Northampton Borough Council: Possible creation of new Town and Parish Councils

ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Northampton Borough Council is keen to find out what local residents and other stakeholders think about proposals to create a new Town Council and other parish councils for some or all parts of the borough. Please read the engagement document and/or go online to www.northampton.gov.uk/ntcconsultation for further information. To give your feedback, complete this questionnaire and return it FREEPOST to arrive by 31 March 2019; or complete the online questionnaire via the webpage above by the same date.

Northampton Borough Council has appointed ORS, as an independent social research company, to manage the engagement and questionnaire responses. ORS will faithfully report the outcomes, in which the views of individual members of the public will be anonymous; but where feedback is from representatives of organisations or someone acting in their official capacity, it may be attributed.

All the questions are optional, and all information you provide will be processed by ORS in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR. For further information, please see www.ors.org.uk/privacy

The government is proposing that Northampton Borough Council, Northamptonshire County Council and other local councils be abolished and replaced by a single new Unitary Authority covering the whole of Northampton, Daventry, and South Northants.

Prior to this engagement exercise, to what extent were you aware of the possible change to local government in this area? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very aware</th>
<th>Fairly aware</th>
<th>Fairly unaware</th>
<th>Very unaware</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Northampton Borough Council (NBC) recognises that a new Unitary Authority would have responsibility for a wider area, and therefore is considering whether some other form of local council could better preserve the town’s historic identity and heritage, as well as promote the interests of the town.

How important or unimportant is it to you to have an organisation that ...? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX IN EACH ROW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preserves the town’s historic identity/heritage</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotes the interests of the town</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Delivers services at a local level</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Fairly important</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Currently ten parish councils exist in the southern parts of Northampton Borough, but the town centre and the north of the Borough do not have any town or parish councils. NBC is currently considering proposals to create a new Town Council covering all or part of the areas of Northampton Borough that remain unparished. If a new Town Council was created, then it would be partly funded by local households. This would appear as the Town Council ‘precept’ on your annual council tax bill. At this stage the charge is unknown; however, it could be in the range of £64 - £100 per year for each Band D household (about £1-2 per week). NBC believes that a new Town Council could have an important role in making sure that residents have greater influence over local matters such as town centre improvements, local development and planning, support for the market, and care for vulnerable people. It could also help preserve the historic identity of the town.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal to create a new Town Council for all or part of the areas in Northampton Borough that remain unparished? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Tend to agree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Tend to disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please explain the reasons for your answer.

NBC is currently considering different options in the event that a new Town Council is created (see maps in engagement document). A new Town Council could cover the whole of the borough that is currently unparished, or just part of the borough including the town centre (the area covered by the Parliamentary Constituency of Northampton South). Or you may feel that some alternative is preferable, for example a smaller Town Council supplemented by other parish councils. The charge to each household could be lower if the Town Council covered a larger area, as the cost would be spread across more council tax paying households.

If a new Town Council were created, which parts of the borough do you believe it should cover? PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option A: The whole of the borough that is currently unparished</th>
<th>Option B: Only part of the borough including the town centre (the area covered by the Parliamentary Constituency of Northampton South)</th>
<th>An alternative: A different part of the borough, please explain below</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Please outline the reasons for your answer, and explain any alternatives you prefer.
If a new Town Council were created, it could take responsibility for some of the services that are currently provided by the Borough and County Councils, and in future would be provided by a new Unitary Authority. If a new Town Council did take responsibility for delivering more services, then it is likely that the charge paid by local residents would be greater, whereas if it managed fewer services, the charge is likely to be lower.

**How would you prioritise between the following two approaches?** PLEASE TICK ✓ ONE BOX ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Town Council should take responsibility for as many local services as possible</th>
<th>The Town Council should minimise the cost to residents as far as possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If a new Unitary Authority is introduced, it would continue to provide services in Northampton, but some of these could be managed by the Town Council instead.

**Which of the following, if any, do you think it would be appropriate for a new Town Council to manage?** PLEASE TICK ✓ ALL THAT APPLY

- Markets and tourism
- Community centres
- Traffic calming measures
- Footpaths and maintenance
- Upkeep of parks and open spaces
- Volunteering/support for vulnerable sections of the community
- Village greens
- Litter and dog waste bins
- Entertainment and the Arts
- None of the above

Regardless of whether any new Town Council is created, any areas of the borough that are currently unparished can make separate proposals to create one or more parish councils.

Regardless of whether any new Town Council is created, do you believe any other parish or community councils should be created elsewhere in the borough?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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If yes, please explain what areas they should cover, and what services they should provide.

If you have any other comments you would like to make or any alternative suggestions on how best to promote the interests of the town and preserve its heritage and historic identity, please write below.
INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

What is your full postcode?  
This will help us understand views in different areas

If you are responding on behalf of an ORGANISATION, which organisation do you represent?  
Please give us the name of the organisation and any specific group or department.  
Please also tell us who the organisation represents, what area the organisation covers and how you gathered the views of members.  
PLEASE ANSWER IN THE BOX BELOW AND CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

If you are providing your own PERSONAL RESPONSE, please answer the questions below...  
Northampton Borough Council have a duty to promote equality and want to make sure all parts of the community are included in this engagement, but these questions are optional. All engagement responses will be taken fully into account when making decisions, regardless of whether you provide your details.  
PLEASE TICK ✓ ONLY ONE BOX FOR EACH QUESTION

What was your age on your last birthday?

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- Prefer not to say

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

- White
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, African, Caribbean or Black British
- Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Are you employed by a local authority in Northamptonshire, and/or any local authority which neighbours Northamptonshire?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If yes, which local authority/ies employ you?

PLEASE WRITE IN

Are you a councillor for any local authority or Town/Parish Council in Northamptonshire?

PLEASE TICK ✓ ALL THAT APPLY

- No
- Yes – County Councillor
- Yes – District/Borough Councillor
- Yes – Town/Parish Councillor
- Prefer not to say

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Please return the questionnaire by 31 March 2019 to:
Opinion Research Services • FREEPOST SS1018 • PO Box 530 • Swansea • SA1 1ZL

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