

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organisation you belong to</u>	<u>Your feedback</u>
Catherine Lang	member of the public	I support the status quo for the Norfolk unitary
David Mansfield	member of the public	<p>I feel that west norfolk council should stay and totally DISAGREE with the proposal to create one large council or even two. We need to keep west norfolk and keep local community priorities.</p> <p>If we have one or two large authorities then Norwich and Yarmouth areas will have priority.</p>
David Poole-Gotto	member of the public	<p>I have views from the perspective of a council rate payer receiving services from Norwich City Council, who have considerable aspirations as a Unitary Authority and a questionable record of financial management. Also as an employee of Broadland District Council, an authority which provides generally good quality, cost effective services, but which will cease to exist if a unitary solution is implemented.</p> <p>While I acknowledge that there is a political will to consider a unitary solution in Norfolk and I can accept that the "doughnut" option enables the differing needs of the city and rural areas to be dealt with by two distinct unitary authorities, I am not convinced it is in the best interests of the population, to pursue any of the unitary options at this time. The area is suffering, like the rest of the country, from the negative effects of the financial downturn. Even using the optimistic estimates included in the proposed submissions, they only predict to begin to save money, several years after implementation of reorganisation. It is unlikely that the submitted estimates are completely accurate and any error is likely to result in a delay before savings are actually made. Nor do the financial costings take into account the potential negative effect on service delivery during the upheaval of relocation of staff/offices and amalgamation of IT systems etc.</p> <p>Surely it would be prudent to employ the principles of risk management. Rather than incur even the estimated (optimistic) initial additional costs by making fundamental changes to the way local government is organised, there is scope to investigate further enhanced partnership working between the existing authorities in Norfolk. If the existing authorities can continue to develop working together, it could produce improvements in service and savings almost immediately.</p> <p>In summary, in this time of severe financial pressure, why spend more of rate payers money now, for a possible, but by no means guaranteed saving, some years in the future, when the consolidation and improvement of existing successful mechanisms of service delivery can be achieved with minimal risk? Consequently, on the basis of affordability and value for money, I would support the status quo arrangement, with enhanced cooperation between the existing Norfolk Authorities.</p>

Grant Harrison	member of the public	<p>I would very much prefer for the status quo to continue. The current districts are already quite large. for example there are 9 counties smaller that the district of West Norfolk. One large unitary, or the doughnut would create an authority far to large and distant. The residents in Kings Lynn have nothing in common with those in Fakenham, or Cromer, or Yarmouth. The current set works very well. Please may it continue.</p> <p>Grant Harrison</p>
Anonymous	member of the public	<p>please keep my details private</p> <p>I support keeping the authorities as they are - they provide a good service. making them larger would make them too isolated</p>
Mrs Margaret Bridgman	resident/community organisation	<p>I am writing on behalf of Clifton Park Residents' Association.</p> <p>Of the two proposals we prefer the two tier approach with one council for Norwich and another for Rural Norfolk.</p> <p>However, we have strong reservations about either approach because we do not feel that a "rural" council will adequately reflect the needs of people living at the coast. Norfolk is a very diverse county and this should be reflected in the way local government is organised.</p> <p>We would also point out that the population of the county is increasing all the time, yet both of these proposals would actually reduce the number of representatives being elected to whatever council is created.</p> <p>We believe that this will mean that our views are less well represented and that this could have a serious detrimental effect on issues such as planning. e.g. the proposed Tesco in Sheringham.</p> <p>We do not feel that councillors from other parts of rural Norfolk will understand the need to preserve the distinct gaps between coastal villages and we are very concerned that this could lead to urban sprawl in the area and affect tourism and therefore jobs.</p> <p>M Bridgman Secretary Clifton Park Residents' Association</p>

valerie ciesciow	member of the public	Do not want to change to one council. Borough council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk should be left alone. If its not broke dont fix it! We will end up in all sorts of trouble if changed. Strongly against it.
Adrian Lawrence	member of the public	<p>Dear Sirs</p> <p>I consider this exercise as a total waste of time and money, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk have one of the best councils in the country and you Max Caller want to destroy it. The countryside has different needs to the city so one size does not fit all. This is just another Labour ploy to try and mess up a Conservative strong hold, and you Max Caller are just a whipping boy for Hazel Blears. When will you wake up and realise we oppose you. As for Daniel Cox he has a different view at every meeting so how can you take his views into account.</p> <p>I insist you leave us alone and let us continue to provide a good value and honest service and keep people in jobs, we can account for our actions unlike the Boundary committee.</p>
Dr Murray Gray	political group/organisation	<p>I am Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and Leader of the Opposition on South Norfolk Council. Your proposals create of real dilemma for those of us who support the principle of unitary government but cannot accept either of your proposed options. A unitary Norfolk would simply cover far too large an area, have too many Councillors and be an unwieldy and bureaucratic organisation. The "doughnut" simply cuts Norwich off from the hinterland with which it interacts on a daily basis. Since it is vital that the right unitary solution is implemented I urge you not to recommend either of these options. The most sensible unitary option would be based on the city-region principle as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) A West Norfolk UA based on Kings Lynn; (b) A Central Norfolk UA based on Norwich; (c) A Yarmouth/Lowestoft UA based on these two towns. <p>If the last, cross-border UA is not acceptable, then Yarmouth would become part of (b).</p> <p>And if none of these options is acceptable then we should, reluctantly, accept the status quo until a sensible unitary solution is proposed.</p> <p>Murray Gray</p>

Ann E Morgan	parish/town council	<p>I have recently heard presentations from both Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council on their bids for unitary status. I personally, do not consider either plans ideal but I do have severe reservations about the fate of so called 'Rural Norfolk' should Norwich City Council be successful. There appears to be little work done on the survival of the remainder of the county once the heart has been cut out; no centre point identified, no sponsor, no firm plans.</p> <p>Whilst both proposals offer potential benefits for town and parish councils to be allowed more freedom to manage local affairs, I would make a strong plea that any such groups should be elected and accountable to the residents of the town or parish. Local Development Partnerships do not fulfil this requirement. Hockwold, Feltwell, Methwold, Northwold. Mundford and Weeting are villages with more in common than adjacent towns; they could be federated into a Parish Borough with a board drawn from elected councillors. This group of villages could be centred on Methwold High School as they form its majority catchment area. This format could be rolled out through the county with both Town and Parish Councils having greater autonomy.</p> <p>I would emphasise that these are my own personal thoughts and not necessarily those of my colleagues on the council.</p> <p>Ann E Morgan Chairman Weeting with Broomhill Parish Council.</p>
Cllr Mary Palmer	member of the public	<p>I think why change something that is working fine, if we incorporate all these other area in to one i think it will fail. The area that are not strong and have the worst taxes will bring down the areas that are strong and try to keep taxes at a minimum. If you seem fit to make changes then i vote for the donut. Then at least we will stay who we are. People are always saying we need to change but i think only change if something is wrong and there is nothing wrong with broadland district. Look at it history and you will see what i mean. Thank you</p>

<p>Frederick Watkins</p>	<p>parish/town council</p>	<p>I am a member of Hetherset Parish Council, have served for over 20 years and am currently chairman. This is a personal submission and not on behalf of the Council. I support a unitary council covering the whole of Norfolk. I believe this would be more efficient and simplify getting things done with only one authority to deal with. The Community Partnership Boards as proposed would appear to have the potential to give parishes or groups of parishes greater involvement in matters that directly affect their communities.</p> <p>The work of District Councils is getting less, no housing stock to manage and recent changes to planning legislation reducing householder applications being two examples. In the forthcoming County Council elections 6 of the 12 seats in South Norfolk are being contested by sitting District Councillors which is possibly further evidence of the diminished role of the District Council. The District / County split does lead to councillors getting involved in matters that are outside their remit - this is understandable were responsibilities interface , however, a single council would remove uncertainty as to who handles such issues both for councillors and those they represent.</p>
<p>G.W.Roy Beckley</p>	<p>parish/town council</p>	<p>As Chairman I am instructed to repond on behalf of Beeston Regis Parish Council which is within the area currently served by The North Norfolk District Council.</p> <p>We find it difficult to respond to a consultation which offers more than one proposal and is also very vague in the detail.</p> <p>The current system in Norfolk is tried and tested. It works very well for and is suited to the county's size and large widespread population. The existing County Council provides strategic services where economy of scale is important and the seven elected District Councils providing services where a localised focus is needed such as planning or regeneration as well as more specific issues such as coastal erosion. We believe that under either Boundary Committee proposal this vitally important focus will be lost.</p> <p>We also believe it is likely that replacing the 7 District Councils with 5 Area Committees and 21 partnership boards will prove to be more expensive, more bureaucratic and less effective.</p> <p>We are concerned that no precise make up of the Area and Community Partnership Boards has been advanced for consultation . At the present time all tiers of Local Government from the smallest Parish Council (the first tier) through the District Councils to the County Council consist of elected councillors who must meet the requirements and scrutiny of The Standards Board regarding their conduct, discloure of interests etc. and must offer themselves for election every four years.The Boundary Commission offers no indication of what standards will apply to non elected so called "stakeholders" within the Area and Community Partnership Boards.</p>

		<p>In any event we believe that all the Partnership Boards should have a majority of elected members.</p> <p>Like many Parish and Town councils in Norfolk Beeston Regis Parish Council is striving to attain " Quality Parish Council Status" and should attain this in 2009. We understand that this " QPS" should be the stepping stone to taking a wider involvement in providing very local services which would be lost as the proposed 21 Community Partnerships which will cover far wider areas than existing Community Partnerships will not be able to have representatives from all Parishes within their area - in some cases over 30 parishes. Our current "Upcher Community Partnership " embraces just the town of Sheringham and the immediately surrounding 8 parishes whereas the possible Community Partnership Board would embrace the towns of Sheringham, Holt and Wells together with all the parishes within that area - a seaside resort, a market town and a port- each with its own local issues.</p> <p>We wish to place on record that in our opinion the present system of elected government in Norfolk, whilst not perfect, meets the requirements of the population and neither proposal is likely to offer any better alternative and whilst not an option on which we have been asked to comment we wish the present system to continue.</p> <p>Unitary Governance in whatever guise is not suitable for a predominantly rural county the size of Norfolk.</p> <p>Beeston Regis Parish Council 14th May 2009</p>
Great Moulton Parish Council	parish/town council	<p>The Parish Council has carefully considered the proposals of the the Boundary Committee and considers that both the options suggested are ill conceived, poorly thought out and costed with an unjustified degree of optimism. These schemes do not offer the Council Tax Payers of Norfolk any benefits over the existing Local Government system, and with the centralisation of services in a County the size of Norfolk will result in a significant deterioration of such services.</p> <p>To ask for interested parties to choose the least harmful option of two badly flawed schemes is ridiculous. The only sensible option is to retain the status quo</p>
Heidi Frary	parish/town council	Barford and Wrampingham Parish Council would like to vote for a single unitary Norfolk.
Heidi Frary	parish/town council	Cranworth Parish Council consider that neither option is a move forward. They would like the current status to be maintained.

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Lucy Seary	parish/town council	Geldeston Parish Council strongly rejects both of the options presented for the change in Norfolk. The Parish Council wishes the current council structure to remain in place. We do not believe the money, time and restructure will benefit the wider rural communities such as ours.
Mr M L Bellingham	member of the public	Having moved from an authority that went down the road of going unitary and relised that it was costing too much of the rate payers money decided to revert back to a two teir authority. I support the vote for the status quo.
Peter Stebbings	parish/town council	UNITARY OPTIONS The adage " if it ain't broke don't fix it " in addressing Local Government Reorganisation is particularly apt. I fail to understand why the status quo cannot be considered as an option. Although the two proposals appear to satisfy the five criteria set by the Sectry of State, the assumptions and financial data used excludes the effect of the "credit crunch and recession the UK is currently facing. The Boundary Committe assumes sufficient funding reserves are available within the authority to support the plans being delivered, and that it would take three to four years to recover the costs of the proposed changes. This is a high risk and not one that our Parish or I would suggest the Norfolk population would wish the politicians to play around with. Remember you are not permitted to increase Council Tax to assist in recovering the reorganistion costs. In the light of uncertainty in the Global economy and more particularly the UK recovery, I think a decision on the proposals should be deferred. Finally I think the Boundary Committee have failed to grasp "the anti" feeling by the people of such proposals, and the effect they may have on the variety of Norfolk cultures that exist. Peter Stebbings Chairman Hedenham Parish Meeting
Prue Lester	member of the public	I do not see that the proposals will in any way offer an improvement to public services, local representation, or management of local affairs. All these are best served by retaining the current '2 tier" system which has been tried and tested over many years. The costings are in doubt and even if they were achieved the money could be better spent on existing services.

		Prue Lester
Swanton Morley Parish Council	parish/town council	Of the two unitary proposals put forward, Swanton Morley Parish Council is in favour of a single unitary council for Norfolk.
Watlington Parish Council	parish/town council	<p>Watlington Parish Council is minded that given the problems attending this review, including the widespread dissatisfaction with the lack of public consultation, the changing views of the Boundary Committee as to which options should or should not be included, that this procedure should now be abandoned until after the General Election.</p> <p>The Council is minded that there is a total lack of support in the community for any of the options proposed, residents wishing to see a continuance of the status quo at present. A boundary change without more public involvement, though say a referendum, will further alienate the populace from the democratic process.</p>
D Wilder	member of the public	I don't want the unitary to go ahead, it will cost tax payers money, be too big and votes will be watered down. people's voices will no be heard, and those currently enjoying cheaper council tax will end up paying more for the cities and deprived areas.
Laura Leicester	member of the public	<p>neither the 1 unitary or donought models would provide an effective service, the 1 unitary would be too large, larger than the original Cheshire suggestion which was ultimately considered too large.</p> <p>The status quo of 2 tier system should remain.</p>
██████████	other public sector	<p>I believe that a unitary authority for Norfolk would have a seriously detrimental effect on services which at present are excellent. The costs of unitary do not, in my opinion justify going ahead.</p> <p>PLEASE DO NOT MAKE THIS RESPONSE PUBLIC</p>
Richelle Moreton	member of the public	I would like Norfolk to maintain the status quo, I feel that a single unitary would be damanging for norfolk as it would be too large to maintain its links with the local communities.
Sandra Owen	member of the public	Leave things as they are, this is a total waste of public money

ANGELA EASTERBROOK	member of the public	I FEEL IT WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO OUR LOCAL AREA FOR THE COUNCILS TO COMBINE WE ARE DOING JUST FINE AS WE ARE. WE IN THE KINGS LYNN AREA ENJOY A GOOD SERVICE FROM OUR COUNCIL ADN TO JOIN WITH OTHER COUNCILS WOULD TAKE THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR NEEDS AWAY AS IT COULD BE DEEMED THAT THE MONEY COULD BEST BE SPENT ON ANOTHER AREA . I BELIEVE THAT ONLY AREAS THAT ARE NOT IN THE FINE POSITION THAT WE ARE DUE TO OUR LOCAL COUNCILS WELL SPENDING OF ITS FUNDS WILL BENEFIT AND WE AS A LOCAL AUTHORITY WILL SUFFER.
Claire Bowes	member of the public	<p>Sir,</p> <p>As a resident and tax payer of Norfolk my overall concern with regard to the manner in which the Boundary Committee are reviewing local government reorganisation for Norfolk is the lack of public consultation that has been undertaken. It is clear that information about the process from yourselves has largely failed to reach the average householder. A small handful of leaflets to local libraries is hardly conducive to consultation with the wider public. Meetings with yourselves to discuss the process have been addressed to 'stakeholders' rather than the general public who must be the largest stakeholder of all. I attended one such meeting at which the representative from the Boundary Committee did not even turn up.</p> <p>These proposals are detrimental to democracy as they will reduce local representation and the electorate are likely to find themselves with a much less powerful voice on local issues. For these reasons, as well as the huge cost implications of change to the taxpayer, public consultation should have been paramount and because it has not been given the importance it should have by the Boundary Committee in looking at these proposals, it is my belief that they are fundamentally flawed.</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>Claire Bowes</p>
claire curtis	member of the public	I consider that the status quo should stay, I think the cost of reorganisation would be an unacceptable burden on the council tax payer. The one authority is far too big and therefore loses local distinctiveness. Why should council tax payers of the careful Norfolk authorities bail out Norwich who are in a terrible state with their monies. Why change something that works efficiently and serves its council tax payers well. From a personal perspective as a council employee, why do you consider it necessary again to create fear of loss of jobs which will happen in any reorganisation, distraction and worries.

Heather Farley	other public sector	<p>This submission is from West Norfolk Voluntary and Community Action, a local infrastructure organisation supporting the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>We feel that the views of the residents of Norfolk have not been taken into account. The consultation has focused on agencies rather than individuals. It is important that the opinions of all residents of Norfolk are sought and taken into consideration before any further progress on this review takes place.</p> <p>No account has been taken of the strong case put forward by the West of its sub regional status. A large majority of residents in the West wish to keep the existing council structure in Norfolk and feel that the proposed boundary committee changes should not take place. They want local councillors ensuring the delivery of local services with local accountability. Experience has taught them that services provided across the county are not as responsive to local need. We feel that the size of a unitary county for Norfolk which is proposed by the Boundary Committee is unworkable, we also feel that the &acirc;€doughnut&acirc;€™ gives no thought to the geography of Norfolk, is unsupported outside of the City Council and we are really unclear why it is being considered.</p> <p>There is excellent partnership work going on in West Norfolk with a Local Strategic Partnership well recognised for its good practice. Relationships have been formed through that partnership which have led to quality projects and improvements in service delivery. We do not feel that the suggested structure of area committees and partnership boards will compare with this. They can only be very expensive and their accountability is far from clear.</p> <p>Finally for those local voluntary and community organisations receiving funding from the Borough Council there are serious concerns for their future position in delivering quality local services. Through experience county wide structures often look to provide services through a county contract which can leave local organisations struggling to get a place at the table or being left with the small proportion of the work. In addition where they may also receive funding from the County there are concerns that this will be reduced if the two structures were to merge. It is very difficult to maintain the same level of relationship with a funder who is geographically some distance away.</p> <p>Therefore we oppose both recommendations put forward by</p>
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		the boundary committee and ask for status quo.
LONG STRATTON PARISH COUNCIL	parish/town council	The Parish Council wishes for the Status Quo - it can see no reason for change.
M A Dawson	member of the public	Keep West Norfolk as it is. We do not need or want to be part of one big organisation.
Michael Grimble	member of the public	<p>As a member of Norfolk Schools Forum I must assert that whatever outcome is chosen for Norfolk, the education budget currently run by Norfolk County Council must not be split. If a "Greater Norwich" option is chosen and Norwich City Council is granted (as it has stated it will get) the lion's share of the education budget, that would be disastrous for pupils in all areas of the County.</p> <p>Given that the pot of schools funding is fixed:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Greater Norwich share would be inadequate to commission the necessary services with the economies of scale essential for financial viability. Duplication of services would be massively costly and at the expense of funds available for pupils' education. 2. Pupils in the Rest of Norfolk would be hugely disadvantaged as this "remainder" has major rurality issues and has the highest pockets of social deprivation, namely Great Yarmouth, Kings Lynn and Thetford. These areas should be attracting the highest funding but would get the least if two unitaries are put in place. <p>My contention, therefore, is that the outcomes for pupils, families and communities would suffer greatly if two unitaries are introduced in Norfolk.</p>

		<p>I suspect this outcome would also be true for other major areas of local government provision i.e. the rest of Children's Services and Adult Services etc, but I am not close enough to these to make an informed comment.</p> <p>I do hope that you will recommend that the education budget is not split so that the best outcomes for children can be assured.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p> <p>M J Grimble (Community Governor representative on Norfolk Schools Forum)</p>
Taylor	member of the public	<p>I really do feel that the Pro status quo would be the best option for the county and the public that the councils serve. I have heard many villagers say if it is not broken dont fix it. it is not felt that being one large concern will benefit us.</p> <p>this reply comes also from my husband K Taylor</p>
Valerie Baker	member of the public	<p>I would prefer the status quo to remain. We have a low Council tax in Breckland District and I can only see it rising - we shall be taking on the debt of councils such as Norwich which, has a bad record. The cost can only rise. The County is one of the largest in the country and the new unitary council would be so remote. The councillors would not be local part time they would have to be full time. Who knows what they would be paid - which, would add to the cost. I would hate to estimate the cost of bringing all IT systems in line. Please leave things and have a look at it again once the recession is over and the Iceland bank money is finally sorted.</p>
A Council Employee	member of the public	<p>As a council employee of one of the affected district council's, I support a single unitary authority as i believe it would be a more efficient council than the one i currently work for and offer better terms and conditions and opportunities for its staff than are presently on offer. Three tiers of local govt at present is unnecessary, burdensome and means decisions take for ever to be taken...if at all.</p>
A Frost	member of the public	<p>If the status quo is not an option then I am in favour of a single unitary authority for Norfolk on the grounds of cost and efficiency.</p>

A W Faulkner	member of the public	<p>If I can only support one of the two options on offer, I would select the one for the whole of Norfolk (not the doughnut), as dividing functions such as education, highways, social services and the like does not make economic sense. However, I am very concerned at the sheer size in terms of population as this will be in the order of 1 million people. The Government has itself said that above a population figure of about 500,000 efficiency declines.</p> <p>I am also concerned about the lack of democracy in decision making in such a large authority as the councillors will represent far too many people and will be too remote to understand local conditions and other matters.</p> <p>Given these concerns, I believe that the existing two tier authorities should be retained as one's district councillor is accessible and knows the area in which he/she is based and represents.</p>
Anonymous	member of the public	<p>I am totally unconvinced that the two authority [Norwich, rest of Norfolk] is satisfactory.</p> <p>*The financial viability of the "rest" is, as you are aware, hazardous</p> <p>*Norwich provides a focal settlement, but there is no centrally accessible focus for the "rest"</p> <p>*The notion of the "rest" feels like we are discarded - scum around the edge of an emptied washbasin as there is no community identity between the far-flung settlements</p> <p>*Whilst Norwich may appear to be viable, there are serious misgivings about recent administrative difficulties [e.g. housing department] which suggest that the economies of scale of a single County authority would be more secure</p> <p>*Transport networks radiate from Norwich in the main. In the event of Norwich being granted unitary status, Norwich would be well served. The "rest" would probably be most viably serviced with an administrative/council hub in Norwich. To encourage public participation in meetings in any other place is almost impossible using public transport, and for some journeys public and personal transport may well route through Norwich</p>

		<p>*Significant functions [main hospitals, transport hubs, retail centres etc] are focused in areas of greatest population in Norfolk. These have been taken away from the smaller settlements for various reasons. This has increased a sense of rural deprivation and isolation. Creating an authority based on the "rest" might well contribute to the perception of being discarded. It is recognised that small settlements will not attract a major hospital, but at least allow us to keep some sort of sense of identity with centres that give us services - for North Norfolk that is Norwich. For other functions, including education, attracting suitable expertise is a potential problem - in terms of Continuing Professional Development Norfolk currently struggles to offer the best training materials and programmes to staff - the diseconomy created by splitting the current authority would potentially spell disaster.</p> <p>Whether or not it is acceptable to remove the tier of district councils or not is another matter. Whatever is decided must help to develop a sense of community or else we stand to become self-centred with all the attendant social ills that accompany that. I would be greatly disappointed [and I'm not Norfolk born and bred] to see anything other than a single authority which unites the present County and includes its County "Town" of Norwich.</p>
Alistair Beales	member of the public	<p>I am strongly opposed to the imposition of a unitary system of local government in Norfolk. The Boundary Committee review of local government in Norfolk has been dragging on since February 2008 and despite the huge amount of time and money devoted to it, appears no closer to a conclusion.</p> <p>Proponents of a unitary system cite cost savings as the main reason for changing the system we have now. I do not believe that the figures stack up and I strongly object to a change from the current system for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> â€¢ Cost - the estimated cost of re-organisation in Norfolk is between Â£42 and Â£64 million pounds. In counties that have already been reorganised, costs have exceeded estimates sometimes by tens of millions of pounds and Norfolk's own estimate was originally put at around Â£20 million pounds. â€¢ Savings â€" much is made of future savings. Given the history of such Government inspired reorganisations I do not believe that the huge costs will be recouped by savings and I think that the tax payer will have to pick up the tab. â€¢ Size â€" Norfolk is just too big to run services via one or two large authorities. Local priorities will be ignored or just forgotten. â€¢ Representation â€" the proposals will mean far fewer Councillors (around two thirds less) and people will find it far more difficult to see their local representative and for them

		<p>to have time to deal with important but local issues. Sadly, the remaining Councillors will be virtually full time politicians with costs to match so the smaller number of Councillors will not be even be any cheaper.</p> <p>For these reasons I strongly oppose the imposition of a unitary system of local government in Norfolk and I support the retention of the existing well proven and cost effective system.</p>
Andrew Howell	member of the public	<p>Dear Sir/Madam</p> <p>I have been following the proposed Local Government Review for Norfolk with increasing alarm and seemingly a view shared by the courts judging by the results of the recent appeal process. I also have real concerns with how this whole process has been managed and wonder what the actual agenda for this proposed change really is. Status quo would most certainly be my preferred option and I fail to understand how this cannot even be on the agenda for discussion.</p> <p>Iâ€™ve yet to read any compelling reason as to why this whole agenda is being forced through, seemingly against the will of many residents within Norfolk. As far as I can establish, the current setup provides services for the 650,000 residents of Norfolk efficiently and effectively. Norwich City Council appears to be moving from one crisis to another judging by the local press yet you propose to give them even more control.</p> <p>The argument of cost and efficiency savings seems flawed to say the least. I firmly believe that the levels of savings are grossly exaggerated and the setup costs greatly underestimated. With the current economic climate within the country, is this really the time to be pushing through poorly researched and ill managed reform?</p> <p>Of greater concern to myself is the fact that there seems to be a total lack of regard for the west of Norfolk in these proposals. Norfolk does not just consist of Norwich and a few remaining towns and villages. My hometown of King's</p>

		<p>Lynn is a major economic force not just within Norfolk, but surrounding counties such as Cambridgeshire and South Lincolnshire.</p> <p>The East/West Model seems to of been totally disregarded without any proper analysis and barely warrants a mention within the Boundary Committee's proposals despite that being supported by independent analysts. In fact the whole needs for the west of the county have been brushed under the carpet.</p> <p>All your proposals seem to be based on making savings around Norwich. Well the area of Norwich only accounts for approximately 160,000 of the 650,000 residents of Norfolk. Do the needs and concerns of the other 490,000 residents not matter?</p> <p>Any proposed unitary council for Norfolk would be on an unprecedented geographic scale and I have real concerns over the impact of these changes on my local community. A Norwich controlled unitary council will undoubtedly be biased towards the East of the county, leaving the West out on a limb and very much the poor relation.</p> <p>The creation of a "Rural Norfolk" council would surely prove a logistical nightmare to administer. This area would stretch from King's Lynn in the East to Great Yarmouth in the West, a distance of over 65 miles! Also, both are major towns within Norfolk but facing their own unique challenges. Why not allow the people who fully understand these issues and communities (i.e. the current borough councils) to tackle these. Wherever a Rural Norfolk is administered from, it is likely the other part of the county is left feeling remote and isolated from the decision making process.</p> <p>The establishment of an authority on this scale would cost millions and likely to lead to a decrease in the quality of services provided to the residents of Norfolk. The whole emphasis of the organisation is likely to be on the internal workings of the organisation rather than providing services to the people of Norfolk as they should be.</p> <p>From reading the feedback on your website, I see very little support for these proposals. If this process is to proceed I fail to understand why the views of the people of Norfolk are not being more actively sought on such an important issue. Why not hold a referendum across Norfolk and let the</p>
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		<p>people decide how they would like THEIR services provided? This matter should not be decided by those in Whitehall with little understanding of the county of Norfolk.</p> <p>I urge you to seek the real views of those living within Norfolk via a referendum; though I imagine the whole reason for you being against this idea is because you already know the result would not support your proposals.</p> <p>Andrew Howell</p>
Anita Hennington	member of the public	I think that the option for Norfolk County Council to run all services should prevail given that there are only two options. Norwich City Council have not proven capable of good management and it would be detrimental to the education and welfare of our community to have the boundary including Cringleford within Norwich.
Ann Parker	member of the public	I am happy with the way Local Government is run at the moment and do not believe that the amount of money it will cost to implement any changes is warranted - I want to vote for the 'status quo'
Beverley Hall	member of the public	I think that the option for Norfolk County Council to run all services should prevail given that there are only two options. Norwich City Council have not proven capable of good management and it would be detrimental to the education and welfare of our community to have the boundary including Cringleford within Norwich.
Bob Waterfield	member of the public	I wish to register my objection to the proposals for unitary local government for Norfolk. I believe I share the opinion of the vast majority of businesses, statutory and other organisations and, more importantly, the people of Norfolk who can see no advantage whatsoever to be gained by subjecting us to this exercise, particularly in the present economic circumstances. The current system, the "status quo", is tried and tested and it works. The huge unwieldy model that you appear biased towards will undermine democracy and leave us at the western outpost of Norfolk poorly represented and remote from the centre of government. Apart from any detrimental impact on local services by trying to standardise across the county it is inevitable that we shall end up having to subsidise the good burghers of Norwich by increases in our council tax. You have a moral obligation to consult the people of Norfolk by holding a referendum to properly gauge what they want; that is REAL DEMOCRACY!

C.D.Johnson	member of the public	<p>There is absolutely no problem with the present arrangement. Here on the coast we have a natural affinity with King's Lynn, just 14 miles away. There is no need to change a system which works well with available funds being fairly applied across the region. Why would we want to be managed from a relatively remote location which would make access to local officers impractical. At present we can speak or meet with officers at the appropriate level usually without difficulty.</p> <p>As for empowering local councils be they parish or town it is clear that members of such committees are well meaning, driven but often have their own agenda. A few are viewed with suspicion by some, but this is rural Norfolk!</p> <p>They may be elected but frequently I am sure they are 'elected' unopposed or co-opted.</p> <p>We are well and fairly looked after at present and although the financial wizards, no doubt earning fat fees, can make a case for change on paper, experience tells me it will not stand up in practice. New offices, new systems (that may not work), cost over runs etc etc. The cost savings are an illusion although I have to state that many officers enjoy enormous salaries and pension arrangements. I appreciate that it is not your remit but salaries within Norwich County Council defy comprehension as do some of the job titles- this is where savings should and can be made in these depressed times.</p> <p>Please leave matters as they are, they work very well and do not need fixing.</p>
Carolyn A Wright	member of the public	<p>We live in Kings Lynn and may only be 40 minutes drive from Norwich, but we have historically never been considered in any plans with an overview of Norfolk, we are traditionally the forgotten step sister.</p> <p>I certainly speak from personal experience since my small Company had previously been a member of the Chamber of Commerce for small businesses, we certainly enjoyed networking with local companies, holding local business forums, presentations etc. then recently the Chamber decided to revoke all presence here in Kings Lynn in favour of centralising from Norwich. The upshot absolutely no consideration for Kings Lynn based small businesses, we just DONT EXIST and I know that the centralising of local Government will follow suit. It is inevitable, and it is wholly unacceptable. Judge for yourself but make your decision wisely, or you certainly will provoke an uprising of many wholly disappointed people, certainly at a time when the Government should surely shun bad publicity.</p>

Christa Beales	member of the public	<p>I oppose any change to local government in Norfolk. As a School Governor and Chair of the local play group I have dealings with Borough, Parish and County Councils and the current system works - there is no need to spend huge amounts of money creating a new one.</p> <p>Besides my support for the current system I am opposed to a unitary sysetem because I do not believe that any money will be saved, that the setting up will cost far more than antiapiated and that local people will find it difficult to see their Councillor. I also beleive that Norfolk is too big and too diverse for one council, what matters in King's Lynn is different from what matters in Norwich.</p> <p>So please don't waste any more taxpayers money and leave the County Council and District Councils to get on with the job that they have proved they can do very well.</p>
Christopher H J Cockcroft	member of the public	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am deeply concerned at the possible waste of MY money if the currently mooted re-organisation goes ahead. As far as I can tell, unless there is a considerable devolution of power back to the parishes, there will be no real benefit for voters and a lot of cost.</p> <p>But if a reorganisation does go ahead, I would favour a Unitary Norfolk County Council taking a Strategic Role, with much of its present admiistration devolved to the current district administrations acting for it. This would enable more local joined up administration, giving Norwich and the districts more say in their own affairs, but at the same time allowing an overall cohesion. (This would be rather like the current arrangements in London.) But it might also permit Norfolk County Council and NHS Norfolk to come together in one building to improve the co-ordination of the Educational, Social and Medical Services provided to the people of Norfolk.</p> <p>I would certainly NOT favour the splitting of Norfolk into a Rural Authority and Norwich Authority. I say this because Norwich is the heart of Norfolk, with people from the rural areas working there, shopping there and enjoying cultural activities there. We also enjoy some superb county wide services, the Library Service being of particular note and which should NOT be split up.</p>

		<p>Norwich is certainly NOT just for the people of Norwich, as the current City Council seems to think, it is for all the people of Norfolk. A Unitary Norwich City Council, with its current insular attitudes, would be a disaster for Norfolk. This cannot be better illustrated than by referring back to the saga of the bus station: For years we had a derelict eyesore for a bus station with the City Council doing nothing about it; it was only when the County Council stepped in and bought the site that we got a decent award winning bus station for Norwich. On a similar theme, Norwich and Norfolk need a decent concert hall, but Norwich City Council thinks that this would be elitist and not for the people of Norwich, so nothing is done. And apart from these matters, we have the recent saga of the City Housing Departments and the on going saga of the neglected War Memorial which truly indicate a very poor administration not fit to be given further powers.</p> <p>Hence to summarise, lets keep the status quo if we can, but, if we have to be reorganised, PLEASE let us have a UNITARY COUNCIL for the WHOLE of NORFOLK and NORWICH.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Christopher Cockcroft</p>
Clive Morley	member of the public	I support the status quo.
David Greening	member of the public	I am bound to say that the proposal to create one huge local authority to cover the bulk of the area of Norfolk is an error of some magnitude. We in the West of the County have no fast links either by road or rail with that of the East. King's Lynn by virtue of its speedy rail link with Ely and Cambridge, not to mention London, looks more and more in that direction for its economic and social links. King's Lynn and West Norfolk will suffer under your proposals and it should be allowed to continue as a local authority and be granted Unitary status. Please reconsider.
David Patey	member of the public	<p>The abolition of the District layer will make government less local and responsive. It will frustrate the objective of place-making and destroy existing social capital.</p> <p>I favour the status quo and oppose any of the options advanced now or in the course of this exercise for unitary government for Norfolk.</p>
David Wright	member of the public	I support the status quo fully. The present system is working well and does not need changing. Norfolk County Council, together with the District Councils, are doing a very good job.

		Please do NOT change to a single Unitary Authority
derek fysh	member of the public	I what to stay as we are and not be part of one large council i am very happy as we are.
Diane Lucas	member of the public	I wish for the council at kings lynn to stay as it is not to go to norwich which is an hour away. they dont know whats going on here as we dont know what they are doing its come to light lately that they had there own people in old peoples bugalows no thanks we are better off where we are .
Dr N Hutcheson	member of the public	<p>I support the single unitary greater Norfolk option. Historically, there is no precedant for separating the urban place from the rural. Norfolk has a long and intricate history of dialogue between the urban place and the rest of the county. Extracting Norwich from its rural base is a strange idea and will potentially improverish both. There is a close and important relationship culturally and economically between the countryside and the town. There is value in both in terms of how the local government is constituted.</p> <p>I also feel that a larger local democracy will be more successful at being hear by central government. Norfolk will be a large single unitary and this will provide a good cross-section of population types and interest groups which should help to balance the democratic situation. Also in planning terms this would be a large enough entity to act strategically in terms of trasport. Norfolk's rural area by itself will be cut off from the major transport routes.</p> <p>Norfolk is a fairly well balanced economy with both industry, major educational establishments and agriculture helping to form the basis of the economy. Taking Norwich out of this equation removes much of the complex aspect of the economy leaving a vulnerable and uniform agricultural base.</p>

Elizabeth Gould	member of the public	<p>I find it difficult to understand why it is felt necessary to change the existing system.</p> <p>Having resided in the Breckland Council area for over 30 years I have had no cause to complain at the way the Council is run, indeed, the fact that we have local people on the Council means that they are accessible to the public, I cannot believe that this situation will continue if the proposed change takes place.</p> <p>The monetary cost of the proposed change, namely between &Acirc;&pound;42m and &Acirc;&pound;64m, seems to me to be a complete waste of rate payers money (not being an accountant I cannot understand how these figures are reached) I would go so far as to suggest that if these figures emanate from central government they can be trebled, if other government estimated figures are anything to go by. The proposal seems to be change for the sake of change and I sincerely hope that common sense will prevail and the existing status quo remains.</p>
Fred Teal	member of the public	<p>The future of local government in Norfolk</p> <p>I write in support of a single unitary Norfolk council. The case for unitary local government generally is clear and I take as a given the savings and efficiency improvements that it would bring for local people.</p> <p>The simple core test is whether a county unitary or a two-council set-up based on a unitary Norwich council would be best-placed to deliver essential services effectively and to the highest standards. Change must also be speedy and effective. The answer has got to be a unitary county authority.</p> <p>Recent history shows that Norwich city council has failed miserably to deliver basic services, most notably on housing. Its official audit ratings are poor across the board; its accounts in disarray in successive years. It does not exhibit a culture of success and its leadership is open to challenge, talking a good game but failing to deliver services which are key to the well-being of its citizens.</p> <p>It is stretching credulity to breaking-point to suggest that a council incapable of controlling a &Acirc;&pound;25m budget and a few hundred staff would suddenly be transformed into a high performer by the addition of big services like education and social services as well as thousands more employees &acirc;€' and by the same</p>

		<p>people who have made a mess of the current city council.</p> <p>Contrast Norwich's record of failure with Norfolk county council's four-star rating; why would you break up a council, which in any event already runs upwards of 85 per cent of services, with a proven track record of success and achievement? It provides the best basis on which to build a new county unitary.</p> <p>For strong, effective and accountable leadership, therefore, Norfolk needs a single unitary council.</p> <p>Likewise in terms of value for money. It is patently obvious that one council would be cheaper than two.</p> <p>There is clearly no broad base of support in Norfolk for a two-council unitary mix, including in the greater Norwich suburbs which find themselves in the new unitary city council area.</p> <p>It is too much to expect people to have to keep their fingers crossed that a unitary city council and its continuing leadership with their culture of under-performance might get things right at some undefined time in the future. There is too much at stake.</p> <p>There is a further major objection to the so-called 'doughnut' solution to local government in Norfolk - simply that Norfolk now as an economic, cultural and social entity works.</p> <p>Norwich is the economic engine-house of the county and the major improvements in the city, from the Forum to the bus station, have only come about through county investment. Taking Norwich out of the county would be disastrous for the rest of Norfolk as well as the city itself - and the city unitary bid fails to prove sufficient care or concern about what would happen to the rest of the county. It would leave the likes of King's Lynn and Yarmouth, 70 miles apart and with no real infrastructure links, stranded - and rural areas of the county with no real focus. What would be the centre of this rural outer ring? Norwich would attract Government assistance at the expense of the rural remainder.</p> <p>Just as a future of several unitary districts in Norfolk would be unviable, so a structure involving a unitary Norwich and a unitary rest-of-Norfolk would not work in the best interests of</p>
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		<p>those who matter most - real people.</p> <p>Only the case for a unitary county authority stacks up and I have no hesitation in supporting that option for change.</p>
George Peek	member of the public	I wish to advise you that I would like the present local government arrangements to continue as they are.
Giles Main	member of the public	<p>Although I am making this submission as a member of the public, my views have been tempered by many years experience as a Social Services employee within Norfolk County Council and previously with a metropolitan unitary authority.</p> <p>Whilst I can understand the drive for a greater Norwich Unitary Authority in that it will enhance the City's prospects both economically and promote better services for its residents, I am concerned that it will leave the remainder of the County greatly depleted. Working in Gt Yarmouth, I do not experience a rural county but significant urban deprivation and I have difficulty imagining the benefits that will accrue when I understand that there will need to be a transfer of resources to Norwich from the outer ring of the doughnut.</p> <p>I fail to understand how the doughnut arrangement will lead to lower operational costs when both authorities will need to duplicate hierarchies for each of the services they provide.</p> <p>Furthermore the damage that would be sustained to Adult Social Services in running 2 departments in parallel at a time when we are undergoing a major re-organisation so we can deliver the Government's programme for Individual Budgets will be great.</p> <p>I would argue that Norwich and Norfolk are mutually dependent upon each other. The increasing population of older people who year on year require services to maintain their quality of life as they become more physically and mentally dependent means that the finite resources made available need to be managed very carefully. It is clear that the County Council has demonstrated a better record in the management of its resources, whereas Norwich City Council cannot provide this evidence, even though it is a smaller</p>

		<p>authority. This would not bode well for the residents of Norfolk should the City achieve Unitary Status.</p>
<p>Glen Beaumont</p>	<p>member of the public</p>	<p>I would like to see the existing Council arrangement retained in Norfolk.</p> <p>I consider that the single unitary option of one Council for the whole of Norfolk will lead to the creation of a remote Council, that is out of touch with its population. Decisions will be made by Members who represent an area of Norfolk that has no relationship with another part of Norfolk. To my mind, this does not have wide public support and will erode local distinctiveness.</p> <p>I do not support the so called doughnut option either. As a resident of Norwich, I am unimpressed at Norwich City Council's well publicised financial problems and its ability to deliver value for money services to its residents. Far from providing strong leadership for the Greater Norwich Area, I am utterly convinced that a unitary council for the Greater Norwich Area will result in stagnation and a distinct lack of leadership. By contrast, South Norfolk Council and Broadland District Council appear to offer better value of money to their residents and are well managed. I am sure that those residents of South Norfolk and Broadland District Council who reside in the urban fringe of Norwich would not support the proposal either.</p> <p>The existing partnership work that takes place between Councils offers good value for money and I would suggest that this better represents local views and reinforces local distinctiveness than either of the proposals suggested by the Boundary Commission.</p> <p>I am happy for my name and response to be published in the public domain but not my contact details.</p>

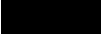
Gordon partridge	member of the public	My preference would be for Norfolk to retain it's current set up of District and County Councils. The cost of the proposed changes simply cannot be justified in the current financial climate. There is no significant pressure in the County for change. Quite frankly Norwich City Council has not demonstrated that they are capable of carrying out their present functions competently let alone taking on more and a single unitary is simply too large a body to allow proper local accountability over a county that has widely differing requirements within it's communities.
hannah massingham	member of the public	Local councils should be exactly that - local! We do not want to be governed by people from areas that don't know our area and make our decisions for us. Keep our councils local!
Hemnell	member of the public	<p>Having carefully considered the latest set of proposals, I am not persuaded that the argument for change has been effectively made.</p> <p>Claims that a single unitary authority would bring with it community empowerment, consistency of approach and a single point of contact for services cannot be borne out. The existing County Council fails to demonstrate these attributes in respect of the services it currently provides. I cannot accept that a unitary authority empowered to provide an even wider range of services would benefit Norfolk.</p> <p>The detail of the 'donut option' in my view has little to commend it.</p> <p>Neither option appears to have robust justification or clarity of argument in respect of affordability or value for money.</p> <p>I believe that Norfolk would be better served by an innovative programme of partnership working and joint services provision by the existing local authorities, sharing good practice, pooling expertise and benefitting from the economies of scale whilst retaining a closeness to their customers and a flexibility of approach.</p>

J Newport	member of the public	Local Government must remain the way it is. The other options do not consider the residents of Norfolk and the rural landscape of the County. A single unitary would work great for a large city but not Norfolk.
Jamie Campbell	member of the public	<p>I submit that a unitary Norfolk is the safest option. Norwich City has a poor record in both financial and housing.</p> <p>The Boundary Committee Report ignores the tiny local authority in the middle of Norfolk. If large, unitary authorities are to be justified on cost grounds, it is difficult to permit the Broads Authority to continue to operate in the middle as a local authority, offering similar services, such as Planning for only c5,000 population.</p> <p>Similarly, the Local Authorities which the Boundary Committee proposes to abolish nominate a large number of representatives to the Broads Authority. Currently DEFRA simply nominates most BA members. Some proposals are required for replacement of the existing LA nominations - preferably to leave the BA with a majority of directly elected members. Those who live in the Broads are quite capable of deciding their own destiny without instruction from DEFRA.</p>
Janice Lewis	member of the public	<p>I do not want:</p> <p>A unitary council for the whole of Norfolk.</p> <p>A 'doughnut' option, which involves one unitary council for the greater Norwich area and one for the rest of Norfolk.</p>
Jillian Green	member of the public	<p>I was surprised when you re-introduced the doughnut in your recent consultation - I thought that the information I had been reading in my local paper about how the finances didn't stack up, coupled with the awful performance of the Norwich City Council meant that this wasn't going to happen.</p> <p>I am writing to say I strongly support one single council for the whole of Norfolk and Norwich.</p> <p>I love Norwich - it is a fantastic city - but it is not in the interests of the people of Norwich and Norfolk to have separate councils. They are too closely linked.</p> <p>I think there would be a real problem with funding City services which people outside the City use. At the moment lots of artistic activity eg the festival, the writing partnership, the theatre are supported financially by the County and the City. Whilst there might be the same money available</p>

		<p>overall, although lots of Norfolk residents use these facilities, I can't see a Norfolk authority funding organisations outside its patch in the city. The new Norwich Council wouldn't have the money (they can't manage their finances anyway) to support the organisations at the existing level, so I'm sure lots would go out of business.</p> <p>One council solves all this, is a lot less disruptive and while I don't agree with everything the County Council does it is well run and efficient.</p>
Joanne Linton	member of the public	<p>my preferred option for Norfolk would be to stay the same, no change made to the boundaries.</p> <p>Pro Status-Quo</p>
Joe Goldie	member of the public	I believe the single unitary solution is the best proposal for Norfolk
John Hanton	member of the public	<p>Having commented earlier on the first submission, nothing in the later submission has changed my view. If the status quo cannot be retained then of these proposals to "One Norfolk" has to be the preferred option. Norwich City Council have stated that one authority cannot meet the needs of City and County, yet their proposal for "Greater Norwich" would lead to many village communities being lumped into the city. Financially, it has been proven in audit after audit that the city cannot manage their existing budget. Although the proposals indicate the doughnut option may have long term savings, it is not worth the risk as looking at existing unitary authorities the costs have increased out hand and the supposed savings diminished. No it has to be either Status Quo or "One Norfolk."</p>

john russell	member of the public	<p>Thank you for giving me the opportunity to give further views relating to the Structural Review of Norfolk.</p> <p>Firstly it makes common sense to keep Lowestoft in the county of Suffolk and keep the boundary of Norfolk as it is now.</p> <p>Secondly the problem of a disaster area namely the City of Norwich needs to be addressed. Since submitting my original views things have putting it bluntly gone from bad to worse. There was the 'Greyhound Opening' scandal when senior citizens were evicted from their retirement bungalows only to be replaced by council staff paying a pittance rent. This was shortly followed by a massive black hole in the council pension scheme. The Labour leader of the council tried as usual to blame it on the previous Liberal Democrat council but has done nothing to correct it since Labour regained power a few years ago. The final nail in the coffin was when the Audit Commission gave the housing department a 'zero rating'. Now there's a surprise.</p> <p>My views however have not changed. Norwich City Council cannot be trusted and the only way forward is a single unitary council run by Norfolk County Council who have proved themselves with an excellent record in running both finances and services.</p>
Keith Eccles	member of the public	<p>The status quo should be maintained, the existing system works well.</p> <p>In the current economic climate the costs of implementation of unitary status cannot be justified bearing in mind that little if any benefit will be derived in the short to medium term. Council taxes will inevitably rise.</p> <p>In a County as geographically large as Norfolk the loss of local services and accountability needs to be avoided.</p> <p>Unitary status in North Yorkshire was scrapped for similar reasons and if you look at some parts of the South East of England the seven authorities in Norfolk cover an equivalent geographical area to over 100 councils there!</p>

Keith Wood	member of the public	<p>Neither of the suggested proposals appears to be acceptable -</p> <p>Partly because from all evidence from unbiased authorities, unitary arrangements are significantly more expensive than a three-tier system</p> <p>but primarily because with such a huge area, democratic influence is greatly weakened. Commonsense would indicate that if that is to be avoided, a new unitary would need the same number of members as the total councillors on district councils in Norfolk and that would be totally unmanageable on one council. The talk of co-operative parish council arrangements seems to be an admission of this fact but merely pays lip- service to such concerns, installing yet more costly beaurocracy with no real advantage to ordinary ratepayers,</p> <p>In my opinion therefore, the "unitary" approach can only be an improvement on the existing if a way can be found to reduce the size of the areas covered by such authorities to something no bigger than that of existing District Councils. If that can be done and it can be sensibly and accurately costed to prove to be at least as financially efficient as the current system and it can be proved to be likely to provide at least as good a service, then it is difficult to see why there should be any change.</p> <p>The priority MUST be democracy.</p> <p>Ratepayers and taxpayers pay for local government and as the customers THEIR views must take precedence over everything else.</p>
L o'keefe	member of the public	<p>PLEASE DO NOT PUBLISH THE EMAIL ADDRESS OR THE POSTAL ADDRESS I HAVE SUPPLIED AS THIS IS PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL</p> <p>I am in agreement with the Eastern Daily Press in totally opposing the restructuring of Norfolk on the basis of the 'donut' model, that is Norwich being given extended boundaries and more services to handle. Either the status quo should be maintained or there should be a single unitary authority for Norfolk</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. it has been evidenced that costs have tripled beyond those forecast for other authorities restructuring as unitary authorities. 2. Council tax will raise for all those affected by the restructure. 3. Norwich has just received a damning report from the

		<p>Audit commission having received zero star rating for the one major service it manages, housing , so how can they possibly manage additional other important services such as education ,social services etc</p> <p>4. Apart from the obvious wastefulness of setting up two authorities with duplicated services,Norfolk county council is currently a 4 star rated authority so if the status quo is discounted as an option it should be a single unitary in the capable hands of an authority with a proven track record.</p> <p>5.It is appalling that Hazel Blears who has reportedly flipped homes several times thus avoiding tax liabilities at the public expense should be taken as a credible authority in deciding the future of one of Britains largest counties.</p>
Laura Anderson	member of the public	I feel that the Boundary Commission should leave Norfolk as it is. Having one authority for the whole area would mean you would no longer get that more 'personal' service that you would get from having smaller authorities.
	member of the public	<p>Please do not publish my details</p> <p>I am opposed to an expensive exercise which will result in services being made more remote from the public. A far better solution is status quo, encouraging local authorities to work more closely together. To exclude status quo from the committee's deliberations appears to make a nonsense of the process</p>
lisa hilton	member of the public	<p>I would prefer to stick with the status quo. i believe one big unitary would just not serve democracy - how could it?</p> <p>Also the cost of setting up a single authority is ridiculous, surely this money could go into our schools and hospitals instead?</p>

M Somerville MSc.	member of the public	<p>My main concerns are that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this economic climate the cost of reorganisation is unjustified . 2. Actual costs of the boundary changes were underestimated by almost 300% in other areas of the country 3. No one has said what is wrong with the existing system which warrents changing 4. The present system of local district councils representing local opinion is very important. To centralise this detracts power away from those who live in those to thos who have at best only second hand knowledge of local situations 5. I work in the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and the referal and funding patterns work well at the moment. To create a bigger Norwich unitary status or indeed only have Norfolk unitary status, limits the understanding of rural and urban needs of the population and their acute health care and indeed longer term social care. <p>My main concern is that the propose change is expensive and unnecessary. Government is suffering from the reduction in public trust at the moment and embarking on such a drastic change in this present economic climate will further disillusion voters. I would find it very difficult to vote for labour knowing that this change is unecessary and unafordable</p> <p>climate will further reduce credibility</p>
Malcolm Griffin	member of the public	A unitary authority would cut out an unecessary layer of administration. A whole county authority would decrease the need for official communication between two local authorities especially in the area of staff recruitment and training. There would be less duplication of services eg children's services. A single Norfolk body to include Norwich would be the better alternative.
Mark Fretwell	member of the public	I support the 'Keep Norfolk Local' campaign!
Mark Stanton	member of the public	I would strongly support no change to the current two tier local government system currently in place and I do not think my best interests as a citizen would be served by any change being proposed including any increase in the current city boundary.

<p>Michael Tighe</p>	<p>member of the public</p>	<p>I am totally against proposals to impose Unitary local Government in my area.</p> <p>Firstly I am unconvinced by the savings estimated . The financial analysis is so uncertain that it would be foolhardy to assume that the savings proposed are realistic. I also feel that the estimated costs (which in reality are likely to go up not down) of the changeover are out of all proportion to the supposed benefits.</p> <p>Mainly though I am unhappy about how I and my village are to be fairly and constructively served and represented. Living in the rural Fens right on the border of the county means that even now our interests are not as well considered as they could be just because we are so distant from where the influence is centred in the county. The new proposals can only make this worse. How can officers and councillors working and living in or near Norwich really have any idea about a community an hour and three quarters drive away (longer by Public transport). When could they ever visit us ? Out of sight out of mind !. Most Norwich residents get confused between The Fens and The Broads. ! No number of 'partnership boards' and area committees can possibly better represent and serve us than the current district council, and they are likely to be more bureaucratic and expensive in the long run. Many of the residents of my village have only been to Norwich once or sometimes never such is the cultural and geographical separation. To us Norwich is another world - a rather nice one but having totally different needs and aspirations to our own.</p> <p>I am also unhappy about the level of consultation that has occurred. By the time I was aware the decision appeared to have been made. How come all the major cities in the land get a referendum on whether they want a Mayor, but we don't get to say whether we want to be run by an inner city quango 70 miles away ?</p> <p>Please give more time for this matter to be discussed and represented by both sides and ideally give us a referendum.</p> <p>Thank you for this brief opportunity to have my say.</p>
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<p>Michaela Beaumont</p>	<p>member of the public</p>	<p>I do not feel that either of the proposals submitted for Norfolk represent value for money or a future improvement in the structure of local governemnt within this area.</p> <p>As a resident of Norwich City Council I do not feel confident in their ability to operate as a unitary authority. Problems already seem to exist within the council in it's current state from the publicised financial mismanagement on a larger scale to very local problems which we have had experience of in connection with parking permits and bin collections. I believe that before consideration can be given to the council to take on more services and a greater area these services need to improve. From a different perspective I feel that residents from the greater Norwich area which are currently situated in the council areas of Broadland District council and South norfolk will be against the proposed donut option. I believe these other councils offer improved services for less council tax making the current structure more value for these residents.</p> <p>With regards to the second option of one unitary authority for all of norfolk I believe this council will cover an area too large for one authority. This would result in residents feeling disassociated from their own local council and the council becoming less in touch in terms of front line services and the grass roots. Norfolk is a very varied county and each individual council has different characteristics in terms of urban, coastal and rural mixes, demographics and social classes. These individual circumstances will become overlooked in a single council trying to provide the same services and levels to all residents in norfolk.</p> <p>In terms of value for money I feel that the current structure is best suited. Partnership working is paramount between councils and in Norfolk this is already strong for example in the Greater Norwich Partnership, Norfolk Waste Partnership and Climate Change Strategies. I feel that keeping the status quo so that each resident has a local council still in touch with the needs of their local community and building upon existing whilst creating new partnerships is the way forward.</p>
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Michele Smith	member of the public	<p>Dear Sirs.</p> <p>I strongly request you not to change the structure of local government. My Council tax is one of the lowest in the country, my Council does a superb job, and it knows the people and their needs. It is structured for the people of Breckland, with many well received initiatives for the people who live and work here... A large unitary council will be expensive and too large for purpose; jobs will be lost and the upheaval does not bear thinking about. It would take years to sort out; the lost paperwork, the confusion with the new computer system, the inefficiencies covered by 'it's all to do with unification- not our fault"</p> <p>I thought I lived in a democracy, so when only 22 people out of the 650,000 living in what would be the 'Rural Norfolk Council' supporting the idea, why are you still going ahead? 60% of people who responded said NO!! I say NO!!!. Or could it be the voice of the people no longer count? In England? I never thought I would live to see the day.</p> <p>Yours in deep sadness</p> <p>Mrs. M A Smith.</p>
Anonymous	member of the public	<p>Norfolk is too large a county to have a single council run only from Norwich. As you would see in my address I am in King's Lynn, which is a major town in its own right and will continue to need a very locally run council.</p> <p>As two comparisons, much more progress has been made in pressing for the whole A11 to be made dual carriageway, being the main Norwich-London road, than has been the case in achieving the same for the A47, as the Norwich-King's Lynn-Peterborough road. The second comparison is that Norfolk has a countywide newspaper, the "Eastern Daily Press", but this has minimal coverage of the western half of the county, especially in related to job advertisements.</p> <p>The priorities of the existing Norfolk County council are already very Norwich and east of county biased and this would be further exacerbated by the proposal with substantial disadvantage to King's Lynn.</p> <p>Please do not publish my name.</p>

Mr Gary Bramham	member of the public	<p>I do not agree that we should have one major leading council, I believe in local councils, they interact with the local public. I live in Kings Lynn and I don't believe that some one in another area will listen to people who do not live local. I am like many others and will only vote for someone who we believe will look after our interests and someone we can approach if needed with having to travel for hours at our expense.</p> <p>KEEP COUNCILS LOCAL</p>
Mr P Roe	member of the public	<p>I feel strongly that the best option would be the SINGLE COUNTY UNITARY authority.</p> <p>This would be far better for the unity of the County as a whole, would support better County wide strategic planning for the whole County including Norwich, and is far more likely to be efficient in terms of both service provision and efficiency.</p> <p>Services for Norfolk can be planned far more effectively for Norfolk as a whole, rather than removing Norwich and creating two unitary authorities on the "doughnut" basis.</p> <p>Norfolk County with a separate Norwich does not make sense for the coherence of Norfolk in terms of "place"</p>
Mr R D Ford	member of the public	<p>The two proposed plans for the unitary authority seem to me to be lacking in insight into the local area. Norfolk is a fairly large county, but the infrastructure is quite poor. The main road through the county, the A47, is in a terrible state and in desperate need to be dualled. Rail services through Norfolk are frankly atrocious - you cannot get from one end of Norfolk to the other (east-west) via train without going into Cambridgeshire. Bus services are limited. There is only the one service that will take you from East to West Norfolk. The reason I'm saying this is that if you have a whole Norfolk unitary authority, the centre will undoubtedly be in Norwich. For those of us that live outside of Norwich, it's difficult to get there. If you have personal transport, then you have to go on the already congested A47. If you don't have personal transport, then you have to use public. Getting a train into Norwich is near impossible, especially if you live in the West. It's frankly simpler to get a train to London from the west than it is to get to Norwich. That leaves the bus. The X1, it's a 2 hour journey from King's Lynn to Norwich. People will need to go to Norwich from all over the county if the base of the new council is based there. They may need to go there for face-to-face with the council. It may be said that there will be satellite offices based around the county for people to go to, but it is widely known that these satellite offices are woefully inadequate and don't give you answers</p>

		<p>when you need them, because they are so distant from the centre. Communication between these offices is often atrocious (I know this as somebody with experience inside norfolk county council - children's services to be precise, so I'm not making this up as I go along!) However, this travel to Norwich is not only needed by the public to see thier council, but workers too. In these days of reducing carbon footprints, this will mean workers will need to travel further. The council will need representatives from all over the county working for it.</p> <p>However, the travel is not the only reason I feel this is a bad idea, but it is the basis of my next point. Norfolk is not very connected due to transport issues and the rural nature of the county. The people of Norwich really don't seem to care about anywhere more distant than wymondham! Again, this is shown in my knowledge of the current norfolk county council. They seem to snub us in the west. If we have a unitary authority for the whole of Norfolk, it will without a doubt mean a diversion and watering down of services from the west. While I am not the biggest fan of the west norfolk borough council, I have witnessed many, many administrative errors on their part, they do look after the west norfolk area in a way that norfolk county council has never, ever come close to. The borough council has kept weekly collections - which is proven to benefit the clenliness of local communities. Areas that have fortnightly collections have an increased incidence of rats and fly-tipping. Then there is the strong sponsoring of local events, such as the king's lynn festivals and local regeneration. These are things that the county council has been mostly unseen in. I am worried - and I know many others are too - that if we get a unitary authority that covers the whole of Norfolk, that these local schemes will be put aside and given less importance than those based closer to Norwich.</p> <p>The population of Norfolk - especially West Norfolk - has a high proportion of elderly people and rurally isolated people. The council needs to be in touch with local needs - the needs of various areas in Norfolk vary greatly from other areas. Having one giant council will water down services and make the council inaccessible by most. I feel that the best option for Norfolk is an East/West split, or East/West/Norwich. The town of King's Lynn is becoming a major town in it's own right, and the surrounding towns and villages deserve a local service. We here deserve a service not run by a council based an inaccessible distance away for most people, and a council that is not in touch with the area it serves.</p> <p>I've explained my reluctance for the whole Norfolk authority, but I am also against the Norfolk/Norwich split for all the same reasons described, plus the additional problem that if we have this system, where will the rest of Norfolk authority</p>
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		<p>be based? If not in Norwich, then it will be somewhere else even less accessible than Norwich. This will then give a problem again for employees of the council, travelling all over Norfolk to get to their new council office. And again, a problem for the public who need to get to the council office for face-to-face. I had read a statistic that the population in west Norfolk over the age of 65 years is 65%. I'm unsure about the accuracy of this statistic, but it is known the population is far more elderly than the general population, and rural too with poor transport links. Norfolk needs to be kept local, where local people can run local affairs. Many people, myself included, feel that the assessment done by the boundary committee is woefully inadequate, and actually has been proven to be not only inadequate but illegal. More needs to be done to look into ALL the options for Norfolk. It feels like the easiest options have been put forward, not the best. These changes to the councils will be around for a long time to come (one assumes), and proper thought and consideration needs to be put into this to get the best outcome for Norfolk as a whole - and also the opinions of the public be taken into consideration, not just ignored as the last assessment by the boundary committee did.</p>
<p>██████████</p>	<p>member of the public</p>	<p>Regarding the options for change within Norfolk</p> <p>Because of the huge change-over costs and inevitable disruption to services, any changes to local and regional government within Norfolk should only be considered if there has been a abject failure in all of the existing system. In all of rhetoric so far I have not heard that this has been established. So why are we considering changes at all? I can say that in talking to my friends and family there is absolutely no "public" support for any changes and generally the existing system appears to be working well. The push for changes seems to be coming from the Norwich City Council who ironically are perhaps the one Council in the region who receive the most criticism. One of the options, to enlarge Norwich City, would only enlarge the area which would receive a "poorer" service! I can not see why this is being considered, as the rest of Norfolk is then left with a ludicrous shaped area with no obvious administrative centre and would HAVE to be split into sub regions to administer effectively. Norfolk is a large County and service provided to say Filby from offices in say Kings Lynn or reversely West Acre from Cromer would be a spectacular waste of travelling time and a feeling of remoteness by the end user. Good services are provided by a mix of good administration and the ability to provide a person from the authority who knows your street/locality and will even turning up on your door step when you need them.</p> <p>The other option, of one County, suffers from the same draw backs as the outer part of the first option, to administer it well and effectively (which is presumably what is wanted) there will have to be sub regions. So in effect all the changes and the huge costs end up with a regional set up not unlike the existing.</p> <p>In my opinion leave as it is, put some of the moneys that would have been spent on the change to bolster hard pressed areas and ask for improvements or sharing of good</p>

		<p>practices to further improve those or other areas.</p> <p>I request that Name and address to be kept confidential and not published</p>
mr russell meager	member of the public	we would like to keep kings lynn office and would like to vote to keep our council
Mr.C.A.Sadler	member of the public	<p>Leave Norfolk alone. The present system works very well and is getting better all th time. I was bread and born in Norfolk and am proud of what we have, and I say NO, NO, NO to the Boundary Committee and the government. Stop wasting money when money is short because your plans will not work or do any good.</p> <p>There must be a hidden agenda behind all this where the very few will benifit and the rest of the county will suffer. My parents and my grand parents must be turning in their graves at the thought of what you are trying to do to this county of ours and most of the people round here say to you - Back Off - Things are alright as they are and we defy you to say otherwise. It has not worked any where else.</p>
Mrs A D Turner	member of the public	Local government works well and I can contact my local councillor. I do not want to be ruled by faceless people who do not understand local issues. I am also of the opinion that to have one large area or the "doughnut" would cost a vast amount of money, which will have to come from the tax payer and no doubt salaries will escalate as inevitably happens when there is change. If the systems works don` t break it just for the sake of spending more money. I will never be convinced that larger means better as those at the top lose all contact with the man in the street.
Mrs Helen Shaw	member of the public	<p>'If it aint broke, dont fix it' would seem to apply. All previous examples of creating a unitary authority caused chaos in the short term, paralysis in decision making, and no obvious improvement in services. The one thing which always occurs is budget overrun, and increased council taxes.</p> <p>In Norfolk the creation of a single PCT (NHS Norfolk) demonstrated this.</p> <p>Both proposals are ridiculous when referring to an area the size of Norfolk - particularly bearing in mind the poor public transport links, and the traditional rivalry between the various regions.</p>

Mrs J Colman	member of the public	I am opposed to the proposals put forward. King's Lynn Council is successful in it's own right and represents the west of Norfolk. Residents benefit from good local services varying from weekly rubbish collections to the regeneration of the town and surrounding area. A yearly free arts festival, one of the largest in europe, also benefits the local community. The local council has also attracted new industry such as Palm Paper, providing much needed employment. The local community should be given the chance to express their opinion of the proposed scheme through a referendum. I'm sure the result would reflect most people's opinion that we are happy as we are and satisfied with the service and value for money our LOCAL council already provides. provides.
Mrs J Raynes	member of the public	I feel that in the present fiancial climate it is appropriate to suggest that councils should be spending money on a reorganisation that very few of the general public want or need. Many of the local councils have recently lost money due to the collapse of Icelandic Banks and the sugestion is that they should be spending money on this reorganisation. My extended family all live in Norfolk and very few of them know what this reorganisation will mean for them so perhaps a more concernted effort to inform the local population of Norfolk would be helpfull to all concerned. How many people would be made redundant in an area were unemployment is aready high. I would support the option of No Change therefore maintaining the status quo.
Mrs S Gibbard	member of the public	Please keep the status quo as regards Norfolk. It works well. To make all these changes which will cost a great deal of money in this current economic climate would be totally unacceptable. In a similar situation in another part of the country, merely changing the logo cost Â£500,000. I cannot begin to imagine what the total cost would be. This is local taxpayers money - listen to what they say and stop wasting any more money on such a ludicrous idea.
[REDACTED]	member of the public	<p>I do not want to be governed by Norwich or any other areas, we need to keep our local council as if we were to be governed by else where, from previous experience, they have no working knowledge of King's Lynn and we would get placed on the bottom of the pile for any issues to be dealt with and where ever the actual council was based would receive priority. At least in Kings Lynn we do have a council that does it's best to cater for the surrounding area and they are there if we have any problems.</p> <p>I dread to think what it would be like if we were governed by somewhere as far away as Norwich (for instance) as not only would it be a higher cost phone call to report any problems but also you would never actually be able to see anyone in person, unless that involved a car or bus journey (I am a widowed pensioner and I do not drive and although I currently receive free public transport I would not relish a journey to the centre of the county just to speak to a human being who works for the council, especially in inclement weather) and I believe it may be a case of 'out of sight, out of mind' if we were to be governed in this way. Also, our</p>

		<p>councillors are very approachable, and listen to problems we have.</p> <p>I would prefer to remain anonymous but would appreciate my comments being read.</p>
Mrs S Mitchell	member of the public	<p>I support the Boundary Commission to review Local Government in Norfolk. I am of the opinion that the two tier system Local Government system established since 1974 is now no longer sustainable. The District Councils represent an uneconomic operation on historical boundaries which are unrelated to socio economic needs both today and in the future.</p> <p>Having comprehended the two proposals I support the proposed County Unitary Authority given the lower set up costs and potentially having the best expertise to provide services. This is also on the assumption that the current County Council offices will lead this new Unitary Authority's services given that they already carry out the majority of these functions for which they are rated a four star Authority.</p>
Mrs Susan Bragg	member of the public	<p>I am against moving West Norfolk to one council or two councils as rural communities need small local councils to work on rural issues. I feel the countryside will get lost amongst the city as the city will be chosen over things that are important to small villages and rural areas.</p> <p>It was in the press that village life may die out as services get lost to cities so young people will no longer live in small communities and villages will be part of history.</p> <p>KEEP NORFOLK LOCAL</p>
N Tupper	member of the public	<p>Considering the two options put forward in the most recent report, it is my view that the single unitary proposal is the only one that could successfully deliver the local government service in Norfolk. This proposal would mean the formation of a new single authority, built on the proven, quality County wide service delivered by Norfolk County Council but integrating existing district and borough functions in a co-ordinated, efficient and effective way.</p>
Natalie Lewis	member of the public	<p>I do not want:</p> <p>A unitary council for the whole of Norfolk.</p> <p>A 'doughnut' option, which involves one unitary council for</p>

		the greater Norwich area and one for the rest of Norfolk.
Niki Park	member of the public	<p>Unitary councils make total sense, but only if they are the right ones. How can you even consider giving Norwich City Council more responsibility when they cannot even manage effectively the responsibilities they've currently got. They are a poor performing council and it would be disastrous to our kids to give them responsibility for education, for example.</p> <p>Norfolk County Council on the other hand is a 4 star council - the only realistic option therefore is for a unitary council for the whole of Norfolk.</p>
O A Rumbelow	member of the public	<p>I am NOT in favour of these proposals. At a time of severe economic times the cost is completely unjustified. Look at the costs involved at both Northumberland and Cornwall, both way way over budget. South Norfolk District Council is very well run, is cosat effective and value for money. Norwich Council however is completley the reverse. Over spend heve real financial problems, some departments are at best described as " walking disasters" There is a saying that when things work well dont fix it. The two proposals leave me speechless. No feel for our community, Thetford for example, where my husband has worked and he knows it very well, has no need to worry about flood defences and the problems of south or north norfolk. It needs to look after itself!! We have lived in this area for 27 plus years and throughout that time have nothing but praise for our District Council. South Norfolk has done a super job, it and we feel that we are part of a special community, which we all understand. This dictact from London is most unwelcome and in addition it goes against both the Conservatory and Liberal policies and with an election imminent it is just plain stupid to be progressing something that is COSTLY and UNNECESSARY and against public opinion. It is yet another example of " I know best" and to hell with your thoughts and ideas!!!!</p>
Oliver Chastney	member of the public	<p>I have followed this process since the start with increasing dismay. What triggered this review was clearly politically motivated and, I imagine, well intentioned. However, the conclusions which have resulted in the options available are completely out of touch with the reality of what is best for the governance of the people of Norfolk.</p> <p>I have lived in Norfolk and Norwich all my 60+ years. My experience of local services over the years has seen a steady trend towards centralisation. Much of this has been gradual and well reasoned. I have spent much of my life in living in Broadland and South Norfolk. Both councils offer exceptional service when judged against any other in the country. I now live in central Norwich. Here it is a different story, not short of a complete shambles compared with the</p>

		<p>surrounding district councils. The very thought of enlarging the present administration is a recipe for an even bigger maladministration. However, I am sure that a complete political shake-up at the forthcoming local election will demonstrate the strength of local feeling. We do not want a unitary Norwich.</p> <p>As to the costs for this whole exercise to date, these are surely a complete waste and experience learned from, for example, Cornwall suggest that ongoing estimates are woefully inadequate.</p> <p>In short, what we currently have in Norfolk may not be perfect but it is infinitely better than the present alternative proposals. It's not broken, stop meddling, it doesn't need fixing.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention.</p>
Paul Eastwood	member of the public	I am not happy to have the local government change to a unitary council. I believe the current system is best, any change will diminish our voice in government and we will also end up paying more council tax and service delivery will be poorer.
Paul Lewis	member of the public	<p>I do not want:</p> <p>A unitary council for the whole of Norfolk.</p> <p>A 'doughnut' option, which involves one unitary council for the greater Norwich area and one for the rest of Norfolk.</p>
Pauline	member of the public	<p>I do not agree with the boundary commissions ideas of one Council in charge of Norfolk, I feel that being a resident in a very small rural Community we will get forgotten and I also feel that we should have our local council in charge of our services</p> <p>keep it Local!!</p>

<p>Peter Brown</p>	<p>member of the public</p>	<p>Dear Sir / Madam</p> <p>Whilst this is not being offered as an option, I would prefer the City, District and County Councils to be left as they are (ie maintain the status quo).</p> <p>Failing that I would prefer one Norfolk County Unitary authority under what is currently the Norfolk County Council, rather than the "Greater Norwich" and "Rural Norfolk" option being offered.</p> <p>My reasons for this are as follow:-</p> <p>Norwich City Council have for a number of years had a bad record of performance. Ignoring the many headline making "errors" over the years ((Greyhound Opening Housing fiasco (2008), Shortest double yellow line (2006), Conker Trees for the chop (2001)), the most recent Audit Commission dated 23rd April 2009 have awarded Norwich City Zero (yes that's zero) stars for it's recent housing inspections, in Planning inspection just one star in 2008, Environment (just one star) in 2006 and the list goes on looking at the audit commission website.</p> <p>The memorial gardens right in front of City Hall is a disgrace and has been for many years, should not have been left to get to the state that it's now in but typical of Norwich City Council - always having grand plans but little action</p> <p>How would Norwich Greater Council cope with other things like schools (something that they have not had any knowledge or dealings with for decades, Adult Social Services, Children's Services, Museums, Libraries, etc.)? - not very well I would imagine seeing how they badly they cope with the lesser number of services that they currently have under their control. My most recent dealing with Norwich City Council, in November 2008 I emailed directly a neighbourhood housing officer, who read the email (I received a read receipt) but did not respond to my simple question.</p> <p>I dispute the savings that Norwich City Council say they can make if they become a unitary council -</p>
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R Fowler	member of the public	<p>No Unitry Council has proven to be an advantage, and the so called savings have just not materialised. There would be problems where local knowledge is a must, but the decision makers will not have the same quality of local knowledge that exists with the present district councils. This applies to all of the district councils who have first hand knowledge of the needs of their own district, but very little of other districts within the county. This idea is another of the present governments wishes to take more control over the people of Norfolk and to create another unmanageable dinosaur that will obviously be made up of overpaid individuals who will bow down to the government whilst making decisions about various areas of the county about which they have very little knowledge or concern. As long as they are being paid exhorbitant salaries and expenses, they will not be bothered whether the decisions they make are for the better or not. Sitting in their new fancy unnecessary offices with their snouts in the trough is all that will matter to them. Kick this idea out once and for all and leave us to be looked after by our own elected councils, who if they let us down can soon be kicked out of office and replaced by more competent individuals. This is and must remain the rights of every person living in Norfolk.</p>

R Leigh	member of the public	<p>Leave the system exactly as it is. It works! I do not see the point of wasting millions of pounds, (especially in the current economic climate) on reorganisation just because the Secretary of State seems hell bent on pushing it through.</p> <p>I do not believe that there will be any economic benefit in either of the unitary authority options. We will just end up paying for the re-organisation for many years to come. The effect of reorganisation will be higher council tax bills and uniform services accross the county which do not suit the varied needs of residents of the many differing areas of Norfolk. Unitary authorities may suit large urban areas but not an area as vast and diverse as Norfolk. The needs of residents in North Norolk are very different to those in Norwich. Likewise Kings Lynn residents will not want the same services as those in Great Yarmouth.</p>
Rachel Bodle	member of the public	<p>I am active in our local community and have discussed your proposals with a number of associates (including in West Norfolk Mind forwhich I am Chair of Trustees, and the community organisation Downham Market by Design that works towards for a sustainable future for our locally distinctive market town - of which I am Secretary). These separate organisations submitted comments in your earlier consultation and I participated in one of the focus groups. I am now providing a further personal submission but my views have been influenced by earlier discussions. I will not be taking a view on which of the two proposals I prefer but am simply providing an indication of what I think and why.</p> <p>I strongly support the view that West Norfolk has distinctive characteristics and needs that must be recognised: The people I have talked with across west Norfolk are united in their view that west Norfolk has some distinctive characteristics that must be recognised by whatever local government structure is in place. This distinctiveness comes in part from the very good rail link between KIng's Lynn and Cambridge/London. There is a north/south dynamic in the western part of the county that weakens the influence of Norwich. Although people strongly identify with Norfolk, they also tend to have links to the south & west. In the southern part of our region there is a further geographic link with the Cambridgeshire & Lincolnshire Fens. This separation or distinctiveness is further reinforced by the existence of a local paper, the Lynn News, that tends to be more widely read here than the Eastern Daily Press that</p>

		<p>dominates elsewhere. This is reflected in the economy and where people go for work, major shopping or entertainment. It doesn't mean that our needs couldn't be served by a council also serving other parts of the County - but probably means that such a council would have to employ a number of people who lived in, and therefore understood, the west of the County. This is best achieved by having a strong regional presence. I leave it to others to assess how this affects the costings of various options and consequently the relative attractiveness of them.</p> <p>Unlike several of the people I've spoken with, I support a change in the structure of our local government. I have been involved with West Norfolk Mind through a period when the commissioning of mental health services has been reviewed and when preparations are being made for the wider use of personal budgets and direct payments. The overall objectives of proposed changes are spot on: I am wholly committed to reducing social exclusion and stigma that attaches to people affected by mental health issues and to enabling them to access the type of support that best meets their needs. However, in practice, the poor handling of these changes for Norfolk has created confusion and uncertainty for service providers such as West Norfolk Mind - with knock-on adverse effects upon service users and staff. I conclude that any structural change in local government that shakes up the current administration can only be helpful.</p> <p>However, the timing and manner of introduction of change will be important. Downham Market is too small a town to provide all the goods and services local people need and King's Lynn is important to this area. I think it's important that any structural changes must maintain the momentum generated around a reinvigorated future for a town that has such a rich heritage but had become distinctively rundown. The changes under way have boosted morale across the region and it would have an adverse effect if momentum was lost.</p> <p>I am hopeful that the neighbourhood empowerment arrangements could be very helpful to the Downham Market town region. There is certainly scope there. I am a former town councillor in Downham Market and took the lead on the production of a town design statement - an exercise that involved a series of public meetings and workshops. I have heard a number of people question whether our BCKLWN officers allocated an equitable share of their thinking time and resources to the southern part of the Borough. Our small market town has experienced intensive development over recent years; development that has not been matched by infrastructure growth. The town had a demographic skewed towards older people and so many of the recent new homes were designed to bring families and younger people to the town. Unfortunately, the jobs and amenities</p>
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		<p>needed by these new residents don't yet exist. A further area of concern is the town's economy. For a town with a population approaching 10,000, the town centre is relatively under-developed. The town has poor links with its hinterland villages and, although the area attracts a number of visitors, town centre facilities don't provide much for tourists. My hope is that a community partnership board would be well placed to take a coherent view of what matters to this rural market town and its hinterland.</p> <p>I do have some concerns relevant to the introduction and operation of a local community partnership board. Being a rural area with few major employers, there are few people in the community who have experience-based confidence in their organisation skills. Local community groups struggle to find competent committee members. The local town and parish councils sometimes struggle to find volunteer councillors. In recent times we have had a number of 'elections' where there was no need for a ballot. Downham Market has started to take control of more local amenities from the Borough council - a shift that necessitates a larger paid staff team - that in turn requires more management oversight from councillors. The pool of expertise available is not what it might be elsewhere. And yet the future might require people who can tackle the strategic challenge of further development, open up new employment opportunities, or reinforce local market-town activity in the face of climate change and to reduce energy demands. Volunteers serving on the forum might need extensive training and support, but might then move on so that the training and support is not just an initial cost but a continuing overhead. I haven't seen any detailed proposals that suggest how these issues might be addressed.</p> <p>Submission ends.</p>
Ralph Burton	member of the public	<p>I vehemently detest the Boundary Commission's process and attitude to the restructuring of local government in Norfolk. With court cases and second rounds of consultation the whole process is a farce. I have not seen any simple financial information regarding the savings that will be made or the costs that will be incurred. I can only think that the costs incurred will run into millions which the tax payer i.e. me will have to foot. The current two tier system of local government in Norfolk works extremely well and there are national best practice examples of efficiency savings and collaboration with partners and between the authorities in Norfolk. I can't think of how much this nonsense has cost already. I suggest the boundary committee abandons its attempts to re-configure Norfolk and leave the situation as status-quo - if it isn't broke don't fix, keep the existing county/district council split, do not impose change for change sake!</p>

Raymond Brown	member of the public	<p>It is said that the reason for this change is to save money, it may well do, however, the amount saved may well be negligible after all the extra cost to the taxpayer through welfare payments!.</p> <p>I however am of the opinion that this change would reduce amenities in all sections and things such as local festivals would be funded at the whim of a council who just would not understand the meaning of such events to locals. The smaller towns and indeed villages in this area would come way down the list for grants and repairs and only after places such as NORWICH had received theirs (as most of the councilors would be from that area).</p>
Richard Dickson	member of the public	<p>I am against a single or double unitary authority proposed by the boundary committee based on the following grounds:</p> <p>1)I cannot recall being consulted by the boundary committee, these appear to have been very small and most probably directed at supporters of the committee. There are approx 800.000 resident in West Norfolk, and I think it is only fair to organise a referendum and actually obtain a true reflection of say 80% before deciding on the future of Norfolk. I believe the committee would then receive results of 85-90% of people against the unitary authority. I speak/ see many people in my chosen profession, and none of these have been consulted, and the majority are against any change.</p> <p>2)I live approx 45 miles away from Norwich in Kings Lynn, and with the reduction of representatives in my area, I struggle to see how local interests will be taken into consideration. The single County unitary proposal would create one of the largest unitary councils. Such a council would be too big to control and too remote. OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF MIND.</p> <p>3)There would be no transition costs if the two tier system is retained. The estimated Â£40-Â£60 million earmarked to cover the costs, could be better spent combating the impact of the recession and improving local services.</p> <p>i AM OF THE VIEW THAT STATUS QUO IS THE ONLY SENSIBLE OPTION.</p>

Richard Page	member of the public	<p>It baffles me how a unitary council can be a good idea for the county. The plans are to either have a central office in Norwich or a ring system, where Norwich has it's own, but everywhere else has to fall in line as a unitary council.</p> <p>Sure enough, a Norwich board would know what is best for Norwich, but how can a Norwich board justify that they know enough about Hunstanton, King's Lynn and Downham Market to make any impact?</p> <p>With the current council set up of Borough Council of West Norfolk, North Norfolk District Council and Breckland Council all serving different parts of the region, at least the region grows as a whole. Surely if everything is based in Norwich, these areas would largely be put aside whilst all attention is focused on Norwich? I know King's Lynn is a growing town, but would it remain so in favour of possibility of growth in Norwich.</p>
Robert Lewis	member of the public	<p>I do not want:</p> <p>A unitary council for the whole of Norfolk.</p> <p>A 'doughnut' option, which involves one unitary council for the greater Norwich area and one for the rest of Norfolk.</p>
Roger Andrews	member of the public	<p>Leave boundaries as they are and stop wasting money on things that have not broken.</p>
Rosemary Andrews	member of the public	<p>The cost of chnging boundaries will cause financial costs and should be left as they are.</p>
S Bullard	member of the public	<p>Norwich continues to perform poorly in assessments of its services, whilst county wide services provided by Norfolk County Council are assessed highly and valued locally.</p> <p>I suggest a unitary Norfolk might bring the services in Norwich up to a better standard.and provide a more consistant level of those services county wide.</p> <p>I have no confidence that a city / rural split enables consistency and no confidence that expanded Norwich will be any better than current poor performance.</p>

S C Betts	member of the public	<p>I was born and brought up in Norfolk, I have lived here all my life (56 years). The Boundary Commission have not allowed the status-quo (i.e. two-tier) as an option, but I would strongly favour this and would like to record this in my submission.</p> <p>I would reluctantly accept a whole-Norfolk Unitary authority. I would very strongly oppose a "doughnut" with a Greater-Norwich Unitary at its centre. I consider that the semi-rural areas which are at the edges of the suggested "outer" Norfolk Unitary have more in common socially and economically with their more rural neighbours than they do with the urban conurbation of the city itself. I live in an area which is well-served by Broadland DC, and which if the doughnut was agreed would be part of Greater Norwich. I would be extremely distressed if this was to happen.</p>
Stephen Smith	member of the public	I do not believe that any reorganisation is warranted, however, the least worst option would be for one authority for the whole of Norfolk.
stephen tataryn	member of the public	Pro status quo
Stephen Thompson	member of the public	I feel it will be detrimental to the people of West Norfolk if we were to lose local control of our council services as our voice will be one of many in one big representative body. At least with the current arrangements the council is local and responsive to the needs of its community this will be lost much as Parliament has become detached from its electorate.
Steve Tartelin	member of the public	<p>Norfolk County Council is well recognised as a successful and well managed local authority, delivering quality services to the local community. This has resulted in numerous national awards and the gaining of 4 star status. In contrast Norwich City Council has consistently failed to manage its finances, and has recently been through a series of high profile problems with its housing department. It is also about to disband its failing Citycare contracting division and transfer much of its operations to the County Council contract partnership.</p> <p>The thought of giving more responsibility to the discredited City Council is an absolute nightmare.</p> <p>The only sensible course of action is to create a single unitary authority for the whole county, building on the current success of the County Council.</p>

Theresa Hewett	member of the public	<p>Dear Boundary Committee</p> <p>I wish to comment in objection to your proposals for review of local government in Norfolk. Firstly I find it difficult to believe your initial premise that you want to get this right for the people of Norfolk. If this is the case then why have you failed to ask us whether it is right for us (by way of a referendum) and why are you ignoring the volume of letters you have received in support of the status quo? The first test of any review has to be how does the current system work, does it need to be changed? And, as with a doctor who diagnoses his patient before treating him, do we need to spend millions of taxpayers pounds to fix something which actually works well already?</p> <p>Neighbourhood empowerment is about encouraging and enabling greater involvement in community life and everything that affects it. So let's spend some money doing that instead of a review which is, here on the ground in the villages and towns of Norfolk, excluding ever more residents from community life and proposing to cut back on local involvement by shedding an entire tier of local councillors, who often are the enablers and encouragers we so desperately need to keep.</p> <p>I would suggest that your assertion that these proposals have been open to considerable public comment is inaccurate, just look at how proportionately few people have responded on this website. If you really want to prove that these proposals have public support then put it to a referendum.</p> <p>Of the responses you have received you suggest that you may discount many because they do not make a comparison of the merits of the existing system over unitary local government. That is because you have not allowed them to. The current system is not one of the options you have put forward and the financial models are, according to your own website, incomparable, so we can neither comment on it nor compare it and you are using this to disregard our views. Hardly public consultation performed in an open and transparent manner.</p> <p>Your own criteria have not been met - the change to unitary status has not attracted a broad cross-section of support (17% can hardly be called a broad cross-section), they are not affordable (by your consultant's own admission) and as such do not appear to provide value for money. Nor will the loss of local representation deliver empowerment of citizens.</p>
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		<p>Apparently you have received 1600 responses from residents and you say in para 2.9 that "most residents" preferred a single unitary approach. When I did maths at school there was no formula that could make 17% into "most" when there was another group of 62%. The 62% in favour of the status quo could fairly be called "most residents".</p> <p>Please enlighten me as to who says that you are not allowed to listen to a majority view during public consultation? What on earth is the point of the consultation if you can't act on it?</p> <p>Value for money means that you get something worth what you pay for it or better. You are virtually dismissing the value for money criteria, howso? In today's economic and political world it is crucial that you give us value for money. This restructure will cost millions - to do a job that is already being done extremely well. Now is not the time or the climate to do this.</p> <p>How is the average man in the street supposed to make sense of the financial models you present for the unitary option? And why would he when you state yourselves that the models are incomparable? What precisely are you asking us to comment on? There is no comparison to be made so this criterion cannot be met.</p> <p>Considering the huge debt the country is in there is no argument over the affordability. We can't afford it. We are having to print money just to keep afloat. I repeat - we can't afford it. It is not affordable.</p> <p>Council Tax will rise as a result burdening residents even more in an economic downturn. There will be greater risk, both financial and strategic. Some figures are yet to be confirmed making the whole process rather academic.</p> <p>What about real outcomes for residents? Will my bin be emptied emptier? Will my streetlights shine brighter? Will the planning officer study my plan more closely? Will my local school get my children more GCSEs? Will my taxi drivers have advanced driving licences? Will there be less holes in the roads? What value do your proposals return to me as a resident of Norfolk?</p>
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		<p>So, my objection to the proposals is based on the following summary points:</p> <p>The financial models are incomparable and do not stack up. The five criteria have not been met. There is not broad cross section of support. Residents have not been adequately informed or consulted. The concept and the resulting process is misdirected and misguided.</p> <p>Just to confirm, this review is not wanted by Norfolk residents. I urge you to do the right thing and put a stop to it so that what little money we have left in the country can go towards things that are necessary and worthwhile.</p> <p>Yours faithfully</p> <p>Theresa Hewett</p>
Tracy Miller	member of the public	<p>I don't understand the need for change. The cost implications to residents in specific areas will be immense and with how the current climate is having these costs put onto the general public as well is ridiculous. Our council and town council perform very well at present and we have the lowest district council tax in the country if this unitary were to happen we would be in a worse position. Have the costs of this actually been fully investigated or is it another pie in the sky idea??</p>
William Tawn	member of the public	<p>Given the size and diverse nature of the County I consider that the existing two-tier system gives the facility of reasonable access to services and ensures that matters are dealt with locally by people who understand the area. For these reasons I would not wish to see any change that led to their being one unitary council covering all or the bulk of the County.</p> <p>I therefore consider that we should maintain the "status quo".</p> <p>The lack of adequate publicity to the proposals prior to the deadline date for submission of any views precludes me from making a more detailed comment. I do however consider that any proposals for alterations should be the subject of a county-wide referendum.</p>

Name	Organisation you belong to	Your feedback
Dave Swinborne	member of the public	This reorganisation has been instigated by the most inefficient council in the country - Norwich . Even their auditors will not sign off the accounts. Their idea is to expand the boundaries to take in the more affluent areas surrounding Norwich to further fund their inept and corrupt administration. The Boundary reorganisation is not wanted by the majority of the population of Norfolk.It is a known from previous super councils that the estimate of costs is woefully inaccurate and actual costs are many more times the estimate and the poor rate payers pick up the tab. Norfolk is a very large County and the interests of Kings Lynn are very different from Thetford or Wymondham. As far as I am concerned we should keep the status quo and scrap the idea of any reorganisation.
Jane Scarrott	parish/town council	As Clerk to West Dereham Parish Council I have been asked to inform you the Council would prefer status quo
Jane Scarrott	member of the public	I would support one council for Norfolk but would like to see neighbourhood boundaries in the one council given good consideration and not necessarily be based on the present Safer Neighbourhood Team areas.
Hilary Hammond	member of the public	I do not see a strong case for dispensing with the current local government arrangements in Norfolk, which work well. I strongly support both Norfolk County Council and Broadland District Council. However, if change is essential, I support one authority for the whole county. Norwich is an important city in the region, with an influence that extends across by far the majority of the county. If it has its own single tier local authority, it is likely to restrict access to its services for those of us who live in the rural part of Norfolk. It did this when it was previously a County Borough. I do not consider it to be a disadvantage to increase the number of people any one Councillor represents. With electronic communication it is as easy to talk to a Councillor as one of 7,000 as one of 3,500 voters. The key is the quality of the Councillors, and that is likely to improve if there is more competition to be a Councillor.

Chris Thompson	member of the public	<p>Dear Sir/Madam. I am absolutely disgusted at the time , money, working hours spent on this farcial review. We are in deep recession and all this government is doing is wasting money on something that does not need changing. One only has to look at recently new Unitary costs have spiralled over expected costs. The goal posts keep moving in Norfolk, and it always seems to move in favor of the Norwich City Council, i wonder why! Boundary and judicial views have found the City Council wanting. They have been totally incapapable of running their finances for over 30 years, and do not make the level of criteria required for a unitary.. They now have a black hole of some 80 million pounds which could soon have at least another 12 million added due to trying to wriggle out of a new computer system contract. Secondly, 40% of housing in Norwich is apparently owned by the council, 60% of which are on Benefits. No wonder the City Council want the Doughtnut so they can then raid the outlying towns and villages to bring in more council tax to pay for their failings. We are supposed to be changing are attitude towards climate change, well if the city council did not waste so much money on bringing Norwich to a standstill with traffic lights everywhere, as you cannot walk anywhere in the city more than 50yds i would think without seeing a traffic light. I rest my case. I am in no doubt that this is politically orientated move. Secondly, the move for a single unitary by the County. This would be the second largest unitary, second only to Birmingham and in my view the only alternative to leaving things as they are, the Status Quo . With an extremely large area an population count approaching the 1 million marker this would be extremely difficult to manage efficiently and once again the projected costs of 15 million are way out. This whole process would, i belive cost at least 100- 150 million pounds, and probably a lot more. This Country, the people of this region and the Government cannot afford the costs so cut the losses and shelve the whole Unitary package. The status Quo is working and working well, extremely well,Councils are working together to improve each others efficiencies and this is saving costs. Finally, hundreds of jobs would also be lost with the reform , something we should seriously consider also in th current climate, because the 100 - 150million estimate to implement this idea could soon spiral to 250million pounds having to pay out redundancy packages, and some of those for leaders of councils would be approaching Â£500,000 each! As the saying goes; If it ain't broke, don't fix it! Yours Sincerely Mr Chris Thompson</p>
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Steven Smith	member of the public	<p>I am against these proposals and in favour of maintaining the status quo. Why change something that is working OK at the moment? I live in Breckland and the cost models shown in the local media indicate that I will have to pay higher council tax. I don't like that idea. I chose to live in rural Norfolk because I don't need many of the services associated with city life. Why should I have to pay for them? In a time of recession and rising unemployment, what's this going to cost? I bet the current estimates will look grossly inadequate a year from now. What about the scale of the county? Norfolk is huge and diverse: people in Emneth have very little in common with those in Great Yarmouth. How can you hope to provide local services to people across such a large area from a central authority based, presumably, in Norwich? People living in the west of the county are closer to Cambridge and Peterborough and, as such, less likely to see Norwich being the centre of their worlds. Neither do I want the services provided to me being decided by the demands of the many in Norwich. What about democracy? You're not asking me if I want this change, just to choose between two poor alternatives to the current system. There are going to be fewer councillors too: so they'll be more distant and less able to deal with local issues. If we don't need eight councils in Norfolk, do we need eight MPs? Would it seem more prudent to replace them with a single MP? After all, with the current scandals about expenses, there are obvious savings to be made there!</p>
Stuart John McLaren	resident/community organisation	<p>Dear Sirs, I am writing on behalf of St Augustine's Community Together Residents' Association. Our association was founded in 2003 to represent residents, tenants and traders who live and work in the St Augustine's area of Norwich (a part of Mancroft Ward to the north-west of the city centre). At a recent public meeting organised by our association there was unanimous support for the proposal that Norwich be governed by a unitary authority. Local residents and traders felt strongly that the current two-tier system of local government was cumbersome and inefficient, and that they wanted a council that was closer to and more representative of the people of Norwich. Stuart John McLaren Secretary, St Augustine's Community Together Residents' Association (Please do not publish my email address as I do not wish to receive any more spam than I am currently receiving!)</p>