



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Alison McGovern MP
*Minister of State for Local Government and
 Homelessness*
 2 Marsham Street
 London
 SW1P 4DF

Leaders of Councils in Devon, Plymouth and
 Torbay:

Cllr Dan Thomas, Cllr David Clayton, Cllr David Thomas, Cllr Julian Brazil, Cllr Ken James, Cllr Luke Taylor, Cllr Mandy Ewings, Cllr Paul Arnott, Cllr Philip Bialyk, Cllr Richard Keeling, Cllr Tudor Evans

17 December 2025

Dear Leaders,

Thank you for your continued hard work to deliver unitary local government. I greatly appreciate the hard work and excellent joint working that has gone into submitting proposals across your areas.

As I have set out, this Government is determined to work with you to streamline local government by replacing the current two-tier council system with new single-tier unitary councils. We are progressing this landmark reform at pace, which will be vital in delivering our vision: stronger local councils equipped to drive economic growth, improve local public services, and empower their communities. Empowered local government, based on unitary councils and strategic authorities, is the foundation for growth across the country – the government's number one mission.

I am therefore grateful for the collaborative work you have already done to produce proposals, and I look forward to working with you over the coming months.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health 2007 Act requires that before a proposal can be implemented the Secretary of State must first consult any council affected that has not submitted the proposal, as well as any other persons considered appropriate. In response to feedback from the sector and to provide clarity on the programme timeline, I expect to launch a consultation in early February on proposals from the remaining 14 areas that seek to meet the terms of the 5 February 2025 statutory invitation. That consultation would also be for seven weeks.

As you will appreciate, I am not able to give views on the substance of your proposals at this stage. But I appreciate that some of your submissions include questions for government, and my officials will work with you to provide answers as soon as practicable.

I am copying this letter to your Chief Executives, local MPs, and to the Police and Crime Commissioner Alison Hernandez.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alison" above "McGovern".

Alison McGovern MP

Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness