

County Council

Amendments and Final Recommendation

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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COUNCIL – 18 FEBRUARY 2025

LABOUR GROUP AMENDMENT
AGENDA ITEM 2: UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WARWICKSHIRE

Recommendation as printed

Additions shown in bold and underlined

Local Government reform is not solely about unitarising two-tier councils. Government has been clear in the White Paper that devolution of power to local communities will be through the establishment of new Strategic Authorities or widening the scope of those which exist.

It is crucial that future unitary government is not remote from local communities. The engagement of local communities in decision-making will be essential if devolved powers are to be exercised effectively.

The County of Warwickshire has a strong heritage, brand and identity which should be preserved and strengthened for future generations.

That Council **therefore**:

1. 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
2. **Opens discussions across the region with prospective Strategic Authority partners.**
3. **Seeks to establish clear guiding principles and rationale for proposals developed.**
4. **Seeks to involve local communities in local decision making in any proposals**
5. **Seeks to preserve the boundaries and the identity of the County in any proposals**
6. **Ensure the interim plans meet the requirements set out by the Minister of State for Local Government.**

Proposer: Councillor Sarah Feeney

Seconder: Councillor John Holland

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COUNCIL – 18 FEBRUARY 2025
LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP AMENDMENT
AGENDA ITEM 2: UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN
WARWICKSHIRE

Recommendation as printed

Additions shown in bold and underlined.

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.

Warwickshire County Council endorses working with Councils at all levels across Warwickshire to explore the options for appropriate service delivery models for unitary status and considering the views of residents,

Council requests that consideration is given to:

- 1. Protecting the level of services currently delivered to the community by District, Borough, Town, Parish Councils.**
- 2. The geography, population and economic and community footprint of Warwickshire.**
- 3. Warwickshire's relationships with its neighbours.**
- 4. The creation of town & parish councils where there are none.**
- 5. Views on which strategic authority the Council would be best to look at aligning with; and**
- 6. A high level cross party working group be established to support this work.**

Proposer: Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
Seconder: Councillor Sarah Boad

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COUNCIL – 18 FEBRUARY 2025

REVISED RECOMMENDATION

AGENDA ITEM 2: UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WARWICKSHIRE

The Labour Government, through the Devolution White Paper, has directed all two-tier Local Authority areas shall become Unitary Councils by 2028. Consultation will be undertaken by the Secretary of State through their department.

It is crucial that future Unitary Government is not remote from local communities and engagement with them is embedded within future structures.

The County of Warwickshire has a strong heritage and identity which should be preserved and strengthened for future generations.

The Council therefore:

1. Will develop a proposal to Government for unitary local government for Warwickshire which meets the guidance, criteria and time frames set out by Government.
2. Seeks to quickly establish clarity from Government regarding the model to be progressed to enable the best use of time and resource.
3. Commits to engage with Districts, Boroughs, Towns, Parishes and Communities in developing proposals, both existing and future emerging arrangements.
4. Recognises the importance of the boundary and the identity of the County of Warwickshire in any proposals and will work with regional partners.
5. Will continue to strive for the economic prosperity of the area even against adverse national headwinds.
6. Agrees to establish a cross-party working group to support this work.

Proposer: Councillor Izzi Seccombe

Seconder: Councillor Sarah Feeney

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