

# **Cumberland Council – Local Government Reorganisation journey**

**APSE Network  
21/11/25**

# Introductions and content

- Darren Crossley, Director of Place and Economy
  - Transport & Highways - Local transport planning, active travel, parking, highway maintenance
  - Waste & Public Spaces – Waste collection, Disposal, street cleansing, enforcement
  - Thriving places – Development management, economic development, regeneration, culture, leisure, play, grounds and gardens, heritage, destination management, bereavement services
- LGR origins, programme, implementation, lessons and take aways



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# Origins – pre LGR Cumbria

Local Government  
Reorganisation  
Delivering Two New Councils  
for Cumbria



- On 21 July 2021, the Secretary of State announced plans for the reorganisation of local government in Cumbria.
- A consultation was held on four proposals put forward to Government in the spring of 2021.
- In July 2021, the government announced that the east/west bid was the preferred proposal.
- This paved the way for the creation of two new unitary authorities within the county boundary which will deliver all services;

**West** - comprising the area covered by Carlisle, Allerdale and Copeland districts; and

**East** - comprising the area covered by Eden, South Lakeland and Barrow districts



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# Creating the two new Councils

## Vision:

The vision, set out in the East/West proposal, stated that local government reorganisation will:

- Create two new unitary authorities that are able to operate **safely and legally** from day one - April 1, 2023.
- Create conditions for the new organisations to **transform and improve outcomes for residents, businesses, partners and the environment** with Vesting Day being a **milestone on a journey which is likely to take 5 - 7 years**.
- **Create governance structures that enable the two new councils to raise ambitions and become more successful in terms of place**, so that the economy is transformed and the opportunities and life chances of all residents are significantly improved.
- Create ways of working that **deliver local, responsive, accessible, high quality services** efficiently and in collaboration with our partners.



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# LGR Programme

- Work to create **two distinct new unitary councils** within the area currently covered by **seven separate authorities** was a complex process and required significant planning on behalf of the seven authorities.
- A clear **transition programme** was put in place including a **full governance structure**. This structure comprised the Cumbria Leaders Oversight Panel, the Chief Executives Programme Board and the Workstream/Programme Boards.
- A clear timeline was also produced with key milestones set by the Government. This included:
  - The laying before parliament of a **Structural Changes Order** - to be adopted in March 2022.
  - The creation of **Joint Committees** in March 2022.
  - **Elections** to shadow authorities in May 2022.
  - **Vesting Day** - when the new councils become operational - on April 1, 2023.
  - Continuing transformation beyond this point.



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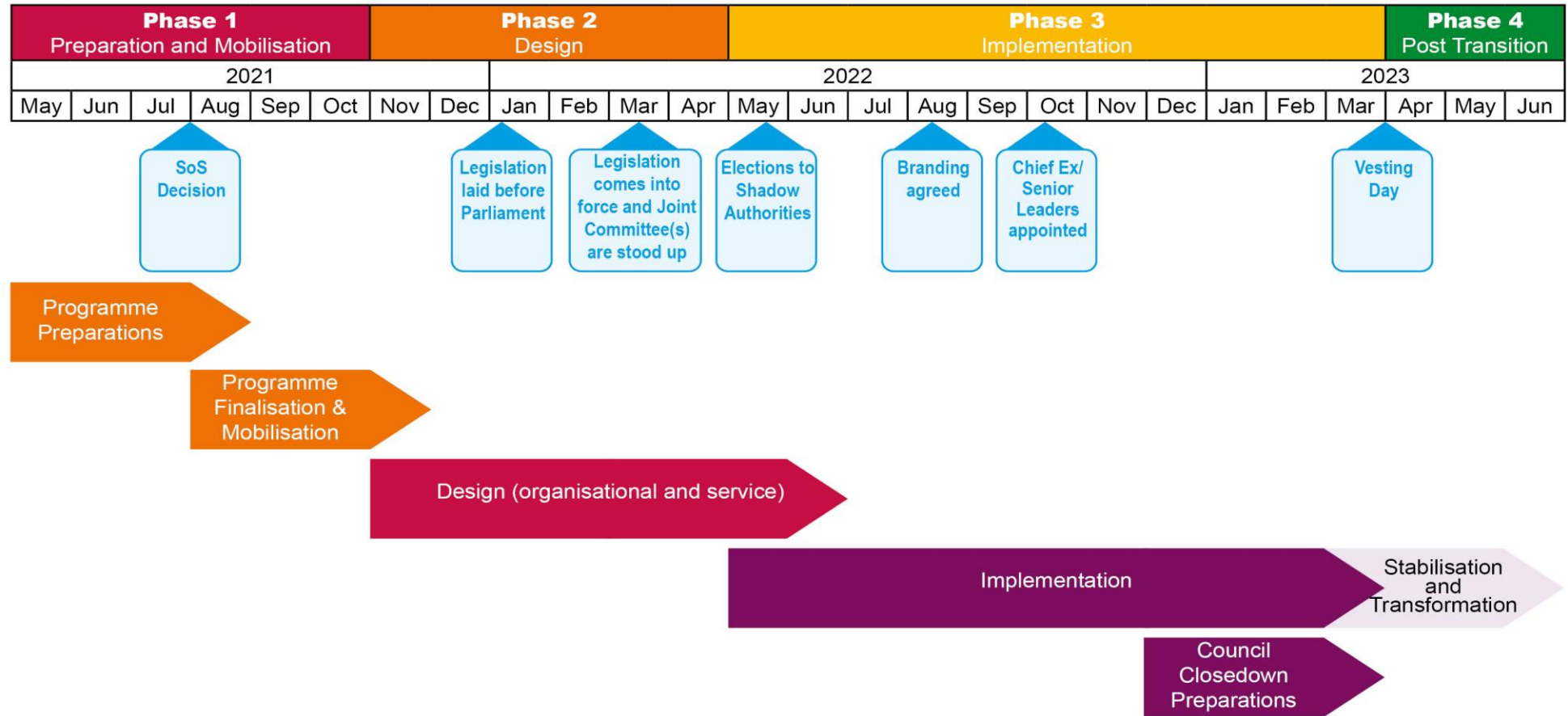


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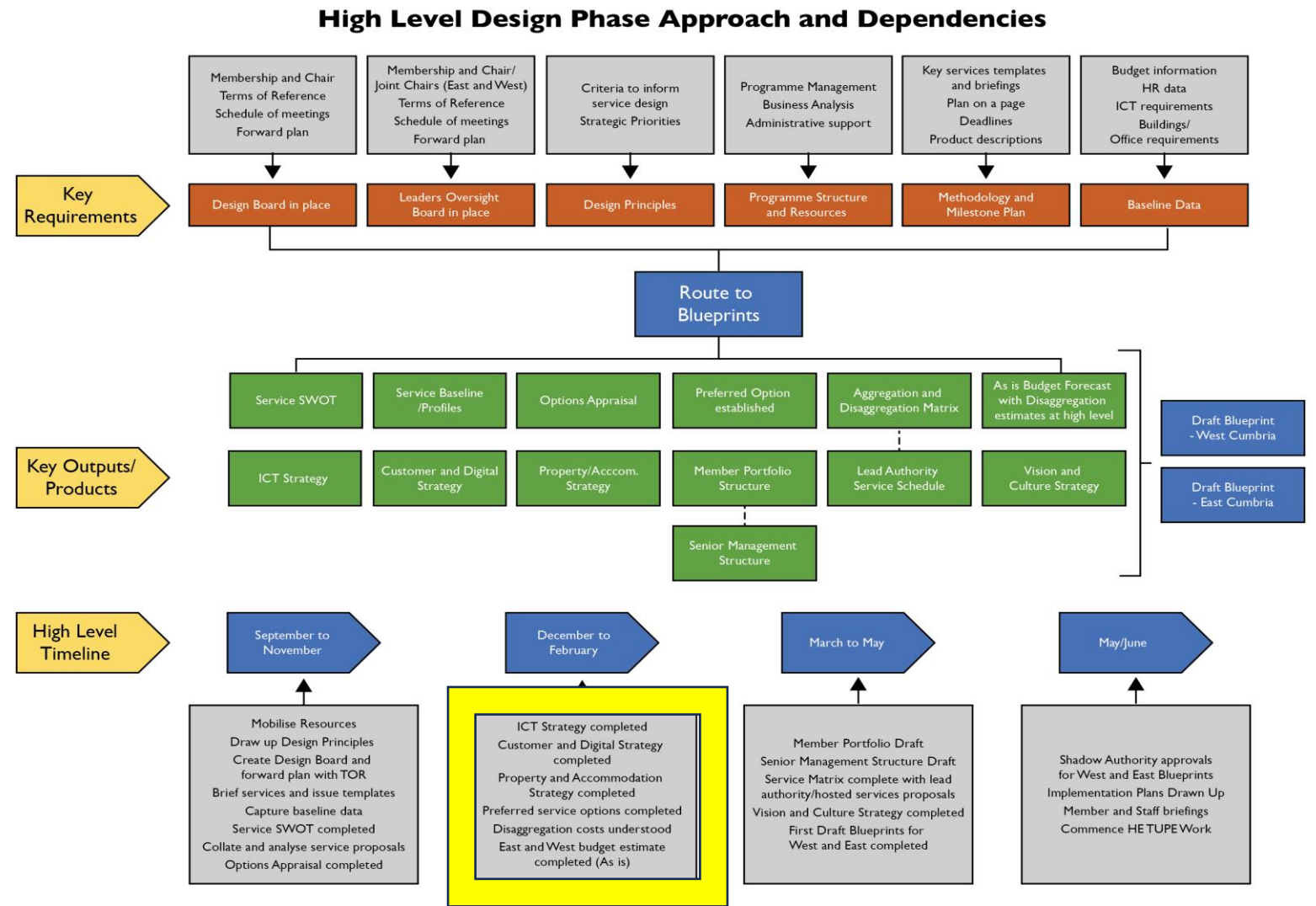
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# High level timeline





# Design v reality – key challenges



# Key areas of corporate LGR work

**ICT Strategy** – key systems of operation

**Customer & Digital Strategy** – web, phone, F2F

**Property & Accommodation Strategy** – office and depots

**Preferred service options agreed** – single, hosted, shared, contracted, outsourced (novation arrangements)

**Aggregation** of budgets (districts)

**Disaggregation** of budgets (County)

New authority budgets estimates completed

New authority **vision, culture**

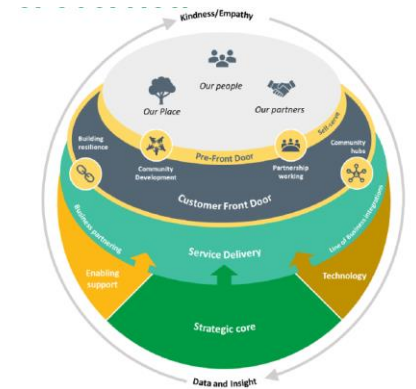
**Target operating model**

Senior management recruitment

TUPE strategy

Future terms and conditions

Member, staff and union briefings





# Key areas of Place Directorate work

## Development of the transformation programme (post day 1)

**Waste collection service** – harmonisation  
**Waste disposal** contract and services – Inter authority agreement

**Highways and transport** – disaggregation programme (including arbitration)

**Planning & building control** – development management aggregation

Other district service aggregation – leisure, bereavement services, parks, etc.

## New Council culture – Place Directorate

Whole service team inductions and service planning

New operating model normalisation

Terms and conditions harmonisation

Health and wellbeing of our teams



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# Key lessons and take aways (a personal view!)

- Be very clear on transition(day 1) v transformation (multi year redesign)
- Properly resource and recruit to the process as early as possible (time flies!)
- Focus hard on the core operating requirements (ICT, finance, HR) the 'single baseline' and plan for early transformation
- Don't underestimate the costs of transition and the additional support you will require, particularly if you are also doing devo!
- Remember you can't communicate enough – residents, partners, colleagues, members



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# Any questions?



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