

Creating Two Balanced and Financially Sustainable Unitary Councils

Proposal for
Local Government
Reorganisation in
Staffordshire and
Stoke-on-Trent



Foreword

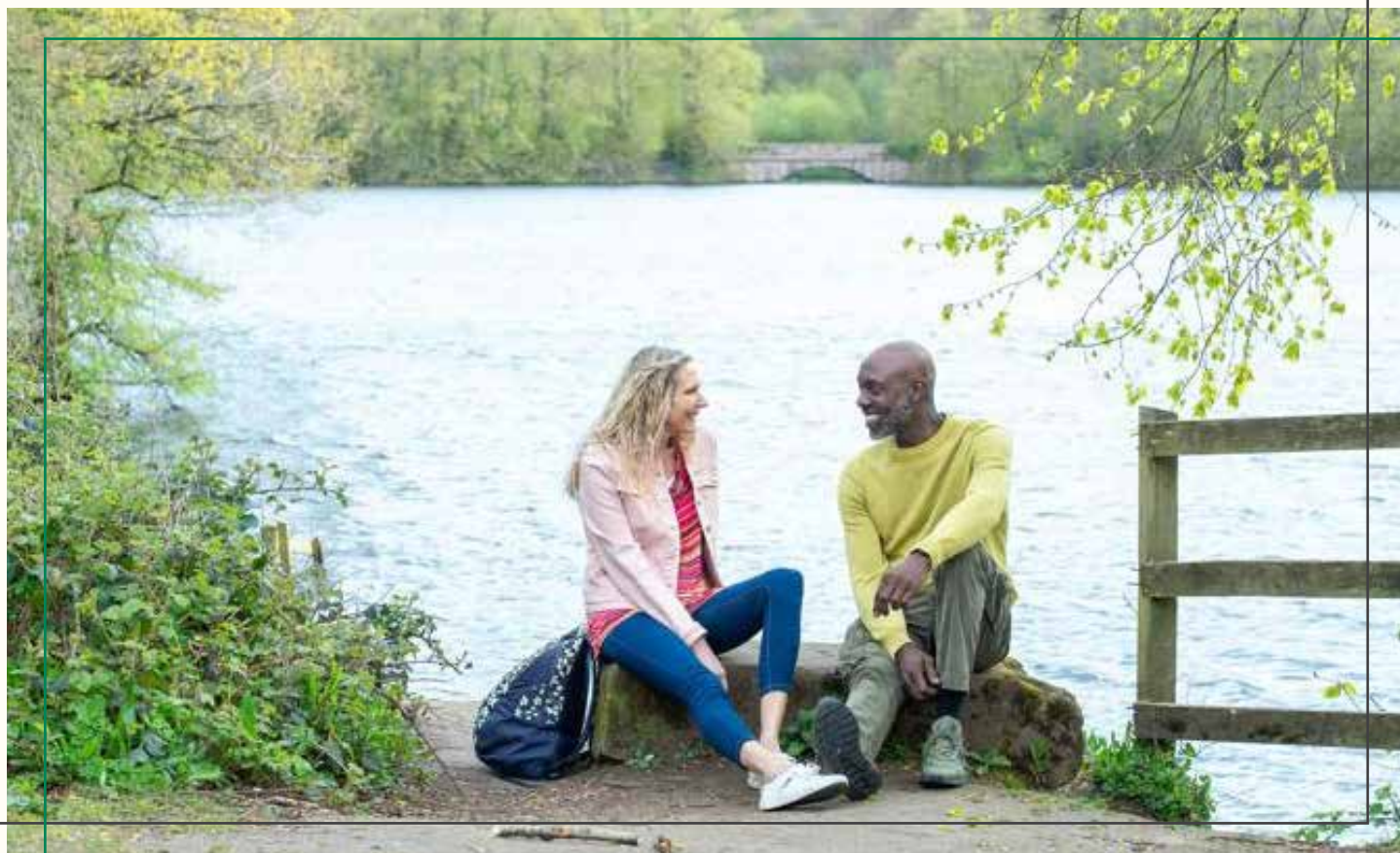
In working towards a new local government landscape for Staffordshire, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council took the deliberate step of not rushing into any premature decision on future structures, when the invitation came from Government to submit an Interim Plan in March 2025.

We took stock of the discussions as a member of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Leaders Board. We noted the early proposal from Stoke-on-Trent City Council and southern districts for a two unitary model placing us in the North alongside Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme, and the desire of Staffordshire County Council to absorb all the districts into one council and keep Stoke-on-Trent as it is.

While we firmly backed moves towards devolution for the county, in line with the rest of the Leaders Board, we wanted to give reorganisation the proper consideration and attention it deserves, for the sake of our residents, businesses and stakeholders – and crucially to consider what might work best for the whole of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

In reading our proposal, we hope that our careful considerations firmly come through as we seek to improve services, give local people more say on decisions that affect them, reduce waste and duplication, and deliver savings to free up the maximum amount of money to be reinvested to ensure positive outcomes for the future.

Our overriding conclusion is that a two unitary solution would work best for Staffordshire, given a



population of 1.13 million, with one council serving the North and another covering Southern and mid-Staffordshire. We believe both would provide sensible economic geographies and reflect established local and cultural identities.

But we go further! We believe the modification of a larger North Staffordshire council, or Enhanced North Staffordshire as we are calling it, is the best way to go: balancing out the populations in the North and Southern and mid-Staffordshire by bringing in towns and villages we believe sit better in the North, giving fairer democratic representation between urban and rural areas, and providing the opportunity for a more equitable council tax base that can help support the known financial challenges faced by Stoke-on-Trent.

Our proposal is the outcome of detailed research and consultation, independent verification and appropriate due diligence. It is a strong fit with the criteria set by Government.

It is built on councillor involvement – we set up a cross-party Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation Sub Committee to work through an options appraisal and develop a preference. We held face-to-face meetings with representatives of our 42 parish and town councils and have helped take them along the journey to change. We have engaged with our residents and businesses and kept members

of parliament informed. We have paid considerable attention to the Government's criteria for LGR and public sector reform, and we have observed developments nationwide as other councils work on their own proposals.

This has been a carefully considered and balanced approach, leading to a proposal we hope Government will find compelling and one worthy of support, as we all strive for a local government structure that will best serve Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent over the coming decades.

Our proposal sees real opportunities for an enhanced North Staffordshire Unitary Council. It will offer a stronger delivery model on a bigger canvass that will fit both national and local priorities such as house building in the right places, a comprehensive public transport system improving connectivity between towns, villages and the city, job creation, upskilling current and future generations, all backed up by first class services that enhance the quality of life for all our residents

We thank you for considering our proposal and we look forward to further engagement with you regarding local government reorganisation in our area.



Councillor Mike Gledhill,
Leader of Staffordshire
Moorlands District Council



Councillor Linda Malyon,
Chair, Staffordshire Moorlands
District Council Devolution and
Local Government Reorganisation
Sub Committee

Executive Summary

Overview

This proposal for local government reorganisation has been developed by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in response to the invitation by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to the 10 local authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

In the invitation the Secretary of State confirmed that six criteria would be used to assess the proposals that are made.

1	Establishing a single tier of local government
2	Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks
3	High quality and sustainable public services
4	Working together to understand and meet local needs
5	Supporting future devolution arrangements
6	Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

This Proposal sets out in detail how it meets the criteria by creating two balanced and financially sustainable unitary councils. It highlights how the proposed new structure will tackle several significant challenges faced by the existing councils

in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and seize the opportunities that reorganisation will bring to improve outcomes for residents

The invitation and guidance issued by the Government has made it clear that, in compliance with the legislation, in any proposal the new unitary structure must be based on existing district (or county) area boundaries, and these should be the building blocks for a proposal. It acknowledges that councils may seek to deliver boundary changes as part of a proposal and in these cases, it should include a Base Proposal using districts as building blocks and, in parallel as part of the submission, request the Secretary of State to modify boundaries using his powers of modification. The proposed modification should achieve an even better outcome than the Base Proposal and strong justification should be made.

This proposal requests a boundary modification, and the proposal refers to a Base Proposal and a Modified Proposal when setting out the strong justification for this.



Collaboration

The Council has collaborated with the other nine local authorities in development of the Proposal. There has not been a consensus on a single proposal, and this Proposal will be submitted alongside four other proposals from local authorities in the area.

Despite having different preferences for local government reorganisation, the underlying ambition of all is to unlock devolution for the area. The potential for devolution to bring significant powers and funding to the region is recognised and the councils share the same preference for a Strategic Authority for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This preference is at the centre of the development of all the proposals by the councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

Timescales for Implementation

It is expected that new unitary councils will be in place from April 2028. The key stages following submission of proposals and the expected timescales are:

Submission of proposals	28th November 2025
Government consultation on proposals received	Early in 2026
Government decision	Expected in July 2026
Preparation of legislation	Autumn/Winter 2026
Shadow unitary council elections	May 2027
New unitary councils go live	April 2028

Challenges and Opportunities

Reorganisation of the existing councils into a single tier unitary structure presents a significant opportunity for local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to be put on a much firmer footing. This will facilitate significant improvements in outcomes for residents. It also provides a timely opportunity to tackle several of the significant challenges currently faced by the councils in the area which this Proposal seeks to address:

Complexities of Service Delivery

The varied contrast of communities across the area, which is made up of high-density urban areas, a significant number of market towns, and large areas of rurality presents lots of challenges for service delivery. The move to a single tier of local government across the county provides an opportunity to integrate service delivery across the area whilst structuring appropriately to retain a strong locality-based focus.

Demographic Challenges

The population is expected to continue to increase, but a significant challenge is the changing age profile with substantial growth in the older population. This significant demographic shift present complex challenges for the existing local authorities and will need to be at the forefront in the strategic planning of the new unitary councils. An ageing population alongside the pockets of deprivation is likely to result in a continuing increased demand on health and social care services, housing, and resident support requirements.

Supporting the Economy

The economy is relatively strong and includes several major international manufacturers alongside many medium sized enterprises operating within the county. There are areas where there is a high concentration of micro businesses which demonstrates the reliance on its entrepreneurial character. Productivity levels are below average across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and there has been a need to move away from the development of traditional skills required to provide local businesses with a qualified workforce. The new unitary councils will need to continue to support the development of the economy, and the opportunities provided by integrating into a single tier offers a significant opportunity to create additional capacity to have a greater impact.

Financial Sustainability

Local government finance in England currently faces significant challenges, with local authorities struggling to balance rising costs and increased service demands. The financial challenges are being faced by all the existing councils particularly Stoke-on-Trent City Council who, alongside a growing number of councils, are in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support. Local government reorganisation will result in significant financial savings and provides an opportunity to put local government in the area on a firmer financial footing. Beyond the immediate financial gains from local government reorganisation, there is the potential that the new, more effective structures will provide further opportunities for value creation and sustained financial health. Taking the opportunity to develop strategies to harmonise council tax and manage debt effectively at an early stage will further strengthen the financial resilience needed to withstand broader economic shocks and uncertainty.

Reorganisation into a single tier will deliver significant financial benefits. There are however several specific challenges related to the reorganisation process which will need to be carefully navigated to realise these benefits:

- Significant investment will be necessary for implementation which will include the disaggregation of services currently provided on a county wide basis
- Redefining and aligning services will require a sustained effort
- Harmonisation of the existing workforce will be complex
- There will be a need to reset place leadership and strategic/locality partnership arrangements
- Democratic representation and accountability will need to be appropriately designed
- Asset rationalisation will be complex and will take time

There will also be the complexities of disaggregating the services provided by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council who operate them jointly through the Strategic Alliance with High Peak Borough Council in Derbyshire. It is essential that the timescales for reorganisation in the two areas are aligned.

Vision for Local Government Reorganisation

After consideration of these opportunities and challenges, the vision is that unitary local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is built on:

	A single tier of local government, working collaboratively across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	
	Enhancement of financial, social and environmental resilience of local government across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	
	Creation of new unitary councils that are large enough to deliver efficiently but close enough to listen and respond to local needs i.e. realising the benefits of scale, while maintaining local connections	
	Building on the principles of an innovative/creative county that is vibrant and retains the existing social and economic identity, recognises diversity, and plays to its strengths	
	Balancing the population and economic strength of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent across the areas to create mutually supportive unitary councils	
	Establishing a governance model for the new unitary councils that improves service delivery, strengthens community bonds, and drives sustainable multi-dimensional growth.	
	Developing a structure of local government that unlocks devolution for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	

Options Assessment and Appraisal

The available options for the future structure of the unitary councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent have been carefully considered in a three-stage process:

- 1). **Stage One – a high-level options assessment** which considered a large range of options for reorganisation and identified a small number of shortlisted options to consider in more detail
- 2). **Stage Two – an outline options appraisal** that set the foundational vision, assessed the shortlisted options against the criteria, and identified a preferred option
- 3). **Stage Three – full options appraisal**, including detailed financial analysis of three of the options and identified the final option for the development of this Proposal

The high-level options assessment involved exploring a significant number of different options to establish a shortlist.

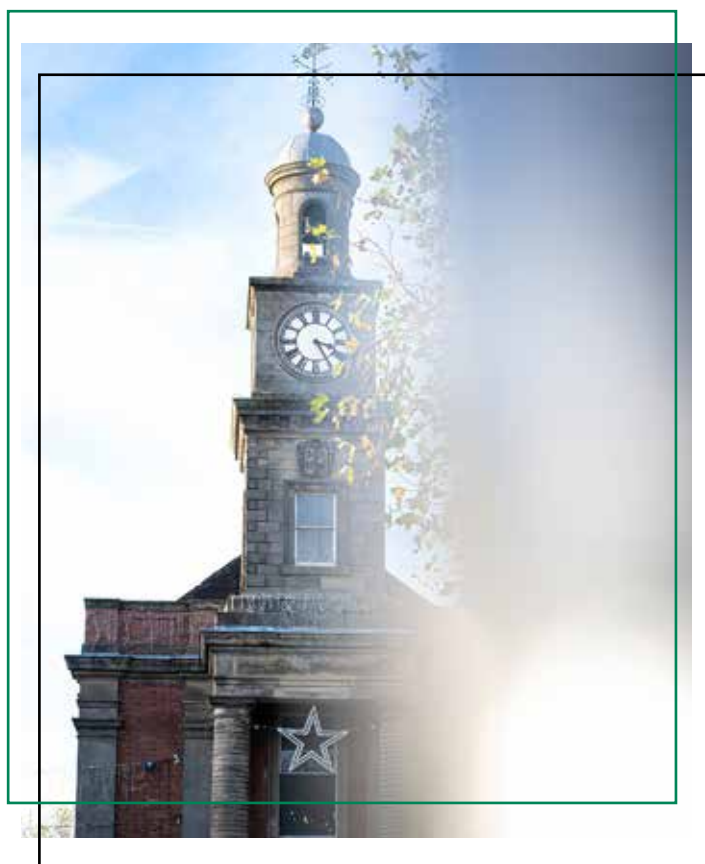
As Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has a population of c.1.1million, models of less than two unitary councils would result in them being significantly below the guiding principle of unitary councils with a population of 500,000 and would need to be strongly justified. The high-level assessment reached a conclusion on the number of unitary councils in the new model of unitary local government:

- A single unitary council for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent was dismissed as a viable option due to its size and scale. It also would misalign with the area's devolution ambition for a Strategic Authority for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.



- It was recognised that, in addition to the guiding principle, there were other important considerations, over and above economies of scale, that needed to be considered in determining the most appropriate option. Lots of empirical evidence demonstrates the potential benefits that can be realised from smaller unitary councils such as the sense of place and identity and coherence of economic geography. Careful consideration was given to a small number of three unitary models as it was recognised that they have some merit, however they were eventually discounted due to increased costs, reduction in financial benefits, limited financial resilience and the potential of fragmentation of services
- Economic data shows that North Staffordshire is a cohesive economic geography which has formed around the economic needs and activities created within Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, the market towns of the Staffordshire Moorlands and other smaller settlements. The geography also aligns to housing market areas
- The local authority areas in the South of the County have strong links with the West Midlands conurbation, including high levels of in/out commuting, and high levels of visitor flows for retail and leisure opportunities. There are also strong connections in the Southeast of the county into Derbyshire and the East Midlands.


The high-level assessment then focussed on two unitary models. One of the key foundations for creating new unitary councils for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is the economic geography:



Four two unitary council options with a North/South split (including the option for a County Unitary co-existing with Stoke-on-Trent which would remain unchanged) were shortlisted for analysis in the outline options appraisal. However, after the completion of the outline options appraisal, Staffordshire County Council confirmed that they had changed their preferred option and would be developing a proposal for a two unitary model with an East/West split. This option was therefore considered in detail at the full options appraisal stage.

In both the outline and full option appraisal stages, each of the options were assessed against the criteria set out in the guidance. The full options appraisal stage also considered a detailed financial appraisal of the options that warranted further consideration.

Conclusions were reached in respect of each option following the full appraisal:

Option A			
	Staffordshire Cannock Chase East Staffordshire Lichfield Newcastle-under-Lyme South Staffordshire Stafford Staffordshire Moorlands Tamworth	Stoke-on-Trent (unchanged)	Population Staffordshire 875,900 Stoke-on-Trent 258,400
Assessment against Criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not meet all the criteria• Leaving Stoke-on-Trent unchanged does not address the financial sustainability issues• Would cause a significant democratic deficit• Whole Staffordshire Unitary would be too large and remote from communities and there would be complexities for service delivery• Was initially Staffordshire County Council's preferred option but was later disregarded			
Financial Appraisal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not assessed as it was disregarded at the outline options stage			

Option B



North Staffordshire
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire Moorlands
Stoke-on-Trent

Southern and Mid-Staffordshire
Cannock Chase
East Staffordshire
Lichfield
South Staffordshire
Stafford
Tamworth

Population
North Staffordshire
477,500

Southern and Mid-Staffordshire
656,800

Assessment against Criteria

- Sufficiently meets all the criteria
- Shaped around a sensible economic geography and reflects local identity
- Broadly meets the guiding principle of 500,000 population but would create a significant disparity in population split of the two unitary councils and an even larger difference in the tax bases
- The Southern and Mid-Staffordshire unitary would comparatively large and find it difficult to maintain connections with localities
- The North Staffordshire Unitary would be dominated by the city of Stoke-on-Trent and risks rural issues being overlooked
- Was initially the preferred option of seven of the other local authorities (although this has since reduced to only four)

Financial Appraisal

- Strongest option in respect of financial benefits and payback period – however only marginally better than Option D

Option C



North Staffordshire
East Staffordshire
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire Moorlands
Stoke-on-Trent

Southern and Mid-Staffordshire
Cannock Chase
Lichfield
South Staffordshire
Stafford
Tamworth

Population
North Staffordshire
601,500
Southern and Mid-Staffordshire
532,800

Assessment against Criteria

- Sufficiently meets all the criteria
- Provides a reasonable balance of population with a larger authority in the North where financial sustainability is more of a challenge
- Economic geography is misaligned in the South of the East Staffordshire Borough
- Not supported by any of the other local authorities

Financial Appraisal

- Not assessed as it was disregarded at the outline options stage

Option D

	North Staffordshire East Staffordshire (Part) Newcastle-under-Lyme Stafford (Part) Staffordshire Moorlands Stoke-on-Trent	Southern and Mid-Staffordshire East Staffordshire (Part) Cannock Chase Lichfield	Population North Staffordshire 536,172 Southern and Mid-Staffordshire 598,128
		South Staffordshire Stafford (Part) Tamworth	

Assessment against Criteria

- Sufficiently meets all the criteria
- Is built around Option B
- Most complex option as it involves a boundary change but would have strong justification
- Shaped around a sensible economic geography and reflects local identity – the proposed boundary changes improve the alignment when compared with Option B
- Balances the population across the two unitary councils and reduces the significant disparity in Option B
- Provides a balance between the urban demands of the city of Stoke-on-Trent and the demands of the surrounding areas
- Shares the foundations for growth across the two unitary councils

Financial Appraisal

- Strong option in respect of financial benefits and payback period – only marginally worse than Option B – but provides a more even distribution of the savings across the two unitary councils
- Confirmed as the Preferred Option

Option E

	Staffordshire East East Staffordshire Lichfield Staffordshire Moorlands Stoke-on-Trent Tamworth	Staffordshire West Cannock Chase Newcastle-under-Lyme South Staffordshire Stafford	Population Staffordshire East 663,330 Staffordshire West 471,179

Assessment against Criteria

- Does not meet all the criteria
- Whilst there is some logic to the East/West split in the South of the county, it does not appear to be sensible to split the North of the county on the same basis – a North/South split has a more compelling argument as a sensible economic geography
- It fragments the existing patterns of local identity particularly in the North by splitting Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme

Financial Appraisal

- Strong option in relation to net benefits and payback (although weakest of the three appraised) – a disproportionate amount of the savings accrue to the Staffordshire East Unitary

Base Proposal

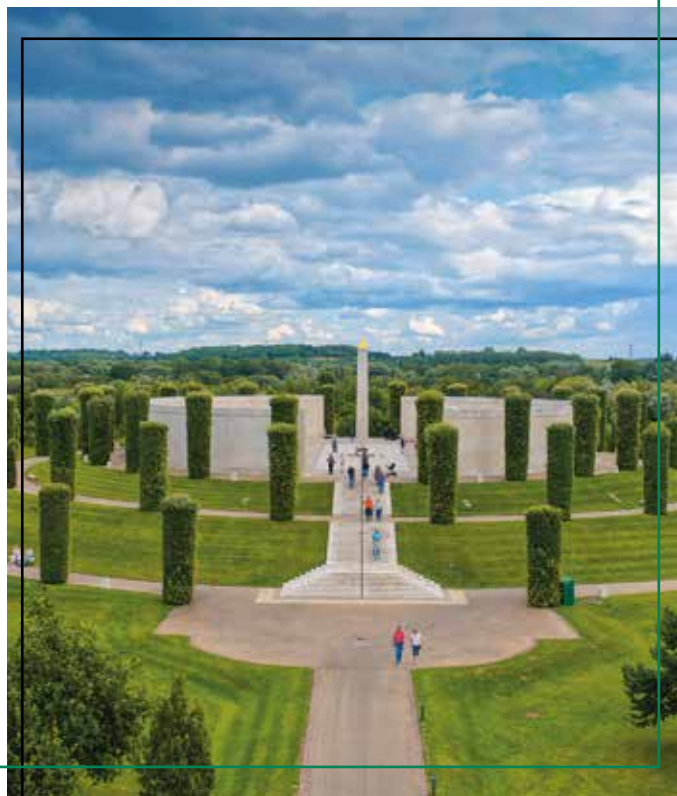
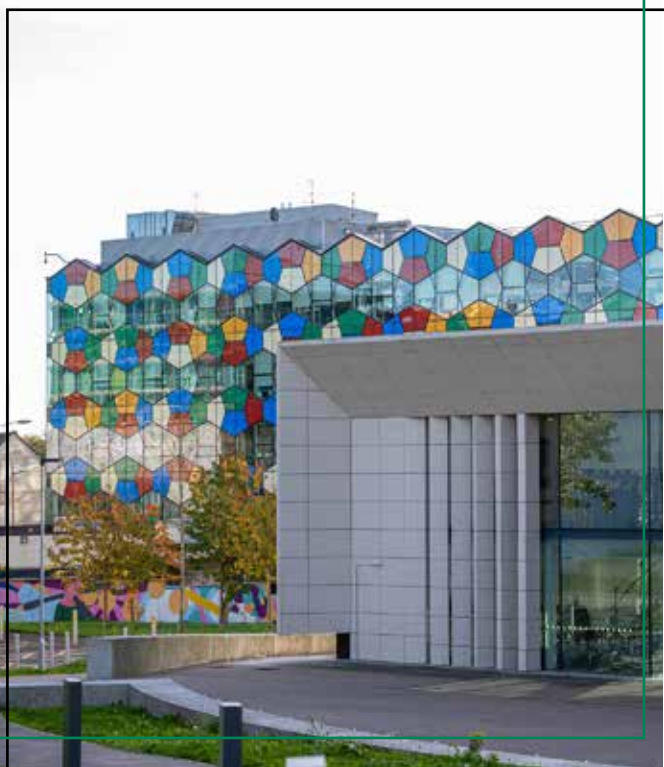
The Base Proposal in this submission is based on whole district and borough boundaries, prepared in accordance with Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the February 2025 invitation. It is a statutory Base Proposal and is not the final proposal being made.

The Base Proposal groups existing principal authorities into two unitary councils, without any changes to existing district and borough council boundaries:

- **North Staffordshire Unitary Council** - including Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council

- **Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Unitary Council** - including Cannock Chase District Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, South Staffordshire District Council, Stafford Borough Council and Tamworth Borough Council

The analysis in the options appraisal concludes that the Base Proposal meets the criteria for unitary local government.



Modification Request

This Proposal contains a modification request in that it provides for boundary changes in the existing district areas of East Staffordshire Borough Council and Stafford Borough Council.

Careful consideration has been given to the extent of the boundary modification and the need to ensure effective arrangements of democratic representation in the newly created Councils. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has confirmed that it is expected that appropriate interim warding arrangements will be set out in the structural changes order for the new unitary councils and that it will not be able to carry out an electoral review on any authority before it has vested. Any electoral arrangements in a proposal that is implemented will be required to be based on existing ward boundaries (at parish, district or county level).

Potential warding arrangements for the two new unitary councils have been developed to inform the basis of the precise split of the boundary between the North and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Councils. This will ensure that the modification request, if accepted, will support the Structural Changes Order development process.

The boundary modification request is that a number of parish areas of East Staffordshire Borough Council and Stafford Borough Council are included in the proposed North Staffordshire unitary council:

The following parishes of East Staffordshire Borough Council:			
Blithfield	Ellastone	Mayfield	Stanton
Croxden	Kingstone	Okeover	Uttoxeter Town
Denstone	Leigh	Ramshorn	Uttoxeter Rural
Draycott in the Clay	Marchington	Rocester	Wootton

The following parishes of Stafford Borough Council:		
Barlaston	Stone Town	Swynnerton
Fulford	Stone Rural	Yarnfield and Cold Meece

Modified Proposal

There are significant opportunities to improve the Base Proposal with a boundary modification. There is compelling justification for this adjustment based on six key factors:

Population Distribution - The Base Proposal will create a significant disparity between the size of the two unitary councils which the boundary modification will significantly reduce:

Unitary Council	Base Proposal		Modified Proposal	
	Population	Share	Population	Share
North Staffordshire	477,500	42.1%	536,172	47.3%
Southern and Mid-Staffordshire	656,800	57.9%	598,128	52.7%

The guiding principle suggesting new unitary councils of a population size of 500,000 or greater to ensure financial resilience and to be able to withstand ‘financial shocks’ is a particularly important consideration for the North Staffordshire unitary which will include the existing Stoke-on-Trent City Council unitary which is in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support (EFS) and has significant ongoing cost demand challenges associated with high levels of deprivation.

Staffordshire unitary council to recognise the differing and competing focus with a significant number of towns and large settlements. The towns of Stone and Uttoxeter have strong economic and social connections to the city of Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire and, by including them in the North Staffordshire unitary, the boundary modification will create more cohesive and recognisable boundaries, supporting jobs and cultural identity across the newly formed authorities

Due to its size, the Southern and Mid-Staffordshire unitary council proposed in the Base Proposal will be extremely challenged to maintain meaningful connections with local communities, respond to disparate local needs, and preserve distinct local identities across such a wide geography.

Financial sustainability of the North Staffordshire Unitary Council - In the Base Proposal, there would be a significant in-balance in the council tax and business rates bases of the North Unitary and the Southern and Mid-Staffordshire unitary councils which would potentially be a challenge for ongoing financial sustainability in the North.

The modification proposed will provide for a more even split of population which will work towards addressing these issues.

Social and economic alignment - The social and economic alignments of the existing Staffordshire district and boroughs with each other and outside the county are complex.

The North Staffordshire unitary council in the Base Proposal recognises the strong social and economic and social alignment of its predecessor local authorities. North Staffordshire is already an identifiable economic area. It will be a complex challenge, however, for the Southern and Mid-

The consolidated tax bases of the new unitary councils are an important consideration, and the boundary modification has a significant impact in addressing some of this disparity:

	Population	Proportion of Population	Council Tax Base	Proportion of Council Tax Base
		%		%
Base Proposal				
North Staffordshire	477,500	42.1	143,040	38.7
Southern and Mid-Staffordshire	656,800	57.9	226,518	61.3
	1,134,300		369,558	
Modified Proposal				
North Staffordshire	536,172	47.3	165,213	44.7
Southern and Mid-Staffordshire	598,128	52.7	204,345	55.3
	1,134,300		369,558	

Balance of growth opportunities - The proposed modification request will balance the opportunities for employment and housing growth across the two unitary councils.

Housing growth has been a challenge for the predecessor councils of the North Staffordshire unitary proposed in the Base Proposal. Given the strength of previous housing delivery in the East Staffordshire and Stafford Borough areas and the existing commitments for future development around Stone and Uttoxeter, the proposed modification will provide a more equitable balance of potential housing growth across the two new unitary councils taking into consideration the significant potential for housing growth in the other current local authority areas which will form part of the new Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Council.

There are several strategic growth opportunities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent which provide opportunities for growth in both employment and housing in the South of the county these include the A5 Growth Corridor, the i54 development and A38/M42 Growth Corridor. In the North of the County, the main strategic opportunity is based around the A50/A500 corridor and the Fifty500 initiative was officially launched in February 2024, and its

prospectus seeks to facilitate plans for regional supplier parks, innovation centres, and sustainable business premises, aiming to create 5,000 new jobs and add £100 million in gross value by 2030. This opportunity is aligned with the Ceramic Valley Enterprise Zone which will help to create up to 9,000 new jobs and use 140 hectares of brownfield land.

The proposed boundary between the two new unitary authorities in the Base Proposal cuts across the A50 Growth Corridor. The Modified Proposal would see all the A50 Growth Corridor included in the North Staffordshire unitary, better balancing the strategic opportunities for the two areas and providing a better platform for the North Staffordshire unitary to realise housing and employment growth in line with its targets.

Balance between rural and urban areas of North Staffordshire and consequences for democratic representation - In the North Staffordshire unitary, there will be a need to balance the urban demands of the city of Stoke-on-Trent with the demands of towns and villages and hamlets in the rest of the unitary council area.

The Modified Proposal allows a better balance of population across the proposed North Staffordshire unitary council. In the Base Proposal, the population of the city of Stoke-on-Trent (258,400) would be larger than the rest of the area (219,100) – there would a risk of the specific issues relating to the market towns and rural villages and hamlets outside the city not having a sufficient focus. The boundary modification will provide for a better balance between the city of Stoke-on-Trent and the rest of the area.

Local Authority	Usual resident population 2021			
	Base Proposal		Modified Proposal	
		%		%
Stoke-on-Trent	258,400	54.1	258,400	48.2
Newcastle-under-Lyme	123,300		123,300	
Staffordshire Moorlands	95,800		95,800	
East Staffordshire	-		25,730	
Stafford	-		32,940	
Other Areas	219,100	45.9	277,770	51.8
Total Population	477,500		536,170	

This would also reduce the democratic deficit in the North unitary prior to any LGBCE Boundary Review that would follow the establishment of the unitary council. This specific concern was consistently raised by residents in the North of the county during the engagement on emerging proposals for reorganisation.

Boundary anomalies and the potential for service delivery simplification - The boundaries of local authorities are outdated. The existing structure of local authorities is largely based on the 1974 reform and as areas, including Stoke-on-Trent, have developed considerably, the boundaries no longer fully reflect how people live, work, and shop.

In the current arrangements in North Staffordshire, this has resulted in administrative boundaries that cut across settlements, which means that in some areas multiple local authorities are providing services, such as waste collection, to residents in a single settlement or in some cases the same street. Several examples of the existing anomalies will be reinforced by the proposed boundaries in the Base Proposal with the boundary between North Staffordshire and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire cutting through several settlements including:

Blythe Bridge – a settlement South-East of Stoke-on-Trent with a population of approximately 6,000. The Base Proposal would result in the settlement being split between the North Staffordshire and the Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Unitary.

Meir and Meir Heath – a suburb of Stoke-on-Trent situated in the South of the city which has grown significantly post war. In the Base Proposal the boundary between the two new unitary councils will cut across the A520 (Sandon Road) where close next-door neighbours will live either side of the boundary.

Trentham – a suburb of the city of Stoke-on-Trent South-West of the city centre and South of the neighbouring town of Newcastle-under-Lyme. Part of Trentham is in Stafford Borough, notably the parish church and the remaining buildings of the Trentham Hall estate which is now an award-winning visitor attraction branded as Trentham Gardens and is one of Stoke-on-Trent's major leisure and tourist attractions. In the Base Proposal these will all be part of Southern and Mid-Staffordshire despite being under six miles from the Stoke-on-Trent city centre.



Wedgwood – the home of the renowned ceramics manufacturer Wedgwood. Alongside the factory, which opened in 1950, there was a small residential development and between 2014 and 2016 there has been further housing development alongside a regeneration of the factory facility. The whole of the new housing development and the factory sits within the city of Stoke-on-Trent boundary, whereas the original housing development and the settlement's community facilities will be part of Southern and Mid-Staffordshire.

The requested modification presents a significant opportunity to resolve these issues to ensure that the new Councils are fit for purpose in the long term and don't reinforce boundaries that were drawn over 50 years ago.



Evaluation against the Criteria

The Proposal sets out detailed analysis against the criteria for unitary local government provided in the invitation from the Secretary of State. The analysis demonstrates that each of the criteria is met.

Criterion 1 – Establishing a single tier of local government

The proposal provides for a single tier of local government across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent through the creation of two evenly balanced new unitary councils.

It is based on a sensible area which strongly reflects the economic geography of the area. It reflects the population distribution across the varied urban and rural areas of the county and city, and the Modified Proposal truly reflects the lives and work travel patterns of their residents including recognising the transport and connectivity challenges that require investment to allow the region to prosper.

Throughout the engagement that has taken place with residents across the county and city, protecting local identity has emerged as one of the key priorities for residents to be considered in the new structure of unitary local government. This Proposal, with its boundary modification, better reflects the economic and social connections that will exist in the new unitary councils and will create more cohesive and culturally identifiable boundaries. The relationship with town and parish councils in the Staffordshire Moorlands, with its strong ties to its six unique localities, could provide a blueprint for the design of future arrangements in the North Staffordshire unitary council.

The more appropriate tax base split across the two future unitary councils in the Modified Proposal will ensure that there is not an unfair advantage which would potentially damage the future financial sustainability of the North Staffordshire Unitary with the financial challenges relating to the high

cost demands in the city of Stoke-on-Trent. This has been a significant concern of residents, particularly in the North of the county, throughout the LGR engagement process

The proposal will create a structure of unitary local government that supports wider public services delivery, will support growth in the local economy and result in better outcomes for residents.

Criterion 2 – Efficiency, capacity and withstanding shocks

In assessing the options for local government reorganisation a full financial appraisal was undertaken with clear financial objectives:

- Individual and cross-Staffordshire financial sustainability.
- To have a balance to the financial strength and sustainability of the new entities which will give the best platform for them to serve Staffordshire as a whole.
- Value for money by driving change at the minimum cost necessary and deriving efficiencies through greater economies of scale, removing waste and duplicate expenditure and making considered investment in people, technology, and processes.

The proposal includes an assessment of the significant financial benefits that will be realised from:

- Reductions in leadership and senior management
- Reductions in the cost of democracy
- ICT rationalisation and systems integration
- Reductions in corporate and support service costs

- Estates and asset rationalisation
- Procurement and contract consolidation
- Service and process transformation

There are also substantial funding opportunities from LGR to improve the financial sustainability of local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Council tax harmonisation presents an opportunity to generate additional revenue as the levels of council tax are lifted to create parity at the earliest point across each proposed area. The importance of this additional revenue stream on future financial sustainability is significant but the way in which this is delivered will need to consider the impact that it may have on residents with low incomes particularly in the city of Stoke-on-Trent where current council

tax levels are significantly lower than in neighbouring authorities.

As with any large-scale programmes of change, there will need to be up front investment in implementation costs including:

- Programme management and transition team costs
- Redundancy and pension strain
- ICT integration or separation
- Property and rebranding
- Legal and governance setup

The Base Proposal and Modified Proposal are forecast to produce similar net benefits:

	Implementation Costs	Payback Period	Net Benefit Over 10 Years	Balance of benefits between North Staffordshire and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Unitary Councils
	£m	Year	£m	% (differential)
Base Proposal	214	3.8	318	48.8:51.2 (2.4)
Modified Proposal	215	3.9	306	50.8:49.2 (1.6)

The Base Proposal produces marginally stronger net benefits over a ten-year investment period. The implementation costs associated with the additional disaggregation required due to the boundary change is one of the reasons for this, but they are relatively modest. The Modified Proposal however presents a significant advantage in that it results in the net benefits being shared more evenly across the two new unitary councils.

The forecast financial benefits are significant. They are forecast to total **£306.2m** over a **ten-year period**, peak at **£69m** per year **after 5 years** and have a payback **period of 3.9 years**.

Annual Savings in Year 5 (increasing thereafter)	£69.0m
Cumulative Net Benefit Across Staffordshire (10 years)	£306.2m
Payback Period – Staffordshire	3.9 years
North Staffordshire Unitary	3.3 years
Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Unitary	4.3 years
Balance of benefit between the North Staffordshire Unitary and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Unitary	50.8:49.2

The implementation costs are primarily incurred in the earlier years while the annual savings grow throughout the assessment period, a large amount of these transition costs will need to be met from the reserves and resources currently held by the existing councils. The analysis in the proposal shows that there was some £99.58m of usable reserves available at the end of the 2023/24 financial year. The amount available for investment in the implementation of local government reorganisation could be potentially increased by any unused Earmarked Reserves held on 31st March 2028 and use of capital receipts with Government approved flexibility. Determination will need to be made on how to allocate these reserves to the new unitary authorities post-reorganisation. Based on the analysis and the total level of reserves, it is considered that there are sufficient reserves in Staffordshire to manage the costs of transition to the new arrangements.

Local government reorganisation will significantly improve the long-term financial sustainability of local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and will remove the need for exceptional financial support currently required by Stoke-on-Trent City Council. The levels of outstanding debt has been benchmarked against similar areas and the conclusion reached is that the two new unitary councils will be able to manage this effectively and it will not threaten their long-term financial sustainability.

A full financial risk assessment has been undertaken which sets out the key risks and mitigation that is required. The mitigations include a potential request for Government to consider a capitalisation direction to enable the flexibility to use capital receipts to fund the transition to the single tier.

The proposal also included a cost benefit analysis to quantify the wider economic and social benefits. The discounted benefits analysis over a ten-year period, based on just the two quantifiable benefits shows that for **every £1 invested in local government reorganisation across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is expected to generate a minimum social return of £2.40**. The analysis also sets out the qualitative benefits as:

- Simplification of governance and clearer accountability
- Improved service integration and quality
- Improved long-term strategic planning
- Strengthening of local identity and community voice
- Workforce and organisational benefits
- Fairness, consistency, and equity for residents
- Foundation for devolution and future growth

Criterion 3 - High quality and sustainable public services

Local government reorganisation in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to realign functions, funding and accountability around residents to improve outcomes. The savings generated from reorganisation, in addition to providing the necessary financial resilience, will present the new unitary councils with the opportunity to invest in service improvements.

There will also be an opportunity to reset, improve and transform services to ensure that they operate to the highest level of effectiveness, achieve service improvements and are sustainable. This will be guided by five key principles:

Finance led sustainability
Integration by default
Clear local accountability
Prevention and resilience
Growth and infrastructure as enablers of wellbeing

The two new unitary councils will develop strong neighbourhood working models to ensure the services are delivered in line with the needs of each locality. This will contain Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INT) with links to neighbourhood governance provided by Neighbourhood Area Committees (NAC).

The Proposal sets out a vision for each of the key local authority services alongside numerous opportunities to develop high quality and sustainable services across all functions of local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

The integration of services in single-tier delivery presents several immediate opportunities for improvements, examples include:

- Integrating housing, environmental health and community safety teams at neighbourhood level
- Co-locating leisure centres with family hubs, libraries and health services
- Linking leisure provision with tourism, culture with town-centre renewal
- Aligning spatial planning, housing and transport to maximise focus on housing delivery and economic growth
- Integrating highways and street scene to deliver “one visit, multiple fixes” and rapid, place-based responses



- Aligning housing, public health, adult social care and transport planning to improve services for older people

There are important considerations for critical services:

Delivering sustainable **Adult Social Care** requires a shift toward earlier intervention, seamless support across organisations and a confident, skilled and stable workforce. The two new unitary model creates the platform for a clearer, more accountable and prevention-focused system, underpinned by aligned commissioning and workforce development

Key delivery priorities include:

- Prevention first through neighbourhood teams integration

- Integrated commissioning and market shaping for specialist provision
- Local accountability with clear senior oversight and outcome focus
- Workforce resilience via shared training and recruitment pipelines

Delivering sustainable and high-quality **Children's Services** requires earlier intervention, local leadership, market reform and confident, well-supported practitioners. The two unitary model creates stronger democratic accountability, localised decision-making and a coherent approach to specialist commissioning.

Key delivery priorities include:



- Earlier help and prevention aligned to local need and community assets
- Localised family support and safeguarding leadership
- Shared commissioning scale for specialist placements and SEND services
- A stable workforce and consistent practice model supported by joint recruitment, training and supervision frameworks
- Clear safeguarding continuity through a strengthened partnership model

Designing the new unitary councils offers a transformative platform to strengthen place-based leadership, embed community priorities and deliver integrated, preventative public services across the North and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire.

The proposed two-unitary configuration aligns with existing public sector geographies, ensuring strong partnership coherence across the NHS Integrated Care System, Police and Crime Commissioner area and other regional agencies. It provides the scale needed for strategic reform while preserving local identity and governance. It also provides the platform to maximise public service reform opportunities across health, care, housing and community wellbeing.

The Proposal has been shaped through a detailed understanding of the local context, engagement with members, residents, officers, town and parish councils and community stakeholders and a forward-looking vision for long-term improvements in public service outcomes and democratic accountability.

Both proposed unitary councils will possess sufficient population, fiscal diversity and institutional capacity to deliver sustainable reform and withstand future financial shocks, while enabling localised responsiveness through place-based governance. Local government reorganisation provides the catalyst and conditions for meaningful whole system

transformation, particularly in relation to the delivery of integrated, preventative services.

The current two-tier arrangements across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent creates duplication, blurred accountability and disjointed delivery across key services, particularly social care, housing, public health and prevention. Current council boundaries and service responsibilities do not always reflect how people live their lives or how services are accessed, reinforcing the case for reform around coherent, functional geographies that better align with communities and everyday patterns of need.

A two unitary model provides a platform to:

- Align strategic reform at scale with genuine local responsiveness
- Integrate service delivery across health, care, housing and community wellbeing
- Drive prevention and early intervention through locality-based governance
- Achieve sustainable efficiencies through workforce planning and data systems

The two new unitary councils will also be able work together to:

- Integrate service delivery
- Use shared intelligence
- Align budgets strategically
- Co-commission with partners
- Devolve decision-making

The two-unitary model balances scale and subsidiarity to accelerate reform across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Criterion 4 - Working together to understand and meet local needs

There has been a wide range of engagement on local government reorganisation in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. The councils across the area have taken a collaborative approach to an element of this engagement to ensure that stakeholders did not experience multiple and conflicting requests.

There are three phases to engagement on LGR:

Phase 1 – the awareness campaigns that have been undertaken by all the councils following the announcement on local government reorganisation in December 2024.

Phase 2 – the engagement with residents and stakeholders on priorities for local government reorganisation and emerging proposals.

Phase 3 – the statutory consultation led by Government which will be undertaken following the receipt of the final proposals from the local authorities which expected to take place in early 2026.

The outputs from the significant amount of engagement that has taken place across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has been to inform the Proposal:

- Engagement with stakeholders which was approached jointly by the Councils
- Residents' engagement via focus groups undertaken by Staffordshire County Council
- Specific residents' surveys undertaken by individual councils
- Engagement with the workforce
- Engagement with local councillors
- Consultation with town and parish councils

As this proposal involves a request for modification of the current council boundaries, specific work was commissioned to engage with the residents of the areas that would be directly impacted by the changes i.e. in the Uttoxeter area of the East Staffordshire Borough and the Stone area of Stafford Borough. This was supplemented by engagement with town and parish councils in those areas.

When considering the output from the wide range of engagement across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, six key priorities emerged from residents and stakeholders for the development of the structure of unitary local government in the areas which have been embedded in the proposal.

High quality services that reflect local needs

Value for money

Protecting local identity

Responsiveness/ability to adapt to local circumstances

Local decision making and accountability

Improved services and infrastructure

The engagement in the areas of Uttoxeter and Stone was a positive experience as the opportunity was used to outline the rationale behind the request for boundary modification. There was a degree of support for the proposal in the Uttoxeter area; Uttoxeter Town Council has gone as far as providing a letter of support. It was less well received however in the Stone Area. The Council is committed to continuing this engagement up until the Secretary of State's decision and beyond if required.

The proposal also recognises the four significant opportunities for local government reorganisation identified by stakeholders and residents during the engagement process:

	Seizing the opportunity for devolution for the area
	Generating Efficiency Savings and Financial Sustainability
	Simplifying Structures and Service Improvements
	Strengthening Partnerships

Despite the extensive engagement across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, there remains a significant number of concerns:

	Loss of local identity due to the geographical coverage of the new unitary councils
	Disruption and continuity of service delivery during the transition
	Financial sustainability and resource allocation
	Loss of local representation and accountability
	Retention of rural identity and services due to the demands from urban areas

During many of the engagements with residents, concerns were constantly voiced about the impact of being amalgamated into a new unitary council alongside Stoke-on-Trent City Council. These views were driven by concerns about financial sustainability, given the financial challenges in Stoke-on-Trent. There were also worries about the distinct needs of different communities outside the city, with fears that rural areas could be neglected due to the complex challenges that will need to be tackled. Assurances about Stoke-on-Trent’s financial position to counter the perceptions of residents that it will be significantly detrimental to the financial sustainability of the North Staffordshire Unitary, will need to be communicated effectively during the reorganisation process.

The proposal sets out a level of assurance in addressing all the concerns raised, but there will be a need for ongoing community engagement and consultation all the way through to implementation in March 2028 and beyond to give assurance that these will be addressed.

Criterion 5 – Supporting future devolution arrangements

It is essential that any future reconfiguration of unitary councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent unlocks devolution to a Strategic Authority in the area.

The councils in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent recognise the benefits of devolution through devolved powers and funding and have confirmed a preferred option of a Strategic Authority based on the existing geography of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

As the area is not part of the Government's Devolution Priority Programme and given the link between devolution and local government reorganisation set out in the English Devolution white paper, devolution in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is likely to follow local government reorganisation. The councils are however urging early discussions with the Government on the timescales for the consideration of a Strategic Authority for the area. Despite the differing views of the future configuration of the unitary local authorities in Staffordshire, the Councils are unified in their view that without devolution the area is 'being left behind' when compared to neighbouring areas with strategic authorities in place.

The two balanced unitary councils set out in this Proposal will support devolution by balancing ambitious regional collaboration with meaningful localised place leadership. It is recognised that the move to a unitary structure will provide a less complex pathway to the establishment of the new Strategic Authority

Collectively, the two new unitary councils and strategic authority would focus on priorities that address both regional and local challenges:

- Economic growth and productivity
- Investment in infrastructure and improving transportation networks
- Investing in the area's workforce, by strengthening alignment between businesses, skills and education and health services
- Joint approaches to housing development and the transformation of public services
- Investment in local capacity and capability through a new approach to community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

The preparation for devolution in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, and the subsequent creation of a new Strategic Authority, needs to be recognised in the design of the new unitary councils. This will ensure that structured regional strategic planning with strong local delivery will be in place to facilitate the creation of a Strategic Authority to provide economic growth and resilience for the area as a whole.

Given Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent neighbour several other existing strategic authorities (West Midlands, East Midlands and Greater Manchester, in addition to Cheshire from 2027), significant opportunities exist for collaboration with other regions.

Criterion 6 - Stronger community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment

Democratic Representation

As the area moves to the unitary model where the local authorities operate on a much larger geographical footprint, local decision making and accountability is a priority for residents. The proposals for democratic representation have been carefully considered in this context. The Proposal sets out the indicative number of councillors for each of the two unitary councils and, although not required at this stage, indicative warding patterns,

and arrangements to give residents some assurance about the levels of local accountability.

These indicative proposals are based on the most recent boundary reviews of Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Staffordshire County Council. This results in complexity in the North Staffordshire Unitary due to the current difference in the levels of democratic representation of Staffordshire as a county council and Stoke-on-Trent as unitary authority.

Authority Name	Electors	No of Wards/ County Divisions	Council Size	Electors per Councillor	Electoral Cycle
Stoke-on-Trent	177,792	34	44	4,041	Whole
Staffordshire County Council	667,255	62	62	10,762	Whole

Considering all the requirements which will be placed on the membership of the new Councils it is proposed that:

North Staffordshire Council has a membership of 92 councillors.

Wards are based on leaving the former city council area unchanged and the other areas based on current 20 County Electoral Divisions becoming 2-member wards apart from 8 divisions becoming 3-member wards due to their size. The make up the new North Staffordshire Council will be:

Former Stoke-on-Trent City Council area 44 councillors in 34 wards

Former Newcastle Under Lyme BC area 20 councillors in 9 wards

Former Staffordshire Moorlands DC 18 councillors in 7 wards

Former Stafford BC area 6 councillors in 2 wards

Former East Staffordshire BC area 4 Councillors in 2 wards

Southern and Mid Staffordshire Council has a membership of 84 councillors.

This area can be based on current county Electoral Divisions with 42 Electoral Divisions that can remain in what will become the new unitary council. The most pragmatic approach to new electoral arrangements in this area is to create 42 2-member wards in the existing Electoral Divisions, which will provide for a new Council membership of 84 councillors in line with the council size proposals. The makeup of the new Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Council will be:

Former Cannock Chase DC area 14 Councillors in 7 wards

Former East Staffordshire BC area 14 Councillors in 7 wards

Former Lichfield DC area 16 Councillors in 8 wards

Former South Staffordshire DC area 16 Councillors in 8 wards

Former Stafford BC area 14 councillors in 7 wards

Former Tamworth BC area 10 Councillors in 5 wards

Neighbourhood Governance and Empowerment

Establishing two unitary councils, North Staffordshire and Southern and Mid-Staffordshire Staffordshire, will ensure that decision-making, service delivery and prevention remain rooted in local communities, while maintaining the strategic scale needed for coherent, county-wide oversight.

It is proposed that, through Neighbourhood Area Committees (NACs) and Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs), aligned with NHS Neighbourhood Health initiatives (Integrated Local Care Teams (ILCTs), residents and partners will be empowered to shape services, address needs early and deliver outcomes that matter most to their communities.

The new unitary councils will build on the current two-tier area's existing commitment to listening to residents, tailoring services to the needs of each community and preventing challenges before they escalate:

LISTEN	Residents' voices are central to identifying local priorities and shaping service delivery. Engagement with communities, voluntary organisations and town and parish councils ensures decisions reflect lived experience
TAILOR	Services are designed to respond to the distinctive character, challenges and opportunities of each neighbourhood
PREVENT	Early intervention and proactive approaches reduce long-term demand on services, whether through addressing barriers to opportunity, supporting mental and physical wellbeing, improving housing, or tackling social isolation

These principles underpin the neighbourhood governance model proposed for the two new unitary councils, ensuring that engagement translates into accountability and action.

The model will building local power through four key elements:

Two unitary councils as strategic enablers
Each unitary council will provide the resources, capacity and leadership to support neighbourhood-level structures, such as NACs and INTs, ensuring services are locally responsive, preventative and aligned with resident priorities.
Neighbourhood Area Committees: local priorities, local accountability
The NAC structures adopted by both new unitary councils will ensure that residents, councillors, Town and Parish councils and local organisations have a direct role in shaping services and decisions in their communities. Each NAC will be tailored to the distinctive character of its area, recognising the industrial heritage, the historic market towns and the rural parishes across the county.
Integrated Neighbourhood Teams: Turning local priorities into action
Integrated Neighbourhood Teams will form the operational backbone of each unitary council’s neighbourhood governance model. Working within the footprints of NACs, INTs ensure that priorities, insights and aspirations identified by residents, councillors and local partners are translated into tangible, locally tailored action.
Partnership with Town and Parish councils and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) networks
The existing network of town and parish Councils and the vibrant VCSE sector form a critical foundation for neighbourhood governance across the two new unitary councils. These locally rooted organisations bring deep insight into community priorities, assets and challenges and their active participation is essential to realising the vision of empowered neighbourhoods under the two-unitary model. While parish coverage varies across the two-tier area, some areas are only partly parished, and places such as Stoke-on-Trent and Tamworth have no Town Councils; the model is designed to be flexible. In unparished areas, alternative mechanisms such as community forums, neighbourhood panels or resident partnerships will ensure representation and accountability are maintained.

Turning the vision of empowered, neighbourhood-focused councils into reality, the Proposal sets out a four-phase roadmap for implementing NACs and INTs. The roadmap provides a practical framework for moving from engagement to implementation; ensuring that local voice is not just heard but translated into action. Each phase has a distinct purpose: to design, test, scale and sustain neighbourhood governance and integrated delivery arrangements that reflect the diversity of each new unitary council’s communities.

Phase 1 - Co-design	Collaboratively design the framework for NAC and INTs, ensuring all community types; urban, rural and market town shape how neighbourhood governance will work in practice.
Phase 2 - Test and learn	Pilot and refine the NAC and INT model through Pathfinder areas, gathering insight on what works, strengthening accountability and testing devolved approaches before wider rollout.
Phase 3 - Scale across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent	Expand successful models county-wide, embedding consistent engagement, devolved decision-making, and visible local accountability across all neighbourhoods.
Phase 4 - System integration and continuous improvement	Embed neighbourhood working as a core feature of each new unitary council’s governance and service delivery models, ensuring it continuously adapts to resident feedback, population change and emerging needs.

This four-phase roadmap provides a clear pathway from community engagement to delivery. It ensures that the two new unitary councils embed neighbourhood influence, integration, and prevention at every level of governance.

Implementing Local Government Reorganisation

A set of guiding principles outlined in the proposal to be used to develop the proposed operating model for the new unitary councils and support their effective implementation:

Customer focussed
Local accountability and decision making
Insight led
Sustainability
Digital first - inclusive by design
Outcome focussed
Empowerment
Collaboration

Implementation will require careful planning and delivery. Implementation plan set out in the proposal will have six phases:

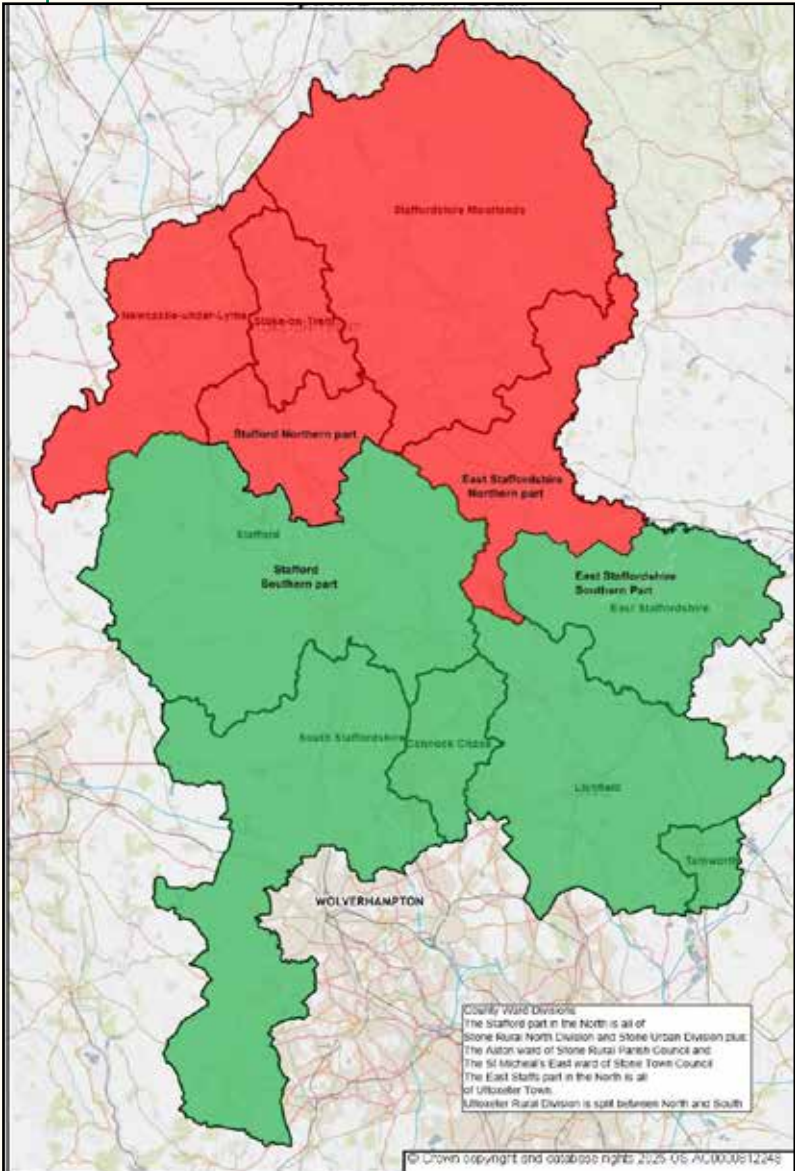
Phase 1 – Plan and define the requirements - prior to the Secretary of State’s decision
Phase 2 – Building the foundations – following the decision
Phase 3 – Mobilise the Shadow authority - following the shadow elections
Phase 4 – Leadership
Phase 5 – Go-live – 1st April 2028
Phase 6 – Extended transformation – April 2028 and beyond

The proposed governance arrangements during the implementation period are set out in the Proposal. The strategic oversight and direction will rest with the Staffordshire Leaders Board up until the Secretary of State’s decision. Post decision, Joint Committees will be established for each of the new unitary councils until the elections to the Shadow Authorities in May 2027.

Summary of the Proposal

The Proposal:

- Creates two balanced and financial resilient unitary councils
- Meets all the criteria for unitary local government
- Closely aligns with the economic geography of Staffordshire Stoke-on-Trent and the social connections of residents
- Provides the foundations for economic growth and housing delivery
- Is informed by significant resident and stakeholder engagement
- Produces significant financial savings and wider social and economic benefits which will be equally distributed across the area
- Requires a modification of existing boundaries but makes a compelling justification which offsets the marginally increased cost
- Sets out clear proposals for service delivery and wider public service reform which will result in positive outcomes for residents
- Provides for appropriate levels of democratic representation
- Proposes an innovative model for neighbourhood governance



Photos:
Cathy Bower, Alex Hyde, Destination Staffordshire, Jack Bailey, McArthurGlen DOWM, National Memorial Arboretum, Photographee.eu, Anastasia Smanyuk Fotografie,