

Data Sharing

The County Council does not accept the criticism from the district councils and Rutland that the County Council was not cooperative in respect of data sharing.

The first request for data was made at a meeting on 6th March, hosted by the Acting Leader of the County Council, when she invited the district councils and Rutland to send to the County Council their specific data request. At that meeting the Leader of Rutland suggested the LLR councils follow a data sharing protocol similar to that introduced in Lincolnshire. The Leader of Rutland said that she would send a copy to the Acting Leader of the County Council but did not do so. The County Council obtained a copy from Lincolnshire County Council and was satisfied that the majority of information listed for sharing was publicly available in the case of Leicestershire.

The County Council was not made aware that on 12th March (six days after the districts and Rutland had been invited to send a data request to the County Council) their leaders wrote to a MHCLG minister to complain that the County Council was being difficult about data sharing. A reply from the minister of 23rd April was copied to the Acting Leader of the County Council, who wrote herself to the minister to explain the facts in the form of the timeline described above and below.

Prior to the receipt of the copy reply from the minister, a letter on behalf of the district councils and Rutland was received by the Acting Leader on 8th April listing information requested by the district councils in 12 categories for each district area. A detailed reply was sent including a suggestion that the districts clarify exactly what information they wanted since some categories were not clear. The districts then asked for a further breakdown of the information but were content to wait until after the County Council elections and when MHCLG's response to the interim plans was received. It was received, after a delay, in early June.

An email was received at officer level from the district councils at the end of May asking for a meeting to discuss data sharing. In June the district councils suggested to the County and City Councils that some of the funding made available by MHCLG to support final proposals in November could be used to establish common data sets and data sharing agreements. In the event the district councils chose to use their share of the funding for their own purposes, which are unknown to the County Council.

It was not finally clear what data the district councils and Rutland wanted until early July. Following that a data sharing group was established (meeting from July to September) with representatives from Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council, Rutland and the seven district councils. The group, which was chaired by the Chief Executive of Blaby District Council, worked constructively to coordinate requests for data from the different local authorities and ensure use of consistent data sources and time periods. The last meeting of the group was on 23 September 2025, where it was agreed that future meeting dates would remain in diaries for a period of time but only take place if needed.

A senior officer group was also established with representation from the County Council, Leicester City Council and Blaby District Council. A secure online data repository was established by the County Council to enable the sharing of datasets between local authorities. While much of the data shared was at middle layer super output area level (c.7,500 people), information sharing agreements were developed and signed by each party.

Following the last meeting of the data sharing group, one information request was received from the district councils, for the home postcodes of all County Council employees. The rationale for this request, which would have had to be considered taking account of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), was separately queried as had been the case with many earlier requests, but no response was received.