



Community Governance Consultation

August 2025

General comments

Research and Consultation Team

Qualitative Analysis and Report by Darmax Research

Executive Summary

BCP Council are consulting on draft proposals to create new parish, town and community councils across Bournemouth and Poole and to make some small changes to the existing town/parish arrangements in Christchurch.

Before any decisions are made, the council sought the views of local residents on setting up a new parish, town or community council in the following areas:

- Boscombe and Pokesdown
- Bournemouth Town
- Broadstone
- Poole Town
- Redhill and Northbourne
- Southbourne

The council also sought the views of local residents on existing parish and town council arrangements in the following areas:

- Burton and Winkton
- Christchurch Town
- Highcliffe and Walkford
- Hurn
- Throop and Holdenhurst

This report summarises the free-text responses to the question asking for any other comments about the Community Governance Review.

Methodology

Qualitative analysis and reporting was undertaken by Darmax Research Ltd.

Results

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments about the Community Governance Review.

Responses have been coded into key themes to make them easier to interpret.

Residents living in a new parish, town or community council area

This section of the report relates to responses from residents living in an area proposed to have a new parish, town or community council.

Boscombe and Pokesdown residents

47 Boscombe and Pokesdown residents provided feedback.

While two respondents supported the proposals, noting the benefits of local governance in fostering community identity, the majority opposed the plans. Opposition centred on concerns that parish councils are unnecessary and are a waste of public money.

Respondents highlighted added bureaucracy, confusion over accountability, and inequity between areas. Respondents commented that BCP Council should focus on delivering services or return to the former three-council structure instead.

Respondents were also concerned about potential rises in council tax and a lack of detail over future costs. Respondents were critical of the consultation process, describing it as lacking detail and biased towards the proposals, with some doubting whether feedback would be considered.

Bournemouth Town residents

212 Bournemouth Town residents provided feedback.

The overwhelming majority of respondents opposed the draft recommendations, describing them as unnecessary, costly, and added levels of bureaucracy.

Administrative concerns were a common theme, with respondents warning of duplication, slower decision-making, confusion over responsibilities and fragmentation so soon after the creation of BCP Council.

There were fears of higher council tax and limited information around precept increases. The consultation process was also heavily criticised by respondents as rushed, poorly publicised, and biased, with some calling for a referendum to decide the issue.

Broadstone residents

168 Broadstone residents provided feedback.

Respondents who supported the proposals commented that a town council was long overdue, could provide a stronger voice on local issues, and enable residents to take greater control over decisions affecting the area.

Those opposed argued that an additional layer of governance was unnecessary and would be a waste of public money, with many calling for the plans to be scrapped entirely.

Concerns about administration and decision-making centred on the risk of creating extra bureaucracy, delays, and confusion over responsibilities. Some felt the

proposals would fragment communities rather than strengthen cohesion. Many pointed to the recent creation of BCP Council as a reason to avoid further governance layers, arguing that BCP should deliver local services directly. Some suggested reverting to the former Poole, Christchurch and Bournemouth town councils. Respondents also felt that existing councillors are sufficient to represent the local community.

Many respondents opposed any increase in council tax or local precept. Respondents criticised the lack of detailed costings and the absence of a cap on future rises after the first year. Some preferred that funding be directed toward tangible improvements, such as repairing pavements, upgrading play areas, or maintaining green spaces.

The consultation process was also widely criticised. Many felt it was rushed, poorly publicised, and lacked accessible information for all residents. Some believed the material was biased towards the proposals, with little acknowledgement of potential downsides. There was scepticism over whether public feedback would influence the final decision, with several calling for a public vote or referendum before any change.

A small number of respondents commented on proposed boundaries and Broadstone's designation as a town, with some suggesting it should remain associated with Poole, while others noted disparities in arrangements between areas.

Poole Town residents

486 Poole Town residents provided feedback.

While respondents felt a Poole Town Council was long overdue, could restore local identity, and ensure local voices were heard, a number of respondents opposed the proposal, considering it to be an unnecessary waste of money.

Some respondents raised boundary concerns, questioning the size and scope of Poole or why some areas were excluded.

Administration and decision-making drew the most comments, with fears of duplication of roles, inefficiency, and delays. Many called for BCP Council to focus on delivering services or to revert to the previous three councils rather than add another governance layer.

Costs were also a major concern, with respondents commenting on the impact of rising precepts on household bills and a lack of clarity on cost details.

The consultation process was widely criticised as rushed and lacking sufficient detail. Respondents also felt that it had not been widely publicised and biased in favour of the proposals, with many demanding a referendum.

Redhill and Northbourne residents

18 Redhill and Northbourne residents provided feedback.

18 residents gave feedback. While 1 respondent expressed support, the majority opposed the proposal arguing that parish councils are unnecessary and a waste of public money.

Concerns about administration were also raised by respondents, who felt the proposals create an additional layer of administration and bureaucracy, were a backwards step considering the formation of BCP Council and could create inequalities between affluent and less affluent areas. Some respondents felt additional precepts would unfairly burden residents on lower incomes.

Southbourne residents

110 Southbourne residents provided feedback.

While support for the proposals was expressed by some respondents, who valued stronger local representation and influence, a number of respondents opposed the proposal. These respondents felt that they were a waste of money and risked harming rather than helping local areas.

Administrative concerns were also raised by respondents, who warned of added bureaucracy, duplication of effort and confusion regarding responsibilities. Respondents also felt that parish councils have limited powers and questioned the need for parish councils so soon after the BCP merger.

Respondents raised financial concerns, opposing higher precepts without clear costings.

A number of respondents criticised the consultation process as rushed, poorly explained, and biased, with many calling for a referendum before any change. Respondents felt that the consultation had been poorly publicised and inaccessible for those who are digitally excluded. Respondents also felt that the proposals were politically motivated and expressed doubt that residents views would be considered in any decisions.

Residents living in an existing parish and town council area

This section relates to responses from residents living in an existing parish and town council area.

Burton and Winkton residents

6 Burton and Winkton residents provided feedback.

Comments related to general support of the proposal, that it was a good idea and that it would result in greater resident engagement. However, some respondents commented that the proposal was a waste of money and not needed. Respondents commented that parish councils result in a duplication of roles, they have limited

authority and that BCP Council should ensure it is delivering services. Respondents also commented that the proposal offers limited information on the associated costs and the money would be better spent elsewhere.

Christchurch Town residents

34 Christchurch Town residents provided feedback.

While some respondents supported the arrangements, valuing stronger local influence, others opposed them, describing parish councils as unnecessary and advocating the removal of two-tier governance.

A number of respondents commented that Friars Cliff should be included in the Highcliffe and Walkford parish instead of Christchurch. Administrative concerns were also mentioned, with calls to return to the three-town council to simplify governance.

Respondents commented on a lack of clarity around precepts and fears of unnecessary financial burdens.

Respondents also commented on the consultation process, appreciating the chance to give feedback but hoping that the views of residents are listened to. However, respondents also felt the review was poorly advertised and lacked detail.

Highcliffe and Walkford residents

14 Highcliffe and Walkford residents provided feedback.

While respondents commented that the proposals enable local residents to have more say in services and their community, respondents also commented that they are an unnecessary waste of money.

Respondents commented that the proposals were a way for BCP Council to divert funds away from Christchurch to subsidise Bournemouth and Poole and that the council should revert to the three-town structure. Respondents also commented that parish councils have limited powers and that residents associations should be created.

Respondents commented that there is little information provided on the costs associated with the proposals and questioned whether the views of residents would actually be considered when making decisions regarding the proposals.

Hurn residents

No responses were received from residents living within the Hurn proposal area for this question.

Throop and Holdenhurst residents

One Throop and Holdenhurst resident provided feedback. This respondent commented that the council should stop wasting money of local residents and threatening to close local services.

Respondents living elsewhere

This section relates to responses from respondents who live outside of the BCP Council area or did not provide a valid postcode that could be assigned to a specific area.

Respondents who live outside BCP Council area

6 residents who live outside the BCP Council area provided feedback.

These respondents felt parish councils provide little benefit at additional cost.

Mixed views were received relating to the consultation process. While one respondent described it as clear and well run, others criticised poor targeting of flyers and called for greater inclusion of seldom-heard groups.

No valid postcode provided

17 respondents who did not provide a valid postcode provided feedback.

These respondents generally opposed the proposals, describing them as an unnecessary waste of money.

Respondents also raised administrative concerns, arguing that BCP Council had not been given time to deliver on its original remit and warning against adding unnecessary bureaucracy.

Respondents criticised the consultation process as poorly advertised, lacking detail, and designed without resident input.

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1 Methodology

Qualitative analysis and reporting was undertaken by Darmax Research Ltd.

Qualitative responses (write in text) to questions were exported into Excel and were thematically analysed. The most common themes are reported on in this report. Anonymised quotes from participants have been used to illustrate the themes identified.

Please note that while the purpose of qualitative data is to provide deeper insights into reasoning and impact rather than to quantify data, the numbers of respondents who mentioned the most prevalent themes are provided in this report to give an indication of the magnitude of response. However, given the nature of qualitative data, it should be noted that this does not provide an indication of significance in relation to the question asked.

In addition, where respondents have provided comments that relate to more than one theme, their feedback has been categorised into multiple categories. Where a response makes several different points, only the relevant part to the discussed theme is shown in the report.

2 Results: Any other comments about the Community Governance Review

Respondents were asked to provide any other comments about the Community Governance Review.

Responses have been coded into key themes to make them easier to interpret. Please note that where respondents have provided comments that relate to more than one theme, their feedback has been categorised into multiple categories.

2.1 Residents living in a new parish, town or community council area

This section of the report relates to responses from residents living in an area proposed to have a new parish, town or community council.

Theme	Boscombe and Pokesdown	Bournemouth Town	Broadstone	Poole Town	Redhill and Northbourne	Southbourne
Number of respondents	47	212	168	486	18	110
General support	2	4	16	36	1	11
General opposition	29	95	66	179	10	43
Boundaries and parish/town allocation	0	14	4	17	0	1
Administration/management of decisions	22	107	60	193	7	50
Cost of delivery	8	33	24	110	3	15
Consultation/decision process	7	56	69	172	2	41
Other	2	3	4	11	0	0

2.1.1 Boscombe and Pokesdown

47 Boscombe and Pokesdown residents provided feedback to this question.

2 respondents expressed general support for the proposals. These respondents commented that residents benefit from having **governance at a local level**, creating a sense of community.



“Governance works much better at a local level for residents. Councillors and residents alike feel much more involved. There is a feeling of belonging and caring in the community.”

However, 29 respondents voiced opposition to the proposals. Many argued that parish councils were **unnecessary and represent a waste of money**. Respondents also questioned whether a parish or town council would deliver meaningful improvements for the community.



“This provides no additional benefit at additional cost.”

“It’s nonsense and a waste of time and money; we do not need this.”

22 respondents raised concerns about how such a council would be administered. Respondents commented that **councillors in the current governance structure** should represent their local communities, with additional councillors increasing **bureaucracy** and confusion over accountability between BCP and new local councils. Respondents also feared that the proposals would lead to division and **inequity** between areas. Respondents commented that the existing council should **focus on delivering services** to residents or revert back to the previous three town council structure.



“There is no need for additional layers of bureaucracy. Get an efficient BCP with councillors who represent their community properly and the problem is solved.”

“I would rather the council just get on with their jobs, than spending time and money re-organising.”

“Bournemouth and Poole should not be divided into several smaller parishes but should retain their identities as two distinct towns. Accordingly, one Bournemouth and one Poole parish should be created, each within the boundaries of their former Borough Councils.”

“Parish councils are damaging for BCP council, enabling greater fragmentation, inequality between areas, corruption and prevention the integrated transformation that the area needs.”

8 respondents highlighted concerns about the financial implications. In particular, respondents were worried about **increases in council tax** or local precepts and the

lack of detailed information about how much residents would be expected to contribute.



“I would like to know how much money this review is costing council tax payers?”

“I’m barely affording the cost of living in BCP as it is, this will just add further unspecified costs that could be any amount with no set limit.”

7 respondents criticised the consultation process. They felt that **information was limited** and not accessible to all residents, with some questioning whether their feedback would genuinely be considered. Respondents felt that the consultation did not allow for them to select an option for not doing anything.



“Without a proper explanation of the nature of the community councils to be created, it is difficult to be sure of BCP Council's real intentions.”

“There is no point undertaking a consultation if you don't act on the views received. If the majority of people want parish councils I accept the democratic mandate even though I disagree - please do the same if it is the other way around otherwise you are just adding to the public view that the council just does what it wants regardless.”

“Question 19 is phrased in such a way as to make very clear that this consultation is a sham. You’re going to impose this on us whether we want it or not.”

2 respondents raised other issues, commenting on **local services that need improvements** generally. Areas of concern included parking improvements, maintenance of public spaces and parks, the provision of leisure and entertainment options and a varied dining experience. Respondents also commented on the need for improved waste collection, infrastructure and amenities.

2.1.2 Bournemouth Town

212 Bournemouth Town residents provided feedback to this question.

4 respondents expressed general support for the proposals. Respondents commented that **continuing historical town and parish councils makes sense** because they have a sense of community and a desire to continue influencing local decisions.



“We should have local representation to maintain standards.”

However, 95 respondents voiced opposition to the proposals. Many argued that creating an additional layer of governance was **unnecessary** and would represent a **waste of public money** that could be spent on more worthwhile services. Some felt the plans should be abandoned entirely.



“The time spent on it could, without doubt, have been far more beneficially used!”

“It’s unnecessary, costly and increases bureaucracy.”

14 respondents commented on **boundaries and designations**. Conflicting responses were received with regards to whether Bournemouth should be split into smaller parishes or remain a single town council covering the entire area. Others raised concerns about inconsistencies between areas in terms of size and number of councillors.



“If this goes ahead and I hope it doesn’t Bournemouth MUST be considered as a whole not slit up into nebulous different parcels, the idea of splitting up Bournemouth alone demonstrates why this is such a bad idea and is being pushed through by people with limited local knowledge.”

“I’d beg you not to divide Bournemouth up. A whole Bournemouth Town Council to mirror Christchurch and Poole makes some sense but the smaller divisions proposed here makes none.”

“I am concerned about the disparity in ratios of electors to councillors across the whole of the BCP area. Some parishes appear to have much larger numbers of electors per councillor and this does not seem equitable.”

107 respondents raised concerns about administration and decision-making. The most common themes were the risk of adding **bureaucracy**, creating **confusion** over responsibilities, and slowing down decision-making. Several felt the proposals could **fragment communities** and reduce cohesion across the town. Others suggested that governance had only recently been reorganised with the **creation of BCP Council**, and introducing further structures so soon would add unnecessary complexity. Some respondents advocated a **return to the former Bournemouth**,

Poole and Christchurch councils instead. Respondents felt that resources would be better directed towards visible improvements to services, such as maintaining parks, pavements, and local infrastructure, rather than funding councillor allowances or administrative overheads. Other respondents commented that there are already councillors elected responsible for the local population.



“Ideally we should not be adding another layer of local government which is entirely unnecessary. It will damage community cohesion and create friction between areas and do nothing to regenerate the parts of BCP that need it.”

“If you feel that localities aren't being represented, you must call a vote of no confidence in BCP. We must disband BCP. We must hold elections immediately.”

“It is not long since the 3 councils merged to form BCP to administer the whole region. This was to streamline things and be more efficient and now, here you are trying to add bureaucratic layers and abrogate your responsibilities.”

33 respondents commented on costs. Concerns focused on the potential for **council tax or precept increases**, which residents could not afford and may force them to move. Respondents also commented on an **absence of detailed costings** or a clear limit on future rises within the draft recommendations.



“I don't think more parish councils should be established as council tax would increase.”

“The review attempts to give the impression that any additional costs would be minimal. It would be fairer to show the possible range of additional costs.”

“Does not give any indications of the startup and operational cost implications. How will it be funded. Is there a budget? If there is not a budget it is all a fantasy.”

56 respondents commented on the consultation process. Respondents felt the exercise was rushed and **poorly publicised**, with respondents commenting that they did not receive the information flyer that was meant to have been sent to all households. Respondents also felt poor publicising of the consultation was intentional so that it did not receive views that opposed the recommendations. Respondents also commented that the information material and survey were **inaccessible** for many residents, particularly those who do not have access to the internet. Some respondents described the survey as **biased towards the proposals** and argued that the process did not allow residents to simply reject the idea of a town council. Others questioned whether feedback would genuinely influence the final decision and suggested that any change should be subject to a **referendum**.



"I did not receive the flyer that was meant to have been sent out to every household in BCP. No one in my block of flats received the flyer and I know many other residents did not receive one either. I have concerns about the depth of consultation because of this, especially across the Bournemouth Town proposed area, and lack of responses to this consultation should not be taken as apathy or tacit acceptance of the proposals."

"There seems to be no compelling reason, in all the documents and videos, for creating another layer of government."

"I have the strong feeling that these councils will be forced upon us whatever the opposition is."

"There should be a referendum to ascertain whether this has support because I believe that it does not have majority public support."

"This survey has been manipulated to produce a positive outcome."

2.1.3 Broadstone

168 Broadstone residents provided feedback to this question.

16 respondents expressed general support for the proposals. These respondents felt that a town council was **long overdue**, could provide a stronger voice to residents about local issues and enable them to take more **control of local decisions**.



“A town council would give a voice to local issues and could provide local solutions.”

“Broadstone residents should be represented in an area in their own right. A town council in Broadstone would ensure people had their views and opinions heard more clearly and localised problems would be resolved ourselves.”

However, 66 respondents voiced overall opposition to the proposals. Many felt that an **additional layer of governance was unnecessary**, would be a waste of money and asked for the plans to be scrapped.



“This is a farce and should be stopped. It is a waste of money and resources.”

“It is not required. Stop wasting money.”

60 respondents raised concerns about how a Broadstone Town Council would be administered and how decisions would be managed. Many respondents felt that it would result in an **unnecessary layer of bureaucracy**, potentially leading to delays and confusion over responsibilities. The proposals would also **create divisions** between different areas rather than support cohesion. Respondents also commented that **BCP Council has only recently been formed** and should be responsible for providing services rather than passing accountability on to smaller councils. Respondents also commented that BCP Council should **revert to the previous three town councils** as it has not achieved what it intended.



“Let’s make local government more efficient by cutting bureaucracy rather than creating more of it.”

“This represents unnecessary layers of local government for zero benefits. The plans will add confusion over which council does which jobs - keep it simple and stick to BCP you have just created!”

“This seems like a cheap way to offload some of the work that BCP should be doing themselves.”

“Yes, dissolve BCP and let's go back to Poole, Christchurch and Bournemouth Town Councils. Let's face it BCP look like they're in deep financial trouble so get rid of the BCP.”

“It won’t help community cohesion by having multiple council layers in each area.”

Respondents also commented that there are **already councillors** who should be representing the local area, while if the proposals are implemented those who are elected should receive suitable support and should be apolitical.



“A waste of money. Get the ward councillors to do their jobs.”

“It is my understanding that these proposed parish councils are supposed to be apolitical, how can Broadstone be that when it is likely that both of our current representatives are Liberal Democrat and will likely follow their own agenda.”

24 respondents commented on the cost implications of the proposal. Concerns were raised about the potential **increase in the local precept** and the financial impact this would have on households. Respondents were also concerned that there was **not enough information provided about the costings** and the increases appeared to be uncapped after the first year. Some respondents felt that funds would be better used for tangible improvements, such as repairing pavements, upgrading play areas, or maintaining green spaces, rather than funding councillor allowances and administrative staff.



“This is just another way to take even more money from the residents of BCP, where are we expected to find this additional cost?”

“BCP charge a tax on all households to provide a service. I do not want to pay more. The first year may well be £5 but after that, there is no control, so we could be looking at £500.”

“Waste of time and money. Focus on things that will make a positive difference to our area.”

69 respondents commented on the consultation process itself. A number of respondents commented that they felt the **consultation was rushed** and documents contained little information about what the draft recommendations actually were. There had also been a **lack of communication** about the review taking place and what had been distributed was **inaccessible for many elderly residents and other vulnerable people**. In addition, the information that had been provided was **biased in favour of the proposals** with little mention of any potential negatives.



“It should be better advertised by appropriate leafleting. Majority of people did not receive information. Elderly people/vulnerable who do not use social media, IT or are not mobile are excluded.”

"I don't feel that sufficient facts have been shared or are even available to enable residents to make informed decisions that affect their future. Please delay any debate until such time."

"A rushed process of 6 weeks for such an important decision."

"There seems to be very little information on the cons of the recommendations. There must be some!"

A further recurring theme was **scepticism about whether resident feedback would influence the final decision**, while respondents also felt that the review was politically motivated. Any changes should not be implemented until a public **vote/referendum**.



"I hope you pay attention to the results of the consultation unlike in the past for things, and if overall people decide they do not want this, you actually abide by that and don't do what you want disregarding their decision."

"This is being forced on us locally by politically motivated local councillors who are biased on local Facebook groups. Local meetings have been made with pre agreed questions."

"As would be expected in any democratic decision making process, the decision to establish town councils should be based on a referendum."

4 respondents commented on the proposed boundaries and designation of Broadstone as a town council. Two of these respondents commented that Broadstone should **remain associated with Poole** as it historically has been, while the other two respondents commented on the disparity of town and parish councils between different areas.



"I still think that Broadstone is a part of Poole and should be under control of the new Poole council if one is established."

"The proposals for Poole & Bournemouth are disproportionate to the other areas."

4 respondents provided **other comments** outside the main themes, including the use of grit lorries, the pay structure of the local authority and public toilets.



"I would also vote to change the pay structure as I don't think anyone who works for the government should get paid more than the prime minister. but that's just another grumble."

"I also feel very annoyed that last autumn we saw lots of brand new grit lorries going to our depot, the grit lorries came round most nights unnecessarily on lots of occasions during the winter."

2.1.4 Poole Town

486 Poole Town residents provided feedback to this question.

36 respondents expressed support for the proposals. These respondents felt that the proposal was long overdue and highlighted that a town council would **restore Poole's identity**, give residents a stronger local voice, and enable more responsive decision-making. Supporters felt that a dedicated Poole Town Council could protect the character of the town and ensure that local priorities are not overlooked within the larger BCP Council structure.



"I hope that the proposals succeed."

"BCP is huge so it's good for people to be involved in their local area."

"There are sound reasons why the area should be a parish, but a particular benefit would be the creation of a Poole Town Council. The town has a long history, strong traditions, a strong identity, and was badly served by the creation of BCP Council without a Town Council option being offered."

In contrast, 179 respondents expressed opposition. Respondents commented that the proposals were **unnecessary** and represented a **waste of money**, while others believed the plan should be scrapped altogether. Some respondents questioned why money was being spent on these when the council has limited funds.



"I am against a town council. The review should be rejected."

"All proposals unnecessary. Just do your job please."

"The council does not have any money as it is, please stop wasting more money on things like this."

17 respondents raised comments about **boundaries and allocation**. Some questioned whether Poole was too large and should be divided into smaller parish councils. Respondents questioned why some areas had not been allocated parish status when other areas had.



"Why is Broadstone treated as a separate issue and not Creekmoor?"

"I am too far away from Poole town to feel that it best describes my location. In this document it is Poole town but that is not what I feel."

193 respondents raised concerns about administration and decision-making. The most common view was that an additional council would **duplicate roles** already performed by BCP, leading to inefficiency and delays. Respondents questioned the authority that town and parish councils would actually have. Respondents feared that the proposals would fracture governance arrangements and **create division** rather than cohesion. Many highlighted that **BCP Council was only recently created** and

should be allowed to prove itself before adding further governance layers. Others argued that if structural change was necessary, the area should **revert to the previous three councils** rather than introducing parish-level councils. Respondents felt that the change in structures would lead to **confusion** regarding responsibilities and lead to BCP Council passing **accountability** to parish councils. Some respondents felt that funds would be better used to address tangible service issues, such as street cleaning, road repairs, or maintaining public spaces.



“It appears to be an exercise to create more politicians and bureaucracy.”

“Let us complete the transformation agenda and get BCP working properly for the whole conurbation.”

“Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch were pushed into joining forces, which in my opinion was not a good move. Another change such as this one in my opinion is not wanted - if anything, it would be better to go back to how it was with 3 separate councils, when each area was taking care of the specific needs of each area.”

“Multi layered governance usually leads to confusion over who runs what and increases costs.”

“It is not a great idea, dilutes accountability.”

“I would like BCP to get on with running the council that is currently in existence, trying to improve its services so that they are at least fit for purpose.”

110 respondents commented on costs. They were particularly concerned about the impact of precepts on **household bills** at a time when many residents were already struggling with the cost of living. Respondents noted the **lack of clarity** around costings and criticised the absence of a cap on future increases. Respondents also commented that the proposals were a way for the council to avoid limits on council tax increases.



“I do not agree with an extra bill on top of the council tax we have had no consultation or letters regarding this matter. The cost of living is high enough.”

“I feel strongly that we should have more guidance on how much this is all going to cost as residents before it is agreed.”

“No costs of these proposals are admitted and it’s a way of increasing costs to residents and avoiding Government restrictions on council tax.”

172 respondents criticised the **consultation process**. They felt that it was rushed, lacked transparency, and had not been adequately publicised. Several respondents described the information provided as being limited and biased towards the proposals and expressed doubts that resident feedback would influence the

outcome. Others argued that changes of this scale should only be introduced following a referendum rather than a consultation exercise. Respondents also questioned whether the proposals were politically motivated to suit individual agendas.



“As already stated from the review there is no list of services to be transferred, no costings and no business case for such a change.”

“Subsequent questions seem to assume I agree with this strategy - I don't!”

“Far too complicated and designed to put people off from getting involved.”

“The residents should have the ability to vote on this and BCP should not have an open mandate to steamroller whatever they want through the system.”

“We all know that BCP will take no notice of this consultation and just do whatever they want. Roll on the next election when we can get rid of this terrible council.”

“Jobs for the boys and of course girls. There are enough ineffective snouts in the trough without adding more.”

11 respondents provided **other feedback** not directly related to the main themes, including calls for Poole Civic Centre to be retained.



“Save Poole civic centre. We need it. If it's sold, we'll need to build another one.”

2.1.5 Redhill and Northbourne

18 Redhill and Northbourne residents provided feedback to this question.

While 1 respondent commented that they **hope the proposals are implemented**, 10 respondents expressed general opposition. Respondents commented that the proposed changes are a **waste of money** and parish councils are unnecessary.



"I hope that it comes to fruition."

"Seems to me like a big waste of council tax payers' money."

7 respondents commented on the administration and management of the proposals. Respondents commented that parish councils create an additional layer of **administration and bureaucracy**. The proposals seem to be a **backwards step** from the formation of BCP Council, who should take responsibility for the delivery of quality services across the conurbation. Respondents were also concerned that proposals would lead to **inequity of services**, with more affluent areas able to afford higher increases in precepts, enabling them to provide more and better services.



"The whole bureaucracy needs slimming down, productivity needs improving."

"The creation of the Poole and Bournemouth town parishes seems to be a step back to the independent councils prior to BCP being created."

"They risk inequality of local services. Some parts of Bournemouth are more affluent than others. If those parts had their own parish council, they would be able to raise more council tax to fund local services, while other parts, such as Boscombe, wouldn't be able to raise the same funds."

3 respondents commented on the **financial burden** the proposals would place on local residents, impacting those on lower incomes the most.



"They increase the cost of living. Although parish councils don't have to raise a precept, they can't do much without one. The larger the precept, the larger your council tax bill. And council tax is a regressive tax - it hits lower-income people harder."

2 respondents commented on the **consultation process**. These respondents commented that local residents had not been involved in deciding whether the review should take place, while the proposals were created for the benefit of a few.



"To my knowledge, residents of BCP were not consulted as to whether this review should have been undertaken at all."

"It's a waste of money to make a few self-important people feel more important."

2.1.6 Southbourne

110 Southbourne residents provided feedback to this question.

11 respondents expressed support for the proposals, commenting that more **representation in local communities**, allowing residents to have a say in how things are delivered in their area and should be implemented.



“I do feel that Boscombe has a unique identity and would benefit enormously from having more input from residents via a Parish Council.”

“More representation is good thing for the community. The plans should go ahead.”

However, 43 respondents expressed opposition, arguing that the proposed governance structures would be a waste of money and called for the **proposals to be scrapped**. They also felt that the changes could do more harm than good to local areas.



“A waste of money which could have been used to actually improve services.”

“I implore the council not to go ahead with this plan.”

50 respondents raised concerns about administration and decision-making. A number of respondents commented that the proposals risk **added bureaucracy**, **duplication** of effort, and **confusion regarding responsibilities**. Parish councils have **limited power** and many respondents also questioned why additional parish and town councils were being proposed so soon after the **recent formation of BCP Council**. The priority for BCP Council should be to deliver services to local residents they were elected to do rather than develop unnecessary proposals. If they are unable to do this BCP Council should revert to the previous three town councils. Respondents also commented that **no more councillors** were required and those that were in place should focus on serving local residents.



“It is not appropriate to create another level of bureaucracy within local government particularly as the proposed parish councils will have very limited powers, if any.”

“The proposal risks duplication and confusion of functions and extra costs without additional benefits.”

“Why are you doing this so soon after the deeply unpopular decision to amalgamate the three councils and?”

“Hopefully the results of this survey will be strongly against the proposed changes and that council effort & money can get back to the key issues and stop being wasted (time & money) on this proposal.”

“Is this not a task that our local MP is already achieving?”

1 respondent commented that **Tuckton** should have its own council representation.



“I would like Tuckton to have its own council representation so locals can build a community identity and improve the look and feel of the area. I would like direct funding for Tuckton projects that impact locals and visitors and draw extra footfall to the area while retaining a small town/village feel.”

15 respondents highlighted **cost concerns**. They argued that increases in council tax or precepts would place an unfair burden on households and that council tax was high enough already. Respondents also commented that a detailed cost analysis had not been provided in the draft proposals.



“Council tax is high enough already without adding unnecessary vanity projects which no one has voted for.”

“Make the case for change by providing a proper cost benefit analysis. These are the benefit and these are the costs. So people can judge whether the benefits are worth it.”

41 respondents criticised the consultation process. A number of respondents felt that the consultation was **rushed, poorly explained, and inadequately publicised**. Several felt the material was biased towards supporting the proposals and expressed scepticism that resident views would influence the final outcome. Respondents also felt that information and the **opportunity to take part was inaccessible** to those who are digitally excluded. Respondents felt that the proposals were **politically motivated**, while others felt that the changes should be voted for democratically through a referendum.



“I think the timescale for getting information out to residents is much too short.”

“You need to ensure information is equal and complete on both hard copy and online. It is also not widely known that Parish council voting is underway. I’d recommend more marketing and awareness to ensure the community are aware.”

“Will you take full notice of the results of the opinions given in this questionnaire?”

“I honestly thought the Liberal Democrats sought to lead for the good of all residents. This just looks like political opportunism.”

“If the proposal is to proceed with parish councils then this should be put to a referendum of residents and not based on a consultation most people won’t bother to fill in.”

2.2 Residents living in an existing parish and town council area

This section relates to responses from residents living in an existing parish and town council area.

Theme	Burton and Winkton	Christchurch Town	Highcliffe and Walkford	Hurn	Throop and Holdenhurst
Number of respondents	6	34	14	0	1
General support	2	5	3	0	0
General opposition	3	7	2	0	1
Boundaries and parish/town allocation	1	6	0	0	0
Administration/management of decisions	3	12	6	0	0
Cost of delivery	3	9	2	0	0
Consultation/decision process	1	11	4	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	1

2.2.1 Burton and Winkton

6 Burton and Winkton residents provided feedback to this question.

2 respondents commented about their **general support** of the proposals, that they are a good idea and would result in greater resident engagement. 3 respondents commented that the proposals were a **waste of money** and **not needed**.



“I think that the proposals are a good idea, as communities will be better represented in smaller units of the BCP area. Residents may well feel more engaged if they have a say in more local matters and BCP will have a greater understanding of their residents wishes.”

“A lot of things are done in the name of progress but not always for the better. Some things are better left.”

3 respondents commented that parish councils result in a **duplication of roles**, they have **limited authority** and that **BCP Council should do its job** in terms of delivering services. 3 respondents commented that the proposals offer **limited information** on the associated costs and the **money would be better spent elsewhere**. 1 respondent commented that the changes would **benefit those in power**, while one respondent suggested that the conurbation should collaborate with Dorset Council, with town and parish councils sitting beneath a **single county-level authority**. This approach would streamline services, reduce duplication of roles and preserve local representation and decision-making. 1 respondent commented that there should be **restrictions on housing developments** in the local area.



“Given the limited number of statutory functions of parish and town councils what is the justification for the gross variation in precepts?”

“Most things that are changed are usually for the council’s benefit i.e. money and not for the benefit of the community.”

“It would be far more sensible to operate under a single, county-level authority that covers the entire geographic area, including Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and the rest of Dorset. This would streamline operations, eliminate duplicated executive structures, reduce administrative overheads, and enable a more strategic and unified approach to service delivery. Local representation could still be preserved - and arguably strengthened - by empowering a network of smaller town and parish councils beneath the single county-level authority.”

“Restricting huge development of rural areas, stopping building on every spot of green space, giving people fresh air and open spaces.”

2.2.2 Christchurch Town

34 Christchurch Town residents provided feedback to this question.

5 respondents expressed general support for the proposals. They felt that the arrangements enable Christchurch residents to **influence local decisions** more directly.



“Giving the community the option to influence topics in their immediate area is positive.”

7 respondents expressed general opposition, commenting that **parish councils are unnecessary** and that two-tier governance should be abolished.



“I hope the review shows that this is a poor use of budget for an unrequired 2 tier system.”

5 respondents commented on boundaries and parish/town allocation. These respondents felt that **Friars Cliff should be included within the Highcliffe and Walkford** parish rather than be part of Christchurch Town. This was because respondents feel more affinity and similarities to Highcliffe.



“Please take seriously the wishes of Friars Cliff residents to join Highcliffe and Walkford. Highcliffe, Walkford & Friars Cliff Parish is perfect.”

12 respondents raised concerns about the administration and management of decision-making. Respondents commented that it is important for Christchurch, along with Bournemouth and Poole, have responsibility for what happens in their local area. This could be achieved by returning to the **three town council approach** as previous to the formation of BCP Council. The two-tier level of governance is complicated and results in **duplication** of responsibilities. Respondents also commented that **local services should be improved generally**.



“It’s important that the local areas of the town; Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole maintain as much control as possible of local services, solutions and plans.”

“We understand there is insufficient funding - but this will not solve problems it will create more. This is not a solution - do not split BCP Council roles and responsibilities further!”

“Make the local services more efficient. Have performance related bonuses for staff.”

9 respondents highlighted the cost of delivery as a concern. They felt that residents would face an **unnecessary financial burden**, with **little clarity** on how precepts would be set or controlled.



“Realistic detailed costings needed to show expense of the proposals, and also analysis of the financial return on investment from existing Town/Parish Councils.”

“Many people are concerned that increases in precepts or the creation of such charges at a time of economic trouble is counterproductive.”

11 respondents commented on the consultation process. Respondents appreciated the opportunity to provide their views, while hopeful that the council **listen to residents** when making decisions and that any changes should be based on the majority of approval. However, some respondents commented that the review had **not been widely advertised** and **lacked detail**.



“Really pleased to have been asked to submit an opinion on my area and being able to comment and do hope you listen.”

“All proposals and plans, should have majority taxpayer approval.”

“I had not heard of this until today and feel that it needs to be made more widely known to the local communities. We locals place great value on where we live and do want to be included.”

2.2.3 Highcliffe and Walkford

14 Highcliffe and Walkford residents provided feedback to this question.

3 respondents commented about their **general support** of the proposals; they enable local residents to have more say in services and their community and all money raised by parish councils is spent in the local community. However, 2 respondents commented that they are an **unnecessary waste of money**.



“They can be a great boost to communities: improving local services, supporting local projects and assets, and offering direct local representation.”

6 respondents commented on the **administration and management aspects** of the proposed councils. Respondents commented that the proposals were a way for BCP Council to divert funds away from Christchurch to subsidise Bournemouth and Poole and that the council should revert to the three-town structure prior to the formation of BCP Council. Respondents also commented that parish councils have limited powers and that residents associations should be created to hold them to account.



“Let’s go back to 3 boroughs under Dorset please?”

“This is just another example of BCP taking money from Christchurch to subsidise Bournemouth and Poole. The community governance review specifically mentions Bournemouth and Poole with Christchurch as an afterthought shown as an asterisk on the flyer.”

“Parish councils should be removed from BCP to save costs for the limited functions available and do not necessarily reflect the political makeup of the administration thus creating tensions and non-alignment of priorities in the exercise of even those limited functions.”

“Much depends on how able the parish councillors are and how well they are supported. BCP should encourage the formation of residents associations in each area to hold them to account.”

2 respondents commented that there is **little information provided** on the costs associated with the proposals. 4 respondents commented on the **consultation process**, with respondents questioning whether the views of residents would actually be considered when making decisions regarding the proposals.



“I have no idea if there is a cost associated with any of the recommendations. As there are no proposed changes from Highcliffe & Walkford, it would be good to understand if those places with no changes will incur additional costs for areas that do have proposed changes.”

“Will any notice be taken of any responses or have decisions already been made?”

2.2.4 Hurn

No responses were received from residents living within the Hurn proposal area for this question.

2.2.5 Throop and Holdenhurst

1 Throop and Holdenhurst resident provided feedback to this question.

This respondent commented that the council should **stop wasting the money** of local residents and **threatening to close local services**.



“Please stop wasting our money and threatening to close our paddling pools, libraries etc.”

2.3 Respondents living elsewhere

This section relates to responses from respondents who live outside of the BCP Council area or did not provide a valid postcode that could be assigned to a specific area.

Theme	Live outside BCP Council area	No valid postcode
Number of respondents	6	17
General support	0	0
General opposition	2	6
Boundaries and parish/town allocation	0	0
Administration/management of decisions	1	5
Cost of delivery	1	2
Consultation/decision process	3	10
Other	1	0

2.3.1 Live outside BCP Council area

6 residents who live outside the BCP Council area provided feedback to this question. These respondents live in Lytchett Matravers and Upton, Corfe Mullen, and West Purbeck.

2 respondents described the proposals as an **extra cost for little benefit** and added an unnecessary level of bureaucracy. 1 respondent commented that if an additional layer of tax was implemented then **BCP Council should receive less money**.



“Extra cost for little value and no reason to add a whole new and pointless level of bureaucracy.”

“If BCP put another layer of tax into play then BCP should receive less money.”

3 respondents commented on the consultation process. 1 of these respondents commented on **Upton residents** receiving a flyer relating to the consultation and felt that it was an attempt by BCP Council to incorporate the area into the conurbation. One respondent felt that the consultation was clear and **praised council officers and councillors**, while the other respondent commented that it was important to **seek the views of vulnerable and seldom heard residents**. 1 respondent raised other comments outside the main themes, including **frustration with broader council decision-making**.



“Why have you included Upton in your delivering of the flyer? You’ve tried to grab Upton in the past, so keep your hands off of Upton & Lytchett Minster.”

“Please ensure you seek representation from young people and children as well as the other marginalised areas within Poole. Parents and carers of SEND - schools - local charities and the services - plus a variety of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds.”

I think it has been excellently laid out and is very clear. Well done BCP Council officers and councillors!

*“Bournemouth is a **** hole, the council don’t care and do nothing neither do the police.”*

2.3.2 No valid postcode

17 respondents who did not provide a valid postcode provided feedback to this question.

6 respondents opposed the proposals, considering them a **waste of council funds** and unnecessary.



“An excessive amount seems to be being committed to consultations which could be better spent on improving the lot of those local residents in real need.”

5 respondents highlighted administrative concerns. Respondents felt that **BCP Council has not been allowed sufficient time** to implement changes it was set up to deliver. Respondents also felt it was an added layer of **bureaucracy** and appear as though they were a means for BCP Council to **offload responsibilities**. One respondents commented that parish and town councillors **should not be affiliated to a political party** to ensure impartiality.



“The administration of the three councils into BCP was promoted on the premiss of a more efficient, effective service for all of us. It would appear they would now wish to offload some responsibilities to an unelected body who it appears will not be accountable to us the electorate.”

“The parish councillors shall have no political affection (as the case in existing parish).”

2 respondents raised concerns about potential **increases in council tax** and that not enough detail on the costs had been provided.



“This whole thing is wrong! I do not agree there should be a second council tax just for the sake of the new parish and town councils. There have been no costings whatsoever as to how much this will cost so how can anyone agree when no information given on exactly.”

10 respondents were critical of the consultation process, describing it as **poorly advertised, lacking detail** and proposals had been designed without the input of local residents.



“It has been poorly administered. We never received a flyer through the door, no did several friends locally.”

“Whilst I think it important to have these reviews, this survey and all the information was not really publicised... In many ways the review is presenting a single proposal so strictly speaking of a review of the options. It is not made clear that if only a few areas were adopted then the charters would remain and a 3-tier system would be put in place.”