



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Alison McGovern MP

*Minister of State for Local Government and
Homelessness*

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Our reference: MC2025/33576

Cllr Simon Tagg
Leader
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Castle House
Barracks Road
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 1BL

15 December 2025

Dear Cllr Tagg and signatories,

Thank you for your letter of 25 November addressed to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, on behalf of Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Councillors, regarding local government reorganisation in the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area. I am responding as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

Thank you for taking time to set out your views following Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's Special Council meeting on 19 November. I thought it would be helpful to set out why the Government is pursuing local government reorganisation and why it will benefit residents.

This Government's ambition is to simplify local government, by ending the two-tier system and establishing new single-tier unitary councils. This is a once-in-a-generation reorganisation and our vision is clear: stronger local councils empowered across local services, equipped to drive economic growth, improve local public services, and empower their communities.

Strong local government will help grow the economy and drive up living standards - the Government's number one mission. With one council in charge in each area, we will see quicker decisions to grow our towns and cities and connect people to opportunity. Reorganisation will speed up house building, get vital infrastructure projects moving, and attract new investment - with more people able to buy their own homes and access high-quality local jobs.

It will also help reform local public services. Bringing services like housing, public health, and social care under one roof means one council can see the full picture and spot problems early - for example, supporting a family in need of housing and then supporting the children to stay in school. Ensuring public services are effective and responsive to their communities will help to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities and enable people to reach their full potential.

As you know, final proposals from the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent area were submitted on the 28 November. I anticipate the Government will consult in the new year on final proposals that meet the terms of the invitation letter of 5 February 2025 before deciding which, if any, to implement. To meet the terms of the invitation, the proposal must be for the whole of the area concerned and provide all the information requested. I encourage you all to respond to the consultation.

Decisions on the most appropriate option for each area will be judgements in the round, having regard to the criteria in the statutory guidance, the consultation responses received and all other relevant information. I am sure you will understand I am not able to give a view on specific unitary proposals at this stage, or to pre-empt future decisions under the statutory process for unitarisation.

Thank you again for writing on this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alison', with a stylized flourish at the end.

ALISON MCGOVERN MP

Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness