

## Annual Parishes Liaison Event 2018

County Hall, Monday 9th July 2018

80 delegates, representing more than 30 Parish & Town Councils attended the event

The agenda included:

- Welcome addresses by Louise Richardson, County Council Cabinet Member and Guy Jackson, Chair of LRALC
- LRALC update by Jake Atkinson, LRALC Chief Executive  
(Jake's slides are available on [www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk))
- Ivan Ould, County Council Cabinet Member explained the County Council's proposal for a Unitary Structure of Local Government in Leicestershire and the expected timeline for developing more detailed proposals. This was followed by a short Q&A session. The text of his presentation is attached for information.
- Nigel Grundy, Chairman of Enderby Parish Council, gave a presentation about a joint initiative for holding Surgeries with the Police and LCCs Local Area Co-ordinator for Enderby. For more information about this initiative, please contact Enderby Parish Council directly.
- Workshop session to enable an initial discussion about the potential implications, opportunities and risks for Parish & Town Councils of working within a unitary council context. A summary of the feedback from these workshops is attached for information.

**For further information about this event, please contact:**

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**Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils**

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## **Presentation by Ivan Ould, County Council Cabinet Member at Annual Parishes Liaison Event, 9 July 2018**

You will no doubt be aware that County Council Leader Nick Rushton has started a conversation about creating a unitary authority.

This would be a new council to replace the county council and the seven district councils. It is not about a county council takeover.

The intention is to start a debate about how best to deliver local government services in Leicestershire.

It's important we consider sensible options to get a better deal for our tax payers and those who rely on public services.

We must accept that the current system for local government system is broken. It's bureaucratic, old fashioned, confusing, inefficient and takes money away from front-line services.

The Leader's vision for one, 21st century council would reduce duplication of services, save at least £30m each year and improve services.

The Leader has made it clear that parish and town councils have a key role to play in ensuring that the establishment of a unitary council leads to a strengthened role and voice for local communities.

In Leicestershire we have thriving parish and town councils and much can be achieved together. We know that many parishes want to take on more, and do more for their communities.

We also know that there are places which would need further support. For example creating town councils in places like Loughborough and Coalville would also enable us to build stronger links with communities - giving residents a greater say in local services.

Other unitary councils are already experiencing these benefits. Places like Cornwall for example – where deep roots into the community and a clear link to the unitary council is really making a difference.

Last Friday, the council's cabinet discussed and approved a report about next steps and timings. Initial proposals will now be drawn up over the summer and early thoughts sought from residents, parishes, district councils, businesses, MPs, universities and other people this autumn.

A full public consultation on more detailed proposals is planned for early next year.

It's too early to give you any more detail but I wanted to take this opportunity to talk to you in person.

I hope that you will be part of this conversation later this year. And we look forward to hearing your initial thoughts and ideas about what a unitary council could mean for parish and town councils at the workshops later this evening.

## Annual Parish Council Liaison Event 2018 - Note of workshops discussion

### Unitary Proposals – Feedback about Opportunities & Risks for Parish & Town Councils

Mr. Ould delivered a plenary address about the unitary proposal and the expected timeline for developing more detailed proposals. This was followed by a short Q&A session. There was further discussion in workshops facilitated by the Communities Team.

The discussion was generally constructive, with most participants interested to see more detailed proposals and expecting further opportunities to engage with LCC in the development of the proposals.

Opportunities	Concerns / risks
<p>More effective devolution of services to Parish &amp; Town Councils</p> <p>Could lead to better partnership arrangements between parish councils and between parish councils and unitary council</p>	<p>Capacity of Parish Councils / Councillors</p> <p>Parish Meetings &amp; small councils – how would they be able to benefit?</p> <p>Having to deal with remote / centralised units could create more distance &amp; make it less easy to get things done for a parish council</p>
<p>Potentially bigger role for parish &amp; town councils in decision making at locality level</p>	<p>Could lead to remote decision making – without understanding of local impact &amp; priorities</p> <p>Spatial planning – could lead to centralised development control without local knowledge &amp; intelligence</p> <p>Local unitary councillors may not have much say on a large council</p> <p>Locality Committees could be talking shops only – no real say.</p>
<p>Single point(s) of contact for each parish council within the unitary authority</p> <p>Potential to improve communication links between parish councils and local authority</p>	<p>Remoteness – concern there would be phone &amp; web-based contact with unitary council services only</p> <p>Could lead to loss of local connection &amp; intelligence</p>
<p>Cost savings due to efficiencies and joined-up service delivery could lead to improved council services</p>	<p>Efficiency at cost of quality – ending up with poor service for everyone</p> <p>If parish councils have to increase precepts to deal with increased demands on them, this could undo unitary councils savings</p>
<p>Could re-invigorate the role of parish councils &amp; make being a parish councillor more interesting / attractive and encourage people to take up this role</p>	<p>Increased pressure on parish councillors may make it (even) more difficult to get volunteers to take the role – especially if parish councils get politicised (like some larger councils)</p>

**Parish & Town Councils represented at the 2018 Annual Parish Liaison Event**

Arnesby Parish Council	Huncote Parish Council
Ashby de la Zouch Town Council	Hungarton Parish Council
Birstall Parish Council	Kegworth Parish Council
Blaby Parish Council	Kibworth Harcourt Parish Council
Broughton & Dalby Parish Council	Kilby Parish Council
Cosby Parish Council	Markfield Parish Council
Cossington Parish Council	Narborough Parish Council
Croft Parish Council	Newbold Verdon Parish Council
Croxton Kerrial & Branston Parish Council	Ravenstone with Snibston Parish Council
Desford Parish Council	Rothley Parish Council
Ellistown & Battleflat Parish Council	Thorpe Langton Parish Meeting
Enderby Parish Council	Thurmaston Parish Council
Essendine Parish Council (Rutland)	Tur Langton Parish Council
Glenfield Parish Council	Walton on the Wolds Parish Council
Horninghold Parish Meeting	Whetstone Parish Council
Houghton on the Hill Parish Council	Wistow and Newton Parish Meeting
Hugglescote & Donington le Heath Parish Council	Witherley Parish Council