



Outlook

LGR Update from Alistair for Parish Councils

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Preparing for LGR

*Transformation
and LGR readiness*

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Dear Parish Councils,

I am getting in touch to update you on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), following the significant Government announcement this week.

In summary, the Government has paused LGR in Norfolk, Suffolk and several other areas, while it conducts a review to consider all local government reorganisation decisions it announced in March and July. To be clear, despite what you may have heard elsewhere, this is a pause for review, not a cancellation of LGR in Norfolk.

Government's LGR review

[The Government announcement](#) states that the review is following updated legal advice, to ensure the process is robust and aligns with new Government priorities, following a change in national political leadership.

With a new Prime Minister in office, who was not even an MP when the Local Government Reorganisation proposals were drafted, and with Angela Rayner now back as Secretary of State, having been out of office when the LGR decisions were taken, it is no surprise that they want to pause the LGR process and review the situation.

On Monday, I had the opportunity to join a meeting with Jim McMahon, Minister for Local Government, Devolution and Regional Growth. That was a small meeting on Teams with just representatives from Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Hampshire present and there was an opportunity to put questions directly to the Minister which I was able to do.

The clear message from that meeting was that this is a pause to review and reflect before implementing final decisions, but commitment to reorganisation remains strong and resolute. Minister McMahon reinforced that message in a follow up meeting on Tuesday where he also explained that an initial review would be undertaken during conference recess and we would have a timetable shortly after that – sometime mid/late October.

The Government has been very clear that all options remain under consideration. This could include revised proposals or different unitary arrangements.

As Council Leader, I remain clear that any idea of replacing the existing eight councils in Norfolk with one or two super councils would not serve local communities well. If district and county councils are to be replaced, our joint proposal with five other districts for three sizable councils delivering all local services, based around the historic centres of King's Lynn, Norwich and Great Yarmouth, is undoubtedly the way forward.

Devolution

What is also clear from Ministers is devolution is an increasing Government priority. Current indications suggest a strong focus on accelerating devolution arrangements linked to the Prime Minister's ambitions to "rewire the state",

with further information expected through updated Government guidance and announcements later this year. We are expecting the county councils in Norfolk and Suffolk to make a decision in October on whether to proceed with devolution for our two counties.

How we're moving forward in Norfolk

One consequence of the LGR review is all-out local elections to the borough council will now take place in May 2027 (on existing boundaries), alongside parish elections, instead of holding elections for councillors to shadow unitary authorities as previously timetabled.

The Norfolk-wide LGR Programme and the LGR-specific work we were doing as a borough council will pause and undergo a managed close-down for the time being. The process will aim to ensure that the value of the work undertaken is retained, so we're ready to stand up again when needed.

I would like to recognise the significant number of officers and elected colleagues across Norfolk's councils, who have contributed considerable time, expertise and energy to the Norfolk-wide LGR Programme.

Personally, as Council Leader, I also relish the opportunity to focus all my time on our borough, while maintaining the new connections and opportunities for constructive joint-working and collaboration across councils that have been fostered through LGR.

Once the Government has made a final decision, we remain committed to working closely with other councils across Norfolk to prepare to integrate services and reorganise, as necessary. In the meantime, we continue to prioritise delivering excellent services for local communities, while awaiting further details from Government.

I will continue to keep you updated at key points in this process. If you would like to explore the topic of LGR further, there is information [on our website](#) and the [Government website](#).

Thanks,

Alistair Beales.

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Leader

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Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



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