

Public Document Pack



West Devon
Borough
Council

Please reply to: Darryl White
Service: Strategy & Commissioning
Direct Dial: (01803) 861247
E-mail address: Darryl.White@swdevon.gov.uk
Date:

Dear Councillor

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 17TH OCTOBER, 2017

I refer to the agenda for the above meeting and attach papers in connection with the following item(s).

Agenda No Item

7. **One Council Consultation Process (Pages 1 - 30)**

One Council Consultation Results

Yours sincerely

Darryl White
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services

Encs

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive Summary

One Council Consultation Results

1.0 Number of respondents

- 1.1 Based on 2016 Office of National Statistics population figures 3.02% of the combined South Hams District and West Devon Borough population responded to the consultation. This equates to 3.33% of the South Hams population and 2.54% of the West Devon population. Or based on the 2017 Electoral Register 4.01% of South Hams residents registered to vote and 3.11% of West Devon population registered to vote (see Appendix A).
- 1.2 2,807 respondents stated they were based in South Hams and 1,387 stated they were based in West Devon. The vast majority of respondents stated they were residents in the area and there was a very modest take up from businesses and visitors equating to just over 1% of all respondents.

2.0 Support for the proposal

- 2.1 Of those who expressed a view either for or against the proposal 24% said 'yes' and 76% said 'no'. These percentages represent both authorities across all channels namely online, telephone and postal (paper) surveys (see Appendix A).

3.0 Council Tax Equalisation

- 3.1 South Hams residents were provided with six options for equalising council tax. The vast majority opted for the longest period of equalisation namely 10 years. 77% of those who were against the proposal opted for the 10 year equalisation period, compared with only 30% of those in favour of the proposal (see Appendix A).

4.0 Number of Councillors and frequency of contact

- 4.1 The for and against responses to the reduction of Councillors question was fairly evenly balanced with 44% of South Hams respondents and 47% of West Devon respondents stating they would be concerned at a reduction of Councillors. This compared with 48% and 47% respectively who stated they would not be concerned by a reduction.
- 4.2 38% of respondents in South Hams and 42% in West Devon had not had contact with their Councillor(s) over the last 2 years. However, 17% of South Hams respondents and 14% of West Devon respondents had contacted their Councillor(s) more than five times in the last two years (see Appendix A).

5.0 Variance in response rates

- 5.1 The telephone survey was undertaken by an independent and professional research company, namely Marketing Means. All respondents were screened to ensure they genuinely resided in the area and were statistically representative of the population in terms of age and gender. It is important to note that this representative sample provided significantly different results compared to the self-selecting online and paper survey respondents. In the telephone survey, of those who expressed a view either for or against the proposal 51% of all respondents said 'yes' with 49% choosing 'no'. This equates to 61% in West Devon and 41% in South Hams saying 'yes' (Appendix A).

- 5.2 There were 393 postal (paper) survey responses in total. Unfortunately 15 paper surveys were submitted on photo copied forms with the sequential number removed. 71 surveys contained incomplete responses to at least one question. However, all paper survey responses have been counted. Of those paper survey respondents who expressed a view either for or against the proposal 15% of respondents said 'yes' to the proposal and 85% said 'no'. This equates to 34% in West Devon and 8% in South Hams saying 'yes' (see Appendix A).
- 5.3 Online responses were by far the most popular way of responding with over 3,000 online responses. Of those online survey respondents who expressed a view either for or against the proposal 19% of respondents said 'yes' to the proposal and 81% said 'no'. This equates to 40% in West Devon and 11% in South Hams saying 'yes'. Over 300 of the online responses showed duplicate IP addresses this is an indication that a single household/business/building has submitted more than one response. However this might be due to multiple occupants and so all of these responses have been counted (see Appendix A).
- 5.4 The survey was open for just over 8 weeks and the response rates during this period increased most notably when the postcards were delivered at the end of August. Note, the consultation was extended by one day to compensate for an ICT glitch which was out of our control and occurred on the last Sunday of the consultation period (see Appendix A).

6.0 Qualitative Responses

- 6.1 An independent Market Research company (Marketing Means) was appointed to analyse the comments in each of the 4,221 responses.
- 6.2 For those who participated in the telephone survey the most popular comments with regards to benefits respondents would like to see in their community can be summarised as follows:
1. Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities (*e.g. schools, hospitals, libraries, health services*)
 2. Protect or improve recycling/waste/garden waste collections
 3. Protect or improve existing services/don't cut existing services further
 4. Improve roads/traffic issues
 5. Improve public transport and links
 6. Housing, property and planning changes/improvements
- 6.3 The most popular responses provided in the online/paper survey with regards to benefits respondents would like to see in their community were:
1. Merger will provide none/no benefits
 2. Other comments against the merger
 3. Council Tax: Reduce council tax or one off charges/don't put council tax up now or lessen future raises
 4. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
 5. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this
- 6.4 Comments or concerns expressed by telephone survey respondents can be summarised as follows:
1. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this
 2. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
 3. Would like more information about merger/other options
 4. Comments in support of merger (which did not fall in to any of the other categories)

6.5 Most popular responses provided in the online/paper survey with regards to comments, concerns are as follows:

1. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this
2. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
3. Other comments against the merger
4. No changes necessary/ happy as things are
5. Need to improve council savings/reduce council spending in other ways
6. Concerns about the financial viability/ service level of one council

6.6 The full Marketing Means qualitative analysis report can be found at Appendix B.

7.0 Stakeholder Responses

7.1 64% of Town & Parish Councils responded to the consultation (74% in South Hams, 52% in West Devon). Of all town and parish councils that responded, 13 support, 49 are against and 7 were not able to reach a decision.

7.2 Many of the Town and Parish Councils provided lengthy responses in respect of the proposal. Of those Councils against the proposal, some of the key themes were:

- Reduction in democratic representation across the larger area
- That more information was required on the proposal (such as where the HQ would be, how the savings would be generated and what the costs would be)
- Concerns over remoteness of access to services
- Acknowledgement of the difficult financial position of the Councils
- Loss of identity for the areas
- That options should be explored with other neighbouring authorities

7.3 Of the 19% of Town and Parish Councils that supported the proposal, some of the key themes were:

- That there were no realistic alternatives
- Ensuring that services remain accessible across the whole area would be important
- Wouldn't want to see service cuts
- That fair and proportional representation should be maintained

7.4 Of the Town and Parish Councils that did not provide a definitive response either way, the majority stated that they felt more information was required in order for them to make a decision on the proposal.

7.5 Responses from neighbouring authorities have stated they will support any decision made by South Hams District and West Devon Borough Councils and the vast majority of these stated they recognised the financial pressures faced and the rationale for the proposal. We had a very limited response from our letters to the business community, however in broad terms they were either supportive or neutral on the proposal.

7.6 There was also a low level of response from partner organisations (Housing Associations, LEP's, Health, Police and support groups etc). Of the 78 organisations that we wrote to (both email and

post), only 7 responses were received by the closure of the consultation. Of the responses received, the majority stated that it was not a subject that they have a specific view on either way but that they would have no specific objections to the formation of a Single Council. None were opposed to the proposal.

8.0 Press Coverage

- 8.1 Since the first article was published in June the Councils have issued 12 press releases to the local papers, TV and Radio. This includes explaining budget pressures and how the council tax system works. This has resulted in the Leaders talking on local radio, appearing on local BBC news and The Politics Show, talking about future budget cuts.
- 8.2 At least 44 news articles relating to the One Council proposal have been published in print and online since June. The content of 17 of these articles were negative towards the One Council proposal, 23 were fairly balanced, despite very negative and sensational headlines.
- 8.3 There were a few articles which we were unable to classify. Only the first few articles presented the One Council Proposal as a positive thing to do. Very quickly most articles present two arguments and it became difficult to classify which ones show the proposal in a positive or a negative light. Towards the end of the consultation, the majority of the articles were negative. Of the balanced articles often the language used by the journalist in reporting both sides does lean towards the sensational and could be misleading if not read in full.
- 8.4 There have been at least 26 letters pages containing letters written to the editors of local publications about the proposal. The majority of these are against the proposal.
- 8.5 During the consultation the Councils posted more than 310 messages on social media. Some of these were articles promoting the consultation events and directing people to the One Council webpage. Others were responding to enquiries made. The Councils also posted 35 videos explaining the forthcoming budget pressures and giving answers to likely questions the public might have. Each of these videos was viewed on average 400 times and the social media campaign to promote the consultation had a social media reach of over 450 thousand people throughout the 9 week period across Facebook and Twitter. In addition to this for the first time the councils ran a Thunderclap campaign which had a social reach of more than 15,000 people.

9.0 Consultation Events

- 9.1 During the eight week consultation, 33 events were held across the two Council areas which saw the Councils engage with a total of 823 individuals. While the number of events attended differed for each Council, the footfall for each Council was largely the same.
- 9.2 A total of 110 hours face to face engagement was undertaken through the formally arranged engagement events (this does not include Councillors attendance at Town and Parish Council meetings etc.)
- 9.3 To ensure that we engaged with the widest range of people, the events were held at a range of times across the week and weekend.

10.0 Independent Advisor Conclusion

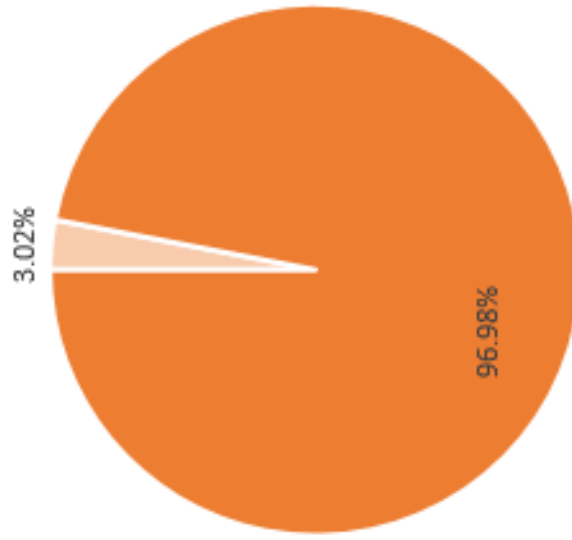
- 10.1 An independent research company (The Campaign Company) recommended by the LGA provided advice on the compilation of the consultation and have concluded the following:

- 10.2 *In all public consultations, the response cannot be seen as representative of the population but it is representative of interested parties who were made aware of the consultation and were motivated to respond. It is therefore also good consultation practice to proactively seek opinion through additional surveys (either by face-to-face or telephone methods) with a randomly selected and representative cross-section of residents. This helps to ensure that the consultation process accurately captures the views of the wider population rather than just those who are self-motivated to respond.*
- 10.3 *Having reviewed the consultation channels that were used in the One Council Consultation carried out South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council, it is clear that:*
- *consideration had been given to make sure the consultation was representative across the two local authority areas and an extensive programme of public engagement was conducted (including wide promotion of the One Council survey and a large number of public engagement events). This also included offering respondents the opportunity to respond in ways that suited them rather than just the One Council survey*
 - *the commissioning of a telephone survey helped to ensure that a wider section of the population could be actively engaged in the process*
 - *information was presented clearly and in an accessible way on a central consultation hub that was developed specifically for the purpose of this consultation*
- 10.4 *On this basis, good consultation principles appear to have been adhered to: there have been a range of opportunities offered for people to get involved including a proactive approach, through the survey, to seek representative opinion to inform the decision-making process. This is the best that any consultor can do in terms of ensuring a fair and inclusive process.*
- 10.5 The full Campaign Company report can be found at Appendix C.

This page is intentionally left blank

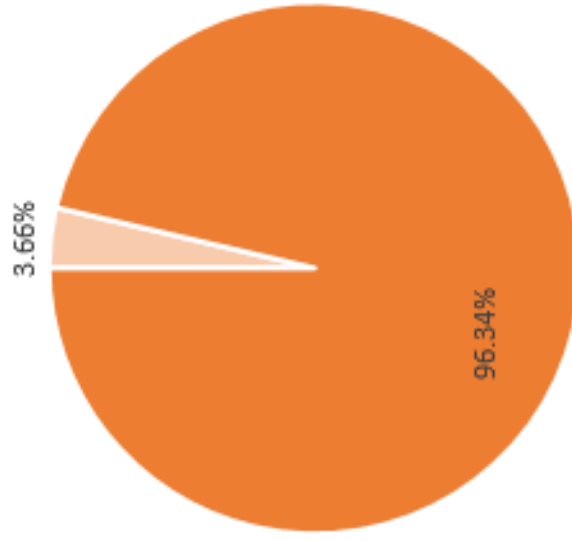
Respondents by Population Totals

Total Respondents Population



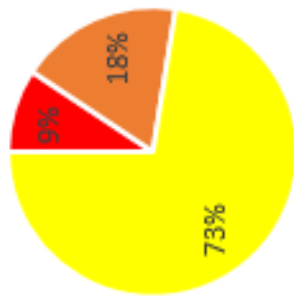
Respondents by Registered to Vote Totals

Total Respondents Reg. to Vote



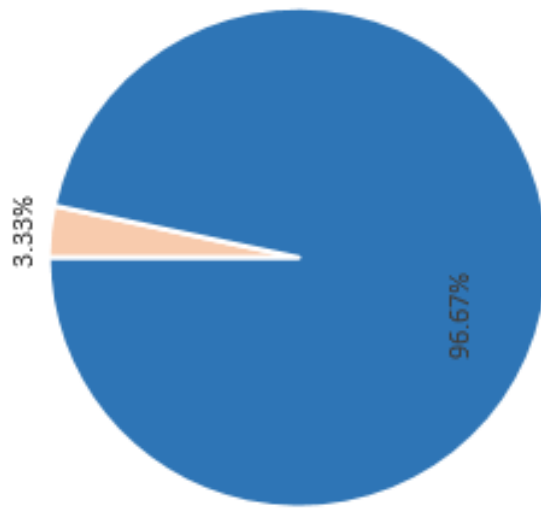
Channel

Postal Phone Online



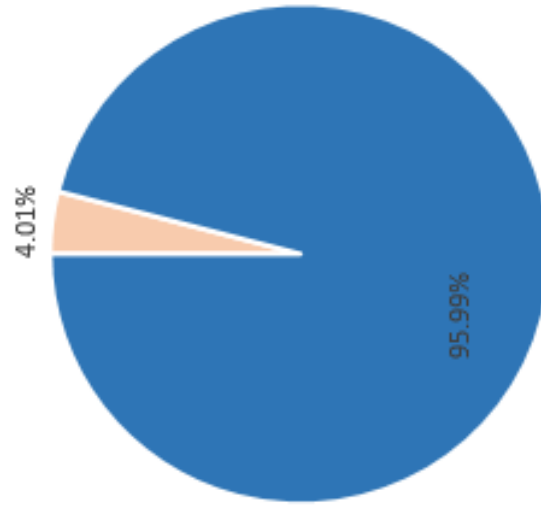
South Hams Respondents by Population

■ Total Respondents ■ Population



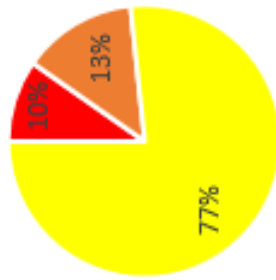
South Hams Respondents by Registered to Vote

■ Total Respondents ■ Reg. to Vote



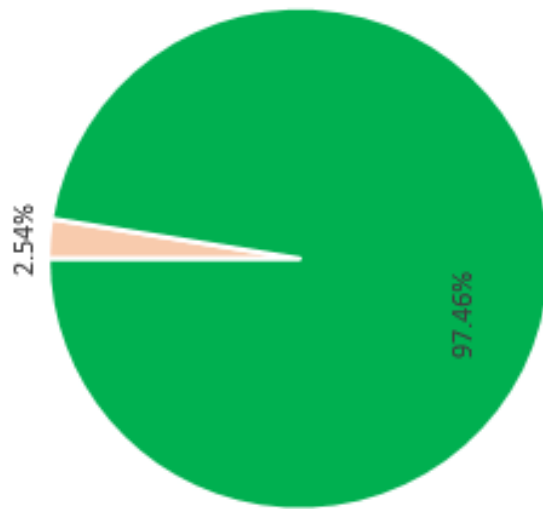
Channel

■ Postal ■ Phone ■ Online



West Devon Respondents by Population

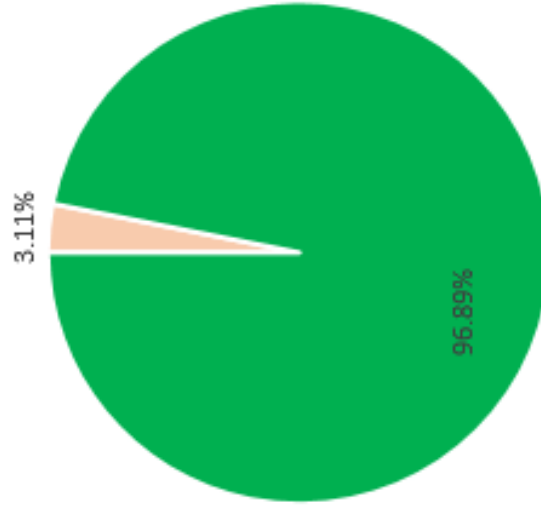
Total Respondents Reg. to Vote



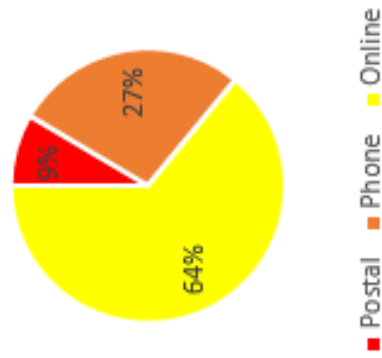
West Devon Respondents by Registered to Vote

Total Respondents Reg. to Vote

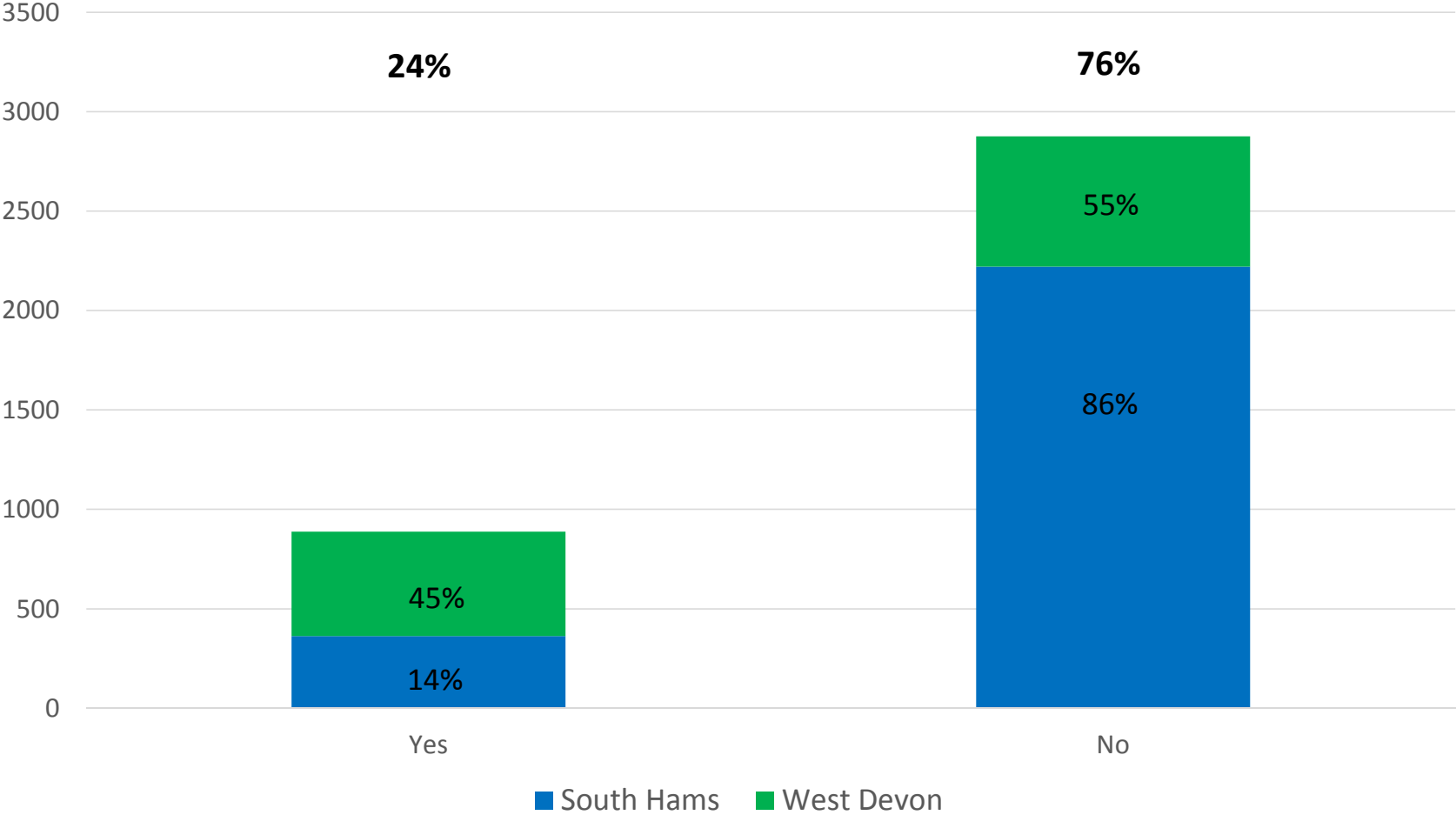
Total Respondents Reg. to Vote



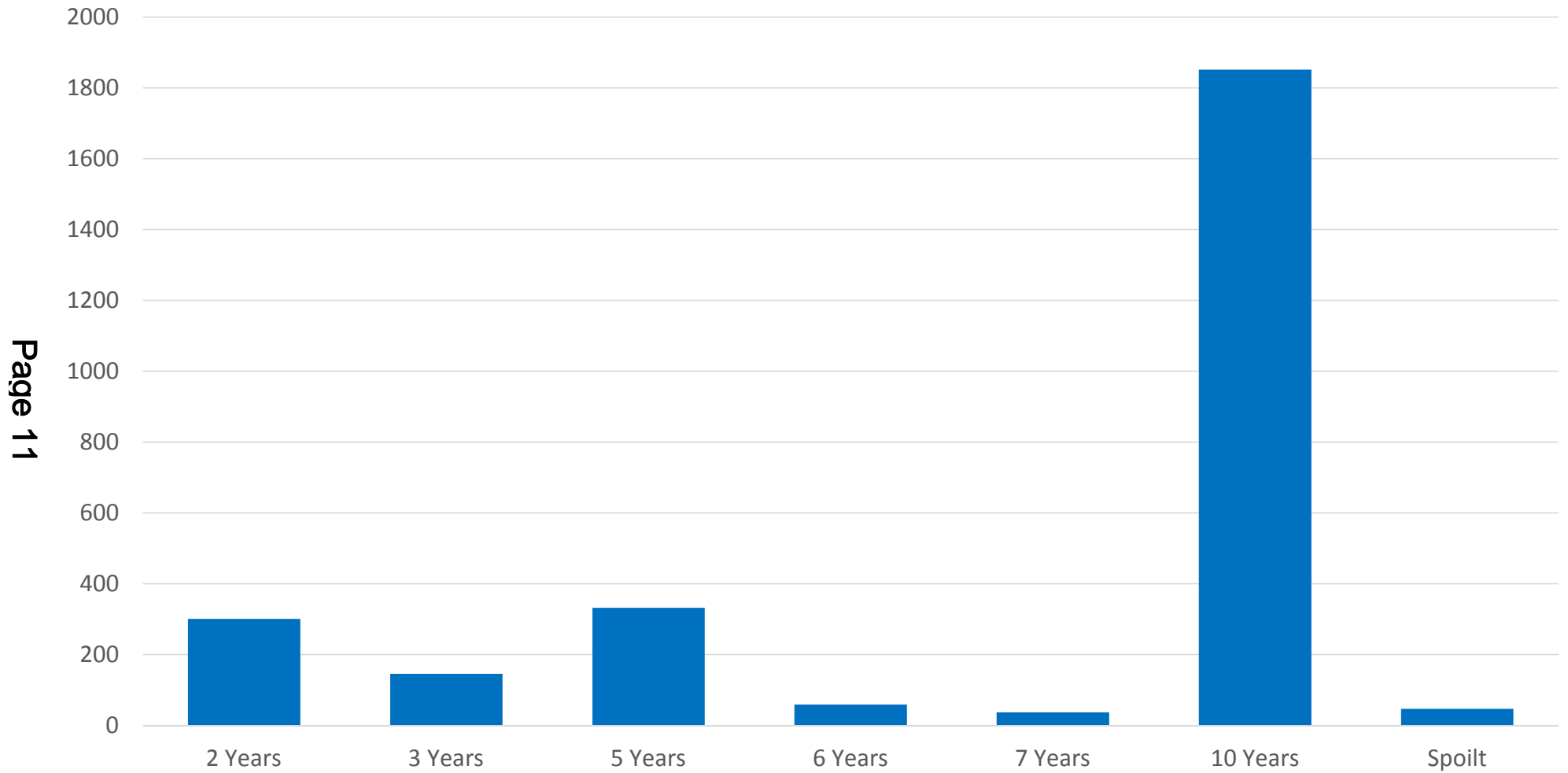
Channel



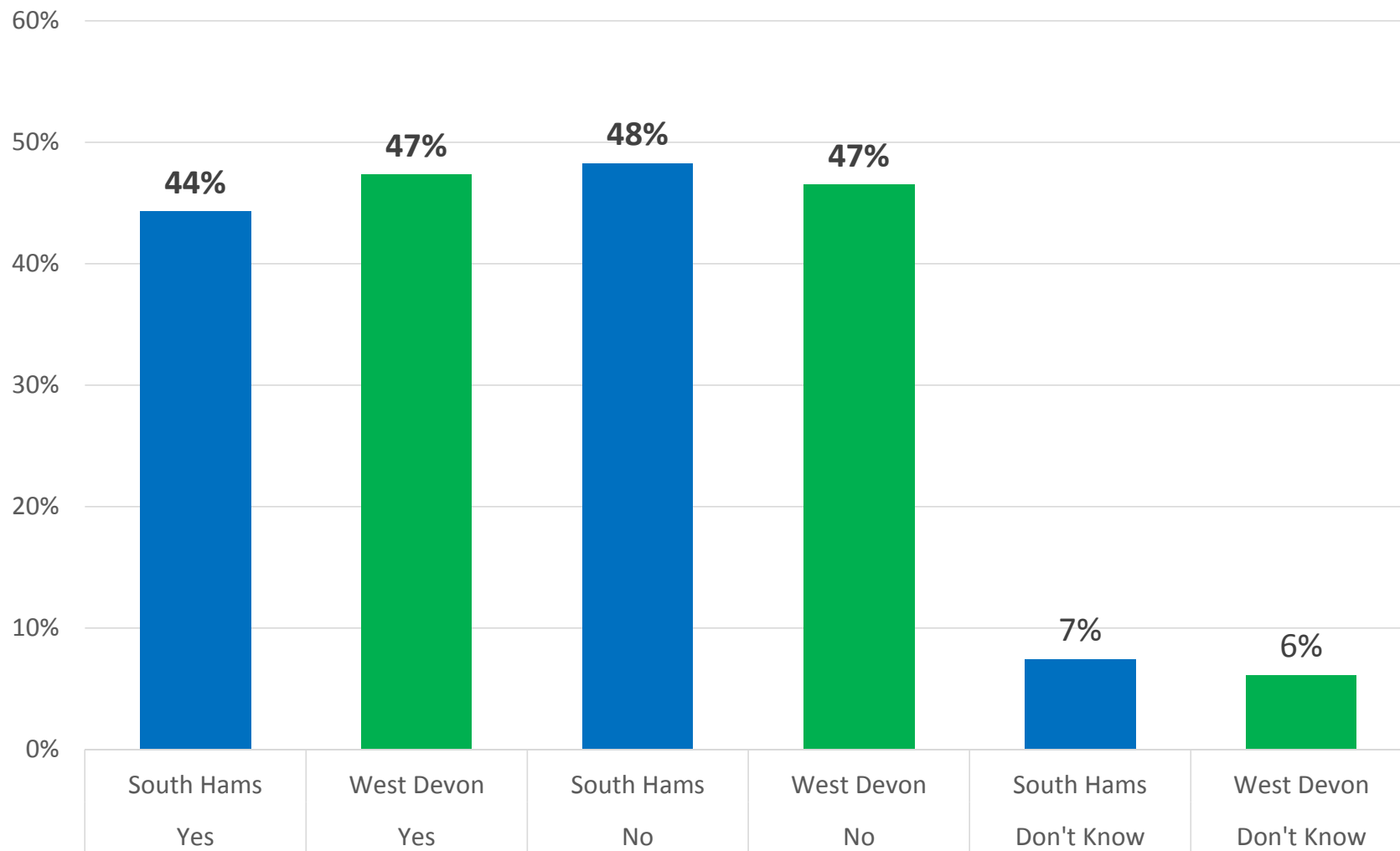
Numbers and Percentages of those responding Yes or No to One Council Proposal



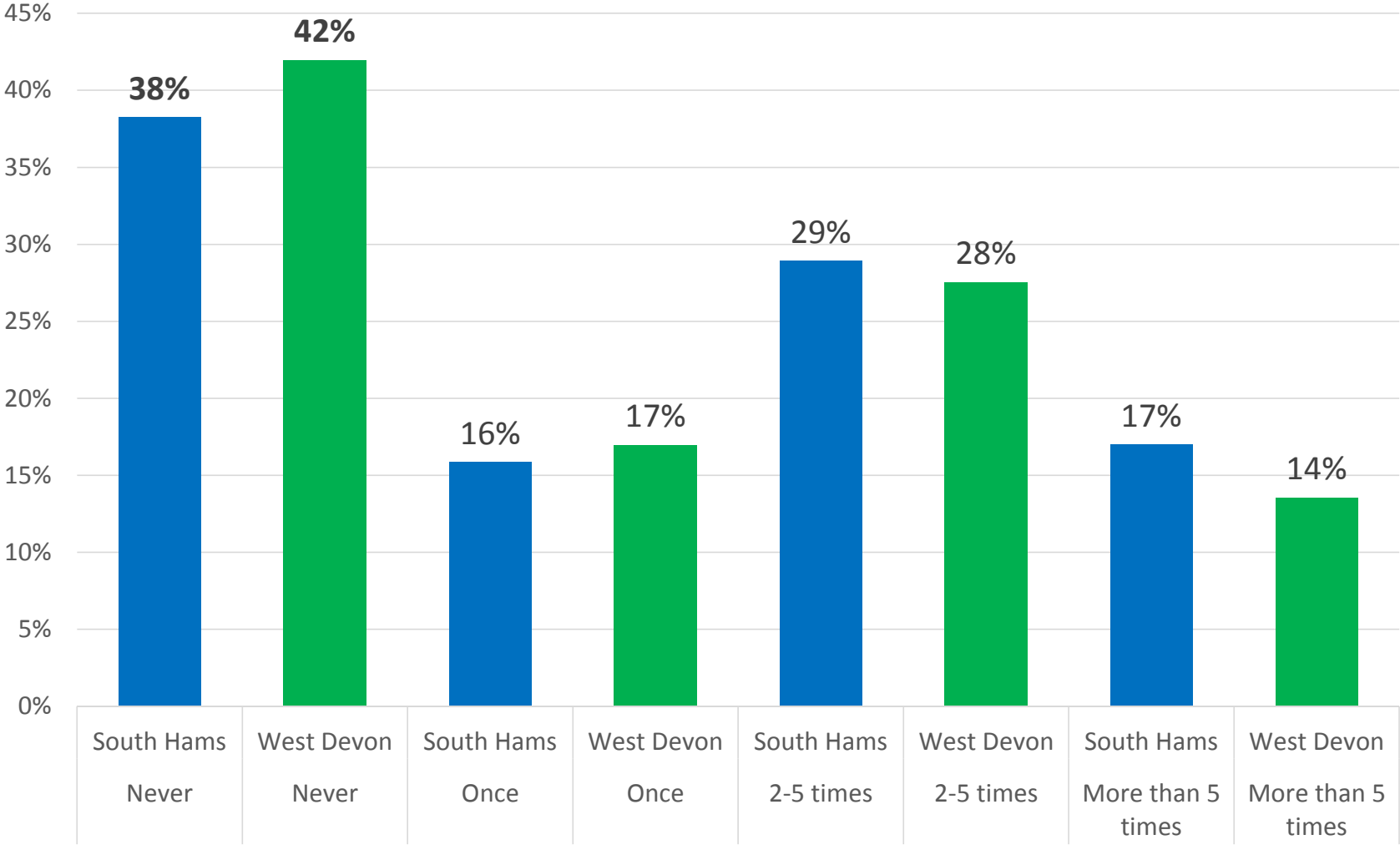
Council Tax Equalisation Period: All responses (South Hams residents only)



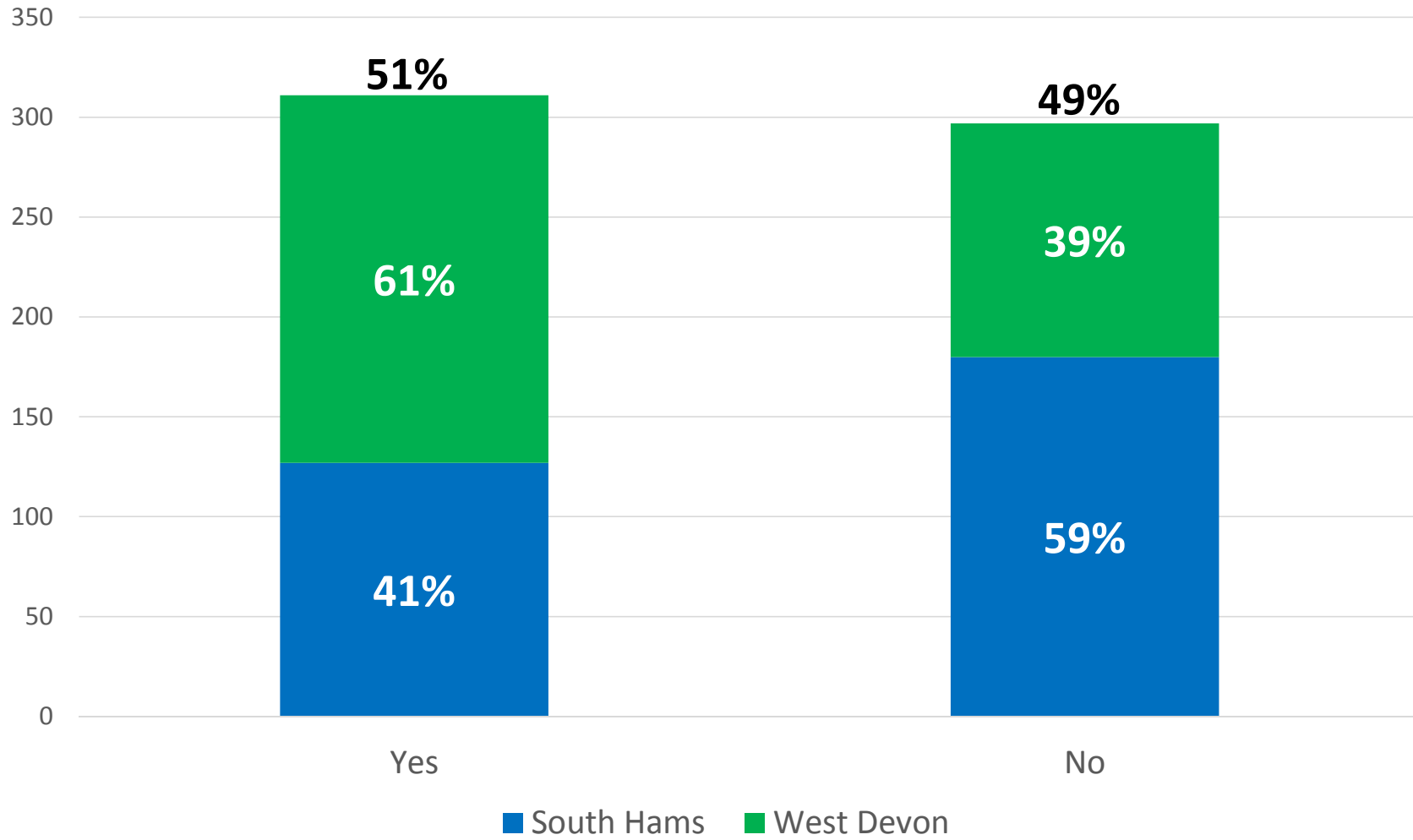
Does a reduction in Councillors concern you?



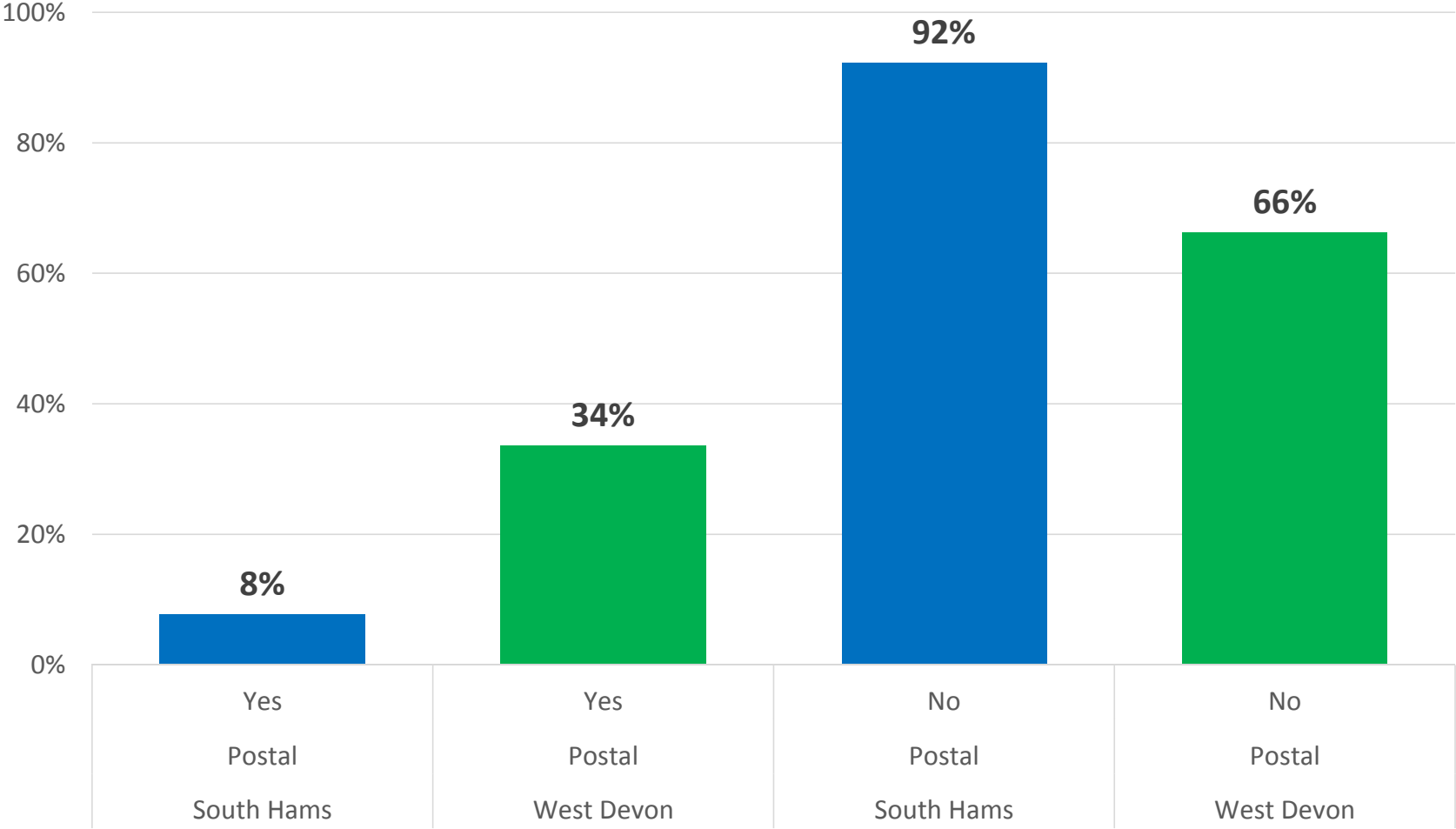
How many contacts with Councillors have you had?



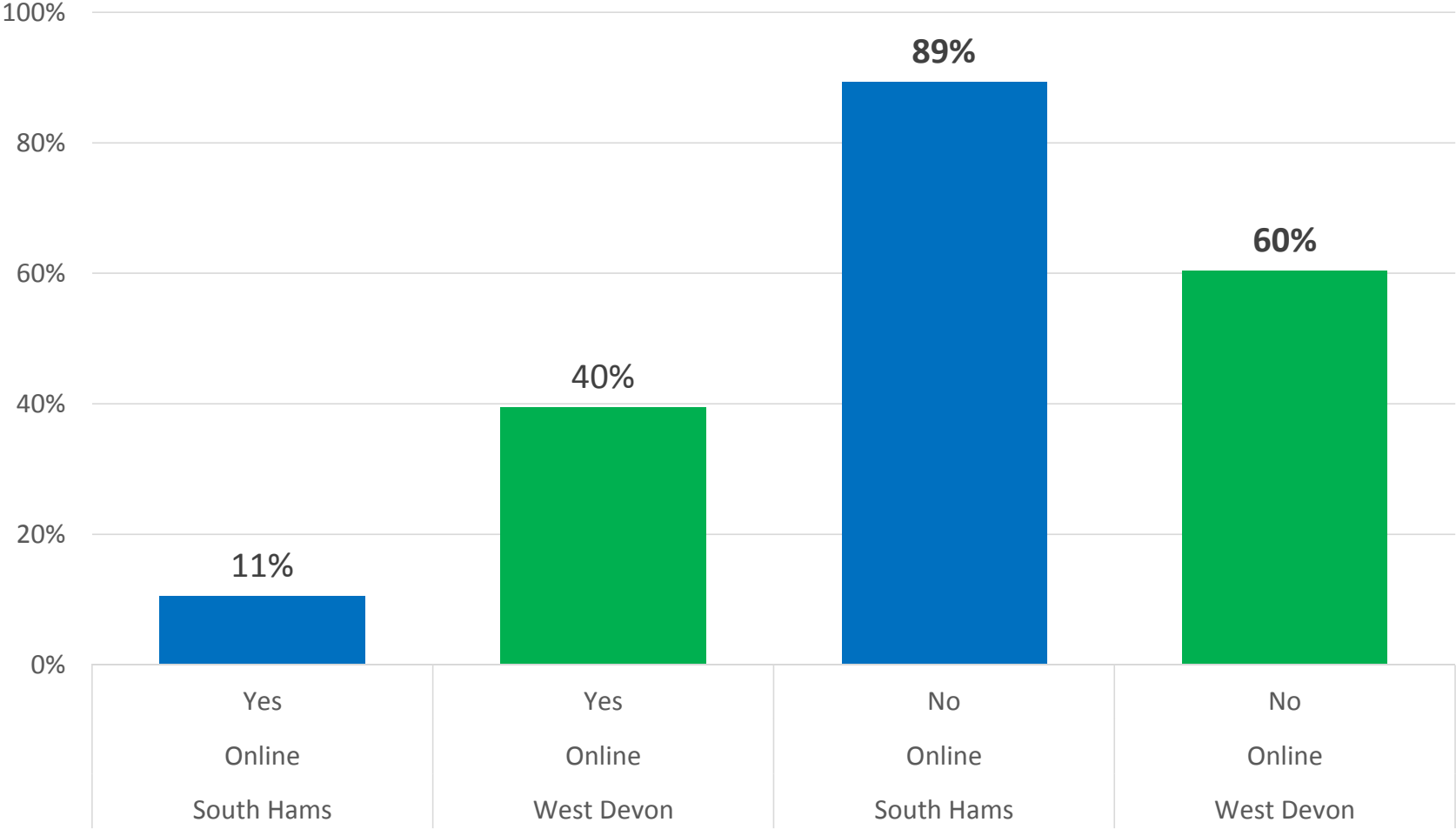
Support for Proposal: All Telephone Respondents



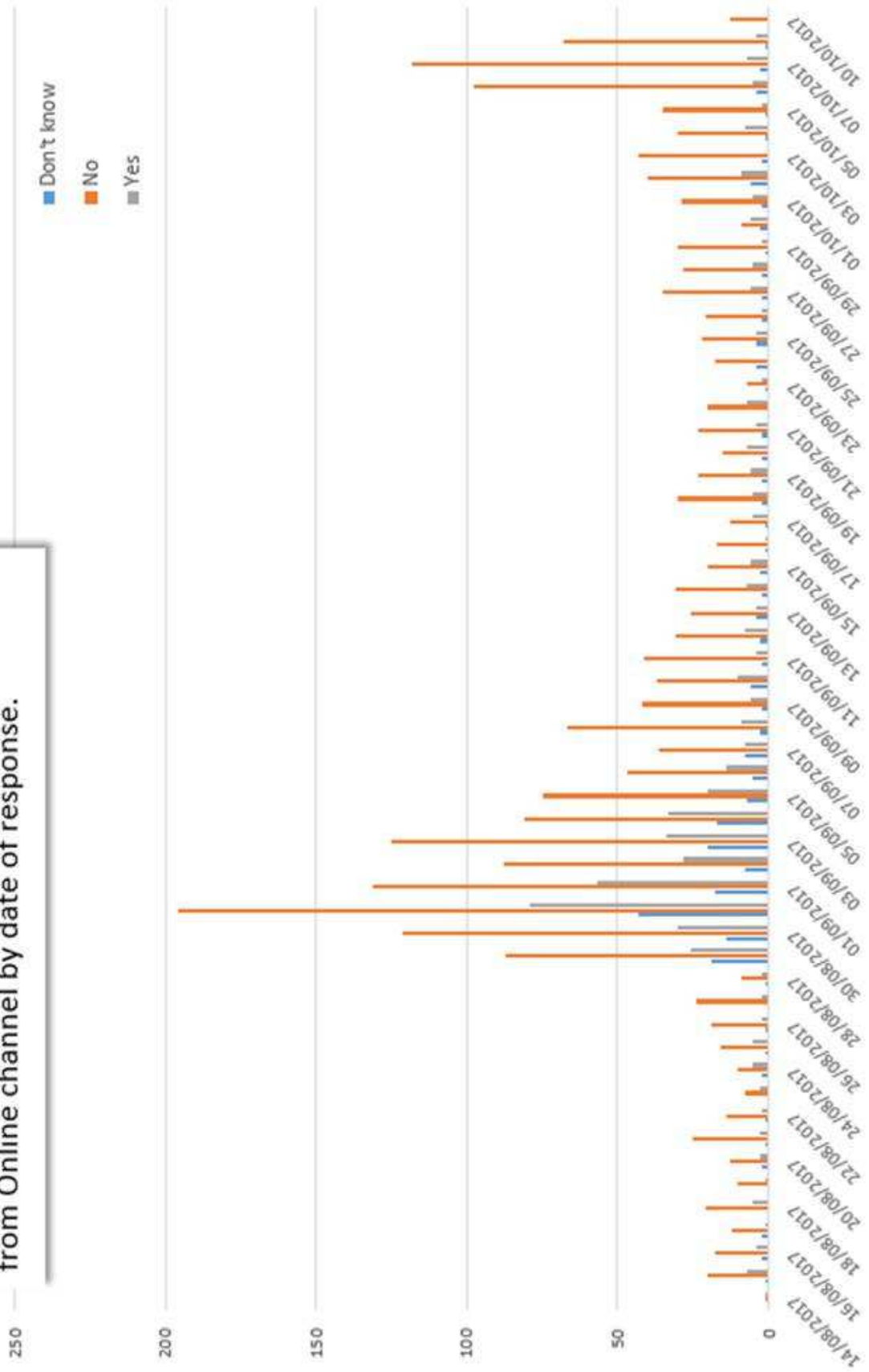
Percentage of those who expressed a preference for One Council:
Postal Respondents



Percentage of those who expressed a preference for One Council:
Online Respondents



Levels of support for the One Council proposal from Online channel by date of response.



This page is intentionally left blank

West Devon & South Hams Councils

One Council Resident Survey 2017

Coding _v2

10th October 2017



10th October 2017

Marketing Means was instructed to code the responses to two of the open ended questions: Q3 and Q8 included in the One Council resident survey.

Code frames were set up for both questions by Marketing Means and these were applied to all online and paper returns received by the Councils, as well as the telephone survey conducted by Marketing Means.

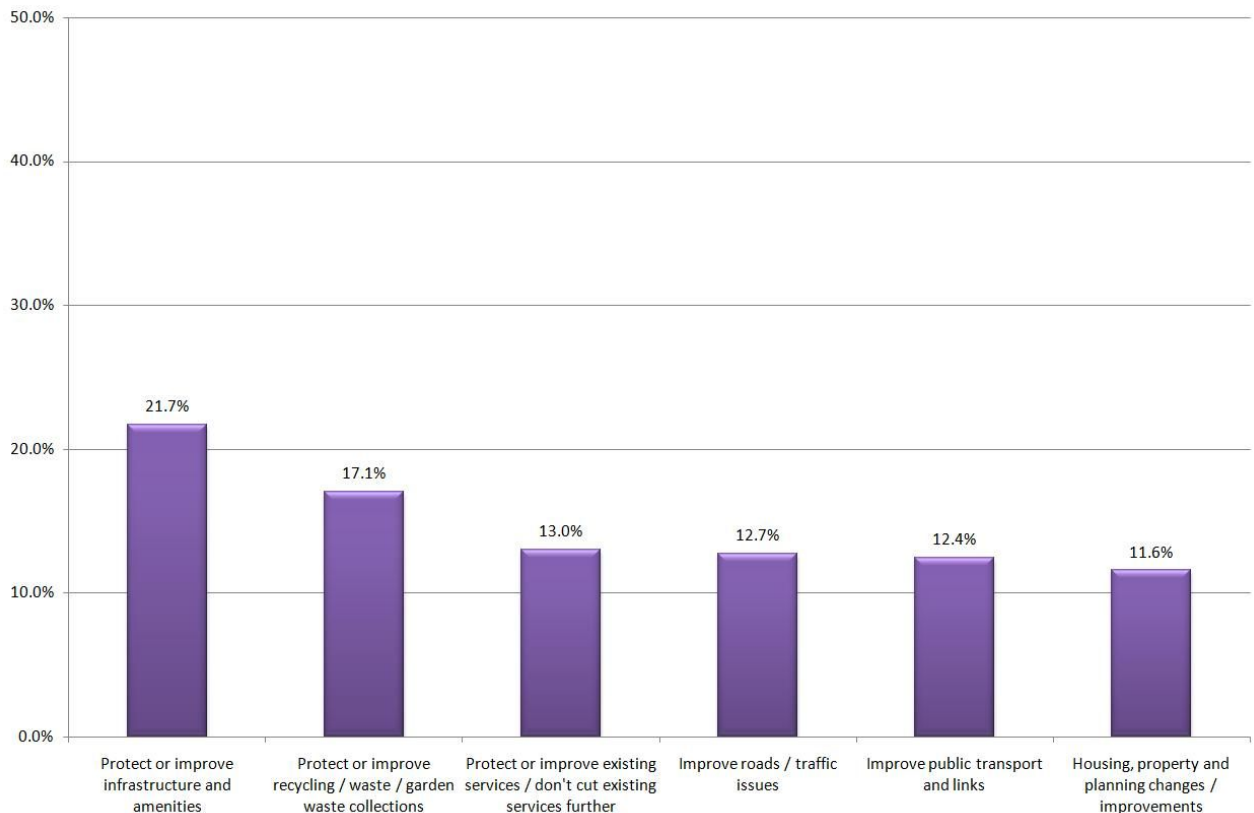
The analysis for the online/paper responses has been kept separate to the telephone survey, all data below is based on unweighted data.

SECTION A: Telephone Survey

Q3. If one new council is created what benefits would you like to see for your community?

Chart 1 – Q3 - Most popular responses - Telephone survey – Base 692*

*Note: no comment/no replies not included



Most popular responses provided in the telephone survey with regards to benefits they would like to see to their community were:

1. Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, libraries, health services)
2. Protect or improve recycling/waste/garden waste collections
3. Protect or improve existing services/don't cut existing services further
4. Improve roads/traffic issues
5. Improve public transport and links
6. Housing, property and planning changes/improvements

A full list is shown in the table below:

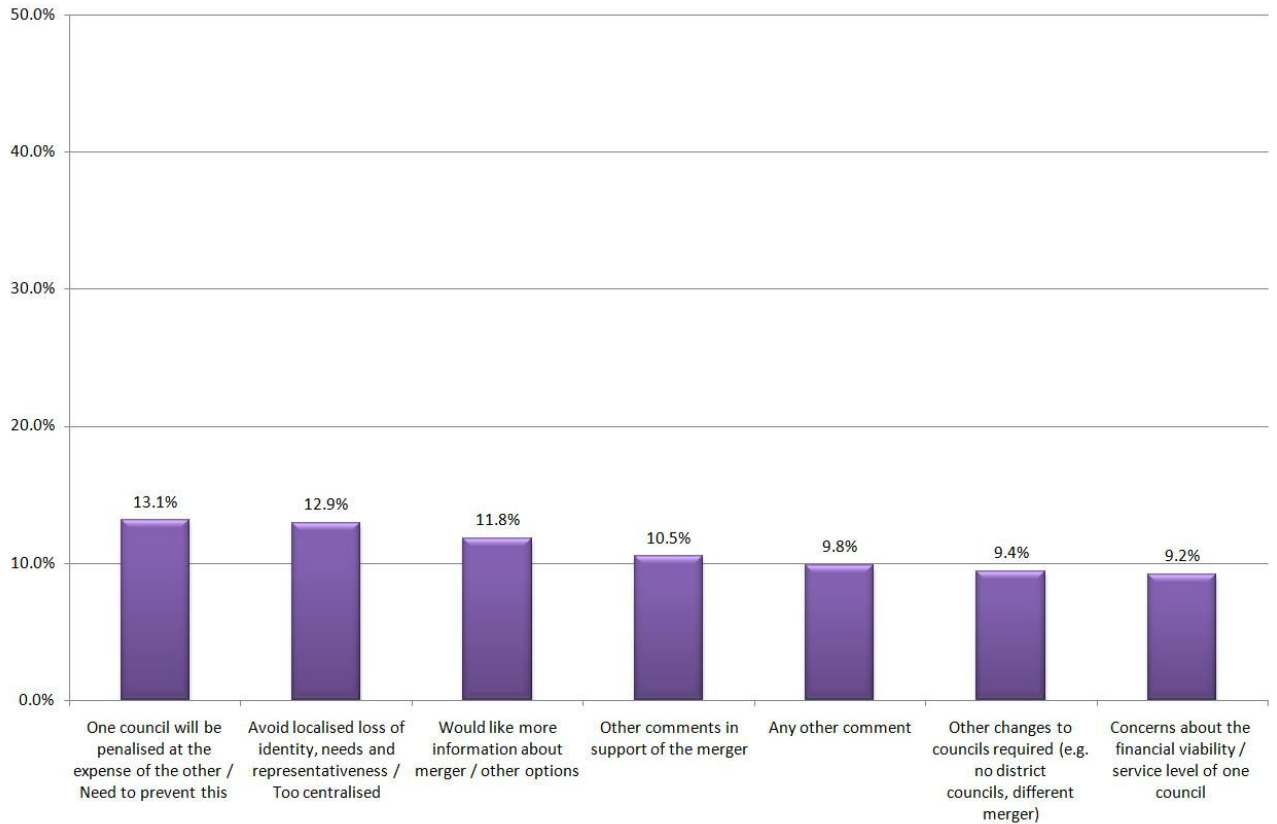
Table 1 – Full code list for Q3 - Telephone survey – Base 692

Q3_CODE	#	%
Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities	150	21.7%
Protect or improve recycling / waste / garden waste collections	118	17.1%
Protect or improve existing services / don't cut existing services further	90	13.0%
Improve roads / traffic issues	88	12.7%
Improve public transport and links	86	12.4%
Housing, property and planning changes / improvements	80	11.6%
Environmental improvements: litter / maintenance / landscaping of local area	69	10.0%
Mention of emergency services	59	8.5%
Support services and provision for elderly / vulnerable / young people e.g. social services	53	7.7%
None / No benefits	46	6.6%
Council Tax: Reduce council tax or one off charges / don't put council tax up now or lessen future raises	45	6.5%
(Positive) Merger to provide economies of scale / savings / more expertise / less bureaucracy	42	6.1%
Council contact: Engage and be more accessible and accountable to residents / more consultation	37	5.3%
Any other comment	34	4.9%
No changes necessary / happy as things are	33	4.8%
Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised	31	4.5%
Other comments against the merger	23	3.3%
Improve parking / cheaper parking provision	19	2.7%
Need to improve council savings / reduce council spending other ways (e.g. pay cuts)	16	2.3%
One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this	16	2.3%
Concerns about the financial viability / service level of one council	12	1.7%
Better support for businesses / employment / protect jobs	11	1.6%
Funding / grants: better allocation of funding for communities and charities	6	0.9%
Avoid changes creating increased pressure / costs on residents	4	0.6%
Concerns about the survey / consultation (e.g. only 350 characters)	4	0.6%
Other changes to councils required (e.g. no district councils, different merger)	2	0.3%
Merger won't save money / needs to save more money	2	0.3%
Other comments in support of the merger	2	0.3%

Q8. Do you have any comments, concerns or alternative ideas to create one new council?

Chart 2 – Q8 - Most popular responses - Telephone survey – Base 457*

*Note: no comment/no replies not included



Most popular responses provided in the telephone survey with regards any comments, concerns or alternative ideas to create one new council were:

1. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this
2. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
3. Would like more information about merger/other options
4. Comments in support of merger (which did not fall in to any of the other categories)

A full list is shown in the table below:

Table 2 – Full code list for Q8 - Telephone survey – Base 457

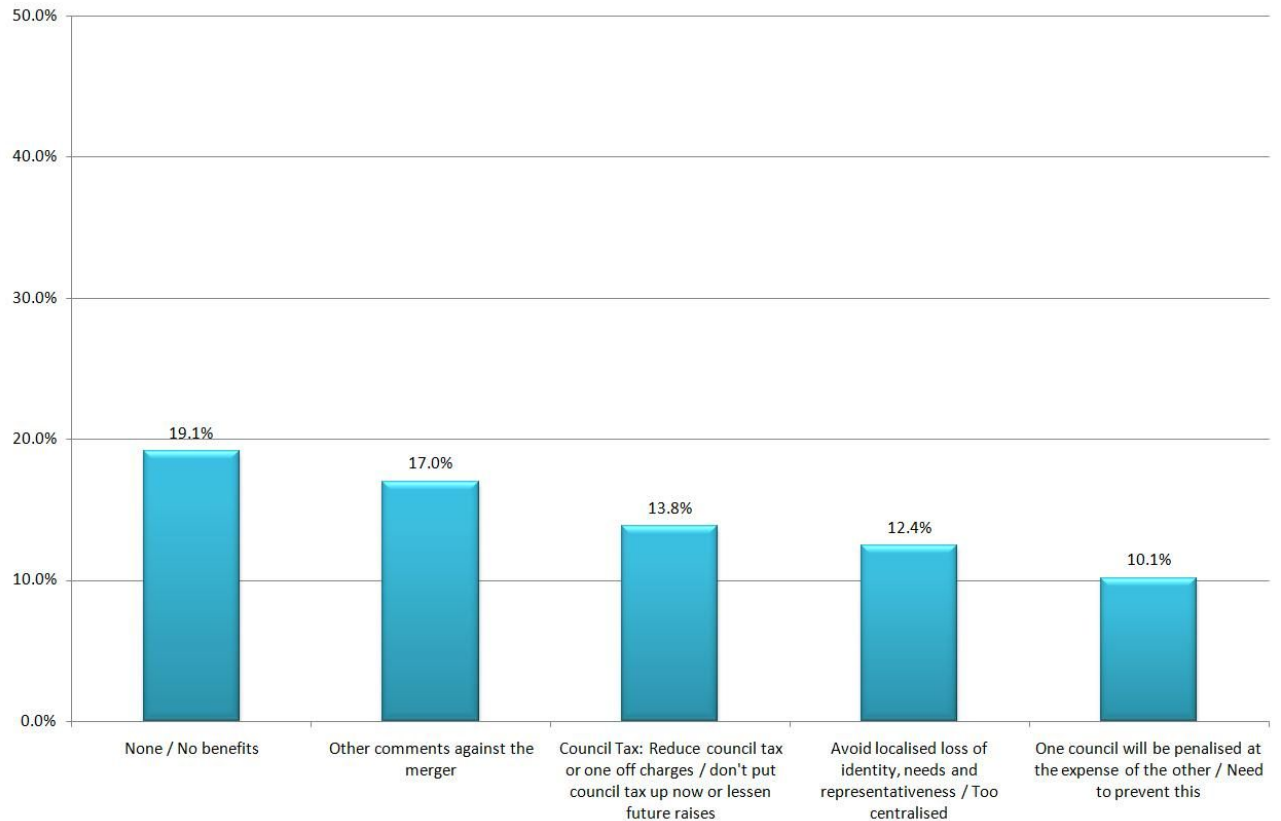
Q8_Code	#	%
One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this	60	13.1%
Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised	59	12.9%
Would like more information about merger / other options	54	11.8%
Other comments in support of the merger	48	10.5%
Any other comment	45	9.8%
Other changes to councils required (e.g. no district councils, different merger)	43	9.4%
Concerns about the financial viability / service level of one council	42	9.2%
No changes necessary / happy as things are	33	7.2%
Other comments against the merger	33	7.2%
Merger won't save money / needs to save more money	30	6.6%
Need to improve council savings / reduce council spending other ways (e.g. pay cuts)	26	5.7%
Council contact: Engage and be more accessible and accountable to residents / more consultation	20	4.4%
Protect or improve existing services / don't cut existing services further	19	4.2%
Housing, property and planning changes / improvements	14	3.1%
Believe the merger is a done deal	13	2.8%
Support services and provision for elderly / vulnerable / young people e.g. social services	11	2.4%
Reduce council tax or one off charges / don't put council tax up	11	2.4%
Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, libraries, health services)	9	2.0%
Avoid changes creating increased pressure on low-income households	9	2.0%
Improve roads / traffic issues	7	1.5%
Lobby central government more / represent local interests	7	1.5%
Environmental improvements: litter / maintenance / landscaping of local area	6	1.3%
Protect or improve recycling / waste / garden waste collections	5	1.1%
Concerns about the survey / consultation (e.g. only 350 characters)	5	1.1%
Improve parking / cheaper parking provision	3	0.7%
(Positive) Merger to provide economies of scale / savings / more expertise / diversity.	3	0.7%
Mention of emergency services	2	0.4%
Funding / grants: better allocation of funding	2	0.4%
Don't know	1	0.2%

SECTION B: Online and Paper responses

Q3. If one new council is created what benefits would you like to see for your community?

Chart 3 – Q3 - Most popular responses – Online/Paper survey – Base 2,035*

*Note: no comment/no replies not included



Most popular responses provided in the online/paper survey with regards to benefits they would like to see to their community were:

1. Merger will provide none/no benefits
2. Other comments against the merger
3. Council Tax: Reduce council tax or one off charges/ don't put council tax up now or lessen future raises
4. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
5. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this

A full list is shown in the table below:

Table 3 – Full code list for Q3 - Online/Paper Survey – Base 2,035

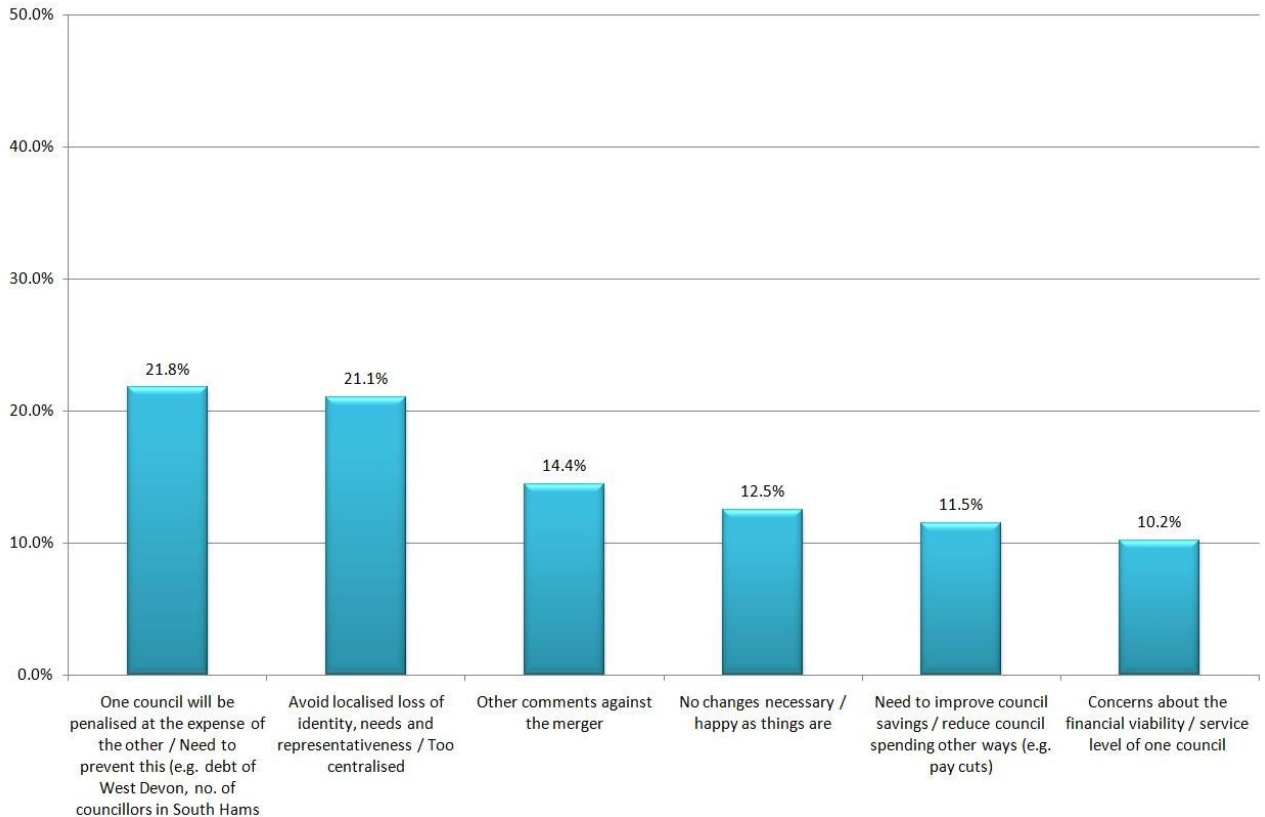
Q3_Code	#	%
None / No benefits	389	19.1%
Other comments against the merger	345	17.0%
Council Tax: Reduce council tax or one off charges / don't put council tax up now or lessen future raises	281	13.8%
Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised	253	12.4%
One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this	206	10.1%
Protect or improve recycling / waste / garden waste collections	202	9.9%
Housing, property and planning changes / improvements	177	8.7%
(Positive) Merger to provide economies of scale / savings / more expertise / less bureaucracy	177	8.7%
Other	153	7.5%
Improve roads / traffic issues	151	7.4%
Protect or improve existing services / don't cut existing services further	151	7.4%
Environmental improvements: litter / maintenance / landscaping of local area	124	6.1%
Concerns about the survey / consultation (e.g. only 350 characters)	122	6.0%
Merger won't save money / needs to save more money	103	5.1%
Council contact: Engage and be more accessible and accountable to residents / more consultation	98	4.8%
Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, libraries, health services)	87	4.3%
Need to improve council savings / reduce council spending other ways (e.g. pay cuts)	83	4.1%
Concerns about the financial viability / service level of one council	80	3.9%
No changes necessary / happy as things are	63	3.1%
Improve public transport and links	58	2.9%
Other changes to councils required (e.g. no district councils, different merger)	50	2.5%
Support services and provision for elderly / vulnerable / young people e.g. social services	38	1.9%
Mention of emergency services	37	1.8%
Improve parking / cheaper parking provision	36	1.8%
Other comments in support of the merger	35	1.7%

Believe the merger is a done deal	33	1.6%
Better support for businesses / employment / protect jobs	29	1.4%
Funding / grants: better allocation of funding for communities and charities	28	1.4%
Avoid changes creating increased pressure / costs on residents	21	1.0%
Lobby central government more / represent local interests	14	0.7%

Q8. Do you have any comments, concerns or alternative ideas to create one new council?

Chart 4 – Q8 - Most popular responses – Online/Paper survey – Base 2,218*

*Note: no comment/no replies not included



Most popular responses provided in the online/paper survey with regards comments, concerns or alternative ideas to create one new council:

1. One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this
2. Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised
3. Other comments against the merger
4. No changes necessary/ happy as things are
5. Need to improve council savings/reduce council spending in other ways
6. Concerns about the financial viability/ service level of one council

A full list is shown in the table below:

Table 4 – Full code list for Q8 - Online/Paper Survey – Base 2,218

Q8_Code	#	%
One council will be penalised at the expense of the other / Need to prevent this (e.g. debt of West Devon, no. of councillors in South Hams)	483	21.8%
Avoid localised loss of identity, needs and representativeness / Too centralised	467	21.1%
Other comments against the merger	320	14.4%
No changes necessary / happy as things are	277	12.5%
Need to improve council savings / reduce council spending other ways (e.g. pay cuts)	255	11.5%
Concerns about the financial viability / service level of one council	226	10.2%
Merger won't save money / needs to save more money	199	9.0%
Reduce council tax or one off charges / don't put council tax up	198	8.9%
Other changes to councils required (e.g. no district councils, different merger)	195	8.8%
Concerns about the survey / consultation (e.g. only 350 characters)	174	7.8%
Any other comment	164	7.4%
Council contact: Engage and be more accessible and accountable to residents / more consultation	158	7.1%
Would like more information about merger / other options	111	5.0%
Believe the merger is a done deal	87	3.9%
Avoid changes creating increased pressure on low-income households	66	3.0%
(Positive) Merger to provide economies of scale / savings / more expertise / diversity.	60	2.7%
Protect or improve existing services / don't cut existing services further	51	2.3%
Housing, property and planning changes / improvements	48	2.2%
Lobby central government more / represent local interests	43	1.9%
Other comments in support of the merger	41	1.8%
Better support for businesses / employment	29	1.3%
Protect or improve recycling / waste / garden waste collections	23	1.0%
Protect or improve infrastructure and amenities (e.g. schools, hospitals, libraries, health services)	12	0.5%
Environmental improvements: litter / maintenance / landscaping of local area	10	0.5%
Improve roads / traffic issues	8	0.4%
Funding / grants: better allocation of funding	5	0.2%
Mention of emergency services	4	0.2%
Improve parking / cheaper parking provision	2	0.1%
Support services and provision for elderly / vulnerable / young people e.g. social services	1	0.0%
Don't know	1	0.0%

Participation rates in local governance arrangement consultations – TCC opinion

Context

Figures from the Consultation Institute¹ suggest that respondent rates average about 1% for most decisions affecting local public services. It is also widely recognised that, unsurprisingly, local communities are not particularly interested in the political management arrangements of their local authority and are more interested in the services they receive. In Liverpool, for example, the response to the consultation exercise about local governance which went to every household elicited a rate of return of about 1% whereas their consultation about the future of the refuse collection service, conducted on the same basis, had a response rate of 26%.

This is why good consultation practice seeks qualitative as well quantitative insight and opinion to inform the decision-making process. This evidence is usually reviewed by the consultor alongside other relevant information, including financial, that will help them make their final decisions.

In all public consultations, the response cannot be seen as representative of the population but it is representative of interested parties who were made aware of the consultation and were motivated to respond. It is therefore also good consultation practice to proactively seek opinion through additional surveys (either by face-to-face or telephone methods) with a randomly selected and representative cross-section of residents. This helps to ensure that the consultation process accurately captures the views of the wider population rather than just those who are self-motivated to respond.

The situation in South Hams and West Devon

Having reviewed the consultation channels that were used in the *One Council Consultation* carried out South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council, it is clear that:

- consideration had been given to make sure the consultation was representative across the two local authority areas and an extensive programme of public engagement was conducted (including wide promotion of the *One Council* survey and a large number of public engagement events). This also included offering respondents the opportunity to respond in ways that suited them rather than just the *One Council* survey
- the commissioning of a telephone survey helped to ensure that a wider section of the population could be actively engaged in the process
- information was presented clearly and in an accessible way on a central consultation hub that was developed specifically for the purpose of this consultation

On this basis, good consultation principles appear to have been adhered to: there have been a range of opportunities offered for people to get involved including a proactive approach,

¹ The Consultation Institute, 2017: *Public consultations and the numbers game*

through the survey, to seek representative opinion to inform the decision-making process. This is the best that any consultor can do in terms of ensuring a fair and inclusive process.

The headline findings from the results received suggest that 3.02% of the total population for South Hams District and West Devon Borough responded to the consultation (this equates to 3.32% of South Hams population and 2.54% West Devon population). This is slightly higher than the average findings reported by the Consultation Institute.