

North Yorkshire

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Nidderdale and Wharfedale

Please see attached comments

Attached Documents:

- [REDACTED]
• reportexecutive_november2024.pdf.pdf

COMMENTS ON FURTHER DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE BOUNDARY REVIEW OF ELECTORAL DIVISIONS IN NORTH YORKSHIRE (September 2025)

I am an elector in the current Pateley Bridge and Nidderdale division. These are my comments on the Further Draft Recommendations relating to Nidderdale, Washburn and Wharfedale published in September 2025.

I was disappointed and surprised to see that the Commission has now proposed to change its draft recommendations published in April 2025 relating to Nidderdale. The new proposal is to include Beverley, Upper Nidderdale (i.e. the parishes of Fountains Earth, Stonebeck Down and Stonebeck Up), and High and Low Bishopside (including the town of Pateley Bridge) in a division united with Upper Wharfedale to be known as Upper Wharfedale and Upper Nidderdale.

A proposal to include upper Nidderdale with upper Wharfedale was put forward by North Yorkshire Council in its initial submission to you. In your report of April 2025 you said (para 112):

“well-evidenced submissions from Beverley Parish Council, Dacre Parish Council, Darley & Menwith Parish Council, Pateley Bridge Town Council, the Nidderdale National Landscape Joint Advisory Committee and several local residents argued that this arrangement would undermine existing community ties. It was argued that, under such a division arrangement, the Upper Nidderdale area would be geographically isolated from the majority of the Upper Wharfedale area by extensive moorland.”

You now say (para 22 of your September 2025 report):

“However, several respondents opposed the draft arrangements, including the Council, the Conservatives, Councillor Hull, Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council and a local resident. Concerns were raised about the geographic size of the proposed Wharfedale division, while Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council objected to the removal of Birstwith and Felliscliffe parishes from a Nidderdale-focused division.”

I set out my comments as follows. First I consider what the 5 respondents you mention actually said, and how they rationalised their objections. Then I address the issues which appear from your report to have persuaded you to combine upper Wharfedale and upper Nidderdale in a single division.

I also include comments on the Protected Landscape duty, which does not appear to have been mentioned in your report.

THE OBJECTING RESPONDENTS

1. The Council, the Conservatives and Councillor Hull

These three respondents make similar points, and all three argue for combining upper Wharfedale and upper Nidderdale in a single division. That idea appears to have originated in a proposal by the Council. I have therefore looked at the process adopted by the Council in formulating the proposal, in an attempt to better understand the rationale.

The Council formulated its submissions to the LGBCE by appointing a Cross Party Working Group of councillors from across North Yorkshire. Only one of the 10 members of the working group represents a division in the Dales. The Working Group’s proposal was presented to the Council’s Executive in a report dated 19 November 2024, which is attached. The Executive adopted the report. It is clear from that report that

- the Working Group based its proposals on divisions within the area of each of the Council’s existing Area Committees (para 3.5 of the report). Those areas are the pre-2024

- parliamentary constituencies in the county. This appears to have precluded consideration of possible divisions across the boundaries of those constituencies, which might have better met the LGBCE's criteria.

- All the working group's report said about Nidderdale was this: "There was also a lack of consistency East-West within the area [of the Skipton and Ripon Area Committee], with those divisions on the Skipton side significantly smaller than those on the Ripon side. For this reason, Pateley Bridge has moved into Nidderdale [sic, but they must mean Wharfedale] to ensure greater balance across the Pennines" (para 4.10).

I submit that this approach is flawed and led to the Council's flawed proposal, which does not respect two of the three main statutory criteria which you are required to have regard to: the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and the need to secure effective and convenient local government. The Council's objections to the LGBCE's first draft proposal are an attempt to justify ex post facto the Council's original flawed proposal.

It is evident that the conclusions of the working group were not unanimous. At least one of its members, Cllr Broadbank, submitted dissenting comments on the commission's first draft recommendations as an individual councillor. He said: "The concern I had at the working group was centered around the Wharfedale and Nidderdale divisions. This wasn't an easy one to resolve because of the size of the area and the sparsely populated parishes in some of them. I submitted alternatives to the working group and these are very similar to the divisions now proposed by the Commission so I support them." (WEB 116076).

2. Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council

This parish council says "the loss of Birstwith and Felliscliffe to Pannal is denying long-time Dales residents services from Pateley Bridge." That can hardly be taken as support for the idea that Pateley Bridge, the main service centre for Nidderdale, should be put in a different division from the rest of Nidderdale. If they argue that Birstwith should not be separated from Pateley Bridge, then they must surely also argue that Summerbridge (the main settlement in Hartwith cum Winsley), which is closer to Pateley Bridge than Birstwith, should not be separated from Pateley Bridge.

3. Local resident

It is not clear which local resident is referred to in para 22 of your September report. One resident of Rylstone parish (WEB 1160146) said "I am very unhappy with the proposed boundary move", but it is clear that they were referring to the separation of Rylstone from Grassington. Two residents of Nidderdale (WEB 1159931 and WEB 1160721) expressed concerns about the separation of Birstwith from the rest of Nidderdale. I can find no support in the comments from local residents for the separation of Pateley Bridge from the lower dale, or for putting upper Nidderdale in a division with upper Wharfedale.

THE ISSUES

These are the five issues which appear from your September report to have now persuaded you to combine upper Wharfedale and upper Nidderdale in a single division:

1. The geographic size of the draft Wharfedale division (para 24)
2. The draft Wharfedale division "linked disparate communities with limited connection." You say that the southern parishes in your "original Wharfedale division are more likely to share community identities and interests with nearby towns – both within and outside North Yorkshire – rather than with the more remote northern part of upper Wharfedale" (para 24)

3. “Upper Wharfedale and upper Nidderdale share common features in terms of landscape, economy and local issues.” (para 24)
4. The “reasonable vehicular access” between upper Wharfedale and upper Nidderdale provided by the B6265 road (para 23)
5. Your “Upper Wharfedale & Upper Nidderdale division avoids splitting High and Low Bishopside parish between divisions, a concern raised by Pateley Bridge Town Council during the previous consultation.” (para 24)

I take these issues in turn, and consider the reasoning advanced by the respondents who objected to your draft proposals.

1. The geographic size of the proposed Wharfedale division.

This was a concern raised by the Council, the North Yorkshire Conservative Party and Councillor Hull. The Conservatives say that the draft Wharfedale division “would run from Buckden in the North to Farnley in the south” and would be too large (“60 miles from end to end”). 60 miles is an exaggeration. Google maps puts the road distance and driving time from Buckden to Farnley at 32 miles and 58 minutes, slightly more distance but shorter time than the 28 miles and 1 hour from Buckden to Middlesmoor in the Upper Wharfedale and Nidderdale division now proposed. Buckden and Middlesmoor are both places where parish council meetings, normally attended by the relevant NY councillor, are held. Farnley is not such a place.

Farnley is part of a grouped parish council (with Castley, Leathley, Lindley and Stainburn), known as Lower Washburn Parish Council, which usually meets at Leathley. The need to secure effective and convenient local government should usually mean that a parish which shares its parish council with one or more other parishes should not be placed in a different division from the other member parishes of the parish council. That avoids the situation where two NY councillors would need to attend the parish council meetings.

I agree that excessive geographic size works against one of the three main criteria, the need to secure effective and convenient local government. That is particularly so when geography results in excessive travelling times. This concern could, and to an extent has been, addressed by changes to the divisions within Wharfedale (the dale) proposed in your September report. But when travelling times are taken into account, the proposed Upper Wharfedale and Upper Nidderdale, suffers from the same problem or worse.

2. Disparate communities with limited connection

It is a curious argument to say that if upper Wharfedale is “disparate” from, and has limited connection with, lower Wharfedale, it should be united with upper Nidderdale, with which it has even less connection. Most residents of Nidderdale (and possibly residents of upper Wharfedale) would argue that it is upper Nidderdale and upper Wharfedale which are “disparate communities with limited connection”.

It is a mistake to assume that distance or perceived remoteness means limited connection. It is a general feature of dales that the best and easiest communications are up and down dales, rather than across the higher ground between dales. The easiest towns for residents of upper Wharfedale to access involve journeys down the dale. That means that the major service centres for upper Wharfedale are Skipton and Ilkley. But upper Nidderdale, like the rest of Nidderdale, looks to Harrogate and Ripon to supply goods and services not available within the dale. This pattern of common interest and connectivity is reflected in public transport. There are regular bus services from Grassington to Skipton and Ilkley. There is no bus service from Grassington to Harrogate.

There is a regular daily bus service from Pateley Bridge to Nidderdale. There is no such service from Pateley Bridge to Skipton or anywhere in Wharfedale.

3. Common features of upper Wharfedale and Nidderdale in terms of landscape, economy and local issues

This was a point made by the Council (para 17 of their submission) and the Conservatives.

Yes, Wharfedale and Nidderdale are both Yorkshire dales, with a mix of sheep and cattle farming and tourism, like other dales. But there are significant differences:

- It is debatable how similar the landscapes of the two dales are. Wharfedale is a limestone dale, whereas Nidderdale is dominated by millstone grit. As a result of this different geology, Upper Nidderdale has three large reservoirs where the Nidd is dammed (Gouthwaite, Scar House and Angram). In the upper Wharfedale catchment there are small reservoirs high on the moors (Barden and Grimwith), but no dams on the Wharfe itself.
- Upper Wharfedale is in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, where the Council has limited planning responsibilities. Nidderdale is part of the Nidderdale National Landscape, where the Council is the sole planning authority. The councillor for an Upper Wharfedale and Upper Nidderdale division would have to deal with two Local Plans and two teams of planning officers.
- “Common features” do not equate to common identities and interests of local communities, which is the relevant statutory criterion. Two similar communities can have very different identities and interests. There is a similar range of shops and services in Grassington and Pateley, which means that there is usually no need for people in Nidderdale to go shopping in Grassington, or for Wharfedale people to go shopping in Pateley. Nidderdale children rarely go to school or doctors in Wharfedale and Wharfedale children rarely go to school or doctors in Nidderdale.
- The Conservative Party claims that Upper Wharfedale and Upper Nidderdale “are intertwined and work together. They also come together for the two major local shows at Pateley Bridge and Kilnsey”. I live in upper Nidderdale and I attend Nidderdale Show at Pateley Bridge most years. The show attracts entries from across Yorkshire and beyond, but for local residents the socially important classes are the Local Classes, restricted to residents of defined parishes in Nidderdale (downdale as far as Clint) or living within 10 miles of Pateley. The Local Classes are not open to residents of Wharfedale. On the other hand I know little about Kilnsey show. I have never been to Kilnsey Show. The only person I know in Nidderdale who has been to Kilnsey show is the daughter of friends who showed at Kilnsey Show to prepare for showing at the Nidderdale Show.

The Council, the Conservatives and Councillor Hull have also sought to show that the identity and interests of upper Nidderdale and lower Nidderdale are different.

The Council attempts to distinguish upper Nidderdale (“a large tourist trade”, agriculture dominated by sheep and cattle rearing) from lower Nidderdale (“commuter areas”, agriculture dominated by “dairy farming and some arable farms”) (para 16). The Conservative Party similarly distinguishes upper Nidderdale as a “very rural” community, “whereas Lower Nidderdale Villages look to Harrogate, Otley and Leeds for employment.”

- That is highly misleading. I live near the top of Nidderdale, and I know neighbours who work in Masham, Ripon, Knaresborough, Harrogate and Otley, as well as in Nidderdale. There are tourist attractions throughout the dale. Brimham Rocks is in the lower dale. Ice cream is made and sold at farms in both upper and lower Nidderdale. Cheese is made at the top of the dale. Farmers in the upper dale also rent land in the lower dale. Sheep farmers from the lower dale put sheep on Yorkshire Water land at the top of the dale. Updale

farmers do contracting work on farms throughout the dale. There is little arable farming, and it is strange to say that agriculture in the lower dale is “dominated” by arable farming.

Councillor Hull says “I live in the Shaw Mills/Burnt Yates/Clint cum Hamlets/Bishop Thornton area and absolutely nobody in the area where I live has any affiliation with Upper Nidderdale/Pateley Bridge and rarely, if ever, goes there.”

- The Nidderdale Show held annually in Pateley Bridge attracts many residents (not just farmers) from the whole of Nidderdale. The published 2024-25 membership list of the Nidderdale Agricultural Society which runs the Show shows that the subscription collector for Bishop Thornton collected £1005 in subscriptions from 20 members.
- The President of the 2025 Nidderdale Show is from Bishop Thornton.
- Councillor Hull’s comments are also at odds with the comments of Hartwith cum Winsley Parish Council, which argued that “the loss of Birstwith and Felliscliffe to Pannal is denying long-time Dales residents services from Pateley Bridge.”

Councillor Hull also says “People in Pateley Bridge/Upper Nidderdale access and use different services (schools, leisure centres, GP surgeries shops etc) to those living in Lower Nidderdale. They simply don’t overlap.”

- That is incorrect. I know of at least one parent in Lofthouse who sends her child to school in Burnt Yates, following the closure of Lofthouse school.
- I personally have several times attended the GP surgery in Birstwith, which is part of the Nidderdale Group Practice, whose clinical staff move between the three surgeries in the practice. I know updale neighbours who have done likewise.
- The largest shop in Nidderdale for hardware and farm and garden supplies is Todds in Summerbridge, used by both updale and downdale residents.

4. Access between upper Nidderdale and upper Wharfedale by the B6265 road

This is a matter raised by the Conservatives and Councillor Hull.

The Conservatives say that the Council proposal combining Upper Wharfedale with Upper Nidderdale “creates a ward that [is] much easier to navigate and is well linked East/West by the B6265 which is a very good and busy ‘B’ road.”

- “Much easier to navigate” begs the question of “much easier than what?” The B6165 road up Nidderdale is perfectly easy to navigate. It just follows the topography of the dale. But the B6265 road between Pateley Bridge and Grassington cuts across the natural topography of the two dales.
- The B6265 has steep hills (up to 19% gradient), a long narrow section and a dangerous corner at Dibbles Bridge. It has one fast section, but also sections where low gear is advised and careful driving is needed. It is avoided by HGVs but well used by cyclists, who find the steepness of the hills challenging.
- At the road summit Greenhow is one of the highest villages in Yorkshire (<https://greenhow-hill.org.uk/>). The road is prone to closure by snow and ice in winter.
- In February 2020 storms caused the road to subside near Pateley. The road was reduced to one-way working controlled by traffic lights until October 2022, when it was closed completely for over 2 months to enable the road to be repaired (<https://www.nidderdaleplus.org.uk/work-on-reconstructing-red-brae-bank-beverley-begins-17th-october/>).

Councillor Hull says that Pateley Bridge and Grassington “are both Dales Communities of a similar size with similar concerns. They are easily linked by the B6265 road and are only about 10 minutes drive from each other.”

- According to Google maps, the distance between the two communities is 10.5 miles and the driving time is 19 minutes. The drive on the B6265 road cannot reasonably be described as “easy”. It has steep hills, narrow sections and warning signs warning drivers to engage low gear and take extra care at Dibbles Bridge.
- There is no bus service between Nidderdale and upper Wharfedale, except on summer Sundays and bank holidays. The Council views the summer Sunday service as primarily for tourists, not local residents, because older people’s bus passes are not valid on it (per the Council at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/roads-parking-and-travel/public-transport/bus-and-travel-passes/older-persons-bus-pass> “passes are not valid on services that operate primarily for the purposes of tourism”).

5. High and Low Bishopside parish

It is good that you agree that High and Low Bishopside (the area of Pateley Bridge Town Council) should not be split between two divisions. That was a proposal put forward by the Council in its original submission, which would have created several anomalies. But the new proposal creates more anomalies:

- Glasshouses, one of the fastest growing villages in Nidderdale, would also become part of a division focussed on Wharfedale, which it has few connections
- Fellbeck, a village only 8 miles from Ripon, would also be part of a Wharfedale-focused division
- Smelthouses, a village divided between High and Low Bishopside and Hartwith cum Winsley parishes, would be split between a Wharfedale-focused division and Lower Nidderdale division.

More fundamentally, in the new proposal Pateley Bridge would be separated from most of the communities which look to it as the main social and commercial centre of the dale. Most community activity in the dale takes place in Pateley Bridge, where there is:

- Nidderdale High School, the only secondary school in the dale
- Nidderdale Show, which takes place every September and attracts about 20,000 people
- The doctors’ surgery (Nidderdale Group Practice), which also has surgeries in Dacre Banks and Birstwith
- the library
- Nidderdale Plus, community hub supporting Nidderdale businesses and organisations
- Nidderdale Museum, entirely staffed by volunteers from up and down the dale
- Nidderdale Playhouse, the only theatre in the dale
- the only livestock market in the dale
- a variety of shops and eating establishments, including the only fish and chip shop in the dale, two butchers’ shops, and the only estate agents, accountants and dentist in the dale.

Pateley Bridge is not a social or commercial centre for Wharfedale residents and businesses.

I calculate that the Pateley Bridge Built-Up Area would be the largest settlement in the proposed Upper Wharfedale and Upper Nidderdale division, but less than a third of the electors in the division would be in Nidderdale. The division would include the only town in the Nidderdale National Landscape, as well as one of the two largest settlements in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. It is hard to see how such a division could “reflect the identities and interests of local communities”.

North Yorkshire Council

Executive

19 November 2024

North Yorkshire Council response to The Boundary Commission’s consultation on future division boundaries

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Local Engagement

1.0	PURPOSE OF REPORT
1.1	To present to Executive the recommended pattern of division boundaries identified by the Boundary Review Member Working Group, seeking approval for the submission of this proposal to the Boundary Commission as part of its consultation.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Following Executive’s and Full Council’s approval of a submission to the Boundary Commission proposing 89 single-member divisions from the May 2027 elections, the Commission accepted this recommendation and commenced a public consultation to gather ideas for appropriate boundaries.
- 2.2 The Member Working Group has developed a proposal which seeks to balance electoral equality whilst recognising the identity of the communities represented by each division.
- 2.3 Executive is recommended to approve this proposal, for submission to the Boundary Commission’s public consultation, which runs until 9 December.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In July, Executive and Full Council approved the submission to the Boundary Commission of a proposal for 89 Councillors in single-member divisions. The report can be found here: <https://ledemocracy.northyorks.gov.uk/ielssueDetails.aspx?IIId=25754&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI19723>
- 3.2 The Boundary Commission reviewed the proposal, alongside others received, and determined that the review would be based on 89 Councillors in single-member divisions. It also accepted the electorate forecast developed by the council to predict the number of electors in each area by 2030. On that basis, a Public Consultation was launched on 1st October 2024, to last 10 weeks. The Council, along with any other interested party, is invited to submit proposals for the arrangement of divisions to achieve the aims of the review, namely electoral equality and divisions that represent the identity of the communities. Information on the consultation can be found here: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/north-yorkshire>
- 3.3 The Working Group has been keen to ensure that the model proposed is sustainable to avoid the need for another Boundary Review within the immediate future. The Boundary Commission would be likely to carry out another Boundary review if there became an electoral imbalance, by either:
 - one electoral ward/division having a +/-30% variance from the local authority electorate average;

- or, 30% or more of the electoral wards/divisions have a +/-10% variance from the local authority average

3.4 To ensure sustainability and a model which works well for North Yorkshire, the group worked to the following principles:

- That, as far as possible, the forecast electorate numbers for each division should start within 10% variance of the average, and that most should be well within this. This meant that each division should ideally represent around 5819 electors, no less than 5237 and no more than 6401.
- That division boundaries should not divide communities which identify as a single area where it is possible to avoid this.
- That it should be possible to access each residence within a division by road without having to leave that division.
- That, as far as possible, urban areas should be in different divisions to rural areas to reflect the different nature of issues and work for the Councillors.

3.5 To allow the large area of North Yorkshire to be considered in manageable units, the existing Area Committee areas were considered individually initially. Based on the forecast electorate, it was agreed that the following numbers of divisions would be identified in each area:

- Richmond – 15
- Scarborough and Whitby – 14
- Thirsk and Malton – 15
- Selby – 15
- Harrogate and Knaresborough – 15
- Skipton and Ripon – 15

3.6 The Working Group initially looked at achieving numerical equality by moving the boundaries of existing divisions to add or remove polling district areas from neighbouring divisions. Whilst this allowed logical and equally sized divisions in some areas, there required a greater degree of change to some boundaries. The initial proposals were mapped by Officers in the GIS (Geographical Information Systems) team, with the predicted electorate calculated for each division. These were then reviewed by the group, who suggested further amendments. Where it was necessary to split existing polling divisions, the Working Group recommended roughly how many electors should be moved into a division, and GIS and Electoral Services Officers looked at where a boundary would need to move to, to achieve that number.

3.7 Once a numerically appropriate pattern was identified, the Working Group then considered if this was logical based on the local knowledge of how communities identify with the places around them and the physical topography of the area to ensure the feasibility of a single member representing the whole area.

3.8 Finally, the names of the divisions were considered to ensure they continued to reflect the places within their boundaries.

3.9 Based on multiple rounds of revisions, the final boundary proposals of the Working Group are found at Appendices A to F. The predicted electorate figures can be found in Appendix G.

4.0 CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Whilst the proposals identify a model which aligns with the main principles of the review, it is clear that there must be compromises in many areas. The geography of North Yorkshire, with some fast-growing urban areas and super-sparse rural communities, makes it difficult

to achieve complete equality within boundaries that can also feasibly be represented by a single member. There is a balance to be struck between the principles of electoral equality, separation of urban and rural areas, and the identities of communities, which is matter of judgement and there will be different views. It is recognised by the Working Group that there are, in many cases, no perfect solutions which fully achieve all the principles simultaneously.

4.2

The calculations of future electors in each division are also inevitably imperfect. Although there is a clear and agreed estimate of future electors at polling district-level, where this figure is growing it is not possible to identify exactly where each additional elector will live within the polling district in the future. For this reason, when splitting existing polling districts, there is an estimate of likely future properties in each area and the number of electors likely to live in each property. It is not an exact exercise. It is recommended that Executive delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Member Working Group, to make any minor amendments required to the predicted electorate figures against each proposed division for the purposes of accuracy, prior to their submission to the Boundary Commission. This will ensure the submitted figures to reflect the proposed boundaries as accurately as possible.

4.3

The considerations and challenges in identifying suitable division patterns vary across the different Area Committee areas. The following summarise some of the key considerations.

Richmond

4.4

The existing divisions are characterised by those around Richmond town being too large, with those in more rural areas being too small. The approach has therefore been to move some of the polling districts on the edge of the town into the surrounding divisions, and to rebalance the divisions within Northallerton. Bedale and Aiskew divisions have been brought together.

Scarborough and Whitby

4.5

The two Ruswarp polling districts had to be separated to ensure Whitby West is the correct size. Some divisions that will form part of the new Scarborough Town Council are large in size, although it was thought likely that there was limited scope in the area for further development so they may not continue to grow significantly. The boundaries around the new Town Council area have not been amended to ensure that they remain coterminous with Town Council proposed wards. Significant growth in Eastfield has required a remodelling of that area to achieve a balance of divisions.

Thirsk and Malton

4.6

The main challenge within this area was the imbalance between the Norton and Malton Divisions. It was determined that it was not desirable to select some of Norton to move to the Malton Division as this does not reflect the identity of the two places. The proposal therefore separates the area north to south with two divisions covering both towns equally.

Selby

4.7

The divisions within Selby had to be revised as they were currently too large. By aligning them with Barlby, three divisions are now proposed covering the centre of Selby. Sherburn was also too large and potentially likely to grow further. No alternative options were identified to splitting some of the north of Sherburn and moving it into Appleton Roebuck. It is recognised that this is not ideal, however, without doing so Sherburn would be too big for a single Division.

Harrogate and Knaresborough

- 4.8 A significant challenge was that the divisions of Harrogate town, which were generally too large. Remodelling the boundaries and moving some polling districts into surrounding areas has been necessary. Boroughbridge has also been moved to a new division with elements of the existing Wathvale and Bishop Monkton division (in Skipton and Ripon) to create greater equality of size across the current Area Committee areas.

Skipton and Ripon

- 4.9 The city of Ripon had some Divisions which were too large, and it was therefore necessary to align some polling districts with surrounding areas. There is also growth to the south of the city which must be factored in.
- 4.10 There was also a lack of consistency East-West within the area, with those divisions on the Skipton side significantly smaller than those on the Ripon side. For this reason, Pateley Bridge has moved into Nidderdale to ensure greater balance across the Pennines.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Should Executive approve the submission of the proposals, the Boundary Commission will review responses to the consultation and formulate a model which meets their aims. This will then be consulted upon in late Spring 2025, before the necessary parliamentary steps are undertaken to enact the new boundaries for the 2027 Local Election.

- 5.2 It is likely that the Council would wish to respond to the final consultation.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The previous report identified that moving to 89 Councillors would very slightly reduce the cost of allowances and expenses. No additional financial implications have been identified based on the recommendations of this report.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is required to periodically review the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England.

- 7.2 The LGBCE does not have power to alter the external boundaries of parish councils to make them coterminous with any council division boundary. North Yorkshire Council however has the power to do this through a community governance review should one be considered as being appropriate. If LGBCE draw a division boundary through an existing parish, it will also in its order create a parish ward. The LGBCE will publish maps in its next phase of consultation on division boundaries which show any proposed changes to parish warding that arise.

- 7.2 Within the period of this review, the new Town Councils for Scarborough and Harrogate, subject to Council approval, will be implemented. It is not possible for the Council Divisions in these towns to be entirely co-terminus with the proposed Town Council wards, as the numbers of electors in each would not align with the requirements of this review. However, the NYC division patterns proposed align with the outer boundary of the Town Councils. This will allow future changes of wards to be made whilst providing continuity of which divisions are within the Town Council areas.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 An EIA screening was undertaken, at Appendix H, at the start of the review. This has been reconsidered through the next stage of the process. No additional significant impacts were identified based on the recommendations of this report.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 A climate change impact assessment was undertaken, at Appendix I, at the start of the review. No direct impacts have been identified based on the recommendations.

10.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 It is not envisaged that the recommendations will have significant performance implications.

11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 The approval and submission of the proposed division patterns will provide the Boundary Commission with a clear model on behalf of North Yorkshire Council. The model represents the work of the cross-party Member Working Group and seeks to achieve a workable balance across the principles described above. If this were not to be submitted, the Boundary Commission would determine a model to be consulted upon based on their knowledge of the area and other information received during the consultation.

- 11.2 By delegating authority to make minor amendments to the electorate figures associated with each proposed division, it will be possible to ensure that the figures accurately reflect the boundaries proposed as the submission is prepared.

12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS
12.1 Executive is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Approve the proposed division patterns at Appendices A-Fii) Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to submit this proposal, and accompanying background information, to the Boundary Commission's consultation by 9 December.iii) Delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement to make any required minor amendments to ensure the accuracy of the split of forecast electorate figures, in consultation with the Chairman of the Member Working Group, prior to submission.

APPENDICES:

- Appendix A – Richmond
- Appendix B – Scarborough and Whitby
- Appendix C – Thirsk and Malton
- Appendix D – Selby
- Appendix E – Harrogate and Knaresborough
- Appendix F – Skipton and Ripon
- Appendix G – Forecast Electorate for each Division
- Appendix H – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix I – Climate Change Impact Assessment

Rachel Joyce, Assistant Chief Executive – Local Engagement, 8 November 2024
Report Author and Presenter of Report – Will Boardman, Head of Strategy and Performance

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.