

# **Extraordinary Meeting of West Berkshire District Council**

**Tuesday 22 November 2016**

***Summons and Agenda***

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To: All Members of the Council

*You are requested to attend an extraordinary  
meeting of*

**WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

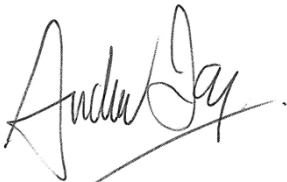
*to be held in the*

**COUNCIL OFFICES, MARKET STREET,  
NEWBURY**

on

**Tuesday 22 November 2016**

**at 7.00pm**



Andy Day  
Head of Strategic Support  
West Berkshire District Council

Date of despatch of Agenda: Friday 11 November 2016

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## **AGENDA**

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1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).

3. **COUNCIL SIZE BOUNDARY REVIEW - PHASE 1 (C3029)**

*To appraise Council of the work that has been undertaken in relation to the Boundary Review (Council Size) and to recommend a single figure as the proposed future number of Members with effect from the next 2019/20 District Council elections.*

**(Pages 5 - 36)**



**Agenda - Council to be held on Tuesday, 22 November 2016 (continued)**

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.



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## Council Size Boundary Review - Phase 1

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<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Extraordinary Council
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	22 November 2016
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Roger Croft
<b>Date Portfolio Member agreed report:</b>	10 November 2016
<b>Report Author:</b>	Andy Day
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	C3029

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### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To appraise Council of the work that has been undertaken in relation to the Boundary Review (Council Size) and to recommend a single figure as the proposed future number of Members with effect from the next 2019/20 District Council elections.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Governance Report be approved and adopted.
- 2.2 That, for the purposes of Phase 1 of the Boundary Review process, the Council be requested to agree that the number of Members required from 2019/20 be reduced from the current number of 52 to 40 (+ or -1).

### 3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** If this report is approved then savings of around £84,000 are available.
- 3.2 **Policy:** N/A
- 3.3 **Personnel:** N/A
- 3.4 **Legal:** This review is being conducted in accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** N/A
- 3.6 **Property:** N/A
- 3.7 **Other:** N/A

### 4. Other options considered

- 4.1 N/A

## 5. Executive Summary

- 5.1 At its meeting on 17 September 2015 the Council agreed to approach the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) with a view to having a Council Size Boundary Review undertaken. Arising from this approach the Council were notified that its request had been approved and Phase 1 - draft Council Size submission would have to be completed by the end of November 2016.
- 5.2 Phase 1 of the review requires the Council to look at its future governance arrangements having regard to the financial challenges it faces and to suggest a future Council size (new single number of Councillors) going forward. The Council is also required at this stage to review its electoral forecasts having regard to a number of factors including the projected number of new houses to be built across the District.
- 5.3 Phase 2 of the review will involve looking at warding patterns having regard to the proposed new number of Councillors. The LGBC believe that factors that influence Council size can be drawn together into four broad elements:
- (i) The decision making process - what decisions, taken where, and how is it managed?
  - (ii) Quasi-judicial processes - e.g. planning and licensing – what is the workload and how is it managed?
  - (iii) The scrutiny process - what is scrutinised and how is the total scrutiny workload managed?
  - (iv) The representative role of the elected Member.
- 5.4 A cross party Working Group has been set up to manage the two phase process and this has met twice. The report attached to this report sets out the current governance arrangements and suggests that changes will be required going forward to reflect the likely resources available to support this.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Working Group has considered the requirements of Phase 1 of the review and is recommending that the future number of Members to represent the electorate of West Berkshire from 2019/20 be reduced from 52 to 40 (+ or – 1).

## 7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A - Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C - Electoral review of West Berkshire Council – Proposed Council Size Submission
- 7.4 Appendix D - Members Survey Results

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# Council Size Boundary Review - Phase 1 - Supporting Information

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## 1. Introduction/Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 17 September 2015 the Council agreed to approach the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) with a view to having a Council Size Boundary Review undertaken. Arising from this approach the Council were notified that its request had been approved and Phase 1 - draft Council Size submission would have to be completed by the end of November 2016.
- 1.2 Phase 1 of the review requires the Council to look at its future governance arrangements having regard to the financial challenges it faces and to suggest a future Council size (new single number of Councillors) going forward. The Council is also required at this stage to review its electoral forecasts having regard to a number of factors including the projected number of new houses to be built across the District.
- 1.3 Phase 2 of the review will involve looking at warding patterns having regard to the proposed new number of Councillors. The LGBC believe that factors that influence Council size can be drawn together into four broad elements:
  - (i) The decision making process - what decisions, taken where, and how is it managed?
  - (ii) Quasi-judicial processes – e.g. planning and licensing – what is the workload and how is it managed?
  - (iii) The scrutiny process - what is scrutinised and how is the total scrutiny workload managed?
  - (iv) The representative role of the elected Member.

## 2. Supporting Information

- 2.1 A cross party Working Group has been set up to manage the two phase process and this has met twice. The Working Group comprises the following Members:

Councillor Graham Jones (Chairman)  
Councillor Pamela Bale (Vice Chairman)  
Councillor Steve Ardagh-Walter  
Councillor Adrian Edwards  
Councillor Alan Macro
- 2.2 As part of formulating the Governance report a survey of Members was undertaken between 19 September and 3 October to better understand the time commitment of Members in relation to a number of roles that they were required to undertake. 32 (62%) Members completed the survey. The results are reflected within the Governance Report attached to this report as Appendix C.

2.3 The Governance report sets out the current governance arrangements and looks to address the four points set out in paragraph 1.3. The Working Group has accepted that all Members have representational roles and the majority also sit on outside bodies. However, going forward it is suggested that there will be three substantive roles for Members and these are set out below:

- (i) Executive (10)
- (ii) Regulatory (15)
- (iii) Scrutiny (15)

2.4 As part of Phase 1 of the review the Council has had to provide the LGBC with a significant amount of data based on the ONS data together with other planning models. This forecasting has to look to 2022. The work done to date indicates that the current registered electorate figure would rise by 3.2% from 118,823 to 125,877. Based on 52 Members this would mean an increase on the 2016 figures of 136 per Member.

2.5 As part of this exercise the Working Group received comparable data which showed how the Council compared to other Unitary County and Unitary District Authorities in relation to Electors per Councillor. Based on the current number of Members (52) each Member had an average of 2208 electors. This placed the Council 11<sup>th</sup> lowest (out of 55 authorities) in terms of number of electorate per councillor. The second graph showed that 40 Members would have an average of 2870 electors. This scenario placed the Council in 28<sup>th</sup> position out of 55 authorities.

### 3. Proposals

3.1 The Working Group consider that in looking ahead to the District Council elections in 2019/20 the number of Members representing the electorate of West Berkshire should reduce from 52 to 40 (+ or – 1).

3.2 The LGBC require a single figure to be submitted as part of Phase 1 and will not accept a range. However, having had discussions with the LGBC they would be prepared to accept a variance of + or – 1 at this time if the case can be made from moving away from the preferred figure of 40.

### 4. Conclusion

4.1 The Working Group has considered the requirements of Phase 1 of the review and is recommending that the future number of Members to represent the electorate of West Berkshire from 2019/20 be reduced from 52 to 40 (+ or – 1).

### 5. Consultation and Engagement.

5.1 This proposal will be the subject of extensive public consultation by the LGBC as part of the review. In addition, the LGBC addressed the recent District Parish Conference on 18 October 2016 to provide some detail behind the review and the opportunities for Parishes to contribute to this.



**Subject to Call-In:**

Yes:  No: X

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval X  
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council   
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position   
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months   
Item is Urgent Key Decision   
Report is to note only

**Strategic Aims and Priorities Supported:**

The proposals will help achieve the following Council Strategy aim:

**X MEC – Become an even more effective Council**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority:

**X MEC1 – Become an even more effective Council**

**Officer details:**

Name: Andy Day  
Job Title: Head of Strategic Support  
Tel No: 01635 519459  
E-mail Address: andy.day@westberkshire.gov.uk

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## Appendix B

### Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity.

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

<b>Name of policy, strategy or function:</b>	Council Size Boundary Review – Phase 1
<b>Version and release date of item (if applicable):</b>	
<b>Owner of item being assessed:</b>	Andy Day
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Andy Day
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	14 October 2016

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	No	New or proposed	No
Strategy	No	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes
Function	Yes	Is changing	No
Service	No		

1. What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the policy, strategy function or service and who is likely to benefit from it?	
<b>Aims:</b>	To conduct a Council Size Review of the District.
<b>Objectives:</b>	To review the future governance arrangements of the Council with a view to ensuring that they are proportionate and affordable. As a result of this review to agree the total number of Councillors required post 2019/20.
<b>Outcomes:</b>	To reduce the number of Members and to have governance arrangements which are proportionate and affordable.
<b>Benefits:</b>	To provide a much more efficient Council.

<p><b>2. Note which groups may be affected by the policy, strategy, function or service. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.</b></p> <p>(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender)</p>
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Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>		

<b>3. Result</b>	
Are there any aspects of the policy, strategy, function or service, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	No
The review will address the current electoral inequality in some parts of the District.	
Will the policy, strategy, function or service have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	No
The review is District wide and will ensure that the electorate per Member ratio is far more equitable.	

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

<b>4. Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name: Andy Day

Date: 14 October 2016

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, the Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) for publication on the WBC website.

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# Electoral Review of West Berkshire District Council

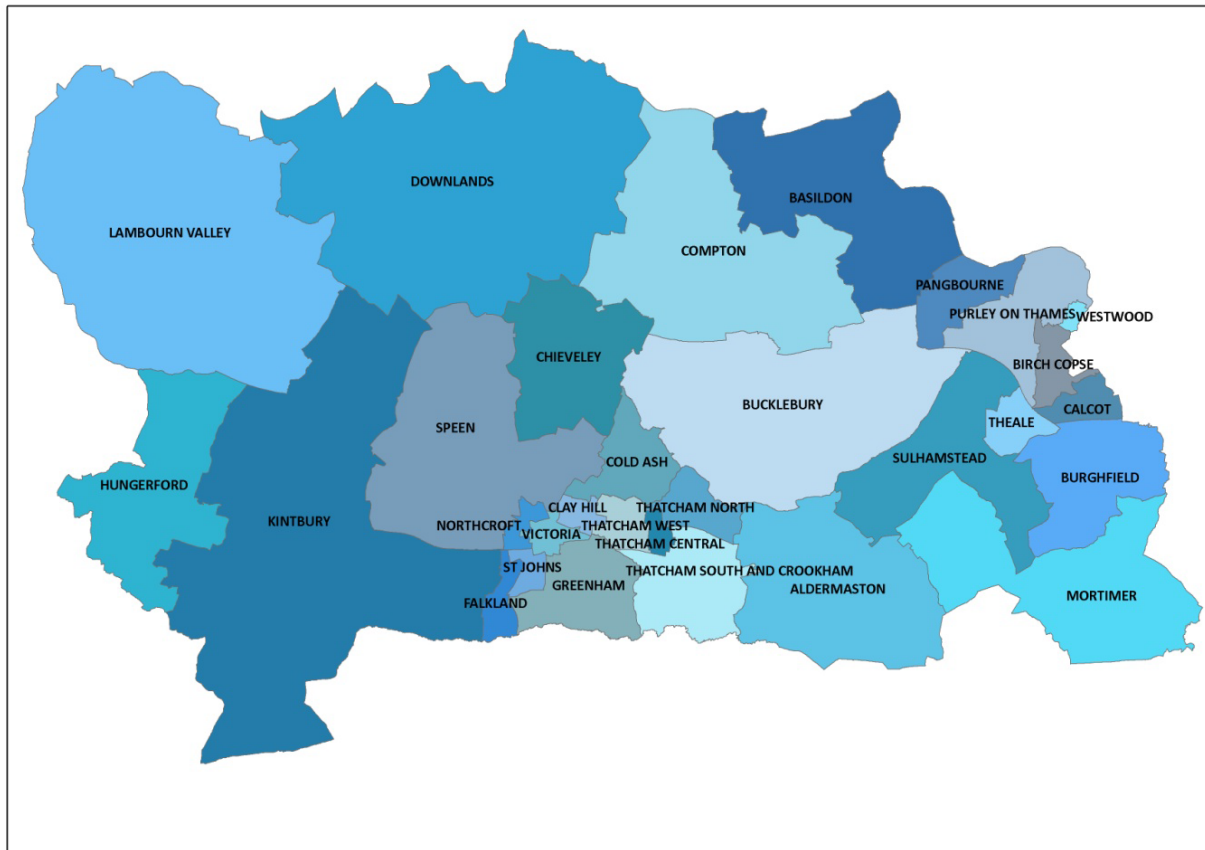
## Stage 1 Size of Council

# Summary

West Berkshire District Council has carried out an assessment of the roles and responsibilities of its elected councillors. The Council has determined that a Council size of 40 (+ or - 1) councillors will secure effective and convenient local government in West Berkshire going forward from the next District Council Elections in 2019/20..

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 West Berkshire makes up over half of the geographical area of the county of Berkshire - covering an area of 272 square miles. It lies on the western fringe of the South East region, centrally located, at a crossroads where the South East meets the South West and where the south coast comes up to meet the southern Midlands.
- 1.2 As such, the district lies at the convergence of two key road arteries in the south – the M4 and the A34. Both provide direct road links in all directions, with all the key urban centres in southern England (London, Reading, Southampton, Portsmouth, Bristol, Oxford, Swindon) within an hours drive.
- 1.3 The district has good rail links, with London less than an hour by train and further connections, via Reading, to all the mainline routes throughout the country. The area also has very good links to international transport hubs: Heathrow and Southampton airport are 40 miles away, as are the ferry terminals in Southampton and Portsmouth, providing links with the continent.
- 1.4 The district is primarily made up of chalk Downlands, loosely centred along the lower reaches of the River Kennet, which rises in Wiltshire and flows through to join the Thames at Reading.
- 1.5 The district is administered by West Berkshire Council. The Council was created as a single tier (unitary) authority after the dissolution of Berkshire County Council in 1998. The boundary of the district corresponds with that of the former Newbury District Council.
- 1.6 The Council has 52 elected Councillors. A Leader and Cabinet (known as the Executive) model was adopted in May 2001. West Berkshire Council is a Conservative-run authority: the political composition (as of the 2015 local elections) is Conservative - 48; Liberal Democrat - 4.
- 1.7 The district of West Berkshire is made up of 30 Wards, each returning elected members to the Council. The map below shows how these are organised across the district.

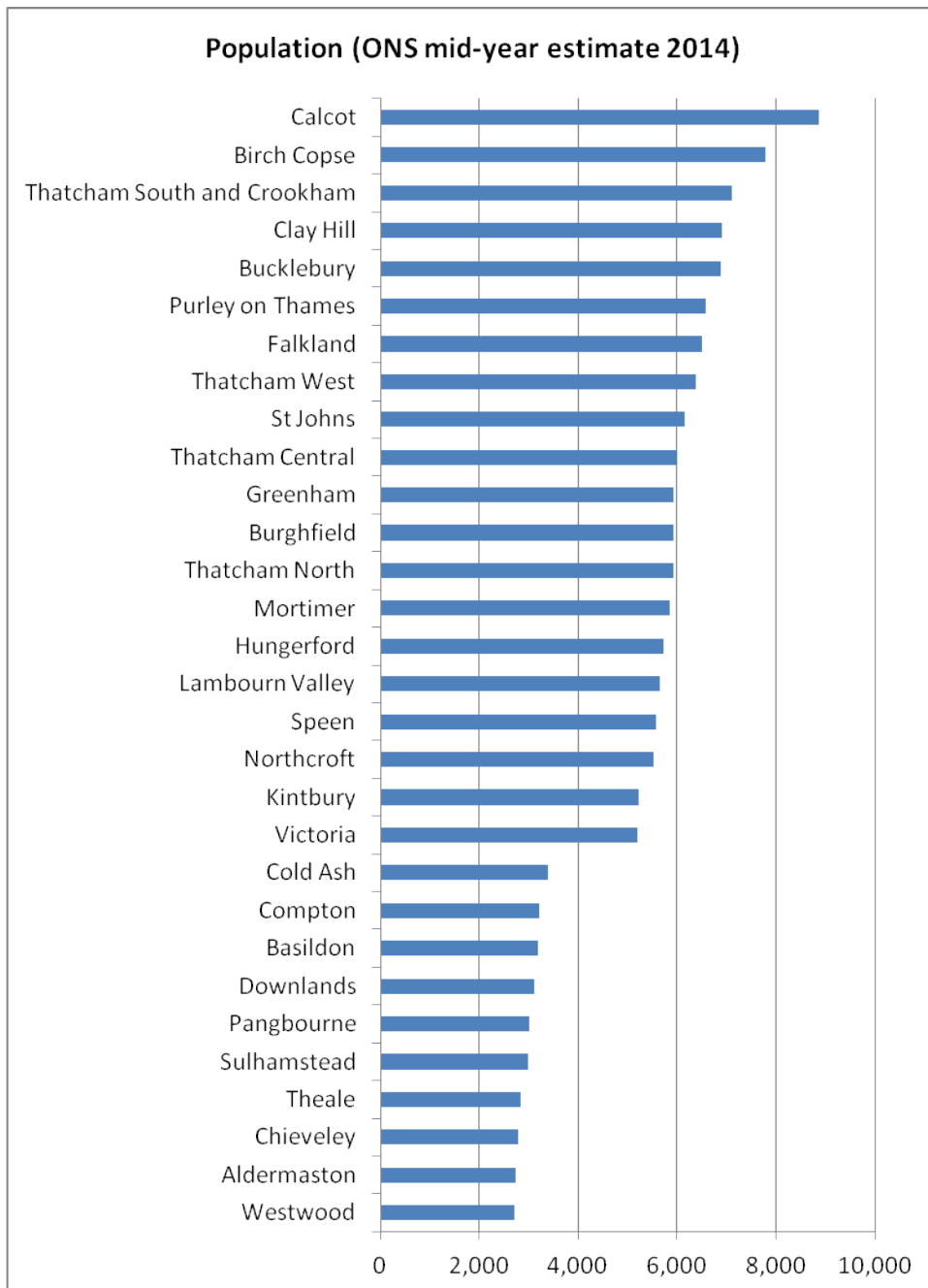


**Map showing the distribution of wards across West Berkshire**

1.8 The mid-year population estimate for 2014 showed the West Berkshire population as 155,732 (published June 2015). The largest urban area in the district is Newbury (incl. Greenham and Speen and Thatcham), where around 66,000 (42%) of West Berkshire residents live. 25,941 or 17% of residents live in the suburban areas to the west of Reading borough (Birch copse, Calcot, Purley and Westwood). Other significant Wards in the district are Bucklebury with just under 6,900 residents and Greenham with a population of just over 5,900.

Ward / area	Population
Newbury	40,440
Thatcham	25,430
Suburban area adjoining Reading borough	25,941
Bucklebury	6,874
Greenham	5,937
Burghfield	5,926
Hungerford	5,726
Mortimer	5,864
<i>West Berkshire</i>	<i>155,732</i>
<i>Area (Hectares)</i>	<i>70416.82</i>

- 1.9 This data comes from the Office for National Statistics. An estimate of the number of people living in the area, and their gender is produced annually. The most recent was for mid-2014, published in June 2015. West Berkshire has one of the most dispersed populations in the South East with 2.2 people per hectare (ONS Mid-year estimate 2014.)
- 1.10 The graph below shows the distribution of population across individual wards within the district. Calcot and Birch Copse, in the suburban area to the east of the district, are the largest wards in West Berkshire with just under 9,000 and 8,000 people respectively. The smallest wards represent around 2,800 people.



Source: (ONS) mid-year population estimate 202014



- 1.11 The recently released 2014 population projections by the Office for National Statistics, in predicting general population growth across the country, estimate the population of West Berkshire will be 160,404 by 2022 - an increase of some 2.3%. This compares with an average increase in population across the South East of 4.8% and for England 4.4%.
- 1.12 The largest employment sector in West Berkshire is public administration, education and health (27.3%) and then banking, finance and insurance with (17.6%) of the West Berkshire population employed in these sectors. Whilst there are some large businesses based in the area (AWE, Vodafone, Stryker, Micro Focus International plc), a significant number of businesses are small and medium size enterprises and cover a diverse range of sectors.
- 1.13 West Berkshire District Council, like many other local authorities across the country, will continue to face significant financial challenges in the years ahead. In order to ensure that the Council is fit for purpose going forward the Council agreed to approach the Local Government Boundary Commission with a view to having an Electoral Review undertaken of the Council size.
- 1.14 The Council established a Steering Group (with representation from both Political Groups on the Council) in order to oversee this review. The first phase of this review has been undertaken on the basis of looking at our existing governance structures and reviewing the role and workloads of Councillors. All Councillors are cognisant of the difficult financial challenges facing the Council and the likely available resource to manage the governance arrangements going forward.
- 1.15 In carrying out this review we have also taken into consideration the role that new technology can and does play in helping councillors manage their workloads.

## **2 Governance**

- 2.1 There has been no formal methodology devised of how many Members the Council needs to run effectively. The Steering Group has considered the issues referred to in this submission and then exercised their judgement. Members are engaged with the Council and its political management structures as witnessed by the fact that each Member sits on at least one committee and others appointed to more than one.
- 2.2 West Berkshire Council has an extensive scheme of delegation that is reviewed on an annual basis. Since 2001 the Council has been operating Leader and Cabinet (Executive) style of governance in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.3 The Council's Executive has 10 Members appointed to it, each with their own portfolios. With the exception of the Executive, the allocation of seats on all other formal "Committees" is based on the proportionality rules set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

## **Full Council**

- 2.3 All 52 councillors are expected to attend Full Council meetings which are held five times a year. The main role of the Full Council meeting is to consider and approve the annual budget and the Council policies that make up the Strategic Policy Framework of the Council. Full Council enables Councillors to present petitions organised by their residents and ask questions of Executive Members. The Annual Meeting of Full Council in May also carries out its statutory role of electing the Chairman and Vice Chairman, with the Leader appointing his Executive. The Chairmen and Vice Chairmanships of other committees are managed at the annual meeting..

## **The Executive**

- 2.4 The Executive currently meets 10 times a year and makes all of the day to day key decisions of the Council within the Policy and Budget Framework of the Council. The Executive will also make recommendations to Council on the Annual Revenue and Capital Budget and Council Strategy. The Executive is a single party “committee” comprising up to 10 Members (including the Leader) from the majority party (Conservatives). Under the Local Government Act 2000 the maximum number of Councillors that can serve on the Executive is 9 plus the Leader of the Council. The Executive currently comprises 10 Councillors. The Portfolio’s assigned to the current Executive are as set out below:

Leader of the Council, Strategy, Performance and Economic Development  
Deputy Leader, Health and Wellbeing  
Finance and Transformation  
Culture and Environment  
Planning and Housing  
Adult Social Care  
Children and Young People  
Community Resilience and Partnerships  
Highways and Transport  
Corporate Services and External Affairs

## **Overview and Scrutiny**

- 2.5 The Council has an Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) and three standing Select Committees. The OSMC meets three times a year. The first meeting of the OSMC will establish a work programme for the three Select Committees.
- 2.6 The Select Committees mirror the three Council Directorates, namely, Communities, Environment and Resources. The OSMC comprises 7 Members these being the chairs and vice chairs of the Select Committee plus one Liberal Democrat Member.

## **Licensing and Licensing Sub Committee**

- 2.8 The Licensing Committee comprises 12 Members and only meets 2 or 3 times a year. The Committee is charged with the responsibility of undertaking the

Council's statutory function of discharging the Council's licensing functions as Licensing Authority. All Members serving on the Licensing Committee are required to undertake specific training before they take up their roles. This is particularly important when Members are asked to determine Licensing appeals. Three Members are required for meetings of the Licensing Sub Committee.

### **District Planning Committee**

- 2.9 The District Planning Committee comprises 12 Members. The District Planning Committee's role is to review decisions made by the two Area Planning Committees where those decisions conflict with adopted policies. Given the role of the District Planning Committee meetings are held infrequently.

### **Eastern and Western Area Planning Committees**

- 2.10 The Eastern and Western Area Planning Committees meet every three weeks and comprise 12 Members each. Each Committee comprises Members from the respective parts of the District. The Council covers a wide geographical area, much of which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council has a robust scheme of delegation in place and this helps to moderate the number of planning applications coming to committee.

### **Governance and Ethics Committee**

- 2.11 The Governance and Ethics Committee comprises 8 Members and meets five times a year. None of the Members on the Governance and Ethics Committee can be a Member of the Executive. The former Governance and Audit Committee was recently combined with the Standards Committee to form the new Governance and Ethics Committee.
- 2.12 The main purpose of the Governance and Ethics Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the of the governance framework, which includes the risk management framework and the associated control framework.
- 2.13 The Committee is also responsible for managing the complaints process associated with the Code of Conduct. This process is supported by the Monitoring Officer, Independent Persons and an Advisory Committee whose role it is to review the complaints received and make appropriate recommendations to the Governance and Ethics Committee on any sanctions that should be applied.

### **Member Development Group**

- 2.14 The Council has set up a Member Development Group (MDG) comprising one Member from each political group. The MDG carries out an overarching role of monitoring and supporting the framework for Member development and training. The MDG meets 4 times a year.

### **3. Representational Roles and Workloads**

#### **Representational Role of Members**

- 3.1 The role of Councillors in West Berkshire is varied and it is for each Councillor to decide how to organise their work. Councillors not only have responsibilities to the Council but also to their respective wards. Councillors also have to ensure that all parts of their community are represented and maintain a link between the users and providers of Council and other public services. Effective representation ensures that local people have a voice and can influence decisions that are made that affect them or their area.
- 3.2 West Berkshire Councillors also help their constituents on specific issues. Councillor contact usually involves dealing with service issues and complaints. All Councillors receive support from council officers in relation to dealing with and resolving local issues.
- 3.3 Whilst it is impossible to generalise how Councillors manage their roles the most common way appears to be to:
- (i) Hold meetings with officers and their constituents;
  - (ii) Represent and speak on behalf of their ward constituent at committees.
- 3.4 Councillors receive support from officers and colleague Councillors in carrying out their duties in relation to their casework and representational role including:
- (i) Liaison with senior management and close links with the Democratic Services Team;
  - (ii) Support from their group;
  - (iii) The Member Development Programme;
  - (iv) Links to key information documents such as the constitution and DPD and links to agendas and minutes.
- 3.5 Councillors engage with their ward constituents in a range of ways. A significant number of councilors attend parish council meetings and act as a conduit between the District Council and the parish. When a particularly controversial issue arises Members will have to manage face to face meetings, e mails, letters and telephone calls with the public within their wards. West Berkshire has 63 parishes and 56 Parish Councils. The difference in numbers is that some parishes only have the status of a parish meeting.

#### **Member Grants**

- 3.6 The Council has operated a grants scheme which allows Members to bring forward projects for capital funding. Members are able to bid for funding up to £5,000 towards a project for their ward. The Council allocates up to £80,000 in funding per year.

## **Outside Bodies**

3.7 The Council has a list of outside bodies and Councillors are appointed to these for a four year term. At the current time the Council appoints to 61 outside bodies. Councillors are not required to report back on their outside body activity.

## **4.0 The Financial Challenges - A Proposed Governance Structure for the Future**

4.1 Over the next three years this Council will need to find up to £22m in savings from its Revenue Budget. This follows £16m which it had to find in 2016/17. Looking ahead the Government is planning, in 2019/2020, to stop the Revenue Support Grant it pays to local authorities. This means that any governance structure needs to be proportionate to the resources available.

4.2 It is clear therefore that in order to realise the quantum of savings referred to above the Council's Establishment will reduce and it is likely that the current staffing levels available to support meetings will be impacted. At the present time over 320 meetings are serviced each year.

4.3 In looking at the Council's current governance structures (Section 2) Councillors can be categorised as:

- (i) Executive Members (10)
- (ii) Scrutiny Members (18)
- (iii) Regulatory Members (36)

4.4 At the present time some Councillors wear multiple hats and sit on a Planning Committee whilst also being an Executive Member. The Council's constitution does allow ward members to speak at Planning Committees so there should never be an opportunity when a Councillor cannot represent his/her electorate on any application if they are not appointed to a Planning Committee.

4.5 The current governance structures are not considered to be sustainable going forward. As such the Council will need to consider the possibility of moving to a single Regulatory Committee (amalgamating the two Area Planning Committees and the Licensing Committee). It will also need to review the workload associated with scrutiny to ensure that this is proportionate to the available resource.

4.6 Given the financial landscape it is suggested that a future governance structure could be based on each Councillor undertaking one of the following substantive roles. Councillors could then be members of other committees or task groups as required.

- (i) Executive Members (10)
- (ii) Scrutiny Members (15)
- (iii) Regulatory Members (15)

## **5. Responses from the Survey**

- 5.1 As part of the Council's consideration of its submission on Council size, a survey of Members has been undertaken regarding time spent by Members in their role as Councillors on formal Council business, partnerships and outside bodies, and time spent by Members in their representational role in, and on behalf, of their communities.
- 5.2 The survey contained 11 questions. 32 (62%) of Members responded. Members were asked specific questions in relation to the average number of hours Members spent per week on:
- (a) Preparing for and sitting on formal Council committees, partner organisations and outside bodies to which Members have been appointed by the Council.
  - (b) Positions which carry a special responsibility allowance ie; Executive Member, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Opposition Spokesperson's allowance.
  - (c) Constituency matters which cover a range of issues.
  - (d) Engagement with Town and Parish Councils.
  - (e) Engagement with Community Organisations.
- 5.2 34% of those responding spent between 1 and 10 hours a week attending Committees etc. 31% of those spent between 1-5 hours preparing for those meetings whilst 25% spent between 6-10 hours a week. 45% of those responding were also a Parish and Town Councillor with 50% of those spending around 6-10 hours a week on Parish and Town Council activity.
- 5.4 The detailed answers to all 11 questions are set out as an Appendix to this report and will be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission as part of the Council's overall Stage 1 case.

## **6. Current Electorate and Electorate Forecasts to 2021**

- 6.1 The Council's electoral arrangements were last reviewed in 2002 following the introduction of Executive Arrangements ("the 2001-2002 Review"), when the then Boundary Committee for England determined that the Council size should be 52 Members, a reduction of 2 Members. Based on February 2001 figures, the total electorate for the district was 111,234. The electoral forecast to 2006 demonstrated an expected increase in electors by 5% to 117,370. This equated to an average electorate per Member of 2,257 per Member.
- 6.2 The current registered electorate based on September 2016 figures is 118,823 for those entitled to vote in local government elections. This equates to an average number of registered electorate per Member of 2,285. The forecast of the number of people eligible to vote by 2022 shows a cumulative projected increase of 3.2% on the 2016 figures to 125,877. This equates to a possible projected increase in the average number of registered electors per Member to

2421, an increase on the 2016 figures of 136 per Member based on the current 52 Councillors.

- 6.3 The Council is aware that based on comparable data produced by the Local Government Boundary Commission it is currently placed 11<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 52 Local Authorities in terms of number of electorate per councillor.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 Whilst there has been no significant change in the structure of the Council's governance arrangements since the 2002 Review, the scope of Member commitments, for example in areas such as Health and Wellbeing (an Executive function) and safeguarding has changed. The complexity of the Council's business as an extended organisation with its partners including Thames Valley Police, Newbury and Reading West Clinical Commissioning Groups has added a degree of complexity to some Members' roles. The business of outside bodies, to which the Council makes appointments, is evidenced within the detail of this submission. However, as has already been articulated Members do not report back formally on their outside body commitments. The Members' survey also adds further evidence to the Council's overall submission. A review of outside bodies will also be undertaken prior to the District Council Elections in 2019/20.
- 7.2 Executive Members have specific responsibilities under Executive Arrangements. However, non Executive Members also have key roles to play on the Regulatory Committees (Planning and Licensing Committees), Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Select Committees, Governance and Ethics Committee and a range of Task Groups. Members also have their representational roles to perform and details of their case work have been included as part of this submission. In some instances Executive Members are also allocated regulatory roles, which can, in some instances, mean that "backbenchers" are unable to undertake regulatory roles.
- 7.3 The Council is aware of the changing nature of its role given the financial challenges it has faced over the last few years and will continue to face going forward. The Council is also mindful of the positive impact that technology can play in helping Members perform their representational roles. In fact, the Council has moved to a nearly "paperless" model of governance with the majority of agendas and reports being dispatched through Modern.gov and picked up by the Surface Pro tablets which Members have been provided with. The District will also benefit from having access to superfast broadband which will enable Members to interact with their electorates much easier particularly where Members choose to use social media.
- 7.4 Going forward and having regard to the financial landscape, the Council consider that its future governance structures should reflect Members undertaking three substantive roles namely, Executive, Regulatory or Scrutiny roles. To this end, the Council's view is that the Council size in 2019/2020 should reduce from 52 Members to 40 (+ or – 1) Members.

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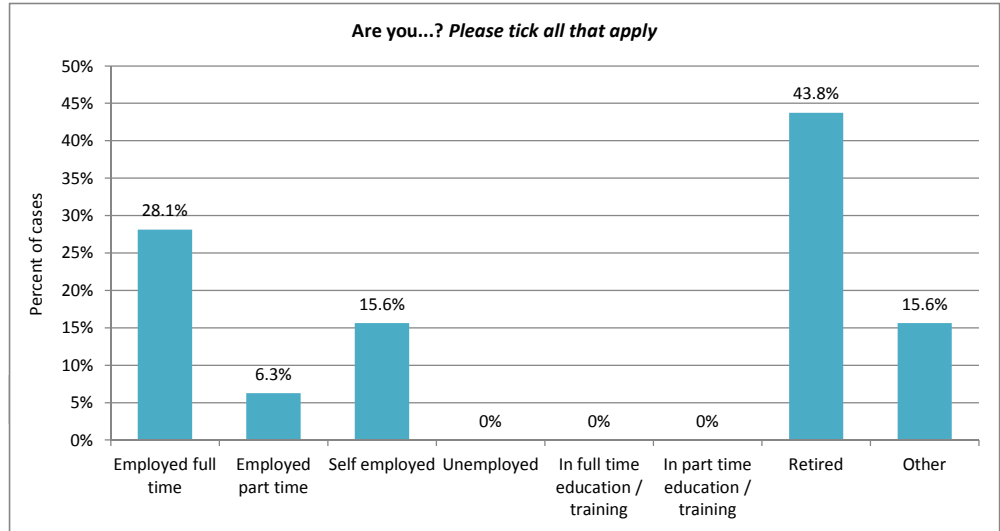


Name:

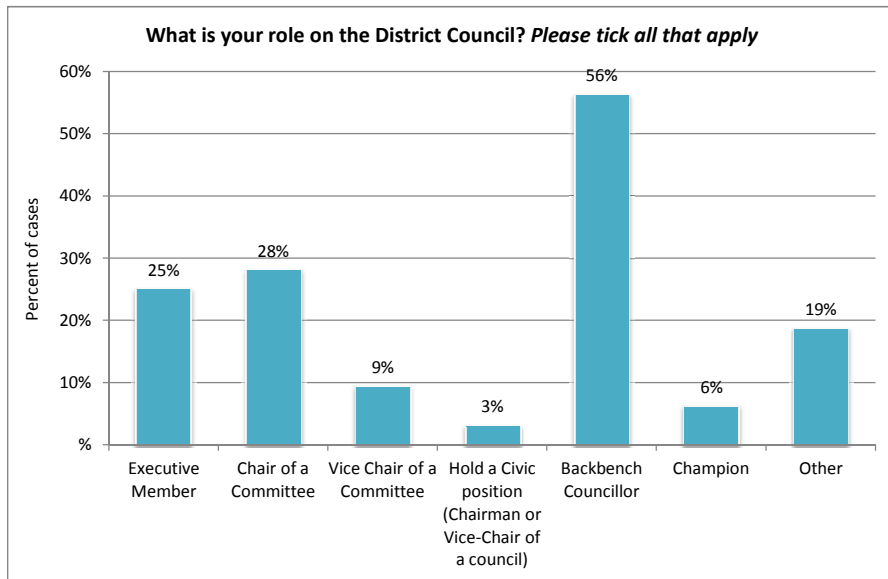
- Adrian Edwards
- Alan Law
- Alan Macro
- Anthony Chadley
- Anthony Pick
- Billy Drummond
- Clive Hooker
- Dennis Benneyworth
- Dominic Boeck
- Emma Webster
- Garth Simpson
- Graham Bridgman
- Graham Jones
- Hilary Cole
- Ian Morrin
- James Cole
- James Podger
- Jeanette Clifford
- Keith Chopping
- Lynne Doherty
- Marigold Jaques
- Mike Johnston
- Pamela Bale
- Paul Bryant
- Quentin Webb
- Richard Somner
- Rick Jones
- Roger Croft
- Steve Ardagh-Walter
- Tim Metcalfe
- Tony Linden
- Virginia von Celsing

Number of responses = 32 (62%)

Are you...? Please tick all that apply	Frequency	Percent of cases
Employed full time	9	28.1%
Employed part time	2	6.3%
Self employed	5	15.6%
Unemployed	0	0%
In full time education / training	0	0%
In part time education / training	0	0%
Retired	14	43.8%
Other	5	15.6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>109%</i>



What is your role on the District Council? <i>Please tick all that apply</i>	Frequency	Percent of cases
Executive Member	8	25%
Chair of a Committee	9	28%
Vice Chair of a Committee	3	9%
Hold a Civic position (Chairman or Vice-Chair of a council)	1	3%
Backbench Councillor	18	56%
Champion	2	6%
Other	6	19%
<i>Total</i>	47	147%

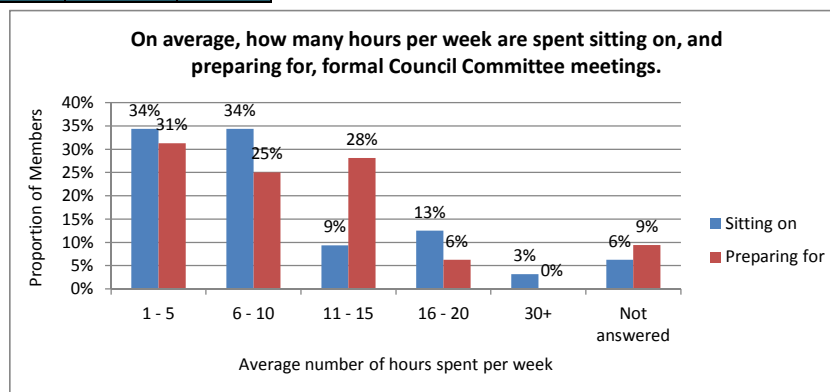


On average, how many hours per week do you spend sitting on, and preparing for, formal Council Committee meetings and partner organisations/outside bodies to which you have been appointed by the Council?

Sitting on	Frequency	Percent
1 - 5	11	34.38
6 - 10	11	34.38
11 - 15	3	9.38
16 - 20	4	12.50
30+	1	3.13
Not answered	2	6.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

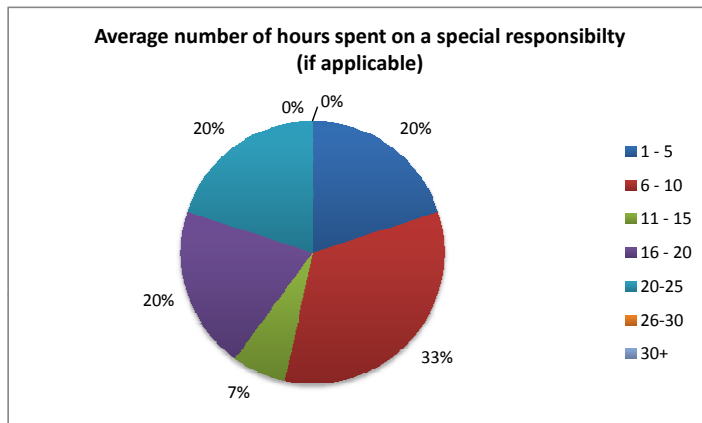
Number of hours	Sitting on	Preparing for
1 - 5	34%	31%
6 - 10	34%	25%
11 - 15	9%	28%
16 - 20	13%	6%
30+	3%	0%
Not answered	6%	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Preparing for	Frequency	Percent
1 - 5	10	31.25
6 - 10	8	25.00
11 - 15	9	28.13
16 - 20	2	6.25
30+	0	.00
Not answered	3	9.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

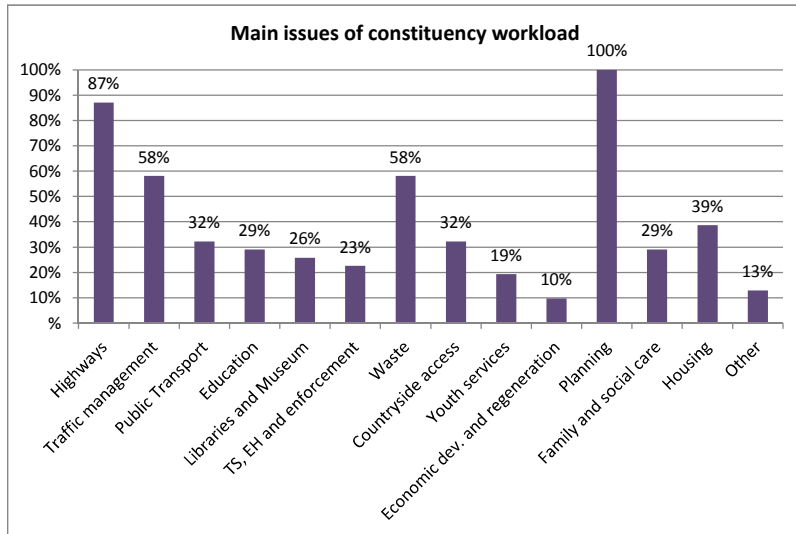


If you hold a position, with a special responsibility allowance attached, for which you have been appointed by the Council, e.g. Executive Member, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Opposition Spokesman, how many hours per week do you spend discharging this function.

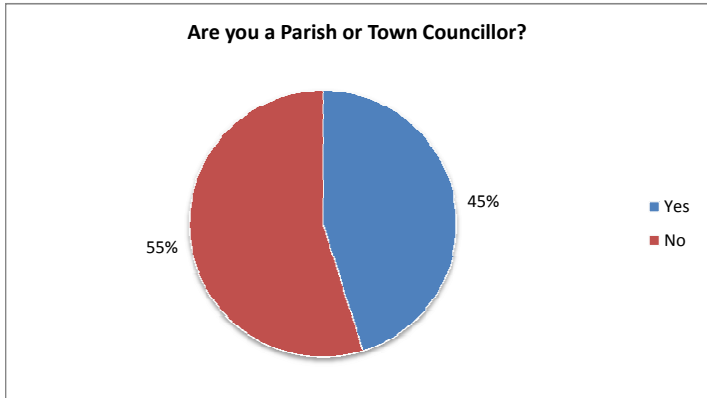
Hours per week	Frequency	Percent
1 - 5	3	9.4
6 - 10	5	15.6
11 - 15	1	3.1
16 - 20	3	9.4
20-25	3	9.4
26-30	0	0
30+	0	0
Not applicable	15	46.9
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>94</i>
Not answered	2	6.3
<i>Total</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>100</i>



What are the main issues which make up your constituency workload? <i>Please tick all that apply</i>	Frequency	Percent of cases
Highways	27	87%
Traffic management	18	58%
Public Transport	10	32%
Education	9	29%
Libraries and Museum	8	26%
TS, EH and enforcement	7	23%
Waste	18	58%
Countryside access	10	32%
Youth services	6	19%
Economic dev. and regeneration	3	10%
Planning	31	100%
Family and social care	9	29%
Housing	12	39%
Other	4	13%
<i>Total</i>	<i>172</i>	<i>555%</i>

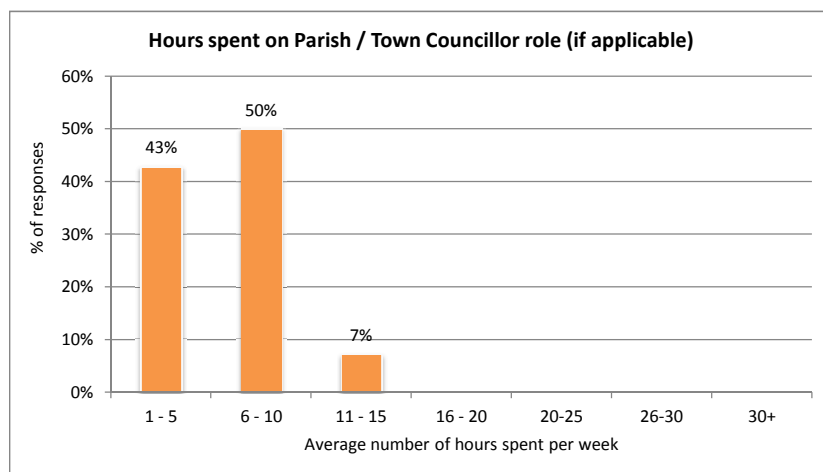


Are you a Parish or Town Councillor?	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Yes	14	43.8	45.2
No	17	53.1	54.8
<i>Subtotal</i>	31	97%	100%
Not answered	1	3.1	
<i>Total</i>	32	100%	100%



**How many hours per week do you spend in your role as Parish / Town Councillor?**

Hours per week	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1 - 5	6	19%	43%
6 - 10	7	22%	50%
11 - 15	1	3%	7%
16 - 20	0	0	0
20-25	0	0	0
26-30	0	0	0
30+	0	0	0
Not applicable	0	0	0
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>100</i>
Not answered	18	56%	
<i>Total</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>100</i>	



**How often do you do the following activities?**

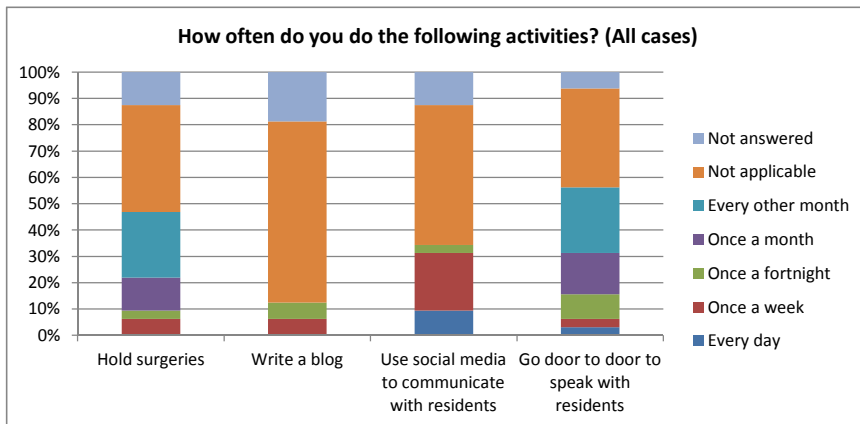
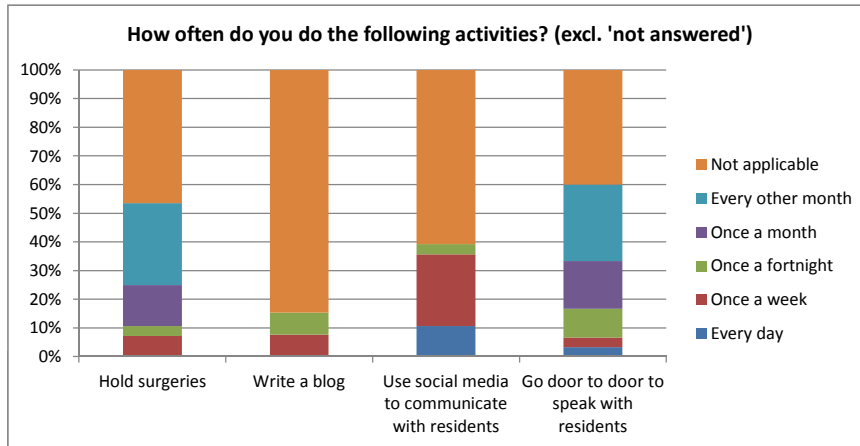
Hold surgeries	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Every day	0	0	0
Once a week	2	6.3	7.1
Once a fortnight	1	3.1	3.6
Once a month	4	12.5	14.3
Every other month	8	25.0	28.6
Not applicable	13	40.6	46.4
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Not answered	4	12.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	

Write a blog	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Every day	0	0	0
Once a week	2	6.3	7.7
Once a fortnight	2	6.3	7.7
Once a month	0	0	0
Every other month	0	0	0
Not applicable	22	68.8	84.6
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>81.25</b>	<b>100</b>
Not answered	6	18.8	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	

Use social media to communicate with residents	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Every day	3	9	11
Once a week	7	21.9	25.0
Once a fortnight	1	3.1	3.6
Once a month	0	0	0
Every other month	0	0	0
Not applicable	17	53.1	60.7
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>100</b>
Not answered	4	12.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	

Go door to door to speak with residents	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Every day	1	3	3
Once a week	1	3.1	3.3
Once a fortnight	3	9.4	10.0
Once a month	5	16	17
Every other month	8	25	27
Not applicable	12	37.5	40.0
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>93.75</b>	<b>100</b>
Not answered	2	6.3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	

	Hold surgeries	Write a blog	Use social media to communicate with residents	Go door to door to speak with residents
Every day	0	0	3	1
Once a week	2	2	7	1
Once a fortnight	1	2	1	3
Once a month	4	0	0	5
Every other month	8	0	0	8
Not applicable	13	22	17	12
Not answered	4	6	4	2





**Are there any other areas of work you carry out in your capacity as Councillor, e.g. School Governor? If so, please provide details.**

- 1 Member of Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority Governor of Berkshire NHS Health Trust South West Neighbourhood Action Group Trustee of St Bartholomews School Foundation Trustee of Newbury Almshouse Trust
- 2 Member of EAPC and DPC Council representative on Berkshire Pension Panel
- 3 School governor: 2-3 hours/week Liaison committee member. 3 hours twice a year
- 4 Chairman of the West Berkshire Heritage Forum.
- 5 I am a governor of the Willows school and a foundation governor of St Barts. I am a director of Greenham business park. I am on the Greenham common commissioners committee.
- 6 Having seven Parish Councils I have in excess of 50 PC meetings to attend a year. WBC representative for the Saunders Wynn & Coventry Trust (Chaddleworth)
- 7 Attend two parish council meetings per month Attend parish working party meetings pre month on Planning and traffic/road safety Meet both primary schools for meetings, minimum one per year. Attend annual parish conference meeting
- 8 Attending four monthly Parish Council meetings and one Parish Meeting every six months, i.e., Aldermaston PC, Brimpton PC, Midgham PC, Woolhampton PC and Wasing Parish Meeting.
- 9 Fire Authority- Lead Member for Integrated Risk Management Plan
- 10 Liaison with parishes - by referring only to WBC appointed outside bodies, Q4 ignores a vast part of the workload (I liaise with, report to and attend five parish councils) - this takes far more time than attending council or committees.
- 11 Lambourn surgery patient participation group
- 12 None that are not already covered in the representation on Outside Bodies
- 13 Attending the parish councils. we have five (plus 2 parish meetings, though both rarely meet), occasionally the SW NAG and the Barton Court Court Liaison committee (soon to close)
- 14 School Governor Mary Hare
- 15 WB rep on Mabel Luke Charity - this week incl reading 3 hours School governor - this week incl reading - this week 8 hours (more than usual but not exceptional)
- 16 I visit my Parish Councils as regularly as I can. I talk to my constituents on the phone often, usually when they have a query about planning or some other issue and I advise them, if I can, as to what to do or who to speak to or where to go to seek information. They either phone me direct or I answer an e-mail with a phone call. It is much better to talk through an issue than to bounce e-mails backwards and forwards.
- 17 NAG Representation
- 18 Trustee Citizens Advice Bureau Chair Henwick Worthy Joint Committee Thatcham Youth Committee Kennet Leisure Committee
- 19 Governor of Theale Green School, Pangbourne Primary School & Pangbourne College. Member of SACRE Setting up Dementia Friendly Village Forum in Pangbourne
- 20 Fire Authority Greenham Trust Donnington Trust
- 21 Visit Schools, Attend Village functions. Meet with Colleges.
- 22 School Governor

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23	Member of Thames Valley LEP Member of Berkshire Leaders Attendance at numerous District wide events Meetings with MP's
24	Outside body - Henwick Worthy JMC West Berkshire Cycle Forum (champion)
25	no

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**Any further comments?**

- 1 This Ward is a 2 Councillor Ward and in a residential area with no commercial activity. It has 2 comprehensive schools and 2 primary schools with associated traffic congestion during term time. It is a densely populated area and is adjacent to a proposed 2000 house development which have involved both councillors in its planning.

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- 2 Whilst regular broad coverage doorstep interactions is usually left for election times, I do often visit residents who initially contact me via phone or e mail. As a recent Executive Member, I would spend 6-10 hours preparing for meetings (Q4) and would spend in total some 20-25 hours per week on Exec+ committee + Councillor work (Q5)

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- 3 None

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- 4 Re the surgeries question it is done on demand and can vary from month to month. For example during housing site allocation DPD consultation it was up to 3 evenings/daytime at weekend. There is not an average week!

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- 5 The survey ignores outside bodies other than council appointed ones, training and general constituency workload. A far better general question would be ""how much time do you spend on activities that you wouldn't be doing if you weren't a councillor""? - in my case, at least 25 hrs per week.

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- 6 I do not hold a surgery as the electorate have open access to myself as part of the day job as a community pharmacist. I will typically deal with 2 or 3 enquiries per day via this route. When there is an issue I do go ""door knocking"" but cannot quantify this from the options given.

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- 7 The workload is variable and it is difficult to quantify just how much time is spent on dealing with emails and telephone calls

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- 8 Not sure what you intended to achieve by your question 4 - my response could be taken to mean that I do no more than 2 hours a week as a WBC councillor; the actual Council and Committee meetings do not take a vast number of hours, but by the time training hours, reading vast amounts of email, phone calls about local planning issues and the Parish Councils are added in, to name but a few of the extras, the requirement is already far more than anyone new to the ""business"" ever expects (based on what is admitted to before election) without reducing the number of Councillors

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- 9 I've found this survey difficult to complete. It's hard to be confident in estimating work load at this early stage of taking on a portfolio, but I expect to see the situation stabilise at around 30 hours a week once I get on top of everything. At the moment there's more as I read myself in. There are very few evenings at home, but that's fine. I continue to answer emails while on holiday. It's all interesting and often enjoyable. I need to make the point that being in a two member ward is a huge advantage.

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- 10 I have tried holding surgeries but nobody ever came. I have met many of my constituents either during elections or at parish Councils or in general activities locally and they know where to contact me and, as I said, frequently do..

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- 11 Demand fluctuates each week. Once a year I do a full ward newsletter drop.

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- 12 At least 3 hours per day is spent responding to e-mails and telephone calls - plus the time to follow up issues with relevant officers. I don't need to hold regular surgeries - just go into the village...use the Library, shops and church - and residents raise issues.

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- 13 Large amount of email and telephone communications. This takes up probably more time than I have allocated,

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14 Obviously hours vary from week to week, as different meetings and forums occur, and as residents require help. I have only just taken on an Exec role, so some of this is first impression of time required. These estimates are therefore guessed averages. I estimate that the total time on all mentioned responsibilities is about 3-4 days per week.

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15 Support the reduction in the number of Councillors to 40+-1

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16 I feel I don't spend as much time on council matters as I should due to the pressures of time from job & Thatcham Town Council

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17 none

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18 COMPTON is a large rural ward - 6+ miles end to end. There are massive road areas, and the Pang flooding in Compton and Hampstead Norreys is a significant issue. Planning in AONB is major issue also as is schools that are full to capacity, and housing.

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