Local government reorganisation

Chief Culture & Leisure Officers Association

9 December 2025

www.local.gov.uk

LGR - Areas involved

- **South East:**
  - Berkshire (not formally – but Reading and West Berks looking to change boundaries)
  - East and West Sussex (including Brighton) (also DPP)
  - Hampshire (including Isle of Wight, Portsmouth, Southampton) (also DPP)
  - Kent (including Medway)
  - Oxfordshire
  - Surrey
- **East:**
  - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
  - Essex (including Southend-on-Sea, Thurrock) (also DPP)
  - Hertfordshire
  - Norfolk (also DPP)
  - Suffolk (also DPP)
- **North West:**
  - Lancashire (including Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool)

- **South West:**
  - Devon (including Plymouth and Torbay)
  - Gloucestershire
- **East Midlands:**
  - Derbyshire (including Derby City)
  - Leicestershire (including Leicester City, Rutland)
  - Lincolnshire (including North Lincolnshire & North East Lincolnshire – both technically in Yorkshire & Humber)
  - Nottinghamshire (including Nottingham City)
- **West Midlands:**
  - Staffordshire & Stoke
  - Warwickshire
  - Worcestershire

(None in London, Yorkshire and Humber, or North East)

(21 county councils, 164 districts & boroughs, 19 unitaries)

Process

Councils invited to submit proposals for new council footprints in their area ([invitation letters](#)).

Ministers decide which proposals meet the criteria and publish these for statutory consultation

Following consultation, ministers decide which proposal to take forward

Structural Changes Order is published,

Section 24 direction issued

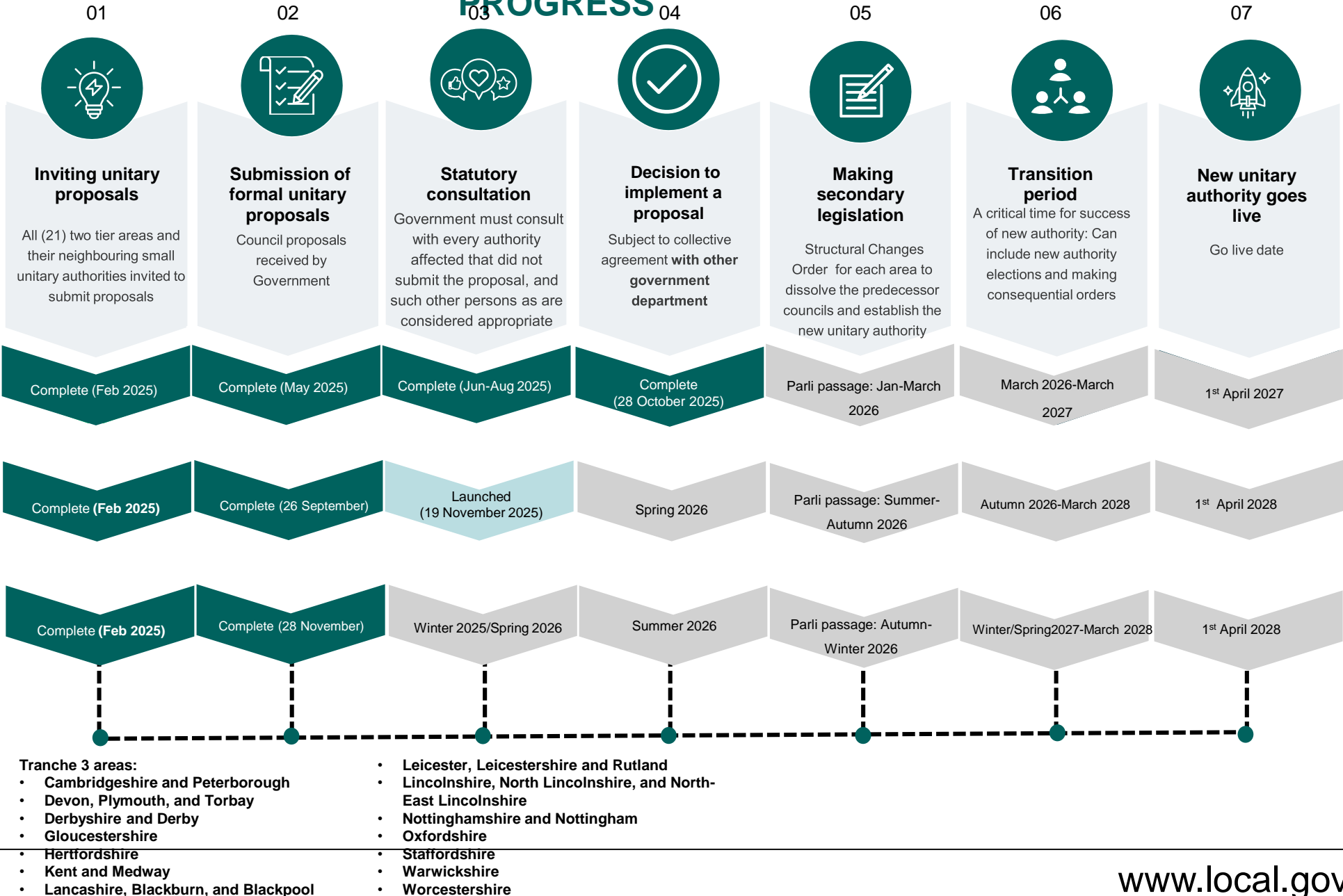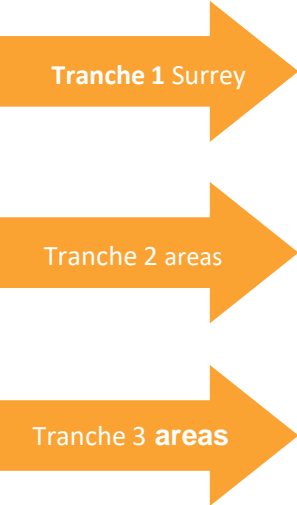Two models for transition– shadow councils or continuing authority.

For shadow councils – shadow elections take place a year before reorganisation, with a shadow council then in place to prepare the new councils for vesting day.

Vesting day – "Day One" for the new councils, and all predecessor councils wound down.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION: TIMELINES AND PROGRESS

	01 Inviting unitary proposals	02 Submission of formal unitary proposals	03 Statutory consultation	04 Decision to implement a proposal	05 Making secondary legislation	06 Transition period	07 New unitary authority goes live
Description	All (21) two tier areas and their neighbouring small unitary authorities invited to submit proposals	Council proposals received by Government	Government must consult with every authority affected that did not submit the proposal, and such other persons as are considered appropriate	Subject to collective agreement **with other government department**	Structural Changes Order for each area to dissolve the predecessor councils and establish the new unitary authority	A critical time for success of new authority: Can include new authority elections and making consequential orders	Go live date
Tranche 1 Surrey	Complete (Feb 2025)	Complete (May 2025)	Complete (Jun-Aug 2025)	Complete (28 October 2025)	Parli passage: Jan-March 2026	March 2026-March 2027	1st April 2027
Tranche 2 areas	Complete (Feb 2025)	Complete (26 September)	Launched (19 November 2025)	Spring 2026	Parli passage: Summer-Autumn 2026	Autumn 2026-March 2028	1st April 2028
Tranche 3 areas	Complete (Feb 2025)	Complete (28 November)	Winter 2025/Spring 2026	Summer 2026	Parli passage: Autumn-Winter 2026	Winter/Spring2027-March 2028	1st April 2028

Tranche 2 areas:
- **East Sussex and Brighton and Hove**
- **Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock**
- **Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight**
- **Norfolk**
- **Suffolk**
- **West Sussex**

Tranche 3 areas:
- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**
- **Devon, Plymouth, and Torbay**
- **Derbyshire and Derby**
- **Gloucestershire**
- **Hertfordshire**
- **Kent and Medway**
- **Lancashire, Blackburn, and Blackpool**

- **Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**
- **Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, and North-East Lincolnshire**
- **Nottinghamshire and Nottingham**
- **Oxfordshire**
- **Staffordshire**
- **Warwickshire**
- **Worcestershire**

www.local.gov.uk

Proposals to date

Area	Current # councils	Possible # councils
Cambs & Peterborough	7	2-3
Derbyshire	10	1-2
Devon	11	3-4
Essex	15	3-5
Gloucestershire	7	1-2
Hampshire	15	4-5
Hertfordshire	11	2-4
Kent	14	1-5
Lancashire	15	2-5
Leicestershire	10	1-3

Lincolnshire	10	2-4
Norfolk	8	1-3
Nottinghamshire	9	2
Oxfordshire	6	1-3
Staffordshire	10	2-4
Surrey	12	2
Sussex & Brighton	15	2-5
Suffolk	6	1-3
Warwickshire	6	1-2
Worcestershire	7	1-2
	204	**35-68**

Our current support offer

- Regional teams as first port of call
- Some adaptation of existing support offers (e.g. Corporate Peer Challenges), some specific LGR support (e.g. networks, webinars, guidance)
- Devolution and LGR Hub

Contents

www.local.gov.uk

Networks

- LGR Delivery Network – this is the main network, open to all those in councils working on the delivery of LGR. ~180 councils are represented on this (over 400 officers)

- LGR Comms and Engagement Network (~190 councils, over 300 officers)

- Digital, Data and Technology network (~80 councils, over 100 officers)

Webinars

- Monthly, open to all
- All presentations recorded & published with summary blog
- Topics to date include workforce, transition, data/IT, finance
- [Devolution and LGR webinars and events](#)
- Ideas to localism@local.gov.uk

LGR Toolkit

- Being developed by Local Partnerships with sector support

- Collate existing resources and tools into a searchable toolkit for councils

- Develop new content to fill gaps

- Focus on sharing knowledge from councils/individuals who have already been through LGR.

- Publication – early 2026.

LGR Toolkit

The first iteration of the Toolkit will focus on the following cross-cutting themes:

- Leadership (political and officer)
- Workforce
- Finance
- Transition planning, service delivery, continuity and compliance
- Governance
- Procurement and supplier alignment, asset management and contract transfer
- Legal services
- Communications and stakeholder engagement (including community engagement)

- Transformation (higher level content, with a focus on how to plan for the authority to be agile enough to progress transformation post vesting day)
- Elections and boundaries
- Aggregating and disaggregating services
- Digital, data and technology (this is likely to be largely covered by a forthcoming MHCLG-funded resource).

The devolution and LGR hub

Devolution and LGR Bulletin sign up

Culture offer

- Cultural Framework
- Cultural Strategies Think Kit
- Joint Cultural Needs Assessment
- Leadership Essentials for Councillors/Officers
- Libraries/Archives guidance