

# STP Survey of Councillors

Research report

July 2017



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## Introduction

The aim of Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) is to work together across a local footprint to deliver a local blueprint for addressing the challenges facing the NHS and its partners. The partnerships should include all providers and commissioners of care, acute providers, local commissioners of health and social care, community health and primary care. There are 44 STPs covering all of England, to improve health and care. Each area has developed proposals built around the needs for the whole population in the area, not just those of individual organisations.

STP can also stand for 'sustainability and transformation plan'. These are plans drawn up in each of the 44 areas setting out practical ways to improve NHS services and population health in every part of England. The plans and partnerships are part of a NHS planning framework for health and care services. Announced in the NHS planning guidance in December 2015, STPs are strategic, multi-year plans running to at least March 2021.

Feedback from local councillors was sought in order to establish a clear national picture of councillors' views and experiences of their local Sustainability and Transformation Partnership. This document reports key findings from a survey of councillors carried out by the Local Government Association between 6 April and 11 May 2017 which was completed by 81 respondents across 68 councils.

A full set of key messages from the survey and a copy of the questionnaire can be found at <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/our-improvement-offer/care-and-health-improvement/integration-and-better-care-fund/better-care-fund/sustainability-and-transformation-plans>.

## Methodology

The survey consisted of 30 questions seeking councillors' views of their local STP. The key themes were: councillors' knowledge of and engagement in the STP process; system leadership and governance arrangements; the STP's alignment with local ambitions for health and wellbeing; engagement with the public; and delivery of the STP. All questions provided a structured set of options for response, with opportunity for further comment. The survey was open between 6 April and 11 May 2017.

Single tier and county councils were targeted as they have adult social care and public health statutory duties, as well as a statutory duty to maintain a health and wellbeing board. Chairs of health and wellbeing boards and/or relevant portfolio holders were directly invited to respond to the survey. At least one named councillor from each council was directly invited, with most councils receiving two or three individual invitations. A reminder was sent to non-responding invitees half-way

through the in-field period. A few additional respondents were also engaged through circulation of the survey in relevant online publications.

## Respondents

Most respondents were chairs of health and wellbeing boards and/or relevant portfolio holders, many of whom are also leaders or deputy leaders of councils.

The survey was completed by 81 respondents from 68 councils, including two districts. Eleven councils gave multiple responses, with two councils giving three separate responses. Completion rates among councils varied by region and council type. Council representation across regions and council types is outlined below.

| Respondents by role                           |        |          |
|---|--------|----------|
|   | Number | Per cent |
| Leader/ Deputy Leader of Council              | 24     | 30%      |
| Lead/responsibility for health/wellbeing/care | 46     | 57%      |
| Other   | 11     | 14%      |
| Total   | 81     | 100%     |

| Authority region         |  |                        |                          |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | Number of responding single tier and county councils | Total number in region | Per cent of region total |
| East of England          | 2  | 11                     | 18%                      |
| East Midlands            | 4  | 10                     | 40%                      |
| Greater London           | 20   | 33                     | 61%                      |
| North East               | 6  | 12                     | 50%                      |
| North West               | 7  | 23                     | 30%                      |
| South East               | 9  | 18                     | 50%                      |
| South West               | 6  | 16                     | 38%                      |
| West Midlands            | 9  | 14                     | 64%                      |
| Yorkshire and the Humber | 3  | 15                     | 20%                      |
| Total                    | 66 <sup>1</sup>                                      | 152                    | 43%                      |

| Authority type        |  |                      |                        |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|
|                       | Number of responding single tier and county councils | Total number of type | Per cent of type total |
| Shire County          | 14   | 27                   | 52%                    |
| English Unitary       | 20   | 56                   | 36%                    |
| Metropolitan District | 12   | 36                   | 33%                    |
| London Borough        | 20   | 33                   | 61%                    |
| Total                 | 66 <sup>1</sup>                                      | 152                  | 43%                    |

<sup>1</sup> Total 66 does not include two responding district councils

## Reporting

The data presented in this report have been aggregated, and no individuals or councils are identified. On the whole, most respondents answered all questions, but for some questions the response rate is slightly reduced. Consequently, data for each question is expressed as a percentage of responses to that question. Response bases are indicated for each individual question throughout the report. Please note that throughout the report percentages may not add up to exactly 100 per cent due to rounding.

## Full results

This section provides aggregated results for each of the structured questions from the STP survey of councillors. Stated 'per cent' is of the total number of respondents responding to a specific question. The maximum number of responses to a question was 81.

Supporting text boxes were provided for a number of the structured questions to provide an opportunity for further explanation or examples of specific experiences. Key messages are included in the [full report](#).

### A. About you and your role

| Q1a) In your opinion, how much do you know about your Sustainability and Transformation Partnership? |        |          |
|--|--------|----------|
|  | Number | Per cent |
| A great deal   | 26     | 33%      |
| A fair amount  | 46     | 58%      |
| Not very much  | 7      | 9%       |
| Not at all   | 0      | 0%       |
| Don't know   | 0      | 0%       |
| Total  | 79     | 100%     |

### B. Councillor engagement in the STP Process

| Q2a) In your opinion, do you agree that councillors have been sufficiently engaged in your STP? |        |          |
|---|--------|----------|
|   | Number | Per cent |
| Strongly agree  | 3      | 4%       |
| Tend to agree   | 14     | 18%      |
| Neither agree nor disagree  | 8      | 10%      |
| Tend to disagree  | 24     | 30%      |
| Strongly disagree   | 31     | 39%      |
| Don't know  | 0      | 0%       |
| Total   | 80     | 100%     |

| Q3a) In your opinion, how engaged have councillors been in the following aspects of your STP? |              |          |         |          |         |          |            |          |                 |          |            |          |        |          |
|---|--------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|   | Very engaged |          | Engaged |          | Neutral |          | Disengaged |          | Very disengaged |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|   | Number       | Per cent | Number  | Per cent | Number  | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number          | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Shaping proposals   | 3            | 4%       | 14      | 18%      | 10      | 13%      | 16         | 20%      | 37              | 46%      | 0          | 0%       | 80     | 100%     |
| Commenting on proposals   | 9            | 11%      | 19      | 24%      | 18      | 23%      | 16         | 20%      | 18              | 23%      | 0          | 0%       | 80     | 100%     |
| Approving proposals   | 1            | 1%       | 10      | 13%      | 11      | 14%      | 21         | 27%      | 36              | 46%      | 0          | 0%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Engaging patients, service users and communities  | 1            | 1%       | 7       | 9%       | 18      | 23%      | 21         | 26%      | 32              | 40%      | 1          | 1%       | 80     | 100%     |

| Q4a) In your opinion, how engaged are the following in your STP? |              |          |         |          |         |          |            |          |                 |          |            |          |        |          |
|--|--------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|  | Very engaged |          | Engaged |          | Neutral |          | Disengaged |          | Very disengaged |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|  | Number       | Per cent | Number  | Per cent | Number  | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number          | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| The full Council   | 0            | 0%       | 8       | 10%      | 19      | 24%      | 20         | 25%      | 30              | 38%      | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Cabinet or leadership group                                      | 4            | 5%       | 31      | 39%      | 17      | 22%      | 13         | 16%      | 12              | 15%      | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Health and wellbeing board                                       | 18           | 23%      | 37      | 47%      | 7       | 9%       | 11         | 14%      | 3               | 4%       | 3          | 4%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Health overview and scrutiny committee                           | 7            | 9%       | 35      | 44%      | 15      | 19%      | 11         | 14%      | 7               | 9%       | 4          | 5%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Senior officers  | 16           | 20%      | 46      | 58%      | 4       | 5%       | 6          | 8%       | 3               | 4%       | 4          | 5%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Other (please specify)   | 2            | 25%      | 2       | 25%      | 1       | 13%      | 0          | 0%       | 2               | 25%      | 1          | 13%      | 8      | 100%     |

| Q5) In your opinion, do you agree that the relationship between councillors and the following local health and care leaders is generally good? |                |          |               |          |                            |          |                  |          |                   |          |            |          |        |          |
|--|----------------|----------|---------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|  | Strongly agree |          | Tend to agree |          | Neither agree nor disagree |          | Tend to disagree |          | Strongly disagree |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|  | Number         | Per cent | Number        | Per cent | Number                     | Per cent | Number           | Per cent | Number            | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Acute or foundation trusts   | 10             | 13%      | 40            | 51%      | 15                         | 19%      | 9                | 11%      | 4                 | 5%       | 1          | 1%       | 79     | 100%     |
| GPs / Primary care   | 7              | 9%       | 41            | 52%      | 22                         | 28%      | 6                | 8%       | 2                 | 3%       | 1          | 1%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Clinical Commissioning Groups  | 24             | 30%      | 32            | 41%      | 13                         | 16%      | 7                | 9%       | 2                 | 3%       | 1          | 1%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Independent or voluntary providers of healthcare   | 5              | 6%       | 22            | 28%      | 35                         | 45%      | 10               | 13%      | 3                 | 4%       | 3          | 4%       | 78     | 100%     |
| Independent or voluntary providers of adult social care  | 7              | 9%       | 36            | 46%      | 21                         | 27%      | 10               | 13%      | 3                 | 4%       | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Neighbouring health and wellbeing boards within the STP  | 1              | 1%       | 26            | 33%      | 21                         | 27%      | 21               | 27%      | 7                 | 9%       | 3          | 4%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Other (please specify)   | 1              | 25%      | 0             | 0%       | 1                          | 25%      | 0                | 0%       | 0                 | 0%       | 2          | 50%      | 4      | 100%     |

Q6) In your opinion, to what extent has the STP process made a positive difference to the working relationships between councillors and the following local health and care leaders?

|   | To a great extent |          | To some extent |          | Not at all |          | Had a negative impact |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|---|-------------------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|   | Number            | Per cent | Number         | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number                | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Acute or foundation trusts                              | 5                 | 6%       | 23             | 29%      | 37         | 47%      | 11                    | 14%      | 3          | 4%       | 79     | 100%     |
| GPs / Primary care                                      | 3                 | 4%       | 23             | 29%      | 42         | 54%      | 7                     | 9%       | 3          | 4%       | 78     | 100%     |
| Clinical Commissioning Groups                           | 12                | 15%      | 25             | 32%      | 25         | 32%      | 15                    | 19%      | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Independent or voluntary providers of healthcare        | 3                 | 4%       | 18             | 23%      | 48         | 61%      | 3                     | 4%       | 7          | 9%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Independent or voluntary providers of adult social care | 3                 | 4%       | 18             | 23%      | 47         | 59%      | 3                     | 4%       | 8          | 10%      | 79     | 100%     |
| Neighbouring health and wellbeing boards within the STP | 2                 | 3%       | 32             | 41%      | 36         | 46%      | 3                     | 4%       | 6          | 8%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Other (please specify)                                  | 0                 | 0%       | 2              | 40%      | 0          | 0%       | 2                     | 40%      | 1          | 20%      | 5      | 100%     |



| Q7) In your opinion, how successful are the following in providing an effective forum for engaging councillors in the STP process? |                   |          |                |          |            |          |                |          |            |          |        |          |
|--|-------------------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|  | To a great extent |          | To some extent |          | Not at all |          | Not applicable |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|  | Number            | Per cent | Number         | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number         | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Health and wellbeing board   | 16                | 20%      | 47             | 59%      | 16         | 20%      | 0              | 0%       | 1          | 1%       | 80     | 100%     |
| STP Board  | 3                 | 4%       | 17             | 22%      | 47         | 59%      | 10             | 13%      | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Health overview and scrutiny committee   | 9                 | 11%      | 51             | 64%      | 15         | 19%      | 1              | 1%       | 4          | 5%       | 80     | 100%     |
| Local health and care partnership or integration board   | 2                 | 3%       | 31             | 40%      | 28         | 36%      | 5              | 6%       | 12         | 15%      | 78     | 100%     |
| Informal meetings  | 11                | 14%      | 35             | 44%      | 23         | 29%      | 4              | 5%       | 6          | 8%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Other (please specify)   | 1                 | 25%      | 1              | 25%      | 0          | 0%       | 0              | 0%       | 2          | 50%      | 4      | 100%     |

## C. System leadership and governance arrangements

| Q9a) In your opinion, how confident are you that accountability and governance arrangements of the STP(s) are fit for purpose? |        |          |
|--|--------|----------|
|  | Number | Per cent |
| Very confident   | 1      | 1%       |
| Fairly confident   | 14     | 18%      |
| Not very confident   | 23     | 29%      |
| Not at all confident   | 40     | 50%      |
| Don't know   | 2      | 3%       |
| Total  | 80     | 100%     |

| Q9b) And in your opinion, do you agree that councillors are sufficiently involved in the governance of the local STP? |        |          |
|---|--------|----------|
|   | Number | Per cent |
| Strongly agree  | 1      | 1%       |
| Tend to agree   | 8      | 10%      |
| Neither agree nor disagree  | 13     | 17%      |
| Tend to disagree  | 17     | 22%      |
| Strongly disagree   | 38     | 49%      |
| Don't know  | 1      | 1%       |
| Total   | 78     | 100%     |

| Q10a) In your opinion, how would you describe your experience of the STP planning process? |        |          |
|--|--------|----------|
|  | Number | Per cent |
| Completely top down (nationally driven)  | 28     | 35%      |
| Mostly top down  | 43     | 54%      |
| Equal collaboration  | 7      | 9%       |
| Mostly bottom up   | 1      | 1%       |
| Completely bottom up (locally driven)  | 0      | 0%       |
| Don't know   | 1      | 1%       |
| Total  | 80     | 100%     |

## D. Local ambitions for health and wellbeing

| Q12) In your opinion, to what extent is the STP aligned with your council's local priorities for health and wellbeing? |        |          |
|--|--------|----------|
|  | Number | Per cent |
| To a great extent  | 14     | 17%      |
| To a moderate extent   | 32     | 40%      |
| To a small extent  | 19     | 23%      |
| Not at all   | 12     | 15%      |
| Don't know   | 4      | 5%       |
| Total  | 81     | 100%     |

| Q13) In your opinion, what would you say should be the main focus of your STP? Please identify your most important aspect first, followed by any others that apply. |   |  |                   |
|---|---|--|-------------------|
| <i>Please select any of the following, with '1' signifying the most important.</i>  | Average rank original (low score = high importance) | Average rank reversed (high score = high importance) | Count of mentions |
| Addressing the financial deficits in the local health economy   | 3.68  | 3.32   | 62                |
| Investing in more preventative ways of working  | 2.70  | 4.30   | 67                |
| Addressing unwarranted variation in quality of services   | 4.28  | 2.72   | 50                |
| Reconfiguration of acute services   | 4.63  | 2.37   | 52                |
| Moving care into the community  | 3.61  | 3.39   | 62                |
| Integrating health and social care  | 3.06  | 3.94   | 64                |
| Improving health and wellbeing outcomes   | 2.79  | 4.21   | 68                |
| Other 1 (please specify)  |   |  | 5                 |
| Other 2 (please specify)  |   |  | 5                 |

At Q13, respondents were asked to specify the areas that they thought should be the main focus of their STP by selecting from the seven listed priorities above and ranking them in order of importance, with a rank of '1' signifying highest importance. For the main results report, these rank values were reverse scored for consistency of scale with count of mentions, meaning a high score signifies high importance.

| Q15a) In your opinion, to what extent is the STP having a positive impact on local plans in the following areas? |                   |          |                |          |            |          |                   |          |            |          |        |          |
|--|-------------------|----------|----------------|----------|------------|----------|-------------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
|  | To a great extent |          | To some extent |          | Not at all |          | Too early to tell |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|  | Number            | Per cent | Number         | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number            | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
| Adult social care provision  | 2                 | 3%       | 19             | 24%      | 27         | 34%      | 31                | 39%      | 1          | 1%       | 80     | 100%     |
| Acute care provision   | 3                 | 4%       | 22             | 28%      | 17         | 22%      | 34                | 43%      | 3          | 4%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Primary care services  | 4                 | 5%       | 20             | 25%      | 17         | 21%      | 37                | 46%      | 2          | 3%       | 80     | 100%     |
| Voluntary and community services   | 0                 | 0%       | 11             | 14%      | 30         | 39%      | 33                | 43%      | 3          | 4%       | 77     | 100%     |
| Prevention, public health and early intervention   | 4                 | 5%       | 17             | 22%      | 22         | 28%      | 35                | 44%      | 1          | 1%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Addressing the wider determinants of health and wellbeing  | 2                 | 3%       | 16             | 20%      | 24         | 30%      | 36                | 46%      | 1          | 1%       | 79     | 100%     |
| Other services such as housing and leisure   | 0                 | 0%       | 8              | 10%      | 42         | 55%      | 24                | 31%      | 3          | 4%       | 77     | 100%     |
| Public services reform   | 1                 | 2%       | 10             | 15%      | 27         | 41%      | 26                | 39%      | 2          | 3%       | 66     | 100%     |
| Other (please specify)   | 0                 | 0%       | 0              | 0%       | 0          | 0%       | 1                 | 100%     | 0          | 0%       | 1      | 100%     |

## E. Engagement with the public

| Q16a) In your opinion, to what extent have councillors been involved in the STP as representatives and/or champions of their communities in developing proposals? |        |          |
|---|--------|----------|
|   | Number | Per cent |
| To a great extent   | 3      | 4%       |
| To a moderate extent  | 8      | 10%      |
| To a small extent   | 26     | 33%      |
| Not at all  | 41     | 51%      |
| Don't know  | 2      | 3%       |
| Total   | 80     | 100%     |

## F. Delivery of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs)

| Q17) In your opinion, how confident are you that your STP will deliver its objectives? |        |          |
|--|--------|----------|
|  | Number | Per cent |
| Very confident   | 1      | 1%       |
| Fairly confident   | 16     | 20%      |
| Not very confident   | 35     | 44%      |
| Not at all confident   | 26     | 33%      |
| Don't know   | 2      | 3%       |
| Total  | 80     | 100%     |

| Q18) In your opinion, how confident are you that your STP will bring benefits for your local communities? |        |          |
|---|--------|----------|
|   | Number | Per cent |
| Very confident  | 2      | 3%       |
| Fairly confident  | 16     | 20%      |
| Not very confident  | 39     | 49%      |
| Not at all confident  | 22     | 28%      |
| Don't know  | 1      | 1%       |
| Total   | 80     | 100%     |

## G. Delivery of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) – Cross tabulations

A small number of questions were cross tabulated in order to determine any potential relationships between reported confidence that the STP will deliver its objectives (Q17) and responses to other questions. These questions were reported agreement that councillors have been sufficiently engaged in the STP (Q2a) and the extent to which the STP is aligned with local health and wellbeing priorities (Q12). In the tables below, 'Confident' is a combination of responses 'Very confident' and 'Fairly confident'. Total response number is based on the number of respondents who answered both questions.

|   |                            | Q17) In your opinion, how confident are you that your STP will deliver its objectives? |          |               |          |            |          |        |          |
|---|----------------------------|--|----------|---------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|----------|
| Q2a) In your opinion, do you agree that councillors have been sufficiently engaged in your STP? |                            | Confident  |          | Not confident |          | Don't know |          | Total  |          |
|   |                            | Number   | Per cent | Number        | Per cent | Number     | Per cent | Number | Per cent |
|   | Agree                      | 10   | 13%      | 6             | 8%       | 0          | 0%       | 16     | 20%      |
|   | Neither agree nor disagree | 3  | 4%       | 5             | 6%       | 0          | 0%       | 8      | 10%      |
|   | Disagree                   | 4  | 5%       | 49            | 62%      | 2          | 3%       | 55     | 70%      |
|   | Total                      | 17   | 22%      | 60            | 76%      | 2          | 3%       | 79     | 100%     |

|  |                      | Q17) In your opinion, how confident are you that your STP will deliver its objectives? |          |               |          |                    |          |
|--|----------------------|--|----------|---------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| Q12) In your opinion, to what extent is the STP aligned with your council's local priorities for health and wellbeing? |                      | Confident  |          | Not confident |          | Total <sup>2</sup> |          |
|  |                      | Number   | Per cent | Number        | Per cent | Number             | Per cent |
|  | To a great extent    | 10   | 13%      | 3             | 4%       | 13                 | 17%      |
|  | To a moderate extent | 5  | 7%       | 27            | 36%      | 32                 | 43%      |
|  | To a small extent    | 2  | 3%       | 16            | 21%      | 18                 | 24%      |
|  | Not at all           | 0  | 0%       | 12            | 16%      | 12                 | 16%      |
| Total <sup>2</sup>   | 17                   | 23%  | 58       | 77%           | 75       | 100%               |          |

<sup>2</sup> Excluding don't knows





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