



# A proposed devolution deal for York and North Yorkshire

## Consultation Outputs Report

30 January 2023



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# 1 Introduction

This document sets out the outputs from a consultation on a proposed devolution deal for York and North Yorkshire.

## 1.1 Background

On 1 August 2022 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities announced that the Government was “minded to” enter into a Devolution Deal with York and North Yorkshire. Under the proposed deal, the region will gain local control of at least £750M of funding to spend on the things that matter to the people of York and North Yorkshire. This will include £540 million of new Government investment to spend on local priorities to produce growth, together with a range of devolved powers.

The proposed deal means that people who know and understand our area will take decisions across key areas, such as, the economy, housing and regeneration, skills and transport in York and North Yorkshire. This will bring greater benefits for our city, rural and coastal communities, improvements to people’s quality of life and help to drive green economic growth for a carbon negative future.

This devolution deal is dependent upon the York and North Yorkshire Authorities (by which is meant City of York Council and the new council for North Yorkshire) establishing a Combined Authority for the area with an elected Mayor.

The proposed deal states that in order for devolution to occur several things must take place. Firstly, all of the Authorities must agree to the deal (in this case the Authorities are City of York and the new North Yorkshire Council). These councils must then carry out a public consultation which will inform their councils’ decision whether or not to submit a scheme for devolution and the consultation outcome to the Secretary of State. This in turn will inform a decision by the Secretary of State to progress devolution and set out a parliamentary order to approve the deal. When referring to the (devolution) deal, this refers to the formal process and statutory requirements, the wording in the deal document states this as

**“Subject to ratification of the deal by all partners and the statutory requirements including, public consultation, the consents of councils affected, and parliamentary approval of the secondary legislation implementing the provisions of this deal” .**

In summer 2022 York and North Yorkshire councils carefully considered the ‘minded to’ devolution deal. In addition, a governance review was undertaken to look at the options, which concluded that establishing a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) model of governance for York and North Yorkshire would have a positive impact on the interests and identities of local communities.

The review also proposed that the Authorities publish a document that sets out proposed role and functions of a Combined Authority. This is called a scheme. The scheme forms the

basis for an order establishing the Combined Authority as an MCA and is a key part of the process required by law to make changes to current local governance arrangements.

The scheme forms the basis of this consultation which was the subject of an eight-week public consultation across York and North Yorkshire between 21st October and 16th December 2022.

## 1.2 Reporting Process (Collated Activity)

This report is presented as the collation of several separate strands of analysis activity related to consultee submissions to the consultation process. These were:

- The receipt, recording and reporting of written submissions by stakeholders by partners in York City Council and North Yorkshire Council.
- The receipt, analysis and summary reporting of feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries supported by a consultation and engagement specialist managed by the York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- Independent analysis of the online survey conducted by The Consultation Institute (tCI).
- Independent facilitation and reporting of a number of focus groups by Westco, which were broadly representative of the county structure.

Each of these analyses has been conducted independently and while care has been taken to integrate these into a single report, individual analysis, reporting and presentation is apparent throughout.

## 1.3 Report Structure

Following this brief introductory section the remainder of this report is set out as follows:

- **Section Two:** Provides a narrative description of the methodology employed in this consultation, the approach to analysis and the outline characteristics of respondents .
- **Section Three:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for new governance arrangements
- **Section Four:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for finance and finance functions
- **Section Five:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for net zero. Climate change and natural capital
- **Section Six:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals new transport powers
- **Section Seven:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for housing and regeneration



- **Section Eight:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for skills and employment
- **Section Nine:** Sets out the responses received related to the proposals for new police, fire and crime commissioner arrangement
- **Section Ten:** Sets out the responses received related to other issues important to respondents
- **Section Eleven:** Provides a detailed report of the outcomes of the independently facilitated focus groups.
- **Appendix One:** Provides a detailed demographic and equalities breakdown
- **Appendix Two:** Contains the full report of the focus groups independently facilitated by Westco

## 2 Analysis Methodology and Response Sample

This brief section sets out the approach adopted to analysis for each method of responding to the consultation and some information about the respondents .

### 2.1 Analysis and Coding

#### 2.1.1 Online Survey

The online survey allowed respondents to provide closed question response to a range of questions against a rating scale Strongly Oppose to Strongly Support (including don't know) for each of the proposed elements of the devolution deal. They were also asked a follow up open question 'Why do you think this?' to allow a discussion of the reasons for providing that rating.

Closed questions were analysed using standard software and data tables produced, allowing us to provide tabular and graphical presentation of the result.

Open questions were thematically coded and are presented to represent the broad views of respondents. Where we report thematically we provide an indication of the number of people who contributed comments to the theme as numbers in brackets (n).

Our approach to coding identifies common areas of comment from respondents across statements supporting and opposing the proposals set out in the deal. For instance many see the Mayoral Role in both a positive and a negative light, therefore in the report it can be seen that there are incidences where this code appears in support, oppose and unsure. This applies to a number of the themes throughout.

#### 2.1.2 Stakeholder Submissions

Written submissions from organisations were received by partners in York City Council and North Yorkshire Council. These submissions have been summarised and attributed to specific respondents.

#### 2.1.3 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries

Feedback in this report was obtained through various methods including:

- Face-to-face and virtual consultation events, stalls at public events; and
- Engagement sessions with selected audiences e.g., secondary schools and youth fora and at local venues.
- Emails and additional comments regarding the consultation received via the dedicated consultation inbox, the Common Place platform and social media accounts.

The reporting of this method adopted a thematic approach to the analysis of the feedback for each question. Themes were mentioned more than twice within same group or same theme mentioned in feedback from two or more different engagement activities. .

## 2.1.4 Focus Groups

Focus group sessions were recorded and thematically analysed, summarising the key points representing the views of participants.

## 2.1.5 Attribution of Responses

The report does not attribute quotes to individuals, to avoid personal identification of respondents.

The exception to this is where stakeholders provide a written organisational response. Responses from organisations were received by letter and also through the online survey. Those received by letter have been analysed separately, whilst those received through the online survey have been included as part of the overall analysis.

## 2.1.6 'Out of Scope' Submissions

Some responses to the consultation relayed misunderstanding of specific elements of the scheme, such as bus franchising, and other responses pertained to the re-organisation of local government rather than the Devolution Consultation. The latter responses were not included in this analysis.

All these types of responses will be considered as part of a 'You said, we did' report that will follow the key decisions relating to the consultation. They will also be considered within associated communications plans to help improve public understanding of the devolution process.

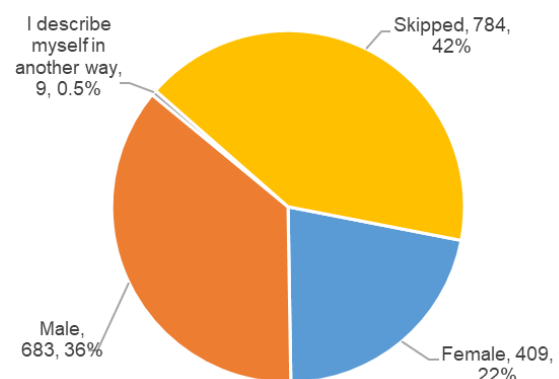
## 2.2 Response Rates

### 2.2.1 Online Survey Response

A total of 1,971 responses were downloaded from the Common Place consultation platform, these are the complete records available and is different to the summary figures reported from the platform which are not validated.

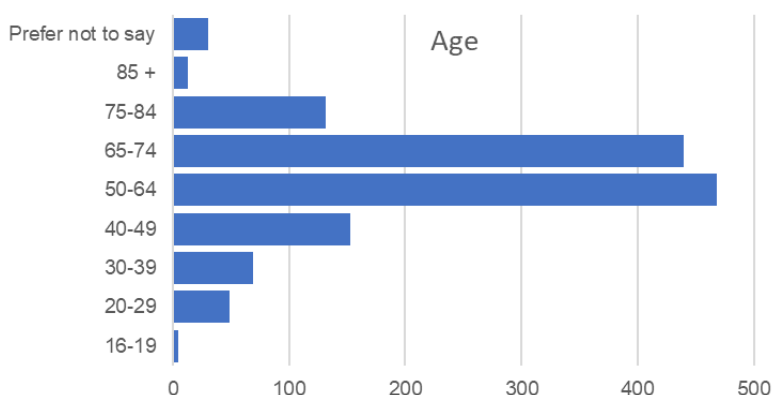
Of those who answered the question 36% were male, 22% female, 0.5% describing themselves in another way.

Sex	No	%
Female	409	21%
Male	683	35%
I describe myself in another way	9	0.5%
Skipped	784	40%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>



The majority of respondents (47%) who provided information were aged between 50 and 74.

Age Group	No	%
16-19	5	0.3%
20-29	49	3%
30-39	69	4%
40-49	153	8%
50-64	468	24%
65-74	439	23%
75-84	132	7%
85 +	13	1%
Prefer not to say	31	2%
Skipped	584	30%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>



The majority of respondents providing information (92%) responded as an individual or on behalf of an organisation, the remainder (8%) replied as a business.

A detailed breakdown of the declared demographics is included at Appendix One of this Survey.

## 2.2.2 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries

Partners engaged 564 people across the region through:

- Face-to-face and virtual consultation events, stalls at public events; and
- Engagement sessions with selected audiences e.g., secondary schools and youth fora and at local venues.
- Emails and additional comments regarding the consultation received via the dedicated consultation inbox, the Common Place platform and social media accounts.

### Comments and emails

All emails, comments and questions were logged, and responses (where appropriate) drawn up in coordination with local authority colleagues. FAQs were hosted on both the devolution website and the Common Place platform.

The team received 20 emails via the dedicated consultation email inbox and the Common Place platform plus 9 comments via social media/ Twitter which have been included in analysis in this report.

## 2.2.3 Focus Group Sample

York and North Yorkshire recruited an independent agency, Westco, to facilitate nine resident focus groups.

These groups were recruited to an agreed profile, which was broadly representative of the geography and population breakdown of York and North Yorkshire. The total number of participants taking part in these qualitative discussion groups was 70. Summary details for each group is below.

Group No.	Date and time	Location	Resident details	No. residents
1	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 6-7:30pm	Online via Zoom	York residents, aged 18-30	10
2	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 6-7:30pm	Broughton Hall, Skipton	Skipton and surrounding area – residents, aged 25-35	4
3	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 6-7:30pm	Ascot House Hotel, Harrogate	Harrogate and surrounding area - residents aged 65+	10
4	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 6-7:30pm	Online via Zoom	York and North Yorkshire residents, aged 18-30	9
5	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 6-7:30pm	Horse and Vale Hotel, Pickering	Pickering and surrounding, area - residents aged 50+	10
6	Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 6:30-8pm	York, Tadcaster Holiday Inn	York residents, aged 18+	7
7	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> December 6-7:30pm	Online via Zoom	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18-30	8
8	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> December 6-7:30pm	Online via Zoom	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18+	4
9	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> December 6-7:30pm	Online via Zoom	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18+	8

Alongside the resident groups, one group was also conducted with landowners on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December from 12:30 to 2pm, with 13 participants. These participants were recruited via the Country Land and Business Association (CLA).

# 3 Governance

## 3.1 Background

The proposed Deal requires the York and North Yorkshire Authorities to establish a new Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) that would be led by an elected Mayor which in summary are:

- A Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) would be created, with the first Mayor for York and North Yorkshire elected in May 2024, by registered voters in the City of York and North Yorkshire Council areas.
- Each mayoral term will last for four years.
- The mayoral combined authority will have a total of 5 voting members, comprising:
  - The elected mayor (who must be in the majority for a decision to pass.)
  - Four elected members, consisting of a Lead Member for each constituent council and one further member appointed by each of the two constituent councils.
- In addition, there will be:
  - One member appointed by the York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The LEP Board will become the Business Committee of the combined authority. This member will be non-voting unless the combined authority resolves to give them a vote on any issues.
- Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions will be passed to the mayor who will be able to appoint a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and delegate some functions to that person.
- The Mayor will also have functions relating to transport, housing and regeneration, and finance.
- The Mayoral Combined Authority will have responsibility for transport-related functions, adult education and skills functions, housing and regeneration functions, economic development, and finance functions in addition to those exercised by the Mayor.
- The Mayoral Combined Authority will be required to make arrangements for the overview and scrutiny of mayoral and non- mayoral functions, as well as retaining statutory arrangements in relation to audit. The Mayor's Police and Crime Commissioner functions will be scrutinised by a Police and Crime Panel.

The existing role of Lord Mayor of York is completely different from a new elected Mayor and will continue as it does currently.

The vast majority of existing services delivered by the councils, including children’s and adults’ services, corporate services, communities, planning, highways and street-based services will continue to be delivered in the same way as currently.

Set out below are the responses related to the Governance proposals detailed in summary above received by:

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

### 3.2 Online Survey Responses

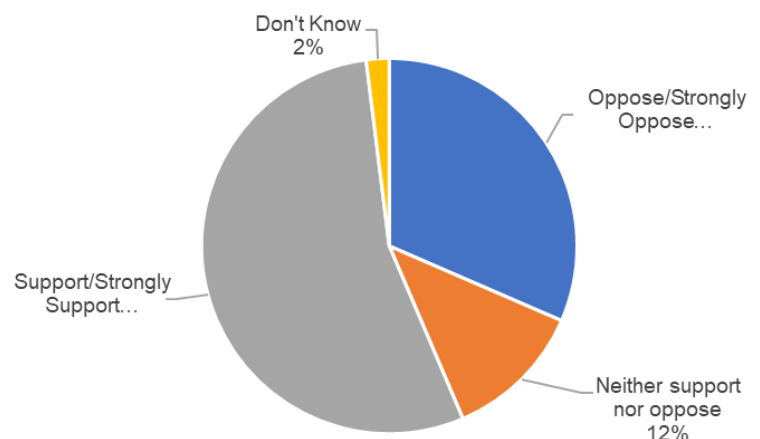
#### 3.2.1 Support or Oppose

When asked:

*Do you support or oppose our proposals for the governance arrangements in the scheme, including an elected Mayor and a Mayoral Combined Authority, to unlock the benefits of the devolution deal?*

- The majority (54%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Around one third (32%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- Just over a tenth (12%) were neither in support nor opposition.
- The remainder didn’t know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	1,073	54%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	621	32%
Neither support nor oppose	238	12%
Don't Know	39	2%
<b>Grand Total*</b>	<b>1,971</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

Respondents were asked to provide a reason for their ranking, and when grouped thematically there can be seen to be commonality between the reasons for support, opposition or otherwise as shown below.

### 3.2.2 Reasons for support

Of the 583 people who provided comments that supported the proposed governance arrangements, which was approximately half of the total in this category, the reasons provided were as follows.

There was a strong expression of support, with respondents in favour but concerned over **increased bureaucracy (58)**.

- *I'm cautious because I fear an increase in unintended bureaucracy, but the general proposals appear to be sound.*

However, balanced against this was a view that the proposal would result in an increase in **democratic accountability (70)**, in terms of decentralising decision making in York and North Yorkshire

- *The UK is probably the most centralised in Europe, which I think this would improve accountability/democracy and mean that decisions reflect local needs.*

It was also felt that these proposals would bring the City and County councils closer together.

- *The local authorities will be working together as one instead of piecemeal.*

The Governance proposals were also felt to provide a strong opportunity to **magnify the voice of York and North Yorkshire on the national stage (77)**.

- *York and North Yorkshire cannot compete with the big cities in isolation and the MCA offers both a stronger voice and routes to new and enhanced funding.*

There is strong support expressed **for the Mayoral role (65)**.

- *I think the mayor can join up things and hopefully have executive power. Yes, there must be checks and balances but sounds more effective than everything being voted on by a full council.*

However, these were balanced against some pragmatic **concerns over the mayoral role (37)** offset by an overall assessment of the need to adopt the model to leverage funds into the area.

- *More finance from central government. Not keen on mayors at this level though.*
- *The government is forcing NY down this route; objecting would be pointless. The proposals seem reasonable, I assume they are based on successful CAs elsewhere.*

Aligned with this those expressing support for the mayoral role there was an identified potential for **increased local accountability through local knowledge (55)** through the proposed MCA.

- *Local Control, to improve representation of the people.*
- *Local governance, so long as it is held accountable, always has the potential to be of more benefit to regions for local issues compared to broad sweep central government policies.*



Respondents also expressed the view that the proposals could result in **political tensions** (40) between the political make up of York City and North Yorkshire councils, which resulted in a tempering of support.

- *'Support' rather than 'strongly' because of the political differences between York and North Yorkshire*

There was strong support for the proposals around **finance issues (62)**, essentially with the view that the creation of the MCA and the associated additional funding could only be viewed as positive for York and North Yorkshire.

- *The opportunity to gain significant funding to generate growth in York is too good an opportunity to pass up.*
- *It's about time we had an integrated transport system and planning for housing is in total chaos. £18 Million per year won't go very far, but at least it's a start.*

There was a recognition that York and North Yorkshire may be **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (32)**, however, there was optimism that the proposed MCA would be able to address this concern.

- *Our region is very diverse - geographically with urban, rural and coastal areas. 98% of our businesses are small or micro. Only with focused decision making by people who live and work in the region, will the opportunities for every person be realised.*

Other respondents expressed positive support based on their **previous experience (28)** or examples from elsewhere, reflecting on the benefits seen in other combined approaches to delivering public service.

- *You can see with the integrated care partnerships across social and healthcare that having autonomy for your local region in the hands of the people that know your region can be really beneficial.*

Examples of success from other combined authority areas was also cited as a reason for support.

- *Tees Valley elected mayor has made a big difference to the region, our elected mayor could do the same.*

There was also a recognition that the size and scale of the county was directly comparable with other devolution models.

- *Yorkshire has a greater population than Scotland and is greater in area than Wales. As both of these areas have been devolved for some considerable time, I think that it is time the Yorkshire should be in greater control of her own finances and how she is governed!*

### 3.2.3 Reasons for opposition

Of the 501 people who provided comments that they opposed the proposed governance arrangements the reasons provided were as follows.

Many respondents expressing an opinion in opposition to the proposals were concerned about **increased bureaucracy (110)** this concern appeared to have a decisive impact on their view of the proposed governance arrangements. This was expressed as concern over the introduction of additional politicians into York and North Yorkshire.

- *Too many politicians as it is without having the expense of a mayor and associated staff.*

It was also felt that these proposals for change were being discussed too soon after the local government reorganisation which saw the creation of North Yorkshire council.

- *This move introduces an additional layer of local government having just succeeded in reducing local governance complexity by combining district and borough councils into the singular North Yorkshire Council this move reverses that improvement.*

There were also concerns that this would introduce significant additional management and administrative overhead.

- *Yet another pointless layer of managers we don't need.*

There was felt to be a **lack of democratic accountability (80)**, due either to concerns over the existing election processes or an increase in perceived distance between residents and decision makers.

- *Largely because the current electoral system (FPTP) would skew the proposed arrangements; a form of AV would go some way to correcting this.*
- *It all takes power away into the large centres of population,*

There were also concerns over the proportionality of representation between York and North Yorkshire with many arguing that it would be fairer on the basis of population, which would see York with less representatives on the proposed MCA.

- *Under this proposal the City of York is being overrepresented.*

Respondents who did not support the proposals also expressed **concerns over the Mayoral Role(95)**, either on the grounds that it was seen as 'Americanisation' of the UK political system.

- *Too much power for one person/ office.*
- *It is getting very Americanised.*

There were also concerns that the proposals would result in a reduction in a **potential for a decrease in local accountability (78)** with the focus being on York and other large towns/urban areas at the expense of rural communities who it was felt were not represented effectively on the MCA.

- *Money always goes to large towns/ cities and rural communities get left out...these needs are very different and start from a low base in most areas.*

The proposals for an MCA were opposed on the grounds that they were **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (93)**. Those expressing opposition were of the view that the proposals would further compound the lack of interest in rural communities.

- *It appears to be a dilution of democracy for small villages - how can a large governing body filter down to somewhere like Kirkby Malzeard.*

Respondents were also opposed to the proposals on the grounds that **they didn't go far enough (18)** in introducing devolution to York and North Yorkshire.

- *This proposal is not devolution' in any accepted sense of the term.*
- *Devolution is about dispersing power into communities. Centralising power into a Mayor is not devolution. Real devolution is what Wales and Scotland have got.*

Others felt there was too much focus on benefits with little corresponding discussion of the drawbacks which were felt to mitigate against support of the proposals.

- *Without a clear definition of the problems that exist with the current system or a reasoned argument for how these problems would be resolve through the devolution plan, I'm left to assume that this is just change for the sake of change and is therefore likely to be a waste of time and money. For that reason, I oppose the plan.*

There were also reservations over the extent to which the **finance issues(103)** explored in the proposals were reflective of the realism of the challenges in setting up an MCA.

- *I don't think this is anywhere near enough investment for the purposes stated for such a large area.*
- *I don't believe that the money we will be given will be enough to cope with the services that you need to look after each council. Whilst some cost saving could be made some sadly is at the detriment of services to the residents.*

When considering the extent to which the proposals were felt to be **looking for increased private sector influence (11)** respondents were concerned over the role of the York & North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The key concern centred on their role in the MCA as an unelected position.

- *I strongly oppose the LEP with an unelected board making serious decisions about spending money on local businesses.*

Some of the respondents opposing the proposal based this on their views of **political tensions** at both the local and national level.

- *As a Central York resident I will have a Conservative MP imposed on me as the mayor. The funding will mainly go to North Yorkshire as it is a larger area.*
- *As York is a labour area we will likely end up with a Labour Mayor imposing left wing policies and priorities over the whole of largely conservative North Yorkshire.*
- *I don't trust any proposal from the government.*
- *I fundamentally disagree with central governments requirements to have an elected Mayor.*

### 3.2.4 Reasons unsure

Of the 150 people who provided comments (out of the 238 who neither supported nor opposed and the 39 don't know) indicating that they were unsure about the Governance proposal the reasons provided were as follows.

Respondents indicated that they were unable to provide an opinion on the governance proposals due to a **lack of information to enable decision making (15)** stating concerns that there was insufficient information on the benefits of the Combined Authority:

- *Apart from the increased funding from government, it is unclear what the benefit will be beyond forming an existing partnership between CYC and NYCC.*

There were concerns that the savings identified in the proposals were not clearly enough explained:

- *at this moment in time you cannot see where the supposed savings are coming from*

Many felt they did not understand the current situation well enough to make an assessment of the benefits of the proposal.

- *I do not yet understand what these roles will do. I need more education.*
- *I don't feel I know enough about the existing arrangements to be able to form a strong view about how they compare with the new Unitary Authority which seems to have been imposed on us. Unlocking more money sounds good but what is the downside?*

The presentation of the proposals was also of concern to some respondents.

- *Your documents are too confusing. Ok if you are used to reading this type of work. You need to provide an easy to read and understand breakdown.*

Within this concern over the lack of information a sub-group identified that **structures were not sufficiently well defined to make a decision (12)**, with particular concern over the mechanisms in place to resolve issues between city and county interests.

- *"I have not seen a clear description of the split of responsibilities between such a mayor and the North Yorkshire Council & York Councils. In the event of a dispute who would have greater authority. Who would arbitrate?"*

A number of respondents expressed concerns over the **increased levels of bureaucracy (10)**, citing views that the proposals would add to the cost and administrative burden in York and North Yorkshire, and therefore were unable to make their mind up.

- *Another layer of bureaucracy not necessary in North Yorkshire!*
- *Another quango*

There were concerns that this would divert funds to support the perceived additional layer of administration in the MCA.

- *How much money is diverted to the team instead of front line services.*
- *I worry that it's just another, expensive layer of bureaucracy.*

- *Worried by too many layers of bureaucracy, inefficiency, cost of headcount and pace of decision making. Open to being persuaded of merit.*

A number of respondents expressed **concerns over the Mayoral role (11)** itself. Much of this concern centred on the extent to which local power was concentrated in the role.

- *Too much power invested in one mayor, who it appears will be connected to the government of the day. An impossible range of responsibilities for one person as mayor*

Others were concerned that they did not like the concept of a mayor.

- *I don't like the Mayoral set up but if it is the only way to get the funding do it.*

While others were concerned that it would be difficult to find someone to undertake the role.

- *don't feel I know enough related to exactly what Mayoral roles are. For North Yorkshire I cannot think of anyone who has the skills*

Others felt they could not make their minds up due to issue related to the **democratic accountability of the proposed MCA (11)**. The main concerns lay around the representativeness of the arrangements.

- *The principle sounds fine but having only 5 individuals with a vote doesn't sound particularly democratic. How are these elected? Might they all represent one political party?*

Linked to this were issues associated with the potential for a **decrease in local accountability (13)**, with concerns that the balance of representation on the MCA favoured York City which may see a decline in services in North Yorkshire.

- *I am concerned the focus will stay on York and possibly Scarborough, with market towns and villages being forgotten about.*

Respondents felt that the proposal for an MCA was **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire(15)**.

- *We are rural, we are forgotten. This will be too big! & again rural will be forgotten after all there are more voters in urban*
- *It's a large fairly diverse area and I hope a mayor + 5 are enough to provide suitable governance.*

Many respondents expressed a view that they **agreed in principle but were waiting to see what actions are delivered (13)**.

- *I would like to see how things develop before I make up my mind.*

Others were unsure because of the introduction of what they saw as **personality politics (5)** and the perceived need for a strong individual to drive the proposals.

- *It all sounds a good idea, but we don't seem to have the right people to move this forward.*

Respondents were unsure on the details associated with the **finance issues (11)** in the proposal which prevented them making a firm decision.

- *In principle it sounds a good idea, I would want to know more about what can go wrong with the financial responsibility aspect,*

The main issue preventing a decision either way expressed in relation to **environmental issues (5)** was the potential for the MCA to become diverted from addressing the climate crisis.

- *The whole of the UK needs to transition to Net Zero, so we are concerned that the Mayoral authority is creating another division which could delay our transition to Net Zero.*

Respondents indicated they were reserving judgement until the MCA and Mayor provided clear evidence that they were effectively **measuring success (5)**.

- *How will the success or failure of a Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority as opposed to the current set up be measured and over what timeframe?*

Others indicated difficulty associated with expressing opinion due to a **focus on benefits only(4)** in the presentation of the proposals.

- *You have listed the potential benefits of the devolution deal. What are the potential detrimental effects?*

Others felt the proposals **don't go far enough (4)** in the discussions of devolution.

- *Because I think that the of Yorkshire should be more devolved from Westminster. But this is better than nothing.*

Some respondents were unsure on their opinion due to **concerns over council tax (3)** and the potential implications at a local level.

- *I'm worried the costs for Council Tax etc. will increase.*

There was a strand of opinion which was **looking for increased private sector influence (3)** to enable them to make a decision on their support for the proposals.

- *Prefer a governance system which is not bureaucratic and is led by people working in SMEs, rather than public servants.*
- *Need greater clarity about the selection of people and views of the LEP if they are to be a core element of the decision making process.*

There was an expressed issue associated with **planning Issues (4)** that the MCA would focus on brownfield development. Linked to this issue; related to housing was a desire to see a focus on affordable housing.

### **3.2.5 Unassigned opinion**

A number of comments were made on the governance proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know. We have classified these unassigned opinion and have grouped them around loose themes below.

### **Decision making at a local level is positive.**

- *Power at local level is a good thing as people know what the priorities are but I am concerned that in such a huge area as North Yorkshire, it will be hard to ensure the big towns and cities don't swallow all the funding.*
- *North Yorkshire as a combined authority will benefit from greater collaboration across the new authority and be a stronger more strategic body in the region.*
- *It will give a profile to the area and attract investment.*
- *Otherwise there will be no devolution, which I strongly support - the more decisions taken at local level the better*

### **Not good value**

- *waste of our money totally unnecessary*
- *A waste of money. £18m a year is a fiction.*
- *This adds another layer of government which is not required.*
- *because it's clear that any savings will not be passed back to the council tax payer but instead contribute to the addiction of the public services to spend, spend, spend, in c\*\*p like eco this and bio that - all meaningless*
- *It's not easily obvious what the benefits are. Haven't got the time or inclination to read about it.*

### **Proposals don't seem representative.**

- *Structure as proposed does not ensure enough representation of different viewpoints.*
- *Imbalance in representation. Only 2 from NY and 2 from York City. As NY covers 600,000 people and York covers 200,000 the NY representation should be increased in proportion.*
- *It's all about the mayor.*
- *Some mayors are proving more effective than others, so progress much depends on the person, teams involved and level of commitment.*
- *good idea to have a figure head/leader for the combined authority to provide vision and leadership - and create unity.*

## **3.3 Stakeholder Responses**

Most respondents were generally in favour of the proposed governance. Organisations including Tees Valley Combined Authority, BioYorkshire, York and Scarborough Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, York and North Yorkshire LEP, and Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network recognised that it was a tried and tested model of enabling strong local leadership with new powers.

Community First Yorkshire supported the structure to enable effective working across the region but recognised there would be some concern within the Voluntary, Community and

Social Enterprise sector about the transition to the new arrangements. York and North Yorkshire LEP highlighted the need for strong private sector representation in the model.

The Police and Crime Commissioner recognised that current governance structures provide extensive assurance ‘reach’ into the operational services on behalf of the public, whilst respecting the operational primacy of those services. They wished to see that the new model preserves and enhances that capacity.

York Conservation Trust considered that it was of paramount importance the new arrangements are structured as efficiently as possible. North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority wanted to see the work in close partnership with National Park Authorities and special purpose local authorities.

York Museums Trust welcomed the collaboration at a broader regional level with the potential to make best use of limited resources. However, York and District Trades Union Council had a view that the sub-region is too large and sparse, and the interests of York were unlikely to be served by a mayor representing the majority of their interests and political views. Whitby Community Network raised concerns as to whether the large rural area would be able to attract funding in the same way as city regions. They wished to see membership of the MCA based on population proportionality, with National Parks included.

York Environment Forum voiced concerns that power would be vested in a few individuals, with challenges in representing diversity and the ability to represent the needs of distinctly differing place characteristics across York and North Yorkshire. Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network considered it vital that the rural nature of the North Yorkshire economy, the livelihoods and provision of services for many people across the entire geography are a key focus and support for the new combined authority and mayor.

York Bus Forum expressed support for the equal representation of York and North Yorkshire on the MCA and the intention for consensus decisions as far as possible. However, they had concerns about the potential for differences of opinion and the inability of a minority to influence changes to the Local Transport Plan. They suggested having representation of opposition members on the MCA.

### **3.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries**

Participants giving their views of the proposed governance arrangements for a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) for York and North Yorkshire raised the following issues:

#### **3.4.1 An inclusive and equitable MCA**

The need for an Inclusive and equitable MCA to ensure all voices are heard:

- *How would all local areas and different sectors (within the region) e.g., education and social care make their “voices heard”?*
- *Membership of MCA (must) be representative of and connected to the community they serve.*



- Governance arrangements (should) ensure communities outside large areas benefit from investment.
- How will MCA ensure that communities outside large areas “stay empowered” and benefit from investment? Rural areas very different from urban areas.
- How will MCA respond to areas of specific community interest e.g., community housing?

### **3.4.2 Economic development / Investment**

- Needs more clarity around responsibility for economic investments; Will there be a business representative in the MCA?
- Under MCA model, decisions should be made by consensus.
- MCA could create “forums for collaboration” (to promote / deliver economic investment)
- North Yorkshire could be “underrepresented” (in the allocation of investment)
- Health provision: how will MCA impact on the development of sites for “multi service” NHS provision?
- Resources should be evenly spread “rather than everything go to York “Yorkshire should be considered one unit with Sheffield, Leeds, Bradford and York the focal points. There should be an agricultural policy for the whole County. Do not split Yorkshire! We need strength to stand up to London centric government”.
- “As a region that has benefited from our own Devolution Deal, we recognise the benefits that this can bring. As you know Leeds has close historic, cultural and economic ties with North Yorkshire and the City of York and we’re strongly committed to continuing to work together with yourselves”.
- Region too large and diverse: “what does Scarborough have in in common with Hawes, Leyburn or Pickering? Very little This strikes me as trying to squeeze a problem into a solution, not trying to find solutions to problems”.

### **3.4.3 Mayor could be a Regional Champion -**

- Someone to “speak up for region like other areas of England (i.e., West Yorkshire and Manchester Mayors)”
- Mayor could “connect urban and rural” areas – would be the bridge between these parts of the region.
- “I’m also keen to ensure that down the line the Mayor & MCA have visibility of the role that National Parks can play in meeting the Region’s ambitions and reciprocally what the MCA can do in delivering the National Park Management Plan where its responsibilities align”.

### **3.4.4 “MCA may have a democratic deficit”**

- There was concern around the idea of having a mayor with responsibility for significant funds “vested in one person” - “It sounds like a lot of power for one person.”
- How does MCA make sure that the Mayor (is) held accountable?
- “Voting not necessarily democratic” - Only a percentage of the population usually votes.

- *MCA could become “an extra layer of bureaucracy so it needs to be made to work efficiently with the councils.”*
- *“Will the MCA staff structure create duplicate positions?”*

# 4 Funding and Finance Functions

## 4.1 Background

The proposed deal includes £18m per year for 30 years from central Government to spend on local priorities. The Mayor would be required to prepare a draft annual budget for their areas of responsibility based on the powers devolved to them as part of this deal. The Mayor's budget is subject to the approval of the Combined Authority.

in summary this also includes:

- The government will provide £500,000 Mayoral Capacity Funding in 2023/24 and £1 million in 2024/25.
- The mayor will have the power to issue a precept on local council tax bills to help pay for the mayor's work. This precept can only be raised for mayoral functions.
- The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority will be the lead local authority for the planning and delivery of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) from 2025/26.
- The Combined Authority will be given powers to borrow for its new functions, which will allow it to invest in economically productive infrastructure, subject to an agreed cap with HM Treasury
- The mayor will have the power to introduce a supplement on business rates for expenditure on a project or projects that will promote economic development in the area, subject to a ballot of affected businesses.

Set out below are the responses related to the new funding and finance proposals - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 4.2 Online Survey Responses

### 4.2.1 Support or Oppose

When asked:

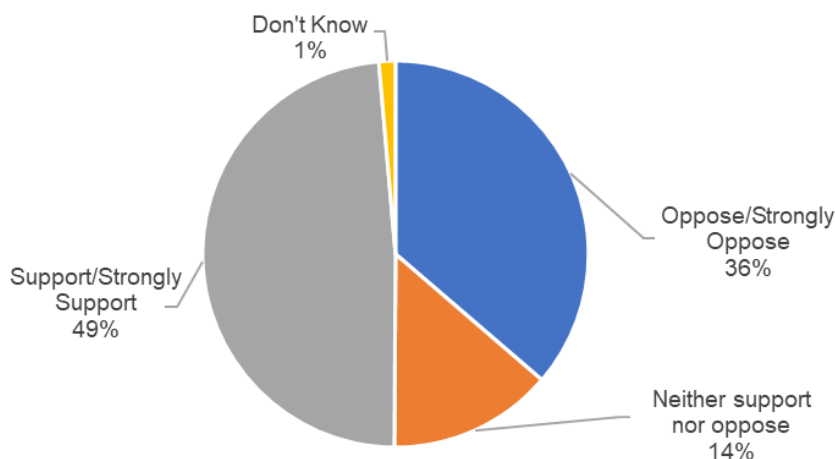
*Do you support or oppose the proposal for a York and North Yorkshire Mayor and Mayoral Combined Authority to have these finance functions?*

Of the 1,587 people who provided a response:

- Just under half (49%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Just over one third (36%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 14% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.

- The remainder (1%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	770	49%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	576	36%
Neither support nor oppose	219	14%
Don't Know	22	1%
<b>Grand Total*</b>	<b>1,587</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

#### 4.2.2 Reasons for support

Of the 353 of 770 people who provided comments indicating why they supported the finance and funding proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Respondents felt that the proposed funding and finance functions enhanced **local accountability (60)**.

- *Precept set locally should be better than from London.*
- *more locally accountable financial powers will be more effective at driving local priorities.*
- *It gives local government more control over the things they know best.*
- *There would need to be a means to verify that the elected mayoral administration does not squander public monies.*

A key positive factor was felt to be the proposals offered **access to additional funding (30)**.

- *It unlocks access to more central government funding.*
- *Need to have financial power to effect change.*
- *It is essential that the Mayoral system works. This means it must have the powers to raise money. Otherwise it will be little more than a PR exercise.*

However, some supporters had questions or concerns due the view that **not enough detailed information was available to enable decision making (52)**.

- *I don't feel I can click strongly support without some knowledge of what the proposed likely precept on council tax for mayoral functions would be and how that would be decided.*

There was a hopeful view that the funding and finance proposals would reduce **political tensions (25)**.

- *Hopefully will get rid of some of current trivial party politics.*

Many respondents were of the view that the proposal offered the potential for an **equitable distribution of funds (30)**.

- *Economically deprived areas of N Yorks should benefit.*
- *I will back this 100% if every district is treated equally, however with a major emphasis on those areas that need the help the most are prioritised over the richer area like York, Harrogate and such like.*

The funding and finance proposals were felt to provide **a local voice that can be magnified on the national stage(44)**.

- *Fair enough, the money provided by Central Government is not over huge but having Local Representation and Ideas to talk about is very important.*

Supportive responses also highlighted the **potential for more strategic investment (32)**.

- *Combining such services as long as they remain flexible to the different needs of individual diverse communities and the services provided to them and neither council is preferred over another in service provision underpinned by strong service level agreements.*
- *The Fire Service in North Yorks is severely underfunded for a large sparsely populated area. The precept needs raising.*

Respondents in many cases provided a support which included questions and concerns on the basis of the need to avoid **increased bureaucracy (25)**.

- *The supporting office for the new Y&NY Mayor must not be bloated however equally it must be sufficiently resourced to accommodate the strategic functions it will lead on.*

Support was also provided based on respondent **experience from elsewhere (17)**.

- *These powers are in line with other MCAs and are necessary to enable them to follow through on decisions been made about developing the region.*

The funding and finance proposal were seen as an **essential strategic enabler for the role of Mayor (11)**.

- *without a budget of time and or £s it is merely wishful thinking*
- *Yes, it's an additional levy, but we need to get things done and stop stagnating.*

### **4.2.3 Reasons for opposition**

Of the 429 of 576 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the finance and funding proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Many respondents were unconvinced that the proposed finance and funding proposals provide **value for money (137)**.

- *Waste of taxpayers' money!*
- *We already pay too much for very little.*

This was compounded by **concerns over the Mayoral role (115)**.

- *Too much power in one person's hands. The financial sweetener is peanuts.*

Which in turn led to concerns over the **potential for a decrease in local accountability (85)**.

- *This is undemocratic.... The public should have a say in how its rates are spent. I strongly disagree that public money should be spent supporting private companies. The companies should raise the funds they need themselves.*
- *This allows an unelected body to create debts that will have to be financed by council tax payers.*

Many felt the proposed precept along with the **power to raise council tax and set a business tax (45)** was a significant factor in their opposition.

- *This is further tax on the residents, when the new North Yorkshire Council is trying to push non-parished localities into establishing Town Councils which will levy a tax on its residents.*
- *The Mayoral precept diverts money away from local communities and increases Council Tax.*
- *Precept on Council Tax is not acceptable to the council taxpayers. This can be 100% funded from the Govt's Mayoral Capacity Fund.*

Respondents felt the proposal was negative due an **increased bureaucracy (30)** and administrative overhead.

- *This is additional expense for an unnecessary additional function.*
- *Not required, more staff more salaries*

There were also concerns over the potential of the proposals to embed **inequality of distribution of funds (38)** across York and North Yorkshire.

- *this is an extremely worrying suggestion for those of us living in a rural area in Richmondshire. How are we going to be represented and supported not by a Mayor in York.*

The concern that the proposed MCA financial proposals were **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (57)** was also a cause for opposition to the proposal.

- *Our county area/boundary is too large for a one size fits all...a 3% increase in one area, maybe completely inappropriate in another part of the county with more deprivation.*
- *There is no certainty that the funding would be equally spread across the County.*

Many felt the **funding on offer is not enough (35)** to enable anything but opposition to the proposals.

- *It's peanuts, fix the trains, proper public transport. Billions not £18 million a year.*

There were also concerns that the proposed finance and funding arrangements presented a lack of **democratic accountability (40)**.

- *It should be a decision for a more democratically accountable and representative body.*

Others opposed the proposal on the grounds of a **failure to convince on the need for devolution (27)**.

- *I don't want devolution.*
- *I have researched independent evidence that confirms no benefit from council unification.*

#### **4.2.4 Reasons unsure**

Of the 125 of 247 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure about the finance and funding proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Power to **raise council tax and set a business tax (29)**.

- *I am concerned about adding to Council tax generally.*
- *Power to introduce a supplement on business rates for expenditure on projects? is this a supplement from the local authority or additional from businesses?*
- *setting of some business rates may support some business types disproportionately.*

**Sums aren't large enough (21)**.

- *Is £500,000 enough to make an impact?*
- *Given the size of the area and the many problems, the amounts of money are pretty small. I am not sure how much difference the authority will be able to make.*
- *Insufficient allowance to address climate emergency.*

Not enough detail in the proposal resulting in a **lack of information to enable decision making (24)**.

- *It's not possible to provide a view on this as it is not made explicit what a matrix precept would be used for. If further information can be supplied that would inform my decision making.*
- *Mayoral functions? What does this mean?*
- *Power to set a precept on council tax to fund mayoral functions is a vague statement.*

Concerns over **increased bureaucracy (21)**.

- *Most will go in wages & benefits for the lucky ones.*
- *Is it efficient and effective to have a layer of government in addition to the county council and York city council?*

**Concerns over democratic accountability (12)**.

- *I am concerned that the proposed accountability structures for Mayoral budgeting are too weak.*
- *Would be happy for the proposed authority to have those finance functions IF it was properly democratically representative of the people.*

## Concerns over the mayoral role (10).

- *York needs the Lord Mayor role to continue, due to its status as a CITY!*

### 4.2.5 Unassigned opinion

A number of comments were made on the governance proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know. We have classified these unassigned opinions and present them below (the volume prevents any meaningful theming of these responses.)

- *...plus layers of government waste money*
- *Because I cannot see any evidence that the council will be run any more efficiently and from what I see where I live the services provided by the District Council are better than the current County Council, in particular the Highways Dept is not fit for purpose and needs drastic overall.*
- *Council tax is high enough.*
- *If more funding available that is a good thing but fair representation is needed. Support any additional funding but is that enough and comparable with funding in the south.*
- *Slightly cynical that all the money will be spent in York, while rural areas are once more forgotten (particularly hospital & emergency medical provision*
- *Waste of money*
- *"York & North Yorkshire!*
- *Why not ""North Yorkshire"" as a whole entity?*
- *This will stop any scrapping about 'them n us!!'*

### 4.3 Stakeholder Responses

The question posed in respect of the financial powers included in the deal was not addressed by most respondents. York and North Yorkshire LEP supported the flexibilities and borrowing powers to deliver the ambitions of the region.

Other, more general points were made, however. There was a view from York Conservation Trust that overheads for the new arrangements should be kept to a minimum.

Whitby Community Network was concerned about the prospect of potential council tax rises but supported other tourism taxes.

Network Rail welcomed the potential for further support, financial and otherwise, that the devolution deal should offer to facilitate the delivery of York Central.

Several respondents, including York Bus Forum, York & District Trades Union Council and York Environment Forum gave the view that the £540m Mayoral Investment Fund was not enough.



## **4.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries**

### **4.4.1 Positive comments**

- *Additional funding welcome*
- *“Good to know region is getting significant amounts of funding”.*
- *“Good to know MCA will have greater local control over how funding is spent”.*
- *“Good to have such levels of funding for our region”.*

### **4.4.2 Negative comments**

- *MCA will be an “extra layer of bureaucracy and expense although the region needs extra funds”.*
- *Local control over finances is “a good thing” but “do not agree Mayor should set Council Tax amounts”.*
- *Inflation: MCA needs assurance from government regarding the impact of inflation: Will devolved funding keep up with rise/s in inflation?*
- *Need more clarity around the process of Gainshare: whether money not spent by the MCA in year would be “rolled over” to subsequent year/s*
- *“Could region have funding without devolution”?*

### **4.4.3 Opportunities for long term planning?**

- *The 30-year fund gives more certainty and should enable MCA to undertake long term planning.*
- *“Significant funds spread over 30 years - not sure of the impact it will make”.*

### **4.4.4 Issues and benefits to the local population for the MCA to consider**

- *MCA should also fund short term projects to address local needs “not just general economic development.*
- *How will devolution impact funding for businesses? “hope (MCA) funding would be easier to access”.*
- *More clarity required about “how (businesses can) access the funding and how to register to deliver programmes of support.”*
- *Will funding be available to help local businesses in hospitality expand?*
- *MCA should have a “flexible pot of funding to respond to needs”.*
- *New investment is needed to attract farm diversification.*
- *Sector plan for farming: Investigate and support new opportunities for farmers.*

# 5 Net Zero, Climate Change and Natural Capital

## 5.1 Background

The proposed deal contains Government commitment to support York and North Yorkshire's ambition to be Carbon negative.

This includes:

- Direct engagement with Government and potential funding to enable York and North Yorkshire's ambition to be carbon negative,
- £7 million investment that will enable the area of York and North Yorkshire to drive green economic growth towards their ambitions to be a carbon negative region.
- Development of a York and North Yorkshire Natural Capital Investment Plan.

Set out below are the responses related to the Net Zero, Climate Change and Natural Capital proposals - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 5.2 Online Survey Responses

When asked:

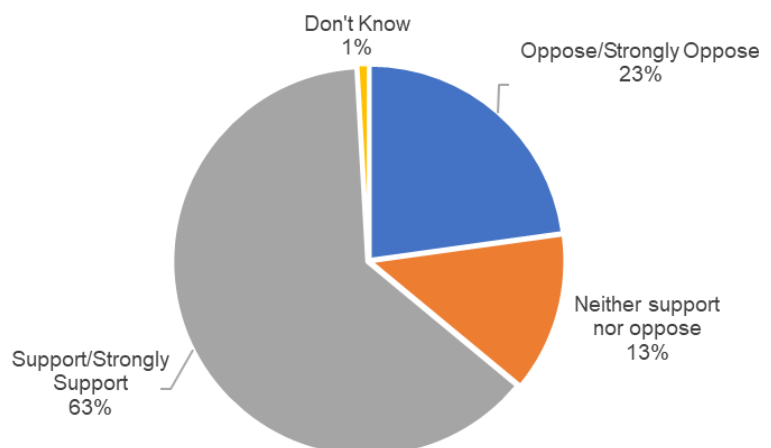
*Do you support or oppose the proposal for a York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to work with Government on Net Zero, Climate Change and Natural Capital?*

Of the 1,553 people who provided a response:

- The majority (63%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Just under a quarter (23%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 12% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.

- The remainder (1%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	980	63%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	354	23%
Neither support nor oppose	205	13%
Don't Know	14	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,553</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

### 5.2.1 Reasons for support

Of the 549 people who provided comments indicating that they supported the net zero proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

**Action to mitigate climate change was seen as an essential priority (193)** for the proposed MCA:

- *Carbon negative is absolutely crucial.*
- *Absolutely this is the most important issue we face and something that nation government have been far too slow to respond to we need to have local plans to address this the most pressing of issues.*
- *it's really, really, important and impacts every decision at every level.*
- *Climate change is the single most important problem we face, so any increased focus on this area is welcome.*

The **Mayor and MCA have a crucial part to play (110)** in delivering this essential priority through the finance available and coordinating a regional and national approach.

- *Climate Crisis & Ecological collapse can be reduced and mitigated by the powers and investment a Mayor and Combined Authority can leverage locally.*
- *A collaborative approach, as a combined authority, regionally and nationally will have greatest impact. Many areas in the authority have assessed an impact and declared climate emergency and this should therefore be a priority.*
- *Any financial support to work towards becoming net zero has to be welcomed.*

A call for the MCA to **invest in renewable energy and develop York and North Yorkshire as a centre of excellence for green engineering (125).**

- *...massive investment in renewable energy from the new devolved administration for the North of Yorkshire, to make sure we can generate free energy in our beautiful dales and land, while securing energy independence from Russia.*

- *I support much greater investment in renewable energy industries and skilled green technical engineering colleges to train up the next generation to make Yorkshire become a Green Engineering powerhouse.*

Addressing the climate crisis will lead to **improved quality of life for residents (53)**.

- *Air quality is important to peoples heath and reducing use of fossil fuel will ultimately help everyone.*
- *...greener environment will be better providing living standards are maintained or improved.*
- *...green is the future for jobs and health.*

However, this support was qualified by a desire for **more information to support decision making (29)**.

- *While funding for net zero is laudable, it is not clear if this is in addition to the £18 million, a one off payment or over 30 years, nor is it sufficient in itself for such a huge and diverse area.*

The **linkage between net zero and transport powers and priorities (11)** was also highlighted.

- *we need to be greener in our approach to transport.*
- *Nett Zero on public transport should be progressed but only viable in such as York, Scarborough etc. but such as electric busses. Within rural areas then investment in charging points to encourage EVs.*

## 5.2.2 Reasons for opposition

Of the 260 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the net zero proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

**Concerns over the Mayoral role (62)**, specifically the requirement for expert knowledge in developing net zero and other climate crisis mitigation.

- *...job for the informed and experts. Not for a well-meaning amateur.*

Respondents also presented negative opinion based on the **proposed funding being too small (47)** to effectively deliver net zero actions.

- *...the proposed level of funding of £7m that will not be sufficient funding to make a difference.*
- *At this level of funding the mayoral body could lobby central government but little more than that.*

Concerns with **social inequity in the impact of net zero actions (36)**

- *Current net zero targets if achieved will be an economic and social disaster disproportionately affecting poorer members of the population.*
- *The challenges of living in a rural community without good links and access support make this challenge disproportionately unfair for our local community.*

Respondents also reported a concern that the proposals as presented **did not go far enough (11)** and shouldn't be linked to the devolution discussion.

- *It's nothing more than window dressing to attract people interested in environmental issues whilst obscuring the febleness of what is proposed.*
- *... misguided and un-informed approach pandering to an ignorant, Woke agenda. It ignores the wider geo-political aspects of significant carbon producers such as Saudi, China, India and the consequential economic and national security issues that it would leave the UK open to.*
- *The net zero target is admirable; however it shouldn't be linked to devolution. Climate change is a global issue and should not be trivialised by localism.*

Many respondents opposed the proposals for net zero on the basis of concern **over the Mayoral role (25)** and a blanket rejection of all elements.

- *I don't support the proposals for a Mayoral combined authority and so I can't support this proposal.*

Others fundamentally **disagreed with the principles of net zero (15)**.

- *It is a waste of money and amounts to a means to restrict individual freedoms to move around. There are counter arguments to so called climate change that have been dismissed out hand.*
- *Net zero is false, not achievable unless you go back to the dark ages.*
- *Climate change is debatable, there is no hard evidence to back it, meanwhile people will go either cold or hungry this winter because of something that need not be happening.*

### **5.2.3 Reasons unsure**

Of the 122 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure over the net zero proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

People were unable to provide a response to either support or oppose the proposal due to **a lack of information to inform their decision making (35)**.

- *Not enough clear information on what is involved.*
- *you haven't explained what this means in simple terms and few people might understand enough to make a comment.*

**A lack of faith that the commitment in York and North Yorkshire is matched by national action (27)**.

- *Yet according to this Government Fracking is back on the table and until that is removed these objectives cannot be realised.*
- *The government has given the go ahead for a coal mine!*

The perceived **failure to make an argument in favour of devolution to achieve net zero (25)**.

- *Why do we have to have a mayoral authority to access this money?? the whole country is supposed to be going carbon neutral and the government should oversee the best ways to do this nationwide and allocate funding accordingly.*
- *This should not be part of the mayoral responsibility; it needs to be a national and governmental responsibility.*
- *This is not a new subject and all work should have been done by now, so what new will a Mayor add?*

The proposals are **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (33)** and do not recognise rural issues.

- *Our village properties all require oil/electricity (for heating etc) and carbon net zero funding is difficult to ascertain helping us.*

## 5.2.4 Unassigned opinion

A number of comments were made on the net zero proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know. We have classified these unassigned opinions and have grouped them around loose themes below.

Scepticism that net zero is the correct approach to address climate change.

- *Net zero is spurious science.*
- *it is only paying lip-service.*
- *Too many attributed initiatives are not environmentally friendly or carbon neutral as they have a relatively short life span or parts, etc are imported from all over the world, usually from volatile/unstable regimes. Focus on making ourselves more self-sufficient and secure.*

A desire to get on with addressing the challenges.

- *Don't talk for majority. Do what they want.*

The only way to address climate change is through national and international action.

- *Probably follow government to initiatives anyway*
- *This needs to be coordinated in a national context.*
- *On past evidence in this sphere it is probable that money spent on these aspirations would be ineffective and overtaken by global events.*
- *What the point until you stop China, Russia and India pumping out all the crap*

A tendency to deny climate change as an issue.

- *Climate change is nonsense and just another way of taxing the working man.*
- *Waste of money*

Concerns that action to address climate change is neither timely nor in line with democratic accountability.

- *The country us experiencing multiple crisis: this is not the time to be prioritising Net Zero.*

the decision was not democratically taken. The votes counted were not available to the constituency.

### **5.3 Stakeholder Responses**

Almost all responses agreed that this was an important area for the deal and that the Combined Authority should work closely with Government on this agenda.

Zero Carbon Harrogate suggested that a strategic coordinated regional approach to decarbonisation is essential, and that the Combined Authority has an important role in encouraging inward investment and acting as a brokerage in finding solutions. East Riding of Yorkshire Council similarly hoped the proposals would support cross-boundary working on Net Zero. North York Moors National Park Authority supported working with Defra on the Natural Capital Investment Plan.

Community First Yorkshire felt that the potential of improved transport links would have a beneficial impact on reducing the local carbon footprint. York Bus Forum welcomed the principles of working with the Government, whilst York and North Yorkshire LEP considered a regional approach to the most appropriate strategic level. First York was supportive of further investment in this area.

Northern Power Grid welcomed the approach and suggested it was important that the joint working with Government identified the funding to implement the decarbonization activities identified within the Local Area Energy Plans.

Both the University of York and BioYorkshire saw themselves as a useful allies and drivers for the MCA, for both economic growth and achieving Net Zero Targets and strongly supported the net zero, climate change and natural capital delivery commitments set out in the devolution agreement.

Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network supported the aspiration and recognised that the agricultural and food and farming sectors have a major contribution to make towards this ambition.

Some respondents felt the climate change ambitions and arrangements didn't go far enough. York & District Trades Union Council considered the proposals inadequate and unacceptable but stated that if the MCA is to come into being, Climate Change should be its central focus. York Environment Forum felt that there was insufficient attention paid to the climate emergency within the proposals, but the devolution deal could be a great opportunity to make a coordinated and concerted effort to have ambitious policies and speedy reductions in carbon emissions. Whitby Community Network strongly supported the work but considered the investment within the deal to be too little.

## 5.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries

### 5.4.1 Positive comments

- *“Additional funding to support investment in energy reduction and renewable energy solutions very welcome”.*
- *“Excited to see there is work going on around net zero”.*
- *“Delighted about green areas, biggest assets we have in York and North Yorkshire”.*
- *“This should support many activities gain momentum”.*
- *“This is high priority for young people. BioYorkshire”*
- *Would be good to see jointed up action on this.*

### 5.4.2 Negative comments

- *Agree with the drive for carbon negative but If we are trying to reach net zero, we need to educate population about where we are now, so people can see where we’re aiming for*
- *“There isn’t enough money to do all things net zero, the initial focus should be on decarbonising housing, so it also supports the affordability agenda”.*
- *Carbon negative may be a bit unrealistic and do not like carbon capture as much as reducing emissions in the first place... there needs to be a workable alternative first.*
- *“We have problems in this area in food production. We have huge food production in our farming. It has been proposed to cover acres with solar panelling to the loss of food crops. Why can't solar panelling go on brown belt. We need all the food that we can get produced in our own area”.*

### 5.4.3 Funding for net zero / oversight of environmental agenda

- *Where does money for net zero come from?*
- *Who will look after general environment e.g., littering?*
- *What does the time period the allocated Over how many years is the £7m allocated?*



# 6 Transport

## 6.1 Background

The proposed devolution deal will give the Mayor and mayoral combined authority responsibilities for investment in transport infrastructure and services, including public transport. This will help York and North Yorkshire develop an effective and efficient transport system for the long term and provide greater certainty over future funding for transport improvements. The proposals are summarised as follows:

- Development and production of a York and North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan and related transport strategies
- Set up and co-ordinate a Key Route Network (KRN) on behalf of the Mayor, enabling a consistent approach to the management of that network.
- Receive transport funding in a single consolidated budget set for a number of years to give greater certainty for the development of future projects.
- Approve a 5 year Strategic Transport Investment Programme for York and North Yorkshire
- Powers to introduce bus franchising. This is where the authority specifies the bus services to be provided, determines the routes, timetables and fares.
- Enter into partnership agreements with Great British Rail, make agreements with Government, other local authorities and National Highways and work with Active Travel England.

Set out below are the responses related to the proposals for new transport powers - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 6.2 Online Survey Responses

When asked:

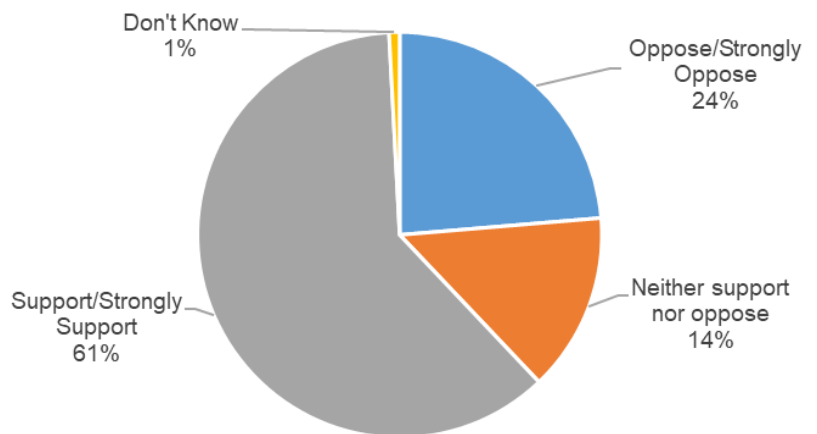
*Do you support or oppose the proposal that a York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and Mayor takes on these Transport functions?*

Of the 1,538 people who provided a response:

- The majority (61%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Just under a quarter (24%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 14% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.

- The remainder (1%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	942	61%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	364	24%
Neither support nor oppose	219	14%
Don't Know	13	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,538</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

### 6.2.1 Reasons for support

Of the 513 people who provided comments indicating that they supported the new transport powers proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Respondents held the view that **the current transport system is not working (105)** and the proposals will provide an opportunity to rethink and refresh the approach for York and North Yorkshire.

- *Our current transport is a shambles and needs careful planning to ensure that it suits everyone- and not just towns/ city, rural areas are difficult but not impossible to manage sensibly.*
- *A full area plan is better than local deals.*
- *We must get away from outdated 'predict and provide' models around road building and we need a central overall focus which a mayor can provide.*

The proposed new powers were also seen as **essential in achieving net zero goals (80)**.

- *A complete refresh is needed on transport thinking especially in the context of net zero.*
- *The pace of carbon reduction from the transport sector is pretty small now so this must be a key priority working alongside neighbouring combined authorities and Transport for the North.*
- *Public transport is key to a future, sustainable form of transport, carbon reduction will only happen with fewer cars on the road (including EVs).*

A **local focus on transport solutions (97)** is seen as being more effective at meeting local need.

- *A Westminster based transport strategy has proven time and time again to fail local communities and businesses. What's the point of a high speed rail link from the capital when people are then unable to move around efficiently in the regions.*

- *...local people who understand the issues making decisions on the local transport infrastructure.*

There are **specific road improvements required (30)** the mayoral powers are hoped will support.

- *A64 and A19 north of York need dualling desperately.*
- *East-West routes north of York a) are mostly back road (i.e. slow, costly on fuel/not green) and b) have NO public services. Harrogate/Ripon - Easingwold - Malton is only passable in private vehicles.*
- *Perhaps we will finally get the A1237 made into a dual carriageway and same for the A64 all the way to Scarborough.*

The ability to **work in partnership with regional organisations to represent the needs of the area (20)**.

- *...an independent less biased view - this office then works with the Northern Powerhouse to implement investment in the right way and ensure the transport providers work in partnership with the office.*
- *...having a stronger voice via Transport for the North would help prevent central government building only southern railways like HS2 (which will in practical terms never reach the north, only Birmingham).*

The **potential for reorganisation in the bus network (52)**.

- *The bus system needs reform and franchising may be a good experiment.*
- *It is essential that the Combined Authority uses its powers to franchise our buses, like they are in London!*

Has the potential to **address** the need for **integrated bus and train services (45)**.

- *...I suffer every few weeks the problems of un-coordinated bus and train timetables...this impacts on economic efficiency, the appeal of the area to residents and tourists, and social well-being.*
- *We are desperately in need of integrated transport solutions... A more joined up approach will hopefully bring fares down too. Currently I pay over £4 for a journey of 3 miles.*

Examples of **experience from elsewhere show these powers can work (11)** and have impact on local transport networks.

- *Devolution works in similar regions.*
- *The West Yorkshire Mayor is doing a good job with the problems with Transport within West Yorkshire and a similar set up within North Yorkshire is essential.*

Can provide the opportunity to **address public transport issues in rural locations (45)**.

- *Our village is very short of transport. To reach nearby towns it is often necessary to travel on more than one bus.*

- *Outlying villages with people who either don't drive or have health issues need a local bus service.*
- *It has to be affordable and available - the Mayor and Combined Authority must be able to ensure ticket prices can be afforded and the rural areas in North Yorkshire have reliable, regular services.*

The **geography and size of North Yorkshire make effective and strategic transport planning essential (30).**

- *Transport is such a strategic issue and so we need the functions at this level to address these.*
- *Transport is more important in YNY than any other area because of size and rurality.*
- *A strategic view is vital for sustainable public transport provision.*
- *Long term planning and consistent regional policy would provide a better environment to attract inward investment for rail, bus, car club, cycle and other transport low carbon travel operators.*

This proposal provides the potential to **make active travel a priority (10):**

- *Priority could assertively be given to active travel, shared transport and public transport as set out in the Local Enterprise Partnership Routemap to net zero.*

**Effective transport links are a key economic enabler (32)** for York and North Yorkshire

- *Transport links are fundamental to the viability of many sectors and also in attracting new business therefore a responsibility and powers to influence in this area are crucial.*
- *Sherburn Enterprise Park estate is one of the largest Manufacturing and Services & transport hubs in North Yorkshire but the Transport Links, Public Transport... are stopping nearly a1,000 jobs being filled in the area as people cannot get there unless they have their own transport.*

## 6.2.2 Reasons for opposition

Of the 269 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the new transport powers proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Respondents were of the opinion that **bus franchising doesn't work (12)** and should be applied in York and North Yorkshire.

- *I don't support the franchising of bus services. They should be brought under the full control of the local authority.*
- *A franchised public transport system has been proven to not work - supplying only in places where there is revenue and consequently leaving those in remote areas deprived of public transport, forcing reliance on the motor car.*

The view that the MCA is an organisation **too big to reflect the diversity of North Yorkshire (45)** in delivering new transport powers.

- *... in a larger Local authority there is more likelihood of "one size fits all approach" and I cannot see how local communities will see direct benefits. What might apply for somewhere like York will not apply for Thirsk or Northallerton.*
- *...this sounds city centric. N Yorks has always had a problem with ensuring good bus services to the remote areas - concerned that these less lucrative routes would be withdrawn*
- *As a resident of Craven I can see that investment in the Key Route Network is likely to completely ignore all the minor roads in our area which are deteriorating. We need local people to decide on the priorities for local transport.*
- *Most of this money will inevitably be spent in urban areas. Much of North Yorkshire is B roads where providing buses etc would likely be unviable.*

A number of respondents objected to the proposals on the principles that they **do not believe in devolution, (26)** the establishment of a mayoral role and combined authority.

- *the transport proposals are valid but not the proposed devolution deal is not the best way to achieve them.*
- *Don't agree with Mayors.*
- *Does the mayor know anything about transport?*
- *I don't support a combined authority.*
- *I don't support an elected Mayor.*

There was a feeling the **available funding in the proposals was not enough to address the required changes (94)** to make the new transport powers effective.

- *As no funding is indicated, this will be an unfulfillable plan.*
- *I cannot see anywhere in the MCA proposal that there is sufficient funding to improve the transport function over and above the performance of the two existing councils.*

There was also a feeling of concern over the potential for **decrease in local accountability(53)**.

- *I can see no need for an MCA to undertake these functions. They can be performed by NYC and York.*
- *All the mechanisms to enable this to happen already exist.*

### 6.2.3 Reasons unsure

Of the 130 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure about the new transport powers proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

The proposals were felt to be on a scale that was **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (27)**, essentially viewed as a 'one size fits all' approach.

- *North Yorkshire is a very Rural county (as a whole), how do we guarantee that the Mayoral system won't prioritise one part of the county over another?*
- *Essential that this does not become a further "anti-car" policy as the private car will always have a place and is often essential in the deeply rural parts of the county where it is doubtful that public transport will ever be able to fulfil the local needs.*
- *Care needs to be taken not to pull funding from key city/town services to maintain inadequately funded rural services.*

Many felt there was a **lack of information to enable decision making (32)**.

- *it's unclear who does this now, and what the changes ACTUALLY mean... these all seem like good things to have 'power' over, but how is that different to what happens now?*
- *Can't really understand the proposals.*
- *Don't have enough information on what this means for current long term planned schemes, for which Government financial help and planning would be required.*
- *I cannot make a judgement on this without knowing what the budget from central government will be.*

**Concerns over the Mayoral role (25)**.

- *I am worried that the mayor is going to have too much power.*
- *I don't support the absolute power of the...Mayor deciding to build roads everywhere and controlling York's policies.*
- *Support the proposals but not with a Mayor.*

There appears to be **insufficient funding available to deliver the proposal (35)**.

- *the funding that will be available to the new authority will never create public transport facilities in a county by its nature and geography must be vehicle dependent.*
- *The Mayor has no money to make significant improvements to the transport infrastructure.*

## 6.2.4 Unassigned opinion

A number of comments were made on the new transport powers proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know. We present these comments without thematic analysis as their volume is so low. They are also presented as verbatim quotes for the same reason.

- *Better if the county was joined up to fully implement a Yorkshire integrated transport policy.*
- *Desperate lack of good public transport in North Yorkshire. Mayor of London over the years has improved public transport immeasurably.*
- *I've done all this once.*
- *Local knowledge is better placed to make important decisions vis-a-vis local transport needs.*
- *Put the mayor's salary towards repairing the roads.*
- *Roads in NYCC are appalling, how can a mayor change it unless stops all the ridiculous salaries and pensions for management.*
- *"The transport role needs to be handled at a broader level than just North Yorkshire.*
- *Traffic flows, services and routes in North Yorkshire often need to be integrated with the more populated regions surrounding it."*
- *Too big to properly control.*
- *Transport decisions are best taken locally. The size of the region will make this difficult though.*
- *"We are already involved with West Yorkshire in parts.*
- *More overheads and little chance of any improvements.*

## 6.3 Stakeholder Responses

Most responses were positive about the transfer of powers and potential to look at transport in a broader strategic way. Organisations including Community First Yorkshire, East Riding of Yorkshire Council and York and North Yorkshire LEP highlighted how taking a strategic approach reflecting both the relationship between York and North Yorkshire but also how the region connects to its neighbouring geographies could benefit growth opportunities across the region.

For respondents with a direct organisational transport focus, York Bus Forum was supportive of the role of the Mayor in developing a Local Transport Plan for York and North Yorkshire. They also welcomed the commitment to establishing a devolved and consolidated local transport budget but were concerned about the lack of detail of this budget. The bus powers were welcomed, but highlighted that the nature of bus service needs, operation and financial viability is very different in urban York from that in much of rural North Yorkshire. They were not clear on the implications of the Transport and Highways Authority powers being split across the MCA and the local authorities.

Action for Yorkshire Transport was concerned that the road expansion schemes, namely the A64 East of York, Kex Gill and the A1237 York Outer Ring Road, will provide additional road capacity which in turn will generate more traffic and increase emissions during their construction. They welcomed the mention of a modal shift away from cars.

First York welcomed the opportunity to access new investment streams and further improve public transport in the region. They voiced support for a Key Route Network (KRN) to enable a consistent approach to the management of that network. They understood the inclusion of bus franchising but were firmly of the opinion that the Enhanced Partnership working is the best way to deliver transport objectives.

Several organisations reflected that the transport focus needed to support the climate change agenda. North York Moors National Park Authority considered it vital that the Mayor and MCA seek to reflect a key premise of the devolution deal to make the region carbon negative. Zero Carbon Harrogate identified for the need for more use of shared transport solutions alongside conventional public transport.

Both Whitby Community Network and Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network similarly supported the use of transport powers to improve public transport connectivity, and highlighted that funding was needed to support public transport for rural communities.

York & District Trades Union Council were directly opposed to the proposals. They considered that the splitting of transport and planning functions would be a backward step and would lead to poorer decision making and local delivery. However, if an MCA is introduced, they would support the commitment to establishing a devolved transport budget and accepted that a Mayor could play a strong role in strategic level co-ordination and representation to Government.

## **6.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries**

### **6.4.1 General**

- *Good to have a Mayor responsible for transport and able to take a strategic view across the patch.*
- *(Strategic approach) needed because York's transport system is undermined by poor planning decisions.*
- *MCA could lead to an integrated transport strategy.*
- *How will devolution impact transport connections? Will there be better connections from small villages?*
- *Any money towards improving regions transport is good: It could force bus companies to run more rural services seven days a week; give priority to "dual A64 and improve A170".*
- *"Transport is key to connecting people to jobs and education."*
- *Doncaster Airport with its exceptional runway should have electric rail/rapid transport connections from the focal points.*



- *“York’s buses need sorting out. This should be a priority as people need to get out of cars. The powers should be used to make sure people can make the change.”*

#### **6.4.2 Transport important to advance education and employment opportunity**

- *“Positive to hear about the potential for more public transport across rural areas.” This will enable access to higher paid jobs elsewhere.*
- *Recruitment difficulties linked to transport issues.*
- *Due to lack of public transport and the cost, “there are problems with accessing apprenticeships, graduate placements, and other work placements especially in Richmondshire.”*
- *Poor public transport, connections and cost in rural areas pushing people towards cars, which is often unaffordable for young people. Restricts access to apprenticeships, graduate placements and general employment opportunities in these areas.*
- *Greater frequency of trains and buses to Leeds, York and Hull will enable people to work in higher paid jobs.*
- *Buses a concern – students rely on them to get around, especially those not in the immediate area. How will an MCA help with this?*
- *Buses are critical to allow young people to get to schools and colleges.*

#### **6.4.3 Public transport in rural areas**

- *Several comments referred to the urgent need to improve public transport in rural areas.*
- *“There is not enough infrastructure – buses are few and far between and trains are always unreliable. Public transport is expensive and not a good service.”*
- *“There are fewer village schools and parents can’t afford school transport in many cases.”*

#### **6.4.4 Issues and benefits to the local population for the MCA to consider**

- *Free travel passes for 16–19-year-olds?*
- *Make Dual A64 is a priority.*
- *MCA has opportunity to listen to local people, particularly in rural areas, requirements and deliver local transport infrastructure to allow more use of public transport.*
- *MCA Should use opportunity to link up trains and buses across district.*
- *Increase number of buses out to villages*
- *Use power to force train companies to deliver a service. Improve congestion around York, especially outer ring road and A64.*
- *“I would like to see dual carriageway developed between Scarborough and York”.*

# 7 Housing and Regeneration

## 7.1 Background

The proposed devolution deal will give the Mayor and MCA responsibilities for housing and regeneration. This will include:

- Land assembly and compulsory purchase powers
- The power to designate a Mayoral Development Area and to create Mayoral development Corporations, which support delivery on strategic sites in York and North Yorkshire
- Invest £12.7m of devolved capital funding across 2023/24 and 2024/25 to support the building of new homes on brown field land.
- Identify and bring forward a pipeline of strategic housing projects.
- To support investment in affordable, low carbon and quality homes across the area

Set out below are the responses related to the new housing and regeneration proposals - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 7.2 Online Survey Responses

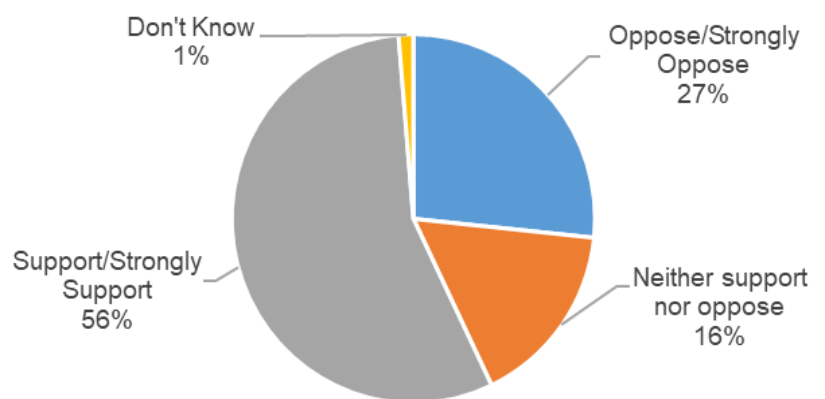
When asked:

*Do you support or oppose the proposal that a York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and Mayor takes on these housing and regeneration functions?*

Of the 1,524 people who provided a response:

- The majority (56%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Just over a quarter (27%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 16% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.
- The remainder (1%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	850	56%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	406	27%
Neither support nor oppose	248	16%
Don't Know	20	1%
<b>Grand Total*</b>	<b>1,524</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

### 7.2.1 Reasons for support

Of the 411 people who provided comments indicating that they supported the housing and regeneration proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Support for the **proposals for brownfield development (60.)**

- *I approve the plan to develop brown field land. I DO NOT APPROVE of mass development on green field sites around small villages where there is no adequate infrastructure in place.*
- *I support this ONLY if there is no building on greenfield sites and why not regenerate areas with many houses left empty because they need updating and repairing.*

A hope that the new mayoral powers will result in **improved social housing conditions (35).**

- *I am a ... Council Housing tenant and hope money will still be available for repairs and upgrades of council properties.*

Support based on the need for **energy efficient homes (64).**

- *we need to be building housing that is already net zero (for embedded as well as operational carbon), so need to progress much faster than national standards.*

- *ALL new houses must be Zero Carbon BREEAM style.*
- *Housing is in short supply and as a major contributor to carbon emissions, the Mayor and Combined Authority must have powers to address this problem and drive forward projects properly financed to address it.*

Support based on the need for **affordable housing and adequate housing in rural areas (51)**

- *Affordable housing for locals is paramount.*
- *we need more affordable housing, especially difficult in rural areas.*

Linked to the issue of affordable homes support based on an expectation of Mayoral powers being used to **regulate the second/holiday home market (30)**.

- *Far too many are bought as holiday lets.*

An assurance that new housing will only be built with **adequate local facilities (53)**.

- *It's no good building houses if there is no development in facilities: Roads; Public transport; Schools; Health services; Shops; Job opportunities.*

**Maximise local experience (35).**

- *...local knowledge is best. Looking at empty units in Town Centres to turn into flats which will in turn bring needed revenue into town centres.*
- *We need to include communities in the decision making around future housing.*

The new Mayoral powers provide an opportunity to **refresh the approach to housing and regeneration (64)**.

- *...the focus on building sustainable and affordable housing is a priority, any additional freedoms to rethink the challenges and refresh our approaches gives more hope.*
- *As with Transport it is critical Y&NY take a more strategic approach to land use planning and economic development. And the reality of the two LA's is that their local economies are very closely intertwined anyway.*
- *A strategic approach to housing across the region makes more sense than piecemeal development and would help prevent local authorities depositing new housing estates at their boundaries, which passes responsibility for infrastructure services onto the neighbouring authority.*

## 7.2.2 Reasons for opposition

Of the 295 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the housing and regeneration proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Respondents who opposed the proposal include those who **remain unconvinced of the need for a Mayor or MCA (18.)**

- *...these functions are handled perfectly well by the Council. Please direct the funding to them, rather than create this extra layer of bureaucracy just to get the funds.*
- *Again, why do we need a Mayor?*

Concerns over the potential erosion of **democratic accountability (16)**.

- *Where would be the democratic scrutiny of the mayor's property deals?*

Concerns over the potential for **further environmental and infrastructure damage (47.)**

- *...too many new homes being built without adequate drainage and infrastructure needs careful thinking and planning.*

Concerns over the potential for **loss of green belt (73)**.

- *Because they will just build on green belt land instead of brownfield sites.*

Concerns over failure to **prioritise climate change mitigation (36)**.

- *...climate and ecological emergencies are not prioritised. New housing must be to the highest environmental standards, and this includes building in better public transport so that people do not use cars. I cannot support proposals where this is clearly not understood.*

Increasing **local involvement in the planning approval process (13)**.

- *Developments such... only occur when they have been approved by the majority of persons living in that area...developments are fully and only focused on local needs and requirements...*
- *I don't think a Mayor will have any knowledge of local areas like a councillor would. This could lead to bad decisions being made, both for the community and for the environment*

A blanket **rejection of the principles of an elected mayor (25.)**

- *I don't support the proposals for a Mayoral combined authority and so I can't support this proposal.*

**Concerns over the Mayoral role (10)**

- *Should not be left to one person.*
- *Undemocratic for one person to hold all the power.*

**Concerns over the appropriateness of funding allocation (13)**

- *Seems a weird thing to spend money on. You're not actually going to build houses, that's what housebuilders do.*
- *It's not enough money, we need 1000s of affordable homes built.*

Concerns over **increased bureaucracy (12)**

- *Just another bureaucracy tier*
- *Local authorities control this and another layer of bureaucracy won't help.*

Concerns over the potential **decrease in local accountability (15)**

- *prefer councils to make decisions on planning and housing.*

Concerns over a **lack of information to enable decision making (12)**.

- *The proposals are weak and lack substance. For example what does "support in other ways" mean?*

### 7.2.3 Reasons unsure

Of the 149 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure about the housing and regeneration proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

#### **Lack of information to enable decision making (23).**

- *Unclear whether housing means affordable or social housing not just houses to buy. I assume it does, but can't support until its clearer*
- *Doubtful what the respective roles of the councils and MCA would be.*

#### **Housing is best placed at the local authority level. Concerns over the potential for a decrease in local accountability (19).**

- *This may be something better done at a more local level.*
- *Here I am more hesitant. Housing should remain as local a function as possible. Moving any housing powers away from York or North Yorkshire... is probably not a good idea...once housing is considered across such a large area there will be more of an incentive to find housing solutions that require...car use and longer commuting journeys.*
- *How do these powers interact with local authority-led spatial planning obligations e.g. local plans, air quality plans etc? Does this empower the CA to impose (or block) development within a local area against the will of the LA?*

#### **Doubts over the ability of the MCA to address issues of second home ownership (20).**

- *housing in general is overpriced if you can get rid of second homes in the area the youth just may be able to get on the housing ladder.*

#### **Concerns over the ability of the MCA to address the challenge of providing affordable housing (27).**

- *York needs more affordable housing for the people that live here and less student and shared housing used to generate massive rent profits from greedy landlords.*
- *This could be a massive opportunity if local people are fully consulted and housing to meet local peoples need is addressed in the first instance - primary homes, for local people/key workers, accessible, climate friendly and affordable.*

#### **A requirement for further assurance that the MCA will concentrate on environmentally friendly homes (31).**

- *All new housing and commercial developments and extensions should be being built to net zero standards with good design to ensure minimal ongoing energy use and using carbon negative materials e.g. wood.*

#### **Confused over the budget allocation and purpose of the new Mayoral powers related to housing and regeneration (12).**

- *Confused by roles here. Thats not a lot of money, so probably expected to see focus on help for existing homes on energy reduction or new energy small scale schemes.*

Looking for more detail of **local involvement in housing (10)** and planning issues.

- *Development should be considered by each local area and in the best interests of that.*

### **7.3 Unassigned opinion**

A number of comments were made on the housing and regeneration proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know.

- *Cooperation across boundaries including West Yorkshire authorities in addressing location and service needs of housing is poor at the moment and needs early action.*
- *Direct controls are important.*
- *Far too much power over the future of Yorkshire vested in a minority.*
- *Hopeful of limits on sprawling new developments and an END to homes in rural areas being sold off as holiday homes which then remain empty for most of the year.*
- *Housing is a local issue.*
- *How will this impact on the surrounding area? The Mayor will not be that interested in towns and villages outside of York. Every town needs its own governance.*
- *It's no good just building houses everywhere! What an out making it compulsory for builders to invest in community infrastructure schools, GP surgeries,, hospitals all if which are desperately struggle. This impacts everyone in communities. Not just about housing*
- *Local knowledge may be valuable here, but the contributions offered by central government aren't enough to make much difference.*
- *Need to ensure provision of more social and affordable housing. Not everyone can afford to buy.*
- *North Yorkshire is not a coherent mayoral area ...*
- *Overrides local opinion.*
- *so long as there is challenge so that it is clear that what is proposed is correct.*
- *The abolition of the district of RYEDALE was not allowed to be voted upon by public demand. Much better close management can be achieved by councillors representing various parished.*
- *Think infrastructure and do not build any more houses without financing the increased infrastructure requirements! It's a travesty that currently there are so many new housing developments in Harrogate without any consideration or financing of the additional infrastructure requirements!!!!!!*
- *This mayor's going to be busy looking after all these things, NYCC has not be able to do it with all the staff it's got, so how will they???*
- *Will Planning still carry the same weight.*

## 7.4 Stakeholder Responses

All responses to this section highlighted the priority of affordable, low carbon housing for the sub-region.

Several organisations, including Zero Carbon Harrogate and Northern Power Grid, suggested that zero carbon or low energy housing should be mandated as part of plans.

Homes England were keen to work with the MCA to increase local housing supply. York and North Yorkshire LEP identified the opportunity for York and North Yorkshire to work in a more integrated way with Homes England, taking a collaborative, place-based approach to delivering homes across the region. Network Rail described the importance of the MCA in supporting the York Central programme, which is important for housing in York.

North York Moors National Park Authority supported the powers on the basis that their statutory planning and place making powers were protected. In particular the requirement for National Park Authorities to give consent to Mayoral Development Areas within their boundaries was seen as important.

Whitby Community Network suggested that there was a huge opportunity to focus on the needs of local communities and address the affordability issues of housing markets skewed by holiday home ownership. They also suggested that redevelopment must be considered equally across towns and rural areas, where primary homes are not being built. Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network similarly supported increased provision of rural affordable housing, essential to the future of a vibrant rural economy.

Yorkshire Museums Trust wished to see developers investing in infrastructure for stronger communities, particular in terms of culture.

## 7.5 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries

### 7.5.1 General comments

- *Several comments noted the urgent need for more affordable housing, especially in the rural areas to prevent younger people from moving out of the region.*
- *“At what point does it become strategic? Will Mayor will take responsibility for the housing plan and external funding”.*
- *Will be good to see more housing and development of employment land happening to stop movement of young people and jobs out of the region.*
- *“If we don’t find a way of making housing and jobs available for our local young people and discourage the present trend of manic house buying (at ridiculous prices) by people from outside the area – there will not be a Yorkshire left to govern”.*



## **7.5.2 Issues and benefits to the local population for the MCA to consider**

- *Requirement for added facilities to complement large housing developments - Lots of housing but no extra facilities such as GP's sporting facilities etc.*
- *Challenges for Mayor's housing portfolio – “The cost of housing, second homes and lack of affordable housing”*
- *When building new estates, “enforce (inclusion of) more affordable houses”?*
- *Affordable housing to enable more local people to stay in the area.*

# 8 Skills and Employment

## 8.1 Background

The proposed devolution deal will give the mayoral combined authority (MCA) powers to help people and businesses in York and North Yorkshire get the skills and support necessary to reach their ambitions, as well as support the region's economy. This will be achieved through control of the government's Adult Education Budget and powers which are outlined in section 3.4 of the scheme. It is proposed that this will work by conferring functions on the mayoral combined authority. This will include:

- Locally provide adult education and training and control the Adult Education Budget (AEB) from the academic year 2025/26, subject to meeting readiness conditions.
- promote the effective participation in education and training of young people aged 16 and 17.
- make available to young people and relevant young adults appropriate support services to encourage, enable and help them participate in education and training.
- ensure that adult education and training in York and North Yorkshire promotes high standards, fair access to opportunity for education and training, and fulfils individuals' learning potential.
- require relevant institutions in the further education sector to provide appropriate education to specified individuals aged between 16 and 18 years.

Set out below are the responses related to the new funding and finance proposals - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 8.2 Online Survey Responses

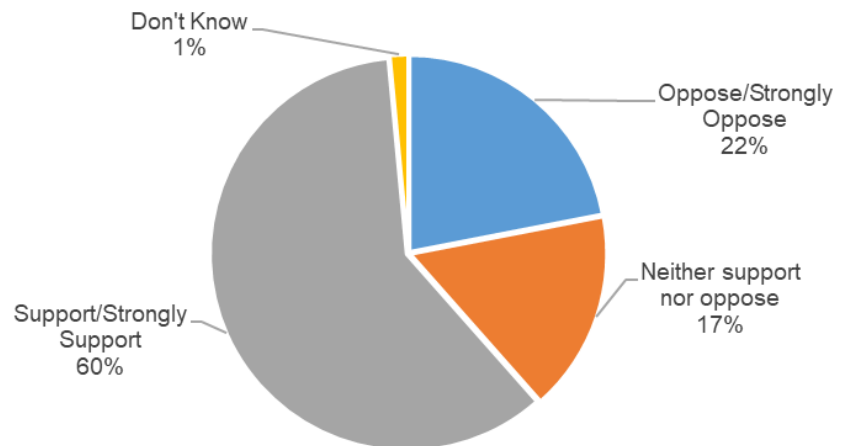
When asked:

*Do you support or oppose the proposal to move these skills and employment functions to a York and North Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority?*

Of the 1,531 people who provided a response:

- The majority (60%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Just under a quarter (22%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 17% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.
- The remainder (2%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	919	60%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	336	22%
Neither support nor oppose	253	17%
Don't Know	23	2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,531</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

### 8.2.1 Reasons for support

Of the 451 people who provided comments indicating that they supported the skills and employment functions proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

**Education is viewed as central to any region's economic performance and individual employability (68).** Respondents support the proposal in recognition of the importance of interventions in this area for York and North Yorkshire.

- *Education both technical and academic are precursors to the future development of the region.*
- *Education is vital is a vital ingredient in a successful modern economy. Local provision must meet local needs.*

Skills development **focussed on the green economy (45)** supporting future sustainability and a zero carbon economy.

- *A strategic economic plan centred on renewables, carbon capture and net zero and even circular will mean a whole new skill set and lifelong learning to unskilled and refill.*
- *The proposed approach enables a greater focus on generating green jobs which will assist in house building but also the ambitions expressed for a York and North Yorkshire*

*Mayoral Combined Authority to work with Government on Net Zero, Climate Change and Natural Capital.*

**Adult education (39)** and retraining are a key motivator to support the proposals.

- *Adult education can be tailored to suit the demands of the locality.*

The proposals provide **an opportunity to foster the skills of young people (67)** to ensure they and the region are competitive.

- *The skills gap in this area is massive. We must restore the aspirations of young people.*
- *The training of young people is crucial to the survival of York and North Yorkshire. Too many leave the area because they cannot find suitable work or housing.*
- *More needs to be done for young people in NEETs (not in education, employment or employment), and alternative education.*

Develop **vocational routes to skills and employment (63)**.

- *Education is a good thing. Training and apprenticeships for the age groups in question is a far better thing. We waste far too much money on young people going to university - we need far more training for employment.*
- *Young people need access to education and skills, not just academic but life skills and vocational.*
- *As a primarily rural county I would like to see skill apprenticeships and vocational training especially in rural skills such as woodwork, stone carving (dry stone walling). For youth not academic there should be better local apprenticeships.*
- *As presently organised education is obsessively academic - much more emphasis needs to be placed on technical education.*

Recognises the **importance of local knowledge (17)** in skills provision planning.

- *As with housing the local context is crucial.*
- *Control on a local level can be more specific and better decisions made.*
- *Local control of education, particularly adult education nature and funding is crucial.*

Recognises the **benefit of experience from elsewhere (12)** to the benefit of York and North Yorkshire.

- *Other Mayoral authorities can do this successfully so why not here?*

Provides a **structured and strategic response** from the combined authority to York and North Yorkshire's immediate and long-term **skills needs (41)**.

- *Provides leadership & co-ordinated approach.*
- *Allows a Combined Authority to tailor local people's skills to the needs of local business and industry, ensuring young people can access local employment opportunities.*

Provides a **structured and strategic response** from the combined authority to York and North Yorkshire's immediate and long-term **employment needs (53)**.

- *We need a strong mayoral area to work on bring the right employers to the area. This would mean quality and skilled employment with well paid jobs.*
- *We need this to achieve our goals and ambitions and support our economy.*
- *We need to ensure the training and skills provided are for actual jobs and employers in the region. We need to get a better fit between what the needs and shortages are, with a supply of skills and people locally. Everyone must talk to each other to ensure it's all relevant.*

Support was offered on the clear proviso that the offer was **equitably applied (15)** across the whole of North Yorkshire.

- *As long as the opportunities are available in all areas of North Yorkshire.*

## 8.2.2 Reasons for opposition

Of the 213 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the skills and employment functions proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

A blanket **rejection of the principles of an elected mayor and MCA (26.)**

- *I don't think a York and North Yorkshire mayoral authority is a good idea...*
- *I don't want a mayor.*
- *I don't want and we don't need an expensive mayor trying to tackle problems beyond their ability.*
- *I oppose the whole principle of a mayor.*

Concerns over **increased bureaucracy (35).**

- *I do not believe there is any benefit in having an additional layer of political opinion. Councillors are elected by local residents to govern local service delivery. An elected mayor, by definition, will be an obstacle to this.*

The **scale of the problem** requires a national solution **(17).**

- *This is a national problem of huge proportions and as such needs a national solution with associated funding. Any attempt to address the problem on a local level will, at very best, do no more than scratch the surface and will result in a patchwork of provision across the country.*

Concerns over the **lack of information to enable decision making (36).**

- *The statement in support of this question is wholly politically loaded in favour of the positive answer but no where can I find evidence to support this.*

This is an issue **best handled at local authority level (25)** and the Mayoral function will interfere.

- *the Unitary Authority should be doing these things.*

The scale of operation of the proposal is **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (31).**

- *As before, outlying areas will lose out.*

- *I believe local providers know the areas and challenges best North Yorks and York are very different providers with different client groups how could a combined authority possibly understand those diverse needs properly. I feel this will be a detriment to York and that York will lose out.*
- *I believe the area is to large and diverse to be singularly controlled.*

#### **Concerns over the Mayoral role (11).**

- *This can be achieved without the role of Mayor.*
- *Do not think a mayor is needed to promote skills.*
- *The North Yorkshire Council already undertake these responsibilities and there is no evidence that a Mayor will carry out the duties any better than the Council.*

#### **Concerns over increased bureaucracy (12).**

- *We really do not need another level of bureaucracy and administration. This reduces the amount actually reaching those who need it.*
- *Don't we already have support systems like this in place?*

The **funding to support the proposals is not explained (13)** giving rise to concern.

- *No mention of specific funding for these devolved responsibilities*
- *There is no case given for why the change will be beneficial over current arrangements.*
- *Insufficient funding provided: apprenticeships and traineeships are excluded.*

### **8.2.3 Reasons unsure**

Of the 133 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure about the skills and employment functions proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

Unsure how to respond as a result of a **lack of information to enable decision making (14).**

- *Sounds woolly.*
- *Not clear how this will work in practice. Again, decisions made remotely will potentially have a big impact on local skills and employment.*
- *This is a fifty/fifty, it could go horrible wrong. I could understand the case if the seven districts were separate to the old county council.*
- *What exactly will they be trained for? Not everyone is an academic high flyer and even if they are, what are the employment prospects?*

The proposals lack detail on the extent to which it will address criticism related to it being **too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (23).**

- *...proposals are fine if the Mayor actually looks at how to help the entire region and not just focus on the cities.*

- *Too large and diverse area to be able to pull this together again it is about local people dealing with this.*
- *May be loading too much on the combined authority. The County and City Councils still need a role.*

The **cost/benefit** of the proposal **needs to be more clearly defined (19)**.

- *The benefit situation needs to be addressed first, as I do not like paying taxes for a lot of the people who cannot be bothered to work and are just happy to 'milk' the system.*

Concerns over **increased bureaucracy** and **lack of clarity on funding /resources (35)**

- *This just sounds like an indictment of the current provision/management and I'm not clear how more bureaucracy will improve that without more funding which does not appear to be part of the deal.*
- *Yet more 'sweeteners! Again, all of these new functions could/should have been introduced under existing local government structures. It is neither necessary, desirable or democratically justifiable to impose an unwanted MCA.*

The way in which **those in most need of support** are to be **attracted to the system (33)** needs further definition/clarification.

- *This is really important; the Council need to find ways to attract and entice those most in need of this support. Finding ways to communicate with communities to understand what they really need, rather than what the professional think they need, is vital.*

## 8.2.4 Unassigned opinion

A number of comments were made on the skills and employment functions proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know.

- *I think this will benefit the urban areas over the rural*
- *All important issues but North Yorkshire does not lend itself to a mayoral approach ... what do Skipton and Scarborough have in common...*
- *Already done this.*
- *Central government would retain power over any budget, so could cripple or negate any initiatives locally favoured with which it disagreed. So it's an illusory benefit.*
- *It would be the height of hypocrisy to let any Authority anywhere near Skills or employment as they lack an understanding of both, however "consultants" and ex. Council Officers now in Skills training would be overjoyed.*
- *"The Mayoral Authority must ensure that the whole of North Yorkshire has a greened skilled workforce:*
  - *1/. Training for new green skills such as retrofitting may require to be tailored to specialist rural needs.*
  - *2/. Such a structure would be able to target both the numerous urban settlements and large rural areas over the geographical region.*

- *3/. Needs to act to ensure coordination with national policies."*

- *This area has been neglected for years.*

### **8.3 Stakeholder Responses**

There was broad support across responses for the proposed powers. The Tees Valley Mayor, Ben Houchen, highlighted successes in Teesside using devolved Adult Education Budget to support residents with skills that businesses need and creating employment opportunities.

Noting that the region has the potential to build an economy based on knowledge, innovation and skills, University of York and BioYorkshire wanted to be part of creating the green skills future required, building on their previous work on the regional skills strategy.

York and North Yorkshire LEP supported the devolution of the Adult Education Budget, but also felt there is an opportunity to go further linking Local Skills Improvement Plans, with Adult Education, Bootcamps and National Skill Funding to deliver skills provision focused on economic opportunities.

North York Moors National Park Authority also supported the proposals, with a desire to ensure that training provision within the region equips the workforce to make the most of the opportunities in the green and landscape economy. Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network supported the provision of a wider range of educational choices, particularly those which will improve job opportunities and higher paid jobs within the rural economy.

Whitby Community Network supported the proposals and wished to see training available in all market towns, or sufficient transport available to access other facilities, to support Net Zero targets.

### **8.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries**

#### **8.4.1 General comment**

- *Positive support for the MCA to invest in the delivery of skills training and employment opportunity across the region.*
- *"The devolution of powers for adult education and skills to the region... allows us to tailor this provision to our needs".*

#### **8.4.2 Issues and benefits to the local population for the MCA to consider**

- *"One door for business support"*
- *Address Issues with recruitment in remote locations*
- *Help for businesses interested in registering to access funding for delivery of skills/employment training.*
- *Priority should be given to support sustainability of rural businesses and help them recruit and retain staff.*
- *Support young people into employment: Get them involved in community projects.*



- *Get educational institutions to teach what is needed locally: Opportunity to deliver what is really needed especially in retail and hospitality.*
- *Ensure education and training is more flexible to allow on job and off job training.*
- *Address the shortage of skills in abattoirs and green skills, and general labour.*
- *MCA should allocate funding to resource towards schools and education, particularly primary school.*

# 9 Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Functions

## 9.1 Background

The proposed deal includes the transfer of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions and powers to the Mayor. This will deliver better outcomes for the public by improving working across public services, for example between social inclusion and community safety and cohesion. Joining police and crime functions with oversight of other public services in the mayoral combined authority would also promote further collaboration within the region.

A mayor exercising police and crime functions will continue to provide a single, directly accountable individual who is responsible for securing an efficient and effective police, fire and rescue services in North Yorkshire, in the same way the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner does currently. A summary of the functions to transfer is shown below:

The Mayor's Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions would include:

- issuing a police and crime plan and Fire and Rescue Plan
- setting the police budget including council tax requirements
- undertaking Chief Constable, Chief Fire Officer and Deputy Chief Fire Officer dismissals, suspensions, and appointments
- being the employer of all Fire and Rescue staff

The Mayor will appoint a Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime (who is not directly elected), to whom they may delegate functions like:

- determining police and crime objectives
- attending meetings of a Police and Crime Panel
- preparing an annual report

These functions will be transferred from the existing North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to the Mayor. A Police, Fire and Crime Panel will scrutinise the actions and decisions of the Mayor / Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and enable the public to hold them to account.

Set out below are the responses related to the new funding and finance proposals - detailed in summary above - received by :

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 9.2 Online Survey Responses

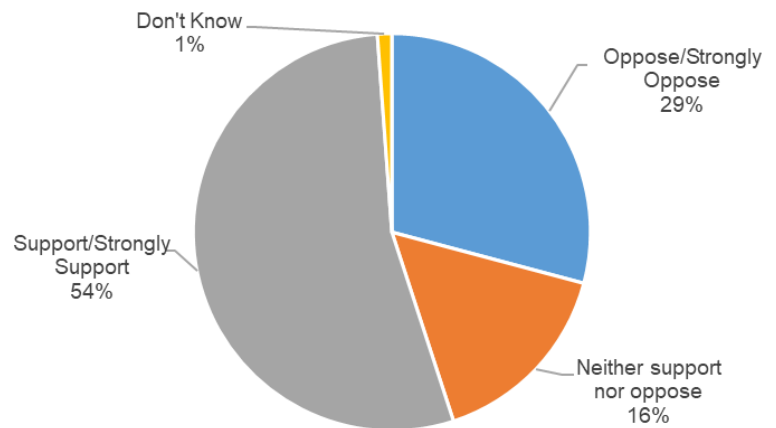
When asked:

*Do you support or oppose the proposal to move Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions to a York and North Yorkshire Mayor?*

Of the 1,534 people who provided a response:

- The majority (54%) supported or strongly supported the proposal.
- Nearly a third (29%) opposed or strongly opposed the proposal.
- 16% of respondents were neither in support nor opposition.
- The remainder (1%) didn't know.

Response	No.	%
Support/Strongly Support	826	54%
Oppose/Strongly Oppose	447	29%
Neither support nor oppose	243	16%
Don't Know	18	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,534</b>	<b>100%</b>



\*Please note this total reflects the number of respondents providing a rating response, additional respondents provided comments without providing a rating.

### 9.2.1 Reasons for support

Of the 354 people who provided comments indicating that they supported the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

The proposal is viewed as positive in that it would bring Fire and Rescue and Police services under the remit of one individual, **providing a holistic overview (67)**.

- *Keeping all services joined up.*
- *Makes sense to be coterminous.*
- *Makes sense to have this function under the elected mayorship to ensure consistency and accountability.*
- *No point doubling up on these particular jobs.*

The overall remit of the MCA and the Mayor's role will **ensure a broad alignment with other strategic action** in the County **(73)**.

- *The alignment of police, fire and crime priorities with housing priorities is a big opportunity to improve outcomes and experiences of customers and communities.*
- *A joined-up approach across all previous council areas will always be a positive, ensuring value for money and a consistent approach across the area.*

- *More cohesive working between these services and council services can only benefit the wider population.*

The feeling that the **current arrangements** are not working and **would benefit from refresh (80)**.

- *The current commissioner has let the roads & pavement deteriorate to a dangerous level with no attempt to enforce road traffic law beyond a few arbitrary speed cameras.*
- *Police commissioners have not been that effective. If this works like Manchester then it would be an improvement*
- *More direct control and information. Things need shaking up. Desperate need of more staff and people to handle complaints, help and support.*

The proposal will allow for **rationalisation of roles and reduced costs (93)**.

- *Having to pay for the election of a commissioner is a waste of money so the mayor taking up this role will save this money and allow it to be spent where needed.*
- *...never saw why this appointment is a standalone position.*
- *Will do away with extra costs for the current post in addition to the new Mayor.*

The proposal will **enhance local accountability (35)** of the role.

- *It must be better to have local accountability.*
- *North Yorkshire Police are wholly non-responsive. It takes an MP letter to get any traction. It is a ridiculous situation. The MCA should improve this situation and introduce more accountability.*
- *Democratic accountability to community safety and combining in the mayoral role ensures efficiency of resources.*
- *Crime is an integrated society problem and needs tackling in an efficient manner with public accountability.*

## 9.2.2 Reasons for opposition

Of the 307 people who provided comments indicating they opposed the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

A blanket **rejection of the principles of a Mayor and an MCA (25)**.

- *I don't support a combined authority.*
- *I support the principle not this undemocratic structure. The proposed composition of the combined authority is profoundly undemocratic.*
- *I don't want a mayor.*

**Increased Bureaucracy (35)**.

- *This will build an additional layer of bureaucracy which we do not support in the current economic climate.*
- *This really does sound like you're creating even more paid positions of power to do a job that is already being done badly.*

- *The staff needed to run the proposed Mayors office will run into millions leaving very little funding for the rural areas.*

**The current arrangements are working (44).**

- *The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner already has adequate oversight. I fail to see how aligning police, fire, and crime priorities with transport, housing and skills employment will improve outcomes for anyone.*

The proposals will result in a **loss of democratic accountability (13).**

- *The PFCC is a democratically elected position, under this proposal it will be appointed. that's taking away democracy and I oppose it.*
- *The PCC won't be elected directly after the new Mayor is in place and that is a negative.*
- *A large amount of money and time has been spent on elected someone to this role, it is inappropriate to change now particularly to some unelected person. This role must be directly responsible to the electorate.*

**Concerns over the Mayoral role (25).**

- *Too much for one person.*
- *One person vested with so much power it is a retrograde step.*
- *too much on plate and political appointment*

**Too big to address the diversity of North Yorkshire (32).**

- *This will lead to resources being diverted away from rural communities.*

**Doesn't go far enough in delivering devolution (14) .**

- *Devolution is about dispersing power into communities. Centralising power into a Mayor is not devolution. Real devolution is what Wales and Scotland have got. Abolish the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and give the money back to Local Governments and fund them properly.*

**Lack of information to enable decision making (35).**

- *I've seen nothing yet suggesting that the proposed method of management would be more efficient, effective and lower cost than the current system.*

**Concerns over politicising the role (53).**

- *The delivery or emergency services should be kept as non-political as is possible. Combining this function with the Mayoral structure is in principle wrong.*

### 9.2.3 Reasons unsure

Of the 134 people who provided comments indicating that they were unsure about the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner proposals the reasons provided were as follows.

#### Concerns over the proposal's funding (53).

- (I'd support) *Only if funded properly.*

A need to be convinced that the **role could be managed by one person (37)**.

- *Not sure about the combination of two such large roles being performed by one person.*

**Unconvinced by the arguments (17)** put forward for the role.

- *No great benefit over existing arrangements*
- *I'm not at all clear whether this is materially different to the current position.*
- *I don't see this changing anything other than the person who is in charge.*

#### Lack of information to enable decision making (13).

- *Not clear how the members of the Police Fire and Crime Panel will be chosen. How will democratic oversight be exercised?*
- *Not enough information as to what this means on the ground, for the day to day running of the local services.*
- *Insufficient information for a decision*

The **potential increase in regional reach**

- *A bigger regional reach for a single Police Authority might be of benefit - depends upon its organisation.*

### 9.2.4 Unassigned opinion

A number of comments were made on the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner proposals by respondents who did not provide an indication of whether they supported, opposed, were neutral or did not know.

- *...broadly support this unless it translates into the amalgamation of services resulting in a 'cost saving' which ends up leaving all but urban areas underserved.*
- *Already done.*
- *Better to have centralised structure*
- *National services are required.*
- *Police and crime commissioners if felt important should be separate.*
- *The job is already a created position that has little value so you are just expanding its worthlessness.*
- *What do we even need a crime commissioner for?? More money being spent on wasted job creations.*

## 9.3 Stakeholder Responses

Relative few responses directly referenced police, fire and crime powers, but there was support for the proposals within all those that did. York and North Yorkshire LEP and North York Moors National Park Authority both supported the transfer of powers.

North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner fully supported the proposals set out in the Scheme for a transfer of all components of the existing governance landscape on an 'as is' basis. This is on the basis that the Office of the Commissioner would "remain a ringfenced entity sitting within the MCA, retaining its existing governance, structures and collaborations."

Whitby Community Network supported the powers and wanted to see further consolidation of all emergency services under one umbrella to support efficiency in remote areas.

## 9.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries

### 9.4.1 Accountability and limited specialist knowledge

- *While some comments supported the proposal for the Mayor to take on police, fire and crime functions, there were comments about the governance implications of this – (in the exercise of these powers), some asked "To whom would the mayor be accountable"?*
- *North Yorkshire Police need a massive input to regain people's trust and faith. How can a mayor have experience in Fire + police also ambulance stations should all be together with Fire stations etc. You should have local people involved who have experience in person.*

### 9.4.2 Issues for the MCA to consider

- *"The office (must be) more visible in what they are doing and delivering" regarding Police, Fire and Crime*
- *"The roles of Mayor and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (should be) aligned".*

# 10 Other Responses

## 10.1 Background

As well as the structured responses prompted by the discussions around:

- Governance;
- Finance and funding;
- Net zero carbon;
- Transport;
- Housing and regeneration;
- Skills and employment; and
- the transfer of Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions

the consultation was geared to encourage and enable consultees to provide their views on issues outside these topics. Set out below are the responses related to these 'other' responses received by:

- Submission to the online survey.
- Stakeholder submissions (by letter.)
- Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries.

Please note that discussions of proposed Governance under the devolution deal that took place in the independently facilitated focus groups are detailed in Section 11 of this report.

## 10.2 Online Survey Responses

The responses (650) received to the online survey to the question.

*Are there any other comments you would like to make that you do not feel you have addressed in your response?*

have been grouped thematically and are explored below.

### 10.2.1 Accessibility and equality (65)

- *To think about people with all disabilities when making decisions that affect them. Also making sure things are all accessible to all disabilities is important.*
- *To make all information accessible to all people with all disabilities, and also to understand people with a disability needs more support with things.*
- *Also to produce all correspondence, inaccessible formats, i.e. electronically, or Braille*

### 10.2.2 Lack of information to support decision making (67)

- *A complete lack of transparency and putting the information in simple to understand layman's terms. I always feel as though people don't want me to know the truth when that happens. Not real engagement of consultation of your intended audience. A shame a lot of the links on commonplace aren't working.*
- *Difficult to respond when the underlying structures are so misconceived. So much so that it is hard to support any proposals. However, I have tried to be constructive.*



### **10.2.3 North Yorkshire's different (53)**

- *A directly elected mayor seems to work well in a metropolitan area like Greater Manchester or West Yorkshire, but North Yorkshire is very different. It is difficult to see how a mayor for a largely rural and geographically diverse area like North Yorkshire would have a similar profile. In most parts of the county, he or she is likely to be seen as an outsider, or even as a representative of central government which would fund him or her.*
- *A large area made up of a few urban centres and a spread out rural population, with many differing and local issues is fundamentally unsuited to being 'run' by one person, with concentrated central power.*

### **10.2.4 Concerns over the Mayoral role (45)**

- *A mayor would be a total waste of money, too much responsibility over too much of the county.*
- *A mayoral role is totally unnecessary.*
- *This is just a boundary of convenience, not of common sense, and if these finances were offered to the region without this dodgy mayorship aspect attached then it would be overwhelmingly taken without the mayor.*
- *I have objections to the Mayor/MCA being an additional cost borne by local residents and businesses.*
- *...do not think that York needs a Mayor. We do not need to copy America - in fact that would be a very retrograde step!*

### **10.2.5 Concerns over the consultation process (52)**

- *From figures I have seen 4 days before this consultation is due to close there has been less than 0.25% of residents responding. This extremely low response rate raises questions about the validity of any findings from the consultation. If the proposals are to be implemented on the basis of the results of the consultation this is not democratic. Surely for this change to be democratic there should be a referendum with more than 50% of those voting being in favour.*
- *From start to finish this questionnaire was loaded in favour of positive answers. Was it ever approved by any independent assessment such as the Electoral Commission?*
- *Absolute waste of taxpayers' money, but the civil service and government NEVER listen to joe public, who don't want it ever.*
- *Never confuse consultation with involvement so although I feel consulted I am not involved because you and your ilk already know the answers and that is what will happen unless the Treasury decides otherwise.*
- *As an individual resident I have taken the time to reply even though I feel cynical about the value of the consultation and that there is a political imperative driving this that has little to do with benefit for local residents.*

- *This consultation is biased and unreasonable. Some of these issues should be tackled at York vs North Yorkshire level, or lower than that, and some should be at the Yorkshire level.*

### **10.2.6 Enhanced focus on environmental issues (47)**

- *"A scaling up of renewable electricity and heat is essential to rapidly reach net zero. There are currently significant barriers from Northern Power Grid that are preventing investment in clean power. Lack of regional oversight and planning could be addressed by an MCA".*
- *Increased insulation/efficiency of homes to save energy is very important, to reduce carbon emission and save money.*
- *"Given that the region has a strong agricultural base, a regionally coordinated land use policy that enables the region to meet its carbon negative ambition is essential e.g. through peat restoration, woodland creation, marine forests and regenerative agriculture."*
- *"All policies proposed by the mayor should be climate change and net zero tested with close adherence to the advice offered by the LEP and the Yorkshire and Humberside Climate Commission".*
- *"What is really needed is the creation and coordination of a regional net zero delivery programme for sustained change over many years, e.g. retrofit. We can't go on relying on handouts from central government to local councils on their own to meet net zero so the new powers will help to ensure the devo settlement is used to best progress an ambitious programme of change."*
- *"Affordability should not be the primary driving force of our transition to Net Zero but needs to be considered".*
- *The Mayoral must ensure interconnectivity with other areas and nationally, which is key.*
- *"Sharing of best practise both nationally and internationally should be accelerated and not be hindered by any new structures."*

### **10.2.7 Challenges of reduced funding in public service (61)**

- *A change of funding and management of the funding does not address the issue of cut backs that have been in place for over a decade.*
- *Need to have income generating powers or else it is one endless round of doing what the Treasury says.*

### **10.2.8 Too big to reflect the diversity of North Yorkshire with too small a budget (15)**

- *Although on the whole I have supported the York and North Yorkshire conglomerate, I feel nervous that this is too big and minority needs will slip through the net.*
- *A Mayor and Combined Authority for York and North Yorkshire should recognise how diverse the region is and that there is a risk the interests of the wider county, which is largely rural, is prioritised and the central, much smaller, and in some ways quite different, city of York is overlooked.*

- *Although the financial figures quoted sound enticing, I fear that is insufficient in a large geographical area.*

### **10.2.9 Focus on communications infrastructure for all (15)**

- *we have intermittent broadband, large area with NO mobile phone, I will be very surprised if a mayor will sort out these village problems.*
- *Get the fibre to the home broadband sorted in every town, not just the villages.*

### **10.2.10 High hopes for the police and crime elements of the proposal (55)**

- *...someone who would be accountable for policing criminal services I hope they understand that the largest % of victims fall into the vulnerable / special needs category - they then would be accountable for any mis failings in future cases.*

### **10.2.11 Working in partnership with other public services (43)**

- *... collaboration and building between existing resources and organisations including the business groups, the LEP, third sector and private sector being well facilitated by combined authorities and the mayor (and not lots of new structures/ restarts).*
- *Areas of urban deprivation must be prioritised for NHS and Social Services.*
- *"Basic life issues"*
- *Friarage hospital staff. apart from the doctors and senior managers, the majority of staff in the hospital don't earn a great deal of money. so why do they have to pay for parking.*
- *I notice nothing about environmental health in these proposals. Public Health budgets are far too small to respond effectively. NHS budgets do not provide for these services. As a tourist area, environmental health services should be excellent - and they are under resourced +++*
- *Council Housing repairs - how long would it take for these to be sorted...*

### **10.2.12 Opposed in principle to the Mayoral model (18)**

- *Basically I 'm opposed to the Mayoral role. It has achieved little in places where it has been set up .*
- *...a political post entirely arranged to paste over the poor decision to exclude York from the new unitary power which could have exercised these same powers .*

### **10.2.13 Devolution doesn't work (23)**

- *Devolution being proposed takes power and decision making from local Residents, it would be far better to have Yorkshire Assembly, where the people elected have a voice and bring local knowledge to the table and have a vote. None of the proposed is Democratic it is taking away local Democracy and it should be halted. The Power in one person's hands can never be right and I will never support it.*
- *Devolution does not work; it just leads to disagreement. Next we will be asking for a Yorkshire independence!!!!*

- *Devolution has not been a massive success in Wales, although the First Minister would think it has, and has proved to be a 'jobs for the boys' exercise. The Police Commissioners are scorned, and the public have not noticed any benefits since they were all appointed on enviable salaries.*
- *Devolution is a con. The monies offered by the Government are far too low. This proposal is not needed.*
- *Devolution is not on the best interests of North Yorkshire residents neither is a Unitary Authority but that seems unimportant.*
- *Devolvement in other areas has generated conflict with central government based on the persuasion of the mayor. An unnecessary cost which will undoubtedly be borne by the council tax payer. We get little support now so to remove contact another step is saying to communities that we don't matter and you do not care.*

### **10.2.14 Devolution will work (46)**

- *Devolution of powers is generally a good idea for local matters. We should also look at broader co-operation across the North East region as part of regaining control over regional development (which goes beyond York/North Yorkshire), rather than relying on a corrupt government in Westminster to do anything about it.*
- *"We also need to take a close look at the electoral process for mayor (and other roles), to avoid binary party political elections along with the corruption and divisiveness associated with that."*
- *"Devolution should embrace and enhance democracy; N Yorkshire".*
- *"Devolution should embrace and enhance local democracy but all decisions need to fit in with wider, national and global priorities. N Yorkshire is already too parochial and smug."*
- *Devolved powers will bring understanding of our region's unique and specific needs, combining this with relevant decisions.*
- *The knowledge to make this region a great place to work and live FOR ALL, exists. With the funds and devolved powers, this should be realised - economically, socially and environmentally. This should be the goal by which devolution is measured.*

### **10.2.15 Reorganisation on top of reorganisation (15)**

- *Getting rid of a layer of costly government to then replace it with another seems folly to me. Why? Why can the unitary council not do these jobs just as well?*
- *Get Unitary working first.*

### **10.2.16 Good luck and best wishes (11)**

- *Good luck! We need a strong and supported North Yorkshire that we can be proud of.*
- *Good luck let's make NY the best county to live and work. Continue to promote the area to visitors.*
- *Thank you for being given chance to speak + be listened to!"*

### **10.3 Stakeholder Responses**

There were a broad range of other comments received. Several respondents, including the National Railway Museum, Tees Valley Combined Authority, Homes England, BioYorkshire, University of York, North Yorkshire Moors National Park were keen to work with the MCA in the future to deliver the ambitions of devolution.

Zero Carbon Harrogate wanted to see a strong and resilient energy generation and distribution system throughout the Combined Authority area, whilst York Museums Trust thought the arrangements could create better conditions to work more collaboratively and reach more people.

Community First Yorkshire expressed support for the proposals with the potential to enhance a focus on rural issues. York Conservation Trust supported the evolving powers, capacity and creating new structures away from Whitehall, closer to the region. York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust welcomed new investment in unlocking growth and tackling local challenges.

York and North Yorkshire LEP supported the opportunity to strengthen public private partnership working to deliver better outcomes.

The North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner highlighted the extent of the work required to make a successful transition of all of the powers, duties, people, assets, services and partnerships of the Elected Local Policing Body and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner Fire and Rescue Authority (PFCCFRA), to the Mayor or the MCA. Effective communication with the public and with those who work within Fire, Police, Enable and OPFCC will be key throughout.

However, York & District Trades Union Council felt that the proposed geography does not make economic sense. They suggested it would make more sense for the southern and northern parts of the area to join the existing combined authorities neighbouring the area.

### **10.4 Feedback from offline activities, comments, and enquiries**

No general or 'other' comments were reported from these activities.

# 11 Focus Group Responses

## 11.1 Introduction

Focus group discussions were independently facilitated by Westco, against a discussion guide agreed with YNY LEP and partners.

The groups were made up of respondents from the following groups, the relevant group number is referenced in brackets against any quote used.

Group No.	Resident details
1	York residents, aged 18-30
2	Skipton and surrounding area – residents, aged 25-35
3	Harrogate and surrounding area - residents aged 65+
4	York and North Yorkshire residents, aged 18-30
5	Pickering and surrounding, area - residents aged 50+
6	York residents, aged 18+
7	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18-30
8	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18+
9	North Yorkshire residents, aged 18+

The objectives of the events were to engage and consult with the public on their views of the following;

- To explore what influences quality of life in the local area – York and North Yorkshire
- Explore understanding and views towards devolution as a concept – in favour/opposed/concerns and why.
- To explore understanding of governance and Mayoralty - in favour/opposed/concerns and why.
- To explore residents' relative priorities in devolution delivery in York and North Yorkshire, and perception and expectations of what devolution can/should deliver.

During each session, a slide deck was handed out to participants to allow them all to have the same level of knowledge about devolution and the proposals for this.

Due to this variation in format of questioning the results of these discussions are presented as a standalone chapter in this feedback report.

This section presents an extract of the report produced by Westco against their agreed brief, and where reference is made to 'we' this reflects the actions of the agency. The full report produced by Westco is included as an embedded file in Appendix Two of this report.

## 11.2 Quality of life

As part of the focus group discussions, residents were asked to define what quality of life means to them and what factors or issues they felt had the biggest impact on it. By doing this, we sought to understand what was important to residents in public service delivery and how this interacts with their quality of life in York and North Yorkshire.

Participants were asked what was important to their quality of life as a York & North Yorkshire resident. This line of questioning served two purposes:

1. To act as a warm up exercise, building participation and confidence to engage in the discussion.
2. To explore residents' relative priorities and provide context from which they could consider their responses to the specifics of the consultation.

This section of the report details findings across the nine resident focus groups on how residents defined quality of life, and their relative priorities in terms of what was most important to their quality of life.

### 11.2.1 Factors that impact quality of life

Some of the key factors mentioned by residents were: proximity to family and friends, access to scenic countryside, access to culture, ease of travel across the region and accessibility of public services, with services that fall under the jurisdiction of other public services operating in the area – such as the NHS and Police often mentioned.

Often the key factors related to much wider and more complex overarching themes, which were often interlinked. This section of the report provides commentary on the following themes and the factors within them:



### Accessibility

The theme of accessibility was discussed by many residents across all of the groups and tended to focus on lack of accessibility to services or negative aspects of factors such as:

- **Highways/roads**

The quality and accessibility of highways and roads were discussed by many and linked to other themes such as growth and opportunities.

Many residents discussed their experiences of using the roads with factors such as the poor quality of the roads and the high volumes of traffic and congestion in local areas affecting quality of life.

Speaking of development at Castle Howard:

- *The roads are not highways, they are simply byways. Already congested, the A64, is frequently blocked which sends all the traffic through the village, it is of great concern.*

Group 5

- *Volume of traffic can't plan to go anywhere in the summer. It's gridlock pretty much every day. It's pretty much all year round now.*

Group 5

- *Where I live in York there are a lot of HMOs<sup>1</sup> and they bring a lot of traffic to the streets*

Group 6

For residents in or around York, discussions around congestion focused particularly on the City's ring roads. In more rural and suburban communities residents argued that there is a need to develop the road networks to support new housing developments and estates that have emerged in these areas. (discussed further in development and growth section.)

Many residents perceived that the volume of traffic and congestion was caused by a lack of planning of the road infrastructure.

- *They made promises about creating a A64 dual carriageway all the way through, but that never seems to finish so it would be interesting to know if that's going to happen as part of this devolution.*

Group 5

- *I'm hoping the transport can be sorted out, it's pretty much one lane all round and there's a lot on levelling up especially around the north and it takes a lot of time to get to certain places.*

Group 1

- *For people who have to commute to work by car, York is a horrendous place to negotiate, you just need York races to be on and the whole city is at a standstill.*

Group 9

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<sup>1</sup> Houses in Multiple Occupation



- *I know from when I lived in an estate when they build new houses everything else just becomes busier and touches upon everything else, traffic, they don't facilitate.*

Group 7

A related issue was the perceived high cost of car parking in York. Some residents acknowledged that parking costs had risen probably because the council was trying to cut congestion in the city, but these residents felt that the cost of travelling to the city by public transport was not cost effective either.

- **Public Transport**

Discussions about highways and roads were usually accompanied by discussions about public transport in the region. Generally, residents across the region felt that public transport is lacking and that it is difficult to travel around the region and also out of the region to other major destinations via public transport. Residents also noted the cost and infrequency of different forms of public transport, particularly important for people who cannot drive and who rely on public transport. In more rural and suburban communities difficulties accessing public transport compounded the accessibility of public services such as GP surgeries and dentists.

- *Because I don't drive, [I need] good transport routes that run on time.*

Group 1

- *The trains up north are so much worse than those down in south, and trying to get to places for instance, York, Manchester takes a lot longer than driving.*

Group 4

**Buses:** Some felt that bus services are not frequent enough in more rural areas, and some mentioned issues of reliability, impacting accessibility, particularly when a route only runs once an hour. Other residents also mentioned the bus fares, particularly that the cost of fares could discourage people from using the service and that this was hindering residents' ability to reach jobs or use towns and high streets.

- *I am lucky I can walk into York but it's £20 for 4 people just to go into town on a bus, that's an expensive trip so that's why the high street is dying and if you haven't got a car some of the shopping centres are out of your reach as well.*

Group 7

- *My granddaughter is doing an apprenticeship and she gets nothing, I pay her bus fare, £90 a month, she can't afford that.*

Group 5

- *A bus drove right past my 13 year old son because there wasn't enough room on the bus and that caused me some distress, he now has to get two buses, and get up an hour earlier to get a local bus into town and then one from town to his school.*

Group 8

**Rail:** Issues with buses were perceived to be compounded by poor rail infrastructure, particularly for residents in Pickering and Skipton where residents discussed how they often cannot take a more direct route to their desired destinations and need to travel to nearby cities and take a connecting train, making trains more expensive and a more time-consuming method of transport.

- *I drive but If I managed to get the train, I feel like you always have to go to Leeds to get to anywhere.*

Group 2

- *I went down to London a couple of weeks ago and it's just great what the underground like there is and train services here are very poor, they take 20-30mins or they don't even come, whereas in London they come every 2mins.*

Group 4

**Health Services:** The majority of residents discussed the accessibility of health services in the region, noting a lack of NHS places at local dentists, difficulties getting GP appointments and long waiting times for ambulances and at A&Es across the region.

Some attributed this to a lack of funding for local health services. Outside of York, residents also argued that population growth from new housing developments had put a lot of pressure on the existing health care infrastructure such that it currently cannot meet the needs of the local population.

- *No point building all these new houses, but what about the dentist? I know we have a hospital in Whitby which is brilliant, but there's not any dentists and there's other things you need to prioritise over houses.*

Group 7

- *There are so many new homes being built around Harrogate and they're not really affordable for the average person who works ... it's affecting the doctors; they are over-subscribed.*

Group 9

- *We keep talking about housing, but do we have the infrastructure like doctors for instance and dentists, I know that's generally a UK issue, but it won't help at all.*

Group 4

- *You could have multiple deaths between trying to reach Scarborough hospital, so it's important to have a regional hospital for those who work in manual jobs.*

Group 5

- *There's a complete lack of ambulance services...they said I won't get any ambulance for a while, so when you need an ambulance to come to Whitby you are going to have to wait because it has to come from Scarborough and in a medical emergency that's appalling.*

Group 8

**Local amenities:** Residents discussed the importance of local amenities as contributors to a good quality of life and physical and mental wellbeing. Here, there were differences by life stage, with families and older residents feeling more positive about the availability of local amenities. Those living in York appreciated the city's history and relaxed atmosphere and felt that living in and around the city provided many things for families to do and that other attractions such as the coast were not far away. Pickering residents were proud that they have everything they needed nearby. However, some younger residents felt their needs were not as well met, especially local cultural amenities.

- *York's got a great city centre, that certainly helps, weekends out, walking round, got history too.*

Group 6

- *Pickering has everything you want in a local area, everything is nearby.*

Group 5

- *For me it's access to good quality amenities locally and culture, so for me I'm a big live music fan and one of the things that is frustrating is having to travel further afield to see good quality acts and not having local culture on your doorstep.*

Group 1

## 11.2.2 Opportunities

The theme of opportunities was discussed by many residents, with some factors affecting quality of life because of a lack of opportunities. Factors impacting opportunities included:

**Housing:** Many cited housing as a key factor impacting their quality of life and differences in views by life stage and location emerged. Those living in or around York were concerned about the cost of housing, either being able to purchase a property or the cost of rent. They felt that the cost of housing has increased and is too high and that they are likely to get less value for money than elsewhere in the county. Generally older residents in Harrogate had moved there to take advantage of the perceived better quality of life the town afforded them and recognised it was more expensive than other towns in the region but some younger residents who had moved there for work had found it difficult to find affordable housing.

Linked to this, residents in other areas lacked confidence that promised affordable housing would actually be affordable for them.

- *Regarding the housing, it's very much needed in York, particularly the affordable housing... if it's not actually affordable for York prices, who would then be buying them up, is it then just for people to create more Airbnb's, will it actually be for people to live in?*

Group 1

- *We came from Leeds, and we found it was cheaper here [in York]... personally for me if someone's going to come in and enforce all this affordable housing, is that going to devalue my house?*

Group 1

- *I'm a primary schoolteacher and I'm only able to afford to live in Harrogate because we have taken over my Grandad's house, and one of my colleagues is renting here and it's just taking out so much of her salary every month.*

Group 9

- *We live in a bubble in Harrogate don't we.*

Group 3

Residents also discussed the need for new housing in terms of population growth and the impact on local infrastructure. As discussed in the accessibility theme, those outside of York often expressed concerns that further new developments would lead to more population growth in their local areas and add further pressure on local services.

- *Building houses in small areas, whilst we need them because the population is growing at the same time the more you do that there is more pressure on these services and people and it's not always feasible for them to meet them.*

Group 7

- *I don't see the point of giving permission for lots of houses when there's no jobs. There's no incentive for the council to say no, as they get £2000 council tax a year for taking the bins.*

Group 5

- *I know that there are 4000 new homes that have been built in Harrogate but nothing done about new GPs or new schools.*

Group 3

**Young people:** Some discussed the need for opportunities and amenities for children and young people. Several residents, often parents, noted that their children's mental health had declined during the pandemic and that there needs to be more amenities aimed at young people to facilitate improvements. There was also discussion about the need to support younger adults with post-16 education – some noting that there are few opportunities for young people in local areas.

- *I don't think the Hydro in Harrogate is scheduled to open until mid-next year and it's been closed for over 18 months, they are renovating it to make it safer but it has an impact on my kids leisure and social lives*

Group 8

- *I feel as a York resident that we don't get anything, if we were in Leeds or Harrogate we would get discounts, like at the ice skating, there's nothing particularly for young families in York, we don't have any ice skating, the leisure pool went.*

Group 9

- *More activities for kids, even with mental health. There used to be a lot of children/parent groups but due to Covid and the lack of funding there isn't a lot out there anymore.*

Group 7

- *Children who go onto further education get something, those who go into apprenticeships get nothing. My daughter I pay for her bus fares she can't afford it, where's the services these young families need?*

Group 5

- *My son couldn't get a job here and he's moved to Manchester now.*

Group 6

**Employment:** Some discussed the importance of job opportunities in York and North Yorkshire as a key component of quality of life. Discussions around jobs often focused on young people and the need to provide good jobs in local areas to ensure that those leaving school/college could stay in the local area. Residents also highlighted how jobs need to be accessible as well.

- *Half of the independent shops in York have closed because the rents are too high.*

Group 1

- *I am concerned about those in really rural areas, no access to transport and broadband and they can't get it, school transport costs, transporting, jobs for young people, jobs being retained by young people, hospital- need to try and keep it open.*

Group 5

- *Education for 16+ and making it fairer, and access courses that essentially lead to good paying jobs.*

Group 4

### 11.2.3 Wellbeing

Factors related to wellbeing often came up first in discussions about quality of life, covering themes such as the importance of having good health, both physical and mental, having a good work/life balance and having good relationships with friends and family. The region was often described as having natural beauty with scenic countryside close by, and this was also a contributor to wellbeing, and a key reason why residents liked living in the region.

**Mental and physical health:** Many residents discussed a general decline in their own mental health or of their friends and family. Much of this was attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the isolation during lockdown. However, other factors were currently felt to be impacting the mental health of residents, such as the cost of living and pressures from work.

Physical health was also discussed as an important factor impacting quality of life, often exacerbated by difficulty accessing health services, as covered earlier in this section of the report.

- *'Mental and physical and balance of work and home life and happiness'*

Group 2

- *'It's not just financial, but wellbeing too, emotions and how you feel. If you don't think properly, you're not going to work properly. Combination of financial and mental wellbeing'*

Group 2

**Work/life balance & family/friends:** Some discussed the need for a good work life balance. Those who felt that this was important described wanting to have enough time to socialise with friends or family outside of work hours and having the freedom to choose how to prioritise work and family life. This topic also links with access to amenities in terms of having time to participate in culture such as music concerts, theatre performances etc.

- *'Good work life balance, making sure you have time for friends and family, working enough to sustain a household'.*

Group 2

- *'A good work life balance... well since having kids, I had been a teacher, but I decided to quit teaching so I could stay at home and look after the kids... I just like looking after the kids'.*

Group 1

- *"For me it's about being able to spend lots of time with my friends and make memories, so having things around locally that I can do and not do the same thing again and again is quite nice.'*

Group 1

- *It also relates to relationships, friends are important to your life,*

Group 3

**Countryside:** Residents emphasised the beauty of the York and North Yorks region as a positive impact on wellbeing. Those who had lived in other parts of the country appreciated the fresh air and relaxed feel of living in the region, and that it was easy to travel to the countryside or the coast. Some residents who had lived outside the region had decided to return when they retired, especially those living in Harrogate.

- *Returned to Yorkshire as it's better to live in the countryside than the city.*

Group 5

- *Loved everything about it [Yorkshire Countryside]*

Group 5

- *My brother was visiting from Glasgow and he remarked how nice it was here. I feel safe here, and I like the access to the countryside, and I couldn't think of another place where I'd rather be.*

Group 3

**Cost of living:** Many residents discussed the impact of the cost of living on heating and food having a negative impact on people's lives.

- *It's what you can afford, can you afford to pay bills and put food on the table, and that influences your health.*

Group 3

**Culture:** Linked with work life balance, several residents and especially those aged 18-35 discussed the need to have access to culture/entertainment in their local area and that this was lacking in the region. They discussed wanting to spend time with friends on 'nights out,' at music concerts and on the high street.

- *York's got a great city centre, that certainly helps, weekends out, walking round, got history too.*

Group 6

- *For me it's access to good quality amenities locally and culture, so for me I'm a big live music fan and one of the things that is frustrating is having to travel further afield to see good quality acts and not having local culture on your doorstep'.*

Group 1

**Personal safety:** Most residents said they felt safe living in the region. One exception to this was Harrogate where a local drugs problem was noted. In York, bicycle theft in the city centre was cited as a problem.

- *For a city York is quite safe, you can walk from one side of the city to the other, you'd let the kids go there on their own for a walk around, it's more relaxed than other cities like Leeds, if you go for a night out there, everything is so far apart, and it feels too crowded.*

Group 6

- *I've got a 17 year old son and I don't like him cycling into town because of the thefts, it doesn't matter what lock you've got, they will cut through it.*

Group 6

- *People tend to gloss over the underbelly of living in Harrogate, we have a huge drugs problem, I was personally assaulted on The Stray by someone who was off his head on drugs. It went to court but he didn't go to prison because of his mental health condition.*

Group 3

## 11.3 Devolution Proposals

The second section of the group discussions concentrated on devolution and the proposals around this. At the start of this section, a set of slides detailing what devolution is and the proposals for York and North Yorkshire were handed out to participants and the facilitator read through the slides with participants. A copy of these slides can be found in appendix C of the full Westco report included at Appendix 2 of this report .

### 11.3.1 Views on Devolution

#### Understanding

Across most groups there was confusion over what devolution means and how it will be different to the current make up of local government and local services. The terminology was not familiar to many which added to their confusion (e.g. mayoral funding stream, combined authority). Some residents understand the current structure of local government in York and North Yorkshire and found it difficult to compare the current model with the devolution deal.

- *I feel like you know more about what they don't do [in reference to local councils] and I think that's because on a day to day basis oh they haven't done this.*

Group 1

- *It's hard to decipher the benefits at the moment and add to that you don't know who will be running the thing.*

Group 3

There was also confusion and sometimes scepticism over if and how the new governance arrangements will change things for them day to day.

- *I don't understand why North Yorkshire County Council can't have all these things. What will be different?*

Group 5

Many wanted to know more about how the changes will impact them and how things will work in the new structure of local government. While the devolution deal is about the transfer of powers and funding, residents often wanted information about how this would be used. Some found it challenging to assess whether a Combined Mayoral Authority and a Mayor would be a benefit without knowing the steps that a newly elected Mayor would take.

- *I think we're all in agreement, that between all of us, we want to know a little bit more about it.*

Group 5

- *In general, moving decisions closer to people has got to be better but it's all in the detail isn't it, and this isn't detailed enough.*

Group 3



## Local decision making

Overall, many residents were positive about the transfer of more decision-making powers to the region. Those in favour of devolution argued that decision making will improve because the decision makers will be based in York and North Yorkshire and will see the opportunities and challenges the region presents.

- *Decisions about local area by people who are local. That is the positive of this.*  
Group 1
- *It sounds amazing, they are giving the region money to improve the region in the way they want.*  
Group 9
- *“Andy Burnham in Greater Manchester has been doing a lot of work on the transport network... Mayor elected by the people who would be much more involved with the community”.*  
Group 1

However, this position was qualified with some arguing that the area covered by the region is so large and diverse that there is a risk that the needs of different and smaller towns/villages may be missed in favour of cities and larger conurbations.

- *If you have one mayor for both, the focus will be on York, they're going to overlook the smaller areas that's always how it happened in the past.*  
Group 7
- *In general, moving decisions closer to people has got to be better but it's all in the detail isn't it, and this isn't detailed enough.*  
Group 3

## Trust in delivery

While many residents were supportive of the principles that underline the devolution deal, such as local decision making, some lacked confidence in the delivery. Reservations were often based on their experiences and perception of existing local government, and some residents did not think that changes to the local government structure will lead to real change.

- *I lived in Reading for 20 years and they did this. They went from unitary to this, back to unitary again. And they spent money on doing it.*  
Group 5
- *If you take it at face value if local decisions are taken by local people, then that can only be a good thing, but it is about the execution because you do see how things are at the moment and so it's always gonna leave a sour taste in your mouth.*  
Group 1

Some were concerned that despite new funding streams as part of the deal, the amount of funding offered will not be sufficient. In part this was because of a perception that local government and services were already stretched and additional funding is needed to simply stabilise these services.

- *How will the councils meet demand, as they can't meet current demand in housing – i.e. maintenance of housing, they already can't do the work needed. Isn't giving them more responsibility going to make that worse?*

Group 1

Residents also suspected that the setup/running costs and the costs of specific projects may also cost more than the funding streams on offer.

- *How are you going to do that? Is this money getting invested so you can hire more people to run these different areas? I feel that's a missing kind of piece.*

Group 1

- *I work in construction and £13m to build new homes would only get you 80-100 new homes.*

Group 6

- *It all sounds a bit vague, and 'jam tomorrow'.*

Group 6

Some residents had heard stories about wasteful spending by local authorities in the region.

- *If it ain't broke, you don't try and fix it. You should stay with the existing system.*

Group 5

## **Funding and Finance**

Many residents questioned where the money for the new funding streams would come from. Several expressed concerns that key funding figures in the devolution deal, such as the £540 million in Mayoral Investment Fund would come from increased council tax.

Some expressed concerns that funding for new local authorities could come at the cost of money earmarked for lower tier local authorities such as town councils, (which have been replaced by North Yorkshire County Council). Residents also wanted more information about how the funding would be apportioned to projects vs. administrative costs.

- *How much of the £18m goes on running this new combined authority rather than on the proposals?*

Group 5

Others thought that some of the funding streams offered were not sufficient and are unlikely to have a positive impact.

- *It's peanuts really so in terms of additional investment, it's potentially quite confusing, and £18m in 30 years' time will be worth nothing, this document is just a sales pitch.*

Group 3

- *80 million across that many years, is that realistic to accommodate young people like us in terms of affordable housing, and how is it going to be designated?*

Group 2

- *I don't think that's enough money for all of these subjects they want to resolve, I understand that that's a lot of money over 30 years, but I just think that that money would be better off used to solve one of those problems.*

Group 1

Despite this, many held the perspective that any new funds are welcome and necessary.

- *Gaining more money for the area sounds positive, without knowing too much obviously about it, not my area of expertise but more money sounds good as it will help areas in need of that.*

Group 2

## **Housing and Regeneration**

Proposals for more funding and powers to support house building prompted much discussion in most groups, and several major themes emerged.

Firstly, many discussed the need for more housing and genuinely 'affordable housing' particularly in York. Residents in York noted that house prices are high and perceived that they were often out of the price range for people already living there and that people can get more for their money elsewhere. In this respect more money and powers to build new housing is seen as a positive.

- *Affordable housing and York, they're just two things that don't really go together any more no matter how many times people try to resolve it. What's affordable in one location would still unlikely be affordable in York".*

Group 1

However, positivity about new housing was tempered by concerns about the pressure new housing developments could have on existing infrastructure. Many gave examples of new homes putting pressure on the existing road network, health services, schools and other local amenities. These concerns were particularly pronounced in rural areas but were also expressed in urban areas like York and Harrogate.

- *Now due to the growth of Pickering, it's becoming more and more difficult. The infrastructure isn't keeping pace with the population and the building that's occurring.*

Group 5

- *We're struggling at the moment with healthcare, dentist, I know some people have concerns with schools, so if more people are coming in how they are going to deal with*

*it, we're going to need more dentists and surgeries with more houses, then you're going to have to keep expanding as a result you will harm the farmland and things like that and there's only so far you can go.*

Group 7

Finally, some were concerned about whether houses are genuinely affordable. Some were concerned that new housing being built will not be genuinely affordable or focused on specific groups such as students.

- *"When we say affordable [in terms of house prices], we need to define who can afford this.*

Group 1

- *It's great that they are building new homes but people have to be able to afford to live in them, I feel like the council are letting local people down, in favour of the student population and tourists.*

Group 7

## **Transport**

Transport was another major topic of discussion in terms of the devolution deal. Few were aware of what the Key Routes Network was and so had few opinions on the devolution deals impact.

There was a general perception that roads in York, especially the ring roads around towns and cities have become more congested. This links with housing development and population growth as discussed earlier. Residents were positive about the inclusion of transport and travel in the devolution deal and some were hopeful that the deal could lead to improvements, primarily because decision makers will live in the region and experience issues related to devolution.

- *For people who have to commute to work by car, York is a horrendous place to negotiate, you just need York races to be on and the whole city is at a standstill.*

Group 7

- *Infrastructure being in place ready for development, to include roads.*

Group 5

Residents also discussed buses. Many who rely on buses to get around the region felt that the services offered are infrequent, often unreliable and many important destinations like dentists are not accessible via the bus network. Older residents linked this with deregulation of bus services more generally.

Issues with buses were more impactful on young people, who rely on buses to get to school/college/apprenticeships etc., and people who do not drive. In general residents thought that bus networks should be considered alongside devolution proposals to build more houses – as the two are closely aligned.

- *I know others who use buses regularly who say the buses aren't on time or there are no drivers available. I live just off Hull Road and there are two bus services, supposed to be every 10 minutes, and if one bus isn't full the other one is.*

Group 8

- *These bus companies are just trying to make a profit out of routes.*

Group 3

- *If they extended the bus routes to areas they don't go now and it was free people would use it to go into town.*

Group 3

- *I rely on buses and trains to go to school, three or four times out of the five day school week the buses don't turn up.*

Group 1

As discussed earlier, there was a general perception that the rail network in York and North Yorkshire is underdeveloped and that it is hard to travel across and out of the region via trains, as well as being expensive. Some were unsure whether the devolution deal will be able to address this issue as the rail network extends beyond the York and North Yorkshire area.

- *Rail network is shocking.*

Group 5

- *Some of the rail, there's constant delays, they're private companies as well... you go from London to York and you pay £180 to sit on a floor, a lot of these issues I still struggle to see how devolution will solve these issues.*

Group 1

## **Skills and Employment**

The skills offer did not prompt much discussion amongst the groups. While younger residents and those with teenage children felt that education and adult education is important many felt this element of the proposal lacked detail, and some felt there needed to be more emphasis on vocational training and apprenticeships.

- *All young people in Harrogate are persuaded to stay on at school and go to university and the college has struggled forever to provide Apprenticeships in direct competition to the universities.*

Group 3

- *I know a lot of it so far has been negative, but I think Adult Education and the point on that is excellent, I've recently come back into education and I think if they help people do that, that's a really good thing, at the moment it's all virtual and I'm really struggling but if I could meet them face to face that would be great, and it's all online and I think its brilliant that they're thinking about doing it.*

There was also a lack of detail about employment in the proposals. Whilst residents generally felt that the region had low unemployment, especially in areas such as Harrogate, some were concerned about the effect of independent shops closing on small businesses in York city centre.

### **Carbon Negative Region**

Some residents were unsure whether it is possible to achieve the goal of becoming a carbon negative region. As the discussions took place around COP 27 some had a heightened awareness of the challenges of decarbonisation. As a consequence, some were concerned that the proposals represented an attempt at ‘greenwashing,’ rather than proposals that will make a difference. In particular, there was a concern that it will be difficult to achieve carbon emission targets alongside housebuilding and resultant population growth.

- *Generally, so, the environmental stuff – because I study that. I find it hard to understand how you can build houses and stuff, and ensure its carbon neutral, like sometimes I think it’s easy to put a stamp on it, but the practicality isn’t there and a lot can be hidden in that term, a lot of greenwashing can take there, I’d like to see a lot more detailed plans.*

Group 7

- *£7m is a drop in the ocean isn’t it.*

Group 3

Residents discussed the challenges of getting people to make changes that are beneficial in terms of carbon emissions but also inconvenient or difficult to achieve. There was an emphasis on making it easier and more accessible to switch to public transport for instance.

- *I know we are quite a small city but to get traffic off the road there has to be a benefit to us.*

Group 6

- *Living on a main road the pollution levels are ridiculous so it’s great to put money into things like that, but we’ll have to put money into that as well to allow [green economic growth] to happen, I live in a 1930s house how am I going to make that work, I can’t afford to buy an electric car. From my side of York I see the electric park and ride buses coming back and forth every 15 minutes with hardly anybody on them, and they are there in preference to a service for local people.*

Group 6

To improve the offer, some suggested more funding and also more community driven projects. One resident advocated locally driven ground up approaches adopted in areas like Cornwall as examples to follow.

- *I think if you're looking at investment in communities, the best place to go in rewilding projects and things like that, if you look at places like Cornwall, they have heavy involvement in their environment stuff and it encourages more people to come to their area, it's something we can really use to bring in more jobs and people in, but we just don't. Investment in that will improve other aspects too, as evidence shows green spaces impact mental health too, especially in North Yorkshire as it's known for its beauty.*

Group 7

### **Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner functions**

Discussion about the Mayor's role as a Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner was less detailed, partly because many were unaware that Police and Fire Commissioners are currently elected locally. Some residents expressed concern over whether a Mayor should have these additional responsibilities considering the other functions they will also fulfil.

- *If they have the sole power to decide whether the finances toward the fire commissioner goes and other funding goes, that doesn't sound like the best idea to me personally.*

Group 4

- *It's a lot of responsibility for one person to have.*

Group 3

Views on the level of crime in the region differed. As discussed earlier, some in central York referred to thefts, a minority in Harrogate discussed the problem of drugs in the town, and some living more rurally felt the levels of policing in their area were insufficient, leading to the introduction of a Neighbourhood Watch programme by residents.

- *If efficiencies can come from this then that's fine but I don't think police and fire are a huge problem here*

Group 3

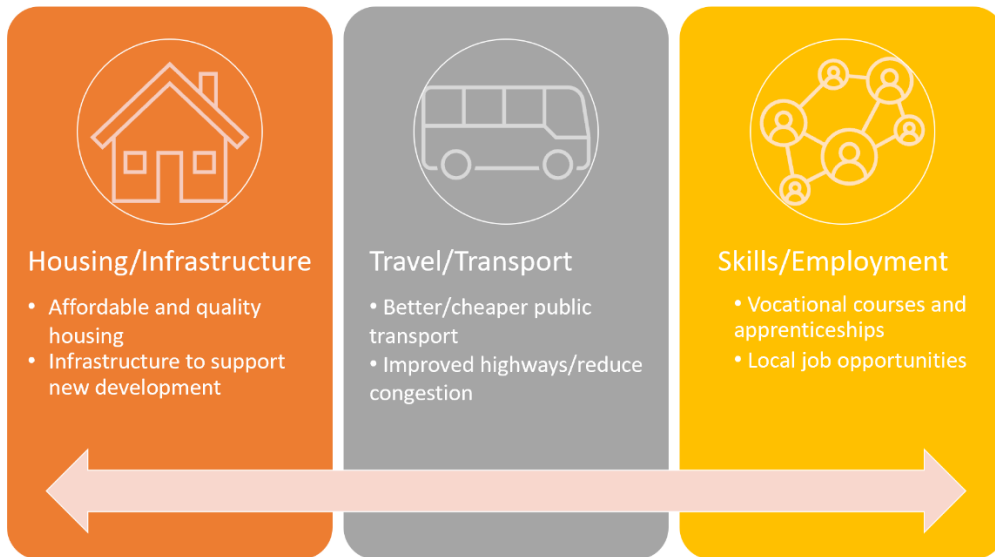
- *Are we going to get more police? There are rural watch people that help as there aren't enough police to man the area.*

Group 2

## **11.4 Prioritisation of proposals**

Residents were asked to complete a prioritisation exercise, to understand the relative importance of the different aspects of the proposals for them. They were asked to list their top three priorities in relation to devolution.

Across the groups the top three priorities were:



## Housing and Infrastructure

Much of the discussion around housing either focussed on availability of “truly” affordable housing, which was often the concern of younger residents, or it was linked to new housing developments being built without the infrastructure in place to service people moving into these homes and local areas.

- *There are so many new homes being built around Harrogate and they're not really affordable for the average person who works, and I am a primary school teacher in a village and the people moving in are not sending their kids to the village school, it's affecting the doctors, they are over-subscribed, and if I have to go for a doctors appt it's a 30 minute drive so that's a knock on effect on fuel costs as well.*

Group 9

- *Infrastructure being in place ready for development, to include roads, schools, workplaces we really do need workplaces.*

Group 5

- *I'm happy to have more housing, as long as it's not anywhere I live because I'm worried it will have a negative impact on my local services and my access to them.*

Group 4

- *The first priority is quality of low-cost homes, as we are currently renting but are looking in the market as we are both working.*

Group 2

## Travel and Transport

The themes discussed mainly focused on access to good value, frequent and reliable public transport and having better highway infrastructure and maintenance. There was also



discussion on congestion both within York and the surrounding areas and in more rural locations like Pickering and Skipton.

- *When you hit 16 you have to pay an adult bus fare but you're still studying at school, and you don't have an adult wage. When I was 16, I had a part time job one day a week but only paying £20 or £30.*

Group 6

- *Improving buses so I can get into town without using a car, but not cycling lanes though because local changes didn't benefit the locals.*

Group 3

- *Highways and transport investment, what about the rail network, and if we're trying to reduce traffic on the roads, the rail network around here is shocking.*

Group 5

- *It impacts me every day when I drive over potholes, the roads are in dire states*

Group 8

- *I am an asthma sufferer and the traffic is at a standstill between 2 and 5pm most days and this time of year it gets worse*

Group 8

## Skills and Employment

The discussion on skills and employment often focussed on having access to vocational opportunities and apprenticeships for young people who don't wish to go to university and having good local job opportunities to keep skills and young people in the area to enable growth.

- *My son couldn't get a job here and he's moved to Manchester now.*

Group 6

- *I think that T courses and apprenticeships will be very helpful, and after lockdown, people don't want a pure work focus any more, they want a way of staying in education.*

Group 9

- *I don't feel like it supports a wide variety of people, it only supports people who are academically smart*

Group 6

- *Jobs and jobs opportunities, I had to move out when I was 17 and join the military through apprenticeship because there wasn't a lot, but you want to keep talent in the area,*

Group 7

### 11.4.1 Landowners' views on Devolution

In general, landowners expressed similar views as residents about the devolution proposals. Landowners were also asked for their specific views on the Natural Capital Investment Plan aspect of the deal.

#### Initial opinions

Landowners were cautiously optimistic about the devolution deal. There was a sense that the structure of the combined authority will ensure it is not 'urban dominated' and will also take on board the needs and concerns of more rural issues, which landowners were apprehensive about.

- *'But the devil is in the detail so how things play out may not be what we are all hoping for'*

However, there were some concerns about the amount of funding available to the new authority. Several argued that £18m was a comparatively small amount of money and were unsure whether the new funding streams would match the amount of money given to lower tier authorities before being consolidated into North Yorkshire Council.

- *The old North Yorkshire itself spent over a billion a year so what's £18m, it's a fraction of one percent.*

## Housing

Landowners believed there were plenty of available sites rurally to help provide new housing as described in the proposals and felt this should be a focus, especially in terms of developing more rural villages. They echoed residents' concerns about the impact of lack of infrastructure on existing services.

They were unsure whether the £50m allocated to York brownfield regeneration was a good use of available funding given the perceived ease of funding such regeneration with private funding.

They were particularly interested in how a new combined authority will impact planning in the region. They generally felt that in the past, approaches to planning varied across the region and that planning policy seemed to not have a good understanding of rural issues. For instance, some discussed how planning would not classify rural villages as viable settlements, preventing developers from building in these areas despite the need for development.

Instead, they believed planning focused on market towns where planning requirements were more straightforward to fulfil, but where the infrastructure already struggles to keep pace with developments.

They also questioned the impact of an MCA on the National Planning Policy Framework but believed it should lead to greater consistency and balance of planning approach from combining different planning departments in authorities.

- *Rather than putting more pressure on market towns which are already overloaded, put a bit of development on to each of the villages over the next 10 years, which would not only go a long way to finding the new houses we need but they would also be in the right places.*
- *It's very easy for a good planner to get a thousand houses approved in an urban setting than in a village because they know the system, it's harder rurally but people just need to come and talk to us.*

## Transport

Landowners were critical of the current system of transport managed by the local councils and were concerned about whether a new Mayor would be able to solve these problems when the devolution deal outlines that maintenance will remain within the control of county councils. They highlighted the A64 and the A59 and the northern part of the ring road around York as highways that need particular attention.

- *The A170 isn't too bad but as soon as you go off the A170 it's a minefield of potholes.*

Landowners emphasised that the problem in rural areas is not about individual services (i.e., buses or trains) but a bigger problem of ensuring that people, especially young people, can get to the places where they need to go, such as work, school, college etc.

- *What is key here is that transport understands rural; people don't get it, we're not just talking about the A roads or buses or West Coast main line, we are talking about how these 16–18year olds get to their places of training and work without access to a car. East Yorkshire has had a very good Wheels to Work scheme because young people can't afford cars.*

### **Skills and employment**

Some landowners were also employers in the hospitality sector and identified that young people aged 16-18 need education to help them to better identify what they are good at, and that this could be facilitated by more vocational options such as apprenticeships and T level courses to help them better train for the types of business and employment available in the region.

- *The hotel and catering world is pretty strong in York and North Yorkshire.*

### **Police/ Fire/Crime Commissioner**

Landowners were generally positive about plans in this area as they felt that it was difficult to gauge whether progress was being made by the current Commissioner so having a Mayor take on this responsibility would help with transparency, and free up the council on providing services.

### **Carbon negative region**

Landowners were particularly interested in proposals towards becoming a carbon negative region. They welcomed the possibility of becoming more involved in informing the delivery of these ambitions, especially in areas such as flood management, bio-diversity net gain and electric grid infrastructure.

Ultimately, landowners believed this aspect of the proposals was broadly the right direction for the combined authority but questioned whether the new Mayor should have overarching responsibility for this aspect.

Landowners emphasised the complexity of Natural Capital Investment (NCI) and felt the development of a NCI Plan was unrealistic with only a budget of £7m – they believed this money would be best spent by the Mayor to help them lobby for additional funding in this area.

Landowners emphasised that NCI is an area still in its infancy and requires specialist expertise to develop strategies. As such, they were unsure whether a Natural Capital Investment Plan should sit with a Mayor. They needed to feel confident that any Mayor will put in place a good procurement process and that the plan would include rural areas.

- *Damage on flooding is in the hundreds of millions so a figure of £7m is not going to dent that, so it would be much better spent on lobbying for national funding or something that stops all these houses flooding for good.*
- *Unless they are going to incorporate a significant private sector funding element into their proposals, I am not convinced it is worth starting on and a lot of these eco system services have no defined agreed output mechanism, so that is challenging.*

- *North Yorks council have already said they will be going net zero by 2030 as a council, but that aim is based on zero understanding of how to measure it and how to do it, and bio diversity net gain coming in on planning. They think it is just planting some trees and they get to net zero rather than analysing all the different areas you can save carbon.*
- *It's just political spiel and probably isn't going to happen, we can all do our little bit which adds up, and in practice will be very hard to deliver, so encouraging people as individuals to do more, as well as councils would be by far the best thing, and it's probably too much for someone like a Mayor to deliver.*
- *North Yorks as a county has a great deal of natural capital, we are the largest county in England so somewhere we need to sort out the conflict between conservation and climate. If we plant lots of trees everywhere that will change the landscape dramatically so I think we need to ask do we want that.*
- *If you are going to write a good NCI plan and the Mayor is really good at campaigning at winning elections what we probably need is confidence in how the plan will be procured.*
- *If the fund is there to help put NCI plans together and give them credence I think that would be a good thing.*
- *We provide a huge amount of eco system services and it seems the thing that everyone identifies with that is planting trees but there are a lot of other services we can provide including clean water and flood prevention but at the end of the day trying to quantify that has beaten some of the best brains in the country and the whole carbon accounting issue is fraught with difficulties as no two people seem to agree on it.*

### **Mitigating the withdrawal of CAP investment**

Landowners believed that delivery of biodiversity net gain could be made more effective and simpler by paying hill farmers to use their land to deliver biodiversity net gain. Enabling landowners to contribute to biodiversity net gain would also help, for example in the case of private developers who are unable to offer biodiversity net gains on-site.

A Mayor could enable greater efficiency in this area by helping to introduce a system for 'scoring' the different categories of biodiversity net gains such as water courses, hedgerows, grassland habitats etc. and alleviating current sensitivities around taking productive agricultural land out of production and allowing them to be used if they also supported biodiversity net gain.

- *Perhaps the Mayor could help contribute a 'habitat bank' into which developers pay, and strategically seek sites across their local planning authority.*
- *We could do things to allow landowners and developers to all benefit and that is something that the Mayor could deliver.*

## **11.5 Creating a Mayoral Combined Authority**

In this part of the discussion residents were asked to read the proposals for governance arrangements:

- The proposed Deal requires the York and North Yorkshire Authorities establish a new Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) that would be led by an elected Mayor.

- The Mayor will not make decisions on their own but will work in partnership with the Unitary Councils.
- There will be a board with the Mayor and two representatives from the two unitary councils to make decisions together. So the Mayoral Combined Authority will have a total of 5 voting members.
- A Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) would be created, with the first Mayor for York and North Yorkshire elected in May 2024, by registered voters in the City of York and North Yorkshire Council areas.
- Each mayoral term will last for four years.

### 11.5.1 Understanding of a Mayoral Combined Authority and Governance Structure

The terminology and structure of a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) was unfamiliar to many, so expectations of how a new MCA would work and the role and functions of a Mayor were either based on comparisons with existing county council two tier structures, or other regions with MCAs if residents were aware of these.

Awareness and detailed understanding of local politics and the way existing Councils worked was based on either experience of communicating with local councils, or from reports in the media which were often negative. Responses to change therefore generated positive hopes of growth but also fear of being worse off.

- *I'm very disappointed in local government, one example being the departure of the Chief Executive of York Council who was kept on full pay for 18 months and given a £400,000 payoff.*

Group 6

Few residents used the term Unitary Council and only a very small minority spontaneously referred to the upcoming reorganisation to a single North Yorkshire Unitary Council.

The proposals for the MCA in York and North Yorkshire generated several questions about how the two unitary councils would be combined and what potential benefits and disadvantages this might bring to residents. A theme running through discussions about the MCA was that York and North Yorkshire were very different in terms of their size, populations and needs and that there was a rural/urban divide which made it difficult to see how the new MCA would be able to manage differences and prioritise urban and rural residents needs fairly or standardise services without potentially damaging the unique character and profile of both urban and rural parts of the region.

- *People from rural areas may miss out, as places like York and Harrogate attract lots of tourists so the focus might be solely on trying to make them areas look good, and little areas/villages then miss out.*

Group 4

- *Scarborough is quite a run-down area, my initial thoughts were that places like Harrogate would get more money but places like Scarborough need more money, then are they going to get it? Will it be split fairly?*

Group 4

- *They're going to look at where the profit is, not these little areas, they've always done this in the past.*

Group 3

## 11.5.2 Questions about the MCA structure and functions

There was a general lack of clarity about the structure of a new MCA and how this would bring benefits over the existing Council structures.

- *I really don't understand how this is going to be different. Everything will be exactly the same.*

Group 5

Residents felt they might be reassured if they understood how an MCA structure had benefited other MCA regions. For example, some were aware that in West Yorkshire MCA transport had been subsidised and this was of interest, but residents assumed that it would be more difficult to introduce in their region because North Yorkshire's rurality could make this less feasible, or that York may need to subsidise rural fares to make this work.

Residents expected each council to have a voice in the new MCA so were pleased to see this reflected in the proposals.

However, there were some reservations about how the new board would be structured. It was assumed that each of the two representatives from each of the Unitary Councils would probably have a team of people working for them helping to brief them about issues but the primary roles/ functions of each of the two representatives from each Unitary Council were unclear. Residents wanted to know whether the new Mayor would be involved in selecting each of the representatives, or whether the Councils would decide, or whether residents would be voting these representatives in.

These discussions led to questions about the potential political structure of the Board and if / how this would impact the fairness of decisions made about allocating funds across the region.

Residents with more experience of their local councils believed it would be important to choose voting members who focus on change and growth in order to deliver on the proposals.

- *The budget might be biased, I was wondering if some independent people could be part of the board so they could have more input on it*

Group 4

- *In principle it sounds good but the public sector has a tendency to give people jobs not to offend them so my only concern is they don't give someone a job just because they've been ages in a particular council, because that won't drive change or growth. I would want people with very strong backgrounds, either commercial or professional experience in the areas they are going to have to make decisions on, not just someone who has worked in the council for decades*

Group 8

- *The structure seems right with everyone being accountable, but it's about how people would be put in place, it all depends on having the right people with the right frame of mind, not just people who bicker and argue.*

Group 8

Some residents wondered where the new combined authority would be located and what impact this would have on accessibility. A few thought that the new MCA offices might be based in Northallerton where North Yorkshire Council currently resides and this was felt to be relatively remote for those nearer York. Some also wondered if the mayor would be based in the same location.

Overall, the perceived benefits and disadvantages of having a MCA were as shown in this table, which will be discussed more fully.

POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES OF MCA	POTENTIAL DISADVANTAGES OF MCA
Greater accountability from having an elected Mayor	Fairness of how funds and resources are allocated
Greater transparency of decision making and control over resource allocation	Feasibility of standardising services
Greater efficiencies and economies of scale	Exacerbated rural / urban divide

### Perceived benefits of a Mayoral Combined Authority

A key perceived benefit of an MCA was that it would enable better local decision making and give more control over what happens in their region.

- *It's important to be in charge of your own region rather than it all is coming from Westminster. It's great to have money and that it will be managed locally, a local voice will be listened to which is important, it will be challenging to prioritise the need over the area it has to cover though.*

Group 9

- *I think a key thing that would be positive would be that people locally would be helping to make the decisions, rather than someone in London, I think the word local is a positive bit.*

Group 2



Residents assumed that having representatives from each Council on the Board would mean collaborative decision making and that the mayor would be held to account.

Another key benefit of an MCA was that standardising services across the region would make things fairer for all residents.

- *If you have one approach you haven't got small individual local authorities and councils who create their own restrictions or use outdated criteria for funding guidelines*

Group 8

- *The one thing that does sound good, I kind of agree on principle that decisions in your local area should be made by people who are local... if the positive of this is that it cuts off a chain of going somewhere else when asking permission to do something then that's great.*

Group 1

Residents believed that changing to two unitary councils offered a major potential benefit in terms of economies of scale, by reducing the total number of staff employed across York Council and North Yorkshire Council, with this cost saving being passed on to residents, and a reduction in bureaucracy from combining the two-tier structure into one. However, a small minority believed that because the unions were in favour of the devolution deal this could mean that staff would just be reshuffled with no saving on HR / no efficiencies.

### **Perceived disadvantages of a Mayoral Combined Authority**

Because of the lack of detail in the proposals, residents identified more disadvantages than advantages for the new MCA.

Primarily, many felt that because York and North Yorkshire were very different in terms of their size, population types and needs, although a reduction in bureaucracy and staffing levels could offer huge benefits the detail was not included to indicate how this would be achieved and where cost savings would be made, and there were concerns that the nuances of local needs would be more difficult to identify and address with a one-tier structure.

- *York is a massive area, and there's not potentially going to be enough funding for everyone to get their priorities so how do you work together, it's just such a big area.*

Group 4

- *It all looks lovely on paper and it sounds great but in reality will it take away a lot from our city being able to make its own decisions and not just being part of North Yorkshire?*

Group 6

- *What hasn't been explained here is why they are doing it; they have said what the benefits [of an MCA] will be but not how they will accrue those benefits. I haven't seen the word 'saving' mentioned in the document. The one thing that isn't stated in here is how the removal of duplication is going to reduce costs. We just have to trust that the 'powers that be' that they use the money wisely.*

Group 6

If the new MCA resulted in a reduction in council offices and relocation to North Yorkshire this could also lead to a lack of accessibility to the new MCA for residents.

In addition, the lack of detail in the proposals generated mixed views on whether an MCA structure would exacerbate the rural/urban divide or offer cost savings for residents throughout the region.

Concerns were raised about how fairness in decision making would be achieved in terms of allocating Mayoral and other funds across the region and of addressing the different priorities identified in the proposals.

- *If you have one mayor for both, the focus will be on York, they're going to overlook the smaller areas that's always how it happened in the past.*

Group 7

- *Would it standardise each area? Rather than each area competing for more resource.*

Group 7

- *They talk about investing in local priorities but if they're taking out a layer, Ryedale district council will no longer exist, how will they assess what is really needed at a local level when they're even more distant. How will that happen?*

Group 5

- *I just think the needs from Yorkshire and North Yorkshire will be very different, like York is a very busy tourist city. When I think of York I think of hustle and busy its somewhere you go it's totally different, so I think it's weird to combine the two.*

Group 2

- *Someone from York wouldn't understand the concerns of here. They should have a spokesperson from here... because we all know urban issues are different to rural issues.*

Group 2

- *I can say I am completely opposed to it, I really don't think places like North Yorkshire and York will work – they're completely different with different needs, with different members of society, York is a university town whereas Whitby is a place where people go to retire, so I don't think having a joint mayor is going to work unless you have a middle man, it's just never going to work unless they have a mayor in each area.*

Group 7

Although not overtly specified in the proposals, residents were concerned about whether they would ultimately have to contribute individually in order to achieve the plans for the region.

- *In terms of the extra funding it sounds positive but as long as it does not end up coming out of our council tax, and the reality isn't that we're actually paying for it.*

Group 2

In particular, residents from more rural areas wanted reassurance that the uniqueness and difference of rural locations would not be eroded by standardisation.

Many believed that York would be prioritised in decision making because of its size and the importance of tourism to the city and surrounding areas. Rural residents from North Yorkshire felt their needs were more likely to be ignored because of the likely greater amount of funding required to address rural issues.

Particularly in smaller rural towns, there was a concern that dissolving district councils would mean a reduction in access to local government generally, and connection to customer services, and an erosion of local knowledge and revenue allocation.

- *People move into areas like this for a reason, and my only fear would be that merging them together would mean it becomes less rural, like they might want to increase the amount of tourism, which would bring in more jobs and money, but I'm afraid it would become more like a city and you need a balance.*

Group 4

- *York is a massive area, and there's not potentially going to be enough funding for everyone to get their priorities so how do you work together, it's just such a big area.*

Group 1

- *The local councils are already massively overwhelmed with what they're trying to do on a day-to-day basis, so if you're adding to that it is going to overwhelm them more.*

Group 1

### Governance structure

Views of the governance structure tended to indicate a lack of understanding about the intricacies of how this might work in practice and a general feeling that this did not sound democratic.

It was difficult to believe that five voting members on the new MCA would be able to base their decisions fairly and without conflict and this related to residents' concerns that the new devolved council would be covering too large an area, so residents wanted to know more about how this structure would work in practice and the type of support each representative and the Mayor would receive. Some questioned how conflicts in voting would be resolved and how fairness in decision making would be ensured. Some wanted community involvement in decision making to ensure fairness.

- *That is a lot of power in very few hands.*

Group 5

- *To get a fair representation there should be more than five, even if they aren't official members.*

Group 4

- *[So it's a] Mayor who runs the area, who has other board members who help him make the decisions. They should have a sample of the community, rather than five people who might not even live in the area.*

Group 7

- *Not quite democratic and needs to be more democratic and have more voting, based on population size and age wise, everyone should have a vote rather than just councillors who vote, a mini election, we should vote for all members on the board.*

Group 7

- *I think it's like having a debate with two sides, and the mayor is like a judge who comes to the final decision and that mayor may favour an area more than another one.*

Group 7

- *It sounds like only five people will make all the decisions whereas now we have a much broader spectrum of people with different experience and representing people, that sounds very worrying if it doesn't go well.*

Group 3

### **Understanding of the role and functions of a Mayor**

There was a general level of confusion about the role of a mayor in an MCA. Some believed that a Mayoral role would be similar to that of a Chief Executive of the council. A few confused a Mayor of an MCA with the ceremonial role of Lord Mayor of York. Some thought there would be two Mayors, one for each of the Unitary Councils.

- *Would it be the Mayor of North Yorkshire or the Mayor of York? North Yorkshire is one of the biggest counties and spans over a big area. My impression is that it's the Mayor of York and then they consult with the different various councils across North Yorkshire.*

Group 1

- *You could call him a Chief Executive, couldn't you?*

Group 5

- *I think the title of Mayor is wrong, he/ she is ultimately the CEO of a large corporation.*

Group 3

There were also questions around the election of the Mayor. These included questions around how a candidate shortlist would be drawn up, which was important because local people would be voting on these individuals.

There was a level of scepticism about who would want to perform the role of Mayor, based on negative media reports about Mayors in other regions and recent negative media about individuals in the current government.

Residents questioned whether the election would be party political or if candidates would be voted for as individuals. There was a preference for the new Mayor to be elected as an

individual as residents were concerned that politically based appointments may perpetuate a lack of transparency about decision making, allocation of funds, and resources.

In addition, there were concerns that elections could become a competition between different geographical areas, with the largest by population size dominating elections and eventual allocation of resources and funding.

- *Would there be political party affiliations, would you have a labour candidate, a conservative candidate?... Is this going to be people voting on party affiliations rather than what they [the candidate for mayor] will do?... It would kind of be nice if it wasn't. Sometimes when you get local candidates and stuff, they kind of hide their party affiliations, and it just becomes noise and nothing local.*

Group 1

- *You constantly see politicians using personal gain.*

Group 1

- *With it being just one person, I'm worried is it going to be like a dictatorship and are they going to have the views of the constituents at heart or are they doing it for gain for themselves.*

Group 4

- *I think the worrying thing is, if there is a mayor are there certain people from certain areas going to be putting money under the table for her/him and are they going to do certain things to certain areas, and then the £18million is spent only in a couple of areas.*

Group 4

In terms of the type of profile of an individual who would become Mayor of a MCA, residents wanted someone who would communicate with the community, someone with knowledge of the region-either through living or working there, and preferably someone who was not a longstanding Council employee because this could potentially taint perceptions of their potential to deliver change and growth.

- *Do we have a clever enough person in Yorkshire to take on this job?!*

Group 3

- *We need someone who is going to be proactive and get things done.*

Group 9

- *Once we vote this mayor in, what do we then have a say in? Can we still vote for things, or do they make a manifesto and promise things but then change everything anyways?*

Group 1

Whilst residents were given information about how the new Mayor would be elected and their length of term, they were unclear about who the Mayor would report to in their role and who they would be accountable to in the event of not delivering on their plans.

- *How local is local? Could a Leeds person become the Mayor of York? And I know that the title means that they will have decisions on what's going on in North Yorkshire, but how is that person managed so that it's fair. Because then the things that's going to happen is that it becomes a population vote... I'm going to vote for a York person because I'm from York, where they're going to vote for a Leeds person.*

Group 1

- *Who can sack the mayor?*

Group 5

Questions were also raised about why a mayor isn't going to be elected until 2024 and how the new MCA will operate until then.

- *As far as I am aware, they're starting the council restructures. The new council is going to be live from 2023, but the new Mayor is going to be 2024. How will they run in-between...without a mayor?*

Group 5

Those who were aware of Mayors in other regions felt it would be useful to know more about how they have delivered against proposals in those regions to feel reassured that this role could make a difference to local people.

### **Perceived benefits of a Mayor**

The potential benefits of having a Mayor focused on having one person responsible for the region who would help to provide greater transparency of MCAs plans and someone to hold accountable if those plans are not delivered.

Having someone to represent the whole region was felt to be particularly important for those in North Yorkshire who felt the more rural areas of the region were currently side-lined in favour of York.

An assumption, based on Mayors in other regions, was that a Mayor would be much more involved with the local community which would benefit decision making for the region.

In addition, having an individual who could generate lots of media attention and raise the profile of the region could help with inward investment.

- *It's better having someone locally telling you how they are spending the money but you need more detail on how they will deliver it.*

Group 6

- *Andy Burnham in Greater Manchester has been doing a lot of work on the transport network... a mayor elected by the people would be much more involved with the community.*

Group 1

- *Andy Burnham always seems like he cares about the people, he's on TV a lot, and Tracy Brabin, she seems really enthusiastic and honest, she might not be but she seems as if she cares about the region and the people.*

Group 9

- *I could probably go into my bin and pull out different leaflets with loads of information about the different initiatives that local councils take... but a lot of the times it does just become a lot of noise around it... if this was going to be implemented it would be interesting to see how this changes how the messaging comes across.*

Group 1

- *I like the idea, knowing that it will go through someone closer to home than someone from government the way it currently does, we have an MP in the area, but it has to go through parliament, whereas now it won't be the case. It would be nicer to have someone representing us, our own mayor, representing each little area.*

Group 7

### **Perceived disadvantages of a Mayor**

There was a certain level of mistrust aimed at politicians generally and it was felt this could potentially influence the role of a Mayor such that anyone who wanted to take on the role may only be doing so to further their own political ambitions.

- *Based on what I've seen of Brabin and Burnham they just seem to be clashing with central government and saying 'oh I'd have done this' and vocally banging the drum for local people but really, they are only looking after their own political ambitions.*

Group 3

Residents were concerned that a Mayor would struggle to address the needs of the very different areas of the region unless they were 'a local' who would have a greater understanding of the regional differences and potential solutions. Someone who wasn't local may be swayed to prioritise more urban priorities.

- *It depends where the mayor comes from. If someone from Pickering they'd look after Pickering.*

Group 5

- *I'm a little bit more worried about these proposals than I thought because of the vagueness, and if the mayor comes from York he will get more pressure from locals to make changes there.*

Group 3

Residents were concerned generally about whether a mayor would be able to deliver on their mandate, based on other Mayors from MCAs who had struggled.

- *I think it's a good and a bad idea. There's a mayor now in West Yorkshire named Tracy and she's appalling. I moved from there to North Yorkshire because it's a nicer area. The city centre wasn't very safe, and the transport was poor, and she came saying she's*

*going to do this, but she didn't deliver, and it can be quite negative, that's why I agree there needs to be a lot more people in the conversation and not just that one person.*

Group 4

Young residents felt the Mayor might struggle to identify or relate to the needs of people in their age group.

- *Stereotypically the mayor is going to be a lot older than everyone that's here, so it's going to be a different point of view to what we are saying.*

Group 4

There were also some concerns about whether the Mayor was the right person to adopt the responsibility of the Police and Fire Commissioner roles. The role of Mayor seemed to be a wide ranging and substantial role to deliver and taking on the responsibilities of the Police/Fire/Crime Commissioner did not seem a logical addition given the specialist expertise required and could be perceived as a step too far in terms of the amount of power allocated to a Mayor.

- *I think it would be more what people are looking for if they had someone just concentrated on the city and then someone to focus on the surrounding areas.*

Group 1

- *If they have the sole power to decide whether the finances toward the fire commissioner goes and other funding goes, that doesn't sound like the best idea to me personally.*

Group 4

- *Will the Mayor have a clue, he is so far removed from what is happening on the ground, I think it's a step too far asking for the Mayor to handle this as well, and I know that the three most recent appointments in the major roles in the fire service were people from South Yorkshire who won't know anything about where are the vulnerable areas in this region or where you need the most amount of staff. Until last year I was in the fire service and Zoe Metcalfe has just decided to close one of the big fire stations in York but I dare say you won't get a reduction in your council tax.*

Group 9

### **11.5.3 Landowner's views of creating a Mayoral Combined Authority**

Landowners' views of creating a Mayoral Combined Authority generally echoed those of residents in terms of how the voting members would be chosen and conflict managed and if a Mayor would be involved in choosing the cabinet. They believed that an MCA could deliver cost savings from reducing the number of borough councils and could be successful providing it was not urban dominated. They questioned how an MCA would impact the National Planning Policy Framework.

Landowners were broadly positive about introducing a Mayor to the region, based on their knowledge of other Mayors in MCAs who had been successful in delivering devolution



deals in other regions and attracting inward investment. For York and North Yorks, landowners a Mayor needed to help deliver rural growth.

They believed that a Mayor would offer transparency and accountability and should focus their time on delivering a small number of 'special projects' which should include ambitions for becoming carbon negative. Other than this they questioned how priorities for the region would be decided on, and how the Mayor would be accountable for these.

Landowners believed the success of the MCA would be heavily dependent on choosing the right person as Mayor. They identified several important qualities and attributes for a Mayor:

- someone who is very familiar with the region and appreciates the needs of rural communities – 'a rural champion'.
  - a natural leader,
  - a good communicator,
  - has entrepreneurial flair,
  - good negotiator,
  - can find solutions to existing problems and challenges barriers to progress,
  - appeals to a wide range of people,
  - natural charisma,
  - ability to source additional funds when required e.g. from government.
- *I think it will be easier for people to relate to an individual that they vote for rather than parties and cohorts of anonymous commissioners, so maybe a Mayor is a good thing rather than the bit of money which could prove to be illusory if the government decide to cut the block grant to local government.*
  - *It would help if they have an understanding of rural issues and the rural economy, and someone who is prepared to listen, and adapt if necessary.*
  - *It needs to be someone who has some sort of power and influence and this person has got to have the courage to stand up and embarrass departments and authorities who are standing in the way of progressing things as well as having the negotiating skills to get them on board, you don't want someone who is lily livered and will run and hide if barked at by a Chief Planning Officer, that won't work, they need to have some backbone.*
  - *Ben Houchen of Tees MCA very much hung his hat on delivering specific projects and making them happen and I can see that approach being quite successful. In other authorities there is an overlap but it's not one person's priority, and if you give it to one person and call that person the Mayor and tell them to get things delivered and bang heads together and find solutions to the problems, go out and get extra funding from government, I can see that being a successful role.*

# 12 APPENDIX ONE: DEMOGRAPHICS

## 12.1 Online Survey

The survey was designed to collect limited demographic data, asking respondents to provide the following information.

### 12.1.1 Business sector

In response to the question

*If you selected 'business' - please select the sector that best describes your business.*

Respondents provided the following:

Providing Response as a Business	No.	%
No	1,794	92%
Yes	149	8%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>

Of those that responded as a business their reported sector of operation was a follows

Sector	No.	%*
Arts	1	1%
construction	1	1%
Creative and digital	37	25%
Farming	1	1%
Financial and professional services	29	19%
Food and drink manufacturing	8	5%
Gardening	1	1%
Health and life sciences	17	11%
Heritage	1	1%
Hospitality	2	1%
Low carbon and environmental	11	7%
Manufacturing	16	11%
Prefer not to say	19	13%
Property	1	1%
Retail	1	1%
Tourism	3	2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## 12.1.2 Age

In responses the question

***What is your age group?***

Respondents provided the following responses.

Age Group	No	%
16-19	5	0.3%
20-29	49	3%
30-39	69	4%
40-49	153	8%
50-64	468	24%
65-74	439	23%
75-84	132	7%
85 +	13	1%
Prefer not to say	31	2%
Skipped	584	30%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 12.1.3 Sex

In responding to a request for respondents sex the following was provided.

Sex	No.	%
Female	409	21%
Male	683	35%
I describe myself in another way	9	0.5%
Skipped	784	40%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 12.1.4 Disability

In response to the question

***Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person or to have a long-term, limiting condition?***

Respondents provided the following.

Disabled	No.
Yes	103
No	601
Prefer not to say	18
<b>Total providing responses</b>	<b>722</b>

## 12.1.5 Ethnicity

In response to the question

### *What is your ethnic group?*

Respondents provided the following.

Ethnicity	Number of respondents
Arab	1
Asian/Asian British Indian	4
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British Caribbean	1
European	1
Other ethnic group	6
Other White	23
White English/Welsh/Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	663
White European	1
White Irish	9
White Yorkshireman	1
<b>Total providing responses</b>	<b>710</b>

## 12.1.6 Employment Status

In response to the question;

### *What is your employment status?*

Respondents provided the following. Please note that despite direction to select one box only respondents chose multiple occupations as seen in the table below.

Employment Status	No	%
Retired	586	30%
Working full-time	423	22%
Working part-time	124	6.4%
Self-employed	73	3.8%
Other	39	2.0%
Retired Working part-time	19	1.0%
Self-employed Working full-time	17	0.9%
Self-employed Working part-time	12	0.6%
Student	9	0.5%
Other Retired	7	0.4%
Retired Self-employed	6	0.3%
Part-time carer Retired	5	0.3%
Full-time carer	4	0.2%
Part-time carer Working full-time	4	0.2%
Unemployed	4	0.2%
Student Working full-time	3	0.2%
Apprenticeship/training Working full-time	2	0.1%
Full-time carer Self-employed	2	0.1%

Employment Status	No	%
Full-time carer Working full-time	2	0.1%
Other Working part-time	2	0.1%
Prefer not to say	2	0.1%
Retired Self-employed Working part-time	2	0.1%
Retired Student	2	0.1%
Self-employed Zero-hour contract Working part-time	2	0.1%
Student Working part-time	2	0.1%
Volunteer Retired	2	0.1%
Working part-time Working full-time	2	0.1%
Zero-hour contract	2	0.1%
Zero-hour contract Working part-time	2	0.1%
Also Town Cllr - 44 years + County Cllr 1981-2009Self-employed	1	0.1%
Apprenticeship/training	1	0.1%
Business owner Working full-time	1	0.1%
Charity shop worker/retired	1	0.1%
Full-time carer Self-employed Working part-time	1	0.1%
Full-time carer Working part-time	1	0.1%
Home Educator	1	0.1%
Homemaker	1	0.1%
I have a portfolio of activities. Self-employed Working part-time	1	0.1%
MD of A Hill & Sons Horticulture	1	0.1%
Mother Self-employed Working part-time	1	0.1%
None of your business	1	0.1%
Other Part-time carer Retired	1	0.1%
Other Part-time carer Working full-time	1	0.1%
Other Student Self-employed	1	0.1%
Other Zero-hour contract	1	0.1%
Part-time carer Full-time carer Zero-hour contract	1	0.1%
PhD Student	1	0.1%
Retired business owner Retired	1	0.1%
Retired Zero-hour contract	1	0.1%
Self-employed Working part-time Working full-time	1	0.1%
Self-employed Zero-hour contract	1	0.1%
Student Apprenticeship/training	1	0.1%
Unemployed Retired	1	0.1%
Unemployed Working full-time	1	0.1%
Voluntary work Retired	1	0.1%
Working two jobs one for NYCC but as underpaid compared to other schools in the area I have to work a second job as a barista and work 6-7 days a week. Working part-time Working full-time	1	0.1%
Zero-hour contract Working part-time Working full-time	1	0.1%
Skipped	554	29%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,943</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 12.2 Focus Group Participant Profiles

A total of 70 residents took part in the focus groups, their demographic profile was as shown in the tables below.

Age	No.
18 – 30	27
31 – 44	14
45 – 64	12
65 – 75	12
75+	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70</b>

Sex	No.
Male	32
Female	38
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70</b>

Working status	No.
Working full time/part time	47
Retired	14
Unemployed	4
Homemaker	3
Student	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70</b>

Ethnicity	No.
White	64
BME	6
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70</b>

<b>Disability</b>	<b>5</b>
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Area	No.
Harrogate	16
Knaresborough	2
Malton	3
Pickering	7
Scarborough	3
Skipton	4
Whitby	6
York (city and suburbs)	29
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>70</b>

# 13 APPENDIX TWO: WESTCO FOCUS GROUP REPORT

Attached as an embedded object is the full report produced by Westco detailed the focus group methodology and findings.



1179E Y&NY  
Devolution Focus Gro