it creates unitaries with increased viability issues and perpetuates an imbalance of SEND services and provision across two areas.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Homelessness 1/2)

Set out below is an assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis and comparison of different unitary arrangements. Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) have relatively similar values to one another. Option 2 has greater variability and higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

I. ***Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:***

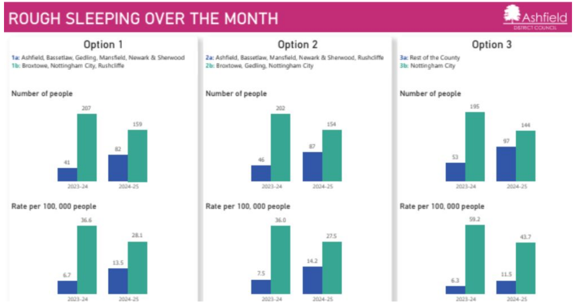
Household prevention duty: The data shows a comparison between Option 1(b), 1(e) and 2 regarding the number of households owed prevention duty and the rate per 1,000 households for two time periods, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Option 1e offers the lowest values for both years in terms of lowest rate per 1,000 households. If reducing the actual number of households owed prevention duty is looked at Option 1(e) still offers the lowest numbers relatively in comparison to Option 1(b) or Option 2. However, it is important to note that the differences between the three options are relatively moderate.

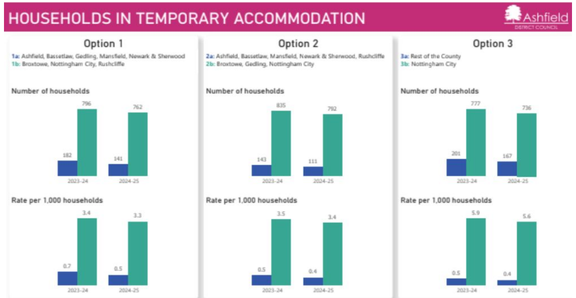
Households owed Relief Duty: The data shows the three options regarding household owed relief duty. Under number of households discrepancies can be seen in all options. Under Option 1(e) greater pressure will be felt on Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe as the number of households in 2023-24 were 1,970 where as in the rest of the areas the total was 907. A gradual decrease can be seen in 2024-25. Similarly, under rate per 1,000 households option 2 shows extreme values for Nottingham city in comparison with the rest of the county.

Households in temporary accommodation: The data compares the three options regarding households in temporary accommodation. Under number of households, Option 1(b) puts greater pressure on Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham city. However, it is important to note that the figures for 1(b) and 1(e) are relatively similar to each other across both time frames. For rate per 1,000 households option demonstrates fluctuations and higher numbers in comparison for Nottingham City than the rest of the county.

Rough sleeping over the month: The data compares the three options regarding rough sleeping over the month. Under number of people the split between Option 1(e) is greater than Option 1(b) and option 2. This indicates that there will be a larger number of people experiencing rough sleeping over the month in Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe in comparison to the County and also in comparison to Option 1(b) and 2. For rate per 100,000 people option 2 shows significantly higher rates for Nottingham City in comparison to the rest of the county. It is important to note that figures were relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e).

Households on housing register: Option 1b and Option 1e has very similar values where as option 2 shows fluctuations highlighting higher discrepancies in demand or resource allocation. Similarly, rate per 1,000 household is highest for option 2 suggesting a more concentrated or higher demand in Nottingham city, which would indicate a need for enhanced housing solution or capacity.





Across most categories Option 1(b) & 1(e) show similar patterns. They generally provide moderate and stable numbers for households and rates, indicating a balanced approach to resource allocation and management. Option 2 has greater variability and often higher rates in specific categories, especially rough sleeping and housing register metrics.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Homelessness 2/2)

Set out below is an assessment of each options against the other factors considered: the opportunities, risks and potential impact on delivery. The analysis does not identify a preferred option, however, based on geographic and demographic similarities Option 1(b) would align more to the MHCLG criteria than the other options.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

II. ***The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** The document identifies several opportunities that can potentially enhance service delivery and resilience across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. By leveraging economies of scale, authorities can achieve more resilient services and better value, through broader geographical procurement and resource sharing, including staffing, IT, and out-of-hours arrangements. This could lead to centralised coordination and an effective response to performance metrics and data management. There's potential to adapt services to address intensified needs through larger geographical coverage, such as establishing women-specific homelessness hostels. A unified strategy and sharing best practices can lead to consistent approaches to tackling homelessness challenges, complemented by enhanced collaboration between housing and social care sectors. Improvements in housing/TA supply can be achieved through shared access to grants/funding/land for new build, renovation or acquisition. Opportunity for programmes such as Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) and changing futures as it would provide better consistency of approach in supporting disadvantaged people across the two areas. Under Option 1(e), many Rushcliffe rough sleepers would have access to Nottingham City which could improve and streamline customer experience.

III. ***The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:*** The document outlines serval generic threats and risks associated with homelessness strategies and services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It highlights a changing policy context, including reforms to private sector housing and supported housing regulations, which could affect service delivery. Changes to the local connection criteria might complicate meeting levels of need, if the criteria is broadened and anticipated revisions to funding formulas for the Homelessness Prevention Grant could impact funding availability, especially if current funding streams are merged or altered based on geographic or population factors. Manfield's unique Domestic Abuse Housing accreditation stands at risk if other areas fail to achieve similar recognition. Furthermore, there is a need for increased responsiveness to individuals moving across geographic boundaries, particularly in the South/City areas. Predicted future trends suggest an increase in homelessness due to factors such as rental reform and rising living costs, although the options may not significantly affect visible rough sleeping or street-based activity, which remain concerns for residents. Additionally, the rising use of temporary accommodations poses a financial threat to general fund resources, with variations occurring among different authorities based on need and TA supply. Lastly, potential disinvestment in non-statutory services by Public Health and the risk of reduced locally driven insight and service delivery due to funding competition are also flagged as concerns. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there is a risk that the sole authority left with links to the hospital trust in the South would struggle to have the same impact around housing/homelessness related challenges. This risk could be mitigated by a new city-aligned authority taking lead on the relationship and work for both areas.

IV. ***Impact on delivery:*** Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact which suggests the possibility that these options could dilute the focus on homelessness due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations. Such dilutions may lead to less effective strategies and approaches to tackling homelessness because resources and efforts might be spread too thin across newly defined authorities. Changes in how services are organised might lead to unclear or fragmented service pathways, affecting how people move through systems to receive support and housing. Finally, there is a concern that restructuring could lead to weaker collaboration and communication between health services and housing/homelessness services. This could hinder integrated efforts to address homelessness.

Conclusion: It is important to note that homelessness does not have significant impact in choosing between either of the options; but should be considered in designing service delivery or organisational functions.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Set out below is a high level summary of the assessment of the Crucial Services criteria for the options under consideration in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements	*Similar patterns across Option 1(b) and 1(e), though 1(b) favoured due to similar geography and demography e.g. children in Gedling with social care needs having greater identity with / proximity to City services.*	*Rushcliffe experiences lower demand for SEND, resulting in an imbalance between the demand for the services and income required to sustain them. Nonetheless, when overall data is examined similar trends can be seen between 1(b) and 1(e).*	*Option 2 shows variability and generally higher rates in data pertaining to homelessness, ASC and SEND. This option creates an imbalance in ASC and SEND services*
The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	*No specific opportunities identified for improving homelessness and SEND services, though Option 1(b) would offer more balanced distribution of CSC and deliver ASC services to areas with greater community of needs.*	*No specific improvement opportunities identified for ASC and SEND, though Option 1(e) may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City, and provide a more fair share of tax base for CSC.*	*Enhanced service delivery for functions such as AMHP quality and provider services. Option 2 can help mitigate the cost, time and risk associated with disaggregation. Furthermore, it enables a localised approach to SEND.*
The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	*Concerns around disaggregation of ASC, CSC and SEND sufficiency, alongside general impact on provider services as services could be situated in areas where individuals no longer reside.*	*There is a loss of revenue to fund statutory SEND services due to Rushcliffe having lower rates of EHCPs or specialist provisions compared to the other areas of Nottinghamshire. The share of children's total expenditure is greater.*	*No specific risks have been identified for Option 2, and it presents no new risks beyond those currently existing within the services e.g it is not impacted by disaggregation.*
Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	*Potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services.*	*There are challenges with delivery of ASC, CSC and SEND services, particularly the loss of income for the county authority.*	*There is no impact on the delivery of homelessness, ASC or SEND as the current service provision is maintained. However, there is still challenges with the imbalances present within these services.*
Summary	Option 1(b) aligns most effectively with the LGR objectives, providing a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Broxtowe and Gedling also have higher population demographics similar to the City.	Option 1(e) somewhat aligns with the LGR objectives but faces geographic and demographic challenges for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND services, with the county-authority facing a loss of revenue.	Option 2 does not meet the LGR objectives due to increased viability issues and services imbalances, despite maintaining the current level of service delivery.

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

6. Financial Analysis

Financial Modelling: Updated Analysis Overview

This section provides an overview of the phase 1 analysis and the updates made since March 2025.

Phase 1 Analysis

In Phase 1 an initial evidence based options analysis was completed for local government reform. The financial model formed a part of the quantitative analysis to investigate the costs and benefits for a wide range of options all of which were based on current district and unitary authority Boundaries.

The s151 officer met on 15 May to review the financial model methodology and outputs. During that session there were some further clarifications sought. Subject to these clarifications all agreed that the case was sufficient to enable the s151s to provide assurance to their Councils that the case was appropriate.

This position was confirmed at the Finance Officers meeting on 23 May. The revised financial analysis was shared with s151 officers on 3 June ahead of a LGR specific meeting of s151s on 9 June. This included some sensitivity analysis the group requested on the assumptions.

In addition the County Council have undertaken some analysis on the potential impact on Options 1b &1e of social care self funders in the event that leads to an important difference in the cases. It has been concluded that this does not.

Updates post March 2025

Assumptions	1	Some changes were made to assumptions such as reduction in front office FTE, service delivery FTE, reduction in back office FTE, property rationalisation, SRA cost per new unitary authority.
Benefit Phasing	2	The benefit realisation period has been changed to 30% in the first year, 50% in the second year and 100% after that.
Definitions	3	The definitions of types of FTE service are have been provided. This includes specific definitions for front office, service delivery and back office.
Overall benefits and costs	4	As a result, there is a change in the total overall benefits and costs since the figures set out in the interim plan in March 2025.

See Appendix B for the methodology and assumptions applied

Financial Modelling: Definitions (1/3)

The financial analysis model relies on a number of assumptions, primarily based on publicly available outturn data, information from each council's own transparency data, or by applying changes which have been demonstrated across previous LGR proposals.

Third-party spend refers to all payments made by local councils for goods and services from external suppliers, excluding grants, taxations, and other charges. Addressable spend is the portion of this expenditure that can be influenced through procurement or commissioning strategies such as negotiating contracts or seeking competitive bids. In contrast, non-addressable spend includes costs that are less flexible and mandated by law, making them harder to influence.

Property expenditure relates to the cost associated with acquiring, maintaining, and managing both **operational** properties (used for delivering council services) and **investment** properties (held for income or capital appreciation). This includes expense such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and management fees.

FTE is calculated as a proportion of spend as supplied in public spending data. **Net revenue expenditure** is used to avoid double-counting any income or grant transfers. **Senior leadership** salaries are calculated across the top three organisational tiers as per transparency reporting.

Staff
- Senior leadership
- Front office FTE
- District service delivery FTE
- Back office FTE

Third party spend
- Non-addressable
- Addressable

Property

Democracy
- Councillor allowances
- Election costs

Increased benefits across Staff and Third Party Spend

Redundancy costs | **Programme transition costs** | **Transformation costs**

Reduced benefits for multiple unitary transition | Increased costs for multiple unitary transition | **Disaggregation Costs** Duplicated delivery and structures

Member allowances are based on rates of Basic and Special Responsibility payments published in transparency reporting. These costs are used to determine the likely cost of one or more new democratic structures in new authorities

Election costs use a total of votes cast in a previous election cycle across all council elections, and a cost-per-vote of £3 calculated by the Electoral Commission

Redundancy costs do not include actuarial strain as this is highly individualised. A payment of 30% of salary is assumed.

Benefits are profiled to be fully effective in Year 3, to account for the need to complete staff changes and undertake contract renegotiations.

Costs such as the creation of new councils, marketing, ICT and consultation are increased proportionately where more than one new council is to be formed. Similarly, fixed **benefits of transition** are shared across all new bodies.

Transition costs include anticipated redundancies due to duplicated leadership structures, and elements of one-off spending relating to creating, marketing and programme managing transition to a new council.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries, and represents the ongoing cost of duplicating management and operations of statutory services, including social care, education and public health. **An element of disaggregated costs therefore recur each year in options with more than one unitary authority**

Financial Modelling: Definitions (2/3)

Definitions for Front office, Service delivery and back office are set out below.

Category	Definition	Activities	
Front office	Front office described all the activities that involve interaction with customers and/or have an immediate impact on customer service delivery. It involves all activities that lead up to and follow on from serving the customer, without capturing the actual act of delivering the service. ***A customer is defined as a person who uses any council service.***	• Enquiry Handling • Processing Requests and Applications • Managing Appointments • Eligibility • Simple and Rules Based Assessment • Complex Assessment • Approval of Service	• General Administration (for frontline operations) • Recording and Data Entry • Closing Record • Management and Supervision (for frontline operations) • Workforce Planning (for frontline operations) • Workforce Scheduling (for frontline operations) • Billing and Receiving Payments
Service Delivery	The actual delivery of a frontline service on behalf of the council which fulfils the needs of external customers.	• Service Delivery	
Back office	The activities aligned to this category provide support to other service areas: • Corporate Services include the activities that support the council in operating effectively on a day-to-day basis. • Strategic Services contain the activities that are central to influencing and executing the councils corporate strategy. • As for Support Services, these activities will all contain an element of transactional activity (e.g. within HR and Finance), but are more broadly aligned to the delivery and support of the strategic direction of the council.	• General Administration (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Health and Safety • Technology • People Management • Budgets and Financial Management • Payroll Services • Key Data Sets • Property, Estate and Facilities Management • Management and Supervision (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Stores and Distribution • Workforce Planning (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) • Fleet and Plant Management	• Democratic services and support provided to elected Members • Legal Advisory Services • Programme and Project Management • Purchasing, Procurement and Commissioning • Managing Contracts • Marketing, PR and Communications • Strategic Planning and Policies • Research and Consultation • Quality Assurance, Performance Management and Improvement • Business Information, Data Analysis and Reporting

Financial Modelling: Definitions (3/3)

Definitions for the various elements of the financial model are set out below.

Definitions	
Transition costs	Costs involved in moving from existing systems to another. This includes fixed costs and redundancy costs incurred (excluding disaggregation). These are one-off costs to reorganisation within Nottingham & Nottinghamshire.
Benefits of Aggregation	Benefits that would arise from reorganisation. This primarily looks at the benefits of collapsing multiple local authorities into a fewer number of local authorities. This will include savings made on: staff, third party spend and property. In addition to this, benefits arising from savings on running democratic processes are also defined. There are percentage reductions applied to each type of benefit saving.
Annual benefits	Annual benefits that are generated as a result of reorganisation. These are calculated as a sum of the front office, service delivery and back office expenditures, as well as third party spend, senior management, property and democracy costs.
Recurring benefit after 5 years	The recurring annual benefit after five years of reorganisation. It is estimated that the full benefits will be realised after five years.
Payback period (years)	The payback period is the time required for the investment in unitarisation to generate sufficient cash flows to recover its initial cost.

Financial Modelling: Purpose and limitations

The options analysis financial modelling provides a tool for comparing potential options for future LGR, based on publicly available data and a set of agreed assumptions. The model accounts for the cost of delivering the new structure in terms of **transition** and **ongoing disaggregation** costs of leading delivery of all unitary council services across the new geographies identified in each option.

What the model does:

- The financial model provides an **independent and policy-neutral comparison** of differing structural approaches to LGR.
- It focuses on the **costs of transitioning** and **running costs of new leadership and political structures.**
- It includes the anticipated costs needed to undertake **the next phases of LGR activity** - programme design and management, building a detailed business case, ICT requirements, delivering consultation and comms, etc.
- Combined with potential additional analysis it provides **a foundation for the detailed business case** to follow.
- The model is **recognised by MHCLG and Treasury** as a reasonable means of determining the potential scale of benefits available from LGR at options analysis stage. It is not developed to the level of detail that is required for a full proposal.

What the model doesn't do:

- The financial model will not at this stage predict the **costs of delivering services** in a new structure.
- It does not account for future policy decisions around the **apportionment of debt, reserves or assets** between constituent councils.
- It does not account for **actuarial costs of redundancy**, which require a detailed review of individual employee's circumstances.
- The transformation costs and benefits are estimates based on experience in other local authorities applied to local spend, they do not represent a **detailed review of your third party spend.**
- The model is based on static, published data and **does not include the influence of increased demand** on running costs.

Financial Modelling: Updated analysis

The financial model incorporates key structural and management costs, including redundancy estimates, senior leadership changes, and anticipated savings across cost categories.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Option 3: Single Unitary Authority (Comparative purposes only)	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Financial Modelling: Planning of costs and benefits

The table below provides an overview of the phasing of benefits, transition costs and disaggregation costs which have been tested with the s151 officers.

Impact of Phasing

In modelling the impact of costs and benefits, assumptions have been made to reflect their realistic phasing. This ensures that one-off costs are spread over multiple years rather than being incurred immediately, alongside the ongoing costs of transition.

Benefits are phased over a 3 year period, recognising that some efficiencies - such as senior leadership reductions - can be realised quickly, while others, like contract realignment and third-party spend savings, will take longer to achieve. This approach accounts for operational complexities, contract obligations, and the time required for full implementation.

It is important to note that the benefits outlined here relate solely to system aggregation, rather than service transformation. The efficiencies modelled do not include potential improvements from broader service redesign, which would be considered separately.

The phasing of the annualised **benefits** is over three years, due to the varying timescales for different aspects of delivery, after 3 years the full annual benefit is assumed. This includes ongoing cost reduction programs, the timing of the next election, and the expiry of third-party contracts. Transformation benefits have not been included.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	30%	50%	100%	100%
Transition Costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%
Disaggregation Costs	***No disaggregation cost***			

Transition costs are spread over a longer period rather than being completed within a single year, ensuring a more realistic and feasible approach. Costs are incurred over three years, with Years 2 and 3 primarily covering recontracting, system migrations, workforce adjustments, and other transition-related expenditures. This phased approach accounts for contractual constraints, the complexity of workforce changes, and the time required to reorganise services, reducing financial risk and operational disruption.

Disaggregation costs arise from splitting county services into new councils, leading to ongoing expenses for duplicated leadership and operations but excluding service delivery costs.

7. Implementation

Implementation: indicative timeframe to implementation

This section outlines key timescales, activities, and opportunities in Local Government Reorganisation. The following pages set out some of the required steps to developing a full business case proposal for submission in November and some of the post-decision implementation activities.

Proposal *Submitted*	Decision	Phase 1: Mobilisation	Phase 2: Transition	Phase 3: Transformation
The submission of a proposal to MHCLG in March 2025 signaled the start of this process. Note that there may be multiple proposals for an area, and coherence with the MHCLG criteria will be a significant factor in the next stages.	The period between March and November requires dedicated governance, time and resource to develop detailed plans for implementation, including financial and legal matters. This will require coordination and collaboration across all nine councils.	Once a decision is made, resources must be mobilised and implementation plans put into effect to deliver the complex task of dissolving existing bodies and creating a new local authority in an effective and legal manner.		
		An Implementation Executive is likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned.		
21 March 2025	We are here	28 November 2025		Vesting Day 1 April 2028 (TBC)

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (1/4)

A significant range of activities will need to be completed prior to final submission of the proposal in November 2025. This includes stakeholder engagement, legal, financial and organisational development activity, which will require specific capabilities and dedicated capacity.The immediate next step is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case.

Interim Plan:
by 21st March 2025
Submitted

An interim was submitted to MHCLG on 21st March 2025:

- This plan outlined the proposed options under consideration and how they are likely to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- More detailed analysis and engagement needs to take place post this submission to refine the options and develop a full business case.
- Engagement will also need to take place with EMCCA, local MPs, parish councils and wider system partners such as police and fire services and the ICS. During this period an engagement and consultation plan needs to be developed in order to gather input and assess support for proposals.

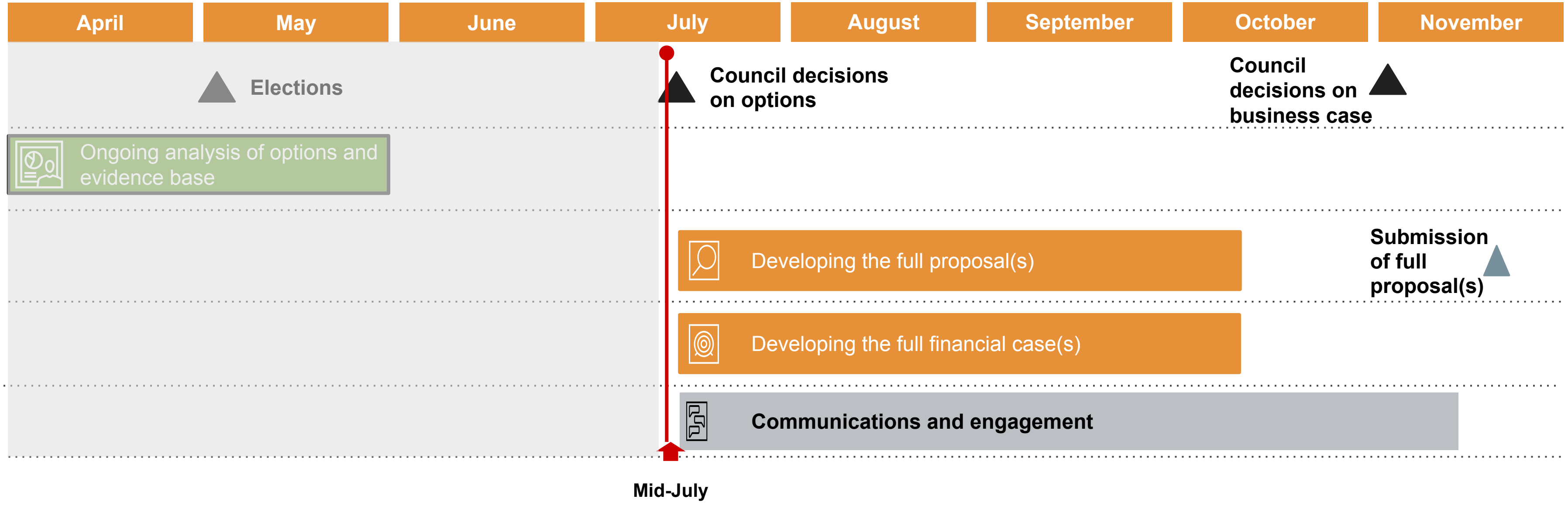
Final proposal:
by 28th November 2025

Based on feedback from the interim plan, Nottingham & Nottinghamshire will need to refine their proposals to ensure they have met all the criteria set out by the MHCLG, including (indicative not exhaustive):

- Agreeing the resources which each council will commit to funding the process.
- A need to prepare for implementation of the new interim structures, including planning for any necessary changes to governance, staffing and service delivery
- Appointment of a responsible officer and cabinet member in each council. The members will form a LGR committee which may transition to be a shadow unitary council executive as vesting day approaches.
- Design the appropriate directorate and senior leadership structure for the new authority
- Finalise arrangements for HR changes and staff redundancy, including any provision for a voluntary scheme, and how this cost will be impact existing councils
- Determine a plan for disbursement of debt and reserves in consultation with joint S151 officers
- Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting the public with Districts.
- Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting staff, including engagement with Trades Unions.
- Agree an approach to harmonising council tax across Districts, including how Council Tax Relief will be harmonised
- Conduct equality impact assessments of proposed arrangements
- Plan for the costs and legal aspects of winding up existing authorities and creating a new statutory entity
- Understand the risks and implications of existing assets, liabilities and HRA provision.

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (2/4)

Set out below is a very high level view of the remaining timeframe available for decision making and development of a full proposal ready to be submitted in November 2025.



Implementation: Development of the final proposal (3/4)

An overview of how the options analysis would need to develop into a full proposal is set out below and on the following page.

1 Refining the options appraisal

- Since submission in March, the Options Analysis has been narrowed down to three options: Option 1(b), Option 1(e) and Option 2.
- Deep dives have been conducted against MHCLG criterion such as sensible economic area, sensible geography and crucial services.
- The financial analysis has been updated.

2 Developing the full proposal

- The stated intention is to develop a single proposal, working collaboratively. The points set out below would need to be developed in any full business case proposal.
- A vision for the new council(s), including the improved outcomes expected to be delivered for people and the place.
- Design of a high level target operating model for the new council(s); including customer offer, ways of working, culture and values, how technology and information will be utilised etc. and describing what residents will experience.
- Identifying opportunities for service synergies - consolidation of existing functions, simplification of processes and opportunities arising from bringing district and county together (e.g. housing and social care), as well as district and existing unitary functions together.
- Designing the arrangements that will be put in place at a locality level to build engagement and ensure the new councils are responsive locally.
- Clarify the democratic structures that will be put in place - e.g. structures and numbers of councillors, key milestones and decision points.
- Determining how the new council(s) will work with EMCCA
- Describing how the the new councils will work towards more ambitious public service reform, working with other providers in the geography.
- Determining how any new council(s) will work together to share certain functions.
- Developing an implementation roadmap, which will identify the target and interim states for the new council(s).

3 Developing the financial case

- Identifying the costs and benefits associated with the implementation of unitary local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, taking more precise account of data concerning:
  - the establishments of all impacted councils;
  - assets and liabilities (including physical assets, reserves, debt and MRP); contracting and other partnership arrangements; IT architecture; grant funding and additional income; and Council Tax implications.
- Developing the investment and benefit profiles that will drive implementation.
- Developing the investment strategy required to fund implementation.

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (4/4)

Due diligence 4	● While the work described under workstream 2 would not entail due diligence (e.g. line by line reviews of all contract and commissioning arrangements, review of assets, liabilities, IT infrastructure etc.), it is anticipated that work of this nature will commence in the period leading up to the November submission.
Communi-cation and engagement 5	● Developing a comprehensive communications strategy to support the development and submission of proposals. This would include a focus on: ○ staff engagement (sharing communication assets across all of the impacted councils); ○ member engagement, including the provision of members to come together for visioning workshops and design discussions; ○ stakeholder engagement - working with MPs, the town and parish councils, as well as public, private and voluntary sector partners to discuss and explain the changes being proposed; and ○ community and public engagement - focus groups, engagement meetings and other forms of communication. ● Consolidating the responses and views gathered during this activity to inform the development of the November submission and evidence support and / or opposition to the establishment of the new council(s).
Mobilising programme workstreams 6	● There is a commitment to deliver an ambitious transformation programme in parallel with the transition to the new council(s). To this end, work is intended to commence in the following areas: ○ service design; ○ consideration of technology requirements; ○ HR - approach to change management, migration of staff to the new council(s); ○ OD - foundational work on culture, behaviours, values and ways of working; ○ branding and buildings; and ○ legal and governance arrangements (including the Structural Change Order, shadow governance arrangements and senior appointments).

Implementation: implementation roadmap

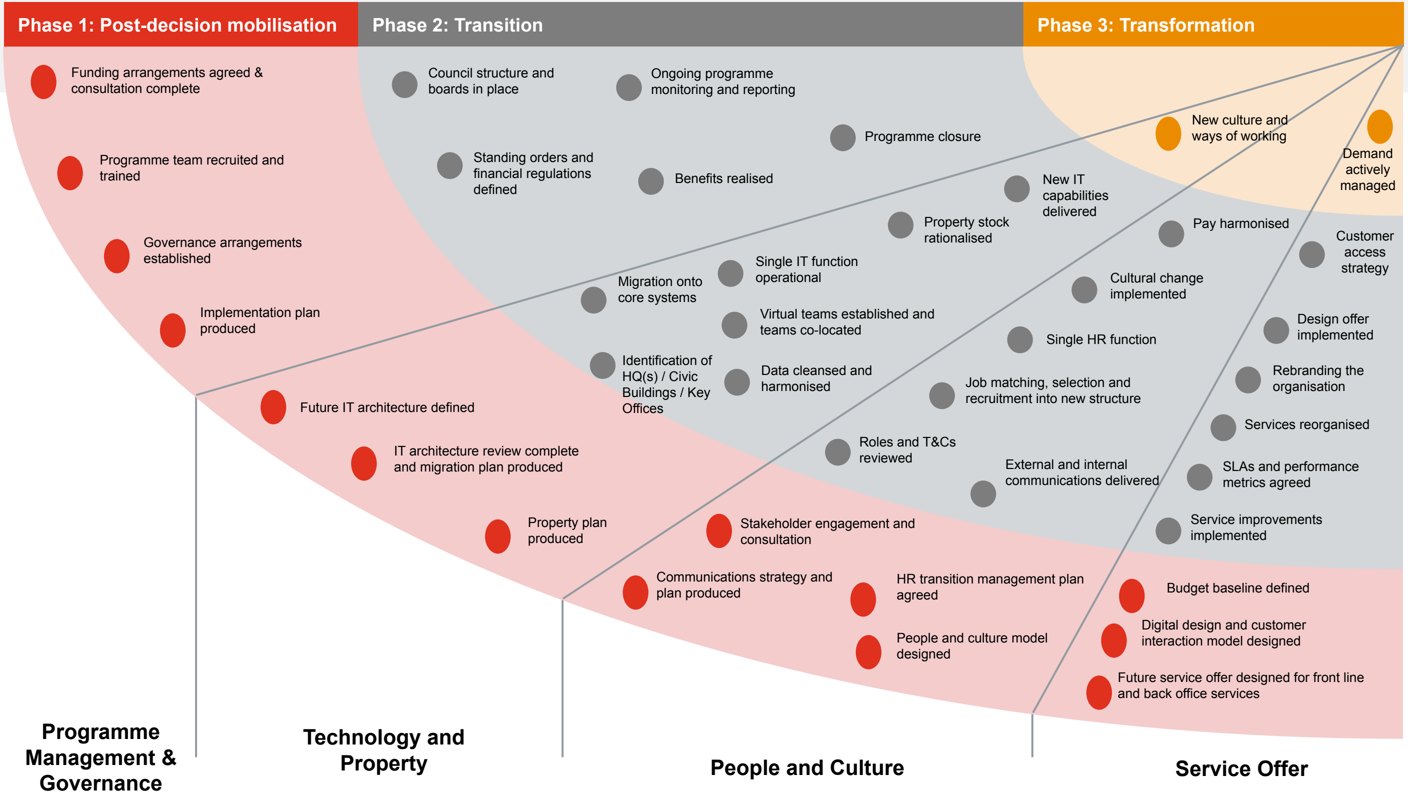
Phase 1: Mobilisation

Phase 2: Transition

Phase 3: Transformation

Detailed implementation plans will be developed during the mobilisation phase outlined above and in the diagram. This implementation map provides an overview for the key activities which will need to be undertaken by officers and members as vesting day approaches, and which will need to be accomplished alongside business-as-usual in terms of service delivery.

The financial model includes a high level estimate that **c. £13m** will be required for internal and external support for the process under Option 1(b) and 1(e). This is consistent (and a conservative estimate at this stage) with previous rounds of LGR.



Implementation: Immediate next steps and planning

Immediate next steps is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case in July 2025 and begin planning for implementation including early scoping on programme support and workstreams (outlined below).

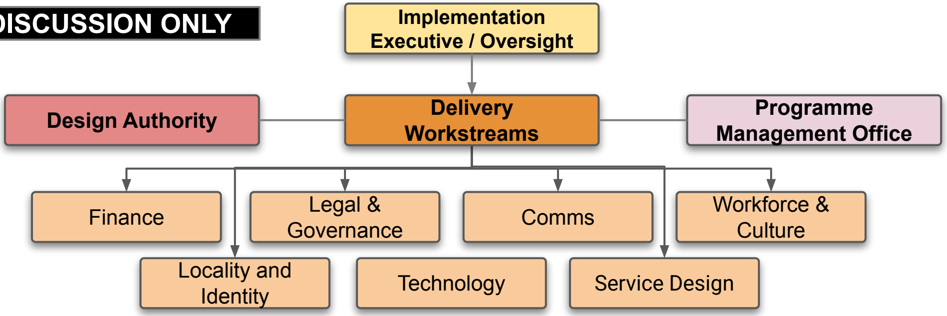
Immediate next steps

- Summary report shared with CEXs
- Confirm LGR Meeting date to take decision on which option to take forward
- Decision on the options analysis and potentially a preferred option.
- Agree coordination and collaboration arrangements where required

Immediate next steps for programme infrastructure set up (not exhaustive)

- Agree resources to coordinate efforts across all councils
- Agree leadership, governance and oversight arrangements
- Identify and establish officer working groups for relevant projects and programmes
- Work with workstream leads to identify the key tasks for each group, secure the appropriate membership and to ensure time and resources are protected to meet the time pressures.
- Agree a stakeholder and engagement plan

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY



Governance	Description
Implementation Executive	• Likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned, Chief Execs and s151 officers. • Responsible for overall strategic direction, oversight of risk, and benefit realisation and meets monthly, or more frequently during critical periods
Delivery Workstreams	• Example workstreams outlined above; each chaired by a Senior Director (from pool of affected councils) with delegated authority, and reports progress, risks, issues and resource needs to the Implementation Executive
Programme Management Office	• Centralised function for planning, reporting, dependency and risk management across all workstreams and driving interface with other enablers (Finance, ICT, Legal, Procurement), ensuring a "single version of truth" through common tools, templates and reporting standards
Design Authority	• Technical group reviewing service design, TOM alignment and systems integration to ensure joined-up thinking

8. Appendix A:
Criteria Analysis

Criteria Analyses (1/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
'Sensible Economic Areas' for Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	23/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of travel to work, economic self-containment, housing market areas and service market for consumers for the three options.	Concludes that the differences in degree of fit are too narrow to be able to identify a clear better fit, though Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA).
Assessment of proposed options for unitary local government in Nottinghamshire in terms of increasing housing supply and meeting local needs	This report has been prepared in conjunction with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Heads of Planning and has been shared with officers of the East Midlands Combined County Authority.	07/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of impact on potential to increase long term housing supply, impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans, impact on meeting local housing needs and impact on other issues such as mineral and wasting planning.	Concludes that Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) potentially having a wider mix of housing supply sources and reflecting existing joint workings on GNSP.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Adult Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City. Broxtowe and Gedling are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

Criteria Analyses (2/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Homelessness	The document has been developed by a core group of lead officers representing the local authorities with the support and consultation of a wider cohort of officers from each district, borough, City and also the County Council.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	The analysis does not identify a preferred option. Under both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's SEND services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of SEND services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as it best aligns with the goals of local government reorganisation, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of Children's Social Care Services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in terms of levels and types of safeguarding needs, which would allow for more targeted / focused service delivery models to be deployed.

9. Appendix B: Financial Assumptions

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Staff) (1 of 2)

Element of the model

Staff

- Senior leadership
- Front office FTE
- District service delivery FTE
- Back office FTE

Methodology

1. The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.
2. Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.
3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.
4. An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of net revenue expenditure spent on staff	31.3%		Calculated through publicly available RO forms.
Front Office FTE	36%		
Service Delivery FTE	37%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Back Office FTE	27%		

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Staff) (2 of 2)

Element of the model

Staff
Senior leadership
Front office FTE
District service delivery FTE
Back office FTE

Methodology

1. The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.
2. Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.
3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.
4. An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Reduction in front office FTE	4%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in service delivery FTE	1.5%		
Reduction in back-office FTE	3%		
Senior leadership costs in Districts	£8,681,498		Senior leadership costs calculated for the top three tiers of leadership of District Councils including on-costs based on averages and no of Districts. Lower tiers are not included as they may be required as part of new organisational structures.

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Third Party Spend)

Element of the model

Third party spend

Non-addressable

Addressable

Methodology

1. The addressable third party spend combined between County and District Councils has been calculated using proportioned net expenditure to provide a baseline. Third party spend relating to property has been excluded.
2. A percentage reduction in third party spend has been applied due to the greater purchasing economies of scale that will be gained through consolidation.
3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of net expenditure spent on third parties	65.7%		Calculated through publicly available RO forms.
Proportion of third party spend (TPS) which is addressable	75%		75% of the total third party spend is treated as addressable, due to some elements of third party spend being non addressable, eg. pass through costs. Previous experience in local authority third party spend analysis suggests that this typically makes up 25% of the spend
Reduction in third party spend	1.5%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Property)

Element of the model

Property

Methodology

1 The combined net expenditure on property has been calculated using net expenditure figures for the County and District Councils.

2 This is spend relating to the ongoing running costs of office spaces such as those used in energy, cleaning and routine repairs rather than from the one-off sale of rationalised council office space. In addition, any benefits resulting from the rental of available office space has been excluded.

3 A percentage reduction has been applied to the property baseline to provide the estimate property benefit.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of net expenditure spent on property	3%		Proportion of spend is based on RO calculations. Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in property spend	12.5%		

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Democracy)

Element of the model

Democracy

- Councillor allowances
- Elections

Methodology

1 By aggregating Districts into one or two unitary authorities, fewer councillors will be required and therefore a saving can be made from base and special responsibility allowances. The average cost of a District council democratic structure has been estimated and multiplied by the number of District councils present within the boundary.

2 Consolidating local authorities will also reduce the number of elections required, thus presenting a benefit. The average annual cost of a District election has been calculated and multiplied by the number of District councils.

3 The calculation for both the single and two unitary model is the same, as the two unitary model also incurs an additional disaggregation cost of duplicating a larger, more expensive councillor structure than in District councils.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
District SRA and base allowances incurred as part of the democratic structure	£351,915		Calculated through publicly available data.
Annual cost incurred per District election	£165,530		The annual cost of a District election has been calculated by multiplying the cost per vote and the average voter turnout during representative District Council elections. This has been divided by 4 to estimate the annual saving that can be achieved per council, and multiplied by the number of District councils inputted.
Cost per vote during an election	£3.00		The cost per vote used to calculate the cost of an election has been estimated at £3 by Government / Electoral Commission based on previous election data.

Key assumptions: Aggregation and Disaggregation costs (1 of 2)

Element of the model

Duplication
- Duplicated senior leadership
- Duplicating service delivery management
- Duplicated democratic structures

Methodology

1. The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.
2. By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.
3. The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Proportion of additional FTE undertaking service delivery management & supervision	0%		Additional costs have not been applied.
Additional senior leadership costs	0%		There is no additional cost as there are two senior leadership teams across existing top tier authorities
Members in upper tier local authorities	121		The existing number of top tier authority councillors across the area has been applied as an estimate and for the purpose for this financial analysis. Note: This does not represent a decision on the future number of Councillors.

Key assumptions: Aggregation and Disaggregation costs (2 of 2)

Element of the model

Duplication
- Duplicated senior leadership
- Duplicating county service delivery
- Duplicated democratic structures

Methodology

1 The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.

2 By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.

3 The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Member base allowance	£1,088,297		Calculated through publicly available data.
SRA costs per new unitary authority	£0		Two top tier unitary authorities already exist - there is no additional requirement based on the options currently under consideration.

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (1 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs
- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Redundancy cost as a proportion of salary	30%		Percentage estimate in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
External communications, rebranding and implementation	£732,000	£366,000	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
External transition, design and implementation support costs	£8,540,000	£4,270,000	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (2 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs

- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Additional programme management costs of disaggregating services	£0		No disaggregation cost as a result of not breaking up the county. There is a potential change of service delivery by one UA, which may delivered by another UA in future.
Internal programme management	£3,806,400	£1,903,200	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Creating the new council	£1,220,000	£610,000	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (3 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs
- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Contingency	£6,775,853		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Organisation Closedown	£305,000		
Public consultation	£411,750	£274,500	

Key assumptions: Costs of transition (4 of 4)

Element of the model

Transition Costs
- Redundancy costs
- Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	*Key figures*		*Rationale*
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) costs	£2,385,000		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Shadow Chief Exec/ Member costs	£622,200	£311,100	

10. Appendix C: Comparative Analysis

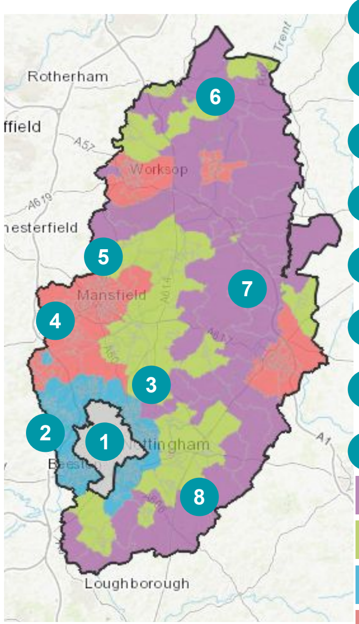
Summary view of comparative analysis for the three options

		Rural / urban	Time to key services	Debt to reserve per capita ratio	Social care demand to council tax take (current)	Social care demand to council tax take (projected)	Population	Deprivation	Housing need	Business Growth	Healthcare provision
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	34.4%	3.5	53.5	0.94	0.94	603,185	26.5	19.6	See detail on page 104	7,101
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.0	0.84	0.87	661,460	20.7	17.2		8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	18.3%	1.7	47.4	0.87	0.87	611,518	24.7	20.5	See detail on page 104	6,906
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.90	0.92	653,127	22.3	16.3		8,556
2	Nottingham City remains the same	30.4%	3.9	83.9	1.18	1.12	352,463	34.9	19.9	See detail on page 104	6,456
	Rest of Nottinghamshire becomes a new unitary authority			14.2	0.81	0.83	912,182	19.0	17.7		8,279

Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (current)

The table below sets out the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography and how this is reflected when combined in the different LGR options that are under consideration.



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Rural Village
Rural Town & Fringe
Urban Minor Conurbation
Urban City & Town

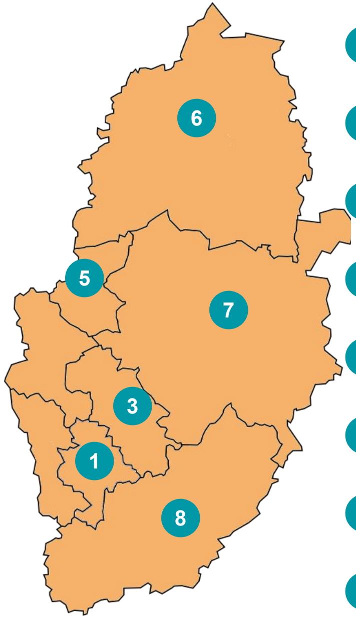
Option		Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	
2	Nottingham City	0.0%	100.0%	30.4%
	Nottinghamshire	30.4%	69.6%	

Average proportion of rural population
Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory

Key: Options that are most alike in rural / urban — Options that are least alike in rural / urban

Analysis: Time to key services analysis

This table highlights which of the potential options are the most equitable in time taken to travel to key services e.g. employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food retail and town centres.



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Option		Time to key services via public transport / walking (min)	Difference between options (mins)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	14.6	3.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	18.1	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	15.5	1.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.3	
2	Nottingham City	13.6	3.9
	Nottinghamshire	17.5	

Source: Average time to key services (Public Transport/ Walking) Department of Transport Journey Time Statistics

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis

Set out below are key components that underpin the debt-to-reserve per capita ratio analysis, as a potential indicator of relative financial health for each option.

Option		# of People (2023)	Total Debt (£000s, 24/25)	Total Reserves - (£000s, 23/24)	Debt per capita (£)	Reserves per capita (£)	Debt/Reserves per capita Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	£ 857,060	£ 16,029	£ 1,528	£ 29	53.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	£ 792,540	£ 56,611	£ 1,293	£ 92	14.0
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	£ 846,248	£ 17,867	£ 1,494	£ 32	47.4
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	£ 803,352	£ 54,773	£ 1,322	£ 90	14.7
2	Nottingham City	329,276	£ 744,626	£ 8,877	£ 2,261	£ 27	83.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	£ 904,974	£ 63,763	£ 1,072	£ 76	14.2

Sources:
[1] Borrowing and Investment Live Tables, Q2 2024-25;
[2] ONS Estimates of the Population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[3] Revenue outturn summary 2023-2024

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (current)

The analysis set out below below compares 2024/25 adult's and children's social care actual spend to council tax receipts in 2023/24 to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2024/25)	Total CSC Spend (2024/25)	Total Care Spend (2024/25)	Council Tax Receipts (2023/24)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 164,626,206	£ 134,262,020	£ 298,888,226	£ 317,184,000	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 206,418,792	£ 154,068,977	£ 360,487,769	£ 427,317,000	0.84
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 160,376,612	£ 132,493,533	£ 292,870,145	£ 335,799,000	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 210,668,386	£ 155,837,464	£ 366,505,850	£ 408,702,000	0.90
2	Nottingham City	£ 92,476,000	£ 90,513,000	£ 182,989,000	£ 154,566,000	1.18
	Nottinghamshire	£ 278,568,998	£ 197,817,997	£ 476,386,995	£ 589,935,000	0.81

Sources:
[1] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25; *[3] Council Tax*
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (projected)

The analysis set out below below compares projected adult's and children's social care actual spend to projected council tax receipts to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2032/33)	Total CSC Spend (2032/33)	Total Care Spend (2032/33)	Council Tax Receipts (2032/33)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 177,007,122	£ 160,455,544	£ 337,462,666	£ 359,340,174	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 224,778,121	£ 184,126,692	£ 408,904,812	£ 470,435,575	0.87
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 173,402,244	£ 158,342,037	£ 331,744,281	£ 380,332,467	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 228,382,999	£ 186,240,198	£ 414,623,197	£ 449,735,749	0.92
2	Nottingham City	£ 99,549,687	£ 108,171,414	£ 207,721,100	£ 186,281,960	1.12
	Nottinghamshire	£ 302,235,556	£ 236,410,822	£ 538,646,378	£ 647,928,338	0.83

Sources:
[1] 2024 England Taxbase - Taxbase data
[2] Tax Rate - Band D Council Tax Figures
[3] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25;
[4] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/2

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Population

The table below compares current and forecasted population estimates for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire across the different options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Population (2035)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	603,185
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	661,460
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	611,518
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	653,127
2	Nottingham City	329,276	352,463
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	912,182

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Deprivation

This table summarises the key findings from analysis of the indices of deprivation, highlighting the areas of greatest need.

Option		Average deprivation score
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	26.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	20.7
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	24.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	22.3
2	Nottingham City	34.9
	Nottinghamshire	19.0

Sources:
[1] English indices of deprivation 2019

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Housing Need

This table summarises the findings from the housing need analysis, identifying which option will see a greatest difference in the number of homes per 1000 of the population.

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

**Nottingham City figures reflect base need values. It excludes a 35% uplift.*

Sources:

[1] Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City, Dec 2022

[2] Nottinghamshire County Council: Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Business Growth

The analysis sets out which would be the three largest areas of potential growth across each of the options based upon Gross Value Added (GVA) figures, coupled with the UK GDP growth seen over the last five years. This is intended to give an indication of which options might be able to grow economies and where that might be more challenging.There are new opportunities - such as the freeport - which are not yet captured in this data.

Option		Largest Sector		2nd largest		3rd largest	
		Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.2%	Education	11.5%	Healthcare & Social Work	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	14.5%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.7%	Real Estate	11.2%
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.6%	Education	11.2%	Professional services	10.1%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.3%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.5%	Real Estate	11.6%
1g	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	17.9%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%	Real Estate	10.9%
2	Nottingham City	Education	13.7%	Healthcare & Social Work	12.4%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.8%
	Nottinghamshire	Manufacturing	16.0%	Real Estate	12.1%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%

Sector	UK GDP growth rates over last 2020-24 (5 years)
Healthcare & Social Work	34.5%
Education	34.1%
Professional services	26.3%
Wholesale & Retail trade	12.8%
Real Estate	3.3%
Manufacturing	-3.6%

While historical GDP growth rates may provide indications of future sectoral resilience, actual future economic performance may diverge due to various factors. This includes potential local growth drivers, such as the development of the East Midlands Freeport, Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme and interventions from the strategic authority (EMCCA), could influence sectoral vulnerability and economic prospects.

Options with least vulnerable sectors

Analysis: Healthcare Provision

Set out below is a summary of the population numbers served per GP surgery in each of the options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Number of GP surgeries (February 2025)	Number of people served per GP surgery
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	79	7,101
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	74	8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	82	6,906
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	71	8,556
2	Nottingham City	329,276	51	6,456
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	102	8,279

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[2] ONS Number of GP surgeries in local areas, England and Wales
[3] ONS Number of GPs per local areas, England and Wales

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Options Appraisal

Potential three-unitary model

14th July 2025

RUSHCLIFFE - GREAT PLACE ▪ GREAT LIFESTYLE ▪ GREAT SPORT

Report contents

Rushcliffe
Borough Council

1. Purpose and approach

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.

Decision point

4 weeks

Phase 1: Options appraisal and report

- Objective, evidence-based approach to analysis of a potential 3-unitary option for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottinghamshire, in comparison to alternative options already being assessed.
- Use publicly available data sources and structure in line with Government criteria set out in the letter dated 6th February 2025.
- Top-down financial model, including estimated payback period for two and three-unitary models.
- Engagement with key public sector partners to gather and assess views on the preferred model for LGR.

Estimated 16 weeks

Phase 2: Full business case (depending on decision)

- Collaborative storyboarding, drafting, development and refinement of proposal content, including structured review sessions with key stakeholders.
- Support to develop vision and outcomes to be delivered through LGR, considering topics such as locality working and public service reform.
- Development and drafting of a more detailed, bottom-up financial model for the preferred option.
- Implementation plan to deliver against the Government timeline.

Summary of approach to options analysis

Rushcliffe Borough Council

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.

1 Options in scope for analysis

The three unitary model which is the focus of this options appraisal was selected through an analysis of key data sets (see Appendix)

This three unitary model has been compared to the three two-unitary options in scope of the Nottinghamshire-wide analysis already ongoing (2A, 2B, 2C).

2 Key baseline data sets gathered

Gathered **publicly available data** sources across the current authorities (step 2.1)

Using an Excel model, calculate combined figures for proposed future unitary authorities (step 2.2)

3 Evaluation criteria developed

Using Government guidance against the six headline criteria, developed a set of 14 criteria for options to be scored against.

Note: **no weighting** has been applied to these criteria at this point.

4 Metrics identified and assessed against each criteria

For each evaluation criteria, identified a series of metrics to provide a basis for differentiating between the merits of each option. For each metric, a statement of 'What does good look like and why?" has been set to guide the evaluation of options (see Appendix 2).

5 Scoring of options against criteria

Use evaluation of metrics for all options to arrive at a red, amber or green score for each criteria.

Commentary has been gathered alongside scoring.

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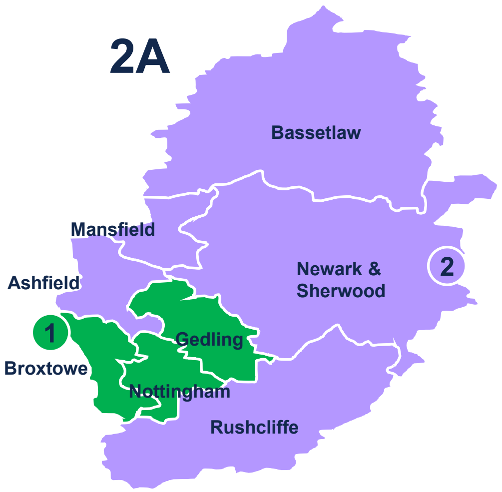
Step 1: Options in scope for analysis

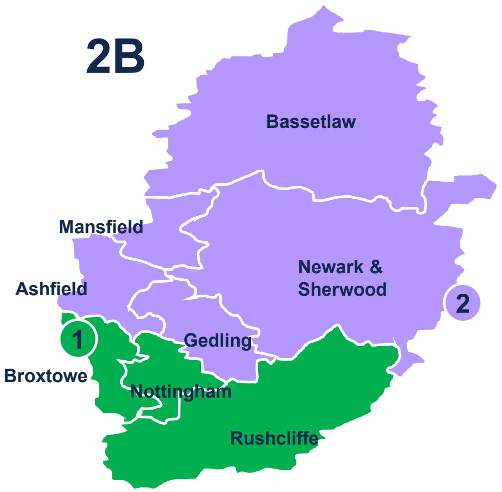
Options being analysed in analysis being performed on behalf of all nine authorities

2A



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

2B



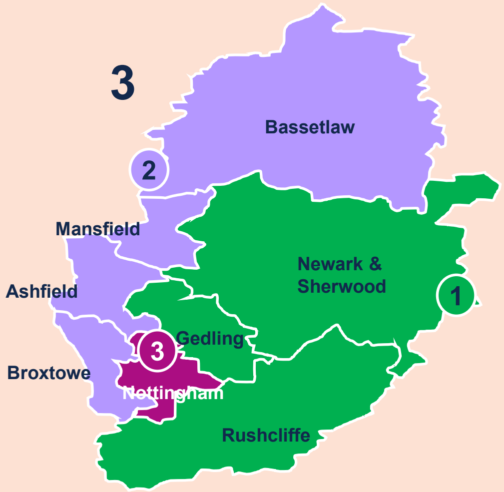
	1	2
Population	566,302	607,468
GVA per Capita (£)	30,817	19,712

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.

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%

1 2 3 4 5

Step 2.2: Key data sets: future unitary options

Rushcliffe Borough Council

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

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	• 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.

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2. Options evaluation results

Summary scoring by evaluation criteria

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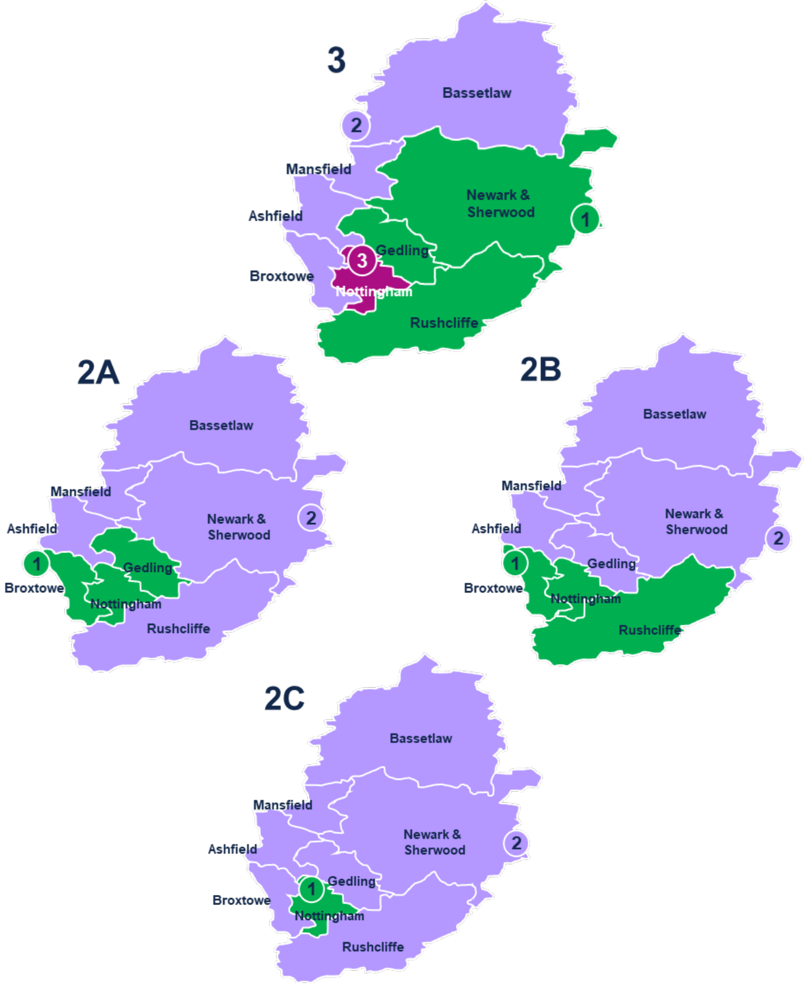

Headline Government Criteria	Evaluation criteria based on Government guidance	Scoring by option			
		3	2A	2B	2C
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	1.1 Sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base	2	2	2	2
	1.2 Sensible geography to increase housing supply and meet local needs	2	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

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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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	• 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.

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 constrains, 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.

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3. Financial model: LGR costs and savings

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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)	Revenue savings (annual)
Estimated investment required to receive the benefit of the potential savings.	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

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	• 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	• 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	• 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

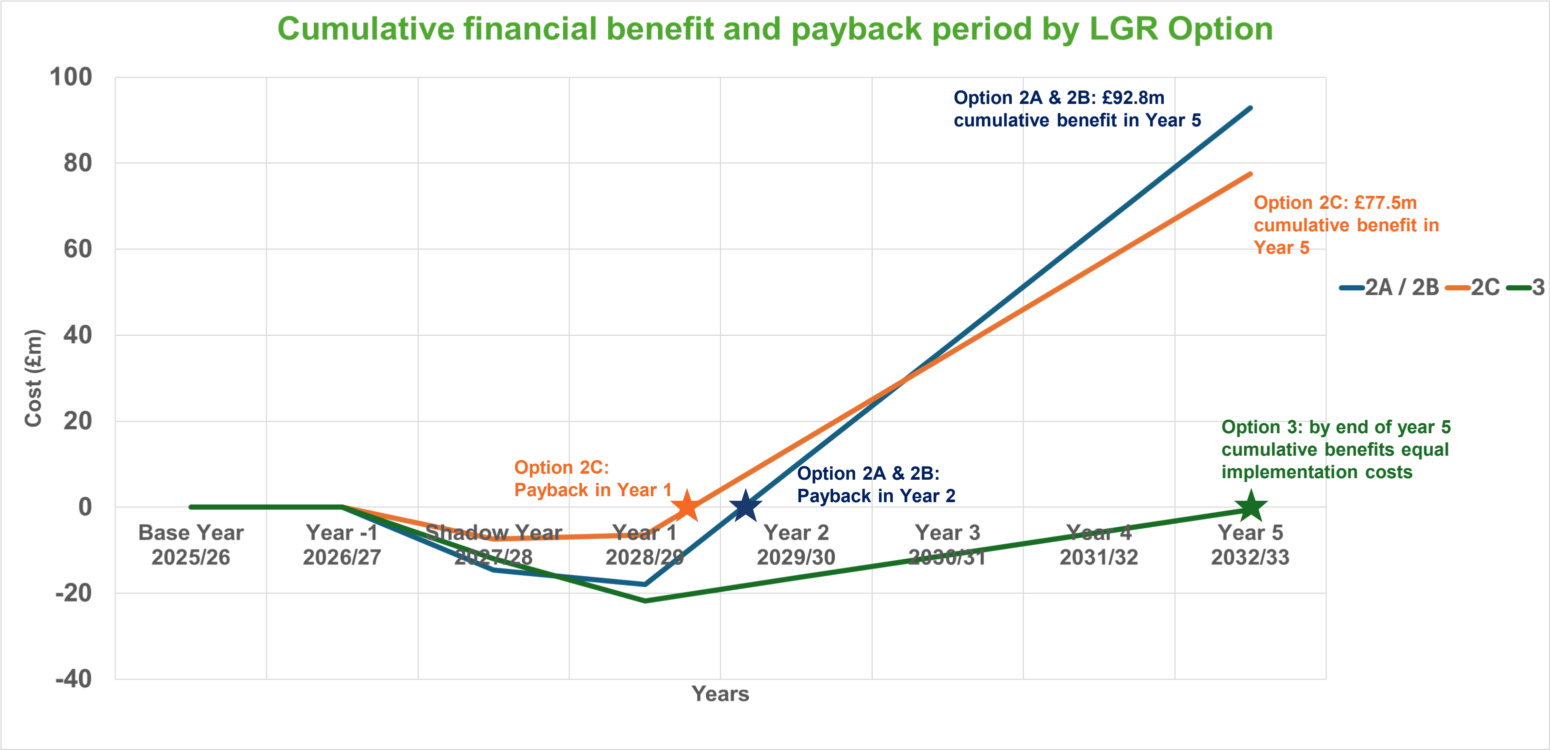
The finance model is driven by a set of assumptions and inputs. These are referenced in Appendix 2: Financial model assumptions and inputs

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

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4. Key considerations informing decision to proceed

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**

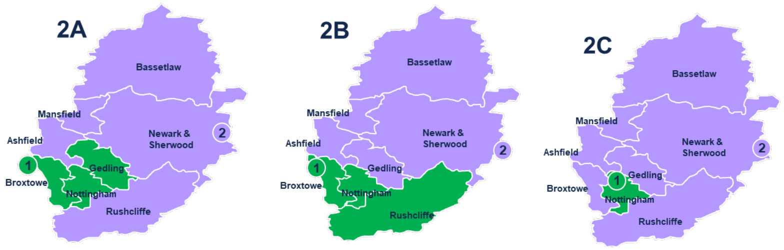
Key considerations relating to each of these six topics have been summarised on the following pages.

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?

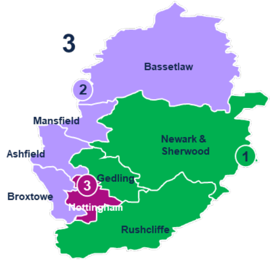


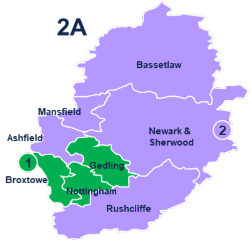
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (2) Economies of scale and financial benefits

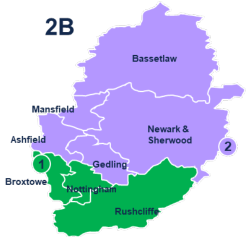
Based on financial modelling carried out during Phase 1, it will be challenging for a three-unitary business case to argue that it will be the leading option from a financial benefits perspective. However, a bottom-up financial model within a full business case could make an argument for a more favourable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





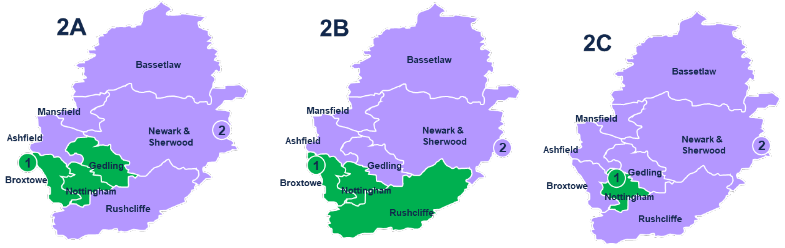


Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (3) The growth potential of Nottingham

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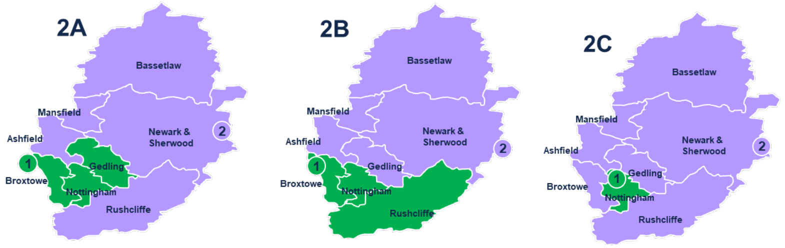
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (4) Debt levels and financial resilience of Nottingham

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.

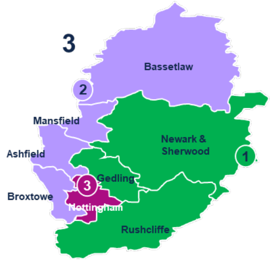


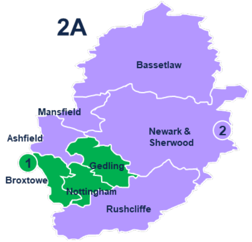
Key considerations for a potential three unitary model: (5) Implementation complexity and risk

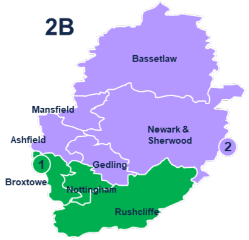
Generally, local government reorganisation complexity and cost increases as the number of proposed unitaries increases. However, as the three-unitary model leaves the current Nottingham City unitary authority as-is, it can reasonably be argued that implementation complexity is lower than for Options 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 though shared service or alternative delivery model choices within the current County Council area?







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.

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Appendix 1: Data sources

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/lifeexpectan cyforlocalareasofgreatbritain?utm
Mapping income deprivation at a local authority level	https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/incomeandwealth/datasets/mappingi ncomedeprivationatalocalauthoritylevel

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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

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Appendix 2: Finance model approach and assumptions

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

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.

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%

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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**	Balanced population ratio between all unitaries within a future strategic authority. Unitaries should seek balanced population sizes resulting in even power balance in authorities.

Rushcliffe Borough Council

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.

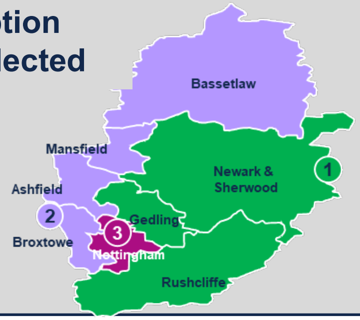
Rushcliffe
Borough Council

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	Option selected	Option disregarded
1. Establishing a single tier of local government	• 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)	
2. Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks	• Slightly more balanced in terms of population	
3. High quality and sustainable public services	• 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	
4. Working together to understand and meet local needs	No significant arguments noted either way	No significant arguments noted either way
5. Supporting devolution arrangements	• Slightly more balanced in terms of population, and representation in Strategic Authority	
6. Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment	• 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.	• 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)

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Local Government Reorganisation

September 2025 - Option Bii (Composite Proposal) Comparative Analysis

Nottingham City Council

Contents

1. Executive Summary

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

This document provides an options analysis for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It supports and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025, and subsequent detailed appraisal of shortlisted options against outcomes set out by the government.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025):

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

Phase 2 (May - June 2025):

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework. Additional analysis was therefore undertaken by officers through the development of thematic papers, drawing on internal and publicly available data.

The additional analysis particularly focussed on:

Sensible Economic Area
Sensible Geographic Area
Impact on Critical Services

Each of the three options offered different strengths and challenges. The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) were marginal.

Phase 3 (August - September 2025):

A composite option was developed by Nottingham City Council, to encompass parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. This option has been assessed, reviewed, and compared against the other two options (1b and 1e) that have been progressed forwards for detailed financial review, along with option 1a as it bears close similarity to Bii (Composite Proposal).

Bii (Composite Proposal) has been compared to the other options through three lenses:

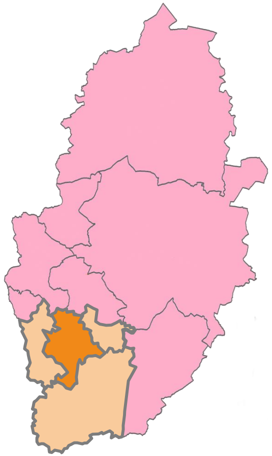
Financial Model (Phase 1)
Thematic Papers (Phase 2)
Comparative Analysis (Phase 1)

This review therefore compares a variety of quantitative factors, ranging from internal costs and benefits to local government, to external service delivery, and also to the level of socio-economic imbalance between the two regions.

Overview of Proposed Option

The proposed option Bii (Composite Proposal) creates a unique footprint, that extends beyond current district boundaries to encompass urban and suburban areas of Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe, within the wider Nottingham City conurbation.

Proposed Option Bii (Composite Proposal)



Source: ONS	Conurbation	County
Current (2023)	612,557	561,213
Projected (2035)	660,520	604,125

Overview of Option

The previously articulated options (1a - 1f and 2) are not optimal in terms of planning for and delivering housing growth and economic growth.

The creation of two unitary authorities that have distinct footprints will enable one to focus on communities in and around **Nottingham city** and delivering services in an urban context as a conurbation. The **county authority** will be more focussed on delivering services and promoting inclusive growth across a polycentric geography of towns and villages.

The creation of a conurbation authority would seek to reflect how the city **functions** and ensure **local identity** is preserved. The ability to plan for **sustainable growth** and having financial capacity to meet needs and provide effective services will be crucial success factors, as well as being able to address Nottingham's historic 'under-bounding'.

MHCLG Criteria

MHCLG have issued guidance over boundary change which highlights that district footprints are the preferred *building blocks* for LGR proposals. However,options with boundary changes can be put forward, but government has set out that "there will need to be a strong public services and financial sustainability justification" for such proposals.

Guidance published by the LGA suggests two routes for government to consider a proposal which modifies district boundaries - as in the case of option Bii (Composite Proposal).

- Final proposal using district building blocks, with request for subsequent Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) - Minister or new councils will request the Local Government Boundary Commission for England to incorporate this PABR into their work programme.
- Final proposal using district building blocks as best fit with request to minister to modify and implement new boundaries to achieve desired configuration.

Methodology and Approach

Three approaches were taken in order to assess option Bii (Composite Proposal) against the other options by deploying the same methodology for the appraisal of the existing shortlisted options. This approach allowed for an assessment that covers the internal financial viability, the impact on services, and the imbalance between the two regions.

Lens
A
Financial Viability

Financial Modelling

The financial modelling utilises a set of assumptions, built off the previous high level financial modelling, to estimate the benefits and costs to the authorities of reorganising. Certain costs are assumed to be higher under option Bii (Composite Proposal), affecting the net benefit after 7 years and also the payback period duration.

Lens
B
Thematic Papers Review

Review of key internally developed papers

This revolves around utilising the data provided in the thematic papers to approximate the likely outcomes under Bii (Composite Proposal). Topics include economic area, geographic area, and crucial services, in order to understand the impact on these services.

Lens
C
Comparative Analysis

Socio-economic factors analysis and comparison

This includes analysis of publicly available data to understand the geographic synergy of the two unitary authority options. Metrics consist of, but are not limited to, the proportion of rural and urban populations, average time to receive key services, debt to reserve ratios, and Council Tax take in relation to social care demand. This aims to find which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Summary of findings

This analysis shows that option Bii (Composite Proposal) can achieve the same level of benefits as options 1b and 1e and that there are marginal differences between all options as set out in the comparative analysis. The complexity of disaggregating services from existing district footprints is likely to incur additional one off transition costs. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could provide greater coherence in service delivery for primarily rural and urban communities, and is similar in terms of the balance of geographic and economic indicators to option 1b & 1e.

Comparative analysis

All options being considered across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint have marginal differences between them and would require some mitigations as part of implementation.

The comparative analysis indicates that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) performs similarly to Options 1b and 1e across most key metrics, suggesting it is comparable to these other options.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) demonstrates strong balance in areas such as population projections, debt to reserve per capita, and deprivation.

More detailed work will be required through the development of a detailed financial case and full proposal to demonstrate that this option meets MHCLG's requirements to implement an option with varied district boundaries.

Thematic Papers Review

The review of thematic areas suggests that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly comparable to Options 1b and 1e on these domains, with several indicators pointing to stronger outcomes from a service delivery perspective.

In areas like Children's Social Care and SEND, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents a more even spread of demand. When analysing the economic and geographic areas, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents no significant material difference to 1b or 1e.

Overall, there is potential for Bii (Composite Proposal) to provide a configuration of local government that provides a viable model for service delivery and a distinctive remit for the respective urban-focused and rural-focused authorities that would be created.

Impact on financial analysis

The financial comparison highlights that whilst all options deliver the same annual benefits of £24.6 million (based on the analysis undertaken at this stage) options 1b & 1e are more financially efficient, with lower transition costs (£28.8 million), a shorter payback period of 1.3 years, and a higher net benefit of £64.7 million over five years.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) has higher one-off transition costs (£31.6 million) arising from additional anticipated programme and design requirements due to the added complexity of change. There is therefore a longer payback period of 1.7 years and a lower net benefit of £62.0 million after 5 years.

It should also be noted that there may be additional financial complexities for the wider public service delivery system where partners currently organise or deliver services aligned to a district footprint.

Appraisal of options

Additional analysis was completed focussed on MHCLG criteria for unitary local government, comparing option Bii (Composite Proposal) to 1b and 1e. This, and previous analysis, has informed the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria. The analysis indicates that all three options put forward a configuration for local government that are likely, on balance, to address the criteria (with mitigations likely to be required in some instances). The RAG rating indicates relative alignment to the criteria among the options (those highlighted in pink are factors that allow for detailed comparative grading).

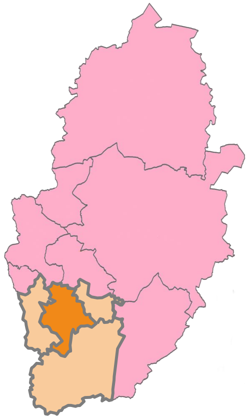
Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option Bii
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic area: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic area: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	High
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Medium
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	High
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	High
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Set out below is further rationale to underpin the comparative RAG rating against the MHCLG criteria for option Bii (Composite Proposal). For those areas which carry a "medium" amber rating, specific areas of difference compared with option 1b and 1e are highlighted, but which could be contextualised or mitigated through the development of a narrative and evidence base for a full proposal to government.

Bii

o Unitary Authorities: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Conurbation



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Areas of strength and suggested further development
Criteria 1	• **Strengths:** strong alignment with sensible geography and economic area criteria.
Criteria 2	• **Strengths:** retains balanced projected population levels (with c.51k higher projected population in the conurbation authority). • **Areas for development:** There are higher transition costs than under 1(b) or 1(e) due to the proposed division of existing district boundaries through reorganisation. Specifically, additional programme and engagement capacity, and external design and implementation support are likely to be required to manage the transition and realise the financial benefits.
Criteria 3	• **Strengths:** Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Creates two distinct areas enabling tailored and specialised service delivery models in line with local population needs and contexts.
Criteria 4	• **Strengths:** Combines portions of authorities that are the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings. • **Areas for development:** Approach to managing any complexities arising from disaggregating services currently delivered at a district footprint, and allaying any local concerns that may arise as a result of different areas within Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe aligning to different unitary authorities.
Criteria 5	• **Strengths:** Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (661k for Nottingham Conurbation and 604k for Nottinghamshire by 2035).
Criteria 6	• **Strengths:** Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries; delineation between urban and rural areas may offer new opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment. • **Areas for development:** New local fora and channels may be required to effectively engage communities.

Definition of RAG ratings

High

A green rating shows a high congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this would be an advantageous element to set out in a full proposal.

Medium

An amber rating shows good degree of alignment with MHCLG criteria, but where additional rationale, detail, mitigation, or explanation may be beneficial when developing a full proposal.

Low

A red rating shows a low congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this will not meet the criteria required for MHCLG to approve this option.

Next steps

The below timetable articulates the key deadlines relating to local government reorganisation within the region, and what should happen in order to progress option Bii forwards.

Timeline

1 **12th September 2025 - Comparative options appraisal**
The draft report, covering a high level options appraisal of option Bii (Composite Proposal), is issued.

2 **28th November 2025 - Submission to MHCLG**
A proposal, along with a full business case, is due to be submitted to MHCLG by the 28th November.

3 **Early 2026 - Feedback from MHCLG**
Feedback is provided by MHCLG, ensuring final proposals include clear rationale, financial assessments, and evidence of public engagement.

4 **April 2027 - Shadow Authority established**
Shadow authorities will be formed and take responsibility of the future Council over the year ahead, before vesting day.

5 **April 2028 - Vesting Day**
New unitary authorities will formally take control over all responsibilities.

Areas for development

- An **internal decision** needs to be reached about the viability of option Bii (Composite Proposal), and whether it should be progressed forwards to develop a full business case and proposal for submission to MHCLG.
- **External stakeholders** should be engaged, to inform them of the plan and proposal. Feedback gathered can be used in the drafting of the proposal.
- A **detailed financial analysis** of option Bii (Composite Proposal) will be needed, in order to effectively compare it as an option to 1b and 1e. These two options are currently being developed through detailed financial modelling.
- Once the modelling has been completed, a **business case and proposal** needs to be drafted, reviewed and approved, for submission to MHCLG by 28th November.

2. Background & Context

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

This document provides an options analysis for local government reorganisation (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It support and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025):

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

Phase 2 (May - June 2025):

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework. Additional analysis was therefore undertaken by officers through the development of thematic papers, drawing on internal and publicly available data.

The additional analysis particularly focussed on:

Sensible Economic Area
Sensible Geographic Area
Impact on Critical Services

Each of the three options offered different strengths and challenges. The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in degree of alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) were marginal.

Phase 3 (August - September 2025):

An alternative option was developed by Nottingham City Council, to encompass parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. This option has been assessed, reviewed, and compared against the other two options (1b and 1e) that have been progressed forwards for detailed financial review, along with option 1a as it bears close similarity to Bii (Composite Proposal) .

This option, Bii (Composite Proposal), has been compared options through three lens:

Financial Model (Phase 1)
Thematic Papers (Phase 2)
Comparative Analysis (Phase 1)

This review therefore compares a variety of quantitative factors, ranging from internal costs and benefits to local government, to external service delivery, and also to the level of socio-economic imbalance between the two regions.

National Policy Context

MHCLG have published set criteria against which all proposals should meet. In addition, they have released information when considering amending district boundaries.

MHCLG Criteria on proposals

1	**Establishing a single tier of government for the whole area:** Proposals should feature a sensible economic area with an appropriate tax base, and a suitable geographic area for housing plans.
2	**Improve efficiencies, capacity and withstand financial shocks:** Financial standing should be improved, and regions should aim for ~500,000 people.
3	**Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality & sustainable public services to civilians:** Proposals should improve service delivery and minimise impact.
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 of local views**
5	**New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements:** Proposals should document the plans and intentions for future interaction with a Combined Authority, if relevant.
6	**New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment:** Proposals will need to document how communities will be engaged.

MHCLG Guidance on redrawing boundaries

Boundary changes are possible, however "existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for proposals".

A strong justification in terms of financial sustainability and public service delivery is required for MHCLG to consider more complex boundary changes.

Any boundary changes proposed should be **clear in the final proposal**, whether parish or ward boundary, or if creating new boundaries, by attaching a map.

Any boundary changes should ensure they meet the **overarching criteria** for all proposals.

Boundary change can be implemented at the same time as structural change, however proposals can use existing district building blocks, before requesting a Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) at a later date.

Local Policy Context

The previously articulated and assessed options focus on redrawing boundaries utilising current district boundaries. This alternative option sets a new geographic footprint which seeks to align to local community areas and more specifically urban areas rather than maintain the existing district boundaries.

Option limitations

All options being considered across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire footprint would require mitigations as part of implementation. Summaries of the relative benefits and alignment to the LGR framework have been set out in the interim plan submission to Government*.

Geographical patterns about how residents live and organisations work are important for the delivery of services as are the need for further growth and housing delivery and the analysis of option 1b (ii) more closely aligns to the 'sensible economic area' criteria. The options proposed (1b and 1e) align Nottingham with Broxtowe and either Gedling or Rushcliffe councils and it has already been identified that some mitigations would be needed in order to deliver the housing and economic growth required.

*https://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s169382/3.%20Local%20Government%20Reorganisation.pdf

Vision and Logic

The creation of two unitary authorities that have distinct footprints will enable one to focus on enabling expansion of the existing urban areas of Nottingham city and delivering services in an urban context. The county authority will be more focussed on delivering services and promoting inclusive growth across a polycentric geography of revitalised towns and buoyant villages.

Through the creation of a city-focussed authority, it will reflect how the city functions and ensure local identity is preserved. It will enable planning for sustainable growth and would have the financial capacity to meet needs and provide effective services. This proposed authority would be able to address Nottingham's historic 'under-bounding'.

An option with boundaries that correlate closely to how individuals interact with services can help set a landscape for effective implementation and service reorganisation.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Redrawing the district boundaries of the neighbouring Gedling, Rushcliffe, and Broxtowe regions would deliver this vision.

This option would include all of Gedling, with the exception of Bestwood St Albans, Calverton, Dumbles, and Newstead Abbey.

It would include all of Rushcliffe, with the exception of Bingham North, Bingham South, Cranmer, Cropwell, East Bridgford, Nevile & Langar, and Newton.

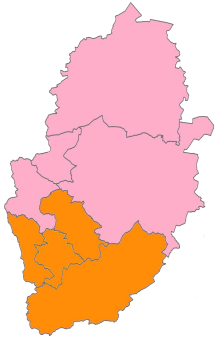
Finally, all of Broxtowe, with the exception of Eastwood Hall, Eastwood Hilltop, Eastwood St Mary's, Brinsley, and Greasley would be included.

A map is included on the following page.

Proposed option for consideration

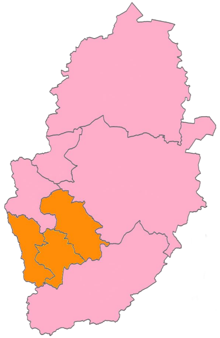
For the purpose of this appraisal, Bii (Composite Proposal) will be compared against options 1b and 1e, as these options remain under active consideration and development. 1a has also been compared against as this option coheres most closely to that put forward in Bii (Composite Proposal).

Option 1a



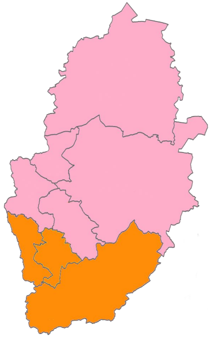
Population	
City + Gedling + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	684,865
Notts County + Remaining LAs	488,905

Option 1b



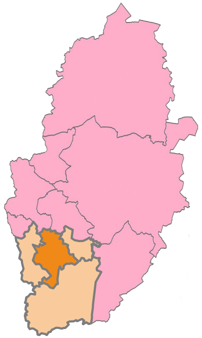
Population	
City + Gedling + Broxtowe	561,011
Notts County + Remaining LAs	612,759

Option 1e



Population	
City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302
Notts County + Remaining LAs	607,468

Option Bii (Composite Proposal)



Population	
City + portions of Gedling + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	612,557
Notts County + Remaining LAs	561,213

In summary…

Four structural options are proposed for Nottingham City Council's Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), each presenting different population splits. To support assessment against criteria 2 (sensible population levels), the summary highlights how each option stacks up in broad terms. Options 1a and Bii (Composite Proposal) share similar population figures, while Options 1b and 1e suggest alternative configurations. Geographic coverage is noted but not the primary focus. Some figures may differ from previous findings due to PwC's population approximations. District level figures are sourced from ONS 2023, ward level figures for Bii (Composite Proposal) have been proxied through ONS mid-2021 data.

3. Impact on financial analysis

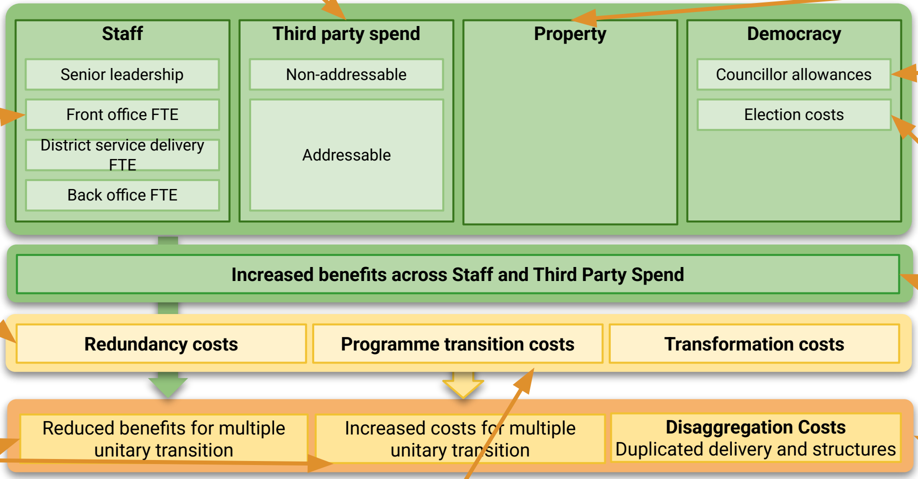
Financial Modelling: Methodology

The previous options analysis utilised a financial analysis model to compare the potential benefits and costs posed by each option. This analysis is primarily based on publicly available outturn data, information from each council's own transparency data, or by applying changes which have been demonstrated across previous LGR proposals.Information highlighted in green displays benefits for the client and those in yellow visualise costs.

Third-party spend refers to all payments made by local councils for goods and services from external suppliers, excluding grants, taxations, and other charges. Addressable spend is the portion of this expenditure that can be influenced through procurement or commissioning strategies such as negotiating contracts or seeking competitive bids. In contrast, non-addressable spend includes costs that are less flexible and mandated by law, making them harder to influence.

Property expenditure relates to the cost associated with acquiring, maintaining, and managing both **operational** properties (used for delivering council services) and **investment** properties (held for income or capital appreciation). This includes expense such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and management fees.

FTE is calculated as a proportion of spend as supplied in public spending data. **Net revenue expenditure** is used to avoid double-counting any income or grant transfers. **Senior leadership** salaries are calculated across the top three organisational tiers as per transparency reporting.



Member allowances are based on rates of Basic and Special Responsibility payments published in transparency reporting. These costs are used to determine the likely cost of one or more new democratic structures in new authorities

Election costs use a total of votes cast in a previous election cycle across all council elections, and a cost-per-vote of £3 calculated by the Electoral Commission

Redundancy costs do not include actuarial strain as this is highly individualised. A payment of 30% of salary is assumed.

Benefits are profiled to be fully effective in Year 3, to account for the need to complete staff changes and undertake contract renegotiations.

Costs such as the creation of new councils, marketing, ICT and consultation are increased proportionately where more than one new council is to be formed. Similarly, fixed **benefits of transition** are shared across all new bodies.

Transition costs include anticipated redundancies due to duplicated leadership structures, and elements of one-off spending relating to creating, marketing and programme managing transition to a new council.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries, and represents the ongoing cost of duplicating management and operations of statutory services, including social care, education and public health. **An element of disaggregated costs therefore recur each year in options with more than one unitary authority**

Financial Modelling: Proposed impact of Bii (Composite Proposal) on model

This appraisal has considered whether any changes to the model are required to be able to compare the existing "2UA" options with an option which proposes forming two Unitary Authorities through amending district borders. The areas of the model where the configuration proposed by option Bii (Composite Proposal) has a material impact over the existing shortlisted options are summarised in colour, with unaffected elements of the model in grey.

It has been assumed that there are additional costs attributable to **third party spend** under the Bii (Composite Proposal) option. This is due to the fact that any contracts held by Gedling, Rushcliffe, and Broxtowe District Councils will need to renegotiated, terminated, or even re-procured. This additional cost has been reflected under the additional internal programme management.

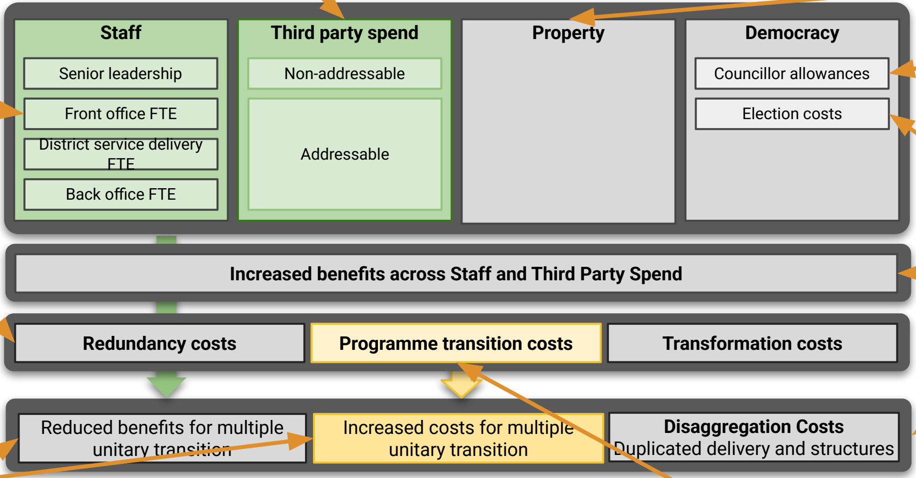
For savings realised through **property expenditure**, they have been assumed to remain the same. Amending District borders should not pose a greater or reduced opportunity to consolidate property.

As the model examines the overall savings across the region and future authorities, the savings from **FTE reduction** have remained the same under option Bii (Composite Proposal). However, the ability to realise these reductions through aggregation may be affected by a model which divides existing district boundaries in the formation of new unitaries.

Redundancy costs are assumed to be 30% of the FTE savings. As FTE savings do not change, redundancy costs will not be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Certain costs relating to the formation of new councils have been assumed to be higher. This includes costs relating to the **registration of new councils**, due to the redrawing of boundaries, and **comms and marketing**, due to the added complexity of redrawn boundaries.

Other costs, including **ICT** and **consultation** have been assumed to remain the same.



As the **member allowances** relate to the Basic and Special Responsibility payments to the councillors and members, these will not be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

The savings from **election costs** will not be impacted. There are still the same number of elections being abolished.

Benefits have been modelled under the same **phasing**, and will be fully realised by year 3.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries. This is not impacted by dividing across district borders. As such, these are the same under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Transition costs relate to the one off costs of managing the transition to the new council. Due to the added complexity, costs relating to the **external transition, design, and implementation support** and the **internal programme management** are higher under option Bii (Composite Proposal). In addition, the **contingency** will also increase, in order to reflect the unknown potential impact of the additional complexity. It has been assumed that the other transition costs are not impacted under this option.

Overview of assumptions (1/2)

The table below identifies the key assumptions underpinning different aspects of the financial model to quantify the potential costs and benefits of different options. There are no differences on the assumptions listed on this page for option Bii (Composite Proposal) , compared to options 1a, 1b, or 1e.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure	
		Option 1a, 1b and 1e	Option Bii
Benefits of aggregation: Staff	Proportion of net revenue expenditure spent on staff	31.33%	
	Front Office FTE	36%	
	Service Delivery FTE	37%	
	Back Office FTE	27%	
	Reduction in front office FTE	4%	
	Reduction in service delivery FTE	1.5%	
	Reduction in back-office FTE	3%	
	Reduction in senior leadership costs	£8,681,498	
Benefits of aggregation: Third party spend	Proportion of net expenditure spent on third parties	65.7%	
	Proportion of third party spend (TPS) which is addressable	75%	
	Reduction in third party spend	1.5%	
Benefits of aggregation: Property	Proportion of net expenditure spent on property	3%	
	Reduction in property spend	12.5%	
Benefits of aggregation: Democracy	District SRA and base allowances incurred as part of the democratic structure	£351,915	
	Annual cost incurred per District election	£165,530	
	Cost per vote during an election	£3.00	

Overview of assumptions (2/2)

The below lists the assumed values that are proposed to use to modify the financial model for the comparative analysis. Any assumption for Bii (Composite Proposal) that differs from 1b and 1e is in bold and highlighted in yellow. This indicates that the primary area where option Bii (Composite Proposal) has a material difference compared with other 2UA options is in increased transition costs.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure	
		Option 1a, 1b & 1e	Option Bii
Aggregation and Disaggregation Costs	Proportion of additional FTE undertaking service delivery management & supervision	0%	
	Additional senior leadership costs	0%	
	Members in upper tier local authorities	121	
	Member base allowance	£1,088,297	
	SRA costs per new unitary authority	£0	
Costs of Transition	Redundancy cost as a proportion of salary	30%	
	External communications, rebranding and implementation	**£732,000**	**£823,500**
	External transition, design and implementation support costs	**£8,540,000**	**£9,607,500**
	Additional programme management costs of disaggregating services	£0	
	Internal programme management	**£3,806,400**	**£4,282,200**
	Creating the new council	**£1,220,000**	**£1,372,500**
	Contingency	**£6,775,853**	**£7,726,489**
	Organisation Closedown	£305,000	
	Public consultation	£411,750	
	Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) costs	£2,385,000	
	Shadow Chief Exec/ Member costs	£622,200	

Rationale for changes to assumptions

For each assumption that has changed from Option 1b and 1e, the explanation and rationale for the number has been displayed in the table below. This table has applied a 12.5% uplift to indicate what an applied change would be against individual cost areas under the model.

Area	Assumption	Key Figure		Rationale
		Option 1a, 1b and 1e	Option Bii	
Costs of Transition	External communications, rebranding and implementation	£732,000	£823,500	In order to effectively communicate to residents, businesses, and individuals, there will need to be an additional cost of approximately 2 FTE to conduct targeted engagement with specific areas affected by boundaries being redrawn. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been used.
	External transition, design and implementation support costs	£8,540,000	£9,607,500	Due to the complexity, it is likely that additional external support will be required. In addition, the added costs originating from renegotiating, terminating, and re-procuring contracts in the short term has been reflected in this assumption. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been applied here.
	Internal programme management	£3,806,400	£4,282,200	This equates to the internal comms to staff, management of the project, as well as designing of future services, operating models and subsequent realignment of staff into the new unitary authorities. This will involve considerable engagement with key stakeholders, as well as approvals and confirmation from senior leadership.A **12.5%** uplift has been applied from the 1b and 1e scenario.
	Creating the new council	£1,220,000	£1,372,500	There is an estimated additional cost of approximately 2 - 3 FTE. This will relate specifically to the additional processes of engaging with LGBCE (e.g. provision of data and facilitating engagement and consultation requirements), to facilitate the redrawing of new unitary boundaries. A **12.5%** uplift from options 1b and 1e has been applied.
	Contingency	£6,775,853	£7,726,489	The contingency will increase due to the additional costs identified, and the added complexity of this option. As such, a **12.5%** uplift is applied to account for these unknown costs.

Impact on costs

Under Option Bii (Composite Proposal), the formation of two unitary authorities with amended district boundaries will have an impact on costs. Recent LGR exercises suggest considerations around any existing cross-boundary shared service arrangements are a particular driver of complexity.

Disaggregation costs

There are **no additional costs arising from disaggregation** in any of the two Unitary Authority options proposed. Disaggregation costs relate to any recurring costs associated with reorganisation which would require *additional* expenditure over and above existing unitary/upper tier arrangements.

In particular, they are born out of three areas, namely, the need for **senior leadership**, the need for **management** of **service delivery** teams, and the need for a **democratic structure**.

Under all of the two unitary authority options, it has been assumed that the cost of the senior leadership structure at Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County will remain. As such, there is no additional costs arising from the need to create with creating a new senior leadership team.

This is also true for the management of service delivery teams. There is no additional cost as it has been assumed that existing management structures will remain in place.

Finally, the existing upper tier democratic structure has also been assumed to remain, with the same number of members and associated costs.

If an option proposed forming **three unitary authorities**, there would be **disaggregation costs** due to the additional structures needed.

Service disaggregation

There are few cases of local government reorganisation that span across unitary and non-unitary authorities, especially for areas that redrew boundaries. As such, there is little evidence to understand and estimate the level of costs.

An assumption has been made, utilising a 12.5% uplift for any **transition** costs that could be impacted by the additional complexity of dividing districts. This 12.5% is a similar figure used by other authorities currently undergoing local government reorganisation where a “split district” option is being proposed in the formation of two new unitary authorities.

Whilst there is very limited precedent for reorganisations that involve dividing district boundaries, some recent examples highlight that reorganisation can require the reconfiguration, and - in some cases, dissolution of shared service agreements and procured third party provisions. The reconfiguration of local government arrangements in Northamptonshire, for instance, led to the need to dissolve shared service agreements with neighbouring district authorities.

These costs have been reflected in the assumptions developed for option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Indicative financial comparisons

An initial financial comparison has been prepared for the Bii (Composite Proposal) option, on the basis of the financial analysis, methodology and assumptions applied previously shared, tested and talked through with s151 officers. This shows that it is likely to take slightly - but not significantly - longer to recoup the enhanced transition costs posed by this option.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option Bii: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe (exc. Eastwood), urban Gedling wards and S&W Rushcliffe	£31,586,230	£24,620,878	***£61,973,107***	***1.7***

Financial Modelling: Phasing of costs and benefits

The review has indicated a potential reduction in realisable benefits through additional transition costs, particularly to achieve third party spend reductions. This information does not propose that this affects the phasing of benefits and costs from the original analysis.

Impact of Phasing

In modelling the impact of costs and benefits, assumptions have been made to reflect their realistic phasing. This ensures that one-off costs are spread over multiple years rather than being incurred immediately, alongside the ongoing costs of transition.

Benefits are phased over a 3 year period, recognising that some efficiencies - such as senior leadership reductions - can be realised quickly, while others, like contract realignment and third-party spend savings, will take longer to achieve. This approach accounts for operational complexities, contract obligations, and the time required for full implementation.

It is important to note that the benefits outlined here relate solely to system aggregation, rather than service transformation. The efficiencies modelled do not include potential improvements from broader service redesign, which would be considered separately.

The phasing of the annualised **benefits** is over three years, due to the varying timescales for different aspects of delivery, after 3 years the full annual benefit is assumed. This includes ongoing cost reduction programs, the timing of the next election, and the expiry of third-party contracts. Transformation benefits have not been included.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	30%	50%	100%	100%
Transition Costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%
Disaggregation Costs	***No disaggregation cost***			

Transition costs are spread over a longer period rather than being completed within a single year, ensuring a more realistic and feasible approach. Costs are incurred over three years, with Years 2 and 3 primarily covering recontracting, system migrations, workforce adjustments, and other transition-related expenditures. This phased approach accounts for contractual constraints, the complexity of workforce changes, and the time required to reorganise services, reducing financial risk and operational disruption.

Disaggregation costs arise from splitting county services into new councils, leading to ongoing expenses for duplicated leadership and operations but excluding service delivery costs.

4. Thematic Papers Review

Methodology

To support the more detailed appraisal of shortlisted options, thematic papers were produced by officers across the authorities covering key policy domains and critical services. These papers and the data collated within them, have been reviewed and analysed to understand the impact of option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Introduction to Thematic Papers

Thematic papers were reviewed in order to understand how options 1b, 1e, and 2 has previously been appraised. These thematic papers have been produced internally. In total, seven papers were reviewed:

1. Critical Services: Adult Social Care
2. Critical Services: Children Social Care
3. Critical Services: SEND Provision
4. Critical Services: Homelessness
5. Critical Services: Public Safety
6. Sensible Economic Area
7. Sensible Geographic Area

From here, hypotheses were developed and tested in order to understand whether option Bii (Composite Proposal) would pose a material difference when compared with options 1b or 1e.

Approach

Through reviewing the papers, it was found that there was no material difference between options 1b and 1e regarding homelessness and public safety. As such, there would be no material difference between these options and Bii (Composite Proposal), and therefore have not been included in the findings here.

The thematic papers contained a variety of qualitative and quantitative data. Where possible, quantitative data was used, through a proxy measurement of population (ONS ward level data), to understand how the service would be impacted under option Bii (Composite Proposal). In order to compare results fairly, measures for option 1a were also calculated, either using specific figures provided in the paper, or through proxy measurements based on population.

On each page, the thematic paper is introduced and briefly surmised, before insight and analysis is applied to the findings. Options which identify a low degree of imbalance between the two regions have been deemed as preferential. As this data has been developed utilising proxy estimates, in order to identify precise metrics, additional district-level data granularity is required.

For the avoidance of doubt, a shorthand has been developed:
City +: Nottingham City and any other districts
County: The remaining LAs and regions not included in the other option.
Con.: Conurbation; the areas of Nottingham City, Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe to be merged under option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Critical Services: Adult Social Care

In terms of Adult Social Care, option Bii (Composite Proposal) will produce an outcome with a balance between the two regions that is comparable to the other options.

What did the papers find?

Overall, the paper identified that contracts, assets, and services are not equally distributed across the region or by population, and that significant work will be required to manage this risk during transition.

The assessment found that although there is a risk posed to service quality posed by disaggregating services, there is no greater risk when comparing 1b and 1e.

1b was found to be more balanced than 1e in terms of numbers of self-funders. It was also more advantageous for strategic and operational needs. Given that Broxtowe and Gedling are more densely populated than Rushcliffe, there is closer alignment for service delivery between Nottingham City and these two districts, rather than expanding into Rushcliffe.

Insight from findings

Combining projected social care spend for adults and childrens compared with to council tax receipts suggests that Bii (Composite Proposal) would produce a closer degree of balance than under any other option. Across both regions, there are high levels of spend compared to Council Tax receipts. Additional income sources such as grants can be explored to ensure financial sustainability. For further detail on this ratio please refer to the appendix.

Under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the Conurbation will see a higher spend and also number of people receiving long term support, when compared to 1b and 1e.

This Conurbation may align closer to the strategic and operational needs, as the conurbation focuses specifically on the urban areas of Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe.

Metric		**Combined social care spend to council tax** (2032/33)	**ASC spending** (2032/33)	**People receiving social care** (2023)
1a	City +	0.84	£211.3m	10,228
	County	0.98	£190.5m	7,960
1b	City +	0.94	£177.0m	8,891
	County	0.87	£224.8m	9,297
1e	City +	0.87	£173.4m	8,605
	County	0.92	£228.4m	9,583
Bii	**Con.**	**0.94**	**£188.7m**	**9,330**
	County	**0.93**	**£213.1m**	**8,858**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Critical Services: Children's Social Care

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) appears to provide the most equal option in terms of spending and demand for Children's social Care support.

What did the papers find?

As an entirety, the previous assessment concluded that whilst dividing services poses a risk to quality, this risk is not significantly larger in either Option 1b or 1e. On the contrary, Option 1b was discovered to offer a more balanced distribution of elements, including demand and resource, which attained better alignment with strategic and operational needs.

The analysis highlighted that Broxtowe and Gedling share higher levels of need around abuse, substance misuse and safeguarding with Nottingham City in comparison to Rushcliffe. Additionally, Gedling's proximity and integration with City's postcodes suggests stronger alignment for service delivery as observed by their school attendance patterns.

As a result Option 1b presents a more favourable approach for an expanded city unitary authority supporting delivering CSC.

Insight from findings

As with ASC, the spend to council tax receipts is higher than expected under this option. Further detail can be found in the appendix.

If Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is selected to move forward with, the CSC spend on the city / conurbation would be higher than under option 1b or 1e, due to higher demand.

There is a 211 difference between the Conurbation and County under option Bii (Composite Proposal), thereby producing a greater degree of balance than under 1b and 1e. If preferring an option which minimises imbalance between the two regions, this option could be considered.

This option would align with 1b in terms of strategic and operational delivery, as this region seeks to identify the urban population of the region.

Metric		Combined social care spend to council tax (2032/33)	CSC spending (2032/33)	People receiving social care (2023)
1a	City +	0.84	£185.2m	3,577
	County	0.98	£159.3m	3,166
1b	City +	0.94	£160.4m	3,084
	County	0.87	£184.1m	3,659
1e	City +	0.87	£158.3m	3,042
	County	0.92	£186.2m	3,701
Bii	**Con.**	**0.94**	**£169.6m**	**3,266**
	County	**0.93**	**£174.9m**	**3,477**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Critical Services: SEND

As with Social Care, option Bii (Composite Proposal) produces a fairly balanced outcome for SEND provision across the region when compared with options 1b and 1e.

What did the papers find?

The thematic paper that assessed SEND services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire found that 1b would be more suitable than 1e.

Both options are closely aligned with the overall aims of LGR, with demand balanced well between the two regions. However, the levels of demand are significantly lower in Rushcliffe, and this could therefore present challenges stemming from an imbalance in income and demand for services.

Overall, the key risk for all options relates to the sufficiency of specialist SEND provision. This could be mitigated against through joint work during the shadow authority, however due to the imbalance under option 1e, the impact may be greater than under option 1b.

Insight from findings

In order to compare 1b and 1e against 1a and Bii (Composite Proposal), the overall numbers were proxied utilising population data.

1a presents the greatest demand imbalance between the conurbation and county. Under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the approximated numbers show that there will be a greater demand imbalance when compared to 1b, however Bii (Composite Proposal) is more balanced than that of 1e.

By extending the conurbation to include only the urban areas of Gedling, Broxtowe, and Rushcliffe, this region may be able to mitigate against risks associated with service delivery.

As with 1b and 1e, it is likely there is a risk relating to specialist provision, especially during the transition.

Metric		Number of initial requests for an EHC Plan (2024)	New EHC Plans issued (2024)	Number of children subject of an EHC Plan (Jan 2025)
1a	City +	1,340	928	4,276
	County	956	662	3,052
1b	City +	1,131	731	3,611
	County	1,165	859	3,717
1e	City +	1,038	629	3,326
	County	1,258	961	4,002
Bii	**Con.**	**1,201**	**832**	**3,833**
	County	**1,095**	**758**	**3,495**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Sensible Economic Area (1/2)

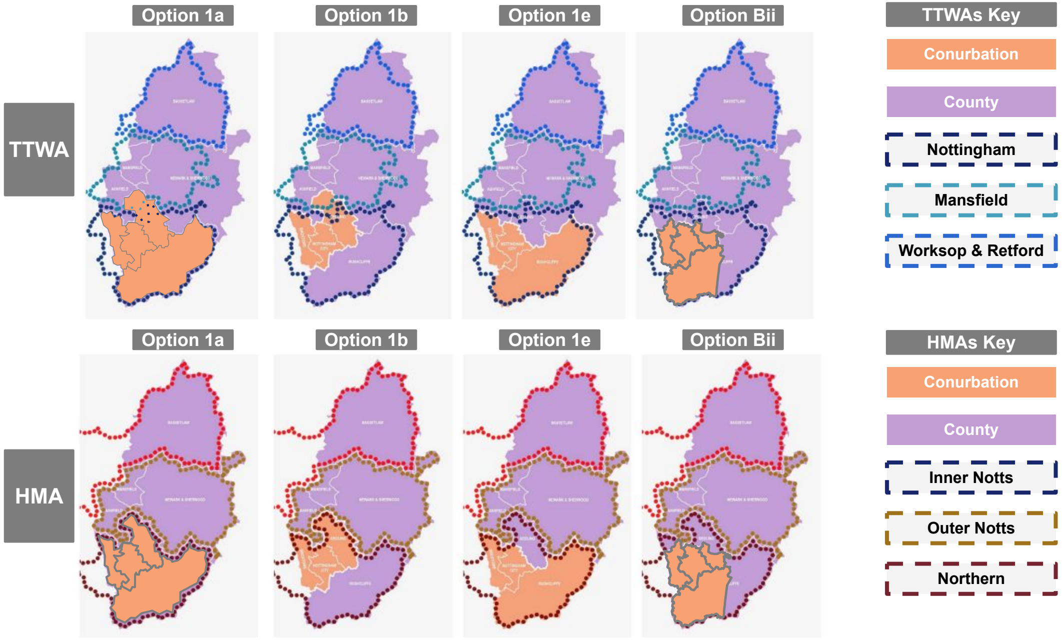
The findings from the original thematic papers are summarised here, with additional insight and analysis from the findings on the next page.

What did the papers originally find?

The Economic Area thematic paper assessed the options through a variety of metrics, including alignment to Travel To Work Areas (TTWAs) and Housing Market Areas (HMAs). Other metrics, including catchment areas for hospitals and key socio-economic areas, were also investigated.

TTWAs have been developed by the ONS to recognise self-contained areas where people live and work, and HMAs have been developed by MHCLG to identify the optimal areas within which planning for housing should be carried out. These areas are overlaid on top of the different boundaries under each option on the maps opposite, with the full findings on the next page.

Overall, the original paper found that option 1b would create a more urban-focused City authority and a rural County authority, with greater disparity in deprivation and income between the two. Option 1e would shift the City authority to a more rural profile, and would slightly improve alignment with TTWA and HMA geographies. It would reduces disparity between authorities, but introduce more internal inequality within the City authority.



Sensible Economic Area (2/2)

Through utilising insight and analysis of the TTWAs and HMAs, it was found that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly more aligned to both metrics than the other options, specifically for the areas around Nottingham.

Insight from findings

Through calculating the numbers of people within each TTWA and HMA, populations of each district were proxied to develop an estimate of comparable metrics.

These metrics allow for an understanding about alignment to a TTWA or HMA. 85.75% of the Inner Nottingham HMA would reside in Nottingham City under option 1a, and this number would reduce down to 76.74% under Bii (Composite Proposal) .

By comparing these metrics, option Bii (Composite Proposal) delivers an overall closer alignment to these factors than 1b and 1e, across both HMAs and TTWAs. Whilst the alignment to the Mansfield TTWA is worse under Bii (Composite Proposal) compared to 1a and 1b, this difference is slight, especially when compared to the benefits in the Nottingham TTWA.

HMA Analysis		% of pop. in Inner Notts	% of pop. in Outer Notts	% of pop. in Northern
1a*	City +	85.75%	0%	0%
	County	0%	100%	29.31%
1b	City +	70.41%	0%	0%
	County	15.33%	100%	29.31%
1e	City +	70.89%	0%	0%
	County	14.85%	100%	29.31%
Bii*	**Con.**	**76.74%**	**0%**	**0%**
	County	**9.01%**	**100%**	**29.31%**

TTWA Analysis		% of pop. in Inner Notts	% of pop. in Mans	% of pop. in W&R	% of pop. in Out of Area
1a*	City +	79.63%	2.76%	0%	0%
	County	6.04%	80.87%	91.21%	17.36%
1b	City +	65.21%	2.76%	0%	0%
	County	20.46%	80.87%	91.21%	17.36%
1e	City +	66.70%	0%	0%	0%
	County	18.98%	83.62%	91.21%	17.36%
Bii*	**Con.**	**71.37%**	**2.18%**	**0%**	**0%**
	County	**14.3%**	**81.45**	**91.21%**	**17.36%**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*

***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

Sensible Geographic Area

The surplus of housing over the next 15 years is expected to be beneficial for the City / Conurbation in all options. There is a degree of imbalance between the two regions, however this is comparable with the other options proposed.

What did the papers find?

The assessment found that while both Options 1b and 1e offer viable pathways for housing delivery, Option 1e presents a more coherent geography for strategic planning. Option 1b benefits from urban redevelopment potential and established planning partnerships, but is constrained by extensive Green Belt coverage and fragmented control over strategic growth areas south of the River Trent.

In contrast, Option 1e consolidates Nottingham City, Broxtowe, and Rushcliffe—three authorities already collaborating on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan—into a single unitary, enabling more streamlined delivery of housing across major growth sites.

Although Gedling's exclusion from Option 1e introduces a limitation, the inclusion of Rushcliffe offsets this by aligning the most significant future housing allocations under one authority, thereby enhancing coordination.

Insight from findings

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) produces an outcome that is the midpoint of options 1b and 1e, where the overall difference is higher for the City than 1b, and lower for the City than 1e. It is therefore comparable to these options, and provides no significant material difference.

If emphasis is placed on delivering the greatest surplus supply to Nottingham City, then 1e should be considered. If emphasis is placed on minimising the imbalance between the two regions, 1b should be prioritised. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could be considered as a compromise between these two factors.

Quantitative analysis shows that under Option 1b, the City area has a surplus of 5,270 homes over a 15-year period, while the County area faces a shortfall of 3,000 homes. In contrast, Option 1e reveals a deficit in both areas, with the City short by 3,000 homes and the County by 6,525.

Metric		Houses Needed (15 year need)	Known housing supply (15 year supply)	Difference
1a	City +	51,270	57,800	+6,530
	County	34,950	30,690	-4,260
1b	City +	38,430	43,700	+5,270
	County	47,790	44,790	-3,000
1e	City +	41,805	50,600	+8,795
	County	37,890	37,890	-6,525
Bii	**Con.**	**44,763**	**51,477**	**+6,714**
	County	**37,013**	**37,013**	**-4,444**

*Key: **City +**: Nottingham City, Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling*
***Con**: The % of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe & Gedling + City*

5. Comparative analysis

Methodology and Approach

This analysis of other relevant data points seeks to identify which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Developed proxy measurements

Utilising ward level population data published by ONS, a proxy measurement was developed.

Approximated metrics

Utilising the proxy measurements developed through the thematic papers review, the metrics used in the previous phase were approximated for option Bii (Composite Proposal).

Averaged deprivation metrics

In order to assess deprivation of the two areas under option Bii (Composite Proposal), the average was found from the deprivation metrics.

Compared outputs

The outputs from 1a, 1b, and 1e were included for comparison purposes.

Analysed comparators

A RAG rating was developed, comparing these 4 options against all other options considered. Green indicates an option where the future authorities are balanced, whilst red indicates imbalance.

Summary view of comparative analysis for the three options

A RAG rating has been applied to each metric, comparing the four options graded against all options, including those from the previous phase. This means that a metric that is graded red represents the least optimal configuration *of all the options*. For further detail, please refer to the appendix.

		Rural / Urban*	Time to key services	Debt to reserve per capita ratio	Social care spend to council tax (current)	Social care spend to council tax (2032/2033)	Population (2035)	Deprivation	Housing need	Business Growth*	Healthcare provision
1a	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	20.30%	1.9	46.0	0.83	0.84	739,151	23	20.6	See appendix for further details	7,209
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.96	0.98	525,494	24.1	15.1		8,429
1b	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Gedling	34.40%	3.5	53.5	0.94	0.94	603,185	26.5	19.6	See appendix for further details	7,101
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.0	0.84	0.87	661,460	20.7	17.2		8,281
1e	Nottingham **City** + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	18.30%	1.7	47.4	0.87	0.87	611,518	24.7	20.5	See appendix for further details	6,906
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.7	0.90	0.92	653,127	22.3	16.3		8,556
Bii	Nottingham **Conurbation**	20.90%	2.2	50.0	0.86	0.94	660,520	24.3	20.5	See appendix for further details	6,205
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs			14.6	0.91	0.93	604,125	22.5	15.9		8,385

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) ranks very similar to options 1b and 1e for the majority of the metrics. It performs significantly better than 1b on time to key services, and better on housing need.

**For the Rural/ Urban metric, a higher degree of imbalance is associated with a positive configuration. Business growth uses reliance on one sector as a measurement for identifying the least optimal configuration.*

Most optimal configuration — Least optimal configuration

6. Conclusion

Summary of findings

This analysis shows that while option Bii (Composite Proposal) can achieve the same level of benefits as options 1b and 1e, the complexity of disaggregating third party contracts from existing district footprints is likely to incur additional transition costs. Option Bii (Composite Proposal) could provide greater coherence in service delivery for primarily rural and urban communities, and is similar in terms of the balance of geographic and economic indicators to option 1b & 1e.

Comparative analysis

The comparative analysis indicates that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) performs similarly to Options 1b and 1e across most key metrics, suggesting it is comparable to these other options.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) demonstrates strong balance in areas such as population projections, debt to reserve per capita, and deprivation.

More detailed work will be required through the development of a detailed financial case and full proposal to demonstrate that this option meets MHCLG's requirements to implement an option with varied district boundaries.

Thematic Papers Review

The review of thematic areas suggests that Option Bii (Composite Proposal) is broadly comparable to Options 1b and 1e on these domains, with several indicators pointing to stronger outcomes from a service delivery perspective.

In areas like Children's Social Care and SEND, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents a more even spread of demand. When analysing the economic and geographic areas, Bii (Composite Proposal) presents no significant material difference to 1b or 1e.

Overall, there is potential for Bii (Composite Proposal) to provide a configuration of local government that provides a viable model for service delivery and a distinctive remit for the respective urban-focused and rural-focused authorities that would be created.

Impact on financial analysis

The financial comparison highlights that whilst all options deliver the same annual benefits of £24.6 million (based on the analysis undertaken at this stage) options 1b & 1e are more financially efficient, with lower transition costs (£28.8 million), a shorter payback period of 1.3 years, and a higher net benefit of £64.7 million over five years.

Option Bii (Composite Proposal) has higher one-off transition costs (£31.6 million) arising from additional anticipated programme and design requirements due to the added complexity of change. There is therefore a longer payback period of 1.7 years and a lower net benefit of £62.0 million after 5 years.

It should also be noted that there may be additional financial complexities for the wider public service delivery system where partners currently organise or deliver services aligned to a district footprint.

Appraisal of options

Additional analysis was completed focussed on MHCLG criteria for unitary local government, comparing option Bii (Composite Proposal) to 1b and 1e. This, and previous analysis, has informed the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria. The analysis indicates that all three options put forward a configuration for local government that are likely, on balance, to address the criteria (with mitigations likely to be required in some instances). The RAG rating indicates relative alignment to the criteria among the options (those highlighted in pink are factors that allow for detailed comparative grading).

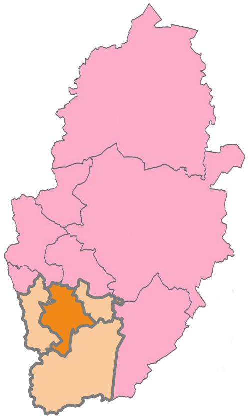
Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option Bii
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned* *Sensible economic area: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities* *Sensible geographic area: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs*	Medium	High	High
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)* *Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers* *Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks* *Manageable transition costs*	High	High	Medium
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation* *Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money* *Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services*	High	Medium	High
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views* *Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance* *Addresses local concerns*	High	Medium	Medium
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution* *Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority*	High	High	High
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement* *Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment*	Medium	Medium	Medium

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option Bii (Composite Proposal)

Set out below is further rationale to underpin the comparative RAG rating against the MHCLG criteria for option Bii (Composite Proposal). For those areas which carry a "medium" amber rating, specific areas of difference compared with option 1b and 1e are highlighted, but which could be contextualised or mitigated through the development of a narrative and evidence base for a full proposal to government.

Bii

o Unitary Authorities: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Conurbation



Alignment to MHCLG criteria

H M L

Criteria	Areas of strength and suggested further development
Criteria 1	• **Strengths:** strong alignment with sensible geography and economic area criteria.
Criteria 2	• **Strengths:** retains balanced projected population levels (with c.51k higher projected population in the conurbation authority). • **Areas for development:** There are higher transition costs than under 1(b) or 1(e) due to the proposed division of existing district boundaries through reorganisation. Specifically, additional programme and engagement capacity, and external design and implementation support are likely to be required to manage the transition and realise the financial benefits.
Criteria 3	• **Strengths:** Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Creates two distinct areas enabling tailored and specialised service delivery models in line with local population needs and contexts.
Criteria 4	• **Strengths:** Combines portions of authorities that are the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings. • **Areas for development:** Approach to managing any complexities arising from disaggregating services currently delivered at a district footprint, and allaying any local concerns that may arise as a result of different areas within Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe aligning to different unitary authorities.
Criteria 5	• **Strengths:** Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (661k for Nottingham Conurbation and 604k for Nottinghamshire by 2035).
Criteria 6	• **Strengths:** Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries; delineation between urban and rural areas may offer new opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment. • **Areas for development:** New local fora and channels may be required to effectively engage communities.

Definition of RAG ratings

High

A green rating shows a high congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this would be an advantageous element to set out in a full proposal.

Medium

An amber rating shows good degree of alignment with MHCLG criteria, but where additional rationale, detail, mitigation, or explanation may be beneficial when developing a full proposal.

Low

A red rating shows a low congruence with MHCLG criteria. It is expected that this will not meet the criteria required for MHCLG to approve this option.

Next steps

The below timetable articulates the key deadlines relating to local government reorganisation within the region, and what should happen in order to progress option Bii forwards.

Timeline

1. **12th September 2025 - Comparative options appraisal**
   The draft report, covering a high level options appraisal of option Bii (Composite Proposal), is issued.

2. **28th November 2025 - Submission to MHCLG**
   A proposal, along with a full business case, is due to be submitted to MHCLG by the 28th November.

3. **Early 2026 - Feedback from MHCLG**
   Feedback is provided by MHCLG, ensuring final proposals include clear rationale, financial assessments, and evidence of public engagement.

4. **April 2027 - Shadow Authority established**
   Shadow authorities will be formed and take responsibility of the future Council over the year ahead, before vesting day.

5. **April 2028 - Vesting Day**
   New unitary authorities will formally take control over all responsibilities.

Areas for development

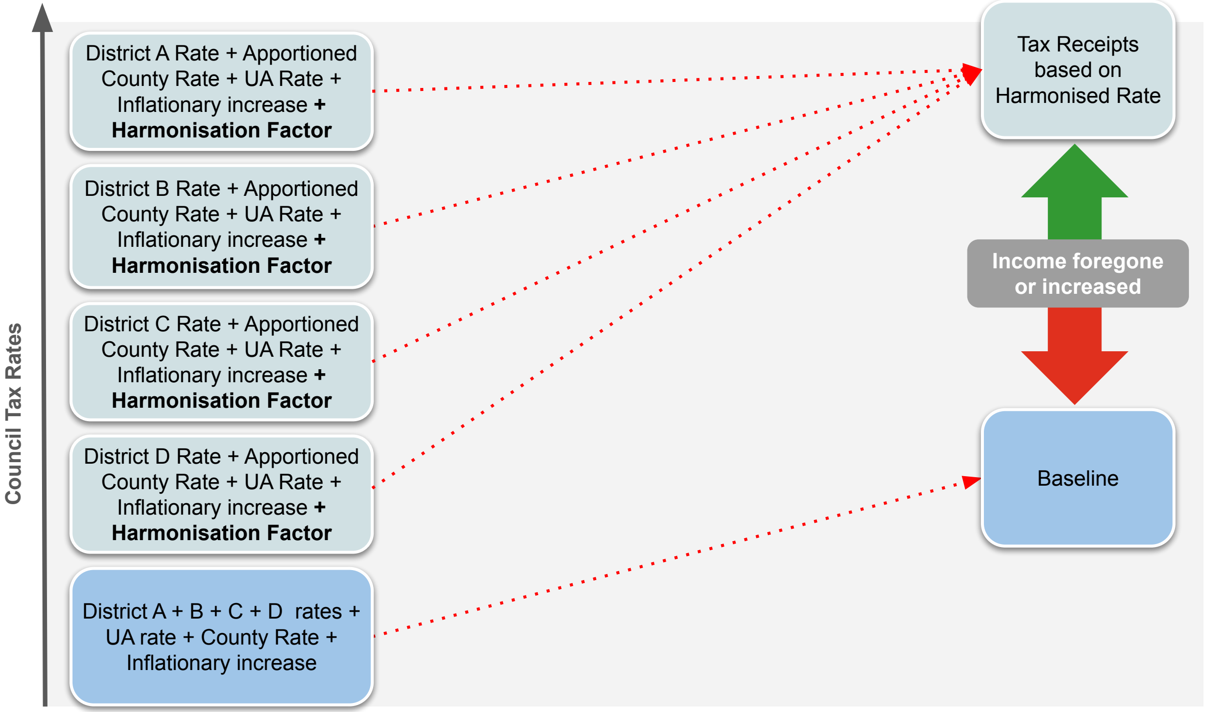
- An **internal decision** needs to be reached about the viability of option Bii (Composite Proposal), and whether it should be progressed forwards to develop a full business case and proposal for submission to MHCLG.
- **External stakeholders** should be engaged, to inform them of the plan and proposal. Feedback gathered can be used in the drafting of the proposal.
- A **detailed financial analysis** of option Bii (Composite Proposal) will be needed, in order to effectively compare it as an option to 1b and 1e. These two options are currently being developed through detailed financial modelling.
- Once the modelling has been completed, a **business case and proposal** needs to be drafted, reviewed and approved, for submission to MHCLG by 28th November.

7a. Appendix

Social Care Spend to Council Tax

Council tax harmonisation approach (1/2)

Council Tax harmonisation refers to the process of aligning the existing tax bands from different districts into a unified set of bands for a new authority. This model has calculated by adjusting them towards a calculated mean.



Harmonising to the highest current rate is likely to lead to larger increases for citizens paying less tax currently, but is also likely to forego less income - and potentially to generate additional income in some areas.

Harmonising to the mean will result in changes to all rates (as the mean is unlikely to exactly equal one of the existing rates). The overall impact will vary depending on the current tax structure.

Harmonising to the lowest current rate is likely to forego the greatest income, but has the lowest impact on rates in areas with lower taxation. This may be seen as more equitable but is more costly in terms of income

Council tax harmonisation approach (2/2)

Council Tax harmonisation refers to the process of aligning the existing tax bands from different districts into a unified set of bands for a new authority. This model has calculated by adjusting them towards a calculated mean.

Project Future Tax Base

Using ONS population projections, the tax base of each District and Nottingham City is adjusted to provide a cumulative increase in households for the coming years. At this point, the timescale for harmonisation (how many years the rates will take to become a single figure) was chosen as 7 years, as well as harmonising to the mean rate.

Project Future Tax Rates

The county tax rate is then apportioned across the Districts according to population to create a single rate for each. District, unitary and county rates are assumed to increase at their annual maximum each year to meet expected financial needs.

Calculate Tax Receipt

The projected rates are multiplied by the increasing tax base, and are gradually incremented to approach harmonisation with either the lowest, highest or median rate among the group as selected. This calculates an annual tax receipt based on the rates as they harmonise.

Calculate Income Foregone

The receipts are compared with a baseline projected by the original rates, incremented per year and multiplied by the projected tax base. The difference between this baseline and the harmonised receipts represents the income foregone or gained via the harmonisation process.

Social care spend to council tax receipts

Combining the projected council tax receipts to the combined social care spend in 2032/33 produces the following ratio.

Metric		Combined social care spend (2032/33)	Council tax receipts (2032/33)	Combined social care spend to council tax (2032/33)
1a	City +	£396,599,429	£473,236,997	0.84
	County	£349,768,049	£356,250,576	0.98
1b	City +	£337,462,666	£359,340,174	0.94
	County	£408,904,812	£470,435,575	0.87
1e	City +	£331,744,281	£380,332,467	0.87
	County	£414,623,197	£449,735,749	0.92
Bii	**Con.**	£358,268,326	£380,705,437	**0.94**
	County	£388,099,152	£415,699,141	**0.93**

Analysis

Utilising this approach to council tax harmonisation yields a lower combined sum of council tax receipts under Bii (Composite Proposal) (~£796m), when compared with other options (£829m - £830m). This is due to the fact that Nottingham City has a significantly larger population than the surrounding areas, and also has the highest council tax rate. As such, by combining to the average of the four council tax rates across Nottingham CIty, Broxtowe, Gedling, and Rushcliffe, the conurbation foregoes receipts.

The sum of the combined social care spend does not change between any of the options, although is apportioned differently between the options.

For the conurbation, this means that whilst they receive as much in council tax as under 1e, their spend on social care is significantly higher (~£27m). Due to the foregone council tax receipts, the final ratios are marginally different to the pattern across the other 3 options.

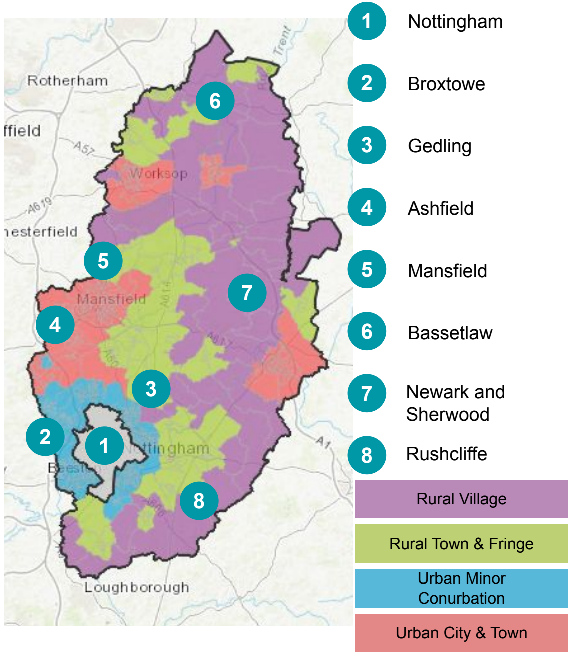
There are other methodologies and approaches to council tax harmonisation, each with advantages and limitations. Utilising a different methodology will impact this ratio and can be explored as part of a detailed financial case. This approach and methodology was used for the appraisal of options 1a, 1b, and 1e, and therefore has been used here in order to compare outputs.

7b. Appendix

Comparative Analysis

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (current)

The table below sets out the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography and how this is reflected when combined in the different LGR options that are under consideration.



Average proportion of rural population
[*Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory*]

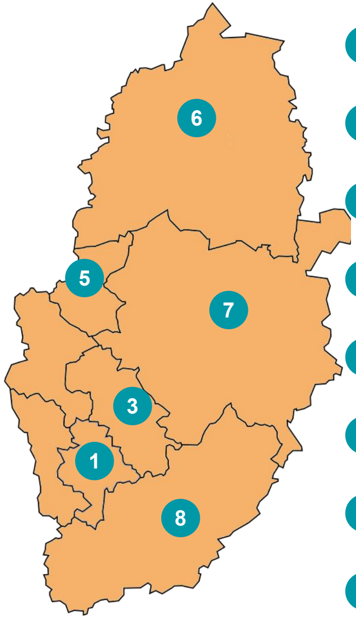
Option		Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	13.4%	86.6%	20.30%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	33.7%	66.3%	
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.40%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.30%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	11.9%	88.1%	20.90%
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	32.8%	67.2%	

For the Rural-Urban analysis, an option with a greater difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Key: Options that are most alike in rural / urban — Options that are least alike in rural / urban

Analysis: Time to key services analysis

This table highlights which of the potential options are the most equitable in time taken to travel to key services e.g. employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food retail and town centres.



1 Nottingham
2 Broxtowe
3 Gedling
4 Ashfield
5 Mansfield
6 Bassetlaw
7 Newark and Sherwood
8 Rushcliffe

Option		Time to key services via public transport / walking (min)	Difference between options (mins)
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	15.6	1.9
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.5	
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	14.6	3.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	18.1	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	15.5	1.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.3	
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	15.4	2.2
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	17.5	

For the time to key service analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Source: *Average time to key services (Public Transport/ Walking) Department of Transport Journey Time Statistics*

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis

Set out below are key components that underpin the debt-to-reserve per capita ratio analysis, as a potential indicator of relative financial health for each option.

Option		# of People (2023)	Total Debt (£000s, 24/25)	Total Reserves - (£000s, 23/24)	Debt per capita (£)	Reserves per capita (£)	Difference between %'s
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	£857,060	£18,633	£1,251	£27	46.0
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	£792,540	£45,130	£1,621	£110	14.7
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	£857,060	£16,029	£1,528	£29	53.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	£792,540	£56,611	£1,293	£92	14.0
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	£846,248	£17,867	£1,494	£32	47.4
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	£803,352	£54,773	£1,322	£90	14.7
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	£835,298	£16,705	£1,364	£27	50.0
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	£814,302	£47,058	£1,451	£100	14.6

For the debt to reserve per capita analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] Borrowing and Investment Live Tables. Q2 2024-25:
[2] ONS Estimates of the Population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[3] Revenue outturn summary 2023-2024

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (current)

The analysis set out below below compares 2024/25 adult's and children's social care actual spend to council tax receipts in 2023/24 to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2024/25)	Total CSC Spend (2024/25)	Total Care Spend (2024/25)	Council Tax Receipts (2023/24)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	£ 195,697,007	£ 155,020,700	£ 350,717,708	£421,660,000	0.83
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 175,347,993	£ 133,310,300	£ 308,658,292	£322,841,000	0.96
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£164,626,206	£134,262,020	£298,888,226	£317,184,000	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£206,418,792	£154,068,977	£360,487,769	£427,317,000	0.84
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£160,376,612	£132,493,533	£292,870,145	£335,799,000	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£210,668,386	£155,837,464	£366,505,850	£408,702,000	0.9
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	174,771,824	£ 141,913,763	£ 316,685,587	367,214,446	0.86
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	196,273,176	£ 146,417,237	£ 342,690,413	£377,286,554	0.91

For the social care demand to council take tax analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25; [3] Council Tax
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/25

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (projected)

The analysis set out below below compares projected adult's and children's social care actual spend to projected council tax receipts to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2032/33)	Total CSC Spend (2032/33)	Total Care Spend (2032/33)	Council Tax Receipts (2032/33)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	211,335,342	£185,264,087	£396,599,429	£473,236,997	0.84
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	190,449,901	£159,318,148	£349,768,049	£356,250,576	0.98
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£177,007,122	£160,455,544	£337,462,666	£359,340,174	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£224,778,121	£184,126,692	£408,904,812	£470,435,575	0.87
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£173,402,244	£158,342,037	£331,744,281	£380,332,467	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£228,382,999	£186,240,198	£414,623,197	£449,735,749	0.92
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	£188,668,243	£169,600,084	£358,268,326	380,705,436.50	0.94
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	£ 213,117,000	£174,982,152	£388,099,152	415,699,140.70	0.93

For the social care demand to council take tax analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred. It should be noted that this RAG rating is based on degree of difference between the two regions, and that ideally social care spend to council tax receipts should be a lower ratio.

Sources:
[1] 2024 England Taxbase - Taxbase data
[2] Tax Rate - Band D Council Tax Figures
[3] Nottingham City Council Budget Monitoring Report FY24/25;
[4] Nottinghamshire County Council revenue budget statement FY24/2

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Population

The table below compares current and forecasted population estimates for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire across the different options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Population (2035)
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	739,151
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	525,494
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	603,185
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	661,460
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	611,518
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	653,127
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	660,520
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	604,125

For the population analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Deprivation

This table summarises the key findings from analysis of the indices of deprivation, highlighting the areas of greatest need.

Option		Average deprivation score
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	23
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	24.1
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	26.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	20.7
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	24.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	22.3
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	24.3
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	22.5

For the deprivation analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] English indices of deprivation 2019

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Housing Need

This table summarises the findings from the housing need analysis, identifying which option will see a greatest difference in the number of homes per 1000 of the population.

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1a	Nottingham City Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	14,110	20.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	7,400	15.1
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	12,568	20.5
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	8,942	15.9

For the housing need analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

**Nottingham City figures reflect base need values. It excludes a 35% uplift.*

Sources:
[1] Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City, Dec 2022
[2] Nottinghamshire County Council: Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Business Growth

The analysis sets out which would be the three largest areas of potential growth across each of the options based upon Gross Value Added (GVA) figures, coupled with the UK GDP growth seen over the last five years. This is intended to give an indication of which options might be able to grow economies and where that might be more challenging.There are new opportunities - such as the freeport - which are not yet captured in this data.

Option		Largest Sector		2nd largest		3rd largest	
		Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.9%	Real Estate	10.8%	Education	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.4%	Education	12.0%	Healthcare & Social Work	11.8%
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.2%	Education	11.5%	Healthcare & Social Work	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	14.5%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.7%	Real Estate	11.2%
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.6%	Education	11.2%	Professional services	10.1%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.3%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.5%	Real Estate	11.6%
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.9%	Education	11.2%	Real Estate	10.5%
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.2%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%	Healthcare & Social Work	11.0%

For the business growth analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the largest two sectors is assumed to be preferred. This will minimise a region's vulnerability risk.

Sector	UK GDP growth rates over last 2020-24 (5 years)
Healthcare & Social Work	34.5%
Education	34.1%
Professional services	26.3%
Wholesale & Retail trade	12.8%
Real Estate	3.3%
Manufacturing	-3.6%

While historical GDP growth rates may provide indications of future sectoral resilience, actual future economic performance may diverge due to various factors. This includes potential local growth drivers, such as the development of the East Midlands Freeport, Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme and interventions from the strategic authority (EMCCA), could influence sectoral vulnerability and economic prospects.

Options with least sector reliance

Analysis: Healthcare Provision

Set out below is a summary of the population numbers served per GP surgery in each of the options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Number of GP surgeries (February 2025)	Number of people served per GP surgery
1a	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe	684,865	95	7,209
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	488,905	58	8,429
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	79	7,101
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	74	8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	82	6,906
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	71	8,556
Bii	Nottingham Conurbation expanded	612,557	86	7,117
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	561,213	67	8,385

For the healthcare provision analysis, an option with the smallest difference between the two regions is assumed to be preferred.

Sources:
[1] ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[2] ONS Number of GP surgeries in local areas, England and Wales
[3] ONS Number of GPs per local areas, England and Wales

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Appendix D – How does our neighbourhood public services offer supports delivery of national reform?

Nationally, the Government is building a strategy that strengthens public service delivery and improves outcomes for residents through public service reform which emphasises neighbourhood and locality working. Across a number of key government departments, reforms programmes of change are bringing the bottom up, neighbourhood and place-based approaches to the core. These reforms collectively signal a shift toward decentralisation, embedding neighbourhood and locality models across health, housing, economic development, and governance.

Criteria 3b of the statutory invitation encourages local authorities to identify “Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money”. Our proposition offers real opportunities to anchor public service reform in collaborative neighbourhood governance and an integrated neighbourhood public service delivery structure. This enables us to maximise the benefits of local government reorganisation for the wider public service partnership in the local area. It facilitates partners to work together to agree and deliver on shared priority outcomes, ensure more needs-led and tailored allocation of resource at a local level, mobilising community assets to support proactive prevention and to co-design services that deliver value for money to the taxpayer and more sustainable public services for the future.

This appendix seeks to outline how our proposition supports the delivery of the ambitions outlined in the NHS 10 Year Plan, particularly the strategic shifts from sickness to prevention and hospital to community. Neighbourhood health is at the heart of delivering these shifts, and working to implement this alongside the requirements of local government reorganisation offers significant opportunities to create more consistent neighbourhood structures and ways of working together that can better meet the needs of local people and communities.

Beyond 2028

Our proposal would seek to integrate neighbourhood health and wellbeing plans (reflecting proposed NPSC geographies, serving a population of 30,000-50,000) with a wider public services offer, recognising the role of both EMCCA and the local authority in delivering the wider building blocks of health and wellbeing and a proactive, community-based prevention offer. These plans would be informed by population data and neighbourhood data profiles, developed with communities to ensure that plans meet local needs and are shaped by local people. Integrated plans would be rooted in local democratic accountability, with the co-produced plan being endorsed by the Neighbourhood Public Service Committee and informing local allocation of delegated budgets and influencing local service delivery.

We would explore opportunities to build on existing structures to strengthen collaboration, bringing together partners who are able to make decisions about the local allocation of partnership resources and models of local service delivery. This will enable a more locally responsive system, geared to move from insight and planning to action more quickly, shifting the way we deliver integrated neighbourhood public services together as a partnership in real-time.

Where further decision-making is required to enable action, we will utilise the Council’s democratic structures or route insights from neighbourhood planning to inform policy or commissioning decisions for pan/regional partners. This will enable partners, like the ICB, to shape their strategic commissioning intentions over time to ensure greater population accountability, a strengthened focus on prevention and integration of service delivery.

We provide a high-level road map for collaborative implementation, with a commitment to working alongside local system partners to maximise the opportunities for reform. With Nottingham City Council currently working as a pathfinder area for the National Neighbourhood Health Implementation Programme (NNHIP) we are well placed as a partnership to learn from this programme and work iteratively together to deliver a new, more integrated, neighbourhood public services offer.

Indicative High Level Implementation Plan (NB: this should be read alongside the wider implementation plan provided).				
	Phase 2 – Planning	**Phase 3 – Early Transition**	**Phase 4 – Launch**	**Phase 5 - Transformation**
Neighbourhood Governance	Mapping of existing neighbourhood governance and resident engagement forums to build on strengths and community assets.	Early engagement with elected members, communities and partners to co-design terms of reference and delegation.	Establish Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs) under shadow authorities, building a network of representative community forums to support.	Decisions are made closer to neighbourhoods, with clear routes in place for local people to inform local decision-making.
Partnership Collaboration	Agree common definitions for spatial geographies (e.g. neighbourhood, multi-neighbourhood, locality, place)	Integrated partnership insights inform a shared outcomes framework for integrated neighbourhood public services.	Agree structures, roles and responsibilities for collaborative partnerships.	Partnership collaboration in place, closer to neighbourhoods, so that strategy and decision-making is informed by neighbourhood planning and governance.
Neighbourhood Planning	Strengthen existing information sharing arrangements to allow us to pool relevant data/insights.	Develop integrated neighbourhood insight profiles.	Share insights with NPSCs and community forums to shape plans.	Neighbourhood plans are aggregated to inform partnership strategy drive tailored neighbourhood service delivery models/commissioning.
Neighbourhood Public Services Delivery	Early engagement with partners to identify potential scope of multi-disciplinary integrated neighbourhood teams.	Workforce in scope for integration/alignment are engaged to begin service design.	Service design is shared with elected members and community groups/forums to support co-design and co-production.	Safe transition on Day One, with test/learn framework to enable development of tailored local delivery models

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Financial Case Option 1b and 1e

November 2025

Nottingham City Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Bassetlaw District Council — North Nottinghamshire —
Ashfield District Council
Broxtowe Borough Council
Gedling Borough Council
Mansfield District Council
Newark & Sherwood District Council
Rushcliffe Borough Council

Contents

1. Overview of approach

Purpose of the Financial Analysis

This document provides an overview position for each unitary option detailing the estimates for transition costs as well as the benefits from aggregation and implementation. It sets out the estimated financial balance of each organisation across income and expenditure and then asset and liabilities.

The output covers:

- A “day 1” budget forecast derived from the above and from income and expenditure projections on the basis of our agreed assumptions and inputs
- A “day 1” financial balance factoring in apportionments of assets, associated liabilities and borrowing commitments according to geography and function
- An updated view of the estimated cost and benefit of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and potential subsequent transformation for each proposed configuration of unitary authorities

Note: this is an estimated financial position for the new unitary authorities developed using current financial data and assumptions. It does not, therefore, take into account decisions that might be taken during the transition phase that might have an impact on costs, realisation of benefits, or wider elements that could impact the Day 1 position e.g the outcome of the Fair Funding Review, changes in the local government finance settlement, inflation, or political developments at both local and national levels.

Components of the Financial Analysis

The analysis undertaken and assumptions applied provides an estimated forecast of "Year 1" budgets and financial balance for the new Unitary Authorities (UAs) options, the projected impact of LGR and Transformation. Separately, an analysis of potential scenarios for council tax harmonisation is provided to demonstrate the impact of this fiscal lever for the new authorities.

Forecast Budgets for new Unitary Authorities

Existing MTFS projections

Income including Council Tax
- Exceptional Financial Support
- MTFS Business Rates, Council Tax, Grants
- Use of earmarked and General Fund Reserves

Expenditure
- Efficiency Savings
- Additional demand pressures overspend
- Additional costs from staffing pay alignment

Impact of LGR (benefits and costs)

Recurring LGR aggregation benefits
- FTE consolidation (including senior leadership)
- Third party and property spend reduction
- Elected member and election cost reduction

One off transition costs
- Redundancies and salary alignment; IT migrations; contingency
- Engagement, design, transition and programme support
- Organisation closedown and establishment

Transformation
- Staffing and operating model transformation benefits
- Third Party Spend reduction
- Transformation costs

Existing transformation (factored into MTFS) → Planned transformation (but not factored into current MTFS) → **Transformation activity *following* reorganisation**

Financial Balance for new Unitary Authorities

Assets (HRA/Non-HRA)
- Long Term Assets

Liabilities
- Long Term Liabilities
- Borrowing Interest

Together, these outputs form the basis of the initial financial position (eg. FY 2028/29) for the new unitary authorities following their establishment.

Council Tax Harmonisation

Alongside the outputs above, analysis has been undertaken to project the impact of different scenarios for Council Tax Harmonisation that the new authorities would be responsible for agreeing and implementing.

Weighted average method

High, low and average harmonisation scenarios

Timeline to the financial analysis

Set out below is the methodology and logic for assumptions applied. The additional complexity involved in creating multiple unitary authorities has been taken into account in the form of increased transition costs and reductions in economies of scale. To note, transformation costs and benefits are applied after reorganisation based on an assumed level of ambition and implementation of further change to realise the full benefit.

Reorganisation Benefits and Costs

Reorganisation Benefits

Recurring Aggregation Benefits: Savings achieved through consolidation e.g. management, systems and support functions. These are ongoing efficiencies generated through removing duplication and streamlining processes.

These benefits are phased over the initial years following vesting (30% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).

Reorganisation Costs

One-off Transition Costs: Upfront investment needed to create new authorities.

These costs are incurred incrementally in the four years following vesting (30% in year 1; 30% in year 2; 30% in year 3, 10% in year 4). The cumulative percentage of costs add to 100%.

Transformation
Post-Vesting Day

Transformation Benefits

Efficiency and productivity improvements realised once new authorities are established and operating effectively.

Reflect long-term service redesign, innovation, and better outcomes for residents.

These benefits begin to realise in Year 1 (28/29) following vesting (25% in year 1; 50% in year 2), before being 100% realised in year 3 (2030/31).

Transformation Costs

Investment required to modernise and redesign services (e.g. digitalisation, workforce reform, asset rationalisation).

These are incurred after reorganisation and are distinct from transition costs. These are short-term costs intended to unlock longer-term service and financial improvements.

Different scenarios for the phasing of costs of transformation have been developed to inform the cost-benefit analysis.

2. Estimated Day 1 Position

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out on this page for Option 1B.

MTFS figures from the most recent published versions as of 31 March 2025 have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. This baseline position was agreed with S151 Officers for all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities in September.

The Year 1 position is not intended to predict the outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.

Option 1B | Estimated Year 1 Position

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Opening deficits:** The combined opening position across the new UAs shows significant core funding pressures. All will start with an operating deficit, which is not unexpected as local government is operating in a challenging financial context.
- **Efficiency requirements:** To achieve a balanced budget, savings are required across multiple councils, with many needing recurring efficiency gains over the next 5 years. These are outlined in the notes below.
- **Strategic trade-offs:** Councils will face early policy choices: draw further on reserves, amend Council Tax, or accelerate service transformation. Longer-term gains from LGR aggregation and longer-term transformation integration are potential offsets.

	Option 1b	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
28/29 Core Funding	£648,520,241	£594,372,174
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£672,117,041	£653,748,917

28/29 "Year 1" Budget Gap	**£23,596,800**	**£59,376,743**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures	**£80,016,112**	**£178,755,555**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	**£43,483,641**	**£70,906,860**

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham City	Nottinghamshire County
Year Used	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29	2028/29
Source	Annual Budget And Council Tax 2025/26 And Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report And Associated Financial Strategie Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals For Submission To Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income.General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified.General fund will be used	The Council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	Successful delivery of transformational change and efficiency savings will be fundamental to the elimination of deficit	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes.This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves

As a result of using the consistent baseline of published revenue budgets and MTFS as of 31 March 2025, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. These may indicate an improved financial position - particularly in the South's net income and expenditure positions and thereby reduce pressure on general fund reserve balances.

An estimated Year 1 Assets and Liabilities position is set out on this page for Option 1B.

The Year 1 Balance Sheet analysis incorporates data which includes:

- Long Term Assets on the current Statement of Accounts
- Long Term Liabilities on the current Statement of Accounts
- Capital Financing Requirements from 25/26 to 28/29
- Capital Programme Budget to from 25/26 to 28/29

Option 1B | Balance Sheet

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Assets:** Set out below is an evidence-based estimate of what each new authority would be accountable for on Year 1, drawn from existing Statement of Account asset values, taking in planned and additional disposals of surplus assets into account. The apportionment of assets assumes that asset value follows population across the proposed new unitaries.
- **Liabilities:** Also below is the long term financial obligations that would transfer into any new unitary councils, which are allocated following the same distribution profile as assets. In reality, the apportionment of debt will be worked through in detail as part of the implementation of any new authority.

	Option 1b	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, and Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
Assets		
Long Term Assets (28/29)	£4,307,432,202	£4,701,904,337
Liabilities		
Long Term Liabilities (28/29)	£1,126,998,351	£1,228,619,592
Net Assets		
Net Long Term Assets (28/29)	£3,180,433,851	£3,473,284,745

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham city UA	Nottinghamshire County
Sources (Asset)	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 9	Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/2025 Financial Year Pg 30	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 33	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 42	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 55	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 32	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 53	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 20	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025s Pg 39

The use of Draft Statement of Accounts for 2024-25 was agreed as a baseline position by Section 151 officers for all authorities. As such, this analysis does not factor in any in-year changes to the asset and liability position for individual authorities (e.g. additional repayment of long-term debt or asset disposal), which could affect the net asset position for the new authorities.

Estimated Year 1 income and net expenditure position is set out on this page for Option 1E.

MTFS figures from the most recent published versions as of 31 March 2025 have been used to estimate forward-looking income and net expenditure for the purposes of developing the Year 1 position. This baseline position was agreed with S151 Officers for all Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities in September.

The Year 1 position is not intended to predict the outcome of national funding reforms or new grant schemes. A significant number of elements could impact the Year 1 position, including the Fair Funding Review, future settlements from government, inflation, political change nationally and locally. The government is expected to provide more detail on the Fair Funding Review outcome in Autumn 2025.

Option 1E | Estimated Year 1 Position

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Opening deficits:** The combined opening position across the new UAs shows significant core funding pressures. All will start with an operating deficit, which is not unexpected as local government is operating in a challenging financial context.
- **Efficiency requirements:** To achieve a balanced budget, savings are required across multiple councils, with many needing recurring efficiency gains over the next 5 years. These are outlined in the notes below.
- **Strategic trade-offs:** Councils will face early policy choices: draw further on reserves, amend Council Tax, or accelerate service transformation. Longer-term gains from LGR aggregation and longer-term transformation integration are potential offsets.

	Option 1e	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
28/29 Core Funding	£638,098,497	£604,793,918
28/29 Net Cost Operating Expenditure	£660,939,524	£664,926,434
28/29 "Year 1" Budget Gap	**£22,841,027**	**£60,132,516**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures	**£84,269,495**	**£174,502,172**
Cumulative Budget Gap from 25/26-28/29 inc. demand pressures net of savings, Exceptional Financial Support, Reserves from MTFS	**£42,231,311**	**£72,159,190**

Authority	**Ashfield**	**Bassetlaw**	**Broxtowe**	**Gedling**	**Mansfield**	**Newark & Sherwood**	**Rushcliffe**	**Nottingham City**	**Nottinghamshire County**
Year Used	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**	**2028/29**
Source	Annual Budget And Council Tax 2025/26 And Medium Term Financial Strategy Update Pg 15	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2029-30 Pg 18	Medium Term Financial Strategy	General Fund Revenue Budget 2025/26 Pg 20	Medium Term Financial Plan 2025/26 To 2027/28 Pg 17	Revenue Budget and Council Tax Setting for 2025/26 Pg2	Budget Setting Report And Associated Financial Strategie Pg 43	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Budget 2025/26 – Proposals For Submission To Full Council Pg 22
MTFS Note	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0 for 2025/26	The Budget highlights the need for the implementation of savings and efficiencies in order to balance the budget. Both general and other reserves are required	The MTFS includes a Business Strategy that sets out initiatives to reduce costs and generate additional income.General fund will be used to balance the budget	Most efficiencies have been built in the budget. Additional efficiencies are yet to be identified.General fund will be used	The Council has a programme of savings that it needs to deliver in order to balance its budget.	Efficiency savings required to set a balanced budget.General and Embarked reserves have been used to achieve a net 0	The budget includes Transformation and Efficiency Plan savings of £1.7m over the 5-year period helping to reduce the deficit to more manageable levels	Successful delivery of transformational change and efficiency savings will be fundamental to the elimination of deficit	The progress of all savings and efficiencies will be monitored as part of the budget monitoring processes.This budget report is proposing to utilise £46.5m of reserves

As a result of using the consistent baseline of published revenue budgets and MTFS as of 31 March 2025, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process. These may indicate an improved financial position - particularly in the South's net income and expenditure positions and thereby reduce pressure on general fund reserve balances.

An estimated Year 1 Assets and Liabilities position is set out on this page for Option 1E.

The Year 1 Balance Sheet analysis incorporates data which includes:

- Long Term Assets on the current Statement of Accounts
- Long Term Liabilities on the current Statement of Accounts
- Capital Financing Requirements from 25/26 to 28/29
- Capital Programme Budget to from 25/26 to 28/29

Option 1E | Balance Sheet

Modelling indicates that the proposed new councils will begin operations in the following financial position.

- **Assets:** Set out below is an evidence-based estimate of what each new authority would be accountable for on Year 1, drawn from existing Statement of Account asset values, taking in planned and additional disposals of surplus assets into account. The apportionment of assets assumes that asset value follows population across the proposed new unitaries.
- **Liabilities:** Also below is the long term financial obligations that would transfer into any new unitary councils, which are allocated following the same distribution profile as assets. In reality, the apportionment of debt will be worked through in detail as part of the implementation of any new authority.

	Option 1e	
	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, and Gedling*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
Assets		
Long Term Assets (28/29)	£4,218,402,048	£4,790,934,491
Liabilities		
Long Term Liabilities (28/29)	£1,082,073,042	£1,273,544,901
Net Assets		
Net Long Term Assets (28/29)	£3,136,329,005	£3,517,389,591

Authority	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark & Sherwood	Rushcliffe	Nottingham city UA	Nottinghamshire County
Sources (Asset)	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 9	Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/2025 Financial Year Pg 30	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 33	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 42	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 55	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 pg 32	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 53	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025 Pg 20	Draft Statement of Accounts FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025s Pg 39

The use of Draft Statement of Accounts for 2024-25 was agreed as a baseline position by Section 151 officers for all authorities. As such, this analysis does not factor in any in-year changes to the asset and liability position for individual authorities (e.g. additional repayment of long-term debt or asset disposal), which could affect the net asset position for the new authorities.

Breakdown of MTFS Income & Expenditure

The cumulative deficit shown in the summary analysis reflects the year-on-year differences in income and expenditure shown in each respective council published MTFS (as of 31 March 2025) from 25/26 to 28/29. As a result, the projected income and expenditure position does not forecast the impact of updated in-year outturn figures or revised MTFPs prepared as part of the 2026/27 budget-setting process.

Council	Income - 2025/2026	Expenditure - 2025/2026	Net Difference	Income - 2026/2027	Expenditure - 2026/2027	Net Difference	Income - 2027/2028	Expenditure - 2027/2028	Net Difference	Income - 2028/2029	Expenditure - 2028/2029	Net Difference	Cumulative Difference
Nottinghamshire County	£668,400,000	£668,408,000	-£8,000	£701,400,000	£711,500,000	-£10,100,000	£735,400,000	£741,700,000	-£6,300,000	£771,500,000	£776,900,000	-£5,400,000	**-£21,808,000**
Bassetlaw	£24,757,900	£24,757,900	£0	£22,158,700	£22,158,700	£0	£20,589,000	£22,196,000	-£1,607,000	£19,027,600	£22,014,900	-£2,987,300	**-£4,594,300**
Ashfield	£17,764,000	£22,017,000	-£4,253,000	£15,361,000	£23,484,000	-£8,123,000	£14,826,000	£24,668,000	-£9,842,000	£14,899,000	£24,837,000	-£9,938,000	**-£32,156,000**
Broxtowe	£14,182,000	£15,429,000	-£1,247,000	£14,471,000	£16,137,000	-£1,666,000	£14,805,000	£16,956,000	-£2,151,000	£15,147,000	£17,395,000	-£2,248,000	**-£7,312,000**
Gedling	£15,527,921	£15,584,200	-£56,279	£14,633,691	£16,206,649	-£1,572,958	£14,717,620	£16,753,607	-£2,035,987	£14,913,015	£15,043,858	-£130,843	**-£3,796,067**
Mansfield	£17,334,000	£17,572,000	-£238,000	£17,304,000	£19,928,000	-£2,624,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	£17,703,000	£20,948,000	-£3,245,000	**-£9,352,000**
Newark & Sherwood	£20,647,000	£20,647,000	£0	£19,337,000	£21,618,000	-£2,281,000	£19,639,000	£21,974,000	-£2,335,000	£19,950,000	£22,629,000	-£2,679,000	**-£7,295,000**
Rushcliffe	£19,888,700	£16,338,900	£3,549,800	£14,278,400	£15,439,500	-£1,161,100	£14,848,800	£15,906,400	-£1,057,600	£15,445,800	£16,263,200	-£817,400	**£513,700**
Nottingham City	£331,800,000	£355,068,000	-£23,268,000	£344,000,000	£372,189,000	-£28,189,000	£349,116,000	£390,103,000	-£40,987,000	£354,307,000	£409,835,000	-£55,528, 000	**−£147,972,000**

Deep dive into the MTFS figures

Outlined is the extent to which each council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) has incorporated the potential impacts of the Fair Funding Review, and on any wider support or fiscal levers which could affect the projected financial position of the new unitary authorities.

Council	Included Fair Funding impact to Income?	Receiving Exceptional Financial Support?	Anticipated use of reserves through life of MTFS?	Description
Nottinghamshire County	No	No	Yes	The impact of Business Rates reform, the Fair Funding Review and reforms to Social Care funding are all acknowledged as risks within the MTFS, but assumed impacts of these changes have not been built into the base budget or MTFS. The 2025/26 budget proposes to directly utilise £46.5m of reserves over the MTFS period (see page 40).
Bassetlaw	Yes (in supplementary data return)	No	Yes	Bassetlaw's position reported to Cabinet and budget Council in February identified a decline in income over the course of the MTFS which has been confirmed as reflecting anticipated impacts of the Fair Funding review which will require further identification of savings and/or additional use of reserves. The MTFS sets out an intention to reduce revenue reserves up to March 2029 whilst maintaining a minimum General Fund balance of £3m and a minimum General Fund working balance of £1m over the life of the MTFS (page 13).
Ashfield	Yes	No	Yes (only 2025/26)	Ashfield's MTFS acknowledges the uncertainty from the proposed Fair Funding review and wider changes to local government finance from 2026/27 (page 14). As a result, the MTFS models a "worst case" scenario which projects an annual reduction in income from 2026/27-2027/28 based on the LG Futures financial model. No use of reserves is forecast beyond 2025/26 where £4.253m of reserves is projected to be used to meet an identified funding gap.
Broxtowe	No	No	Yes	Broxtowe's MTFS does not model a decrease in Revenue Support Grants from Government and presupposes a continuation of current business rate retention mechanisms. While the MTFS assumes a reduction in reserve balance from £4,347m to -£2.856m in 2028/29. However, this does not factor in savings and efficiencies set out in the authority's Business Strategy which sets an expectation of an anticipated budget underspend (pages 5-7).
Gedling	Yes	No	Yes	Gedling's MTFS does reflect assumed impacts of the Fair Funding Review but this has minimal impact on income but does acknowledges outcomes of Fair Funding Review and Business Rates retention as risks to the MTFS projections. The MTFS assumes transfers from reserves budgets totalling £3.74m to balance the shortfall between income and expenditure, and identifies a need to identify £4.467m of efficiencies to maintain a balanced MTFS (page 19).
Mansfield	Yes (in supplementary data return)	No	No	While Mansfield's published MTFS does not model the impact of fair funding reforms, subsequent data provided by finance leads estimates an increase in income for 2028/29 arising from this. The MTFS does not use reserves to achieve a budget balance (but acknowledges the need to increase reserve balances as a result of depletions over recent years).
Newark & Sherwood	Yes	No	Yes	The MTFS assumes a reduction in government grants from 26/27 as a result of the outcomes from the Fair Funding Review (page 2). The MTFS shows a gap in funding from 2025/26 to 2028/29 of £8.882m. The Council has mitigation plans that will deliver savings and generate additional income of £3.186m. The balance of the shortfall of £5.696m will be funded by use of the MTFP reserve. This reserve was specifically set up for the purpose of bridging the gap in funding resulting from the Fair Funding Review and the Business Rates baseline re-set. By the end of 2028/29 it is forecast that this reserve will have a balance remaining of £2.566m.
Rushcliffe	Yes	No	Yes	The business rates reset has been built into the budget from 2026/27 and assumes no loss due to fairer funding. From 2027/28 the budget includes the effect of a reset and some growth (2%).
Nottingham City	No	Yes	No	A request for Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) was made on 31 December 2024 in accordance with MHCLG deadline for up to a further c£35m, being £25m for 2025/26 and a further £10m for 2026/27 bringing the total EFS to £100m (page 10). The MTFS does not assume additional use of General Fund reserves to balance budgets over and above earmarked reserves over the life of the MTFS.

3. Estimated impact of Local Government Reorganisation

The estimated aggregation benefits for Option 1B as a whole are set out on this page.

Table 1 quantifies the maximum annualised benefit realisable (which will be realised in 2030/31) for:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in duplicated roles across leadership, front office, service delivery, and back office internal and enabling services and strategic roles.
- **Third Party Spend (TPS):** Benefits from reduction in addressable spend across all in-scope service areas.
- **Democracy:** Benefits from changing the number of councillors and streamlining elections.
- **Property:** Benefits from reduced operational expenditure spent on rationalised assets (i.e. surplus assets).

Table 2 applies an assumed phasing of aggregation benefits agreed with section 151 officers in July 2025 to calculate the benefit realised in each year following vesting.

Option 1B | Aggregation Benefits

Table 1: Maximum annualised benefit realisable through LGR from reduced spend on staffing, third party spend, democracy and property operating costs.

		TOTAL	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
Estimated Staffing Benefits				
Senior Leadership Structures savings	**Recurring**	£8,681,498	£6,201,070	£2,480,428
Front Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
Service Delivery Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**	£7,654,170	£6,807,873	£846,297
Back Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
TOTAL FTE BENEFITS	**Recurring**	£16,335,668	£13,008,943	£3,326,725
Estimated Third Party Spend Benefits				
TPS Aggregation savings	**Recurring**	£9,018,354	£6,564,991	£2,453,363
Estimated Democracy Benefits				
Allowances+SRA savings+Election costs	**Recurring**	£1,783,602	£1,414,008	£369,595
Estimated Property Benefits				
Property OpEx savings	**Recurring**	£3,435,116	£2,520,439	£914,677
Total Aggregation Benefits (when 100% is realised from 2030/31)	**Recurring**	**£30,572,741**	**£23,508,381**	**£7,064,360**

Table 2: Gross aggregation benefit by year

Aggregation benefits					
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**	**32/33**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4**	**Y5**
Total Aggregation Benefits	£9,171,822	£15,286,371	£30,572,741	£30,572,741	£30,572,741
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£7,052,514	£11,754,191	£23,508,381	£23,508,381	£23,508,381
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£2,119,308	£3,532,180	£7,064,360	£7,064,360	£7,064,360
Aggregation benefits profile	**30%**	**50%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The estimated aggregation benefits for Option 1E as a whole are set out on this page.

Table 1 quantifies the maximum annualised benefit realisable (which will be realised in 2030/31) for:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in duplicated roles across leadership, front office, service delivery, and back office internal and enabling services and strategic roles.
- **Third Party Spend (TPS):** Benefits from reduction in addressable spend across all in-scope service areas.
- **Democracy:** Benefits from changing the number of councillors and streamlining elections.
- **Property:** Benefits from reduced operational expenditure spent on rationalised assets (i.e. surplus assets).

Table 2 applies an assumed phasing of aggregation benefits agreed with section 151 officers in July 2025 to calculate the benefit realised each year following vesting.

Option 1E | Aggregation Benefits

Table 1: Maximum annualised benefit realisable through LGR from reduced spend on staffing, third party spend, democracy and property operating costs.

		TOTAL	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	**South** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
Estimated Staffing Benefits				
Senior Leadership Structures savings	**Recurring**	£8,681,498	£6,201,070	£2,480,428
Front Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**	£7,654,170	£6,932,412	£721,758
Service Delivery Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
Back Office Reorganisation savings	**Recurring**			
TOTAL FTE BENEFITS	**Recurring**	£16,335,668	£13,133,482	£3,202,186
Estimated Third Party Spend Benefits				
TPS Aggregation savings	**Recurring**	£9,018,354	£6,473,715	£2,544,640
Estimated Democracy Benefits				
Allowances+SRA savings+Election costs	**Recurring**	£1,783,602	£1,341,434	£442,169
Estimated Property Benefits				
Property OpEx savings	**Recurring**	£3,435,116	£2,478,523	£956,593
Total Gross aggregation benefits (when 100% is realised from 2030/31)	**Recurring**	**£30,572,742**	**£23,427,154**	**£7,145,588**

Table 2: Gross aggregation benefit by year

Aggregation benefits					
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**	**32/33**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4**	**Y5**
Total Aggregation Benefits	£9,171,823	£15,286,371	£30,572,742	£30,572,742	£30,572,742
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£7,028,146	£11,713,577	£23,427,154	£23,427,154	£23,427,154
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£2,143,676	£3,572,794	£7,145,588	£7,145,588	£7,145,588
Aggregation benefits profile	**30%**	**50%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

The estimated transition costs for Option 1B as a whole are set out on this page.

- **New unitarites setup & closedown costs:** Spend to design the new UA and manage the change (training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT & Systems costs:** Spend on new / upgraded systems to support a single UA (e.g. finance, HR, CRM).
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** Resources needed to run the transformation programme (e.g. Project management)
- **Redundancy Costs:** Payments and support for staff reductions due to structural changes.
- **Salary Alignment:** Additional staffing costs to align to the same payscale
- **Contingency:** A buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and **complexity.**

Option 1B | Transition Costs

One off transition costs for Option 1B as a whole	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*	***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*
External transition/design/implementation support	£4,270,000	£4,270,000
Internal programme management	£1,903,200	£1,903,200
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	£366,000	£366,000
Public consultation	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new council(s)	£610,000	£610,000
Redundancy costs	£3,902,683	£998,018
Salary alignment	£5,375,473	£1,246,258
Contingency	£3,387,927	£3,387,927
Total	£21,366,157	£14,332,277

Transition costs over a five year period (and apportionment)

	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Total One-Off Transition Costs (£M)	£10,709,530	£10,709,530	£10,709,530	£3,569,843	£0
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£2,136,616	£0
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£1,433,228	£0
Aggregation cost profile	**30%**	**30%**	**30%**	**10%**	**0%**

The estimated transition costs for Option 1E as a whole are set out on this page.

- **New unitarites setup & closedown costs:** Spend to design the new UA and manage the change (training, comms, process redesign).
- **IT & Systems costs:** Spend on new / upgraded systems to support a single UA (e.g. finance, HR, CRM).
- **External transition, design and implementation support costs:** Resources needed to run the transformation programme (e.g. Project management)
- **Staffing:** Redundancy payments and support for staff reductions due to structural changes and the costs of salary alignment.
- **Salary Alignment:** Additional staffing costs to align to the same payscale
- **Contingency:** A buffer for unexpected costs, reflecting risk and **complexity.**

Option 1E | Transition Costs

One off transition costs for Option 1E as a whole	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*	***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*
External transition/design/implementation support	£4,270,000	£4,270,000
Internal programme management	£1,903,200	£1,903,200
ICT (integration, migration, licensing)	£1,192,500	£1,192,500
Comms & rebranding	£366,000	£366,000
Public consultation	£205,875	£205,875
Organisation closedown	£152,500	£152,500
Creating the new council(s)	£610,000	£610,000
Redundancy costs	£3,940,045	£960,656
Salary alignment	£5,540,905	£741,117
Contingency	£3,387,927	£3,387,927
Total	**£21,568,951**	**£13,789,774**

Transition costs over a five year period (and apportionment)

	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Total One-Off Transition Costs	£10,607,618	£10,607,618	£10,607,618	£3,535,873	**£0**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£2,156,895	**£0**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£1,378,977	**£0**
Aggregation cost profile	**30%**	**30%**	**30%**	**10%**	**0%**

This page collates the phased benefits and costs of reorganisation to identify a total cumulative net benefit for each proposed unitary authority for Option 1B.

Option 1B | Cost/benefit overview

North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£7,052,514	£11,754,191	£23,508,381	£23,508,381	£23,508,381
Yearly Cost	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£6,409,847	£2,136,616	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£7,052,514	£18,806,705	£42,315,086	£65,823,468	£89,331,849
Cumulative Cost	£6,409,847	£12,819,694	£19,229,541	£21,366,157	£21,366,157
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	£642,667	£5,987,011	£23,085,545	£44,457,311	£67,965,692
Payback period	0.91 years				

South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,119,308	£3,532,180	£7,064,360	£7,064,360	£7,064,360
Yearly Cost	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£4,299,683	£1,433,228	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,119,308	£5,651,488	£12,715,849	£19,780,209	£26,844,570
Cumulative Cost	£4,299,683	£8,599,366	£12,899,049	£14,332,277	£14,332,277
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	-£2,180,375	-£2,947,878	-£183,200	£5,447,932	£12,512,293
Payback period	3.03 years				

This page collates the phased benefits and costs of reorganisation to identify a total cumulative net benefit for each proposed unitary authority for Option 1E.

Option 1E | Cost/benefit overview

North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£7,028,146	£11,713,577	£23,427,154	£23,427,154	£23,427,154
Yearly Cost	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£6,470,685	£2,156,895	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£7,028,146	£18,741,723	£42,168,877	£65,596,032	£89,023,186
Cumulative Cost	£6,470,685	£12,941,371	£19,412,056	£21,568,951	£21,568,951
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	**£557,461**	**£5,800,353**	**£22,756,821**	**£44,027,080**	**£67,454,234**
Payback period	0.92 years				

South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*

Financial Year	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33
Year after vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Yearly Benefit	£2,143,676	£3,572,794	£7,145,588	£7,145,588	£7,145,588
Yearly Cost	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£4,136,932	£1,378,977	£0
Cumulative Benefit	£2,143,676	£5,716,470	£12,862,058	£20,007,645	£27,153,233
Cumulative Cost	£4,136,932	£8,273,864	£12,410,797	£13,789,774	£13,789,774
Total Cumulative Net Benefit	**-£1,993,256**	**-£2,557,394**	**£451,261**	**£6,217,871**	**£13,363,459**
Payback period	2.85 years				

4. Transformation scenarios following reorganisation

Local Government Reorganisation has previously been seen as a catalyst for wider transformation in order to realise additional financial and non-financial benefits in addition to those achieved through reorganisation.

This analysis sets out some different scenarios for costs and benefits available for each unitary authority through additional transformation activity. In particular, it explores different assumptions about the phasing of the costs of mobilising transformation programmes for each unitarity authority. In each scenario there is a "base" and "stretch" case (and cost assumptions).

Any estimated benefits of transformation are of course subject to effective implementation, and the analysis assumes that each authority would instigate a transformation programme rapidly following reorganisation.

Transformation | Scenario overview

Three transformation scenarios have been developed as part of this analysis.

Scenario A assumes that 100% of the cost of transformation is applied in year 1 (2028/29). This provides an illustration of the total costs of transformation for each authority (see further pages 24 and 26), but is not reflective of a programme that may, in reality, run over a number of years (for example to implement a target operating model and innovate new models of service delivery).

Scenario A	Year 1 *(2028/29)*	Year 2 *(2029/30)*	Year 3 *(2030/31)*	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	100%			

Scenario B assumes that costs of transformation are phased over four years, with 30% of costs borne for each of the first three years, with 10% incurred in year 4.

Scenario B	Year 1 *(2028/29)*	Year 2 *(2029/30)*	Year 3 *(2030/31)*	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%

Scenario C projects a scenario where the costs of mobilising and delivering transformation are front loaded in to the first two years, with a reduced cost being borne in years 3-4 (for example for sustaining programme management capacity to assure ongoing benefit.

Scenario C	Year 1 *(2028/29)*	Year 2 *(2029/30)*	Year 3 *(2030/31)*	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	40%	40%	10%	10%

Local Government Reorganisation has previously been seen as a catalyst for wider transformation in order to realise additional financial and non-financial benefits in addition to those achieved through reorganisation.

This analysis sets out some different scenarios for costs and benefits available for each unitary authority through additional transformation activity. In particular, it explores different assumptions about the phasing of the costs of mobilising transformation programmes for each unitarity authority. In each scenario there is a “base” and “stretch” case (and cost assumptions).

Any estimated benefits of transformation are of course subject to effective implementation, and the analysis assumes that each authority would instigate a transformation programme rapidly following reorganisation.

Transformation | Scenario overview

Three transformation scenarios have been developed as part of this analysis.

Scenario A assumes that 100% of the cost of transformation is applied in year 1 (2028/29). This provides an illustration of the total costs of transformation for each authority (see further pages 24 and 26), but is not reflective of a programme that may, in reality, run over a number of years (for example to implement a target operating model and innovate new models of service delivery).

Scenario A	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	100%			

Scenario B assumes that costs of transformation are phased over four years, with 30% of costs borne for each of the first three years, with 10% incurred in year 4.

Scenario B	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%

Scenario C projects a scenario where the costs of mobilising and delivering transformation are front loaded in to the first two years, with a reduced cost being borne in years 3-4 (for example for sustaining programme management capacity to assure ongoing benefit.

Scenario C	**Year 1** *(2028/29)*	**Year 2** *(2029/30)*	**Year 3** *(2030/31)*	**Year 4 -10**
Benefits *(cumulative)*	25%	50%	100%	100%
Transformation costs *(one-off)*	40%	40%	10%	10%

4a. **Transformation scenario a:** *100% year 1 costs*

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

Estimated transformation benefits and costs for Option 1B are set out on this page.

The table shows what the maximum annual benefits arising from transformation would be under base and stretch scenarios (assumed to take effect in 2030/31).

Benefits are drawn from three areas:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in roles, realisable through operating model transformation.
- **Third party spend:** Reduced reliance on third party spend through transformation of commissioning, procurement and digital estate.
- **Income:** transformation of commercial capabilities to derive more income (e.g. from assets).

Costs are calculated based on experience of transformation programme costs from other local authorities and public sector organisations.

Benefit Area	Base Savings Assumption	Stretch Savings Assumption	**North** *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe*		***South*** *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling*	
			100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits	100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits
Front office FTE reduction	6.00%	10.00%	£14,707,345	£21,690,483	£15,282,639	£22,538,931
Service delivery FTE reduction	3.00%	5.00%				
Back office FTE reduction	7.00%	8.00%				
Third Party Spend (TPS) reduction	2.50%	3.00%	£10,777,527	£12,933,033	£10,719,494	£12,863,393
Income uplift (SFC, commercial) uplift	1.30%	1.70%	£8,430,763	£11,024,844	£7,726,838	£10,104,327
Cost Area						
IT Investment Costs			£4,550,000	£9,100,000	£4,550,000	£9,100,000
Operating Model Construct & Change Management			£4,550,000	£5,850,000	£4,550,000	£5,850,000
Programme Support Costs			£1,300,000	£1,950,000	£1,300,000	£1,950,000
Contingency			£1,365,000	£2,242,500	£1,365,000	£2,242,500
Redundancy costs			£4,412,203	£6,507,145	£4,584,792	£6,761,679

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above.

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£16,911,152	£33,822,304	£67,644,607	£67,644,607
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£8,478,909	£16,957,818	£33,915,635	£33,915,635
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£8,432,243	£16,864,486	£33,728,972	£33,728,972
North Total Costs	£16,177,203	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£16,349,792	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.45 years			
Payback period South	1.47 years			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£22,788,753	£45,577,506	£91,155,012	£91,155,012
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£11,412,090	£22,824,180	£45,648,360	£45,648,360
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£11,376,663	£22,753,326	£45,506,651	£45,506,651
North Total Costs	£25,754,003	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£25,792,109	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.63 years			
Payback period South	1.63 years			

The component parts of the transformation benefits and costs for Option 1E are set out on this page.

The table demonstrates what the maximum annual benefits arising from transformation would be under base and stretch scenarios (assumed to take effect in 2030/31).

Benefits are drawn from three areas:

- **Staffing:** Benefits from reduction in roles, realisable through operating model transformation.
- **Third party spend:** Reduced reliance on third party spend through transformation of commissioning, procurement and digital estate.
- **Income:** transformation of commercial capabilities to derive more income (e.g. from assets).

Costs are calculated on the basis of transformation programme costs from other local authorities and public sector organisations.

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

Benefit Area	Base Savings Assumption	Stretch Savings Assumption	North *Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling*		*South* *Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe*	
			100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits	100% of Base benefits	100% of Stretch benefits
Front office FTE reduction	6.00%	10.00%	£14,943,213	£22,038,343	£15,029,340	£22,165,364
Service delivery FTE reduction	3.00%	5.00%				
Back office FTE reduction	7.00%	8.00%				
Third Party Spend (TPS) reduction	2.50%	3.00%	£10,627,682	£12,753,218	£10,869,340	£13,043,208
Income uplift (SFC, commercial) uplift	1.30%	1.70%	£8,295,280	£10,847,674	£7,862,321	£10,281,497
Cost Area						
IT Investment Costs			£4,550,000	£9,100,000	£4,550,000	£9,100,000
Operating Model Construct & Change Management			£4,550,000	£5,850,000	£4,550,000	£5,850,000
Programme Support Costs			£1,300,000	£1,950,000	£1,300,000	£1,950,000
Contingency			£1,365,000	£2,242,500	£1,365,000	£2,242,500
Redundancy costs			£4,482,964	£6,611,503	£4,508,802	£6,649,609

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above.

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£16,906,794	£33,813,588	£67,627,176	£67,627,176
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	£8,466,544	£16,933,088	£33,866,175	£33,866,175
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£8,440,250	£16,880,500	£33,761,001	£33,761,001
North Total Costs	£16,247,964	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£16,273,802	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.46 years			
Payback period South	1.46 years			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	£22,782,326	£45,564,652	£91,129,304	£91,129,304
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	£11,409,809	£22,819,618	£45,639,236	£45,639,236
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£11,372,517	£22,745,034	£45,490,068	£45,490,068
North Total Costs	£25,754,003	£0	£0	£0
South Total Costs	£25,792,109	£0	£0	£0
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Payback period North	1.63 years			
Payback period South	1.63 years			

4b. **Transformation scenario b:** *Costs phased in line with transition cost assumptions*

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). However, it should be noted that authorities would bear a cost for transformation activity over four years rather than in one as in scenario A.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,911,152**	**£33,822,304**	**£67,644,607**	**£67,644,607**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£8,478,909**	**£16,957,818**	**£33,915,635**	**£33,915,635**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£8,432,243**	**£16,864,486**	**£33,728,972**	**£33,728,972**
North Total Costs	£4,853,161	£4,853,161	£4,853,161	£1,617,720
South Total Costs	£4,904,938	£4,904,938	£4,904,938	£1,634,979
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,788,753**	**£45,577,506**	**£91,155,012**	**£91,155,012**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£11,412,090**	**£22,824,180**	**£45,648,360**	**£45,648,360**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£11,376,663**	**£22,753,326**	**£45,506,651**	**£45,506,651**
North Total Costs	£7,694,893	£7,694,893	£7,694,893	£2,564,964
South Total Costs	£7,771,254	£7,771,254	£7,771,254	£2,590,418
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). However, it should be noted that authorities would bear a cost for transformation activity over four years rather than in one as in scenario A.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,906,794**	**£33,813,588**	**£67,627,176**	**£67,627,176**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	**£8,466,544**	**£16,933,088**	**£33,866,175**	**£33,866,175**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£8,440,250**	**£16,880,500**	**£33,761,001**	**£33,761,001**
North Total Costs	£4,874,389	£4,874,389	£4,874,389	£1,624,796
South Total Costs	£4,882,141	£4,882,141	£4,882,141	£1,627,380
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,782,326**	**£45,564,652**	**£91,129,304**	**£91,129,304**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Gedling)*	**£11,409,809**	**£22,819,618**	**£45,639,236**	**£45,639,236**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£11,372,517**	**£22,745,034**	**£45,490,068**	**£45,490,068**
North Total Costs	£7,726,201	£7,726,201	£7,726,201	£2,575,400
South Total Costs	£7,737,633	£7,737,633	£7,737,633	£2,579,211
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	30.00%	30.00%	30.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	Less than 1 year			
Payback period South	Less than 1 year			

4c. Transformation scenario c: *Alternative cost phasing profile*

Option 1B | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1B are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). This is, however, a lower net benefit for years 1 and 2 when compared with Scenario B as a result of the assumed higher cost phasing for these initial years of transformation.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£16,911,152**	**£33,822,304**	**£67,644,607**	**£67,644,607**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£8,478,909**	**£16,957,818**	**£33,915,635**	**£33,915,635**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£8,432,243**	**£16,864,486**	**£33,728,972**	**£33,728,972**
North Total Costs	£6,470,881	£6,470,881	£1,617,720	£1,617,720
South Total Costs	£6,539,917	£6,539,917	£1,634,979	£1,634,979
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32
Year following vesting	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4 -10
Total Benefits	**£22,788,753**	**£45,577,506**	**£91,155,012**	**£91,155,012**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	**£11,412,090**	**£22,824,180**	**£45,648,360**	**£45,648,360**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**£11,376,663**	**£22,753,326**	**£45,506,651**	**£45,506,651**
North Total Costs	£10,259,858	£10,259,858	£2,564,964	£2,564,964
South Total Costs	£10,361,672	£10,361,672	£2,590,418	£2,590,418
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Option 1E | Transformation Benefits

The estimated transformation benefits for Option 1E are set out on this page.

These are additional benefits which the new UAs could achieve post-vesting day through transformation for example, by implementing digital technology, AI, automation, and redesigned operating models.

These potential savings are over and above aggregation benefits identified above (previous slide).

The scope of transformation savings would need to be refined by the new authorities including identifying individual opportunities and establishing programmes of work.

In this scenario, the phasing of the cost of transformation over multiple years means that the authorities would see a net benefit in year 1 (hence payback periods of less than 1 year). This is, however, a lower net benefit for years 1 and 2 when compared with Scenario B as a result of the assumed higher cost phasing for these initial years of transformation.

Net Summary base				
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4 -10**
Total Benefits	**£16,906,794**	**£33,813,588**	**£67,627,176**	**£67,627,176**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	**£8,466,544**	**£16,933,088**	**£33,866,175**	**£33,866,175**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£8,440,250**	**£16,880,500**	**£33,761,001**	**£33,761,001**
North Total Costs	£6,499,186	£6,499,186	£1,624,796	£1,624,796
South Total Costs	£6,509,521	£6,509,521	£1,627,380	£1,627,380
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

Net Summary stretch				
Financial year	**28/29**	**29/30**	**30/31**	**31/32**
Year following vesting	**Y1**	**Y2**	**Y3**	**Y4 -10**
Total Benefits	**£22,782,326**	**£45,564,652**	**£91,129,304**	**£91,129,304**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood,Gedling)*	**£11,409,809**	**£22,819,618**	**£45,639,236**	**£45,639,236**
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**£11,372,517**	**£22,745,034**	**£45,490,068**	**£45,490,068**
North Total Costs	£10,301,601	£10,301,601	£2,575,400	£2,575,400
South Total Costs	£10,316,844	£10,316,844	£2,579,211	£2,579,211
Transformation benefits profile	25.00%	50.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Transformation costs profile	40.00%	40.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Payback period North	**Less than 1 year**			
Payback period South	**Less than 1 year**			

5. Summary position

This page summarises the key components of the financial case for local government reorganisation, and the impact on the two proposed new unitary authorities for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The analysis summarises:

- the inherited net budget position that each proposed unitary authority would inherit under the two options;
- projected costs and benefits realisable through reorganisation;
- financial disbenefits accrued through the transfers of services between the proposed UA areas;
- costs and benefits of post-reorganisation transformation activity in a "base" scenario.

LGR | Summary of financial case

Option 1b					
	28/29 Cumulative budget gap [1]	**One-off LGR transition Costs**	**Projected transition benefit [2]** *(recurring)*	**Projected transformation costs (base)**	**Projected transformation benefit (base) [3]**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Rushcliffe)*	£43,483,641	£21,366,157	£23,508,381	£16,177,203	£33,915,635
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	£70,906,860	£14,332,277	£7,064,360	£16,349,792	£33,728,972

Option 1e					
	28/29 Cumulative budget gap [1]	**One-off LGR transition Costs**	**Projected transition benefit [2]** *(recurring)*	**Projected transformation costs (base)**	**Projected transformation benefit (base)**
North *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark and Sherwood*	£42,231,311	£21,568,951	£23,427,154	£16,247,964	£33,866,175
South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	£72,159,190	£13,789,774	£7,145,588	£16,273,802	£33,761,001

Notes:
[1] Assumes MTFS savings delivery, reserves transfer and exceptional financial support are delivered.
[2] Represents 100% of projected transition benefit *(due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31)*
[3] Represents 100% of projected transformation benefit *(due to take effect in year 3 - 2030/31), as considered in Scenario A*

6. Council Tax Harmonisation scenarios

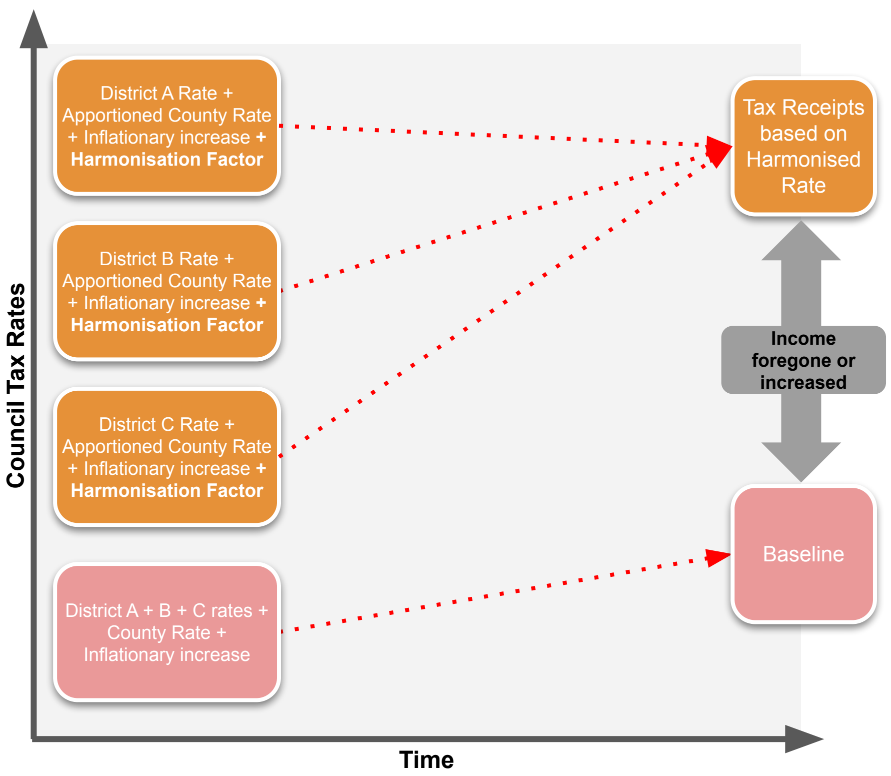
Council Tax Harmonisation is the process which brings the existing bands of tax payable across districts together to form a single future set of bands for a newly formed authority.

Under the Local Government (Structural Changes) (Finance) Regulations 2008, the same level of council tax should be in payment across the whole of the new authority area within seven years of vesting day.

This therefore represents a fiscal lever available to the new unitary authorities as they undertake their initial financial planning following vesting.

This may involve increasing taxes to the highest among the current rates, reducing to the lowest, or bringing taxes towards a calculated median point. Additionally, a ‘weighted average’ approach can be employed which prevents significant changes for taxpayers. The time taken to make the adjustment will influence the difference between the income from current rates, and the harmonised rate which may represent income foregone or increased over the harmonisation period.

Council Tax | Low, Medium, High Approaches



Harmonising to the highest current rate is likely to lead to larger increases for citizens paying less tax currently, but is also likely to forego less income - and potentially to generate additional income in some areas.

Harmonising to the average (mean) will result in changes to all rates (as the mean is unlikely to exactly equal one of the existing rates). The overall impact will vary depending on the current tax structure.

Harmonising to the lowest current rate is likely to forego the greatest income, but has the lowest impact on rates in areas with lower taxation. This may be seen as more equitable but is more costly in terms of income

Note: The setting of council tax rates is a member function and will be exercised by either a shadow or continuing authority. These scenarios are therefore presented to demonstrate the potential implications of the various available approaches. It should also be noted that the new unitaries are not required to take the same approach to harmonisation as each other.

Following LGR there is a requirement to harmonise council tax rates, to ensure that all parts of a new unitary area are paying the same rate within a maximum of seven years. An alternative approach used in some areas follows a "weighted average" method to harmonise rates from day 1.

The weighted-average option is modelled on the projected FY28/29 Band D rate for each local authority. The weighted weighted Band D charge is calculated by dividing total council tax by the total tax base.

This sets the single rate equal to the weighted average of existing rates, so there is no material change to aggregate council tax income (unlike phasing over several years, which changes timing and distributional impacts).

Council Tax | Weighted Average

Option 1b	Area	2028/29 Rate	Weighted Average Rate	Impact on the Resident
North	Bassetlaw	£2,418	£2,411	-£7
	Ashfield	£2,419	£2,411	-£8
	Mansfield	£2,419	£2,411	-£8
	Newark & Sherwood	£2,410	£2,411	£0
	Rushcliffe	£2,393	£2,411	£18
South	Nottingham City UA	£2,619	£2,511	-£108
	Broxtowe	£2,405	£2,511	£106
	Gedling	£2,406	£2,511	£105

Following LGR there is a requirement to harmonise council tax rates, to ensure that all parts of a new unitary area are paying the same rate within a maximum of seven years. An alternative approach used in some areas follows a "weighted average" method to harmonise rates from day 1.

The weighted-average option is modelled on the projected FY28/29 Band D rate for each local authority. The weighted weighted Band D charge is calculated by dividing total council tax by the total tax base.

This sets the single rate equal to the weighted average of existing rates, so there is no material change to aggregate council tax income (unlike phasing over several years, which changes timing and distributional impacts).

Council Tax | Weighted Average

Option 1e	Area	2028/29 Rate	Weighted Average Rate	Impact on the Resident
North	Bassetlaw	£2,418	£2,414	-£4
	Ashfield	£2,419	£2,414	-£5
	Gedling	£2,406	£2,414	£8
	Mansfield	£2,419	£2,414	-£5
	Newark & Sherwood	£2,410	£2,414	£4
South	Nottingham City UA	£2,619	£2,501	-£118
	Broxtowe	£2,405	£2,501	£96
	Rushcliffe	£2,393	£2,501	£108

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under Option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- **Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)**
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 1 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2029/30	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,508	**4.00%**	**Low- £3.67M** **Mid- £323K** **High- £1.8M**
		Mid	£2,528	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,535	**5.12%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£2,521	**1.78%**	**Low- £16.8M** **Mid- £5.3M** **High- £17.7M**
		Mid	£2,597	**4.88%**	
		High	£2,750	**11.02%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under Option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- **Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)**
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 1 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2029/30	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£2,522	**4.44%**	**Low- £1.6M** **Mid- £79.7K** **High- £992.2k**
		Mid	£2,531	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,535	**5.00%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,508	**1.46%**	**Low- £18.1M** **Mid- £4.5M** **High- £20.9M**
		Mid	£2,593	**4.88%**	
		High	£2,750	**11.22%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- **Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)**
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 3 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2031/32	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,756	**4.55%**	**Low- £7.6M** **Mid- £704.5K** **High- £3.8M**
		Mid	£2,777	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,785	**4.91%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£2,770	**3.80%**	**Low- £37.8M** **Mid- £11.9M** **High- £39.0M**
		Mid	£2,857	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,031	**6.96%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- **Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)**
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 3 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2031/32	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£2,771	**4.69%**	**Low- £3.3M** **Mid- £193.5K** **High- £2.1M**
		Mid	£2,780	**4.81%**	
		High	£2,785	**4.87%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£2,756	**3.69%**	**Low- £40.6M** **Mid- £10.1M** **High- £46.1M**
		Mid	£2,852	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,031	**7.03%**	

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1b has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- **Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)**

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Council Tax | 7 year harmonisation scenarios

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2035/36	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1b	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark & Sherwood and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£3,330	**4.71%**	**Low- £15.9M** **Mid- £1.9M** **High- £8.7M**
		Mid	£3,353	**4.82%**	
		High	£3,362	**4.86%**	
	South *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling)*	**Low**	£3,344	**4.38%**	**Low- £92.9M** **Mid- £29.1M** **High- £96.0M**
		Mid	£3,458	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,683	**5.83%**	

Council Tax | 7 year harmonisation scenarios

A summary of the projected council tax receipts for each authority under option 1e has been provided.

Three scenarios have been modelled:

- Harmonisation after one year (i.e. 2029/30)
- Harmonisation after three years (i.e. 2031/32)
- Harmonisation after seven years (i.e. 2035/6)

These scenarios show the impact on harmonisation on the Final Band D level, the income foregone or received within the system, and the average change in council tax rate.

Average change rates above 4.99% would exceed the trigger for a referendum on council tax. This is especially pertinent for "mid" and "high" scenarios. While some flexibility is available in setting rates using an 'Alternative Notional Amount' this would require the approval of MHCLG.

Option	Unitary Authority	Harmonisation level	Final Band D level in 2035/36	Average change in council tax rate	Income foregone/received over respective year
1e	**North** *(Ashfield, Bassetlaw, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood and Mansfield)*	**Low**	£3,346	**4.80%**	**Low- £6.7M** **Mid- £800.4K** **High- £4.9M**
		Mid	£3,356	**4.82%**	
		High	£3,362	**4.84%**	
	City UA *(Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe)*	**Low**	£3,330	**4.34%**	**Low- £98.8M** **Mid- £24.4M** **High- £113.4M**
		Mid	£3,452	**4.88%**	
		High	£3,683	**5.86%**	

Appendix F – CIPFA Financial Template

Excel spreadsheet available on request, unable to print due to formatting issues.

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Engagement report

September 2025

LGR | Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

public perspectives

Research, consultation and evaluation for the public and charitable sectors.

Contents

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – Engagement report

Executive Summary

Introduction and background

1. Nottinghamshire is a two-tier area served by seven district and borough councils and a county council. The city of Nottingham is contained within the boundary of Nottinghamshire, with all council services in the area provided by Nottingham City Council, which is a unitary council. In total, nine different councils provide services across the county.
2. In February 2025, as part of the Government's local government reorganisation plans, it contacted local councils in areas such as Nottinghamshire to work together to draw up initial proposals to reduce the number of councils by replacing two-tier councils with larger unitary councils.
3. Following considering key criteria and a range of potential options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal to Government in March 2025. They propose to create two new unitary councils that would be responsible for all council services in their areas and replace the existing nine councils.
4. An important part of the local government reorganisation process is engaging with residents and stakeholders. This report relates to an engagement exercise about the councils' proposals to replace the nine existing councils with new unitary councils, including different options for the configuration of the future councils. The councils have been supported to conduct the engagement process by independent organisation, Public Perspectives.
5. The results of the engagement exercise will be used to inform the development of the councils' final proposals for the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, alongside a range of evidence. This must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottingham is expected in 2026, and then subject to statutory consultation by Government.

Approach to the engagement

6. The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14 September 2025.
7. The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), as well as outreach events and engagement with stakeholders.
8. The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support. The questionnaire is available at appendix 1.
9. Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as

validating the findings from the engagement survey. The focus group discussion guide is available at appendix 2.

10. In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.

Key findings and points for consideration

Local area

11. **Sense of place and identity is layered** with respondents **anchoring their description to Nottingham City** (e.g. near Nottingham or north of Nottingham), **followed by Nottinghamshire (the county)**, and then **refined by naming specific towns** or local villages (especially for those areas further away from Nottingham City such as Mansfield, Newark and Worksop), or well-known areas/landmarks or **cultural references such as Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.** There are also **occasional regional references** such as 'the middle of England' or the 'East Midlands'.

12. In more **rural areas**, respondents often emphasised the rurality e.g. 'a small village', 'the countryside'. In more **urban areas** they tended to reference 'the city' or the nearest town. Whilst there is a **tendency to look inwards within the county and towards Nottingham City** (especially for those areas bordering the city), some respondents in **areas that border other counties and major urban areas or landmarks will also make reference to these.** There are also tendencies to draw clear **distinctions between urban and rural areas and those that live in or near the city and those in other areas of Nottingham, while local authority names are not often used as reference points or forms of identity.**

13. Most respondents are **proud of their local area**, with respondents that live in the Rushcliffe, Gedling and Broxtowe council areas having higher levels of pride about their local area than other locations. There is a **distinction between being proud of their local areas, and satisfaction and advocacy of their local council**, regardless as to whether they hold positive perceptions or not of their council.

Effectiveness of the current council structure and services

14. **Over half of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery in councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is effective.** Respondents in Rushcliffe, Gedling and Broxtowe council areas have the highest ratings of effectiveness, while respondents in Nottingham City have the lowest.

15. Those rating the system **effective** tend to highlight **service reliability, local knowledge and responsiveness, local representation, and a sense that the current system is fit for purpose.** Those who said **neither effective or ineffective** often expressed **mixed experiences.** Those rating the system **ineffective** often emphasised issues related to a two-tier system such as **confusion, duplication, inefficiency, lack of joined-up/partnership working, political distrust, and inequity and inconsistency in services between different local councils**, with some advocating for change and unitary authorities.

Local Government Reorganisation in England

16. Respondents identified several **potential benefits** of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils, with **efficiency and cost savings being the most common,** particularly through reduced duplication and streamlined services by forming unitary councils. Other perceived advantages included greater geographic and administrative coherence, a simpler and clearer council structure, improved coordination and joined-up working, enhanced service quality and outcomes, and fairer, more consistent access to services. However, around **one in five respondents were sceptical**, seeing no real benefits or expressing doubt about whether the potential benefits could be realised in practice, with slightly higher levels of scepticism in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas.
17. The main **concerns** about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils **centred on fears of urban–rural imbalance**, particularly that Nottingham City could dominate and rural areas would lose voice, priority, and tailored services. **Financial risks** were also a major worry, with doubts about high reorganisation costs, savings not being realised, or neighbouring areas having to cover Nottingham City's perceived financial struggles.
18. **Other key concerns included loss of local representation, accountability, and knowledge**, potential decline in service quality and disruption during transition, and **doubts about efficiency, with larger councils seen as possibly more bureaucratic.** Smaller proportions mentioned risks of job losses and staff disruption, politicisation and distrust of motives, and argued for reform within the current system or no change at all. Around 5% of respondents expressed no concerns. Concerns were broadly consistent across areas, but stronger in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas, particularly regarding urban–rural imbalance and financial risks.
19. In addition, a few participants in the focus groups **questioned how the proposals align with wider reforms**, noting that the mix of regional devolution, other public bodies/offices, and new governance structures risks creating confusion rather than simplification. They felt the approach adds layers while removing others, leading to disruption, costs, and a system that remains just as complex.

Future councils

20. Respondents said that any new council should **focus on delivering good quality core and universal services/issues** such as roads and pavements, crime and anti-social behaviour, clean streets, and travel and transport, alongside **value for money and meeting local needs.**
21. Relatedly, respondents highlighted the **importance of involving residents in decision-making and local area/neighbourhood working** to ensure that future councils understand and are responsive to the needs of different communities and areas, including urban and rural (this was considered important in general and especially important in the context of larger unitary councils). Consequently, they want to see mechanisms in place to ensure this continues and thrives in future arrangements. This can include local area forums, research and consultation to identify local issues and priorities, engaging with local councillors, and working closely with town and parish councils as well as local community and voluntary groups. They also wanted engagement and consultation to be genuine and meaningful, leading to positive change.
22. Throughout the engagement results, there are differences in experience, perceptions and opinion by different demographic groups. The reasons for this are not unpicked in this report, although it highlights the **importance of understanding local issues and**

priorities and tailoring services and support to different communities (both equality groups, different localities and urban-rural communities) as part of any future arrangements.

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

23. **Over half disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils from the existing nine to two new larger unitary councils**, with a relationship between perceived effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement i.e. in other words, those that consider the current system ineffective are more likely to state there is a case for change. Respondents in Nottingham City are more likely to agree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two than respondents in other areas. In contrast, respondents in Broxtowe, Rushcliffe and Gedling council areas are less likely to agree.

24. Those that **agreed tended to state that the proposals would reduce duplication, generate efficiencies and consequently lead to cost-savings**, while a smaller number also said that it would lead to a **simplification of the system and therefore improved accessibility.** This said, support was often conditional upon potential benefits being realised, including savings being re-invested into better services or lower council tax.

25. Those that disagreed are **concerned about fairness and equitability, especially in relation to an urban-rural imbalance.** Similarly, they are concerned about a **loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability**, and associated issues around **access to services and responsiveness to local issues.** Some respondents **oppose local government reorganisation in general**, with concerns that implementation will be disruptive, and **improvements and savings will not be achieved in practice.** There is also some **distrust about the motives** behind the proposals and **concern that neighbouring areas will inherit perceived financial and service delivery issues experienced by Nottingham City.** This said, it is **worth noting that the concerns were mainly about larger councils not necessarily moving to a unitary model.**

The Options

Option 1b

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

26. Around half of respondents **expressed concerns about Option 1b, particularly that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair**, with some urban areas excluded (such as neighbouring urban areas with close links to the city, such as West Brigford) and rural areas included that lack alignment with Nottingham City (such as in some parts of Broxtowe Borough Council area). Many were also concerned about **perceived Nottingham City Council's financial and management issues**, fearing neighbouring areas could be drawn into these perceived problems, face higher council tax, or experience declining services, as well as **rural voices lost within a council dominated by Nottingham City** - concerns especially strong in Broxtowe and Gedling council areas.

27. Nonetheless, around one in ten respondents supported the option, but largely on the condition that it delivers genuine efficiencies, cost savings, and service improvements. This said, **some participants that live in Gedling Borough Council area were more agnostic**

about the option, given their proximity and relationship to Nottingham City. Participants living in other parts of Nottinghamshire had less to say about this option (or all the options) because they would not be in a council with Nottingham City. However, there were some concerns about **being in a large council covering such a large and diverse area.**

Option 1e

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

28. **Option 1e received more support than 1b, with around a third of respondents viewing it positively or as the better of the two, particularly for its clearer North–South split and perceived geographic logic.** Nottingham City and Gedling respondents were more supportive than other respondents, though concerns remained about boundary choices, especially the inclusion of rural areas with little connection to the city (such as in the south of Rushcliffe Borough Council area) and exclusion of closer areas that were seen as more integrated with Nottingham City, such as some parts of Gedling Borough Council and Ashfield District Council.
29. **Consistent worries included perceptions about Nottingham City's financial challenges and the risk of neighbouring areas 'bailing it out', as well as rural–urban imbalance and loss of local voice**, particularly in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe council areas. Around one-in-ten opposed the option outright, questioning the evidence base and feasibility of benefits. Some respondents also suggested alternative models, such as a single county-wide council, a smaller city-focused unitary alongside a wider county council, or a three-council structure dividing north, south, and city areas.

Other considerations

30. Respondents often said they wanted **more information** to better understand the reasons for the proposals, the evidence base, and the potential benefits and challenges, highlighting the continued importance of effective communications.
31. They also want any **changes to be conducted seamlessly and with as little disruption as possible**, so that services and outcomes are not undermined and any potential benefits realised.

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire – Engagement report

Main report

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction and background

1.1. Nottinghamshire is a two-tier area served by seven district and borough councils and a county council. The city of Nottingham is contained within the boundary of Nottinghamshire, with all council services in the area provided by Nottingham City Council, which is a unitary council. In total, nine different councils provide services across the county.

1.2. In February 2025, as part of the Government's local government reorganisation plans, it contacted local councils in areas such as Nottinghamshire to work together to draw up initial proposals to reduce the number of councils by replacing two-tier councils with larger unitary councils.

1.3. Following considering key criteria and a range of potential options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal to Government in March 2025. They propose to create two new unitary councils that would be responsible for all council services in their areas and replace the existing nine councils.

1.4. An important part of the local government reorganisation process is engaging with residents and stakeholders. This report relates to an engagement exercise about the councils' proposals to replace the nine existing councils with new unitary councils, including different options for the configuration of the future councils. The councils have been supported to conduct the engagement process by independent organisation, Public Perspectives.

1.5. The results of the engagement exercise will be used to inform the development of the councils' final proposals for the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, alongside a range of evidence. This must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottingham is expected in 2026, and then subject to statutory consultation by Government.

Approach to the engagement

1.6. The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14 September 2025.

1.7. The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), and partner toolkits.

1.8. The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support. The questionnaire is available at appendix 1.

1.9. Local councils also supported some community outreach and engagement events, promoting the engagement exercise with residents and stakeholders, including businesses.

1.10. In addition, local councils drew-up a list of key stakeholders who were directly contacted and invited to participate in the engagement exercise. This included town and parish councils, VCSE organisations and local businesses, as well as strategic and pan-Nottinghamshire organisations.

1.11. Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as validating the findings from the engagement survey. The focus group discussion guide is available at appendix 2.

1.12. In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.

1.13. The following table summarises the background of respondents:

Figure 1.1: Background of respondent*

A resident living in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	96%
Someone who works in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	26%
A voluntary or community organisation	1%
A Town or Parish Council	1%
A District / Borough / City / County Council employee	7%
Another public sector organisation	0%
A local councillor	1%
A business owner or business leader operating in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire	2%
Other	1%

*Respondents could select more than one answer, hence why responses add up to over 100%.

1.14. The following table shows the local council area in which respondents live and compares this to the population sizes in each local council area. As is the nature with self-selecting/open-access questionnaires, the responses are not proportional to the population sizes in each of the local council areas.[1] Consequently, the results are analysed (and in some cases presented) both as they are and also re-weighted to be in-line with the population sizes in each local council area.

Figure 1.2: Location of respondents

Location	Respondents	Population*
Ashfield District Council area	5%	11%
Bassetlaw District Council area	9%	10.3%
Broxtowe Borough Council area	22%	9.7%
Gedling Borough Council area	16%	10.2%
Mansfield District Council area	4%	9.6%
Newark and Sherwood District Council area	7%	10.7%
Nottingham City Council area	10%	28.2%
Rushcliffe Borough Council area	26%	10.4%
Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	2%	N/A

*Based on Census 2021.

[1] The level of response is influenced, in part, by the degree to which the proposals and options may affect a local council area.

1.15. There is a spread of responses across different demographic groups, albeit a skew towards older and more affluent groups, which is common in self-selecting/open-access questionnaires such as this.

Figure 1.3: Demographic profile of respondents (only asked to those that live in Nottinghamshire)

Sex	
Female	49%
Male	45%
Another term	0%
Prefer not to say	5%
Age	
Under 18	0%
18-24	1%
25-34	7%
35-44	13%
45-54	18%
55-64	23%
65 and over	31%
Prefer not to say	7%
Disability	
Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a lot	6%
Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a little	10%
Yes, but they don't reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities at all	10%
No	64%
Prefer not to say	10%
Ethnicity	
White British-Irish	82%
Non-White British-Irish	7%
Prefer not to say	11%
Housing situation	
Owner-occupier	80%
Privately renting	5%
Renting from the council or housing association	4%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	9%

Reporting

1.16. The rest of this report presents the key findings from the engagement questionnaire and focus groups. The results have been analysed against all demographic and key variables/questions to identify any important differences in opinion between different groups. In particular, the focus is on geography i.e. the local council area respondents live in.

1.17. In addition, the open-ended comments received in the questionnaire have been reviewed and key themes presented in the report.

1.18. The focus group insights are integrated alongside the engagement questionnaire findings, including exemplifying quotes.

1.19. The report is organised in-keeping with the structure of the engagement questionnaire and focus groups, as follows:

- Section 2: Your local area
- Section 3: The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- Section 4: Local Government Reorganisation in England
- Section 5: Future councils
- Section 6: Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Section 2: Your local area

Introduction

2.1. This section presents findings about respondents' views on their local area, including movement across the county, sense of place and council services/priorities.

Where is your main place of work or study? by Which council area do you live in?

Respondents tend to work or study in areas closest to where they live, while notable proportions that live outside Nottingham work or study in the city, especially those council areas that border it

2.2. Respondents tend to work or study in the same council areas they live in, especially those that live in Nottingham City (69%), Bassetlaw (68%) and Newark and Sherwood (61%) council areas.

2.3. Notable proportions that live outside Nottingham work or study in the city, especially those council areas that border it (Gedling – 33%, Broxtowe – 29%, Rushcliffe – 24% and Ashfield - 23%).

2.4. In addition, there are also notable proportions that work or study across the county. Similarly, there are notable proportions that work or study outside of the county, especially those council areas that neighbour other counties or urban areas (Bassetlaw – 17%, Broxtowe – 17% and Rushcliffe – 15%).

Figure 2.1: Movement across Nottinghamshire

	Council area live in							
Main place of work or study	**Ashfield**	**Bassetlaw**	**Broxtowe**	**Gedling**	**Mansfield**	**Newark and Sherwood**	**Notting-ham**	**Rushcliffe**
Ashfield District Council area	**47%**	1%	2%	3%	9%	2%	1%	0%
Bassetlaw District Council area	1%	**68%**	0%	1%	3%	4%	0%	0%
Broxtowe Borough Council area	3%	0%	**43%**	3%	1%	1%	4%	2%
Gedling Borough Council area	3%	1%	2%	**40%**	4%	3%	3%	2%
Mansfield District Council area	9%	3%	1%	2%	**52%**	5%	1%	1%
Newark and Sherwood District Council area	2%	4%	0%	3%	6%	**61%**	1%	2%
Nottingham City Council area	**23%**	**2%**	**29%**	**33%**	**4%**	**8%**	**69%**	**24%**
Rushcliffe Borough Council area	2%	0%	3%	5%	2%	2%	7%	**48%**
Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	12%	8%	10%	13%	17%	10%	9%	11%
Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	9%	17%	17%	7%	10%	8%	10%	15%

Number of respondents: 7,658 (excludes respondents that do not study or work currently – 33%).

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

(Non-weighted results i.e. the results have not been changed to reflect the actual population sizes of a local council area. This is the case for all graphs and tables in this report. The weighted results, where presented, are referenced in separate paragraphs and clearly indicated).

How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention?

Residents tend to anchor their description to Nottingham City and/or Nottinghamshire, with further mention of nearby towns or villages as well as well-known landmarks or cultural references

2.5. Respondents were asked how they describe where they are from when talking to someone who does not live nearby (only asked to respondents that live in Nottinghamshire – 10,945 responses). In summary, across Nottinghamshire **sense of place and identity is layered** with respondents **anchoring their description to Nottingham City** (e.g. near Nottingham or north of Nottingham), **followed by Nottinghamshire (the county)**, and then **refined by naming specific towns** or local villages (especially for those areas further away from Nottingham City such as Mansfield, Newark and Worksop), or well-known areas/landmarks or **cultural references such as Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.**

2.6. There are also **occasional regional references** such as 'the middle of England' or the 'East Midlands'. In more **rural areas**, respondents often emphasis the rurality e.g. 'a small village', 'the countryside'. In more **urban areas** they will tend reference 'the city' or the nearest town. Whilst there is a **tendency to look inwards within the county and towards Nottingham City** (especially for those areas bordering the city), some respondents in **areas that border other counties and major urban areas or landmarks will also make reference to these.**

2.7. The following summarises the responses by each council area:

Ashfield District Council area

- Anchor to Nottingham plus local towns: Sutton-in-Ashfield, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Hucknall, and also nearby Mansfield.
- Some wider mention of being part of Nottinghamshire County.
- Strong references to Robin Hood/Sherwood Forest connections.
- Directional framing ("north of Nottingham").

Bassetlaw District Council area

- Reference to key towns such as in or near Worksop or Retford.
- Occasional reference to being part of Nottinghamshire, alongside references to nearby Sheffield and Doncaster (due to proximity to South Yorkshire) (and more likely to reference these areas and look northwards than southwards to Nottingham City).
- Also mentions of Sherwood Forest as a notable local landmark.
- Some occasional mention of 'Bassetlaw' highlighting a sense of identity linked to the local council area.
- Also mentions of rurality and specific villages.

Broxtowe Borough Council area

- Nottingham City is commonly mentioned as an anchor reference point, for example ‘near Nottingham’.
- This is accompanied by local identifiers of nearby towns such as Beeston, Eastwood, Kimberley, Stapleford, as well as rural areas, suburban areas and villages such as Bramcote, Chilwell and Nuthall.
- There is also occasional reference to IKEA as a landmark.

Gedling Borough Council area

- A common anchor point is reference to Nottingham, for example ‘just north of Nottingham’, ‘just outside Nottingham’ or ‘near Nottingham’.
- Local towns and areas are also commonly reference in conjunction with reference to the city, such as Arnold, Carlton and Mapperley.

Mansfield District Council area

- Strong and primary emphasis on Mansfield as the main identifier, given its eponymous nature, history/heritage, and dominance of, and largest town within, the district.
- Some lesser references to Warsop as a smaller town in the district or Woodhouse.
- Frequent associated references to nearby Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood heritage.
- Nottingham City is also occasionally mentioned, but often in a secondary manner. For example, ‘I live in Mansfield, a few miles north of Nottingham’.

Newark and Sherwood District Council area

- Newark-on-Trent is often referenced as an anchor point given its relative size, the main town in the area and where the council offices are located.
- Southwell (and sometimes the racecourse) and Ollerton are also mentioned. Depending on location, Mansfield is also sometimes mentioned as too Nottingham City itself, often as secondary markers. There is also occasional secondary mention of ‘near Lincoln’, depending on proximity.
- Landmark and cultural references are commonly made to Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood.

Nottingham City Council area

- The core reference is unsurprisingly Nottingham itself, with follow-up reference to specific locations within the city.
- There is sometimes secondary mention of wider landmarks, regional and cultural references such as Nottinghamshire, East Midlands or Robin Hood.

Rushcliffe Borough Council area

- Nottingham City is a common anchor reference, often framed as relative to ‘the south of Nottingham’.
- There is often follow-up reference to specific towns and areas as a key local identifier, especially West Bridgford as the largest town in the area.
- Other notable areas mentioned include Bingham, Cotgrave, Radcliffe-on-Trent and Ruddington.
- There are also sometimes references to ‘Rushcliffe’ or near the ‘River Trent’.
- Further south in the district into more rural areas such as Keyworth and East Leake there is less reference to Nottingham City and more reference to the wider county and/or rurality, as well as some reference to large nearby towns outside of the county, such as Loughborough.

Focus group insight:

The focus groups validate the points raised through the engagement survey about layered identity and sense of place, with **clear distinctions between urban and rural areas and those that live in or near the city and those in other areas of Nottingham:**

“I say I’m from Nottingham first, which most people have heard about and reflects how I feel about myself. If I need to clarify even further I might say Nottinghamshire, East Midlands or just the middle of England.” *Urban participant*

“I say that I live near Nottingham. I’m on the outskirts and I don’t really feel like I live in the city itself, but it’s a good reference point and at the end of the day I spend quite a bit of time in Nottingham and I’m happy to be associated with it.” *Urban participant*

“Not everyone has heard of Newark-on-Trent, so I might say that and follow it up by saying Sherwood Forest and Robin Hood, most people have heard of those.” *Urban participant*

“I live in a small village in a rural area. I’m guess I’m not a million miles away from the city, but I definitely don’t feel like I come from Nottingham or an urban area. But I do feel like I’m from Nottinghamshire and that’s normally what I tell people.” *Rural participant*

Focus group participants tended to say that they **do not specifically identify with their local authority in itself or would not typically use it as a reference point:**

“I live near Mansfield and that’s how I’d introduce myself, but I wouldn’t go as far as to say I live in Mansfield District.” *Urban participant*

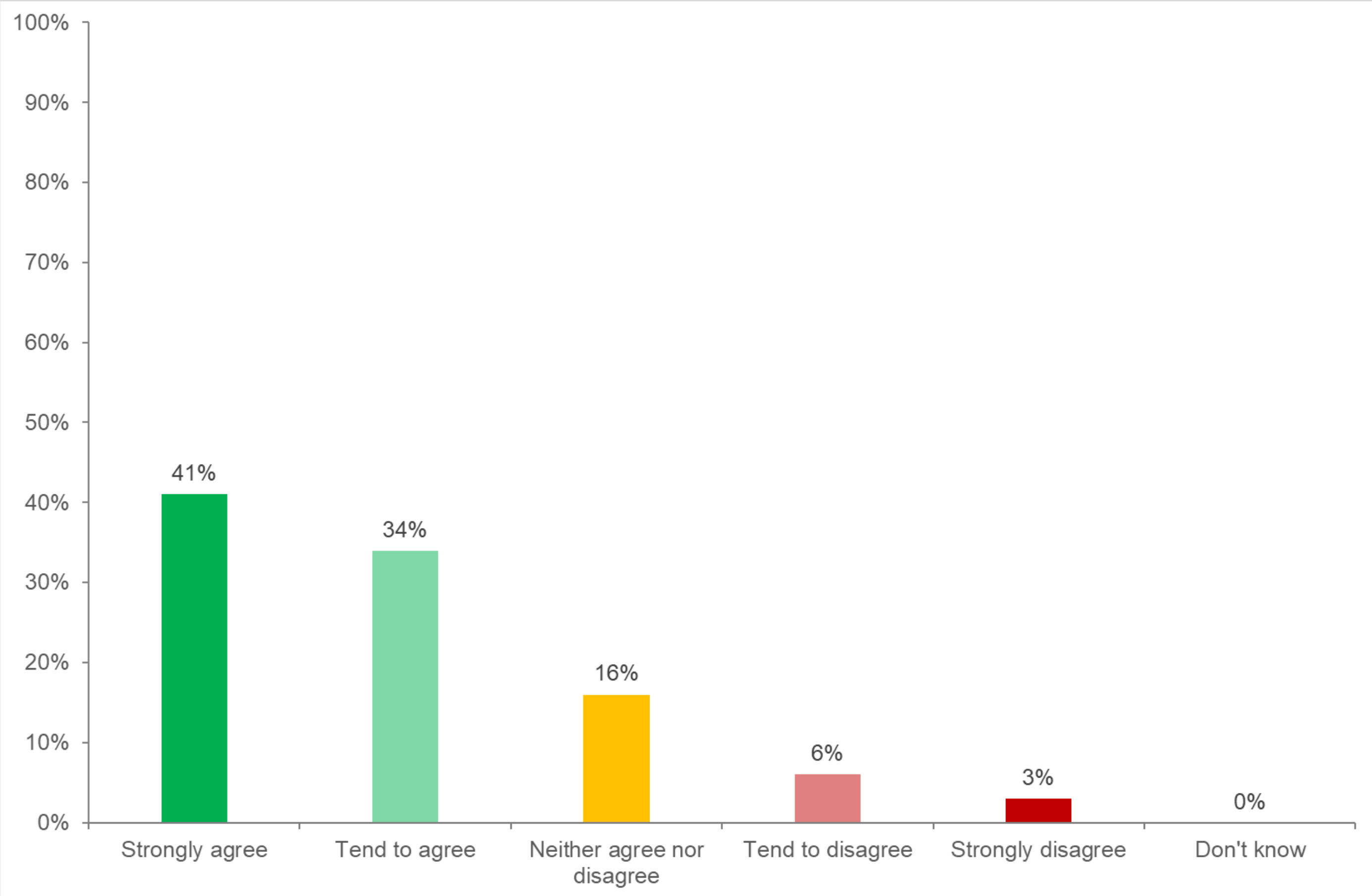
“I pay my council tax to Rushcliffe Borough Council. I’m pretty happy with them. But I don’t say to people I’m from Rushcliffe or that I live in Rushcliffe Borough Council area. I only reference them if I’m talking about council stuff, like services, council tax or voting.” *Rural participant*

To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are proud to live in your local area?

Three-quarters of respondents said they are proud to live in their local area with notable variation by council area

2.8. 75% of respondents are proud to live in their local area including 41% that strongly agree. Only 9% disagree.

Figure 2.2: Proud to live in local area



Number of respondents: 11,206 (only asked to respondents that live in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire).

Focus group insight:

The focus group participants highlighted a **distinction between being proud of their local areas and satisfaction and advocacy of their local council**, regardless as to whether they hold positive perceptions or not of their council:

"I like my local area, I like living here, but that's got nothing to do with whether I think my council are doing a good job or not. There's been lots of reported issues about the City Council and there's been issues that we've experienced, but I still enjoy living in the city and I'm proud to say I'm from Nottingham." *Urban participant*

"I think my council does a good job, in general. But when I think about my local area I don't really think about the council. They can affect my enjoyment of living here because if it's well looked after it improves my quality of life. But the reason I like living here is because of lots of other things specific to the area such as the location, ruralness and being close to lots of different places and attractions." *Rural participant*

2.9. Respondents that live in Rushcliffe (91% proud), Gedling (79% proud) and Broxtowe (78% proud) council areas have higher levels of pride about their local area than other locations, especially Mansfield council area (43% proud).

Figure 2.3: Proud to live in local area by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Strongly agree	21%	26%	41%	40%	17%	32%	25%	63%
Tend to agree	33%	32%	37%	39%	26%	38%	35%	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	24%	24%	16%	17%	30%	20%	20%	7%
Tend to disagree	14%	10%	4%	3%	18%	7%	11%	1%
Strongly disagree	8%	8%	1%	1%	9%	3%	9%	0%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

2.10. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the levels of pride in a downwards direction (as the locations with higher levels of pride have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data has 65% of respondents agreeing that they are proud and 15% disagreeing:

- Strongly agree: 31%
- Tend to agree: 34%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 20%
- Tend to disagree: 9%
- Strongly disagree: 6%
- Don't know: 0%

2.11. Respondents with lower levels of pride are:

- Aged 18-25: 58% proud compared with 75% of older respondents.
- People living with a disability: 70% proud compared with 78% of other respondents.
- Private and social renters: 65% proud compared with 77% of owner-occupiers.

Thinking generally, what would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? And what are your priorities for improvement in the local area?

Core and universal services/issues such as roads and pavements, crime and anti-social behaviour, clean streets, and travel and transport are key priorities

2.12. 71% of respondents said that maintaining roads and pavements are the priority for improvement (and also second top cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 83%).

2.13. 64% of respondents said crime and anti-social behaviour are priorities for improvement (third top cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 81%).

2.14. 57% of respondents said clean streets are a priority, which is top cited as making somewhere a good place to live by 85% of respondents.

2.15. 53% noted public transport, roads and parking as priorities for improvement (also fourth cited as making somewhere a good place to live – cited by 80% of respondents).

2.16. Other core and universal services/issues such as refuse collection and recycling (cited by 40% as a priority for improvement), parks, sports and leisure facilities (42%) and health services (46%) also standout.

Figure 2.4: Important aspects in making somewhere a good place to live and priorities for improvement

	Making somewhere a good place to live (11,173)	Priority for improvement (11,123)
Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy	85%	57%
Maintaining roads and pavements	83%	71%
Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime	81%	64%
Public transport, roads and parking	80%	53%
Refuse collection and recycling	77%	40%
Parks, sports and leisure facilities	77%	42%
Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles	68%	46%
Schools and places of learning	67%	32%
Decent and affordable homes	64%	35%
Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups	62%	37%
Activities and facilities for children and young people	61%	30%
Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets	59%	41%
Jobs and supporting people into work	58%	32%
Community events and activities and supporting local community groups	58%	25%
Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums	44%	16%
Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment	37%	20%

Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question (only asked to respondents that live in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire). Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

2.17. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 2-3% mentioned the importance of ‘sense of community’, while a similar proportion said a priority is increasing ‘community voice’ to influence decision-making and an associated improvement in governance of local councils and areas.

2.18. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order of importance/priority is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

The focus groups reiterated the importance of **good quality core services and value for money**, and that these should be the priorities for any future council:

> “It isn’t rocket science. Councils spend lots of money on lots of things that often don’t matter to local people. All I really want my council to do is get the basics right – keep the streets clean, pick up my bins and don’t leave a mess when you do it, get rid of potholes and keep me and my family safe. Anything else on top of this is a bonus, but I’d rather pay a lower council tax than see money wasted on vanity projects.” *Urban participant*

Section 3: The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

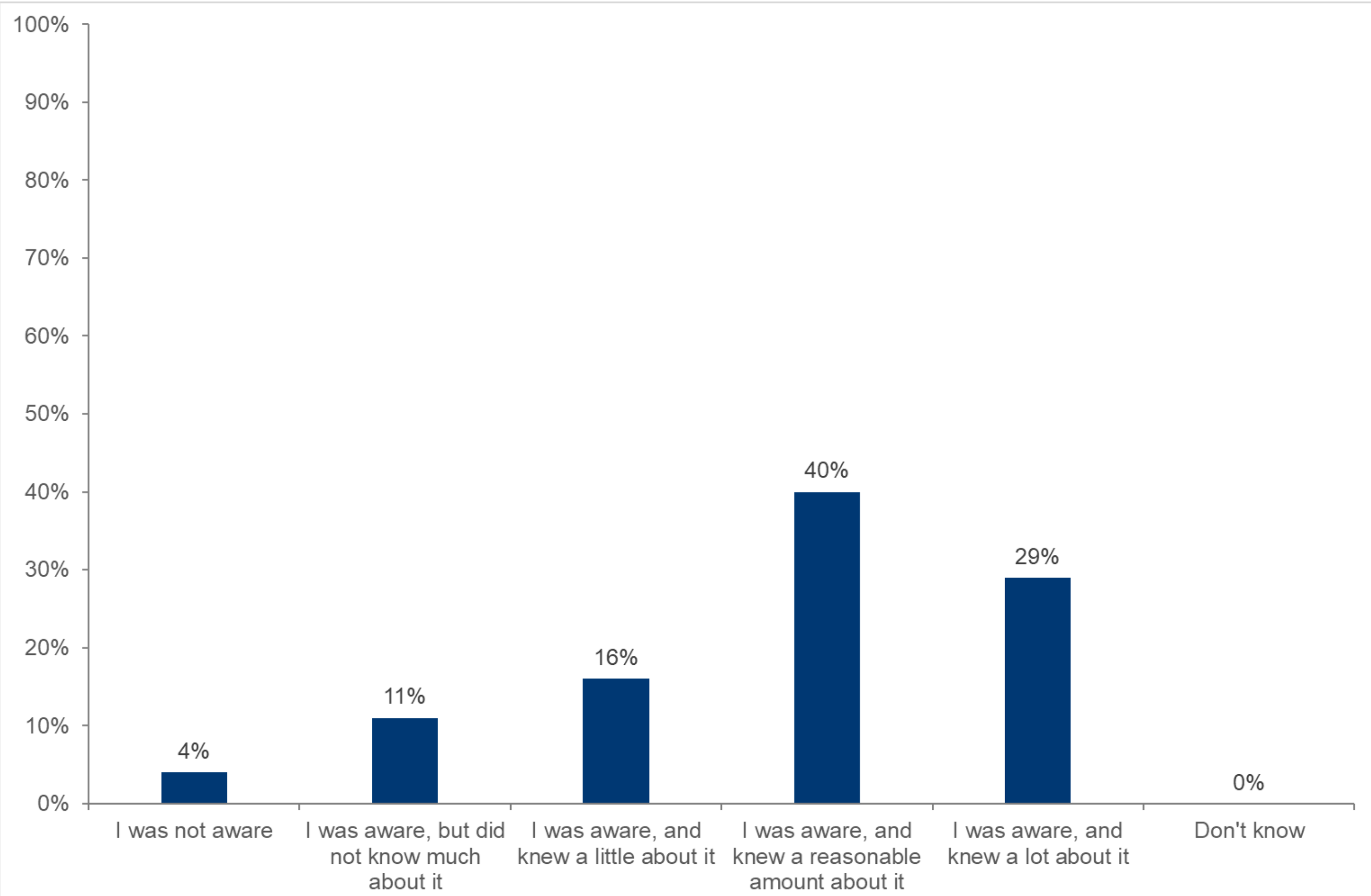
3.1. This section presents findings about the current ways councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including awareness and knowledge, and perceptions of effectiveness.

Before today, how aware were you of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and the services each council provides?

Most respondents were aware of the current structure of councils and the different services delivered, and had varying levels of knowledge

3.2. 96% of respondents were aware of the current structure of councils, including 29% that knew a lot about it, 40% a reasonable amount, 16% a little and 11% not much about it. 4% were not aware of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire before responding to the engagement survey.

Figure 3.1: Awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils



Number of respondents: 11,424.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups had **varying levels of awareness and knowledge** of the current structure of councils in their area, including the two-tier system. In several cases this was **limited to an awareness that their council tax is shared between two councils** (in the case of non-Nottingham City residents), while others said their **use of services had made them aware, albeit also often confusing:**

> "I know that my council tax goes to both my District Council and the County Council. I think I know why and what each does, but don't test me. It can be a little confusing." *Rural participant*

> "I've had to deal with both councils during my time for different services, including the county council for social services. I'd say I'm now quite knowledgeable about it, but that's been hard won through bitter experience of having to navigate around the system." *Rural participant*

> "I know that Nottingham City delivers all services in the area, but what relationship does it have with the county and the neighbouring district and borough councils? It's always felt a bit odd. It's like the City is an island in amongst all these other councils. It doesn't feel that joined-up when you think about it." *Urban participant*

3.3. Respondents in Gedling (98% aware including 75% with at least reasonable knowledge), Rushcliffe (also 98% aware including 74% with at least reasonable knowledge) and Ashfield (96% aware including 72% with at least reasonable knowledge) are most awareness and knowledgeable. Respondents in Bassetlaw are least aware and knowledgeable (92% aware including 56% with at least reasonable knowledge).

Figure 3.2: Awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
I was not aware	4%	8%	5%	2%	6%	7%	5%	2%
I was aware, but did not know much about it	9%	17%	12%	7%	11%	11%	12%	9%
I was aware, and knew a little about it	14%	17%	19%	15%	15%	13%	16%	15%
I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it	37%	34%	41%	43%	31%	36%	37%	43%
I was aware, and knew a lot about it	35%	22%	23%	32%	36%	33%	30%	31%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%

3.4. There are some minor changes when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Not aware: 5%
- Not know much: 11%
- Know a little: 16%
- Know a reasonable amount: 38%
- Know a lot: 30%
- Don't know: 0%

3.5. Respondents with lower levels of awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils and the different services delivered are:

- Women: 25% know a lot compared with 33% of men.
- Aged under 35: 62% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 69% of older respondents.
- Non-White British-Irish: 57% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 69% of other respondents.
- Private renters and social renters: 61% of private renters and 51% of social renters know at least a reasonable amount compared with 70% of owner-occupiers.

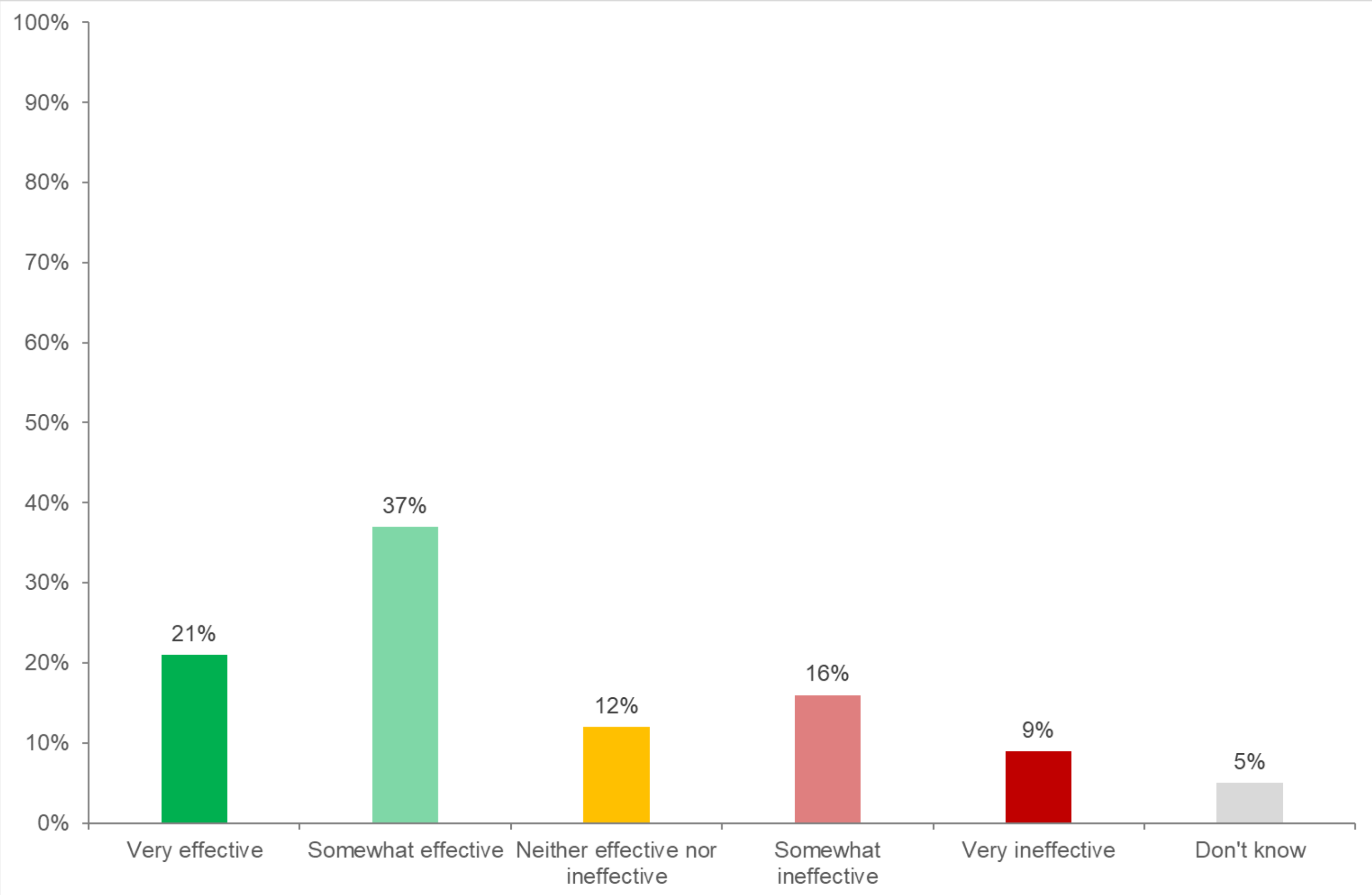
How effective is the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Over half of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery in councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is effective with some variations by area

3.6. 58% of respondents said the current structure and approach to service delivery is at least somewhat effective, including 21% that said it is very effective. A quarter said it is at least somewhat ineffective, including 9% that said it is very ineffective.

3.7. Respondents that knew at least a reasonable amount about the current structure and approach to service delivery (63%) are more likely to say that the current system is effective compared to respondents with less awareness or knowledge (48%).

Figure 3.3: Effectiveness of the current structure and approach to service delivery



Number of respondents: 11,413.

3.8. Respondents in Rushcliffe (72% effective), Gedling (65% effective) and Broxtowe (63% effective) council areas have the highest ratings of effectiveness, while respondents in Nottingham City have the lowest (26% effective).

Figure 3.4: Effectiveness of the current structure and approach to service delivery by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Very effective	14%	11%	24%	22%	10%	15%	5%	31%
Somewhat effective	40%	32%	39%	43%	34%	38%	21%	41%
Neither effective nor ineffective	14%	16%	13%	12%	17%	15%	15%	9%
Somewhat ineffective	16%	21%	12%	14%	20%	20%	33%	11%
Very ineffective	11%	14%	5%	7%	15%	8%	22%	5%
Don't know	4%	6%	6%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%

3.9. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the results with levels of effectiveness decreasing (as the locations with higher ratings of effectiveness have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data is more polarised with 47% of respondents rating the current system as effective and 34% ineffective:

- Very effective: 14%
- Somewhat effective: 33%
- Neither effective nor ineffective: 14%
- Somewhat ineffective: 21%
- Very ineffective: 13%
- Don’t know: 5%

3.10. Respondents that rated lower the effectiveness of the current system are:

- Aged under 25: 46% rate the current system as effective compared with 58% of older respondents.
- Private and social renters: 49% rate the current system as effective compared with 59% of owner-occupiers.

3.11. Respondents were asked to explain their answers to help understand the reasons behind their perceptions about effectiveness with 59% of respondents providing further explanation. In summary, those rating the system **effective** tend to highlight **service reliability, local knowledge and responsiveness, local representation, and a sense that the current system is fit for purpose.** Those who said **neither effective or ineffective** often expressed **mixed experiences, or uncertainty/lack of clarity.** Those rating the system **ineffective** emphasised **confusion, duplication, inefficiency, lack of joined-up/partnership working, political distrust, and inequity and inconsistency in services between different local councils**, with some advocating for change and unitary authorities.

3.12. The following provides more detail on the reasons alongside volume of opinion:

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as effective:</u>

- **Satisfaction with services** (cited by approximately 15% of respondents): Service provision is generally considered effective and satisfactory including key services such as bin collections, highways maintenance, and schools working well.
- **Local knowledge and responsiveness** (cited by approximately 10%)**:** Smaller/more localised councils such as District/Borough councils allow services to be tailored to local need and priorities, and be more aware of, and responsive to, issues as they emerge at the neighbourhood level.
- **Representation** (cited by approximately 5%)**:** Councils are closer to their communities and there is greater local accountability and political representation, reflecting local needs/priorities.
- **Familiarity, stability and continuity** (cited by approximately 2-3%): The current approach works sufficiently well and does not need to change, just potentially improved in-situ.

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as neither effective nor ineffective:</u>

- **Mixed experiences and views** (cited by approximately 5% of respondents): Some services/aspects work well and others could be improved. This includes an appreciation that there is scope for change and improvement, allied with concerns that change could be disruptive or not lead to positive benefits in practice.
- **Lack of knowledge, information or understanding of the current structure or approach to services** (cited by approximately 2-3%): This meant that respondents could not form a firm or clear opinion regarding effectiveness.

<u>Reasons for rating the current system as ineffective:</u>

- **Service delivery issues** (cited by approximately 10% of respondents): Mixed experiences of service delivery and quality, with scope for improvement.
- **Duplication and inefficiency** (cited by approximately 5%): The two-tier structure is inefficient with resource duplication between councils, unnecessary tiers of management and staffing resulting in wasted resources, added bureaucracy and negative consequences for service delivery/quality as well as cost-effectiveness.
- **Confusion** (cited by approximately 5%): The two-tier structure makes the system difficult to navigate, as well as creating a lack of accountability between councils.
- **Joined-up/partnership working** (cited by approximately 5%): The current two-tier system makes coordination challenging between councils and partners across the different tiers of local government, with scope to improve partnership working.

- **Political concerns** (cited by approximately 2-3%): Undercurrent of distrust of politics and politicians, surfacing mainly around planning decisions, fairness of service allocation, and perceptions of political agendas overriding residents' needs.
- **Inequity and lack of consistency** (cited by approximately 2-3%): Experiences of inconsistent services depending on location and challenges accessing services in neighbouring areas, as well as some concerns around a bias to service provision in urban areas compared to more rural areas.

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants shared similar views about the effectiveness of the current system to those expressed by respondents in the engagement survey, **driven by their personal experience of the councils and their services.** These views tended to be **dominated by perceived concerns about Nottingham City council's finances and services** and their impact on neighbouring areas. There was also reference to **inconsistent services, parochialism and calls for more joined-up and partnership working:**

> "It is confusing about who you should speak with about any given issue, the district council, the city council or the county council or all of them. I've learnt to know who does what and navigate the system, but I think there's scope for change." *Rural participant*

> "When you think about Nottingham City Council you can't say that the current approach works. There's been mismanagement, its financially bankrupt and my fear is that there will be a ripple effect on its neighbouring areas, especially if there is local government reorganisation. It's not a good advert for a unitary council or forming a new council with Nottingham City council at its head." *Urban participant*

> "I generally feel like my council does a reasonable job, but I've seen it professionally where I've been able to get services for one client from their council, but not for someone else who lives in a neighbouring council. It's a bit like a postcode lottery, so I'd like to see more consistency in service provision and it to be easier to access those services so that you don't have to speak to lots of different people." *Urban participant*

> "The day-to-day is fine, but I do question some of the decisions that are made. On one level it is nice to have a local council that feels close to the community, but some of the decisions feel a bit parochial, and possibly even overly self-interested, especially around planning decisions or pet projects of councillors. It feels a bit inward looking and I'd like to see the council be more innovative and outward facing, working closely with other councils and partners." *Rural participant*

One point focus group participants tended to share is that they felt it **important that their council is coherent geographically and focussed on their local community:**

> "One thing I like about the current system is that it feels like your council is working for you, is focussed on your area and your issues. Mansfield council is a good example, it is a fairly small council and is focussed on those that live in Mansfield and the surrounding areas." *Urban participant*

Section 4: Local Government Reorganisation in England

Introduction

4.1. This section presents findings about the Government's plans for reorganisation of local government across the country, including awareness and knowledge, and perceptions about these plans.

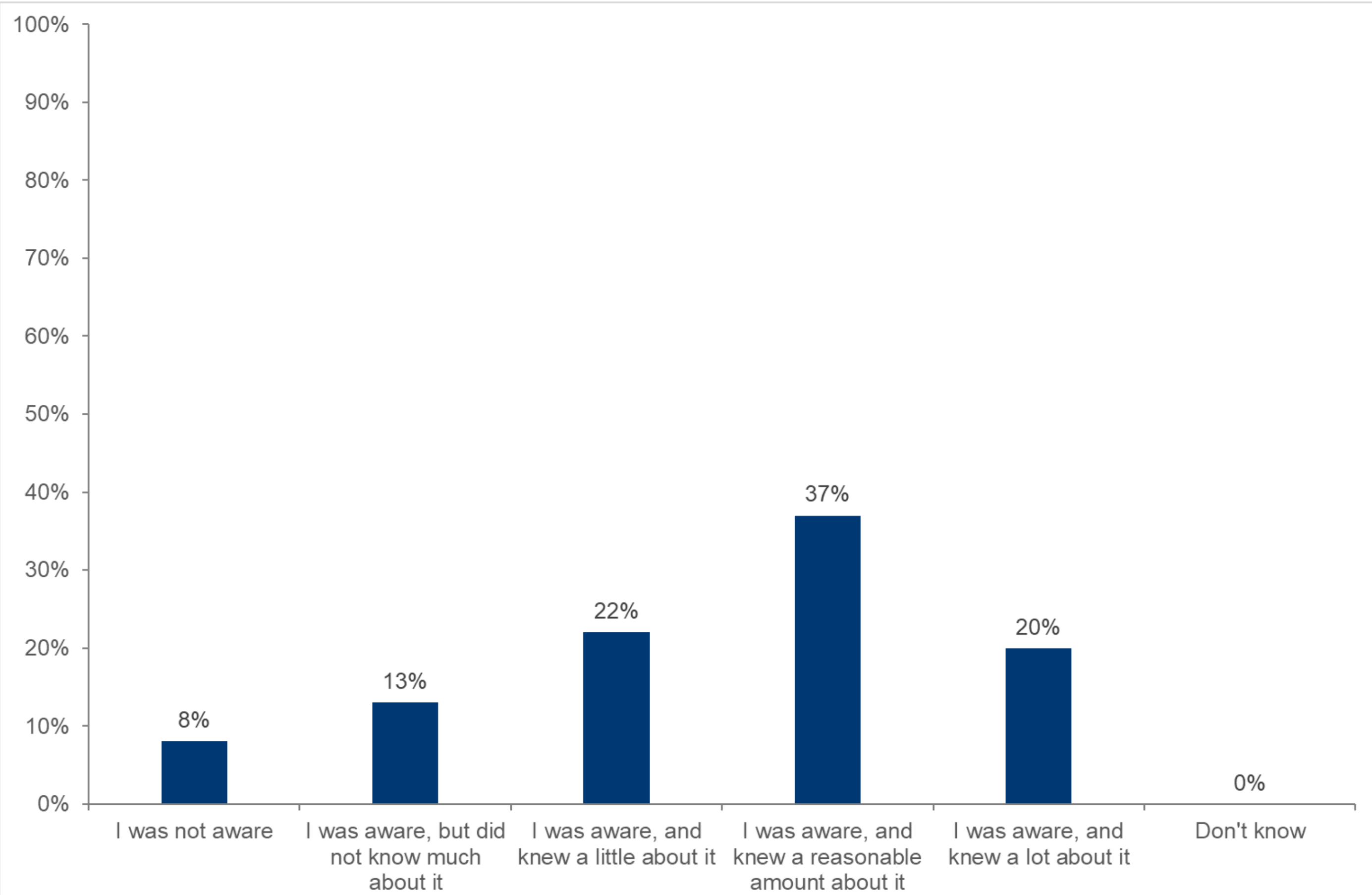
Before today, how aware were you about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England?

Most respondents are aware of the reorganisation of councils across England, including over half that have at least reasonable knowledge about it

4.2. 92% of respondents are aware of the reorganisation of councils across England, including 20% that knew a lot about it, 37% a reasonable amount, 22% a little and 13% not much about it. 8% were not aware at all before responding to the engagement survey.

4.3. There is a close relationship between awareness and knowledge of the current structure of councils and that of the reorganisation of councils across England. For example, 50% that were not aware of the current structure of councils are also not aware of the reorganisation of councils. Similarly, 54% that were aware and know a lot about the current structure of local councils are also equally aware and knowledgeable about the reorganisation of councils across England.

Figure 4.1: Awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England



Number of respondents: 11,429.

Focus group insight:

The focus group participants had **mixed levels of awareness and knowledge about local government reorganisation in England**, with most awareness and knowledge generated through this engagement process and associated communications. Awareness and knowledge tended to be **greatest amongst participants in areas that are perhaps most affected by the proposals.** Prior awareness was also linked with the wider devolution agenda, including the formation of the East Midlands Combined County Authority:

> "I wasn't aware about any of this until you invited me to attend the focus group." *Urban participant*

> "I had some awareness, but only really vaguely. I'd seen something on social media about it." *Urban participant*

> "I'd heard of devolution and all that previously, but only really found out about local government reorganisation when I heard more about it from my council. Once I heard that we may be joining Nottingham I spent some time getting familiar with the issues as they directly affect me and my family." *Rural participant*

> "There was that consultation around the East Midlands regional authority a few years ago, so I was aware of what's going on in general, but I can't say I knew much about these specific plans until just recently." *Rural participant*

4.4. Respondents in Rushcliffe (96% aware including 64% with at least reasonable knowledge) and Gedling (96% aware including 62% with at least reasonable knowledge) are most aware and knowledgeable. Respondents in Bassetlaw are least aware and knowledgeable (78% aware including 37% with at least reasonable knowledge).

Figure 4.2: Awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
I was not aware	8%	22%	8%	4%	14%	9%	9%	4%
I was aware, but did not know much about it	15%	19%	15%	12%	13%	16%	14%	10%
I was aware, and knew a little about it	19%	21%	24%	22%	22%	21%	22%	22%
I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it	37%	25%	36%	40%	28%	34%	37%	42%
I was aware, and knew a lot about it	20%	12%	17%	22%	22%	21%	18%	22%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

4.5. There are some minor changes when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Not aware: 9%
- Not know much: 14%
- Know a little: 22%
- Know a reasonable amount: 35%
- Know a lot: 19%
- Don’t know: 0%

4.6. Respondents with lower levels of awareness and knowledge of local government reorganisation across England are:

- Women: 51% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 62% of men.
- Aged under 25: 79% are aware compared with 92% of older respondents.
- Non-White British-Irish: 49% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 56% of other respondents.
- People living with a disability that affects their day-to-day activities a lot or a little: 49% know at least a reasonable amount compared with 57% of other respondents.
- Private renters and social renters: 49% of private renters and 39% of social renters know at least a reasonable amount compared with 57% of owner-occupiers.

What do you think are the main potential benefits, if any, of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Potential benefits include efficiency and cost savings, geographic coherence, a simpler and clearer system and more joined-up working

4.7. Reduced duplication, efficiency and cost savings are the dominant perceived benefits, while scepticism/no benefits form the second largest cluster. Other themes like geographical coherence, simplification, joined-up working, improved services and fairness also stand-out, albeit in lesser numbers:

- **Efficiency and cost savings** (cited by approximately 35% of respondents): Respondents frequently highlighted the potential for reducing duplication, achieving greater efficiencies and consequently saving money by moving to larger unitary councils (although some also questioned whether these savings would be reinvested into local areas, public services or reduced council tax).
- **Geographic / administrative coherence** (cited by approximately 15%): Some respondents noted the opportunity to bring areas under a clearer, more consistent administrative structure, which reflects the way people live and move across the county, by bringing council areas together into larger bodies.
- **Simplification / clarity of councils and access to services** (cited by approximately 10%): These respondents consider benefits in having a single unitary council to contact, resulting in improved access to services, ease of navigation around the council system, and consequently also clearer accountability.
- **Better coordination, joined-up services and partnership working** (cited by approximately 10%): Some see value in larger councils promoting better coordination of services and joined-up decision making and working in areas managed by a single council. Relatedly, some also consider this could lead to better partnership working between the larger unitary councils and other public bodies.
- **Improved services and outcomes** (cited by approximately 5%): A smaller, albeit notable, proportion of respondents felt these changes would lead to improved service quality and delivery, and better social outcomes because of the above noted potential for efficiencies and joined-up decision-making and services, and partnership working, as well as scope for further investment in local areas and services due to cost savings.
- **Fairness and equitability** (cited by approximately 2-3%): A smaller group of respondents suggested that the proposals could lead to a fairer and more equitable system as a single, larger unitary council could result in more consistency around access to, and quality of, services and support. Relatedly, some also said it could result in a more considered and cohesive approach to tackling inequalities across a larger area.

4.8. However, approximately 20% of respondents were **sceptical about the proposals** for local government reorganisation stating they could see **no real benefits, expressing doubt or outright opposition.**

4.9. The findings are broadly **consistent across different areas and demographics**, albeit with slightly greater scepticism amongst respondents in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas.

What concerns, if any, do you have about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Respondents are concerned about urban-rural imbalance and the financial risks of local government reorganisation, as well as loss of local representation, accountability and knowledge

4.10. Urban–rural imbalance was the biggest single concern amongst respondents with costs/financial risks and loss of representation also consistently high mentions. These issues feed into concerns about service disruption and decline:

- **Geographic / urban–rural imbalance** (cited by approximately 35% of respondents): Strong concerns about Nottingham City in particular as the major urban centre in the county dominating rural locations in neighbouring council areas. This includes a concern that larger councils will not be able to tailor services to suit rural areas and that rural areas will receive inconsistent service provision or be deprioritised (loss of rural voice) compared to urban areas, as well as suffer from some of the challenges in urban areas and councils currently serving those areas. This view is heightened in areas surrounding Nottingham City, especially Broxtowe and Rushcliffe. Relatedly, some respondents suggested that Nottingham City could be a separate council in its own right to avoid some of these concerns and provide services specific to an urban area.
- **Financial risks** (cited by approximately 25%): Worries that reorganisation would be expensive and potentially not achieve the projected savings in the longer-term. Similarly, there are concerns that reorganisation could be used to bail out councils that are perceived to be struggling financially, especially Nottingham City, which in turn could lead to increased council tax and/or worse services in neighbouring areas.
- **Concerns over efficiency and complexity** (cited by approximately 10%): Related, there is scepticism that larger councils will be more efficient, simpler to navigate and improve access to services but rather in practice would add complexity and bureaucracy (and costs due to inefficiencies and waste).
- **Loss of local representation, accountability and knowledge** (cited by approximately 20%): Merging councils could increase the distance between decision-makers and communities, diluting residents' voices and reducing accountability and local connections. This could result in less responsive and tailored services to meet local needs and priorities, as well as a system and services that will be harder to navigate and access.
- **Service quality decline** (cited by approximately 15%): Linked to the above points, specific concerns that bigger councils would stretch services, reduce responsiveness, and worsen frontline delivery. Similarly, some respondents are concerned about the complexity of merging councils, which could lead to confusion and disruption, affecting service quality in the short-term.
- **Job losses / staffing concerns** (cited by approximately 5%): Relatedly, some respondents noted risks of redundancies, loss of experienced staff, and disruption to council workforces, in turn affecting services. This concern was shared between both residents and staff currently working in local councils with the latter explicitly concerned about their own jobs.

- **Politicisation** (cited by approximately 5%): A few respondents questioned whether these proposals are about political parties using reorganisation to consolidate power, or about democracy being weakened.
- **Preference for reform within existing structure** (cited by approximately 2-3%): As a result of the above concerns, some respondents said existing councils should be improved rather than replaced.
- **No need for change** (cited by approximately 2-3%): The system is not broken, so there is not a need to fix it, especially with risk that any changes could lead to less effective councils and services.

4.11. Approximately 5% of respondents said they did **not have any concerns about local government reorganisation and/or saw the risks as minimal.**

4.12. The findings are broadly **consistent across different areas and demographics**, albeit with greater concern amongst respondents in Rushcliffe and Broxtowe council areas especially related to Nottingham City and concerns around urban-rural imbalance and financial risks/costs.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups echoed the potential benefits and concerns around local government reorganisation, albeit with a **skew towards concerns over benefits.** Most participants could **appreciate the potential efficiencies and cost-savings, although they questioned whether in practice these would be achieved and moreover where they would be invested.** They also could see that there may be opportunities for more joined-up decision-making, working and services, although they also felt these could be **achieved within the current structure:**

> "It's all well and good saying there will be these savings and I can see on paper how they may think that's the case, but I'm not entirely convinced. I'd like to see the evidence and calculations because in my experience these things are a lot harder to achieve in practice." *Rural participant*

> "Cost-savings are fine, but how will they benefit me? Will I get a lower council tax? Will they be re-invested in services? Or will they just be a way of balancing the books and in effect we're just bailing out the government or failing councils?" *Rural participant*

> "I can see that there's room for improvement in the way things are currently. Services could be improved, there could be opportunities to work more strategically and regionally. I guess what I don't fully get is why this can't happen as things are now. Why do we have to rip up everything and start again. It's costly and time consuming to do that and it's not guaranteed to get results. It does feel a bit like a cost-cutting exercise dressed up." *Urban participant*

The two biggest concerns cited by focus group participants (mainly from rural areas) were around the **urban-rural imbalance and associated dominance of Nottingham City, and the loss of local representation and knowledge:**

> "The benefit of the current system is that you've got a council focussed on the needs of Nottingham City and another focussed on an area with a completely different set of issues and characteristics, a much more rural area. So you'd be losing that focus by creating larger councils and you risk creating councils that end up having different divisions in them, one to deal with rural issues and one to deal with urban issues because some of the challenges and priorities in these areas will be vastly different, so in the end you're not making any savings. Or what's more likely is that everything will be configured to suit the city because it will dominate any future larger council. It just feels like my voice and that of my community would be lost within the thousands more voices of those that live in the city." *Rural participant*

A few participants also questioned how **local government reorganisation fits with regional devolution and other public bodies and reforms:**

> "The whole agenda and governance in local government feels a bit muddled to me. They created the East Midlands regional council, which I felt like was adding an extra tier and now they're saying they want to reduce the tiers. Then you've also got things like the Police and Crime Commissioner who is meant to reflect local issues. You've got all these layers already, so they take some away and then add some more in, and in the end it's no more or less complex, confusing or cost-effective, and in the process you've incurred costs, time and disruption. It just feels messy and like an exercise in job creation and constant unnecessary change." *Urban participant*

Section 5: Future councils

Introduction

5.1. This section presents findings about the design of the potential future councils, including the most important principles and features of a new council and the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions.

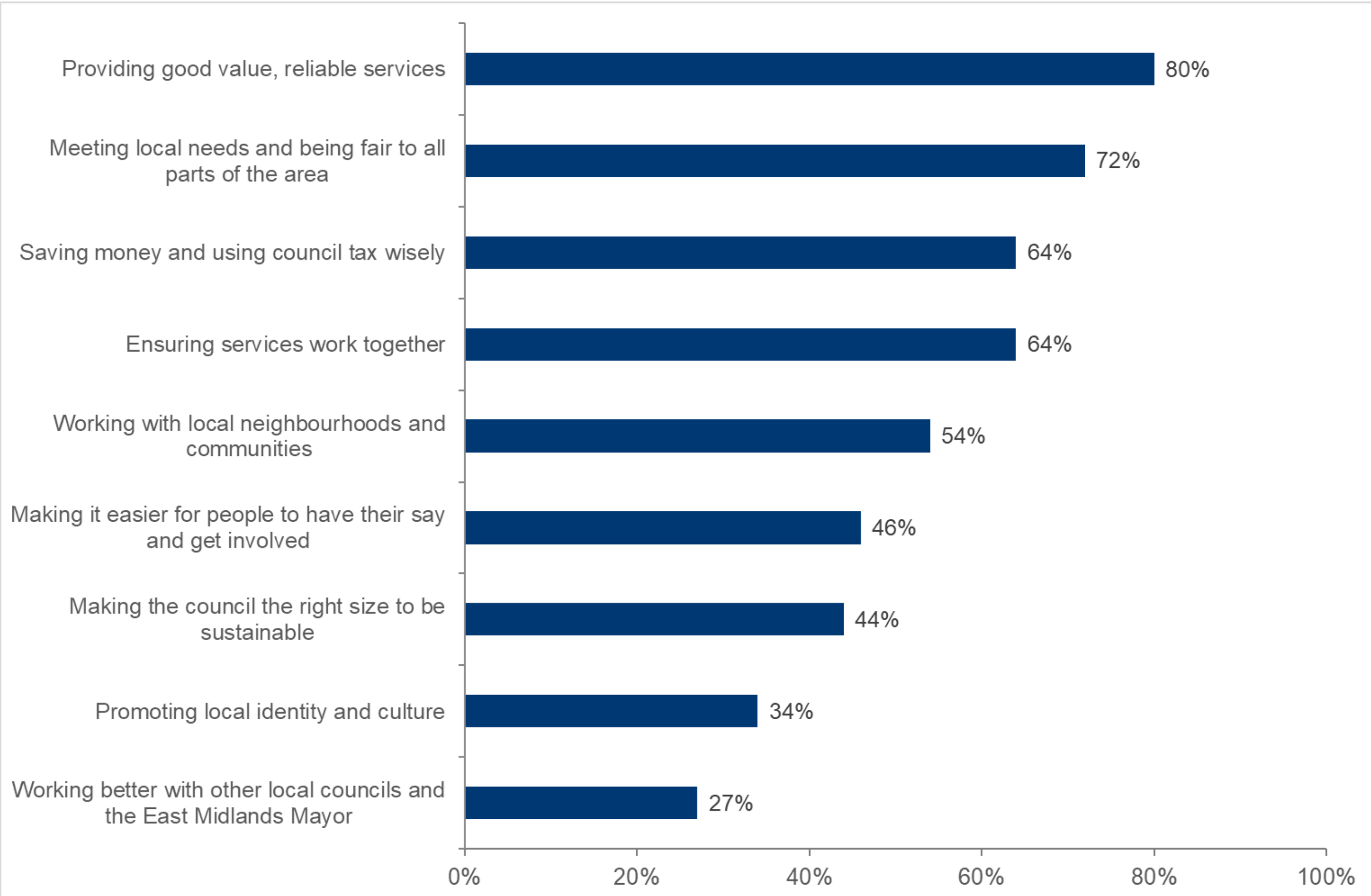
What should be most important when designing a new council?

Quality services, value for money and meeting local needs are the priorities for a future council

5.2. 80% of respondents cited providing good value, reliable services, following by 72% noting meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area.

5.3. 64% said saving money and using council tax wisely and the same proportion mentioned ensuring services work together, while 54% said working with local neighbourhoods and communities.

Figure 5.1: Most important for a new council



Number of respondents: 11,335.

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

5.4. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 5% of respondents said that new councils should engage effectively and meaningfully with local residents, respond to local concerns and issues and consequently provide representation and accountability.

5.5. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

Discussions in the focus groups reflected the results in the engagement survey with an emphasis on **effective delivery of core services, value for money, competent management and meeting the needs of local residents**, including those in rural and urban areas**:**

> “Keep it simple really – good quality services, keep council tax low and manage the council and it services effectively.” *Urban participant*

> “The role of local councils, local government is to reflect the priorities of local people and meet their needs. Local councillors have an important role in this, as too does effective engagement with local people, communities and neighbourhoods. So any future council needs to preserve this approach, which I think is more difficult to do in a larger council.” *Urban participant*

> “I’m worried a larger council will be more detached from local people and local areas. How will they make sure that they understand and respond to the specific local concerns, especially of rural areas compared to somewhere like the city? That’s something they really need to bottom-out in a new council.” *Rural participant*

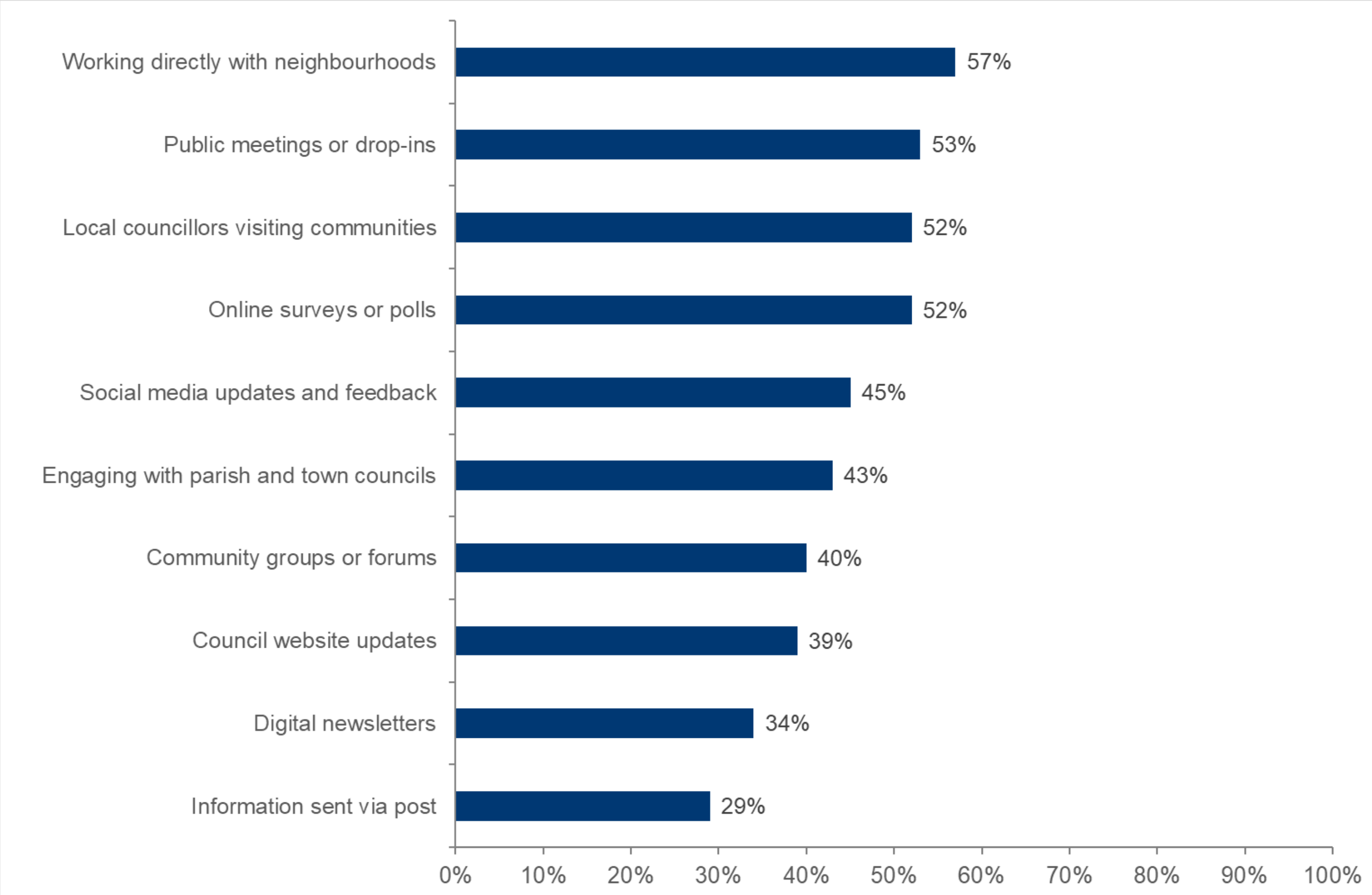
What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions?

Neighbourhood working, direct resident engagement, and local councillors along with parish and town councils and community groups are the best way to involve people in local decisions

5.6. 57% of respondents said working directly with neighbourhoods, while several respondents mentioned engaging with local residents through public meetings (53%), online surveys (52%) and social media (45%).

5.7. 52% mentioned local councillors visiting communities, 43% said engaging with parish and town councils, and 40% mentioned community groups or forums.

Figure 5.2: Best ways to involve people in local decisions



Number of respondents: 11,262.

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

5.8. In the ‘other’ responses, approximately 2-3% of respondents highlighted the importance of engaging with local residents prior to decisions being made and avoiding decisions being ‘imposed’ on residents. Relatedly, some of these respondents raised concerns that their voices are not heard and will not make a difference. Similarly, some said they are concerned that new and larger councils will lead to less representation and undermine resident voices and democracy as there will be a greater distance between local people and issues, and their decision-makers.

5.9. Whilst there are variations by council area (and also other demographics), these are not notable and the order is similar. Consequently, for succinctness, these are not presented in this report (although they are available in a separate document).

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants said it is **important that local people are involved in decision-making**, both in principle and especially given the potential changes with concerns that larger councils may be more detached from local people and diverse local areas. They felt that **local councillors, parish councils, community groups and working closely in local neighbourhoods/communities** would be most important. They also wanted **engagement and consultation to be genuine and meaningful:**

> “It’s really important anyway, in principle, to involve local people, but even more so if these changes go ahead. I’ve engaged with my local councillor on a few things, so I’d be worried that the changes will take that away. Local councillors, if you get a good one, can be really important. And what is happening with the parish councils? They play an important role on the ground in rural areas like mine.” *Rural participant*

> “I don’t think it really matters how big the council is, they’re already quite big now covering lots of people and areas. It’s more about how well they know their communities and how well they respond to those issues. You want to see them getting involved at the grassroots level, out and about in their neighbourhoods and communities and delivering services at that more local level to meet specific needs. Council staff and councillors have a role in this, but so too do local community groups and charities because they know their areas and often work at a more individual or local level.” *Urban participant*

> “You can run as many surveys and focus groups as you want, but it’s not worth much if it doesn’t change things. I’m worried that this process is a done deal, that these changes we’re discussing will happen regardless of what we say. So my main point is that any involvement of local people needs to be done earnestly and with integrity.” *Urban participant*

Section 6: Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

6.1. This section presents the proposals for reorganisation of local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils and different options for the proposed new councils.

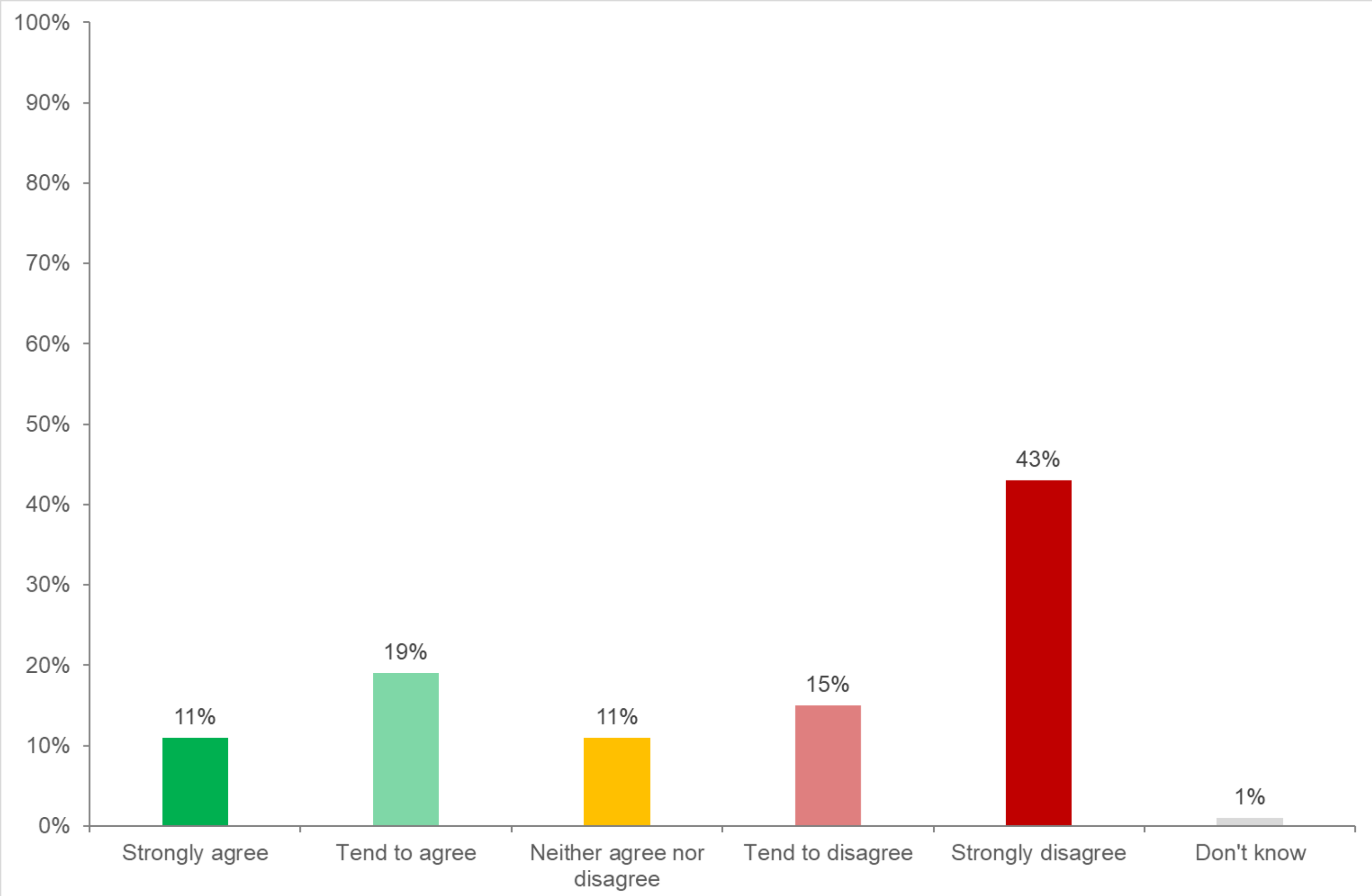
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

Over half disagree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils, with a relationship between perceived effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement, as well as variations by area

6.2. 30% of respondents agree with the proposal, including 11% that strongly agree. In contrast, 58% of respondents disagree with the proposal, including 43% that strongly disagree.

6.3. There is a relationship between perceptions of the effectiveness of the current system and levels of agreement with the proposal. For example, 16% of those that said the current structure of local councils is effective agree with the proposal to reduce the number of councils compared with 60% of those that said the current system is ineffective. i.e. in other words, those that consider the current system ineffective are more likely to state there is a case for change.

Figure 6.1: Level of agreement with proposal to replace nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire



Number of respondents: 11,427.

6.4. Respondents in Nottingham City are more likely to agree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two (63% agree) than respondents in other areas. In contrast, respondents in Broxtowe (20% agree), Rushcliffe (22% agree) and Gedling (27% agree) council areas are less likely to agree.

Figure 6.2: Level of agreement with proposal to replace nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire by council area

	Ashfield	Bassetlaw	Broxtowe	Gedling	Mansfield	Newark and Sherwood	Notting-ham	Rushcliffe
Strongly agree	11%	10%	7%	9%	14%	12%	31%	8%
Tend to agree	21%	21%	13%	18%	23%	24%	32%	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	16%	18%	8%	11%	16%	17%	15%	7%
Tend to disagree	14%	21%	13%	15%	15%	17%	8%	15%
Strongly disagree	36%	28%	58%	46%	31%	28%	11%	55%
Don't know	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%

6.5. Consequently, when the data is re-weighted by council area to be proportionate to population sizes across Nottinghamshire there is a change in the results with levels of agreement increasing (as the locations with lower levels of agreement have responded in greater numbers relative to their population size). The re-weighted data is more polarised with 39% of respondents agreeing compared with 46% that disagree:

- Strongly agree: 16%
- Tend to agree: 23%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 14%
- Tend to disagree: 14%
- Strongly disagree: 32%
- Don’t know: 2%

6.6. Respondents that are less likely to agree with the proposal to replace nine existing councils with two are:

- Women: 26% agree compared with 35% of women.
- Aged under 35: 37% agree compared with 30% of older respondents.
- People living with a disability that affects their lives a lot: 25% compared with 32% other respondents.

6.7. Respondents were asked to explain their answers to help understand the levels of agreement for the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire with 70% of respondents providing further explanation. Many of these comments reflect the benefits and concerns raised earlier about local government reorganisation in England in general. In summary, those that **agreed tended to state that the proposals would reduce duplication, generate efficiencies and consequently lead to cost-savings**, while a smaller number also said that it would lead to a **simplification of the system and therefore improved accessibility.**

6.8. Those that disagreed are **concerned about fairness and equitability, especially in relation to an urban-rural imbalance.** Similarly, they are concerned about a **loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability**, and associated issues around **access to services and responsiveness to local issues.** Some respondents **oppose local government reorganisation in general and in principle**, with concerns that implementation will be disruptive, and **improvements and savings will not be achieved in practice.** There is also some **distrust about the motives** behind the proposals and at a local level **concern that neighbouring areas will inherit the issues experienced by Nottingham City.**

6.9. The following provides more detail on the reasons alongside volume of opinion:

Reasons for agreement:

- **Efficiencies, streamlining and cost-savings** (cited by approximately 15% of respondents): Fewer councils would reduce duplication and bureaucracy with less waste and administrative layers resulting in cost-savings and potentially improved services.
- **Simplification of system and services** (cited by approximately 5%): Related to the above, a single layer/simplified structure and larger/fewer councils could be easier for residents to navigate and access services, as well as partners to engage with (resulting in more joined-up/partnership working, including between the two new councils).

Reasons for neutrality:

- **Balanced views** (cited by approximately 5% of respondents): Whilst there is an appreciation that changes may have a positive impact, there is also scepticism that these will be realised in practice. Similarly, some respondents said that the current system works satisfactorily and that change is not essential, even if it leads to improvements.
- **Lack of knowledge, information or understanding of the proposals or certainty about the outcomes** (cited by approximately 5%): This meant that respondents could not form a firm or clear opinion regarding agreement with the proposals or were uncertain in practice what the changes would entail and the potential benefits, as well as whether any benefits would be achieved in practice.

Reasons for disagreement:

- **Rural inequality and urban-rural divide** (cited by approximately 25% of respondents): Concern that larger councils will not be able to tailor services to suit rural areas and that rural and smaller areas will lose their voice and receive inconsistent or unfair service provision, resource allocation or be deprioritised compared to urban areas, as well as suffer from some of the challenges in urban areas and councils currently serving those areas. This view is heightened in areas surrounding Nottingham City where a relatively large urban area will be at the centre of the new council, and where some respondents in these areas do not want to take on the problems and challenges experienced by Nottingham City. Relatedly, some respondents suggested that Nottingham City could be a separate council in its own right to avoid some of these concerns and provide services specific to an urban area.
- **Loss of local representation, knowledge and accountability** (cited by approximately 20%): Concern that two councils would be more detached from local communities and not responsive to local issues, needs and priorities. This includes less access to councillors and decision-makers, loss of local identity and diminishing the ability of smaller communities to influence decision, with the concern heightened in more rural areas located away from urban centres.
- **Impact on services and outcomes** (cited by approximately 10%): Related to the above there is a concern that larger, potentially more centralised, councils will become more complex and difficult to navigate, as well as less in touch with local issues and priorities. Consequently, this will undermine access to service, negatively impact on quality and responsiveness of services and lead to reduced social outcomes, especially in rural areas away from the urban centres that may dominate the proposed new larger councils.
- **Concerns about implementation** (cited by approximately 5%): Scepticism that proposed benefits may not be realised and concern that disruption and confusion in making changes may outweigh benefits, at least in the short-term. This includes not realising the potential financial benefits and making it harder to navigate councils and access services.

- **Opposed to local government reorganisation in principle and specifically a two-council model (cited by approximately 5%):** Related to many of the above points, some respondents said they do not agree with local government reorganisation in principle. They either said that changes are not needed as the system is not broken, that improvements should be made to the existing councils in situ or that alternative approaches should be considered such as a whole county model and/or a Nottingham City specific model.
- **Distrust about motives** (cited by approximately 2-3%): A smaller proportion of respondents raised concerns that the proposals are about politicians and political parties seeking to strengthen their positions and power, and/or that it is about neighbouring councils and residents bailing out Nottingham City council for its perceived financial and delivery challenges.

Focus group insight:

Participants in the focus groups shared **similar viewpoints to those in the engagement survey and expressed earlier about Government's local government reorganisation across England.** The main points made were that a **two-council solution and associated larger councils would distance decision-makers from local issues and their communities**, including urban and rural areas, which in turn would lead to less responsive services. Consequently, they tended to feel that any potential efficiency, cost-saving and service improvement benefits would be undermined. This said, it is **worth noting that the concerns were mainly about larger councils not necessarily moving to a unitary model:**

> "Big isn't necessarily better. I think it's difficult enough already for councils to engage with their residents and really know the issues in each area, each neighbourhood. This is only going to be more difficult now if they're larger and more distanced from the people they're meant to serve, especially if they have lots of areas within their council that are different, from large cities to small towns and villages." *Rural participant*

> "I don't necessarily disagree with the idea of moving to a unitary model. The two-tier system is confusing, complex and bureaucratic. But I think two large councils may not be the answer, especially with one of them having Nottingham City at its heart. Big can sometimes mean that things are more cumbersome and more complex, which means it may make things worse. Have they considered any other solutions, like 3 or 4 councils? Or a city council on its own, with then a larger county one around it. That way at least you avoid the city being mixed in with villages and rural areas." *Urban participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option (Option 1b)?

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

There is concern that the proposed boundaries, especially around Nottingham City, are illogical or unfair, excluding some relevant areas close to the city while including outlining rural areas that do not have much in common with Nottingham City

6.10. Approximately half of respondents raised **concerns about the way the boundaries are drawn and the associated geography in the proposed new councils.** There is strong concern that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair with many respondents highlighting the exclusion of some neighbouring areas such as West Bridgford in Rushcliffe Borough Council and some areas close to the city in Ashfield District Council, which are seen as integral to Nottingham's urban area. At the same time, the **council covering Nottingham City is considered two large in scope, bringing in areas that do not align in terms of identity, characteristics, and access to services with the City**, while under-representing the city compared to its surrounding districts.

6.11. Relatedly, approximately 20% of respondents are critical of Nottingham City Council, which they perceive to be struggling financially. Consequently, they are **worried that neighbouring areas will be pulled into the city's problems and essentially 'bailing it out'.** In turn, they are concerned that they will have worse services and higher council tax. Respondents in Broxtowe and also some in Gedling particularly expressed these views. In contrast, some respondents that live in Nottingham were concerned that they may be forced to subsidise more rural areas.

6.12. Similarly, approximately 10% of respondents raised **concerns that rural areas in neighbouring councils will lose their voice within a council dominated by Nottingham City** (this is a particular concern of respondents living in Broxtowe). They said this could lead to less suitable services and/or loss of resources and services in rural areas, the new council not meeting the needs and priorities of rural areas, and rural areas subsidising the city.

6.13. Approximately 10% of respondents **explicitly supported the option, albeit conditionally.** This was often tied to an acceptance that local government has funding issues and that compromises are necessary if savings are to be made. That said, these respondents tended to say that they only support this option if in practice is leads to efficiencies and cost-reductions, as well as improved services and outcomes.

Focus group insight:

Focus group participants tended to have **negative views about Option 1b**, reflecting those in the engagement survey. Firstly, they were **concerned about Nottingham City dominating the new council** and the neighbouring areas being used to resolve its perceived financial issues, while receiving services that do not suit their local areas. The second reason related to the **exclusion of certain areas that neighbour the city**, such as West Brigford (and also Hucknall in Ashfield District Council area).

> "I'm against it. I feel like residents living in Broxtowe are going to have to pay for all the financial mismanagement of Nottingham City Council and subsidise the city and take on its problems. I don't see any benefits to anyone outside the city. Broxtowe is a very different area to the city, with different identity, heritage, character and issues. Are we now going to be treated the same way as those that live in Nottingham and receive the same types of services?" *Rural participant*

> "How did they draw up these boundaries. Why do they have Broxtowe and not say West Bridgford which is in Rushcliffe. There are definitely some places that are more like suburbs of Nottingham that you could argue for inclusion, but not some of the more rural areas in Broxtowe. Some of them are just a few miles away, but they feel a world away from the city." *Urban participant*

This said, some participants that **live in Gedling Borough Council area were more agnostic about the option, given their proximity and relationship to Nottingham:**

> "I'm fairly relaxed about it to be honest. I do feel like I live in a suburb of Nottingham – that's where I tell people I'm from. I work in Nottingham and we socialise and recreate in Nottingham. I appreciate some of the concerns around finances and management, but changes can be made to improve that. If this is all going ahead, then I can see the benefits of being part of a larger city council than with say the rest of Nottinghamshire that I have a bit less to do with." *Urban participant*

Participants living in other parts of Nottinghamshire had less to say about this option (or all the options) because they would not be in a council with Nottingham City. However, there were **concerns about being in a large council covering such a large area:**

> "On one level it doesn't really affect me that much, I'd be more worried if I was in one of the areas proposed for inclusion with Nottingham City. But on another level, this option geographically just doesn't sit well with me. The county-wide council is just so large. I live at the top of it and I'm wondering what I've got in common with areas and communities right at the bottom of it in Rushcliffe. It just feels like there should be three or four councils, not just two – it all fills a bit simplistic, which makes you worry about the thinking and evidence behind it all." *Rural participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option (Option 1e)?

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

Whilst there is more positivity towards this option, notable concerns remain including around the proposed boundaries and inclusion or exclusion of certain areas

6.14. There is **more positivity/support towards this option compared to 1b** with approximately a third of respondents supporting it or at least state that it is the best of two options. This in part is because some respondents say it **makes more sense geographically and/or is a cleaner North-South split** with a better division of populations and resources. Nottingham City respondents are most supportive, although question marks remain about the boundaries not being wholly logical and linked to the urban-suburban connections between the city and areas in its immediate vicinity and the way local residents live and connect with the city. Respondents living in Gedling are also more supportive about option 1e compared to 1b, although some that live closer to the city felt that it is more appropriate that they are part of a city/south council rather than one orientated towards the north.

6.15. This said, many respondents re-assert concerns about the option **joining outlying rural and other areas to the city that have little to no relationship with it, while excluding other areas** that are much closer geographically and more connected to the city (cited by approximately 25% of respondents). These concerns were particularly made by respondents living in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas.

6.16. Similarly, **concerns about bailing out Nottingham City Council** and inheriting its issues (cited by approximately 20% of respondents) and **rural-urban differences and associated concerns** (cited by approximately 20%) in relation to the city continued to be noted with this option, especially amongst respondents living in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas that are worried about being 'over-shadowed' or their voice lost with local identity, decision-making and priorities absorbed into the urban and city areas. Some respondents from Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Council areas said that if such an option were to go ahead those councils should take over the running of the new council.

6.17. Approximately 10% of respondents **outright oppose the option**, often citing issues raised earlier about local government reorganisation in general. Some of these respondents also **request more information and question the evidence base**, including around identifying the options and the practical reality of the potential benefits and savings.

6.18. Across both options, some respondents **suggested alternatives** including a one county option, a two-council option involving the city and immediate surrounding areas (but not to the current extent of proposed options) and then a wider county council, or a three-council solution – one in the north, one in the south and then one based around the city and its immediate vicinity.

Focus group insight:

Much of the discussion in the focus groups about Option 1e **reiterated points made about Option 1b, and the results of the engagement survey.** Participants said that whilst they felt **Option 1e was more logical, they also questioned the exclusion of some neighbouring areas to the north of the city and the inclusion of areas at the bottom** of Rushcliffe Borough Council in the option involving the city.

> "On the face of it this seems like a more logical and fair option, a more natural split between the north and the south of the county." *Urban participant*

> "This options resolves some of the issues we discussed about the other option like including West Bridgford, but you've now got an option that excludes some areas in Gedling Borough that are on the doorstep of Nottingham and instead includes some areas that are miles away from the city in really rural areas. I don't see how this can work as a coherent council." *Urban participant*

> "I live right at the bottom of Rushcliffe Borough in a small village. It's as rural as you can get. I try to avoid going into Nottingham and if I do, it's only to the outskirts. I have very little to do with it. So it feels strange that I'd then be in a council with Nottingham at its centre. I can't see how that would benefit me or my area in any way." *Rural participant*

Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about the development of this option (Nottingham City specific option)?

Nottingham City Council boundary review option that could include parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling as one of the unitary councils. The second council would cover the rest of Nottinghamshire – **only asked to respondents that live or work in Nottingham City.**

This is considered a sensible and logical solution by *Nottingham City respondents*, although concerns remain around fairness, urban-rural imbalance and that this may not resolve perceived deep-seated financial and service issues, while in practice it may be difficult to identify appropriate boundaries

6.19. This approach was often described as the **"most sensible and logical" solution** (cited by approximately half of respondents to this question) by Nottingham City respondents. Respondents that supported it said it is fairer with suburban residents who use city services paying city council tax and having voting rights, essentially creating a **better alignment between service use, taxation, and representation.** Some respondents also perceived it as potentially a **less disruptive and preferable alternative to wider structural reorganisation.** There was also support for the **concept of a city-specific solution and relatedly a strong city at the heart of the county.**

6.20. However, **concerns remain about fairness of boundaries and urban-rural divides**, potentially dragging rural areas into an urban focussed council and an urban area having to deliver and potentially subsidise services to a rural area (cited by approximately 20%). There is also **scepticism as to whether a larger council with new boundaries will solve financial pressures and service delivery issues** with some believing these are deep-seated and underlying in nature (cited by approximately 15%).

6.21. There are also **concerns and debate about the drawing up of new boundaries** – their appropriateness and the areas that would be included/excluded, which is not considered clear-cut or straight-forward (cited by approximately 10%). Relatedly, some respondents said that there is a **risk of disruption or disputes over boundaries, with concern that some of this could be politically motivated** (cited by approximately 5%).

6.22. Some respondents said that a boundary review, whilst potentially sensible, could be **more challenging to deliver as it involved breaking-up existing local councils**, which could undermine some of the potential cost-savings and service improvements (cited by approximately 5%). Similarly, a few respondents said that **existing council boundaries reflected local community connections, heritage and identity and breaking-up these council areas could be divisive**, especially if the boundaries are not identified appropriately (cited by approximately 5%). This was **especially cited in the case of West Bridgford, which is considered linked to the city but also an integral part of the Rushcliffe Borough Council area** and therefore risked undermining ties between the town and neighbouring villages and leaving the rest of the council area 'adrift' (cited by approximately 15%).

Appendices

Appendix 1: Engagement survey

Note: This is an export from an online version of the survey.

Give your views on the future of Local Government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Introduction

The way local councils in England are organised is being fundamentally changed for the first time in 50 years.

All nine local councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are working together to gather views on how local government should work in the future. This includes the city, county, and all district and borough councils. The survey is open to everyone who lives, works, or has an interest in the area. Your feedback will help shape proposals that reflect the needs and priorities of local communities.

The changes being considered are significant. If approved, all nine existing councils would be abolished and replaced with two new, larger councils. These new councils would each be responsible for delivering all local services in their area, bringing everything from housing and social care to waste collection and road maintenance under one organisation.

This would be a major shift from the current system, where responsibilities are split between different councils. The aim is to make services more joined-up, easier to access, and more responsive to local needs. It could also reduce duplication and overheads, helping to save money and make local government more efficient.

The feedback from this survey will help shape the final proposals, which must be submitted to Government by November 2025. The Government will then decide how and when the new arrangements will be introduced.

This questionnaire will take about 10 minutes to complete. **Please complete it by Sunday 14 September 2025.**

The survey is being conducted with support from Public Perspectives, an independent organisation that works with local councils and communities.

Your personal details are managed securely and within data protection laws. Your responses are anonymous and confidential. This means that we will not report your answers alongside your personal details in such a way that you can be identified. Each of the partner council privacy notices will apply and anonymised data will be shared between councils. Please visit the following to read Public Perspectives' privacy notice:

www.publicperspectives.co.uk/data-security-and-privacy/

Information in a different format:
If you need help or support to respond to this questionnaire, or would like it in an alternative format (large print, British Sign Language etc.) or language, please contact Public Perspectives via e-mail on: Nottinghamshire@publicperspectives.co.uk or Freephone: 0800 533 5386 (please leave a message and we will call you back).

Please read the background information before responding: Read background information

Click 'Next' below to begin responding to the questionnaire.

Living, working and studying in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Q1a.Are you responding as . . .?

Please select all relevant answers. These questions help us understand who is responding to the survey.

- ❑ A resident living in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Someone who works in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ A voluntary or community organisation
- ❑ A Town or Parish Council
- ❑ A District / Borough / City / County Council employee
- ❑ Another public sector organisation
- ❑ A local councillor
- ❑ A business owner or business leader operating in Nottingham or Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Other

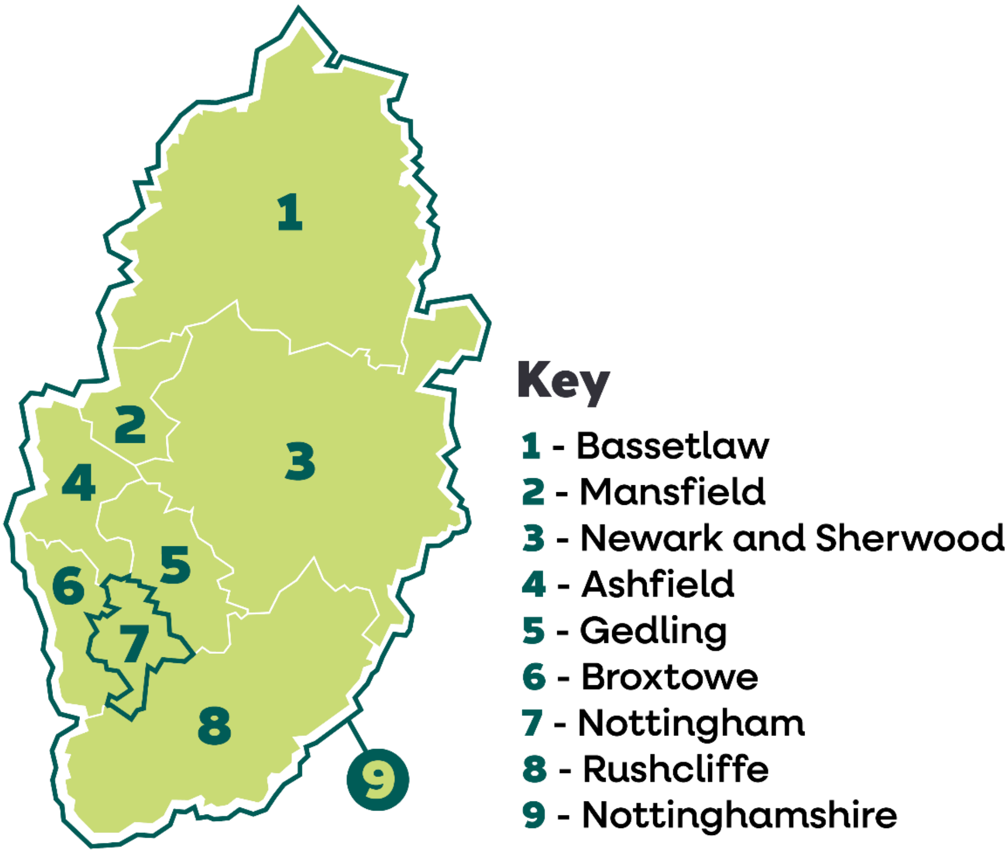
If 'Other', please state:

____

Please state the name of the organisation or business you represent:

____

To help you answer the following questions, this map shows the boundaries of the local councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:



Q1b. Which council area does your organisation mainly operate in?

Please select all relevant answers.

❑Ashfield District Council area
❑Bassetlaw District Council area
❑Broxtowe Borough Council area
❑Gedling Borough Council area
❑Mansfield District Council area
❑Newark and Sherwood District Council area
❑Nottingham City Council area
❑Nottinghamshire County Council area
❑Rushcliffe Borough Council area
❑Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
❑Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
❑Don't know

Q2a. Which council area do you live in?

If you are uncertain which council covers your area, visit the following website and enter your postcode: **www.gov.uk/find-local-council**

Please select one answer only.
- ❑ Ashfield District Council area
- ❑ Bassetlaw District Council area
- ❑ Broxtowe Borough Council area
- ❑ Gedling Borough Council area
- ❑ Mansfield District Council area
- ❑ Newark and Sherwood District Council area
- ❑ Nottingham City Council area
- ❑ Rushcliffe Borough Council area
- ❑ Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Don't know

Q2b. What is your postcode? (This is asked so we can analyse the results by different areas. We will not be able to identify you personally)

____

Q3. Where is your main place of work or study?

Please select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Ashfield District Council area
- ❑ Bassetlaw District Council area
- ❑ Broxtowe Borough Council area
- ❑ Gedling Borough Council area
- ❑ Mansfield District Council area
- ❑ Newark and Sherwood District Council area
- ❑ Nottingham City Council area
- ❑ Nottinghamshire County Council area
- ❑ Rushcliffe Borough Council area
- ❑ Across all of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
- ❑ Don't know
- ❑ Not applicable - not currently in work / education

If 'Outside of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire', where is your main place of work or study?

____

Your local area

Q3a. How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention?

Please list below:

____
____
____
____
____
____

Q3b. To what extent do you agree or disagree that you are proud to live in your local area?

Please select one answer only.

❑Strongly agree
❑Tend to agree
❑Neither agree nor disagree
❑Tend to disagree
❑Strongly disagree
❑Don't know

Q3c. Thinking generally, what would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

Please select all relevant answers.

❑Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums
❑Activities and facilities for children and young people
❑Community events and activities and supporting local community groups
❑Decent and affordable homes
❑Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
❑Jobs and supporting people into work
❑Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy
❑Maintaining roads and pavements
❑Parks, sports and leisure facilities
❑Public transport, roads and parking
❑Refuse collection and recycling
❑Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets
❑Schools and places of learning
❑Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups
❑Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment
❑Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
❑Other
❑Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Q3d. And what are your priorities for improvement in the local area?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Arts and cultural services such as theatres and museums
- ❑ Activities and facilities for children and young people
- ❑ Community events and activities and supporting local community groups
- ❑ Decent and affordable homes
- ❑ Health services such as mental health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
- ❑ Jobs and supporting people into work
- ❑ Keeping the streets and public areas clean and tidy
- ❑ Maintaining roads and pavements
- ❑ Parks, sports and leisure facilities
- ❑ Public transport, roads and parking
- ❑ Refuse collection and recycling
- ❑ Regeneration of town centres / high streets, including shops and markets
- ❑ Schools and places of learning
- ❑ Support and services for older people and vulnerable groups
- ❑ Supporting residents to reduce their impact on the environment
- ❑ Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
- ❑ Nothing
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

The current way councils are organised in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Currently, council services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire are delivered differently, depending on where you live.

In Nottinghamshire, local services are currently delivered under what is known as a ‘two-tier’ council structure. For example, your local borough or district council will collect your waste, but the county council will dispose of it. You will also be represented by two sets of councillors, borough or district councillors and county councillors.

Nottinghamshire County Council oversees county-wide services such as social care, education, and road maintenance. While several district and borough councils are responsible for services, including waste collection, housing and leisure centres.

Nottingham City Council operates as a ‘unitary authority’, meaning it provides all council services within the city of Nottingham.

In total, nine different councils provide services across the county (not including town and parish councils and these councils are not included in the reorganisation).

Q4. Before today, how aware were you of the current structure of councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and the services each council provides?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ I was not aware
- ❑ I was aware, but did not know much about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a little about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a lot about it
- ❑ Don't know

Q5. How effective is the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ Very effective
- ❑ Somewhat effective
- ❑ Neither effective nor ineffective
- ❑ Somewhat ineffective
- ❑ Very ineffective
- ❑ Don't know

Why have you answered in this way?

Local Government Reorganisation

For the first time in 50 years the way local councils are set up in parts of England is being reviewed and modernised. In areas like Nottinghamshire, where there are currently two layers of local government (such as county and district councils), the Government is encouraging a move to a simpler system.

This change, called Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), would replace the current two-tier structure with a single council, known as a unitary authority. Instead of having separate councils responsible for different services, one council would take care of everything from roads and rubbish collection to housing and social care.

The goal is to bring services that are currently split across different councils into one place, with the aim of making them easier to access and more joined-up for residents. It also means fewer councils overall, which could lead to savings by cutting duplication and reducing overheads.

Local councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been asked to work together on proposals for how this new system could work best in their area. These proposals, which will include evidence and public feedback, need to be submitted by November 2025. The Government will then decide on the final arrangements.

Q6. Before today, how aware were you about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England?

Please select one answer only.

- ❑ I was not aware
- ❑ I was aware, but did not know much about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a little about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a reasonable amount about it
- ❑ I was aware, and knew a lot about it
- ❑ Don't know

Q7. What do you think are the main potential benefits, if any, of the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Please make comments below:

Q8. What concerns, if any, do you have about the Government's proposed reorganisation of local councils?

Please make comments below:

____
____
____
____
____
____

Future councils

Q9. What should be most important when designing a new council?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Ensuring services work together
- ❑ Making the council the right size to be sustainable
- ❑ Providing good value, reliable services
- ❑ Saving money and using council tax wisely
- ❑ Working better with other local councils and the East Midlands Mayor
- ❑ Making it easier for people to have their say and get involved
- ❑ Working with local neighbourhoods and communities
- ❑ Meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area
- ❑ Promoting local identity and culture
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Q10. What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Working directly with neighbourhoods
- ❑ Public meetings or drop-ins
- ❑ Online surveys or polls
- ❑ Local councillors visiting communities
- ❑ Community groups or forums
- ❑ Social media updates and feedback
- ❑ Council website updates
- ❑ Digital newsletters
- ❑ Information sent via post
- ❑ Engaging with parish and town councils
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

All councils across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have been working together on a proposal to restructure how local government services are delivered in the area. An initial proposal was submitted to the Government in March 2025.

Since then, further work has been carried out to explore options in greater detail and gather supporting evidence. In line with government guidance to use existing district areas as the basis for reorganisation, two core options are being proposed. No final decision has been made by all councils on a single option, and some councils could still explore additional proposals alongside the two core options currently being proposed.

Under these proposals, the nine existing councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire would be replaced by two new unitary councils. Each new council would be responsible for delivering all local government services in its area.

You can see a map showing the geography of the two proposals later in this questionnaire.

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

Please select one answer only.

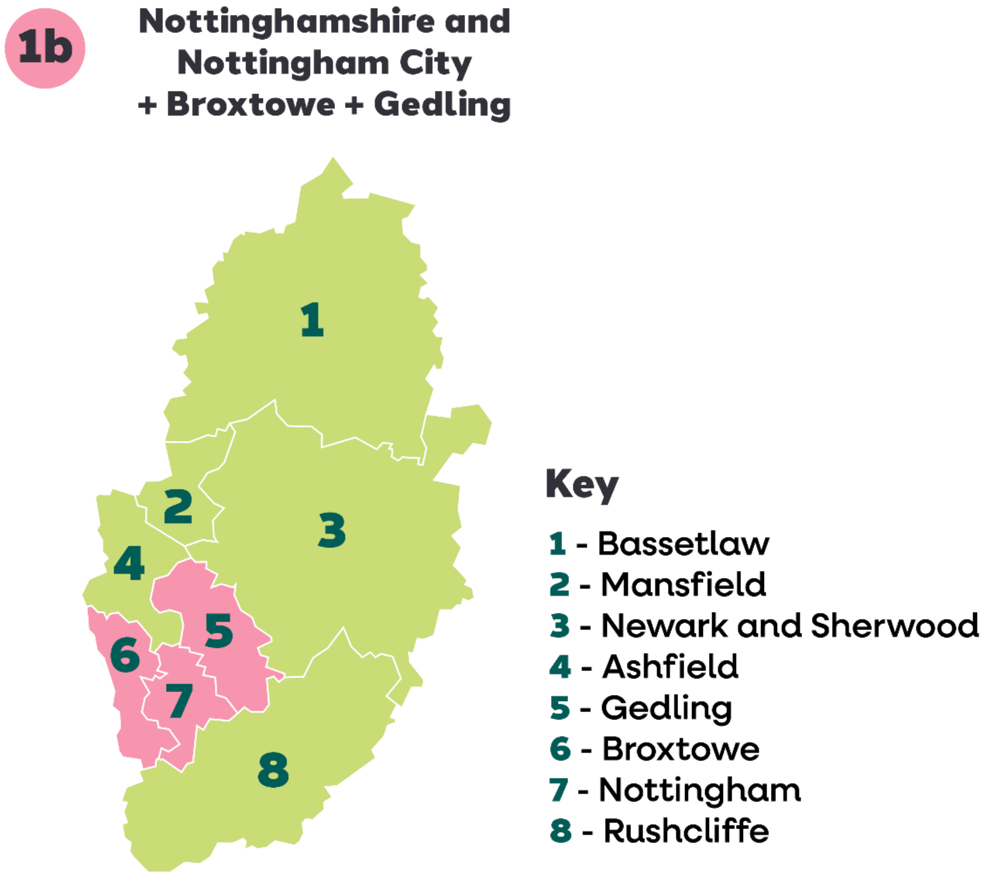
- ❑ Strongly agree
- ❑ Tend to agree
- ❑ Neither agree nor disagree
- ❑ Tend to disagree
- ❑ Strongly disagree
- ❑ Don't know

Why have you answered in this way?

The core options

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b)

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.

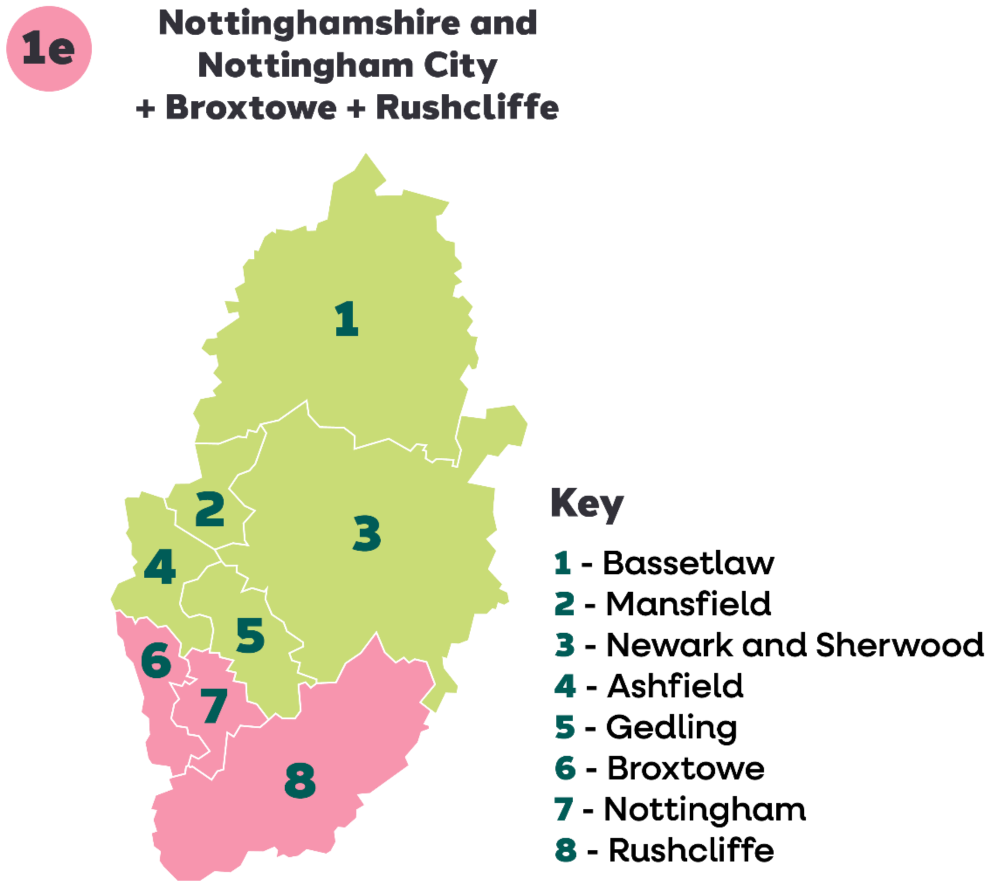


Q12. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option?

Please make comments below:

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe (known as Option 1e)

This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.



Q13. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about this option?

Please make comments below:

____

____

____

____

____

Nottingham City Council boundary review option

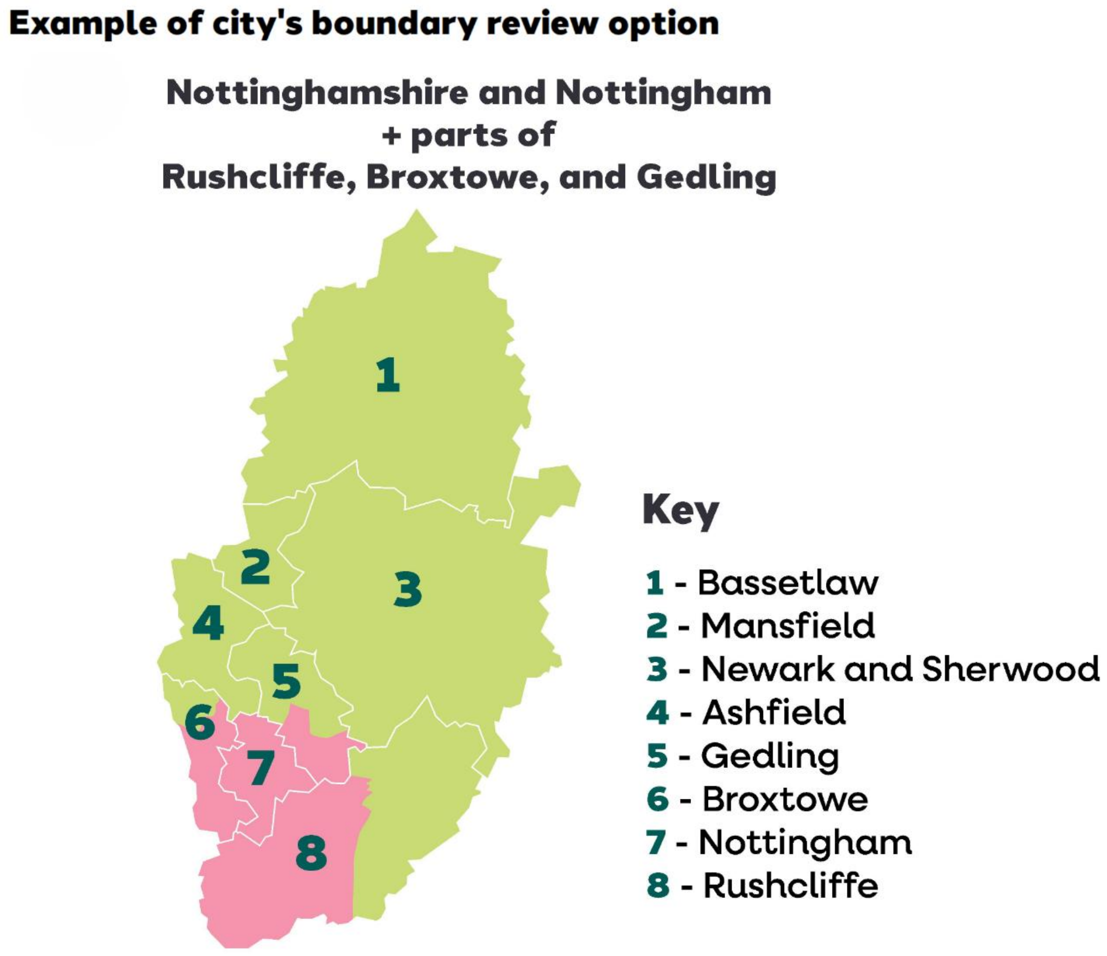
This option is being presented to anyone living or working in the Nottingham City Council area.

The Government has suggested that there may be an opportunity for a boundary review, where strong justification exists. A boundary review looks at the current local council boundaries, the communities within them and the services they access to see if they work well or whether new boundaries may work better. A boundary review could allow councils to look at options outside of their existing boundaries.

Nottingham City Council is currently exploring a boundary review option that may include parts of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe, and Gedling as one of the unitary councils. The second council would cover the rest of Nottinghamshire.

The rationale is that while the official population of Nottingham is 328,000, the built-up area of the city is much greater, and there are people who live in the suburbs, work in the city, and use Nottingham City services, but who can't vote in city elections and don't contribute to city council tax because of the current council boundaries.

A map is included below to indicate what this could look like, however Nottingham City Council would like to understand people's views in order to develop the option further.



Q13a. Do you have any comments, concerns or suggestions about the development of this option?

Please make comments below:

____

Other comments

Q14. Do you have any other comments, concerns or suggestions about the proposals for the reorganisation of local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire?

Please make comments below:

____

Q15. How did you hear about this survey?

Please select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Council website
- ❑ Council e-mail or newsletter
- ❑ Other council communication or event
- ❑ Council social media
- ❑ Other social media
- ❑ Via a local councillor
- ❑ Via a local organisation
- ❑ Poster or flyer
- ❑ Direct e-mail or letter
- ❑ An advert in a local newspaper
- ❑ A relative or a friend
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please state:

____

About you

We would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your household. This will help councils understand the opinions and impact of the proposals on different groups of people that live or work in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Please be assured that your answers are confidential and will be treated anonymously. This means that we will not report your answers alongside your personal details in such a way that you can be identified. All your answers and personal information will be managed securely and in accordance with data protection laws.

This information is **optional**. If you do not wish to complete this section, you can skip these questions and then submit your responses.

Q16. Are you . . .?

Please select one answer only.
❑Female
❑Male
❑Another term
❑Prefer not to say

Q17. What is your age group?

Please select one answer only.
❑Under 18
❑18-24
❑25-34
❑35-44
❑45-54
❑55-64
❑65 and over
❑Prefer not to say

Q18. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

Please select one answer only.
❑Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a lot
❑Yes, which reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities a little
❑Yes, but they don't reduce my ability to carry out my day-to-day activities at all
❑No
❑Prefer not to say

Q19. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group or background?

Please select one answer only.
❑White British or Irish
❑Central or Eastern European
❑Other White background
❑Asian or Asian British
❑Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
❑Mixed background
❑Other ethnic group
❑Prefer not to say

Q20. Which of the following best describes your current housing situation?

Please select one answer only.
❑Owner-occupier
❑Privately renting
❑Renting from the council or housing association
❑Other
❑Prefer not to say

Next steps

You're nearly finished – thank you for taking part so far.

Before you submit your response, please take a moment to read the information below about what happens next.

Following the close of the survey on Sunday 14 September 2025, we will be collating and analysing all of the responses received from across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to understand the views of everyone who has taken part.

The views of people shared in this survey will feed into the development of final proposals, which must be submitted to government by 28 November 2025. Your local council will keep you updated as things progress.

Click 'Submit' below to send us your responses.

Once submitted, you will be redirected to the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Government Reorganisation website.

Appendix 2: Stakeholder in-depth interview discussion guide

Key aims and approach

Four on-line focus groups are being conducted with residents to provide further insight, complementing the findings from the questionnaire. The aims of these are:

- Opportunity for an informed and in-depth discussion with residents about living in the county and future local government proposals. These discussions will explicitly explore:
  - Sense of place and identity
  - Understanding of local government reorganisation and high-level perceptions about change, including potential benefits, concerns and mitigations
  - Future local council priorities and design
  - Views on changing from nine councils to two, including opportunities, concerns and mitigations
  - Views on each of the specific core options, including opportunities, concerns and mitigations

In essence, the focus groups will explore in-depth the ground covered in the questionnaire, and consequently the discussion guide is built around this.

9 participants will be recruited for each group (with 6-8 participating in practice per group because there will always be one to two drop-outs, despite best efforts to maximise participation – 6 or 7 participants tends to be the optimum number for an on-line discussion allowing sufficient opportunity for each participant to share their views).

As discussed, two groups will be with residents living in urban areas and two living in rural areas (these will be both self-defined and also validated against their postcode). This approach both allows us to explore the differences and similarities in perception between residents living in these different types of locations as well as reach a broad diversity of residents across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Each group will include a mix of key demographics such as location, sex, age and ethnicity so that the groups broadly reflect the profile of residents living in urban and rural areas.

The groups will take place on-line, via Zoom, on Thursday 4th September and Monday 8th September (these are provisional dates currently, and all groups will be completed by the close of the engagement exercise):

- 5.50pm to 7.30pm
- 7.50pm to 9.30pm

Participants will be offered a £50 thank you gift (incentive) for taking part and to maximise participation.

In advance of the discussions, the link to the engagement website will be shared and participants will be asked to review, although we will not rely on this and will be feeding participants with information throughout the discussions.

Discussion Guide

Please note: This is a discussion guide and will be used flexibly depending on the flow of discussion. This means that not every question will necessarily be asked in the way or order outlined below. However, we will make sure that all the key issues are explored fully.

On log-in:

- Participants will be held in a virtual waiting room and invited into the main forum at the start of the discussion.
- On joining the main room, participants will be asked to check that their audio and visual works and name labels changed to first names only (for ease and anonymity).

Introduction (c2-3 mins)

Key points to note:

- Background – why we're here and some of the things we plan to discuss [i.e. living in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and proposed changes to local councils in the area].
- Introduce facilitator.
- Introduce observers (if present).
- Ask to record the interview.
- Stress anonymity and confidentiality.
- Set ground rules – no right or wrong answers, honest and open, range of views encouraged.
- Respect different opinions.
- Encourage disagreement, agreement and debate – do it politely.
- One voice at a time.
- Allow others the space and time to share their views.
- Introduce key features of Zoom such as chat function and emoticons, and encourage use.
- Stress important that patient and flexible given challenges of technology and conducting on-line discussions.
- Stress that important people participate and input as much as they might in a face-to-face group – we can be relaxed and informal, but we want to make sure we cover the ground and use the time as effectively as possible.
- What happens to the information? [i.e. feed into decision-making process, along with a range of other information and evidence].
- Any questions?

Key lines of questioning

Warm-up, context and headline perceptions (c10 mins)

- Just so we can get to know each other a little bit, can I ask each of you to say briefly:
  - Your name?
  - Roughly, where you live?
  - What do you think about the area you live in? Why – what's good and what could be improved?

Your local area – sense of place and local identity (c15 mins)

- How do you describe where you're from when talking to someone who doesn't live nearby? Which names or places do you mention? Why do you use those names or places?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Do you see yourself as living in an urban, suburban, semi-rural or rural area – why?
  - Do you consider yourself as living in Nottinghamshire? Why?
  - What do you consider you nearest town? Why?
  - What is your association or link with Nottingham? Why?
  - Do you feel like you are part of your local authority area? Why?

Local government reorganisation (c20 mins)

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the way councils are currently organised as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the current structure of councils and the approach to service delivery in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Before today, how aware were you of the current structure?
  - What's good about it/what works well? Why?
  - What's not good about it/could be improved? Why?
  - How well do the current arrangements suit an area such as yours (i.e. urban/rural)? Why?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about local government reorganisation as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the Government's plans to reorganise local councils across England? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Before today, how aware were you of these plans?
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about the plans to reorganise local councils? Why?

Future local council design and priorities (c20 mins)

- What should be most important when designing a new council (e.g. what should be the key principles that it adopts or it is built around or tries to achieve)? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Ensuring services work together
  - Making the council the right size to be sustainable
  - Providing good value, reliable services
  - Saving money and using council tax wisely
  - Working better with other local councils and the East Midlands Mayor
  - Making it easier for people to have their say and get involved
  - Working with local neighbourhoods and communities
  - Meeting local needs and being fair to all parts of the area
  - Promoting local identity and culture
  - Other

- What are the best ways for the new councils to involve people in local decisions? Why?
- How well is this done now? Why?
- And does this matter to you? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - Working directly with neighbourhoods
  - Public meetings or drop-ins
  - Online surveys or polls
  - Local councillors visiting communities
  - Community groups or forums
  - Social media updates and feedback
  - Council website updates
  - Digital newsletters
  - Information sent via post
  - Engaging with parish and town councils
  - Other

- What do you think should be the priorities for any new council to improve your local area? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What's important to you? Why?
  - What's currently working well, and that you would like to continue working well? Why?
  - What's not working well and is important to change/improve? Why?

Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including core options (c20-25 mins)

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the proposal to move from 9 to 2 councils as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this proposal? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the core option 1b as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about this option? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this option? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

[Note: Facilitator to share screen and read out information about the core option 1e as per the questionnaire]

- What do you think about this option? Why?

  Prompt/probe:
  - What do you think are the potential benefits of this, if any? Why?
  - What concerns, if any, do you have about this option? Why?
  - How may it impact you and your family? Why?
  - How may it impact your area? Why?
  - Is there anything you would like considered to help promote any potential benefits and/or mitigate/reduce any potential negative impacts?

Summing up (c5 mins)

- Overall, what do you think about the proposals and options?
- Are there any alternatives you would like considered?
- Is there anything else you would like to say this subject?
- Facilitator to sum up the key messages identified from the discussion to sense check that understood correctly.

- Facilitator to outline next steps – what will happen to the information.
- Sign-post to on-line consultation, if not already participated.
- Any final points or questions?
- Outline how thank you gifts will be provided.
- Thank and close.

The future of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Engagement report: Methodology and clarification report - October 2025

Introduction

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

Nottinghamshire currently has a two-tier system, with seven district and borough councils and a county council. Nottingham City, within the county boundary, is served separately by its own unitary council—making nine councils in total.

In February 2025, the Government invited local councils, including those in Nottinghamshire, to develop proposals to replace two-tier systems with larger unitary councils.

After reviewing options, Nottinghamshire's councils submitted an interim proposal in March 2025 to create two new unitary councils to replace the existing nine.

The main report summarises the findings of an engagement exercise with residents and stakeholders on these proposals. This was supported independently by Public Perspectives, specialists in public sector research and consultation since 2008.

Public Perspectives

Public Perspectives is a Market Research Society (MRS) company partner and member of the Social Research Association (the industry bodies in the UK) and holds Cyber Essentials certification.

The project was led and managed by Public Perspectives' Director of Research and Engagement, Mark Yeadon. Mark Yeadon has over 25 years of research, evaluation and consultation experience in the public and charitable sectors, including working for two local authorities and Central Government. Mark has a 1st class degree in Politics, a Masters (Distinction) in Applied Social and Market Research and is a RICS trained property and built environment surveyor (with a Masters in Real Estate at distinction from the University College of Estate Management). He is a full certified member of the Market Research Society (CMRS) and a former trustee of the Social Research Association.

Public Perspectives had no prior professional, commercial or personal affiliation with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire or its partner councils. Public Perspectives has acted with independence and objectivity in the design, data collection, analysis and reporting of the engagement exercise and to reflect effectively the views of respondents.

Throughout this process, Public Perspectives has worked with the nominated project leads representing the council partners and through the agreed partner/LGR governance processes.

Methodology and clarification

This document is supplementary to the main report, published on the 1st October 2025, following requests of clarification from two councils.

Throughout the engagement process, interim headline findings were shared with partner councils on a weekly basis. A draft of the final report was made available to council partners on Tuesday 23rd September 2025 and subject to an initial review process involving representatives from all partner councils. This included a presentation to communication leads from each partner council on Wednesday 24th September 2025 and subsequent sharing of the draft report to the same group. A similar offer of a presentation was also made to Chief Executives, but the opportunity was not taken up. This document is produced in response to subsequent review and comments, following publication by council partners of the main report on Wednesday 1st October 2025.

The document provides further detail about the methodology, including examples of the analysis and selected comments/quotes from respondents to the engagement exercise, providing further detail and insight. It also includes clarity about some of the key findings.

The document should be read alongside the main report and also published alongside it or at least included as an appendix to the main report when submitted to Government as part of the final proposals.

The report authors ask that any readers refer directly to Public Perspectives where further clarity may be required about the findings of the engagement exercise.

Methodology

Context

- The engagement exercise was conducted over a six-week period ending on Sunday 14th September 2025.
- The aims of the engagement exercise established and agreed by council partners were:
  - Make it as easy as possible for residents to understand and share views.
  - Improve public awareness and understanding of LGR.
  - Gather public opinion and understand what's important to people [to shape future organisations].
  - Ensure representation across the geography.
  - Demonstrate to Government that criteria on engagement has been met.

- The main mechanism for capturing responses was an online questionnaire open to all interested parties, promoted through councils' websites, communication channels and promotional/marketing activity, including a dedicated website (lgrnotts.org), as well as outreach events and engagement with stakeholders.
- The questionnaire was also available in alternative formats on request, such as paper copies, alongside e-mail, phone, BSL and translation support.
- Relatedly, four focus groups were conducted involving 34 local residents reflecting the diversity of Nottinghamshire and organised by urban and rural areas. These focus groups allowed the emerging findings from the engagement process to be unpacked and views about the proposals to be discussed in-depth, both adding further insight as well as validating the findings from the engagement survey.
- In total, the engagement questionnaire received 11,483 responses.
- This level of response compares well to other similar exercises conducted in the region or across the country.

Key points to note

- This is an 'engagement' exercise. It is not a formal or statutory consultation or a referendum.
- The engagement exercise is not a representative sample research survey, as per the aims of the process established and agreed by all partner councils. It is designed to provide valuable information and insight. However, the findings should not be treated as conclusive as may be the case with a robust research survey. This includes the results not being suitable for statistical tests of significance, although notable differences between council areas or other demographics are likely to be meaningful.
- Whilst the findings of the engagement help shape proposals on the future of local councils in Nottinghamshire, they are to be considered alongside other information and evidence including detailed options appraisals about the viability and suitability of different options.
- This is not a one-off exercise. Engagement with key and strategic stakeholders preceded this engagement exercise and there is on-going engagement.
- The final proposals from councils must be submitted to Government by 28 November 2025, and feedback on how any proposal will be taken forward for Nottinghamshire is expected in 2026. This will then be subject to statutory consultation by Government.
- Alongside the focus groups, a number of the questions in the engagement questionnaire are open-ended text questions or qualitative in nature. This approach was agreed with all partner

councils. It was designed to capture comments and insight about the benefits and concerns relating to LGR, the proposals and options.
- Council partners requested the inclusion of open-ended questions, especially for options 1b and 1e, noting at the time the limitations of such question types. Whilst analysis of qualitative data is conducted robustly and independently, the findings should be treated as valuable insight and indicative rather than as conclusive, especially given the exercise was an engagement process rather than a research-based exercise.
- Responses to the engagement exercise were based on available and known information at the time. The engagement questionnaire was designed to have a stand-alone quality i.e. that respondents could answer it without reference to further information. This included brief descriptions and information about LGR, the proposals and options, including maps. In addition, respondents were encouraged to read further background information on the lgrnotts.org website, including the options appraisal and interim proposals submitted to Government in March 2025.
- The report authors ask that these points are noted by all parties when using the findings of the engagement exercise in developing proposals and in public statements or press releases. This is so that the findings are presented appropriately and not mis-represented.

Approach to quantitative data analysis

- Quantitative data captured through the questionnaire has been analysed using specialist survey software – SNAP XMP (www.snapsurveys.com). This is one of the longest established and widely used specialist survey software amongst the public sector and local authorities in the UK.
- Each quantitative question has been analysed and reported overall and by local council area. As is the nature with self-selecting/open-access questionnaires, the responses are not proportional to the population sizes in each of the local council areas. Consequently, the results are analysed and reported both as they are (i.e. non-weighted) and also re-weighted to be in-line with the population sizes in each local council area, given the importance of local council areas as building blocks in any future local government arrangement for Nottinghamshire.
- The quantitative data has also been analysed by other demographics such as sex, age, ethnicity, disability and housing status. Notable differences in responses related to these demographics are reported.

Approach to qualitative data analysis

- The open-ended comments from the engagement questionnaire and the focus groups have been subject to thematic analysis – an established and widely used qualitative analysis technique. This approach aims to systematically identify key themes from the data, alongside an indication of volume and strength of opinion, and presenting exemplifying quotes.
- This process is iterative and both manual and automated, included using AI tools, especially important given the volume of responses.
- It is also worth noting that whilst each individual qualitative/open-ended question is analysed specifically, the themes/findings are identified, contextualised and considered in light of all responses made by a respondent and those of other respondents. In other words, comments are not just analysed in isolation – the use of automated and AI software allows such holistic analysis to be conducted across a large data-set.

- The steps adopted are as follows:
  – Open-ended comments and focus group transcripts are initially reviewed manually by two researchers independently of one another. This provides an initial gauge of the parameters of the data and the key emerging themes.
  – The comments and transcripts are then subject to further analysis using specialist qualitative data analysis software. This is primarily NVivo 15 (www.lumivero.com/products/nvivo), which is one of the leading and longest established qualitative data analysis software. NVivo 15 also includes in-built AI to assist in identifying key themes.
  – This begins with sentiment analysis to assess the levels of positive, neutral/mixed and negative responses.
  – This is then followed by further thematic analysis, identifying and describing key themes, as well as volume/strength of opinion, relationships between themes and relationships with other variables such as demographics. It also allows for the organisation of the data into these key themes and therefore identification of key quotes to exemplify the themes.
  – This work is predominantly conducted by a lead researcher with a second researcher reviewing the analysis and associated key themes/findings and acting as a critical friend.
  – In addition, as a final sense-check, anonymised data is interrogated through open-source AI platforms (such as Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT 5).

- The themes and findings are presented including approximated percentages/numbers of respondents (rounded up or down). This is reasonable given that the qualitative comments were made as part of a questionnaire and there have been thousands of such responses (i.e. there is a large sample rather than just a few respondents). This is to help provide an indication of relative importance of the themes/findings. These should be treated as such (i.e. approximations) rather than conclusive percentages, given the qualitative nature of the data. Further quantification beyond key themes is resisted to avoid ‘over-quantification’ of qualitative data, which is methodologically not good practice.
- Summaries of thematic analysis and a selection of exemplifying quotes for options 1b and 1e have been made available to council partners. These are provided as examples of the method and to provide further detail and insight. Please note that these are only summaries reflecting the final output of a thematic analysis. The actual thematic analysis is more detailed and essentially a working document/process with detail and notes held within the qualitative data analysis software and on paper.

Clarification of key findings relating to options 1b and 1e

- The engagement questionnaire included open-ended questions relating to options 1b and 1e – two short-listed options following the options appraisal process included in interim proposals to Government in March 2025:
  - Option 1b is: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling (known as Option 1b). This option is two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Rushcliffe. The second covering Gedling, Broxtowe, and Nottingham City.
  - Option 1e is: Two new unitary councils, one covering Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Newark and Sherwood, Ashfield, and Gedling. The second covering Broxtowe, Nottingham City, and Rushcliffe.

- Some council partners have asked for further clarity about these findings and their communication within the main report. Findings relating specifically to these two options can be found at paragraphs 26 to 29 inclusive in the Executive Summary and 6.10 to 6.18 inclusive in the main body of the report (pages 43 to 46 inclusive).
- The specific findings in the main report relating to these options should be read alongside wider findings relating to other questions asked in the engagement exercise, including perceptions about the effectiveness of the current structure of local councils, views about local government reorganisation in general, and responses about the proposal to replace the nine existing councils with two councils to run local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Not only are these findings relevant for each option, respondents themselves sometimes referred back to points previously made and commented on each option in light of their responses to other questions.
- Likewise, the report authors are keen that the detail related to options 1b and 1e does not distract from key findings and concerns relating to these options and the approach/design of any new councils. This is so that any future configuration of options and the subsequent councils reflect the concerns and expectations of respondents. This includes focusing on delivering good quality core and universal services/issues, alongside value for money and meeting local needs. Relatedly, respondents highlighted the importance of involving residents in decision-making and local area/neighbourhood working. This includes understanding local issues and priorities and tailoring services and support to different communities (both equality groups, different localities and urban-rural communities) as part of any future arrangements.
- Please also note points made earlier about the methodology, analysis of qualitative data and use of approximated percentages to indicate relative importance of key themes/findings.
- At the risk of being reductionist and the danger of re-writing a published report that could lead to differing interpretation, below is a bullet-point summary of the headline findings relating to options 1b and 1e. These are presented in such a way to reduce the risk of misinterpretation based on the reader's background or sentiment towards either of the options. This clarification should be used positively to increase understanding and insight, and not used to undermine the main report:
  - The majority of respondents had concerns about both options 1b and 1e.
  - The nature of many of these concerns are similar for each option to lesser or greater degrees. These include:

- concerns about the inclusion and exclusion of surrounding areas of Nottingham City i.e. boundary concerns;
- being included in a council with Nottingham City that could inherent some of the perceived issues experienced by the city and its council; and
- rural areas being dominated by the city including lack of rural voice, representation and inappropriate services to meet local need.

– Regarding boundary concerns and specifically option 1b, approximately half of respondents raised concerns that the proposed boundaries are illogical or unfair with the exclusion of some neighbouring areas such as West Bridgford in Rushcliffe Borough Council and some areas close to the city in Ashfield District Council, which are seen as integral to Nottingham's urban area. At the same time, the council covering Nottingham City is considered too large in scope, bringing in areas that do not align in terms of identity, characteristics, and access to services with the city, including rural areas.
– Regarding 1e, concerns were also raised about boundaries with some respondents stating that the option excluded locations surrounding the city in council areas including Gedling Borough Council and Ashfield District Council area. Similarly, there were specific concerns about joining outlying rural and other areas to the city that have little to no relationship with it.
– Despite concerns, approximately a third of respondents either explicitly supported option 1e or said they preferred it compared to option 1b as the best of the two options or least worst option (approximately half of this third explicitly supported the option and the other half were positive towards it in the context of comparing it against option 1b). This support or positivity to option 1e was often due to respondents stating that they considered 1e to be more geographically coherent and/or is a cleaner North-South split with a better division of populations and resources. That said, some support/positivity (about half of those that supported 1e) was caveated by continued concerns around boundaries or urban-rural imbalance and/or conditional upon benefits being realised.
– This compares to approximately a tenth of respondents that explicitly supported option 1b. This is because they believe it is the most suitable option in terms of geography with Nottingham City at the heart of the new council and combining areas with common links (and a wider county-wide council drawing in other parts of Nottinghamshire). As with option 1e, support for 1b was often cited on the condition of realising the benefits of LGR.

- In short, with both options notable concerns exist and dominate the responses i.e. a majority of respondents have concerns about either or both of the options, including concerns about LGR in general. Option1e does receive greater positivity and support than option 1b based on qualitative comments, but this is from a minority of respondents, in some cases is a preference rather than outright support, and with both options positivity/support is sometimes caveated by concerns or conditional on achieving the potential benefits of LGR and/or minimising disruption to residents and services.
- It is also helpful to note that respondents tended to consider and respond to questions about options 1b and 1e collectively. Consequently, many of the points are common across both options and respondents compared and contrasted each option, which in part accounts for the marginal preference for option 1e over 1b by a minority of respondents.
- The report authors ask that all parties seek to utilise these findings in a constructive way to inform their final proposals and that findings are used appropriately and not misrepresented in proposals and in public statements or press releases.

Stakeholder Engagement

Detailed Summary of Responses

Introduction

As part of the partnership's response to the Government's statutory invitation for proposals on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council undertook a comprehensive programme of stakeholder engagement. This was designed to meet the Government's criteria for meaningful engagement with local partners, businesses, and communities, ensuring that the views of those most affected by potential changes were heard and considered.

The Government's guidance emphasises the importance of demonstrating local support, addressing concerns, and evidencing how proposals will improve local governance. In response, Nottinghamshire County Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council adopted a structured and inclusive engagement approach to gather a wide range of perspectives from across the county.

Our engagement strategy was twofold:

Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

We identified key countywide and sub-countywide stakeholders with whom the Council and its partners have established strategic relationships. These included representatives from the education sector, business and development communities, voluntary and community sector organisations, and public service partners including Nottingham City Council Commissioners. Senior officers, including Chief Executive leads, facilitated direct engagement through formal meetings, interviews, and written submissions to explore the implications of LGR on service delivery, partnership working, and local priorities.

Local and Community-Based Engagement

To ensure local voices were captured, we worked closely with district and borough Councils, who led engagement with local stakeholders such as Town and Parish Councils, grassroots voluntary organisations, and local businesses. These sessions were complemented by a series of public engagement activities, including surveys, workshops, and focus groups, coordinated across all nine Councils.

In total, the engagement programme included:

- Over 665 young people consulted through 45 focus groups across all districts.
- Targeted sessions with education leaders, SEND professionals, and alternative providers.
- Engagement with voluntary and community sector (VCSE) organisations via focus groups and interviews.
- Consultation with developers and business leaders, trade unions, MPs, and Council staff.
- Member and Town and Parish Council engagement workshops and surveys, alongside outreach in local areas.

To support this process, a short online survey was developed to capture views on the opportunities and challenges of LGR. This was distributed widely and complemented by in-person and virtual engagement sessions. The insights gathered have been used to inform the development of the proposal and ensure that it reflects the aspirations, concerns, and priorities of Nottinghamshire’s communities.

This report summarises the key themes and feedback from each stakeholder group, providing a clear evidence base for the Council’s submission and demonstrating our commitment to inclusive, transparent, and locally informed reform.

Stakeholder Feedback Summary

Education Sector

To gather informed perspectives on the implications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) for education services, a targeted engagement programme was conducted with stakeholders across the education sector. This included school leaders, SEND professionals, and service providers, ensuring a broad and representative range of voices.

The methodology involved:

- Structured Interviews: Direct conversations with key education stakeholders to explore current strengths, challenges, and future considerations.
- Written Submissions: Participants were invited to provide detailed feedback on service delivery, funding models, and strategic priorities under LGR.

This approach captured both operational insights and strategic viewpoints, particularly around SEND provision, partnership working, and service continuity. The feedback has informed planning for future governance models, with a focus on preserving effective practices, addressing areas for improvement, and ensuring equitable outcomes for children and families across Nottinghamshire.

1. What the Current Council Does Well

Strong Relationships & Communication

- Open, responsive communication with Council officers and teams.
- Constructive partnerships with providers and schools.
- Trust and dialogue with senior staff and SEND teams.
- There is a strong desire among education leaders to preserve existing relationships across districts, particularly those built through collaborative work with Nottinghamshire County Council.
- One contributor expressed sadness at potentially losing ties with districts like Broxtowe and Gedling, highlighting the value of current partnerships.

SEND System Strengths

- Fair and needs-focused EHCP and funding processes.
- Effective safeguarding and vetting of providers.
- Tendering systems for Alternative Provision (AP) are generally well-received.
- The Nottinghamshire SEND funding model is widely praised for being fair and effective. Concerns were raised about the comparative quality of the city model, with stakeholders keen to retain the strengths of the current system.
- There is recognition of the need to prepare children for transitions between unitary authorities, especially those in special schools, and to maintain high-quality provision throughout.

Support Services

- Governance, HR, legal, and finance support praised.
- Good safeguarding training and support from C+L and C+I teams.
- Clear commissioning pathways and quality assurance.

2. Areas for Improvement in Education and SEND Services

Process Efficiency & Digitisation

- Streamline paperwork (e.g., linking bids to EHCPs).
- Faster placement times and clearer referral systems.
- Digitise documentation and make it portable across services.

Funding & Resources

- Simplify funding systems to reduce admin burden on SENDCOs.
- More special school places and quicker access to funding.
- Better feedback and transparency in AP tender outcomes.
- Stakeholders emphasised the importance of maintaining Nottinghamshire's SEND funding mechanisms, which are seen as superior to alternatives. There is concern that changes could lead to inequities, particularly under proposed boundary models (e.g., 1b and 1e).
- There is a call to ensure funding systems continue to support the most vulnerable children and do not shift too rapidly, which could cause anxiety among families.

Joined-Up Working

- Improve collaboration between education, health, and social care.
- Align referral processes across departments (e.g., SEN, EHCP, Virtual School).
- Adopt place-based approaches that integrate services.
- Contributors stressed the need for a unified approach to SEND across both new unitaries, with consistent standards and shared good practice. There is concern that boundary changes could disrupt service delivery and create disparities.
- The importance of aligning SEND planning with wider Children and Young People (CYP) and family services was highlighted, with a recommendation to lead with SEND priorities in strategic documents.

Staffing & Training

- Invest in CPD and training for mainstream staff.
- Increase number of caseworkers.
- Provide access to specialist training (e.g., MAPA, positive handling).

EHCP Quality

- Improve clarity and relevance of EHCPs (e.g., outdated content).
- Ensure EHCPs reflect current needs and are updated regularly.

3. Suggestions for Future Planning

Structural & Strategic Recommendations

- Retain effective district-based ICDS team structures.
- Use existing Council assets (e.g., buildings) for localised provision.

- Avoid duplication and ensure continuity during transition.
- Several stakeholders favour a “Greater Nottingham” model, citing its alignment with existing service provision and travel patterns. There is concern that alternative models may introduce inequities or disrupt effective collaboration.
- There is a strong desire to preserve the Nottinghamshire Learner First approach and extend its benefits across both new authorities.

Support for Families

- More accessible support services and early help.
- Create parent support groups and befriending services.
- Simplify systems for families to access help.
- Contributors emphasised the need to support families through transitions, particularly those with children in special education. Parents are likely to be vocal if they perceive a risk to their child’s education, so clear communication and gradual change are essential.

Policy & Governance

- Merge SEND services across Nottinghamshire for consistency.
- Consider geography and community needs in Council boundaries.
- Address disparities in Council income and avoid increasing inequalities.
- There is a clear call to address potential inequities arising from proposed boundary models. Stakeholders want assurance that good practice will be rolled out consistently across both unitaries, avoiding disparities in service quality or access.

Voluntary and Community Sector

To understand the perspectives of the voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector on the potential impacts of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a targeted engagement programme was completed. This approach aimed to capture the views of organisations deeply embedded in local communities and delivering essential services.

The methodology included:

- Focus Groups: Facilitated discussions with VCSE representatives to explore concerns, opportunities, and expectations related to LGR.
- Written Submissions: Organisations were invited to provide detailed feedback on how proposed changes might affect their operations, partnerships, and service users.
- Interviews: One-on-one conversations allowed for deeper exploration of sector-specific issues and the potential implications of structural reform.

This multi-method approach ensured a broad and inclusive evidence base, reflecting the diversity of the VCSE sector across Nottinghamshire. The insights gathered have informed the development of proposals that aim to protect community relationships, enhance service delivery, and ensure that grassroots voices are central to the reorganisation process.

Key Themes Identified

Uncertainty and Concern

- Many organisations expressed uncertainty about the impact of LGR, citing a lack of clear information and communication.
- Concerns include potential loss of trusted relationships, disruption to services, and centralisation that may reduce local responsiveness.
- Some fear LGR may mirror past reorganisations (e.g., NHS changes) that were costly and ineffective.

Value of Existing Relationships

- Strong emphasis on the importance of current partnerships with District and Parish Councils.
- Organisations value local knowledge, face-to-face contact, and community-focused support.
- There is concern that these relationships may be weakened or lost in a unitary structure.

Need for Clear Communication and Consultation

- Calls for transparent planning, early engagement, and consultation with VCSEs.
- Desire for co-production and inclusive decision-making, rather than top-down approaches.
- Organisations want to be kept informed and involved in shaping the transition.

Support for Community and Grassroots Work

- Recognition of the critical role of grassroots organisations in delivering local services.
- Requests for continued or increased funding, volunteer support, and local hubs.
- Emphasis on community cohesion, health and wellbeing, and intergenerational collaboration.

Opportunities for Improvement

Some see LGR as a chance to:

- Streamline services
- Reduce bureaucracy
- Improve strategic planning
- Integrate services more effectively
- Environmental organisations highlighted the potential to embed nature recovery and climate resilience into local planning.

Risks of Centralisation

Widespread concern that centralising services may:

- Dilute local representation
- Make services less accessible
- Ignore rural and vulnerable communities
- Fear that decision-makers will be too remote from the people they serve.

Business & Developers

As part of the broader stakeholder engagement programme for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), targeted consultations with representatives from the business and development sectors was conducted. These sessions aimed to explore the potential implications of LGR on strategic planning, infrastructure, service delivery, and economic growth.

The event brought together approximately 40 representatives from across the developer, construction, investor, and strategic regeneration sectors to help understand and unpack the impact of and potential for LGR in Nottinghamshire and Nottingham.

The methodology included:

- Structured engagement meetings with business leaders, developers, and infrastructure partners.
- Discussions focused on key operational and strategic themes, including boundary alignment, shared services, planning efficiency, and capital investment risks.
- Feedback was gathered through facilitated dialogue, allowing stakeholders to raise concerns, identify opportunities, and offer recommendations for future governance models.

This approach ensured that the voices of economic stakeholders were captured, particularly in relation to growth, investment, and operational readiness. The insights have informed proposals that seek to balance efficiency with continuity, and to align local government structures with regional economic ambitions, including those of the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA).

Geographical and Strategic Considerations

- Attendees questioned whether the preferred model had been tested across different areas—it had.
- Concerns about boundary changes and their impact on growth and governance.
- Importance of maintaining strategic alliances (e.g. Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood, Rushcliffe) to retain government support and funding.

Adult Social Care (ASC) & Financial Implications

- ASC distribution across regions is a challenge.
- Cost implications and service delivery need careful balancing.

Shared Services & Collaboration

- Strong interest in shared services to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
- Sectors mentioned: civil engineering, highways, waste.
- Emphasis on leveraging existing partnerships, especially in the business sector.

Operational Readiness

- Existing infrastructure (Arc and Via depots) is well-positioned to support any model.
- Operational disruption expected—requires robust risk management.

Housing & Procurement

- Merging authorities could lead to inconsistencies in housing contracts and procurement.
- Need for continuity planning post-2028.

Risk Management & Governance

- Suggestions included revising meeting systems and introducing local area committees.
- Governance changes must not hinder progress—“new structures shouldn’t get in the way of progression.”

Planning Efficiency

- Potential to streamline planning processes through collaboration and AI tools.
- Goal: faster approvals and improved responsiveness.

Devolution & Economic Growth

- LGR aligns with East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) goals.
- Key projects: Freeport, Investment Zones, STEP Fusion at West Burton.
- Push for more powers to be devolved to the East Midlands Mayor.

Capital Investment Risks

- Concerns about delays or pauses in capital funding due to structural changes.

Communication & Transparency

- Open communication is essential to maintain alignment and stakeholder engagement.

Opportunities Identified

- **Waste & Planning Alignment**: Unified approach for consistency.
- **Asset Rationalisation**: Strategic management of depots, leisure centres, housing.
- **Economic Growth**: Access to EMCCA funding and innovation zones.
- **Rural Cohesion**: Support for agri-tech and low-carbon sectors.

Recommendations

1. **Preserve Strategic Alliances** - Maintain existing collaborations to retain funding and continuity.
2. **Mitigate Operational Risks** - Develop contingency plans for disruptions from boundary and structural changes.
3. **Enhance Shared Services** - Explore models to improve efficiency and reduce duplication.
4. **Streamline Planning** - Invest in tools and partnerships to accelerate planning processes.
5. **Ensure Transparent Communication** - Keep stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the transition

Nottinghamshire Police

Taken from a letter from Assistant Chief Constable Leona Scurr, Nottinghamshire Police dated 3 November 2025 sent to Adrian Smith, Chief Executive Nottinghamshire County Council and Adam Hill, Chief Executive Rushcliffe Borough Council:

Dear Mr Smith and Mr Hill,

I am writing on behalf of Nottinghamshire Police Chief Constable Steve Cooper in relation to your email requesting the views of Nottinghamshire Police on the ongoing discussions around Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the potential redrawing of council boundaries within Nottinghamshire.

As part of our commitment to supporting a smooth transition under any future governance model, we have undertaken an initial assessment of how proposed changes may impact policing operations, partnership working, and service delivery. While Nottinghamshire Police is fully prepared to operate under any LGR structure that is ultimately adopted, we believe it is important to share our early observations to help inform the ongoing discussions.

From a policing perspective, a division that aligns with existing boundary lines would offer several operational advantages. Specifically.

- *Continuity in established partnership arrangements, particularly in safeguarding and community safety*
- *Consistency in performance reporting and data comparison across like-for-like areas*
- *A more seamless experience for residents in terms of service access and accountability*
- *Reduced disruption to operational structures and resource deployment*

We recognise that there are multiple models under consideration, each with its own merits and challenges. Our intention is not to advocate for any particular outcome, but rather to highlight the practical implications for policing and public safety. We remain open to alternative configurations and welcome further dialogue with all stakeholders to ensure that any future arrangements support effective service delivery across the county.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you wish to discuss these matters further. We are committed to working collaboratively throughout this process and ensuring that public safety remains at the forefront of any structural changes.

Nottingham City Council Commissioners

Email received from the Commissioners: 'As you submit your LGR proposals to your Councils you may wish to reference Nottingham City Council Commissioners as having been engaged in your stakeholder sections. As Commissioners we so feel we have been engaged which we do thank you for.'

Young People

To ensure that the voices of young people were meaningfully included in the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) consultation, Nottinghamshire County Council's Youth Service facilitated a targeted youth engagement programme. This initiative aimed to understand young people's perspectives on the proposed changes, their priorities, and the potential impact on their lives and communities.

The methodology involved:

- Participation of over 665 young people from all seven districts across Nottinghamshire.
- Engagement through a variety of youth-focused settings, including:
- Young People's Centres
- Link Clubs (for young people with disabilities)
- Mobile Youth Provision
- Members of Youth Parliament (MYPs)

45 focus groups were conducted, structured around three core questions:

1. What changes would you like to see from the LGR proposals?
2. How do you think these changes will affect you?
3. What are your top three priorities?

The consultation was designed to be inclusive and accessible, capturing both qualitative insights and district-level priorities.

Further insights are drawn on youth data sources such as the 2024 Make Your Mark Survey and the 2025 Integrated Care System Consultation to inform the discussion framework. The findings provide a rich evidence base for shaping future governance models that reflect the needs, aspirations, and lived experiences of young people across Nottinghamshire.

1. What Changes Would Young People Like to See?

General Sentiment
Mixed views on reorganisation:

- Positive: Potential for better transport, investment, and efficiency.
- Concerns: Loss of local identity, confusion over services, and reduced youth provision.

Key Issues Raised

Mental Health:
Most urgent concern across all districts.
Requests for:

- Early and accessible support
- Calm spaces in schools
- Reduced academic pressure

Safety
Need for:
- Increased police presence
- Better street lighting
- Tackling antisocial behaviour, drugs, and vaping

Youth Spaces
Seen as essential for inclusion, wellbeing, and community connection.

Transport
Especially in rural areas:
- Cheaper fares
- More reliable services
- Better connectivity to education, leisure, and jobs

Cost of Living & Housing
Concerns about affordability and financial pressures on families.

Environment & Homelessness
- Cleaner green spaces
- Climate action
- Support for homeless individuals

Voice in Decision-Making
- Strong demand for youth involvement and feedback loops:
- "You said, we did" approach
- Transparency and accountability from Councils

2. How Do Young People Think These Changes Will Affect Them?

Awareness & Engagement
Young people showed:
- Curiosity and optimism
- Caution and confusion about the complexity of the model

Concerns
Loss of Local Representation
- Fear that decisions will be made far from communities
- Reduced access to help and services

Funding Inequality
- Worries that rural/smaller districts may lose out
- Nottingham City's financial constraints raised concerns about cuts to youth services

Youth Centres
- Seen as vital for mental health and safety
- Anxiety over sustainability and funding

Positive Outlook (if well-managed)
Potential benefits:

- Stronger collaboration between areas
- Improved transport and service delivery
- Better access to opportunities

Desire for:

- Realistic expectations
- Clear communication
- Genuine youth participation in shaping future decisions

2. Top Three Priorities by District

Young people selected their top priorities from a list informed by:

- 2024 Make Your Mark Survey (12,035 responses)
- 2025 Integrated Care System Consultation

Common Themes Across Districts

- Mental Health: Top priority in every district
- Drugs & Alcohol, Poverty, Education, and Crime & Safety were also frequently selected

District	Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
Ashfield	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Crime & Safety
Bassetlaw	Mental Health	Poverty	Education
Broxtowe	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Education
Gedling	Mental Health	Social Media	Access to Resources
Mansfield	Mental Health	Education	Crime & Safety / Poverty
Newark & Sherwood	Mental Health / Education	Poverty	Drugs & Alcohol
Rushcliffe	Mental Health	Drugs & Alcohol	Poverty

Conclusion

Young people are not resistant to change, but they want:

- Fairness in funding and service access
- Inclusion in decision-making
- Wellbeing to be at the heart of reforms
- Respect for local identity
- Transparency and follow-through on feedback

Town and Parish Councils

Key points from this consultation were:

Planning and Preparation

- Concerned, reactive, low proactive planning
- Lack of preparation; limited discussion at parish council level
- Uncertainty about responsibilities, roles, and impact of LGR
- Concerns about capacity: part-time clerks, recruitment challenges, volunteer skills
- Training, CPD, and networking needed to manage new assets/services
- Engagement primarily digital, limiting input
- Questions about local grants, parish council status, and perception under LGR
- Planning and preparation are limited; support and guidance are sought
- Financial clarity and partnership strategies are key priorities moving forward

Opportunities and Risks

Risk-focused; cautious optimism about potential benefits

Opportunities

- Pooled resources could improve finances and service delivery.
- Devolved powers and better local accountability.
- Potential to reduce bureaucracy and support residents more effectively.
- Improved recycling and standardisation of services.
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.
- Emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and support networks.

Risks

- Financial: cost, debt transfer, precept increases, and funding clarity.
- Governance: loss of local identity, decision-making power, MP/borough connection.
- Capacity: workload on parish councillors, reliance on volunteers, HR/training support.
- Planning and integration: IT, branding, elections, neighbourhood forums, and smaller councils being overlooked.
- Timeline perceived as rushed; uncertainty on roles of T&PCs.

Finances

- Cautious, seeking clarity
- Concern over association with city finances
- Lack of clarity on funding, grants, delegation schemes, and asset acquisition
- Precept management, potential increases, and local control are key issues
- Contingency planning, covenants, and rebranding costs are considerations

Partnership Working

- Opportunistic but cautious; need guidance
- Desire to work with NALC and other parishes for collective voice.
- Larger councils seen as faceless; small councils value local, efficient service.

- Interest in joining resources or clusters (e.g., RCAN, “Big 6”).
- Emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and support networks.
- Questions on how LGR output will affect PCs and larger partnerships.

Overall Observations

- Thinking about LGR primarily in terms of risks and responsibilities.
- Opportunities are acknowledged but discussed less frequently.
- Planning and preparation are limited; support and guidance are sought.
- Financial clarity and partnership strategies are key priorities moving forward.

Nottinghamshire Association of Local Councils (NALC)

It's very much a mixed picture in terms of how well-prepared town and parish councils are for LGR and devolution and of course different districts and boroughs in the county have differing numbers of town and parish councils.

Rushcliffe and Gedling are well provided for, largely through the role RCAN plays in supporting town and parish councils in these areas and the working relationships with those councils.

It will be critical for the new unitary councils to have contact and preferably enhanced commissions with NALC and RCAN and these contracts become the conduit into town and parish councils in terms of support and exploring opportunities. The town and parish councils won't be able to transform without this degree of external support.

Communication with town and parish councils will be vital.

Parish-ing is a big concern, large areas are currently unparished. Parish-ing (and community governance reviews) needs to be done correctly using parish liaison officers and government really needs to provide funding for this.

There are opportunities for town and parishes to take on local assets, but there are going to be skills and capacity gaps that will need proper consideration in order to allow opportunities to be realised and importantly sustainable.

The unitary councils need to take the lead on local democratic structures.

Government reference to Neighbourhood Committees is not clear in terms of the role town and parish councils will have, so this will need to be worked through as part of creating new governance arrangements.

"Go Collaborate" is a good online community engagement and consultation platform, a similar model could be developed as part of the unitary council's approach.

Parkwood Leisure (Operator for four Rushcliffe leisure centres and Rufford Country Park)

Providing as much certainty as possible, as soon as possible on how the new unitary councils will be structured and operate (and wish to commission) will be critical to ensure businesses such as Parkwood are able to do robust business planning

Implementation planning prior to vesting day will be equally critical to provide clarity to businesses

Unitarisation provides an opportunity to take the best bits of how leisure contracts work across the county and roll that approach out over a broader geography.

It will be interesting to see how certain demographics influence the overall priorities of the new unitary councils. For example, GP referrals to leisure prescription are very common in the city/urban areas but very low in more affluent rural areas. Will the new unitary councils be driven by the areas of highest need when it comes to the allocation of resources at the expense of other areas?

Leisure commissioning and procurement will be very important to get right and ensuring that unintended consequences to do not impact upon the ability of medium sized delivery partners to bid for leisure contracts that may become fewer and larger under the new unitary models.

NHS Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS & ICB

Nottingham & Nottinghamshire ICS

Shaping new ways of working around the building blocks of health will be important, as will transferring the strong existing relationships across the new councils.

Implementation needs to be as seamless as possible with services aligned around communities

It will be important to assess the concept of ‘neighbourhoods’ with communities to check how relatable they are.

Team structures within the new unitary councils will need to work for people who live in the county, not for ease of the organisation.

The voluntary sector has an incredibly important part to play in the culture of ‘support’ not ‘command and control

The Liberation model in Northumberland is an example of a good operating model

Commissioning models can be siloed, there is an opportunity to capitalise on working with the voluntary sector more when it comes to commissioning.

Notts & Nottingham ICS

Neighbourhood focus is going to be critical, using the ‘building blocks of health’ also known as the broader determinants of health, to drive and develop local partnerships.

Implementing a holistic sense of ‘place’ from a health perspective is very much an existing strength of the district and borough councils across Nottinghamshire and the model can be encapsulated within the new unitary councils.

It will be important to define ‘neighbourhood’ in the new unitary councils, with model neighbourhood guidance expected which will define neighbourhood population sizes.

Joint commissioning is going to be critical, especially in relation to the working with the voluntary sector, with which there are significant opportunities to build on the already great work taking place.

Member Engagement Workshops (including the Member Engagement Survey)

To capture the views of elected members on the implications and opportunities of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), there was the facilitation of a series of structured engagement activities. These included targeted Member Engagement Workshops and a Member Engagement Survey, designed to explore Councillors' perspectives on governance, service delivery, and community outcomes under proposed new Council models.

The methodology was designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse roles and responsibilities held by members across the county. It included:

Workshops: These interactive sessions provided a forum for Councillors to discuss key themes such as vision and outcomes, governance structures, and neighbourhood-level decision-making. Discussions were guided by prompts around service priorities, local representation, and strategic planning.

Survey: A complementary survey was distributed to gather quantitative insights and broaden participation. It enabled members to express views on specific proposals, including the scope and remit of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs), Councillor numbers, and urban-rural service needs.

This dual approach ensured both depth and breadth in member feedback, allowing the Council to identify common priorities, areas of concern, and opportunities for improvement. The findings have informed the development of governance models that aim to balance strategic oversight with local responsiveness, and to reflect the lived realities of communities across Nottinghamshire.

Key Insights from the Engagement

1. Vision and Outcomes

Focusing on improving core local services

- Building connected communities
- Schools and Education
- Tackling Antisocial behaviour
- Road Maintenance
- Housing
- Supporting local businesses
- Transport and Connectivity

One Nottingham Vision

- Building connected communities
- A chance to build Nottingham's reputation
- Metropolitan name discouraged
- Joined-up efficient services with residents at the centre
- Local identity and heritage

2. Governance

Number of Councillors and Structure

- Mixed views – some concerns around with reduced no of Cllrs and increased responsibilities
- Member support and opportunities for Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish governance and operating models are varied. Consideration to be given on how best to give greater responsibilities reflecting these differences.

New structures could offer opportunity for community development teams

Opportunity to take on further responsibilities but with appropriate support and budgets

Service area scope of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs)

- Focused on local level outcomes – parks and recreation, cultural heritage/ events, road maintenance.
- Involvement with partners – fire and police, EMCCA representatives, health (local health reps), Schools, Forest East Connect, NHS, ICB

Remit of Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs)

- NGBs to have their own budget, but NOT have an input into strategic vision and budget planning.
- To replicate the geographical design and structure of some existing forums that bring together rural areas.

Assessment of needs in the urban / city-based Council vs rural / county-based Council?

- Waste services – demand and needs are higher in urban.
- Housing – social housing issues and new developments in urban.

Member Engagement Survey insights

- Councillors' Common Activity
    - Resident feedback, stakeholder communication, social media, meetings, emails, community events.
    - Top Resident Issues
    - Clean streets, road maintenance, crime, transport, recycling, health services, housing and youth support.

- Engagement
    - Difficulty reaching older residents (digital) and young people (low participation).
    - Build better engagement through surgeries, meetings and digital offering

- Unitary Council Support
    - IT help, clear guidance, regular meetings.
    - Training for councillors

Workforce (Webinars, Workshops & Online Engagements – Viva Engage)

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of workforce perspectives on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), a multi-channel engagement strategy ~~e~~ continues. This approach captured a diverse range of views, concerns, and suggestions.

The methodology included:

Webinars: Facilitated by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) speakers, these sessions provided a platform for staff to ask questions and receive direct responses on key aspects of LGR, including workforce implications, shared services, and governance structures.

Workshops: Themed engagement workshops focused on specific operational areas such as workforce culture, governance, technology, and neighbourhood services. These sessions encouraged collaborative dialogue and solution-focused discussions.

Online Engagements via Viva Engage: Digital platforms were used to extend participation, allowing staff to contribute asynchronously and share insights on proposed changes.

Other staff engagement exercises

Rushcliffe

- Webinar – Presentation by the Chief Executive on current position and updates since last session followed by question-and-answer session
- Email updates – Important information and developments in the LGR process as they happen, for example central government responses.
- Dedicated LGR information page on council intranet – includes timelines, webinar dates and session feedback, FAQs.
- Quarterly Leadership workshops engaging managers of different levels across the organisation

LGR focused workshops and groups

- A mixture of large workshops and smaller specialism focused and operational groups, involving district and county council colleagues, have gathered ideas and options for the future new unitaries.
- 'The Hackathon' which involved senior managers and service specialists exploring themes from vision and strategic opportunities, 1b model to implementation.
- Smaller specialism working groups of cross council colleagues focusing on specific service areas – democratic structure and neighbourhood governance, public protection and safety, people and resources, finance and 151 officer group, monitoring officer group.
- Core working group supporting continued collaboration and discussion among the nine Nottinghamshire councils through the continued LGR process. Implementing robust professional practices such as data sharing and governance.
- Operational update meetings of senior RBC managers progressing operational LGR activities, development of 1b option and sharing of knowledge and good practice from support events and training to inform and support the LGR process.
- Chief Executives meeting supporting continued collaboration and discussion among the 9 Nottinghamshire councils. Decision making and direction for continued collaborative areas of the LGR process.

NCC Webinar Insights

Questions Answered During the Webinar from CLT Speakers:

Q1. What happens if a decision is made to take forward an option other than 1b?
We will continue to work together so that we can make a success of whatever proposal is implemented and the best of Nottinghamshire.

Q2. What does LGR mean for the workforce?
Across the 9 Councils, there is a Notts HR Group who meet frequently and share best practice – strong connection over the partnership that will work together towards implementation planning.

Q3. What will the impact be for people who might currently have in their patch / patch they work in, Gedling or Broxtowe?
The new unitary aim to be outstanding in everything they do, including as an employer to whoever ends up working for them going forward.

Q4. What will shared services across the two new Councils look like?
There is a lot of work being done around what works and models around shared service delivery, NCC are open to opportunities this presents. Once we're at a point of structural changes order and putting transitional governance in place, it will be for elected members of the shadow authorities who will take decisions of what the future will look like.

Q5. Under Neighbourhoods, Place and Environment – there are 3 proposition areas listed and no reference to the 'natural environment' – will this be included?
We will replace some of our colleagues in district and borough Councils, whether it's more technical street place-based services relating to highways, transport, waste collection. There is real opportunity for us to get local and stay strategic.

Q6. Engagement / comms – Are there confirmed plans to publish the findings of the public consultation?
11,000 people responded to the public consultation and NCC aims to publish all relevant surveys/findings.

Workforce Engagement Workshop – Operating Model Insights

Workforce, Culture, Leadership & Management

Strengths:

- Strong resident – focused and committed workforce.
- Positive organisational culture with no blame culture.
- Accessible and visible leadership that sets clear priorities.
- Flexible working arrangements supporting wellbeing and talent attraction.
- Inclusive recruitment practices and staff networks.
- Autonomy in service delivery with senior leader support.
- Apprenticeship and graduate schemes seen as valuable.

Opportunities

- Strengthen partnership clarity and shared responsibilities.

- Develop integrated, multifunctional teams to address service gaps.
- Maintain local feel and community connection.
- Improve consistency in leadership messaging and matrix working.
- Streamline internal processes and enhance internal comms.
- Build inclusive leadership development and mentorship programmes.
- Treat workforce data holistically and improve talent retention strategies.

Governance, Democracy & Decision-Making

Strengths

- Delegated decision – making to officers enables quicker action
- Strong constitution and governance structures.
- Effective scrutiny embedded in report writing and processes.
- Responsive senior leadership and programme boards.
- Clear fallback structures and strategic oversight.

Opportunities

- Streamline senior decision-making and reduce bureaucracy.
- Clarify roles between officers and elected members.
- Improve public understanding and engagement in decision-making. Enhance transparency and communication around Council finances.
- Build inclusive governance with local representation.
- Improve internal clarity on governance routes and responsibilities.
- Strengthen Councillor-officer relationships and informal engagement.
- Address reputational challenges and promote new Council identity.
- Foster cross-departmental collaboration and reduce siloed working.
- Create central hubs for service queries and improve intranet usability.

Technology, Digital & Data

Strengths

- Good access to software, ICT support, and hybrid working infrastructure.
- Strong data governance and security.
- Responsive digital tools (e.g., Viva Engage), cloud migration, and accessibility features.
- Tactical workarounds by skilled workforce.
- Centralised information systems for staff and residents.

Opportunities

- Unify digital systems and centralise data access
- Improve collaboration tools and shared spaces for staff.
- Strengthen data protection frameworks and governance.
- Enhance digital inclusion, especially in rural areas.
- Develop a single, user-friendly website and complaints system.
- Align technology strategies across Councils and departments.
- Improve procurement processes and system integration.
- Embrace AI and enterprise architecture for smarter service delivery.
- Treat data as a strategic asset with a single source of truth.

- Plan now for system migration and business continuity.

Workforce Engagement Workshop – Neighbourhoods

Vision for Thriving Neighbourhoods

Themes:

Community-Centric Design: Services should be relevant, personal, and co-produced with residents. Emphasis on listening, trust-building, and regular presence in communities.

Holistic Wellbeing: Addressing education, employment, housing, transport, food access, and social cohesion.

Inclusivity & Equity: Ensure all groups (e.g. asylum seekers, migrants, SEND children) are included and supported.

Green & Safe Spaces: Investment in nature, clean environments, and accessible green areas.

Digital Inclusion: Tackle digital exclusion through hubs, devices, and training.

Community Resilience: Encourage mutual aid, volunteering, and neighbourly support.

Alignment with Existing Structures

Themes:

Hyperlocal Focus: Align services with local identities and needs, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.

Cross-Partner Collaboration: Better integration with schools, PCNs, police, and voluntary sectors.

Simplified Systems: Reduce confusion across Councils (e.g. school admissions, EHCPs), and improve communication.

Cultural & Structural Barriers: Address siloed working, historical rivalries, and inconsistent engagement.

Shared Infrastructure: Use community hubs, libraries, and GP surgeries as access points for services.

Data & Systems Integration: Improve interoperability between platforms (e.g. Mosaic, Synergy).

Outcomes of Neighbourhood Working

Themes:

Improved Access & Equity: Consistent service quality regardless of location; reduce postcode lottery.

Joined-Up Services: Holistic support through integrated teams and shared goals.

Health & Education: Focus on preventative care, mental health, school attainment, and life expectancy.

Community Hubs: Repurpose buildings for multi-agency use and local engagement.

Transport & Infrastructure: Better links to jobs, schools, and services, especially in rural areas.

Satisfaction & Safety: Track softer outcomes like community satisfaction and family safety.

Gaps & Considerations

Themes:

Public Consultation: Need for clearer, ongoing engagement and communication with residents.

System Change Risks: Concerns about job security, service continuity, and cultural resistance.

Funding & Competition: Avoiding competitive dynamics between areas; focus on collaboration.

Council Tax & Governance: Questions around future changes and clarity post-LGR (Local Government Reorganisation).

Adrian Smith's Leadership Viva Engage Insights

Weekly questions shared:

1. What are the characteristics or attributes of the Current Councils in Nottinghamshire that we should replicate in the new Councils we create?
2. If you had more say in what your council does in your community, what would you want to influence – and how?
3. What is / should be different in the urban / rural council?

Themes identified:

Difference in urban vs. rural council operations

- Service Delivery Concerns: Clarity, oversight and contact points.
- Decision – Making Preferences: Localised control and tailored priorities.
- Suggestions for Future Operations: Community – led initiatives and resource allocation.

Desired areas of influence:

- Key Areas of Influence: Waste strategy and community engagement.
- Preferred Engagement Methods: Online platforms, in-person meetings, feedback loops.
- Suggestions for Council Responsiveness: Hybrid engagement, priority setting, transparent performance tracking.

Favoured characteristics / attributes to be featured in the new Councils

- Valued attributes: Local presence, responsiveness, transparency.
- Examples of Good Practice: Community hubs, waste management, collaboration.
- Suggestions for Continuity: Retain local offices, preserve staff knowledge, maintain transparency.

Conclusion

The stakeholder engagement programme undertaken in support of the Greater Nottinghamshire proposal has provided a robust and inclusive evidence base to inform the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposals. Through extensive consultation with strategic partners, local communities, education leaders, the voluntary and community sector, young people, residents, and the Council's workforce, a diverse range of perspectives has been captured.

The feedback highlights a shared commitment to preserving strong local relationships, ensuring equitable service delivery, and maintaining community identity amidst structural change. Stakeholders consistently emphasised the importance of transparent communication, fair funding, and inclusive governance that reflects both urban and rural needs. There is a clear appetite for reform that enhances efficiency, simplifies service access, and strengthens local voice and accountability.

This report demonstrates dedication to meaningful engagement and is responsive to the concerns and aspirations of Nottinghamshire's communities. As the LGR process progresses, these insights will remain central to shaping a future governance model that is locally rooted, strategically aligned, and capable of delivering improved outcomes for all.

Rushcliffe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire County Council:

Member Engagement Summary

Contents

Introduction

A comprehensive member engagement programme has been undertaken by Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) to inform the development of the proposal for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Nottinghamshire. This programme was designed to be inclusive and reflective of the diverse roles and responsibilities held by councillors across the county and borough.

The engagement activities included:

- **NCC Structured Workshops**: Two cross-party Member working sessions were held on 17 and 21 October. All County Councillors were invited to attend. 31 County Councillors from the Reform Group and Labour Group attended the sessions. These sessions explored key themes such as vision and outcomes, governance structures, and neighbourhood-level decision-making. Discussions were guided by prompts around service priorities, local representation, and strategic planning.

- **NCC Targeted Survey**: 16 Councillors responded to a targeted survey. Their responses provide insights into councillor time commitments, community engagement practices, local priorities, and support needs. Members also shared views on the scope and remit of Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs), councillor numbers, and urban-rural service differences.

- **RBC Member Engagement Survey**: 13 Councillors responded to an engagement survey. The responses identified what support and structures are needed to ensure local voices continue to shape decision making.

- **RBC Cross-Party Member Engagement Session**: On 14 October, all Rushcliffe Borough Council members were invited to an interactive workshop, attended by 30 councillors representing the Independents, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Green Party, and Conservatives. The session was shaped around key questions regarding vision, outcomes and neighbourhood governance.

- **NCC Overview and Scrutiny**: The Corporate Leadership Team and 13 Committee Members participated in an Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to discuss the LGR proposal. Members were invited to contribute feedback on the vision for future governance, service delivery priorities, and structural considerations for the new council model.

- **RBC/NCC Joint Member Session**: Joint RBC/NCC and Ashfield District Council Member session.

- **RBC Overview and Scrutiny**: tbc – 18/11/2025 to review governance.

This multi-channel approach ensured both depth and breadth in member feedback, enabling the Council to identify common priorities, understand councillor perspectives, and shape proposals that balance strategic oversight with local responsiveness.

We thank the councillors who participated in this engagement. Their insights have helped shape a clearer understanding of the support needed to sustain and strengthen their work. Their contributions continue to build stronger, more inclusive communities across Nottinghamshire.

Summary of key themes

1. Vision and Outcomes

- Councillors strongly support a vision that places **residents at the heart of service delivery**, promotes **connected communities**, and delivers **joined-up, efficient services**.
- Priorities include **core local services** such as education, housing, transport, road maintenance, and tackling antisocial behaviour.
- Feedback emphasized the need for **plain English**, authenticity, and recognition of financial realities to ensure credibility.

2. Governance

- Mixed views on reducing councillor numbers; concerns about increased responsibilities and maintaining accessibility for residents.
- Calls for **streamlined governance structures** to avoid duplication and bureaucracy.
- Strong emphasis on integrating **Town and Parish Councils** within neighbourhood governance models while preserving democratic representation and local identity.

3. Neighbourhood Governance

- Broad support for **local-level decision-making** and dedicated budgets for Neighbourhood Governance Bodies (NGBs).
- Opportunities for Town and Parish Councils to take on greater responsibilities, provided adequate **resources, training, and officer support** are in place.
- Need for clarity on roles, accountability, and avoiding overly complex structures.

4. Community Engagement

- Councillors see themselves as **connectors between councils and communities**.
- Recommendations include **dedicated engagement teams**, improved IT support, physical spaces for interaction, and unified digital platforms.
- Emphasis on inclusive engagement, particularly for underrepresented and digitally excluded groups.

5. Resident Priorities

- Common issues raised by residents: **road and pavement maintenance**, **antisocial behaviour**, **public transport**, and **clean streets**.
- Additional priorities include housing, youth initiatives, support for vulnerable groups, and improved community facilities.

6. Support and Resources for Councillors

- Councillors request **training**, **peer learning**, **administrative assistance**, and **access to local data**.
- Additional needs include IT support, operational guidance, and increased allowances to reflect time demands.

7. Future Needs and Recommendations

- Maintain **local voices** through elected representation and accessible engagement channels.
- Ensure **devolution of powers** is matched with resources and accountability.
- Avoid overly bureaucratic models; keep governance **streamlined and community-focused**.

This summary reflects a consistent desire for **effective, locally responsive governance**, **clear communication**, and **adequate support structures** to enable councillors to serve their communities effectively during and after the LGR transition.

NCC Member Engagement Workshops feedback

Vision and Outcomes

Members' focus was on opportunities to improve core services such as transport and connectivity, housing and social care, and to ensure they are designed with the resident at heart. Key issues to address are schools and education, tackling anti-social behaviour, road maintenance and supporting local businesses. They were keen that there is a collective vision across the councils and that this is a chance to rebuild Nottingham City Council's reputation. Local identity and heritage is an important consideration when developing the new councils.

Governance

Members support the development of connected communities. They expressed support for Neighbourhood Public Service Committees (NPSCs) working alongside existing Town and Parish Councils, and greater focus on community voice. They think that NPSCs should focus on local level outcomes - parks and recreation, cultural heritage/ events, road maintenance – and that they should develop working relationships with partners such as Fire and Police services, EMCCA representatives, Health (local health reps, NHS, ICB), Schools and education providers. They are keen for NPSCs to manage their own budgets but do not feel that they should be involved in strategic vison and budget planning. They noted that renewed local focus could offer opportunity for community development teams.

They noted the different needs in the largely urban council as opposed to the largely rural council, with examples such as waste services and housing.

There were mixed views regarding Councillor numbers and the impact on responsibilities; some concerns about reduced number of Councillors but also potential to increase responsibility with appropriate support and budgets.

NCC Member Engagement Survey feedback

Introduction

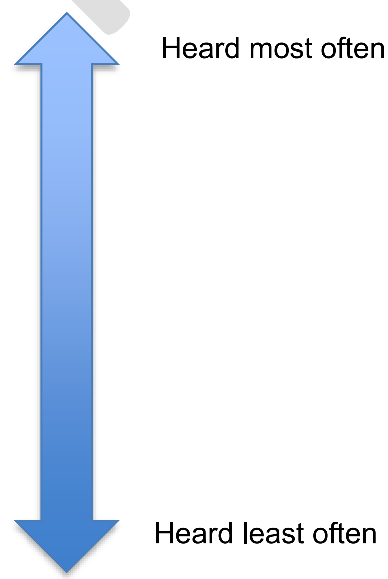
This report summarises the findings from a targeted survey distributed to Nottinghamshire County Council members, focusing on their time commitments, community engagement practices, collaboration with local stakeholders, and views on future support. 16 Councillors responded to the survey.

Summary of responses

The majority of Councillors' time is taken up with communication and engagement activity, be that answering emails and feedback from residents, local groups and stakeholders, and participating in council meetings and liaison.

The top three issues or priorities heard most often from residents are, in priority order:

- Maintaining roads and pavements
- Tackling anti-social behaviour and reducing crime
- Public transport, roads and parking
- Keeping streets and public areas clean and tidy
- Regeneration of town centres/high streets
- Parks, sports and leisure facilities
- Support/services for older people and vulnerable groups
- Health services and promoting healthy lifestyles
- Decent and affordable homes
- Encouraging community cohesion
- Jobs and supporting people into work
- Activities/facilities for children and young people
- Road safety (speed limits, signage, markings, etc.)
- Schools and places of learning
- Uncontrolled immigration
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
- Community events and supporting local groups



Councillors were asked what would help them to improve engagement and communication with residents and groups such as young people, older people and under-represented communities, and what other support would help them be more effective as a councillor:

- Better advertising of outreach centres
- Dedicated engagement teams
- More physical spaces for interaction
- Improved IT and operational support
- Childcare options and Police interaction
- PA/assistant or Officer support
- Structured communication channels

- Access to local data and updates
- Training on communication tools
- Peer learning and mentoring
- Dedicated assistants or PAs
- Improved officer communication
- Local council offices and meeting spaces

Councillors were asked for an example of how they feel they make a real difference in their community:

- Advocacy & Support: Councillors have actively supported vulnerable individuals, including securing placements for children needing social services and opposing harmful planning proposals.
- Local Improvements: Actions taken include relocating speed limit signs, resolving long-standing issues with community buildings, and addressing anti-social behaviour through collaboration with housing authorities.
- Community Engagement: Councillors have organized inclusive events, supported local groups, and maintained strong visibility and responsiveness within their communities.
- Collaboration: Effective partnerships with Parish Councils and First Responders have enhanced local service delivery and community cohesion.

Councillors were asked what types of projects they would prioritise if they had a larger local budget to support the community:

- Support for Vulnerable Groups: Increased engagement with elderly residents, children, and SEND families through activities, clubs, and tailored services.
- Youth Initiatives: Investment in youth clubs, skill-based social groups, and life-enhancing experiences for young people.
- Infrastructure & Environment: Calls for better public transport, pavement repairs, flood prevention, and cleaner, safer streets.
- Community Facilities: Proposals for a one-stop help centre, enhanced green spaces, and improved community hubs.
- Funding & Investment: Strategic use of Community Development Funds (CDF) and recognition of the need for additional resources beyond CDF for local clubs and services.
- Community Cohesion: Support for events that bring generations together and celebrate local traditions and holidays.
- Safety & Engagement: Desire for more police interaction and projects to reduce antisocial behaviour.

Councillors who had experience of working in district, borough or city councils were asked what works well:

There was limited feedback to this question. One respondent emphasized the importance of keeping councillors informed about local service delivery. A councillor’s use of a departmental email ‘drop-box’ system was praised for improving enquiry handling and building relationships with council officers. One respondent noted improved scrutiny in the absence of personal agendas from specific political groups. One respondent expressed scepticism about Mansfield District Council’s ability to influence Nottinghamshire County Council.

Councillors were asked what one change would most improve how they connect with residents in the future unitary councils, and what support and resources they will need:

- Dedicated community engagement days
- Local offices with parking and assistants
- Unified digital platforms
- Locality boards for structured engagement
- Better integration with Parish/Town Councils

Supported by

- IT support and operational guidance
- Regular informal meetings
- Councillor ‘buddy’ systems
- Administrative assistance
- Training on governance models
- Increased allowances for time demands

RBC Member Engagement workshop feedback

Vision

1. What elements of the vision really resonate with you?

- The focus on citizens at the heart of service delivery strongly resonated.
- The mention of heritage and a connected region were well received.
- The vision's aspirational intent was appreciated, particularly its emphasis on joined-up, efficient service delivery.
- The inclusion of arts and culture in both visions was viewed positively.
- Both visions should express integration and collaboration, bringing councils together to deliver seamless public services.
- A potential unifying strapline, such as "Bringing Services Together to Serve You Better," could help communicate this shared ambition.

2. Which bits of the vision will best resonate with communities, businesses, and key stakeholders?

- A clear emphasis on delivering effective, value-for-money services will resonate most strongly.
- Residents and businesses will appreciate joined-up and tailored services that reflect local needs.
- For the city unitary, the focus should be on economic development and innovation; for the rural unitary, on environmental stewardship, heritage, and protecting traditional communities.
- The phrase "a great place to live" should be included in the rural council's wording.
- Communities will respond positively to a vision that demonstrates authenticity, accessibility, and plain English.
- Reference to digital enablement is welcome, but it must be balanced with support for those who are not digitally confident.
- A vision that recognises the role of councillors in engagement and decision-making will carry more credibility.
- Local identity matters, both councils should reflect civic traditions (e.g., Lord Mayor, High Sheriff, Mayoral references) across the whole county, not confined to one area.

3. Is there anything missing?

- The vision currently feels too generic, removing "Nottingham and Nottinghamshire" would make it difficult to tell where it applies.
- It risks reading like a sales brochure: polished but lacking substance or local resonance.
- The financial reality of the current context should be acknowledged, aspirations must appear credible given public concern about the city's financial state.
- The vision should emphasise delivering services effectively for the public rather than organisational change.
- Hyper-local representation terminology did not land well; plain English alternatives are needed.
- The urban vision feels overly Nottingham-centric, while the rural version lacks ambition. Both should demonstrate how they will connect and complement each other.
- Consider renaming:

    - Urban → **Metropolitan** (reflecting mixed urban/rural areas).
    - Rural → **Town and Country** (instead of "Suburban").
- The language and tone risk alienating rural communities, particularly Rushcliffe, if the city is positioned too prominently.
- Stronger reference to environmental sustainability and active travel infrastructure (cycling, walking, e-scooters) is needed.
- Include councillor engagement and community input, currently light in the vision.
- Plain English and clarity should replace overly corporate phrasing.
- Ensure shared straplines and wording to reflect a common purpose and service model between both unitaries.
- Vision should recognise that in theory savings may exist, but in practice communication and coordination costs could rise.
- The risk remains that residents may see this as "moving the deck chairs" rather than meaningful reform.
- The human element and personal touch must not be lost under a larger, more remote structure.
- Ensure references to civic traditions (Lord Mayor, High Sheriff) are used correctly and reflect county-wide significance.

Neighbourhood Governance exploring links with Town and Parish Councils and the local voice.

1. How can you in your role act as conduit to best support town and parishes on their LGR journey?

- Recognition that town and parish structures, governance and operating models are varied across the borough. Consideration to be given on how best to engage and give greater responsibilities reflecting these differences.
- Members can serve as connectors between unitaries and parishes, facilitating two-way communication and co-design of local services
- New structures could include area action partnerships or community development teams to embed localism.
- Training and capacity-building support, potentially led by district or borough teams, should strengthen local capability.

2. What are the opportunities for town and parishes to take on greater responsibilities under new governance arrangements?

- Opportunities exist for parishes to manage local parks, open spaces, leisure, planning in some circumstances, and community events, but only if resources, funding, and officer support are provided.
- Some town and parish councils lack the capacity or experience to take on new responsibilities, e.g., expanding the lengthsman service is currently difficult.
- Devolution must come with budget and officer support, not simply the transfer of responsibilities.
- Address the shortage of trained clerks and the lack of remuneration that currently limits local council effectiveness.
- Unitary resources should be deployed locally to assist town and parish councils.

- New models must avoid becoming overly bureaucratic.
- Clarify what “greater responsibilities” truly means, particularly around planning powers and service delivery.
- *Desired Outcomes:*
    - Statutory services delivered effectively and economically.
    - Non-statutory services protected and enhanced where headroom allows.
    - Easy access to core services at a local level.
- *How can the integrity of town and parish councils be maintained and enhanced?*
    - Town and parish councils must be properly resourced, trained, and supported to remain credible and effective.
    - Membership must be strengthened, resolve allowances, avoid co-opting, attract quality and quantity of councillors.
    - Clerks should be adequately paid and professionally supported.
    - Councils should remain democratically elected and formally constituted, avoiding symbolic or tokenistic roles.
    - Consider modernising terminology: “Neighbourhood Council” or “Community Council” may encourage wider participation.
    - Avoid replacing existing councils with area committees; these should complement, not duplicate or undermine, existing governance.
    - Ensure devolution of budgets and powers is matched with accountability and regulatory oversight.
    - Maintain each area’s local identity and civic traditions.
    - Communication between parishes, unitaries, and the combined authority must be structured and consistent.
    - Recognise that some parishes currently exist only on paper or lack participation, build a realistic support framework for sustainability.

3. What are the best ways to ensure local voices are still heard?

- Local representation must remain elected, not based on unelected “stakeholder” forums.
- Introduce or retain Area Planning Committees to ensure planning remains locally informed.
- Encourage public engagement through surgeries, meetings, and accessible digital channels (with support for the digitally excluded).
- Maintain single-member wards where possible to sustain community connection.
- Clarify language, residents identify with their neighbourhood and village, but not larger administrative layers.
- Ensure smaller villages are not overshadowed within broader governance structures.
- Build a culture of engagement, encouraging regular public participation in local decision-making.

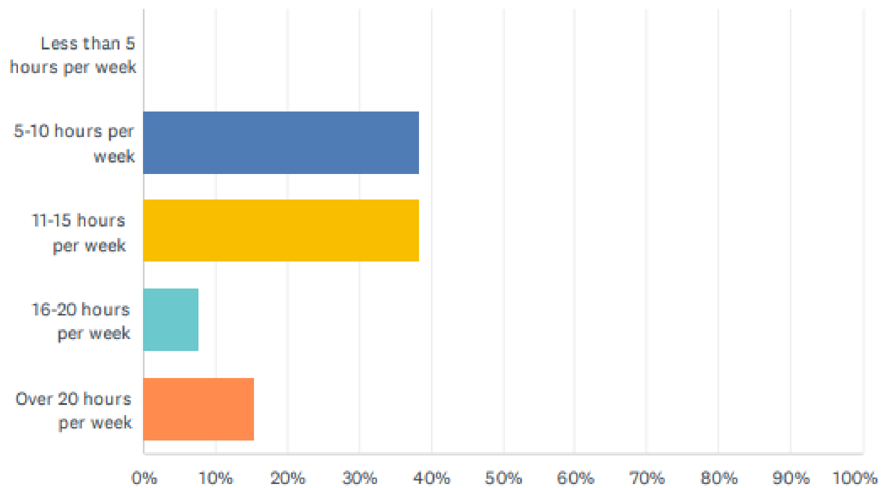
RBC Member Engagement Survey feedback

Survey Responses

Member engagement in your communities

Q1 On average, how many hours per week do you dedicate to your Rushcliffe Borough Council councillor role?

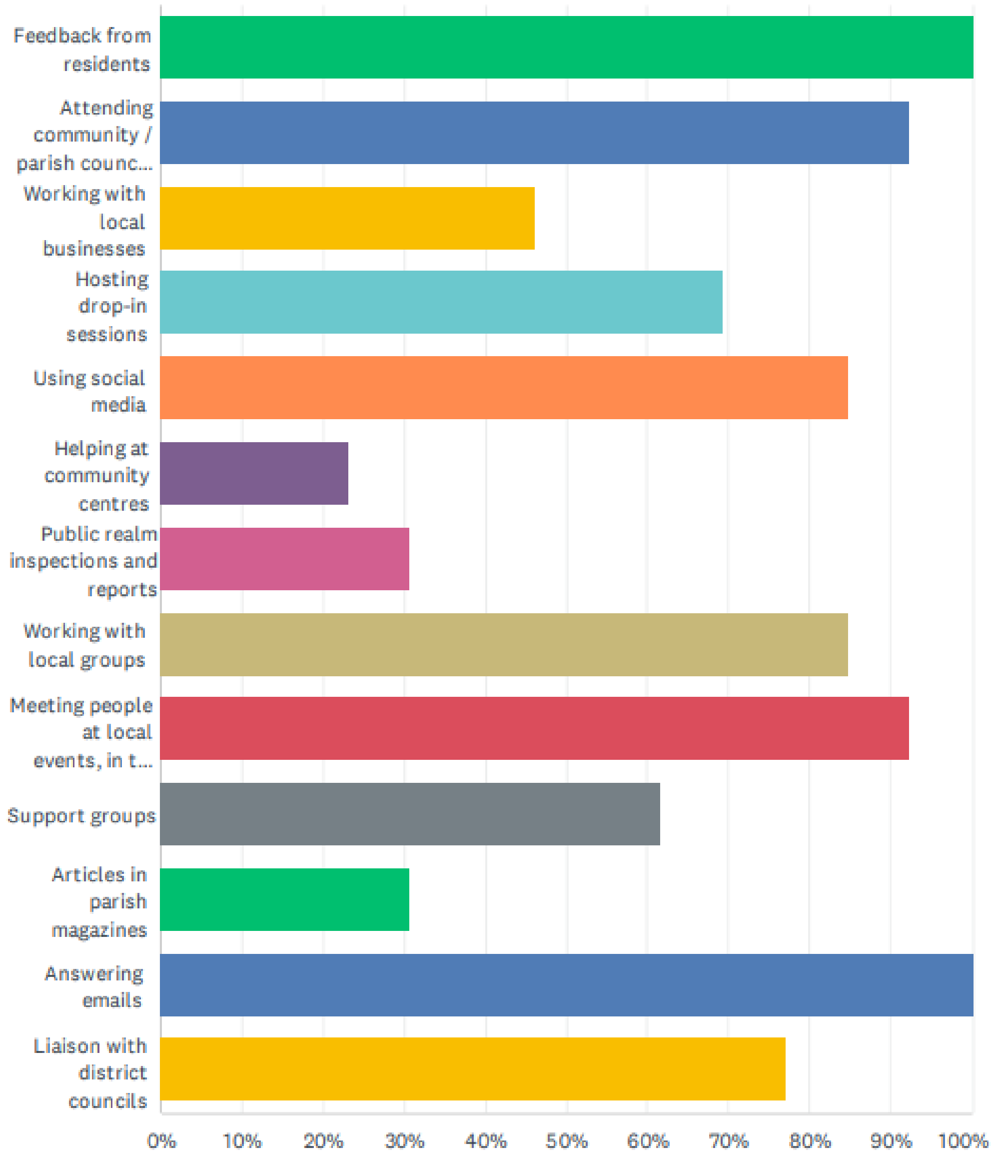
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 5 hours per week	0.00%	0
5-10 hours per week	38.46%	5
11-15 hours per week	38.46%	5
16-20 hours per week	7.69%	1
Over 20 hours per week	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

Q2 Which of the following activities do you carry out in your local area?

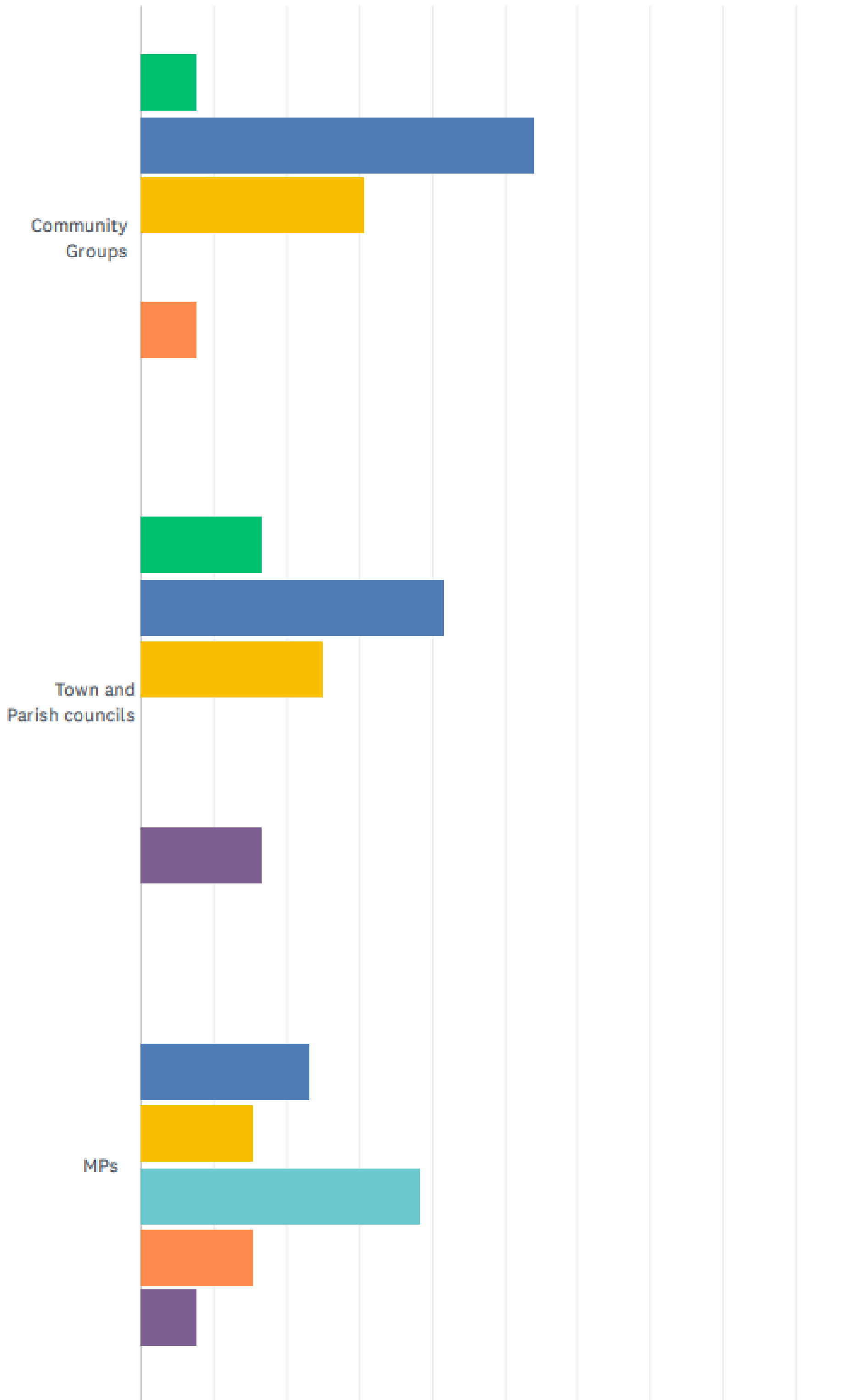
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

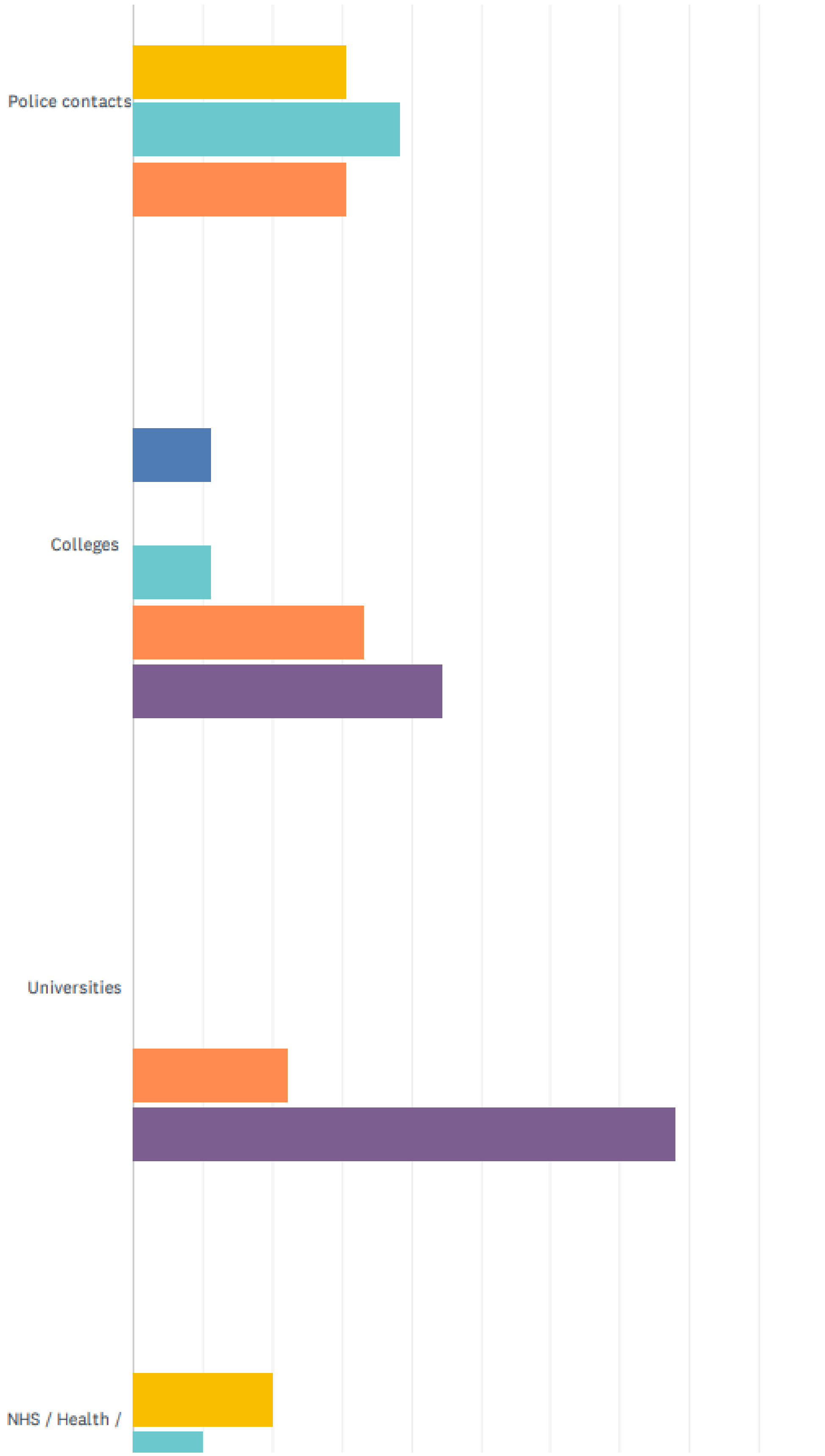


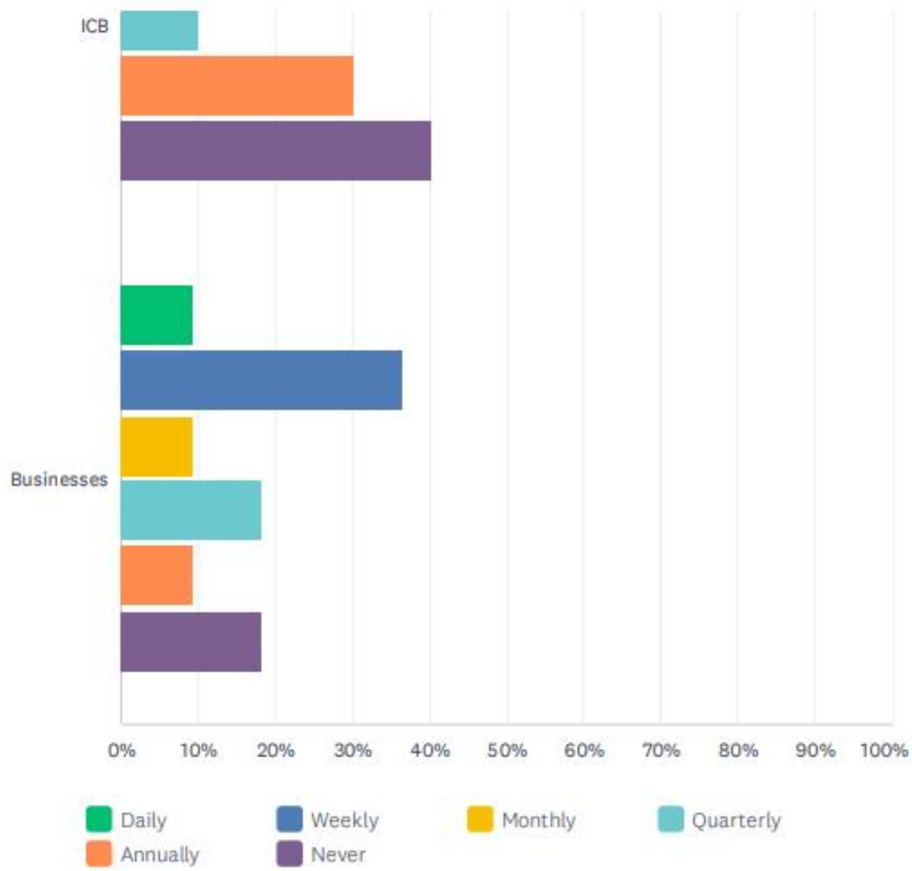
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Feedback from residents	100.00%	13
Attending community / parish council meetings	92.31%	12
Working with local businesses	46.15%	6
Hosting drop-in sessions	69.23%	9
Using social media	84.62%	11
Helping at community centres	23.08%	3
Public realm inspections and reports	30.77%	4
Working with local groups	84.62%	11
Meeting people at local events, in the streets and working with charities	92.31%	12
Support groups	61.54%	8
Articles in parish magazines	30.77%	4
Answering emails	100.00%	13
Liaison with district councils	76.92%	10
Total Respondents: 13		

Q3 How often do you engage with the following?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0




Police contacts
Colleges
Universities
NHS / Health /



	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY	NEVER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Community Groups	7.69% 1	53.85% 7	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	13	2.46
Town and Parish councils	16.67% 2	41.67% 5	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16.67% 2	12	2.75
MPs	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	15.38% 2	38.46% 5	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	13	3.69
Police contacts	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	30.77% 4	38.46% 5	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	13	4.00
Colleges	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	33.33% 3	44.44% 4	9	5.00
Universities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	77.78% 7	9	5.78
NHS / Health / ICB	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	30.00% 3	40.00% 4	10	4.90
Businesses	9.09% 1	36.36% 4	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	11	3.36

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY WHO AND HOW FREQUENTLY)	DATE
1	Residents weekly or more	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	There is no not applicable option here but the area I represent is not parished and there are no	11/5/2025 12:25 AM

	nearby colleges or universities	
3	Residents - in touch on a daily basis	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
4	Sheltered accommodation - residents meetings -bi monthly	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
5	voluntary groups twice a year	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
6	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q4 What are the top three issues or priorities you hear most often from residents?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	need for new health centre ASB, young people and inconsiderate parking increased traffic levels, roads (potholes), speeding	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Parking ASB Pot-holes	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	VAT on Small Businesses, abandoned houses on Ruddington Green & traffic/lack of parking.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Forest Football parking Planning Local Natural Environment	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Planning, roads, canal,	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Transportation- bus service and rat run& speeding issues Planning issues - numerous Mix - flooding, social problems, vegetation issues,etc	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Development concerns; anti-social behaviour; roads/pavements	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Need for a new Health Centre in the village Recycling Flooding	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	State of the roads, rural environmental issues, this being a Rural Ward, Planning, litter and fly tipping.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Noise from bars, planning concerns, environmental issues, issues with registered providers, state of the pavements, parking issues from Forest matches, bins on pavements.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	space for the new bins Why are we reorganising as it works well as it is and no one wants bigger authorities concerns about HMOs' and the impact on immediate neighbours	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Planning Issues including potential breach of contract by developers (especially within Sharphill wood new developmenr, Housig Allocation Scheme/Banding, Street wise issue/maintenance. But I have been contacted for issues outside the statutory duties of RBC (such Pension Funding, Ethical investment, role of councillors to support peace and conflict resolution, winter fuel allowance...	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Planning Issues Council Tax Local Government Reorganisation	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q5 What would help you engage more effectively with residents? In particular, what support, if any, would help you engage with specific groups, such as young people, older people and underrepresented communities?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Funding for health centre and places for young people to go. it is important that when we need to report problems e.g. issues with rented housing, that officers are willing and able to offer advice and sources of help.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Not having a day job to be able to attend events and go around the town during the week day.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Help getting out communications and the work we are doing to our residents. The focus on Cabinet members does mean some our work locally doesn't get advertised, which is a shame.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Having more time!	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	It would help if officers were more community minded rather authority driven	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Nothing comes to mind other than having more available time to do so.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Information leaflets / web materials on particular topics to give to residents / direct them to	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	More understanding of community issues and public/communities in general by council officers. Too often answers from council officer are generic and do not relate to live situations	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
9	A comprehensive guide to voluntary community support groups within my ward.Also knowledge of supported housing for residents with learning disabilities. Clearer lines of communication with registered providers. Improved responses - or any response from Severn Trent!	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
10	I currently produce a twice a year newsletter for my ward which produces a flurry of responses. This takes time and resources to produce and deliver to households.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
11	A vibrant democratic participatory youth and children's council with cross communication with full council and RBC officers and councillors. Dispersing decision making with neighbourhoods and residents assemblies. Opening up council's decision making bodies and encourage participation engagement. Proactively engage with local trade unions, tenants associations, refugeee forums, BAME and LGBT, disability networks and elavate their voices and political prioritisations.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
12	Holding dedicated meetings at the Arena or local venues in wards to discuss certain topics or areas/issues of concern	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q6 What is one example of a time you felt you made a real difference in community?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Working with MTVH and their contractors to help residents whose homes were being refurbished and it was not going well. Helping residents of managed estates to start to form residents associations to challenge injustices from council, managing agents/companies and developers.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Getting a new play area built	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Helped a communication breakdown between a resident & Metropolitan.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Helping people with planning and housing	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Winning for the community on a very controversial planning appeal hearing	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	When I tried to help with the school bus service and lack of seatbelts When I run surgeries and speak with people	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Raising issue of fly-tipping further up the agenda resulting in RBC's partnership with Wise.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Getting support structures out in place to prevent glass recycling bins (x 13 of them) tipping over and shedding broken glass across Co-op car park every time the car park floods - 2-3 times per year	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	Engaging with the community and successfully Fighting a planning appeal at full enquiry. Also putting across resident concerns re road safety and getting speed limit and road marking altered.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Setting up a friends group to save Lutterell hall from demolition.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	canvasing views on the reduced bus timetable and sending a petition to the bus company to request the number of buses increase. This eventually with follow up got the increase requested.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	When I supported a 72 year old transwoman, who was handed a section 21 no fault eviction note to vacate a property she has been living for 17 years with all that it entails (losing a social network of support) to apply for social housing and be housed in an area within close proximity with her last accommodation.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Supporting local community groups	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q7 If funding was available to support local communities, what types of local projects would you prioritise?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	New health centre Facilities for young people, e.g. teen café Refurbish the village centre to make it more attractive	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	to build community infrastructure, be physical and help groups that get people together so they feel apart of the community.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Youth provision and the rebuilding of community assets. In Ruddington that would be our Community Centre.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Active travel/road safety infrastructure Street planting Public transport provision Waste reduction	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Community transport however in my area the canal	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Woodland and land maintenance Social activities	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Anything that supports volunteers and groups providing community-focused work/opprtunities.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Traffic calming through East and West Leake main streets Setting up a fully-funded youth club or drop in service further environmental improvements to housing stock	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	In general engagement with young people in schools so they understand the real world, where they fit in, employment opportunities and how they can make a difference - This is their world, their future. In my Ward reinstatement of the Grantham Canal as of beneficial use in Rushcliffe for Leisure, Health and environment.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	A project that mapped local support services already in the community and brought voluntary/ community groups together to prevent repetition and address gaps. More support for young mums and carers.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	I currently support local voluntary groups which need funding for equipment. so gardening projects and signage for projects	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Local trade unions, especially those unionising hospitality workers and those with intersectional marginalised identities. With emphasis on casualised almost forgotten workforce such as Uber drivers, deliveroo workers. Ensuring every corner of our Borough has unioninised living wage employees with safe, secure emplyment and decent terms and conditions. Tenants associations as the guarantors of safe, accessible, affordable housing (meeting the diverse needs of our community addressing cultural issues, different perceptual systems, functional abilities, age ranges, linguistic diversity, workers, retired, students, unemployed, refugess) Food banks, refugee forums, mutual aid networks, regenerative care Setting up primary school children's council/forums, re invirogare young people's council, setting up citizen's assemblies	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Dementia Support Ethnic Community Support Groups	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q8 If you are a parish councillor what support do you receive from Nottinghamshire Association of Local Council (NALC)?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	none	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Access to the training courses and newsletters	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	N/A	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	N/A	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	I am but none directly. They do support the zpC generally	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
6	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Not used their resources	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	N/A	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
9	NA.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
10	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q9 What support, if any, would help you be more effective as a councillor?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	see question 5	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Being able to have more time and social media.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Help with promoting us on all media channels.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Admin support	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	A better understanding by officers of communities and place. Everything is not necessarily 'black and white' no two places are the same	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
7	Clear, timely briefings when asked for	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
8	Relevant face to face training - not generic tick box training, which is not training at all simply dictation - not usually relevant	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
9	More support in dealing with case work.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
10	being with other councillors other than just in meetings I am the only Lib dem so I am not included in the leaders briefings so I don't always know what is happening.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
11	To be more effective as a councillor, I need support that strengthens collective, participatory forms of governance. The most valuable support would be structural , creating time, space, and institutional legitimacy for citizens' assemblies, neighbourhood forums, and community co-operatives to shape policy directly. Dedicated community development officers to help organise and facilitate assemblies, ensuring inclusion of tenants, young people, and marginalised groups. Training and coordination spaces with local trade unions, tenant associations, and voluntary sector groups to co-design policy, monitor service delivery, and ensure accountability to everyday realities. Ensuring decisions are co-owned by communities and that councillors act as facilitators of democratic life.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
12	Regular Officer Support, not only when requested which is very helpful but perhaps one-to-one contact points in each directorate to share issues or solicit additional support	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q10 If you are also a County Councillor, what support do you receive from County that works well and that we could learn from?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	n/a	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	N/A	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
3	N/A	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
4	N/A	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
5	NA	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
6	N/A	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
7	NA.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
8	N/A	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q11 What one change would most improve how councillors connect with residents in the future unitary council(s)?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Local committees that can be the link between these overlarge, remote organisations. The role of borough councillors is to be that link and it will be lost.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Better presence on social media	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Less political bias on media channels	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Proportional representation	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	Maintaining local councillors familiar with their area who can liaise face to face. In many cases there is room for vast improvement. Residents still need councillor input to understand complex application processes imposed by authorities we are now being driven by outside consultants and imposed inflexible software	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Being able to do a quarterly newsletter by social media or direct signnups	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	Electing good Councillors.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Dedicated space for Cllrs to host drop-ins - plus increased allowance to make up for lost work time	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	I am afraid there will be little or no councillor connection with residents - cost savings will ultimately lead to chatbot contact. I am very much a face to face councillor and work closely with my communities - this will all go!	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	The unitary authority would be responsible for all public services provided which would simplify things for residents and councillors alike.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	More understanding of the day to day functions of work streams. I attend a cil group but how they get to the decisions they want confirming in meetings isn't clear. Some aspects of the councils functions are still mysterious. residents want their say at planning committee where there is concerns about an application	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Setting up of open forum's and people's assemblies, so we are embedded in our areas/neighborhoods/communities. Creating a link to deliberate on commmunity groups priorities/campaigning issues.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	Closer 'on the ground' ward support for residents...the future unitary councils will create a vacuum between councillors appreciating local issues and a more centralised structure	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Q12 What types of support and resources do you believe councillors will need to effectively serve their communities in the new unitary council(s)?

Answered: 13   Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Access to named officers of the new councils. Officers with responsibility for particular areas so that they gain a more comprehensive understanding of the local issues. This new system has the potential to become remote from the reality of the communities.	11/6/2025 12:41 PM
2	Social media training and understanding to use effectively.	11/5/2025 5:55 PM
3	Good communication and involvement in the all new systems and policies from the beginning.	11/5/2025 11:52 AM
4	Town council in West Bridgford so that local democracy is not lost	11/5/2025 12:25 AM
5	More face to face liaison with residents and council officers less tick box regime. We deliver services to humane being not robots	11/4/2025 6:21 PM
6	Better allowance so can spend more time sorting out issues for people Training to understand how all the different service provisions work	11/4/2025 5:44 PM
7	It's all about understanding the decision making structure. Helping people to understand who is making a particular decsion and how. The 'soft power' stuff.	11/4/2025 4:45 PM
8	Open, transparent information - without political spin - a decent, accessible website that is easy to navigate, has the right info presented in easy bitesize chunks. Keep localism at the fore - not centralised and distant - officers who know the area and can respond with a good depth of knowledge	11/4/2025 3:50 PM
9	As above - The personal councillor who knows their patch will ultimately go. All very worrying.	10/31/2025 2:02 PM
10	Better training and more admin support from officers. More focus on case-work and how best to support residents with often complex issues.	10/28/2025 2:30 PM
11	More councillors. The new councils will give each councillor a much bigger area to cover. I am not going to stand as a result of the changes.	10/23/2025 11:22 AM
12	Under a new unitary structure, councillors risk becoming even more remote from the people they represent unless deliberate measures are taken to devolve power downward. To serve communities effectively, councillors will need: 1. Institutional frameworks for participatory democracy, formal recognition and resourcing of citizens' assemblies, ward-level budgets, and co-decision structures that give residents real authority over spending, planning, and service priorities. 2. Local infrastructure for collaboration, physical and digital spaces where councillors, NGOs, unions, tenants, and residents can meet regularly to deliberate and act. 3. Funding autonomy, ring-fenced participatory funds that can be co-allocated through local assemblies rather than top-down officer discretion. 4. Transparent data access and open-source tools ensuring councillors and community partners can scrutinise contracts, budgets, and outcomes without bureaucratic barriers. 5. A culture of solidarity and mutual learning , cross-ward networks of councillors, activists, and community organisers sharing tactics for democratic engagement and resistance to centralisation.	10/18/2025 5:10 PM
13	The ability to engage closely with residents which will become more difficult with more residents to look after and disengaged due to the increased ward sizes with new unitary structures	10/16/2025 4:43 PM

Town and Parish Councillor engagement

Placeholder – content to be finalised

NCC Overview Committee Recommendations

Overview Committee 5 November 2025

Neighbourhood Governance arrangements

- That proposals around the development of neighbourhood governance models should clearly show how they will effectively deliver public services and meet local need at a very local level. Neighbourhood governance arrangements should also enable residents to be able influence how services are delivered in their local communities.

- The structure of neighbourhood governance arrangements should be as streamlined as possible, with the aim of avoiding excessive bureaucracy and duplication to fully realise the potential benefits of local government reorganisation.

- Consideration should be given to show how models of neighbourhood governance could work in partnership with existing Town and Parish Councils.

- Consideration should be given to how neighbourhood governance in non-parished areas could operate effectively and how arrangements in these areas may need to vary from how neighbourhood governance is delivered in areas with Town or Parish Councils.

Engaging with Town and Parish Councils

- That the proposal should include a map showing the areas covered by Town and Parish Councils in Nottinghamshire (as well as the areas where there is no Town or Parish Council).

- There should be clear proposals about how Town and Parish Councils will be engaged and worked with in the formulation and delivery of neighbourhood governance arrangements in their areas.

- That the proposal should clearly set out how the Town and Parish Councils will be engaged with during the period of setting up of the new Councils. This work should involve county councillors, town and parish councillors, as well as local residents. This work should be used to harness existing knowledge on the needs of local communities.

Number of elected members on the new Councils

- The number of elected members proposed for each of the new Councils should ensure that there are sufficient members in place to effectively support residents with case work enquiries.

- There should be sufficient elected members in place across the new councils to ensure that accessibility to elected members by residents is not negatively impacted by the change to how local government is structured in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Engaging with District and Borough Councils

- The proposal should clearly set out how existing Councils will work together during the process of establishing the new councils to enable the sharing of knowledge, expertise and best practice around the effective delivery of all the services that the new Councils will be delivering. This work should be used to harness existing knowledge around how services can best be delivered to meet local needs.