



Press Release

19 June 2025

Have your say on plans for the future of local councils

Communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are being given an opportunity to have their say on a once in a generation opportunity to shape the future of local government.

An [engagement survey has launched today](#) (Thursday 19 June) and focus groups are being run in June and July so people can help inform the biggest shake-up of local government since the 1970s.

It follows a national government requirement to replace current district, county and city councils with single-tier councils.

From April 2028, rather than dealing with separate county, city, and district authorities, residents will access all services - from road maintenance and bin collections to education, planning, social housing, social care, and support with benefits - through a unitary council.

Where areas have parish and town councils, these will not be affected and will continue to operate as they do now.

The national government believes these changes will improve services, making them simpler and more efficient, as well as supporting economic growth and delivering much needed housing.

Since the changes were announced in December 2024, all seven existing county, district and city councils have been working collaboratively to identify viable options for new unitary councils across the region.

No decisions have yet been made on what these new arrangements could look like, but the government has made it clear that it wants these councils to be unitaries (providing all services and covering all county and district functions).

Three proposed options for reorganisation were [shared last week](#). Council leaders now want to hear the views of residents, businesses and local stakeholders like town and parish councils and community groups, to inform the business cases being developed for each of these proposals. Those business cases will then be submitted to the government in November. The final decisions on which new local government

structures are put into place in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will ultimately be made by national government.

The engagement focuses on the connections that people feel they have to different areas; where they work, socialise or get healthcare, for example. It also covers what priorities they think new unitary authorities should have and what is important to them when it comes to dealing with local government.

Councillor Chris Boden, Leader of Fenland District Council, said: “Not all of us believe that this is the best way to reorganise local government, but it is the way the government has chosen so we must make the best of it in the interests of local residents. This engagement survey gives local residents a chance to input into the decision-making process about the future delivery of local government services. I hope that as many residents as possible choose to make their voices heard.”

Councillor Cameron Holloway, Leader of Cambridge City Council, said: “Cambridge residents told us last year that they wanted us to explore in more detail options for a unitary authority for Cambridge. In response to the government’s plans for local government reorganisation, we’ve listened to residents’ feedback and worked with all local authorities across the county to examine options for our area.

“It’s vital that the new council structures serve our residents’ best interests, and work for our city and the surrounding area. Residents can help by letting us know what matters most to them – whether that’s services, structures, or sense of place.”

Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, said: “This is a moment of significant change for local government across our area, and it is essential that the voices of Cambridgeshire residents are heard clearly in shaping what comes next.

“We want to ensure the authorities that follow are not only efficient and financially sustainable, but also deliver high-quality services and strong local accountability. This engagement is a vital first step in developing proposals that genuinely reflect the needs and aspirations of our communities.”

Councillor Anna Bailey, Leader of East Cambridgeshire District Council, said: “Councils in Cambridgeshire are facing the biggest change to local government in over 50 years. While I very much support the idea of unitary councils, where residents can access all services from one council instead of two, I do not support the government’s move to larger, more remote structures. We must make sure we do not take the “local” out of local government and we are determined to maximise the opportunities, to get the best arrangement we possibly can for East Cambridgeshire residents, businesses and organisations.

“I would therefore urge all our residents, community groups, businesses, and everybody we work with, and for, to share their views and help us shape what the future looks like for our district.”

Councillor Sarah Conboy, Executive Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council, said: “Our aim, as always, is to achieve the best solution for our

communities, ensuring our local areas remain great places to live, work and invest, now and long into the future.

“As part of this, it's vital that we hear from our communities themselves, so we can understand their priorities and hopes for the future of local government. I urge everyone to get involved - whether you are a resident or represent a business or community group - your views are equally valued, and we want to hear from you.”

Councillor Dennis Jones, Leader of Peterborough City Council, said: “This is the biggest shake-up of local government in a generation and therefore it is only right that we understand the opinions of our residents before we submit a proposal to government.

“Change is coming, and we have a fantastic opportunity to secure Peterborough's future prosperity whilst continuing to provide high quality public services, whilst maintaining a strong connection with the residents that we serve.

“We are urging the public, businesses, community groups and all others to learn more about the government's proposals and to tell us what their priorities are so that the plans we submit to the Minister later in the year reflect these as far as possible.”

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council, said: “Local government reorganisation will shape how our communities and businesses access vital frontline services for decades to come. It will also mean changes in how important local decisions, that affect all our lives, are made. We would not all have chosen this path - but we of course want the best for our residents. That's why it is so important our communities share their thoughts, ideas and concerns now. The local knowledge and views gathered during the next few weeks will help us to continue developing ideas for how local councils could change.”

The [survey](#) will run from Thursday 19 June to the end of the day on Sunday 20 July.

Hard copies will be available at council offices and in all libraries.

Once there is a proposal for a new system of local government agreed by government, further engagement consultation would take place at that point. Ultimately, the government will have the final decision on what new structures are put in place.

For more information, visit: www.fenland.gov.uk/LGR

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Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk