

FOI Request

Request for Information: Ref NCC-033967-18

Thank you for your comments and questions in relation to the ongoing engagement exercise that we are conducting in Nottinghamshire on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). The response to the questions you asked are below:

How much the organisation running this consultation is being paid?

The organisation running this engagement phase is being paid £50,000. These costs were agreed and approved at the County Council's Policy Committee on 12 September 2018. A copy of the committee report is available to the public on the Nottinghamshire County Council website. Link [Democratic Management System > Meetings](#)

A two-phased approach to stakeholder engagement and community consultation is proposed to enable residents and stakeholders to share their views and have their say on Local Government reorganisation in Nottinghamshire.

An independent social research company Opinion Research Services (ORS) are undertaking both Phase 1 and Phase 2 (if conducted), of this work.

Phase 1 is a listening, engagement and preparation phase that will run from September to November 2018. This phase will focus on engaging residents and stakeholders in the discussion around local government reorganisation to gain initial insights and views on the options locally at a formative stage. The public engagement stage will run for 4 weeks from 3rd October – 31st October. Views captured during this stage will be used to help inform the case for change and plan for formal community consultation. This phase is costing £50,000.

Phase 2 will be an independent, formal consultation exercise with residents and stakeholders. This consultation would be an essential component in any proposals for change but will only be agreed following County Council consideration of the business case on local government reorganisation and carried out in 2019 if agreed by County Council in December 2018. This formal public consultation will cost up to £140,000 if agreed.

- **Who decided what questions would be asked in the consultation – and who they're employed by?**

All questions and the overall questionnaire were developed by Opinion Research Services who were employed by the County Council to undertake this work on their behalf. The questionnaire was signed off by the Chief Executive of the County Council. No County Councillors had any involvement or sight of the questions or questionnaire prior to it being launched publicly.

Opinion Research Services (ORS) is a university spin-out company that seeks to maintain standards of academic rigour in conducting its social research. They are a Market Research Society (MRS) company partner and a partner in excellence of the Consultation Institute and

are fully compliant with the MRS Code of Conduct. ORS has been involved in a large number of local government consultations around the restructuring of local government in Dorset, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire as well as other consultation and engagement exercises by fire, police and health services.

- **What methods are being used to raise awareness of this consultation?**

A comprehensive public communications and marketing approach was taken to raise awareness of this engagement activity on local government reorganisation involving press, radio and social media coverage. This involved web based distribution of the Future Notts Engagement paper with links to an online questionnaire with hard copy availability at all Nottinghamshire libraries, (freepost envelopes have been provided); face to face meetings and telephone interviews. Broadcast interviews have been conducted to raise awareness and regular social media messages were posted throughout October.

In addition 3 separate focus groups with representative members of the public were arranged independently by ORS in the North, South and Mid-Notts areas and three engagement events held with Parish and Town Councils; voluntary sector organisations; and business representatives.