



LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE  
FUTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF  
LANCASHIRE

A REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

*London: HMSO*

# THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the recommendations for the structure of local government in Lancashire, as agreed by the Commission:

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## **The Local Government Commission for England**

**Sir John Banham**  
Chairman

Dear Secretary of State

### **THE FUTURE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF LANCASHIRE**

With this letter the Local Government Commission is submitting its final recommendations for the structure of local government in Lancashire.

You will be aware that the Commission put forward three possible structures, on which we sought the views of all those with a stake in local government in the area. These possibilities were: eight unitary authorities, six unitary authorities and the retention of the existing two-tier structure in its entirety. The Commission's stated preference was for eight unitary authorities, but we made it clear that we would be prepared to recommend either of the two alternatives if these turned out to enjoy greater local support.

Since our draft recommendations were published on 14 June 1994, we have heard directly from over 77,000 respondents, including many voluntary organisations, businesses, parish and town councils and other local and national organisations, along with each of the local authorities. We have also commissioned a survey of a representative sample of local residents.

The Commission did not set out to conduct a referendum and it is aware that there have been vigorous local campaigns, both for unitary structures and for no change. The Commission appreciates that these may have influenced people's views. Nevertheless the Commission is satisfied that it has obtained a fair reflection of local opinion.

This consultation has caused the Commission to reconsider its draft recommendations. It is clear that there is strong local support for the retention of the existing two-tier structure of county and district councils. Taking this into account, and considering all the other evidence in the light of the statutory criteria, we are therefore recommending no change to the present structure of local government in the area.

The review process has brought to the surface a number of useful proposals for enhancing the management and effectiveness of local government, whether in a two-tier or unitary structure. Indeed, the Commission has been mindful of the fact that the manner in which any given structure is managed is probably as important as the structure itself and in any case there is a constant need to revise and update practices. We hope that such improvements will be pursued with appropriate vigour now that the distractions of reorganisation can be put behind local authority members and officers alike. In particular, we would like to see more management authority and responsibility devolved to local communities, and a more meaningful consultative role for town and parish councils.

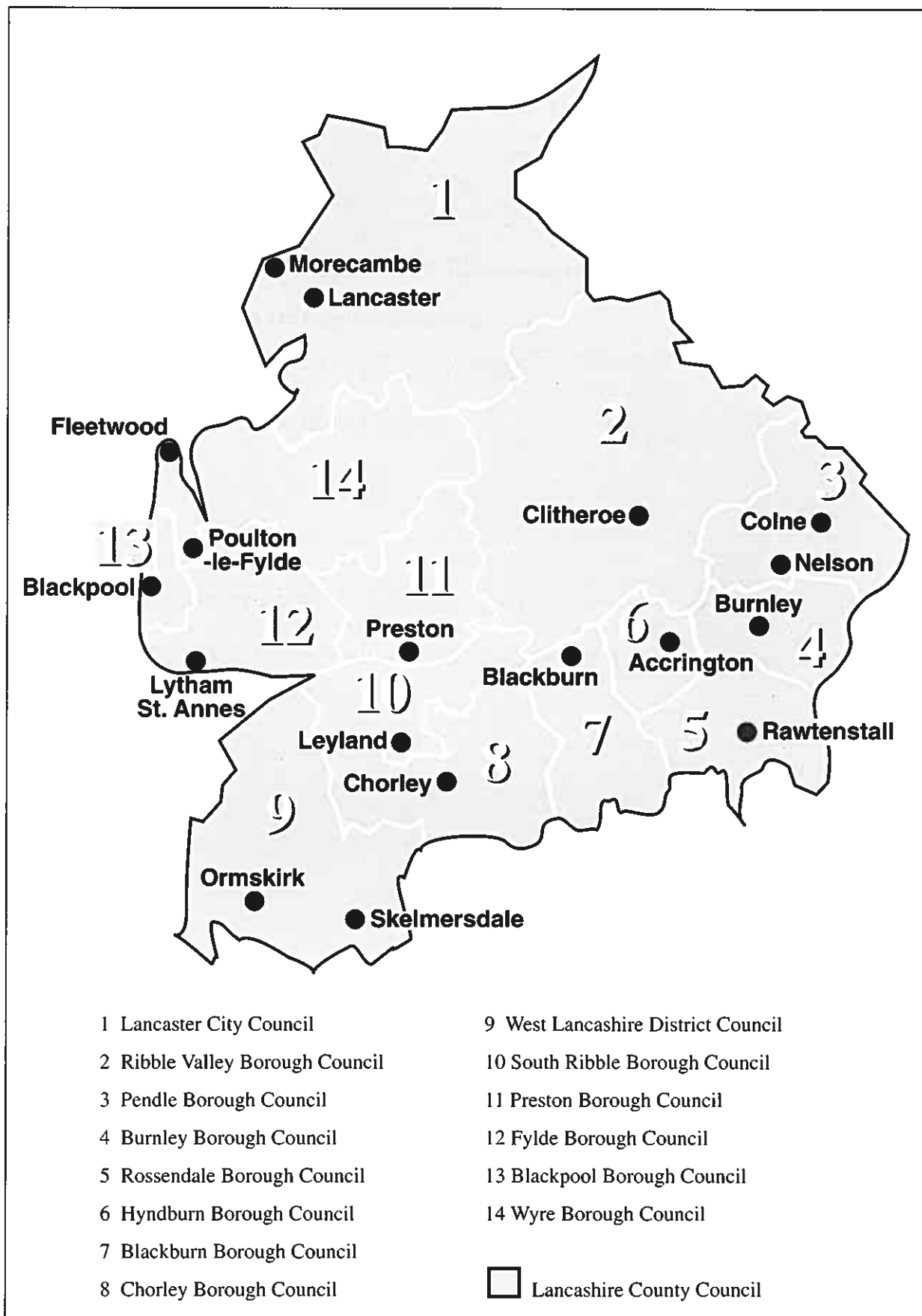
In a further general report to be published when its structural review programme has been completed, the Commission will discuss the establishment of unitary authorities where these come into existence, and their on-going evolution; the same report will consider the improvements that can and need to be made in two-tier structures where they continue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Banham', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sir John Banham  
Chairman  
26 October 1994

Map 1: THE STRUCTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN LANCASHIRE



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 THE COMMISSION'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	3
3 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION	15
4 THE COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS	23
5 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS	31

## APPENDICES

A SUMMARY OF MORI FINDINGS ON COMMUNITY IDENTITY	35
B SUMMARY OF MORI FINDINGS ON SUPPORT FOR STRUCTURAL OPTIONS	39

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report contains the Commission's final recommendations for the structure of local government in Lancashire. It represents the culmination of 14 months work by the Commission, during which time it received the views of over 105,000 individuals and organisations.
- 2 The report is in four main parts:
  - (i) Chapter 2 describes the Commission's draft recommendations
  - (ii) Chapter 3 details the responses to consultation over the draft recommendations
  - (iii) Chapter 4 sets out the Commission's conclusions
  - (iv) Chapter 5 contains the Commission's final recommendations.
- 3 The original review commenced on 20 September 1993, was temporarily suspended on 18 October 1993 and was then re-launched on an accelerated timetable on 13 December 1993. It was conducted under the provisions of Part II of the Local Government Act 1992, having regard to the Secretary of State's Policy and Procedure Guidance of November 1993 as amended by the courts. In accordance with the Secretary of State's Procedure Guidance, the Commission wrote to all the principal authorities in Lancashire, informing them of the review's commencement. Copies were also sent to the other organisations and individuals listed in Annex A to the Guidance.
- 4 A period of consultation until 8 April 1994 was given for all local authorities and any other body or person interested in the review to put their views to the Commission on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government in the county, or any boundary or electoral changes, and, if so, or what those changes should be.
- 5 The Commission's draft recommendations were published in its report *The Future Local Government of Lancashire* on 14 June 1994. Copies were sent to organisations which wrote to the Commission during the initial consultation stage, to appropriate representative organisations, and to the organisations and individuals listed in Annex A of the Secretary of State's Procedure Guidance. Copies were also made available to local residents on request.
- 6 In addition, principally through the Royal Mail, the Commission distributed approximately 675,000 leaflets with a questionnaire to households in the county. The leaflets summarised its draft recommendations and other structural options. The Commission also advertised extensively in the local press, drawing residents' attention to the review and to its draft recommendations and other structural options.





## 2 THE COMMISSION'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7 At the start of the review, local authorities, members of the public and all other interested parties were invited to write to the Commission giving their views on the future local government of Lancashire. Mrs Ann Levick and Mr David Ansbro, the Commissioners with particular responsibility for the review, visited the county and met numerous local authority members and officers, interest groups, business organisations and individuals.
- 8 Before considering the options for local government in Lancashire, the Commission was concerned to learn about local perceptions of community identity, and to determine how much local people knew both about the Commission's work and the principle of unitary local government. As part of the review, a county-wide survey among a representative cross-section of the population was undertaken by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI) on behalf of the 14 Lancashire districts. The survey, similar to those carried out in other review areas, covered interviews with 3,104 residents aged 18 and over. A summary of the findings is given in Appendix A.
- 9 The Commission received directly almost 2,000 representations at this stage, as well as a large number of proforma letters and petitions, the majority of which were from individuals. The balance was from a mixture of interest groups, the voluntary sector, parish councils and the business community. Approximately a fifth of representations expressed support for no change. Support for unitary options was stronger, although no clear picture about the preferred pattern of unitary authorities emerged. About 160 letters were received from people who had a specific interest in county-level services such as education support services, archives and trading standards. A large number of representations were forwarded by the Friends of Lancashire Archives seeking the maintenance of the archives as an integrated unit. Some of the respondents expressed concerns about the stability and accountability of any joint arrangements.
- 10 The responses from some areas were more substantial than others. The Commission received a larger number of letters from South Ribble and Ribble Valley, following the publication of the Lancashire branch of the Association of District Council's joint proposal suggesting that these two districts should be divided. In Ribble Valley, public opinion was mobilised by CARVE (Campaign Against Ribble Valley's Extinction) which sent several petitions to the Commission.
- 11 The Commission also received a wide spectrum of views from national organisations with a particular interest in the issues raised by local government reorganisation. Almost unanimously, those advocating change recommended unitary authorities larger than the existing districts. However, there was also support for the existing two-tier structure. Each of the principal local authorities in Lancashire also made its views known to the Commission.
- 12 In addition to the letters referred to above the Commission received representations from people living in Merseyside and Greater Manchester who still consider themselves Lancastrian and who expressed a wish to see the reinstatement of the historic county.

## THE STRUCTURAL OPTIONS FOR LANCASHIRE

- 13 The Commission is required by section 13(5) (a) and (b) of the Local Government Act 1992 to have regard to the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government. The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance advises that proposals which are put forward by groups of authorities should be an important starting point for the Commission. The Policy Guidance also advises that, where such proposals demonstrate that a range of options have been considered, along with the implications for individual services, the Commission should give them particular weight. Accordingly, the Commission evaluated carefully the main options suggested by the existing local authorities. In doing so, however, it was mindful of the need to arrive at draft recommendations or alternative options which were viable, had been assessed against the existing two-tier structure, and which met the statutory criteria set out in section 13(5) of the 1992 Act.
- 14 Figure 1 below indicates the preferred options put forward by the existing authorities in Lancashire.

Figure 1

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES' PREFERENCES AT STAGE 1

Authority	First Preference	Second Preference	Third Preference
Lancashire County Council	No change	Three unitary authorities	—
Blackburn Borough Council	Unitary 'Wider' Blackburn and Hyndburn <sup>1</sup>	Unitary Blackburn on existing boundaries	Third - unitary 'wider' Blackburn Fourth - unitary Blackburn with Hyndburn
Blackpool Borough Council	Unitary Blackpool +	—	—
Burnley Borough Council	Unitary Burnley	Unitary Burnley and Pendle+	Unitary Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale
Chorley Borough Council	Unitary Chorley plus 'Greater Leyland' * <sup>2</sup>	—	—
Fylde Borough Council	Unitary Fylde and Wyre+	—	—
Hyndburn Borough Council	Unitary Hyndburn and Rossendale+	—	—
Lancaster City Council	Unitary Lancaster on existing boundaries	Unitary Lancaster plus part of Ribble Valley+	—
Pendle Borough Council	Unitary Pendle	—	—
Preston Borough Council	No change	Unitary merger of Preston, South Ribble, Chorley and part of Ribble Valley	Third - unitary Preston, South Ribble and part Ribble Valley Fourth - Preston, part South Ribble and part Ribble Valley <sup>#</sup>
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Unitary Ribble Valley in a seven unitary option <sup>3</sup>	—	—
Rossendale Borough Council	Unitary Rossendale	—	—
South Ribble Borough Council	Unitary South Ribble	No change	—
West Lancashire District Council	Equal weight given to no change and unitary West Lancashire	—	—
Wyre Borough Council	Unitary Fylde and Wyre+	—	—

Source: Local authority submissions

## Key

- + Denotes that this forms part of the Lancashire branch of the Association of District Councils (ADC) proposals (options A and B)
- \* Denotes that this forms part of the ADC option A (nine unitary authorities)
- # Denotes that this forms part of the ADC option B (eight unitary authorities)

## Notes

1. 'Wider' Blackburn includes the existing Borough area plus Samlesbury and Cuerdale parish from South Ribble Borough Council and nine parishes from Ribble Valley Borough Council.
2. 'Greater Leyland' consists of eleven wards in South Ribble Borough as set out in the ADC option A.
3. Ribble Valley also shortlisted (without clear rankings) Ribble Valley enhanced, Ribble Valley with Hyndburn, Ribble Valley with Wyre and Lancaster, and Ribble Valley and Craven (in North Yorkshire).

- 15 The Commission's draft recommendation report provided full details of its consideration of these structures, as well as other structures which were not championed by the local authorities.
- 16 Having considered all the evidence which had been submitted, and which it had itself collected, the Commission concluded that the statutory criteria would best be satisfied by replacing the existing structure of local government in Lancashire, and consulted on the following draft recommendation:

#### **DRAFT RECOMMENDATION (OPTION 1)**

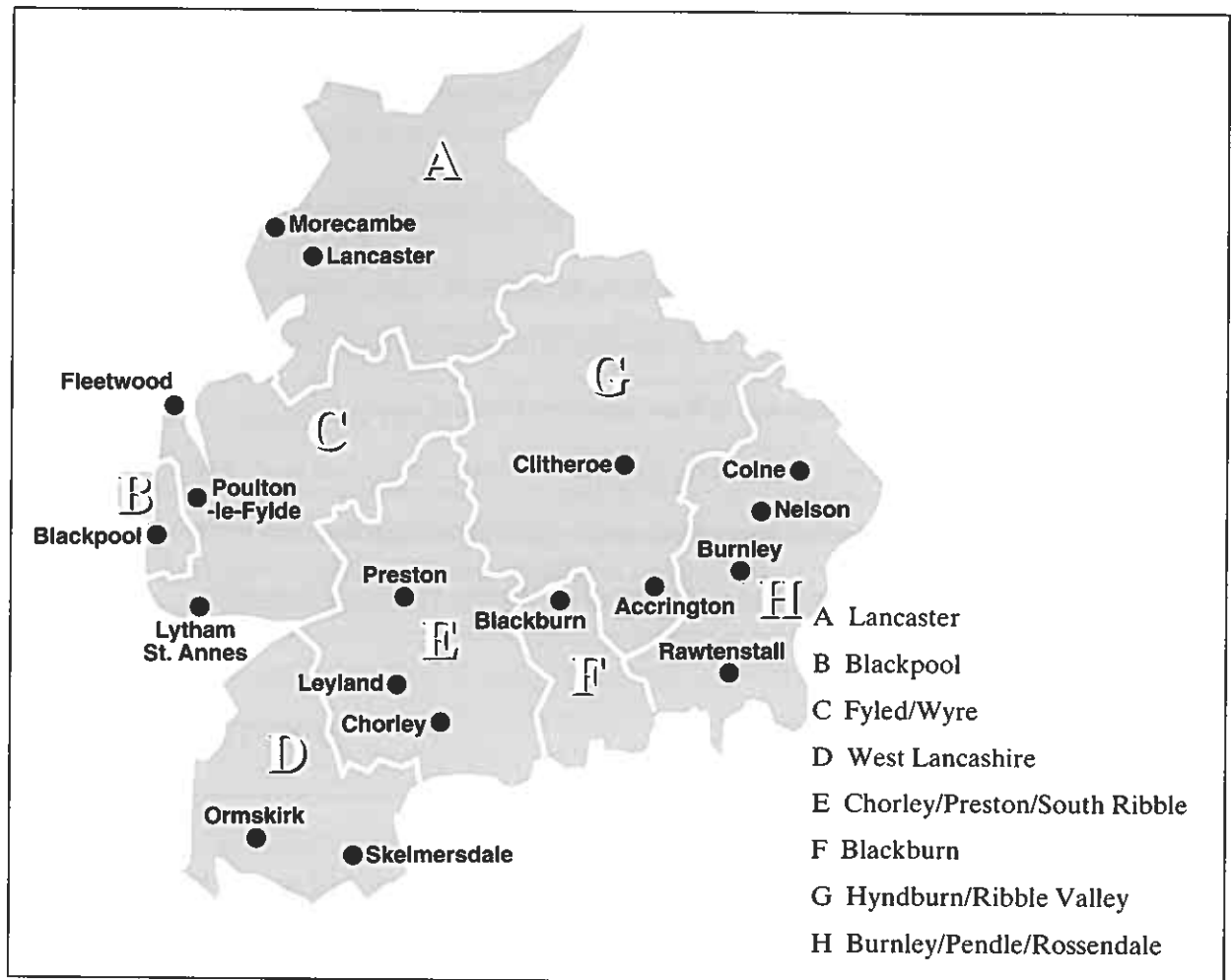
The existing two-tier structure of 15 councils should be replaced by eight unitary authorities, each responsible for the broad range of services now provided by the county and district councils.

There should be unitary authorities serving:

- (i) the present area of Lancaster City Council;
- (ii) the present area of Blackpool Borough Council;
- (iii) the present area of the boroughs of Fylde and Wyre;
- (iv) the present area of West Lancashire District Council;
- (v) the present area of the boroughs of Preston, South Ribble and Chorley;
- (vi) the present area of Blackburn Borough Council;
- (vii) the present area of the boroughs of Rossendale, Burnley and Pendle;
- (viii) the present area of the boroughs of Hyndburn and Ribble Valley.

- 17 Map 2 illustrates the Commission's draft recommendation for structural change.

Map 2: EIGHT UNITARY AUTHORITIES



- 18 On consideration, the Commission believed that there were two other viable alternative structures which might also meet the statutory criteria, either of which it would be prepared to recommend to the Secretary of State if new evidence justified this, including evidence about the level of local support: a structure of six unitary authorities, and the retention of the existing two-tier system. Accordingly, in addition to its draft recommendation, the Commission decided to consult the people of Lancashire on the two alternative structures.

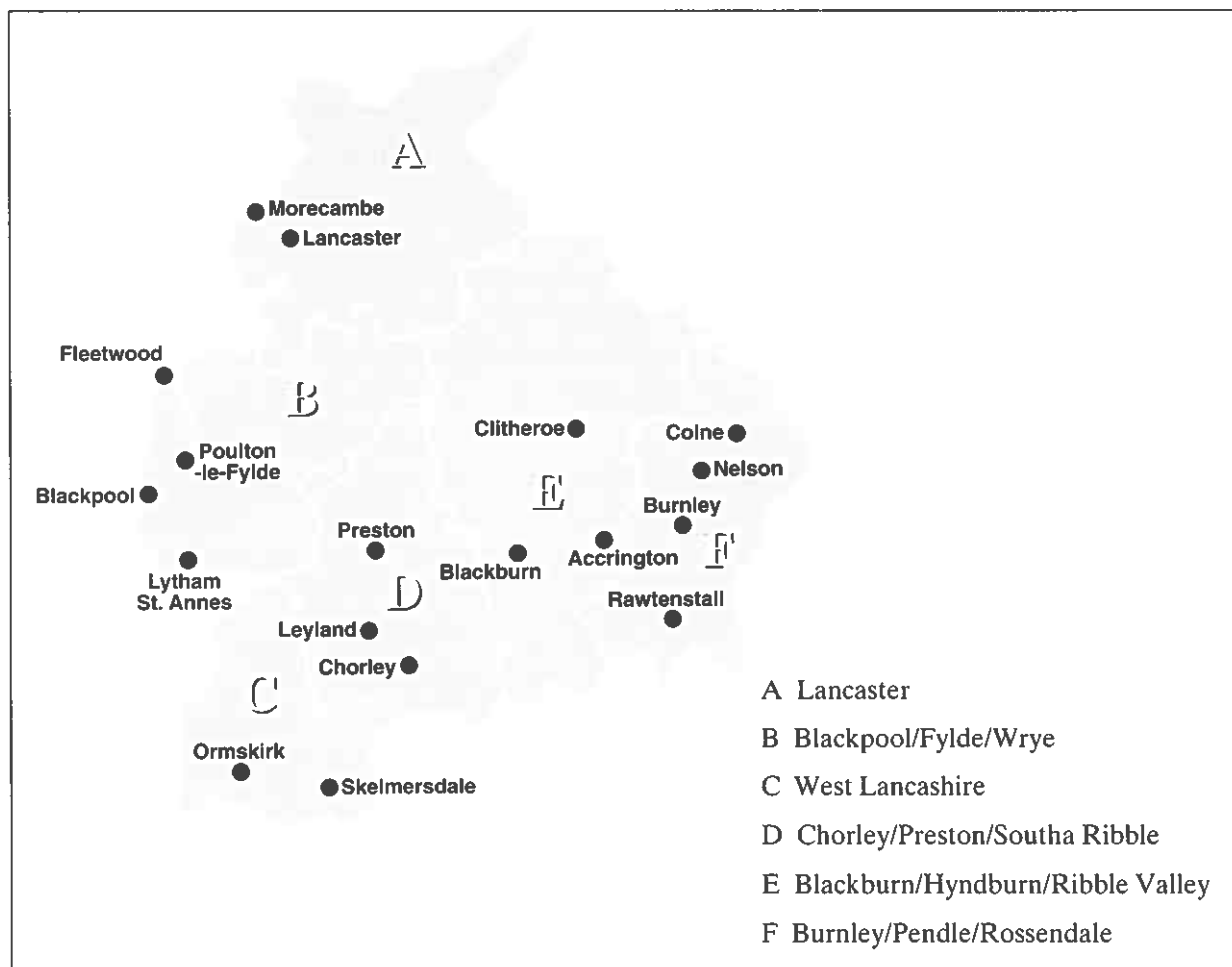
### ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE (OPTION 2)

The existing two-tier structure of 15 councils should be replaced by six unitary authorities, each responsible for the broad range of services now provided by the county and district councils.

There should be unitary authorities serving:

- (i) the present area of Lancaster City Council;
- (ii) the present area of the boroughs of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre;
- (iii) the present area of West Lancashire District Council;
- (iv) the present area of the boroughs of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble;
- (v) the present area of the boroughs of Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley;
- (vi) the present area of the boroughs of Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale.

Map 3: SIX UNITARY AUTHORITIES



### **ALTERNATIVE STRUCTURE (OPTION 3)**

There should be no change to the existing structure of fourteen district/borough councils and one county council.

The existing local government structure is as shown in Map 1.

- 19 The Commission noted an interest from local people in the first stage of the review for the retention of historic counties and therefore proposed the following recommendation.

### **DRAFT RECOMMENDATION**

The existing county of Lancashire should be retained for ceremonial and related purposes. The areas currently in Pendle and Ribble Valley which were formerly in Yorkshire should be returned to historic Yorkshire for ceremonial and related purposes.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

- 20 In addition to reviewing the structure of local authorities in Lancashire, the Commission is also required to consider the delivery of certain local authority services, to make recommendations about future electoral arrangements, and to take account of the role which parish and town councils could play in the review area. The Commission's consideration of these issues, and its draft recommendations in respect of them, are set out below.

### **PUBLIC PROTECTION (POLICE, FIRE AND OTHER SERVICES RELATED TO LAW AND ORDER)**

- 21 The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance to the Commission is explicit in requiring police and fire services to be carried out over an area no smaller than at present. Indeed, the Commission received no proposals suggesting that these services should cover any smaller an area. Accordingly, the Commission concluded that the police and fire services should continue to cover the present county area of Lancashire and that a combined authority should be established for each of these services on which representatives of the appropriate new councils should serve.

### **DRAFT RECOMMENDATION**

There should be combined authorities established in the present county area for the police and fire services, on which representatives of the new councils should serve. No changes are proposed to the probation and magistrates' courts services.

- 22 The same recommendation would be appropriate in a six unitary authority structure. If the existing two-tier structure were to be retained then there would be no change to the present arrangements.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

- 23 The Commission is invited by section 14 of the 1992 Act to consider whether unitary authorities should be empowered to prepare unitary development plans rather than, as at present, structure plans and local plans.
- 24 The Commission was concerned that strategic land use planning for Lancashire should not be undermined by changes to the structure of local government in the county. This matter is fully discussed in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*. As the present authorities recognised in their initial submissions to the Commission, there is a high level of interdependence between different parts of the county and this needs to be reflected in an appropriate planning structure. This indicated a need for a strategic approach to planning across the whole area of Lancashire, as at present.
- 25 Accordingly, the Commission made the following draft recommendation.

#### DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

For strategic planning the eight new authorities should assume joint responsibility for structure planning for the whole of their combined area. The new unitary authorities should also be mineral and waste planning authorities with strategic minerals and waste policies being included in the joint structure plan. Each authority should individually have responsibility for formulating detailed minerals and waste policies for its area in general conformity with the policy framework established by the structure plan, and should be authorised to include such policies in its local plans. Responsibility for local plans should rest with each of the new unitary authorities in their respective areas and they should also exercise development control functions for their areas for all purposes.

- 26 The Commission considered that this same recommendation would be appropriate for the alternative six unitary authority structure consulted on by the Commission. If the existing structure were preferred then there would be no change in the existing arrangements.

### OTHER SERVICES

- 27 The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance advises the Commission that, where it recommends unitary authorities, the aim should be to make the individual authorities responsible for all local government services. The exception is law and order services where necessary. The Guidance further advises the Commission that it should recommend shared arrangements for particular functions where a satisfactory structure is unlikely to be achieved without them. The Commission has had regard to these aspects of the Guidance in the conduct of its review of Lancashire.



- 28 From the information submitted during the initial stage of the review, the Commission was satisfied that the new unitary authorities of its draft recommendation and the alternative structures canvassed would command sufficient resources to carry out the other main local government services, whether directly or by 'contracting out' their provision either to other local authorities or to the private sector.
- 29 The Commission was also satisfied that the local authorities in the area would be in a position to put in place adequate structures for any shared arrangements necessary to function efficiently. It therefore made no draft recommendations in this respect. However, the Commission expressed its expectation that the new authorities should work closely together to ensure that specialist expertise would not be unnecessarily broken up. In particular, it was concerned that the existing levels of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of relatively small scale but important functions, such as trading standards, archive provision and emergency planning, would not be reduced by reorganisation.

#### ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 30 The Commission examined alternative means by which local democratic control and accountability could be secured within the new structure. The present electoral arrangements in Lancashire create an element of confusion in that some of the councils hold elections most years because they hold elections by thirds, whereas others have elections for the whole council every four years. In addition, accountability is blurred by the fact that some wards return either two or three councillors. The Commission generally supports the view of the Committee of Inquiry into the Conduct of Local Authority Business (1986) that there should be one councillor for every electoral ward, and that the whole council should be elected together once every four years.
- 31 The Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires* set out the Commission's view that the ratio of local residents to councillors should generally be around 1 to 4,000. This ratio is midway between the existing ratios for district and for county councils. It also reflects the Commission's wish to see a different role for councillors with more back-up made available to assist them in carrying out their demanding task. However, it is not a hard and fast rule and the Commission applies it sensitively, taking into account local custom and practice, the need to minimise disruption, and any special local needs, especially in very rural areas.
- 32 The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance states that the Commission should take account of local practice and that '*where a new authority covers the area of an existing county or district . . . the Commission should recommend that the wards or electoral divisions should be transferred to the new authority.*' The Commission also wished to minimise disruption by putting forward what were, in any event, only interim electoral arrangements.
- 33 On this basis, the Commission made the following draft recommendation for electoral change, which was set out in detail in its consultation report.

## DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Elections to the proposed eight new unitary authorities should be held every four years (except Blackburn and West Lancashire which should continue to have elections 'by thirds'). The initial number of councillors should be as set out below:

- (i) there should be no change to the electoral arrangements for Lancaster, Blackpool, Blackburn and West Lancashire which should continue to be served by 60, 44, 60 and 55 councillors respectively;
- (ii) there should be 59 councillors serving 22 wards for Fylde and Wyre based on existing or mergers of existing borough wards;
- (iii) there should be 93 councillors serving 38 wards for Chorley, Preston and South Ribble based on existing or mergers of existing borough wards;
- (iv) there should be 68 councillors serving 24 wards for Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale based on existing or mergers of existing borough wards; and
- (v) there should be 62 councillors serving 26 wards for Hyndburn and Ribble Valley based on existing or mergers of existing borough wards.

- 34 The Commission proposes to review electoral arrangements generally throughout England during the next five years, as part of a periodic electoral review it is required to undertake.

## LOCAL COUNCILS

- 35 The Commission considered that the structure of local government in Lancashire should build on the strong sense of identity with immediate neighbourhoods, as found by the MORI survey. It received a number of submissions suggesting how this might be achieved.
- 36 Since parish and town councils can be an important reflection of people's sense of identity within their community, the Commission believes that their role should be enhanced. This should include regular meetings with the principal local authorities, improved consultation on planning and highways issues and, where there is a demand from a local council, devolved management of local facilities such as sports grounds and libraries. Members of parish and town councils would also be well placed to help residents secure assistance or redress when faced with problems about local services. These proposals enlarge on existing practice, and reflect suggestions in many of the submissions to the Commission both nationally and locally.
- 37 The Commission does not envisage an increase in the statutory powers of parish and town councils, nor the establishment of another tier of local government. However, the Commission does see an important role for parish and town councils in empowering local communities. The Commission agreed with many of its respondents that a clear consultative framework should be established between principal local authorities and parish and town

councils. This framework, or 'local charter', could ensure that parish and town councils have rights to the following:

- (i) a clear statement of those matters affecting the local community upon which they will be consulted, with the areas for consultation being widely drawn;
- (ii) sufficient information from principal authorities about local matters on which local councils' views have been requested;
- (iii) the right to a written explanation from a principal authority if it does not accede to the views of the parish or town council, as it may legitimately decide;
- (iv) regular meetings between representatives of the principal authorities and the parish and town councils to discuss matters of common interest.

38 The Commission recognised that the enhanced role it proposes would require the creation of parish or, in the case of large towns or cities, neighbourhood councils for areas of the county that are currently unparished. At present Lancashire parishes represent 82 per cent of the land area but only 26 per cent of the population. Over one million people live in unparished areas. However, at the time the Commission published its draft recommendations, in spite of the evidence of strong local identity, this had not been translated into a direct and widespread demand for local councils in the unparished areas of the county.

39 With no evidence of strong local demand for the parishing of most areas of Lancashire, the Commission did not consult over specific parishing proposals. Nevertheless, it indicated that it would welcome comments about parishing from residents. Should it become evident that there was a demand for parishing generally, the Commission indicated that it would be prepared to recommend to the Secretary of State that it should be directed to undertake an electoral and boundary review, with a view to considering the parishing arrangements in the county.

#### **DRAFT RECOMMENDATION**

If there is clear local support for parishing areas in Lancashire which are not currently parished, the Secretary of State should be invited to direct the Commission to undertake a review in which the scope for further parishing can be considered.

In addition, there should be an enhanced consultative role for all town and parish councils.

Elections for parish and town councils should, wherever possible, be held at the same time as elections for the principal authorities.



### 3 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

- 40 In response to its draft recommendation report, the Commission received over 77,000 written representations from residents, local authorities, Members of Parliament and public and private sector organisations. These included individual letters, proforma letters, petitions and returns of questionnaires. This represents 5 per cent of the population of Lancashire, although some residents may have written to the Commission and also signed a petition. The Commission is most grateful to all who took the trouble to give their views on the future structure of local government in Lancashire.
- 41 All these representations, irrespective of their source or nature, have been carefully considered by the Commission and have been taken into account by it in reaching its final recommendations. As required by the Secretary of State's Procedure Guidance, a list of respondents is available on request from the Commission and all representations may be inspected at the Commission's offices.

#### LOCAL RESIDENTS

- 42 Residents of Lancashire expressed their views on the Commission's draft recommendations either directly to the Commission or through local authorities, Members of Parliament or others. They also made their views known through a survey of public opinion conducted on the Commission's behalf by Market & Opinion Research International (MORI).
- 43 The Commission's public consultation exercise was unprecedented in local government terms. To ensure that the Commission received as wide a variety of views as possible, it sought the views of residents by means of a leaflet, with detachable questionnaire, delivered by the Royal Mail to households throughout the county. This was an ambitious task and some difficulties were experienced in ensuring that each household received a copy of the leaflet. These were remedied using a variety of methods to ensure that the residents of Lancashire were aware of the Commission's draft recommendations and how to comment on them. The Commission is satisfied that all residents of Lancashire have had the opportunity to make their views known.
- 44 Nevertheless, the Commission recognises that the results of the leaflet exercise can give only a broad indication of the views of the public, some of whom may have been influenced, in some cases, by the publicity of the existing authorities and other bodies.

#### RESPONSES DIRECT TO THE COMMISSION

- 45 Over 675,000 leaflet questionnaires outlining the Commission's draft recommendations and alternative structural options were distributed to residents of the county, of which some 40,000 were completed and returned to the Commission, representing 6 per cent of those distributed. Over 4,200 individual letters were received, of which around 4,000 were from within the county area.

- 46 NOP was commissioned to tabulate responses on behalf of the Commission, and these tabulations were published shortly after the conclusion of the consultation period. Copies may be obtained from NOP at Tower House, Southampton Street, London WC2E 7HN, price £5.00.
- 47 Figures 2 and 3 below summarise the views expressed direct to the Commission either in individual letters or through the household questionnaires. They do not include the views of those who submitted proforma letters or who signed or submitted petitions; these are summarised separately.

Figure 2

IEWS ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE: AN OVERVIEW

Structure	Percentage of respondents
No change	60
Eight unitary authorities	22
Six unitary authorities	6
Unitary district in own district	4
Other (including multiple choice)	8
Total (number)	(n=70,076)

Source: NOP analysis, September 1994

Figure 3

IEWS ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE: DISTRICT LEVEL ANALYSIS

	Eight unitary authorities	Six unitary authorities	No change	Unitary district in respondent's district	No preference/ Other	TOTAL
Blackburn	38%	13%	44%	*	5%	3,647
Blackpool	49%	14%	35%	*	2%	6,071
Burnley	32%	14%	46%	1%	7%	2,628
Chorley	3%	4%	63%	1%	29%	6,033
Fylde	36%	6%	54%	*	4%	4,221
Hyndburn	43%	3%	49%	*	5%	3,922
Lancaster	31%	9%	57%	*	3%	4,279
Pendle	7%	4%	63%	1%	25%	5,100
Preston	12%	8%	78%	*	2%	4,770
Ribble Valley	12%	2%	56%	21%	9%	4,836
Rossendale	7%	4%	77%	5%	7%	3,370
South Ribble	3%	3%	75%	12%	7%	10,515
West Lancashire	24%	9%	65%	*	2%	3,635
Wyre	35%	4%	57%	*	4%	6,330
County total	22%	6%	60%	4%	8%	69,357
	(15,129)	(4,388)	(41,423)	(2,646)	(5,771)	
Out of county	13%	5%	51%	—	31%	719

Source: NOP analysis, September 1994

Notes:

- 1 In a number of responses, particularly questionnaire responses, residents did not express a preference for a single option; these the Commission classified as multiple choice returns. These included 388 (1 per cent) who selected option 3, plus unitary district. No other multiple choice was significant.
- 2 One per cent of other respondents did not specify any option; the remaining respondents classified as 'other' expressed support for a wide range of alternative structures.
- 3 719 responses were received from outside the county area; of these, 12 per cent expressed no structural preference.
- 4 These tables include all respondent types, including individuals, businesses, local groups and parish councils.

- 48 It is evident that there is strong support for no change and minimal support for unitary districts. In particular, figure 3 shows that, with the exception of Blackpool, no change was the most popular choice in each districts—and it was supported by over 50 per cent of respondents in every district except Blackpool (35 per cent), Blackburn (44 per cent), Burnley (46 per cent) and Hyndburn (49 per cent).
- 49 The other main points to emerge are:
- (i) Support for the option of eight unitary authorities was only 22 per cent across the county.
  - (ii) The overall support for the six unitary authority alternative was only 6 per cent.
  - (iii) In some areas (Burnley, Chorley, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Rossendale, South Ribble, and West Lancashire) the same unitary authority is proposed in both Options 1 and 2. Such combinations should always be treated with caution, as it may be that respondents' preferences are at least partly based on what would happen outside the district in which they live. However, if the support for Option 1 and 2 is added in these areas, no change remains the more popular option in all cases, except Burnley, where both were 46 per cent.
  - (iv) Other options attracting support from more than 5 per cent of the respondents in a particular district are:
    - 20 per cent from Chorley were in favour of some kind of merger of Chorley and Leyland.
    - 17 per cent of Pendle respondents supported a merger of Pendle (or the West Craven part of it) with Craven District in North Yorkshire.
    - Unitary districts in their own district were supported by 21 per cent of Ribble Valley respondents, 12 per cent from South Ribble, and 5 per cent from Rossendale.
- 50 Approximately 1,600 proforma letters were received in support of no change. Petitions totalling over 4,400 signatures were forwarded. These petitions included one collected in Chorley representing 3,400 signatures in support of a unitary authority based on Chorley and Leyland. Two petitions totalling almost 1,000 called for the retention of South Ribble Borough Council and opposed a central Lancashire unitary authority.
- 51 Other types of response submitted to the Commission included questionnaires from consultation exercises carried out by other bodies. These included 560 responses from a 'West Lancashire First' campaign which supported the Commission's first option, and over 1,000 from a campaign which supported a unitary Rossendale authority. The majority of the rest, including 562 pre-printed postcards forwarded by teachers, supported no change.
- 52 The Commission has paid close attention to all the views expressed during the consultation programme. However, it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions about the attitudes of local residents from this part of the consultation exercise alone as respondents may not be representative of residents as a whole. The same issue of representativeness applies to local

authorities' and other groups' consultation programmes. Some of the local authorities prepared leaflets setting out their views. The Commission was also made aware of other media campaigns undertaken by some local authorities and by pressure groups.

## MORI SURVEY

- 53 In order to obtain a representative indication of residents' attitudes towards change, the Commission engaged MORI to undertake an independent survey of a representative sample of residents.
- 54 Those interviewed were shown a copy of the Commission's household leaflet (with text indicating the Commission's recommendations being deleted) and were asked about each of the options for structural change. They were also given an opportunity to suggest other options.
- 55 All respondents were asked two questions about their preferences: first, they were asked to select one of the Commission's options; second, they were asked if there were any other options that they would prefer.
- 56 By taking account of people's response to both questions a succinct summary can be prepared which best reflects people's views and preferences.
- 57 The methodology is as follows:
  - (i) those who selected one of the Commission's options as their first preference with the prompted list, and then went on to say that they did not have any other preference when offered an open choice, are described as firm supporters of that option;
  - (ii) those who, having given their preference for one of the Commission's options, then went on to say there was actually another structure that they would prefer are re-allocated to take account of this information;
  - (iii) there are also those who expressed no view or preference at both the Commission's options question and the unprompted open choice question. These people remain categorised as 'don't know'.
- 58 Figure 4 below sets out the results of this analysis across the county and within individual districts.



Figure 4

## SUMMARY OF RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES ON STRUCTURAL OPTIONS — 'FIRM SUPPORT'

Authority	Percentage of respondents				
	Eight unitary authorities	Six unitary authorities	Status quo/ no need to change	Other	Don't know/ no opinion
Blackburn	15	19	33	13	20
Blackpool	20	14	30	4	32
Burnley	6	11	44	10	29
Chorley	5	9	53	10	23
Fylde	13	11	50	4	22
Hyndburn	16	9	58	7	10
Lancaster	9	8	43	11	29
Pendle	5	7	60	16	12
Preston	7	14	51	4	24
Ribble Valley	5	3	63	14	15
Rossendale	4	6	61	14	15
South Ribble	6	5	70	6	13
West Lancashire	11	6	52	7	24
Wyre	11	7	53	9	20
Overall County average	10	10	49	9	22

Source: MORI, September 1994

- 59 The results show that about half of the respondents in the MORI survey support no change, compared with 60 per cent of the representations submitted direct to the Commission.
- 60 The other main features of the survey were:-
- (i) in all districts Option 3 or no change was the most popular option;
  - (ii) support for the present system, though still the most popular option, was less pronounced in Blackpool and Blackburn (at 30 per cent and 33 per cent respectively compared with a county average of 49 per cent);
  - (iii) overall, support for the Commission's two unitary alternatives was low — each at 10 per cent.
- 61 A summary of the MORI survey findings is given at Appendix B. A copy of the full tabulations may be obtained direct from MORI, 32 Old Queen St, London SW1H 9HP, price £10.00.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

- 62 Figure 5 summarises the views of the Lancashire local authorities at the end of the consultation exercise, as the Commission understands them.

Figure 5  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES' PREFERENCES

Authority	Preference
Lancashire County Council	No change
Blackburn Borough Council	Unitary Blackburn
Blackpool Borough Council	Unitary Blackpool
Burnley Borough Council	Supports eight unitary authority option
Chorley Borough Council	Supports a nine unitary authority option similar to the Commission's first option, but with a Chorley/Leyland unitary authority
Fylde Borough Council	Supports eight unitary authority option including a merger of Fylde and Wyre
Hyndburn Borough Council	Merger of Hyndburn and Rossendale
Lancaster City Council	Supports eight unitary authority option with a unitary Lancaster
Pendle Borough Council	No change
Preston Borough Council	No change
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Unitary Ribble Valley
Rossendale Borough Council	No change
South Ribble Borough Council	No change
West Lancashire District Council	No change
Wyre Borough Council	Supports eight unitary authority option including a merger of Fylde and Wyre

Source: Local authority Stage 3 submissions

- 63 Although Fylde and Wyre Borough Councils are both committed to a merger, the other proposed unitary authorities based on mergers have proved unpopular, with only Burnley Borough Council prepared to accept a unitary authority based on Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale.
- 64 Although at Stage 1 Pendle Borough Council, Rossendale Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council supported unitary status on borough boundaries, in Stage 3 they rejected the unitary structures put forward by the Commission and supported Option 3 (no change). The county council and other district councils maintained their original positions, although West Lancashire District Council's final clear preference was for no change.

## OTHER CONSULTEES

- 65 The majority of Lancashire Members of Parliament have expressed their views to the Commission. Seven Members of Parliament have indicated support for the Commission's preferred option of eight unitary authorities, two wish to see unitary districts for the areas they represent, one supports a merger of Chorley and South Ribble, while one supports no change.
- 66 Businesses and representative business groups also let the Commission know their views. The CBI (North West Region) stated that they could support a six unitary authority option. There were about 60 responses from businesses or business groups and of these around half supported no change.

- 67 Local Chambers of Commerce circulated a copy of the Commission's consultation leaflet to their members and have provided a summary of the results of their survey. This indicates that there were 445 responses, with views being split fairly evenly between the three options put forward for consultation by the Commission. In central and west Lancashire 'no change' was more popular, while in east Lancashire there was greater support for Option 1.

Figure 6

RESPONSE TO SURVEY OF MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Chamber	Option 1 Eight unitary authorities	Option 2 Six unitary authorities	Option 3 No change	Other	Total (number)
Central and West Lancs	18%	34%	43%	5%	248
East Lancashire	54%	35%	11%	—	197
Overall	34%	35%	28%	3%	445

Source: Chambers of Commerce submissions

- 68 There was a strong education lobby opposed to any change to the local government structure in Lancashire. This included proforma responses from teachers, plus approximately 200 letters from governing bodies, professional organisations and the churches.
- 69 The Commission heard from more than 100 of the 195 town and parish Councils in Lancashire: over half of these wished to see no change.
- 70 Morecambe Bay Health Authority indicated that any of the three options would be acceptable, while South Lancashire Health Authority wanted either a coterminous unitary authority or no change. The North West Lancashire Health Authority's Director of Public Health preferred no change. The Family Health Service Authority covering the county did not express a structural preference but wanted 'the best possible fit' with the NHS structure.
- 71 Voluntary and local groups who wrote during Stage 3 expressed fears about the impact of change on their client groups, and also on their own organisation's funding. The majority of voluntary groups wished to see no change to the existing arrangements.
- 72 The public sector unions also indicated that they do not believe that the case for change has been made. UNISON carried out its own campaigning activity promoting no change. The union forwarded to the Commission 640 representations in support of this view. The regional council of the TUC also preferred the existing two-tier structure.
- 73 In general, statutory consultees at a national level have restricted their views to the overall issues, such as whether they agree with the unitary principle, and if so what size unitary authorities should be, or else they have set out general concerns about service delivery. Generally, these consultees have suggested that some services need to be organised at county level, as they are now.

- 74 Several consultees — both at national and at a local level — wrote expressing concern about the archives service. The National Council on Archives' view was shared by many:

*The reservations felt by the National Council on Archives from the outset of the review about the future of county archive services if a county-wide authority should no longer exist have not been alleviated.*

- 75 Other services which concerned particular statutory consultees included the library service, arts, museums and heritage co-ordination, the Sites and Monuments Records, and archaeological services. In many cases the statutory consultees believe that the level of service enjoyed in the present system would be forfeited in a unitary structure.

## 4 THE COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS

- 76 The Commission has reassessed its draft recommendations in the light of all the representations received during the consultation period, and the results of the MORI opinion survey which was undertaken during that period.
- 77 Any recommendations for change which the Commission may make must satisfy the statutory criteria given in section 13(5)(a) and (b) of the 1992 Act. This stipulates that its recommendations must have regard to the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities and to secure effective and convenient local government. This means striking a balance between the two criteria to ensure that one is not satisfied at the expense of the other.
- 78 Accordingly, in reaching its final conclusions on the future structure of local government in Lancashire, the Commission has had to exercise a degree of judgement in order to conform to the statutory criteria and to the Secretary of State's Policy Guidance (in particular the issues of identity, accessibility, responsiveness and democracy). In doing so, it has considered and weighed both the evidence which has been submitted, much of it conflicting, and that it has itself collected.
- 79 In order to determine whether there was still a case for structural change in Lancashire, the Commission reviewed those criteria in the light of the responses received during the consultation period.

### THE IDENTITIES AND INTERESTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

- 80 The MORI survey on community identity, summarised in appendix A, was carried out on behalf of the 14 Lancashire district councils. It helped the Commission to assess patterns of community identity and interests, and indicated the strength of personal affiliation with various divisions of local government.
- 81 In Lancashire, community identity is generally strongest in respect of the local neighbourhood or village, followed by the home town or nearest town, district/borough council area and the county council area. A similar pattern of association was found in other English counties.
- 82 The main points which emerged were that:
- (i) Affiliation to the county council area was higher than to the district/borough council area in Blackburn, Lancaster and South Ribble, although in Blackburn affiliation to the nearest town was markedly higher than average.
  - (ii) There was a 'strong or very strong' affiliation to the borough council area in Ribble Valley (84 per cent) and Rossendale (81 per cent).
  - (iii) The feeling of belonging to the nearest town was generally stronger than the affiliation with the borough/district council. The exceptions were Fylde, Pendle, Ribble Valley, South Ribble and West Lancashire.

- (iv) Blackburn provoked negative feelings from 20 per cent of respondents in Hyndburn and from 19 per cent of respondents in Ribble Valley.
  - (v) Thirty-five per cent of respondents in Fylde and 20 per cent in Wyre cited Blackpool when asked to name an area towards which they had negative feelings.
- 83 While the Commission has clear evidence of community identity and interests in the review area it is not possible to create a local government structure which reflects all the indicators of community identity and interests. These have had to be weighed in the balance with a number of other factors.

## EFFECTIVE AND CONVENIENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- 84 As already mentioned, the Commission received a number of representations on its draft recommendations in relation to particular services. The Commission agrees with those which place considerable store on, for example, local government's responsibilities for care in the community. The Commission believes it to be highly important that any new structure should facilitate effective working relationships between social services departments, housing departments and health authorities. Care in the community and the Government's 'Health of the Nation' initiative, as well as crime prevention and measures to overcome social alienation, require active co-operation between district services (housing, environmental health, leisure, recreation, local planning, etc) and county services (social services, education, strategic planning, police, highways and transportation, etc).
- 85 Crucially, the co-operation and active involvement of other public bodies (the health trusts and health authorities, the training and enterprise councils, etc), the churches, voluntary organisations and the business community must also be engaged. The integration of such a wide range of interests within a single organisation would be quite impracticable, nor is it likely that each interest could be organised on common boundaries. Nevertheless, the integration of local government services — county and district — into a single authority serving areas of reasonable cohesion and community would make it easier for non local government interests to co-operate and, in the Commission's view, offers the prospect of major benefits.
- 86 Although major changes to the education service have taken place, it remains a key concern of the public and of local government. Again, the more that the major education institutions, the business community, the training and enterprise councils and other organisations are able to relate conveniently with one another, the greater is the prospect that there will be successful co-operation in the interests of the community's well-being.
- 87 However, some consultees feared the impact of fragmentation of a county-wide service. This point was made by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Lancaster:
- The variety of expertise and advice currently available to the schools for curriculums support needs to be safeguarded. Over seven hundred schools benefit from this service. Unitary Authorities would have extreme difficulty in maintaining existing services and specialised services — e.g. nursery and Rising Fives Admissions to primary schools as they currently exist in Lancashire, because these services are not funded under the Standard Spending assessments.*

- 88 The Commission also received representations in relation to statutory land-use planning functions. In its consultation report, the Commission recommended that, under a structure of eight or six new unitary authorities in Lancashire, each authority should assume joint responsibility for structure planning for the county area as a whole, and that each authority should be responsible individually for the preparation of local plans for its own area. All of the representations which commented on planning and related issues stressed the advantages of retaining a two-tier planning system across the county area as a whole. Consultees, such as British Aggregate Construction Materials Industries (BACMI), which represents some of the major employers in the county, and the Freight Transport Association, were pessimistic about the viability of voluntary joint arrangements for strategic functions in the county.
- 89 The Commission believes that the structure of local government should allow voluntary organisations to continue to play a full part in providing local services. Voluntary organisations are not only important service providers, but also help develop strong, active and involved communities. Although environmental initiatives associated with the Government's White Paper *This Common Inheritance*—such as coastal zone management, woodland management, ecology projects and the county's Green Audit—should benefit if all local government responsibilities were effected by a single tier, many consultees were concerned that initiatives being undertaken by the county council would be jeopardised in any reorganisation, particularly where activities were not statutory and where they were dependent upon a small number of experts.
- 90 In relation to other services — for example, libraries, archives, museums and other heritage services — representations have pointed to the need to retain county-wide services, if possible without joint arrangements, and to maintain the integrity of records and collections. Indeed several consultees were pessimistic about the likely success of voluntary joint arrangements, in view of their perception of earlier reorganisations. The Library Association expressed concern about the costs of disaggregation, as well as the loss of economies of scale, while the North Western Regional Library System felt that the impact of disaggregating Lancashire County Council's book stock would lead to both duplication and a narrower range of publications.
- 91 Although the Commission is satisfied that the existing authorities are aware of the need to make appropriate provision for the effective management of such services, and that they would co-operate in establishing the necessary mechanisms — lead authority arrangements or consortia agreements — without the need for a formal recommendation by the Commission, this view is not shared by the majority of respondents.
- 92 The creation of unitary authorities of a sufficiently large size in population terms offers the prospect that local government will be able to command resources sufficient to accomplish the task of effective liaison with other organisations. Some respondents, however, expressed the view that structural change to larger unitary authorities would cause remoteness, especially where rural communities were merged with predominantly urban areas. However, the Commission is of the view that convenient services do not necessarily depend on small

scale local government structures. Of more importance is the organisation of services and the means of access to them. With the effective devolution of management responsibilities to the community level, and an enhanced representational and consultative role for parish and town councils, the Commission considers that unitary authorities will be in a position to ensure reasonable access to, and efficiency of, services to the public.

- 93 Concerns have also been expressed that the proposed reduction in the number of councillors which would result from restructuring would place a greater burden on councillors' workload and their capacity to fulfil their functions effectively. It is worth noting that, where unitary authorities replace the two-tier structure, there will be more, not fewer, councillors available to the public for the present county services, which represent three-quarters of local government expenditure and include major services like education. The Commission believes that more streamlined management and the introduction of an improved support network for councillors can contribute to easing councillors' workload. The councillor to elector ratios—1 councillor to approximately 2,200 electors—detailed in the Commission's draft recommendation report are consistent with its view that while, in general, one councillor should represent around 4,000 residents (equivalent to 1 to 3,000 electors) lower ratios are appropriate in sparsely populated rural areas.
- 94 Some of the organisations writing during the consultation period have been keen to point out that their preference for the existing arrangements should not be equated with no improvement in local government services. They expect to see an improvement in the standard of service and new initiatives for dealing with the needs of the community. The Commission has been assured by many in local government that improvements could be made to the existing two-tier structure. In other words, many of the potential benefits associated with a unitary structure — avoiding duplication, co-ordinating resources, securing effective partnerships, improving consultation and establishing 'one-stop shops' — could be achieved in the existing structure.

## COSTS AND SAVINGS

- 95 The Commission is required to consider the change in overhead costs which may result from changes in the structure of local government. This is not a straightforward matter and the issues concerned are discussed more fully in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires*.
- 96 Figure 7 below shows existing local government indirect expenditure (administrative overheads), based upon financial material provided by the local authorities in Lancashire. The Secretary of State's Policy Guidance requires the Commission to look only at indirect expenditure since the level of direct service provision is largely independent of local government structure. Indirect expenditure typically represents only some 10 per cent of total local government spending.



Figure 7

ESTIMATE OF EXISTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT INDIRECT SPENDING

	£ million
Staff costs (including associated overheads)	116
Accommodation	5
Information technology	26
Costs of democracy (members allowances etc)	2
Total of existing indirect expenditure	149

Source: Local Government Commission

- 97 Figure 8 below shows the Commission's estimates of annual savings and transitional costs of each of the structural options detailed in its draft recommendation report.

Figure 8

COMPARISON OF THE INDIRECT COSTS OF EACH OF THE UNITARY STRUCTURAL OPTIONS AGAINST EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS

Option	Annual savings/ costs	Transitional costs	Payback period
Eight unitary authorities	From £1m to £8m saving	From £21m to £28m	Under 3 years to 28 years
Six unitary authorities	From £9m to £16m saving	From £22m to £29m	Under 2 years to over 3 years

Source: Local Government Commission

Note:

The transitional costs for the six unitary authority option have been increased by £1 million since the consultation report following a review of the information technology requirements. The payback period is unchanged.

- 98 The county and district councils in Lancashire provided the Commission with their own estimates of the financial consequences of a range of structural alternatives. However, in order to secure a consistent approach the Commission has applied the financial methodology developed by the Commission and its consultants, Ernst & Young, and which was published in December 1993, to produce the estimates of costs and savings set out in figure 8. These estimates differed from those provided by the local authorities. They are expressed as a range in order to reflect the broad nature of the estimates and assumptions involved.
- 99 Retention of the existing structure of one county council and 14 district councils, while producing no annual savings or costs, would also result in no transitional costs.
- 100 The County Council have communicated to the Commission reservations about the application of the financial model in the review area. They believe that the judgements made by the Commission have led to a potential overstatement of savings in administrative expenditure. The Commission has considered these arguments and has concluded that, were they to be accepted, the figures would still fall within the ranges set out above.

- 101 The detailed figures on which the Commission's estimates are based have been published separately. Copies have been sent to the Secretary of State and to the principal authorities in the review area. Additional copies are available from the Commission on request.

## CONCLUSION

- 102 Having reviewed all the evidence before it against the statutory and other criteria, the Commission has to conclude whether the case for change to the structure of local government in Lancashire has been made.

## THE CASE FOR CHANGE

- 103 Any structure which involved unitary authorities based on areas smaller than the existing county would require some form of joint arrangements. However, the Commission concluded that either the eight or the six unitary authority structure put forward for consultation would nevertheless lead to authorities which had adequate resources to deliver local government services to the current standard at least. The Commission's view remains that the potential benefits associated with having one unit of local government to deal with related services, such as housing and social services, could be achieved in either of the unitary structures which it considered viable in its consultation report. Partnerships would also benefit from authorities nesting within the boundaries of key partners, such as the training and enterprise councils and health authorities.
- 104 However, in contrast, most statutory consultees have expressed strong reservations about the ability of either of the two proposed unitary structures to provide effective and convenient local government services. There have been fears about the fragmentation of specialist services and the proliferation of non-elected boards. Consultees were generally sceptical that the unitary authorities would provide accessible and responsive local government in practice.
- 105 The Commission's financial estimates indicate that modest annual savings in indirect expenditure could be achieved in each unitary structure once transitional costs had been incurred.
- 106 The Commission put forward interim electoral arrangements for each unitary structure which resulted in a ratio of approximately 1 councillor to 2,200 electors, a lower ratio than that generally recommended elsewhere by the Commission. As already noted, some respondents believed that the proposed electoral arrangements would lead to a diminution in democratic representation.
- 107 On the basis of the evidence then available, the Commission's consultation report concluded that its proposed authorities would better reflect the community of interest which was displayed in people's behavioural patterns for shopping, work and leisure. However, in respect of the larger authorities based on Blackpool and Blackburn in option 2, there was an acknowledged degree of tension between the needs of the urban centres and their surrounding rural hinterlands.

- 108 However, the direct response to the Commission indicated that the unitary options were unpopular with residents throughout the county. This was confirmed by the MORI survey.
- 109 On balance, the evidence suggests that the Commission should recommend no change to the existing structure. However, this could be modified in respect of those parts of the county where local people and other interest groups do appear to accept the unitary authority proposed by the Commission as part of its draft recommendations. Such appears to be the case in Blackpool, and the Commission has considered whether to recommend unitary status for the Borough as part of a modified two-tier structure.
- 110 The Commission concluded in its consultation report that a unitary Blackpool authority (population 152,100) would be capable of providing the full range of local government services to the present standard, either directly or by buying in services.
- 111 Blackpool was a county borough on its existing boundaries from 1904 to 1974. It is densely populated (43.5 persons per hectare compared to a county average of 4.6) which is a strong contrast to its more rural neighbours. Although Blackpool's travel-to-work area extends into neighbouring boroughs, it is largely self contained for work, shopping and leisure. Its illuminations, pleasure beach, tower and conference facilities attract 17 million visitors a year, making it the most visited resort in Britain. This is vital to the economy, with 80 per cent of all jobs based in the service sector. Although there is tourism elsewhere on the Fylde coast, it is on a completely different scale in Blackpool.
- 112 A relatively high proportion (49 per cent) of those Blackpool residents responding directly to the Commission wished to see a unitary Blackpool. However, unitary status on 'firm preferences' is supported by only 20 per cent of respondents in the MORI survey compared with 30 per cent who preferred no change.
- 113 The view of businesses/business groups generally, as shown in the Chamber of Commerce survey, is split between the three options put forward by the Commission. Other consultees have tended not to make comments relating to specific districts. However, they have expressed concerns about the loss of county-wide expertise and the fragmentation of services. There are fears about the ability of a unitary authority of this size to provide a strategic approach to planning, transportation and economic development.
- 114 County services are currently organised on areas smaller than the county and there are area offices in Blackpool for education (including an educational psychologist unit), the library service, adult social services, and a purchasing team for social services. The creation of a unitary authority based on Blackpool would nevertheless cause disruption to county services.
- 115 The Commission has considered the financial implications of a unitary Blackpool with the rest of the county remaining two tier. It estimates that there would be transitional costs of £2 million to £4 million, and that the annual indirect expenditure across the county would increase by up to £2 million. In effect, there would be a continuing cost attached to such a change.

- 116 Having carefully balanced the available evidence, and notwithstanding the support for the unitary principle from the residents of Blackpool, the Commission has concluded that, in the light of concerns expressed about the fragmentation of county services and the ongoing cost of such a structure, it cannot recommend a unitary authority based on Blackpool whilst recommending no change in the rest of the county.
- 117 There are no other unitary authorities which were proposed within the Commission's consultation report, which the Commission feels would attract sufficient local support to make them viable within a modified two-tier system.

#### RETENTION OF THE EXISTING STRUCTURE

- 118 The Commission found no groundswell of opinion anywhere in the county area that local government in Lancashire was in need of reform: indeed there was generally strong — in some areas overwhelming — support for the existing two-tier structure, as evidenced in both the NOP analysis of direct responses and in the MORI survey of public opinion. The local reaction to the draft recommendations cannot be dismissed lightly by the Commission, since there must be grave doubts about the robustness of any structure which does not command sufficient support of local government's clients and partners.
- 119 Retention of the present structure would forego the potential benefits of a unitary system of local government. However, as the County Council and others have indicated, many of these benefits could be achieved through improvements to the existing two-tier system, particularly by involving parish and town councils and by harnessing the potential of information technology and telecommunications.
- 120 There would be no savings in annual indirect costs, but equally no transitional costs would be incurred.
- 121 In the Commission's view, structural change would not adequately address the issues of identity, accessibility, responsiveness and democracy to which it has had regard in the conduct of this review. Having weighed up the evidence, including the response to the consultation report, the Commission has concluded that there should be no change to the existing two tier structure in Lancashire.
- 122 In the following chapter the Commission sets out its final recommendations to the Secretary of State.

## 5 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- 123 The final recommendations set out below reflect the views set out in the Commission's report *Renewing Local Government in the English Shires* as well as the responses to the Commission's consultations. The first section of the chapter addresses the structure of local government in Lancashire; the second relates to the other matters on which the Commission consulted.

### THE STRUCTURE

- 124 Having reviewed the evidence before it against the statutory and other criteria, including the public response to consultation, the Commission has concluded that there should be no change to the existing two-tier structure of local government in Lancashire.

#### FINAL RECOMMENDATION 1

There should be no change to the existing two-tier structure of one county council and 14 district councils in Lancashire.

- 125 The Commission's consultation report noted that there was an interest from local people in the restoration of historic counties, in particular from parts of Pendle and Ribble Valley that are in 'historic' Yorkshire. That interest was again noted during the consultation period, but given that no structural changes are proposed in Lancashire the Commission recommends that there should be no change at present to the arrangements for ceremonial and related issues. It considers, however, that the Secretary of State may wish to look carefully at this issue in the light of local opinion.

#### FINAL RECOMMENDATION 2

There should be no change to the present arrangements for ceremonial and related issues in Lancashire.

### OTHER MATTERS

- 126 In addition to looking at the structure of local government in Lancashire, the Commission is also required to examine the position of certain services, to make recommendations about future electoral arrangements and to take account of the part that town and parish councils could play in each area it reviews. In view of the recommendation that there should be no change to the structure of local government in Lancashire, no recommendations are made about services such as public protection and land-use planning.

## ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

- 127 The Commission proposes to review electoral arrangements generally throughout England during the next five years. In Lancashire, that review will be able to look further at the local authority electoral arrangements. In the meantime, the Commission does not propose any changes to the electoral and warding arrangements of the existing authorities.

## LOCAL COUNCILS

- 128 Since parish and town councils can be an important reflection of a sense of identity within their community, the Commission believes that their role should be enhanced, whether or not there is a change to a unitary structure. This should include regular meetings with the principal local authorities, improved consultation on planning and highways issues and — where there is a demand from a local council — devolved management of local facilities, such as sports grounds and libraries. Members of parish and town councils would also be well placed to help residents secure assistance or redress when faced with problems about local services. These proposals enlarge on existing practice, and reflect suggestions in many of the submissions to the Commission, both nationally and locally.
- 129 No increase in the statutory powers of parish and town councils is envisaged, nor the establishment of another tier of local government. However, the Commission does see an important role for parish and town councils in empowering local communities. The Commission agreed with many of its respondents that a clear consultative framework should be established between principal local authorities and parish and town councils. This framework is set out in paragraph 37 of this report.

### FINAL RECOMMENDATION 3

There should be an enhanced consultative role for all town and parish councils.

- 130 The Commission recognised that the enhanced role it proposes would require the creation of either parish or (in the case of large towns or cities) neighbourhood councils for areas of the county that are currently unparished. The MORI survey undertaken on behalf of the Commission found that 66 per cent of respondents agreed that town and parish councils should be set up, where they do not exist, if local people want them.
- 131 The Commission has received representations in favour of the parishing of a number of areas including Colne, Darwen, Fleetwood, Longton (in South Ribble), Lytham and Padiham. It has not been possible to carry out a detailed review within the statutory timetable for the structural review and therefore the Commission would now wish to undertake a general review of parishing in Lancashire so that these matters can be pursued further.

### FINAL RECOMMENDATION 4

The Commission invites the Secretary of State to direct it to undertake a review in which the scope for further parishing in Lancashire can be considered.

\* \* \*

## NEXT STEPS

- 132 Having now completed its review of Lancashire and submitted its final recommendations to the Secretary of State, the Commission has fulfilled its statutory role under section 13 of the Local Government Act 1992.
- 133 All further representations and correspondence concerning the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State, who will take them into account before reaching a conclusion on the Commission's recommendations. Representations should be addressed to:

The Secretary of State for the Environment  
Local Government 1 Division  
Department of the Environment  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 3EB





# APPENDIX A

## SUMMARY OF MORI FINDINGS ON COMMUNITY IDENTITY

### Extract from the Commission's Consultation Report

#### RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TO CHANGE

Local attitudes to change are important. It has generally been the Commission's experience that residents favour a single-tier system of local government, although there are some review areas where support for this principle has proved to be weak. When residents are given choices for unitary structures it can be difficult to translate support for the unitary principle into designs for the actual unitary structures.

In Lancashire, as elsewhere, the market research on community identity commissioned by the 14 districts sought the views of local residents on support for the principle of unitary authorities. Based on responses to the question: 'One possible outcome of the review is a change from the present system so that one council instead of two is responsible for providing all the services. To what extent would you support or oppose this proposal for this area?' the level of support overall was 44 per cent (19 per cent opposed). Figure A1 sets out the results by district, and indicates that in all areas except South Ribble there is a balance in favour of change, although a significant proportion of respondents did not express a view.

Figure A1

SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF UNITARY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Question: 'One possible outcome of the review is a change from the present system, so that one council instead of two is responsible for providing all services. To what extent do you support or oppose this proposal for your area?'

Authority	Percentage of respondents		
	Support	Oppose	Neither/no opinion
Blackburn	38	16	46
Blackpool	43	12	45
Burnley	62	11	27
Chorley	53	21	26
Fylde	55	16	29
Hyndburn	47	25	28
Lancaster	44	23	33
Pendle	48	20	32
Preston	46	26	28
Ribble Valley	41	25	34
Rossendale	24	14	62
South Ribble	28	29	43
West Lancashire	42	15	43
Wyre	42	24	34
Overall	44	19	37

Source: MORI, July-August 1993

The Lancashire survey also asked what priorities people would attach to the various factors that influence local government structure.

This survey enabled the Commission to gauge the relative importance that people in the review area give to major factors that will influence local government structure. Responses to the question 'which three of these factors, if any, do you think should be most important in deciding the local government structure in your area?' are shown in figure A2.

Figure A2

## FACTORS DETERMINING LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE IN LANCASHIRE

Percentage of respondents mentioning each factor	
Responding to local people's wishes	60
Quality of services	60
Local decision making	35
Cost of services	35
Accountability	24
Ease of contacting the council	15
Sense of community	14
Historical or traditional boundaries	9
Location of council offices	9
Size of population covered	6
Number of local councillors	6
Other/Don't know	8

Source: MORI, July-August 1993

These opinions were broadly in line with public opinion in the Commission's review elsewhere. It can be seen that 'quality of service' and 'responding to local people's wishes' were top of the list of people's priorities, with 'cost' and 'local decision making' also being identified by many.

When asked what was the *single* most important factor, 24 per cent of the residents identified quality of services and 29 per cent responsiveness to local people's wishes. Local decision making, cost of services and accountability were each identified by around 10 per cent of respondents. No other factor was identified by more than 2 per cent of respondents. In a separate MORI survey undertaken for the Commission, on a national basis, 82 per cent of residents said that they would not be prepared to pay more for services to be locally based.

Figures A3 and A4 summarise the key findings of the MORI survey in Lancashire. Figure A3 shows that throughout Lancashire community affiliation is generally strongest in respect of the local neighbourhood or village, followed by the home town or nearest town. People then generally felt that they belonged more strongly to their district/borough council area than the county council. Figure A4 illustrates the variation, by district, of community affiliations.

Figure A3

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN LANCASHIRE: AN OVERVIEW

Question: 'How strongly do you feel you belong to each of the following areas?'

Percentage of respondents belonging 'very or fairly' strongly

	Very Strongly	Very/Fairly Strongly
This neighbourhood/village	45	79
Town/nearest town	34	67
District/borough/city area	24	60
County council area	20	51
Former Lancashire	12	25

Source: MORI July-August 1993

Figure A4

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY IN LANCASHIRE

Question: 'How strongly do you feel you belong to each of the following areas?'

Percentage of respondents belonging 'very or fairly' strongly

Authority	Neighbourhood/ village	Town/nearest town	City/borough/ district council area of Lancashire	County council area of Lancashire
Blackburn	79	82	64	67
Blackpool	76	76	61	49
Burnley	79	66	59	45
Chorley	79	76	57	54
Fylde	81	48	50	32
Hyndburn	85	83	59	44
Lancaster	79	65	40	46
Pendle	72	47	52	50
Preston	74	82	55	46
Ribble Valley	91	47	84	60
Rossendale	84	82	81	49
South Ribble	78	49	62	71
West Lancashire	76	39	61	49
Wyre	83	75	67	52
Overall	79	67	60	51

Source: MORI July-August 1993

## APPENDIX B

# Local Government Structure in Lancashire

**RESEARCH STUDY CONDUCTED FOR  
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND  
SEPTEMBER 1994**

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Local Government Commission for England

**FROM:** MORI Local Government Research Unit

**DATE:** 12 September 1994

**RE:** Public attitudes to Local Government structure in Lancashire

### **TECHNICAL NOTE**

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 4,407 adults aged 18+ across Lancashire. All Census enumeration districts (EDs) in the county were sorted into districts, and within district ranked by percentage professional/managerial households. At this stage, 24 EDs were selected in each district, with a probability of selection proportional to the size of the population of each. Quota controls were set for each sampling point, by gender, age and work status using 1991 Census data. Around 300 interviews were achieved in each district, and at the analysis stage the data were weighted to account for the population profiles of each district and the relative population sizes.

### **MAIN FINDINGS**

- One in two expresses either firm support for Option Three or say there is no need to change. Retaining the existing structure receives more firm support than Options One and Two combined in all districts except Blackpool and Blackburn.
- No majority agreement on which option would be worst—either across the county or within any district.
- No majority for any “other” option not presented by the Commission.

## DETAILS

- Seven in ten (69%) name Lancashire as their County Council
- In most districts, at least three in four can name their district council (lower in Blackpool and West Lancashire)

**Q What is the name of the Borough/District/City Council for this area?**

	<b>% Correct</b>
Blackburn Borough	75
Blackpool Borough	61
Burnley Borough	85
Chorley Borough	78
Fylde Borough	75
Hyndburn Borough	86
Lancaster City	80
Pendle Borough	78
Preston Borough	76
Ribble Valley Borough	85
Rossendale Borough	87
South Ribble Borough	89
West Lancashire District	63
Wyre Borough	85

- Just one in four (25%) say they have never heard of the Review, although depth of knowledge stands at a low level—just two per cent of residents say they know “a great deal” about the Review, and 11% know “a fair amount”.
- The options for change were presented as on the Commission leaflet, modified to remove the text indicating the Commission’s recommendation.

In summary:

One: Eight new unitary councils.

Two: six new unitary councils.

Three: Retention of the existing two-tier structure.

- There is majority support for Option Three in South Ribble, Ribble Valley, Pendle, Rossendale, Hyndburn and Wyre. In the nine remaining districts, this option receives more mentions than the other two options:

**Q Please tell me which of these options, if any, you would prefer?**

		<b>Option One</b>	<b>Options Two</b>	<b>Option Three</b>	<b>None of These</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
LANCASHIRE	%	12	11	49	6	22
Blackburn	%	20	20	37	3	20
Blackpool	%	22	14	30	3	31
Burnley	%	7	12	45	9	27
Chorley	%	5	10	45	21	19
Fylde	%	13	12	49	1	25
Hyndburn	%	18	9	59	4	10
Lancaster	%	12	9	46	6	27
Pendle	%	6	7	63	7	17
Preston	%	8	16	43	9	24
Ribble Valley	%	6	4	70	6	14
Rossendale	%	6	7	62	5	20
South Ribble	%	6	6	70	6	12
West Lancashire	%	12	7	49	5	27
Wyre	%	14	7	54	3	22

- Offered the opportunity to name "other" options that they preferred (but with no particular options prompted), eight in ten say either that there are none (50%) or that they do not know (31%). The proportions preferring another option are as follows:

**Q What other options, if any, would you prefer to those I have shown you?**

		<b>No Need to change</b>	<b>Some other preference</b>
LANCASHIRE	%	10	9
Blackburn	%	2	13
Blackpool	%	4	4
Burnley	%	8	10
Chorley	%	20	10
Fylde	%	13	4
Hyndburn	%	6	7
Lancaster	%	4	11
Pendle	%	17	16
Preston	%	16	4
Ribble Valley	%	3	14
Rossendale	%	21	14
South Ribble	%	15	6
West Lancashire	%	12	7
Wyre	%	11	9

Some of those who had selected Option Three were then selecting "No Change".



- All respondents are, therefore, asked two questions about their preferences: first, they are asked to select one of the Commission's options; second, they are asked if there are any other options that they would prefer.

By taking account of people's responses to both questions we can prepare a succinct summary which best reflects people's views and preferences.

The methodology is as follows: those who select one of the Commission's options as their first preference with the prompted list, and then went on to say that they do not have any other preference when offered an open choice, are described as "firm" supporters of that option.

Those who, having given their preference for one of the Commission's options, then went on to say there was actually another structure that they would prefer (which might have been the status quo, for example) are re-allocated to take account of this information.

There are also those who express no view or preference at both the Commission's options question and the unprompted open choice question. These people remain categorised as "Don't know". The table below sets out the results of this analysis across the County and within individual districts.

		<b>Firm Support</b>					<b>Don't know</b>
		<b>Option One</b>	<b>Option Two</b>	<b>Option Three</b>	<b>No need change</b>	<b>Other</b>	
LANCASHIRE	%	10	10	39	10	9	22
Blackburn	%	15	19	31	2	13	20
Blackpool	%	20	14	26	4	4	32
Burnley	%	6	11	36	8	10	29
Chorley	%	5	9	33	20	10	23
Fylde	%	13	11	37	13	4	22
Hyndburn	%	16	9	52	6	7	10
Lancaster	%	9	8	39	4	11	29
Pendle	%	5	7	43	17	16	12
Preston	%	7	14	35	16	4	24
Ribble Valley	%	5	3	60	3	14	15
Rossendale	%	4	6	40	21	14	15
South Ribble	%	6	5	55	15	6	13
West Lancashire	%	11	6	40	12	7	24
Wyre	%	11	7	42	11	9	19

- Within each district, it is feasible to add figures horizontally where the outcome of more than one option is the same for the district concerned. For example, Options One and Two entail a unitary Lancaster; therefore, the figures for first preference of these two options can be added together for Lancaster residents. However, such combinations should always be treated with caution, as it may be that respondents' preferences are at least partly based on what would happen **outside** of the district in which they live.
- Although there is no majority opinion, the eight unitary authorities option is most commonly selected as the least preferred option. There is considerable variation by district, however:

**Q Which, if any, of the options shown here would you least prefer?**

		<b>Option One</b>	<b>Option Two</b>	<b>Option Three</b>	<b>None of These</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>
LANCASHIRE	%	23	18	11	12	36
Blackburn	%	20	26	22	4	28
Blackpool	%	14	13	16	12	45
Burnley	%	19	7	13	12	49
Chorley	%	30	8	9	19	34
Fylde	%	25	19	13	3	40
Hyndburn	%	15	48	9	6	22
Lancaster	%	16	11	14	21	38
Pendle	%	32	16	7	15	30
Preston	%	28	10	13	13	36
Ribble Valley	%	16	42	5	9	28
Rossendale	%	43	10	6	10	31
South Ribble	%	36	19	6	18	21
West Lancashire	%	25	9	8	15	43
Wyre	%	13	32	10	9	36

- Two in three residents (66%) support the principle of setting up town or parish councils where people want them. This is broadly consistent throughout the county.

## STATISTICAL RELIABILITY

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total "population", so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the "true" values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95%—that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval":

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 interviews	6	9	10
300 interviews	3	5	6
1,000 interviews	2	3	3
3,000 interviews	1	2	2
4,500 interviews	1	1	2

For example, with a sample size of 300 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of  $\pm 5$  percentage points from the sample result.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real," or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one—ie if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the differences between the two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
300 and 300	5	7	8
1,000 and 1,000	3	4	4
1,000 and 300	4	6	7
4,500 and 300	4	5	6

## **MARKED-UP QUESTIONNAIRE**

MORI/8197  
(1-4)

# OPTIONS RESEARCH (LANCASHIRE)

Serial No. ....  
OUO (5-8)

Fieldwork 16 July - 15 August 1994

N = 4,407 respondents aged 18+

Sample stratified by district, data weighted to be representative of the population profile

**Gender** %  
Male ..... 47  
Female ..... 53

**Age** %  
18-24 ..... 13  
25-34 ..... 18  
35-44 ..... 17  
45-54 ..... 16  
55-64 ..... 14  
65-74 ..... 14  
75+ ..... 8

WRITE IN AGE

--	--

**Work Status** %  
Full-time (30 hrs/wk+) ..... 45  
Part-time (8-29 hrs/wk) ..... 8  
Not working (under 8 hrs) ..... 2  
Looking after home/children ..... 9  
Retired ..... 27  
Registered unemployed ..... 4  
Unemployed but not registered ..... 1  
Student ..... 2  
Other ..... 2

**Occupation of Chief Income Earner (CIE)**  
Position/rank/grade .....

Industry/type of company .....

Qualifications/degrees/apprenticeship .....

No of Staff Responsible for .....

**PROBE FOR CIE/PENSION** %  
AB ..... 16  
C1 ..... 26  
C2 ..... 24  
D ..... 18  
E ..... 15

## Number in Household

Adults aged 18+ (inc. respondent)  
20% 56% 16% 6% 2%  
1 2 3 4 5+

## Children (17 or under)

61% 15% 15% 5% 3%  
0 1 2 3 4+

**QA Are you or other members of your household employed by a council?**

**IF YES: Is this a Borough/District/City Council or a County Council?**

**CODE FOR BOTH RESPONDENT AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS**

	Respondent %	Other %
Yes:		
Borough/District/City .....	2	2
County .....	5	3
Don't know which .....	*	*
No .....	92	87
Don't know .....	1	7

## Tenure

	%
Owned outright .....	36
Buying on mortgage .....	46
Rented from Council .....	10
Rented from Housing Association .....	1
Rented from private landlord .....	4
Other .....	1

**QB Is this your main permanent home, or is it a second or holiday home?**

	%
Main/permanent .....	99
Second/holiday .....	*

## Car in Household

**CIRCLE NUMBER**  
23% 51% 22% 4%  
0 1 2 3+

THIS FORM IS THE PROPERTY OF MARKET & OPINION RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL (MORI)  
32 OLD QUEEN STREET, LONDON, SW1H 9HP

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION: I confirm that I have conducted this interview face-to-face with the above named person and that I have asked all the relevant questions fully and recorded the answers in conformance with the survey specification and the MRS Code of Conduct.

Interviewer Name ..... Signature .....

Interviewer Number     /

DATE OF INTERVIEW      Month      Date  
     

NB INTERVIEWER: ALL SHOWCARDS HAVE BEEN REVERSED. PLEASE BE CAREFUL TO CODE THE CORRECT RESPONSE.

Good morning/afternoon/evening. I'm from MORI, the market research and polling organisation. We are doing a survey about local issues, and I would like to ask you a few questions.

ASK ALL

Q1a Firstly, how long have you lived in this town/village?

Q1b And how long have you lived in this county?

	Q1a	Q1b
	%	%
Less than 1 year .....	4	1
1-2 years .....	4	1
3-5 years .....	9	3
6-10 years .....	13	6
11-20 years .....	17	11
Over 20 years/all my life .....	54	76
Don't know/can't remember .....	*	1

Q2 What is the name of the County Council for this area? DO NOT PROMPT

	%
Lancashire County Council .....	69
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "2") .....	9
Don't know .....	22

Q3 What is the name of the Borough/District/City Council for this area? DO NOT PROMPT

	%
	Correct
Blackburn Borough Council .....	75
Blackpool Borough Council .....	61
Burnley Borough Council .....	85
Chorley Borough Council .....	78
Fylde Borough Council .....	75
Hyndburn Borough Council .....	86
Lancaster City Council .....	80
Pendle Borough Council .....	78
Preston Borough Council .....	76
Ribble Valley Borough Council .....	85
Rossendale Borough Council .....	87
South Ribble Borough Council .....	89
West Lancashire District Council .....	63
Wyre Borough Council .....	85
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "3") .....	—
Don't know .....	

IF INCORRECT ANSWER AT Q2 OR Q3, READ OUT: In fact, this is the Lancashire County Council area and the . . . Borough/District/City Council area.

**ASK ALL**

- Q4 SHOWCARD A (R) As you may know, there is currently a review being undertaken by the Local Government Commission on the future of local government structure in this area. How much, if anything, would you say you know about this?**

A great deal .....	%
A fair amount .....	2
Just a little .....	11
Heard of but know nothing about .....	36
Never heard of .....	26
	25

**HAND OVER COMMISSION LEAFLET**

Three/four options have been put forward by the Local Government Commission for the future structure of local government in Lancashire. Could you please read through this leaflet, which outlines the options and includes maps which illustrate them.

**ASK ALL**

- Q5 SHOWCARD B Please tell me which of these options, if any, you would most prefer?**  
**SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Option 1 .....	%
Option 2 .....	12
Option 3 .....	11
None of these .....	49
Don't know .....	6
	22

**ASK IF PREFER 1, 2 OR 3. (OTHERS GO TO Q8)**

- Q6 Why do you say you would most prefer option . . . ?**  
**PROBE FULLY — DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK**  
Base: All expressing preference (3,188)

	%
<b>Cost/Efficiency</b>	
Will cost less/save money .....	23
More efficient/less duplication .....	8
Easier to manage .....	8
<b>Size/Area</b>	
Smaller areas better/others too big .....	18
Bigger areas better/others too small/too many councils .....	6
More sensitive to local area/people .....	10
Each area different/local identity .....	5
Want to join/be part of . . . (area/town) .....	3
Don't want to join/be part of . . . (area/town) .....	6
Takes account of different levels of community .....	2
Maintains strategic services .....	2
<b>General</b>	
No need to change/OK as it is .....	45
Like present Council/is good/satisfactory .....	13
Don't like present Council/is poor .....	2
Current services good/current councils provide good services .....	7
Would increase services/more services .....	2
Would improve services/services would be good quality .....	3
Need strong/influential council .....	1
Go back to how it was .....	*
Good idea generally .....	5
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "9") .....	19
.....	
.....	
Don't know .....	4

**THERE IS NO Q7**

**ASK ALL**

- Q8 SHOWCARD (B) (R) AGAIN Which, if any, of the options shown here would you least prefer?**  
SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Least %
Option 1 .....	23
Option 2 .....	18
None of these .....	11
None of these .....	12
Don't know .....	35

**ASK IF LEAST PREFER OPTION 1, 2 OR 3 (OTHERS GO TO Q10)**

- Q9 And why do you say you would least prefer option . . . ?**

PROBE FULLY — DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

Base: All expressing least preference (2,326)

	%
<b>Cost/Efficiency</b>	
Cost of change .....	16
Would cost more to run/more expensive .....	10
Too much duplication .....	5
Too many joint arrangements .....	4
Too difficult to manage .....	7
<b>Size/Area</b>	
Area too big/smaller areas better .....	33
Area too small/bigger areas better/too many councils .....	10
Would ignore us/our views/would be isolated .....	7
Too impersonal/less local .....	9
Don't want to join/be part of. . . (area/town) .....	11
No local identity .....	8
Authorities too small to cope .....	2
Too narrow/no strategic view .....	1
<b>General</b>	
No need to change/OK as it is .....	9
Like/Don't like present Council/is good/poor .....	5
Poor services .....	3
Current services would be reduced/in danger .....	3
Bad idea generally .....	6
I prefer the others/like other options more .....	3
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "7") .....	17
.....	
Don't know .....	7

**ASK ALL**

- Q10 What other options, if any, would you prefer to those I have shown you?**

	%
None .....	50
Don't know .....	31
Go back to how it used to be/back to pre-1974 structure .....	5
No need to change/keep things as they are .....	10
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "5") .....	4
.....	
.....	



ASK IF CODE "3", "4" OR "5" AT Q10 (OTHERS GO TO Q12)

Q11 Why do you say that?

PROBE FULLY — DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK

Base: All citing another preference (883)

	%
<b>Cost/Efficiency</b>	
Will cost less/save money.....	15
More efficient/less duplication .....	6
Easier to manage .....	8
<b>Size/Area</b>	
Smaller areas better/others too big.....	15
Bigger areas better/others too small/too many councils.....	1
More sensitive to local area/people .....	11
Each area different/local identity.....	5
Want to join/be part of . . . (area/town) .....	1
Don't want to join/be part of . . . (area/town).....	5
Takes account of different levels of community .....	3
Maintains strategic services .....	3
<b>General</b>	
No need to change/OK as it is.....	41
Like present Council/is good/satisfactory .....	10
Don't like present Council/is poor .....	2
Current services good/current councils provide good services .....	4
Would increase services/more services .....	4
Would improve services/services would be good quality .....	3
Need strong/influential council.....	1
Go back to how it was .....	6
Good idea generally .....	5
Other (WRITE IN & CODE "9") .....	18
.....	
.....	
Don't know .....	9

ASK ALL

Q12 Please tell me whether you support or oppose the following proposal . . .  
READ OUT

	Support %	Oppose %	Neither/ Don't know %
If local people want them, town and parish Councils should be set up, where they do not exist .....	66	13	21

THANK RESPONDENT  
GO TO DEMOGRAPHICS, THEN COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

District Name: .....

COPY SAMPLE POINT FROM FRONT PAGE 

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