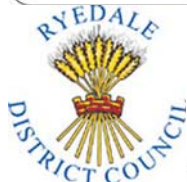
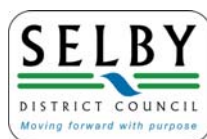


Survey of Parish Councils in North Yorkshire

Research Study Conducted for the North Yorkshire District Council Network



June 2007

Contents

Introduction	1
The purpose of this survey	1
Methodology	2
Interpretation of the data	2
Publication of the data	2
Key findings	4
Profile of parishes which responded to this survey	4
Most parish clerks feel well informed about council affairs	4
Knowledge of proposal	5
View of unitary proposal	5
Creation of greater links between authorities	8
An enhanced role for parish and town councils	9
Appendices	
Marked up Questionnaire	

Introduction

The purpose of this survey

In the last eighteen months, the debate on local government structure has once again come to the fore. In March 2007, Local Government Minister Phil Woolas announced that unitary applications from ten county councils and six district councils were agreed for further consultation. One of these areas was North Yorkshire where the County Council proposed that a new unitary council be set up to replace the existing arrangements across the county.

Following the Minister's announcement, Hambleton District Council, on behalf of all seven district councils in the county, asked Ipsos MORI to research the views of local residents and parish councils. This report provides an overview of the findings of the latter part of the research, which was conducted with parish councils. A separate report covers our research with residents.

The district councils were keen to understand parish councils' knowledge, understanding and views of the proposals and therefore commissioned Ipsos MORI to undertake a census survey with North Yorkshire parish council clerks.

Specifically, the research covered:

- knowledge of, engagement with, and attitudes towards, local governance in the county;
- knowledge of, and attitudes towards, models of local government structure;
- awareness and views of the County Council's submission, 'A New Council for North Yorkshire'; and
- attitudes towards the appropriateness of devolving services to town and parish councils.

In drafting the questionnaire, Ipsos MORI have been conscious of the controversies over the years and to the need to ensure, as in all of its work, that the survey is above any criticism of partiality. Where applicable, the survey incorporated questions that have been previously used and adopted by Ipsos MORI (and often subject to discussion with local government associations) when working with independent organisations reviewing local government structure – the Local Government Commission for England and the Boundary Committee for England (part of the Electoral Commission).

In addition, the parish survey was designed to replicate the residents' survey content, although with changes as appropriate for the audience. Comparisons have been made in this report with the findings of the residents' research conducted in May 2007. However, these comparisons should be viewed as

indicative only, as the residents' survey employed a telephone methodology, compared with a postal survey used in this research.

Methodology

Contact details for town and parish council and parish meetings in North Yorkshire were provided to Ipsos MORI by the North Yorkshire District Council Network. Ipsos MORI sent an eight-page postal questionnaire to all 605 parish clerks across the seven district authorities in North Yorkshire, although where details were not held for a clerk the questionnaire was directed to the Parish Council Chairperson.

To meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act, a covering letter stating the purpose for which the data was being collected was sent with each questionnaire. The front page of each questionnaire was branded with the seven district councils and Ipsos MORI logos.

Fieldwork took place between 30 April and 25 May 2007. This was broken down into two key stages: a first mailout with questionnaires posted to all 605 addresses in the sample on 30 April 2007, and a reminder questionnaire posted to all non-respondents by the first cut-off date, 18 May 2007. The final deadline for questionnaires to be returned was 25 May 2007.

Question 1 gave clerks the opportunity to state whether their response was given on their own, their council's or their chair's behalf, or was completed by the parish chair or other parish council representative.

Across the entire fieldwork period 388 questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 64%.

Interpretation of the data

It should be remembered that a sample, and not all parishes in North Yorkshire, responded to the survey. All results are therefore subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant.

Where percentages in the topline do not sum 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers. An asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half a per cent but greater than zero.

It is also worth emphasising that the survey deals with parishes' *perceptions* at the time the survey was conducted *rather than with facts*.

Publication of the data

As the North Yorkshire District Council Network has engaged Ipsos MORI to provide an objective and representative programme of research, it is important to protect the Network's interests by ensuring that it is accurately reflected in any press release or publication of the findings. As part of Ipsos MORI's standard terms and conditions, the publication of the data in this volume is therefore

subject to the advance approval of Ipsos MORI. This would only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misinterpretation of the findings.

©Ipsos MORI/J30548

Checked & Approved:

Toby Cotton

Rachel Ellis

Colin Wilby

Key findings

Profile of parishes which responded to this survey

1. Question 1 of our questionnaire gave parish clerks the opportunity to state whether their response was given on their own, their council's or their chair's behalf, or was completed by the parish chair or other council representative. In relation to those who returned questionnaires, half (53%) were town or parish clerks, 35% the town or parish council chair and 11% another parish council representative. Half (49%) of respondents completed the questionnaire giving a personal view, whilst 43% gave a view which they felt represented the view of their councillors as a whole.
2. Two thirds of the sample (67%) are from parish councils whilst 27% are from parish meetings, and 6% are town councils.
3. In terms of district area, the sample profile broadly matches that of the overall location of town and parish councils and parish meetings in the seven districts of North Yorkshire. One in five respondents are from parishes within the district areas of Hambleton and Ryedale (21% and 19% respectively). One in seven are from the districts of Craven (15%), Harrogate, and Richmondshire (14% each) and less than one in ten are from the districts of Selby and Scarborough (9% and 7% respectively).
4. Regarding the size of the parish population, 28% of the parishes surveyed have populations of less than 200 residents, 34% between 200 and 499 residents, and 29% 400 or more residents. As expected, parish meetings tend to be more prevalent in parishes where populations are less than 200 residents (76% of all parish meetings are in these areas).
5. Three quarters (75%) of the parishes responding consider themselves to be 'active', with parishes who describe themselves thus tending to be parish councils and therefore from areas with higher populations. One in nine (87%) parish councils describe themselves as 'active', as do a similar proportion (90%) of parishes with populations of over 200 residents.

Most parish clerks feel well informed about council affairs

6. Almost nine in ten (86%) parishes say that their district council keeps them very or fairly well informed about the services and benefits provided compared with 66% who say that the County Council keeps them informed. Two in five (38%) parishes say that their district authority keeps them *very* well informed compared to 17% who say the same about the County.

7. A similar question was asked of residents in North Yorkshire in April 2007 regarding the degree to which they felt that their local councils in general kept them informed – two thirds (66%) said that the local council kept them very or fairly well informed. This difference in awareness is an important consideration when comparing the views of parish clerks and councillors with those of residents. It should be noted however that some caution ought to be exercised when making comparisons with this survey given differences in methodologies, timing and question wording¹.

Knowledge of proposal

8. Claimed awareness of the proposals for local government reorganisation in North Yorkshire is high. Almost three quarters (73%) of parishes say that they know a great deal or a fair amount about the proposal. Larger parishes (those with populations of more than 500 residents) and those that consider themselves to be 'active', are more likely than other parishes to say that they know either a great deal or a fair amount about the proposal (84% and 77% respectively).
9. In January 2007, North Yorkshire County Council published the document 'A New Council for North Yorkshire' which set out the proposal for local government reorganisation. Whilst two thirds (68%) of parishes as a whole have read some or all of this document, parish councils are more likely than parish meetings to have read some or all of it (71% compared with 58% respectively).
10. Though awareness of the issue in general is high, 44% of parishes would like more information before making up their mind on the proposal. As expected given the lower proportion who feel informed by councils in general, residents in North Yorkshire are almost twice as likely as parishes to state that they would like more information before making up their mind on the issue (82%)².

View of unitary proposal

11. On the whole parishes do not agree that there is a need to change to a unitary system of local government in North Yorkshire. Two thirds (66%) disagree that there is a need to change compared with one in five (21%) who agree that there is a need to change, and 12% who are neutral.

¹ Ipsos MORI interviewed by telephone a representative sample of 2,007 North Yorkshire residents aged 18+ on the subject of government reorganisation in April 2007.

² Although again, it is important to note that due to the difference in methodologies, comparisons between the views of parishes and residents should be treated as indicative only.

12. When compared with results for residents in North Yorkshire, parishes are less likely to agree that there is a need to change to a single authority providing all services (21% agree compared with 30% of residents). Similarly, parishes are more likely to *disagree* that there is a need to change (66% and 51% disagree respectively). However, a similar proportion of residents and parishes are neutral about the issue (12% each). As has already been mentioned, some caution has to be exercised here since the different methodologies involved in surveying residents and parishes render the figures not directly comparable.
13. Whilst, in general, only a minority of parishes agree that there is a need to change to a new system with a single authority providing all services, larger parishes (i.e. those parishes with populations of more than 500 residents) are more likely to feel that there is a need to change (31% agree compared with 21% of parishes overall). Similarly, those who claim a great deal/fair amount of knowledge about the unitary proposal are more likely than those who know only a little or nothing at all to agree that there is a need to change (25% versus 10% respectively).
14. The extent to which parishes feel informed by either the County or by their district council also seems to have a bearing on the degree to which parishes support a change to a unitary system of local government in North Yorkshire. Those parishes who feel that the district authority keeps them informed about the services and benefits that it provides, and those who think that the County Council do not keep them informed are more likely to *disagree* that there is a need to change (70% and 76% disagree respectively compared with 66% overall). Similarly, those parishes who feel that their district council does not keep them informed are more likely than other parishes to agree that there is a need to change (46% versus 21% overall).
15. Turning now to reasons for opposition to the proposal, three quarters (75%) feel that a single council providing all services in North Yorkshire would be remote and less in touch with local people and local issues while seven in ten (70%) agree that North Yorkshire is too big an area to be served by only one council providing all services. Similar proportions of agreement to these statements are found amongst residents in North Yorkshire³. This issue also features heavily in the response to open ended questions, since without being prompted, these reasons for opposition are stated by one in five parishes (18%).
16. Smaller parishes (those with populations of less than 200 residents) are more likely than parishes as a whole to agree that a single council would be too remote (83% compared with 65% of parishes with populations of 500+).

³ Although again, it is important to note that the telephone methodology used in April this year means that results are not directly comparable.

17. Information levels, both about the proposal and in general, also impact on parishes views of the appropriateness of a single council. Those parishes that have read some or all of the County Council's proposal document are more likely than those that have heard only a little or nothing about this document to disagree that a single council would be too remote (17% versus 8%) and that North Yorkshire is too big an area to be served by only one council (20% versus 11%). Those parishes who feel that their district council does not keep them informed are more likely than average to disagree both that a single council would be too remote and that North Yorkshire is too big an area to be served by one council (26% and 40% compared with 14% and 17% overall respectively). Conversely, those that feel that the *County Council* does not keep them informed are more likely to agree with these statements (84% and 81% compared with 75% and 71% overall respectively).
18. The prospect of reorganisation is clearly a salient issue to parishes since less than one in seven (15%) of parishes agree that a change to a single council providing all services in North Yorkshire would *not* have an impact on their town or parish council, while two thirds (68%) disagree with this statement. Similarly, more than half (58%) agree that the change to a single council would be too disruptive.
19. Parishes tend not to see a need for change from the current two-tier system in order to improve efficiency. Whilst a half of all parishes (51%) agree that with a single council it would be clearer who is responsible for local services, only a quarter (27%) agree that a single council would be more efficient than the current system of two councils (53% disagree). In addition, most do not feel that the current system needs greater clarity. On the whole parishes are more likely to disagree that the current two tiered system of local government is confusing (50%) than they are to agree with this statement (33%). As expected, residents of North Yorkshire are more likely to find the current system confusing (55%).
20. Parishes feel that when the decision is made about whether or not to replace the existing system of two local authorities with a new system with one council providing all services, the quality of the services (73%) the accountability of the council to local people and the cost of services (both 69%) should be taken into account. When asked to identify the single most important factor, the quality of the services and the accountability of the council were the top two mentions (31% and 29% respectively). Less important factors to take into account were the sense of local community, levels of information about the council and its services and historical and traditional place names, all of which were mentioned by less than 2% of parishes.

Creation of greater links between authorities

21. Over two thirds (68%) of parishes feel that rather than creating a single council providing services across the whole of North Yorkshire, it would be better if the existing county and the seven district councils worked more effectively together. Compared to residents in North Yorkshire, parishes are slightly less likely to agree that the County Council and the seven districts should work more effectively together (77% of residents agree)⁴.
22. Large parishes (500+ residents) are most likely than to *disagree* that it would be better if the existing County Council and the seven district areas worked more effectively together rather than creating a new unitary authority (27% versus 18% overall).
23. The degree to which parishes feel informed by their district or the County Council again seems to play a part in a parish's propensity to agree that more effective links between these authorities would be preferable to a new unitary authority. Those parishes who feel that the County Council does not keep them informed are more likely than parishes as a whole to agree that a more effective working relationship between county and district councils is preferable (81% versus 69% overall). Conversely, those parishes who feel that the district council does not keep them informed are more likely to disagree (36% compared with 18% overall).
24. Again, the level of knowledge about the issue of proposed government restructuring seems to have a bearing on the support for a move to a unitary system of local government in North Yorkshire. Those parishes who say that they know a little or nothing about the proposal for local government reorganisation in North Yorkshire are more likely than those who say that they know a great deal or a fair amount to agree with the statement that it would be better for the County Council and the seven districts to work more effectively together (77% versus 66% respectively).
25. Almost nine in ten (88%) parishes agree that the leaders of the county council and all the district councils in North Yorkshire should meet together regularly to take forward the needs of the county as a whole. Larger parishes (500 or more residents) are most likely to *strongly agree* than parishes as a whole (58% versus 44% overall).

⁴ Although again, it is important to note that the telephone methodology used in May this year means that results are not directly comparable.

26. There is a high level of agreement that there is scope for strengthening the links between principal councils and town and parish councils both under the current two tier structure and if there were to be a single council in North Yorkshire (76% and 63% of parishes agree respectively). Whilst this is the case there appears to be significantly more support amongst parish councils when compared with other parish types for strengthening these links under the current two tier structure of local government (83% of parish councils agree compared with 76% of parishes as a whole).
27. Agreement on the scope for strengthening the links between principal councils and town or parish councils under differing local government structure in North Yorkshire appears to vary according to the degree to which parishes feel that their district or the County Council keeps them informed. Those parishes who feel uninformed by the County Council are more likely than parishes overall to agree that there is scope to strengthen links under the current structure (87% versus 76% overall), whilst those who feel uninformed by the district tend to agree that there is scope were there to be a single authority (88% versus 63% overall).
28. Agreement on the scope for strengthening links between principal councils and town or parish councils under particular structures of local government therefore seems to be bound up with the degree to which parishes agree that there is a need to change to a unitary system in North Yorkshire. Over four in five (84%) parishes who agree that there is a need to change to a unitary system agree that there is scope for strengthening the links were there to be a single council compared with three in five parishes overall (63%).

An enhanced role for parish and town councils

29. Almost one in nine (88%) parishes agree that local decisions should be made by local people, while 58% agree that a under a single council, local councillors would have less power to improve things in their local area. As would be expected, those who agree that a single council would be too remote and those who agree that North Yorkshire covers too large an area to be served by one authority are more likely than parishes as a whole to agree with these statements.
30. Smaller parishes (less than 200 residents) are also more likely to agree that the change to a single council would mean that local councillors would have less power to improve things in their local area (70% agree compared with 58% overall).
31. Parishes are divided as to the opportunities that the change to a single council would provide in terms of an enhanced role for parish and town councils, with slightly under a third (30%) agreeing that this would be the case under a single council, slightly over a third (36%) disagreeing and a similar proportion (35%) neither agreeing nor disagreeing, stating that they do not know, or not stating a position either way.

32. While there is division amongst parishes regarding whether or not a change to a single council would afford greater opportunity for an enhanced role for parishes, over half (56%) agree that this should be the case regardless of whether or not there is a change to a unitary system. Parish councils are more likely than parish meetings to hold this view (58% agree compared with 46% of parish meetings)
33. Over half (55%) support the devolving of certain services to parishes where the conditions set out in the document, 'A New Council for North Yorkshire' are met. As set out in the proposal document these conditions are: that the town or parish Council wishes to undertake the function, that the town or parish council would be able to effectively discharge the function and that there are not any significant adverse effects on efficiency that will have to be passed on to council tax payers.
34. Parishes with populations of over 500 are more likely than those with smaller populations to support the devolution of services, with two thirds (67%) stating support compared with 55% of parishes overall.
35. Of a variety of services that could be devolved to parishes in general, two thirds of parish councils think that grass cutting and village greens might successfully be managed by parishes (67% and 66% respectively), three in five (59%) feel similarly regarding the maintenance of community facilities such as village halls and over half (54%) feel that play and recreational facilities could be devolved to parish councils in general.
36. Whilst at least one in five parishes feel that all the services mentioned may, to some extent, be successfully managed by town or parish councils in general, in all instances they feel it less appropriate for their town or parish council in particular to manage any of the services. This difference is particularly marked for the management of allotments which 45% of parishes feel could be managed by town or parish councils in general but only 18% of parishes considered it appropriate to devolve this service to their town and parish councils in particular (a drop of 27 percentage points). However there is some support for the devolution of certain services such as grass cutting which over half (55%) feel could be managed successfully by their parish council in particular.
37. As we might expect, larger parishes (500 or more residents) are most likely to think that it is appropriate to devolve services to their town or parish council. For example, three quarters (76%) of larger parishes feel they could manage grass cutting services compared with just over a half (55%) of parishes overall. Similarly, the majority feel that play and recreational facilities (63%) and village greens (58%) could be devolved compared with 33% and 44% respectively of all parishes.

North Yorkshire Parish Survey Topline Results (1st June 2007)

- This topline shows results for a postal survey conducted among North Yorkshire parish clerks by Ipsos MORI between 30th April - 25th May 2007 on behalf of the North Yorkshire District Council Network. A questionnaire was sent to all 605 addresses from a list provided by the North Yorkshire District Council Network. A reminder questionnaire was sent to non respondents on 14th May 2007.
- Results are based on responses from 388 parish clerks, representing a response rate of 64%. Question 1 gave clerks the opportunity to state whether their response was given on their own, their council's or their chair's behalf, or was completed by the parish chair or other parish council representative.
- Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding or the exclusion of 'don't know' categories.
- An asterisk (*) indicates a percentage of less than 0.5% but greater than zero.
- Data are unweighted
- Full computer tabulations have been provided to Aly Thompson at Hambleton District Council

Q1. Firstly, please can you confirm who this questionnaire is completed by?

	%
Town or parish clerk – giving a personal view	29
Town or parish clerk – reflecting the view of the councillors	24
Town or parish chairperson – giving a personal view	18
Town or parish chairperson – reflecting the view of the councillors	17
Councillor – giving a personal view	2
Councillor – reflecting the view of the councillors	2
Other	7

Q2. Is your council a town council, parish council or parish meeting?

	%
Town council	6
Parish council	67
Parish meeting	27
Not stated	1

Q3. In which of the following district areas is your town or parish council?

	%
Craven	15
Hambleton	21
Harrogate	14
Richmondshire	14
Ryledale	19
Scarborough	7
Selby	9
Not stated	1

Q4. Approximately, what is the population of your parish area?

	%
Less than 100	12
100-199	15
200-299	16
300-399	12
400-499	6
500-999	12
1,000 – 1,999	7
2,000 – 2,999	4
3,000 – 3,999	2
4,000 or more	4
Don't know	6
Not stated	4

Q5. Compared to other town and parish councils of which you are aware in North Yorkshire would you say that your town or parish council or parish meeting is..?

	%
Very active	26
Fairly active	49
Not very active	18
Not at all active	6
Don't know	2

Q6.a) How well informed do you think that your District Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?

b) And how well informed do you think that the County Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?

	(a) District %	(b) County %
Keeps us very well informed	38	17
Keeps us fairly well informed	48	49
Gives us only a limited amount of information	12	27
Does not tells us about what they do	1	3
Don't know	1	1
Not stated	*	2

- Q7. **There are proposals to create a single council providing all services across the whole of North Yorkshire based on the current county boundary and covering the seven district areas. How much do you feel that you know about this issue?**

	%
A great deal	11
A fair amount	62
Not very much	25
Nothing at all	1
Don't know	0
Not stated	*

- Q8. **How strongly do you agree or disagree with the view that there is a need to change from the existing two-tier system of the district council and county council to a new system with a single authority providing all services covering the whole of North Yorkshire?**

	%
Strongly agree	5
Tend to agree	16
Neither agree nor disagree	12
Tend to disagree	26
Strongly disagree	40
Don't know	1
Not stated	1

- Q9. **Why do you say this?**

	%
TOP TEN MENTIONS	
Would be too remote from the people it serves/difficult to access	18
Too big/diverse an area to be ruled by a single/unitary council	18
Present system works well/if it's not broken why fix it	12
It will cost money/be too expensive/be a waste of money	9
Loose control of local issues/would not be responsive to local issues	7
Would be greater efficiency/improve local services	6
Could make substantial cost reductions/be more cost effective	5
Other areas/parishes will suffer/get lost	5
Will reduce democratic representation	4
Would lose local contact/contact with those who understand concerns of locals/people we have a relationship with	4

- Q10. **How strongly do you agree or disagree with the view that, rather than creating a single council providing all services across the whole of North Yorkshire, it would be better if the existing county and the seven district councils worked more effectively together?**

	%
Strongly agree	41
Tend to agree	27
Neither agree nor disagree	12
Tend to disagree	12
Strongly disagree	5
Don't know	1
Not stated	1

- Q11. **Why do you say this?**

	%
TOP ELEVEN MENTIONS	%
Present system works well/ if it's not broke why fix it	10
District authority more aware of what is required	6
Will be more efficient/ better efficiency would reduce costs	6
No evidence they have worked well/ have had good relationship in the past	6
Will increase costs/cost too much to alter	4
Duplication of resources	4
Economies to be made by combining/ sharing services	3
Would be too remote from people it serves	3
Would cost less to improve current services than start new system from scratch	3
Don't know enough to comment	3
If they worked better/communicated better the need for this wouldn't arise	3
Decision making needs to be local	3

Q12.a) **When the decision is made about whether or not to replace the existing system of two local authorities, the district council and county council, with a new system with one council providing all public services, which three or four things in the list below, if any, do you think should be taken into account?**

b) **...and from the same list, which do you think is the single most important issue to take into account?**

		(a) Take into account	(b) Most important
Ease of contacting the council	%	41	4
Being accountable to local people	%	69	29
Historical or traditional place names	%	3	*
Cost of services	%	69	19
Level of information about the council and its services	%	9	1
Access to local councillors	%	33	3
Quality of services	%	73	31
Responding to local people's wishes	%	54	16
Sense of local community	%	20	2
Size of population covered	%	11	1
None of these	%	*	*
Don't know	%	*	1
Not stated	%	2	3

Q13. **Imagine that there was a single council providing all services across the whole of North Yorkshire. Below are some statements that people have made about this proposal. How strongly do you agree or disagree with each one?**

	Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither/ nor %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Don't know %	Not stated %
A single council providing all services in North Yorkshire would be remote and less in touch with local people and local issues	51	24	9	9	5	1	2
With a single council it would be clearer who is responsible for local services	15	36	13	22	11	1	2
The change to a single council would be too disruptive	28	30	22	12	5	2	3
It won't affect this town or parish council if there is a single council in North Yorkshire or not	2	13	11	29	39	4	2
A single council would be more efficient than the current system of two councils	8	19	15	28	25	3	2
The change to a single council would mean that local councillors would have less power to improve things in their local area	29	29	13	18	6	4	1
North Yorkshire is too big an area to be served by one council providing all services	51	19	9	10	7	1	2
A new single council would provide opportunities for an enhanced role for town and parish councils	6	24	26	20	15	7	2
There should be an enhanced role for town and parish councils regardless of whether or not there is a change from a two-tier to a unitary local government system	20	36	21	12	5	4	2
Local decisions should be made by local people	54	34	6	1	1	1	3
I would like to have more information before making up my mind	21	23	25	9	7	2	14

Q14. Below are some statements about all local government in North Yorkshire. How strongly you agree or disagree with each one?

	Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither/ nor %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %	Don't know %	Not stated %
Leaders of the county council and all the district councils in North Yorkshire should meet together regularly to take forward the needs of the county as a whole	44	44	6	1	2	1	2
It wouldn't matter to my parish if there were fewer county/district councillors representing this area, providing all areas in the county are fairly represented	7	31	11	23	26	1	1
The current system of local government, with a district and county council, is confusing	11	22	16	29	21	1	1

In January 2007, North Yorkshire County Council submitted a response to the Government's invitation to councils in England to make proposals for future unitary structures. This document 'A New Council for North Yorkshire' sets out the county council's proposals for the creation of a unitary council in North Yorkshire replacing the current two-tier system.

Q15. How much, if anything would you say that you know about this document?

	%
Not heard of the document	4
Heard of the document but know nothing about it	9
Know a little about the document but have not read any of it	18
Read some of the document	47
Read all of the document	21
Not stated	1

‘A New Council for North Yorkshire’ suggests that it may be appropriate to devolve certain services to town or parish councils, where the following conditions are met:

- The town or parish council wishes to undertake the function
- The town or parish council would be able to effectively discharge the function
- There are not any significant adverse effects on efficiency that will have to be passed on to council tax payers

Q16. **In principle, how much do you support or oppose the devolving of certain service to parishes where these three conditions are met?**

	%
Strongly support	16
Tend to support	39
Neither support or oppose	17
Tend to oppose	13
Strongly oppose	8
Don't know	4
Not stated	2

Q17.a) **And if the three conditions are met, which of the following services, if any, do you think may be appropriate to devolve to town or parish councils in general?**

b) **And of those which, if any, do you think it may be appropriate to devolve to your town or parish council in particular?**

	(a) Town or parish councils in general %	(b) Your town or parish council in particular %
Grass cutting	67	55
Village greens	66	44
Maintaining community facilities (e.g. village halls)	59	35
Play and recreational facilities	54	33
Maintaining footpaths	46	28
Allotments	45	18
Parks and open spaces	44	22
Bus shelters	39	26
Local recycling	37	22
Street cleaning	33	18
Public toilets	29	9
Local support services for vulnerable people	26	10
Tourism initiatives	22	6
Other	8	3
None of these	10	16
Not stated	6	11

Q18. **How strongly do you agree or disagree with the view that there is scope for strengthening the links between principal councils and town and parish councils...**

- a) **...under the current two-tier council structure?**
 b) **...were there to be a single council for North Yorkshire?**

	(a) Current two-tier structure %	(b) Single council %
Strongly agree	31	37
Tend to agree	45	26
Neither agree nor disagree	13	12
Tend to disagree	6	9
Strongly disagree	1	8
Don't know	1	4
Not stated	2	5

Q19. **Any other comments you would like to make:**

TOP ELEVEN MENTIONS	%
Already receive too much/ unnecessary information/ paperwork for a small council	10
Poor service provision in our area/ need better services	10
Experience has shown that services provided by North Yorkshire are poor	10
Concerns about local decision making/ if locals will be allowed to make their own decisions	10
Local residents not consulted/ decisions made without local representation	6
It would be costly/ cost will be prohibitive	5
Single authority would be too large/remote/out of touch/unmanageable	4
Idea is unacceptable/disagree with proposals/ will not be beneficial	4
Parishes/ Districts are too small to take on extra duties/ lack of resources/ funding/ training	3
Already receive good service provision from local council	3
Restructuring would not save money/ would only increase duplication/ bureaucracy	3