

**Councillor Rose Grewal**  
**Leader of the Council**

Reply To: address as below

Date: 10 September 2026

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**The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP**

Secretary of State for Housing

Communities and Local Government

**Jim McMahon OBE MP**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

MHCLG

*Via email*

Dear Secretary of State and Minister,

**Local Government Reorganisation – Hertfordshire**

Thank you for your letter of 7 September setting out the Government's decision to pause Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Hertfordshire and encouraging councils to stop work on the programme, while a review is undertaken.

I understand and agree that any final decision on the reorganisation of local government in Hertfordshire must be robust. This is a major undertaking and a once in a generation change, and it is essential that it delivers a model of local government that works to the best advantage of residents, communities and businesses across Hertfordshire.

However, it is important that I express my deep disappointment at this outcome, coming as it does at such a late stage. In Welwyn Hatfield, alongside our colleagues across the County, we have invested significant energy, time, effort and resources over the last two years, in keeping pace with the ambitious timetable for LGR set by Government. This has required substantial commitment from elected Members, chief executives, senior staff and partner organisations. While we have maintained frontline services, LGR has inevitably shaped workstreams and priorities throughout this period.

The decision to pause and review the programme now creates significant uncertainty, and we urgently need Government to fully engage with us and set out a clear, transparent and timely process for resolving that uncertainty.

Specifically, I hope you can urgently provide clarity on:

- **The scope and terms of the review** – including transparency around the extent of the review and the criteria against which existing decisions will be reassessed. It is essential that the outcome of the review is robust to instil confidence, including a clear understanding of the financial implications of whichever option is finally agreed for the Councils affected by LGR in Hertfordshire.
- **The timetable and decision making process** – including when the review will commence, key milestones, and when we can expect a final

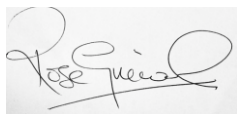
decision. The loss of momentum created by this pause will only increase the longer the delay continues.

- **The role of councils in the review** – including how councils, elected Members and local partners will be engaged in the process.
- **The relationship between LGR and the Government's devolution ambitions** – we fully support the Prime Ministers desire to accelerate Devolution and we support the establishment of a Hertfordshire based Mayoral Strategic Authority. It is important that the review does not adversely impact this ambition. It would be helpful to understand how these two strands of reform are intended to work together moving forward.
- **The financial consequences of the pause** – including whether Government will consider reimbursing councils for expenditure already incurred and committed in good faith, in progressing LGR in accordance with the timetable and requirements previously set by Government.

While I am disappointed by the decision and concerned about its impacts, I remain committed to ensuring that Welwyn Hatfield's interests are fully represented throughout the review. We will continue to work constructively with Government and with partners across Hertfordshire to ensure that any future arrangements are sustainable, effective and deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents.

I look forward to working with you and your officials as the review progresses, and to receiving the clarity and certainty we urgently require.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Rose Grewal  
Leader of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Leader of Labour Group



Cllr Sandreni Bonfante  
Deputy Leader of Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and Leader of Liberal Democrats Group