

Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock: Summary and analysis of consultation responses and summary of representations from named consultees

Introduction

1. A statutory consultation on proposals for unitary local government in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock was opened on 19 November and closed on 11 January 2025. We received a total of 4128 responses.
2. The four proposals being consulted on were made by councils and submitted to the Government on 26 September 2025.
3. This document provides a summary of the 4128 responses received to the Government's consultation on the proposals for future unitary local government in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock
4. The Government announced to Parliament in March 2026 that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government had decided to implement, subject to Parliamentary approval, the proposal for 5 unitaries submitted by Southend-on-Sea City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Basildon Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Colchester City Council, Harlow District Council, Maldon District Council, Tendring District Council and Uttlesford District Council.
5. **This consultation invited views on the proposals submitted by:**
6. **Southend-on-Sea City Council, Chelmsford City Council, Basildon Borough Council, Brentwood Borough Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Colchester City Council, Harlow District Council, Maldon District Council, Tendring District Council and Uttlesford District Council proposed 5 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:**
 - **West:** Uttlesford, Harlow, Epping Forest
 - **North East:** Braintree, Colchester, Tendring
 - **Mid:** Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon
 - **South West:** Thurrock, Basildon
 - **South East:** Castle Point, Southend, Rochford
7. From here this is referred to as the 5 unitary proposal.
8. **Essex County Council, Braintree District Council and Epping Forest District Council proposed 3 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:**
 - **North:** Braintree, Colchester, Tendring, Uttlesford
 - **Mid:** Harlow, Epping Forest, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon
 - **South:** Thurrock, Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend
9. From here this is referred to as the 3 unitary proposal.

10. **Rochford District Council proposed 4 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:**
 - **North:** Braintree, Colchester, Tendring
 - **West:** Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford
 - **Central:** Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon, Rochford
 - **South:** Basildon, Castle Point, Southend, Thurrock
11. From here this is referred to as the Rochford 4 unitary proposal.
12. **Thurrock Council proposed 4 unitary councils across the whole of the area of Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea, comprising the current district areas of:**
 - **West:** Harlow, Epping Forest, Brentwood, Thurrock
 - **North:** Uttlesford, Braintree, Chelmsford
 - **East:** Maldon, Colchester, Tendring
 - **South:** Basildon, Castle Point, Southend, Rochford
13. From here this is referred to as the Thurrock 4 unitary proposal.
14. The consultation on these proposals has informed an assessment of the merits of each proposal. All the proposals have been considered carefully, alongside the responses received to this consultation, representations and any other relevant information, in assessing the proposals against the criteria before a judgement was taken on which proposal to implement.
15. The criteria by which proposals for local government reorganisation have been assessed are set out in the letter of invitation, sent to councils in area on 5 February 2025. The consultation asked questions relating to the criteria for each of the above proposals.
16. This consultation relates to the structure of local government in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. These proposals relate to England only.

Methodology

17. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 states that the Secretary of State may not implement a proposal unless they have consulted with every authority affected by the proposal and other such other persons as they consider appropriate. Those councils and persons considered appropriate are hereafter referred to as 'named consultees'.
18. The list of named consultees is available on gov.uk.
19. In addition, the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government (the Ministry) welcomed the views of any other persons or bodies interested in these proposals, including local residents, town and parish councils, businesses and the voluntary and community sector.

20. The Ministry used Citizen Space, a third-party consultation programme to collect responses. Citizen Space was open to both named consultees and all other interested parties. Further information on the statutory basis for, and methodology of, the consultation is provided on the [publication page](#).
21. Responses to the consultation were also received by email and letter.
22. The Ministry used a tool named Consult AI to assist in the analysis of responses. The AI tool identified themes present in the responses which Ministry officials have checked for accuracy. The tool did not have access to any personal data. All responses from named consultees were read by Ministry staff.
23. To evaluate Consult's performance, human reviewers independently checked the theme assignments Consult had produced, and these were compared against Consult's original outputs using an F1 score — a standard measure that penalises both over- and under-assignment of themes. Consult's theme mappings were consistent with people.

Consultation Questions

24. Respondents answered the questions below using a five-point agree–disagree scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree', with an additional 'don't know' option.
25. The questions were as follows:

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Question 9: If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

Summary of responses

26. There were 4128 responses to this consultation, 46 from named consultees and 4082 from other respondents. 7 respondents sent in replies relevant to all six invitation areas. There were 213 responses as part of a campaign for boundary change for Wickford. Not all respondents provided an answer to each question, please see analysis of responses by question below for individual response data.

Responses from named consultees

Named consultee respondents	Number of Responses
Principal councils	15
Neighbouring councils	7
Health Bodies	3
Police and Fire	3
Education Bodies	2
Other Public Sector	6
Voluntary and Community Sector	3
Business Organisations	3
National Bodies	3
Other named consultees	1
Total named consultees	46

Responses from other respondents

Other respondents	Number of responses
Individuals living in Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock (the affected area)	3647
Individuals not living in affected area	301
Organisations	134
Total other respondents	4082
Total responses (including named consultees)	4128

Summary of findings

27. Tables in this report included numbers rounded to the nearest whole number, and as such, not all cumulative scores will equal 100%.
28. Respondents were invited to respond to 8 multiple choice questions per proposal and could provide a rationale for their answers in a free text box. The multiple choice questions invited respondents to state whether they strongly agreed, somewhat agreed/agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, somewhat disagreed/disagreed, strongly disagreed, or did not know when responding to a statement.
29. For the purposes of this document we have classified positive responses as strongly agree, somewhat agreed or agree and negative responses as somewhat disagree or disagree and strongly disagree.
30. The table below takes the average response across the multiple choice questions to provide an overall view of whether all respondents viewed a proposal positively or negatively.

All respondents

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>5 unitary</i>	28619	48%	42%	8%	2%
<i>3 unitary</i>	25548	22%	68%	8%	2%
<i>Rochford 4 unitary</i>	23832	23%	64%	11%	3%
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	24288	22%	64%	11%	2%

31. Overall, the responses demonstrate a preference for the 5 unitary proposal. 48% of respondents to the 5 unitary proposal provided positive responses to the questions and 42% of respondents provided negative responses. 10% were responses of neither agree nor disagree or don't know. Preference is for 5 unitary, with the other three proposals less preferred and performing similarly.

Named consultees

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>5 unitary</i>	256	64%	16%	20%	0%
<i>3 unitary</i>	248	33%	48%	19%	0%
<i>Rochford 4 unitary</i>	231	22%	48%	30%	0%
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	232	12%	58%	30%	0%

32. Overall, the responses from the named consultees demonstrate a preference for the 5 unitary proposal. 64% of respondents to the 5 unitary proposal provided positive responses to the questions and 16% of respondents provided negative responses. 20% were responses of neither agree nor disagree or don't know. Preference in order is for 5 unitary, 3 unitary, Rochford 4 unitary, Thurrock 4 unitary.

Individuals living in the Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>5 unitary</i>	26948	48%	42%	8%	2%
<i>3 unitary</i>	23988	21%	69%	8%	2%
<i>Rochford 4 unitary</i>	22411	22%	64%	11%	2%
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	22896	22%	64%	11%	2%

33. Overall, the responses from individuals living in Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock demonstrate a preference for the 5 unitary proposal. 48% of respondents to the 5 unitary proposal provided positive responses to the questions and 42% of respondents provided negative responses. 10% were responses of neither agree nor disagree or don't know. Preference is for 5 unitary, with the other 3 proposals performing similarly.

Individuals living outside of the affected area

<i>Respondent type</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>5 unitary</i>	552	45%	40%	10%	4%
<i>3 unitary</i>	512	30%	54%	10%	5%
<i>Rochford 4 unitary</i>	464	31%	57%	8%	4%
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	448	26%	63%	7%	4%

34. Overall, the responses from individuals living outside of Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock demonstrate a preference for the 5 unitary proposal. 45% of respondents to the 5 unitary proposal provided positive responses to the questions and 40% of respondents provided negative responses. 14% were responses of neither agree nor disagree or don't know. Preference in order is for 5 unitary, Rochford 4 unitary, 3 unitary, Thurrock 4 unitary.

Organisations

<i>Respondent type</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>5 unitary</i>	863	55%	29%	14%	3%
<i>3 unitary</i>	800	31%	53%	14%	3%
<i>Rochford 4 unitary</i>	726	24%	53%	18%	4%
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	712	13%	65%	18%	4%

35. Overall, the responses from organisations demonstrate a preference for the 5 unitary proposal. 55% of respondents to the 5 unitary proposal provided positive responses to the questions and 29% of respondents provided negative responses. 14% of responses were neither agree nor disagree and 3% of responses were don't know. Preference in order is for 5 unitary, 3 unitary, Rochford 4 unitary, Thurrock 4 unitary.

Analysis of responses by question

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal suggests councils that are based on sensible geographies and economic areas?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	71%	29%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	20%	80%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	29%	64%	7%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	86%	0%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	80%	0%	20%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	67%	33%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	100%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	66%	19%	16%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	48%	16%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	31%	48%	21%	0%

Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	10%	62%	28%	0%
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Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3375	58%	38%	4%	0%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	3007	27%	70%	4%	0%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2811	28%	64%	7%	1%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2871	29%	64%	6%	0%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	51%	41%	7%	1%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	36%	56%	5%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	34%	59%	5%	2%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	30%	66%	2%	2%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	63%	28%	9%	0%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	34%	58%	7%	1%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	29%	58%	10%	3%

<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	18%	70%	9%	3%
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Total Responses Question 1

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3584	58%	38%	4%	0%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3202	27%	69%	4%	0%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2989	29%	64%	7%	1%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3045	28%	64%	7%	1%

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will be able to deliver the outcomes they describe in the proposal?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	71%	29%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	27%	73%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	64%	21%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	79%	7%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	60%	0%	40%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%

<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	67%	33%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%

<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%

<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	63%	19%	19%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	48%	16%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	17%	48%	34%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	14%	59%	28%	0%

Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3372	49%	42%	7%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	3001	23%	69%	6%	1%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2802	24%	63%	11%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2866	23%	64%	11%	2%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	49%	42%	6%	3%

<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	31%	55%	8%	6%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	33%	57%	7%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	27%	68%	2%	4%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	56%	28%	13%	4%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	31%	52%	14%	3%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	25%	52%	20%	3%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	11%	69%	17%	3%

Total Responses Question 2

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3581	50%	41%	8%	2%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3196	24%	68%	6%	2%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2980	24%	62%	11%	2%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3040	23%	64%	12%	2%

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils are the right size to be efficient, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	71%	29%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	27%	73%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	29%	64%	7%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	79%	7%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	60%	0%	40%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2	0%	50%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	50%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	56%	25%	19%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	48%	16%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	28	25%	50%	25%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	14%	62%	24%	0%

Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3369	50%	43%	6%	1%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	3002	24%	69%	6%	1%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2800	24%	64%	11%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2864	24%	64%	10%	2%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	45%	43%	9%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	34%	55%	6%	5%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	34%	59%	3%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	23%	64%	9%	4%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	107	56%	32%	10%	2%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	31%	54%	12%	3%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	90	24%	58%	14%	3%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	15%	66%	16%	3%

Total Responses Question 3

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3577	50%	42%	6%	1%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3197	25%	68%	7%	1%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2976	24%	63%	11%	2%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3038	24%	64%	10%	2%

Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this proposal will put local government in the area as a whole on a firmer footing, particularly given that some councils in the area are in receipt of Exceptional Financial Support?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	71%	29%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 4 unitary</i>	14	21%	64%	14%	0%
<i>Principal Council 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	79%	7%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	60%	0%	40%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%

<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%

<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	0%	50%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%

<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	59%	19%	22%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	45%	19%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	17%	48%	34%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	10%	59%	31%	0%

Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3365	43%	45%	9%	3%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	3002	21%	67%	9%	3%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2805	20%	64%	12%	4%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2862	21%	63%	12%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	38%	42%	12%	9%

<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	28%	52%	13%	8%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	21%	60%	10%	9%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	23%	63%	5%	9%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	48%	31%	17%	5%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	28%	52%	16%	4%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	20%	53%	22%	5%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	10%	66%	18%	6%

Total Responses Question 4

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3574	43%	44%	9%	3%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3197	22%	66%	9%	3%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2983	20%	64%	13%	4%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3036	21%	63%	12%	4%

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed councils will deliver high quality, sustainable public services?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	71%	29%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	27%	73%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	29%	64%	7%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	79%	7%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	80%	0%	20%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	50%	25%	25%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	0%	50%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%

<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	59%	19%	22%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	48%	16%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	21%	48%	31%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	10%	59%	31%	0%

Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3370	46%	43%	9%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	2996	20%	69%	9%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2798	21%	64%	13%	3%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2855	20%	64%	13%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	43%	45%	7%	4%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	30%	58%	8%	5%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	28%	59%	10%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	23%	64%	9%	4%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	55%	28%	16%	2%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	30%	53%	14%	3%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	23%	53%	21%	3%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	10%	65%	20%	4%

Total Responses Question 5

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3579	46%	43%	9%	2%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3191	21%	68%	9%	2%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2976	21%	63%	13%	3%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3029	20%	64%	13%	3%

Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal has been informed by local views and will meet local needs?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	79%	21%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	20%	80%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	21%	71%	7%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	7%	86%	7%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	80%	0%	20%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%

<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	0%	67%	33%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	0%	50%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	0%	100%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%

Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	69%	13%	19%	0%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	26%	52%	23%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	17%	52%	28%	3%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	10%	59%	31%	0%

Individuals and Organisations (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3369	43%	46%	9%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	2990	16%	74%	8%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2795	19%	68%	10%	3%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2857	18%	69%	11%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	42%	41%	14%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	23%	56%	13%	8%
<i>Individual living outside affected</i>	58	28%	60%	9%	3%

<i>area Rochford 4 unitary</i>					
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	25%	63%	9%	4%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	52%	30%	16%	3%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	24%	54%	19%	3%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	20%	55%	22%	3%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	9%	60%	26%	6%

Total Responses Question 6

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3578	43%	45%	9%	2%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3185	16%	73%	8%	2%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2973	19%	67%	11%	3%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3031	17%	68%	12%	3%

Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that establishing the councils in this proposal will support devolution arrangements, for example, the establishment of a strategic authority?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	79%	14%	7%	0%

<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	27%	67%	7%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	21%	57%	21%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	57%	29%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	80%	0%	20%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	50%	25%	25%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	0%	75%	25%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	0%	50%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%

<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
Total Named Consultees 5 unitary	32	69%	6%	22%	3%
Total Named Consultees 3 unitary	31	35%	42%	23%	0%
Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	24%	45%	31%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	17%	48%	34%	0%

Individuals and Organisation (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3364	46%	39%	12%	3%

<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	2992	23%	62%	11%	3%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2799	22%	61%	13%	4%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2861	21%	60%	15%	4%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	43%	33%	17%	6%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	33%	45%	17%	5%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	31%	52%	12%	5%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	29%	55%	11%	5%
<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	55%	27%	17%	2%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	36%	45%	16%	3%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	90	30%	47%	20%	3%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	16%	57%	22%	4%

Total Responses Question 7

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3573	47%	38%	12%	3%

<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3187	24%	61%	11%	3%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2976	22%	61%	14%	4%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3035	21%	60%	15%	4%

Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposal enables stronger community engagement and gives the opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment?

Summary of Named Consultee Responses

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Principal Council 5 unitary</i>	14	79%	21%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council 3 unitary</i>	15	20%	80%	0%	0%
<i>Principal Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	14	29%	50%	21%	0%
<i>Principal Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	14	14%	71%	14%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 5 unitary</i>	5	80%	0%	20%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	25%	50%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	33%	67%	0%
<i>Neighbouring Council Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	33%	33%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Health Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%

<i>Health Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 5 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies 3 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Police and Fire Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	0	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Education Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 5 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector 3 unitary</i>	4	25%	0%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Other Public Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	4	0%	25%	75%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 5 unitary</i>	3	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector 3 unitary</i>	3	0%	67%	33%	0%
<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Rochford 4 unitary</i>	3	33%	67%	0%	0%

<i>Voluntary and Community Sector Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3	0%	67%	33%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 5 unitary</i>	2	50%	0%	50%	0%
<i>Business Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Business Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 5 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>National Bodies Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	0%	100%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 5 unitary</i>	1	100%	0%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees 3 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other named consultees Rochford 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Other Named consultees Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	1	0%	100%	0%	0%
<i>Total Named Consultees 5 unitary</i>	32	69%	13%	19%	0%
<i>Total Named Consultees 3 unitary</i>	31	23%	52%	26%	0%

Total Named Consultees Rochford 4 unitary	29	24%	41%	34%	0%
Total Named Consultees Thurrock 4 unitary	29	10%	55%	34%	0%

Individuals and Organisation (not named consultees)

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Individual living in affected area 5 unitary</i>	3364	45%	44%	9%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area 3 unitary</i>	2998	17%	74%	7%	1%
<i>Individual living in affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2801	21%	66%	10%	2%
<i>Individual living in affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	2860	21%	67%	11%	2%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 5 unitary</i>	69	52%	36%	10%	1%
<i>Individual living outside affected area 3 unitary</i>	64	27%	56%	14%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Rochford 4 unitary</i>	58	38%	52%	7%	3%
<i>Individual living outside affected area Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	56	29%	59%	11%	2%

<i>Organisations 5 unitary</i>	108	55%	29%	13%	4%
<i>Organisations 3 unitary</i>	100	30%	55%	10%	5%
<i>Organisation Rochford 4 unitary</i>	91	23%	53%	19%	5%
<i>Organisations Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	89	11%	69%	15%	6%

Total Responses Question 8

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>No. of responses</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	3573	46%	43%	9%	2%
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	3193	18%	73%	8%	2%
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	2979	22%	65%	11%	2%
<i>Total all responses Thurrock 4 unitary</i>	3034	20%	67%	11%	2%

Question 9: If you would like to, please use the free text box to explain the answers you have provided to questions 1-8 referring to the question numbers as part of your answer. You may also use the box to provide any other comments you have on this proposal.

<i>Respondent type/Proposal</i>	<i>Total Named consultees</i>	<i>Total Individuals living in area</i>	<i>Total individuals not in area</i>	<i>Total Organisation</i>
<i>Total all responses 5 unitary</i>	28	1929	50	82
<i>Total all responses 3 unitary</i>	26	1706	52	74
<i>Total all responses Rochford 4 unitary</i>	23	1403	47	58

<i>Total all responses</i>	23	1467	51	53
<i>Thurrock 4 unitary</i>				

Summary of named consultee response

Principal Councils

36. Responses from principal councils supported the proposals that they put forward with the majority supporting the 5 unitary proposal. Some councils noted their second preferred proposal.

Neighbouring Councils

37. Of the seven neighbouring authorities from outside of the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock invitation area who responded, most supported the 5 unitary proposal. Two supported the 3 unitary proposal and one was neutral, expressing no preference for a proposal.

Health bodies

38. Of the three health bodies who responded, two were neutral on proposals although one stated that fewer authorities would be better. The other preferred the 3 unitary proposal stating it will improve efficiencies and have the fewest boundaries.

Police and Fire

39. Of the police and fire organisations who responded, all were neutral, expressing no preference for a proposal. They each provided reflections on the importance of coterminous police and fire boundaries and the principle that fewer unitaries should enable more coherent delivery strategies.

Education Bodies

40. Both Universities support the 3 unitary proposal, with one citing growth considerations as part of their rationale.

Other public sector

41. Of the other public sector bodies who responded, four were neutral and one stated a preference for the 3 unitary. A response set out considerations for their statutory organisation, including governance and funding arrangements.

Voluntary and Community Sector

42. Of the voluntary sector bodies who responded, all three stated a preference for the 5 unitary proposal on grounds of smaller size enabling closer community engagement.

Business Bodies

43. Of the business bodies who responded, one preferred the 3 unitary proposal and one was neutral, expressing a preference for fewer authorities. One showed some levels of support for the 5 unitary proposal.

National Bodies

44. Of the national bodies who responded, one supported the 5 unitary proposal citing cultural identity as a factor, three were neutral with one body stating they had some alignment to the 3 unitary proposal.

Other named consultees

45. One other body responded in support of the 5 unitary proposal noting it would strengthen the necessary conditions for a thriving visitor economy.

Comments against the criteria

46. **For criteria 1: A proposal should seek to achieve for the whole of the area concerned the establishment of a single tier of local government.** Concerns were raised that the 5 unitary proposal lacks the scale required for efficiencies, with significant variation in deprivation, demand pressures and ability to raise revenue. Concerns were noted about the size and deprivation levels in the South unitary in the 3 unitary proposal. Concerns about the positioning of Rochford in the Central rather than South unitary in the 4 unitary (Rochford) proposal, separating it from Southend. The risk of complex service disaggregation and reaggregation in the South was noted in both the 3 unitary and 4 unitary (Rochford) proposal. There were concerns that the 4 unitary (Thurrock) proposal separated Thurrock from Basildon and the wider Thames Gateway area.

There was also a local campaign supporting the movement of Wickford into any Mid-Essex unitary and a request articulated as a 'swap' for Uttlesford and Maldon between the North and Mid unitaries if the 3 unitary proposal were to be taken forward.

47. **For criteria 2: Unitary local government must be the right size to achieve efficiencies, improve capacity and withstand financial shocks.** Concerns were raised that the 5 unitary proposal lacked financial resilience and value for money, with particular concerns relating to the proposed South-West unitary. Wider concerns were expressed about Thurrock's debt and the ongoing need for government support. Whilst some regarded the 3 unitary proposal as the most financially resilient and sustainable, concerns were raised that new councils would be too large to be operationally coherent. Others noted an imbalance in population size in the 4 unitary (Rochford) proposal. It was noted that the 4 unitary (Thurrock) proposal council sizes were relatively balanced.
48. **For criteria 3: Unitary structures must prioritise the delivery of high quality and sustainable public services to citizens.** Principal Councils justified their own models and noted concerns about other proposals regarding the ability of new unitaries to deliver high quality, sustainable social services for adults and children. Concerns about challenge of bringing together three upper tier authority services together in some configurations in the 3 unitary and 4 unitary (Rochford) proposals. More generally, concerns noted about increasing the number of social care authorities. Concerns also expressed about rural service accessibility.
49. **For criteria 4: Proposals should show how councils in the area have sought to work together in coming to a view that meets local needs and is informed by local views.** Concerns were raised about a loss in cultural identity which could weaken relationships with local tourism businesses. Concern that

unrecognisable geographies will be created. Concerns about the reduction in councillor numbers.

50. **For criteria 5: New unitary structures must support devolution arrangements.** Concerns about the number of councils creating complexity for the new Mayor when they are seeking consensus. Concerns that the size of some councils also risks complicating representation, creating an imbalance or inequitable votes in the new Mayoral Combined Authority.
51. **For criteria 6: New unitary structures should enable stronger community engagement and deliver genuine opportunity for neighbourhood empowerment.** Concerns that new models for community engagement and neighbourhood empowerment are not developed enough. Concerns that locality boards could struggle to reflect diversity of communities and create connection to decision making. Concerns about the size of councillor's workload and responsibilities in relation to size of their ward.

The top themes identified by the AI tool were as follows:

52. **Geographical split of areas** Concerns were raised that the proposed council groupings bring together areas with differing economic circumstances and communities that do not share common characteristics, which may create challenges for cohesion, coordination, and service delivery. Additional concerns were raised about geographic alignment, including boundaries, transport links, and the structure of Essex, with views that some linked areas - such as Harlow and Chelmsford - have different needs. Furthermore, concerns were raised that the proposal may not fully represent rural areas or address local challenges, contributing to concerns about practicality and communication across the proposed groupings.
53. **Proposed councils are too large** Concerns were raised that the proposed councils are too large to effectively deliver community-based services, maintain local identity, and sustain meaningful local engagement, leading to a disconnect between residents and decision-making. Further concerns highlighted that larger unitary authorities would weaken local representation, democratic accountability and community focus, increase bureaucracy and inefficiency, raise costs, whilst slow down responses to local needs.
54. **Opposition to merging with councils with high debt** The responses suggested a strong opposition to merging with Thurrock due to its financial mismanagement, debt absorption, lack of commonality in community character, and distrust in its ability to manage reorganisation. In addition, concerns were also raised that linking Basildon with Thurrock or other areas would stretch resources and create further risks around debt management, with past authority debt being carried by residents without service or infrastructure improvement.

55. **Concerns about financial stability and efficiencies** Responses highlighted concerns about affordability, financial resilience, efficiency, high implementation costs, debt burdens, and mismanagement throughout the reorganisation process, with questions around the value for money benefits. There were concerns raised that local government reorganisation would lead to job losses, particularly among specialist teams, as well as putting strain on existing staff and systems, which could have an adverse impact on customer service and staff well-being.
56. **Opposed to local government reorganisation** Concerns were raised that the reorganisation is seen as unnecessary, undemocratic, and a waste of taxpayers' money, with calls for cancellation and views that funding would be better directed towards securing local councils rather than merging with non-neighbouring authorities. Additional concerns were raised that the proposals are perceived as imposed without meaningful consultation, which risks breaking up a system seen as currently working, and which could undermine local democracy.
57. Respondents to all proposals were concerned that the new councils would be too large however, the response was strongest in the 3 Unitary proposal with 30% of answers articulating concerns compared to 14% for 5 unitary, 13% for 4 unitary (Rochford) and 12% for 4 unitary (Thurrock).
58. The second most common theme across all proposals, except for the 3 unitary, was opposition to merging with councils with high debt. This was noted as a concern by 20% of respondents to the 4 unitary (Thurrock), 17% of respondents to the 5 unitary, 14% of respondents to the 4 unitary (Rochford). Whilst 13% of respondents to the 3 unitary highlighted merging with councils with high debt as a concern, other themes ranked higher in percentages across the 3 unitary respondents.
59. Financial stability and the efficiency of new unitaries was the strongest concern from respondents across the 5 unitary model with 19% commenting on this. 15% of respondents to the 3 unitary proposal also raised financial stability as a concern, and 12-13% of respondents also raised this across both the 4 unitary (Rochford) and 4 unitary (Thurrock) proposals.
60. Opposition to the principle of local government reorganisation was noted for all four proposals, with 9-11% of respondents commenting on this.

Summary of paper and emailed non-named consultee responses

61. Areas of concern included loss of local identity, councillor representation, democratic deficit, the size of the proposed authorities, debt and financial

sustainability as well as service delivery. There was also a local campaign seeking boundary change for Wickford.