

## STATEMENT FROM LEADER OF OCC

**Councillor Tim Bearder, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, said:** “I am deeply disappointed in the government’s decision to split Oxfordshire up into three unitary councils – it does not deliver on its vision to simplify and improve local government services.

“The three-council model does not meet the government’s criteria for scale, efficiency and financial resilience. It offers the lowest cost savings of all the proposals.

“We will also need three directors of adult social care, three for children’s social care for example, which increases costs and risks disruption to these high-performing critical services.

“We all have a responsibility to our residents to achieve the best outcomes we can for them, maintaining continuous service delivery as we transition and in the creation of any new councils.

“To do this, we will work together with our colleagues, partners and communities to keep championing Oxfordshire, collaborate effectively to do all we can to build the best possible future for our people and places.

“We will find a way forward to provide the stable foundation our communities and economy need to thrive.”

Each of the proposals submitted included fully costed options for the government to consider.

The government ran a statutory consultation in February 2026 on the options with local stakeholders, residents and businesses invited to have their say. The results of the consultation have been published today on the government’s website.

Over the next two years, the existing councils will continue working together to prepare for the new arrangements, keeping people informed as plans develop ahead of April 2028.

The full details of the three-unitary proposal can be found on [3councils.org](https://3councils.org)