

HEAD OFFICE

9-10 EASTWAY BUSINESS VILLAGE
OLIVERS PLACE, FULWOOD
PRESTON PR2 9WT

T+44 (0)1772 653 000

F+44 (0)1772 655 544

REGISTERED IN ENGLAND NO. 145454
VAT NUMBER: 154 2675 62



INFO@LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK
WWW.LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK

26th September 2025

The Right Honourable Steven Reed OBE
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State

Subject: Response of the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to Local Government Re-organisation.

I am writing on behalf of the members of the North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce to express their collective response to the ongoing discussions regarding local government reorganisation in Lancashire.

We acknowledge that these decisions are ultimately political; however, we believe it is crucial to highlight the perspectives and preferences of the local business community, which plays a vital role in the economic vitality of the county.

Through significant consultation with our members, their conclusions strongly favour a three-unitary authority approach for Lancashire. Specifically, they support the following grouping:

- Preston, Chorley, West Lancashire, and South Ribble
- Blackpool, Fylde, Wyre, Lancaster
- East Lancashire

This structure aligns with natural economic footprints within the county and reflects the interconnectedness of these areas in terms of commerce, infrastructure, travel to work and community ties.

Furthermore, our members consider that establishing three unitary authorities would help reach the critical mass requested by the government, enabling more efficient governance, better resource allocation, and stronger economic development strategies. The above

HEAD OFFICE

9-10 EASTWAY BUSINESS VILLAGE
OLIVERS PLACE, FULWOOD
PRESTON PR2 9WT

T+44 (0)1772 653 000

F+44 (0)1772 655 544

REGISTERED IN ENGLAND NO. 145454
VAT NUMBER: 154 2675 62



INFO@LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK
WWW.LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK

structure will strengthen existing local identities and allows for coherent regional planning. It avoids the serious pitfalls of the two-unitary model, where one authority would be disproportionately large and the four-unitary model, where population sizes fall outside guidelines with transitional arrangements being highly disruptive. We also understand a model of five unitaries currently favoured by Burnley and Pendle is not under any circumstance a viable model for consideration.

We of course recognise that all options present challenges and trade-offs, including transition costs and service reconfiguration. However, a three unitary structure provides the most practical platform for businesses and communities to thrive.

Lancashire requires clarity, accountability and an efficient local government structure which strengthens our competitiveness. The Chamber considers a three-unitary model will deliver stronger local identity, provide more coherent strategic decision-making and a balance between efficiency savings and quality service.

The many options currently under discussion by local authorities (outside the three unitary model) do not adequately address concerns raised by the business community. Inclusion of the business community's position is vital to ensure that any restructuring benefits the entire community, promotes economic resilience, and supports sustainable growth.

We trust that the government will take into account these perspectives as part of the ongoing review process. We are keen to continue engaging with policymakers to ensure that Lancashire's local government structure best serves its economic future.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours faithfully

Babs Murphy
Chief Executive

cc.

NORTH & WESTERN LANCASHIRE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HEAD OFFICE

9-10 EASTWAY BUSINESS VILLAGE
OLIVERS PLACE, FULWOOD
PRESTON PR2 9WT

T+44 (0)1772 653 000

F+44 (0)1772 655 544

REGISTERED IN ENGLAND NO. 145454
VAT NUMBER: 154 2675 62



INFO@LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK
WWW.LANCSCHAMBER.CO.UK

The Right Honourable Alison McGovan MP, Minister of State at the Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local Government

Leaders of:

Lancashire County Council

Preston City Council

Blackpool Unitary Authority

Fylde Borough Council

Wyre Council

South Ribble Borough Council

Chorley Council

West Lancashire Borough Council

Lancaster City Council

Blackburn with Darwen Unitary Authority

Burnley Council

Pendle Borough Council

Rossendale Borough Council

Hyndburn Borough Council

Ribble Valley Borough Council

Members of Parliament for:

Blackpool South

Blackpool North & Fleetwood

Chorley

Fylde

Lancaster & Wyre

Preston

Ribble Valley

South Ribble

West Lancs

Morecambe & Lunesdale

Burnley

Hyndburn

Pendle & Clitheroe

Rossendale and Darwen

Blackburn

Preston Partnership

Members of North & Western Lancashire Chamber of Commerce