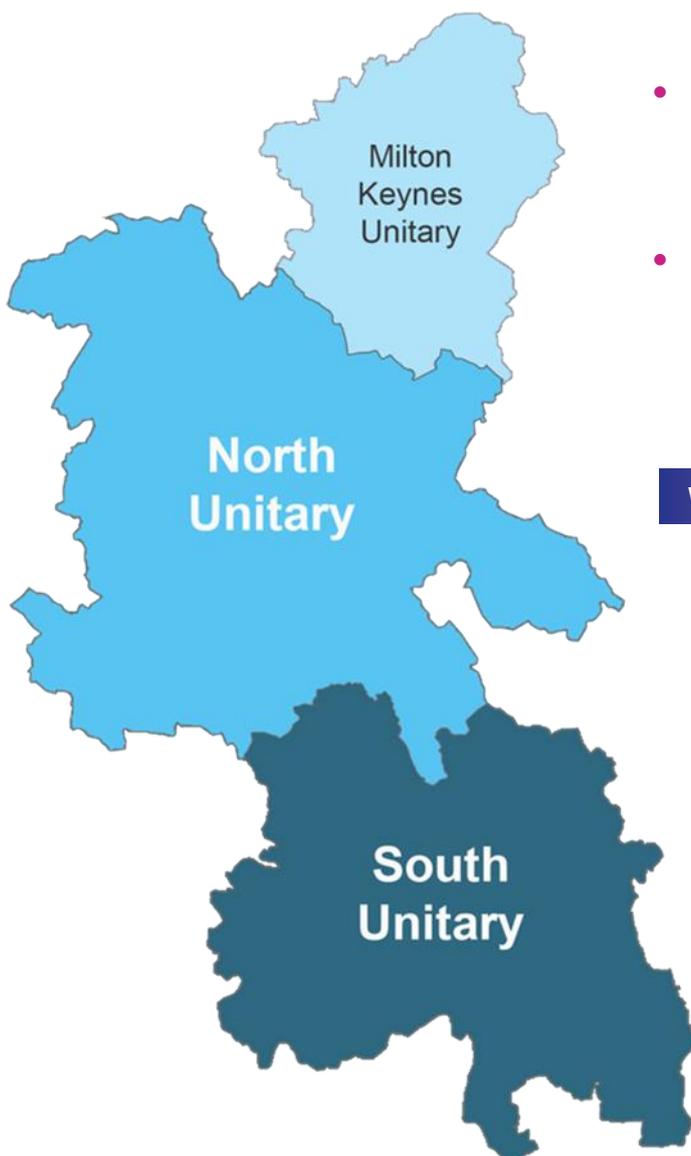


# Two Unitary Councils for Buckinghamshire:

Summary of the submission by Aylesbury Vale, South  
Bucks, Chiltern and Wycombe District Council

## What are we proposing?

The four current district councils propose **two new unitaries**:



- One northern unitary encompassing the area of Aylesbury Vale District Council.
- One southern unitary covering the combined area of Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Councils.

## What would this mean for you?

**MORE LOCAL**

**BETTER OPPORTUNITIES**

**MORE EFFECTIVE**

**BEST VALUE**

## Why two new unitaries?

There are fundamental and crucial differences between north and south Buckinghamshire – in their **economies**, **communities** and even their **geography**. This more local model will secure the best deal for residents, businesses and other key stakeholders.

A more local system will bring accountable decision-making closer and engage communities. Each unitary will be able to prioritise and provide tailored services to better meet local need, efficiently and effectively. Informed by local knowledge, they will be better value for money, more resilient and sustainable.

Each will work strategically with the right partners to focus on their different economic and growth priorities. The north is a key partner in SEMLEP, looks to Milton Keynes, the South Midlands and has natural interests in significant infrastructure projects including East West Rail and the Oxford to Cambridge corridor. A northern unitary has the potential to work in partnership with Milton Keynes to emulate its success and maximise the potential for growth and increased productivity.

**ALIGN  
WITH OTHER  
PUBLIC  
SERVICES**

**MEMBERS &  
COMMUNITY  
LEADERS  
WORKING IN  
PARTNERSHIP**

**IMPROVING  
COMMUNITY  
LEADERSHIP**

The south looks to west London, the M40 corridor and the Thames Valley; a southern unitary would be able to advocate its cause with its natural partners and fully benefit from these relationships, with the expansion of Heathrow and the development of Crossrail continuing to make the south of the county desirable areas for new businesses and those seeking a UK base near London.

The areas of the two unitaries will align with other public services such as the police and CCGs, making partnership work more successful. Both unitaries will work together to ensure the cohesion of Buckinghamshire, particularly on common ground. For example, on waste disposal a shared Energy From Waste facility will be managed between north and south.

With fewer members than under current arrangements, each will have an enhanced role which will see them working in partnership with more community leaders. Parishes and town councils will build on their role as the bedrock of local representation. They will be able to deliver some services

**MORE  
LOCAL  
SYSTEM**

**BETTER  
VALUE FOR  
MONEY**

**MORE  
RESILIENT  
AND  
SUSTAINABLE**

where they want to and are able, but will not necessarily be expected to.

Moving away from traditional limiting forms of engagement, our proposed 'area panels' in response to local need will foster working together – improving community leadership, empowering communities and increasing their resilience.

Joined up strategic planning will create coherent growth strategies and remove the current disconnect created by the county council, which negatively impacts on the delivery of major housing and employment schemes, as well as delaying decisions.

Our extensive experience in transforming services will enable us to deliver services in areas such as transport, social care, children's services and education in a more effective way. We will work with interim managers who are experts in these areas, using existing experts from the county council.

EMPOWERING  
COMMUNITES

INCREASING  
COMMUNITY  
RESILIENCE

COHERENT  
GROWTH  
STRATEGIES

EXPERIENCE IN  
TRANSFORMING  
SERVICES

### Why not the county council's proposed single unitary model?

**One size does not fit all** – the county's model is too simplistic, too large to adapt and fails to take account of essential differences and complexities.

A single unitary as defined in BCC's bid would have a higher ratio of electors to each member than any other county unitary. Two unitaries means a stronger democratic mandate, and in turn more accountable and transparent decision-making.

Leadership and management (and therefore decision-making) would be remote to many parts of the county.

More services would be devolved to parishes, but with no extra resource.

The existing Buckinghamshire boundary has artificially joined areas and hampered ambitions, causing problems with growth, planning, skills development and investment strategies. The single unitary that BCC proposes would reinforce this. There is no broad consensus

ONE SIZE  
DOES NOT  
FIT ALL

around the county's unitary proposal – engagement was carried out with key stakeholders after BCC submitted their proposal, making it pointless.

Bucks County Council has a track record of failing children's services and social care.

It has failed to transform services and demonstrated complacency over growth, which has failed all stakeholders.

If BCC delivered 'good' services at per capita levels of spend of Herts or Oxon they would achieve savings of £15 – 25 million per year.

### What will our proposal deliver?

Our two unitaries proposal will deliver £58 million savings over five years through:

-  Reducing senior posts
-  Reducing the number of members
-  Making savings in corporate services with the removal of the current two tiers
-  Service optimisations
-  Property rationalisation

BCC's single unitary model claims higher savings (£72m), but the two unitary model will offer greater value for money as it has better outcomes for all stakeholders - through more growth opportunities, more tailored services, more local services, empowered local communities.

Each 1% of additional growth achieved by two economically coherent unitaries will result in additional fiscal receipts of £50 million per annum. Council tax and businesses rates receipts will exceed BCC savings if growth rises by over 2%.

The savings detailed in the county council's single unitary proposal should be viewed with caution, as our calculations suggest that: more work is needed on the costs of contracted out district services and staffing of 19 community hubs; transition costs have been underestimated; savings are based on capping redundancies and the 'one-off' sale of assets.

**2** UNITARIES  
MEANS A STRONGER  
DEMOCRATIC  
MANDATE

**MORE  
TAILORED  
SERVICES**

**£58** MILLION  
SAVINGS OVER  
FIVE YEARS