

COUNCILLORS' PERCEPTIONS OF Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships

SUMMARY OF KEY SURVEY FINDINGS



TOP STATISTICS

- Over 90 per cent of councillors surveyed feel that they know about their sustainability and transformation partnership (STP) even though very few – only 21 per cent – feel that councillors have been sufficiently engaged with their STP.
- Overall, most councillors do not feel that they have been engaged with shaping, commenting on or approving proposals, or with engaging patients, service users or communities in STPs.
- Only 10 per cent reported that the full council had been engaged in the STP while almost 80 per cent reported that senior officers had been very engaged or engaged with their STP.
- Despite this, just under 80 per cent of respondents thought that health and wellbeing boards (HWBs) could provide an effective forum for engaging councillors in the STP process.
- Under 25 per cent of councillors are confident that their STP will deliver on its objectives or bring benefits to their local communities.

KEY MESSAGES

Our survey results strongly support the messages we have been hearing for months – STPs are largely excluding councillors from the STP planning process. We need to ensure that STPs are firmly focused on the health and wellbeing needs and challenges of their local communities and that they are accountable to them. We are calling for urgent action at national and local level to:

- engage councillors in a meaningful way in all aspects of the STP development. This is particularly important now that STPs have developed from written plans into strategic partnerships to drive forward the transformation of the health and care system. It is positive that senior officers of councils have been involved in STPs but it is vital that STP leaders recognise the crucial role of councillors as democratically elected representatives of their communities
- ensure that STPs are locally accountable through health and wellbeing boards, which, with local agreement, could be reconfigured to match the footprints of combined authorities or other more strategic bodies where appropriate
- align STP delivery plans with health and wellbeing boards, giving health and wellbeing boards a legal duty to sign off commissioning plans, including plans for integration.

HOW WAS THIS SURVEY CARRIED OUT?

This document reports key findings from a survey of councillors carried out by the Local Government Association between 6 April and 11 May 2017.

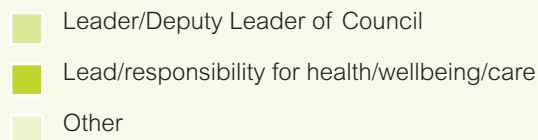
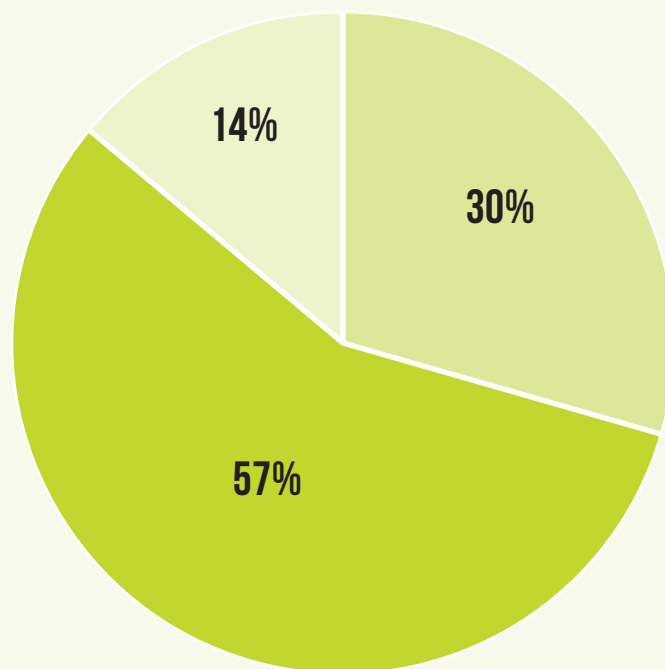
The survey sought the views of councillors regarding their local Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP).

Named councillors from all single tier and county councils were directly invited to undertake the survey. The majority of respondents were leaders, deputy leaders or relevant portfolio holders of councils, most of whom are also chairs of health and wellbeing boards. A few additional respondents were also engaged through circulation of the survey in relevant online publications. A breakdown of respondents by role is presented here.

The survey was completed by **81 respondents** from **68 councils**, including two districts.

The full survey results and analysis is available on our [STP webpage](#).

RESPONDENTS BY ROLE

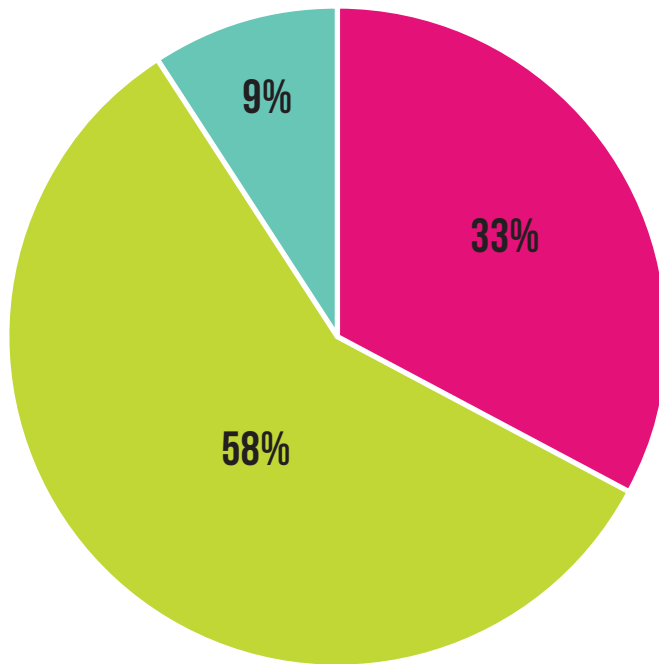


Respondent base: 81

COUNCILLOR KNOWLEDGE OF STPS

1

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR STP?



- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much

Respondent base: 79

“I have had significant involvement from the start. This has primarily been due to my working relationship with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues.”

Cabinet member for health, metropolitan district

“I’m aware of the STP plan, but the explanation of the very broad descriptions of savings to be achieved feels very opaque.”

Adult social care (ASC) lead member, London borough

“The process is complex and full of jargon, making it hard to have a total and complete grasp of everything involved.”

Lead health and ASC member, unitary authority

“To my knowledge councillors have not been involved at all in the development of the local STPs. The lead NHS officer for the footprint has never even bothered to establish contact despite repeated requests.” **Leader, county council**

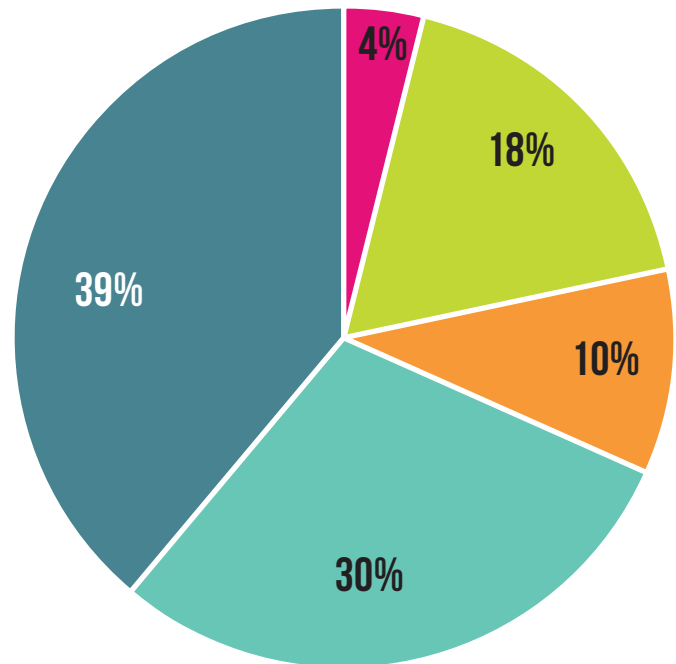
“We have provided presentations for all city and county councillors, along with other stakeholders. The challenge is that the work is very complex, and it is difficult to engage other members at sufficient level so that they can make a judgement about the way forward.”

ASC lead and HWB member, county council

“Myself as Leader, the Cabinet Member and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board are Partnership Board members. Scrutiny are well engaged and full council have been advised of progress.”

Leader, metropolitan borough council

DO YOU AGREE THAT COUNCILLORS HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY ENGAGED IN YOUR STP?

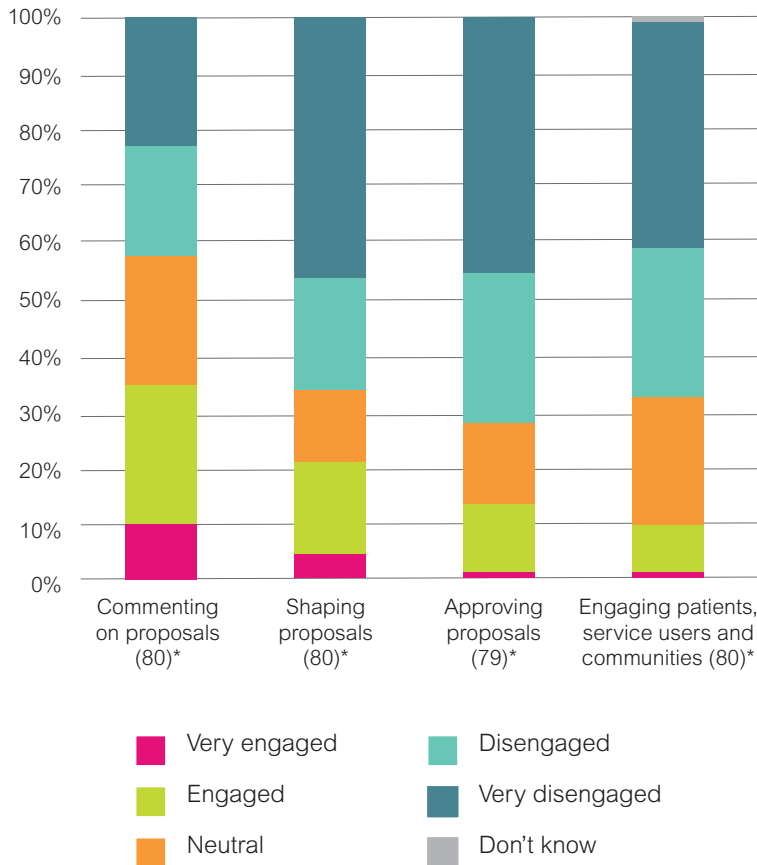


Respondent base: 80

COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT IN STPS

3

HOW ENGAGED HAVE COUNCILLORS BEEN IN THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF YOUR STP?



* Respondent base

“Those on health and wellbeing or health scrutiny were very engaged; some others not at all. The starting position from the CCG was very top down and it appeared that they had little or no understanding of how local government works, mostly looking to engage officers not members. Things are getting better.”

ASC lead, county council

“Proposals have been presented to the HWB and Scrutiny Committee, but this has been ‘show and tell’ rather than ‘inform and shape’.”

Leader, metropolitan district

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WIDER COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT IN STPS

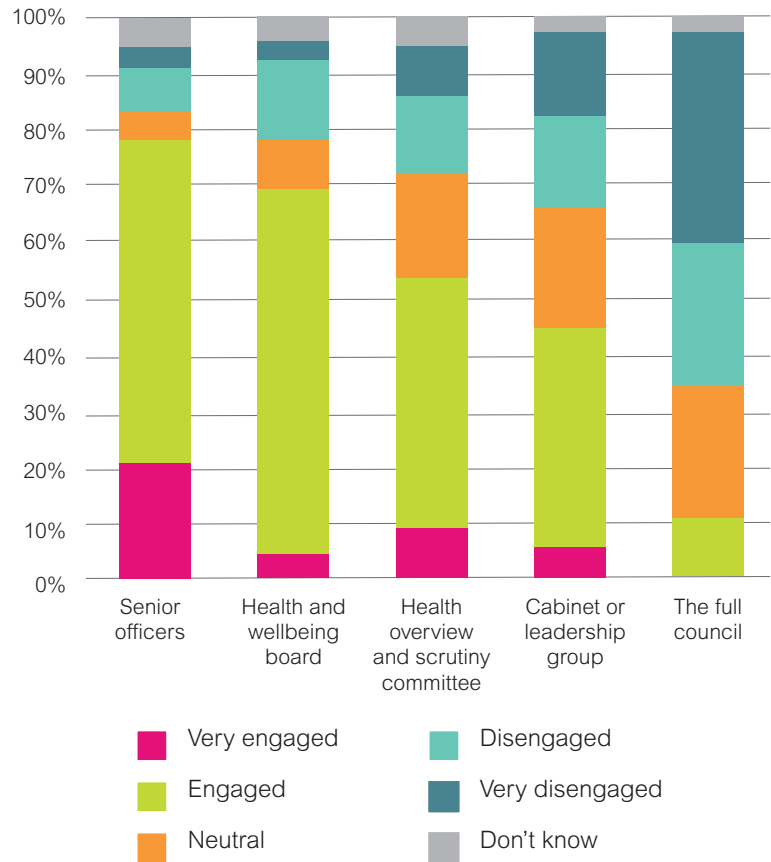
“It is now developing into work streams and the council officers are involved in some; across the footprint the ASC Director will lead on the preventative work stream. However there is no member role.”

Leader and HWB Chair, county council

“The NHS simply does not understand the decision making of local government, particularly the difference between the Executive function in agreeing policy and the wider council.”

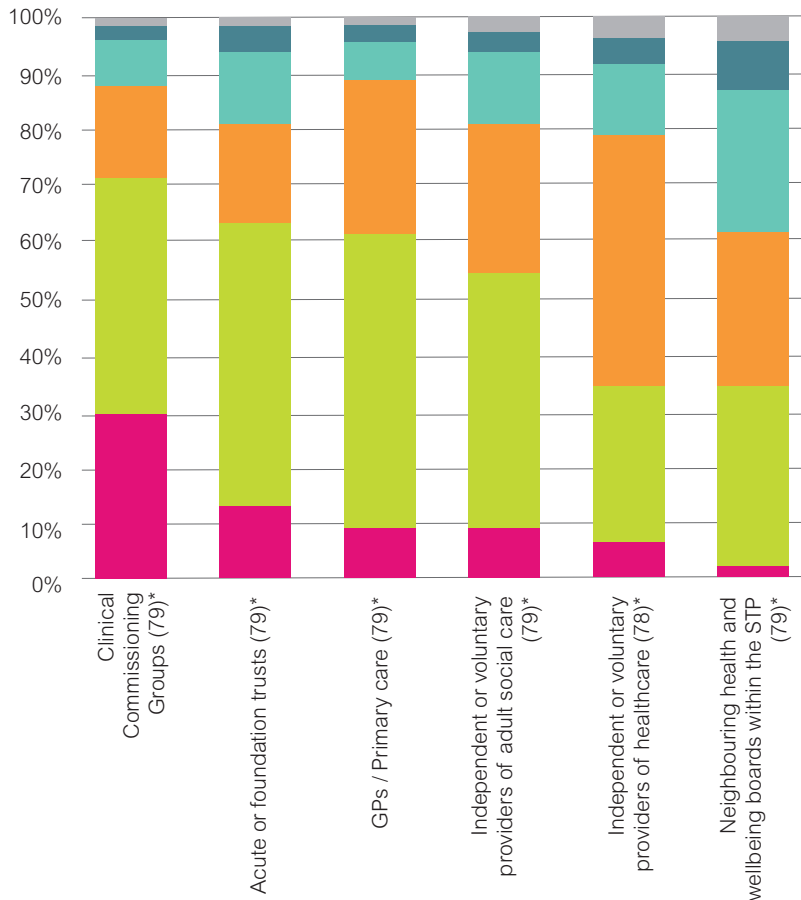
Leader, unitary authority

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW ENGAGED ARE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR STP?



Respondent base: 79

DO YOU AGREE THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COUNCILLORS AND THE FOLLOWING LOCAL HEALTH AND CARE LEADERS IS GENERALLY GOOD?



“There is a Members’ STP board to try to engage further in the process but it is an internal board with no health representation. It is looked on as an opportunity to steer views and concerns and to try to drive forward how councillors would wish to see the changes taking shape.”

Leader, county council

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

* Respondent base

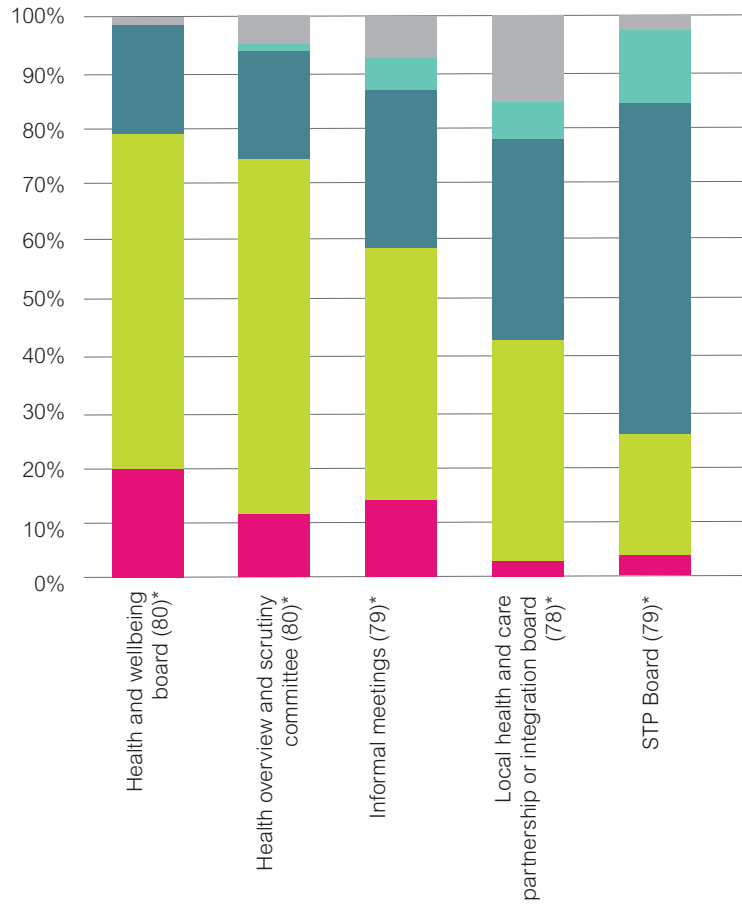
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COUNCILLOR RELATIONSHIPS WITH HEALTH AND CARE

HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE THE FOLLOWING IN PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE FORUM FOR ENGAGING COUNCILLORS IN THE STP PROCESS?

“The STP process has not added anything to the existing efforts to build effective relationships between members and local health leaders.”

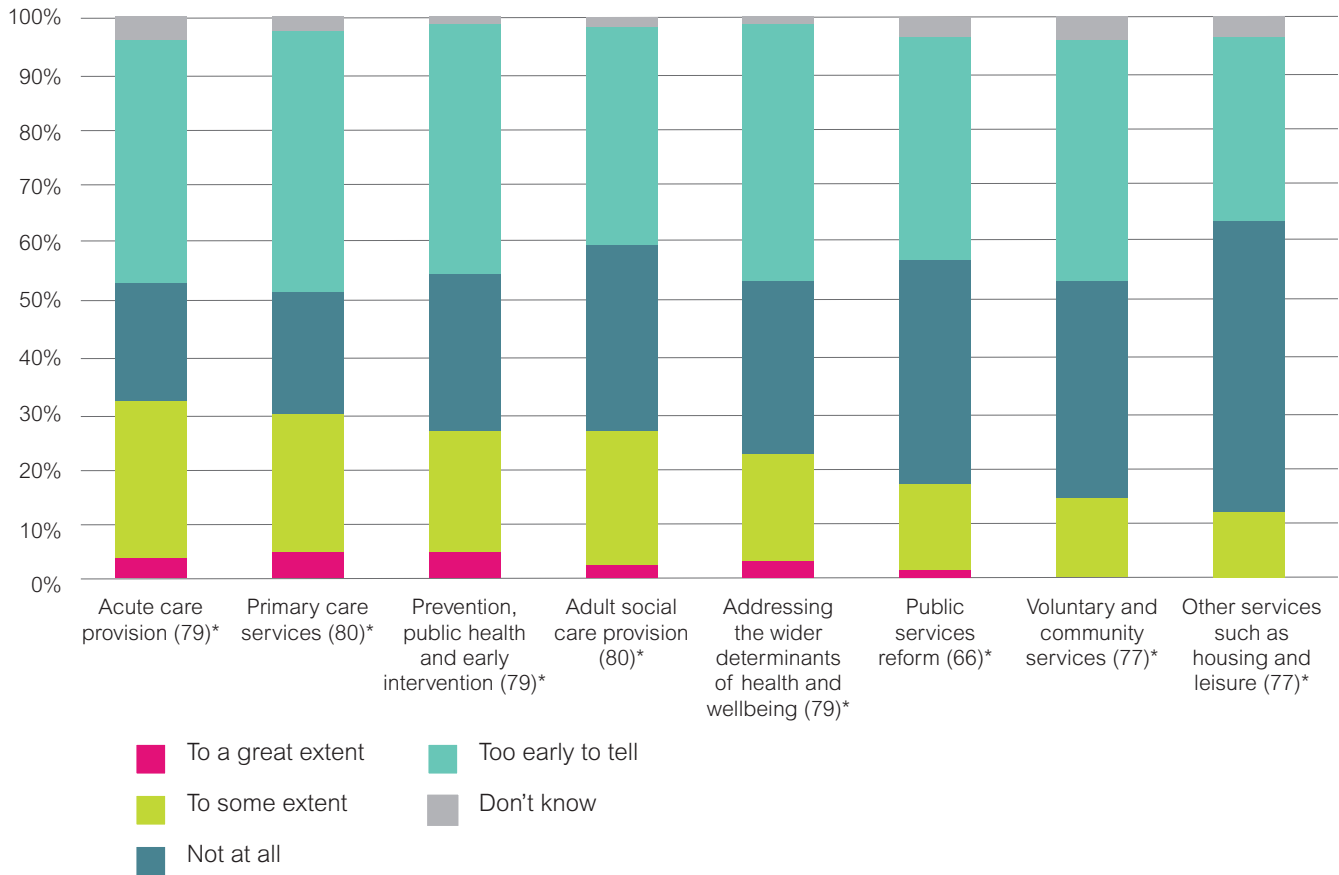
Leader, unitary council



- To a great extent
- To some extent
- Not at all
- Not applicable
- Don't know

* Respondent base

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE STP HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON LOCAL PLANS IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS?



* Respondent base

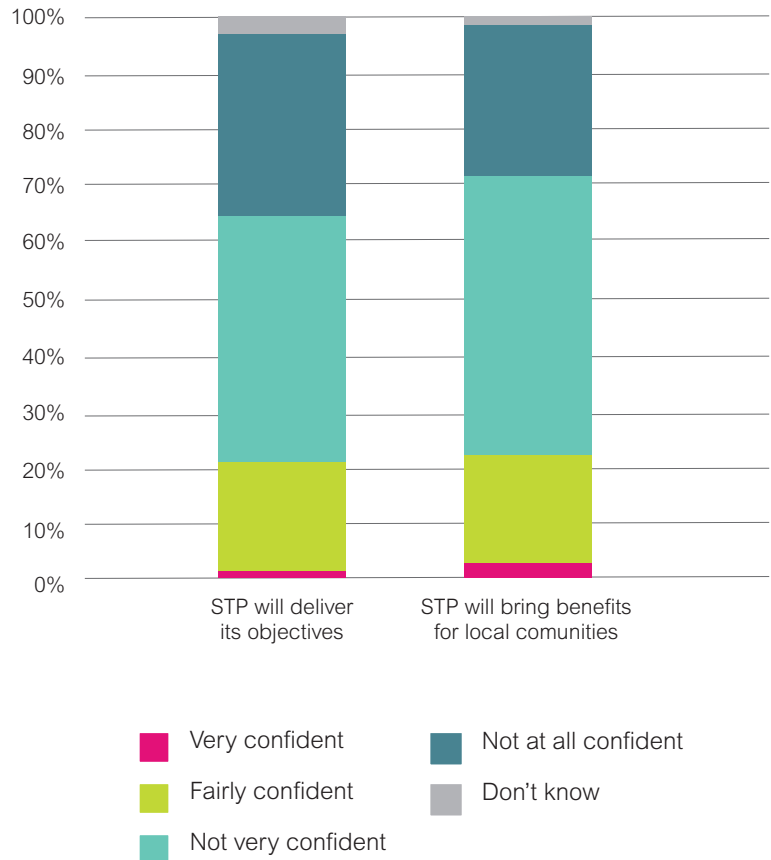
HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOUR STP WILL DELIVER ITS OBJECTIVES AND BRING BENEFITS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

“It is generally agreed that the financial targets in most STPs are not deliverable, and that additional resources will be needed to deliver the required health outcomes.”

Leader, county council

“The premise that an alternative model will deliver savings and change the pattern of care is next to impossible. Add in that the NHS has done little to establish how it can integrate with care in the STP area.”

Leader, unitary authority



Respondent base: 80

NEXT STEPS

We are firmly committed to working with councils and the NHS to do our best to ensure that STPs are a genuine partnership between clinical, professional and political leaders, driving the transformation of local health and care systems in order to get the best outcomes for local communities.

As part of that, we will also work to support STPs to understand the importance of local democratic accountability and vital role of councillors in this. We will support the NHS to understand the vital role of political leadership in local health and care systems and are keen to work closely with the NHS to support STP leaders to understand how they can work more effectively with councillors.

The LGA provides an extensive support and improvement offer to health and wellbeing boards through the **Care and Health Improvement Programme**, which you can find out more about at www.local.gov.uk/careandhealthimprovement

Over the coming months we will further develop our leadership offer to help councillors understand STPs and how councillors can make engage effectively and proactively with to STPs.

For more information about STPs, visit www.local.gov.uk/stp

NOTES

A teal-colored notepad graphic with a folded corner effect on the top right and a small tab sticking out from the bottom center. The word "NOTES" is written in bold, black, uppercase letters at the top left of the notepad, with a thin black underline underneath.





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