

REPORT of CHIEF EXECUTIVE

to
EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL
25 FEBRUARY 2025

DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out for Council a summary of the Government's English Devolution White Paper published on 16 December 2024 in respect of its proposals in this policy area and the Government's intentions for local government re-organisation; including the relevant timelines for these two separate but parallel strands of Government policy.
- 1.2 It also sets out Essex County Council's response to this paper to be a devolution priority area and notes the Secretary of States decision in relation to Essex being accepted as a priority area and the deferral of elections scheduled for May 2025 to May 2026.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Council:

- (i) receives this report for information.
- (ii) acknowledges work will continue to ensure that Maldon District Council is in the best possible position as devolution progresses and/or local government reorganisation goes ahead;
- (iii) mandates the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive to seek to ensure that the voice of Maldon District (and north Essex more generally) is as strong as possible in any negotiations around devolution and local government reorganisation recognising its opportunities and challenges;
- (iv) recognises that Members and Officers will continue to deliver this Council's best value and other statutory duties for the benefit of its residents, businesses and communities every day that it exists;
- (v) agree in Principle that 5 Unitaries for Essex is the preferred model. Whilst acknowledging other councils reserve the right to advance different models.
- (vi) welcomes the intention to provide periodically, briefings to Members (and reports to this Council as necessary) as the agenda around devolution and local government reorganisation develops locally.

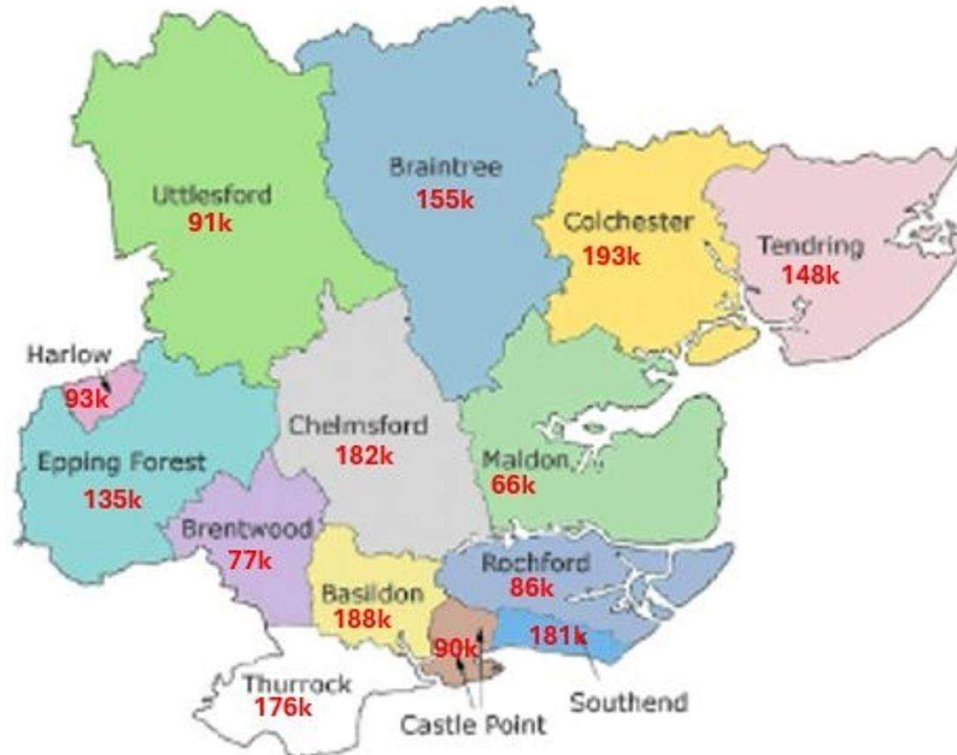
3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Government's "English Devolution" White Paper was published on 16 December 2024. Devolution means taking Whitehall powers and devolving these to more local institutions. The Government calls these 'Strategic Authorities'. The White Paper sets out the Government's aim of universal coverage in England of Strategic Authorities – which should consist of a number of councils working together, to be responsible for areas that people recognise and work in. The current Combined Authorities, in places like Tees Valley and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, would become Strategic Authorities (as referred to below). The levels of Strategic Authority are stated by Government as being:

- Foundation Strategic Authorities: These include non-mayoral Combined Authorities and Combined County Authorities automatically, and any Local Authority designated as a Strategic Authority without a Mayor.”
 - Mayoral Strategic Authorities: The Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities and all Mayoral Combined County Authorities will automatically begin as Mayoral Strategic Authorities.
 - Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities: Those Mayoral Authorities who meet specified eligibility criteria may be designated as Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities. This unlocks further devolution, most notably an Integrated Settlement (which the Government states will mean Mayors will not be bound by strict Westminster rules over how to spend money locally). Integrated Settlements are to have a single systematised approach to spending controls and a single, streamlined, overarching assurance and accountability framework.
- 3.2 The default position for Government is that Strategic Authorities should cover areas with a population of 1.5 million or above. The combined population of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea is currently about 1.8million. The powers of Strategic Authorities are set out in Appendix 1 ('Devolution Framework Summary Table') to this report.
- 3.3 Mayoral Combined and Combined County Authorities can currently use a Mayoral Council Tax Precept. However, they cannot use this on their full range of functions. Government has said that it will legislate to correct this, raising the value for money of this existing power.
- 3.4 To take forward the intentions in the White Paper, the Government intends to introduce an English Devolution Bill. Ahead of that, it proposes to agree areas that it will determine are ready to move quickly through to the establishment of a new Strategic Authority. Those identified will join a new Devolution Priority Programme (DPP). Essex County Council, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea Unitary Councils submitted a joint proposal to join that Programme, and it has been confirmed by Government that Essex, Thurrock and Southend are to be part of the DPP. This will see a new Strategic Authority established in April 2026 for 'Greater Essex' with the election of a directly elected Mayor for the area in May 2026.
- 3.5 The White Paper does not solely address devolution matters; it also references Local Government Reorganisation. The Government expects all two-tier areas and smaller or failing unitary authorities to develop proposals for reorganisation. Those existing Councils are to be replaced with new unitary councils. Further to this, the Leader has received a letter dated 5 February 2025 from the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, this letter sets out the criteria for unitary proposals and a requirement that interim plans must be submitted on or before the 21 March 2025.
- 3.6 Areas that are part of the Devolution Priority Programme, which now includes Greater Essex, will then be invited to submit detailed LGR reorganisation proposals to Government by 26 September 2025.
- 3.7 The White Paper sets out some initial guidance on criteria one of which is the scale for new unitaries: New unitary councils must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks. For most areas this will mean creating councils with a population of 500,000 or more, but there may be exceptions

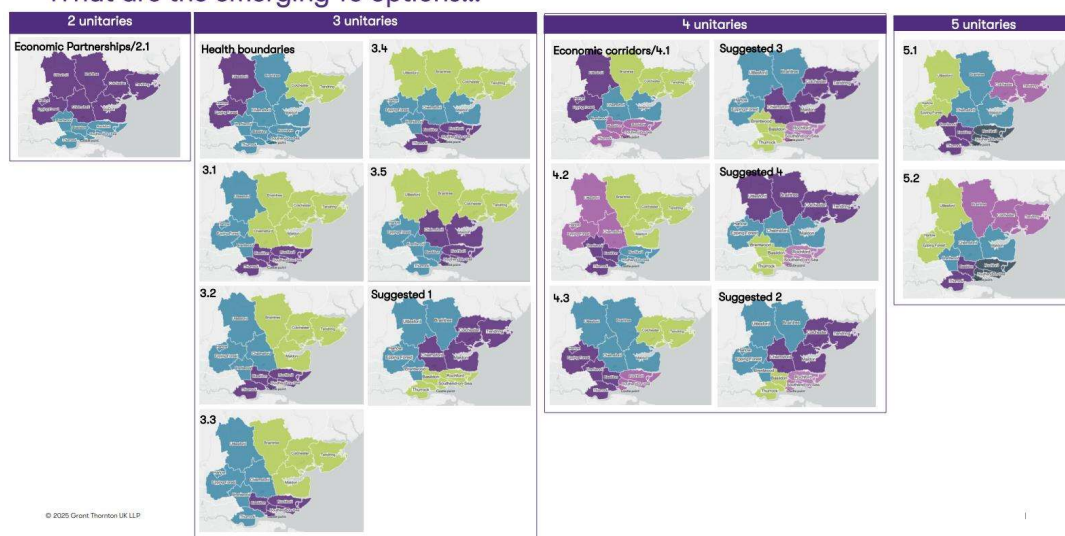
to ensure new structures make sense for an area, including for devolution, and decisions will be on a case-by-case basis.

- 3.8 With Essex's population at a little over 1.8 million, albeit fast growing, this would suggest a model of either 3 or perhaps 4 new unitary councils, just based on a calculation. Statutorily such new unitary councils cannot cross county/PFCC boundaries, so council mergers into unitaries with Suffolk, Cambs, Herts, London or Kent are not an option.
- 3.9 Merging councils (and disaggregating the County Council across smaller geographical units) is a significant and complex task, as a result, it is unlikely that Government will be looking at changing most of the existing district boundaries unless there is a strong case to do so meaning that the current districts are effectively 'building blocks' for new councils.
- 3.10 Within the criteria, new unitary configurations need to reflect sensible communities and economies and must of course be coterminous with the Strategic Authority boundary. There are many different formations and models for the current 12 districts and 2 small unitaries in Thurrock and Southend to be configured into sensible new unitaries.
- 3.11 This simplistic map demonstrates geographical complications: e.g. Maldon and Rochford may have a long common boundary, but without any direct road crossings, so it would arguably make no sense for them to be combined unless also including at least Chelmsford which has an equally limited shared boundary. The same is true of Thurrock and Castle Point, with Basildon forming the route in between.



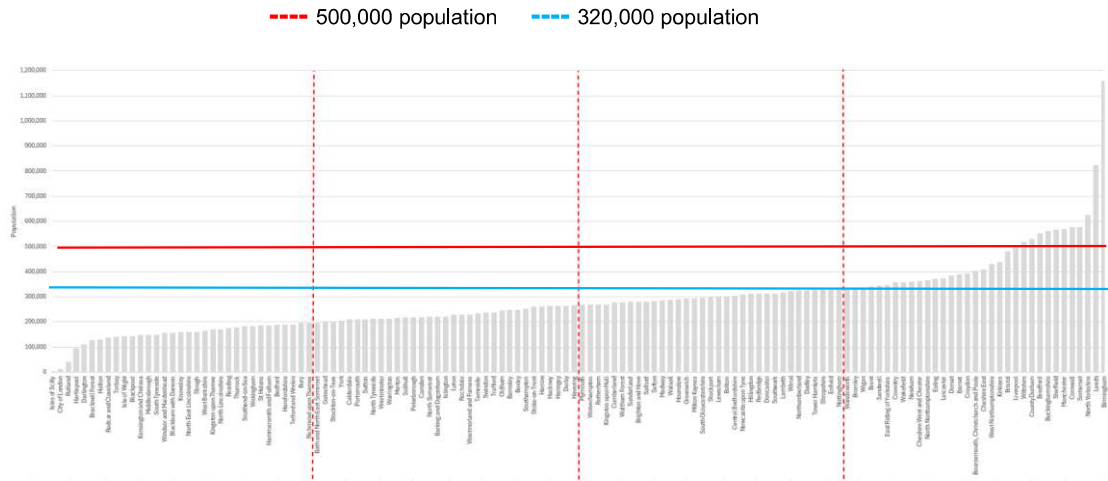
- 3.12 Government makes it clear that they expect local councils to work together and to seek to find consensus for any new proposals for unitaries. However, Government would be open for different councils to advance different models, nevertheless, Government will have the final say on deciding on the model to go forward.
- 3.13 The 15 Councils across Essex have commissioned Grant Thornton to do a piece of analysis exploring the costs, complexities and options for Local Government Reorganisation in Essex. Information was gathered in recent weeks from the 15 councils, and a report was produced in January.
- 3.14 To keep options open, Grant Thornton explored different sized unitary options at either 2, 3, 4 or 5 unitaries for Essex's just over 1.8 million (and growing) population. (a larger image can be found in Appendix 2)

What are the emerging 16 options...



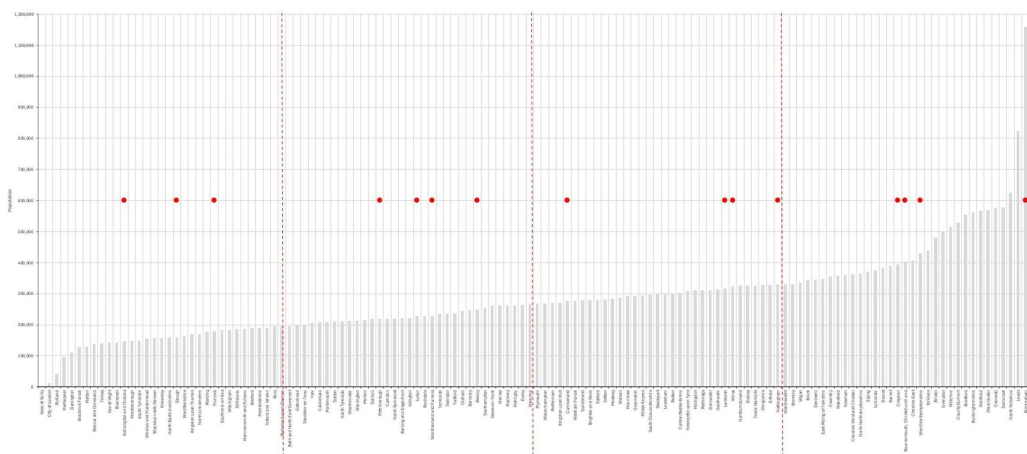
- 2 unitaries would average over 900k populations each, making them amongst the largest in the country, and well over the indicative 500k+ population size White Paper level.
- 3 unitaries would average over 600k each, making them compliant with the indicative 500k+ population size White Paper level.
- 4 unitaries would average over 450k each, making them close to compliant with the indicative 500k+ population size level, and in the discretionary area for discussion with Government, particularly recognising growth levels.
- 5 Unitaries would average over 360k each, making them some way away from the indicative 500k+ population size White Paper level, but still comparable to/larger than many current unitaries, including London Boroughs.

Baseline graph – ranking of current 132 unitary council by population size



3.15 It can be seen from the chart above that there are only 11 of the 132 current unitaries that have a population of over 500,000. Financial viability and resilience is crucial for the future sustainability of any new unitaries, the chart below, graph 2, attempts to demonstrate that there does not seem to be any correlation between size of council and those that have issued section 114 notices

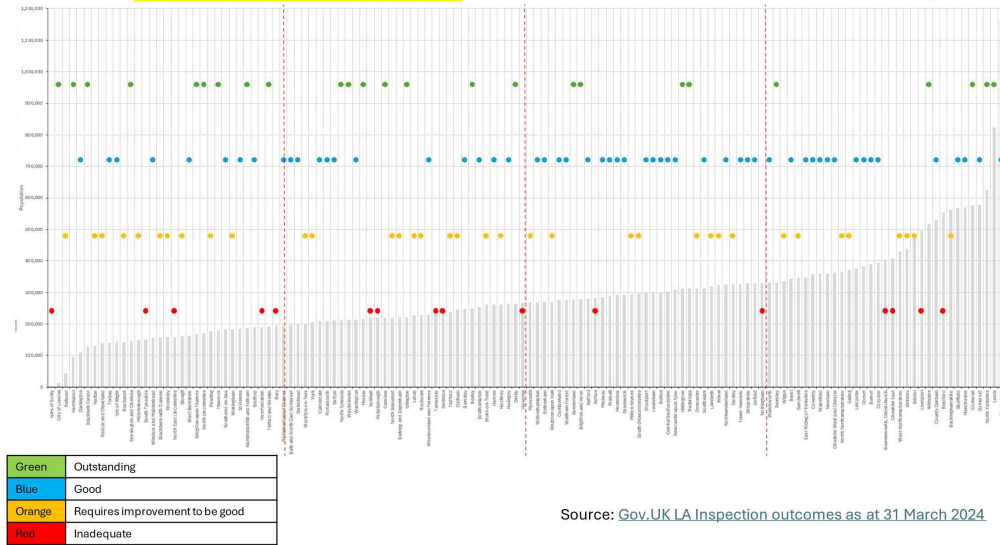
Graph 2 – criteria: financial viability: – ranking of current unitary by population size, showing the local authorities who issued a section 114 notice or had capitalisation directions in the last three years – No Correlation to size of Unitary



Source: [Exceptional financial support for local authorities for 2023 -24 - GOV.UK](#) and [Exceptional financial support for local authorities for 2022 -23 - GOV.UK](#) and [Exceptional financial support for local authorities for 2021 -22 - GOV.UK](#)

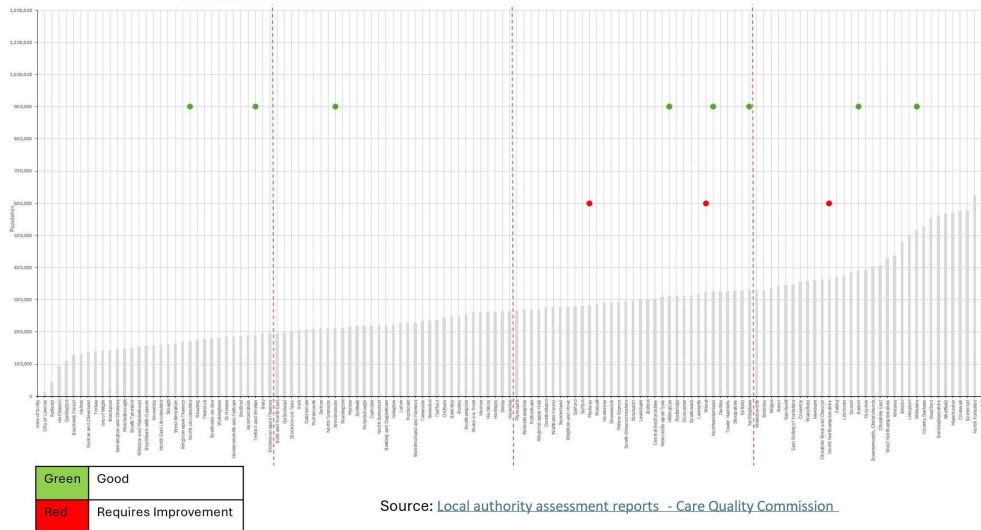
3.16 Equally work has been done to look at performance of those services that will be disaggregated from upper tier authorities (Essex CC, Thurrock and Southend) to the new unitaries and whether size has any impact on performance for Children Services. The chart below, graph 3, attempts to demonstrate that there is an even spread of good and outstanding authorities regardless of size.

Graph 3 – criteria: Potential: – ranking of current unitary by population size showing most recent Ofsted Children’s Services inspection result headline conclusion– No Correlation to size of Unitary



3.17 Similarly, work has been done to look at performance of Adult Social Care whether size has any impact on performance. The chart below, graph 4, attempts to demonstrate that there is an even spread of good authorities both small in size and larger regardless of size.

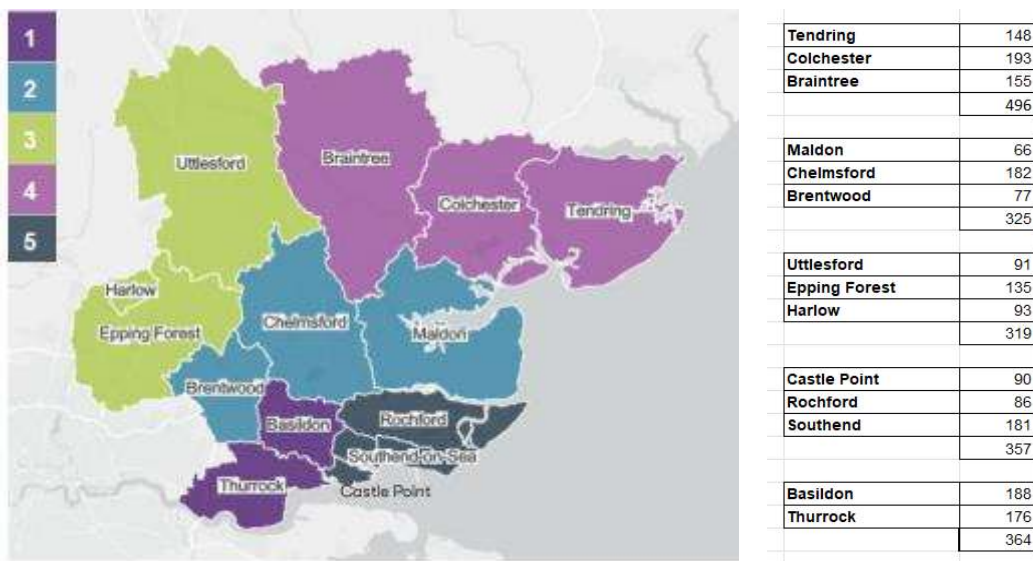
Graph 4 – criteria: Potential: – ranking of current unitary by population size showing most recent CQC ratings for Adult Social Care– No Correlation to size of Unitary



3.18 Clearly, concerns about sense of place and the loss of closeness to residents is likely to be more acute the larger each new unitary authority is. Councillors may also feel that different alignments of areas would make Maldon’s character more or less likely to be subsumed into more densely populated neighbouring areas.

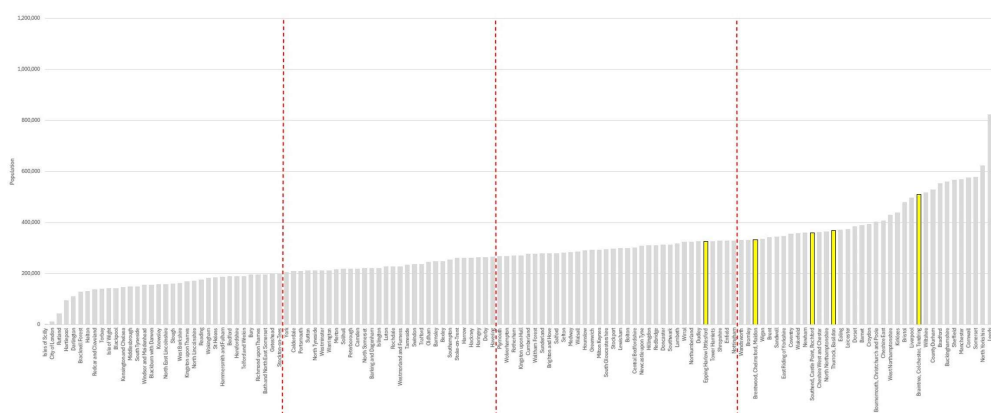
3.19 Early submissions to Government of proposals for new unitary combinations (i.e. which councils merged with which others) are required by 21 March 2025 or sooner depending on how quickly the 15 local councils move and how easily a consensus is reached between them. At recent meetings of the 15 councils, there has been a strong preference from the district councils for a five unitary model however further work and evidence will need to be done to support this position to ensure it is a viable and sustainable model. Equally any alternative viewpoints and models will need to be further developed, tested and considered.

3.20 Emerging thoughts from the districts supporting a five unitary model are the preferred grouping as shown below, Model 5.2 of paragraph 3.14 above. (a larger image can be found in Appendix 2 and 3).



3.21 If this five unitary model was the option the chart below shows that all five unitaries would be towards the upper end in terms of current size by population.

Graph 1a – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 5 new Essex unitaries as per model 5.2



3.22 As stated earlier within this report, the ultimate decision maker on which model is to be implemented will be Government, however they would like consensus on any submission. Once decided, again, after public consultation, should Parliament approve the establishment of a new set of unitary councils in Essex, transitioning to these new councils is a lot more complex than setting up a new Strategic Authority, and would therefore take longer.

3.23 The start date ('Vesting Day') for a new set of unitaries in Essex (and close down date for the current 15 councils to be abolished) could be either April 2027 or April 2028, with a Shadow Authority elected about a year earlier (i.e. likely May 2026 or May 2027 respectively).

- 3.24 Should things move forward to abolish the current 15 district, county and smaller unitary councils across Essex, then Maldon District Council would be abolished on the day the new councils started. If that new start date were April 2028, then it would be likely that the currently scheduled MDC elections for May 2027 would be cancelled (closer to the time) and all current MDC councillors see their terms of office extended by an extra year.
- 3.25 Merging several district/smaller unitary councils together whilst simultaneously disaggregating Essex County Council services, their assets and budgets across several new unitary councils is a vast undertaking. It is important to understand that even with a couple of years to work on this, by the time the new unitary councils start (whether in April 2027 or April 2028) it is likely that a significant amount of the work to fully integrate them will still need to take place over the subsequent years. It must be noted that it will be important for both the current authorities to continue to deliver on current local ambitions before the transfer, there will inevitably be challenges on the amount of capacity to look at and deliver new initiatives and projects.
- 3.26 Vesting Day is therefore more the end of phase one of a merger than the end of the merger process. Although a Vesting Day of April 2028 may on the face of it seem to afford a welcome degree of more time to merge councils, in many respects it is just putting off some of the harder and more unsettling decisions that need to be taken, and thus extending the period of uncertainty and stress for staff, contractors and service users. This is because the really hard decisions are taken by the newly elected Members of the Shadow Authority, which is generally only elected in the year before Vesting Day. An April 2028 Vesting Day therefore means elections to the Shadow Authority likely in May 2027, so those difficult decisions being taken from May 2027, instead of from May 2026 Shadow Elections if Vesting Day were April 2027.
- 3.27 Should all 15 councils in Essex be set for abolition and merger into new unitaries, the other areas Maldon is combined with will obviously be significantly important both for the future of effective operation of the new authority, and to provide the best future opportunities for Maldon residents and businesses.
- 3.28 It will be important for Maldon councillors to be able to influence this process to the best of our abilities by focusing on how the different alignments might, more or less positively provide opportunities for improving outcomes for local people – as opposed to taking a more political set of considerations about which combinations of current council areas would be more or less likely to lead to particular sets of future election results for one party or another.
- 3.29 Following the publication of the white paper just before the Christmas break, the following deadlines are particularly noteworthy:

Timeline:

10 January 2025

- (a) Deadline for County and Unitary Councils to request Government to join the Devolution Priority Programme referred to elsewhere.
- (b) Deadline to request Government to postpone May 2025 elections to May 2026 (initially) in order to provide the space and certainty to progress with (1) devolution and (2) local government reorganisation as quickly as possible.

[Note: Essex County, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea Councils submitted their request to join the Devolution Priority Programme and to postpone their elections and this has been agreed by Government.]

21 March 2025 - Interim plans for local government reorganisation to be submitted to Government. This may require a decision at Maldon District Council to support any proposals.

26 September 2025 - Full plans for local government reorganisation to be submitted to Government.

1 April 2026 – New Strategic Authority established for Great Essex exercising devolved powers.

May 2026 - Elections to the office of Mayor of the Strategic Authority - Tranche 1 elections to shadow new Unitary Councils established through local government re-organisation

1 April 2027 - Tranche 1 of the new Unitary Authorities come into being established through local government re-organisation

May 2027 - Tranche 2: elections to shadow new Unitary Councils established through local government re-organisation

1 April 2028 - Tranche 2 of the new Unitary Authorities come into being established through local government re-organisation

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Government's policy position for (1) devolution and (2) local government reorganisation has significant implications for this Council, the residents and businesses of Maldon District, and local Town and Parish Councils, and those in unparished areas. Consequently, it is appropriate to enable all Maldon District Councillors to have this opportunity to consider the policy positions and intentions for the District and provide the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive with the appropriate mandate.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out its ambitions for Maldon District and the Council's services in the period 2025-2028. The Council will continue to focus on delivering the Corporate Plan for that full term or until any new Unitary Council were to replace it.

5.2 Supporting our communities

5.2.1 To be further considered as appropriate

5.3 Investing in our District

5.3.1 To be further considered as appropriate

5.4 Growing our economy

5.4.1 To be further considered as appropriate

5.5 Protecting our environment

5.5.1 To be further considered as appropriate

5.6 **Delivering good quality services.**

5.6.1 To be further considered as appropriate

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 **Impact on Customers** – to be further developed as the future becomes clearer.

6.2 **Impact on Equalities** – to be further developed as the future becomes clearer.

6.3 **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – to be further developed as the future becomes clearer.

6.4 **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Whilst the White Paper itself does not have direct financial implications on the authority, it does potentially lead to substantial change, including the potential abolition of this Council itself, which would include substantial cost in terms of preparing its smooth, safe and legal merger into a new unitary council.

6.5 The comment above relating to the substantial costs involved is important which would be in terms of budgets, resources and capacity. This would need to be balanced against the need to continue to deliver Council Services on a 'business as usual basis' as well as delivering key priorities and projects.

6.6 Significant uncertainty would also be introduced in terms of financial planning over the coming years, which would therefore introduce challenges in terms of the Council's medium term financial plans, including cost pressures, savings and investment.

6.7 The above would therefore need to be acknowledged and plans and resources put in place to address the associated risks as part of the agreed way forward.

6.8 Subject to any approach agreed, it may be helpful to learn from other local government areas that have recently gone through similar reorganisation processes, which in turn would likely help mitigate risks both financially and non-financially.

6.9 **Impact on Resources (human)** – to be further developed as the future becomes clearer, but it is clear that we as a Council would need to allocate resources to the transition process.

Background Papers:

[English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK](#)

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Appendix 1

Devolution Framework summary table

Key

(**) refers to functions for which funding will be included in Integrated Settlements for Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities

(^) refers to functions which apply to Combined and Combined County Authorities only

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
Funding and investment			
Access to a multi-departmental, long-term integrated funding settlement**			X
Long-term investment fund, with an agreed annual allocation		X	X
Removal of gateway review from investment fund, after Gateway One complete			X
Ability to introduce mayoral precepting on council tax^		X	X
Consolidation of local growth and place funding in a single pot**	X	X	X
Strategic leadership			
A statutory duty to produce Local Growth Plans		X	X
Membership of the Council of Nations and Regions		X	X
Membership of the Mayoral Data		X	X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
Council			
Transport and local infrastructure			
Local Transport Authority and public transport functions, including bus franchising and responsibility for an area-wide Local Transport Plan	X	X	X
Simplification and consolidation of local transport funding**	X	X	X
Removal of certain Secretary of State consents, e.g. on lane rental schemes		X	X
Duty to establish a Key Route Network on the most important local roads^		X	X
Mayoral Power of Direction over use of constituent authority powers on the Key Route Network^		X	X
Priority for strategic rail engagement (including mayoral partnerships) with Great British Railways	X	X	X
Statutory role in governing, managing,		X	X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
planning, and developing the rail network			
An option for greater control over local rail stations		X	X
A 'right to request' further rail devolution			X
Priority for support to deliver multi-modal ticketing			X
A clear, strategic role in the decarbonisation of the local bus fleet	X	X	X
Active Travel England support for constituent authority capability^	X	X	X
Formal partnership with National Highways		X	X
Skills and employment support			
Joint ownership of the Local Skills Improvement Plan model, with Employer Representative Bodies	X	X	X
Devolution of the core Adult Skills Fund	X		
Devolution of non-apprenticeship		X	X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
adult skills functions through a consolidated skills funding pot** Central convening of youth careers provision including greater flexibility for Careers hubs		X	X
A clear role in relation to 16-19 education and training		X	X
Responsibility for developing local Get Britain Working Plans	X	X	X
Devolution of supported employment funding**	X	X	X
Co-design of future employment support that is additional to core Jobcentre Plus provision		X	X
Delegated delivery or commissioning of employment support that is additional to core Jobcentre Plus provision			X
Alignment of Jobcentre Plus boundaries with Strategic Authorities			X

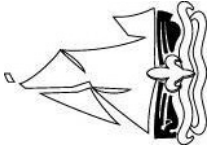
Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
Housing and strategic planning			
A duty to produce a Spatial Development Strategy	X	X	X
Strategic development management powers (once the Spatial Development Strategy is in place)		X	X
Ability to raise a Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy to fund strategic infrastructure (once the Spatial Development Strategy is in place)		X	X
Ability to make Mayoral Development Orders		X	X
Ability to establish Mayoral Development Corporations		X	X
Homes England compulsory purchase powers (held concurrently)	X	X	X
Devolution of wider grant funding to support regeneration and housing delivery**		X	X
Ability to set the strategic direction of any future			X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
programme to support affordable housing provision in their area Strategic Place Partnership with Homes England		X	X
Support to establish a public sector land commission			X
Economic development and regeneration			
Partnership working with Department for Science, Industry and Technology and UK Research and Innovation to explore opportunities for closer long-term collaboration in strengthening local research and innovation capacity	X	X	X
Develop joint innovation action plans with Innovate UK to shape long-term strategies and investments		X	X
Embed UK Research and Innovation lead points of contact for enhanced collaborative working on innovation with Mayoral Strategic Authorities that are committed to work		X	X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
collaboratively on innovation			
Responsibility as the accountable body for the delivery of Growth Hubs	X	X	X
Devolution of Growth Hubs funding**			X
A Strategic Partnership with the Department for Business and Trade focused on domestic growth, exports, investment, and delivery of local growth priorities.		X	X
Partnership working with Department for Culture, Media and Sport Arm's Length Bodies to maximise culture, heritage, and sport spending in place	X	X	X
Environment and climate change			
Devolution of retrofit funding this parliament subject to a successful transition period (see 3.7)**			X
Heat network zoning coordination role	X	X	X
Coordinating local energy planning to	X	X	X

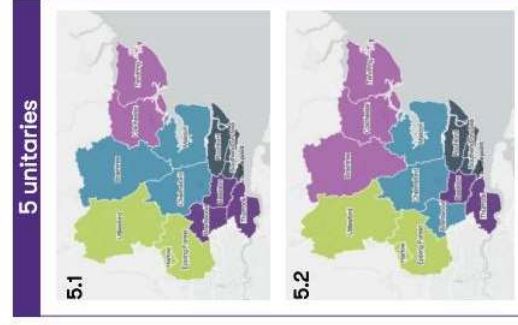
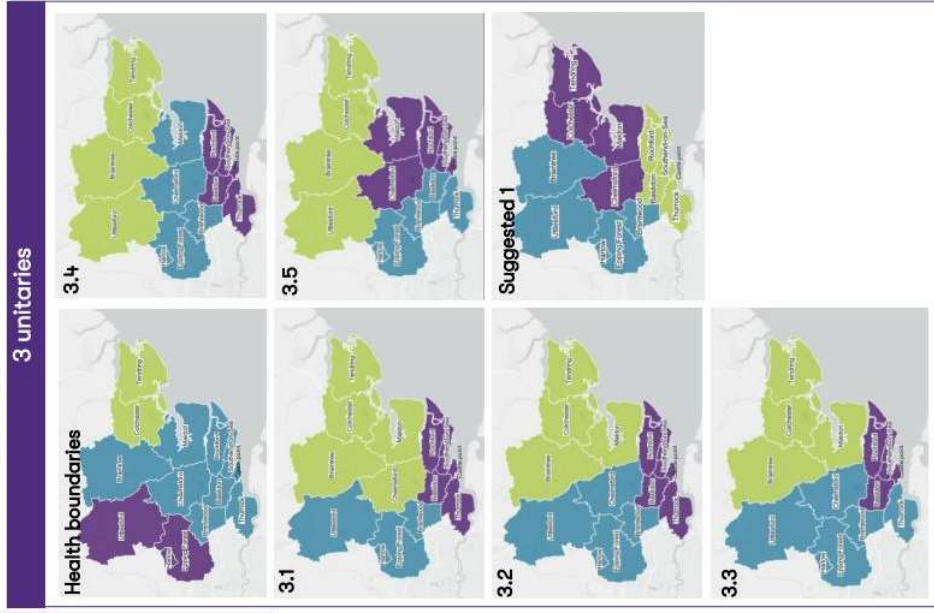
Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
support development of regional network energy infrastructure			
Green jobs and skills coordination role	X	X	X
A strategic role on net zero in collaboration with government, including on Great British Energy's Local Power Plan and Warm Homes Plan	X	X	X
Responsibility for coordinating delivery and monitoring of Local Nature Recovery Strategies^	X	X	X
Health, wellbeing and public service reform			
A bespoke statutory health improvement and health inequalities duty^	X	X	X
Mayors engaged during the Integrated Care Boards chair appointment process		X	X
Mayors as members of local Integrated Care Partnerships, and consideration for position of chair or		X	X

Detail	Foundation Strategic Authorities	Mayoral Strategic Authorities	Established Strategic Authorities
co-chair			
A role in convening partners and driving cross-cutting public service reform, including looking at areas such as multiple disadvantage	X	X	X
Public safety			
Mayors accountable for the exercise of Police and Crime Commissioner functions where police force and mayoral boundaries align^		X	X
Mayors accountable for the exercise of Fire and Rescue Authority functions where fire and rescue service and mayoral boundaries align		X	X
A clear and defined role in local resilience, working with the Local Resilience Forum to embed resilience into broader policy and delivery^	X	X	X



Appendix 2

What are the emerging 16 options...



Appendix 3



Tendring	148
Colchester	193
Braintree	155
	496
Maldon	66
Chelmsford	182
Brentwood	77
	325
Uttlesford	91
Epping Forest	135
Harlow	93
	319
Castle Point	90
Rochford	86
Southend	181
	357
Basildon	188
Thurrock	176
	364

Appendix 4 – Data charts.

Baseline data – current unitary by population quartile

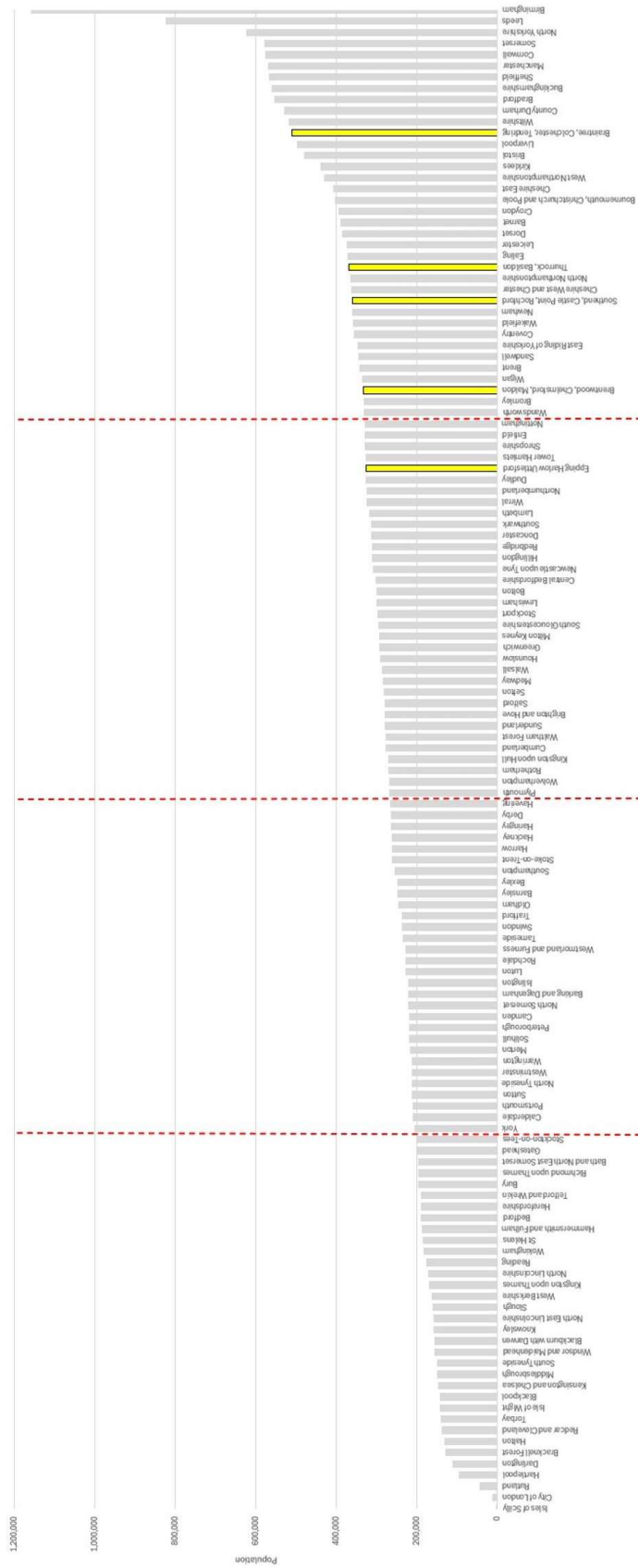
Council	Population	Council	Population	Council	Population	Council	Population
Isles of Scilly	2,281	Bath and North East Somerset	195,618	Plymouth	266,862	Wandsworth	329,035
City of London	10,847	Gateshead	197,722	Wolverhampton	267,651	Bromley	329,578
Rutland	41,151	Stockton-on-Tees	199,966	Rotherham	268,354	Wigan	334,110
Hartlepool	93,861	York	204,551	Kingston upon Hull	268,852	Brent	341,221
Darlington	109,469	Calderdale	207,699	Cumberland	275,390	Sandwell	344,210
Bracknell Forest	126,881	Portsmouth	208,420	Waltham Forest	275,887	East Riding of Yorkshire	346,309
Halton	128,964	Sutton	210,053	Sunderland	277,354	Coventry	355,600
Redcar and Cleveland	137,175	North Tyneside	210,487	Brighton and Hove	277,965	Wakefield	357,729
Torbay	139,479	Westminster	211,365	Salford	278,064	Newham	358,645
Isle of Wight	140,794	Warrington	211,580	Sefton	281,027	Cheshire West and Chester	361,694
Blackpool	141,574	Merton	214,709	Medway	282,702	North Northamptonshire	363,408
Kensington and Chelsea	146,154	Solihull	217,678	Walsall	286,105	Ealing	369,937
Middlesbrough	148,285	Peterborough	217,705	Hounslow	290,488	Leicester	373,399
South Tyneside	148,667	Camden	218,049	Greenwich	291,080	Dorset	383,274
Windsor and Maidenhead	154,738	North Somerset	219,145	Milton Keynes	292,180	Barnet	389,101
Blackburn with Darwen	155,762	Barking and Dagenham	219,992	South Gloucestershire	294,765	Croydon	392,224
Knowsley	157,103	Islington	220,373	Stockport	297,107	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	401,898
North East Lincolnshire	157,754	Luton	226,973	Lewisham	298,653	Cheshire East	406,527
Slough	159,182	Rochdale	226,992	Bolton	298,903	West Northamptonshire	429,013
West Berkshire	162,215	Westmorland and Furness	227,643	Central Bedfordshire	301,501	Kirklees	437,593
Kingston upon Thames	168,302	Tameside	232,753	Newcastle upon Tyne	307,565	Bristol	479,024
North Lincolnshire	170,042	Swindon	235,657	Hillingdon	310,681	Liverpool	496,770
Reading	174,820	Trafford	236,301	Redbridge	310,911	Wiltshire	515,885
Thurrock	176,877	Oldham	243,912	Doncaster	311,027	County Durham	528,127
Southend-on-Sea	180,915	Barnsley	246,482	Southwark	311,913	Bradford	552,644
Wokingham	180,967	Bexley	247,835	Lambeth	316,812	Buckinghamshire	560,409
St Helens	184,728	Southampton	252,689	Wirral	322,453	Sheffield	566,242
Hammersmith and Fulham	185,238	Stoke-on-Trent	259,965	Northumberland	324,362	Manchester	568,996
Bedford	187,466	Harrow	261,185	Dudley	324,969	Cornwall	575,413
Herefordshire	188,719	Hackney	261,491	Tower Hamlets	325,789	Somerset	576,852
Telford and Wrekin	188,871	Haringey	261,811	Shropshire	327,178	North Yorkshire	623,501
Bury	194,606	Derby	263,490	Enfield	327,224	Leeds	822,483
Richmond upon Thames	194,894	Havering	264,703	Nottingham	328,513	Birmingham	1,157,603

Baseline graph – ranking of current unitary by population size



Source: Wikipedia

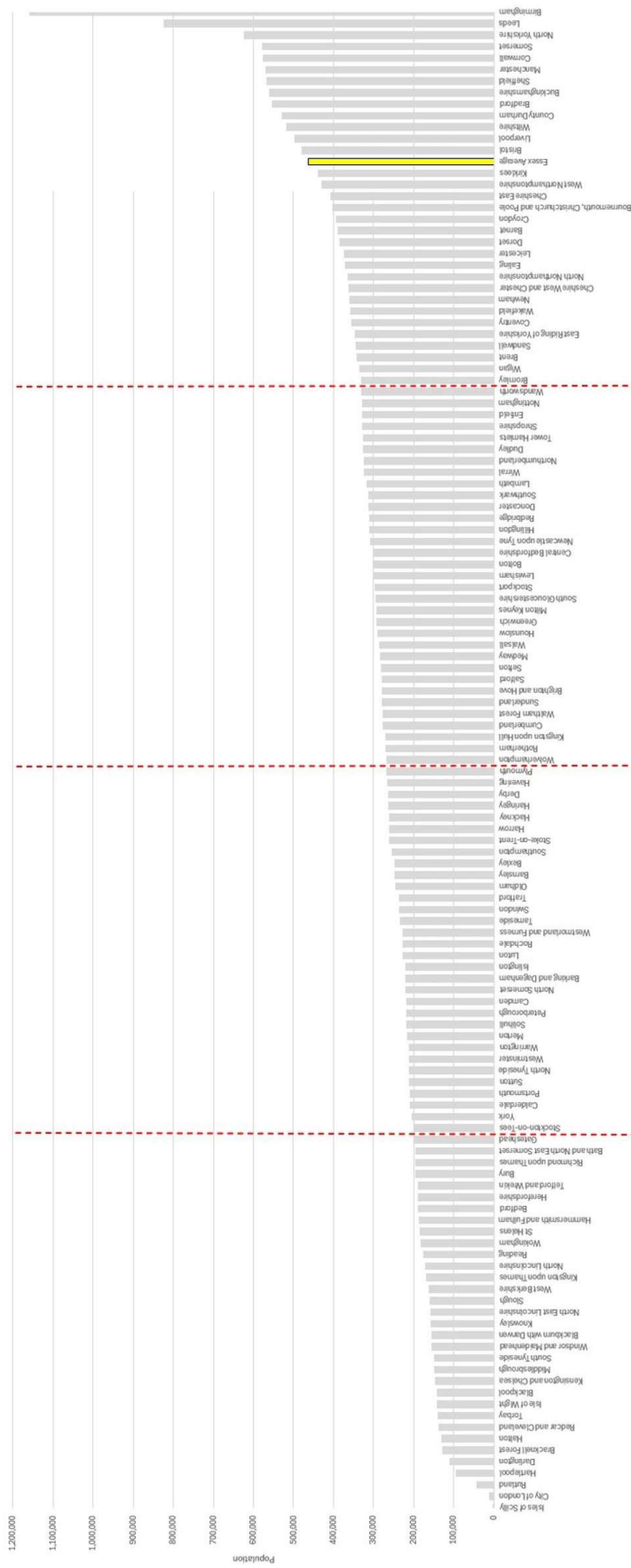
Graph 1a – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 5 new Essex unitaries as per model 5.2



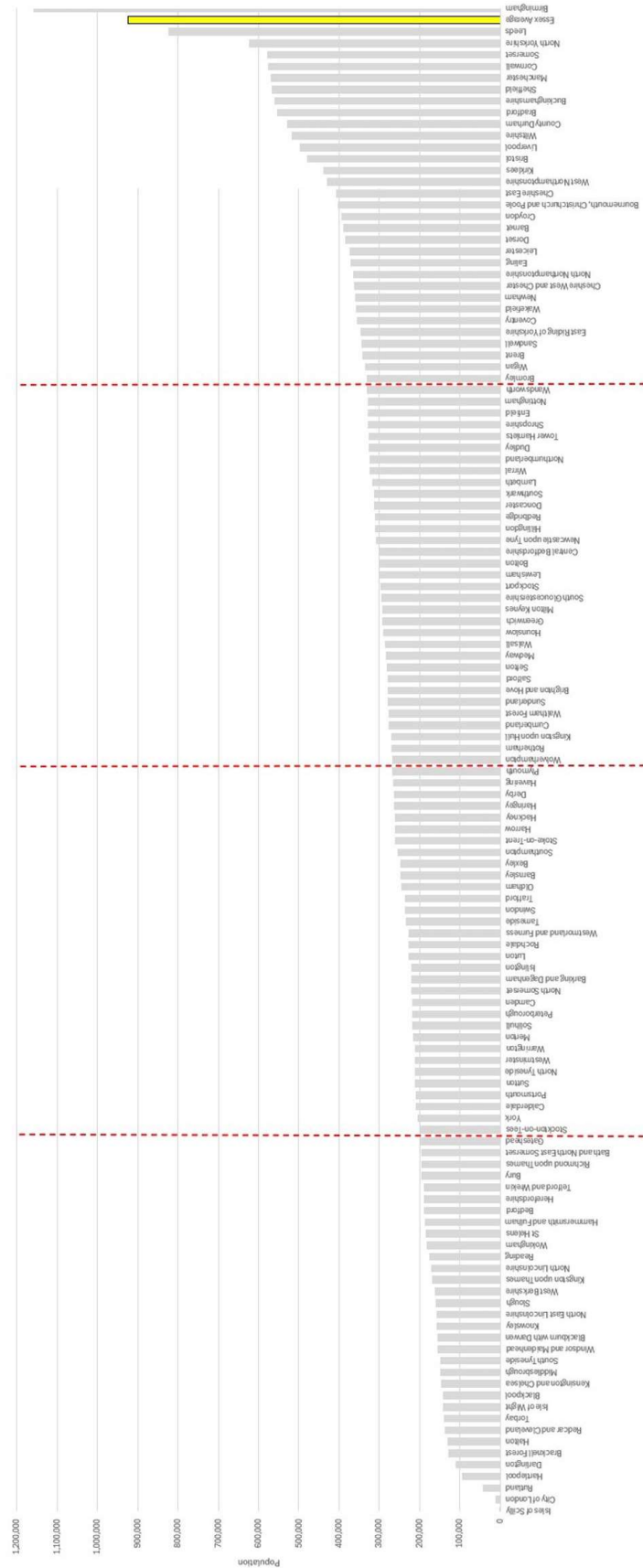
Graph 1b – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 5 new Essex unitaries with average unitary size (ie 1.85m divided by 5)



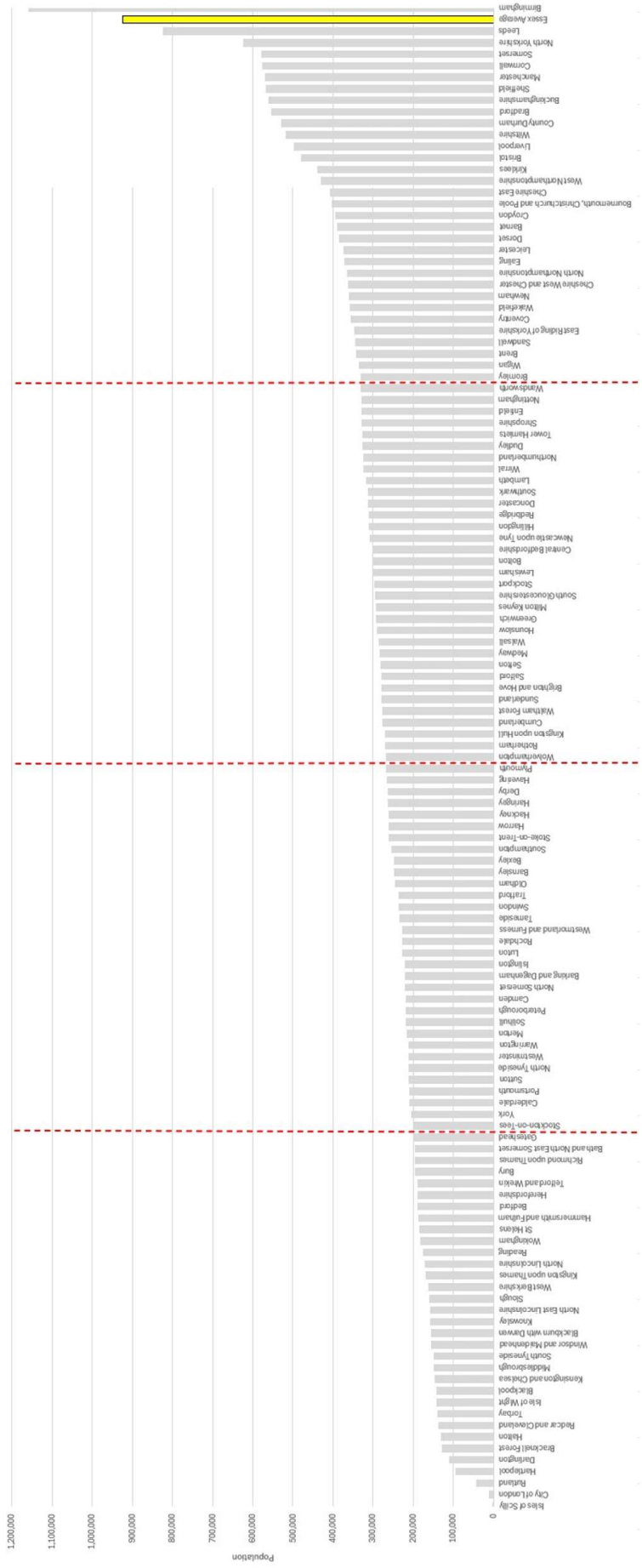
Graph 1c – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 4 new Essex unitaries with average unitary size (ie 1.85m divided by 4)



Graph 1d – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 3 new Essex unitaries with average unitary size (ie 1.85m divided by 3)



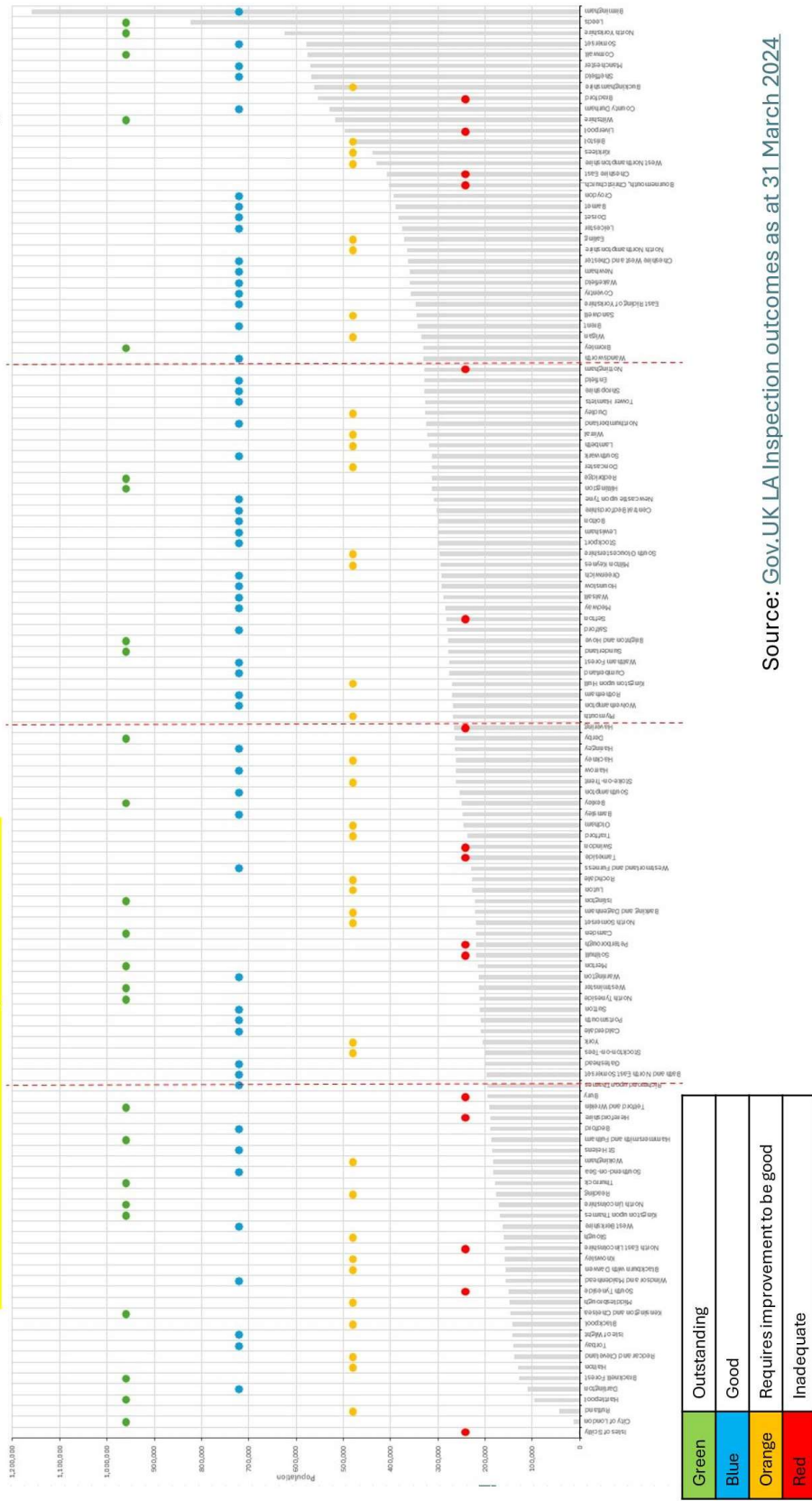
Graph 1e – criteria: size and scale: – ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in 2 new Essex unitaries with average unitary size (ie 1.85m divided by 2)



Graph 1f – criteria: size and scale: ranking of current unitary by population size, adding in just 1 new Essex unitary ie 1.85m

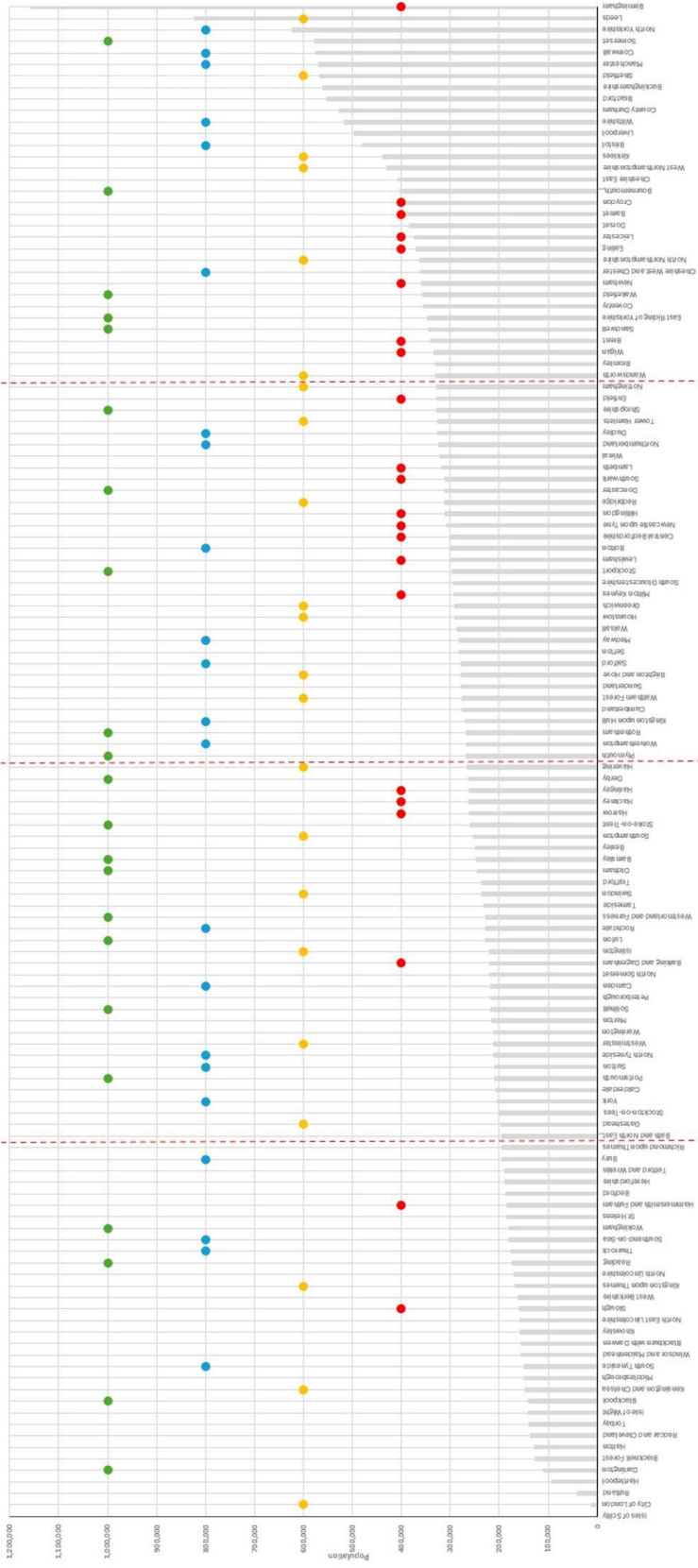


Graph 3 – criteria: Potential: – ranking of current unitary by population size showing most recent Ofsted Children’s Services inspection result headline conclusion– No Correlation to size of Unitary



Source: Gov.UK LA Inspection outcomes as at 31 March 2024

Graph 5 – criteria: Potential: – ranking of current unitary by population size showing most recent Tenant Satisfaction Percentage (TR01) split by quartile



Green	Top Quartile
Lilac	Upper Quartile
Orange	Lower Quartile
Red	Bottom Quartile

Source: Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)