North Yorkshire Council

Council Size Submission

DRAFT

Contents

How to Make a Submission

It is recommended that submissions on future governance arrangements and council size follow the guidance provided and use the format below as a template. Submissions should be treated as an opportunity to focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. **Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them**.

The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading. It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

'Good' submissions, i.e. those that are considered to be most robust and persuasive, combine the following *key success components* (as set out in the guidance that accompanies this template):

- Clarity on objectives

- A straightforward and evidence-led style

- An understanding of local place and communities

- An understanding of councillors' roles and responsibilities

About You

The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, a resident group, or an individual.

This submission is on behalf of North Yorkshire Council and will be considered by Full Council. The submission is based on the recommendations of the Cross-Party Members Working Group.

Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one if its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

The Context for your proposal

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 - 20 years. **The consideration of future governance arrangements and council size should be set in the wider local and national policy context.** The Commission

expects you to challenge your current arrangements and determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

- When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?
- To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?
- Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
- What influence will local and national policy trends likely have on the Council as an institution?
- What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

North Yorkshire Council was created on 1 April 2023, bringing together services previously provided by eight councils into one. The Unitary Authority replaced the County Council and the five district councils and two borough councils in North Yorkshire. The Council is currently undertaking a transformation programme to consolidate services, make savings, reduce duplication and improve efficiency.

During the transition to the new council, the initial priority was to secure safe and legal services on day one. This was achieved and performance has largely remained strong across services. There have been some expected challenges in consolidating operations from the eight councils, with the need to align teams, systems, policies and processes, and this has uncovered some variation in performance. However, these have been operational issues rather than governance.

Whilst Councillors have noted an increase in the scope and scale of their roles, compared to previous County and District/Borough arrangements, the existing governance arrangements have proved capable of supporting effective and timely decision-making. No governance issues have been raised through inspections or reviews over the past year.

North Yorkshire Council has a Leader and Executive governance model, which continued from the arrangements within the predecessor North Yorkshire County Council. This model works well and is considered the best option for the council due to the large size of the council and the number of services that the unitary authority delivers.

The new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority has been set up with Mayoral elections held in May 2024. North Yorkshire Council will work in close partnership with the Combined Authority across a range of issues. Whilst the national policy outlook is uncertain pending the General Election, all the main parties have committed to maintain or enhance local devolution and we expect this model of governance at a sub-regional level to continue.

This council size proposal will not have an impact on the Council's effectiveness, as a small reduction in the number of Councillors from 90 to 89 would have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.

Local Authority Profile

Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting, in particular the local geography, demographics and community characteristics. This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description should cover all of the following:

- Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
- Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?
- Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
- Community characteristics – is there presence of "hidden" or otherwise complex deprivation?
- Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Further to providing a description, the Commission will be looking for a submission that demonstrates an understanding of place and communities by putting forth arguments on council size based upon local evidence and insight. For example, how does local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on councillor casework, workload and community engagement?

North Yorkshire is the largest geographical county in England. Situated on the south side of the Tees Valley basin, it stretches almost 100 miles across the width of the country, from the east coast to the Lancashire border, down to Selby in the south of the County. The authority covers more than 3,000 square miles (8,000 Sq. Km) of urban, coastal, and predominantly rural terrain, including two National Parks, North York Moors National Park, and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It also includes three National Landscapes (former Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)).

The current population of North Yorkshire is estimated at 615493 (census 2021). However, there are only two towns with populations greater than 50,000, being Harrogate and Scarborough. All other towns have a population of less than 25,000, with about 65% of the population living in these urban areas.
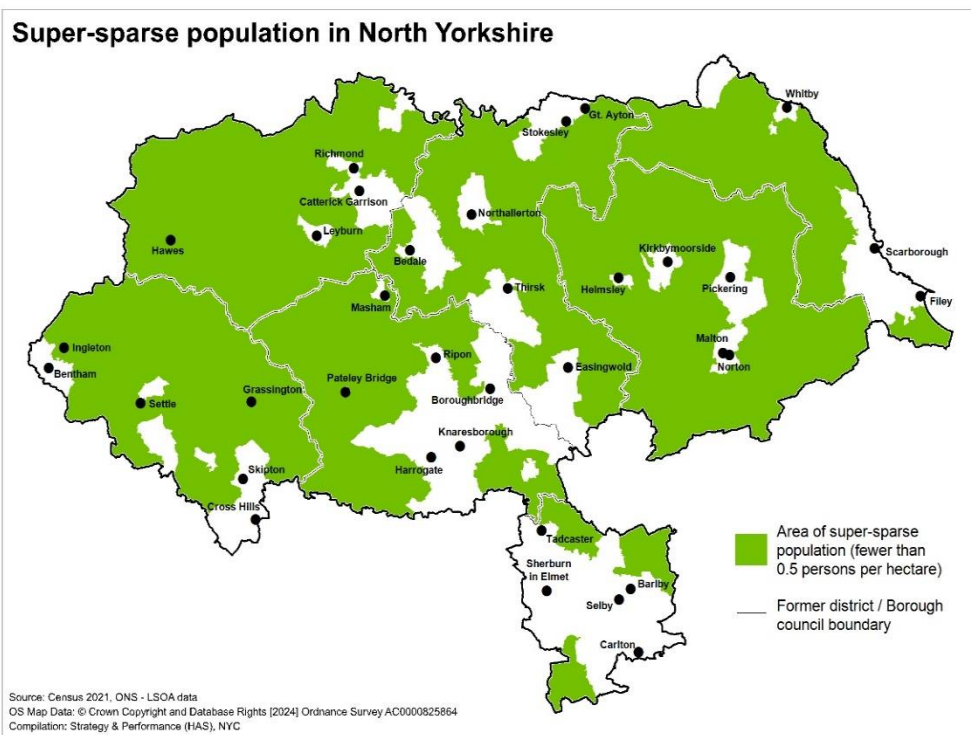
The remaining 35% of the population live in either super sparse or sparce areas of North Yorkshire. This accounts for 98% of the area of the authority.

Sparsely and super-sparsely populated communities present a challenge in terms of inclusion and community sustainability, as well as service delivery. In sparsely populated rural areas people can experience physical and digital isolation with difficulty accessing services, jobs, and transport links.
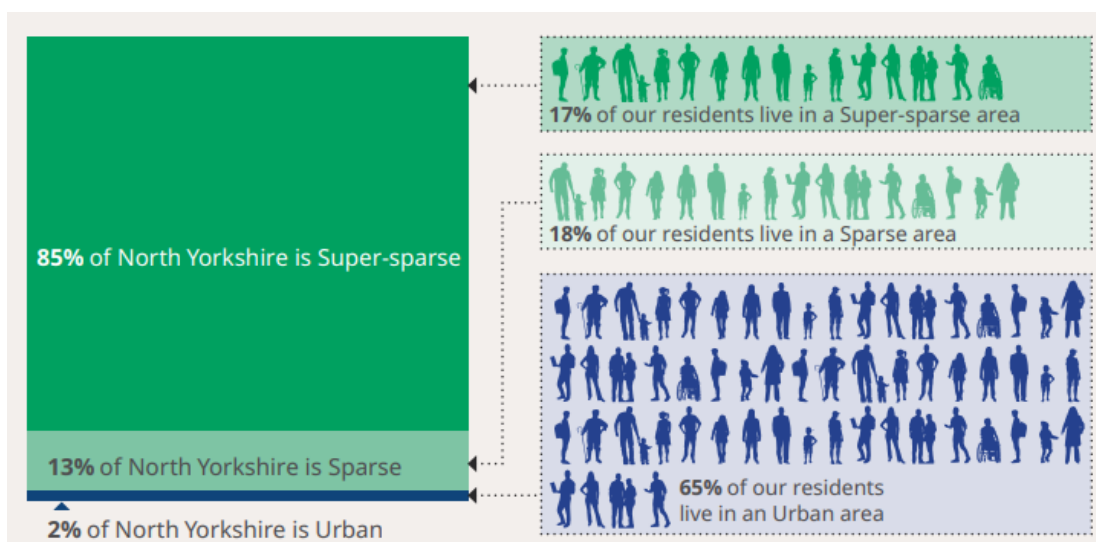
Urban areas are the connected built-up areas identified by Ordnance Survey mapping that have resident populations above 10,000 people (2011 Census). Rural areas are those areas that are not urban, i.e., consisting of settlements below 10,000 people or are open countryside.

North Yorkshire also has an ageing population with almost a quarter (153,000) of the population aged 65 and over. With projected trend and inward migration of older people to the area, we expect this figure to increase to almost a third by 2035. This will continue to place substantial pressures on social and health care services across the county, especially in remote rural areas. For example, in the Harrogate area this pressure is resulting in a shortage of residential care home places for the over-65s.
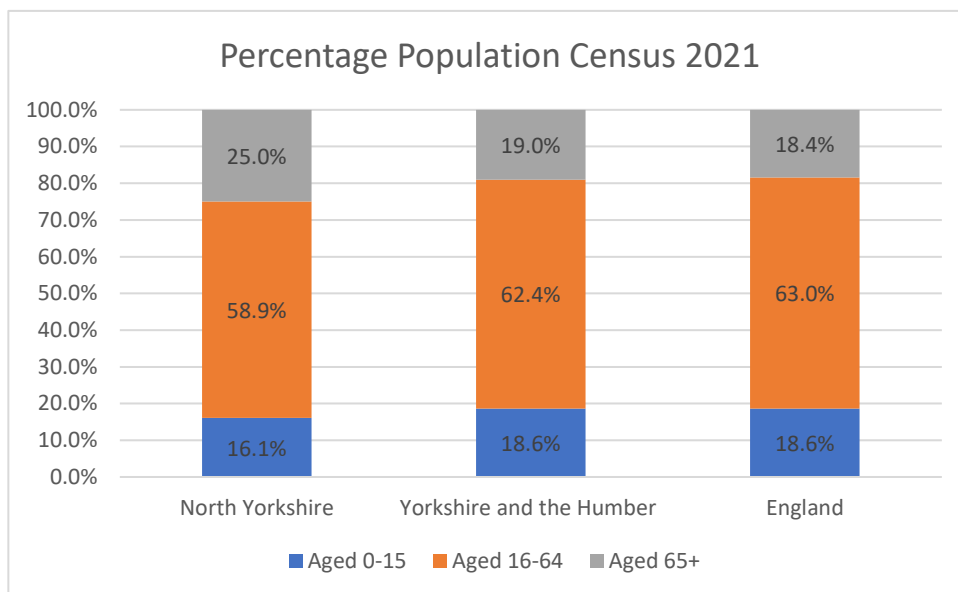
One further consequence of this age split is that there are fewer working age people compared to over-65s and under 15s. Known as the dependency ratio, North Yorkshire's is 0.7 while England's is 0.59. This means there are on average only 1.4 working age adults to support each dependent child or older person. Whereas, for England there are 1.86 working age adults to support each dependent child or older person.

Looking to the future, based on the ONS population growth tool, the overall population of North Yorkshire is expected to grow by 4.1% over the period 2021 to 2039. Over the same period, the population across England is expected to grow by 6.97% to 60.961m and by 4.93% to 5.819m in Yorkshire and the Humber.

The following table is based on the ONS Population age structure by single year of age and sex for local authorities, counties, regions, and England as a whole, mid-2021 to mid-2039 and uses the Midyear estimates of population as its base.

Population Based on MYE								
	2021	2024	2027	2030	2033	2036	2039	Growth	%
Craven	57346	57970	58491	58983	59429	59855	60287	2941	5.1%
Hambleton	91590	92018	92274	92472	92613	92750	92926	1336	1.5%
Harrogate	160783	161183	161212	161190	161339	161612	162134	1351	0.8%
Richmondshire	53466	53468	53489	53467	53455	53472	53564	98	0.2%
Ryedale	56289	57571	58663	59563	60332	60976	61579	5290	9.4%
Scarborough	109714	110587	111364	112042	112607	113084	113561	3847	3.5%
Selby	92053	94592	96695	98525	100130	101545	102912	10859	11.8%

Ny MYE	621241	627389	632188	636242	639905	643294	646963	25722	4.1%
Growth		1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%		4.1%
Ny Census	615400	621490	626244	630260	633889	637246	640880	25480	4.1%

The final row is the NY Census population figure uplifted for growth. However, growth is not uniform with the former Selby and Ryedale district areas having the highest and Richmondshire the lowest.

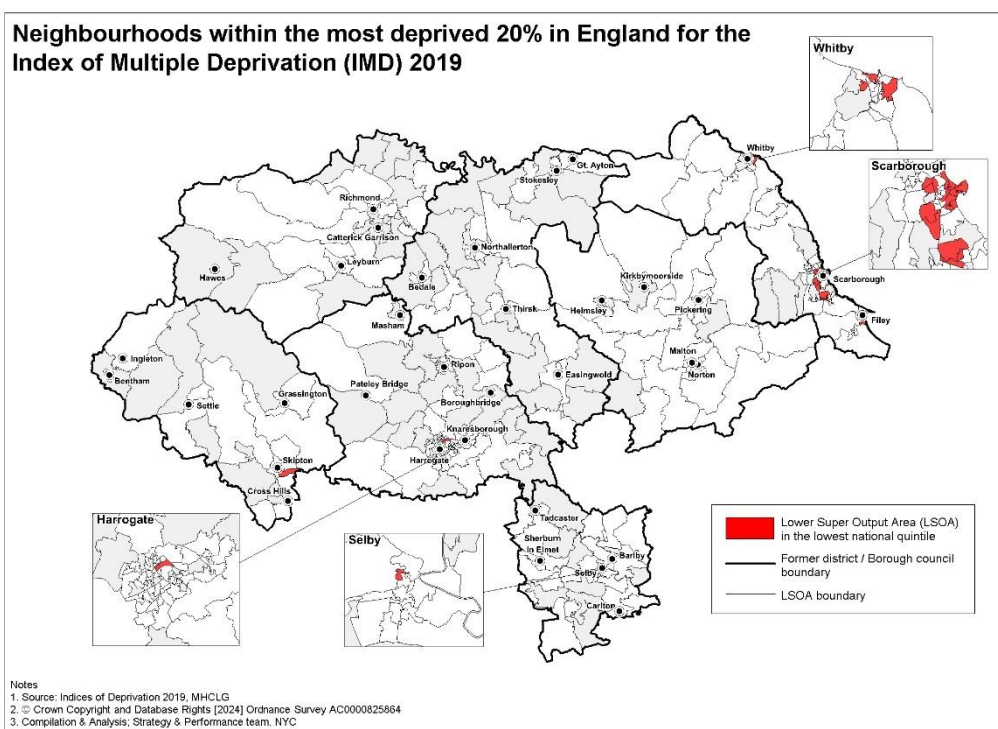| Census pop 2021		Total	M	F	% M	%F
E10000023	North Yorkshire	615,400	313,800	301,700	51%	49%
E07000163	Craven	56,900	29,300	27,600	51%	49%
E07000164	Hambleton	90,700	46,400	44,200	51%	49%
E07000165	Harrogate	162,700	83,000	79,700	51%	49%
E07000166	Richmondshire	49,700	24,300	25,400	49%	51%
E07000167	Ryedale	54,700	28,000	26,700	51%	49%
E07000168	Scarborough	108,800	55,900	52,900	51%	49%
E07000169	Selby	92,000	46,800	45,200	51%	49%

In general terms the male / female split is 51% / 49% across the authority.

Average Age of Population within Local Authority areas

East Riding of Yorkshire	49.6
North Yorkshire	48.7
North Lincolnshire	44.9
North East Lincolnshire	43.1
Calderdale	42.4
Barnsley	42.2
Rotherham	41.6
Doncaster	41.5
Wakefield	41.4
YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER	40.6
Kirklees	39.9
South Yorkshire (Met County)	39.8
York	39.3
West Yorkshire (Met County)	38.3
Kingston upon Hull, City of	37.0
Sheffield	36.9
Bradford	36.8
Leeds	36.4

The above table shows the average age of the councils in the Yorkshire and Humber region. It is interesting to note that the higher proportion of residents over-65 pushes up the average age of North Yorkshire's residents to 48.7 years. This is over 12 years older than the lowest authority, Leeds, at 36.4 years. This higher age has implications for the workforce and job market.

Across most indicators, the health and wellbeing of North Yorkshire's residents is generally good. At a countywide level, the Index of Multiple Deprivation shows North Yorkshire to be one of the least deprived local authority areas in England. There are however pockets of deprivation and inequalities that affect specific groups of our population. Some areas of the county fall into the most deprived quintile in the country, particularly to the east with parts of Scarborough town falling within the most deprived 1% nationally most deprived quintile in the country

Neighbourhoods within the most deprived 20% in England for the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019

Notes
1. Source: Indices of Deprivation 2019, MHCLG
2. © Crown Copyright and Database Rights [2024] Ordnance Survey AC0000825864
3. Compilation & Analysis; Strategy & Performance team, NYC

Prior to 1 April 2023, North Yorkshire operated a two tier system of 7 district and borough councils, and an overarching county council. This arrangement for the 8 councils had 301 councillors between them, although 50 of these sat on both district and county councils. This overall figure was reduced to 89 wards with 90 councillors for the new unitary North Yorkshire as from 2023. The average number of electors is 5,374 ranging from Wathvale & Bishop Monkton with 7,283 electors to Cayton with 3,711 electors. One ward, Selby West with 7,631 electors, has two councillors representing it, with all other wards having a single councillor.

In comparison to other rural unitaries, North Yorkshire has a slightly higher average of 5,374 registered electors per councillor. In comparison, other large rural unitaries include Cornwall with a ratio of 4,994 registered electors per councillor and Cumberland, another new unitary, with a ratio of 4,569 registered electors per councillor. In general terms County Councils have higher levels of electors per Councillor.

Annex1 provides greater detail on this.

Council Size

The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role.

These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

Strategic Leadership

Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic		
Governance Model	*Key lines of explanation*	➤ *What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?* ➤ *The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?* ➤ *If the authority runs a Committee system, we want to understand why the number and size of the committees you propose represents the most appropriate for the authority.* ➤ *By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?* ➤ *Whichever governance model you currently operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities.*
	Analysis	North Yorkshire Council is currently composed of 90 councillors, representing 89 Electoral Divisions. One of the Council's Electoral Divisions is represented by two Members. It is proposed that the number of councillors is reduced to 89, with each Electoral Division represented by one Member. Members are elected every four years with the next full Council elections due to be held in May 2027. Members are given an induction after they have been elected. The Democratic Services Local Area Support Team are responsible for Member learning and development. The current political make-up of the Council is as follows: • Conservative and Independents - 47 • Liberal Democrats and Liberals - 14

		• Labour - 10 • NY Independents - 10 • Green - 4 • Unaffiliated – 5 The council operates a Leader and Executive model of governance. This model works well and is considered the best option for the council due to the large size of the council and the number of services that the unitary authority delivers. This allows decisions to be made in a timely and efficient manner. The council will continue to review the governance arrangements. The Executive and its Members have wide ranging leadership roles. They: • Lead the community planning process, the preparation of the Council's policies and the search for Best Value, with input and advice from Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Area Constituency Committees and any other persons as appropriate; • Lead the preparation of the Council's budget; take decisions on resources and priorities, together with other stakeholders and partners in the local community, to deliver and implement the budget and policies decided by full Council; • and provide the focus for forming partnerships with other local public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to address local needs. Executive Members regularly attend meetings with Corporate Directors and other lead officers within their respective portfolio's. Executive members are also appointed to sit on a number of outside bodies, which each have varying time commitments. The Leader and Executive Members are active in decisions relating to the running of the council and are often a spokesperson for the council in the local press.
Portfolios	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How many portfolios will there be?* ➢ *What will the role of a portfolio holder be?* ➢ *Will this be a full-time position?* ➢ *Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?*
	Analysis	The Executive, consisting of the leader and nine Executive Members, makes most decisions, but decisions about the budget and major policy framework are made by the full council.

		The current portfolios are: • **Leader of the Council**, also responsible for communications and emergency planning. • **Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Finance and Resources**, including Pension Fund, Property, Procurement & Commercial, Technology, Transformation, Revenue and Benefits, and HR. • **Children and Families** with responsibility for Inclusion, Fostering and Adoption, Children's Social Care, Safeguarding and Prevention. • **Education, Learning and Skills**, including School Improvement, Early Years, Apprenticeships, Further and Adult Education, FE colleges and UTCs, Music Service, Outdoor Education, School Admissions, Organisation and Transport. • **Highways and Transportation** including Parking Services, Street Scene, Parks and Grounds, Integrated Passenger Transport, Public Rights of Way, Coastal Protection and Flooding. • **Open to Business** including Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration, Visitor Economy, Broadband, Harbours. • **Culture, Arts and Housing** including Culture, Arts, Libraries, Museums, Archives, Key venues, Leisure, and Housing. • **Health and Adult Services** including Public Health, Prevention and Service Development. • **Corporate Services** including Locality Working and Structures, Stronger Communities, Policy and Performance, Refugee and Asylum issues, Community safety including CCTV, Legal and Democratic Services, Members Support, Elections, Customer Contact, Community Networks and Parish Liaison, Locality Budgets, NYLAF & Household Support and Gypsy and Traveller issues. • **Managing our Environment** covering Natural Capital, which includes Climate Change, Carbon Reduction and Biodiversity, Waste Collection and Disposal, Regulatory Services which includes Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing, Bereavement Services, Registrars and Coroners. There is not expected to be any changes to the portfolios in the near future. On average, the Executive formally meets 16 times a year, as well as additional informal meetings. There were 92 Executive reports in the 2023/24 financial year.

		The Council's Executive arrangements delegate decision making to individual Executive members on Executive functions that sit within their portfolio. Before taking decisions within their delegated authority, individual Executive Members will seek advice from relevant Officers.
		Quarterly performance and finance reports are presented to Executive to scrutinise. Council strategies are also approved by the Executive, with those listed on the Policy Framework also required to be approved by Full Council.
		The current financial threshold for key decisions is £500,000 or 20% of the gross expenditure of the relevant budget service area, whichever is less.
Delegated Responsibilities	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?*
	Analysis	The Council's Executive arrangements delegate decision making to individual Executive members on Executive functions that sit within their portfolio. Before taking decisions within their delegated authority, individual Executive Members will seek advice from the relevant Directors and Officers. This approach allows for decisions to be made quickly. A total of 890 Executive Member decisions were made in the 2023/24 financial year. These are the decisions that were approved (rather than those that are still awaiting implementation or were withdrawn). The number is high as Executive Members also have powers to approve Councillor Locality Budget grant recommendations. Executive Members regularly attend meetings with Corporate Directors and other lead officers within their respective portfolios. Individual Executive Members with decision making powers may delegate decisions to Area Constituency Committees, or to Officers. Non- Executive functions are delegated by the council to committees and Officers. **Committee Structure** The table below outlines the expected number of committees and attendances per year. It is estimated that: • 510 positions (figures may change)

		• Average 5.7 seats per councillor (figures may change) Given the large geography of the council, there is a need for some decision making to locality based and there must, therefore, be enough councillors to ensure appropriate representation at a locality level. It was recognised that there are currently no plans to significantly alter the approach to committees, and that arrangements have generally worked well since vesting day of the new authority. Members have also been appointed to outside bodies and key partnerships. For example, Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership, County Council Network, and Local Government Association.	

Committee	No. of seats	No. of meetings	Overall resource
Full Council	90	4	360
Executive and Portfolios			
Executive	10	16	160
Scrutiny			
Audit Committee	10	6	60
Care and Independence and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board	3	6	18
Scrutiny of Health Committee	16	4	64
Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee	16	4	64
Regulatory, Licensing, Planning			
General Licensing and Registration Committee	25	6	150
General Licensing and Registration Sub-Committee	3	ad hoc	
Statutory Licensing Committee	15	3	45
Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee	3	ad hoc	
Strategic Planning Committee	15	12	180
Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency planning Committee	7	12	84
Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84

Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Planning Committee	7	12	84
Development Plan Committee	22	ad hoc	
Community Engagement			
Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee	13	5	65
Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee	16	5	80
Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
Selby and Ainsty Area Constituency Committee	16	5	80
Skipton and Ripon Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
Thirsk and Malton Area Constituency Committee	15	5	75
North Yorkshire Local Access Forum (Duplicated also covered under Outside Bodies)	2	3	6
Other			
Appeals Committee (Homes to School Transport)	5	14	70
Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Committee	10	ad hoc	
Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Sub-Committee	10	ad hoc	
Children's and Young People's Service-Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	2	12	24
Community Development Directorate-Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	2	12	24
Corporate Services- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	3	weekly	
Employment Appeals Committee	5	ad hoc	
Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member for managing our Environment	1	12	12
Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member- Highways and Transport	1	12	12

Environment Directorate- Corporate Director and Executive Member- Open to Business	1	12	12
Health and Adult Services- Executive Members and Corporate Director Meetings	1	12	12
North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)	5	4	20
Pension Fund Committee	10	5	50
Shareholder Committee	3	3	9
Standards and Governance Committee	10	3	30
The Charter Trustees for Harrogate	9	ad hoc	
The Charter Trustees for Scarborough	6	ad hoc	
North Yorkshire Council Committees Total	**510**	**283**	**2,592*** **(Not including ad hoc Committees)**
Key Partnerships			
York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority	2	TBC	
North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board (duplicated from scrutiny section)	3	6	18
Humber and North Yorkshire Health and Care Partnership			
Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)			
North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel	7		
Outside Bodies (may be subject to change)			
County Councils Network (CCN)	4	X	
Local Government Association (LGA)	4	X	
North York Moors National Park Authority	9	X	
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority	10	X	
Other outside Bodies (including Partner and Local Bodies)	177		
Outside Bodies Total	**204**		

*Estimated number of meetings per year

Accountability

Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

Topic	
Internal Scrutiny	The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and

	others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available.
Key lines of explanation	➢ *How will decision makers be held to account?* ➢ *How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?* ➢ *How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?* ➢ *How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?* ➢ *Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.* ➢ *Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.*
Analysis	The council has six Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise decision- making and the performance of the council. **Overview and Scrutiny Committees:** (see table above for the time commitment required for each committee) • Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee: (16 Members) • Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Scrutiny of Health Committee (16 Members) • Transport, Economy, Environment and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) • Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (16 Members) There are 16 members per scrutiny committee. This ensures there is political balance, as well as a range of debate and views to be expressed. The Transition (LGR) Overview and Scrutiny Committee formally ceased as of the 15 May 2024 Council meeting and any outstanding work was re-allocated, in liaison with Scrutiny Board, to the other Overview and Scrutiny committees (with the exception of matters relating to leisure). A new Housing and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 politically balanced Members was created. Any Overview and Scrutiny Committee may appoint one or more sub-committees or task groups either on a standing basis or for a particular purpose or time. The council also has a Scrutiny Board which comprises of chairs from the six Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

		Three Members sit on the North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board.
Statutory Function		This includes planning, licencing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council?
Planning	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?* ➢ *Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?* ➢ *Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?* ➢ *Will executive members serve on the planning committees?* ➢ *What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?*
	Analysis	Prior to April 2023, the council was only responsible for county matter planning applications (including minerals and waste), now the council is also responsible for all planning decisions including major, minor and other decisions. A small percentage of planning decisions delegated to Members for determination. There is a countywide Strategic Planning Committee with 15 members. See table above for number of meetings and time commitment for Members. There are six Area Constituency Planning Committees: (each committee has 7 Members). • Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Planning Committee, • Skipton and Ripon, • Richmond (Yorks), • Selby and Ainsty, • Thirsk and Malton, • Scarborough and Whitby. Each Area Constituency Planning Committee has 12 meetings per year. The length of these meeting depends on the items on the agenda. Currently some of the Executive Members do serve on planning committees. The Development Plan Committee meets on an ad hoc basis. The role of the committee is to act as the main sounding board for the preparation of the Local Plan/ Development Plan Documents, except Neighbourhood Plans.

		North York Moors National Park and Yorkshire Dales National Park are also planning authorities in North Yorkshire and make decisions on planning in their areas.
Licensing	*Key lines of explanation*	➤ *How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?* ➤ *And what will be the time commitment for members?* ➤ *Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?* ➤ *Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?*
	Analysis	• The General Licensing and Registration Committee comprises 25 Members of the Council. Of the 25 Members, 15 of those Members will comprise the membership of the Statutory Licensing Committee. • The Statutory Licensing Sub-Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and comprises of 3 Members. • The General Licensing and Registration Sub- Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and is comprised of 3 Members. • The General Licensing and Registration Committee shall have a list of named substitute Members. Those named substitutes can also be appointed to the General Licensing and Registration Sub-Committees. Substitutes must have received licensing training prior to sitting on the Committee. • The appointment of substitute Members to the Statutory Licensing Committee is not permitted and any Sub-Committee Members must be appointed from the Statutory Licensing Committee Membership. See table above for information on number of Councillors, number of meetings and time commitments.
Other Regulatory Bodies	*Key lines of explanation*	➤ *What will they be, and how many members will they require?* ➤ *Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.*
	Analysis	The following regulatory bodies support Council business: • **Audit Committee:** 10 Members, as well as substitute Members • **Standards and Governance Committee:** 10 Members • **Appeals Committee (Homes to School Transport):** 5 Members, as well as substitute Members • **Employment Appeals Committee:** 5 Members, as well as additional substitutes. *A group of about 12 Members should develop particular expertise and experience on appeals matters, but only five Members should sit on the committee at any one time. It is intended, therefore, that the Substitution Scheme should be used to vary membership of the committee in order to ensure that the expertise and experience of all Members of the committee, including all Substitute Members, is developed.* • **Chief Officers Appointments and Disciplinary Committee:** 10 Members • **Chief Officers Appointments Sub- Committee:** 10 Members

		• **Pension Fund Committee:** 10 Members • **Shareholder Committee**: 3 Members • **North Yorkshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE):** 5 Members Information on the number of meetings can be found in the table above.
External Partnerships		Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account.
	Key lines of explanation	➢ *Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?* ➢ *How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?* ➢ *What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?*
	Analysis	Councillors are appointed to the boards of a number of outside bodies, whether this be due to statutory requirement or upon request of the outside body. There are currently 111 Outside Bodies that Members are appointed to (see table above). Some of these bodies have multiple Members appointed to them (204 seats in total). The average number of appointments to an outside body per councillor is 2.29. There is a varying level of time commitments depending which Outside Bodies a Member is appointed to. The list of outside bodies is constantly under review and may be subject to change. Both the Leader and Deputy of North Yorkshire Council are Members of York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. The Leader and some of the Executive Members will need to work closely with the MCA but it is not envisaged that this will lead to a significant increase in workload at this time.

Community Leadership

The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties? The Commission also wants to see a consideration of **how the use of technology and social media by the council as a whole, and**

by councillors individually, will affect casework, community engagement and local democratic representation. Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.

Topic		Description
Community Leadership	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?* ➢ *Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?* ➢ *How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?* ➢ *Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?* ➢ *Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?* ➢ *Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making?*
	Analysis	Members said the main way they represent and engage with their electorate is through face-to-face interactions such as public meetings for example, Parish and Town Council meetings, community groups, and resident/ tenants' meetings. Due to the size of the county this does mean a lot of time is spent traveling. Members said that social media is a key platform for engaging with the electorate, especially the younger demographic. For example, by replying to comments on social media. All Members are part of one of the 6 Area Constituency Committees: • Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee (13 Members) • Richmond (Yorks) Area Constituency Committee (16 Members) • Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee (15 Members) • Selby and Ainsty (16 Members) • Skipton and Ripon (15 Members) • Thirsk and Malton (15 Members) Area Constituency Committees oversee and champion local areas, provide a forum for local issues to be raised, empower and enable delivery of Community Area Action Plans and other local priorities, and hold Division and Executive Members to account.

		Decisions may also be delegated to Area Constituency Committees.
		The geographies of Area Constituency Committees may change, however, it is not anticipated that any changes to the geographies will directly result in an increase in the workload of Councillors.
		North Yorkshire has 731 Parishes, with Members regularly attending Parish and Town Council meetings. The number of meetings Members attend depends on individual councillors and the Electoral Division they represent, some attend multiple a week and for a few hours a night. The more rural divisions can have extremely sparse populations, but small settlements can increase the number of individual community meetings that a member is expected to attend. Parish council meetings, in particular, can be extremely time consuming, with some Members associated with 15+ parishes. Meetings can often be on the same evenings, making it logistically impossible to attend all. The involvement of Members in these meetings varies, from providing updates on issues within their divisions, to being a point of contact for North Yorkshire Council.
		The council has set up five Community Partnerships to bring together local councillors, public sector agencies, communities and businesses to get things done in their local area. This model is currently being trialled, with the aim of rolling it out across North Yorkshire.
		The council also has eight Member Champions. Member Champions are elected Members who act as an advocate/ spokesperson for a specific area of the Council's business. The main responsibility of each Champion is to encourage communication and positive action over the issue they represent. There are currently Member's Champions for: • Young People • Older people • Climate change • Armed Forces • Digital • Flooding • Cycling/ Active Travel • Road Safety
Casework	*Key lines of explanation*	➢ *How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?* ➢ *What support do members receive?* ➢ *How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?*

		➢ *In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?*
	Analysis	Members are expected to undertake casework as part of their overall duties as a councillor. Members sometimes contact Council officers for further information on a particular subject, or the relevant Executive Member, Committee chair or their political groups. Members do not receive any direct day-to-day support from Democratic Services on their casework. As part of the establishment of the new Council, work is underway to review the support that Members need as they go about their business in their Electoral Divisions. Part of this includes training and development opportunities. Members explained that while newsletters were historically used for interacting with residents, most communication is now online, including communication with Parish Councils. There has also been an increase in communication via email. Members also said that local elections were now promoted more through social media, which will continue going forward. However, Members said that the use of digital platforms and social media has not reduced their workload, as most meetings, events, activities still take place face to face. Currently, managing and maintaining social media platforms also creates additional work, however, long-term this has benefits in reaching larger numbers of people. The Council has a one front door approach to customer service. Customers access support and services via one telephone number, one website, one customer service team, customer queries are then dealt with by the relevant Officer.

Other Issues

Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

The Renumeration panel recommended a pay allowance increase for councillors, this shows that councillors are working effectively and efficiently. Therefore, reducing the number of councillors would be a contradictory message.

Summary

In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the governance arrangements and number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future.

Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

North Yorkshire Council proposes that number of councillors is 89.

The following evidence supports this:
- The large geography of North Yorkshire and the rural nature of the county. 35% of the population live in either super sparse or sparce areas of North Yorkshire. This accounts for 98% of the area of the authority. Sparsely and super-sparsely populated communities present a challenge in terms of inclusion and community sustainability, as well as service delivery. Therefore, there is a need for some decision making to be locality based and there must, therefore, be enough councillors to ensure appropriate representation at a locality level. It was recognised that there are currently no plans to significantly alter the approach to committees, and that arrangements have generally worked well since vesting day of the new authority.
- In North Yorkshire the average number of electors per councillor is 5,374. North Yorkshire compares favourably in comparison to other large rural Unitary Authorities. Cornwall has a ratio of 4,994 registered electors per councillor. Cumberland, another new unitary has a ratio of 4,569 registered electors per councillor. In general terms County Councils have higher levels of electors per Councillor. The average number of registered electorate per councillor for County Councils and Unitary Authorities is 4,852.
- The workload of councillors has not reduced, for most councillors this is a full-time commitment, and they do not have time to have other full-time jobs. The Renumeration panel recommended an increased pay allowance for the councillors, this shows that people are working effectively and efficiently, therefore, significantly reducing the number of councillors would be a contradictory message. The Leader and Executive members have significant time commitments and are part of the day-to-day functioning of the Council.
- The varied geography means that some more urban divisions are small in area, but with significant amounts of casework around regeneration, development and transport. Conversely, the more rural divisions can have extremely sparse populations, but small settlements can increase the number of individual community meetings that a member is expected to attend. Parish council meetings, in particular, can be extremely time consuming, with some Members associated with 15+ parishes. Meetings can often be on the same evenings, making it logistically impossible to attend all.
- Members also provide local leadership and sit on Area Constituency Committees, Community Partnerships as well as community groups. Councillors are also appointed to a number of Outside Bodies, with the time commitment varying from Councillor to Councillor.

The Member Working Group considered a range of possible numbers of councillors, ranging from significant reductions to significant increases.

It was concluded that a large reduction in the number of Councillors would:
- Risk increasing the workload beyond a reasonable amount. This could create a barrier for any potential candidate from maintaining employment alongside being a councillor, which might reduce the opportunities for younger people to stand for

elected office. It was also noted that creating a larger workload could prevent those with caring responsibilities from balancing the different responsibilities.

- Create much larger divisions. This would be problematic for sparsely-populated rural areas, as to achieve electoral equality, the geographical area would need to be huge, and this wouldn't be conducive to Members being visible and available to communities. It could make it logistically impossible to attend face-to-face meetings given the travel time required.
- Save money from Member allowances and expenses, but that these savings would likely be reduced by the need for greater officer support to deal with casework and the increased workload in general.

It was concluded that a large increase in the number of Councillors would:
- Significantly increase the costs of Member allowances and expenses.
- Run counter to the principles of the LGR Case for Change, providing reduced efficiency. At a time where residents are struggling with the Cost of living and local government is under increasing financial pressure, and the Council is already undertaking a programme of transformation to help make savings and efficiencies, it is not the time to increase number of councillors significantly which would result in paying additional allowances to new Members.
- Risk creating more Members than are needed for the operations of the authority, with the possibility of less agility in decision-making and more challenge in reaching consensus on issues.

However, a small reduction in the number of Councillors from 90 to 89 would:
- Have limited impact on workload or division sizes overall.
- Would marginally reduce costs from Member allowances and expenses.

Therefore, a council size of 89 councillors in the future would ensure that there is fair representation for the electorate in North Yorkshire and allow councillors to continue to undertake effective decision making, scrutinise decisions and provide effective community leadership.

Number of Registered Electors per Councillor

Ward Name	No. of Registered Electors	No. of Councillors	Registered Electors per Councillor	Variance from average ratio (5364 electors)
Wathvale & Bishop Monkton	7283	1	7,283	35.78%
Sherburn In Elmet	6802	1	6,802	26.81%
Monk Fryston & South Milford	6708	1	6,708	25.06%
Boroughbridge & Claro	6534	1	6,534	21.81%
High Harrogate & Kingsley	6532	1	6,532	21.77%
Harlow & St Georges	6480	1	6,480	20.81%
Knaresborough East	6471	1	6,471	20.64%
Killinghall, Hampsthwaite & Saltergate	6464	1	6,464	20.51%
Richmond	6442	1	6,442	20.10%
Ripon Ure Bank & Spa	6426	1	6,426	19.80%
North Richmondshire	6405	1	6,405	19.41%
Knaresborough West	6402	1	6,402	19.35%
Ripon Minster & Moorside	6367	1	6,367	18.70%
Sowerby & Topcliffe	6324	1	6,324	17.90%
Oatlands & Pannal	6323	1	6,323	17.88%
Falsgrave & Stepney	6233	1	6,233	16.20%
Pickering	6198	1	6,198	15.55%
Valley Gardens & Central Harrogate	6195	1	6,195	15.49%
Bentham & Ingleton	6191	1	6,191	15.42%
Masham & Fountains	6177	1	6,177	15.16%
Glusburn, Cross Hills & Sutton-in-Craven	6156	1	6,156	14.77%
Stray, Woodlands & Hookstone	6103	1	6,103	13.78%
Fairfax & Starbeck	6039	1	6,039	12.58%
Norton	6027	1	6,027	12.36%
Whitby West	5983	1	5,983	11.54%
Hipswell & Colburn	5977	1	5,977	11.43%
Weaponness & Ramshill	5960	1	5,960	11.11%
Filey	5878	1	5,878	9.58%
Bilton & Nidd Gorge	5873	1	5,873	9.49%
Bilton Grange & New Park	5872	1	5,872	9.47%
Coppice Valley & Duchy	5872	1	5,872	9.47%
Tadcaster	5794	1	5,794	8.02%
Thornton Dale & Wolds	5767	1	5,767	7.51%
Selby East	5736	1	5,736	6.94%
Easingwold	5725	1	5,725	6.73%
Skipton East & South	5687	1	5,687	6.02%
Sheriff Hutton & Derwent	5580	1	5,580	4.03%

Thirsk	5560	1	5,560	3.65%
Northallerton North & Brompton	5542	1	5,542	3.32%
Huby & Tollerton	5522	1	5,522	2.95%
Esk Valley & Coast	5503	1	5,503	2.59%
Hillside & Raskelf	5499	1	5,499	2.52%
Northstead	5477	1	5,477	2.11%
Castle	5467	1	5,467	1.92%
Kirkbymoorside & Dales	5411	1	5,411	0.88%
Washburn & Birstwith	5350	1	5,350	-0.26%
Thorpe Willoughby & Hambleton	5317	1	5,317	-0.88%
Morton-on-Swale & Appleton Wiske	5304	1	5,304	-1.12%
Spofforth with Lower Wharfedale & Tockwith	5235	1	5,235	-2.40%
Woodlands	5188	1	5,188	-3.28%
Bedale	5142	1	5,142	-4.14%
Stokesley	5131	1	5,131	-4.34%
Hunmanby & Sherburn	5115	1	5,115	-4.64%
Northallerton South	5089	1	5,089	-5.13%
Hutton Rudby & Osmotherley	5085	1	5,085	-5.20%
Aire Valley	4992	1	4,992	-6.94%
Eastfield	4988	1	4,988	-7.01%
Brayton & Barlow	4962	1	4,962	-7.49%
Osgoldcross	4933	1	4,933	-8.04%
Malton	4928	1	4,928	-8.13%
Appleton Roebuck & Church Fenton	4914	1	4,914	-8.39%
Newby	4886	1	4,886	-8.91%
Catterick Village & Brompton-on-Swale	4883	1	4,883	-8.97%
Camblesforth & Carlton	4880	1	4,880	-9.02%
Romanby	4856	1	4,856	-9.47%
Skipton North & Embsay-with-Eastby	4817	1	4,817	-10.20%
Skipton West & West Craven	4805	1	4,805	-10.42%
Scalby & the Coast	4772	1	4,772	-11.04%
Ouseburn	4681	1	4,681	-12.73%
Aiskew & Leeming	4672	1	4,672	-12.90%
Leyburn & Middleham	4655	1	4,655	-13.22%
Settle & Penyghent	4630	1	4,630	-13.68%
Barlby & Riccall	4625	1	4,625	-13.78%
Great Ayton	4522	1	4,522	-15.70%
Upper Dales	4520	1	4,520	-15.73%
Cliffe & North Duffield	4451	1	4,451	-17.02%
Pateley Bridge & Nidderdale	4431	1	4,431	-17.39%
Cawood & Escrick	4430	1	4,430	-17.41%
Scotton & Lower Wensleydale	4349	1	4,349	-18.92%
Amotherby & Ampleforth	4293	1	4,293	-19.97%
Mid Craven	4283	1	4,283	-20.15%
Whitby Streonshalh	4221	1	4,221	-21.31%

Helmsley & Sinnington	4206	1	4,206	-21.59%
Derwent Valley & Moor	4198	1	4,198	-21.74%
Wharfedale	4015	1	4,015	-25.15%
Danby & Mulgrave	3926	1	3,926	-26.81%
Selby West	7631	1	3,815	-28.88%
Seamer	3777	1	3,777	-29.59%
Cayton	3711	1	3,711	-30.82%
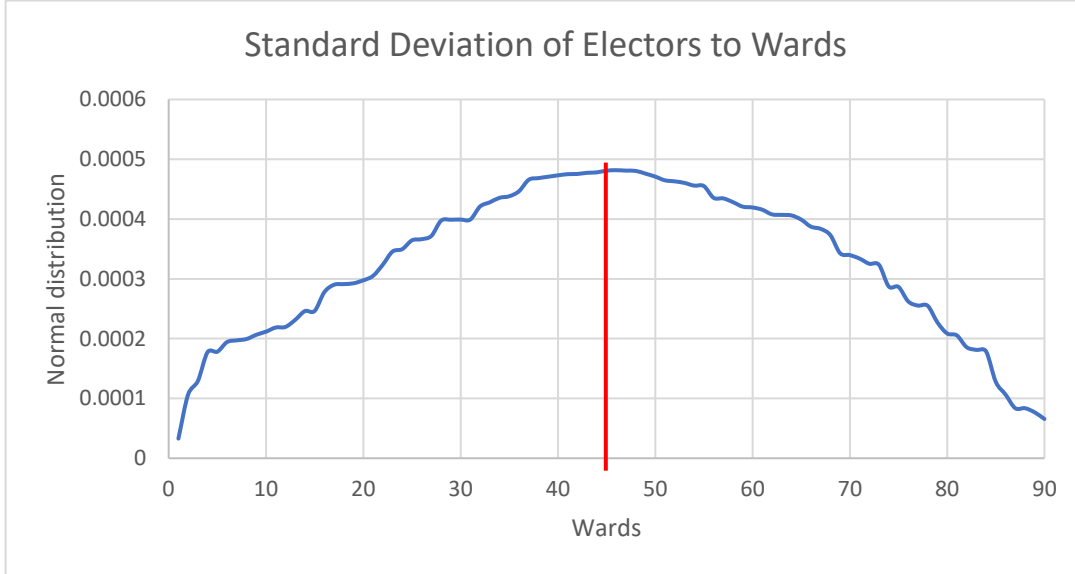
The above chart is the standard deviation profile of electors to wards. Ranging from 7283 to 3711 electors per councillor, the spread of councillors conforms to the normal distribution with the majority of wards (51) falling within 1 standard deviation of the mean of 5364.

The second graph below shows the spread of wards over 10% intervals. There are only 2 wards that are +/- 30% of the mean. Wathvale & Bishop Monkton with 7283 electors and Cayton with 3711 electors
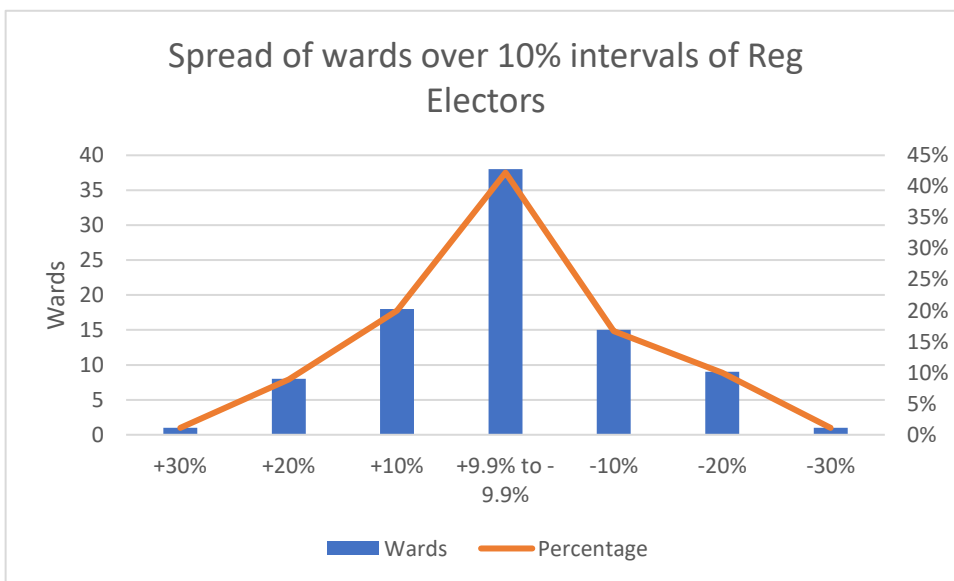
Annex 2

Number of Registered Electors per Councillor (2023)

Type	County/ Unitary council	Control	Councillors	Reg Electors 2023	Reg Electors per Councillor
County	Essex	Leader and cabinet	75	1121312	14951
County	Kent	Leader and cabinet	81	1142773	14108
County	Hampshire	Leader and cabinet	78	1059798	13587
County	Hertfordshire	Leader and cabinet	78	874716	11214
County	Lancashire	Leader and cabinet	84	917889	10927
County	Surrey	Leader and cabinet	81	882083	10890
County	Staffordshire	Leader and cabinet	62	667255	10762
County	Devon	Leader and cabinet	60	625899	10432
County	Leicestershire	Leader and cabinet	55	540229	9822
County	Derbyshire	Leader and cabinet	64	621113	9705
County	West Sussex	Leader and cabinet	70	667422	9535
County	Nottinghamshire	Leader and cabinet	66	623229	9443
County	Gloucestershire	Leader and cabinet	53	492714	9296
County	Norfolk	Leader and cabinet	84	707333	8421

County	East Sussex	Leader and cabinet	50	420170	8403
County	Oxfordshire	Leader and cabinet	63	524639	8328
County	Lincolnshire	Leader and cabinet	70	571092	8158
County	Cambridgeshire	Leader and cabinet	61	493444	8089
County	Worcestershire	Leader and cabinet	57	459044	8053
County	Warwickshire	Leader and cabinet	57	448861	7875
County	Suffolk	Leader and cabinet	75	577667	7702
Unitary	North Yorkshire	Leader and cabinet	90	483617	5374
Unitary	Cornwall	Leader and cabinet	87	434438	4994
Unitary	Bristol	Mayor and cabinet	70	323581	4623
Unitary	Cumberland	Leader and cabinet	46	210172	4569
Unitary	Leicester	Mayor and cabinet	54	244503	4528
Unitary	Stoke-on-Trent		44	177791	4041
Unitary	Somerset		110	444093	4037
Unitary	East Riding of Yorkshire		67	269767	4026
Unitary	Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole		76	297295	3912
Unitary	Wiltshire		98	382258	3901
Unitary	Cheshire East	Committee system	82	312765	3814
Unitary	Northumberland	Leader and cabinet	67	252806	3773

Unitary	Cheshire West and Chester	Leader and cabinet	70	263663	3767
Unitary	Brighton & Hove		54	199015	3685
Unitary	Nottingham		55	199796	3633
Unitary	Dorset		82	295142	3599
Unitary	Central Bedfordshire		63	223722	3551
Unitary	Milton Keynes		57	202030	3544
Unitary	Derby		51	179841	3526
Unitary	Portsmouth		42	147377	3509
Unitary	Medway		59	206075	3493
Unitary	Plymouth		57	196496	3447
Unitary	North Northamptonshire	Leader and cabinet	78	268606	3444
Unitary	Shropshire	Leader and cabinet	74	249845	3376
Unitary	Bedford	Mayor and cabinet	40	134042	3351
Unitary	North Somerset		50	166913	3338
Unitary	York		47	152989	3255
Unitary	West Northamptonshire	Leader and cabinet	93	298873	3214
Unitary	Kingston upon Hull		57	181905	3191
Unitary	Southampton		51	161079	3158
Unitary	South Gloucestershire		70	219311	3133
Unitary	Durham	Leader and cabinet	126	388130	3080
Unitary	Luton		48	146681	3056
Unitary	North Lincolnshire		43	130239	3029
Unitary	Swindon		57	166451	2920
Unitary	Torbay		36	103231	2868
Unitary	Isle of Wight	Leader and cabinet	39	110328	2829
Unitary	Buckinghamshire	Leader and cabinet	147	415196	2824
Unitary	West Berkshire		43	120232	2796
Unitary	Herefordshire		53	147935	2791
Unitary	North East Lincolnshire		42	116840	2782

Unitary	Warrington	Leader and cabinet	58	160602	2769
Unitary	Westmorland and Furness	Leader and cabinet	65	176452	2715
Unitary	Windsor and Maidenhead		41	109549	2672
Unitary	Stockton-on-Tees		56	143732	2567
Unitary	Southend-on-Sea		51	130094	2551
Unitary	Thurrock		49	122656	2503
Unitary	Telford and Wrekin		54	133544	2473
Unitary	Wokingham		54	132197	2448
Unitary	Reading		48	117436	2447
Unitary	Blackpool	Leader and cabinet	42	102360	2437
Unitary	Peterborough		60	144408	2407
Unitary	Slough		42	100940	2403
Unitary	Bath and North East Somerset		59	136962	2321
Unitary	Bracknell Forest		41	91938	2242
Unitary	Middlesbrough	Mayor and cabinet	46	98612	2144
Unitary	Blackburn with Darwen	Leader and cabinet	51	103989	2039
Unitary	Hartlepool		36	70434	1957
Unitary	Halton	Leader and cabinet	54	94340	1747
Unitary	Redcar & Cleveland		59	101720	1724
Unitary	Darlington		50	79641	1593
Unitary	Rutland		27	29768	1103
				Average	4852
				Median	3493