



Local Government Reorganisation 2026-28

An overview of the proposals and how APSE can help

To: Councils in England

For information only: Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales

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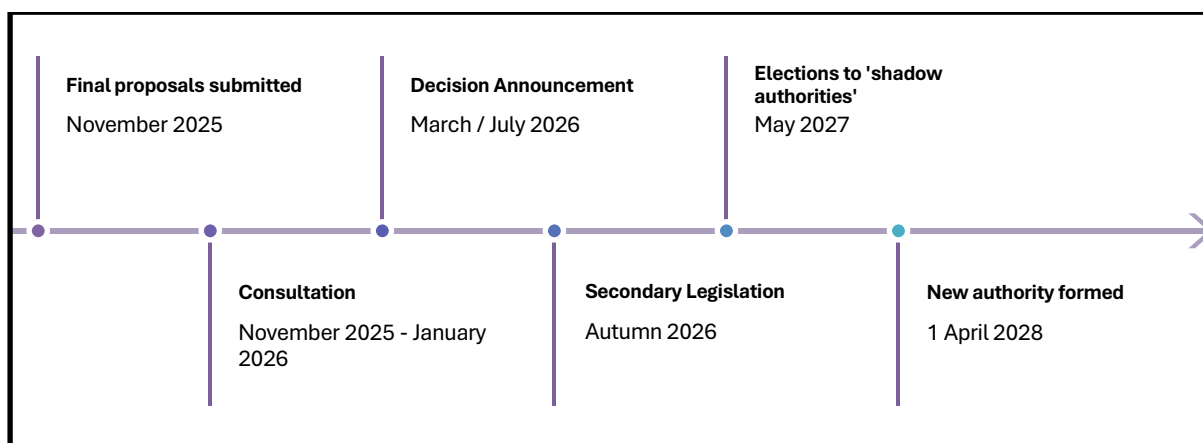
1 Introduction

The [English Devolution White Paper](#) was published in late 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) signifying the government's intention to create new unitary councils across England and put an end to the existing two-tier system. [The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026](#) confirmed the Government's intention towards both devolution and reorganisation, with the Act containing a number of provisions specifically related to its' reorganisation agenda. The government's case for reorganisation, as set out in the White Paper, includes improved efficiencies, service transformation, easing workforce pressures, local accountability and new partnership working such as in planning. Another aim is to remove the confusion over different responsibilities and streamline services for residents, whether they belong to the County or District Council, by bringing them under one authority. The process is set to run alongside the expansion of 'strategic authorities', and the creation of new combined authorities, and mayoral authorities, in line with the government's devolution agenda for England.

Overall, the process culminates in the biggest sweeping change in English local government in over 50 years, with reorganisation at this scale last taking place in 1974 when the vast majority of current councils were formed. However, it should be noted that Scotland and Wales have already been through the process of unitarisation taking place on 1 April 1996. In Northern Ireland local government reorganisation reduced councils from 26 down to 11 in April 2015.

The Latest Position on LGR in England

Previous rounds of reorganisation have taken place over the decades in a piecemeal fashion in certain areas, but in this case the government invited all two-tier areas to submit initial proposals in February 2025, with final proposals received by November 2025. The timeline since then for most of two-tier England (with the exception of Surrey*) is set out below:



Surrey followed an 'accelerated' programme a year earlier than the above, with final proposals submitted by May 2025, the two new unitary councils East and West Surrey were announced in October 2025, followed by elections that took place in May 2026 for the two 'shadow' councils that will come into force on **1 April 2027.*

In March 2026, the then-Secretary of State for MHCLG, The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP announced the configuration of the new unitary councils for **Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk and Suffolk**. In July 2026, a further fourteen areas were announced: **Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Lancashire, Lincolnshire, East Sussex, Oxfordshire, Devon, Hertfordshire and Kent**. The two remaining areas, **Cambridgeshire and West Sussex**, are yet to be confirmed at the time of writing.

The purpose of this briefing is to summarise the proposals that have been announced so far, and to set out how APSE can help its member authorities on this journey.

APSE Comment

APSE has been in existence as a local authority network for over 40 years and has supported councils across the UK navigate reorganisation when it has affected them over the years, through sharing best practice, events and networks, working with officers, elected members and trade unions, from delivery of frontline services, through to supporting the political leadership and Chief Executives and senior officers on strategic issues.

This briefing therefore provides at [Appendix 1](#) a summary of the current changes by regional areas, and at [Appendix 2](#) the list of services provided by APSE that will assist our member authorities through LGR. [Appendix 3](#) summarises the previous examples of LGR in England since 2009.

Please note the current proposals are subject to parliamentary approval in the autumn, and the names of the new authorities listed are provisional and are yet to be confirmed.

Reorganisation: Efficiency Challenges

Reorganisation presents a number of challenges as APSE has consistently highlighted in earlier reorganisation proposals. Whilst reorganisation is cited as a means by which efficiencies can be generated the cost of reorganisation of itself must also be considered. It is an over-simplification to assume cashable savings. APSE has consistently highlighted the issue of optimal efficiency; in other words many neighbourhood level services would not necessarily benefit from being delivered at scale. For example, in waste and recycling the proximity to transfer stations and disposal sites impact on the operational practicalities of collection rounds and route optimisation. In areas like parks, communities would not wish to lose access to local public realm in place of an aggregated service offering many miles from their homes.

There is, however, also the opportunity to explore service transformation. For example, in sports and leisure services legacy facilities could be replaced by newer facilities in a more convenient location, using the combined resources of predecessor authorities. Aggregating demand for commercial waste services or education catering services could also provide opportunities for service development. Clearly a major concern for everyone impacted by reorganisation is the ongoing budget demands in social care for both adults and children, SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities) and SEND transport, homelessness and temporary accommodation.

APSE has long argued that all local government services need fair funding and whilst the last two years have improved funding overall, notwithstanding some changes to the funding formulae which has created disadvantageous funding settlements in some areas, the disproportionate draw on budgets to support some areas of council services has clearly impacted on the funding levels available for neighbourhood level services.

Whilst discussions in some areas have been fraught and there is understandable anxiety over the changes and the ongoing threat of judicial reviews, APSE would also argue that reorganisation may provide opportunities for efficient and effective services in local government. There is chance for neighbouring authorities to use the opportunities presented by reorganisation to rethink services, including how best to meet the future needs and demands on services, reflecting socio-economic factors, and emerging policies which may create newer demands on local public services.

Communicating Complex Changes to Residents and the Workforce

Communication and coordination are key, to bring staff from the predecessor districts and counties together to share information and agree on approaches going forward. Reflecting this approach APSE has already hosted a series of online LGR network meetings for its local authority members affected by LGR. In addition a series of in-person events is also taking place across APSE areas and online to allow local authority officers, elected members and trade unions to come together to discuss these topics, and examples of these sessions with links to the presentations is in [Appendix 2](#).

A specific issue to arise from the most recent LGR announcements is the extent to which existing districts have been 'broken up' with part wards and parishes being added to different authorities in some of the proposals. This is unlike any of the more recent rounds of LGR over the past two decades, such as Northamptonshire or Cheshire, where entire districts formed the 'building blocks' of the new unitary authority.

However, dividing existing districts is not entirely unknown, as in 1996, the creation of a new City of York unitary authority did involve the expansion of the city's boundaries to take wards from Ryedale, Selby and Harrogate. The latter three authorities are now part of the North Yorkshire unitary. In 1998, some wards from the Malvern Hills District of Worcestershire joined a newly-formed Herefordshire unitary authority.

The breaking up of existing authorities will present an additional challenge when it comes to communicating the changes to residents, and how operations may have to adapt. For example in waste services, a new unitary authority may be looking for a harmonised waste collection scheme for a consistent approach. Councils will have to communicate clearly 'if you live in X part of authority Y, you will be part of new unitary authority Z' rather than simply 'all residents in authority Y are becoming authority Z'.

It should be said however that a harmonised service is not always expected or feasible on 'day 1', and it is commonplace for many authorities to continue with legacy services for some years, phasing in consistent services and new strategies over the years as resources and/or contracts allow.

A further complexity is of course reassuring staff and answering queries as to where individuals may be deployed post-reorganisation. APSE supports calls from local government organisations and trade unions to ensure a collaborative approach to staff engagement and consultation before vesting day but equally an acknowledgment of the challenges faced in a post-reorganisation environment, given issues such as job evaluation, working arrangements and equal pay. Again, APSE has explored these issues and provided networks to work through such sensitive issues.

Opportunities to Review Operating Models and In-House Services

A challenge of LGR is that predecessor councils will potentially have different operating models, with some operating in-house services and others operating outsourced delivery models, or a mixed economy. It is clearly necessary to explore operating models in advance of merger but the value of considering in-house services as part of a service improvement plan is that often with an outsourced model the ability to safely insource a service is limited due to a hollowed-out service base. APSE would urge authorities to look at a fair options appraisal to assess the opportunities, which may be created by capacity in merging councils, such as the readiness to manage a direct workforce, utilise supply chains and maximise the use of fleet and logistics. The recent Cabinet Office guidance, whilst not applying directly to local authorities, should be treated as ‘best practice’ guidance and include a public interest test before procurement decisions are made. APSE would also urge social value to be a consideration supporting local jobs, local supply chains and local economics. APSE Training services including in [Appendix 2](#) contains further details.

Data and LGR

APSE would urge all LGR councils to ensure that they have good data on service costs, quality and productivity to inform decision making. Baseline data on assets such as parks and highways should be readily accessible to decision-making teams and well as information on the quality of the local estate and properties such as leisure centres.

Many member councils have utilised APSE Synergy to provide diagnostic workshops to support the assessment of services in advance of LGR. APSE Performance Networks benchmarking service is also supporting member authorities with their data for benchmarking with new modules on LGR.

Further details are again provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Bonni Jee
Principal Advisor

Appendix 1: Summary of Proposals Confirmed

Region: North West

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Northern** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Vickie Hacking at vhacking@apse.org.uk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Lancashire	15	4
	- Lancashire County - Blackburn with Darwen (<i>unitary</i>) - Blackpool (<i>unitary</i>) - Burnley - Chorley - Fylde - Hyndburn - Lancaster - Pendle - Ribble Valley - Rossendale - South Ribble - West Lancashire	North: - Lancaster, Ribble Valley, Preston ‘Pennine Lancashire’ / East: - Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale ‘Fylde Coast’ / West: - Blackpool, Fylde, Wyre South: - Chorley, South Ribble, West Lancashire

[You can view an interactive map of all the proposed authorities overlaid with existing ones on the government website here.](#)

Region: East Midlands

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Central** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Bonni Jee, at bjee@apse.org.uk if in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, and Leicestershire & Rutland.

Please contact Vickie Hacking at vhacking@apse.org.uk for Lincolnshire, which is part of the '**Northern**' region for APSE purposes.

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Derbyshire	10	2
	- Derbyshire County - Derby City (unitary) - Amber Valley - Bolsover - Chesterfield - Derbyshire Dales - Erewash - High Peak - North-East Derbyshire - South Derbyshire	North: - High Peak, Derbyshire Dales, Chesterfield, NE Derbyshire, Bolsover, Amber Valley (part) South: - Derby, South Derbyshire, Erewash, Amber Valley (part)
Nottinghamshire	9	2
	- Nottinghamshire County - Nottingham City (unitary) - Ashfield - Bassetlaw - Broxtowe - Gedling - Mansfield - Newark & Sherwood - Rushcliffe	'North' / 'North East': - Bassetlaw, Newark & Sherwood, Mansfield, Ashfield, parts of Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe 'Greater Nottingham' / 'South West': - Nottingham City plus parts of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Leicestershire and Rutland	10	2
	- Leicestershire County - Leicester City (unitary) - Rutland County (unitary) - Blaby - Charnwood - Oadby & Wigston - Hinckley & Bosworth - Harborough - Melton - North West Leicestershire	‘Greater Leicester’: - Leicester City, Oadby & Wigston plus parts of Charnwood, Blaby and Harborough ‘Leicestershire and Rutland’ - Rutland County, Melton, North West Leicestershire and parts of Charnwood, Blaby, and Harborough not in the expanded Leicester
Lincolnshire	7	2
	- Lincolnshire County - Lincoln City - North Kesteven - South Kesteven - East Lindsey - West Lindsey - South Holland <i>(North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire are existing Unitary authorities in the ‘Yorkshire and Humber’ region, to which no changes have been proposed)</i>	‘Rural Lincolnshire’: - East Lindsey, Boston, South Holland, South Kesteven, parts of North Kesteven and West Lindsey ‘Greater Lincoln’: - Lincoln City plus parts of West Lindsey and North Kesteven

[You can view an interactive map of all the proposed authorities overlaid with existing ones on the government website here.](#)

Region: West Midlands

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Central** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Bonni Jee, at bjee@apse.org.uk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Staffordshire	10	2
	- Staffordshire County - Stoke-on-Trent City (unitary) - Cannock Chase - East Staffordshire - Stafford - South Staffordshire - Staffordshire Moorlands - Lichfield - Tamworth - Newcastle-under-Lyme	North: - Staffordshire Moorlands, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent Mid and Southern: - Stafford, East Staffordshire, South Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth
Warwickshire	6	2
	- Warwickshire County - North Warwickshire - Nuneaton & Bedworth - Rugby - Warwick - Stratford-on-Avon	North: - North Warwickshire - Nuneaton & Bedworth - Rugby South: - Warwick - Stratford-on-Avon
Worcestershire	7	2
	- Worcestershire County - Worcester City - Bromsgrove - Redditch - Wyre Forest - Malvern Hills - Wychavon	North: - Bromsgrove, Redditch, Wyre Forest South: - Worcester, Malvern Hills, Wychavon

Region: East of England

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Southern** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Abi Ademulyi at aademulyi@apse.org.uk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Cambridgeshire	7	?
	- Cambridgeshire County - City of Peterborough (Unitary) - Fenland - Huntingdonshire - East Cambridgeshire - South Cambridgeshire - Cambridge City	TBC – Decision Delayed as of July 2026
Essex	15	5
	- Essex County - Thurrock (unitary) - Southend-on-Sea (unitary) - Basildon - Braintree - Brentwood - Castle-Point - Colchester - Chelmsford - Epping Forest - Harlow - Maldon - Rochford - Tendring	North East: - Braintree, Colchester, Tendring Mid: - Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon West: - Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford South West: - Basildon and Thurrock South East: - Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea City

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Hertfordshire	11	4
	• Hertfordshire County • Broxbourne • Dacorum • East Herts • Hertsmere • North Hertfordshire • St Albans • Stevenage • Three Rivers • Watford • Welwyn-Hatfield	North West: • Dacorum, St Albans South West: • Hertsmere, Three Rivers, Watford Central: • Stevenage, parts of Welwyn-Hatfield and North Hertfordshire Eastern: • Broxbourne, East Herts, parts of Welwyn-Hatfield and North Hertfordshire
Norfolk	8	3
	• Norfolk County • Norwich City • Broadland • Breckland • Great Yarmouth • King's Lynn & West Norfolk • North Norfolk • South Norfolk	West: • Breckland, Kings Lynn & West Norfolk, part of South Norfolk Greater Norwich: • Norwich City, parts of Broadland and South Norfolk East: • Great Yarmouth, North Norfolk, parts of Broadland and South Norfolk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Suffolk	6	3
	- Suffolk County - Babergh - Ipswich - Mid Suffolk - East Suffolk - West Suffolk	West: - West Suffolk, parts of Mid Suffolk and Babergh Central and Eastern: - Parts of Mid Suffolk and East Suffolk Ipswich and South Suffolk: - Ipswich, parts of Babergh, Mid Suffolk and East Suffolk

[You can view an interactive map of all the proposed authorities overlaid with existing ones on the government website here.](#)

Region: South East

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Southern** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Abi Ademulyi at aademulyi@apse.org.uk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Kent	14	4
	• Kent County • Medway (unitary) • Ashford • Canterbury • Dover • Dartford • Folkestone & Hythe • Gravesham • Maidstone • Sevenoaks • Swale • Thanet • Tonbridge & Malling • Tunbridge Wells	North: • Dartford, Gravesham, Medway West: • Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells Mid: • Swale, Ashford, Folkestone & Hythe East: • Canterbury, Thanet, Dover
Hampshire	15	4
	• Hampshire County • Southampton City (unitary) • Portsmouth City (unitary) • Isle of Wight (unitary) • Basingstoke & Deane • Eastleigh • East Hampshire • Fareham • Gosport • Havant • Hart • New Forest	North: • Basingstoke & Deane, Hart, Rushmoor Mid: • Winchester, and parts of East Hampshire, Test Valley and New Forest South West: • Southampton, Eastleigh, and parts of Test Valley and New Forest South East:

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
	• Rushmoor • Test Valley • Winchester	• Gosport, Fareham, Havant and part of East Hampshire <i>(no changes to the Isle of Wight which will remain a standalone unitary)</i>
Oxfordshire (and West Berkshire)	7	3
	• Oxfordshire County • Oxford City • Cherwell • West Oxfordshire • South Oxfordshire • Vale of White Horse • West Berkshire	Greater Oxford: • Oxford City plus parts of Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and South Oxfordshire Northern Oxfordshire: • Parts of Cherwell and West Oxfordshire except those joining Greater Oxford Ridgeway: • Vale of White Horse, West Berkshire and part of South Oxfordshire
East Sussex	7	2
	• East Sussex County • Brighton and Hove City (unitary) • Eastbourne • Hastings • Rother • Lewes • Wealden	Brighton and Hove: • Expands into part of Lewes East Sussex: • The rest of Lewes and all other districts

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
West Sussex	7	?
	• West Sussex County • Adur • Arun • Chichester • Crawley • Horsham • Mid-Sussex • Worthing	TBC – Decision Delayed
Surrey	11	2
	• Elmbridge • Epsom & Ewell • Guildford • Mole Valley • Reigate & Banstead • Runnymede • Spelthorne • Surrey Heath • Tandridge • Waverley • Woking	East: • Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate & Banstead, Tandridge West: • Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley, Woking

[You can view an interactive map of all the proposed authorities overlaid with existing ones on the government website here.](#)

Region: South West

For more information about APSE membership services and events in the **Southern** Region and support on LGR, please contact your regional Principal Advisor, Abi Ademulyi at aademulyi@apse.org.uk

County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities proposed
Devon	11	4
	- Devon County - Plymouth (unitary) - Torbay (unitary) - Exeter City - East Devon - West Devon - Mid Devon - North Devon - Teignbridge - Torridge - South Hams	Plymouth: - Expands into part of South Hams Exeter: - Expands into parts of Teignbridge, East Devon and Mid Devon Torbay: - Expands into parts of Teignbridge and Mid Devon Devon Coast and Countryside: - Mid Devon, West Devon, Torridge and remaining parts of the other authorities not subsumed into Plymouth, Exeter or Torbay.
Gloucestershire	7	1
	- Gloucestershire County - Gloucester City - Cheltenham - Cotswold - Forest of Dean - Stroud - Tewkesbury	Gloucestershire (all previous districts)

[You can view an interactive map of all the proposed authorities overlaid with existing ones on the government website here.](#)

Appendix 2: How APSE can help your council through LGR

This section aims to summarise the various services provided by APSE's core membership offer, plus our additional services from training, to benchmarking, interim management and consultancy, and energy advisory.

Join our network

All APSE members can sign up to **APSE's Local Government Reorganisation Network**, which is an online network providing learning events across the year, with expert speakers from across local government. You can sign up to the network using [this link](#).

Previous presentations

Since the launch of the online network series in 2025, we've been joined by over 100 local authority representatives per meeting on average to hear from experienced speakers from across the sector and share their experiences, and a chance for delegates to discuss and ask questions. More meetings will be held in the coming months and years in the run up to LGR and indeed once the new authorities come into being.

You can view the previous presentations and agendas of previous online networks here:

June 2026:

- [LGR and devolution proposals for Tamworth and neighbouring authorities](#)
 - Stephen Gabriel, Chief Executive, Tamworth Borough Council
- **Surrey's proposals for LGR**
 - Pedro Wrobel, Chief Executive, Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils
- [Workforce issues: engagement, impact on equalities, job descriptions and TUPE](#)
 - Alex Porter, Unison
- [Operational Necessity, models for delivering services:](#)
 - Matt Miller, Executive Consultant, APSE Solutions

March 2026:

- [LGR and Employment Legal Issues](#)
 - Forbes Solicitors
- [Building capacity by enhancing capability](#)
 - Fiona Sutton-Wilson, Head of APSE Training
- [Lessons from North Northamptonshire Council](#)
 - Cllr Mark Pengelly, North Northamptonshire Council
- [New LGR Benchmarking Module – Performance Networks Light](#)
 - Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks, APSE

November 2025:

- [Waste Services and the reorganisation journey at West Northamptonshire](#)
 - Vanessa Kelly, Waste Services and Projects Manager, West Northamptonshire Council
- [Lessons from Cumberland Council](#)
 - Darren Crossley, Deputy Chief Executive, Cumberland Council
- **New proposals for LGR in Surrey**
 - Daniel Mouaward, Chief Executive, Spelthorne Council
- [Supporting our councils undergoing this transition](#)
 - Mo Baines, Chief Executive, and Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks, APSE

Your frontline services – sharing best practice at our networks

Frontline services are at the heart of what councils do and what APSE does in sharing best practice. These are amongst the most visible and important services to residents and most affected by LGR operationally, with changes to ways of working, depots and communications to name but a few. Our networks have online meetings and in-person seminars throughout the year and you are encouraged to attend, ask questions of speakers and each other, particularly those who have been through LGR that will be showcased at some of the networks.

- [Armed Forces and Veterans Network](#)
- [Building Cleaning](#)
- [Catering \(School Meals\)](#)
- [Cemeteries and Crematoria](#)
- [Climate Change and Renewable Energy Network](#)
- [Highways and Street Lighting](#)
- [Housing, Construction and Building Maintenance](#)
- [Social Value, Procurement and Commercialisation Network](#)
- [Parks and Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance](#)
- [Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing](#)
- [Sports and Leisure Management](#)
- [Vehicle Maintenance and Transport](#)

Examples of frontline service area presentations relevant to LGR presented at previous networks and seminars - waste and recycling as an illustrative example:

- [Waste Services Transformation – the next chapter for Cumberland Council](#)
 - Neil Dixon, Assistant Director of Waste and Open Spaces, Cumberland Council
Presented at the APSE Waste and Recycling Seminar, June 2026, Sheffield Town Hall
- [Bin there, changed that: The Impact of LGR on Waste Management](#)
 - Anna Smith, Assistant Director of Waste & Environmental Services, Westmorland & Furness Council
Presented at the APSE Waste and Recycling Online Network, December 2025
- [Efficiency and Transformation in Waste Services](#)
 - Charlotte Tompkins, Head of Waste Services, North Northamptonshire Council
Presented at APSE Central Efficiency and Transformation Webinar, July 2025

Case studies – what can we learn from history?

Whilst this has been the biggest exercise in Reorganisation in England in over 50 years, there have been several smaller rounds of it over the past 20 or so years. There is much we can learn from the authorities who have been through this journey, and APSE has supported several of these authorities over the years with their journey. Many of them are APSE members and so part of our network with staff who have real experience of LGR.

APSE have regularly showcased them and will continue to do so at this pertinent time, at network webinars and seminars, allowing them to share their lessons learnt, what has worked and what other authorities can learn to ensure a smooth transition.

In addition, APSE members include the vast majority of local authorities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, all of whom have been through LGR and now operate on a fully single-tier unitary basis. This took place in 1996 for Scotland and Wales, and 2015 in Northern Ireland. Our Associates and many

of our members have experience of this journey too that they would be willing to share at network meetings and how they have been working as unitary authorities.

[Click here to jump to Appendix 3: A summary of previous rounds of LGR in England since 2009](#)

Network queries

APSE regularly receives queries on all manners of issues from our member councils. We source responses to these queries by circulating them to our extensive UK-wide network of professionals. If you are an APSE member council and have any queries relating to reorganisation, which could be related to a frontline service area, or more widely – the APSE network may have the answers. Connect with the APSE network and get involved with our Network Queries service [here](#).

The role of Parish and Town Councils

Local government reorganisation could significantly affect town and parish councils by changing who they work with, how services are delivered, and where decisions are made. It may also create uncertainty around funding, assets and responsibilities, while increasing expectations for them to represent local priorities and protect community identity within larger authority structures. Whilst some Ministers have stated that do not view the growth of towns and parishes as being necessary as a response to unitary status others have argued this would be an obvious response to service accountability becoming more remote under larger councils.

APSE membership is now open to all Parish and Town Councils, and we have a dedicated [Town and Parish Councils Hub](#), specifically designed to support Town and Parish Councils through knowledge sharing, training courses and expert webinars.

To find out more about our offer for Town and Parish Councils, please contact Vickie Hacking at vhacking@apse.org.uk

APSE Training

[APSE Training](#) has extensive experience of delivering courses to support local authorities across a wide range of areas, from frontline services to programme and project management.

Reorganisation takes time, energy and patience. It requires managing change and complex programmes while maintaining excellent frontline customer-focused service delivery.

APSE Training offers a range of open courses or in-house courses tailored to your authority:

- Book pre-set dates via [APSE's website](#) to join a course with other councils
- Book an in-house course tailored to your team or service by contacting the training team to arrange a call or quote

If you would like to discuss any of our courses, or you would like us to write new content to help your authority to develop the skills and capacity you need, **please email** training@apse.org.uk

Examples of training courses that will be of interest to authorities undergoing LGR include:

For elected members and those with an interest in governance:

- Excellence in Elected Local Leadership
- [Working with Elected Members to Improve Frontline Services](#)
- [Non-Executive-Directors: LATCos and Public Services](#)

Contracts and commissioning:

- [Developing and Managing Service Level Agreements \(SLAs\)](#)
- [Principles of Contract Management \(CPD\)](#)
- [Advanced Contract Management \(CPD\)](#)
- [Social Value and the Public Interest Test](#)
- [Insourcing Public Contracts](#)

Projects and programmes:

- [Managing Change in Local Government](#)
- [Project Management in Local Government](#)
- [Managing Programmes in Local Government](#)

Workforce Development:

- [Managing Conflict in Local Government](#)
- [Coaching and Mentoring Skills](#)
- [Supervisory Skills](#)

Service Delivery:

These new courses will equip you with the skills to analyse, appraise and plan the most efficient and effective options for service delivery, within your locality. Working through both strategic and operational pathways, APSE provides a toolkit to ensure success, guided by highly experienced and expert trainers who will signpost to future resources.

- **LGR: Making it work in...**

- [Waste](#)
 - Fleet
 - Highways
 - [Parks](#)
- [Leading a Customer-Focused Culture](#)
- [Turning Complaints into Compliments](#)

Benchmarking your council through reorganisation and beyond

APSE Performance Networks is the largest voluntary public sector benchmarking organisation in the UK. With around 170 authorities in membership, Performance Networks has assisted local authorities for the past 28 years through benchmarking service data.

For more information about how your service can benefit from Performance Networks membership, click [here](#).

Support from Performance Networks for authorities undergoing LGR:

Councils across England are facing significant organisational changes, and keeping track of performance during this period can be challenging. To support local authorities, the service has developed a local government reorganisation (LGR) template designed to make performance monitoring simpler and more consistent throughout the transition.

If one authority within a group of affected councils is an APSE Performance Networks member, all authorities in that group will be able to access the LGR template at no additional cost.

This streamlined module enables councils to track a focused set of key performance indicators efficiently, reducing the time and effort required for data collection. It draws on established Performance Networks measures, providing a high-level KPI framework that can be tailored to local priorities. Councils can choose to opt in or out of specific measures, ensuring the reporting remains relevant to their individual needs.

What does this module cover?

The benchmarking module includes performance measures on key indicators for the following areas:

- Corporate services
- Housing and building maintenance
- Highways and street lighting
- Recycling and waste
- Street cleansing and parks
- Environmental health

The LGR module is now available. [Complete this form](#) to register your interest in the Local Government Reorganisation template.

As part of the advanced offer to members, a new training session will be available to support the new **Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)** data template.

[You can find out more about the free training session here.](#)

APSE Solutions

APSE Solutions, trading as APSE Synergy Limited, provides in-house consultancy and interim management services, an ethical consultancy providing services at preferential rates to APSE members. For more information, please contact solutions@apse.org.uk

With LGR, there will be increased demand and pressure on both high-level corporate functions and day-to-day delivery of frontline services. The field associates, working with APSE Solutions, have decades of experience supporting authorities including working on LGR in the recent past. They have real experience from the frontline and can hit the ground running in your authority.

A diagnostic approach to service re-design to support your council's reorganisation journey

This model looks to identify different processes within an authority and identify possible duplication of resources, wasted effort and avoidable demand. By deploying a range of techniques, the Solutions team can look to reduce the steps in the supply chain, creating efficiencies and savings, leading to an improved end user experience. In the context of LGR this will also include exploring the best use of facilities, assets and workforce skills.

[You can read more about the diagnostic approach and offer here](#)

Case studies – how have we supported authorities that have undergone or are going through LGR?

Unitary Authority, South East England

APSE recently supported this council with critical friend support for their Grounds Maintenance team. The council was looking for support with tailoring their procurement specification to ensure that it was fit for purpose before sending it out to market. The Associate used their knowledge to work with the manager to finalise the specification providing additions and identifying omissions and duplication to ensure the specification was the best it could be.

District Council, East Midlands

APSE are supporting a council to ensure all their fleet replacement strategy is appropriate for future vehicle acquisitions and to work towards decarbonising its fleet operations.

This requires the development of a decision-making model to assist with vehicle choice and purchasing decisions. The council have had a report produced by a third party which outlines how the council could move towards a full decarbonisation of its fleet. The council needed this document to be peer reviewed by fleet experts and a report producing to provide a new fleet replacement strategy that incorporates elements of the report whilst maintaining a realistic view of how changes and a move towards a greener fleet can be completed.

Northern Ireland

APSE Associates are also supporting a number of authorities across Northern Ireland, which

underwent LGR in 2015, focusing on coaching and mentoring, conflict resolution and general support. You can find out more about our coaching and mentoring offer by contacting the team.

Roundtables

APSE Solutions are pleased to introduce a series of online roundtable webinars with our Associates allowing authorities to come together, ask questions and discuss the hands-on issues across the key frontline service areas, throughout August and September 2026.

[Please sign up for the sessions here](#)

These include:

- 17 August: Facilities and Building Maintenance
- 18 August: Highways
- 20 August: Cemeteries and Crematoria
- 25 August: Fleet
- 26 August: Parks
- 28 August: Waste and Recycling
- 10 September: Streetscene

APSE Energy

APSE Energy supports councils in developing sustainable energy solutions, energy efficiency and responding to climate challenges. It is designed to bring councils together to share information, ideas, resources, best practice, and to support local energy projects. Working together enables them to exchange knowledge on funding sources and options, law and procurement. It also helps them to gain greater marketplace leverage.

Putting the Energy into reorganisation

LGR is a significant exercise for all concerned, and the priority is always safe and legal functioning services on day one. However, there are many other priorities to be addressed. The energy and changing climate agenda is important and has been recognised as such by many local authorities setting policies, targets and action plans and whilst the two elements of energy and changing climate are inextricably linked they are also different in the context of local authorities. Energy in the form of supply and usage is specific to organisations with contracts, tariffs and billing agreed between parties. Improving energy efficiency and installing generation is particular to council assets. The changing climate on the other hand knows no boundaries and so is much harder to address.

Efficiency in more ways than one

As local authorities come together as part of LGR there may be opportunities to make efficiencies in terms of energy management. In APSE Energy's experience, many local authorities have been unable to

maintain up to date data related to energy. The location of meters, the lack of half hourly data, regular estimates of use as opposed to actual figures and incorrect billing are all common. As different councils come together, the likelihood of these circumstances grows whilst it is an ideal time to rectify such problems. Future contracts will have to be agreed, and decisions made on suppliers, tariffs and further services. The new council's appetite for risk is important when agreeing an energy contract but that needs to be informed with explanations of relevant information, factors (local and global) and options.

Efficiencies from investing in assets will be a consideration for new councils such as installing solar on car parks, land holdings and buildings and linking to EV chargers to save on bills and create an income source. Improving buildings including new lighting, heating, cooling and energy efficiency measures in leisure centres, civic officers, depots, community buildings and elsewhere will bring benefits. Updating policies and action plans, engaging with staff, partners, suppliers and the public on this agenda are also key areas for activity.

How can APSE Energy help?

From past experience LGR takes up time, and that, added to the lack of capacity in many local authorities, means it is only with external support that actions such as these can be accomplished. APSE Energy has been helping councils achieved the benefits of action in the energy and changing climate agenda for many years and the APSE Energy team is ready to support local authorities over this coming period of local government change. Contact energy@apse.org.uk

Appendix 3: Summary of previous examples of LGR in England since 2009

Year	County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities
2023	Cumbria	7	2
		- Cumbria County - Allerdale - Barrow-in-Furness - Carlisle - Copeland - Eden - South Lakeland	Cumberland: - Allerdale, Carlisle, Copeland Westmorland & Furness - Barrow-in-Furness, Eden, South Lakeland
	North Yorkshire	8	1
		- North Yorkshire County - Craven - Hambleton - Harrogate - Richmondshire - Ryedale - Scarborough - Selby	North Yorkshire (all previous districts) <i>(City of York remains a separate unitary authority in the ceremonial county of North Yorkshire)</i>
	Somerset	5	1
		- Somerset County - Mendip - Sedgemoor - Somerset West & Taunton - South Somerset	Somerset (all previous districts) <i>(North Somerset, and Bath & North East Somerset, remain separate unitary authorities within the ceremonial county of Somerset.)</i>
2021	Northamptonshire	8	2
		- Northamptonshire County - Corby - Daventry	North Northamptonshire: - Corby - East Northamptonshire - Kettering

Year	County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities
		- East Northamptonshire - Kettering - Northampton - South Northamptonshire - Wellingborough	- Wellingborough West Northamptonshire: - Daventry - Northampton - South Northamptonshire
2020	Buckinghamshire	5	1
		- Buckinghamshire County - Aylesbury Vale - Chiltern - South Buckinghamshire - Wycombe	Buckinghamshire (all previous districts) (Milton Keynes remains a separate unitary authority.)
2019	Dorset	9	2
		- Dorset County - Bournemouth (unitary) - Poole (unitary) - Christchurch - East Dorset - North Dorset - Purbeck - West Dorset - Weymouth & Portland	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Dorset (all remaining districts)
2009	Bedfordshire	5	2
		- Bedfordshire County - Bedford - Mid Bedfordshire - South Bedfordshire - Luton	Bedford (unchanged boundaries, became unitary) Luton (already unitary, unchanged) Central Bedfordshire:

Year	County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities
			Mid and South Bedfordshire
		7	2
		- Cheshire County - Chester City - Crewe & Nantwich - Congleton - Ellesmere Port & Neston - Macclesfield - Vale Royal	Cheshire East: - Congleton, Crewe & Nantwich, Macclesfield Cheshire West & Chester - Chester City, E' Port & Neston, Vale Royal (Halton and Warrington remain as unitary authorities in the ceremonial county of Cheshire)
		7	1
		- Cornwall County - Carrick - Caradon - Kerrier - Penwith - Restormel - North Cornwall	Cornwall (all previous districts)
		8	1
		- Durham County - Durham City - Chester-Le-Street - Derwentside - Easington - Sedgefield - Teesdale - Wear Valley	Durham (all previous districts) <i>(Hartlepool, Darlington, and Stockton-on-Tees remain as unitary authorities in the ceremonial county of Durham)</i>

Year	County	Existing authorities (including County Council and any existing unitary authorities affected)	New unitary authorities
	Northumberland	7	1
		- Northumberland County - Alnwick - Berwick-upon-Tweed - Blyth Valley - Castle Morpeth - Tynedale - Wansbeck	Northumberland (all previous districts)
	Shropshire	6	1
		- Shropshire County - Bridgnorth - North Shropshire - Oswestry - Shrewsbury & Atcham - South Shropshire	Shropshire (all previous districts) <i>(Telford & Wrekin remains a separate unitary authority in the ceremonial county of Shropshire)</i>
	Wiltshire	5	1
		- Wiltshire County - Kennet - Salisbury - North Wiltshire - West Wiltshire	Wiltshire (all previous districts) <i>(Swindon remains a separate unitary authority in the ceremonial county of Wiltshire)</i>

Sign up for APSE membership to enjoy a whole range of benefits

APSE member authorities have access to a range of membership resources to assist in delivering council services. This includes our regular network meetings, specifically designed to bring together local authority staff, elected members, directors, managers and heads of service, together with trade union representatives to discuss service specific issues, innovation and new ways of delivering continuous improvement. The networks are an excellent forum for sharing ideas and discussing topical service issues with colleagues from other councils throughout the UK.

Networks are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and are regular webinars, and occasional in-person meetings with lunch, to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE Network meetings and would like to be added to our list of contacts for your service area, please email enquiries@apse.org.uk or [click here](#).

Our national networks include:-

- Local Government Reorganisation
- Armed Forces and Veterans
- Building Cleaning and Facilities Management
- Catering (School Meals)
- Cemeteries and Crematoria
- Housing, Construction and Building Maintenance
- Social Value, Procurement and Commercialisation
- Parks, Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance
- Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing
- Renewables and Changing Climate
- Roads, Highways and Street Lighting
- Sports and Leisure Management
- Vehicle Maintenance and Transport

Visit www.apse.org.uk for more details.



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