



**POLICE & CRIME  
COMMISSIONER**  
for Leicester,  
Leicestershire & Rutland  
Your Communities - Your Commissioner

12<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Open Letter

Dear Sir Peter & Cllr Taylor,

Now that we know that the County Council elections are not being cancelled, I am writing to you to urge you to open up discussions about the Devolution process to councillors, Members of Parliament and other key stakeholders. An open and transparent approach to this important issue will ensure a more effective, more efficient and more democratic end result.

I find it somewhat surprising that you have not included the Leader of the third top tier authority – Rutland County Council – in your discussions.

The timetable for this major change to local government arrangements is short as the government has not altered the deadline for submission of proposals.

Of course, the submitting of a proposal for local devolution is largely in your hands as the leaders of our top tier authorities. However, it is important for the residents, businesses and organisations of our area that we get this right. It is also vital that we take the people with us on this journey. History has taught us that reforms that are forced upon an unwilling public are likely to lead to resentment, dissatisfaction and, ultimately, to failure.

We live in a democracy and it is vital that the public and their democratically elected representatives are fully engaged in the making of important decisions that affect them.

While the principle of the devolution deals being introduced by this government have a democratic mandate from the result of the 2024 General Election, the details of the deal affecting Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland do not. If whatever deal results from this process is to have a chance of success it is vital that the people or their elected representatives have a voice.

The process of local government reorganization is a complex one. The main focus of the national government to date has been on economic issues. However, it is also important to take into account local loyalties among our residents, the importance of transparent lines of democratic responsibility and the accountability of those managing the reorganization.

Many different organisations will be involved in this process. The expertise, experience and knowledge of the leaders of these organisations will be important in ensuring that a transition takes place smoothly. Their input will also be vital to ensuring that the final shape of the devolution deal works effectively and efficiently to the benefit of all residents, businesses and organisations across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.



I gather that in other areas where a devolution settlement is taking place a round table working group has been established. These groups are proving to be invaluable in ensuring that expert opinion is taken into account.

Having looked at models in place elsewhere, I would suggest that a starting point for such a body in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland would be a working group consisting of:

- Leicestershire County Council Leader
- Rutland County Council Leader
- Leicester City Mayor
- Chief Fire Officer
- Chair, NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board
- District Council Leaders x6
- Leicestershire Probation Service
- Police and Crime Commissioner

Each supported by their Chief Executive Officer for matters of administrative detail.

Local councillors have great expertise to bring to this process. However, there are simply too many of them for all to sit on the working group. I would suggest that they should be regularly updated by email so that the opinions of all councillors, no matter to which political party, or none, they belong can be properly taken into account.

This will give the democratically elected councillors an opportunity to have input to the process. I hope that you will respond positively to these suggestions to make the process open, transparent and democratic.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rupert Matthews', with a long horizontal line underneath.

**Rupert Matthews**  
**Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland**

CC:  
Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP  
Chief Constable of Leicestershire Police  
Members of Parliament for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland  
Council Leaders of District and Borough Councils  
Rutland County Council Leader  
Chief Fire Officer for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland  
Chair, NHS Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board  
Head of Leicestershire Probation Service