

From: lgr <lgr@oxford.gov.uk>

Sent: 28 August 2025 09:54

To: Sharon Groth <sharon.groth@witney-tc.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Local Government Reorganisation: A Three Unitary proposal - Greater Oxford

Dear Sharon

thank you for your enquiry about our LGR proposals. We are working through the detail on our proposals, and we take on board your points about the clarity you would like to see on key aspect of your work in the new structures. Thank you for setting this out so clearly at this stage when we can factor these in to our future thinking.

In response to your questions about transfer of services, financial implications, and future governance, we are clear that the current role of town and parish councils delivers on important priorities for local communities, and we want to see that continue. We are still working through the detail on this level of local service delivery and you will see more clarity in our proposal in the autumn.

We believe local government should be well connected to the communities it serves, and that is a key part of the rationale for three smaller unitary councils. Smaller unitary councils are more able to respond to local need, and the voices of communities - through bodies like town and parish councils - are more easily heard when there are fewer competing interests.

We are developing proposals for Neighbourhood Area Committees in the three unitary model, which would provide stronger area representation within the new democratic structures. These are expected to include ward members for a grouping of wards, and other community representatives like town councils are also expected to be involved. The exact mechanisms, powers, funding, etc are still being considered, and we would want to work with town and parish councils on the detail of how these could work.

I hope this gives your confidence on the importance we place on local governance and delivery in our three unitary proposal. If you would like to discuss these issues further we would be happy to meet with you in September, please let me know what availability you have in the first part of the month.

kind regards

Emma Jackman

Director of Law, Governance and Strategy