

The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local
Government
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government
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Please ask for
Direct Line

Huw Bowen
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Our Ref

HB/GH

27 November 2025

From the Leaders of Derby City Council and seven of Derbyshire's eight Borough and District Councils

Dear Secretary of State

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ("the 2007 Act")
Invitation for Proposals for a Single Tier of Local Government

We write as the Leaders of Derby City Council and seven of Derbyshire's eight Borough and District Councils to jointly respond to your formal invitation, dated 5 February 2025 to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire by 28 November 2025.

In responding to your invitation, we have had due regard to the guidance set out in the Schedule to your invitation (and in particular to the 'criteria for unitary local government'), and to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) 15 May 2025 written feedback on the interim plans submitted by Derbyshire and Derby councils on or before 21 March 2025.

We have also had due regard to the further guidance that we have received from MHCLG civil servants and especially Katrina Crookdake, who has been MHCLG's Local Delivery Lead for Local Government Reorganisation in the area of the county of Derbyshire.

Our councils have respectively resolved to approve the attached 'One Derbyshire, Two Councils' case for change, in which we jointly make the case for the number of local authorities in the area of the county of Derbyshire to be reduced from ten to two – one covering northern Derbyshire, and the other covering southern Derbyshire – that deliver all council services.

Our case for change is detailed and evidence-based and aims to clearly describe the benefits of creating two new unitary councils that:

- a) Remain connected to local people – councils that are big enough to deliver but close enough to listen and respond to local needs.

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- b) Provide effective and value for money services – with the vision and financial stability to transform the services residents receive, especially those relating to social care, children’s services, SEND and homelessness.
- c) Recognise the importance of maintaining the integrity of the historic county of Derbyshire and its world-renowned cultural, heritage and environmental assets.
- d) Are of the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. Our financial modelling indicates that cumulative savings of up to £167m should be achievable by year 6, and annual savings of £44m from year 6 onwards. On this basis, the initial investment associated with setting up the two new unitary councils (£65.4m) would be recouped within roughly three-and-a-half years of their establishment.
- e) Align well with the emerging proposals for unitary local government in Nottinghamshire and in turn with Mayor Claire Ward’s and East Midlands Combined County Authority’s (EMCCA’s) ambitions to grow an inclusive economy, reform public services and secure better outcomes for the region’s communities.

Our ‘One Derbyshire, Two Councils’ case for change and our proposals (see below), have also been shaped by the results of an independently conducted public consultation exercise which elicited responses from more than 7,300 local residents and the considered views of a range of key stakeholders, including partner public sector bodies, voluntary and community sector organisations and business networks.

Informed by the shared case for change, our councils have however developed and ultimately resolved to put forward four separate proposals for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire. These proposals are attached to our ‘One Derbyshire, Two Councils’ case for change at Appendices 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 and should be read in conjunction with the case for change.

Amber Valley Borough Council has resolved to submit **Proposal A** as their final proposal for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire, the justification for which is set out in Appendix 3.1.

This is a Type B proposal under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (“the 2007 Act”) and based on ‘whole District building blocks’.

In this proposal, the geography of Amber Valley Borough Council would be part of the northern Derbyshire unitary council, alongside the geographies of High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, and Bolsover District Council.

The southern Derbyshire unitary council would then comprise the geographies of Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District Council, and Erewash Borough Council.

South Derbyshire District Council has resolved to submit **Proposal B** as their final proposal for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire, the justification for which is set out in Appendix 3.3.

This is a Type B proposal under the 2007 Act and based on ‘whole District building blocks’.

In this proposal, the geography of Amber Valley Borough Council would be part of the southern Derbyshire unitary council, alongside the geographies of Derby City Council, South Derbyshire District Council and Erewash Borough Council.

The northern Derbyshire unitary council would then comprise the geographies of High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, North East Derbyshire District Council, and Bolsover District Council.

Bolsover District Council and North East Derbyshire District Council have resolved to submit **Proposal A1** as their final proposal for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire, the justification for which is set out in Appendix 3.2.

Proposal A1 is based on Proposal A but requests a boundary change using the geographies of existing parish councils within Amber Valley borough as the building blocks for the proposed configuration of the two new unitary councils, with the populations of the named parish councils either being part of the northern Derbyshire unitary council or the southern Derbyshire unitary council.

In making their submission, the two councils **invite** the Secretary of State to use their powers of modification to make changes to the boundaries of the statutory base Proposal A as indicated in Proposal A1.

High Peak Borough Council, Chesterfield Borough Council, Derby City Council and Erewash Borough Council have resolved to submit **Proposal B1** as their final proposal for a single tier of local government in the area of the county of Derbyshire, the justification for which is set out in Appendix 3.4.

Proposal B1 is based on Proposal B and again requests a boundary change using the geographies of existing parish councils within Amber Valley borough as the building blocks for the proposed configuration of the two new unitary councils. However, Proposal B1 is configured differently from Proposal A1 with more of Amber Valley borough’s population falling under the remit of the southern Derbyshire unitary council.

In making their submission, the four councils **invite** the Secretary of State to use their powers of modification to make changes to the boundaries of the statutory base Proposal B as indicated in Proposal B1.

While Derbyshire County Council has resolved to submit their own proposal for a single tier of local government (including the geography of Derby City Council) in the area of the county of Derbyshire, all ten Derbyshire councils have been signatory to a data sharing protocol. This has ensured the timely sharing of relevant data between the ten councils to enable our respective proposals to be developed using a shared evidence base.

In conclusion, we believe the four proposals submitted by Derby City Council and seven of Derbyshire's eight Borough and District Councils meet MHCLG's 'criteria for unitary local government' and we look forward to working with you, your ministers and MHCLG's civil servants and advisors to help you better understand their content and that of our underlying 'case for change' ahead of you taking steps to formally consult on the proposals in Spring 2026.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Nadine Peatfield

Leader of Derby City Council



Cllr Chris Emmas-Williams

Leader of Amber Valley Borough Council




Cllr Jane Yates

Leader of Bolsover District Council



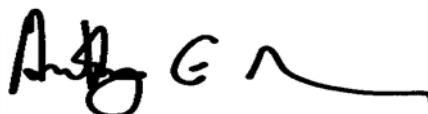
Cllr Tricia Gilby

Leader of Chesterfield Borough Council



Cllr James Dawson

Leader of Erewash Borough Council



Cllr Anthony McKeown

Leader of High Peak Borough Council



Cllr Nigel Barker

Leader of North East Derbyshire District Council



Cllr Rob Pearson

Leader of South Derbyshire District Council