



Ministry of Housing,
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Cheryl Headon
Winchester City Council
By email: [REDACTED]

28 September 2026

Dear Cheryl,

Thank you for your recent letters on local government reorganisation across Hampshire. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I very much appreciate your time to date and that of colleagues across Hampshire in meeting with MHCLG to explore the challenges in bringing forward local plans alongside local government reform and for the suggested changes to regulations and guidance to support this process. We will consider the comments you made as part of developing arrangements to support the plan-making transition from two-tier areas to single unitary authorities. We know finalising this work is a priority and we hope to make further information available soon.

On 7 September the Secretary of State announced that she has withdrawn decisions on reorganisation in four areas, including Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton and that there will be a pause and review of the programme as a whole. The Government recognises the need to provide certainty as quickly as possible, and remains committed to reform and local government reorganisation.

The pausing and review of the local government reorganisation programme is not a reason to delay plan-making. Authorities continue to be required to prepare their plan for their current local planning authority area, in line with timings set out in regulations. As such we do not intend to change the commencement dates for the new system of plan making. Getting up-to-date, ambitious plans in place is vital in ensuring communities have the homes and infrastructure they need. The outcome of any future decisions on local

government reorganisation will benefit from having more developed local plans in place to build upon.

My colleagues in the planning directorate will continue to work with you and others across Hampshire to support plan making going forward.

Yours sincerely,



Joanna Key

Director General, Regeneration, Housing and Planning