

All Forums, September 2025: Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Update

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The government's requirement for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has now reached an important stage in Hertfordshire, as all 11 councils begin to engage with residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders on principles and priorities, as well as potential options for future council arrangements.
- 1.2 Engagement events are being held across Hertfordshire throughout September, including the community forums in North Herts. A survey is now open to allow residents to give their views on how local government in Hertfordshire should be organised.

2. **Overview:**

- 2.1 The government's Devolution White Paper requires all local authorities in areas where there are currently two tiers of local government, to develop proposals for reorganisation. These proposals should seek to establish a single tier of local government. District and Borough Councils across Hertfordshire, along with the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner, are working closely together to consider future arrangements that will best meet the needs of our communities.
- 2.2 This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help shape how local services, from bins and planning to libraries and social care, are delivered in Hertfordshire. Councils want to protect what already works well while improving the things that could be better. By taking part, residents and organisations can ensure their voices are heard and any future changes deliver long-term benefits to our communities.
- 2.3 The objectives for LGR are:
 - Simplified, more efficient and more resilient council structures
 - More consistent service access
 - Greater transparency in decision-making
 - A stronger local voice in how councils operate

3. **Steps to date:**

- 3.1 A single unitary council for the whole of Hertfordshire has been ruled out. With a population of 1.2 million, Hertfordshire is too big to be viable as just one council area. It would be larger

than any local authority in the UK and decision-making would become too far removed from our communities. Instead, councils are working together to explore options that are more locally focused and responsive, including multiple unitary authorities that better reflect the identity of different parts of our county.

- 3.2 An initial round of engagement took place in July with several key strategic partners of the council, including town business improvement districts (BIDs). This initial phase focussed on the principles and opportunities behind potential reorganisation options, and aimed to build understanding of the LGR process.

4. Information to note

- 4.1 Hertfordshire's 11 councils have developed three potential options for how local government could be structured in the future. Details for each of the three options can be seen on the display boards at the Community Forum.
- 4.2 A survey is now available online for residents to have their say on the proposals. It's the easiest way to give feedback. The link to the survey is on the display boards.
- 4.3 A website has also launched which has more information about the three options for unitary councils and updates related to LGR in Hertfordshire. The link to the survey is also there. The North Herts Council website also has more information and a link to the site.

5. Next steps:

- 5.1 Feedback from this phase of engagement will be collated and used to shape a final submission for LGR in Hertfordshire. The deadline for submissions is 28 November 2025.
- 5.2 An Extraordinary Council meeting will take place on 13 November 2025 to consider the submission, and a final decision will be made at a Cabinet meeting on 19 November 2025. Other Herts local authorities will also make a final decision that week.
- 5.3 A decision on which proposal to take forward is expected in 2026. It is anticipated that elections to the new unitary authorities will take place in May 2027, and Vesting Day (the date the new councils officially take over from the current councils) will be in 2028.

Note prepared by: Gavin Midgley, Senior Digital Communications Officer and Christine Crofts, Communications Manager