

Agenda

Executive Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 25 June 2024 at 6:30 pm
Venue:	Town Hall, St Annes, FY8 1LW
Committee members:	Councillor Karen Buckley (Chairman) Councillor Richard Redcliffe (Vice-Chairman) Councillors Tim Armit, Peter Collins, Chris Dixon, Kelly Farrington, Ellie Gaunt, Paul Hodgson, Matthew Lee, Michelle Morris, Jayne Nixon, Tommy Threlfall.

Public Platform

To hear representations from members of the public in accordance with Article 15 of the Constitution.

To register to speak under Public Platform: see [Public Speaking at Council Meetings](#).

	PROCEDURAL ITEMS:	PAGE
1	Declarations of Interest: Declarations of interest, and the responsibility for declaring the same, are matters for elected members. Members are able to obtain advice, in writing, in advance of meetings. This should only be sought via the Council's Monitoring Officer. However, it should be noted that no advice on interests sought less than one working day prior to any meeting will be provided.	1
2	Substitute Members: Details of any substitute members notified in accordance with council procedure rule 23(c).	1
3	Confirmation of Minutes: To confirm the minutes, as previously circulated, of the meeting held on 23 May 2024 as a correct record.	1
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Contact: Katharine McDonnell - Telephone: (01253) 658550 – Email: democracy@fylde.gov.uk

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DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND HEAD OF GOVERNANCE	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	4

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE – PARISHING OF ANSDELL AND LYTHAM

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

<p>RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER</p> <p>This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Ellie Gaunt.</p>

<p>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT</p> <p>Legislation allows the council to review the pattern of community governance in its area. A review can recommend the establishment or abolition of parish councils, re-align boundaries between them and change the number of parish councillors.</p> <p>A community governance review was undertaken in 2022, with terms of reference comprising the whole of the council’s district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell. Amongst other things, the review recommended establishing parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.</p> <p>Members felt that there needed to be a more wide-ranging consultation within the localities concerned prior to a decision being reached with regard to the elements relating to Ansdell and Lytham.</p> <p>A further consultation has now taken place and this report outlines the consultation process and its outcomes.</p> <p>It light of this the Executive Committee is invited to consider this matter with a view to making recommendations on this matter. The Executive Committee is recommended to adopt the recommendations of the community governance review and establish parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.</p>

<p>RECOVERABILITY</p> <p>This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.</p>

<p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To recommend to council that it adopts and implements the recommendations of the community governance review to establish parish councils for each of the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham. To recommend to council that it approves an order establishing the new parishes of Ansdell and Lytham includes the provisions for interim councillors. To recommend to council one of the Band D precept options set out in Table 1 of the report (which will in turn generate the resultant estimated precepts for the new parishes as shown in the table), or any other Band D precept as the committee feels is appropriate.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. On 28 September 2020 the former Finance and Democracy Committee recommended that a review be undertaken of the pattern of community governance across the borough, and in doing so asked that initial attention be given to the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.
2. As Fylde was then undergoing a Local Government Boundary Commission review of borough electoral arrangements, Council agreed on 19 October 2020 that the timetable for the community governance review would be moved back, so that the review started on completion of the Boundary Commission review. A consultation subsequently took place with borough councillors whose wards would be affected by proposed changes together with an online questionnaire for residents which was publicised through social media and other council communications channels. The outcome was recommendations for Parish Councils to be established in both Ansdell and Lytham by way of a community governance review and the details regarding this are attached at **Appendix 1**. However, members felt that as the on-line survey had a response rate of just below 100 that a more-wide ranging consultation was required to encourage broader views prior to a decision being reached.
3. A second consultation therefore took place during March and April of this year over a six-week period and the extent, and outcome, of this consultation is set out in **Appendix 2**. For completeness, a copy of the questionnaire used in the consultation is attached at **Appendix 3**.
4. A community governance review is a review of the pattern of parishes and parish councils in the whole or part of a district. The legal framework for reviews is set out in part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The terms of reference for the review in Fylde were to consider whether to create a parish council or councils to cover the unparished area of the district, and the outcome of the most recent consultation supports the outcomes of the original community governance review to establish parishes in the unparished areas of Ansdell and Lytham.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

5. The review has so far consisted of four stages: initiation, stakeholder and community consultation x 2, and writing the report and recommendations. The final stage, if the recommendations are accepted, would be implementation.
6. The most recent consultation built on the earlier consultation conducted in 2022 (appendix 2). Well over a thousand local people took part in the second consultation. A letter informing residents of the consultation was sent to all households in the areas asking them to take part in the consultation via an online survey, paper survey or by contacting the council directly. Four in-person community events were held in Ansdell and Lytham. 1,165 survey responses were received and over 200 people engaged at the in-person events. 98 per cent of the survey responses were from residents, with an even mix from the wards covering the proposed parished areas. 78 per cent of survey respondents would prefer some form of parish council across Ansdell and Lytham and overall, more people were in favour of creating two parish councils. As a result, this report makes recommendations to establish parish councils for both Ansdell and Lytham.
 - [Proposal A1](#): A new parish council for Ansdell.
 - [Proposal L1](#): A new parish council for Lytham.
7. The Executive Committee is now asked to consider making formal recommendations implement the recommendations of the earlier community governance review to create parishes in Ansdell and Lytham and to approve the necessary formalities associated with this.

IMPLEMENTATION

8. If the Council agrees to create parishes in both Ansdell and Lytham, these would be implemented by an order. The order would be based on the relevant parts of the [model community governance reorganisation order](#) published by the Government.
9. The order would provide for the two new parishes to come into existence on 1 April 2025, and for elections to be held on 1st May 2025. Subsequent elections would be held in May 2027 and then every fourth year. This is the same pattern of elections as for other parish councils in the borough. In the short period between the councils coming into existence and the newly elected councillors coming into office, the order would provide for the borough councillors for the area covered by each new parish to be interim councillors¹.
10. The order would not automatically transfer any property or assets to the new parish councils, except for allotments. Any property or asset transfer would need to be negotiated and agreed between the borough council and the parish council concerned, after parish councillors have been elected.
11. District councils and parish councils are both allotment authorities. But a district council cannot exercise its powers as an allotment authority in an area that has a parish council². Consequently, responsibility for the allotments at Mythop Road and Moss Hall Lane would transfer³ to the new Lytham and Ansdell parish councils when the new councils are established.
12. 4,661 properties will be created into the new Lytham parish and the special expenses will continue to be charged in addition to the new parish precept. 4,385 properties will be created into a Ansdell parish and special expenses will continue to be charged in addition to the new parish precept.
13. The Revenues and Benefits Shared Service has advised the anticipated systems costs for this work, provided by Capita, will be chargeable. Costs will be sought from Capita and will be shared at the meeting if available. However, these costs are likely to run to several thousand pounds. There will also be the need to buy consultancy days for stationery changes and these costs are estimated to be circa £6,000.
14. The Revenues and Benefits Service also outlines that this is not an insignificant amount of work, and it is likely to impact on the timing of the main council tax billing process for 2025/26. As a result the service may have to reschedule other planned work possibly until the following year. There may also be additional overtime costs to undertake manual work required prior to any system changes.

FINANCIAL PROVISION

15. Parish councils are financed by a parish precept, which is collected by the borough council as part of the council tax in the relevant parish area. The parish council decides on the amount of the precept which the borough council then collects and passes on to the parish council. Because any new parish councils would not be in existence in time to decide on their precepts for 2025/26, legislation⁴ provides for the borough council to anticipate a precept.
16. The amount of the anticipated precept would be set out in the order establishing the new parish councils. The council tax calculation for each newly-parished area would treat the anticipated precept as if it were a precept issued by the new parish council. Detailed regulations provide for the transfer of the "precepted" funds to the new parish council, for the parish council to issue a precept by October (2025) of an amount not more than the anticipated precept, and for consequential adjustments.
17. It is proposed that the most appropriate town/parish precept upon which to base an estimated precept for the new parishes is St Annes. This is because St Annes is covered by the special expenses charges for open spaces maintenance just like the currently un-parished area of Lytham and Ansdell. In all other parishes in the borough

¹ The borough councillors for the wards of Lytham East and Lytham West would be the interim councillors for Lytham Parish Council and the borough councillors for the wards of Ansdell and Fairhaven and Park would be the interim councillors for Ansdell Parish Council.

² See paragraph 9 of schedule 29 to the Local Government Act 1972

³ In practice, the borough council would continue to manage the allotments on behalf of the parish councils until the parish councils put in place their own arrangements.

⁴ See the Local Government Finance (New Parishes) (England) Regulations 2008

the charge for open spaces maintenance is included within their precept, so there would be an element of doubling-up if any other parish precept was to be used.

18. St Annes Town Council has set the following precepts in recent years (band D figures):

- 2021/22 £22.64
- 2022/23 £23.58
- 2023/24 £24.73
- 2024/25 £37.03

19. The actual total precept for each of the new parishes can only be established once the tax base for the 2025/26 financial year has been confirmed in December 2024. In the absence of actual tax base data for the two new areas for 2025/26, the following table shows INDICATIVE ESTIMATES of the total precept receivable by each of the two new parishes based on the respective number of properties on the electoral roll for the areas of Lytham and Ansdell in June 2024:

Table 1: INDICATIVE PRECEPTS FOR NEW PARISHES BASED ON ST ANNES BAND D PRECEPT FOR THE LAST 4 YEARS AND THE NUMBER OF PROPERTIES ON THE ELECTORAL ROLL IN JUNE 2024:

					ESTIMATED SPLIT*	
	Year	St Annes Town Council Band D Precept	Lytham and Ansdell Tax Base for the current year (2024/25)	Estimated Total Precept Receivable By the New Parishes 2025/26	Estimated Lytham Parish Precept 2025/26	Estimated Ansdell Parish Precept 2025/26
OPTION 1	2021/22	£22.64	7,747	£175,392	£90,372	£85,020
OPTION 2	2022/23	£23.58	7,747	£182,674	£94,124	£88,550
OPTION 3	2023/24	£24.73	7,747	£191,583	£98,714	£92,869
OPTION 4	2024/25	£37.03	7,747	£286,871	£147,812	£139,059

* The estimated split between the two new parishes has been calculated based on the property numbers on the electoral roll as at June 2024, those being 4,661 for Lytham and 4,385 for Ansdell.

20. The committee is requested to determine which of the 4 Band D precept options in Table 1 is the most appropriate to set as the precept level for the new parish councils for the financial year 2025/26, ranging from £22.64 per property to £37.03 (at Band D), or any other precept as the committee feels is appropriate. Setting precepts for subsequent years will be a matter for each of the new parish councils to determine.

21. It should be noted that the two new parish precepts identified above will be charged **in addition to** the existing charges which are levied in these areas, including the FBC borough wide council tax charge and the FBC Special Expenses charge (which is charged primarily to pay for the costs of maintaining parks and opens spaces owned by FBC across the area of Lytham, Ansdell and St Annes).

CONCLUSION

22. The community governance review recommended the establishment of new parish councils in Lytham and Ansdell in light of the initial consultation, and the second consultation supports this. The committee is therefore asked to endorse the recommendations as set out and refer the matter to the council for its decision.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The financial provisions including the mechanism for anticipating and charging precepts for the newly established parish councils are set out in the body of the report. The new precepts will be charged in addition to existing council tax and special expenses charged in Lytham and Ansdell. There may be some software costs associated with setting up the new parishes in the council tax system and allocating the relevant properties to their respective new parishes. It is anticipated that these costs can be met from existing budget provision, together with any additional costs incurred by the Revenue and Benefits Shared Service.
Legal	The legal provisions governing community governance reviews are contained in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
Community Safety	None arising directly from this report.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no direct human rights or equalities implications.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	New parish councils will be able to contribute to achieving environmental sustainability at a local and community level.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
<p>Community Outlook Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14 May 2009: received a report recommending a community governance review of the whole of the council's district. Recommended that a review be not carried out.</p> <p>Council, 27 July 2009: Commissioned a review of the whole of the council's district.</p> <p>Council, 26 July 2010: Received the review; deferred consideration until further consultation had taken place.</p> <p>Council, 27 September 2010: Accepted the recommendation of the review to increase the council size of St Annes on the Sea Town Council; declined to go ahead with the remaining recommendations.</p> <p>Finance & Democracy Committee, 28 September 2020: Recommended a community governance review be undertaken of the whole district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell and areas of high development.</p> <p>Council, 19 October 2020: Commissioned the review with an amended indicative timetable to take into account the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's electoral review of the council.</p>

Finance and Democracy Committee, 23 June 2022:

1. To note the recommendations of the community governance review as set out in pages 33-36 of the review report for adoption and further consideration by full council.
2. To arrange a Member Briefing on the matter to allow full consideration of the impact of this review prior to a future Council meeting.

Council from 12 October 2022:

Community Governance Review

Councillor Buckley introduced the report that detailed the finding of a received community government review with terms of reference comprising the whole of the council's district with a focus on the unparished areas of Lytham and Ansdell. Councillor Buckley proposed an amendment to the recommendation stated with the report to defer the decision to establish new parishes of Ansdell and Lytham until further public consultation had been carried out.

Although the public had already been consulted, in relation to the new parishes, the number of responses returned were so low that it could not be deemed as being an effective mandate from the residents of the areas affected. A wider and more extensive public consultation was therefore proposed.

Councillor Settle seconded the revised recommendations.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED to:

1. Accept proposals BW3, E1, RW1 and WS4/1 (which is referred to as WP1 in the covering report) asset out in the community governance review report.
2. Defer a decision on proposals A1 and L1 owing to low numbers of respondents from Lytham and Ansdell.
3. Commit to a further and more extensive public consultation in relation to proposals A1 and L1, the details of such consultation to be determined by the Finance & Democracy Committee.

Community Focus Scrutiny – 12 October 2023:

Community Governance Review of Lytham & Ansdell

Further to the resolution of Council on 12 October 2022, Paul Walker (Interim Scrutiny Manger) presented the report which sought to consider a proposal to advise the Executive Committee as to how further and more extensive consultation should be undertaken in relation to proposals to establish parish councils for Ansdell and Lytham.

Ian Curtis (Head of Governance) was invited by the Chairman to further expand on the details contained in the report.

Clarification was sought about the timeline for this review. This was addressed by the

Chairman. Following consideration of this matter it was RESOLVED:

1. A Task and Finish Group be established comprising Councillors Peter Anthony, Chris Dixon, Martin Evans, Gail Goodman, Gavin Harrison and Vince Settle to undertake a spotlight review to look at how further and more extensive consultation should be undertaken in relation to community governance proposals to establish new parish councils for Ansdell and Lytham.
2. That the Task and Finish Group make recommendations direct to the Executive Committee regarding the nature and extent of such public consultation.

Executive Committee – 5 December 2023:

Community Governance Review of Lytham St Annes

Councillor Gaunt, Lead Member for Finance and Resources, introduced the report into a proposed governance review for the unparished areas of Lytham St Annes. She advised that Community Focus Scrutiny Committee had

established a task and finish group to consider the public consultation arrangements for the Community Governance review.

Councillor Settle, Chairman of Community Focus Scrutiny Committee, advised that following detailed consideration of the various options about how further, and more extensive consultation, should be undertaken in relation to community governance proposals to establish new parish councils for Lytham & Ansdell, the Executive Committee was requested to consider recommendations from the scrutiny spotlight review.

Following a brief discussion, it was RESOLVED

1. That Fylde Council runs the proposed consultation via a mix of online and paper-based surveys along with some local events and sessions to promote the consultation exercise.
2. That the Council engage external consultation support to undertake all relevant analysis and reports on the survey data including, preparing and delivering stakeholder engagement sessions, qualitative analysis and reporting, survey project management and feedback session(s). (Identified as level 4 of the options presented to the task and finish group).
3. That if practicable, the Council commission the distribution of promotion of the survey via the Council Tax 2024/25 bills (to affected households only) issued in March 2024 and if that is deemed to be impractical, this be undertaken by a stand-alone mailing exercise to all households in Lytham and Ansdell.
4. That the consultation material should include information on the powers of the new parish councils along with the likely precept which will be set for the first year.
5. That the Executive Committee agree to an indicative timetable for the proposed consultation based on a projected date of Spring 2025 for the creation of any new parish councils.
6. That the consultation exercise (estimated at an appropriate cost of £10,000) be funded from other revenue budget savings.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM

Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Community governance review report	May 2022	Appended
Community questionnaire responses	Open March – April 2022	Town Hall, Lytham St Annes
Community governance reviews: Guidance and model reorganisation order	Updated 2010	www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance
Consultation on parishing	Open March-April 2024	Attached in appendix to report

LEAD AUTHORS	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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Attached documents

Appendix One - Extract of Community Governance Review Report 2022

Appendix Two - 2024 Consultation Report

Appendix Three – Consultation Questionnaire

APPENDIX ONE

Extract of Community Governance Review Report 2022

Proposal A1: A new parish council for Ansdell and Fairhaven

1. The proposal is for the creation of a new parish of Ansdell and a new parish council for that parish.
2. The part of the urban area of Lytham St Annes not included in the parish of St Annes on the Sea is Fylde's only unparished area. The unparished area consists of the connected communities of Lytham and Ansdell (including Fairhaven). The population of Ansdell is 7,756⁵.
3. Ansdell is, by any measurement, a large enough community to be able to sustain a parish council. A parish council covering nearly 8,000 people would be one of the largest in the borough by population. A parish council for Ansdell would be "effective and convenient" in that it would be viable in terms of providing at least some local services, and easy to reach and accessible to local people⁶.
4. Ansdell is mainly Victorian in origin. It has a distinct local centre focused on Woodlands Road, serving the locality. Though undoubtedly part of the wider urban area of Lytham St Annes, Ansdell has its own distinct sense of place. The revitalised Ansdell Institute, as well as other local institutions like churches and youth organisations, underpin the local community and show that Ansdell has an identity that is complementary to, but separate from, its neighbours.
5. Despite this, without a parish council Ansdell does not have a permanent, democratically accountable voice that represents the specific interests of the community. This stands in contrast with nearly all of the rest of the borough, including neighbouring St Annes. There does not seem to be a good reason why Ansdell should be at this relative disadvantage in terms of representation. A separate parish council for Ansdell would be the best way of representing its interests and providing a focus for community life in the locality.
6. Proposals elsewhere in this community governance review recommend the formation of a new Lytham parish comprising the new borough wards of Lytham East and Lytham West (see [proposal L1](#)). The remaining unparished part of the borough would comprise the new borough

⁵ ONS Population estimates for 2020

⁶ See paragraph 63 of the DLUHC Guidance.

wards of Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park. The proposal would create a new parish of Ansdell comprising those two new borough wards⁷, except as noted in the paragraph below.

7. The exception is the most northerly part of the unparished area, bounded by Moss Sluice. That very rural area has little in common with the urban and suburban character of most of the unparished area and much more similarity to the scattered rural character of neighbouring Westby with Plumpton. This area would be excluded from the new Ansdell parish and incorporated into Westby with Plumpton (see [proposal WS4/1](#)).
8. The new Ansdell parish would therefore consist of the new borough ward of Ansdell & Fairhaven, together with the new borough ward of Park except for the part to the north of Moss Sluice.
9. A new parish council for Ansdell would represent a population of approximately 8,000. Most parish councils representing a population in the range 2,501 to 10,000 have a council size of between 9 to 16 councillors⁸. In Fylde, the closest three existing parish councils by population size to the proposed new council are:

Council	Population ⁹	Number of councillors
Kirkham	8,000	10
Freckleton	6,000	12
Bryning-with-Warton	4,000	9

10. Advice from the National Association of Local Councils, endorsed in the guidance, says that the minimum size for a parish council should be seven, with a maximum of 25. Having regard to this guidance and the size of existing parish councils in Fylde, the new parish council is recommended to have a council size of ten and to be divided into two parish wards, based on the new borough wards, with each electing five parish councillors.
11. The review must recommend a name for each new parish. The new parish could be called "Ansdell" to reflect the name of the most populous and central part of the parish where most services are concentrated. An alternative would be for the new parish to be called "Ansdell and Fairhaven". The latter would reflect the name of the railway station and acknowledge that parts of the new parish are commonly referred to as "Fairhaven" and that places like Fairhaven Lake and the Fairhaven pub are important within the new parish. On balance, the shorter name "Ansdell" is considered to be preferable. The new parish council could resolve after its

⁷ It is noted that there is an incongruity between a borough ward called "Ansdell & Fairhaven" forming part of a parish called "Ansdell", but the naming of borough wards is outside the scope of this review.

⁸ See paragraph 63 of the DLUHC Guidance

⁹ 2020 population as estimated by the Office of National Statistics, to the nearest thousand

formation to change its name if it preferred the longer name.

12. The review is also required to recommend whether a new parish council should have one of the alternative styles of “neighbourhood council”, “village council” or “community council”. The alternative styles were introduced by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. No existing parish council in Fylde has taken up any of the alternative styles. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the alternative styles have had minimal use across the country.
13. It is not proposed that the new parish council for Ansdell should have one of the alternative styles. This means that the new council would be known as “Ansdell Parish Council”¹⁰.

Proposal L1: A new parish council for Lytham

14. The proposal is for the creation of a new parish of Lytham and a new parish council for that parish.
15. The part of the urban area of Lytham St Anne’s not included in the parish of St Anne’s on the Sea is Fylde’s only unparished area. The unparished area consists of the connected communities of Lytham and Ansdell (including Fairhaven). The population of Lytham is 9,044¹¹.
16. Lytham, like Ansdell, is comfortably a large enough community to be able to sustain a parish council. A parish council covering more than 9,000 people would be the second largest in the borough by population. A parish council for Lytham would be “effective and convenient” in that it would be viable in terms of providing at least some local services, and easy to reach and accessible to local people¹².
17. People in Lytham are proud of their local area. Local groups such as the Civic Society work to preserve and maintain the built environment and heritage. Others like Park View 4U have engaged and energised the local community to provide public amenities. Campaign groups have mobilised the local population in opposition to development proposals that have been perceived as threatening to the character of the area.
18. Despite the successes and commitment of local groups and campaigns such as these, without a parish council Lytham does not have a permanent, democratically accountable voice that represents the specific interests of the town. This stands in contrast with nearly all of the rest

¹⁰ The new council could decide itself to adopt one of the alternative styles. It could also pass a resolution under section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have the status of a town and would then be known as “Ansdell Town Council”.

¹¹ ONS population estimates for 2020.

¹² See paragraph 63 of the guidance

of the borough, including St Annes, which forms part of the same contiguous urban area. There does not seem to be a good reason why Lytham should be at this relative disadvantage in terms of representation. A parish council would fill this democratic deficit.

19. The unparished area presently comprises the new borough wards of Lytham East and Lytham West, together with Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park. It is notable that, apart from a very small-scale change around Church Road, the western boundary of the new Lytham West borough ward has been left unchanged by the 2021 review of borough wards. This is unsurprising, as the boundary runs for the most part through open land dividing Lytham from surrounding communities. It is recommended that the western boundary of Lytham parish should reflect that pattern and be coterminous with the boundary of the new Lytham West borough ward, The new Lytham parish would therefore comprise the new Lytham East and Lytham West borough wards.
20. A new parish council for Lytham would represent a population of approximately 9,000. The matters discussed in [paragraphs 29](#) and 30 in relation to Ansdell apply equally to Lytham. The proposal is therefore that the new parish council should have a council size of ten, that it be divided into two parish wards, coterminous with the new borough wards and with each parish ward electing five parish councillors.
21. For the same reasons as set out in [paragraph 32](#), it is not proposed that the new parish council for Lytham should have one of the alternative styles. This means that the new council would be known as "Lytham Parish Council"¹³.

¹³ The new council could pass a resolution under section 245 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have the status of a town and would then be known as "Lytham Town Council".



Ansdell and Lytham Parish Consultation.



Consultation Report: May 2024.



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Summary.

Summary of findings (1 of 2).



Well over a thousand local people took part in a wide-ranging consultation on parishing in Lytham and Ansdell

- A letter informing residents of the consultation was sent to all households in the area inviting them to take part in the consultation via an online survey, paper surveys or by contacting the council directly
- Four in-person community events were held in Lytham and Ansdell
- **1,165** survey responses were received and over 200 people engaged at the in-person community events
- 98% of all survey responses were from local residents, with an even mix from the wards covering the proposed parish(es) area



People responding to the consultation recognise the importance of having a local identity and voice, and three quarters agree that a parish council has an important part to play in local communities

Nine in ten survey respondents agree that having a local identity, a formal local voice, the ability to influence local decisions and manage local facilities are all important.



Neighbourhood plans appear to be important to local people

85% of respondents would like any parish council(s) in Lytham and Ansdell to create a neighbourhood plan for the area.

Summary of findings (2 of 2).



78% of survey respondents would prefer some form of parish council across Lytham and Ansdell



Overall, more people are in favour of creating two parish councils

Nearly half (46%) of survey respondents prefer the option of creating two parish councils, one for Lytham and one for Ansdell, with one in five preferring one combined parish council and 12% saying they would like the areas to be 'parished' but don't mind how.



One in five do not want to see any parish councils in the Lytham and Ansdell area

Key reasons given for the preferred options

- Two parishes: people feel the two areas are very different and have different needs
- One combined parish: people feel there would be economies of scale and/or that the areas are similar
- No change: people feel parish councils are not needed and would just add another layer of bureaucracy



Although most people do not have any concerns about their preferred option, some are concerned about the cost of parish councils and who the councillors would be (e.g. would they be representative of local community)



Local stakeholders responding to the survey have similar views to residents; 9 in 10 would like to see the two areas 'parished' in some way with the majority (24 of 42; 57%) preferring the option of creating two parish councils

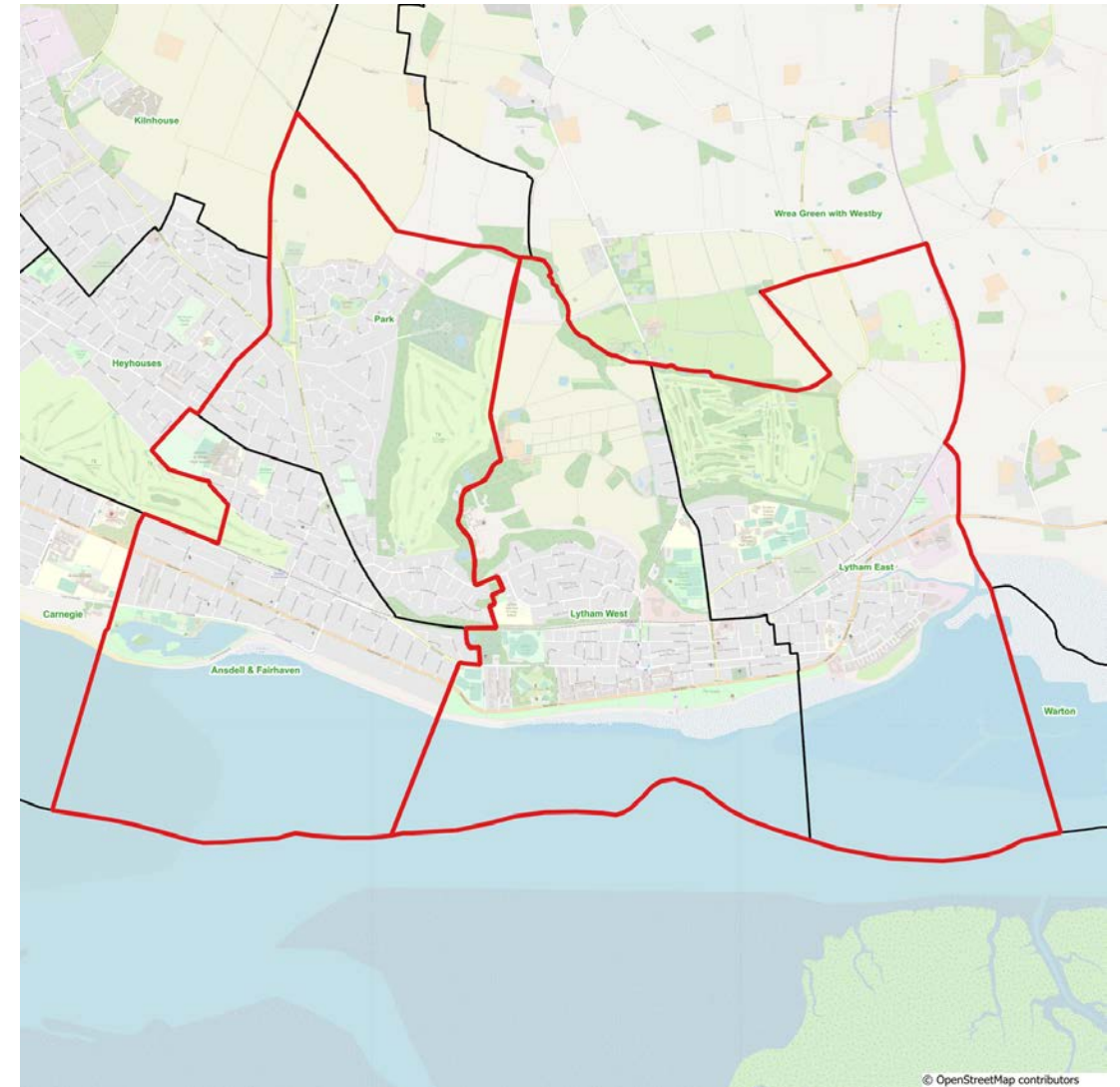
Introduction.

Introducing the consultation.



What was the consultation on?

Fylde Council reviewed existing parishes, together with the unparished areas, across the borough in early 2022 through a process called a Community Governance Review. Following on from this, the council wanted to know what local people think about proposals to establish parish councils across Ansdell and Lytham, covering the borough wards of Lytham East, Lytham West, Ansdell and Fairhaven, and most of Park. Or alternatively if they think a parish council covering both areas should be established.



The consultation approach.



A survey

An online consultation survey was available to complete between 13 March and 23 April 2024. Paper surveys were also available to complete in the Town Hall, Ansdell Library and Lytham Library. 100 paper responses were received in total.



Alternative methods of participating

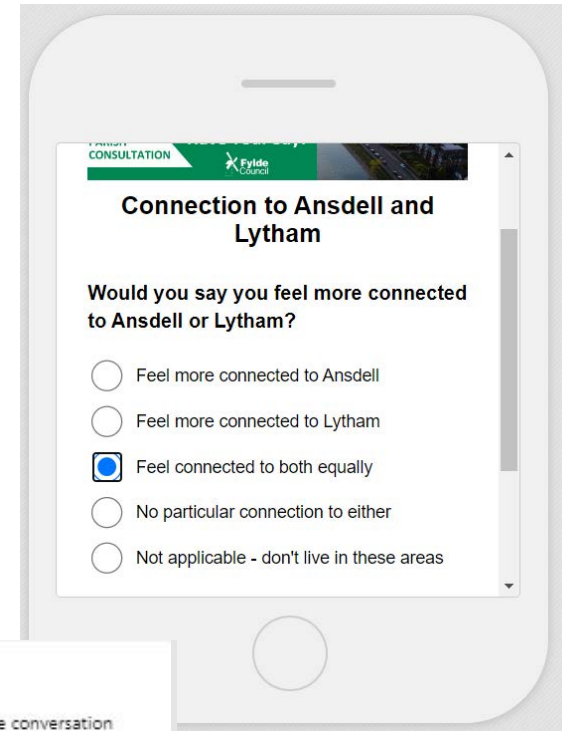
The option to respond directly to the Council via email or letter was also provided, and four in-person community events took place during March and April 2024.



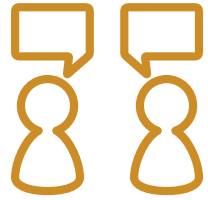
Marketing and communication

A letter informing residents of the consultation was sent to all households in the area.

In addition, the consultation was supported by wide-ranging marketing and communication, including website articles, social media posts, press releases and weekly newsletters. Over 16,000 social media users were reached by the boosted Facebook post, and across all social media posts, almost a thousand users clicked on the link to more information.



Pop-up events were held in the community.



Over 200 people engaged at in-person community events

Four 'pop-up' events took place within the community to give local people further opportunities to find out more and have their say. Council Officers and staff members engaged with over 215 local residents at the events, answering questions and encouraging residents to fill in questionnaires.

- Lytham Library/Assembly Rooms (Friday 22 March)
- Asndell Library (Tuesday 26 March)
- Lytham Square (Saturday 6 April)
- Outside Asndell Co-Op store (Saturday 13 April)

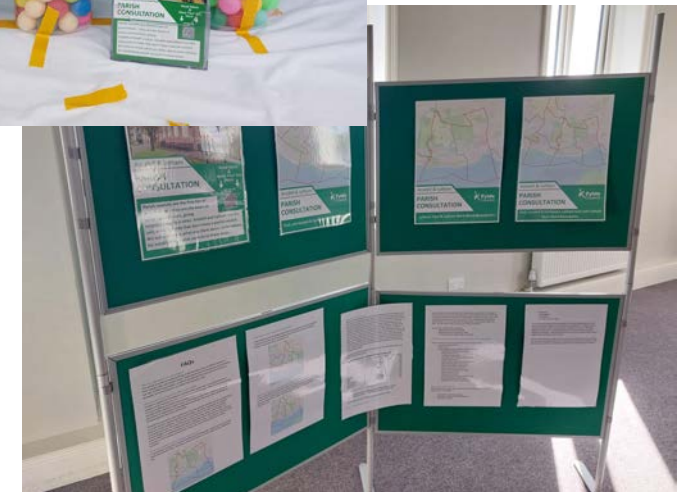


Ten responses were received via email/letter

An additional ten responses were sent directly to Fylde Council, one of which was the official response from Lytham Town Trust, which expressed the desire for the creation of two parish councils for Lytham and Asndell.

Of the remaining nine responses:

- Three were in agreement with creating parish councils
- Six indicated that they were not in agreement



1,165 survey responses were received.



98%

of survey responses were from local residents



42 responded in another capacity

- 20 respondents were representing a local business
- 14 represented a community group or organisation
- 10 were local councillors

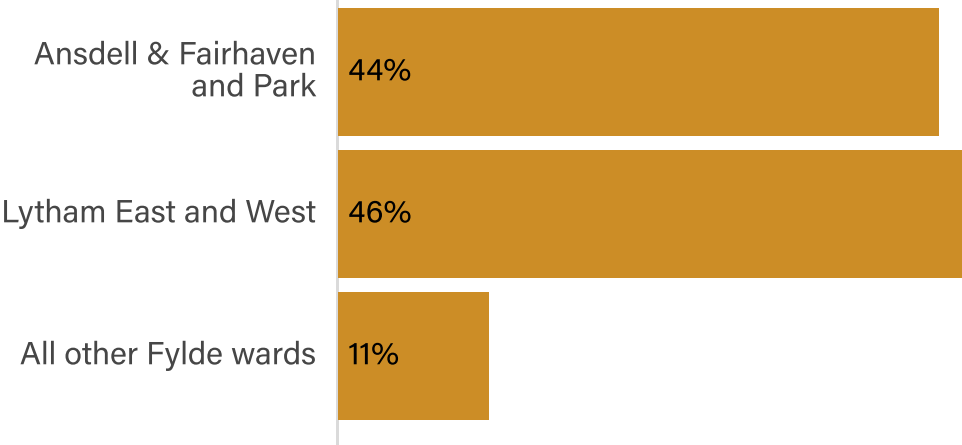
Note: two respondents were representing both a local business and a community group; of the 42 stakeholder responses, 24 are also residents of Fylde.

Where did consultation responses come from?

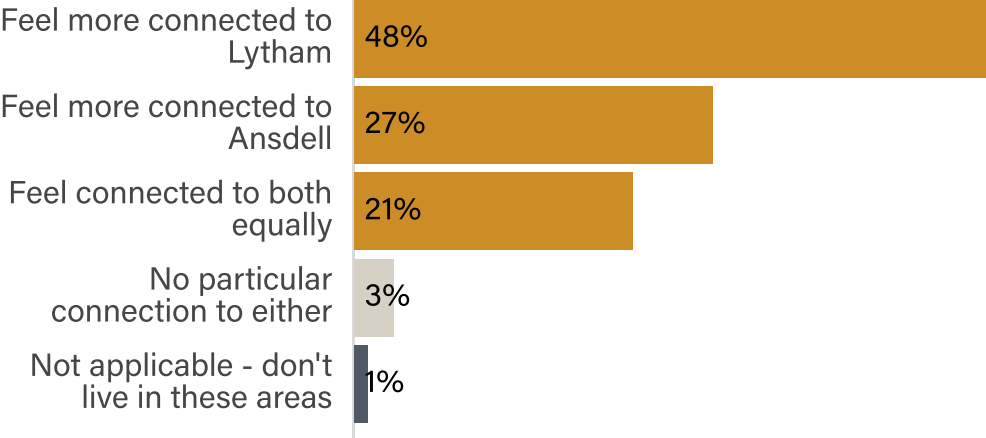


There was an even mix of responses from the wards covering the proposed parish(es) area

Based on full postcodes provided by respondents (n=978)



Overall, respondents were more likely to feel connected to Lytham



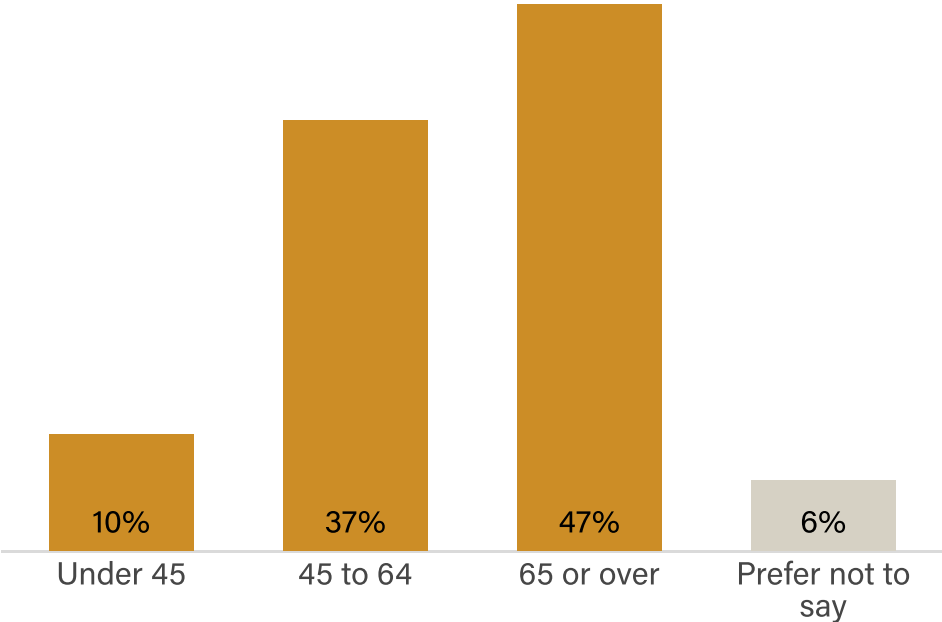
Respondents from Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park wards were more likely than those from Lytham East and West to feel connected to both equally

31% compared to 9%

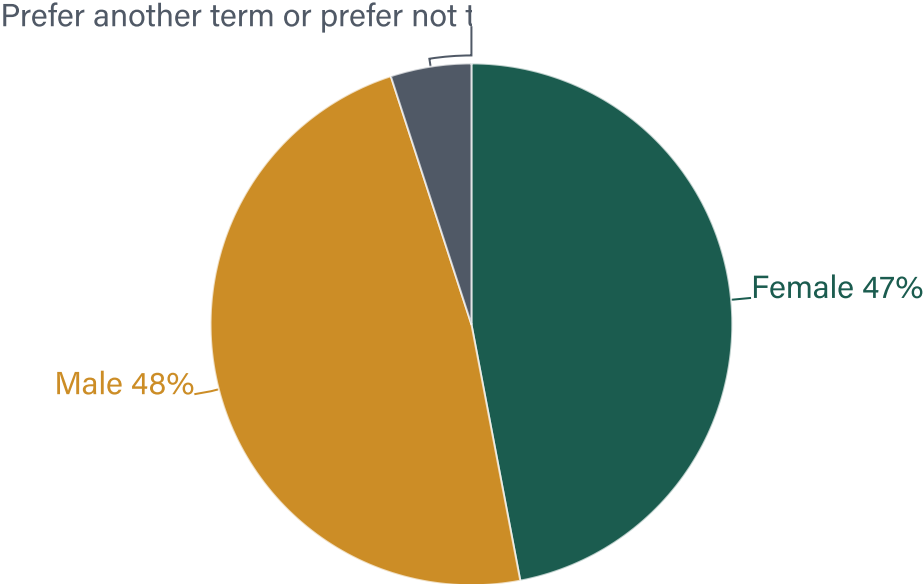
Who responded to the consultation survey?



Local residents responding to the consultation were more likely to be older



There was an even split by gender

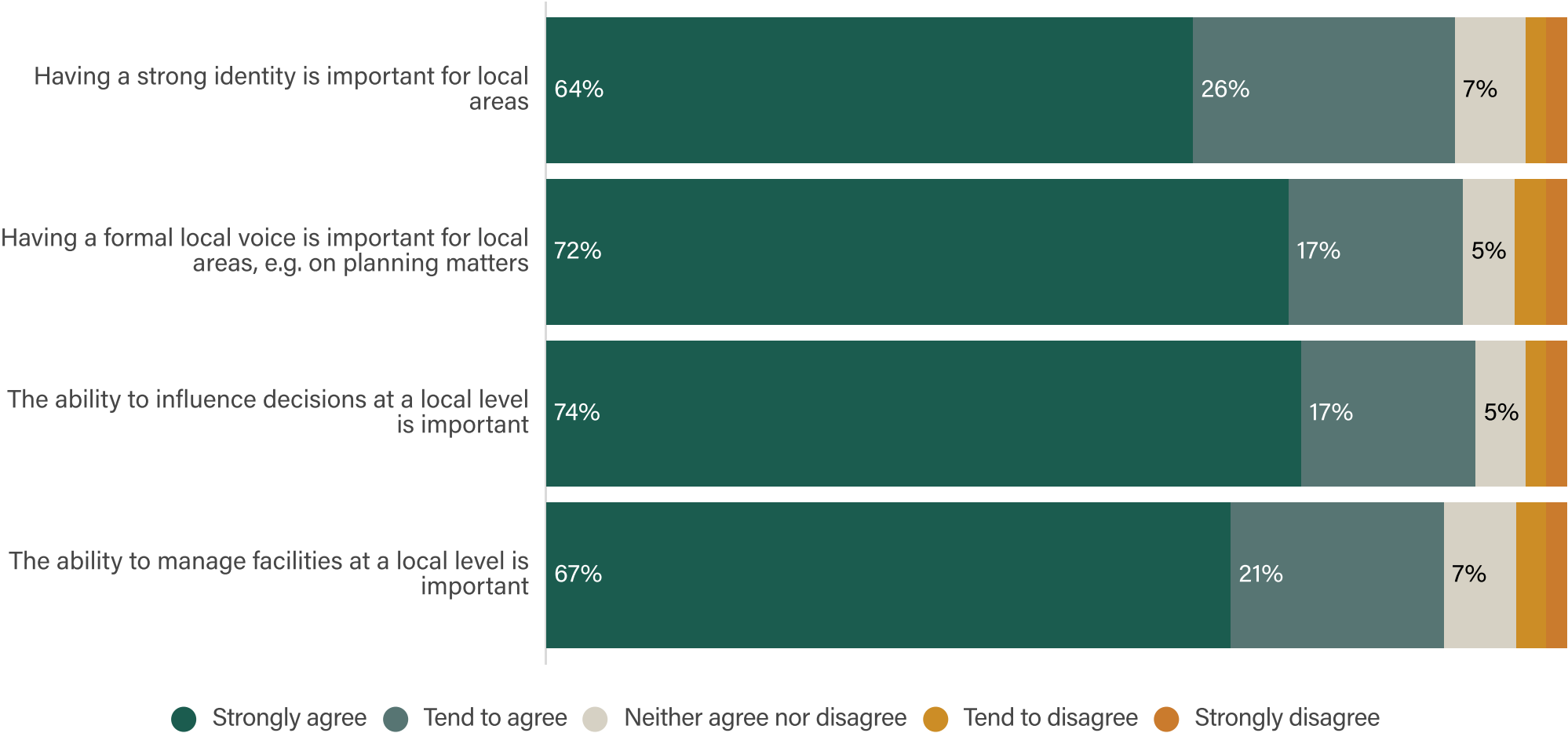


Local identity and parishing.

People recognise the importance of a local identity and voice.



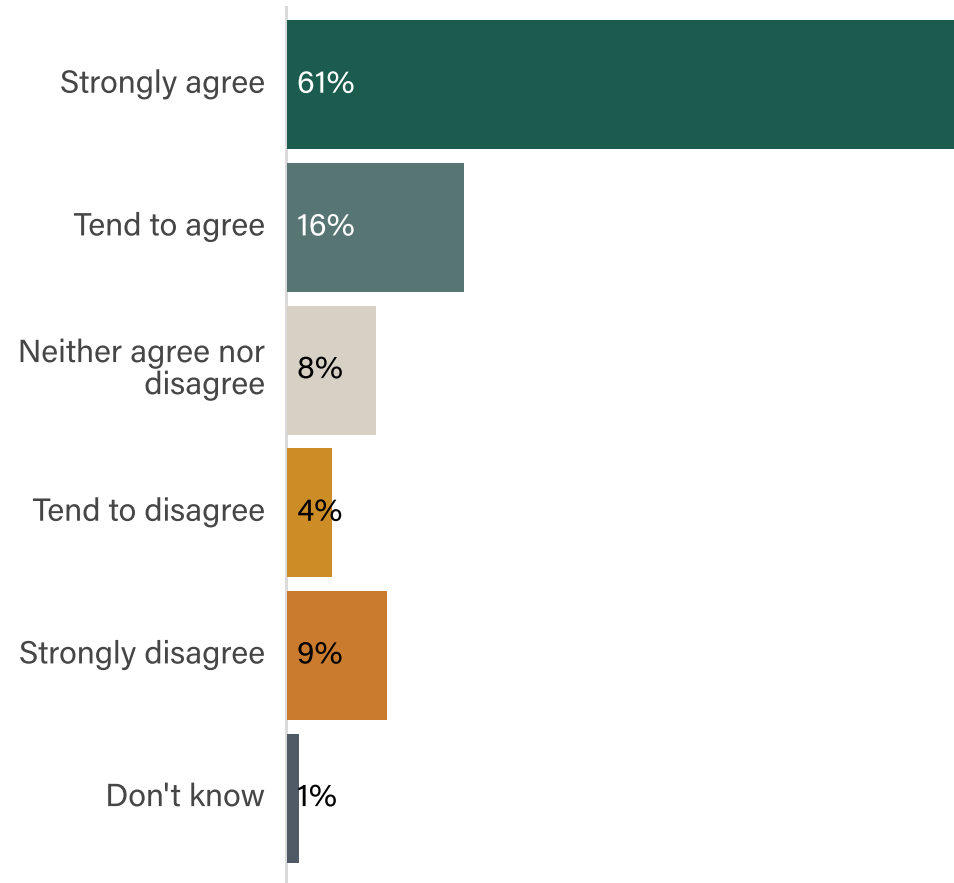
Nine in ten respondents agree that having a strong local identity, a formal local voice, the ability to influence local decisions and manage local facilities are all important



Three in four agree that a parish council has an important part to play in local communities.



Level of agreement with the statement: 'A parish council has an important role to play in local communities'



Agreement is higher in Lytham East and West

81% strongly or tend to agree, compared to 75% of respondents who live in Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park



Older respondents were also more likely to agree

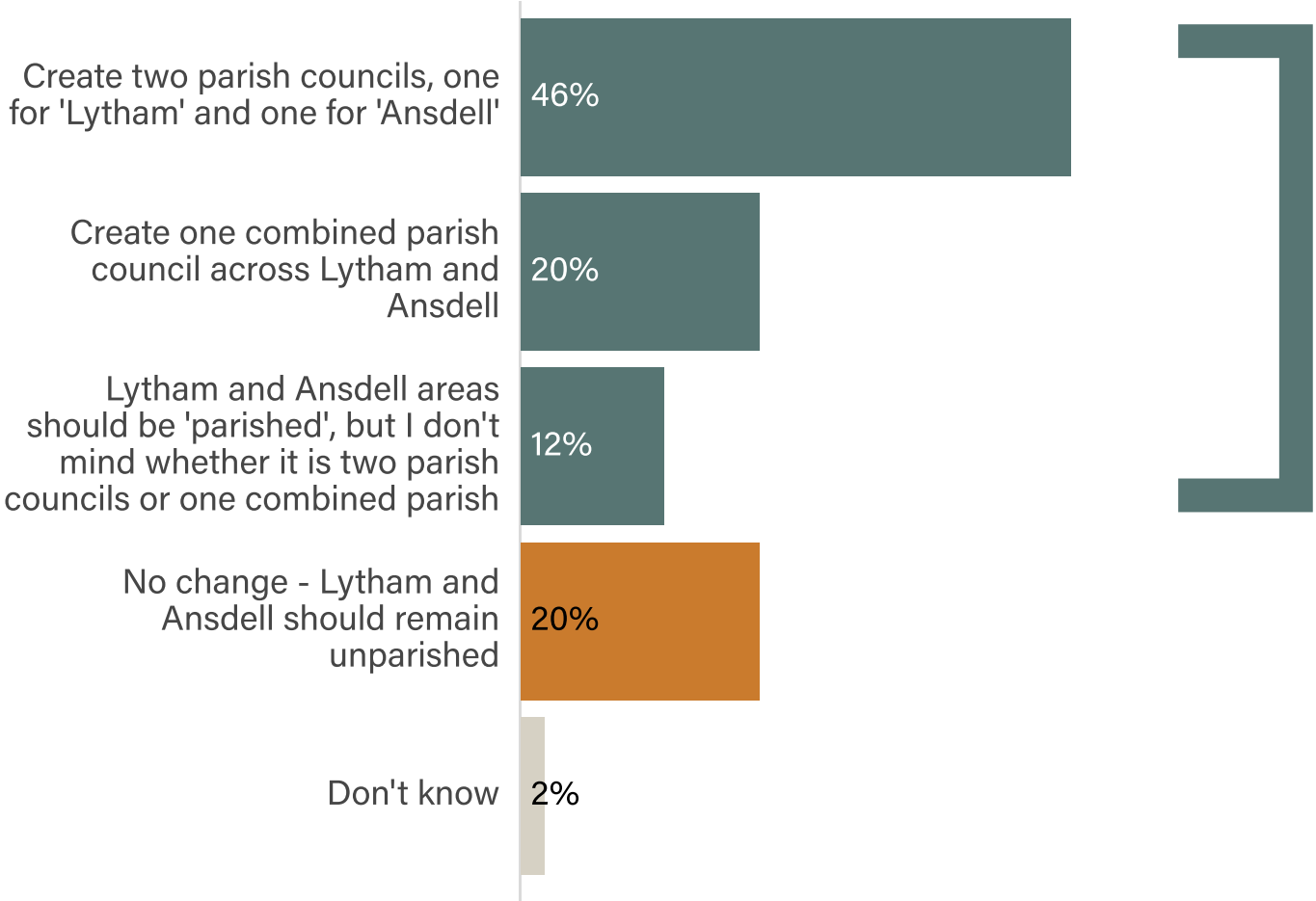
80% of those aged 65+ strongly or tend to agree, compared to 73% of those aged under 45.

Overall, more people are in favour of two parish councils.

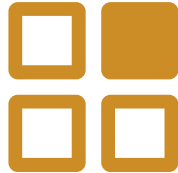


Nearly half (46%) of respondents prefer the option of creating two parish councils, one for Lytham and one for Ansdell

One in five do not want to see any parish councils in the area.



78% of respondents would prefer some form of parish council across Lytham and Ansdell, whether that is two councils or one



Those who feel more connected to either Ansdell or Lytham are more likely to prefer creating two parish councils

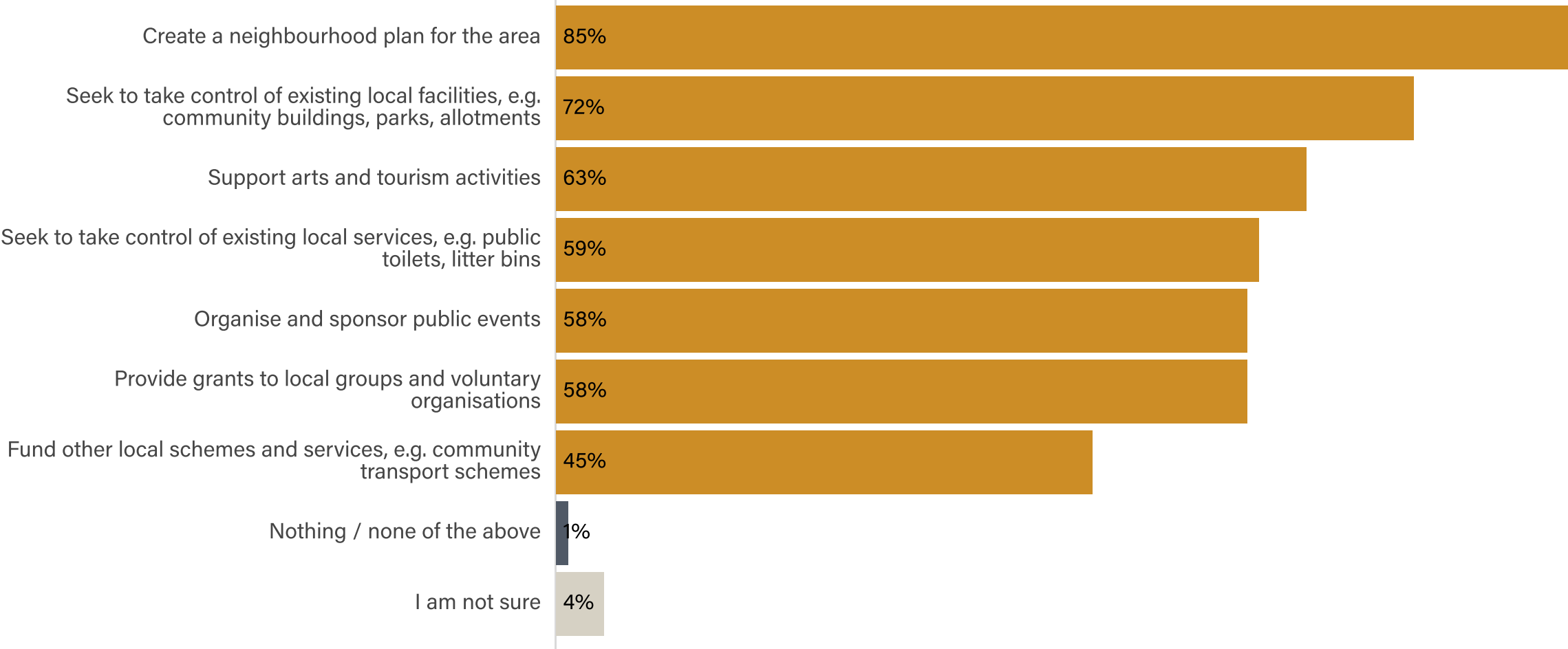
- 61% of respondents who feel more connected to Ansdell prefer creating two parish councils
- 47% of those who feel more connected to Lytham prefer creating two parish councils

Neighbourhood plans appear to be important to local people.

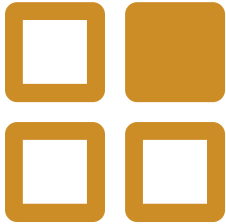


It appears that respondents are interested in any parish council(s) taking on a wide range of local roles, activities and facilities

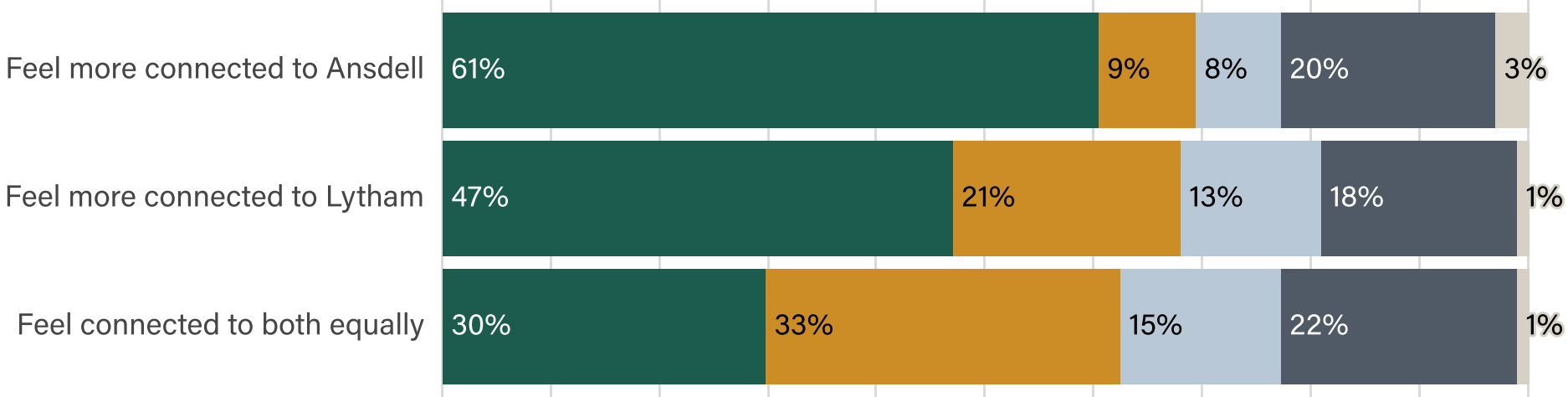
'Which of the following, if any, would you like any parish council(s) in Lytham and Ansdell to do? Please select all that apply'



Those who feel more connected to either Ansdell or Lytham are more likely to prefer creating two parish councils.



Three in five respondents who feel more connected to Ansdell would prefer two parish councils to be created



A third of those who feel connected to both areas equally would like to see one combined parish council

● Create two parish councils, one for 'Lytham' and one for 'Ansdell'

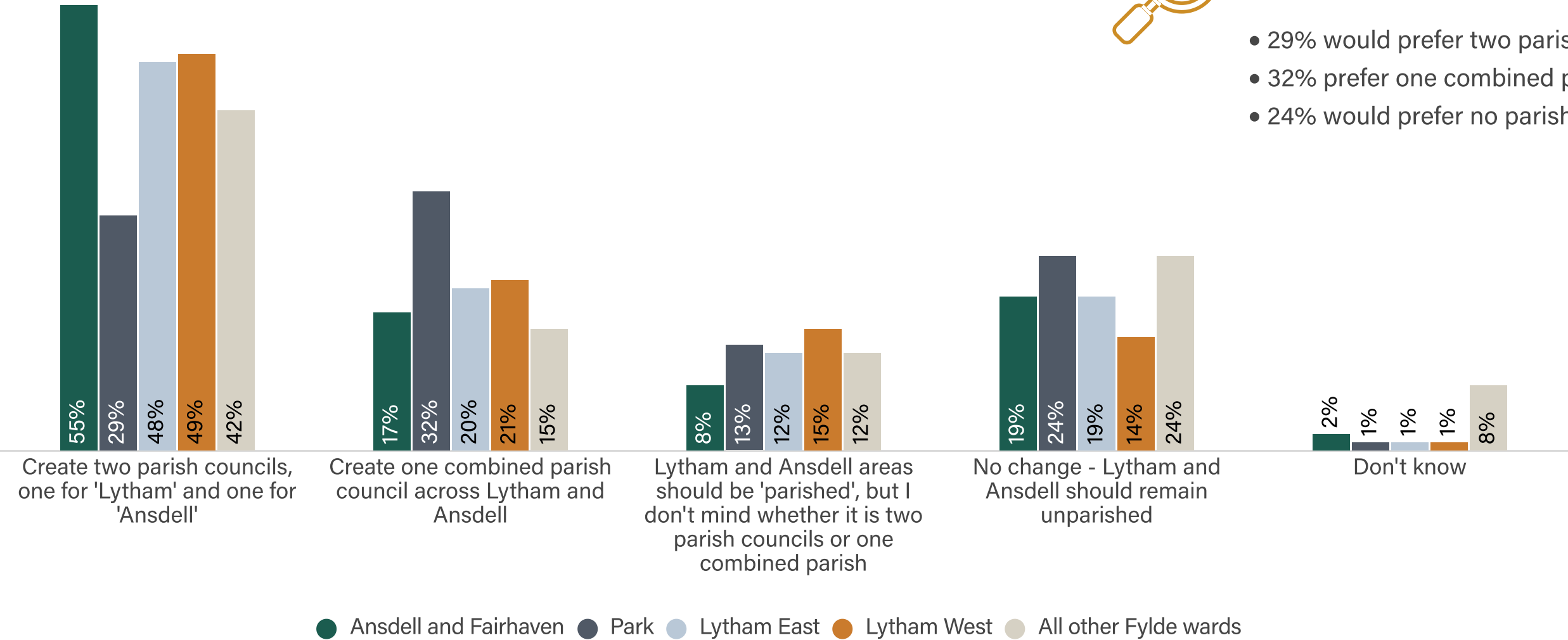
● Create one combined parish council across Lytham and Ansdell

● Lytham and Ansdell areas should be 'parished', but I don't mind whether it is two parish councils or one combined p...

● No change - Lytham and Ansdell should remain unparished ● Don't know

Respondents from the Park ward appear more split about their preferred parishing option.

Preferred options by ward they live in



Respondents from the Park ward:

- 29% would prefer two parish councils
- 32% prefer one combined parish
- 24% would prefer no parish council

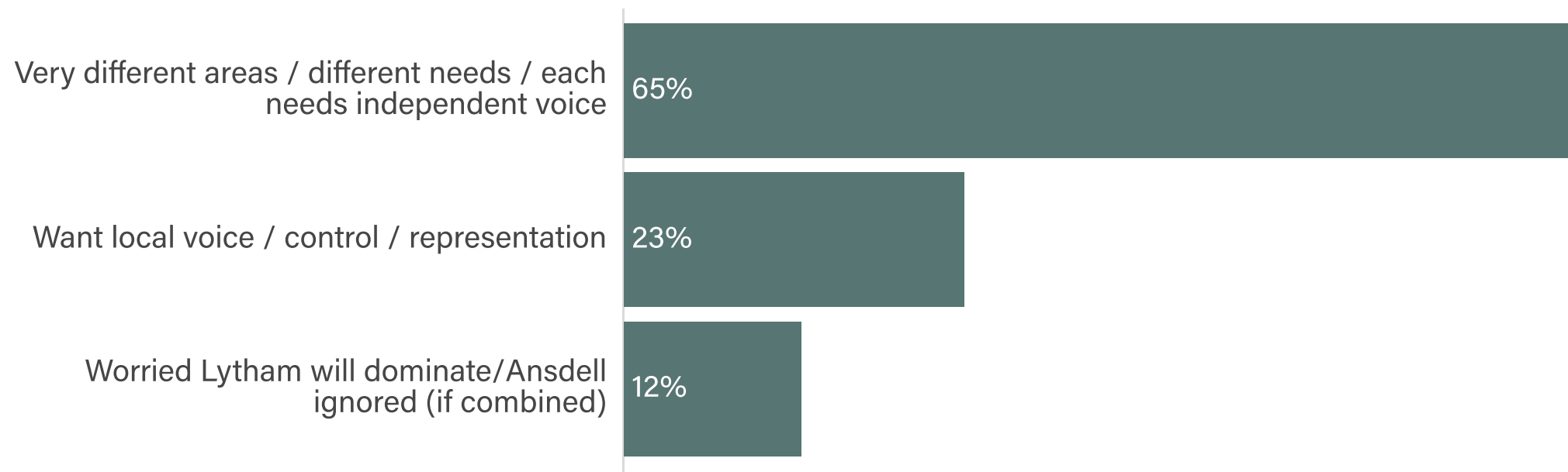
Feedback: reasons given for preferred option.

Two parishes: the two areas are different, with different needs.

46% of respondents prefer the two parish option

- ● The most common reasons given for preferring the two parish option is that the two areas are very different, they have different needs and that each needs its own independent voice

Most common themes within comments:



458 comments made by respondents who would like to see two parish councils. Comments have been coded into themes. One comment can appear in more than one theme.

Reasons given for preferring the two parishes option: example comments.

Different areas with different needs

“ I live in Ansdell and it needs its own voice - it is not Lytham and has different needs. New businesses are popping up and it is starting to create its own amazing community.

“ Because Lytham and Ansdell have their own problems, two totally different areas, each area has its different objectives.

“ Lytham and Ansdell are two very different characters and needs. Whilst they share some common challenges, these can not be delivered through one council.

Concerned Lytham will dominate

“ The two areas have distinctly different characters and needs and my main concern would be that Lytham, as very much the senior partner, would override the requirements for Ansdell.

“ Ansdell is a lovely little community that exists in the shadow of Lytham. What Lytham people want is not necessarily what the people of Ansdell want.

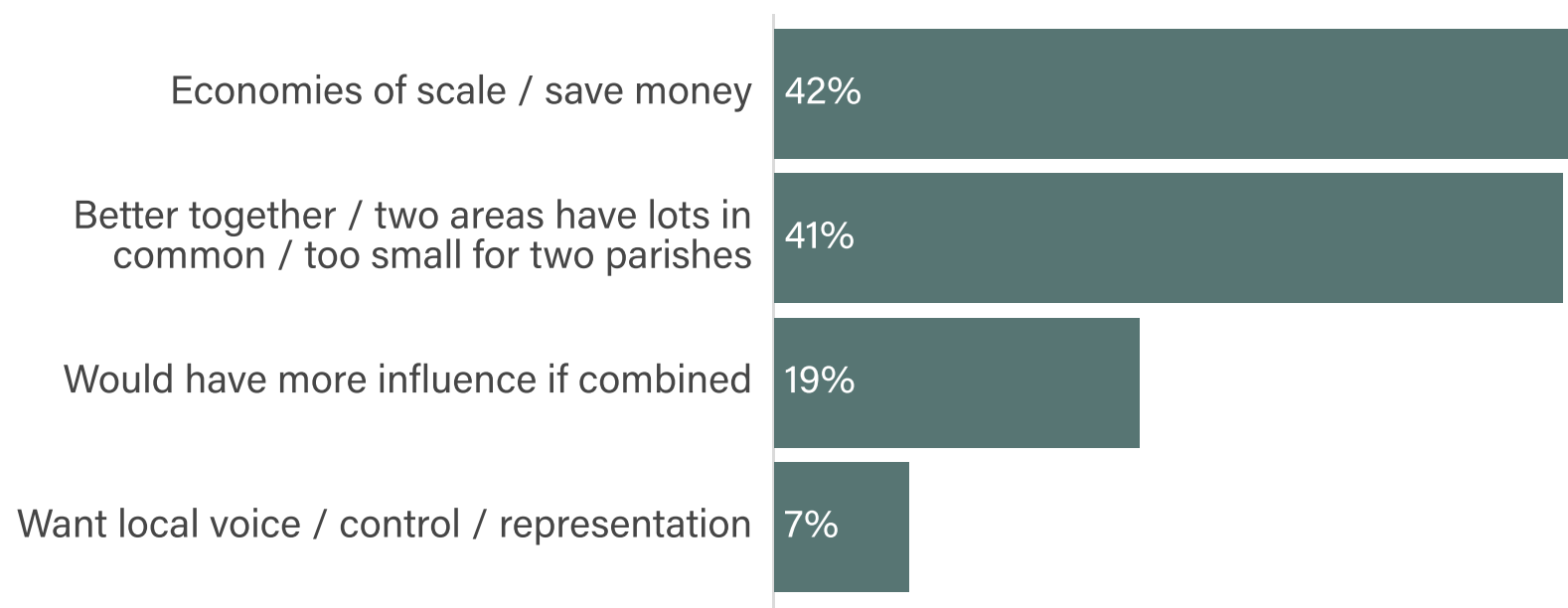
“ Because Lytham is huge compared to Ansdell and they have totally different needs, Ansdell would be out voted by Lytham.

One parish: should provide economies of scale.

20% of respondents prefer the one combined parish option

 Amongst those who would prefer the one combined parish option, most feel there would be economies of scale and/or that the two areas are too similar or too small to be separate parishes

Most common themes within comments:



195 comments made by respondents who would like to see one combined parish council. Comments have been coded into themes. One comment can appear in more than one theme.

Reasons given for preferring one combined parish option: example comments.

Economies of scale

“ I don't consider the two areas to be big enough to support two Parish Councils. Also it may be cheaper to just have one.

“ One council combined has Economy of scale. The decisions of two independent small councils would impact each other to the extent that they may undermine each other detrimentally. The wards have very similar populations with folk travelling, working and schooling across the Ansdell and Lytham areas and are very much integrated by these activities.

“ The combined parish would have economy of scale and carry more weight during negotiations with Fylde and LCC.

Better together / too small for two

“ The area needs cohesion as one area, rather than a fragmented approach.

“ Lytham and Ansdell are closely linked with residents from both areas frequently accessing leisure/ business facilities in both areas. Demography is similar and local schools are contained within both localities.

“ Larger scale having more influence on local decisions. Being neighbouring Parishes there will often be a knock on effect of decisions made in independent Parishes, it would therefore be better that those effects were considered by a single Council. Economies of scale for the provision of paid services, income etc.

Survey comments

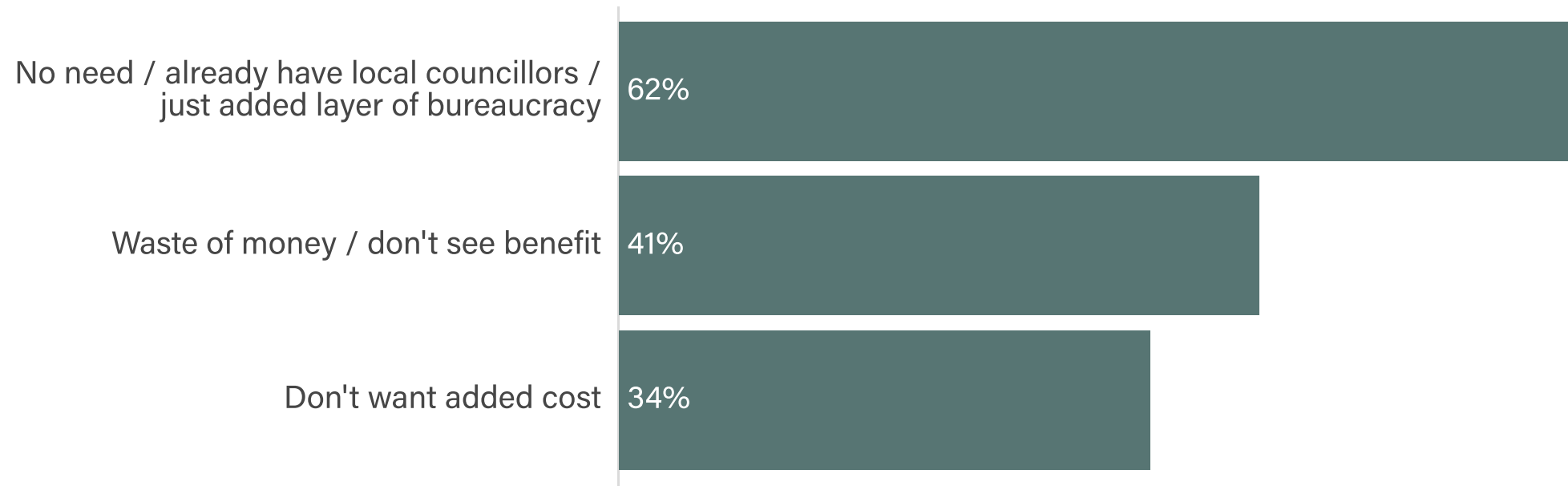
No change: a parish council is not needed and would just add another layer of bureaucracy.

20% of respondents prefer the areas to remain unparished



Amongst those who want the areas to remain unparished, around 2 in 5 do not feel there is a need for an extra layer of bureaucracy

Most common themes within comments:



213 comments made by respondents who would like to see no change (areas to remain unparished). Comments have been coded into themes. One comment can appear in more than one theme.

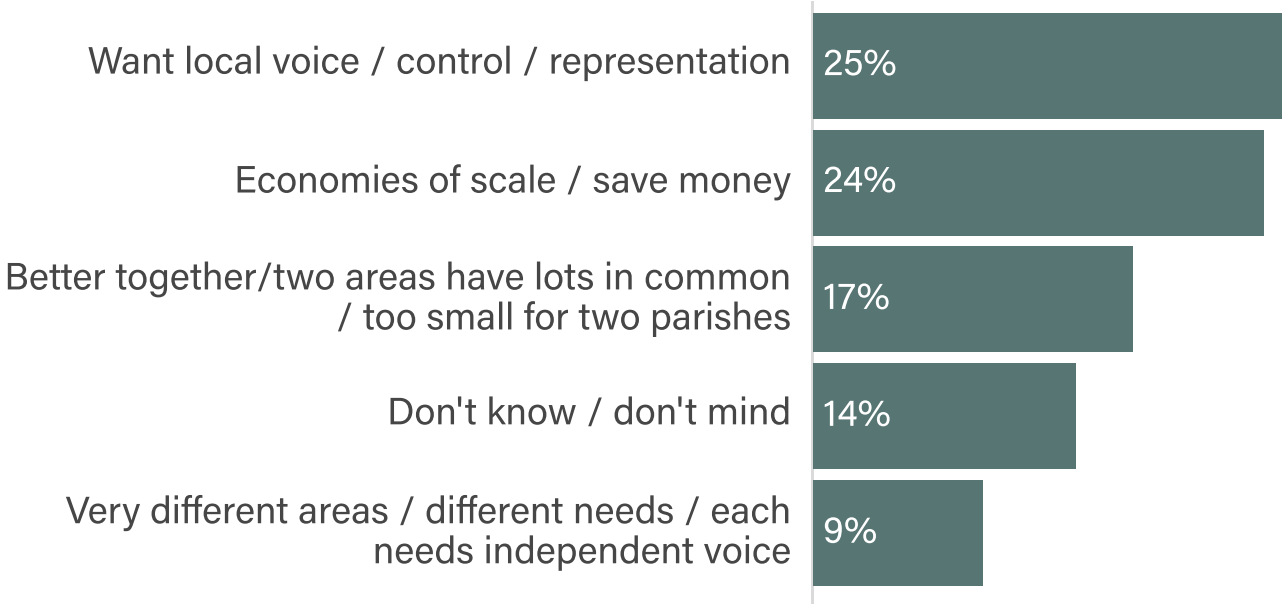
Don't mind how the areas are 'parished': reasons are mixed.

12% of respondents feel that the Lytham and Ansdell areas should be 'parished' but don't mind whether it is two parish councils or one combined parish



Reasons for not minding how the areas are 'parished' are more mixed, although a quarter mention the desire for local voice/control/representation

Most common themes within comments:



93 comments made by respondents who would like to see the two areas 'parished' but don't mind if this is two parish councils or one combined parish. Comments have been coded into themes. One comment can appear in more than one theme.

Reasons given for preferring the 'no change' option: example comments.

No need / just added layer of bureaucracy

“ We already have a Fylde Borough Council with elected members. To create a further level of bureaucracy will be wasteful of resources (public money will be required to fund these councils) and nothing will be achieved. It will clog up the system with a further layer of bureaucracy and delay real sensible decision making.

“ Do not need another level of administration in addition to what we already have and certainly no more raising extra funding from already stretched households. The existing structures should be made to meet the requirements of the local communities.

Waste of money / can't see benefit

“ More money wasted on another level of local government. Totally unnecessary!

“ It's a waste of money, an opportunity for do-gooders to interfere more (expressing minority views) and totally unnecessary. Could not do anything that existing local councillors can and should be doing.

“ It is unlikely to make much difference apart from increasing council tax bills which are already too high and unfair. People who are elected do not have the interests of residents in the area because the voting turnout will be so low. Fylde Council should be looking to combine parishes rather than create more in order to cut costs and reduce divisions.

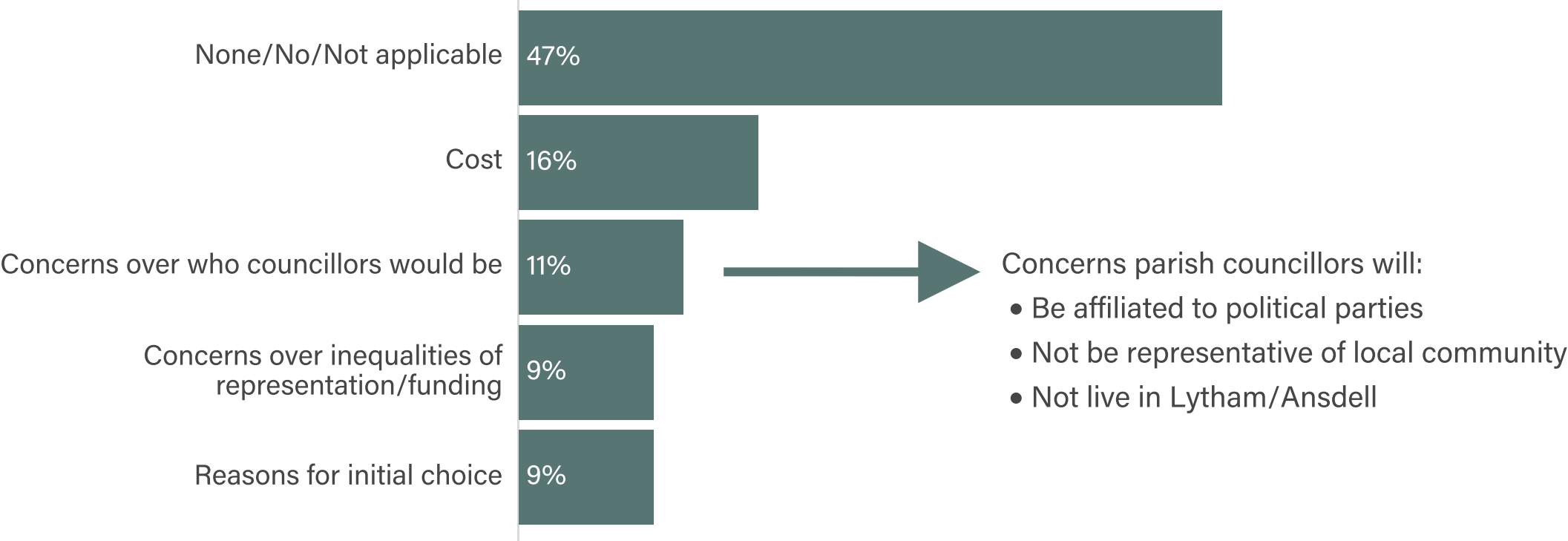
Feedback: concerns and any other options to consider.

Most common concerns are cost and who councillors would be.



However, almost half say they have no concerns about the option they chose

Most common themes within comments on any concerns:



572 comments overall to the question 'Please tell us if you have any concerns about the option you have chosen'. 270 comments from respondents who would like to see two parish councils, 118 from those who would like a combine parish council and 116 from those who would like areas to remain unparished. Comments have been coded into themes. One comment can appear in more than one theme.

Concerns over chosen option: **example comments.**

Cost

““ The cost of setting up any parishes. The interests of local should already be financially catered for in our community charge. We pay enough already.

““ Council Tax is already far too high and poor value for money. Adding another layer of costs to this bill will make it more unaffordable for many local residents.

Concerns over inequalities

““ That investment in both areas may not be proportionate so Ansdell's needs neglected.

““ For this to work there must be equal representation of both areas on the new parish council.

Who will councillors be

““ My concern is how the councillors get selected - we have a lot of strong characters who have one sided opinions/views.

““ I am concerned that the people who stand for election will all be local business people which has been the case often in Fylde Council , so the emphasis will remain on tourism, an ever increasing festival and events on the green.

““ Electing the right people with experience, passion and independent views. Not becoming a talking shop and not bullied by Fylde Council.

““ The concern I would have is the demographic and diversity of voice - we need to ensure we have equality in our voices and be listened to with respect and compassion

Survey comments

Most people did not feel there are other options that should be considered.

492 respondents left a comment to 'Any other options you think we should consider?'



Almost two-thirds said 'no/not that I can think of'

Most common themes amongst other comments:

- Comments relating to current Council/local issues
- Need to communicate and engage with residents more
- Comments and concerns over potential councillors
- Repeating reasons for preferred option
- If preferred option for how areas are parished is not the majority choice, still want a parish council in some way
- Don't want areas to be parished



Communicate and engage more: example comments

- “ More public information given to residents in Fylde to inform them of local politics and how it works. Regular public updates and newsletters regarding all levels of politics would be helpful.
- “ A listening group would be advantageous rather than councillors at Borough level making unpopular decisions without due diligence or an understanding of the issues within Ansdell or Lytham.
- “ Have a non-statutory body feeding residents concerns to FBC e.g. like Lytham voice.

Stakeholder feedback.

Stakeholders also recognise the importance of local identity.



42 people responded in another capacity

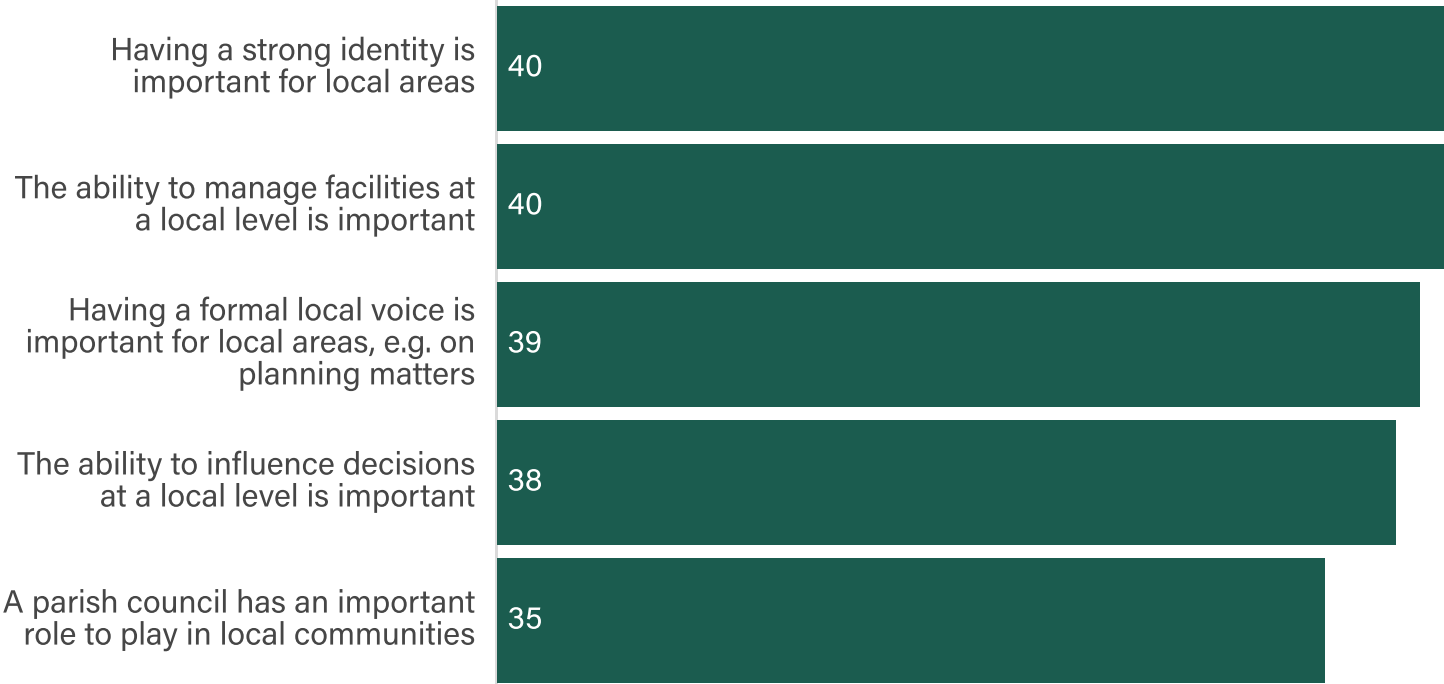
- 20 respondents represented a local business
- 14 represented a community group or organisation
- 10 were local councillors

Note: two respondents were representing both a local business and a community group; of the 42 stakeholder responses, 24 are also residents of Fylde.



Local stakeholders recognise the importance of local identity and a formal local voice

Number of stakeholder respondents who either strongly agree or tend to agree with statements (overall total of 42):

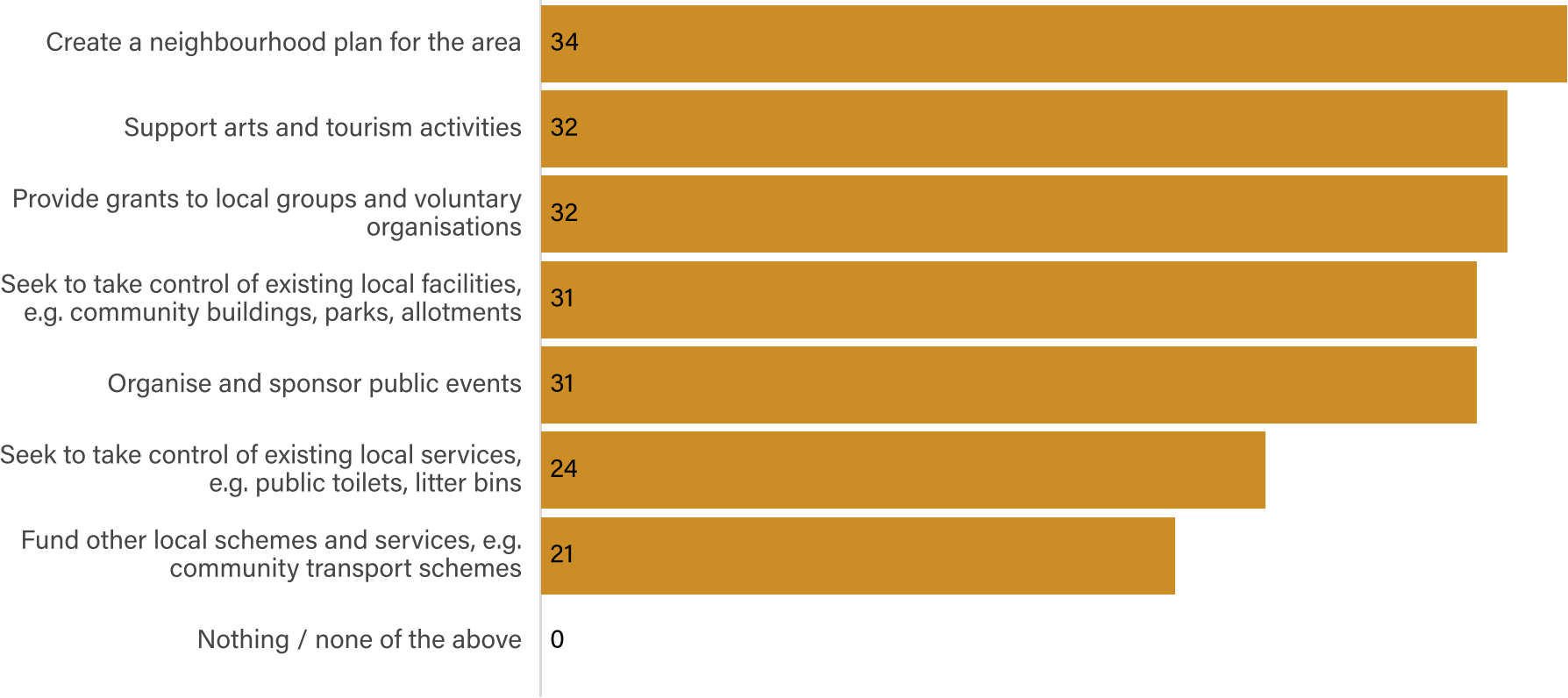


Stakeholders also feel any parish council should create a neighbourhood plan.



A neighbourhood plan appears to be important to stakeholders

Number of stakeholder respondents who either strongly agree or tend to agree with statements (overall total of 42):



"We endorse the establishment of a neighbourhood plan as an initial objective for a Lytham Parish Council. This will facilitate the creation of a unified vision for the town's development in collaboration with Lytham residents. It will aid in determining needs and priorities, as well as outlining the parameters for the scope of a Lytham Parish Council."

~ Lytham Town Trust, written response

9 in 10 stakeholders would like to see the two areas parished.



38 (90%) would like to see the two areas parished, and most prefer the option of creating two parish councils

- 24 (57%) prefer the option of creating two parish councils → **Key reasons:** majority feel the two areas are very different with different needs
- 7 (17%) prefer the option of one combined parish council → **Key reasons:** economies of scale, more inclusive and similar issues/interests
- 7 (17%) would like Lytham and Ansdell to be 'parished' but don't mind how
- 4 (10%) would prefer no change, i.e. Lytham and Ansdell should remain unparished → **Key reasons:** too many layers of bureaucracy with little perceived benefit



Almost all have no concerns about their preferred option



Report by Adam Pearson and Emma Slater.

psresearch.co.uk | hello@psresearch.co.uk





Parish councils are the first tier of government – they are at the heart of many communities, giving neighbourhoods a voice and can help people feel more involved in decisions which affect them. Ansdell and Lytham are the only areas in Fylde that don't have a parish council. We want to know what you think about some options for establishing parish councils in these areas. You can find more information about these options at: www.fylde.gov.uk/parish-councils-review. Please spare 5 minutes to tell us what you think. Your views are really important to us as it will help to shape our decision-making about this. The survey is being run by an independent research company on our behalf and responses to the survey will remain anonymous. You can find out more about how data in this survey is processed in this Privacy Notice: www.psresearch.co.uk/privacy-notice

Q1. Are you responding to this survey as a...?
Please select all that apply

- Resident of Fylde
- Local business
- Community group or organisation
- Local councillor
- Other (please explain)

Q1a. If you are representing a group, business or organisation, please tell us who you are representing. We will only use this to understand who our consultation has reached.

Q2. Would you say you feel more connected to Ansdell or Lytham?

- Feel more connected to Ansdell
- Feel more connected to Lytham
- Feel connected to both equally
- No particular connection to either
- Not applicable - don't live in these areas

Q3. Before we look at the options for parishing in Ansdell and Lytham, we would like to know what you think generally about decision-making and identity in local areas and the role that parish councils can play in these. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Having a strong identity is important for local areas

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tend to agree | <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neither agree nor disagree | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

Having a formal local voice is important for local areas, e.g. on planning matters

- Strongly agree
- Tend to disagree
- Tend to agree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

The ability to influence decisions at a local level is important

- Strongly agree
- Tend to disagree
- Tend to agree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

The ability to manage facilities at a local level is important

- Strongly agree
- Tend to disagree
- Tend to agree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

A parish council has an important role to play in local communities

- Strongly agree
- Tend to disagree
- Tend to agree
- Strongly disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Don't know

There are a number of options to consider for establishing parish councils in Ansdell and Lytham:

- Create two parish councils, one for 'Lytham' (covering the Lytham East and Lytham West wards) and one for 'Ansdell' (covering the Ansdell & Fairhaven and Park wards)
- Create one combined parish council across Lytham and Ansdell
- Leave the areas 'unparished'

Any parish council would bring a formal local voice and identity to the area it covers. It has the discretion to exercise a range of statutory powers of certain services or facilities which could benefit the area and/or the residents that live there. It can employ staff, own or manage premises, enter into contracts and provide services. Unlike other councils though, local parish councils do not have statutory responsibilities relating to social care, education, highways or waste collection as examples, and these services will continue to be provided by Fylde Council and Lancashire County Council.

Parish councillors would be selected through a local election to represent residents on the parish council(s) and the council would have discretion to get involved in a broad range of projects and activities to make the area a better place to live. By having one combined parish, there could be economies of scale, for example around staffing or premises. The main source of income for a parish council comes from a 'precept' which is added to the council tax bill of households in a parished area. Any charge is likely to be £40-50 per household annually for a Band D property in the first year, regardless of the parish size. After that, it would be down to the parish council(s) to decide how much this would be. For more information on these options, you can review our information page: www.fylde.gov.uk/parish-councils-review

Q4. We want to understand what local people think about these options. In principle, which option do you prefer?

- Create two parish councils, one for 'Lytham' and one for 'Ansdell'
- Create one combined parish council across Lytham and Ansdell
- Lytham and Ansdell areas should be 'parished', but I don't mind whether it is two parish councils or one combined parish
- No change - Lytham and Ansdell should remain unparished

Don't know

Q5. Please tell us why you have chosen this option.

Q6. Please tell us if you have any concerns about the option you have chosen.

Q7. Are there any other options you think we should consider?

Q8. Parish councils can do a range of things for a local area, however, they are not responsible for fixing roads, managing planning or licensing applications, collecting waste or other statutory duties. Which of the following, if any, would you like any parish council(s) in Lytham and Ansdell to do? Please select all that apply

- Seek to take control of existing local facilities, e.g. community buildings, parks and playgrounds, allotments

- Seek to take control of existing local services, e.g. public toilets, litter bins

- Organise and sponsor public events

- Support arts and tourism activities

- Provide grants to local groups and voluntary organisations

- Fund other local schemes and services, e.g. community transport schemes

- Create a neighbourhood plan for the area, setting out a shared vision with residents for how the neighbourhood is developed

- Nothing / none of the above

- Other (please explain)

These final few 'about you' questions will help us understand more about who our consultation has reached and we can also use them to analyse the results of the survey. They will never be used to identify individuals.

Q9. What is your home postcode?

Q10. Which age group do you belong to?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 to 44 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 64 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Q11. Which gender do you identify with?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Identify in another way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return it by Tuesday 23rd April 2024 using one of the ballot boxes provided in Ansdell Library, Lytham Library or The Town Hall (Lytham St Annes). You can also hand it to a member of staff.

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
CHIEF EXECUTIVE	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	5
THE PRODUCTIVITY PLAN			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources, Councillor Ellie Gaunt.

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the content of the Council’s Productivity Plan in response to the Productivity in Local Government request, from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) for member approval.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is recoverable under section 7 of part 3 of the constitution.

RECOMMENDATION

- Members are asked to approve the content for the productivity plan, included as Appendix 1 to the report, prior to submission to DLUHC ahead of the deadline of 19th July 2024.

REPORT

- The Government is reviewing productivity across all public services and local government is included in this approach. The 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2023 included the announcement that councils would be asked to produce productivity plans.
- The guidelines for productivity plans were published on 16th April 2024 with a submission deadline of the 19th of July 2024. The guidance encourages councils to think broadly when drafting a Productivity Plan and confirmed that there is no formal template or set criteria to be included. The Productivity Plan should set out what councils have done in recent years to achieve productivity gains and outline plans to achieve further efficiency through the transformation of service delivery.
- The Productivity Plan is included at Appendix 1 and has been structured in accordance with the guidance from DLUHC to cover 4 key headings:
 - How you have transformed the way you design and deliver services to make better use of resources.
 - How you plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making service design and use of resources.
 - Your plans to reduce wasteful spend within your organisation and systems.
 - The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help reduce or remove.

4. Individual plans will not be rated or scored by DLUHC, there will not be a league table produced. Instead, central government will identify common themes, challenges, shared issues, as well as good practice that can be used to identify opportunities for the public sector and individual authorities to achieve productivity gains.
5. The guidance states that elected members must endorse the plan before it is submitted to DLUHC, and the plans must be uploaded to the council's website for residents to see. DLUHC stated that a panel will be created to consider the themes and evidence that come from the plans. The panel, which will be chaired by Simon Hoare, will also consider the implications for future policy design, the role of Government in supporting further change "and the role of the sector in going further".
6. The guidance did not state whether the productivity plan will be an annual requirement or any formal process for review of the plans however, it will be monitored and included as part of the existing performance management framework where the measures and metrics are published to inform residents on how we are performing. The content and nature of the productivity plan for Fylde is consistent with the approach taken to service review, efficiency, and value for money that has been at the forefront of organisational behaviour since 2009. Key performance measures which measure productivity (inputs, outputs, and outcomes) have been in place for many years which are published, reviewed, and reported to scrutiny. The range and number of key performance measures in the performance framework at Fylde is greater than the Oflog requirement providing a comprehensive picture of service delivery across the council.

CONCLUSION

7. The productivity plan is a new requirement for local authorities for 2024 announced alongside the finance settlement, the content of the plan for Fylde is included in Appendix 1, members are asked to consider and approve the content for the plan.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None arising directly from this report
Legal	None arising directly from this report
Community Safety	None arising directly from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising directly from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising directly from this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising directly from this report

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS		
There are no previous decisions in relation to Productivity Plans as these have been introduced as a new requirement from 2024.		
LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Chief Executive	allan.oldfield@fylde.gov.uk 01253 658500	June 2024

Appendix 1 – The Productivity Plan

Productivity Plan – Fylde Council

Introduction

The 2024/25 Local Government Finance Settlement announced that councils would be asked to produce a Productivity Plan. This plan has been produced to meet that requirement and has been structured around the 4 key themes identified by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The council has a long-standing culture of continuously reviewing everything we do and how we do it, which is the foundation of our Productivity Plan. This approach has transformed the delivery of services in the local community and the finances of the council, year on year the council has been more productive by delivering 'more from less'.

Theme 1: How we have transformed the way we design and deliver services to make better use of resources

In recent years the council has transformed service design and delivery to maximise resources effectively which has increased productivity. The approach is to continuously re-design services and align delivery outcomes with corporate priorities and resources. The recently produced Corporate Plan 2024-2028 outlines the strategic direction of Fylde Council with clearly defined strategic ambitions that we are focused on delivering.

Measuring Productivity

At Fylde productivity is measured across several metrics which change over time based on the current challenges, issues, and circumstances. The productivity of individual employees is measured through appraisal, mentoring, coaching, and prescribed metrics for example, the number of visits, inspections, calls handled, or reports completed. Workload review and allocation is addressed through regular team or daily briefs dependent on the service, overall productivity is determined by the output achieved from the input required. Despite the impacts of inflation, increased service demand, higher wages, and price rises, between 2011 and 2021 the council reduced the required operating budget from £10.765m to £10.449m. During the same period there was no reduction in service provision, additional responsibilities were taken on, and the number of employees was reduced through natural movement and service transformation. Performance and customer satisfaction during this period improved, 'more from less' was achieved demonstrating excellent productivity.

Key performance indicators which measure productivity (inputs, outputs, and outcomes) have been in place for many years, they are published, reviewed, and reported to scrutiny. The range and number of key performance measures in the performance framework at Fylde is greater than the Oflog requirement providing a comprehensive picture of service delivery across the council. Key performance measures are published online with updates in real time, they are regularly reviewed resulting in updated methodology or revised targets. These measures

monitor the 'more from less' approach and will be used to assess our performance against this productivity plan.

Benchmarking performance measures and outcomes is shared through professional officer networks with the Oflog suite of key performance measures now used for headline comparison because the metric is prescribed and constant. Current performance measured in hard metrics and in stakeholder satisfaction levels are excellent.

The council is open to challenge on productivity and performance welcoming an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in 2024, which will complement and build on previous corporate and service-based peer challenges.

Transformed Structure

The council has undergone extensive restructure of member and officer arrangements over recent years. A Boundary Commission review reduced the number of elected members from 51 to 37 from May 2023, with streamlined committee arrangements introduced on the back of the new council. Restructuring of the senior management team has created a streamlined structure with minimal hierarchy that delivers the flexibility and responsiveness required in the dynamic fast pace of change post-pandemic. The workplace, work environment and work attitude change driven by necessity during the pandemic has created hybrid working. These arrangements along with the impact on the workplace, service delivery, and productivity have been subject to constant review by management in consultation with staff since the pandemic. Lockdown and post-lockdown have proved challenging, the council is implementing new ways to go further in this new environment.

Transformed People

A culture based on continuous improvement began over 15 years ago aimed at transforming the council from a traditional bureaucratic institution to a flexible responsive customer-focused modern organisation. Our continuous improvement policy statement outlines the rationale for continuous service review with the objective of ensuring that change is for improvement. The approach encourages leadership from everywhere, change driven by those who deliver the services to achieve ownership that will embed sustainable improvement, change cannot be imposed. Employees are trusted and empowered to drive ideas and change in the service areas they deliver and the workplace they occupy. Employee engagement is the cornerstone of transformation, securing ownership of change through engagement, empowerment, and trust ensures sustainable meaningful change. Core competencies developed by employees for employees outline essential behaviours required for every position serving as the foundation for increased productivity, to develop great employees who will deliver great service, and accept there is and will always be room for improvement, it is a journey not a destination.

Transformed Processes

Service reviews often include business re-engineering led by technology that drives out waste, duplication, and unnecessary processes that initially had been unchallenged for years, a 'we have always done it that way' ethos was prevalent. The removal of paper-based outdated practices gained pace through necessity during the pandemic resulting in an enormous reduction in the

cost of processes, increased the speed of delivery, and enhanced the customer experience. The paperless office is an unattainable destination, but a journey the council is taking regardless, and which has to date led to hundreds of thousands of less printed pages, fewer expensive copiers, and savings on storage, distribution, handling, and disposal of paper-based documents. Process re-engineering delivers 'more from less' through technology, the removal of unnecessary procedure, improvement in communication, and reduced manpower input.

Transformed Community

Productivity has been significantly enhanced through community partnership engagement with the voluntary sector. The council has deliberately taken the role of facilitator on initiatives that have attracted massive 'sweat equity' through volunteer resources delivering significantly enhanced output and outcomes. For example, around 20 'In Bloom' community groups linked to the parks and grounds maintenance service achieve multiple awards year on year at the local, regional, and national level. There is a multitude of volunteer groups and third sector organisations across the Borough directly supported by the council through which thousands of residents and visitors receive direct benefit including litter picking, railway station improvements, tourism events, health and wellbeing initiatives, soft sea dunes defence, beach schools, and more. Through limited input in terms of finance, resource, and employee time significant outputs are delivered consistent with the aims and objectives of the council and the expectations of our customers.

Current & Future Transformation

The transformation work that has achieved 'more from less' over the last few years has been reviewed in response to several factors including an inevitable reduction in opportunities after annual budget right sizing exercises; hybrid working arrangements; increased cost of local democracy in terms of time and resource; and the ability of small district councils to recruit and retain employees in a significant number of disciplines.

Current plans are aimed at extending the scope and potential for productivity gain through more ambitious alternative service delivery options particularly, external commissioning, shared services, mergers or joint work with other public sector bodies, or community interest companies etc. Internal efficiencies will continue to be pursued despite the potential being limited because of the productivity gains already delivered for example, reduction in print and paper, process re-engineering, digital automation, resource allocation and shared or commissioned services etc.

Alternative service delivery arrangements have been a feature of productivity gains including revenues and benefits, human resources, health and safety, corporate fraud, internal audit, occupational health, and payroll however, no new arrangements have been secured post pandemic. Opportunities to share, merge, pool, or commission are being explored in several service areas with neighbouring authorities, other public sector providers, and external organisations from the private and third sector. The focus over the next two years is on professional services where the ability to recruit and retain has been significantly impacted post pandemic and because of the cost-of-living crisis, as well as the common back office functions all organisations deliver.

Potential for productivity gain is also being explored through procurement arrangements and commercial asset management opportunities both internally and between partners. Lancashire local authorities are pooling resources to secure more competitive pricing from major suppliers of goods and services procured by all partners including computer licence, support, maintenance, upgrades, hardware procurement, and software development from the major suppliers. Future productivity gains will be greatest through joint working with public sector partners on goods and services that are required by all organisations.

Capital Project Productivity

Capital spending will be targeted to achieve savings that lead to productivity gains through growth or service improvements. Investment in technology or physical assets that release capacity and resource to deliver productivity gain will be prioritised where possible. The council has recently reviewed and adopted an updated Asset Management Plan and established a dedicated regeneration and project service team to support efficient and effective delivery of projects capable of transforming existing services or unlocking new opportunities. A project being delivered in 2024 to improve the work environment at the vehicle fleet depot will realise significant energy cost reduction releasing funds to employ additional resource in services that deliver direct to the public including waste, cleansing, grounds maintenance, and recycling.

Theme 2: How we plan to take advantage of technology and make better use of data to improve decision making, service design and use of resources

Data Driven Productivity

The opportunities for productivity increase through technology are perpetual because they continue to stem from further advances that create potential for improvement, potential that will inevitably increase with greater ability to understand and develop technology in successive generations. Fylde recognises the significant opportunity to use data effectively to improve service performance and delivery outcomes consistent with changing customer expectation.

Transparent and open data that is made easily accessible to those who require it is the approach taken to service delivery and partnership working. Almost every service area has a local authority network (regional or wider) through which information is shared, performance is compared, and resource, skill, knowledge is pooled. Learning from and with others is a deliberate approach to efficiency at Fylde.

Post pandemic the application of technology to make better use of data in decision-making has increased across all services supported by a corporate approach to the review of digital solutions which includes the following:

- How digital technology can be applied to improve customer experience by making the service more efficient.
- How digital technology can be applied to improve relations in the workplace.
- How digital technology can be applied to use data as the driver for service design and decision making.

Digital system security, protection, resilience, and recovery is used to limit down time, data loss or breach, and enhance backup and recovery, all designed to reduce to an absolute minimum the time that systems are unavailable and to maximise productive time and resource.

One of the primary elements of service review is to challenge how the council can do things differently using technology, to be more efficient, to increase productivity including outputs such as income generation, increased satisfaction, and reduced demand etc. This work has led to significant improvement in data collection and analysis from the customer with the ability to access bespoke online forms to share customer experience which can be analysed in real time and made immediately available to the service team and other stakeholders i.e. partners, members, public agencies, customers etc.

The council recognises the importance of modern digital solutions to improve customer experience, and deliver service efficiency, and effectiveness evidenced in the 'digital-first' online service delivery 'all day, every day', while retaining traditional contact methods for customers with complex needs or preference. This approach has delivered both cashable and non-cashable savings while increasing customer engagement, less input for greater output. Online customer satisfaction is very high with the implementation of automated 'end to end' transactions that provide flexibility for the customer while achieving 'more for less' from the service.

Legacy systems owned by major computer houses that hold most contracts for local authorities have drained Fylde and other councils of funds and resources for years. As a small district council there are barriers because the account is not as valuable, or the treatment on price is the same regardless of the authority. There is potential for efficiency gains from legacy systems which has resulted in three of the major systems being replaced over the last few years under shared arrangements with other local authorities. Lancashire authorities have formed a network led by senior IT officers to review costs, terms, licences, maintenance etc. of the legacy systems common in most cases to all the partners.

The potential to achieve productivity gains through AI is phenomenal, it is available to access and use across the council with some service areas piloting AI for templates, research, reports etc. with mixed results shared to date. AI will be a feature of the next two years drive for productivity through technology with more advanced programs rolled out in response to service review.

Theme 3: Our plans to reduce 'wasteful spend' (*Government prescribed term*) within the organisation and systems.

Process re-engineering is designed to remove waste and duplication, it has been applied in several service reviews to identify efficiencies with the latest in the planning team. Pre-pandemic the corporate team managed a bespoke programme of process re-engineering in a number of services successfully removing unnecessary procedures, speeding up service delivery and reducing the cost particularly through the migration to digital service, storage, distribution etc. In 2010 the council printed on 1,364,000 sheets of paper, in 2023 that number was 450,000, a 67% reduction that has created significant productivity gains.

Employee development has become more prolific through online courses with bespoke modules developed in the HR system shared with other public service providers, the modules are

supported, evaluated, and reviewed on a regular basis, at any given time there is a live module supporting employee development.

The current arrangements for training and development have proven to be far more effective than the previous ones. Despite a significant decrease in the percentage of the authority budget spent on training, the volume and effectiveness of training provision has increased achieving significant productivity gains. More employees now have access to training and development opportunities at a much lower cost because of digital online remote formats.

In-person training at central city or rural hotel locations has been restricted for many years because post training review identified that most were inefficient, or the output can be achieved through other methods. The council has replaced almost all off-site, generic training with work-based, bespoke mentoring and coaching wherever possible, online modules, digital networks etc. This shift has fostered and enhanced self-development, leading to increased productivity and higher quality outcomes.

The vast majority of agency budget is spent on front end operational staff, refuse service, parks, cleansing etc which provides maximum operational efficiency and flexibility throughout the year. There is an annual review of the cost against employing the same resource direct, or through other means, to assess value for money. A significant number of agency or consultant posts are funded from grants or as part of capital project costs to procure specialists dedicated to the project.

The council has embedded comprehensive budget management processes that inform the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, the budget management process has transformed the finances of the council, from the brink of a Section 114 notice in 2009, through 14 years of delivering a surplus against the budget, to a robust position with £5.1m general fund reserves and earmarked reserves of £12.0m, against an increased general fund reserve minimum of £1m. Through austerity, long-term uncertain business rates review, New Home Bonus adjustments, and multiple single year financial settlements the council has successfully managed budgets because of a robust financial and governance framework.

Very little budget and resource is required for trade union facilities or staff, the council has a low union membership with the main union (UNISON) branch connected to the Blackpool membership who employ a full-time shop steward. Because of the low membership rate amongst employees the time required for union related activity and engagement is limited but always productive.

4: The barriers preventing progress that the Government can help reduce or remove.

Barriers in the Organisation

Fylde employs circa 260 employees, there are people with a positive attitude and commitment to themselves, to work, and to the organisation, they are productive because the input required for them to achieve is minimal. Similarly, there are employees who require greater input through support, monitoring, management, supervision, correction, training, and more who are less productive and inevitably a barrier to their own progress and that of the council.

The size of the council is a barrier, Fylde is a small district with all the statutory requirements of any other district as well as significant non-statutory functions with high demand, high profile, and high expectation that is common in a borough with relative affluence. The more vulnerable residents that need support from the council are fewer in number making them harder to target and harder for the council to secure external support because many grants target greatest need, higher number, and concentrations of deprivation. The size of the council also means that there is not enough demand to resource some professional specialisms which is as a barrier to employment and recruitment for example, architects, surveyors, legal specialists etc.

Internal capacity is limited and becoming more of a challenge in the current climate, the time and resource required to review, innovate, engage, and develop people or services that will deliver productivity gains is reducing because demand from democratic structure, procedures, and stakeholders has increased. The time and resource required to meet the 'cost of local democracy' has increased significantly because the new governance arrangements and member engagement requires many more employees to engage in the democratic process on a more regular basis. This impact on productivity is evident in every service area and consistent with the change in culture post pandemic.

The External Barriers to Progress

There are multiple significant barriers to progress and productivity gain in the local government national and regional framework. Single year financial settlements over multiple years have presented the council with ongoing productivity challenges because of uncertainty over future levels of funding. Financial pressures have been caused by real term reductions in spending power when considered alongside recent high levels of inflation, high energy costs and increases to the pay bill including the impact of increases to the National Living Wage. Multiple year financial settlements would provide a sound basis for more coherent medium term financial planning, which in turn would increase productivity.

Local government processes for accessing funding are a barrier to progress with increasingly competitive process in place when bidding for funding which is a wasteful use of officer time and gives uncertainty for service and project planning.

Council Tax referendum limits are a barrier to council-controlled income along with the ability to locally set the level of planning fees.

Fylde has a large tourism economy that would be more productive with the introduction of a tourism tax for example, bed night tax to go back into supporting the visitor economy.

Progress would be supported with incentivised investment in new green infrastructure and affordable housing through a discounted PWLB borrowing rate available to all local authorities for investment in housing and associated infrastructure. Along with discounted borrowing for infrastructure investment that delivers on the Net zero 2050 target.

Working relationships with the upper tier county council has resulted in barriers to productivity because of cultural differences inevitable between an upper tier of almost 40,000 employees and district of less than 270. The necessary engagement of county on highway or ecology matters has hindered progress on planning applications, greater integration with county council

on highway matters would increase productivity. Funding streams such as UK Shared Prosperity (UKSPF) Fund returning to county control through devolution arrangements will impact on productivity by creating uncertainty on whether funding can be applied locally or within the organisation to increase productivity and effectiveness at Fylde.

Local government is inherently process driven and bureaucratic because of the necessity of local democracy and governance in decision making, more streamlined re-engineered processes would increase local government productivity. This is a national issue that government could review and improve to increase productivity across the sector through the alignment of process that closer reflects the private sector in terms of procurement, recruitment, audit, transparency requirements, FOI's and accounting, it is the differences and detailed requirements in areas such as these where the barriers to progress arise when seeking to partner with other sectors.

Other operational and strategic issues where simplified process and updated policy would improve productivity at a local level include reduced evidence base for the Local Plan, permit refuse collection frequencies to be determined at local level, simplify business rates revenue-sharing arrangements, review council tax banding, review FOI requirements to restrict private companies simply canvassing for marketing information, and provide direct funding for affordable homes to reduce the burden on homelessness resource and cost.

Maximise the use of new technology by removing outdated processes from all regulations e.g. all notices to be published online, and use of ANPR for parking enforcement.

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND HOUSING	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	6
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION GRANT FUNDING 2024-25			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Housing, Councillor Chris Dixon.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) is to give Local Authorities control and flexibility in managing homelessness pressures and supporting those who are at risk of homelessness. This report is requesting the uplift in HPG for 2024/25 and top up amounts received, be placed within the Housing Services base budget to deliver on statutory homeless duties under the Homeless Reduction Act 2018 (HRA).

A report was taken to Full Council in October 2022 advising of the changes to the funding arrangements related to the HPG from 2022/23 onwards. Prior to this date Local Authorities were able to commit the funding flexibly to deliver homelessness services. From 2022/2023 there is a requirement for spend to be identifiable for services provided under the Homelessness Reduction Act duties: provision of temporary accommodation, staffing costs, homelessness prevention, relief, and main housing duty support.

The Local Authority was awarded £107,457 in 2022/23 and this was placed in the Housing Services base budget to form the basis of future years income and corresponding expenditure budgets. In 2023/24 the HPG allocation was £117,192 and the allocation for 2024/25 is £123,821.

In 2024/25 Fylde Council have been awarded further Top Up grants totalling £92,380 made up from £60,970.80 HPG Top up (66%) and £31,409.20 HPG Ukraine Top Up 34%. The total HPG that will be received in 2024/25 will be £216,201 and there is a requirement for this spend to be identifiable for services provided under the HRA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To approve a fully funded budget increase to the Homelessness Prevention Grant base budget of £16,364 (currently the base budget is £107,457 taking it to £123,821 per annum); and
2. To approve a fully funded budget increase to the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2024/25 for the HPG top-up grants totalling £92,380 to deliver additional homelessness prevention and relief services in 2024/25.

REPORT

HOMELESS REDUCTION ACT 2018

1. The Government is committed to preventing homelessness before it occurs and the Homeless Reduction Act 2018 (HRA) was focussed on ensuring more people get help earlier, reducing the risk of households becoming homeless with intervention at its earliest stage. DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) data shows that intervening when a household is at risk of losing their accommodation is overall more effective in tackling homelessness.

2. HRA was implemented by Local Housing Authorities across England from 1st April 2018 and its introduction significantly reformed England’s homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent homelessness in their areas. It also requires housing authorities to provide homelessness services to **all** those affected, not just households who are in a ‘priority need’ category.
3. Enhanced prevention and relief duties were introduced prior to the statutory main housing duty and the periods households could be classed as being threatened with homelessness was increased from 28 days to 56 days. This meant that local authorities are now required to work with people to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage.

HOMELESS PREVENTION GRANT (HPG)

4. The HPG is awarded annually, and the amounts awarded are determined by the quarterly HClick returns on homelessness pressures within the borough. There is a requirement for spend to be identifiable for services provided under the Homelessness Reduction Act duties: provision of temporary accommodation, staffing costs, homelessness prevention, relief, and main housing duty support.
5. Table 1 (below) details the history of grant funding Fylde Council have received from central Government, to take forward their statutory duties under HRA. Funding has been committed up to 2023/24 through the Committee reporting systems into the implementation of projects that ensured the housing service has adapted to the changes in approach required under HRA.
6. The basic base budget allocation has increased in 2024/2025 to £123,821 with a Top up grant of £92,380.

Table 1 – Central Government Funding towards Homelessness Services

Financial Year	FHSG standard allocation	FHSG Top Up	HPG Top Up	Section 31 HCLIC new Burdon’s funding	HRA New Burdon’s funding	Homeless Reduction Grant	HPG Allocation	Total
2017-18	£45,834.98				£8,409			£54,244
2018-19	£51,026.56	£11,000	£5,000	£2,953	£7,703			£77,683
2019-20	£42,766	£11,000	£5,000	£2,228	£9,927			£70,921
2020-21	£42,766					£26,655		£69,421
2021-22							£107,457	£107,457
2022-23							£107,457	£107,457
2023-24			£9,735				£107,457	£117,192
2024-25			£92,380				£123,821	£216,201

HCLICK RETURNS

7. Homelessness pressures data is reported via H-Click returns, sent quarterly to Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Table 2 below provides an overall summary of service demand over the last 4 years since 2020/21. This demonstrates a continued increase in demand for homelessness and advice services in Fylde.
8. The number of enquiries the service is responding to has increased year on year. In 2023/24 we dealt with 1,027 enquiries for housing and homelessness advice and assistance, of this 33% required a full homeless assessment. In 2022/23 this percentage was 37% therefore we have seen a slight drop in full assessments required based on number of approaches for advice.
9. There is a marked increase of 50% from 2020/21 to 2023/24 in households to who the Local Authority has accepted a Homeless Relief Duty towards in 2024, indicating households are approaching the service where there are limited options to prevent homelessness.
10. A result of this is the number of clients in temporary accommodation at year end has doubled since the end of 2020/21 to the end of 2023/24 from 27 to 49.
11. Fylde Council work to keep families with children out of B&B accommodation and a requirement of the HPG grant funding is that families with children should not be in B&B type accommodation for over 6 weeks. At the end of March 2024, the Local Authority had four families in B&B accommodation with 6 children, and fourteen families with 29 children in self-contained accommodation.

12. The service continues to see a high number of single households. At the end of 23/24 this stood at 31 single households and one couple.
13. The service continues to be successful in moving clients on into settled accommodation. Throughout 2023/24 we have assisted 146 households into permanent accommodation and successfully negotiated between the tenant and landlord to enable 42 clients to remain in their own home.
14. During 2023/24 the Housing Service had been successful in applying for and receiving Local Authority Housing Fund 2 (LAHF2) to increase the provision of temporary accommodation in the Borough alongside the provision of accommodation under the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS). This will increase supply during 2024/25 to additional 9 units of temporary accommodation and 5 units of ACRS accommodation. The partner Registered Provider is Humankind and these properties are coming on-line throughout 2024/25, with 6 units already in use.
15. The service has also entered into a Homeless Partnership Agreement with the YMCA to provide an additional 12 units of homeless temporary accommodation for single households under the age of 35. These units came online on the 1st April 2024.
16. The service has a long-standing arrangement with Progress Housing who provide 10 units of homeless temporary accommodation under a Homeless Partnership Agreement. By the end of 2024/25, 31 units of temporary accommodation will be available in the Borough to reduce the reliance on B&B accommodation out of Borough and the cost of this provision.

Table 2 – H-Click Data

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total number of housing enquiries	650	773	784	1,027
Enquiries of which from Duty to Refer from Statutory Partners	80	109	87	178
Number of full homelessness assessments undertaken	163	349	292	343
Clients in Temporary accommodation at year end	27	28	47	49
Prevention Duty Owed year total	56	112	127	97
Assisted to source alternative accommodation in Prevention Duty	11	49	75	48
Assisted to remain in accommodation in Prevention Duty	2	9	30	42
Relief Duty Owed year total	105	157	165	200
Assisted to source alternative accommodation in Relief Duty	14	66	76	98
Main Housing Duty owed (after Prevention and Relief Duty expired)	16	27	62	60

CONCLUSION

17. The funding will be placed across a number of housing budgets to assist the Local Authority to continue with its statutory functions under the HRA 2018 – staffing costs, provision of temporary accommodation, void loss

and damage re-charges, financial support for Bond and Rent in Advance and a range of other services including debt advice, tenancy training and interpretation services.

18. The purpose of this report is to request an increase the Homelessness Prevention Grant base budget from 2024/25 by £16,364 taking it to £123,821 and to commit the top-up grant funding totalling £92,380 to continue to deliver homelessness prevention and relief services during 2024/25.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	Revenue budget increase to the Homelessness Prevention Grant housing service base budget of £16,364, to £123,821 per annum and fully funded budget increase for the HPG top-up grants totalling £92,380 available for 2024/25.
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
<p>Homeless Prevention Grant – Full Council 12th October 2022 Recommended that future HPG funding from 2022/23 under the annual allocation of from DLUHC be placed within the Housing Services Base Budget (£107,457).</p> <p>Local Authority Housing Fund – Full Council – 18th December 2023 Approval of an addition to the Capital Programme of £2,784,000 in respect of LAHF2 and S106 developer contributions to enable the purchase of units for temporary and ACRS accommodation to meet the funding priorities.</p>

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Homeless Prevention Grant 2023-25	February 2024	Homelessness Prevention Grant: 2023 to 2025 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Local Authority Housing Fund	June 2023	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-housing-fund

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Kirstine Riding	Kirstine.riding2@fylde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658569	10/06/2024

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF TECHNICAL SERVICES	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	7
DRAWDOWN REPORT-WORKSHOP HEATING SYSTEM			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Customer and Operational Services (Councillor Michelle Morris)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The proposed project is to replace the existing heating oil system in the fleet management workshop at Snowdon Road Depot with a more modern, fit for purpose, energy efficient heating system to provide adequate welfare provision for staff working in this building. The report looks to draw down the Capital funding from the Councils 2024/25 Capital Programme and requests authority to delegate the award of contract to the Head of Technical Services.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is recoverable under section 7 of part 3 of the constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Approve the full drawdown of £116,740 within the 2024/25 Council's Capital Programme to replace the existing heating system, within the Fleet Workshop at Snowdon Road Depot.
2. Approve the delegation of the award of tender for the works contract to the Head of Technical Services based on the most economically advantageous tender to the Council.
3. Note that Blackpool Council's Mechanical Engineer has been engaged to project manage the scheme.
4. Note the award of works to the value of £9,254 to a contractor to remove the existing gas supply to the building and install a new one. The order for these works has been issued under section 6.7 of the Council's Constitution Financial Procedure Rules due to the urgent requirement for these works to be carried out prior to the main scheme. In accordance with those rules these works is now being reported to the committee for information.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. The proposed project is to replace the existing heating oil system in the fleet management workshop, at Snowdon Road Depot with a more modern, fit for purpose, energy efficient heating system to provide adequate welfare facilities for staff working in this building. The existing heating oil system has been in place since 2010

and was transferred from the old Poulton Fleet Depot where it had previously been in use for many years. It requires replacing as it has become inefficient, costly to run and the infrastructure being used for the system is outdated. It is no longer viable to repair the system if it breaks down. This system is designed to heat the entire workshop area, including the MOT bay, fuel pits and vehicle ramps, by pumping heat through a fan system into the building rather than heating any specific work area or object. This results in significant heating loss whenever the roller shutter doors are opened throughout the day when manoeuvring vehicles in and out of the workshop and particularly in the MOT bay area, where there is a requirement for the roller shutter door to be opened constantly.

2. Another issue with the existing heating system is the oil tank, which is currently stored in an external container and is serviced annually by a contractor. During the last service in 2022 the team were advised that the oil tank and the container that houses the tank, both need to be replaced soon due to their deteriorating condition. If the existing tank starts to leak this could cause environmental damage including the potential of oil contaminating the surrounding area including local water watercourses which could result in the Council being prosecuted by the Environment Agency. If the tank and storage container are not upgraded there is a danger of the heating oil system being condemned with no other means to provide heating in the building, which further necessitates the need to explore alternative heating options for the workshop building to ensure compliance with health and safety standards.
3. After exploring new heating technologies suitable for workshops with Blackpool Council’s Mechanical Engineer, the best solution identified is an infrared heating system for the fleet workshop. Infrared heating uses shortwave heat, which is designed to heat objects and people directly rather than the air, which is ideal for a workshop building environment. This is because the workshop contains large open spaces that can be difficult to heat using the existing heating oil system.
4. Other heating systems have been considered and discounted such as wet systems (radiators), fan systems and ground source heat pumps. These methods are not suitable for large workshop areas, as they will heat the entire building and result in heat loss when the roller shutter doors are opened. A reliable, energy efficient, heating system for the workshop is essential and will assist the Council in realising cost saving benefits in the longer term with the uncertainty of rising oil fuel costs. Therefore, by investing in a more efficient, fit for purpose system will provide considerable cost savings to be made over the longer term.
5. A detailed breakdown of the funding strategy is detailed below -

Table 1. Budget Estimate

Cost Heading	Description	Total £
Removal and disposal of the old system	Removal of fan and vented system in the workshop area plus separate removal of the heating oil tank and container housing from site	6,720
Equipment for New Heating System	10 x gas fired radiant heaters including controllers, flues and all suspension kits etc	21,872
Installing New Heating System	Installation including new internal gas main, electrics, labour and all access equipment	40,603
Upgraded gas supply	Installation of upgraded gas supply including Cadent admin fees	21,535
Installing New Ventilation	New localised fan vents to be placed around workshop for increased air circulation	5,250
Approval costs	Building control costs	500
Project fees @ 10%	Project Management costs (Blackpool Council M&E specialist)	9,648
Contingency 10%	Contingency and inflation allowance	10,612
Total Costs	Full project costs	116,740

6. The capital budget of £116,740 to deliver the Snowdon Road heating scheme was approved at the Budget Council meeting of the 4th March 2024.
7. Regarding revenue budgets, utility costs are currently volatile so potential savings or additional costs are uncertain. However, based on estimated future price changes and expected use of the heating system, annual gas charges are estimated at about £7,000. Oil costs for 2022/23 were £8,200 and are likely to have further increased since. As such it is expected that there should be an annual revenue saving of at least £1,200 with the new system.

PROCUREMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

8. The removal of the existing heating oil system and the supply and installation of the new system will be delivered under Blackpool Council's specialist Mechanical and Electrical framework. Five contractors on the framework will be asked to provide a price to undertake the work. This complies with Fylde Council's procurement rules and procedures for mid-range contracts. It is recommended that once the tenders are received that the award of tender is delegated to the Head of Technical Services based on the most economically advantages to the Council.
9. Blackpool Council's Mechanical Engineer has been engaged to prepare the detailed specification and contract documentation, tender the works and project manage the removal of the old system and installation of the new system at a cost of £9648. The Head of Technical Services is satisfied that this represents value for money and is the best way to deliver the project.
10. The new system requires the existing gas supply to the building to be increased in capacity. This will require the existing gas supply to be disconnected and the old gas meter disposed of with a new gas supply pipe and meter to be installed. Due to the lead-in times required for these works and to ensure that the new gas supply is installed by the time the new heating system is in place, these works have been awarded to a contractor following a tender exercise where 3 quotes were received. The total value of this work is £9,254. The order for these works has been issued under section 6.7 of the Council's Constitution Financial Procedure Rules due to the urgent requirement for these works to be carried out prior to the main scheme. In accordance with those rules these works is now being reported to the committee for information.

PROGRAMME

• Preparation of Specification and contract documents	14 th June 2024
• Out to tender	14 th June 2024
• Award of Tender	15 th July 2024
• Start on site	29 th July 2024
• Complete	27 th Sept 2024

RISK ASSESSMENT

11. The main risk to the scheme is the upgrade of the existing gas supply. These works have already been commissioned to limit this risk.

CONCLUSION

12. Members are asked to approve the draw-down of £116,740 to enable officers to proceed with procuring a replacement heating system for the fleet workshops at Snowdon Road Depot and authorise the Head of Technical Services to award the contract once the tender process is complete.
13. Members are also asked to note that Blackpool Council's Mechanical Engineer has been appointed to project manage this scheme and that works to replace the existing gas supply have been awarded to a contractor under section 6.7 of the Council's Constitution Financial Procedure Rules due to the urgent requirement for these works to be carried out prior to the main scheme. In accordance with those rules these works is now being reported to the committee for information.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	<p>Approve the full drawdown of £116,740 within the 2024/25 Council's Capital Programme to replace the existing heating system, within the Fleet Workshop at Snowdon Road Depot.</p> <p>Approve the delegation of the award of tender for the works contract to the Head of Technical Services based on the most economically advantageous tender to the Council.</p> <p>Note that Blackpool Council's Mechanical Engineer has been engaged to project manage the scheme.</p> <p>Note the award of works to the value of £9,254 to a contractor to remove the existing gas supply to the building and install a new one.</p>
Legal	None arising from this report
Community Safety	None arising from this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	The new heating system should be more efficient and have less environmental impact. By removing the old system the risk of a potential oil leak from the current storage will be mitigated
Health & Safety and Risk Management	The new heating system will be more suitable to the workshop environment which will improve working conditions for staff.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
4 th March 2024 Full Budget Council – Approval of the capital programme for 2024/25 including the replacement of the heating system at Snowdon Road Depot's Fleet Workshop.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Darren Bell and Andrew Loynd	Darren.bell@fylde.gov.uk , Tel 01253 658465 Andrew.loynd@fylde.gov.uk , Tel 01253 658527	11 th June 2024

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF CORPORATE SERVICES	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	25 JUNE 2024	8
FULLY FUNDED ADDITION TO THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME REPLACEMENT MICROPHONE SYSTEM – COUNCIL CHAMBER			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Customer & Operational Services (Councillor Michelle Morris)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide details of the proposal to replace the current microphone system in the Council Chamber to address long standing challenges with the reliability of audio quality in meetings and in live streams and recordings.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is recoverable under section 7 of part 3 of the constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Executive Committee is requested to support the decision to replace the microphone system in the Council Chamber.
2. To approve an addition to the capital programme in the sum of £43,000 in 2024/25 fully funded from the council's Capital Investment Reserve.
3. To delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Lead Member for Customer and Operational Services, to carry out the appropriate procurement and selection of a system that meets the specification within the report.

REPORT

BACKGROUND

1. Stakeholders using the Council Chamber have experienced challenges with the reliability and quality of the audio system which has impacted on in-person meetings and live-streamed or recorded sessions. Addressing this will improve communication, enhance public trust, and reduce technical support demand. The existing microphone system no longer meets the need for reliable audio transmission. A replacement system is required that will better support transparency, accessibility, and effective governance.
2. A 'fit for purpose' audio system is required to deliver the following:

- a. Modern, reliable audio setup in the Council Chamber.
- b. Support the transparency and accessibility of council meetings.
- c. Be easy for stakeholders to operate.
- d. Compliance with legal standards and health and safety.
- e. Minimum technical resource for system support.
- f. Compatibility for future video upgrades.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENT

3. The requirement to replace the existing system has been under consideration for some time, every effort has been made to address the issues with the current system prior to considering a replacement. The current system has had improvements introduced in response to user feedback and technical issues, but these have not been resolved. The current system will be retained for use in other council operated meeting rooms and venues.
4. The proposal is to replace the system in the Council Chamber with a facility that meets the following requirements:
 - a. Sufficient participant units and one control unit to ensure all stakeholders can communicate clearly and effectively and the system can be centrally managed.
 - b. Secure and reliable connectivity.
 - c. Easy to operate with minimum requirement from the user.
 - d. Ability to capture audio from a seating or standing position.
 - e. Professional installation and support.
 - f. On site user training.
 - g. Compatible with digital video or live streaming.
5. There will be a requirement for any potential supplier to provide proof of concept through a demonstration of the system either onsite or at a venue currently operating the system.

BUDGET REQUIREMENT

6. Officers have looked at several systems used at other local authorities and have held discussions with providers. Based on this research and extensive enquiries with suppliers in the market covering system requirements, installation, support, and quotes already informally provided, a budget of £43,000 would be sufficient to procure a high quality modern 'fit for purpose' and future proof system.
7. It is proposed that the £43,000 budget is fully funded from the Capital Investment Reserve and it is added to the capital programme for the current financial year 2024/25 to allow for the system to be procured and installed as soon as practical.
8. There are no additional revenue implications to this proposal, the system will be maintained and supported by the facilities and IT teams.
9. Procurement will be carried out through an approved list of A.V. equipment specialists in accordance with regulations for projects of this value, a direct award will be made based on specification submitted from a minimum of three quotations.

CONCLUSION

10. Members are asked to approve the decision to replace the existing audio system in the Council Chamber and to allocate £43,000 to the capital budget programme for the current financial year 2024/25, with the budget to be fully funded from the Capital Investment Reserve. Members are also asked to delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Services to work with the Lead Member for Customer and Operational Services on the procurement and selection of a system that meets the stated requirements and is within budget.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report recommends an addition to the capital programme in the sum of £43,000 in 2024/25 fully funded from the council's Capital Investment Reserve. There are no additional revenue implications to this proposal as the new equipment will be managed within existing resources.
Legal	None arising from the report
Community Safety	None arising from the report
Human Rights and Equalities	None arising from the report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None arising from the report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None arising from the report

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
Finance and Democracy Committee 26/9/2016 approved the "proposed works in relation to the Accommodation Project in the sum of £518k (that being £363k for Phase 6 (Option 2b)". Phase 6 of the Accommodation project included the IT installation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Gemma Broadley	Gemma.broadley@fylde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658513	07/06/2024

No Attachments