

County Council

Addendum

Date: Tuesday 18 February 2025

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Council Chamber, Shire Hall

Items on the agenda: -

2. Unitary Local Government in Warwickshire

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Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

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County Council

18 February 2025

Unitary Local Government in Warwickshire

Recommendations

That Council supports the development of a proposal to Government for unitary local government for Warwickshire which meets the guidance, criteria and timeframes set out in the invitation received from Government

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 On 16th December 2024 the Government published the English Devolution White Paper, setting out its ambition for both devolution and Local Government reform.
- 1.2 On the same date the Council received a letter from the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution asking for a view on or before 10th January 2025 regarding the potential postponement of the May 2025 County Council elections. On 10th January the Leader of the Council took a decision to respond to the Minister of State, signalling the County Council's willingness to be considered for delivering local government reorganisation and devolution to the Government's ambitious timeframe and recognising that, as a consequence, the Government may decide it necessary to postpone the May 2025 County Council elections.
- 1.3 On 5th February 2025 the Secretary of State announced that nine counties would form part of the Devolution Priority Programme - Cheshire East, Cumberland, Essex, East Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Westmorland and Furness. In addition, Surrey is on the local government fast track programme. In these areas the 2025 County Council elections will be postponed to facilitate local government reorganisation and enhanced devolution, through the creation of new Strategic Authorities covering those areas.
- 1.4 Warwickshire was not named by the Secretary of State as one of these areas and County Council elections will go ahead in May 2025. Similarly for several other county councils which had requested fast-track local government reorganisation, county council elections will go ahead in May. These include Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Kent, Derbyshire, Devon, Leicestershire and Lincolnshire.
- 1.5 Subsequently on 5th February 2025 the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution wrote to the Leaders of the six Councils in Warwickshire

to officially invite them to work together to develop a joint submission with proposal(s) for local government reorganisation in their area. The letter constitutes a statutory invitation which the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has issued in exercise of powers under Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

- 1.6 The invitation sets out guidance for the development of any proposals and the criteria against which proposals will be assessed. It also sets out the the timeline for the process, namely that an interim plan be submitted by 21st March 2025, followed by full proposals to be submitted by 28th November 2025.
- 1.7 This paper presents Council with the guidance and criteria set by Government for the development of proposals (**Appendix 1**), the requirements for the interim plan (also **Appendix 1**); an outline of the Warwickshire position, including previous decisions taken in respect of devolution and local government reform (**Appendix 2**). **Appendix 3** contains the English Devolution White Paper and an LGA Briefing on the White Paper
- 1.8 In bringing this report to Council in the shortest possible timeframe, the intention is to hear the views of council members on this issue and for those views to help shape the development of the proposals and the interim plan that will be considered by Cabinet for approval ahead of submission to Government by 21st March.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 When implementing unitary government for Warwickshire there will be significant financial implications. These implications will need to be evaluated throughout the process and in particular, in respect of the development of the full proposals. However, at this stage there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 Environmental considerations will be a key element of the development of the interim and full proposals and will be evaluated throughout the process.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The invitation of 5th February 2025 from the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution includes a schedule which sets out guidance for proposals for unitary local government. The schedule includes the following criteria for unitary government:

- A proposal should seek to achieve for the **whole of the area** concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.

- Unitary local government must be the **right size to achieve** efficiencies, improve 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**

4.2 The detailed criteria underneath these headlines are set out in the same invitation letter from the Minister of State which is attached at **Appendix 1**.

4.3 Of particular note are:

4.3.1 Proposals should be for sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base which does not create an undue advantage or disadvantage for one part of the area.

4.3.2 Proposals should be for a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.

4.3.3 Existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for your proposals, but where there is a strong justification more complex boundary changes will be considered.

4.3.4 As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more and proposals should set out the rationale where it is considered that this 500,000 figure does not make sense for an area

4.3.5 Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.

4.3.6 Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services.

4.3.7 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.

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

4.3.9 Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be

addressed.

4.3.10 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, or a decision has been taken by Government to work with the area to establish one, 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. Where no CA or CCA is already established or agreed then the proposal should set out how it will help unlock devolution.

4.3.11 Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged and where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement.

4.4 In term of options for unitary government, the following have been presented for consideration:

- **Type A** – a single tier of local authority covering the whole of the county concerned – i.e. a single new unitary council for Warwickshire;
- **Type B** – a single tier of local authority covering an area that is currently a district, or two or more districts – i.e. two or more new unitary councils for Warwickshire;
- **Type C** – a single tier of local authority covering the whole of the county concerned, or one or more districts in the county; and one or more relevant adjoining areas; and
- **Combined proposal** – a proposal that consists of two or more Type B proposals, two or more Type C proposals, or one or more Type B proposals and one or more Type C proposals.

4.5 The requirements for the interim plan are set out in the letter from the Minister of State dated 5th February 2025, attached at **Appendix 1**.

4.6 The deadline set by Government for the submission of an interim plan by 21 March 2025 will require a degree of pragmatism in our approach, presenting a proposal back to Government which meets the guidelines and the criteria whilst at the same time is concise and digestible to enable officials to understand the proposed direction of travel for Warwickshire. The full proposal to be submitted by 28th November 2025 is then expected to be more specific and contain more analysis and supporting detail.

4.7 The Government has made it clear that it expects Councils to make every effort to work together to develop and jointly submit one proposal for unitary local government across the whole of the area. In undertaking the work required, the County Council is committed to working collaboratively with all District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire with the intention of co-producing a single interim plan if possible.

4.8 Government has also commented that it is not in council taxpayers' interest to devote public funds and valuable time and effort into the development of

multiple proposals which unnecessarily fragment services, compete against one another, require lengthy implementation periods or which do not sufficiently address local interests and identities. However, it is recognised that in some cases it will not be possible for all areas in an area to jointly develop and submit a single proposal, despite best efforts to do so.

- 4.9 The Council will also engage with stakeholders, partners, staff and Warwickshire residents during the process, in particular in the development of the full proposals recognising the early time pressures involved in producing the interim plan by 21 March 2025.
- 4.10 In respect of the Council's public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010, it is considered unlikely that the decision proposed and the matters contained in this report will have any material impact and as such there are not considered to be any specific equalities implications arising from this report. It may be possible that such implications arise as this matter proceeds, but they will be assessed and considered as appropriate at that time.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 There are two key deadline dates:
- Submission of an interim plan for single unitary government in Warwickshire by 21st March 2025; and
 - Submission of full proposal(s) for single unitary government in Warwickshire by 28th November 2025.
- 5.2 To meet the first deadline, it is intended that a paper is presented to Cabinet in March authorising the submission of an interim plan, having taken into account and had regard to the debate at the Full Council meeting on 18th February 2025.
- 5.3 We will seek to work collaboratively with District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire to coproduce the interim plan.
- 5.4 Further work will be needed in the coming weeks to align decision-making and governance processes with those of the District and Borough Councils wherever possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Letter from the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution dated 5th February 2025

Appendix 2 – Warwickshire Position

Appendix 3a – LGA Briefing <https://www.local.gov.uk/parliament/briefings-and-responses/devolution-white-paper-day-factual-briefing>

Appendix 3b – English Devolution White Paper

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): N/a countywide matter

Other members: N/a



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Jim McMahon OBE MP

*Minister of State for Local Government and
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To: Leaders of two-tier councils in
Warwickshire

North Warwickshire Borough Council
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough
Council
Rugby Borough Council
Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Warwick District Council
Warwickshire County Council

5 February 2025

Dear Leaders

This Government has been clear on our vision for simpler, more sustainable, local government structures, alongside a transfer of power out of Westminster through devolution. We know that councils of all political stripes are in crisis after a decade of decline and instability. Indeed, a record number of councils asked the government for support this year to help them set their budgets.

This new government will not waste this opportunity to build empowered, simplified, resilient and sustainable local government for your area that will increase value for money for council taxpayers. Local leaders are central to our mission to deliver change for hard-working people in every corner of the country through our Plan for Change, and our councils are doing everything they can to stay afloat and provide for their communities day in, day out. The Government will work closely with you to deliver these aims to the most ambitious timeline.

I am writing to you now to formally invite you to work with other council leaders in your area to develop a proposal for local government reorganisation, and to set out further detail on the criteria, guidance for the development of proposals, and the timeline for this process. A formal invitation with guidance for the development of your proposals is attached at Annex A. This invitation sets out the criteria against which proposals will be assessed.

Developing proposals for reorganisation

We expect there to be different views on the best structures for an area, and indeed there may be merits to a variety of approaches. Nevertheless, it is not in council taxpayers' interest to devote public funds and your valuable time and effort into the development of multiple proposals which unnecessarily fragment services, compete against one another, require lengthy implementation periods or which do not sufficiently address local interests and identities.

The public will rightly expect us to deliver on our shared responsibility to design and implement the best local government structures for efficient and high-quality public service delivery. We therefore expect local leaders to work collaboratively and proactively, including by sharing information, to develop robust and sustainable unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area to which this invitation is issued, rather than developing competing proposals.

This will mean making every effort to work together to develop and jointly submit one proposal for unitary local government across the whole of your area. The proposal that is developed for the whole of your area may be for one or more new unitary councils and should be complementary to devolution plans. It is open to you to explore options with neighbouring councils in addition to those included in this invitation, particularly where this helps those councils to address concerns about their sustainability or limitations arising from their size or boundaries or where you are working together across a wider geography within a strategic authority.

I understand there will be some cases when it is not possible for all councils in an area to jointly develop and submit a proposal, despite their best efforts. This will not be a barrier to progress, and the Government will consider any suitable proposals submitted by the relevant local authorities.

Supporting places through change

It is essential that councils continue to deliver their business-as-usual services and duties, which remain unchanged until reorganisation is complete. This includes progress towards the Government's ambition of universal coverage of up-to-date local plans as quickly as possible. To support with capacity, I intend to provide some funds for preparing to take forward any proposal, and I will share further information later in the process.

Considering the efficiencies that are possible through reorganisation, we expect that areas will be able to meet transition costs over time from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.

The default position is that assets and liabilities remain locally managed by councils, but we acknowledge that there are exceptional circumstances where there has been failure linked to capital practices. Where that is the case, proposals should reflect the extent to which the implications of this can be managed locally, including as part of efficiencies possible through reorganisation, and Commissioners should be engaged in these discussions. We will continue to discuss the approach that is proposed with the area.

I welcome the partnership approach that is being taken across the sector to respond to the ambitious plans set out in the White Paper. My department will continue to work closely with the Local Government Association (LGA), the District Councils Network, the County Councils Network and other local government partners to plan how best to support councils through this process. We envisage that practical support will be needed to understand and address the key thematic issues that will arise through reorganisation, including managing service impacts and opportunities for the workforce, digital and IT systems, and leadership support.

Timelines and next steps for interim plans and full proposals

We ask for an interim plan to be submitted on or before 21 March 2025, in line with the guidance set out in the attached Annex. My officials will provide feedback on your plan to help support you to develop final proposals.

I will expect any full proposal to be submitted **by 28 November**. If I decide to implement any proposal, and the necessary legislation is agreed by Parliament, we will work with you to move to elections to new 'shadow' unitary councils as soon as possible as is the usual arrangement in the process of local government reorganisation.

Following submission, I will consider any and all proposals carefully before taking decisions on how to proceed. My officials are available throughout to discuss how your reorganisation and devolution aspirations might work together and what support you think you might need to proceed.

This is a once in a generation opportunity to work together to put local government in your area on a more sustainable footing, creating simpler structures for your area that will deliver the services that local people and businesses need and deserve. As set out in the White Paper, my commitment is that clear leadership locally will be met with an active partner nationally.

I am copying this letter to council Chief Executives. I am also copying this letter to local Members of Parliament and to the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Yours sincerely,



JIM MCMAHON OBE MP

Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN HEALTH ACT 2007

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR A SINGLE TIER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of his powers under Part 1 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 ('the 2007 Act'), hereby invites any principal authority in the area of the county of Warwickshire, to submit a proposal for a single tier of local government.

This may be one of the following types of proposal as set out in the 2007 Act:

- Type A – a single tier of local authority covering the whole of the county concerned
- Type B – a single tier of local authority covering an area that is currently a district, or two or more districts
- Type C – a single tier of local authority covering the whole of the county concerned, or one or more districts in the county; and one or more relevant adjoining areas
- Combined proposal – a proposal that consists of two or more Type B proposals, two or more Type C proposals, or one or more Type B proposals and one or more Type C proposals.

Proposals must be submitted in accordance with paragraphs 1 to 3:

1. Any proposal must be made by **28 November 2025**.
2. In responding to this invitation an authority must have regard to the guidance from the Secretary of State set out in the Schedule to this invitation, and to any further guidance on responding to this invitation received from the Secretary of State.
3. An authority responding to this invitation may either make its own proposal or make a proposal jointly with any of the other authorities invited to respond.

Signed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.



F KIRWAN

A senior civil servant in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

5 February 2025

SCHEDULE

Guidance from the Secretary of State for proposals for unitary local government.

Criteria for unitary local government

- 1. A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.**
 - a) Proposals should be for sensible economic areas, with an appropriate tax base which does not create an undue advantage or disadvantage for one part of the area.
 - b) Proposals should be for a sensible geography which will help to increase housing supply and meet local needs.
 - c) Proposals should be supported by robust evidence and analysis and include an explanation of the outcomes it is expected to achieve, including evidence of estimated costs/benefits and local engagement.
 - d) Proposals should 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.

- 2. Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.**
 - a) As a guiding principle, new councils should aim for a population of 500,000 or more.
 - b) There may be certain scenarios in which this 500,000 figure does not make sense for an area, including on devolution, and this rationale should be set out in a proposal.
 - c) Efficiencies should be identified to help improve councils' finances and make sure that council taxpayers are getting the best possible value for their money.
 - d) Proposals should set out how an area will seek to manage transition costs, including planning for future service transformation opportunities from existing budgets, including from the flexible use of capital receipts that can support authorities in taking forward transformation and invest-to-save projects.
 - e) For areas covering councils that are in Best Value intervention and/or in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support, proposals must additionally demonstrate how reorganisation may contribute to putting local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing and what area-specific arrangements may be necessary to make new structures viable.
 - f) In general, as with previous restructures, there is no proposal for council debt to be addressed centrally or written off as part of reorganisation. For areas where there are exceptional circumstances where there has been failure linked to capital practices, proposals should reflect the extent to which the implications of this can be managed locally, including as part of efficiencies possible through reorganisation.

3. Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.

- a) Proposals should show how new structures will improve local government and service delivery, and should avoid unnecessary fragmentation of services.
- b) Opportunities to deliver public service reform should be identified, including where they will lead to better value for money.
- c) 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.

4. 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.

- a) It is for councils to decide how best to engage locally in a meaningful and constructive way and this engagement activity should be evidenced in your proposal.
- b) Proposals should consider issues of local identity and cultural and historic importance.
- c) Proposals should include evidence of local engagement, an explanation of the views that have been put forward and how concerns will be addressed.

5. New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.

- a) 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 or a decision has been taken by Government to work with the area to establish one, 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.
- b) Where no CA or CCA is already established or agreed then the proposal should set out how it will help unlock devolution.
- c) Proposals should ensure there are sensible population size ratios between local authorities and any strategic authority, with timelines that work for both priorities.

6. New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.

- a) Proposals will need to explain plans to make sure that communities are engaged.
- b) Where there are already arrangements in place it should be explained how these will enable strong community engagement.

Developing proposals for unitary local government

The following matters should be taken into account in formulating a proposal:

Boundary Changes

- a) Existing district areas should be considered the building blocks for your proposals, but where there is a strong justification more complex boundary changes will be considered.
- b) There will need to be a strong public services and financial sustainability related justification for any proposals that involve boundary changes, or that affect wider public services, such as fire and rescue authorities, due to the likely additional costs and complexities of implementation.

Engagement and consultation on reorganisation

- a) We expect local leaders to work collaboratively and proactively, including by sharing information, to develop robust and sustainable unitary proposals that are in the best interests of the whole area to which this invitation is issued, rather than developing competing proposals.
- b) For those areas where Commissioners have been appointed by the Secretary of State as part of the Best Value Intervention, their input will be important in the development of robust unitary proposals.
- c) We also expect local leaders to engage their Members of Parliament, and to ensure there is wide engagement with local partners and stakeholders, residents, workforce and their representatives, and businesses on a proposal.
- d) The engagement that is undertaken should both inform the development of robust proposals and should also build a shared understanding of the improvements you expect to deliver through reorganisation.
- e) The views of other public sector providers will be crucial to understanding the best way to structure local government in your area. This will include the relevant Mayor (if you already have one), Integrated Care Board, Police (Fire) and Crime Commissioner, Fire and Rescue Authority, local Higher Education and Further Education providers, National Park Authorities, and the voluntary and third sector.
- f) Once a proposal has been submitted it will be for the Government to decide on taking a proposal forward and to consult as required by statute. This will be a completely separate process to any consultation undertaken on mayoral devolution in an area, which will be undertaken in some areas early this year, in parallel with this invitation.

Interim plans

An interim plan should be provided to Government on or before **21 March 2025**. This should set out your progress on developing proposals in line with the criteria and guidance. The level of detail that is possible at this stage may vary from place to place but the expectation is that one interim plan is jointly submitted by all councils in the area. It may be the case that the interim plan describes more than one potential proposal for your area, if there is more than one option under consideration. The interim plan should:

- a) identify any barriers or challenges where further clarity or support would be helpful.
- b) identify the likely options for the size and boundaries of new councils that will offer the best structures for delivery of high-quality and sustainable public services across the area, along with indicative efficiency saving opportunities.
- c) include indicative costs and arrangements in relation to any options including planning for future service transformation opportunities.
- d) include early views as to the councillor numbers that will ensure both effective democratic representation for all parts of the area, and also effective governance and decision-making arrangements which will balance the unique needs of your cities, towns, rural and coastal areas, in line with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England guidance.
- e) include early views on how new structures will support devolution ambitions.
- f) include a summary of local engagement that has been undertaken and any views expressed, along with your further plans for wide local engagement to help shape your developing proposals.
- g) set out indicative costs of preparing proposals and standing up an implementation team as well as any arrangements proposed to coordinate potential capacity funding across the area.
- h) set out any voluntary arrangements that have been agreed to keep all councils involved in discussions as this work moves forward and to help balance the decisions needed now to maintain service delivery and ensure value for money for council taxpayers, with those key decisions that will affect the future success of any new councils in the area.

Warwickshire Position

Warwickshire

Population: 617,800

Local authorities: Warwickshire County Council
North Warwickshire Borough Council
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council
Rugby Borough Council
Stratford District Council
Warwick District Council

Town & Parish Councils 221. However, some areas do not have a Town or Parish Council (eg Rugby Town, Nuneaton & Bedworth area).

Local Government Reform

The latest guidance from Government and the criteria for unitary local government are clearly set out and have been issued to all councils in Warwickshire.

1. In 2020 Warwickshire County Council developed a Strategic Case for Change in response to White Paper on Devolution and Local Recovery. This concluded that a single unitary authority best met the requirements for local government reform as set by the Government of the time.
2. In 2020 all District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire produced a similar report, which concluded that two unitary authorities - North and South, best met the same requirements.
3. Neither option was progressed further at the time.
4. In 2020 Warwick District and Stratford District Councils pursued a merger to become a single South Warwickshire Council. This was withdrawn in May 2022, but a number of joint plans and strategies have continued e.g. the Local Plan.

Devolution deals

In the latest guidance the Government has stated that new unitary structures must support devolution arrangements, and this should be a consideration for the interim plan.

1. In 2024 the County Council was one of only 4 counties to be successful in securing the Level 2 Devolution Deal for Warwickshire which included devolution of the Adult Skills Funding (circa £7.6m); devolution of Homes England Compulsory Purchase Order powers and allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Funding to the County Council

2. Additionally, the Coventry and Warwick Gigapark, one of three sites within the West Midlands Investment Zone, was announced at the same time and is located across sites in Warwick District and Coventry City areas.
3. On 10th January 2025, Warwickshire County Council wrote to the Minister signalling the County Council's willingness to be considered for delivering local government reorganisation and devolution to the Government's ambitious timeframe and recognising that, as a consequence, the Government may decide that it is necessary to postpone the May 2025 County Council elections. Nine areas were selected to move forward with the Government's ambitions, with all featuring the establishment of new strategic authorities that would enable greater devolution in the respective areas and county elections being postponed in relevant areas. Warwickshire was not selected.

Strategic authority

Strategic Authorities would be overseen by an elected Mayor. The remit of Strategic Authorities would include transport and local infrastructure, skills and employment support, housing and strategic planning, economic development and regeneration, environment and climate change, health, wellbeing and public service reform, public safety. In the latest guidance the Government has reconfirmed the minimum population for a Strategic Authority at 1.5m population.

1. All six councils in Warwickshire are non constituent or observer members of the West Midlands Combined Authority
2. In 2024 the WMCA secured a Deeper Devolution deal for all constituent members which will result in a single settlement with Government covering economic growth, transport, skills, climate and infrastructure.
3. The Government in the English Devolution White Paper has confirmed that the WMCA has met the criteria for an Established Mayoral Strategic Authority.
4. As a non-consistent member Warwickshire County Council do not directly benefit from this although there is potential to participate in some of the elements and access funding.
5. In 2023 Warwickshire County Council explored the option of full constituent membership of the West Midlands Combined Authority – this was not pursued further at the time.