

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP
The Speaker
Speaker's House
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

22 January 2026

Dear Mr Speaker

**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England:
supplementary estimate submission for 2025/26**

Ahead of the Speaker's Committee's formal consideration of the Commission's supplementary estimate, I thought it would be helpful to provide a summary of the background to the estimate and to provide assurances to you and the Committee as to the robustness of our budgeting approach and management.

At the session with the Committee on 11 November 2025, we discussed our intention to return £500,000 of our allocated budget for 2025/26 through the supplementary estimates process.

As the Committee will be aware, this provision was originally included in our main supply estimate for 2025/26 in anticipation of potential demands arising from the English Devolution White Paper and, specifically, local government reorganisation (LGR).

At the time we met the Committee in March 2025, the scope and pace of LGR were uncertain, making it challenging for us to accurately identify the work and resource that we would need to respond to LGR and its impacts.

The provision that we included in our estimate aimed to ensure that the Commission would be equipped to respond swiftly and effectively to any requests for support. It was intended to provide flexibility, allowing us to bring in temporary staff or specialist expertise, such as legal advice, to meet emerging needs.

Since then, our role in supporting LGR has become clearer. We have worked closely with both MHCLG and local authorities to provide our expertise in support of their work on councillor numbers and interim electoral arrangements for new authorities. This has included delivering webinars, publishing guidance and responding to individual requests for advice.

In the event, we have been able to complete this activity without the need for additional staff and within our core resources. This has been possible by making effective use of capacity within our review teams, facilitated by a reduced review programme following our decision to pause activity in areas invited to submit proposals for new unitary authorities.

We are now confident that the remaining work during this financial year can be delivered without drawing on this additional LGR budgetary provision. It is appropriate, therefore, to return these funds, reflecting our commitment to only spend what is necessary to deliver our objectives.

Whilst we appreciate this is a significant mid-year change to our budget, it is not entirely unexpected given the uncertainty of the position in early 2025 when we submitted our main supply estimate, only weeks after publication of the English Devolution White Paper. These specific, unique, circumstances created the challenge of how we could ensure sufficient resources would be available to enable us to respond to an unknown pressure, at pace, which led us to include a dedicated provision in our estimate to ensure that we would not delay the introduction of any desired new structures. In the event, this has not been required.

We continue to manage our budget as a whole robustly, seeking to ensure our expenditure is as efficient as possible and that we are delivering value for money across all our functions.

Looking ahead, in the five-year financial plan contained in our corporate plan, we had included similar provision for 2026/27, intended as a marker to highlight the potential for additional resources being required to be able to respond to LGR. We are now clearer as to the likely scope and scale of the impact on our work over the coming year, and this will be reflected in our estimate. Our 2026/27 budget will not include a separate provision for LGR but rather will reflect throughout where spend is required to deliver our functions, both in the current year and in terms of building capability and capacity for future peaks in activity.

Should you require any further information to support the Committee's consideration of our supplementary estimate, our Director of Corporate Services, Bipon Bhakri (bipon.bhakri@lgbce.org.uk), will be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely



Ailsa Irvine

**Chief Executive
Local Government Boundary Commission for England**