

Supplement for

Cabinet

On **Monday 10 November 2025** At **6.00 pm**

Agenda Item 6 - Local Government Reorganisation - Appendix 4

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6. **Local Government Reorganisation**

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The Chief Executive has submitted a report to agree a preferred option for the creation of three unitary councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire as a proposal to Government for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR); and to submit the proposal to Government by the 28 November 2025.

All Oxfordshire Councils have been invited to submit proposals for Local Government Reorganisation, replacing existing two-tier councils with a single 'unitary' layer of local government. Oxford City Council has been developing a proposal for the creation of three unitary councils across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire. Proposals for two unitaries (covering Oxon & W Berks), and a single unitary (covering Oxon) being developed by other councils in Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. **Note and consider** all three LGR proposals that have been developed by Oxfordshire and West Berkshire councils for the creation of unitary local government across Oxfordshire, which are presented in the appendices:
 - a. Three unitary authorities (Greater Oxford, Northern Oxfordshire and Ridgeway) developed by Oxford City Council
 - b. Two unitary authorities (Oxford and Shires and Ridgeway) developed by West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Berkshire

Council

- c. One unitary authority (Oxfordshire Council) developed by Oxfordshire County Council.
2. **Agree** that Oxford City Council's preferred LGR proposal is for the creation of three new unitary councils covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire, as set out in Appendix One;
3. **Delegate authority** to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Council Leader, to make any further minor amendments to the LGR proposal before its submission to Government in accordance with its prescribed process and requirements to ensure a fully compliant proposal, provided that such amendments do not materially affect the substance of the proposal. This may include the addition of explanatory graphics and case studies, and the design layout of the proposal.

Proposals for the 1 Unitary Authority and 2 Unitary Authority will be published as supplementary agendas.

Appendix 4 (Risk Register) will be published as a late supplement next week.

The agenda, reports and any additional supplements can be found together with this supplement on the committee meeting webpage.

Appendix Four: Risk Register - LGR draft Three Unitary Authorities proposal

Title	Risk Description	Cause	Consequence	Owner	Gross		Current			Target		Control Description	Progress	Date Due	Action Owner
					P	I	P	I	Score	P	I				
Financial	Level of net efficiencies not achieved	While a prudent approach has been taken to modelling of costs and savings, there remain uncertainties around overall level of efficiencies that will be delivered: MTFS outturns for each of 7 constituent councils and management of high cost services up to vesting Funding formula changes Future decisions taken by new unitary councils	A lower level of net efficiencies would lead to a longer payback period for transition costs	Transition Director	3	2	2	2	4	2	2	Detailed financial modelling supported by Pixel Financial, and Inner Circle Consulting Common position on financial data used for modelling among all 7 councils Prudent approach taken, including contingency Projections show all three councils will achieve very strong business growth, that will enable recovery and a business rates position.	100%	Closed	Transition Director
Boundaries	3UA proposal is taken forward without modification	Government does not grant modification requested to enable boundary changes	If Government accepted 3UA proposal but chose not to grant the modification requested to enable boundary changes: Would significantly reduce opportunity to deliver step change in economic growth Would significantly reduce ability to deliver new housing sufficient to meet Oxford's needs close to city	Transition Director	2	4	1	4	4	1	4	Regular dialogue with MHCLG officials throughout development of proposal Advice sought from Boundary Commission KC legal advice taken over structuring of proposal and modification request 18 of 21 English county areas undergoing LGR are understood to include proposals involving boundary changes	100%	Closed	Transition Director
Implementation	Implementation of new councils has negative impacts on existing authorities	A lower level of net efficiencies would lead to a longer payback period for transition costs. Additional workload on officers. Uncertainty over future leads to loss of key staff Councils fail to reach agreement on fully collaborative approach to implementation	Transitional and transformational cost savings are delayed Service levels in existing and/ or new councils are negatively impacted Potential delay to implementation	Transition Director	3	3	2	3	6	1	3	Consistency among outline implementation plans put forward across all three proposals Well understood pathway to creation of new councils with additional support from LGA and MHCLG Strong track record of collaborative working in Oxfordshire	50%	Open	Transition Director

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