

SRR-15 Local Government Re-organisation affecting Pendle BC and all Lancashire local authorities

Risk Owner	Lawrence Conway – Interim Chief Executive
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The government has invited all local authorities (LA's) within Lancashire to make submissions by 28th November 2025, on re-organising 2 tier local government into a single tier of government. This would mean the eventual abolition of all existing Councils to be replaced by Unitary Councils, a number yet to be defined or considered by Government. It is likely the decision will be made by the relevant Secretary of State (SoS) in the Summer of 2026, with implementation by April 2028.

There will be a future impact on residents; however, the full extent of this won't be known until the number of Unitary Councils for Lancashire is decided.

Original Risk Score		Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score
20		15	15
Impact Scores	4 - Major	3 - Moderate	3 - Moderate
Likelihood Scores	5 - Almost Certain	5 - Almost Certain	5 - Almost Certain

Causes	Consequences	Internal Controls & Mitigations
Lancashire Councils are currently assembling a number of possible unitary models that may be anywhere between 2 and 5. Pendle BC has committed via Council decision that it favours a 4/5 model, with current work focussing on a 5 unitary model, which members feel will provide the most beneficial outcome for residents. The final submission will be a decision of the Executive at a date yet to be fixed and agreed. The costs of the whole project up until 2028 are yet to be established and may have a significant impact on the Councils MTFP.	There are potentially significant cost implications, yet unknown, in the development of proposals and then delivery of the model approved by Government. Links to SRR-01 (Financial Sustainability). There are also implications on staff time and costs to the council. Loss of staff – for example, due to staff being required to take on additional roles / workload as part of this process on top of their existing roles could make staff feel overburdened, increase stress, etc. Also, staff could feel vulnerable and seek alternative employment elsewhere.	Pendle BC has commissioned consultants to analyse and prepare a submission/business case within the required timescales. An LGR Member Working Group has been established and will meet on a regular basis. Officers are involved in various Lancashire wide LGR groups – Finance, Governance, HR, Data, IT. An Officer Working Group meets once per week and informs the Leader of progress on a regular basis of the themed groups created to take the proposals forward. A working group has also been established with Burnley BC that also meets on a weekly basis, as they are a key partner in the 5 unitary model work. By opting for the 5 model the Council is aiming to deliver the best outcome for residents.

		Regular staff communications / briefings to keep staff informed, engaged and motivated. The business case will be reviewed by O&S then Council, before being approved by the Executive in November 2025 and submitted by the deadline 28th November 2025.
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Linked Actions					
SRR-15.01 Regular Staff Briefings (monthly)		30%	Interim Chief Executive	01-Apr-2028	Why is the action red, amber or green? This is an ongoing commitment to keep staff regularly updated throughout the LGR process. What are you doing to maintain or improve the situation? Briefings commenced in June 2025 and continue.
SRR-15.02 PBC input into all themed groups		100%		31-Aug-2025	Why is the action red, amber or green? This action has been completed with PBC represented on each of the themed groups. What are you doing to maintain or improve the situation? Attendance at the regular meetings of these groups is prioritised to ensure PBC is appropriately represented.
SRR-15.03 All Member Briefing		0%	Interim Chief Executive	25-Sep-2025	
SRR-15.04 1st draft business case		50%	Internal LGA Group	26-Sep-2025	
SRR-15.05 Full draft business case		50%	Pendle / Burnley LGA Group	17-Oct-2025	
SRR-15.06 Pendle Council Public Council Consultation undertaken		0%	Chief Executive	31-Oct-2025	
SRR-15.07 Draft submission presented to Overview & Scrutiny		0%	Chief Executive	10-Nov-2025	
SRR-15.08 Draft submission presented to Full Council		0%	Chief Executive	11-Nov-2025	

SRR-15.09 Draft submission presented to Executive		0%	Chief Executive	20-Nov-2025	
SRR-15.10 Final submission sent to Government		0%	Chief Executive	28-Nov-2025	

Latest Note

Officers are working with the appointed consultants and Burnley Council to ensure timetable for draft and final business cases is met. The financial impact is not know, but the plan will be formulated over the next few months and at that time the Council will have to consider setting aside resources to finance the transition.