

Please ask for: Sir Peter Soulsby, Deborah Taylor, Gale Waller
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 Our Ref: 2025/January/EDWP
 Date: 10 January 2025



Rutland
County Council



Leicestershire
County Council



Leicester
City Council

Jim McMahon OBE MP

Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution
EnglishDevolutionLGENquiries@communities.gov.uk

Dear Minister

ENGLISH DEVOLUTION WHITE PAPER

Thank you for your letter of 16th December 2024 and the very informative meeting on the 9th January 2025.

As a region it is recognised by all stakeholders that the Devolution White Paper sets out a once in a generation opportunity for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland which potentially could deliver substantial benefits to local residents. Following initial consideration and engagement there is unanimous in-principle agreement to a Mayoral Strategic Authority linked to local government reorganisation and therefore pathway 2 is our preferred option : LGR needed to unlock devolution.

To move forward with local government re-organisation at pace, we recognise further work will be required to develop detailed proposals that explore all options. We will need to consider evidence around the critically important relationship between scale and physical geography, understanding that councils perform best when their boundaries reflect the way people live their lives.

We are clear that any LGR option will need to address the boundaries of the City. Currently the City boundaries exclude built up areas in adjacent districts that most people would recognise as the contiguous urban area of Leicester, restricting the City's growth potential, and its long-term financial sustainability. It is considered that expansion of the city boundary, alongside the most appropriate option for wider LGR across the sub-region, will deliver the right conditions to ignite growth of the local and sub-regional economy, whilst at the same time creating a more efficient and financially sustainable local government structure allowing more effective public service delivery.

On that basis we collectively recognise that we are an area which needs reorganisation to unlock devolution, and we confirm that we will be working together to submit re-organisation proposals to Government by May 2025.

Leicestershire County Council is therefore requesting the postponement of elections scheduled for May 2025 to allow for this work to take place. Elections in Leicester and Rutland are both scheduled for May 2027.

The three authorities want to take forward this unique opportunity to progress as quickly as possible towards a Strategic Mayoral Authority once local government reorganisation is delivered.

We look forward to a positive response and engaging with your officials to move this forward at pace.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Soulsby
City Mayor

Councillor Deborah Taylor
Acting Leader Leicestershire County Council

Councillor Gale Waller
Leader Rutland County Council

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