

Dear Cllr Brookes-Hocking,

Thank you for your email regarding the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) proposal for the Plymouth Growth Area. Please accept my sincere apologies for the delay in responding. I am writing to address the concerns raised and provide clarity on our engagement approach.

Plymouth City Council has a good understanding of Parish and Town Councils. Our experience is not theoretical but practical and extensive, the best example of which was during the development of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan, where we worked closely with the Towns and Parishes surrounding Plymouth.

Our experience and respect for the work of Town and Parish Councils is central to the development of our interim plan, indeed a core principle in our approach has been that **“Any boundary change will retain the character and identity of the existing neighbourhoods in Plymouth and the parishes of any extended area”**. Should Government consider our approach to be the right one, we have committed to work with parish councils to co-author elements of the detailed proposals due to be submitted to government in November 2025.

We want to explicitly clarify that the impression of no choice was not conveyed by us but interpreted when we advised that there would be no opportunity for Parish Councils to veto the proposal we would put forward as our interim plan. We were clear that the government would be making final decisions on proposals and that the government will be leading a formal consultation process that will actively seek views from all stakeholders, including parish councils, residents, and other interested parties. This was clearly and unambiguously set out when we invited parish councils to meet with us for a face-to-face discussion at the Watermark in Ivybridge on the 12 March 2025, I have attached the slides used at that session for your information.

Regarding the potential for parishing unparished areas, we acknowledge and support the government's continued support for the important role of Town and Parish Councils. While current resident feedback in Plymouth has not indicated a strong requirement for additional Parish and Town Councils in the area, we remain receptive to future discussions. Should our residents wish to create parish councils across Plymouth we would welcome the expertise and insights that DALC could bring to such considerations.

We have committed to ensuring that all thirteen parish councils receive clear, consistent, and timely information throughout this process. Our primary goal is to work collaboratively, with the utmost respect for the crucial role parish and town councils play in representing their communities. We would be pleased to arrange a meeting to discuss the proposal in more detail and address any specific concerns or questions you may have.

Please feel free to contact our office to schedule a convenient time. LGR@plymouth.gov.uk

Kind regards

Tudor

Cllr Tudor Evans OBE

Leader of Plymouth City Council Council House, Armada Way, Plymouth, PL1 2AA