

Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

My Ref: IC / TK 183

Date: 10 November 2025

Dear Prime Minister

Local Government Reorganisation in Staffordshire

We write jointly as Leaders of all political groups within Staffordshire County Council to state our united and unequivocal opposition to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Staffordshire. We urge your government to withdraw this requirement immediately. If you are unwilling to withdraw LGR for Staffordshire immediately, we ask that you pause the process and work with us to evaluate whether reorganisation is in the best interests of Staffordshire residents.

Let us be absolutely clear: Staffordshire did not ask for LGR, does not want LGR, and does not need LGR.

This is not about party politics. It is about protecting the best interests of the vibrant, historic, and proud communities and businesses we represent. While we may differ on other issues, on this matter we stand together united for Staffordshire.

Staffordshire is ambitious and forward-looking. We strongly support genuine devolution: transferring decision-making powers and sustainable funding from Westminster to local areas. The English Devolution Bill offered a positive opportunity for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent to unite under a Strategic Authority led by a mayor, unlocking funding, influence, and collaboration. Unfortunately, that vision has been sidelined in favour of forced structural reorganisation.

We recognise that LGR may be appropriate in some areas to enable devolution. However, imposing it wholesale on Staffordshire is unnecessary and risks becoming a costly political experiment. It will divert time, energy, and resources away from the real priorities and challenges our communities face now and in the years ahead. The proposed timescales are unrealistic and threaten critical services such as social care. Adding unnecessary pressure to already stretched services, services relied upon by our most vulnerable residents is unacceptable.

These concerns are not confined to the council chamber. Community engagement has revealed widespread opposition. Thousands of residents have voiced fears about inheriting Stoke-on-Trent City Council's financial challenges and losing local responsiveness under a larger authority. These are serious, legitimate concerns that must not be ignored.

Moreover, independent analysis and sector experience show that any theoretical savings from reorganisation are likely to be outweighed, or at best cancelled out, by substantial upfront costs. Costs that local authorities, and ultimately taxpayers, would bear. This is not a risk we should take.

Finally, this policy was not included in the Labour Party's 2024 General Election manifesto, the platform on which your government was elected. Introducing such a fundamental change without a clear democratic mandate undermines public confidence in both local and national governance.

For all these reasons, we call on you to withdraw the requirement for Local Government Reorganisation in Staffordshire immediately. Instead, let us work together to deliver ambitious, meaningful devolution, strengthening local democracy and delivering real benefits for our residents.

We stand ready to engage constructively on a positive agenda for Staffordshire: one that prioritises collaboration, efficiency, and genuine empowerment for local communities.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Ian Cooper
Leader of the County Council

On behalf of:

Cllr Patrick Allen, Uttoxeter Town
Cllr Helen Arnold, Newcastle Rural
Cllr Sean Bagguley, Stone Rural North
Cllr Thomas Baker, Cheslyn Hay Village, Featherstone & Shareshill
Cllr Su Beardmore, Churnet Valley
Cllr Gary Bentley, Cheadle & Checkley
Cllr Mike Broom, Biddulph North
Cllr Catherine Brown, Needwood Forest
Cllr Michael Carver, Burton Town
Cllr Daniel Cecil, Norton Canes, Heath Hayes and Wimblebury

Cllr Valerie Chapman, Codsall
Cllr Andrew Clissett, Burntwood North
Cllr Hayley Coles, The Heaths
Cllr Lynn Dean, May Bank & Wolstanton
Cllr Tracey Dougherty, Lichfield Rural East
Cllr Ann Edgeller, Stafford South
Cllr Sonny Edwards, Leek South
Cllr Bob Egginton, Biddulph South and Endon
Cllr Alex Farrell, Lichfield Rural South
Cllr Chris Gilbert, Stafford North
Cllr Colin Greateorex, Lichfield City South
Cllr Adam Griffiths, Newcastle South
Cllr Gary Hales, Uttoxeter Rural
Cllr Robin Hall, Burntwood South
Cllr Janet Higgins, Lichfield Rural West
Cllr James Hodges, Perton
Cllr Richard Holland, Lichfield Rural North
Cllr Jill Hood, Stone Urban
Cllr Craig Humphreyson, Penkridge
Cllr Alex Hunt, Chads Moor
Cllr Syed Hussain, Burton Trent
Cllr Paul Jones, Hednesford North
Cllr Charlotte Kelly, Leek Rural
Cllr Nick Lakin, Bradwell & Porthill
Cllr Chris Large, Brewood
Cllr Wayne Luca, Watling
Cllr Rhys Machin, Audley and Chesterton
Cllr Rhys Mandry, Hawks Green, Rawnsley & Cannock Wood
Cllr Barry Martin, Stretton
Cllr Peter Mason, Burton South
Cllr Warwick McKenzie, Caverswall
Cllr Gordon Munro, Wilnecote
Cllr Martin Murray, Cannock Town
Cllr Andrew Mynors, Stafford Trent Valley
Cllr Mark Nixon, Silverdale & Knutton
Cllr Antonia Orlandi-Fantini, Stafford South West
Cllr Neil Parton, Brereton & Ravenhill
Cllr Jon Pendleton, Etching Hill & the Heath
Cllr Jeremy Pert, Eccleshall & Gnosall
Cllr Martin Rogerson, Talke & Red Street
Cllr Jack Rose, Stafford West & Rural
Cllr Anthony Screen, Kidsgrove
Cllr Marie Shortland, Wombourne
Cllr Simon Tagg, Westlands, Thistleberry & Keele
Cllr Nicholas Thompson, The Cotes / Two Rivers
Cllr Matthew Wallens, Lichfield City North
Cllr Philip White, Dove
Cllr Conor Wileman, Burton Tower
Cllr Paul Williams, Stafford Central
Cllr Victoria Wilson, Kinver
Cllr Michelle Woods, Great Wyrley & Essington