

# Equality Impact Analysis

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to:

- (i) help decision makers fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and
- (ii) for you to evidence the positive and adverse impacts of the proposed change on people with protected characteristics and ways to mitigate or eliminate any adverse impacts.

## Using this form

This form must be updated and reviewed as your evidence evolves on proposals for a:

- project
- service change
- policy
- commissioning of a service
- decommissioning of a service

You must take into account any:

- consultation feedback
- significant changes to the proposals
- data to support impacts of the proposed changes

The key findings of the most up to date version of the Equality Impact Analysis must be explained in the report to the decision maker. The Equality Impact Analysis must be attached to the decision-making report.

**\*\*Please make sure you read the information below so that you understand what is required under the Equality Act 2010\*\***

## Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 applies to both our workforce and our customers. Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers are under duty, to have due (that is proportionate) regard to the need to protect and promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics.

## Protected characteristics

The protected characteristics under the Act are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

## **Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010**

Section 149 requires a public authority to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share those characteristics
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The purpose of Section 149 is to get decision makers to consider the impact their decisions may or will have on those with protected characteristics. By evidencing the impacts on people with protected characteristics decision makers should be able to demonstrate 'due regard'.

## **Decision makers duty under the Act**

Having had careful regard to the Equality Impact Analysis, and also the consultation responses, decision makers are under a duty to have due regard to the need to protect and promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics (see above) and to:

- (i) consider and analyse how the decision is likely to affect those with protected characteristics, in practical terms.
- (ii) remove any unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and other prohibited conduct.
- (iii) consider whether practical steps should be taken to mitigate or avoid any adverse consequences that the decision is likely to have, for persons with protected characteristics and, indeed, to consider whether the decision should not be taken at all, in the interests of persons with protected characteristics.
- (iv) consider whether steps should be taken to advance equality, foster good relations and generally promote the interests of persons with protected characteristics, either by varying the recommended decision or by taking some other decision.

## **Conducting an impact analysis**

The Equality Impact Analysis is a process to identify the impact or likely impact a project, proposed service change, commissioning, decommissioning or policy will have on people with protected characteristics listed above. It should be considered at the beginning of the decision-making process.

## **The Lead Officer responsibility**

This is the person writing the report for the decision maker. It is the responsibility of the Lead Officer to make sure that the Equality Impact Analysis is robust and proportionate to the decision being taken.

## **Summary of findings**

You must provide a clear and concise summary of the key findings of this Equality Impact Analysis in the decision-making report and attach this Equality Impact Analysis to the report.

# Impact

**An impact is an intentional or unintentional lasting consequence or significant change to people's lives brought about by an action or series of actions.**

## How much detail to include?

The Equality Impact Analysis should be proportionate to the impact of proposed change. In deciding this ask simple questions:

- who might be affected by this decision?
- which protected characteristics might be affected?
- how might they be affected?

These questions will help you consider the extent to which you already have evidence, information and data. It will show where there are gaps that you will need to explore. Ensure the source and date of any existing data is referenced.

You must consider both obvious and any less obvious impacts. Engaging with people with the protected characteristics will help you to identify less obvious impacts as these groups share their perspectives with you.

A given proposal may have a positive impact on one or more protected characteristics and have an adverse impact on others. You must capture these differences in this form to help decision makers to decide where the balance of advantage or disadvantage lies. If an adverse impact is unavoidable, then it must be clearly justified and recorded as such. An explanation must be stated as to why no steps can be taken to avoid the impact. Consequences must be included.

## Proposals for more than one option

If more than one option is being proposed, you must ensure that the Equality Impact Analysis covers all options. Depending on the circumstances, it may be more appropriate to complete an Equality Impact Analysis for each option.

**The information you provide in this form must be sufficient to allow the decision maker to fulfil their role as above. You must include the latest version of the Equality Impact Analysis with the report to the decision maker. Please be aware that the information in this form must be able to stand up to legal challenge.**

## Background information

Details	Response
<b>Title of the policy, project or service being considered</b>	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
<b>Service area</b>	Corporate Policy, Transformation
<b>Person or people completing the analysis</b>	Daniel Larkin, Jessica Parker
<b>Lead officer</b>	Debbie Barnes
<b>Who is the decision maker?</b>	Lincolnshire County Council
<b>How was the Equality Impact Analysis undertaken?</b>	Initial draft in June/July 2025 and updated at various stages
<b>Date of meeting when decision will be made</b>	21 November 2025
<b>Is this a proposed change to an existing policy, service, project or is it new?</b>	New
<b>Version control</b>	v.1.0
<b>Is it LCC directly delivered, commissioned, recommissioned, or decommissioned?</b>	Directly Delivered
<b>Describe the proposed change</b>	Local Government Reorganisation across Greater Lincolnshire will see the district/borough councils merged into larger authorities where all services provided across local government will then be provided by a single authority.

# Equality Impact Assessment Context

In December 2024, the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon wrote to all councils in remaining two-tier council areas and neighbouring small unitaries to set out plans for a Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Since then, in March 2025, local authorities from across Greater Lincolnshire submitted their interim plans which included proposals for various options of what Local Government Reorganisation could look like in Greater Lincolnshire. The government see unitarisation as an effective way to maximise value for money in local areas and also a way in which the system can be simplified for residents.

The governments ambition is to merge areas where there are currently two tiers of local government (a district/city/borough council, and a county council) into one singular authority which is responsible for all functions of local government. The government has asked for detailed proposals from local authorities as to the potential options within their area. They have indicated a notional population of 500,000 for each individual authority unless a larger population is sensible for the area.

Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) have produced a business case proposal to put forward to government in time for the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 deadline. LCC's business case can only contain one proposed option for LGR within Greater Lincolnshire. This will be an in-depth analysis, focused on the financial implications, impact on services, and the wider benefits that can be realised.

Each local authority within Greater Lincolnshire can also submit one individual proposal. The government will then decide which option to pursue, and a subsequent public consultation will follow, undertaken by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government. Lincolnshire County Council has engaged with residents and other stakeholders in the coming months.

Lincolnshire County Council will be submitting a business case which puts forward one single unitary authority for the entirety of the Lincolnshire county area. This will enable a unified approach to services across the area. Efficiencies will be created through the pooling of funding and services. Crucially, services that the county and the districts provide will not be broken up, they will be lifted to the one new authority. Disaggregation is where services currently serving an area would have to be split up and restructured to serve 2 or more areas. We view this as a risk of splitting up high-performing services that will have to adapt quickly to major transformational change. Our business case proposes that North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council will continue to operate as they currently do, as separate unitary authorities.

This Equality Impact Analysis seeks to identify any potential positive/adverse effects upon individuals within Greater Lincolnshire as a result of our proposal for Local Government Reorganisation. Where adverse impacts are identified, the EIA will also show due consideration to this and seek to alleviate and show due regard to this in the overall decision-making process.

Public engagement events were organised by Lincolnshire County Council to give residents the opportunity to find out more about LGR and ask questions associated with our proposal. There was also an option to respond to a public engagement survey on the topic where any thoughts or concerns could be voiced. This survey was available to respond to for 10 weeks. In addition to the public survey a designated survey was also available for staff. Some questions in the two surveys were aligned whilst others were more bespoke to the audience.

After this period of engagement, Lincolnshire County Council worked with Alma Economics to develop the results of the survey and to analyse the trends and patterns. The full report analysis can be seen as a supporting document of what has been through the council's decision-making process, and this is available through Lincolnshire County Councils website. Some of these results can also be seen throughout this assessment to help depict any possible positive/adverse impacts that arose solely through the survey.

Following the internal decision-making process the government will then undertake a formal consultation on the plans and this EIA will be reviewed and updated to reflect any additional impacts/concerns raised by the residents within this period of consultation.

## **Understanding those with an interest in the decision**

The EIA shows due consideration to those who have an interest in LGR which covers a wide range of demographics. This emphasises the importance of making the entire process accessible and understandable for all within the region, and where negative implications have been identified, it seeks to provide mitigations to limit any possible negative effects.

The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government will undertake a formal public consultation on the proposals that are being pursued for LGR. This will provide all residents and organisation of Lincolnshire, the opportunity to express their views on what is being put forward.

## Supporting Evidence

Lincolnshire County Council has ensured that public engagement is at the forefront of the approach to LGR. It is crucial to consider the views of those whom this policy will directly impact.

There were a number of ways in which individuals and stakeholder organisations could give their views to ensure the initial engagement activity reached the widest possible audience:

- Online survey
- Paper copy survey
- A written letter, sent via the Freepost address
- By email
- By the Let's Talk online platform
- Alternative formats, such as easy read and large print were proactively shared
- Attend a variety of public and community events, both in person and virtual
- Telephone survey
- Paper copy surveys were made available at various locations such as libraries and children's centres across the area. The paper survey was available with a freepost return address was available in:
  - standard text
  - large print
  - easy read (simplified, pictorial version)

Other data has also informed this document through internal analysis, to show how a particular option for LGR could impact positively and adversely on the services that are provided by both the county council, the unitary authorities and the district councils.

Full details of the progress on LGR can be found on the Lincolnshire County Council website.

## Greater Lincolnshire Geography, Statistics and Challenges Summary

Greater Lincolnshire (GL) is the area that includes Lincolnshire County Council, the 7 district councils within the Lincolnshire boundaries, and the two unitary authorities which are North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. These 10 local authorities make up the region of Greater Lincolnshire.

GL is a large geographical area combining urban, rural and coastal areas. GL has coastal and low-lying regions and our diverse geography is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with high risks from flooding impacting on homes, communities and limiting coastal tourism in the warmer seasons. GL's population has grown by almost 55,000 people in the 10 years to 2021.

The Lincoln City area grew the most (11%) increasing by over 10,000 since the 2011 Census. North East Lincolnshire was the only area with a decreased population, dropping over 2,000 (-2%). 16% of the population (175,000) (as of the 2021 census) are aged under 15 years. There are more people in this age group compared with 2011. However, as a proportion of the overall population, the size of the group has decreased (170,000, 16% in 2011).

61% of the GL population in 2021 (669,000) were aged 15 to 64 years. There are more people in this age group compared with 2011 (when 664,000 were aged 15 to 64 years), but as a proportion of the overall population there has been a decrease in the size of this group (64% in 2011). The ageing population trend has continued, with more people than ever before in the older age groups. 23%, (249,000) of the population in 2021 were aged 65 years and over, up from 20% (206,000) in 2011.

The size of the population aged 90 years and over (11,100 or 1.0% of the population) has increased since 2011, when 8,800 or 1% were aged 90 and over.

GL's ageing population has increased 30% faster than the rest of the UK since 2020. More people in GL define themselves as being religious compared to those who do not. 596,727 said that they were affiliated to a form of religion. This is equal to approximately 54% of the entire population. According to 2021 Census Data, 10% (approximately 113,880) of the population belong to what would be identified as minority ethnic groups in GL which is less than the England figure of 18%. GL has a higher rate of disability than the national figure, with a total of 211,250 people having a form of disability which either limits them a little or a lot. This equates to 19% of the population of the area and therefore above the national figure of 18%.

GL faces increasing challenges which are not helped by the rurality and unique geography of the region. GL has few motorways, dual carriageways and limited public transport networks. This reduces the opportunity to travel to work, learning and leisure, contributing to greater inequality. Costs are often higher and greater investment is required. Access to both higher and further education is hampered by poor digital connectivity, limiting the development of the skill-base needed within the population. There are also currently 149,700 people in GL (23%) that are economically inactive when compared to the UK figure of 21% which presents a wide challenge.

## Positive impacts

The proposed change may have the following positive impacts on persons with protected characteristics.

Protected characteristic	Response
<b>Age</b>	<p>This equality impact analysis identifies a number of potential positive impacts on this protected characteristic relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Environment</b> Unified planning approaches across the new unitary authority in Lincolnshire could seek to expand access to parks, nature and green spaces, which can assist in improving health and wellbeing. A unified approach may also support investment in safe walking and cycling routes to schools which would promote healthier lifestyles and reduce car dependency.</li> <li>- <b>Employment and skills</b> Provisions through LGR in relation to education and skills could have a potential positive impact on younger people improving their education and training, access to careers and wider determinants of health that could lead to a longer and healthier life. Fewer councils can better coordinate schools, colleges, and employers to offer clearer routes into local careers which is a particular challenge in Lincolnshire as a high number of graduates leave the area.  In addition, reduced bureaucracy and streamlined governance should help enable better coordination of adult education, retraining, and employment support services within Lincolnshire which should support all residents irrelevant of age. This should also be supported by funding being pooled into one centralised location. This could help to expand apprenticeship schemes in key sectors for Lincolnshire such as food and agri-tech.</li> <li>- <b>Transport</b> There would be little change for all age groups in regard to how transport operates within Lincolnshire as the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) will be the single transport authority for the region. However, certain functions will be moved across to the county council once LGR is fulfilled particularly around licencing such as taxis. Currently local transport plans for an area is a collaboration between the relevant councils across Lincolnshire.  A possible benefit is the pooling of all transport related funding so that it can be directed to priority projects across the county which could seek to increase the connectivity for all residents and give them access to public transport in hard-to-reach areas. Significant projects with the backing of an entire single council should also in theory speed up the process and reduce bureaucracy.  The reorganisation process in Lincolnshire will work alongside the work of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, which can unlock devolution funding for major transport projects.</li> <li>- <b>Innovation and trade</b></li> </ul>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>An integrated approach to trade and innovation would help Lincolnshire adapt to global challenges and future-proof the economy and also support a skills uplift for young people looking to make a career in the sector. Larger organisations tend to be more resistant to financial shocks and a new Lincolnshire unitary council will have a bank of expertise and knowledge across the key innovation and trade sectors to support the aims of the entire county. This strong, joined up approach will help to support all age groups.</p> <p>One council will mean that there will not be competing economic strategies working against each other in Lincolnshire. This will prevent different areas in Lincolnshire competitively bidding against each other for government money, and whilst local views will still be crucial to the operation of the new authority, it will be one council with one over-arching aim. This enables better coordination of innovation hubs, enterprise zones, and trade corridors across Greater Lincolnshire. The proposed single-unitary model offers a strong tax base and business rates income, which can be used in supporting investment in trade and innovation initiatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Digital</b></li> </ul> <p>LGR allows councils to redesign services around user needs, making them more accessible online. Lincolnshire’s approach aims to ensure that all communities benefit, particularly those facing socio-economic challenges. The financial viability of the proposed model could be able to support investment in digital services, ensuring long-term benefits for residents particularly around connectivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Housing</b></li> </ul> <p>Under the single-unitary plan for Lincolnshire, housing responsibilities will now fall under one authority allowing for a single, cohesive housing strategy across wider geographical areas. This means better alignment of housing with transport, infrastructure, and economic development.</p> <p>Across Lincolnshire this will help long-term planning for affordable housing, regeneration, and sustainable growth across Lincolnshire which will benefit all residents, particularly as we work towards the governments new ambitious housing targets for our region.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>An example of how different age groups responded to the survey can be seen below. This table was produced in response to the current number of elected representatives:</p>

Protected characteristic	Response							
	Response	Under 24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	Prefer not to say
	Too many councillors	12 (36%)	52 (48%)	111 (59%)	194 (63%)	247 (60%)	321 (55%)	21 (47%)
	Too few councillors	<3 (~5%)	7 (6%)	<3 (~1%)	5 (2%)	4 (1%)	9 (2%)	<3 (~5%)
	About the right number	– (~25%)	28 (26%)	– (~20%)	65 (21%)	114 (28%)	182 (31%)	– (~40%)
	Not sure	11 (35%)	21 (19%)	36 (19%)	43 (14%)	48 (12%)	74 (13%)	4 (9%)
	All respondents	33 (100%)	108 (100%)	189 (100%)	307 (100%)	413 (100%)	586 (100%)	45 (100%)
	<p>This analysis when averaged out across age groups shows that the most popular response was that there are currently too many councillors. Lincolnshire County Councils LGR proposal to government, puts forward an option which would see the number of councillors in Lincolnshire reduced from 360 to 70. From the above analysis, it would indicate that this would be supported by residents who responded to this survey.</p> <p>In addition, the analysis suggests that the middle age range had the most support for reducing the number of councillors in comparison to younger people who were least likely to declare support for reducing the number of representatives. However, younger people particularly those in the under 24 age range were the most likely to say that they were ‘not sure’ when considering their opinion on the number of councillors in Lincolnshire.</p>							
Workforce	<p>A single unitary council for Lincolnshire will help simplify governance. Crucially there will be much less duplication across departments which should assist in creating achievable career pathways for staff. With all responsibilities and services being under the control of one authority, this should help speed up processes which can currently be impacted by duplicated bureaucracy when multiple councils are involved in the same piece of work.</p> <p>Employees may gain access to training and leadership opportunities that weren’t available in smaller district councils. In addition, the council can offer a greater variety of job roles for staff in service areas that the council did not previously have responsibility for. This may persuade them to stay within the organisation to work in a different role which wasn’t available to them previously.</p> <p>Many staff move between councils within Lincolnshire and have to adapt to new policies and procedures and organisational culture. This new consolidated and integrated approach to governance will mean a better use of resources and consistent policies across a region rather than a specific small</p>							

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>geographical area. This can lead to fairer pay structures, harmonised terms and conditions, and improved recruitment and retention.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>A separate engagement survey was designed solely for staff as LCC recognises the impacts that the LGR process can have on employees.</p> <p>422 responses to the survey were from members of staff. Of this number, 61% of staff members believed that the reorganisation would provide better value for money by reducing costs and 67% of staff believe there are too many councillors. The aims and objectives of our LGR proposal supports this. Our financial modelling shows that efficient financial savings can be made in a full operational single unitary authority. Similarly to the public, staff believe that the number of elected members is currently too high across and Lincolnshire. Our proposal if chosen has the opportunity to reduce this number to 70. These two areas emphasise the need of value for money within local government and our proposal for local government reorganisation can help to support these ambitions of our staff.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>A single-unitary model in Lincolnshire will always be looking to improve the lives of people with disabilities by streamlining services and enhancing accessibility. The delivery of the essential services that those with disabilities rely on, such as adult social care, SEND support, and housing assistance will become more coordinated and efficient.</p> <p>This reduction in bureaucratic complexity can lead to quicker response times and more personalised support. Community engagement and local discussions will still be central to the authorities approach but will now be within one organisation rather than eight. This will be crucial in empowering disabled residents to have a more active role in shaping the services they rely on</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>The analysis conducted of the engagement survey asked people of their disability status. The majority of respondents said that they (1,262, or 73%) did not have a disability, 338 (19%) indicated they had a disability, and 140 (8%) preferred not to answer.</p> <p>On several different questions the indication from the survey results is that those who declared they had a disability answered in a similar way to those who said they didn't have a disability. 55% of respondents with a disability said that there were too many councillors. This closely aligned to those who said they didn't have a disability in response to the same question which was 58%. In addition within other question areas.</p>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	<p>A unified council structure can standardise policies on inclusion, safeguarding, and access to services. LGR offers a chance to embed inclusive practices from the outset, including relevant training for staff and inclusive language in forms and communications.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>The following specific question was posed in the public engagement survey. "Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. 1,710 members of the public responded to this question, with 27% indicating they believe there could be an impact, and 73% indicating there would be none.</p> <p>The engagement survey did not ask people whether they have gone through the process of gender reassignment. The analysis of this question is based on the overall response rate on the specific impact upon protected characteristic group. This process is not intended to benefit one group over another so the fact that 73% of respondents believe that there will be no impact upon these groups should be viewed as a positive. It is not the intention of LGR to directly positively or negatively impact on protected characteristic groups. The rights and the views of all protected characteristic groups will continue to be respected throughout the process.</p>
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	<p>This equality impact analysis identifies that overall, the proposal should benefit people across the area irrespective of their marital or civil partnership status.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Similarly to gender reassignment a question wasn’t specifically posed to ask people of their marital status and subsequent analyse results from this perspective. The same more general question was asked “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p> <p>There was no specific correlation between different factors as to how individuals answered this question. For example, 82% of 18–24-year-olds believed there would be no impact on these protected characteristic groups. 72% of those over 65 also believed the same. The view across all age groups therefore were also that upon various groups, including those who are married or in a civil partnership was that there will be no impact upon on them as a result of local government reorganisation.</p>
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	<p>This equality impact analysis identifies a number of potential positive impacts on this protected characteristic which are detailed below. GL as of 2021 has a birth rate of 1.62 children per woman. The England and Wales figure was 1.6122</p> <p>A Government Equalities Office Report from 2019 showed that nationally, fewer than one-in-five of all new mothers, and 29% of first-time mothers, return to full-time work in the first three years after maternity leave. This falls to 15% after five years. It is important that any LGR proposal helps to improve these figures and make the workplace accessible for those returning through a unified approach.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>As previous, the analysis for this protected characteristic group is provided by the same question. “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
<b>Race</b>	<p>This equality impact analysis identifies a number of potential positive impacts on this protected characteristic.</p> <p>A unified council could seek to standardise relevant frameworks across the county, ensuring all residents receive fair treatment regardless of where they live.</p> <p>Streamlined systems could reduce barriers for residents navigating housing, education, or health.</p> <p>LGR also offers a chance to build inclusive engagement processes that amplify the voices of underrepresented groups in shaping local decisions.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>As previous, the analysis for this protected characteristic group is provided by the same question. “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<p>Broader governance structures might encourage more regional interfaith forums or initiatives, potentially increasing collaboration across different belief communities.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>As previous, the analysis for this protected characteristic group is provided by the same question. “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p>
<b>Sex</b>	<p>Lincolnshire councils already have a very strong balance in senior positions when it comes to sex. LGR would not seek to remove this meritocratic process.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>As previous, the analysis for this protected characteristic group is provided by the same question. “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<p>This equality impact analysis identifies that overall, the proposal should benefit people across the area irrespective of their sexual orientation.</p> <p>Lincolnshire councils already provide significant support platforms for staff and operate in an inclusive and welcoming environment for all. A more unified structure could mean better coordination and standardised approach.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>As previous, the analysis for this protected characteristic group is provided by the same question. “Do you think changes to local government could have a positive or negative impact on you or someone you care for, because of: age, sex, disability, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, or pregnancy and maternity?”. As before, 73% of the those who responded to this question believe there would be no impact on this group.</p>

## Positive impacts - other groups

If you have identified positive impacts for other groups not specifically covered by the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 you can include them here if it will help the decision maker to make an informed decision.

Other group	Positive impacts
<b>Business community</b>	<p>In theory replacing the two-tier system with unitary councils reduces confusion and duplication making it easier for businesses to engage with local government, as planning associated challenges alongside business rates and licencing responsibilities will now be held under one organisation. Businesses will benefit from streamlined access to grants, advice, and export support through a single authority.</p> <p>In addition, a unified approach to business rates and tax-base management could offer greater predictability and fairness</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>14 people attended an interactive virtual event for directly for businesses. LCC also actively ensured that a multi-channel communications strategy was in place. This included printed literature to support public events and ensure visibility in public places. This saw 250 business cards distributed across events. LinkedIn had 5 posts targeting businesses and professionals with a reach of 4,265.</p> <p>The same questionnaire was used for members of the public and businesses/organisations/councils. The public engagement survey delivered 42 responses received on behalf, or as a representative, of a business or organisation. 17 indicated that they represented a town or parish. The second most frequent sector for this question was 'county council officers' with 8 selecting this category, followed by 'business' (5), 'Voluntary, community and charity sector (5), 'Civil Service or Government' (1), and 'County Council councillor' (1). Therefore 5 formal responses to the survey were directly from businesses.</p> <p>Due to the smaller number of specific business responses, the analysis conducted groups business and other organisations together. More than half of the respondents to the survey on behalf of businesses or organisations reported that the main benefit they would expect from reorganisation would be having a single point of contact for council services (61%). Other benefits that closely followed in order of popularity were (i) faster decision making (54%); (ii) having the same standards, regardless of location (51%); and (iii) stronger voices and representation for Lincolnshire (49%).</p>
<b>Armed Forces Community</b>  <b>(Veterans, reservists and those still serving)</b>	<p>Under the current model in Lincolnshire, various council offer support to the armed forces community as a central policy to the organisations. All councils recognise the importance of looking after the large armed forces community across the county.</p> <p>However, the different needs of the community mean they often have to go to different councils for the relevant support. If it is associated with care this will be done through the county council. Anything associated with housing will have to be conducted through a district/borough/city council depending on the resident's location.</p> <p>In addition, a unified Lincolnshire authority can ensure consistent implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant which is crucial to supporting the community.</p>

Other group	Positive impacts
	<p>Engagement Analysis</p> <p>There was no specific engagement analysis aimed specifically at the Armed Forces Community. Under the LCC proposal we intend to continue the support and engagement approach to the community that we currently have and don't envisage any tangible change to take place as a direct result of LGR.</p>
<b>Deprived communities</b>	<p>A unified Lincolnshire council could better align regeneration funding and economic development strategies to focus on areas with high deprivation, such as parts of coastal Lincolnshire and inner urban wards. It would be more challenging to do this under a proposal which splits up Lincolnshire into multiple authorities.</p> <p>Merging councils in Lincolnshire may provide the opportunity to reduce confusion and improve access to housing, benefits, and health service, especially for residents with complex needs.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>No specific engagement activity was specifically aimed at deprived communities. Public engagement events were held all around the county in areas with varying levels of deprivation. This allowed LCC to engage with the widest variety of residents with varying concerns.</p>
<b>Visitors</b>	<p>With fewer councils, there's potential for more cohesive marketing of Lincolnshire's unique attraction, from the Wolds to the coast. This can also be done under a unified brand. This could make it easier for visitors to plan trips and access information.</p> <p>LGR in Lincolnshire is interlinked to broader devolution plans in the region, which include ambitions to improve transport links. Better roads, public transport, and signage could enhance the visitor experience, especially in rural and coastal areas.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>No specific engagement activity was specifically aimed at the visitor sector. Public engagement events were held all around the county in areas which rely heavily on tourism and the visitor economy. This allowed LCC to engage with the widest variety of residents with varying concerns. LCC recognises the crucial impact that the visitor economy has on Lincolnshire as a whole and this will not change as a consequence of LGR.</p>
<b>Digitally Excluded</b>	<p>The LGR process could enable a more unified and strategic approach to broadband rollout, mobile connectivity, and digital service delivery. A single council may be better positioned to negotiate with telecom providers and coordinate investment in underserved areas.</p> <p>According to a 2025 Local Government Association report, LGR offers a rare moment to "create smarter organisations" and "increase productivity and efficiency" through digital transformation.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>In addition to the online and in person meetings/briefings, residents, community groups and charities were reached through a variety of direct communications, newsletters, print and digital media and targeted communication, including County News, which is delivered to every household in Lincolnshire.</p>

Other group	Positive impacts
	<p>This ensured that there was the option for all residents and organisations, irrelevant of their digital circumstances to engage with the process.</p> <p>As part of LCC's LGR proposal, the responsibility for areas such as broadband rollout will remain under the control of a single authority as is the case now with LCC being the responsible body for the entirety of the county. A key ambition of the new authority will be to ensure that digital exclusion and isolation is reduced and where issues remain, that the views and thoughts of those in these areas are always acknowledged and considered.</p>
<b>Coastal or rural communities</b>	<p>Rural areas often struggle with access to healthcare, transport, and broadband. LGR could help by pooling resources and delivering services more efficiently across sparsely populated areas.</p> <p>Our reorganisation plans are interlinked to our further devolution plans that include ambitions for better digital connectivity and rural transport.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LGR engagement events and communications took place and were distributed all around the county. This included forms of engagement with coastal and rural communities. LCC will continue to engage with these communities and as with digital exclusion, many of the services that impact these communities more than others such as broadband, road access, transport links, will under our proposal, still be handled by one single authority rather than the responsibilities being split between multiple authorities.</p>

## Adverse or negative impacts

Protected characteristic	Response
Age	<p>Reorganisation may temporarily affect coordination between schools, youth centres, and support services. Close ties to local communities; their removal could reduce tailored youth engagement programmes.</p> <p>If employment and training schemes are paused or restructured, adults seeking reskilling may face delays. Older residents may find it harder to navigate new systems or access services if local offices close or change. If services move online too quickly without adequate support, older adults may struggle to engage.</p> <p>Residents and staff alike may experience confusion or frustration during the multi-year transition process.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The Lincolnshire County Council proposal is not seeking to break up any current services delivered at a county or district level. The same services will be delivered under one body rather than multiple, thus minimising the risk of disruption.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Younger respondents (Under 24 and 25–34) were most concerned about potential job losses and service disruption, with over half of 25–34-year-olds citing employment risks. These groups also felt their needs were underrepresented, indicating a perceived lack of voice in decision-making.</p> <p>Middle-aged groups (35–54) expressed balanced concerns across financial uncertainty, governance, and service continuity. Scepticism about cost savings and fears of council remoteness were prominent, alongside growing concern about the loss of local identity.</p> <p>Older respondents (55–64 and 65+) showed the highest levels of concern overall. Nearly two-thirds of those aged 65+ feared the council would become too remote, reducing accountability. This group also expressed strong doubts about the likelihood of cost savings and the ability of town and parish councils to support residents effectively.</p> <p>Respondents who preferred not to disclose their age echoed the concerns of older groups, with 71% citing council remoteness and over half expressing scepticism about financial benefits.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>LCC will seek to mitigate these concerns, with consistent and accessible communication to anyone who may be sceptical about the development of the new council. We have a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section which seeks to fully explain specifics about the possible changes that the councils in Lincolnshire will be going through.</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
<b>Workforce</b>	<p>Staff may face redundancy or redeployment, which can create anxiety and lower morale during the transition period. In some cases, particularly in such large areas such as Lincolnshire, employees in district councils often have deep knowledge of their local communities as their responsibility is localised.</p> <p>Aligning pay scales, benefits, and contracts across councils is complex and may result in perceived unfairness or dissatisfaction.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The workforce, local areas and local communities will remain at the heart of the organisation and will not lose focus. We will always seek to keep staff informed throughout every stage of this process.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>The most frequently mentioned concern among staff was the possibility of job losses (73%), followed by potential service disruptions (52%), and uncertainty about cost savings (47%). 70% of staff responding also said that minimising service disruptions during council changes was paramount. These concerns have been raised throughout the process. LCC has also put on staff briefing sessions to discuss LGR to provide the opportunity to further discuss any concerns.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Communication with staff is central to the approach of LCC. At every phase of decision making whether local or national, staff are/will be kept informed of how this is developing. Job losses are a genuine concern which we recognise, however the services that LCC currently provide will still be required under the new authority if our proposal is selected. As LCC is the only authority in Lincolnshire which provides highways services, social care, and SEND for example, current staff will still be required to deliver these services in a new authority.</p> <p>On cost savings, LCC have conducted a full costings analysis which considers different scenarios, and this is represented over the short, medium and long term. Whilst external factors will always impact finances, this modelling, based on the current set of circumstances, we believe can be achieved.</p>
<b>Disability</b>	<p>If services are centralised, disabled residents may face longer travel times and inaccessible facilities. Smaller district councils often have closer ties to disabled communities. There is an argument to suggest that merging councils may dilute local representation and advocacy.</p> <p>People with disabilities often rely on consistent, trusted relationships with carers and service providers. Reorganisation may interrupt these. Changes to council structures could make it harder for disabled individuals to access services, especially if digital systems replace in-person support.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>Local representation will be altered however our view is that the County Council currently has 70 seats and this will remain when the new unitary council is established. The councillors will serve the same divisions as they do now, it will be the district council seats that are removed. There will still be every opportunity for representation of this group.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just disability.</p> <p>However, there were qualitative answers that specifically mentioned concerns regarding potential negative impacts on people with disabilities. One of these was responses was, <i>"I worry that those that have a disability are at risk from falling through a unitary authority net that will have too large holes because of the vastness of the County of Lincolnshire."</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>LCC recognises the additional concerns that those with protected characteristics may have regarding LGR. As previously mentioned, the services that our residents with disabilities rely on, such as social care, blue badge services, and SEND, will still be provided by one authority as LCC does now. LCC are already responsible for these services across the entire Lincolnshire geography and under our proposal there will be no splitting up or alterations to the way these services are provided. Residents' familiar with the current system will not see change in how those serviced operate.</p> <p>There are also fundamental benefits of bringing together County and District services such as Adult Social Care (ASC) and Housing. This will help enable more integrated and person-centred services. By aligning ASC with housing, the new council can better support vulnerable residents such as older adults or people with disabilities by ensuring their care needs are matched with appropriate housing. Similarly, combining DSG with housing and social care allows for more coordinated support for children with special educational needs, which potentially can help to improve outcomes through earlier and more effective interventions.</p>
Gender reassignment	<p>This group of people often rely on localised services for support when they need it. An argument could be that reorganisation could disrupt these networks. If services are merged or relocated, individuals may lose access to professionals familiar with their history and needs. There is a need for strong local champions.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Emphasis on locality and local engagement will be central to our proposal, LGR is a change to governance within Lincolnshire and not the removal or alteration of important organisations, particularly those in the voluntary and community sector.</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on gender reassignment.</p> <p><i>Qualitative responses were received. For example, "The important services that are provided to the people of Lincolnshire should not be disrupted or stopped just because the service user is disabled or is transgender."</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Our LGR proposal will not benefit or hinder any one group over another. The services provided by LCC will continue to be provided by one single council if our proposal is selected. Other services currently at a district level will continue to be provided, just by one authority rather than multiple. The statutory responsibilities that all councils have will remain under this single authority.</p>
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnership</b></p>	<p>No potential negative impacts have been identified for this protected characteristic.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on marriage and civil partnership.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised regarding this protected characteristic group, LCC does not envisage any sort of implications upon any one group over another.</p>
<p><b>Pregnancy and maternity</b></p>	<p>Centralisation of services could mean longer travel times to clinics or support groups, particularly in rural areas like East Lindsey or South Holland. Smaller district councils often tailor services to local needs. There is an argument which would say that larger unitary authorities may struggle to maintain that level of responsiveness.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>No services will be broken up or disaggregated so they will continue to operate as they do now.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p>result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised regarding this protected characteristic group, LCC does not envisage any sort of implications upon any one group over another.</p>
<b>Race</b>	<p>Fewer councillors per resident as a result of LGR in Lincolnshire may result in fewer elected representatives, which could weaken the political voice of ethnic minority communities. Larger unitary authorities may struggle to maintain close ties with diverse communities, especially in urban centres like Boston or Lincoln.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The overall governance structure of the council will be as Lincolnshire County Council is now, just with increased responsibility for councillors who will be familiar with a wider range of concerns.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on race.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised regarding this protected characteristic group, LCC does not envisage any sort of implications upon any one group over another.</p>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<p>Faith communities may struggle to influence policy if representation is diluted across larger jurisdictions. Many faith groups provide food banks, counselling, and youth programmes. Changes in funding or bureaucracy could hinder their operations.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Our discussions with the religious, voluntary, and community sector will not be impact by LGR and engagement will continue with these groups, when transitioning to the new authority.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on religion or belief.</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	<p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised regarding this protected characteristic group, LCC does not envisage any sort of implications upon any one group over another.</p>
<p><b>Sex</b></p>	<p>No potential negative impacts have been identified for this protected characteristic.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on sex.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised regarding this protected characteristic group, LCC does not envisage any sort of implications upon any one group over another.</p>
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>	<p>Smaller councils often fund or partner with relevant organisations. Reorganisation may centralise services, reducing access to tailored support. LGR may reduce the number of elected officials, weakening representation and voices in local decision-making. Larger unitary authorities may deprioritise these relevant services, unless it's explicitly protected in governance frameworks.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The new council will continue to operate as all the councils do now as inclusive, meritocratic organisations. There is always opportunity for these groups to engage with/be represented on the council.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>LCC included dedicated questions in the engagement process to explore the views of respondents regarding potential impacts on protected characteristics. 27% of those who responded to this question said that there could be a potential positive or negative impact as a result of LGR. This question was across all protected characteristic groups rather than just focused on sexual orientation.</p> <p>Qualitative responses were received. For example, <i>“Disability and sexual orientation are often seen as cinderella services that could be cut. All of the characteristics listed need to be equally and consistently funded, provided, and reviewed to ensure the needs of all individuals are being effectively met.”</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>As mentioned previously, our LGR proposal will not benefit or hinder any one group over another. The services provided by LCC will continue to be provided by one single council if our proposal is selected. Other services currently at a district level will continue to be provided, just</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
	by one authority rather than multiple. All residents are considered equally throughout the decision-making process.

## Negative impacts - other groups

If you have identified negative impacts for other groups not specifically covered by the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 you can include them here if it will help the decision maker to make an informed decision.

Other Groups	Negative impacts
<b>Businesses</b>	<p>There is a potential risk that merging councils into a single authority could dilute their voice in decision-making, especially for SMEs in Lincolnshire that in some cases may rely on close relationships with local authorities.</p> <p>If the process doesn't operate smoothly and efficiently during transition, this could lead to temporary confusion or delays in services like licensing, business rates, and support schemes</p> <p>In Lincolnshire, businesses often align with local branding and community identity. A county-wide authority might overlook the unique economic profiles of places like Lincoln, Boston, or Grantham.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Current district functions such as licensing and business rates will be part of the new unitary authority. They will have county wide coverage rather than smaller areas. The ambition is to produce an efficient service. Breaking up district areas and splitting it between different authorities could impact the work that they do</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>The business community was categorised with organisations as part of the response to the survey. Organisations and businesses were mainly concerned about the potential disruption that could happen as a result of other proposals suggesting the breaking up of services, as well as that the savings made from reorganisations may not reach local people and businesses (both selected by 63% of respondents). The following concerns, in order of frequency, were that (i) remote organisations are not familiar with localities (54%); (ii) the loss of local networks (51%); and (iii) the reduction of influence for town and parish councils, as well as for their urban equivalents (49%).</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Neighbourhood or local area committees will be established if the LCC proposal is selected. These are intended to connect businesses, town and parish councils, resident groups, and the voluntary sector with key public services, such as councils, police, health, and fire services. They work closely together to share concerns, insights, and shape local priorities. These committees would feed into the new council structure to help ensure decisions reflect local priorities and support the preservation of community identity. This will help ensure that concerns about local identity and local knowledge are alleviated and local relationships are maintained. Any financial decisions will be made for the widest possible benefit and seek to support our organisations and communities.</p> <p>Services will not be broken up as part of the LCC proposal. They will continue to be provided by the new single authority. Services provided by districts will become part of the new authority where decisions can be made by less layers of government and our businesses will have one single</p>

Other Groups	Negative impacts
	<p>organisation to engage with rather than multiple. Any possible disruption will be limited by the LCC proposal.</p>
<p><b>Armed Forces Community</b></p> <p><b>(Veterans, reservists and those still serving)</b></p>	<p>Veterans often rely on coordinated support across housing, mental health, employment, and welfare. If reorganisation did not run smoothly in Lincolnshire, it could temporarily disrupt these services or lead to gaps in provision.</p> <p>Veterans' groups could potentially find it harder to engage with decision-makers if the new council becomes more centralised.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>All councils in Lincolnshire recognise the importance of supporting our large armed forces community. We will be consistently engaging throughout the process which will give members of the community an opportunity to ask any questions regarding what support for them may look like in a single unitary authority in Lincolnshire.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised throughout the engagement process, LCC recognises the importance of support for our Armed Forces Community. Platforms were provided and will continue to be provided for them to express their views and concerns. We already have strong partnerships in place with the community, and these will be unaffected by LGR.</p>
<p><b>Deprived Communities</b></p>	<p>Larger councils can feel remote, making it harder for residents in deprived areas to influence decisions or access councillors.</p> <p>Projects focused on regeneration, youth support, or health inequalities could be deprioritised or lost in the shuffle during transition.</p> <p>Deprived areas often have strong community identities. A mega-council risks eroding that sense of place and belonging.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Whilst no priorities for the new council can be decided at this stage, the most vulnerable will always be at the forefront of the thinking during the process of implementing the new council. One of the main benefits of our approach is that we will not be splitting up services, they will be aggregated up so the functions of the services will remain as they are now just under a new name of council.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Some qualitative responses were received as part of the engagement activity in relation to deprived communities. For example, <i>"Small community's will be even more ignored with priority going to urban areas even though rural locations are the most deprived because of restricted access to public transport"</i>.</p>

Other Groups	Negative impacts
	<p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>As previously mentioned, neighbourhood area committees will be established if the LCC proposal is selected. These are intended to connect businesses, town and parish councils, resident groups, and the voluntary sector with key public services, such as councils, police, health, and fire services. They work closely together to share concerns, insights, and shape local priorities. These committees would feed into the new council structure to help ensure decisions reflect local priorities and support the preservation of community identity. This will help ensure that the views of residents from deprived communities are having their views and concerns heard in the new council. Existing relationships between any of Lincolnshire's councils and their communities will remain in place at this new council. Services aren't being removed or altered; they are being amalgamated into one council.</p>
<b>Visitors</b>	<p>LGR may lead to fragmented tourism oversight, with responsibilities diluted across the new unitary authority in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Any disruption in tourism infrastructure or marketing could jeopardise this growth, especially in areas dependent on seasonal visitors.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The visitor economy is paramount to success in Lincolnshire, and this will not be lost as we move through LGR. Local teams will be moved from their district/city/borough councils to the new authority where they will bring their local knowledge of their area. Different areas can also learn new approaches from each other inside one organisation.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Whilst no specific concerns were raised throughout the engagement process, LCC recognises the importance of support for our visitors and visitor economy. Platforms were provided and will continue to be provided for them to express their views and concerns. We already have strong partnerships in place with this sector and these relationships will be unaffected by LGR.</p>
<b>Digitally excluded communities / individuals</b>	<p>Centralised systems often rely on online portals, which can disadvantage rural areas with poor broadband coverage. Areas like East Lindsey show high levels of digital exclusion, including poor broadband access. There is a risk that these areas may not be prioritised by any new infrastructure upgrades. Older adults, low-income households, and disabled residents are also already disproportionately affected by digital exclusion.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The new council will have representatives from all over the county area of Lincolnshire much like Lincolnshire County Council does now. Local voices and concerns will still be heard, and the new authority will have less bureaucratic restriction in order to make the tangible change that local areas need.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p>

Other Groups	Negative impacts
	<p>Some qualitative responses were received as part of the engagement activity in relation to digital exclusion. For example, <i>“Living right on the northern edge of West Lindsey are already remote from many services. We cannot get transport or referrals to many services. A centralised service will almost certainly be even less accessible.”</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Respondents themselves shared suggestions to mitigate the risk of digital exclusion for vulnerable populations, particularly older residents and those with limited digital literacy. One common suggestion was to improve access to in-person services. Respondents recommended maintaining local offices and providing face-to-face support to ensure services stay accessible to everyone.</p> <p>LCC intends to maintain local offices and property in order to ensure local accessibility for residents. All customer service functions will be amalgamated as part of the new authority which will help to reduce confusion surrounding which council to contact for which specific service a resident requires.</p> <p>In addition, neighbourhood or local area committees will be established if the LCC proposal is selected. These are intended to connect businesses, town and parish councils, resident groups, and the voluntary sector with key public services, such as councils, police, health, and fire services. They work closely together to share concerns, insights, and shape local priorities. These committees will be central to the governance structure of the new organisation.</p>
<b>Coastal or rural communities</b>	<p>Smaller coastal towns could struggle to compete for funding and attention against larger urban centres like Lincoln.</p> <p>There is a potential risk that rural residents may face longer travel times to access council services if there are wide-ranging changes to council property and particularly where it is located.</p> <p>Fewer councillors overall across Lincolnshire could mean less direct representation for sparsely populated areas.</p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>The new council will have representatives from all over the county area of Lincolnshire much like Lincolnshire County Council does now. Rural and Coastal voices will continue to be heard and the importance of locality and local engagement will be central to the approach that is taken to ensure that local voices are heard and communities represented.</p> <p><b>Engagement Analysis</b></p> <p>Much like the concerns raised in digital exclusion, rurality and isolation was a concern raised. . For example, <i>“Living right on the northern edge of West Lindsey are already remote from many services. We cannot get transport or referrals to many services. A centralised service will almost certainly be even less accessible.”</i></p> <p><b>Mitigation</b></p> <p>Respondents themselves shared suggestions to mitigate the risk of digital exclusion for vulnerable populations, particularly older residents and those with limited digital literacy. One common</p>

Other Groups	Negative impacts
	<p>suggestion was to improve access to in-person services. Respondents recommended maintaining local offices and providing face-to-face support to ensure services stay accessible to everyone.</p> <p>LCC intends to maintain local offices and property in order to ensure local accessibility for residents. All customer service functions will be amalgamated as part of the new authority which will help to reduce confusion surrounding which council to contact for which specific service a resident requires.</p> <p>In addition, neighbourhood or local area committees will be established if the LCC proposal is selected. These are intended to connect businesses, town and parish councils, resident groups, and the voluntary sector with key public services, such as councils, police, health, and fire services. They work closely together to share concerns, insights, and shape local priorities. These committees will be central to the governance structure of the new organisation.</p>

## Summary

This EIA shows that there are many tangible benefits that can be achieved as a result of a new single unitary council in Lincolnshire. The aims and ambitions of our proposal align with public opinion in Lincolnshire, particularly around costs savings and efficiency measures. Residents also expressed views on the benefits of having one single voice for Lincolnshire where bureaucracy in decision-making is reduced but ensures that local voices are still heard.

There were also concerns raised about the unknown potential impacts of LGR. This EIA recognises those concerns that residents have and LCC is clear that we intend to communicate clearly throughout this process in order to keep residents as informed as possible. Residents expressed concerns about centralisation and disconnect from local communities. Where these implications have been identified, mitigation measures have been listed either to explain why this will not be a fundamental issue or in specific cases, what we will do to ensure that these concerns are not realised. This includes our Neighbourhood Area Committees as part of the governance arrangements which will ensure that local voices will continue to be heard in the new council.

The LGR process should not positively or negatively impact one protected characteristic group over another in our proposal. Our approach seeks to benefit all Lincolnshire residents, and we are clear that the most vulnerable in society will continue to be protected and will not be impacted by our Your Lincolnshire proposal for LGR. The opportunity to engage will be available for specific groups to express their views, and those existing relationships they have currently, whether with the county council or district council, will remain, as services provided are brought together into the new authority.

## Stakeholders

Objective(s) of the EIA engagement or engagement activity
<p>This EIA has informed the LGR engagement stakeholder analysis.</p> <p>To ensure everyone has a fair and open opportunity to share their views and ideas.</p> <p>To test assumptions made about potential impacts of LGR on those with protected characteristics and additional communities identified in this document or as part of stakeholder conversations.</p> <p>To consider areas where the proposal may need to be changed as a result of engagement feedback.</p>

Protected characteristic	Response
Age	<p><b>Stakeholder mailshot – Young People</b>            Boston United Community Foundation            College – Boston            College - Grantham            LCC Children’s Services staff, including schools news</p> <p><b>Stakeholder mail shot Older people</b>            Age UK            Co-op</p> <p><b>Paper copies Older people</b>            48 libraries/community hubs (older people)</p>
Disability	<p><b>Stakeholder mailshot</b>            Adult Services staff            HealthWatch            Health and Wellbeing network            Individuals            Just Lincs            Longhurst Housing            ULHT</p>
Gender reassignment	<p><b>Stakeholder mailshot</b>            Just Lincs</p>
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A

Protected characteristic	Response
Pregnancy and maternity	<b>Stakeholder Mailshot</b> Staff  <b>Promotional material (paper copies - survey, executive summary, proposal, posters, and post cards)</b> 48 Children's centres 7 Family centres
Race	<b>Stakeholder mailshot</b> Just Lincs
Religion or belief	<b>Stakeholder mailshot</b> Just Lincs Restore Church
Sex	N/A
Sexual orientation	<b>Stakeholder mailshot</b> Just Lincs
<b>Are you confident that everyone who should have been involved in producing this version of the Equality Impact Analysis has been involved in a meaningful way?</b>  The purpose is to make sure you have got the perspective of all the protected characteristics.	Yes
<b>Once the changes have been implemented how will you undertake evaluation of the benefits and how effective the actions to reduce adverse impacts have been?</b>	Any new local government structure will be subject to the public sector equality duty and have regard to this in its decision-making processes and the delivery of its functions.

## Further details

Personal data	Response
Are you handling personal data?	No
If yes, please give details	

Version	Description	Created or amended by	Date created or amended	Approved by	Date approved
V0.1	Initial Analysis after internal discussion	Daniel Larkin	25/06/2025		
V0.2	Amended analysis after period of engagement	Daniel Larkin	06/11/25		
V0.3	Draft Version for Policy Briefing	Daniel Larkin	07/11/25	Clare Rowley	07/11/25
V0.4	Final Version for Executive Decision	Daniel Larkin	12/11/25	Clare Rowley	12/11/25
V1.0	Final Version	Daniel Larkin	21/11/25	Executive Decision	21/11/25