



An update from Bucks District Councils

What's going on...

You may or may not be aware, given that we all lead busy lives, that major changes are planned for the future of councils in Bucks. There are two proposals on the table – one from the district councils in Bucks and one from the county council. We'll explain more about them in a bit.

Why should I care?

It will affect:

- your council services
- the way decisions are made about your community
- how much say you'll have in local decisions
- future opportunities for your local area
- your value for money as a taxpayer



Can I make a difference?

Absolutely. The government, through the Secretary of State, wants to hear from everyone who's interested by 25 May, before he makes a final decision.

Your view counts and you can email him at sajid.javid@communities.gsi.gov.uk. Please also copy in your MP (details are at the end of this email).



Why are things changing? What is meant by unitary?

The current council system is confusing with councils running different services. Having your services in one place (unitary system) would improve services and save millions of pounds of taxpayers' money. Unitary councils are basically 'all-purpose' authorities.

District council services

- Bin collections
- Planning
- Parks, open spaces and leisure
- Housing and homelessness support
- and many more!

Bucks County council services

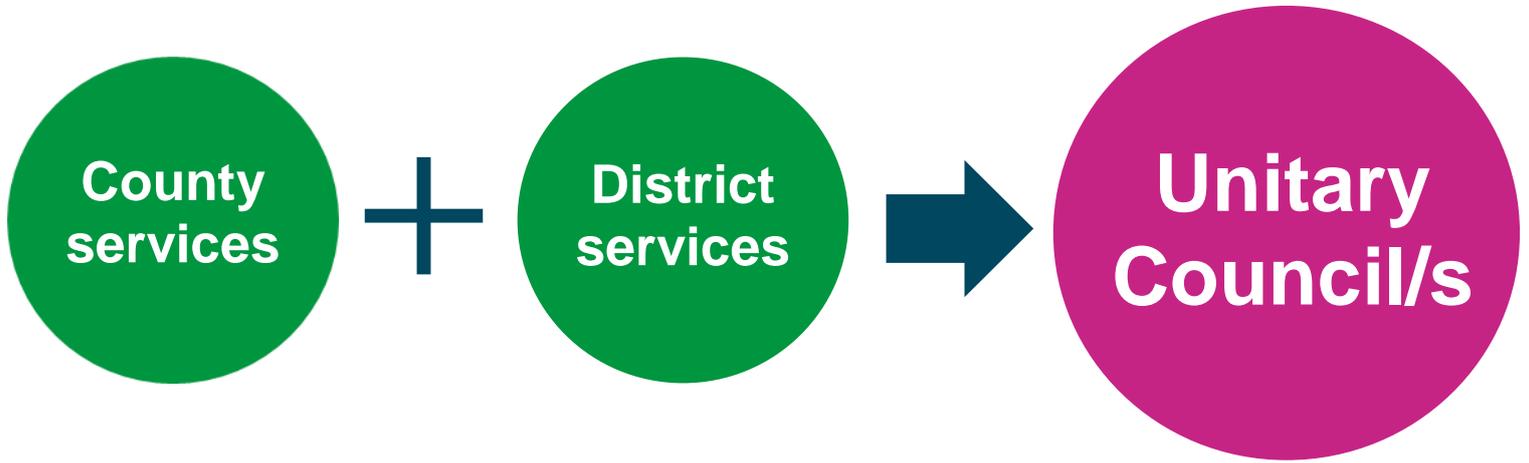
- Children's services
- Adult social care
- Education
- Road maintenance
- and many more!



WHY ARE THINGS CHANGING? WHAT IS MEANT BY UNITARY?

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What changes are being proposed?

Remember there is more than one option!

Bucks County Council wants one new unitary council (excluding Milton Keynes which is already a unitary authority on its own). This would be a huge 'super' council for the whole of Buckinghamshire, replacing the current county council and four district councils.

You may be under the impression this is the only option and it's already been decided – but this is not the case. Although the Secretary of State is currently showing more support for one huge Bucks unitary, he realises that not everyone is supporting it locally. In fact, there is another way which would deliver a better deal for all communities in Bucks...

So what is the 'other option' and why's it better for me?



Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Councils have put forward a proposal for two new unitary councils for Bucks (excluding Milton Keynes) - one in the north and the other in the south of the county.

This plan recognises that these two areas have completely different communities, economies, opportunities and needs.

For you, your family and friends, it would mean a more local unitary council; one in north Bucks, exclusively serving Aylesbury Vale residents, and one in south Bucks, exclusively serving Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe residents. If you've got time, please [read more here](#). If not, take a look at some of the following key points.

BIGGER ISN'T BETTER

ONE big unitary council excluding Milton Keynes

New single Unitary Council

Milton Keynes Unitary

Let's keep it LOCAL with two new councils for Bucks

TWO new unitary councils excluding Milton Keynes

New Northern Unitary Council

New Southern Unitary Council

Milton Keynes Unitary Council

MODERNISING BUCKS

Find out more at www.modernisingbucks.org



The benefits of two new unitary councils in a nutshell:

More local. Better opportunities. More effective. Best value.

More local

- Bucks is too big for one huge super council – it's around 70 miles long! Our proposal of two, more local unitary councils would enable more joined-up, flexible, sustainable services, tailored to your needs - whether you're a resident, business owner or part of a bigger community group.
- It would mean more local decision making, while ensuring money raised in the local area is spent locally. While our proposal makes savings by reducing the number of councillors, a single countywide unitary would scale this back much further, meaning important decisions affecting you could be made by people who know little about your community.

Better opportunities

- It's about focusing on the right economy to grow - north and south Bucks have very different opportunities and challenges. The north looks more to Milton Keynes and Oxford while the south is more connected to London. Communities, employment and housing are totally different.
- Two new unitary councils would mean better investment, jobs and the right level of growth for both the north and south of Bucks.

More effective

- District councils have a strong track record in transforming services, for example, by sharing services and embracing the digital world, all while making significant savings – a potentially invaluable foundation for the future.
- The right size – we know smaller unitary councils, such as Milton Keynes, can thrive. We also know key services such as children's services, adult social care and road maintenance are failing on a county-wide scale. Two new unitary councils would mean staying local, while working together on common ground.

Best value

- Two new unitary councils would make significant sustainable savings while delivering better services, which are easier to access. A single unitary may seem the cheapest option but with short-term savings, cheapest is not always best for the future.

Have your say before it's too late – it's your future!



This is about all communities in Bucks, it's about your future and we, along with the government, want you to have your say by 25 May. A final decision will be made a few weeks later.

You can email the Secretary of State:

sajid.javid@communities.gsi.gov.uk

You can also write to him at:

The Rt. Hon. Sajid Javid MP,
Secretary of State for Housing,
Communities and Local Government
Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street,
London SW1P 4DF

Please also copy your views to your local MP:

John Bercow MP (Buckingham): john.bercow.mp@parliament.uk

The Rt. Hon. David Lidington MP (Aylesbury): david.lidington.mp@parliament.uk

The Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve QC MP (Beaconsfield): dominic.grieve.mp@parliament.uk

The Rt. Hon. Dame Cheryl Gillan MP (Chesham and Amersham): cheryl.gillan.mp@parliament.uk

Steve Baker MP (Wycombe): steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk

You can find much more information about the proposal for two new councils [here](#).

You can also follow updates on our social media channels:



For details about the proposal for one unitary council that covers the whole of Bucks, excluding Milton Keynes, visit [Future Bucks](#).