

North East Derbyshire District Council

Cabinet

26 February 2026

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Statutory Consultation Response

Report of Cllr K Gillott, Cabinet Member with responsibility for LGR

Classification: This report is public

Report By: Lee Hickin Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Lee Hickin

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

This report provides Members with:

- a summary of the statutory consultation process undertaken by Government in relation to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR); and
- a proposed **full set of responses to the Government's statutory consultation questions**, reflecting **Option A1** as set out in **Appendix 3** of the *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* Case for Change presented to Council in October.

The report is intended to inform Members and to provide a clear, consistent and comprehensive basis for the Council's engagement with the Government's statutory consultation on LGR proposals for Derbyshire.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

2.1 Note the statutory consultation process for Local Government Reorganisation in Derbyshire.

2.2 Agree the proposed responses to the Government's statutory consultation questions set out in **section 6** of this report, including explicit support for **Option A1** within the *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* proposals and use the wording in the report to inform the response to all Derbyshire consultation questions.

2.3 Delegate any minor changes to the final response, for all Derbyshire consultation questions, to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Approved by the Portfolio Holder – Cllr Gillott Cabinet Member with responsibility for LGR

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk:

Yes

No

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Financial implications associated with Local Government Reorganisation are addressed in the Case for Change and supporting documentation previously reported to Council.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection):

Yes

No

Local Government Reorganisation is governed by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and associated secondary legislation.

Agreeing responses to the statutory consultation does not determine the final outcome, which remains a matter for Government and Parliament.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing:

Yes

No

There are no direct staffing implications arising from this report

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Decision Information	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: NEDDC: Revenue - £125,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £310,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	None
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) details:	
Stage 1 screening undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed EIA stage 1 to be appended if not required to do a stage 2 	No, not applicable.
Stage 2 full assessment undertaken <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed EIA stage 2 needs to be appended to the report 	No, not applicable.
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cabinet <input type="checkbox"/> SMT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes Details:

Links to Council Plan priorities; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A great place that cares for the environment A great place to live well A great place to work A great place to access good public services
All

REPORT DETAILS

1 Background

- 1.1 Following publication of the English Devolution White Paper in December 2024, councils in two-tier areas were invited by Government to develop and submit proposals for Local Government Reorganisation.

- 1.2 In Derbyshire, the eight district and borough councils and Derby City Council worked collaboratively to develop a shared Case for Change proposing the creation of two new unitary councils: one covering North Derbyshire and one covering South Derbyshire.
- 1.3 The Case for Change included several options for the configuration of the two unitary councils, including alternative approaches to the alignment of Amber Valley. These options, and their respective benefits and impacts, are set out in Appendix 3 to the Case for Change.
- 1.4 The proposals were approved by Cabinet, following a six-week public consultation undertaken locally by the participating councils.

2. Statutory Consultation Process for Local Government Reorganisation

- 2.1 The statutory framework for Local Government Reorganisation is set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 2.2 Government has published a staged process for considering LGR proposals. In summary, this comprises:
 - invitation to councils to submit proposals
 - submission of formal proposals
 - **statutory consultation undertaken by Government**
 - ministerial decision on whether to implement a proposal (with or without modification)
 - preparation and approval of secondary legislation; and
 - a transition period leading to vesting day for the new unitary authority or authorities.
- 2.3 Statutory consultation is a national process led by the Secretary of State. Before implementing any proposal, the Secretary of State must consult:
 - any council affected that has not submitted the proposal; and
 - any other persons or bodies considered appropriate.
- 2.4 Responses received through the statutory consultation are considered alongside the submitted proposals and other relevant evidence. Ministers must have regard to these representations when deciding which proposal, if any, should be implemented.
- 2.5 In addition to the Derbyshire consultation, there are consultations underway for LGR proposals in Nottinghamshire and Staffordshire that through the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) and the High Peak and Staffordshire Moorlands Strategic Alliance, have a relationship to the Derbyshire proposal. The proposal is for the Council not to participate in those consultation processes.
- 2.6 The consultation closes on the 26 March 2026.

3. Options for Derbyshire and the preferred option for North East Derbyshire

3.1 The *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* Case for Change identifies two base options (Options A and B) and two modified options (Options A1 and B1) for the configuration of the proposed northern and southern unitary councils.

3.2 **Option A1** is a modification of Option A. It proposes:

- a north/south split of Derbyshire into two unitary councils; and
- a boundary change within Amber Valley using existing parish council geographies as the building blocks for allocating communities to either the northern or southern unitary council.

2.3 Option A1 was included in the public consultation undertaken by Derbyshire councils (referred to as Option C during consultation) and reflects evidence gathered on community identity, functional geography and service alignment.

4. Proposed Responses to the Government's Statutory Consultation Questions

The following section sets out proposed responses to the questions included in the Government's statutory LGR consultation, structured to align with the consultation questionnaire and referencing the Council's preferred option, A1, where relevant. The consultation is largely based on drop down options with an opportunity to provide free text response to some questions. There are 58 questions over the 5 options/variations in the submissions. For each option there are 9 questions the same and those options which split boundaries, two additional questions. The full question trace for each can be found here: [Consultation on Proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Derbyshire and Derby - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Citizen Space](#). Below is the screen image showing the full list of Derbyshire consultation sections the Council will be responding to.

Page	Response
Tell us about yourself (Required)	 0 of 8 questions answered
Personal Data (Required)	 0 of 1 questions answered
Consultation on the Proposal from Derbyshire County Council	 0 of 9 questions answered
Consultation on the Proposal from Amber Valley Borough Council	 0 of 9 questions answered
Consultation on the Proposal from Bolsover District Council and North-East Derbyshire District Council	 0 of 11 questions answered
Consultation on the Proposal from Chesterfield Borough Council, Derby City Council, Erewash Borough Council, and High Peak Borough Council	 0 of 11 questions answered
Consultation on the Proposal from South Derbyshire District Council	 0 of 9 questions answered

Below are example responses which will be used by the CEO to respond to each of the questions in the various sections of the consultation. Where the consultation requires responses to proposals that the Council does not support, the responses will still reflect the Council's assessment of the relative merits of the two-unitary model as a whole, with Option A1 identified as the preferred configuration within that model:

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Response:

Strongly agree

Context:

The *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* model is founded on coherent north and south geographies that reflect existing economic relationships, travel-to-work patterns and public service partnership footprints. The Case for Change demonstrates that these geographies are large enough to support strategic functions and economic resilience, while remaining sufficiently place-based to respond to local priorities.

Overall, the proposed unitary councils are grounded in functional economic areas and represent sensible, balanced and sustainable geographies for future local government.

Within that framework, we specifically support **Option A1**, which is a modification of Option A and proposes a parish-level split of Amber Valley. This option retains the overall two-unitary model while enabling a more locally responsive boundary configuration.

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Response:

Strongly agree

Context:

The Case for Change sets out clear, evidence-based outcomes relating to improved service delivery, financial sustainability, stronger governance and enhanced community engagement. The two-unitary model is supported by detailed financial, service and governance analysis, demonstrating that the proposed councils are of an appropriate scale and capacity to deliver these outcomes.

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Response:

Strongly Agree

Context:

The Case for Change demonstrates that the two-unitary model creates councils of sufficient scale to achieve efficiencies, build organisational capacity and provide greater financial resilience than the current two-tier arrangements. The proposed councils have balanced populations and tax bases, supporting sustainability and the ability to absorb financial pressures while continuing to deliver high-quality services.

The financial case for the two-unitary model is set out in the Case for Change and supporting financial analysis. Option A1 operates within the same overall financial framework and does not materially alter the strategic financial benefits identified, including resilience, efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality sustainable public services?

Response:

Strongly agree

Context:

The Case for Change demonstrates that the two-unitary model is designed to improve service quality by removing duplication, strengthening strategic capacity and enabling more consistent, place-based service delivery. The proposed councils are of sufficient scale and resilience to support long-term sustainability while remaining focused on local needs and outcomes. The Council's preferred option, A1, does not undermine these benefits and instead supports coherent service delivery by allowing for a more nuanced boundary arrangement in Amber Valley.

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Response:

Strongly agree

Context:

The Case for Change was developed collaboratively by Derbyshire's councils and informed by engagement with Members, senior officers and partners, alongside a six-week public consultation with residents and stakeholders. Feedback from this engagement was used to refine the proposals prior to submission to Government.

The proposal has been assessed against the Government's criterion of meeting local needs and reflecting local views, drawing on evidence of community identity, functional geography and existing service and partnership arrangements. The inclusion of Option A1, which uses parish council geographies to respond to community identity within Amber Valley, demonstrates how local feedback has shaped the proposal.

Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements?

Response:

Agree

Context:

The *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* model creates unitary councils of an appropriate scale to act as effective strategic partners to the EMCCA. The proposed north/south configuration aligns well with existing functional economic areas and public service partnership footprints, strengthening Derbyshire's ability to present a coherent and credible governance structure for further devolution.

By simplifying governance arrangements and clarifying accountability, the proposal provides a stronger foundation for future devolution opportunities while retaining a clear focus on local priorities and place-based decision-making.

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Response:

Strongly Agree

Context:

The *One Derbyshire, Two Councils* model is explicitly designed to be “*big enough to deliver, but close enough to listen*”, strengthening local engagement by simplifying governance and clarifying accountability. The proposal retains and values parish and town councils as a key tier of local democracy, providing a clear mechanism for neighbourhood-level engagement and influence.

By creating unitary councils aligned to coherent geographies and communities, the proposal supports more effective place-based working and creates the conditions for enhanced community involvement and neighbourhood empowerment.

Question 9: This is a proposal that is accompanied by a request that the Secretary of State considers a boundary change or that affects wider public services. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal sets out a strong public services and financial sustainability justification for a boundary change?

Response:

Strongly agree

10. If you would like to, please use this free text box to explain your answer to question 9.

The Case for Change demonstrates that boundary modifications within the two unitary model are driven by service coherence, financial resilience and long term sustainability rather than administrative convenience. Option A1 specifically provides a justified and proportionate boundary change by using parish council geographies within Amber Valley to better align communities with service delivery patterns, while maintaining the overall financial and operational integrity of the two council model.

The financial analysis underpinning the proposal shows that Option A1 operates within the same sustainable financial framework as the wider two unitary model, ensuring that the boundary change supports efficient service delivery, balanced tax bases and resilience to future financial pressures.

11. I confirm that I have not provided any information that identifies an individual in the free text boxes.

5 Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The statutory consultation process for Local Government Reorganisation seeks the Council's responses to all consultation questions. Submitting responses will ensure that the Council's position, including our support for Option A1, is clearly and consistently articulated to Government

6 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 To not submit a response. Rejected - not submitting a response fails to clearly and consistently articulated to Government the Councils position.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers	
None	