



Securing the Future:

Zscaler for Seamless
Local Authority
Integration



How Zscaler can help the challenges facing local authorities by seamlessly integrating whilst continuing to provide public services

The UK government is grappling with significant cost pressures exacerbated by recent economic policies and the ongoing challenges of managing public finances. A recent report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) suggests that real-term spending per person on local authorities fell by 19% over the last decade, and core funding for councils was cut by 55% in real terms between 2010 and 2015. This trend is further compounded by a Local Government Association report predicting a funding gap of £4 billion for councils in the 2023/24 fiscal year. This creates a perfect storm, as recent reports from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and KPMG indicate a lower-than-expected growth prediction for the UK economy, which would eventually lead to lower tax revenues and local authority funding for the government.

To address these challenges, the UK government has proposed a major restructuring of local government, merging district and county councils into larger “super councils.” This initiative, spearheaded by Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, aims to reduce costs by streamlining services and eliminating duplication through the merger of district and county councils into larger strategic local authorities. However, there are concerns that the plan might not achieve the expected savings. Ms. Rayner has already signed off on the creation of mayors in Greater Lincolnshire and the combined authority of Hull and East Yorkshire, which was followed by similar local authority consolidations in the Cumberland as well as Westmorland and Furness councils.

The recent reforms echo the combined authorities provisions of the Local Democracy,

Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (LDEDCA), which enabled a group of two or more councils to collaborate and make collective decisions across council boundaries. Councils were encouraged to share resources (including IT) to provide better services and reduce costs. Combined authorities were implemented in some well-known regions, including the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, and West Midlands Combined Authority.

In recent times, the government has also introduced Warning, Advice and Reporting Points (WARPs) for councils, which are community-based services for public sector information security practitioners. These provide a platform for members to receive and share up-to-date advice on information security threats, incidents, and solutions. WARPs bring together Information Security, Assurance, and Governance practitioners on a regional, sub-regional, or partnership basis.

All the aforementioned reforms rely on the sharing of people, processes, and tools between local authorities. IT becomes a critical point in facilitating this approach by leveraging IT infrastructure and applications to ensure that the cost-cutting and collaboration aims of the reforms can be realized. This disruption may be the catalyst local authorities need to initiate a digital transformation revolution, which is essential to meet the government’s ambitious cost transformation agenda. Before the recent announcement, the Future Council pilot was set up to tackle the IT challenges associated with combined authorities. It worked closely



with eight pilot councils from March to October 2023 to identify common challenges and develop solutions for digital transformation in local government.

While these mergers aim to improve efficiency and service delivery, they also necessitate significant organizational and technological changes. Some of the challenges faced by local authorities include:

- **Data silos:** Existing systems within individual councils often operate independently, creating isolated data repositories. This fragmentation hinders data sharing and collaboration, which are crucial for effective service delivery across a merged entity.
- **Legacy systems:** Many councils rely on outdated IT infrastructure and software. These legacy systems may be incompatible with modern integration technologies, hindering data exchange and creating significant compatibility issues.
- **Integration complexity:** Merging disparate systems and data sources requires complex integration processes. This can involve significant technical expertise, time, and resources, potentially disrupting existing services during the transition.
- **Cybersecurity concerns:** Integrating systems from different organizations increases the attack surface for cyberthreats. Ensuring the security and privacy of sensitive data across the merged entity is paramount.

This is where the Zscaler M&A Integration solution comes in. With a track record of helping hundreds of private and public sector clients speed up, de-risk, and simplify their cross-entity management and collaboration, our zero

IT footprint and cloud-delivered integration solution help optimize all three key metrics of an integration program—cost, duration, and risk—while materially improving user experience. Our approach provides a strategic framework to ensure local authorities can be integrated seamlessly without impacting delivery of critical public services.

Our zero trust platform securely connects resources across councils and addresses the cybersecurity risk with no need to address underlying network complexity. This means users across councils can be productive on Day 1 while our simple-to-operate, scalable, cloud-centric platform protects against known and evolving cyberthreats and risks. The Zscaler platform:

- **Accelerates integration** with reduced integration timelines and seamless user productivity.
- **Enhances visibility** with comprehensive views into user, application, and app-to-app interactions.
- **Secures access** to critical applications on Day 1, minimizing disruption to essential services.
- **Reduces cyber risk** and enhances security posture with the power of the world's largest security cloud.
- **Optimizes costs** by reducing hardware, MPLS, and support expenses with a cloud-centric approach.



The simplicity of the Zscaler approach can help you complete local authority integrations in far less time and with little user disruption, lower costs, and reduced risk. Zscaler allows local authorities to quickly begin value capture activities and help meet the government's ambitious transformation goals through:

- **Flexible integration solutions** that address the unique needs and challenges of merging councils.
- **Demand-based pricing models** to accommodate varying budgets.

Zscaler provides tools for local authorities leaders to navigate the complexities of post-merger integration successfully. Our AI-backed platform significantly improves essential metrics that directly impact government and council objectives, making Zscaler a key strategic investment.

50%

INCREASE IN
ACCELERATING
TIMELINES

85%

REDUCTION IN
CYBERTHREATS

40%

REDUCTION
IN ONE-TIME
INTEGRATION
COSTS

Successful local government reform requires a strategic and technology-driven approach. By leveraging innovative solutions like the Zscaler M&A Integration platform, local authorities can overcome the integration challenges and cybersecurity risks, ultimately achieving the government's objectives of improved efficiency, enhanced service delivery, and reduced costs.

Reach out to the Zscaler M&A/D team to learn how you can create sustainable value and help your council contribute to the overall government agenda.

About Zscaler

Zscaler (NASDAQ: ZS) accelerates digital transformation so customers can be more agile, efficient, resilient, and secure. The Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange™ platform protects thousands of customers from cyberattacks and data loss by securely connecting users, devices, and applications in any location. Distributed across more than 150 data centers globally, the SSE-based Zero Trust Exchange™ is the world's largest in-line cloud security platform. Learn more at zscaler.com or follow us on Twitter @zscaler.

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