Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Councils

Contents

Options Appraisal for Local Government Reorganisation across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils in line with the requirements of the Government's English Devolution White Paper published in December 2024.

1. Executive Summary

PwC supported the production of this report (which details the results of collaborative discussions between the councils) and:

- Assisted with the options appraisal of the different formations of unitary council we have considered.
- Conducted financial analysis of those unitary options.

For the avoidance of doubt, PwC's input was provided solely with our interests in mind, for our use only, and may not be relied upon by any other party.

Executive Summary: Summary

This document provides and options analysis for local government reform (LGR) in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It support and builds on analysis undertaken to support the submission of an interim plan by the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils to MHCLG in March 2025.

Phase 1 (January - March 2025)

MHCLG officially set out their formal LGR criteria to all councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire on 5th February 2025, with supplementary guidance provided (in response to the interim plan) in June 2025.

Through independent analysis, engagement with Chief Executives and Section 151 officers, an options appraisal for future council arrangements in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire was developed. This has led to the identification of three potential options for LGR (from a long list of eight) which, on agreement with the Leaders / Mayor were included within the interim plan submitted to Government.

Given the rapid timeframe, it was agreed that further work should be undertaken following the interim plan, including a range of activities to deepen the appraisal of the three options.

1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. **Nottingham City remains the same** 2. The **rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

Phase 2 (May - June 2025)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed in May 2025 that the identified options should be further appraised through additional analysis against the government's framework.

The additional analysis prepared has particularly focussed on:

£ **Sensible economic area**

Sensible Geography

Impact on crucial services

Each of the three options offer different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and 1(e) (as set out on page 33) were found to provide the strongest alignment to the set criteria.

The additional analysis undertaken demonstrated that Option 2 is the least aligned, and that the differences in degree of alignment between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

This document sets out how each of the three options aligns to the MHCLG criteria and includes updated financial modelling to reflect a review of the assumptions which has been discussed with s151 officers over the course of the last few weeks.

Executive Summary: Updated financial analysis

The financial analysis, methodology and assumptions applied have been shared, tested and talked through with s151 officers. All councils have accepted the financial analysis as complete with each s151 officer providing assurance on the model and underlying assumptions. This analysis is to support the options analysis stage only. Significantly more work will be needed for a financial case that supports a full proposal.

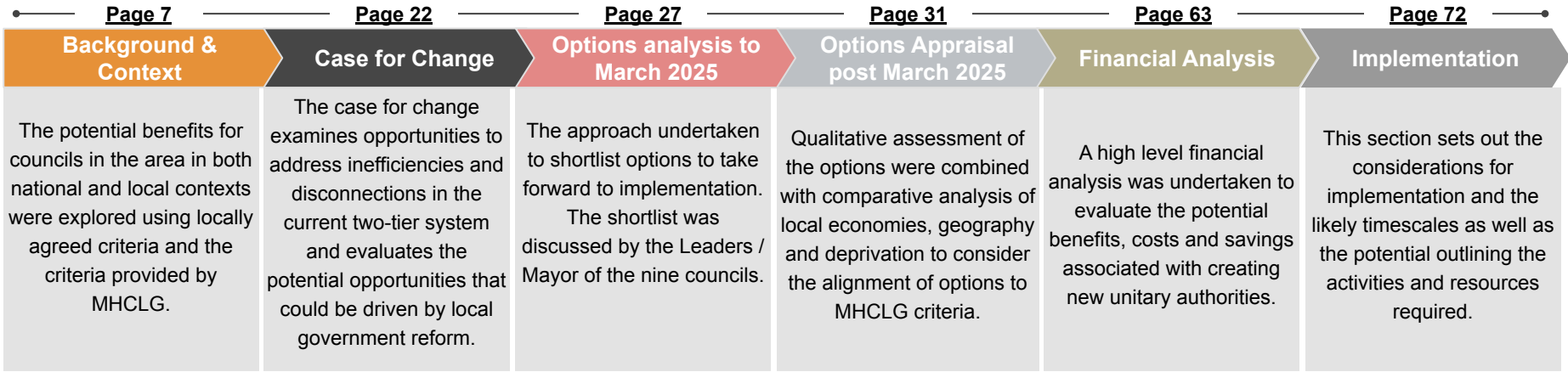|	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Option 3: Single Unitary Authority	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

Comparative purposes only

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Executive Summary: Process to date

Following the publication of the White Paper, significant activity has taken place in order to agree a local response, to test potential models for reorganisation, to document the outcomes of that analysis, and to present a comprehensive set of information for Chief Executives and Members to consider. The process followed is set out below:

Page 7	**Page 22**	**Page 27**	**Page 31**	**Page 63**	**Page 72**
Background & Context	**Case for Change**	**Options analysis to March 2025**	**Options Appraisal post March 2025**	**Financial Analysis**	**Implementation**
The potential benefits for councils in the area in both national and local contexts were explored using locally agreed criteria and the criteria provided by MHCLG.	The case for change examines opportunities to address inefficiencies and disconnections in the current two-tier system and evaluates the potential opportunities that could be driven by local government reform.	The approach undertaken to shortlist options to take forward to implementation. The shortlist was discussed by the Leaders / Mayor of the nine councils.	Qualitative assessment of the options were combined with comparative analysis of local economies, geography and deprivation to consider the alignment of options to MHCLG criteria.	A high level financial analysis was undertaken to evaluate the potential benefits, costs and savings associated with creating new unitary authorities.	This section sets out the considerations for implementation and the likely timescales as well as the potential outlining the activities and resources required.

2. Background and Context

2a. National Context

National Context: Devolution and reform

The **English Devolution White Paper** published in late 2024 by MHCLG, outlined a shift in the approach and ambition for reorganising and decentralising power to Local Government in England

The White Paper sets out as the default an enhanced Devolution Framework clarifying the powers available to each type of Authority and the aspiration regarding the types of powers and funding arrangements that will exist in future. This was a distinct shift from previous approaches, built around a bespoke devolution 'deals'. This new approach seeks to empower local authorities to address existing financial sustainability and local service challenges by:

● Allowing for increased powers to be vested in local and regional government supported by new funding frameworks and integrated funding settlements;
● Structuring these new entities to cover larger geographies, but to retain logical boundaries which avoid 'islands' between reorganised areas, and which resonate with local identity;
● Implementing these radical changes at pace, accelerating delivery of benefits.

Reorganisation:
The transition to unitary authorities will ultimately remove the 'two tier' model of delivery from the map. This will involve the creation of new unitary councils which take the place of the current county, city and districts.

Devolution:
Creation of Strategic Authorities which will coordinate and commission services at a regional level. This could include the collaboration of multiple unitary authorities to provide a strategic regional authority. The White Paper includes specific ambitions and incentives for these authorities to drive economic growth and lead on strategic planning and transport.

National Context: "*a once in a generation opportunity*"

Government has set out their ambition to make the most of a '*once in a generation*' opportunity to improve the way that local and regional government operated in England. The aim is to create the conditions for economic growth, reduce duplication and fragmentation and create greater efficiencies in public spending and service delivery.

Transform service delivery: LGR should be a catalyst for transformation, beginning with the establishment of new unitary councils. This provides a rare opportunity to redesign ways of working from the ground up and to deliver greater consistency across all services. It also allows for the opportunity to share the best of what is done currently, and to deploy it at scale to support broader public service reform.

Increased efficiency: There is duplication and fragmentation across local government as a result of the way the two-tier system has developed over a number of years. LGR creates an opportunity to address this by consolidating common functions, bringing together services that are currently split across more than one tier, make better use of new and emerging technology and reduce the volume of systems or assets that are currently in place.

Establish a stronger voice for the place: There is an opportunity to develop a stronger, more unified voice for the area which supports its growing presence on the regional and national stage. Government has already expressed its view about the importance of unitary local government as part of the devolution agenda, and in future models of system-wide delivery or integrated funding.

Enhance connections with communities: LGR presents an opportunity to create event better connections with local communities, better understand their sense of belonging, and to design models of service delivery that are effective. A number of the unitary councils established during previous rounds of LGR have adopted similar new arrangements, using the raised profile of democratic accountability to promote and enhance the connection with their communities.

Growth & Prosperity: Continued accelerated growth which reaches all parts of the area requires a strategy that builds on regional priorities and opportunities. The conditions for future prosperity will be influenced by new infrastructure and investment which that require a place-based approach across a wider geography. This is a key priority for regional and local government who will need to work together in different ways to achieve this.

National Context: MHCLG ambitions for local government reform

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria correspondence to all 21 two-tier areas across England on 5th February 2025.[1] Set out below is a summary of that criteria. The department shared some additional clarifications in June 2025 as part of the response to the interim plan.[2]

Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6
Establishing a single tier of government for the whole area	**Improve efficiencies, capacity and withstand financial shocks**	**Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens**	**Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views**	**New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements**	**New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment**
Sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base.

A sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.

Proposals need to be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes.

There is a need to describe clearly the single tier local government structures it is putting forward for the whole of the area, and explain how, if implemented, these are expected to achieve the outcomes described. | New councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more. There may be scenarios in which this does not make sense for an area, including on devolution.

Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that council taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money.

Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets. | Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services.

Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money.

Consideration should be given to the impacts for crucial services such as social care, children's services, SEND and homelessness, and for wider public services including for public safety. | It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way.

Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.

Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed. | Proposals will need to consider and set out for areas where there is already a Combined Authority (CA) or a Combined County Authority (CCA) established, how that institution and its governance arrangements will need to change to continue to function effectively; and set out clearly (where applicable) whether this proposal is supported by the CA/CCA /Mayor. Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities. | Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged.

Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement. |

2b. Local Context

Local Context: Existing two-tier local government

Local government across Nottinghamshire has seen major changes in governance arrangements over time.
In 1992, unitary authorities were created, and by 1998, Nottingham City Council regained full responsibility for local services, while the county continued to operate a two-tier system with District councils.

**Creation of Nottinghamshire County Council**
The Local Government Act 1888 established Nottinghamshire County Council for rural governance. Nottingham became a county borough.

Local Government Reorganisation
This introduced a two-tier system, with Nottinghamshire County Council overseeing strategic services while district and borough council managed local matters.

East Midlands Combined County Authority
Nottingham and Nottinghamshire councils become constituent members of the EMCCA which held its first Mayoral election in May 2024.
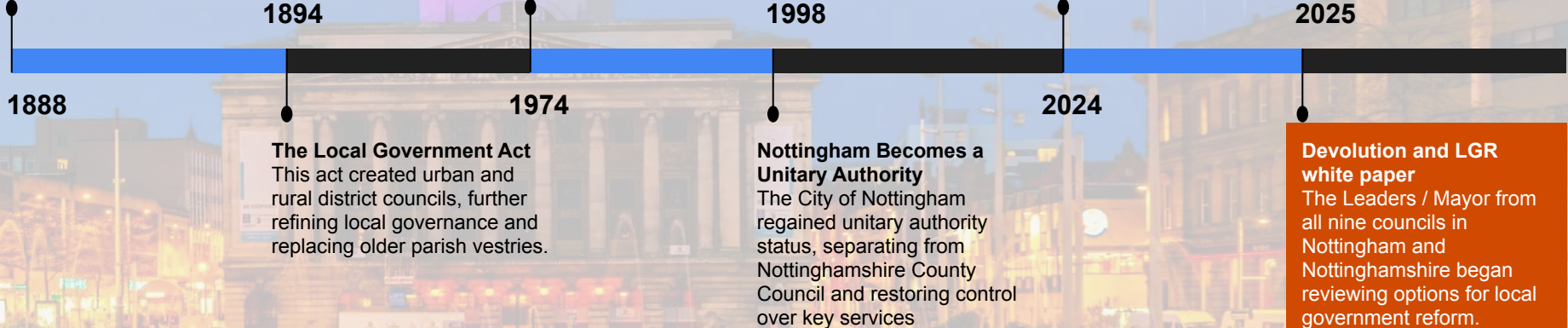
1894

1998

2025

1888

1974

2024

The Local Government Act
This act created urban and rural district councils, further refining local governance and replacing older parish vestries.

Nottingham Becomes a Unitary Authority
The City of Nottingham regained unitary authority status, separating from Nottinghamshire County Council and restoring control over key services

Devolution and LGR white paper
The Leaders / Mayor from all nine councils in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire began reviewing options for local government reform.

Local Context: The ambition to drive public sector reform

In response to the White Paper shared on 16th December 2024, and in advance of the statutory invitation being received from MHCLG, the nine councils agreed a series of local priorities which are set out below:

How people live their lives

- Covers a credible geography – reflecting how places function economically and how people live their lives
- Reflects community identity and makes sense as a "Place" including spatial characteristics
- Enables sustainable operational delivery for public services
- Seeks to improve connectivity especially for communities that most need support

Financial and fiscal sustainability

- Financially sustainable local authorities, which are resilient to longer-term economic or policy changes by balancing income and need
- Delivers value for money through economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- Delivers financial benefits which outweigh the cost of change
- Risk informed with effective mitigation measures
- Considers the future Council Tax base and equalisation across new authority areas

Offers the potential for public service reform that improves outcomes and experiences for residents

- Enables solutions to challenges impacting on residents' outcomes and which risk long-term financial stability
- Provides safe and resilient support, help and protection and care to vulnerable children, families and adults
- Aligns with EMCCA to enable creation and delivery of services for Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire
- Considers alignment with all other key strategic partners
- Maximises opportunity to enhance delivery through innovation

Enables strong, local accountability and connection to communities and neighbourhoods

- Ensures services are easily accessible for all
- Strengthens the role of local democratic leadership
- Builds trust with local communities
- Seeks the active input and engagement of residents, businesses and employees

Local Context: East Midlands Combined County Authority

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) has a strategic purpose to address economic, planning and infrastructure needs at a regional level. Further devolution deals under the proposed strategic authority framework will provide a means to unlocking additional central government (integrated) funding arrangements and greater powers with delivery responsibilities sitting with new unitary authorities.

EMCCA's Background

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024.

The EMCCA is a partnership of local authorities working across the region to leverage devolved funding.
An elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers is in place. This creates the conditions for greater local autonomy and will over time gain further strategic powers and devolved central government funding.

What constitutes the EMCCA?

In November 2022, a devolution deal was agreed by the four upper-tier councils:

- Derbyshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Derby City Council
- Nottingham City Council

This secured a £1.1bn investment package, spread over a 30-year period, alongside devolved powers around transport, housing, skills and adult education, economic development and net zero.

EMCCA's Priorities

EMCCA's shared ambition for the region focuses on:

- Growing the region's economy through targeting investment to drive growth
- Improving transport links for better connectivity
- Increasing housing availability
- Enhancing skills development to create demand and supply within the region
- Supporting green initiatives
- Improving health outcomes

DERBYSHIRE

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Derby

Nottingham

East Midlands
Combined County
Authority

Local Context: Role of EMCCA and new unitary authorities

Determining how the new councils will work with EMCCA will form part of the full business case. Several factors should be considered when defining this relationship including MHCLG criteria, existing and future aims and objectives and community expectations of each body as well as the opportunity for wider public service reform.

The role that unitary authorities will play in service delivery, within the context of the newly created EMCCA, will need to be agreed during implementation. Initial factors for considerations are outlined below:

(1) Criteria: *What does 'one layer of local government for the whole area' imply?*

MHCLG Criteria 1 requires proposals to achieve the establishment of a single tier of local government. For Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, EMCCA will set the strategic direction, and the new councils will have an operational focus.
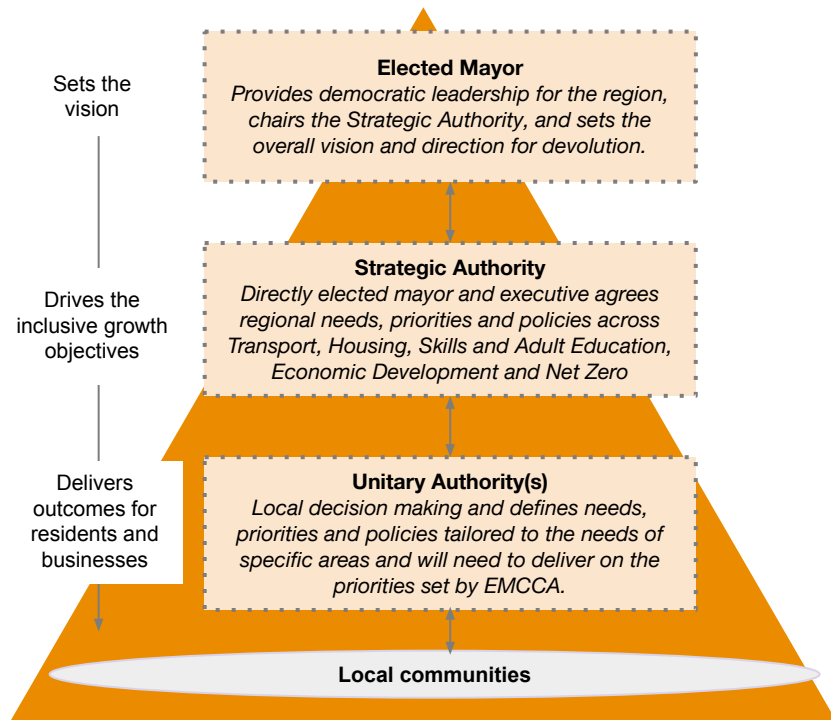
(2) Purpose: *What are the aims and objectives of each body?*

EMCCA has powers relating to transport, housing and skills – alongside leading the economic strategy of the region. Several key aims have been identified within the EMCCA Strategic Framework that sets out an initial broad vision rooted in 'inclusive growth'. The Strategic Authority will set the growth agenda and lead decisions on the direction of spatial planning, transport and skills provision.

This will be overseen by the EMCCA Inclusive Growth Commission, which sets out the view that growth is essential to creating successful communities that are people-centred and focus on education, wellbeing, public safety, healthcare, infrastructure, housing and assets.

(3) Community: *What would a resident expected of each body?*

Residents will expect councils to continue providing vital services to their community and championing their towns, rural communities and cities, whilst EMCCA will be expected to deliver transport links, business development and employment opportunities that support places and inclusive growth.

Sets the vision

Drives the inclusive growth objectives

Delivers outcomes for residents and businesses

Elected Mayor
Provides democratic leadership for the region, chairs the Strategic Authority, and sets the overall vision and direction for devolution.

Strategic Authority
Directly elected mayor and executive agrees regional needs, priorities and policies across Transport, Housing, Skills and Adult Education, Economic Development and Net Zero

Unitary Authority(s)
Local decision making and defines needs, priorities and policies tailored to the needs of specific areas and will need to deliver on the priorities set by EMCCA.
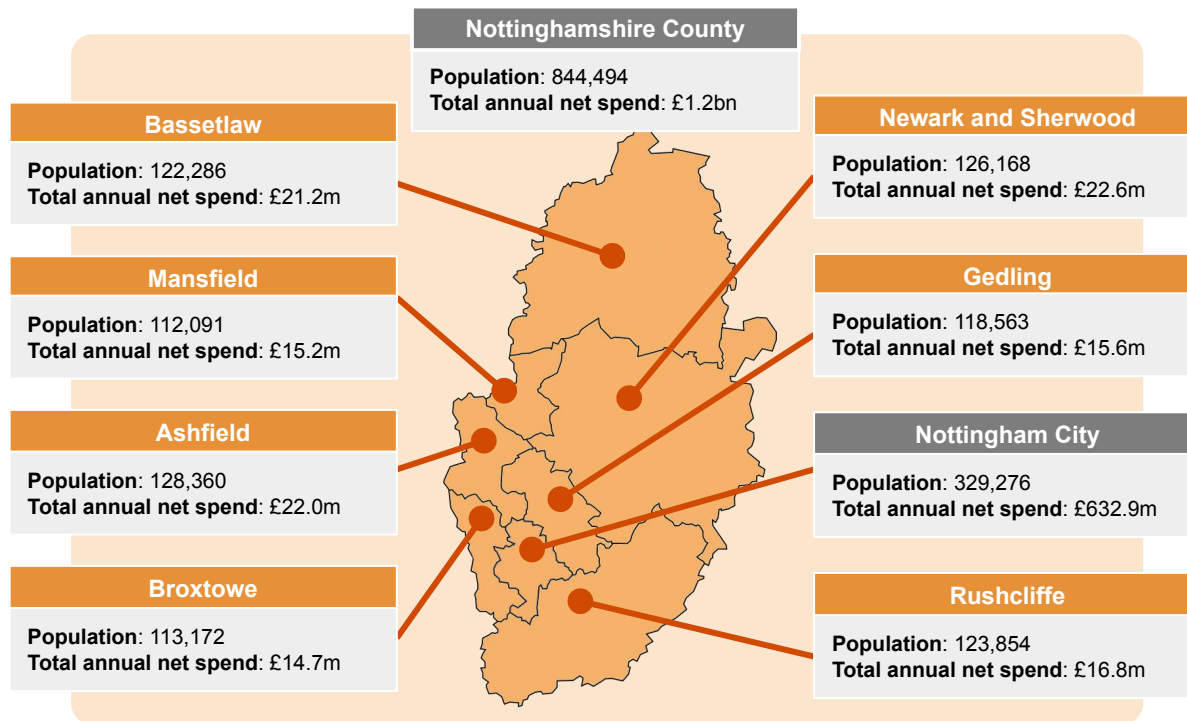
Local communities

Local Context: Geography, population and council spend

Set out below and across the next four pages is a snapshot of the context in which all nine councils are operating which has fed into the comparative analysis undertaken, aligned to local and MHCLG criteria.

Nottinghamshire is currently served by multiple tiers of local governance. Nottinghamshire County Council is responsible for education, social care and highways, while seven district and borough councils provide services such as housing, waste collection and local planning. Nottingham City Council operates as a unitary authority, distinct from Nottinghamshire County Council, managing all local government functions within its boundaries.

The county is represented by 11 parliamentary constituencies, many of which closely align with district and borough boundaries.

Nottinghamshire shares a boundary with several neighbouring counties: Derbyshire to the west, South Yorkshire to the north, Lincolnshire to the east and Leicestershire to the south. EMCCA is comprised of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and the cities of Nottingham and Derby.

Nottinghamshire County
Population: 844,494
Total annual net spend: £1.2bn

Bassetlaw
Population: 122,286
Total annual net spend: £21.2m

Mansfield
Population: 112,091
Total annual net spend: £15.2m

Ashfield
Population: 128,360
Total annual net spend: £22.0m

Broxtowe
Population: 113,172
Total annual net spend: £14.7m

Newark and Sherwood
Population: 126,168
Total annual net spend: £22.6m

Gedling
Population: 118,563
Total annual net spend: £15.6m

Nottingham City
Population: 329,276
Total annual net spend: £632.9m

Rushcliffe
Population: 123,854
Total annual net spend: £16.8m

Local Context: Place & Demography

Nottinghamshire has a diverse socio-economic profile, with place and demographic trends indicating contrasts between urban and rural areas as well as across those places which are historically industrial compared to those which are experiencing growth in new sectors. It is important that any reorganisation considers the diverse place and demography across the wider area.

19.0% of the Nottinghamshire population is aged over 65, and is projected to rise by over 30.0% by 2034. Bassetlaw has the highest proportion of over 65's, while Nottingham City has the lowest.

Gross disposable income is highest in Rushcliffe, at £23,828, and lowest in Nottingham City, at £15,015. This compares to a national average of £20,425.

Bassetlaw has the lowest population density within the area at 110 people per square km. Nottingham City is the most densely populated as 4,338 people per square km.

The further education and skills participation is highest in Nottingham City, at 6,545 per 100,000 population, and lowest in Rushcliffe, at 4,435 per 100,000 population.

Ethnic diversity varies, with Nottingham city the most diverse (65.9% white; 14.9% Asian, Asian British or Welsh; 10.0% Black, Black British or Welsh, Caribbean or African) and Bassetlaw the least.

Nottingham City has the highest proportion of its population claiming out of work benefits, 6.3%, and Rushcliffe the lowest at 2.1%.

Nottingham City is facing economic challenges as a result of growth constraints, whilst northern districts are more deprived and some districts such as Rushcliffe have older populations overall.

Local Context: Economic Geography

Latest data on Gross Value Added (GVA) demonstrates strong ties in the manufacturing and wholesale / retail trade sectors, with at least one of these sectors being a significant part of each district's economy. Any new unitary authorities will need to carefully consider the sectors it intends to nurture, the type of inward investment it will seek and what type of economy would be created as a result. EMCCA clearly has a significant leadership role in this.

Local Authority City / District	Largest in GVA terms (2022)		2nd largest in GVA terms (2022)		3rd largest in GVA terms (2022)	
	Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
Ashfield	Manufacturing	19.4%	Human health and social work activities	18.5%	Construction	13.6%
Bassetlaw	Manufacturing	20.8%	Wholesale and retail trade	12.3%	Human health and social work activities	11.1%
Broxtowe	Manufacturing	24.2%	Real estate activities	12.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Gedling	Real estate activities	18.2%	Manufacturing	15.7%	Wholesale and retail trade	14.9%
Mansfield	Wholesale and retail trade	16.8%	Real estate activities	11.6%	Manufacturing	11.6%
Newark & Sherwood	Manufacturing	12.6%	Real estate activities	11.4%	Information and communication	9.9%
Nottingham	Education	13.7%	Human health and social work activities	12.4%	Wholesale and retail trade	11.8%
Rushcliffe	Professional, scientific and technical activities	22.9%	Real estate activities	13.3%	Wholesale and retail trade	10.7%

Local Context: Transport and Connectivity

Nottinghamshire's transport network is designed to support economic hubs and growing commuter flows. Greater investment is required to enhance connectivity and mobility. It is important that any reorganisation efforts consider the existing transport and infrastructure arrangements.

Transport data reveals significant commuting patterns, particularly the dominance of Nottingham as a key employment hub, attracting 73% of workers from within the city, 42% from Gedling and 35% from Rushcliffe. Mansfield and Newark and Sherwood are also major employment centers, with 55% of Mansfield's workforce living locally and 59% of Newark and Sherwoods' workforce employed within the area. However, smaller employment flows exist across districts, demonstrating localised economies with some regional mobility.

Transport infrastructure supports current movements, with the M1, A1, and major rail links providing connectivity. Though transport is challenging in rural areas where one-third of the population resides. Increasing vehicle use is evident, with Nottinghamshire's road traffic rising from 3.9bn miles in 2020 to 4.8bn in 2023, while Nottingham's traffic grew from 885m miles to 1.1bn miles in the same period. Strategic planning for transport and services after LGR will be crucial to maintaining connectivity and overall will be the responsibility of EMCCA.

Nottingham City Council has secured over £250m since 2019 to enhance its transport network. Key programmes include Transforming Cities for better connectivity, the Bus Service Improvement Plan for greener buses, Future Transport Zones for innovative mobility, the Levelling Up Fund for safer streets, and the Active Travel Fund to promote walking and cycling. These support the city's long-term transport vision.

In the context of LGR, transport planning must remain coordinated and efficient to support economic connectivity and service integration. Many transport projects, such as Transforming Cities and the Bus Service Improvement Plan, are currently delivered in partnership between Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Councils. A shift to two unitaries, for example, would require a strategy to avoid duplication, ensure efficiency, and coordinate investment across the area. EMCCA will have a leadership role in this as the Strategic Authority.

Sheffield

M1

Derby

East Midlands Airport

Leicester, London
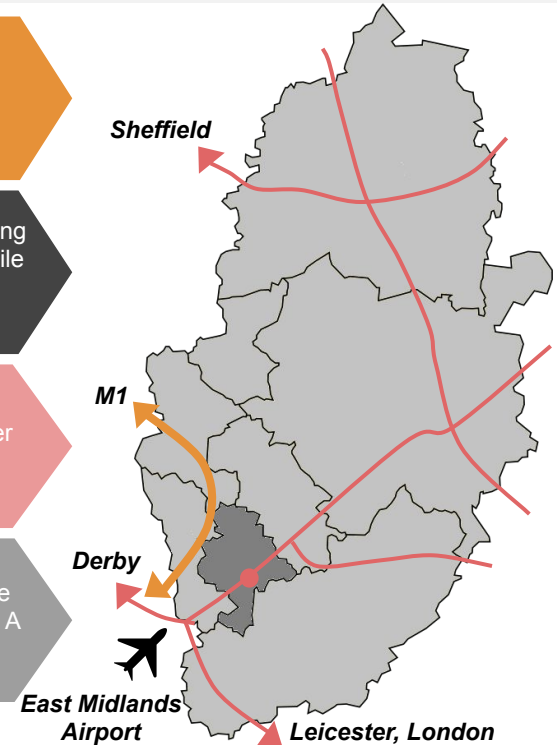
Local Context: Strategic Partnerships

Strong partnerships exist across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire which provide the basis to drive better outcomes and wider public sector reform. The majority operate within coterminous boundaries. Some examples of these are set out below.

Regional Government

The East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) was officially established on 28th February 2024, with the Mayor elected in May 2024.

Initial devolved funding arrangements and powers are in place governed by an elected Mayor and board with decision-making powers. There is an opportunity for EMCCA to become a strategic authority under the arrangements set out in the White Paper.

Health Partners

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS): This partnership brings together the wider system to commission and deliver integrated health and care services, including primary care across the whole Nottingham and Nottinghamshire area.

Within Nottinghamshire, there are four Place Based Partnerships (PBPs):
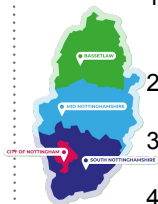
1. Bassetlaw Place Based Partnership (also part of South Yorkshire ICS)
2. Mid Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
3. South Nottinghamshire Place Based Partnership
4. Nottingham City Place Based Partnership

Private Sector & VCSE

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Alliance: Established in July 2022, this alliance comprises VCSE organisations across the region, acting as a single point of contact to generate citizen intelligence from the communities they serve. The alliance collaborates with statutory partners to improve outcomes for residents.

Since 2016, Arc Partnership - a joint venture between Nottinghamshire County Council and SCAPE - has delivered 3,511 community projects and secured £394m in investment. It provides property design, consultancy, regeneration, and asset management services.

Community Safety

There are a range of community safety partnerships across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs): County/City Councils are required to participate in CSPs, which involve collaboration with police, fire services, health services, and other agencies to develop strategies for reducing crime and improving community safety e.g. the Nottingham Community Safety Partnership. Also, in two-tier areas there is a statutory requirement to have a strategic county coordinating group, the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB).

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire has one police force, which is split into 12 smaller neighbourhood policing areas, allowing local officers to work closely with communities.

3. Case for Change

Case For Change: Opportunities

Local government reform in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire presents an opportunity to address inefficiencies in the current two-tier system, which creates duplication, administrative complexity, and inconsistent service delivery.

Opportunities

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire have already embarked on a journey to devolution as part of EMCCA and LGR offers an opportunity to underpin this with a local structure that supports and complements the regional authority. A new unitary authority which encompasses an expanded city area would create space to grow, in turn providing opportunity to align urban planning and services. For example, with 6,565 additional homes required in Nottingham City over the forecast period 2022/27, reorganisation may enhance housing provision by balancing resources across a larger geographical area and tax base.

A simplified governance model would consolidate local service delivery under two new unitary authorities. This approach can enhance efficiency and consistency across a wider geography and community, ensuring seamless, equitable and cost-effective provision of key services. It also provides clarity for residents on where responsibilities for delivery of local services lies, and the respective layers of democratic representation.

Building on the Progress of EMCCA

Strengthening Regional Governance
1
LGR can help ensure that local councils work more efficiently with EMCCA, avoiding fragmented governance and complex decision-making processes.

Attracting More Investment
2
EMCCA can unlock significant funding and access to regional and national investment, while a streamlined local government structure simplifies bidding and fund management and delivery once funding is secured.

Supporting Economic Growth
3
Aligning LGR choices with the regional strategy and economic vision by simplifying the two-tier system decision-making and implementation.

Enhancing Democratic Accountability
4
LGR creates clearer governance, strengthening local authority ties with EMCCA and ensuring transparent, accountable decision-making for residents and businesses.

Case For Change: Limitations in the current system

Rising financial pressures on local councils highlight the urgent need for governance reform, with unitary authorities bringing together services with opportunities for future transformation, offering a pathway to improved stability, efficiency, and accountability.

Limitations

The current two-tier system can be confusing for residents and businesses regarding the responsibility for service provision (*see page 25*), and creates considerable customer demand in redirecting and supporting enquiries. Multiple district councils increases the challenge of coordination, and while collaboration across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is generally productive and positive, delivering complex services such as housing, planning and economic growth is more challenging across multiple organisations. The recent reliance on bidding processes for central government funding places local areas in a competitive rather than collaborative space, resulting in potential gaps in service delivery, or in unequal provision of support across the area.

There are wider partnership challenges as the number of organisations that need to be involved in decision-making processes or operational delivery is significant. This is a system-wide issue and not just limited to local government arrangements.

.

Escalating challenges in Financial Stability

Nottingham City Council is under a Best Value Intervention Framework review due to financial challenges. To comply with the Best Value Duty, it developed a framework within its 'Together for Nottingham' plan, aimed at improving service delivery and meeting statutory obligations. Rising demand for key services, particularly adult social care, alongside economic pressures has intensified financial strain. In 2024/25, the council required £41.0m in Exceptional Financial Support to balance its budget. To address ongoing challenges, it proposed £17.9m in savings and income measures for 2025/26, focusing on financial stability while maintaining essential services.

Projections at the time of this analysis indicated a budget pressure of £27m in 2024/25 for Nottinghamshire County Council, with more significant pressures identified in subsequent years. To address financial challenges, the council has proposed various service efficiencies aimed at maintaining value for money while delivering its priorities.

There is also a live consultation on Fair Funding 2.0 which is likely to result in changes in funding levels for all councils in the area.

The existing two-tier system has the potential to lead to service duplication. Local Government Reform offers a chance to simplify services, optimise resources, and enhance outcomes for residents. The types of local authorities and the services provided by each district are outlined below.

Type	Name	Community Safety & Trading Standards	Economic Develop-ment	Education & Schools	Highways Roads & Transport	Housing	Licencing & Public Protection	Parks, Leisure & Culture	Planning & Building Control	Public Health	Social care	Waste disposal / recycling	Waste Collection
Unitary Authority	Nottingham City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County Council	Nottinghamshire County	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✱	✓	✓	✓	
District Authority	Ashfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Bassetlaw	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Broxtowe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Gedling	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Mansfield	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Newark & Sherwood	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓
District Authority	Rushcliffe	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓				✓

✱ Nottinghamshire County Council provides planning and building services in the form of Strategic Planning

Case For Change: Democracy

Democratic services across Nottinghamshire, the city and districts manage a significant amount of electoral services activity, including rolling registration, election administration and supporting committees of their respective councils. Unitary councils would result in one set of local elections per authority (as currently take place in Nottingham City):

Local Election	Number of Councillors[3]	Election Cycle[3]	Last Election[1]	Votes Cast[1]	Number of electors per council member[3]
Nottinghamshire County Council	66	4 years	2025[2]	287,388[2]	9,404[4]
Nottingham City UA	55	4 years	2023	55,879	3,633
Ashfield	35	4 years	2023	29,594	2,662
Bassetlaw	48	4 years	2023	27,738	1,868
Broxtowe	44	4 years	2023	42,154	1,922
Gedling	41	4 years	2023	31,259	2,185
Mansfield	36	4 years	2023	22,191	2,266
Newark & Sherwood	39	4 years	2023	27,844	2,371
Rushcliffe	44	4 years	2023	39,926	2,095

4. Options analysis to March 2025

Summary of Options: Overview

A number of two unitary authority options were identified to be part of the initial options appraisal activity taking into account the MHCLG framework and local criteria.

Current State

Nottinghamshire County Council

District Councils

Nottingham City Council

Potential future states

Other options for change discounted for political reasons

Two Unitary Authorities

Multiple remaining options

1a Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe

1e Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

1b Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

1f Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Rushcliffe

1c Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe

1g Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe

1d Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling

2 Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City

28

Methodology and Approach: Overview

The process for appraising the initial eight options and distilling to a shortlist of three is set out below. The detail of each of the four lenses of the comparative analysis is set out on the following page.

1 **Longlist of options**

An overview of all the potential options for LGR will be initially outlined.

Multiple unitary options covering different geographies

2 **Option Distillation Approach**

Collective engagement with CEX, Leaders & Mayors

Individual engagement with each CEX and respective Leader / Mayor

Individual engagement with Senior Officers

Assessment of fit to local & MHCLG criteria

Comparative Analysis

Lens **A** — **Geographic Synergy**

Lens **B** — **Financial Viability**

Lens **C** — **Comparative Analysis**

Lens **D** — **LGR Benefits & Costs**

3 **Shortlist of options**

At this stage, a preliminary shortlist of options to take forward for implementation will be outlined.

Option

Option

Option

29

Comparative Analysis: Overview

Each option was analyses through a series of 'lenses' the detail of which is set out below. The summary of the comparative analysis can be found at Appendix C.

Lens A — Geographic Synergy

Geographic Analysis

Analysis of publicly available data to understand the geographic synergy of the two unitary authority options. This will include an understanding of each District's proportion of rural and urban populations, each Authorities Mosaic Segmentation Profiles and the average time to key services.

Lens B — Financial Viability

Analysis of financial data from individual councils

Analysis of publicly available information to understand the financial viability of two unitary authority options. This will include understanding existing positions on debt to reserve ratios, and measure both current and future Council Tax take in relation to demand for both Adult and Children Social Care.

Lens C — Comparative Analysis

Other relevant information

Analysis of other relevant data points in line with the criteria such as population, deprivation and housing to identify which options are likely to result in the establishment of two councils that are broadly balanced.

Lens D — LGR Benefits & Costs

Outcomes of financial modelling

Our financial analysis will be used to assess the benefits and costs of your local government transformation, demonstrating the benefits, costs and savings related to the implementation of a two unitary authority system.

5. Options analysis post March 2025
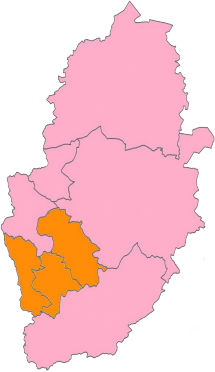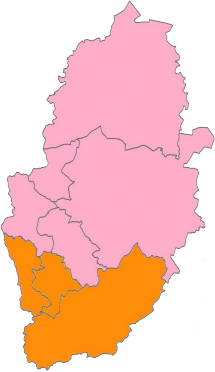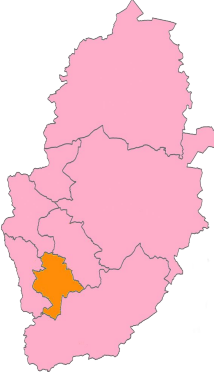
Summary of Options: Options to take forward (1/2)

As set out in the previous section, the first phase of options analysis distilled eight options to three which were included in the interim plan submitted to Government in March.

Current State

Nottinghamshire County Council
District Councils

Nottingham City Council

Potential future states

Other options for change discounted for political reasons

Two Unitary Authorities

Multiple remaining options

1a Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling + Rushcliffe

1b Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

1c Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe

1d Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling

1e Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

1f Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Rushcliffe

1g Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City + Gedling + Rushcliffe

2 Nottinghamshire
Nottingham City

Key: Proceed to Interim Plan

The three options set out in the interim plan are described below.

1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Gedling** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. Nottingham City conurbation to include **Broxtowe and Rushcliffe** 2. The **rest of Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority	1. **Nottingham City remains the same** 2. The **rest of the Nottinghamshire** becomes a new unitary authority

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of shortlisted options (1/3)

In considering how each shortlisted option might satisfy the MHCLG criteria, it was agreed that further analysis should be undertaken by the nine councils to enable Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case for local government reorganisation.

Each option demonstrates varying degrees of alignment with the MHCLG criteria and presents distinct strengths and risks. Key factors that have been considered include financial sustainability, service coordination, and sensible geographic and economic configurations.

Assessment against MHCLG Criteria + Domain Analysis

01	Sensible single tier of local government
02	'Right-sized' local local government
03	High quality, sustainable services
04	Meets local needs
05	Supports devolution arrangements
06	Local engagement and empowerment

Domain Analysis:
- 1(b) Sensible economic breakdown
- 1(c) Sensible geographic breakdown
- 3(a) Improves local government & service delivery
- 3(b) Opportunity for public service reform
- 3(C) Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk on crucial services

Relative alignment of LGR criteria among options:

🟢 High alignment   🟠 Medium alignment   🔴 Low alignment

Option 1(b)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

This option demonstrates a somewhat stronger fit against the MHCLG criteria compared to other options. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and aligns with the City's demography and geography, potentially creating a more even requirement for service delivery and equal population / debt-to-reserve ratio based on analysis.

01 02 03 04 05 06
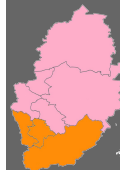
Option 1(e)
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria. It is a marginally stronger fit on travel to work and housing market areas, has a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, (to 1b) and is comparable in terms of the financial analysis completed to date. The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the more diverse Mosaic characteristics, potentially leading to a requirement of different services models across the place.

01 02 03 04 05 06

Option 2
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria of the three options under further consideration. It would provides the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas, a significant population and debt-to-reserve imbalance which is the highest amongst all options, significant challenges in coordinating and financing services, and may leave communities that identify with the city in a different geography.

01 02 03 04 05 06

Additional analysis was completed focussed on key MHCLG criteria including 1(b), 1(c) and 3 as highlighted below. This and previous analysis completed has helped inform the evaluation of each option against all MHCLG criteria.

Criteria	Key factors	Option 1b	Option 1e	Option 2
1 Sensible single tier of local government	*Establishes a single tier of Local Government for the whole of the area concerned*			
	Sensible economic breakdown: with a tax base which does not create undue inequalities	Medium	High	Low
	Sensible geographic breakdown: which will help increase housing supply and meet local needs			
2 'Right-sized' local government	*A population of 500,000 or more (unless specific scenarios make this unreasonable)*			
	Supports efficiencies and value for money for council taxpayers	High	High	Low
	Improves capacity and supports the council to withstand financial shocks			
	Manageable transition costs			
3 High quality, sustainable services	*Improves local government & service delivery, avoiding unnecessary service fragmentation*			
	Opportunity for public service reform including where this will lead to improved value for money	High	Medium	Medium
	Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services			
4 Meets local needs	*Meets local needs and is informed by local views*			
	Improves / mitigates risk to issues of local identity, cultural and historic importance	High	Medium	Medium
	Addresses local concerns			
5 Supports devolution arrangements	*Helps to support devolution arrangements / unlock devolution*	High	High	Low
	Sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority			
6 Local engagement and empowerment	*Enables stronger community engagement*	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Delivers genuine opportunities for neighbourhood empowerment			

Each LGR model offers different strengths and challenges, though Options 1(b) and (e) would provide the strongest alignment to the MHCLG criteria. Whilst the analysis concludes that Option 2 is the least appropriate option, it also sets out that the differences between Options 1(b) and 1(e) are marginal.

Summary of domain analysis

Sensible Economic Area (SEA) (1a)
The differences in degree of fit are marginal. Option 1(e) (< 1 percent) provides a slightly stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA) but also will have the complication of housing delivery for the urban conurbation being delivered across two authorities.

Sensible Geography (1b)
Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) producing two more balanced authorities in size with a wide mix of housing supply sources and reflects existing joint workings on GNSP.

Critical Services (3)
Option 1(b) is overall the preferred choice due to its demographic and geographic similarities. Additionally, it provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand of crucial services.

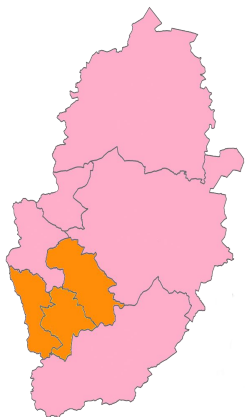| Criteria	1b — Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e — Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 — Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
1 Sensible single tier of local government	Strong alignment with SEA criteria but fragments travel to work/housing areas; urban capacity constraints and green belt review could impact future growth beyond current plan	Stronger alignment with SEA criteria marginally more than Option 1(b) (<1 percent); wide mix of housing supply resources but supply will be require cross council collaboration.	Greatest fragmentation of travel to work and housing market areas and weakest alignment to sensible geography; supply figures look strong through difficult to increase supply in long-term (no green-belt)
2 'Right-sized' local government	Equal population level (603k vs 661k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserves ratio (53.5 vs 16.6); financial resilience likely to be met despite imbalance and only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e)	Equal population level (611k vs 653k) though an imbalance in debt-to-reserve ratio (47.1 vs 17.5); though is the option with the lowest difference on this factor between authorities	Significant population imbalance and highest amongst all options (352k vs 912k); financial resilience a concern as debt-to-reserve reaction significantly unbalanced (83.9 vs 16.5)
3 High quality, sustainable services	Provides a balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND; has the best demographic and geographic makeup for service delivery.	Provides a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness and ASC; there are challenges around SEND as Rushcliffe has a lower demand with varying geography and demography.	It creates unitaries with an uneven distribution of services; The demand for homelessness, ASC and SEND is the most varying under this option.
4 Meets local needs	Combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings and most similar clustering of Mosaic segments across both authorities; able to tailor services to specific demographics	Combines authorities that are most different in terms of rural / urban settings, with the city-based conurbation authority becoming predominantly rural; difficult to tailor services to specific demographics	Combines authorities that are highly alike in terms of rural / urban setting; arguably less likely to satisfy criteria as may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different and rural geography
5 Supports devolution arrangements	Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (603k for Nottingham City and 661k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)	Combined authority already exists within the Nottingham City conurbation and meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (611k for Nottingham City and 653k for Nottinghamshire by 2035)	Combined authority already exists though does not meet requirements for a sensible population (352k for Nottingham City and 912k for Nottinghamshire by 2035) and minimum threshold of 500k population
6 Local engagement & empowerment	Similar clustering of Mosaic segments and some overlap with Hospital Trusts and Nottingham City Council boundaries though not completely coterminous; new channels required to engage communities	Existing efforts to prepare GNSP demonstrates joint engagement and some overlap with Hospital Trusts though not completely coterminous; mix of rural/urban communities requires bespoke channels	Consolidation of rural communities allows for concentrated focus on specific community issues; size of rural / mixed urban unitary could make it challenging to maintain depth of local engagement

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Alignment to MHCLG criteria: H M L

This option demonstrates the strongest fit against the MHCLG criteria overall. Whilst constraints such as urban capacity and Green Belt review may impact future housing delivery, it combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings amongst all options and aligns with the City's demography and geography, offering a balanced distribution of service delivery, equal population and debt-to-reserve ratio.

1b Two Unitary Authorities:
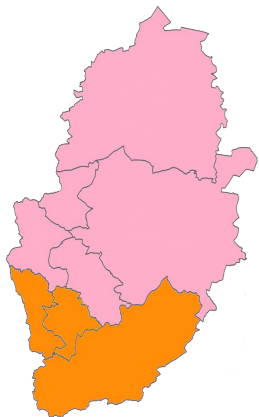Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling

Alignment to MHCLG criteria
(H) (M) (L)

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages	Key: Footnote (Page)
Criteria 1	Presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria than Option 2 though is not an optimum fit as fragments both the travel to work and housing market areas in Nottingham; though only marginally more more than Option 1(e) (< 1 percent).[1 (22)] Similarly, it presents a stronger alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria than Option 2, though less than Option 1(e).[2 (22)] Whilst Option 1(b) has the lowest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs,[2 (12)] constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.[2 (20)] Deprivation levels are relatively equal though the spread between authorities is wider in Option 1(b) than 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling average deprivation score at 26.5, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 20.7.[9]	
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level though marginally less than Option 1(e), with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire would have 661,460.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to criteria 2 - is likely to be met with this option, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 53.5, with the Nottinghamshire authority standing at 14.0.[8] Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, this option is only marginally less balanced than Option 1(e).	
Criteria 3	Strongest fit with Criteria 3 given the similar demographics and geography between Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham City meaning minimal impact to service delivery given infrastructure, town centres, travel and crossover to facilitates. Ensures a balanced distribution of demand for SEND services, minimising impact on resources, workforce and caseload.[3 (8,11)] Additionally, this option offers the most equitable share of Children's Social Care Expenditure (51% & 49% for the County and City authority respectively).[12 (8)] It also has potential to deliver ASC services to areas with greater commonality of needs.[4 (9)] Potential risks of Option 1(b) include potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services 10 [(14)] and possible impact on provider services due to asset relocation.[4 (10)]	
Criteria 4	This option presents the strongest alignment with criteria 4 when considering local identity. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options (i.e. Urban Minor Conurbation and Rural Town/Fringe).[5] It also has the most similar clustering of demographics across both Unitary Authorities when considering mosaic characteristics, which are mainly Aspiring Homemakers, Senior Security, Rental Hubs, Domestic Success and Rental Hubs (non-exhaustive).[6] Given the similar grouping of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority could best tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic.[5]	
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5. It supports effective governance arrangements with the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham City conurbation projected to have 603,185 residents by 2035 and the rest of Nottinghamshire to have 661,460.[7]	
Criteria 6	There is some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography, though there would be a need to consider if new channels / approaches will be required to strengthen engagement with communities. Gedling, Broxtowe and Nottingham residents also share similar urban characteristics, challenges, and infrastructure needs - enabling more targeted and aligned engagement approaches.[6]	

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Criteria Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Criteria Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)

7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Options Appraisal: Detailed analysis of Option 1(e)

This option demonstrates a strong fit against the MHCLG criteria with a marginally stronger fit with travel to work and housing market areas than Option 1(b). Whilst there is a balanced population split, similar deprivation levels, and similar levels financial resilience, the city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural with the least similar Mosaic characteristics, potentially needing different service delivery models and a potential imbalance in terms of demand.

1e Two Unitary Authorities:
Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe

Alignment to MHCLG criteria
(H)(M)(L)

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages	Key: Footnote (Page)
Criteria 1	Stronger alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria, providing the strongest fit with travel to work areas, housing market areas and NHS hospital trust areas, though only marginally more than Option 1(b) (< 1 percent).[11 (23)] Similarly, it presents the strongest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria overall,[2 (22)] despite having the greatest difference between the two authorities in the number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs.[2 (15)] This is due to existing collaborations on the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan and the ability to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt to address the housing needed, producing two balanced planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources. Deprivation levels are relatively equal between the two authorities and is the option with the lowest difference, with Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe average deprivation score at 24.7, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's at 22.3.[9]	
Criteria 2	Presents an equal population level and is the option with the lowest difference between authorities, with the city authority projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire having 653,127.[7] Additionally, financial resilience- is likely to be met, as Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 47.4, and the rest of Nottinghamshire's 17.5. Despite an imbalance in debt/reserves per capita, it is the option with the lowest difference between authorities.[8]	
Criteria 3	Demographics and geography differ in the city authority, with Rushcliffe being more similar to Bassetlaw and Newark with large rural areas and an older adult populations.[4 (17)] Whilst no noticeable service enhancement opportunities have been identified for ASC[4 (12)] or SEND, this option may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City.[10 (15)] For Children's Social Care, Option 1(e) would provide a fairer share of the tax base across the two new unitaries.[12 (9)] However, whilst the disaggregation of Rushcliffe from the county to city authority would have little impact in terms of demand (i.e. children in care), income would be significantly reduced for the county authority. The percentage point gap of 6% between the share of children's total expenditure is 3 times that of Option 1(b).[12 (9)] The key risk to service delivery is further exemplified through the loss of revenue for SEND service in Rushcliffe, as it has a lower rate of children with EHCPs or special provisions which would result in an imbalance between service demand and income needed.[3 (9)]	
Criteria 4	This option presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(e) combines authorities that are the most different in terms of rural / urban settings.[5] The city-based conurbation authority would become predominantly rural, whilst the county-based authority would remain predominantly rural.[1 (23)] Of all three options, it also has the least similar Mosaic characteristics across both authorities.[6] Given that Option 1(e) would combine authorities that are most different in terms of rural and urban populations, this suggests that each authority might not be able to tailor its services to the specific needs of its demographic in the same way that Option 1(b) could.	
Criteria 5	This option presents a strong alignment with criteria 5 as there is already an existing combined authority within the Nottingham City conurbation. Additionally, this option meets the requirements for a sensible population size ratio (outlined above in Criteria 2), with the Nottingham city conurbation projected to have 611,518 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 653,127.[7]	
Criteria 6	Some overlap with existing wider system provision and several cross-boundary community networks already operating across this geography. The rural mix of rural and urban populations within the city-based authority would will present unique needs and therefore potentially new and bespoke channels will be required.	

1. Criteria Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Criteria Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Criteria Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Criteria Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)

7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Criteria Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
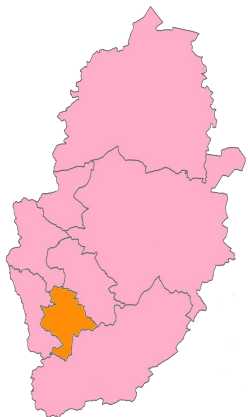11. Criteria Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Criteria Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

This option demonstrates the weakest alignment against the MHCLG criteria. It would create councils with the greatest degree of fragmentation of travel to work, hospital and housing market areas and a significant population imbalance. It would also confine the City to existing boundaries rather than creating the conditions for growth.

2

Two Unitary Authorities: Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
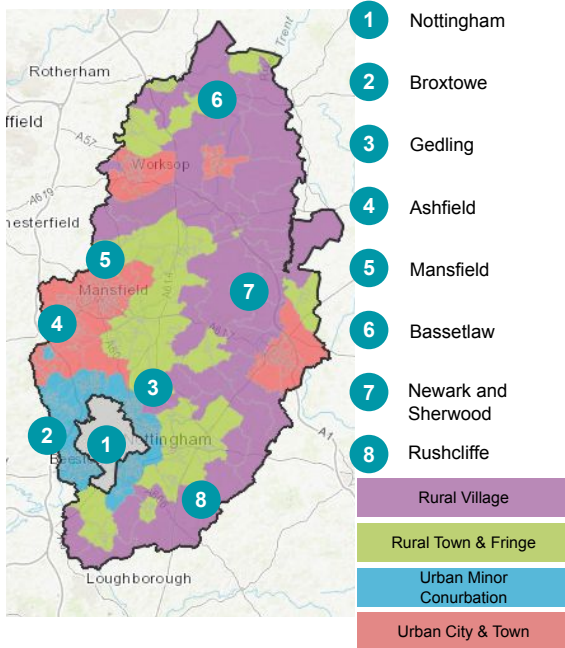
Alignment to MHCLG criteria

(H) (M) (L)

Criteria	Advantages and Disadvantages	Key: Footnote (Page)
Criteria 1	This option presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Economic Area criteria of all three options, providing the lowest degree of economic self-containment 1 [10] and the greatest fragmentation of travel to work areas, NHS hospital trust areas and the Inner Nottingham housing market areas.[1 (6, 15, 13)] Similarly, it presents the weakest alignment with the Sensible Geography criteria, as the ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City.[2 (17)] Whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time (e.g. absence of Green Belt land).[2 (19)] Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs have a significant shortfall and requires the highest number of houses to be identified across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.[2 (18)] The contrast in deprivation levels are the highest amongst all options, with Nottingham City's average deprivation score at 34.9, significantly higher than Nottinghamshire's 19.[9]	
Criteria 2	This has the weakest alignment with criteria 2, as it presents a significant population imbalance and the highest difference amongst all options, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035, fewer than Nottinghamshire's 912,182.[7] Additionally, financial resilience - key to the criteria 2 - is a concern, as Nottingham City's debt-to-reserves ratio stands at 83.9, exceeding Nottinghamshire's 16.5.[8] This imbalance increases financial vulnerability when compared to Option 1(b) and Option 1(e), and has the highest difference amongst all options.[8]	
Criteria 3	Option 2 does not meet criteria 3, as it establishes unitaries with heightened viability issues and service imbalances.[3 (11)] There is a high social care cost imbalance in this option as the projected social care-to-council tax spending ratio is 1.12 for Nottingham City and 0.83 for Nottinghamshire.[4 (15)] This would cause financial strain due to high care demands paired with a limited tax base. While this option presents a greater GP availability, it is not enough to outweigh its structural weakness.[4 (15)]	
Criteria 4	Option 2 presents a medium alignment with criteria 4. Looking at the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography, Option 1(b) combines combines authorities that are already the most alike in terms of rural / urban settings of all three options.[5] Arguably, Option 2 would less likely to satisfy the requirement as it may leave communities that do identify with the city in a different geography.	
Criteria 5	This option presents the weakest alignment with criteria 5. Whilst it may support effective governance arrangements between the two new Unitary Authorities and the EMCCA as the reorganisation will reduce complexity and bureaucracy, it does not meet the requirements for a sensible population size ratio, with Nottingham City projected to have 352,463 residents by 2035 and Nottinghamshire to have 912,182.[7] This would not meet the threshold for a population of 500,000 or more.[7]	
Criteria 6	Community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment will need to be supported. This option retains the need for continuous, strong, coordination between the City and County authorities for any major incidents that affects both areas. It may not fully capitalise on the benefits of aggregation that a single larger authority could offer for truly region-wide threats.[11 (Pg.24)] The sheer size of the rural/mixed urban-rural unitary could make it challenging to maintain the depth of local engagement and partnership.[5]	

1. Assessment: Sensible Economic Areas for LGR in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
2. Assessment: Increasing Housing Supply and Meeting Local Needs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
3. Assessment: Children's SEND service in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
4. Assessment: Adult Social Care services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
5. Comparative Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (Phase 1)
6. Comparative Analysis: Experian Mosaic segmentation analysis (Phase 1)
7. Comparative Analysis: Population (Phase 1)
8. Comparative Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis (Phase 1)
9. Comparative Analysis: Deprivation (Phase 1)
10. Assessment: Homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
11. Assessment: Public Safety in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
12. Assessment in Children's Social Care in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis of 11 core cities in the UK

The table below shows the percentage distribution between rural and urban areas within the UK's eleven core cities. Option 1(b) most closely aligns with the average city demographic offering an urban density of 96.1% against the UK average of 98.41%, which is greater Option 1(e) (87.6%).

1. Nottingham
2. Broxtowe
3. Gedling
4. Ashfield
5. Mansfield
6. Bassetlaw
7. Newark and Sherwood
8. Rushcliffe

Rural Village
Rural Town & Fringe
Urban Minor Conurbation
Urban City & Town

Average proportion of rural population
Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification Map - Nottingham Observatory

11 core cities	Rural %	Urban %
Bristol	0%	100%
Liverpool	0%	100%
Manchester	0%	100%
Nottingham (currently)	0%	100%
Birmingham	0.10%	99.90%
Glasgow [1]	0.40%	99.60%
Belfast [2]	0.43%	99.57%
Newcastle	2%	98%
Cardiff [3]	3%	97%
Sheffield	4.10%	95.90%
Leeds	7.50%	92.50%

The primary focus is a comparison of the percentage of rural and urban areas within each city, highlighting the predominance of urban regions. A key observation is that Option 1(b) is more aligned with demographic characteristics of a typical UK city, with an urban density of 96.1%, whilst Option (1e) would have the least urban density of all UK cities at 87.6%.

Option	Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
Option 1(b)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
Option 1(e)			
Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	

Source: [1] Rural Urban Classification 2011 lookup tables for local authority areas; [2] Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2022; [3] Belfast Local Development Plan 2023; [4] Wales Government website

5a. *Sensible Economic Area*

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Economic Area (1/4)

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1a in creating a sensible economic area. There is no HMG definition of sensible economic area for local government meaning analysis has considered 'functional economic area' criteria.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1a requiring proposals to consider what would be a sensible economic area.

There is no established definition of a 'sensible economic area' for local government, though such an area should consider alignment of political and administrative structures with the actual economic behaviours and interactions of residents as far as is possible. A 'functional economic area' can act as a proxy for 'sensible economic area; using a range of factors such as TTWAs.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

Key considerations for sensible economic areas within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMA) were defined in a May 2021 report which analysed whether the Nottingham Inner and Outer HMAs could be considered FEMAs. It concluded that the five 'Core HMAs form a self-contained FEMA' and that 'an argument can be made that the Outer HMA is also a self-contained FEMA.'
- The 'kickstarting growth' mission aims to enhance living standards, supported by authorities putting in place policies across a sensible economic area.[2] Profiling conducted by the Office of National Statistics highlighted the economic challenges in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, emphasising the need for administrative boundaries that better align with sensible economic areas.
- The evaluation of boundaries has focussed on long-term alignment with the functional economy (50 year horizon), prioritising fit with economic function over alignment with short-term policy, whether local, regional or national.
- Reflecting the overall economy of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, all six authorities proposed under the 3 options would have higher than UK average inactivity rates, lower than average levels of enterprise formation, GDHI and productivity (GVA per head) – indicating the importance of sensible economic areas for local government to support long term prosperity of citizens and sustainability of local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1a Sensible economic area	Travel to work areas	Medium	High	Low
	Economic self containment	Medium	High	Low
	Housing market area	Medium	High	Low
	Service market for consumers (NHS Hospital Trusts)	Medium	High	Low

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Sources:
[1] Nottingham Core HMA and Nottingham Outer HMA Employment Land Needs Study
[2] Kickstarting Economic Growth

Whilst none of the options provide a 'perfect fit' against Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs), Option 2 provides the least coherence with TTWAs whilst Options 1b and 1e would most strongly represent a 'sensible economic area' given the lower levels of fragmentation.

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. ***Travel to Work Areas[1]:*** Alignment with Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area; covering self-contained labour markets that reflect areas where people live, work and commute. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Greater Nottingham, Worksop & Retford and Mansfield TTWAs, which also incorporate areas outside of the county (See Figure 1). Assessing the percentage of each TTWA population that resides in each current authority, Option 2 provides the least coherence with current TTWAs, whilst Option 1e marginally provides the strongest fit with the Nottingham TTWA for the Nottingham City conurbation and with the County based TTWAs for the Nottinghamshire authority. This is due to approx 8,600 Gedling authority residents that work in the Mansfield TTWA who would be living and working in the same authority under this option. However, assessment of the three options against TTWAs alone is insufficient given none provide a 'perfect fit', though though further analysis informs the degree of fit from fragmentation levels.

Option 2 would result in the greatest fragmentation of all options; particularly for the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe absorbed into the Nottinghamshire authority. This is evidenced through assessment of the overall patterns of travel between authorities, which shows that the first choice work destination for residents from these authorities (and Nottingham) is Nottingham. Further evidence of fragemention within Option 2 is evidenced by the number of residents that commute to work from outside their home authority versus those that work and work within the same authority, with Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe authorities having the lowest percentage of residents that work work within the new Nottinghamshire unitary authority. This suggests that Option 2 does not represent a sensible economic area given the level of fragmentation.

Options 1b and 1e would provide the lowest degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2. Option 1b presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Rushcliffe residents whilst Option 1e presents a significant degree of fragmentation for Gedling, leaving more residents working outside their home authority than than in within it. Whilst the degree of fragmentation is slightly more significant for Gedling residents in Option 1e versus Rushcliffe residents in Option 1b, either option could represent a sensible economic area given the low levels of fragmentation across all authorities.

Figure 1: *Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)*

Figure 2: *Submitted Options and Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs)*
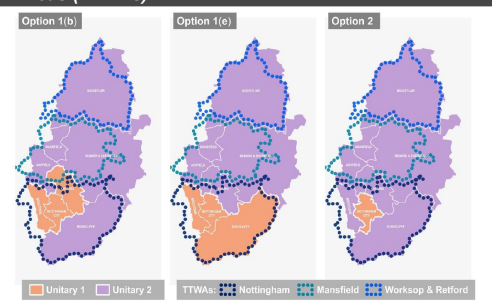
Options 1a and 1b have the highest degree of economic self-containment and most strongly align with Housing Market Areas and NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries; whilst the degree of difference is marginal, Option 1e would more strongly represent a 'sensible economic area'

Sensible Economic Area: *Aligning political and administrative structures with how people live, work and travel*

I. *Economic self containment:* The overall percentage of workers living within each new authority that also work within that authority can be used to indicate the degree of economic 'self-containment', with a higher percentage indicating a greater self-containment. Options 1b and 1e are comparable, exhibiting a medium-degree of self-containment across both the Nottingham City conurbation (71.3% and 71.1% respectively) and Nottinghamshire (60% and 61% respectively). Option 2 exhibits the lowest-degree of self-containment across all options at 64% for Nottingham City and 58% for Nottinghamshire.

II. *Housing market area:* Alignment with local Housing Market Areas (HMA) can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 1); covering 'whole council' areas and linking places where people live, work and move home. Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities fall predominantly within the Nottingham Inner, Outer and Northern (Sheffield and Rotherham) HMAs, with the majority falling within the Nottingham Inner / Core. None of the proposed options align perfectly with the HMAs in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, though Option 2 would provide the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe. Options 1b and 1e provide the strongest alignment to the Nottingham Inner HMA, though would fragment the residents of Rushcliffe and Gedling respectively and equally. Further analysis of each HMA population that would reside in each of the proposed new authorities indicates that Option 1e would marginally provide a better fit with the HMA geographies than Option 1b, though only by ~0.5 per cent (70.89 vs 70.41 percent).

III. *Service market for consumers:* Alignment with existing health service structures can be used as a key determinant of a functional economic area (see Figure 2). Option 1e suggests the strongest alignment between proposed authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, including the Nottingham University Hospitals for the Nottingham City conurbation and Sherwood Forest Hospitals and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals for for Nottinghamshire. This is supported by analysis of Middle Super Output Areas (MSOAs) where more than 50% of patients attended an NHS Trust Hospital, which indicates there is significant alignment between NHS Hospital Trust Area boundaries, Travel to Work Areas and Housing Market Area geographies.

Figure 1: *Submitted Options and Housing Market Areas (HMAs)*

Figure 2: *Submitted Options and NHS Hospital Trust Areas*
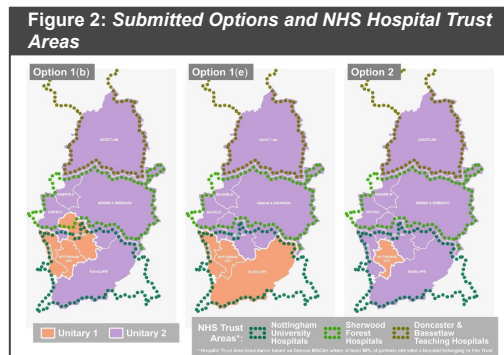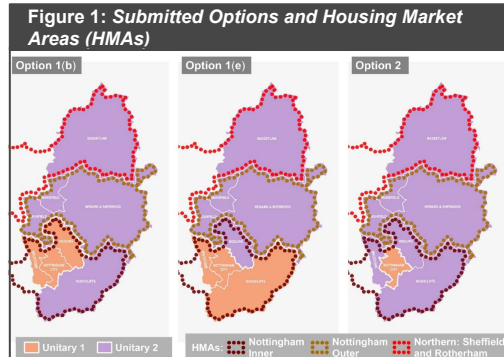
Additional analysis suggests that Option 2 represents the least sensible economic are and whilst neither Option 1(b) or (e) represent an optimal fit as they both fragment travel to work and housing market areas, Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with TTWA and HMA's

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Travel to work areas (TTWAs)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50) to a lesser degree than Option 1(e) would for Gedling residents (-15.1). However, has a lower share of Nottingham TTWA population (65.2%) than Option 1e would (66.7%)	Fragments the Nottingham TTWA for Gedling residents (-15.1), more than Option 1(b) does for Rushcliffe residents (-3.50). However, has a higher share of the Nottingham TTWA population (66.7%) than Option 1b would (65.2%)	Least coherence with the Nottingham TTWA, particularly for Broxtowe (3.9), Gedling (2.7) and Rushcliffe residents (9.30). The Nottingham City authority would have the lowest share of the Nottingham TTWA population of all options (38%)
Economic self containment	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.3%) and Nottinghamshire (60%) though differences are marginal to Option 1(e).	Greater levels of economic self-containment than Option 2 for both the Nottingham City conurbation Authority (71.1%) and Nottinghamshire (61%) though only marginally better than Option 1(b).	Lowest degree of economic self-containment for both the Nottinghamshire (58%) and Nottingham City (64%) authorities of any of the three options.
Housing market area (HMA)	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.41%), suggesting a strong fit with HMA geographies. This however is marginally less than 1(e) (70.89%).	High proportion of the population within the existing Nottingham Inner HMA would reside in the Nottingham City Authority (70.89%), suggesting the strongest fit with HMA geographies. This is marginally more than 1(e) (70.41%).	Provides the greatest fragmentation of the Nottingham Inner HMA and the residents of Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe
Service market for consumers	Medium alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. and Sherwood Forest Hospitals.	Strongest alignment between authority boundaries and existing NHS Hospital Trust boundaries, with the majority of the Nottingham City conurbation covered by Nottingham Uni. Hospitals.	Lowest alignment, with Nottinghamshire covered by three NHS Hospital Trust Areas including Nottingham Uni. Sherwood Forest and Doncaster & Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals.
Summary	Provides a lesser degree of fragmentation when compared to Option 2 hence representing more of a sensible economic area, though the degree of fragmentation is slightly more than Option 1(e)	As with Option 1(b), represents significantly more of a sensible economic area than Option 2, with the degree of fragmentation being slightly less than Option 1(b), though this is marginal when assessed against all criteria.	Provides the lowest degree of economic self-containment for both authorities and greatest fragemention of travel to work, Housing Market and NHS Hospital Trust area(s), representing the least sensible economic area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5b. *Sensible Geography*

Additional analysis completed by the nine councils assessed how the three options contribute to the MHCLG criteria 1b in helping to increase housing supply and meet local need.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 1b requiring proposals to be for a sensible geography.

The assessment assumes that reference to "meeting local need" refers to how well options fare in meeting local housing needs; particularly in respect of affordable housing solutions for those unable to access market housing for sale or rent, for gypsy, Roma and traveller groups and those with specialist housing needs.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

Key considerations for planning and housing within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- There are existing Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) that have worked together to determine Housing Market Areas and address strategic housing needs for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire authorities; LPAs have worked within these groups for several years and have strong working relationship levels with shared strategic planning evidence based and common strategic planning policies.
- The spatial overview of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire together with the evidence led work undertaken on differing housing and economic market areas both point to a difference between the north and south of Nottinghamshire which suggests that in order to plan effectively for housing, future unitary authorities in Nottinghamshire should be organised to reflect these different characteristics.
- Collectively across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire as a whole, there appears to be sufficient sources of supply to meet future requirements; though both Ashfield and Broxtowe are currently required to prepare and implement an action plan designed to raise the level of housing delivery in their respective district as delivery is not meeting required.
- By the time new unitary authorities are created, the landscape of planning for housing will change as the East Midlands Combined Authority (EMCCA) will be given powers related to planning for future housing supply as part of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS)

Assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
1b Sensible geographic breakdown	Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply	Medium	Medium	Low
	Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	Medium	High	Low
	Impact on meeting local housing needs	High	High	Low
	Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	High	High	High

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

47

Updated analysis has assessed long-term issues around housing delivery through assessment of the 2024 published housing need figure for each authority over a 15-year period. This has been compared to current identified supply as set out in the latest published housing supply documents from each authority.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. *Impact on potential to increase long term housing and meet local needs*: Option 1e sees the greatest difference in the number of homes needed and available over the next 15 years. Whilst Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe have significant sources of housing supply to meet local housing needs estimates with little need to allocate further strategic housing land at present, Nottinghamshire and the remaining council areas have a sizeable housing need to meet. The analysis notes however that there are significant opportunities to allocate further land to address this housing need in areas outside the Nottingham-Derby Green Belt, though this is dependent on a future Spatial Development Strategy.

The housing need per capita analysis from Phase 1 measured the demand for new homes by comparing forecasted housing requirements to the population,

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
1b	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
1e	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
2	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

Updated analysis prepared by Heads of Planning has assessed the combined effect of housing needs and supply across the three options

Option		15 year local housing need (dw/pa)	Known housing supply over next 15y (dw)	Difference between need and supply
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	38,430	43,700	+5,270
1b	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	47,845	43,790	+4,055
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	41,905	50,600	+8,695
1e	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	44,370	36,890	-7,480
2	Nottingham City*	19,305	26,700	+7,395
2	Nottinghamshire	66,970	59,035	-7,935

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (3/4)

Assessment of prioritised options against the criteria considered how options would align with the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan, the Trent Arc Cluster and available geography to allocate development without significant compromise to the existing (current) Green Belt policies. This could of course change as regional and national spatial planning policy is amended.

Sensible Geography: *Increasing housing supply and meeting local needs…*

I. ***Impact on potential to increase long-term housing and meet local needs (con't):*** Option 1b sees the smallest difference in housing need and supply, with Nottingham City, Broxtowe and Gedling able to meet housing supply without significant reliance on greenfield land. The success of this approach however is dependent on (a) continued development of brownfield sites in Nottingham City and (b) amendment of the Green Belt boundary within Gedling and Broxtowe to accommodate housing growth on less valuable Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire and remaining council areas cover such a large geography the identification of further sites would not be problematic. The ability to increase housing supply in Option 2 is limited by restrictions on available land for housing in Nottingham City, and whilst present supply figures look strong, housing supply may not be able to be increased in the long-term due to reduction in sources of supply over time. Nottinghamshire remaining council areas have a significant shortfall and require the highest number of houses to be identified.

II. ***Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans:*** Alignment with the current Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan (GNSP) and minimising the separation of strategic growth locations between authorities were noted as key considerations for this criteria. In particular, grouping authorities which have major proposals for "Trent Arc" was specifically noted as strategically important. Option 1b would see several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area be split between the two authorities; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply. By contrast, Option 1e reflects existing joint planning efforts evidenced through development of the GNSP, and would provide a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Regional Spatial Development Strategy and Mayoral Spatial Development Strategy. Option 1e would however require both councils to develop a shared vision for the northeastern part of the built-up area of Nottingham, which to date has formed a functional housing and economic market area for the purposes of strategic planning. Whilst Option 2 would require no changes to the Nottingham City authority and allow it to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects and focus on its own needs, greater demands would be placed on the Regional Spatial Development Strategy with sufficient guidance to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham as a conurbation beyond the boundaries of the city. This presents a unique challenge if Nottinghamshire Authority wishes to purse a different development strategy; one which the other options do not need to resolve.

III. ***Impact on meeting Local Housing Needs:*** Existing collaborations formed to assess housing needs as part of the GNSP were noted as a key consideration for this criteria, as evidenced in Options 1b and 1e. Both options offer a shared strategy for increasing affordable housing on development sites through the release of land in the Nottingham Derby Green Belt as Grey Belt and provide a wide geography for the other Unitary Authority to accommodate the specific housing needs of its area. By contrast, Option 2 does not afford Nottingham City the same opportunity to meet its specific housing needs given the absence of a Green Belt and need to work with a surrounding larger authority. Whilst the size of Nottinghamshire would provide more opportunities to meet its housing needs, addressing the specific needs in localities across the region might be an ongoing challenge.

IV. ***Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning:*** Specialist knowledge and experience exists within the present Nottinghamshire County Council and needs to be retained. Option 1b and 1e would allow staff to be retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two Unitary Authorities and provided as a commissioning service to the other Unitary Authority. This approach aims to preserve expertise and ensure consistent policy advice and application processing across both Unitary Authority. Option 2 would see the Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire Unitary Authority without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan). All options present minimal impacts.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Sensible Geography (4/4)

Considering the above assessment of planning in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and the three options under consideration as to the appropriate geography to assist in increasing housing supply, Option 1e would best meet the MHCLG Criteria 1(b)

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Impact on potential to increase long term housing supply	*The least difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; excess of +5,270 in Nottingham conurbation and +4,055 in Nottinghamshire, though almost entirely dependent on Green Belt policies*	*The greatest difference in number of homes needed and available over next 15yrs between the two authorities; Nottinghamshire authority having sizeable housing need to meet (gap of -7,480) versus the Nottingham conurbation (excess of +8,695)*	*Ability to increase housing supply is limited by restrictions on available land in Nottingham City; supply figures look strong however difficult to increase in long-term due to reduction in sources of supply. Nottinghamshire has significant shortfall.*
Impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans	*Several new development sites for the wider Nottingham area would be split between the two UAs; necessitating the need for collaboration on existing growth locations and potentially slowing development of Local Plans and acceleration of housing supply.*	*By contrast, Option 1(e) reflects existing joint planning efforts through GNSP, and provides a solid foundation for conversion into a new Unitary Local Plan through alignment with the evolving Development Strategies; would require a joint vision for NE part of Nottingham*	*Option 2 would allow Nottingham City to continue pursuing urban regeneration projects, though greater guidance needed by Regional Development Strategy to ensure a clear growth strategy for Nottingham City conurbation; a challenge not faced by other options*
Impact on meeting local housing needs	*Nottingham City conurbation to increase affordable housing through the release of Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodate needs of its area.*	*As with Option 1b, Nottingham City conurbation to release Nottingham Derby Green Belt land as Grey Belt; though the quantum of this is uncertain. Nottinghamshire would have a wide geography to accommodation needs of its area.*	*Unlike Options 1(b) and 1(e), Nottingham City restricted in the long-term given absence of Green Belt land. Nottinghamshire to have more opportunities though required to meet specific needs across a large authority; a challenge not faced by the other options.*
Impact on other issues such as mineral and waste planning	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Staff retained from the present County mineral and waste planning service; hosted by one of the two UAs and provided as a commissioning service to the other UA*	*Nottinghamshire County Council service absorbed into the Nottinghamshire UA without changing existing arrangements with Nottingham City (e.g. preparation of a joint waste Local Plan).*
Summary	Constraints such as urban capacity, Green Belt review and splitting of strategic growth areas would dominate and impact future growth options beyond current plan allocations, and may hinder long-term housing supply.	Councils already collaborating on GNSP and can utilise urban capacity of Nottingham City with opportunity for Greenfield release, producing two balance planning authorities in size with wide mix of housing supply resources	Initial urban capacity will eventually be utilised and long-term housing growth for Nottingham would need to be accommodate in Nottinghamshire, which may hinder accelerated housing growth in the whole area

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

5c. *Crucial Services*

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Additional analysis of the three options has been prepared by officers across all councils to assess how options meet MHCLG criteria 3 to improve service delivery or mitigate negative impact on crucial services.

Context

MHCLG officially set out their formal criteria for LGR proposals in February 2025, with criteria 3 requiring proposals to be to improved delivery of, or mitigate risks to negative impact on crucial services.

There is likely to be national funding changes given the current Fair Funding consultation however, this options analysis has taken place in the context of knowledge of current and forecast demand and funding. Potential wider national and regional policy changes have not been able to be factored in at this stage.

Impact on crucial services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on crucial services*

Key considerations for Crucial services within Nottingham and Nottinghamshire:

- Addressing homelessness requires coordinated efforts across public services like health, social care, and probation. Preparation for local government reorganisation is essential to align financial resources and services with community needs. Each authority in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire has strategies for homelessness, it is important to align on strategies and priorities for improved outcomes.
- Around 13,000 people receive long-term support, with increasing needs and cost driven by factors like post-covid effects and government policies. Safeguarding concerns have risen, particularly financial abuse, linked to deprivation. The city faces high levels of deprivation and disability, impacting life expectancy and demand for support. Efforts are underway to digitise social care and develop shared care records. The net budget for social care is influenced by self-funders depleting assets, particularly in more deprived areas. Future legislation, such as NHS reforms and Mental Health Act changes, will affect service delivery and funding.
- Balancing the distribution of SEND services to meet regional demands and prevent disparities in resource allocation is key. Potential reforms impacting social care, homelessness, and SEND services must also be addressed. Managing high-demand and costly SEND provisions is challenging due to inadequate statutory funding. It is crucial for councils to collaborate during transitions, handle funding deficits, and prepare for national SEND reforms to ensure effective service delivery in the proposed unitary structure.
- The proposed reforms and future legislations under Children's Social Care offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to transform the systems and improve outcomes for children and families.

Initial assessment of prioritised options against four factors:

Criteria	Sub-criteria used in the officer assessment	1b	1e	2
3b Improves delivery of, or mitigates risk to negative impact on crucial services	Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements	High	Medium	Low
	The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	Low	Low	Medium
	The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	Medium	Low	High*
	Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	Medium	Medium	Medium

Note: * This indicates that Option 2 provides a low risk to the different unitary arrangements

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

Based on an assessment of the options using relevant data shows that the differences between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) are marginal. Option 2 has greater variance and has higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

1(b): Under population there is a fairly even split, with a slightly higher count in the county. Council tax contribution is higher from the county (57%), yet they receive only 42% of the grant funding, indicating an imbalance. City + Broxtowe + Gedling get a larger proportion of the grant funding (58%) despite contributing less in council tax, potentially because of higher needs or deprivation indicators. Additionally, expenditure on adults is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable service responsibilities. The social care to council tax ratio is relatively equitable at 0.94 for City + Broxtowe + Gedling and 0.97 for the rest of the area. The GP patient per practice is more evenly distributed than other options. For the unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Gedling the number of requests are marginally less than the rest of the County. A similar trend can be seen in number of people receiving long-term support. However, under health distribution the % of households in highest 2 deciles is an average of 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Gedling in comparison to the rest of the county which is at an average of 17.6%. This option demonstrates a balanced distribution of care and service responsibilities and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for equitable, sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Under population both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe generate less council tax (46%) but receive greater grant funding 56%. The rest of the county generates more local revenue but receives less external support, which is typically more affluent areas. Expenditure on Adults' services a higher cost can be seen in the rest of the county (53% vs 47%). This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and costs. The social cost rations are City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe is 0.87 whereas the rest of the County is 0.92, lower ratios indicate more cost-effective service delivery relative to council tax base. The GP patients per practice split is also relatively similar ensuring less pressure on the infrastructure of City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. The unitary covering City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe has a greater number of new requests in comparison to the rest of the county. The same trend can be seen for people receiving long-term support. The health distribution split is greater under this option than 1b. The % of households in the lowest decline is 71.4% and % of households in the highest two deciles is at 40.6% for City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe. It is at 27.14% amd 7.62% respectively for the rest of the county.

Option 2: Nottingham City accounts for only 22% of the council tax base despite comprising about 28% of the population. The city receives 43% of the grant funding and there is greater reliance on central funding in the City making it more financial vulnerable. For Adult Social Care the county bears 74% of the costs and the City only 26%. Under projected spending pressure the city spending-to-tax ratio is 1.12 which means that the spending on social care would exceed council tax income by 12%. Whereas for the county the ratio is 0.8 which means the spending is less than income tax. The city would be financially overstrained, with high care needs but a limited tax base. Splitting the city from the rest of the county may disrupt integrated services such as social care and health. It fails the crucial services test as it makes it harder to deliver and coordinate key services. This option indicates a greater GP availability but this is't enough to outweigh the structural weakness of option 2. Under this option the split for new requests, people receiving long-term support and health distribution is greater than that seen in both Option 1(b) and 1(e).

Assessment of the options against the other sub-criteria are set out below including the risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Though Option 1(b) and 1(e) have slight variations, 1(b) is preferable due to geographical and demographic factors.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

II. *The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Under Option 1(b) the two unitaries would be providing services to areas with greater commonality of needs - predominantly urban, in the city-based unitary of NBG, and to towns and villages, in the county. Option 2 provides the opportunity to scale service delivery for functions such as AMHP Care Quality and provider services. It will also help avoid the cost, time and risk involved in disaggregation of services. It will ensure that residents continue to receive services from colleagues that is consistently good.

III. *The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Under Option 1(b) there is a presence of numerous self-funders in Gedling and Broxtowe, combined with a reduction in council tax income, could potentially worsen funding challenges, as these regions have a less of a call on the net budget. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e), Mansfield and Ashfield exhibit the highest demand for all services, including safeguarding, mental health, physical support, and hospital discharge. Countywide services, although small are facing high demand, highlight the challenge of disaggregation in areas such as safeguarding, AHMP, shared lives and short breaks. Similarly, under Option 1(e) there are many self-funders in Rushcliffe and as previously stated when combined with loss of council tax income can lead to funding challenges as they have less call on the net budget. Additionally, the transition of residents to the new unitary structure alongside Nottingham City may lead to discrepancies in service quality due to differences in quality of experience, service costs and the potential for poor continuity of care as there are variations in services and service levels between the county and the city. Under option 2 no risks were identified that do not already exist in the service. Option 2 is neutral on outcomes and delivery given it would be status quo.

IV. *Impact on delivery:* Under Option 1(b) the potential impact on provider services arises from the possibility of assets could be situated in a different council from those where the residents utilising them currently reside. Newark and Rushcliffe are experiencing a shortage in nursing and residential care, while Mansfield and Ashfield face an increased number of care quality concerns, necessitating greater capacity. Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there are significant variations in recruitment and retention across the county, with Rushcliffe identified as a recruitment hotspot. Market sustainability is challenged by disparities in provider costs, particularly in bed-based care for working-age adults, with Ashfield's average residential rates being considerably lower than those in Rushcliffe. Similar variations are evident in the costs for those aged 65 and over, Bassetlaw residential cost rate is £102pw less than Rushcliffe (£5k pa) this is further impacted by levels of client contributions. Nursing capacity has significantly diminished in Mid-Nottinghamshire since February 2023, resulting in the loss of 145 nursing registered beds. The complexity of health and system footprints makes apportionment by district difficult, spanning three hospital trusts. Although home care rates show no significant hourly differences across districts, social care record disaggregation and integration with the City Council could present a challenge potentially requiring system replatforming of the Mosaic system. Under Option 1(e) the potential impact on daycare services ending up in a different council that where residents are using them currently. It can also impact hospital discharges and other provider issues. Option 2 maximises the opportunity of working in partnership on a Nottinghamshire footprint with services that are county based. It also for neighbourhood partnerships as efforts are focused on a new relationship as opposed to disaggregating partnerships and adding in the complexity of contracts.

Option 1(b) and Option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and align with strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over Option 1(e) due to its alignment with the geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Adult Social Care*

Conclusion: The analysis concludes that while there is a notable risk associated with disaggregation and quality of service delivery, Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar levels of risk. The uneven distribution of contracts, assets, and services across the city leads to increased costs and risks when disaggregating services, although this disparity does not significantly affect the risk levels between options 1(b) and 1(e). Effective financial modeling is essential to manage the costs and resources required for these options, addressing system integration and wider issues comprehensively. The assessment suggests that Option 1(b) and option 2 are most balanced for accommodating self-funders and contributions, considering strategic and operational needs. Option 1(b) is preferred over 1(e) strategically due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of The City, particularly for more urban areas like Broxtowe and Gedling, which are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (1/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

Children Looked After: Options 1(b) and 1(e) present similar pictures of need for children's social care, with broadly comparable caseloads in each of the options. However Option 2 results in a greatly imbalanced picture, with 639 children looked after by the City unitary authority, while 905 children will require the support of the new 'Nottinghamshire' unitary authority. Similar trends can be seen for number of referrals, the total for Nottinghamshire is 7,410 whereas the total for Nottingham City is 3,926. Option 1(b) suggests that referrals received would be broadly equal (50% for both) whereas Option 1(e) offers sees slightly more referrals in the wider 'county' area (48% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe and 52% for the rest of Nottinghamshire). Option 2 has the greatest difference where Nottinghamshire receiving 65% of the proposals and Nottingham City receiving 35%. This needs to be seen in the context of fragmentation, where resources and staff will require reallocation and the continuity of care for these children will be compromised by reorganisation.

Characteristics of family need: Nottinghamshire sees similar characteristics to much of the country in that neglect is the most common reason for engagement with children's services. However Broxtowe and Gedling record historically high incidences of physical abuse, consistently recording average rates that are 80-90% higher than Rushcliffe over the past three years,. Additionally, Broxtowe reports higher instances of sexual abuse in comparison to Gedling and Rushcliffe. Overall, the levels of all types of need in Broxtowe and Gedling indicate greater alignment with Nottingham City than with Rushcliffe.

Family risk factors: Options 1(b) and 1(e) also differ from Option 2 in terms of the risk factors which result in referral to children's services. Over the past three years, Broxtowe and Gedling have experienced the highest rates of alcohol misuse among parents, with average rates of 48 and 54 per 10k, compared to 25 per 10k in Rushcliffe. There is also a significant disparity in drug misuse among children, with Broxtowe and Gedling reporting 17 instances per 10k, in comparison to Rushcliffe reporting 6 per 10k. Parental drug misuse is notably higher in Broxtowe and Gedling by 70-80%, compared to Rushcliffe. Domestic abuse cases are more frequent in Broxtowe and Gedling, at 22-23 cases per 10k compared to just 11 per 10k in Rushcliffe.Overall, Broxtowe and Gedling exhibit similar levels of alcohol abuse, drug abuse and domestic violence, with Rushcliffe consistently showing rates that are significantly lower than these areas.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Children's Social Care (2/3)

Below is an assessment of the options against data analysis and comparisons of different unitary arrangements and the opportunities presented.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

Contextual Safeguarding: Levels of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) have been dropping across Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the past three years although the rate in Broxtowe remains almost double that in Rushcliffe. In Gedling the rate is higher than both other districts. Levels of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) have also reduced across all three districts, although average rates in Broxtowe and Rushcliffe over the three-year period are similar and two to three times higher than in Rushcliffe. Overall, levels of CCE and CSE in Broxtowe and Gedling are aligned to those in Nottingham City.

II. *The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Under Option 1(b) the two new unitary authorities will be providing services to footprints with greater commonality of needs which is mainly urban areas, in the city-based unitary of Nottingham City + Broxtowe and Gedling, and to towns and villages in the county. This option offers a more balanced split of Children's Social Care expenditure at 51% for the rest of Nottinghamshire and 49% for Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling. Under Option 1(e) there is an opportunity for a fairer share of tax base across the two new unitary authorities. Finally, Option 2 would avoid any unnecessary fragmentation of CSC. A key factor in determining the success of any arrangement will be engagement with partners such as schools, health providers and the police who are critical in recognising, referring and supporting local authorities in keeping children safe and well.

Assessment of the prioritised options against the other four factors considered: The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements and the impact on delivery. Option 1(b) better aligns with the stated criteria.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children's Social Care*

III. *The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Option 1(b) results in a greater risk of disaggregation of services and a need to consider programmes such as Family First implementation. Under Option 1(e) if Rushcliffe is disaggregated from the county area to an expanded city area it would have little impact in terms of demand for either new authority. However, relative differences in tax base would present issues in funding delivery. Option 1(e) has a share of children's total expenditure that is three times that of Option 1(b). Opton 2 provides little risk other than the current challenges facing Nottingham City which include current cost pressure and no increase in tax base.

IV. *Impact on delivery:* Option 1(b) brings together areas which are similar to each other. Those delivering CSC in the City, Broxtowe and Gedling currently serve large urban conurbations. This option offers the best alignment of service. In Option 1(e), assets may be located in the other authority which would impact, for example, children going to special schools. This is a challenge as spaces are generally filled by the current County service with any surplus places offered to the City. Under this scenario, the situation could be reversed as it would challenge Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe to deliver services to more rural communities that border another county (Leicestershire). Option 2 would disadvantage Nottingham City due to the current tax base, population/demographic and level of needs which would have a significant impact on delivery of CSC. This option offers the least change, disruption and impact to services as CSC is an upper tier function and there no change to the existing footprint.

Conclusion: Option 2 does not meet the MHCLG criteria as it does not establish sensible economic areas with an appropriate tax base. It creates an imbalance which could be an advantage for Nottinghamshire County Council and disadvantage for Nottingham City. Although there is very little difference in the distribution of overall levels of need between Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) , Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in levels of need, family risk factors, and contextual safeguarding than Broxtowe and Rushcliffe do. Additionally, children with universal, targeted or specialist SEND needs in Gedling have greater commonality, connection, proximity, association, identity, access and transport links with Nottingham City than those in Rushcliffe. Therefore, Option 1(b) offers a better alignment with the MHCLG criteria.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services (Children with SEND 1/2)

Assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis, comparison of different unitary arrangements.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

SEND measures: Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) the number of initial requests for an EHC Plan in the calendar year 2024 is relatively similar. Under Option 2 the number of requests in Nottingham City is 2,296 in comparison to the rest of the county at 579. Option 2 would create a greater split. For new EHCP demand, Option 1b has a more balanced distribution in comparison to 1(e) or 2. A similar trend can be seen for number of children subject of an EHCPs as of January 2025 and the proportion of children subject to it.

Education measures: Under education measures number of persistently absent pupils (10%+) the numbers are relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e) whereas Option 2 has more variance as Nottingham city has 9,760 whereas the rest of the county has 21,190. For number of severely absent pupils (50+%) a similar trend can be seen. Additionally, for number of permanently excluded pupils and proportion of pupils with one or more suspensions figures for all options are similar to one another.

Additional measures: Option 1(b) and 1(e) present relatively similar figures across all categories. The largest difference can be seen under Option 2, where 71% of the under 17 population resides in Nottinghamshire in comparison to the City. Similar challenges can be seen in number of state funded primary, secondary and special schools and pupil headcount in these institutions. The analysis compares Gedling and Rushcliffe districts using secondary school locality and pupil numbers to determine their characteristics as more "City-like" or "County-like." Gedling has 6,885 secondary pupils attending six schools, with 89% attending schools in postcodes bordering Nottingham City directly (NG4, NG5), indicating strong integration and proximity to the city. Conversely, Rushcliffe has 8,004 pupils across seven schools, but only 48% attend schools near the city boundaries due to physical separations like the River Trent. Many Rushcliffe pupils attend schools further from the city, highlighting its more "County-like" characteristics. Thus, Gedling children's services have closer connections and are more aligned with urban dynamics than Rushcliffe.

1(b): Expenditure on children's services is fairly balanced between the two proposed authorities, suggesting equitable responsibility for delivering services. This option would see a balanced distribution of needs and service delivery, and ensures no single unitary authority faces disproportionate strain. It also supports the case for sustainable service delivery across both authorities.

1(e): Both unitaries areas would serve relatively similar sized populations, ensuring no single authority is disproportionately burdened. Children's service is relatively evenly distributed. This proposed split avoids creating a significant imbalance in service demand and financial burden

Option 2: The data suggests that this option has the greatest imbalance imbalance of SEND services and provision split across the two areas. The split for % of share of childrens' total expenditure is 60% for the Country and 40% for the rest of the county.

Detailed assessment of the prioritised options against the other factors considered: the opportunities,risks and potential impact on delivert. Option 1(b) best aligns with the goals of LGR.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on Children with SEND*

II. *The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) there is an opportunity to work collaboratively to support children with SEND across both unitaries. Option 2 will enable the locality-based SEND improvement approach to continue for all children and young people with SEND. Additionally, there would be continued improvements to statutory delivery. The distribution of schools and their relationship with new authorities is key to managing future SEND need effectively.

III. *The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:* Under Option 1(b) and 1(e) a new plan for 150 additional specialist school places in Broxtowe aims to address the need for special education capacity, though it might have a limited effect on the overall sufficiency across Nottinghamshire and could particularly benefit Nottingham City. Under Option 1(e) a significant loss of revenue fund statutory SEND services from Rushcliffe which has lower rates of children with EHCPs or specialist provision than other areas of Nottinghamshire. Option 2 maintains the current provision.

IV. *Impact on delivery:* Option 1(b) has less impact on delivery in comparison to the other models as level of demand for SEND services in Broxtowe and Gedling are in the average band. Under Option 1e there would be a need for joint working with a shadow authority to put a plan in place for SEND sufficiency which could lead to significant impact on availability of provision. Additionally, local authority statutory teams would see very little impact. Option 2 would main the current provision.

Conclusion: Option 1(b) best aligns with local government reorganisation criteria, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads. Although both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) present a risk to the sufficiency of specialist SEND provision, this risk could be managed through collaborative efforts between authorities during the shadow authority period. Option 1(e) also aligns well with reorganisation aims, but faces challenges due to lower SEND demand in Rushcliffe, leading to an imbalance between service demand and the income needed to meet it. As a result, the impact on SEND sufficiency might be more pronounced than in Option 1(b). Option 2 does not fulfill the reorganisation objectives, as it creates unitaries with increased viability issues and perpetuates an imbalance of SEND services and provision across two areas.

Set out below is an assessment of the prioritised options against data analysis and comparison of different unitary arrangements. Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) have relatively similar values to one another. Option 2 has greater variability and higher rates across most metrics.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

I. *Data Analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements:*

Household prevention duty: The data shows a comparison between Option 1(b), 1(e) and 2 regarding the number of households owed prevention duty and the rate per 1,000 households for two time periods, 2023-24 and 2024-25. Option 1e offers the lowest values for both years in terms of lowest rate per 1,000 households. If reducing the actual number of households owed prevention duty is looked at Option 1(e) still offers the lowest numbers relatively in comparison to Option 1(b) or Option 2. However, it is important to note that the differences between the three options are relatively moderate.

Households owed Relief Duty: The data shows the three options regarding household owed relief duty. Under number of households discrepancies can be seen in all options. Under Option 1(e) greater pressure will be felt on Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe as the number of households in 2023-24 were 1,970 where as in the rest of the areas the total was 907. A gradual decrease can be seen in 2024-25. Similarly, under rate per 1,000 households option 2 shows extreme values for Nottingham city in comparison with the rest of the county.

Households in temporary accommodation: The data compares the three options regarding households in temporary accommodation. Under number of households, Option 1(b) puts greater pressure on Broxtowe, Gedling and Nottingham city. However, it is important to note that the figures for 1(b) and 1(e) are relatively similar to each other across both time frames. For rate per 1,000 households option demonstrates fluctuations and higher numbers in comparison for Nottingham City than the rest of the county.

Rough sleeping over the month: The data compares the three options regarding rough sleeping over the month. Under number of people the split between Option 1(e) is greater than Option 1(b) and option 2. This indicates that there will be a larger number of people experiencing rough sleeping over the month in Broxtowe, Nottingham City and Rushcliffe in comparison to the County and also in comparison to Option 1(b) and 2. For rate per 100,000 people option 2 shows significantly higher rates for Nottingham City in comparison to the rest of the county. It is important to note that figures were relatively similar for Option 1(b) and 1(e).

Households on housing register: Option 1b and Option 1e has very similar values where as option 2 shows fluctuations highlighting higher discrepancies in demand or resource allocation. Similarly, rate per 1,000 household is highest for option 2 suggesting a more concentrated or higher demand in Nottingham city, which would indicate a need for enhanced housing solution or capacity.

ROUGH SLEEPING OVER THE MONTH

HOUSEHOLDS IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

Across most categories Option 1(b) & 1(e) show similar patterns. They generally provide moderate and stable numbers for households and rates, indicating a balanced approach to resource allocation and management. Option 2 has greater variability and often higher rates in specific categories, especially rough sleeping and housing register metrics.

Set out below is an assessment of each options against the other factors considered: the opportunities, risks and potential impact on delivery. The analysis does not identify a preferred option, however, based on geographic and demographic similarities Option 1(b) would align more to the MHCLG criteria than the other options.

Crucial Services: *Improves service delivery or mitigates negative impact on homelessness*

II. *The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements:* The document identifies several opportunities that can potentially enhance service delivery and resilience across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. By leveraging economies of scale, authorities can achieve more resilient services and better value, through broader geographical procurement and resource sharing, including staffing, IT, and out-of-hours arrangements. This could lead to centralised coordination and an effective response to performance metrics and data management. There's potential to adapt services to address intensified needs through larger geographical coverage, such as establishing women-specific homelessness hostels. A unified strategy and sharing best practices can lead to consistent approaches to tackling homelessness challenges, complemented by enhanced collaboration between housing and social care sectors. Improvements in housing/TA supply can be achieved through shared access to grants/funding/land for new build, renovation or acquisition. Opportunity for programmes such as Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) and changing futures as it would provide better consistency of approach in supporting disadvantaged people across the two areas. Under Option 1(e), many Rushcliffe rough sleepers would have access to Nottingham City which could improve and streamline customer experience.

III. *The risks presented by the different unitary arrangements:* The document outlines serval generic threats and risks associated with homelessness strategies and services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It highlights a changing policy context, including reforms to private sector housing and supported housing regulations, which could affect service delivery. Changes to the local connection criteria might complicate meeting levels of need, if the criteria is broadened and anticipated revisions to funding formulas for the Homelessness Prevention Grant could impact funding availability, especially if current funding streams are merged or altered based on geographic or population factors. Manfield's unique Domestic Abuse Housing accreditation stands at risk if other areas fail to achieve similar recognition. Furthermore, there is a need for increased responsiveness to individuals moving across geographic boundaries, particularly in the South/City areas. Predicted future trends suggest an increase in homelessness due to factors such as rental reform and rising living costs, although the options may not significantly affect visible rough sleeping or street-based activity, which remain concerns for residents. Additionally, the rising use of temporary accommodations poses a financial threat to general fund resources, with variations occurring among different authorities based on need and TA supply. Lastly, potential disinvestment in non-statutory services by Public Health and the risk of reduced locally driven insight and service delivery due to funding competition are also flagged as concerns. Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there is a risk that the sole authority left with links to the hospital trust in the South would struggle to have the same impact around housing/homelessness related challenges. This risk could be mitigated by a new city-aligned authority taking lead on the relationship and work for both areas.

IV. *Impact on delivery:* Under Option 1(b) & 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact which suggests the possibility that these options could dilute the focus on homelessness due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations. Such dilutions may lead to less effective strategies and approaches to tackling homelessness because resources and efforts might be spread too thin across newly defined authorities. Changes in how services are organised might lead to unclear or fragmented service pathways, affecting how people move through systems to receive support and housing. Finally, there is a concern that restructuring could lead to weaker collaboration and communication between health services and housing/homelessness services. This could hinder integrated efforts to address homelessness.

Conclusion: It is important to note that homelessness does not have significant impact in choosing between either of the options; but should be considered in designing service delivery or organisational functions.

MHCLG Criteria Analysis: Crucial Services

Set out below is a high level summary of the assessment of the Crucial Services criteria for the options under consideration in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Sub-criteria	1b Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	1e Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	2 Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City
Data analysis and comparison of the different unitary arrangements	*Similar patterns across Option 1(b) and 1(e), though 1(b) favoured due to similar geography and demography e.g. children in Gedling with social care needs having greater identity with / proximity to City services.*	*Rushcliffe experiences lower demand for SEND, resulting in an imbalance between the demand for the services and income required to sustain them. Nonetheless, when overall data is examined similar trends can be seen between 1(b) and 1(e).*	*Option 2 shows variability and generally higher rates in data pertaining to homelessness, ASC and SEND. This option creates an imbalance in ASC and SEND services*
The opportunities presented by the different unitary arrangements	*No specific opportunities identified for improving homelessness and SEND services, though Option 1(b) would offer more balanced distribution of CSC and deliver ASC services to areas with greater community of needs.*	*No specific improvement opportunities identified for ASC and SEND, though Option 1(e) may help streamline homelessness services as rough sleepers have a local connection to Notts City, and provide a more fair share of tax base for CSC.*	*Enhanced service delivery for functions such as AMHP quality and provider services. Option 2 can help mitigate the cost, time and risk associated with disaggregation. Furthermore, it enables a localised approach to SEND.*
The risk presented by the different unitary arrangements	*Concerns around disaggregation of ASC, CSC and SEND sufficiency, alongside general impact on provider services as services could be situated in areas where individuals no longer reside.*	*There is a loss of revenue to fund statutory SEND services due to Rushcliffe having lower rates of EHCPs or specialist provisions compared to the other areas of Nottinghamshire. The share of children's total expenditure is greater.*	*No specific risks have been identified for Option 2, and it presents no new risks beyond those currently existing within the services e.g it is not impacted by disaggregation.*
Impact on delivery e.g. staffing considerations, geography	*Potential fragmentation of homelessness services given confused pathways and weaker relationships between health and housing/homeless teams/services.*	*There are challenges with delivery of ASC, CSC and SEND services, particularly the loss of income for the county authority.*	*There is no impact on the delivery of homelessness, ASC or SEND as the current service provision is maintained. However, there is still challenges with the imbalances present within these services.*
Summary	Option 1(b) aligns most effectively with the LGR objectives, providing a relatively balanced distribution of demand and services for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND. Broxtowe and Gedling also have higher population demographics similar to the City.	Option 1(e) somewhat aligns with the LGR objectives but faces geographic and demographic challenges for homelessness, ASC, CSC and SEND services, with the county-authority facing a loss of revenue.	Option 2 does not meet the LGR objectives due to increased viability issues and services imbalances, despite maintaining the current level of service delivery.

Note: RAG rating indicates how the option aligns to the MHCLG criteria relative to the other two options

6. Financial Analysis

Financial Modelling: Updated Analysis Overview

This section provides an overview of the phase 1 analysis and the updates made since March 2025.

Phase 1 Analysis

In Phase 1 an initial evidence based options analysis was completed for local government reform. The financial model formed a part of the quantitative analysis to investigate the costs and benefits for a wide range of options all of which were based on current district and unitary authority Boundaries.

The s151 officer met on 15 May to review the financial model methodology and outputs. During that session there were some further clarifications sought. Subject to these clarifications all agreed that the case was sufficient to enable the s151s to provide assurance to their Councils that the case was appropriate.

This position was confirmed at the Finance Officers meeting on 23 May. The revised financial analysis was shared with s151 officers on 3 June ahead of a LGR specific meeting of s151s on 9 June. This included some sensitivity analysis the group requested on the assumptions.

In addition the County Council have undertaken some analysis on the potential impact on Options 1b &1e of social care self funders in the event that leads to an important difference in the cases. It has been concluded that this does not.

Updates post March 2025

1. Assumptions
Some changes were made to assumptions such as reduction in front office FTE, service delivery FTE, reduction in back office FTE, property rationalisation, SRA cost per new unitary authority.

2. Benefit Phasing
The benefit realisation period has been changed to 30% in the first year, 50% in the second year and 100% after that.

3. Definitions
The definitions of types of FTE service are have been provided. This includes specific definitions for front office, service delivery and back office.

4. Overall benefits and costs
As a result, there is a change in the total overall benefits and costs since the figures set out in the interim plan in March 2025.

See Appendix B for the methodology and assumptions applied

The financial analysis model relies on a number of assumptions, primarily based on publicly available outturn data, information from each council's own transparency data, or by applying changes which have been demonstrated across previous LGR proposals.

Third-party spend refers to all payments made by local councils for goods and services from external suppliers, excluding grants, taxations, and other charges. Addressable spend is the portion of this expenditure that can be influenced through procurement or commissioning strategies such as negotiating contracts or seeking competitive bids. In contrast, non-addressable spend includes costs that are less flexible and mandated by law, making them harder to influence.

Property expenditure relates to the cost associated with acquiring, maintaining, and managing both **operational** properties (used for delivering council services) and **investment** properties (held for income or capital appreciation). This includes expense such as maintenance, utilities, insurance and management fees.

FTE is calculated as a proportion of spend as supplied in public spending data. **Net revenue expenditure** is used to avoid double-counting any income or grant transfers. **Senior leadership** salaries are calculated across the top three organisational tiers as per transparency reporting.

Member allowances are based on rates of Basic and Special Responsibility payments published in transparency reporting. These costs are used to determine the likely cost of one or more new democratic structures in new authorities

Election costs use a total of votes cast in a previous election cycle across all council elections, and a cost-per-vote of £3 calculated by the Electoral Commission

Staff	Third party spend	Property	Democracy
Senior leadership	Non-addressable		Councillor allowances
Front office FTE			Election costs
District service delivery FTE	Addressable		
Back office FTE			

Increased benefits across Staff and Third Party Spend

Redundancy costs do not include actuarial strain as this is highly individualised. A payment of 30% of salary is assumed.

Redundancy costs	Programme transition costs	Transformation costs

Benefits are profiled to be fully effective in Year 3, to account for the need to complete staff changes and undertake contract renegotiations.

Costs such as the creation of new councils, marketing, ICT and consultation are increased proportionately where more than one new council is to be formed. Similarly, fixed **benefits of transition** are shared across all new bodies.

Reduced benefits for multiple unitary transition	Increased costs for multiple unitary transition	**Disaggregation Costs** Duplicated delivery and structures

Transition costs include anticipated redundancies due to duplicated leadership structures, and elements of one-off spending relating to creating, marketing and programme managing transition to a new council.

Disaggregation Costs are incurred where an option involves dividing a county level authority into two or more unitaries, and represents the ongoing cost of duplicating management and operations of statutory services, including social care, education and public health. **An element of disaggregated costs therefore recur each year in options with more than one unitary authority**

Definitions for Front office, Service delivery and back office are set out below.

Category	Definition	Activities	
Front office	Front office described all the activities that involve interaction with customers and/or have an immediate impact on customer service delivery. It involves all activities that lead up to and follow on from serving the customer, without capturing the actual act of delivering the service. **A customer is defined as a person who uses any council service.**	- Enquiry Handling - Processing Requests and Applications - Managing Appointments - Eligibility - Simple and Rules Based Assessment - Complex Assessment - Approval of Service	- General Administration (for frontline operations) - Recording and Data Entry - Closing Record - Management and Supervision (for frontline operations) - Workforce Planning (for frontline operations) - Workforce Scheduling (for frontline operations) - Billing and Receiving Payments
Service Delivery	The actual delivery of a frontline service on behalf of the council which fulfils the needs of external customers.	Service Delivery	
Back office	The activities aligned to this category provide support to other service areas: - Corporate Services include the activities that support the council in operating effectively on a day-to-day basis. - Strategic Services contain the activities that are central to influencing and executing the councils corporate strategy. - As for Support Services, these activities will all contain an element of transactional activity (e.g. within HR and Finance), but are more broadly aligned to the delivery and support of the strategic direction of the council.	- General Administration (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) - Health and Safety - Technology - People Management - Budgets and Financial Management - Payroll Services - Key Data Sets - Property, Estate and Facilities Management - Management and Supervision (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) - Stores and Distribution - Workforce Planning (Corporate, Strategic & Support Services) - Fleet and Plant Management	- Democratic services and support provided to elected Members - Legal Advisory Services - Programme and Project Management - Purchasing, Procurement and Commissioning - Managing Contracts - Marketing, PR and Communications - Strategic Planning and Policies - Research and Consultation - Quality Assurance, Performance Management and Improvement - Business Information, Data Analysis and Reporting

Financial Modelling: Definitions (3/3)

Definitions for the various elements of the financial model are set out below.

Definitions	
Transition costs	Costs involved in moving from existing systems to another. This includes fixed costs and redundancy costs incurred (excluding disaggregation). These are one-off costs to reorganisation within Nottingham & Nottinghamshire.
Benefits of Aggregation	Benefits that would arise from reorganisation. This primarily looks at the benefits of collapsing multiple local authorities into a fewer number of local authorities. This will include savings made on: staff, third party spend and property. In addition to this, benefits arising from savings on running democratic processes are also defined. There are percentage reductions applied to each type of benefit saving.
Annual benefits	Annual benefits that are generated as a result of reorganisation. These are calculated as a sum of the front office, service delivery and back office expenditures, as well as third party spend, senior management, property and democracy costs.
Recurring benefit after 5 years	The recurring annual benefit after five years of reorganisation. It is estimated that the full benefits will be realised after five years.
Payback period (years)	The payback period is the time required for the investment in unitarisation to generate sufficient cash flows to recover its initial cost.

Financial Modelling: Purpose and limitations

The options analysis financial modelling provides a tool for comparing potential options for future LGR, based on publicly available data and a set of agreed assumptions. The model accounts for the cost of delivering the new structure in terms of **transition** and **ongoing disaggregation** costs of leading delivery of all unitary council services across the new geographies identified in each option.

What the model does:

- The financial model provides an **independent and policy-neutral comparison** of differing structural approaches to LGR.

- It focuses on the **costs of transitioning** and **running costs of new leadership and political structures.**

- It includes the anticipated costs needed to undertake **the next phases of LGR activity** - programme design and management, building a detailed business case, ICT requirements, delivering consultation and comms, etc.

- Combined with potential additional analysis it provides **a foundation for the detailed business case** to follow.

- The model is **recognised by MHCLG and Treasury** as a reasonable means of determining the potential scale of benefits available from LGR at options analysis stage. It is not developed to the level of detail that is required for a full proposal.

What the model doesn't do:

- The financial model will not at this stage predict the **costs of delivering services** in a new structure.

- It does not account for future policy decisions around the **apportionment of debt, reserves or assets** between constituent councils.

- It does not account for **actuarial costs of redundancy**, which require a detailed review of individual employee's circumstances.

- The transformation costs and benefits are estimates based on experience in other local authorities applied to local spend, they do not represent a **detailed review of your third party spend.**

- The model is based on static, published data and **does not include the influence of increased demand** on running costs.

Financial Modelling: Updated analysis

The financial model incorporates key structural and management costs, including redundancy estimates, senior leadership changes, and anticipated savings across cost categories.

	Transition costs (£)	Annual benefits (£)	Net benefit after five years (£ total)	Payback period (years)
Option 1: 1(b) & 1(e)	£28,848,294	£24,620,878	£64,711,043	1.3
Option 2: Nottinghamshire & Nottingham City	£21,250,744	£24,620,878	£72,308,593	Less than 1 year
Option 3: Single Unitary Authority *Comparative purposes only*	£19,249,433	£30,044,575	£94,919,953	Less than 1 year

The methodology is set out in Appendix B and includes a clarification as to what is and isn't covered for the purposes of an options analysis. There are some considerations for the full financial case that have not been included at this stage including potential impact of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 which is currently in live consultation.

Financial Modelling: Planning of costs and benefits

The table below provides an overview of the phasing of benefits, transition costs and disaggregation costs which have been tested with the s151 officers.

Impact of Phasing

In modelling the impact of costs and benefits, assumptions have been made to reflect their realistic phasing. This ensures that one-off costs are spread over multiple years rather than being incurred immediately, alongside the ongoing costs of transition.

Benefits are phased over a 3 year period, recognising that some efficiencies - such as senior leadership reductions - can be realised quickly, while others, like contract realignment and third-party spend savings, will take longer to achieve. This approach accounts for operational complexities, contract obligations, and the time required for full implementation.

It is important to note that the benefits outlined here relate solely to system aggregation, rather than service transformation. The efficiencies modelled do not include potential improvements from broader service redesign, which would be considered separately.

The phasing of the annualised **benefits** is over three years, due to the varying timescales for different aspects of delivery, after 3 years the full annual benefit is assumed. This includes ongoing cost reduction programs, the timing of the next election, and the expiry of third-party contracts. Transformation benefits have not been included.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4 -10
Benefits *(cumulative)*	30%	50%	100%	100%
Transition Costs *(one-off)*	30%	30%	30%	10%
Disaggregation Costs	*No disaggregation cost*			

Transition costs are spread over a longer period rather than being completed within a single year, ensuring a more realistic and feasible approach. Costs are incurred over three years, with Years 2 and 3 primarily covering recontracting, system migrations, workforce adjustments, and other transition-related expenditures. This phased approach accounts for contractual constraints, the complexity of workforce changes, and the time required to reorganise services, reducing financial risk and operational disruption.

Disaggregation costs arise from splitting county services into new councils, leading to ongoing expenses for duplicated leadership and operations but excluding service delivery costs.

71

7. Implementation

Implementation: indicative timeframe to implementation

This section outlines key timescales, activities, and opportunities in Local Government Reorganisation. The following pages set out some of the required steps to developing a full business case proposal for submission in November and some of the post-decision implementation activities.

Proposal *Submitted*	Decision	Phase 1: Mobilisation	Phase 2: Transition	Phase 3: Transformation

The submission of a proposal to MHCLG in March 2025 signaled the start of this process. Note that there may be multiple proposals for an area, and coherence with the MHCLG criteria will be a significant factor in the next stages.

The period between March and November requires dedicated governance, time and resource to develop detailed plans for implementation, including financial and legal matters. This will require coordination and collaboration across all nine councils.

Once a decision is made, resources must be mobilised and implementation plans put into effect to deliver the complex task of dissolving existing bodies and creating a new local authority in an effective and legal manner.

An Implementation Executive is likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned.

21 March 2025

We are here

28 November 2025

Vesting Day 1 April 2028 (TBC)

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (1/4)

A significant range of activities will need to be completed prior to final submission of the proposal in November 2025. This includes stakeholder engagement, legal, financial and organisational development activity, which will require specific capabilities and dedicated capacity.The immediate next step is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case.

Interim Plan:
by 21st March 2025
Submitted

An interim was submitted to MHCLG on 21st March 2025:
- ❏ This plan outlined the proposed options under consideration and how they are likely to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.
- ❏ More detailed analysis and engagement needs to take place post this submission to refine the options and develop a full business case.
- ❏ Engagement will also need to take place with EMCCA, local MPs, parish councils and wider system partners such as police and fire services and the ICS. During this period an engagement and consultation plan needs to be developed in order to gather input and assess support for proposals.

Final proposal:
by 28th November 2025

Based on feedback from the interim plan, Nottingham & Nottinghamshire will need to refine their proposals to ensure they have met all the criteria set out by the MHCLG, including (indicative not exhaustive):
- ❏ Agreeing the resources which each council will commit to funding the process.
- ❏ A need to prepare for implementation of the new interim structures, including planning for any necessary changes to governance, staffing and service delivery
- ❏ Appointment of a responsible officer and cabinet member in each council. The members will form a LGR committee which may transition to be a shadow unitary council executive as vesting day approaches.
- ❏ Design the appropriate directorate and senior leadership structure for the new authority
- ❏ Finalise arrangements for HR changes and staff redundancy, including any provision for a voluntary scheme, and how this cost will be impact existing councils
- ❏ Determine a plan for disbursement of debt and reserves in consultation with joint S151 officers
- ❏ Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting the public with Districts.
- ❏ Agree and undertake a joint plan for consulting staff, including engagement with Trades Unions.
- ❏ Agree an approach to harmonising council tax across Districts, including how Council Tax Relief will be harmonised
- ❏ Conduct equality impact assessments of proposed arrangements
- ❏ Plan for the costs and legal aspects of winding up existing authorities and creating a new statutory entity
- ❏ Understand the risks and implications of existing assets, liabilities and HRA provision.

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (2/4)

Set out below is a very high level view of the remaining timeframe available for decision making and development of a full proposal ready to be submitted in November 2025.

April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November

Elections

Ongoing analysis of options and evidence base

Council decisions on options

Council decisions on business case

Developing the full proposal(s)

Developing the full financial case(s)

Communications and engagement

Submission of full proposal(s)
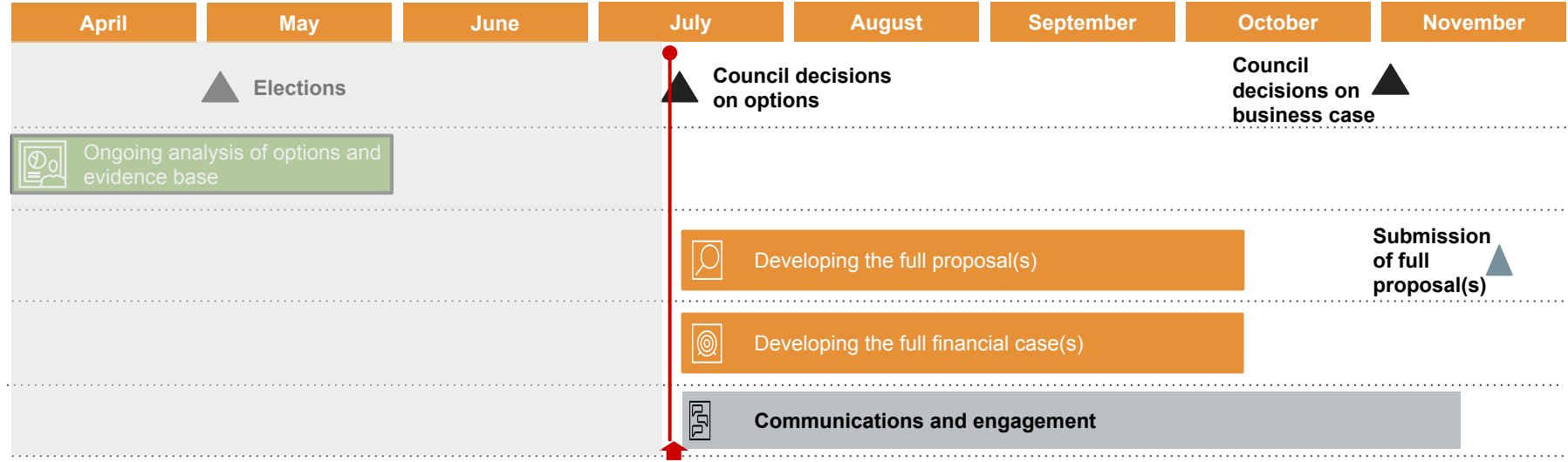
Mid-July

Implementation: Development of the final proposal (3/4)

An overview of how the options analysis would need to develop into a full proposal is set out below and on the following page.

Refining the options appraisal | **1**

- Since submission in March, the Options Analysis has been narrowed down to three options: Option 1(b), Option 1(e) and Option 2.
- Deep dives have been conducted against MHCLG criterion such as sensible economic area, sensible geography and crucial services.
- The financial analysis has been updated.

Developing the full proposal | **2**

- The stated intention is to develop a single proposal, working collaboratively. The points set out below would need to be developed in any full business case proposal.
- A vision for the new council(s), including the improved outcomes expected to be delivered for people and the place.
- Design of a high level target operating model for the new council(s); including customer offer, ways of working, culture and values, how technology and information will be utilised etc. and describing what residents will experience.
- Identifying opportunities for service synergies - consolidation of existing functions, simplification of processes and opportunities arising from bringing district and county together (e.g. housing and social care), as well as district and existing unitary functions together.
- Designing the arrangements that will be put in place at a locality level to build engagement and ensure the new councils are responsive locally.
- Clarify the democratic structures that will be put in place - e.g. structures and numbers of councillors, key milestones and decision points.
- Determining how the new council(s) will work with EMCCA
- Describing how the the new councils will work towards more ambitious public service reform, working with other providers in the geography.
- Determining how any new council(s) will work together to share certain functions.
- Developing an implementation roadmap, which will identify the target and interim states for the new council(s).

Developing the financial case | **3**

- Identifying the costs and benefits associated with the implementation of unitary local government across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, taking more precise account of data concerning:
  - the establishments of all impacted councils;
  - assets and liabilities (including physical assets, reserves, debt and MRP); contracting and other partnership arrangements; IT architecture; grant funding and additional income; and Council Tax implications.
- Developing the investment and benefit profiles that will drive implementation.
- Developing the investment strategy required to fund implementation.

Due diligence — 4

- While the work described under workstream 2 would not entail due diligence (e.g. line by line reviews of all contract and commissioning arrangements, review of assets, liabilities, IT infrastructure etc.), it is anticipated that work of this nature will commence in the period leading up to the November submission.

Communi-cation and engagement — 5

- Developing a comprehensive communications strategy to support the development and submission of proposals. This would include a focus on:
  - staff engagement (sharing communication assets across all of the impacted councils);
  - member engagement, including the provision of members to come together for visioning workshops and design discussions;
  - stakeholder engagement - working with MPs, the town and parish councils, as well as public, private and voluntary sector partners to discuss and explain the changes being proposed; and
  - community and public engagement - focus groups, engagement meetings and other forms of communication.
- Consolidating the responses and views gathered during this activity to inform the development of the November submission and evidence support and / or opposition to the establishment of the new council(s).

Mobilising programme workstreams — 6

- There is a commitment to deliver an ambitious transformation programme in parallel with the transition to the new council(s). To this end, work is intended to commence in the following areas:
  - service design;
  - consideration of technology requirements;
  - HR - approach to change management, migration of staff to the new council(s);
  - OD - foundational work on culture, behaviours, values and ways of working;
  - branding and buildings; and
  - legal and governance arrangements (including the Structural Change Order, shadow governance arrangements and senior appointments).

Implementation: implementation roadmap

Phase 1: Mobilisation

Phase 2: Transition

Phase 3: Transformation

Detailed implementation plans will be developed during the mobilisation phase outlined above and in the diagram. This implementation map provides an overview for the key activities which will need to be undertaken by officers and members as vesting day approaches, and which will need to be accomplished alongside business-as-usual in terms of service delivery.

The financial model includes a high level estimate that **c. £13m** will be required for internal and external support for the process under Option 1(b) and 1(e). This is consistent (and a conservative estimate at this stage) with previous rounds of LGR.

Phase 1: Post-decision mobilisation

Phase 2: Transition

Phase 3: Transformation

- Funding arrangements agreed & consultation complete
- Council structure and boards in place
- Ongoing programme monitoring and reporting
- New culture and ways of working
- Demand actively managed
- Programme team recruited and trained
- Standing orders and financial regulations defined
- Programme closure
- Benefits realised
- New IT capabilities delivered
- Governance arrangements established
- Property stock rationalised
- Pay harmonised
- Customer access strategy
- Implementation plan produced
- Migration onto core systems
- Single IT function operational
- Cultural change implemented
- Single HR function
- Design offer implemented
- Virtual teams established and teams co-located
- Future IT architecture defined
- Identification of HQ(s) / Civic Buildings / Key Offices
- Data cleansed and harmonised
- Job matching, selection and recruitment into new structure
- Rebranding the organisation
- Services reorganised
- IT architecture review complete and migration plan produced
- Roles and T&Cs reviewed
- External and internal communications delivered
- SLAs and performance metrics agreed
- Service improvements implemented
- Property plan produced
- Stakeholder engagement and consultation
- Communications strategy and plan produced
- HR transition management plan agreed
- Budget baseline defined
- People and culture model designed
- Digital design and customer interaction model designed
- Future service offer designed for front line and back office services

Programme Management & Governance

Technology and Property

People and Culture

Service Offer

Implementation: Immediate next steps and planning

Immediate next steps is for Chief Executives and Members to take a decision on which option(s) to take forward to develop into a full business case in July 2025 and begin planning for implementation including early scoping on programme support and workstreams (outlined below).
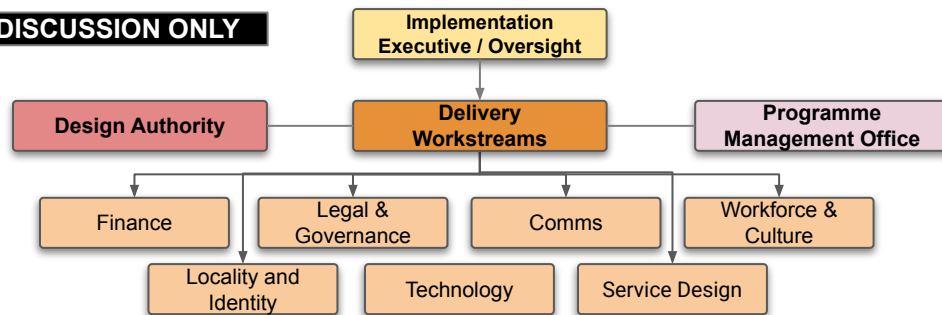
Immediate next steps

- Summary report shared with CEXs
- Confirm LGR Meeting date to take decision on which option to take forward
- Decision on the options analysis and potentially a preferred option.
- Agree coordination and collaboration arrangements where required

Immediate next steps for programme infrastructure set up (not exhaustive)

- Agree resources to coordinate efforts across all councils
- Agree leadership, governance and oversight arrangements
- Identify and establish officer working groups for relevant projects and programmes
- Work with workstream leads to identify the key tasks for each group, secure the appropriate membership and to ensure time and resources are protected to meet the time pressures.
- Agree a stakeholder and engagement plan

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

Implementation Executive / Oversight

Design Authority — Delivery Workstreams — Programme Management Office

Delivery Workstreams:
- Finance
- Legal & Governance
- Comms
- Workforce & Culture
- Locality and Identity
- Technology
- Service Design

Governance	Description
Implementation Executive	• Likely to be required by statute, consisting of representatives existing local government areas which will form the new unitary authority. This will generally include the leader of the City, County and District Councils concerned, Chief Execs and s151 officers. • Responsible for overall strategic direction, oversight of risk, and benefit realisation and meets monthly, or more frequently during critical periods
Delivery Workstreams	• Example workstreams outlined above; each chaired by a Senior Director (from pool of affected councils) with delegated authority, and reports progress, risks, issues and resource needs to the Implementation Executive
Programme Management Office	• Centralised function for planning, reporting, dependency and risk management across all workstreams and driving interface with other enablers (Finance, ICT, Legal, Procurement), ensuring a "single version of truth" through common tools, templates and reporting standards
Design Authority	• Technical group reviewing service design, TOM alignment and systems integration to ensure joined-up thinking

8. Appendix A: Criteria Analysis

Criteria Analyses (1/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
'Sensible Economic Areas' for Local Government Reorganisation in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	23/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of travel to work, economic self-containment, housing market areas and service market for consumers for the three options.	Concludes that the differences in degree of fit are too narrow to be able to identify a clear better fit, though Option 1(e) marginally (< 1 percent) provides a stronger fit with the Travel to Work Area (TTWA) and the Housing Market Area (HMA).
Assessment of proposed options for unitary local government in Nottinghamshire in terms of increasing housing supply and meeting local needs	This report has been prepared in conjunction with Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Heads of Planning and has been shared with officers of the East Midlands Combined County Authority.	07/05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of impact on potential to increase long term housing supply, impact on transition to system of a Spatial Development Strategy & Local Plans, impact on meeting local housing needs and impact on other issues such as mineral and wasting planning.	Concludes that Option 1(b) may not accelerate housing supply in the same way that Option 1(e) might, with 1(e) potentially having a wider mix of housing supply sources and reflecting existing joint workings on GNSP.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Adult Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option due to its alignment with geographic and demographic characteristics of Nottingham City. Broxtowe and Gedling are better integrated with the city's infrastructure and facilities.

Criteria Analyses (2/2)

The table provides details on the information which was included in the additional analysis.

Title	Prepared by	Date	Description	Conclusion
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Homelessness	The document has been developed by a core group of lead officers representing the local authorities with the support and consultation of a wider cohort of officers from each district, borough, City and also the County Council.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of homelessness in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	The analysis does not identify a preferred option. Under both Option 1(b) and Option 1(e) there could be reduced homelessness impact due to changes in administrative boundaries and service configurations.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's SEND services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of SEND services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as it best aligns with the goals of local government reorganisation, offering a balanced distribution of demand and service delivery for SEND and not posing challenges to the reallocation of resources, workforce, or caseloads.
Assessment of potential options for unitary local government in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire in context of Children's Social Care services	Council officers across the nine Nottingham Nottinghamshire authorities.	05/2025	The analysis provides an overview of Children's Social Care Services in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire along with the opportunities, risk, service delivery impacts and data analysis of the three options.	Option 1(b) is the preferred option as Broxtowe and Gedling more closely align to Nottingham City in terms of levels and types of safeguarding needs, which would allow for more targeted / focused service delivery models to be deployed.

9. Appendix B:
Financial Assumptions

Element of the model

Staff
Senior leadership
Front office FTE
District service delivery FTE
Back office FTE

Methodology

1. The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.

2. Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.

3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

4. An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Proportion of net revenue expenditure spent on staff	31.3%		Calculated through publicly available RO forms.
Front Office FTE	36%		
Service Delivery FTE	37%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Back Office FTE	27%		

Element of the model

Staff
- Senior leadership
- Front office FTE
- District service delivery FTE
- Back office FTE

Methodology

1 The combined County and District Councils spend on staff has been estimated, and grouped into front office, service delivery, and back office spend based on local authority averages.

2 Percentage reductions have been applied to front office, district service delivery and back office full-time equivalent (FTE). These reflect the efficiencies gained from removing duplicated activity.

3 These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

4 An additional benefit has been calculated from removed District senior leadership posts, including on-costs.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	**Option 2 - City and County Council**	
Reduction in front office FTE	4%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in service delivery FTE	1.5%		
Reduction in back-office FTE	3%		
Senior leadership costs in Districts	£8,681,498		Senior leadership costs calculated for the top three tiers of leadership of District Councils including on-costs based on averages and no of Districts. Lower tiers are not included as they may be required as part of new organisational structures.

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Third Party Spend)

Element of the model

Third party spend
Non-addressable
Addressable
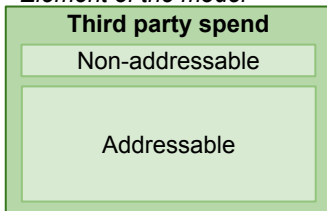
Methodology

1. The addressable third party spend combined between County and District Councils has been calculated using proportioned net expenditure to provide a baseline. Third party spend relating to property has been excluded.
2. A percentage reduction in third party spend has been applied due to the greater purchasing economies of scale that will be gained through consolidation.
3. These percentage reductions are higher for a single unitary authority and revised down for a two unitary authority model due to forgone economies of scale.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Proportion of net expenditure spent on third parties	65.7%		Calculated through publicly available RO forms.
Proportion of third party spend (TPS) which is addressable	75%		75% of the total third party spend is treated as addressable, due to some elements of third party spend being non addressable, eg. pass through costs. Previous experience in local authority third party spend analysis suggests that this typically makes up 25% of the spend
Reduction in third party spend	1.5%		Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Property)

Element of the model

Property

Methodology

1. The combined net expenditure on property has been calculated using net expenditure figures for the County and District Councils.

2. This is spend relating to the ongoing running costs of office spaces such as those used in energy, cleaning and routine repairs rather than from the one-off sale of rationalised council office space. In addition, any benefits resulting from the rental of available office space has been excluded.

3. A percentage reduction has been applied to the property baseline to provide the estimate property benefit.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Proportion of net expenditure spent on property	3%		Proportion of spend is based on RO calculations. Percentage reductions in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
Reduction in property spend	12.5%		

Key assumptions: Benefits of aggregation (Democracy)

Element of the model

Democracy
Councillor allowances
Elections

Methodology

1. By aggregating Districts into one or two unitary authorities, fewer councillors will be required and therefore a saving can be made from base and special responsibility allowances. The average cost of a District council democratic structure has been estimated and multiplied by the number of District councils present within the boundary.

2. Consolidating local authorities will also reduce the number of elections required, thus presenting a benefit. The average annual cost of a District election has been calculated and multiplied by the number of District councils.

3. The calculation for both the single and two unitary model is the same, as the two unitary model also incurs an additional disaggregation cost of duplicating a larger, more expensive councillor structure than in District councils.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
District SRA and base allowances incurred as part of the democratic structure	£351,915		Calculated through publicly available data.
Annual cost incurred per District election	£165,530		The annual cost of a District election has been calculated by multiplying the cost per vote and the average voter turnout during representative District Council elections. This has been divided by 4 to estimate the annual saving that can be achieved per council, and multiplied by the number of District councils inputted.
Cost per vote during an election	£3.00		The cost per vote used to calculate the cost of an election has been estimated at £3 by Government / Electoral Commission based on previous election data.

Element of the model

Duplication
Duplicated senior leadership
Duplicating service delivery management
Duplicated democratic structures

Assumptions applied

Methodology

1. The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.

2. By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.

3. The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Proportion of additional FTE undertaking service delivery management & supervision	0%		Additional costs have not been applied.
Additional senior leadership costs	0%		There is no additional cost as there are two senior leadership teams across existing top tier authorities
Members in upper tier local authorities	121		The existing number of top tier authority councillors across the area has been applied as an estimate and for the purpose for this financial analysis. Note: This does not represent a decision on the future number of Councillors.

Key assumptions: Aggregation and Disaggregation costs (2 of 2)

Element of the model

Duplication
- Duplicated senior leadership
- Duplicating county service delivery
- Duplicated democratic structures

Assumptions applied

Methodology

1. The following costs of disaggregation only apply in the two unitary authority scenario. Two sets of senior leadership will be required to run two distinct authorities. This cost has been calculated using the costs of senior leadership at a representative council to tier three.

2. By disaggregating services that are currently county wide, for example Adults and Children's services, additional FTE will be required to account for lost efficiency. The amount of effort used in service delivery management & supervision has been used as a proxy to estimate the size of the increase required in a two unitary model.

3. The cost of a representative county democratic structure has been estimated as an additional cost incurred having two unitary authorities

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Member base allowance	£1,088,297		Calculated through publicly available data.
SRA costs per new unitary authority	£0		Two top tier unitary authorities already exist - there is no additional requirement based on the options currently under consideration.

Element of the model

Transition Costs

Redundancy costs

Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Redundancy cost as a proportion of salary	30%		Percentage estimate in line with previous local government spend reduction and reorganisation work and tested with the Sect 151 Officers.
External communications, rebranding and implementation	£732,000	£366,000	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
External transition, design and implementation support costs	£8,540,000	£4,270,000	

Element of the model

Transition Costs

Redundancy costs

Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	*Option 2 - City and County Council*	
Additional programme management costs of disaggregating services	£0		No disaggregation cost as a result of not breaking up the county. There is a potential change of service delivery by one UA, which may delivered by another UA in future.
Internal programme management	£3,806,400	£1,903,200	Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Creating the new council	£1,220,000	£610,000	

Element of the model

<div style="border:2px solid green; background:#fdebbf;">

Transition Costs

Redundancy costs

Programme transition costs
</div>

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	**Option 2 - City and County Council**	
Contingency	£6,775,853		
Organisation Closedown	£305,000		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Public consultation	£411,750	£274,500	

Element of the model

Transition Costs
Redundancy costs
Programme transition costs

Methodology

1 One off redundancy costs will be incurred when re-organising local authorities. These have been calculated as a proportion of the benefit resulting from FTE reductions and therefore is higher in a single unitary model than a two unitary model.

2 There are a number of transition costs that will be incurred when closing down existing local authorities and creating new authorities. In transitioning to a single unitary authority, these costs will only be incurred once, whereas in a two unitary model, many of these costs will be incurred twice.

Assumptions applied

Area	Key figures		Rationale
	Options 1b & 1e	Option 2 - City and County Council	
Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) costs	£2,385,000		Estimates in line with previous local government reorganisation work. For 1b & 1e x2 multiplier has been used.
Shadow Chief Exec/ Member costs	£622,200	£311,100	

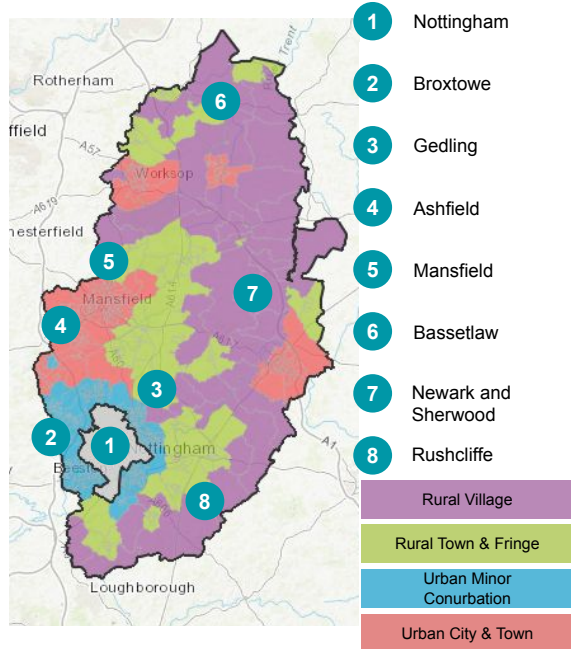# 10. Appendix C: Comparative Analysis

Summary view of comparative analysis for the three options

		Rural / urban	Time to key services	Debt to reserve per capita ratio	Social care demand to council tax take (current)	Social care demand to council tax take (projected)	Population	Deprivation	Housing need	Business Growth	Healthcare provision
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling			53.5	0.94	0.94	603,185	26.5	19.6	See detail on page 104	7,101
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	34.4%	3.5	14.0	0.84	0.87	661,460	20.7	17.2		8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe			47.4	0.87	0.87	611,518	24.7	20.5	See detail on page 104	6,906
	Nottinghamshire with the remaining LAs	18.3%	1.7	14.7	0.90	0.92	653,127	22.3	16.3		8,556
2	Nottingham City remains the same			83.9	1.18	1.12	352,463	34.9	19.9	See detail on page 104	6,456
	Rest of Nottinghamshire becomes a new unitary authority	30.4%	3.9	14.2	0.81	0.83	912,182	19.0	17.7		8,279

Options with lowest difference   Options with highest difference

Analysis: Rural-Urban comparative analysis (current)

The table below sets out the types of areas that exist across the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire geography and how this is reflected when combined in the different LGR options that are under consideration.

1. Nottingham
2. Broxtowe
3. Gedling
4. Ashfield
5. Mansfield
6. Bassetlaw
7. Newark and Sherwood
8. Rushcliffe

Rural Village
Rural Town & Fringe
Urban Minor Conurbation
Urban City & Town

Average proportion of rural population
Department for Rural Affairs - Rural Urban Classification
Map - Nottingham Observatory

Option		Rural %	Urban %	Difference between %'s
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	3.9%	96.1%	34.4%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	38.3%	61.7%	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	12.4%	87.6%	18.3%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	30.7%	69.3%	
2	Nottingham City	0.0%	100.0%	30.4%
	Nottinghamshire	30.4%	69.6%	

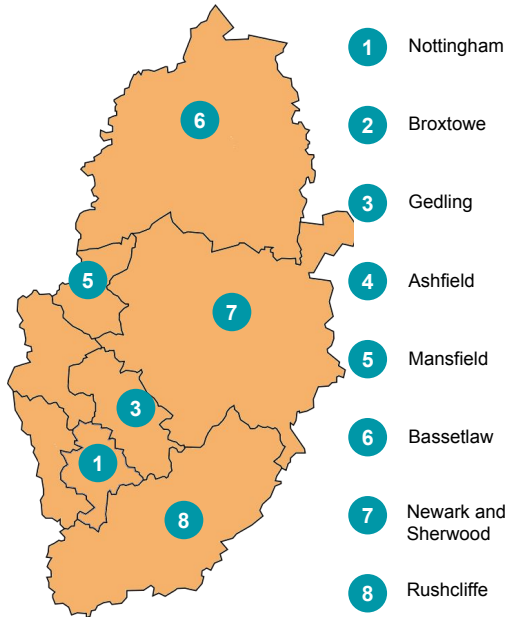**Key:** Options that are most alike in rural / urban — Options that are least alike in rural / urban

Analysis: Time to key services analysis

This table highlights which of the potential options are the most equitable in time taken to travel to key services e.g. employment centres, primary schools, secondary schools, further education, GPs, hospitals, food retail and town centres.

1	Nottingham
2	Broxtowe
3	Gedling
4	Ashfield
5	Mansfield
6	Bassetlaw
7	Newark and Sherwood
8	Rushcliffe

Option		Time to key services via public transport / walking (min)	Difference between options (mins)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	14.6	3.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	18.1	
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	15.5	1.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	17.3	
2	Nottingham City	13.6	3.9
	Nottinghamshire	17.5	

Key: Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

98

Analysis: Debt to Reserve per capita Ratio Analysis

Set out below are key components that underpin the debt-to-reserve per capita ratio analysis, as a potential indicator of relative financial health for each option.

Option		# of People (2023)	Total Debt (£000s, 24/25)	Total Reserves - (£000s, 23/24)	Debt per capita (£)	Reserves per capita (£)	Debt/Reserves per capita Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	£ 857,060	£ 16,029	£ 1,528	£ 29	53.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	£ 792,540	£ 56,611	£ 1,293	£ 92	14.0
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	£ 846,248	£ 17,867	£ 1,494	£ 32	47.4
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	£ 803,352	£ 54,773	£ 1,322	£ 90	14.7
2	Nottingham City	329,276	£ 744,626	£ 8,877	£ 2,261	£ 27	83.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	£ 904,974	£ 63,763	£ 1,072	£ 76	14.2

Sources:
[1] Borrowing and Investment Live Tables, Q2 2024-25:
[2] ONS Estimates of the Population for England and Wales Mid-2023
[3] Revenue outturn summary 2023-2024

Key:

Options with lowest difference | Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (current)

The analysis set out below below compares 2024/25 adult's and children's social care actual spend to council tax receipts in 2023/24 to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2024/25)	Total CSC Spend (2024/25)	Total Care Spend (2024/25)	Council Tax Receipts (2023/24)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 164,626,206	£ 134,262,020	£ 298,888,226	£ 317,184,000	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 206,418,792	£ 154,068,977	£ 360,487,769	£ 427,317,000	0.84
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 160,376,612	£ 132,493,533	£ 292,870,145	£ 335,799,000	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 210,668,386	£ 155,837,464	£ 366,505,850	£ 408,702,000	0.90
2	Nottingham City	£ 92,476,000	£ 90,513,000	£ 182,989,000	£ 154,566,000	1.18
	Nottinghamshire	£ 278,568,998	£ 197,817,997	£ 476,386,995	£ 589,935,000	0.81

Key: Options with lowest difference   Options with highest difference

Analysis: Social Care demand to Council Tax take (projected)

The analysis set out below below compares projected adult's and children's social care actual spend to projected council tax receipts to gauge the potential strain on public services.

Option		Total ASC Spend (2032/33)	Total CSC Spend (2032/33)	Total Care Spend (2032/33)	Council Tax Receipts (2032/33)	Care to Council Tax Receipt Ratio
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	£ 177,007,122	£ 160,455,544	£ 337,462,666	£ 359,340,174	0.94
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 224,778,121	£ 184,126,692	£ 408,904,812	£ 470,435,575	0.87
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	£ 173,402,244	£ 158,342,037	£ 331,744,281	£ 380,332,467	0.87
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	£ 228,382,999	£ 186,240,198	£ 414,623,197	£ 449,735,749	0.92
2	Nottingham City	£ 99,549,687	£ 108,171,414	£ 207,721,100	£ 186,281,960	1.12
	Nottinghamshire	£ 302,235,556	£ 236,410,822	£ 538,646,378	£ 647,928,338	0.83

Options with lowest difference

Options with highest difference

Analysis: Population

The table below compares current and forecasted population estimates for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire across the different options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Population (2035)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	603,185
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	661,460
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	611,518
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	653,127
2	Nottingham City	329,276	352,463
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	912,182

Key:

Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference

Analysis: Deprivation

This table summarises the key findings from analysis of the indices of deprivation, highlighting the areas of greatest need.

Option		Average deprivation score
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	26.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	20.7
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	24.7
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	22.3
2	Nottingham City	34.9
	Nottinghamshire	19.0

Key:

Options with lowest difference

Options with highest difference

Analysis: Housing Need

This table summarises the findings from the housing need analysis, identifying which option will see a greatest difference in the number of homes per 1000 of the population.

Option		Population (current)	Forecast new homes (2022-2027)	Forecast new homes needed per 1000 people (2022-2027)
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	11,000	19.6
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	10,510	17.2
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	11,625	20.5
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	9,885	16.3
2	Nottingham City*	329,276	6,565	19.9
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	14,945	17.7

*Nottingham City figures reflect base need values. It excludes a 35% uplift.

Sources:
  [1] Assessment of Housing Need and Capacity in Nottingham City, Dec 2022
  [2] Nottinghamshire County Council: Draft Housing Strategy 2023-2028

Key: Options with lowest difference | Options with highest difference

Analysis: Business Growth

The analysis sets out which would be the three largest areas of potential growth across each of the options based upon Gross Value Added (GVA) figures, coupled with the UK GDP growth seen over the last five years. This is intended to give an indication of which options might be able to grow economies and where that might be more challenging.There are new opportunities - such as the freeport - which are not yet captured in this data.

Option		Largest Sector		2nd largest		3rd largest	
		Sector	%	Sector	%	Sector	%
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.2%	Education	11.5%	Healthcare & Social Work	10.8%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	14.5%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.7%	Real Estate	11.2%
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.6%	Education	11.2%	Professional services	10.1%
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	16.3%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.5%	Real Estate	11.6%
1g	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	Manufacturing	17.9%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%	Real Estate	10.9%
2	Nottingham City	Education	13.7%	Healthcare & Social Work	12.4%	Wholesale & Retail trade	11.8%
	Nottinghamshire	Manufacturing	16.0%	Real Estate	12.1%	Wholesale & Retail trade	12.0%

Sector	UK GDP growth rates over last 2020-24 (5 years)
Healthcare & Social Work	34.5%
Education	34.1%
Professional services	26.3%
Wholesale & Retail trade	12.8%
Real Estate	3.3%
Manufacturing	-3.6%

While historical GDP growth rates may provide indications of future sectoral resilience, actual future economic performance may diverge due to various factors. This includes potential local growth drivers, such as the development of the East Midlands Freeport, Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme and interventions from the strategic authority (EMCCA), could influence sectoral vulnerability and economic prospects.

Options with least vulnerable sectors

Analysis: Healthcare Provision

Set out below is a summary of the population numbers served per GP surgery in each of the options under consideration.

Option		Population (2023)	Number of GP surgeries (February 2025)	Number of people served per GP surgery
1b	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Gedling	561,011	79	7,101
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	612,759	74	8,281
1e	Nottingham City + Broxtowe + Rushcliffe	566,302	82	6,906
	Nottinghamshire + Remaining LAs	607,468	71	8,556
2	Nottingham City	329,276	51	6,456
	Nottinghamshire	844,494	102	8,279

Key:

Options with lowest difference — Options with highest difference