The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

[Insert name of submission organisation/group/individual here]

# Council Size Submission: Template

[Derbyshire County Council]

# Contents

## How to Make a Submission

It is recommended that submissions on future governance arrangements and council size follow the guidance provided and use the format below as a template. Submissions should be treated as an opportunity to focus on the future needs of the council and not simply describe the current arrangements. **Submissions should also demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been considered in drawing up the proposal and why you have discounted them**.

The template allows respondents to enter comments directly under each heading.  It is not recommended that responses be unduly long; as a guide, it is anticipated that a 15 to 20-page document using this template should suffice. Individual section length may vary depending on the issues to be explained. Where internal documents are referred to URLs should be provided, rather than the document itself. It is also recommended that a table is included that highlights the key paragraphs for the Commission's attention.

'Good' submissions, i.e. those that are considered to be most robust and persuasive, combine the following *key success components* (as set out in the guidance that accompanies this template):

- Clarity on objectives
- A straightforward and evidence-led style
- An understanding of local place and communities
- An understanding of councillors' roles and responsibilities

## About You

The respondent should use this space to provide the Commission with a little detail about who is making the submission, whether it is the full Council, Officers on behalf of the Council, a political party or group, a resident group, or an individual.

This response has been prepared by Officers on behalf of Derbyshire County Council and will be considered by Full Council on 15 February 2023.

## Reason for Review (Request Reviews Only)

Please explain the authority's reasons for requesting this electoral review; it is useful for the Commission to have context. *NB/ If the Commission has identified the authority for review under one if its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

The Commission has identified the area for review under one of its published criteria.

Your submission gives you the opportunity to examine how you wish to organise and run the council for the next 15 - 20 years. **The consideration of future governance arrangements and council size should be set in the wider local and national policy context.** The Commission expects you to challenge your current arrangements and determine the most appropriate arrangements going forward. In providing context for your submission below, please demonstrate that you have considered the following issues.

- When did your Council last change/reorganise its internal governance arrangements and what impact on effectiveness did that activity have?
- To what extent has transference of strategic and/or service functions impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery and the ability of the Council to focus on its remaining functions?
- Have any governance or capacity issues been raised by any Inspectorate or similar?
- What influence will local and national policy trends likely have on the Council as an institution?
- What impact on the Council's effectiveness will your council size proposal have?

The authority has operated a strong leader model of governance since 2001. This system of governance has worked well and proved stable for the authority under both Labour and Conservative administrations.

A number of changes to Cabinet Portfolios and Scrutiny Committees were introduced in 2021 to support an increased focus on priorities and to reflect an increasing emphasis on climate change - a key local, national and international issue, cross cutting in nature. As such, the number of Cabinet Portfolios increased from seven to nine which has enabled Cabinet to provide greater attention on priorities such as economic growth and post covid recovery, as well as a dedicated Portfolio focusing on the operational aspects of Education. The Council also saw an increase in the number of Scrutiny Committees in the Council with the creation of a new Committee focused on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Carbon Reduction.

Since the last Electoral Review of Derbyshire, there have been changes to the Council's operating model. The new model reflects the Council's strategic approach, ensuring that the Council is structured in a way that achieves priorities whilst considering the budget position. Following a report to its meeting of 15 September 2021, Council agreed to introduce a permanent Managing Director leadership model to enable the Council to meet future challenges. The new operating model provides strong, accountable senior officer leadership to ensure the Council has the capacity to face the considerable challenges of the next few years including:

- Taking a lead role in respect of economic growth and post-pandemic economic recovery
- Integration of health and social care
- Climate Change
- Harnessing the opportunities that a devolution deal for Derbyshire presents.

The Managing Director is supported by four Executive Directors who each lead one of the Council's four departments as follows:

- Adult Care and Health
- Childrens Services
- Corporate Services and Transformation
- Place

The County Council, with the three upper tier councils in Nottinghamshire, Derby and Nottingham was successful in securing a Devolution Deal for the area worth £1.14 bn over 30 years in August 2022. The four upper tier Councils have recently consulted on draft Proposals and will be making recommendation to their respective Full Councils in March 2023, whether to progress. Should Proposals be successful, and approved by Government, the area will be the first area in the country to establish a new Combined County Authority. This will impact on governance arrangements with the Council having a key role in any future CCA and associated sub structures such as Advisory Boards, Overview and Scrutiny Committees etc. as a constituent member of the CCA.

The Council participated in a Local Government Association Corporate Peer Review in 2018, with a follow up visit taking place in October 2022. The Peer Review Team found that:

> "*There is visible and active political leadership provided by the Leader and Cabinet. The Leader is making his presence felt in national, regional, and sub-regional forums; and through the support of a committed and effective senior management team the Council is beginning to take a much more outward looking leadership role.*
>
> *The Peer Team was impressed to hear from both partners and council staff the positive culture of partnership working, and the pride and commitment people have in working for the Council. These are huge assets for the Council that will help in delivering its ambitions for Derbyshire residents*"

Given the relatively recent changes to the Council's governance arrangements and operating model which have been working well, the Council does not believe that its proposals in respect of Council size, following the review, will impact on overall effectiveness.

## Local Authority Profile

Please provide a short description of the authority and its setting, in particular the local geography, demographics and community characteristics. This should set the scene for the Commission and give it a greater understanding of any current issues. The description should cover all of the following:

- Brief outline of area - are there any notable geographic constraints for example that may affect the review?
- Rural or urban - what are the characteristics of the authority?

- Demographic pressures - such as distinctive age profiles, migrant or transient populations, is there any large growth anticipated?
- Community characteristics – is there presence of "hidden" or otherwise complex deprivation?
- Are there any other constraints, challenges, issues or changes ahead?

Derbyshire is an upper tier authority which contains eight district and borough councils and geographically surrounds the unitary authority of Derby City.

Derbyshire is a large and diverse county with a number of heavily built-up urban areas and large sparsely populated rural areas. Much of the north and west of the county is very rural, most of it falling within the Peak District National Park area. The county benefits from being centrally located in the UK with strong links to the neighbouring cities of Derby, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester and Leicester. The county is home to 794,636[1] people and covers an area of 255,000 hectares.  The county includes the boroughs of Amber Valley, Chesterfield, High Peak and Erewash, and the districts of Bolsover, Derbyshire Dales, North East Derbyshire and South Derbyshire and encircles the unitary authority of Derby City.  The county has a long-standing history of partnership working with upper tier areas in Nottinghamshire, Derby and Nottingham and has more recently been working to secure a devolution deal for the areas which, should proposals be approved form a proposed Combined County Authority (CCA) area.

Chesterfield is the main urban area, with a population of 103,600 (a slight reduction of -0.2% since the 2011 Census). Derbyshire also has a number of important market towns which play a significant role in the local economy as centres of employment and service provision. These include Belper, Buxton, Ilkeston, Long Eaton, Swadlincote, Bakewell and Dronfield.

By 2043, Derbyshire's overall population is estimated to grow by 13.0%[2]. In addition to this, the county is forecast to have fewer people of working age and an increasingly ageing population, currently 23.0% of the population are of retirement age or over (higher than the national average of 20.1%) and this is set to increase to 27.0% by 2043.  With a smaller working age population and a higher level of need there will be implications for the level and cost of many public services.

Derbyshire's population is becoming more diverse. Over the last 10 years there has been an increase of 42.0% (10,800) in the number of non-UK born residents in the county, above the national figure of 33.6%[3]. There has also been a significant rise in the number of same-sex marriages/civil partnerships in the county, with an increase of 1,100 since 2011[4]. As the population changes, the Council and partners have an important role in ensuring that people

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[1] TS017, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright
[2] 2018 based Sub National Population Projections (SNPP), ONS, March 2022
[3] TS004, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright
[4] TS002, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright

from protected characteristic groups are able to live their lives fully and free of discrimination.

Nearly 27,100 (4.1%) of the county's residents have previously served in the UK armed forces, slightly above the England figure of 3.8%[5]. Ensuring that these individuals and their families are able to access well-being, housing and other support services will be important.

There has been an above average growth in the number of households in Derbyshire, with 6.5% (21,600) more households than in 2011[6], and this is set to continue. Rising demand has implications for the supply of housing over the next decade.

This is further supported by looking at the number of housing completions over the last 17 years. Housing completions have fluctuated greatly on a quarterly basis (see the Trendline Chart below), although all districts except for Chesterfield and Erewash have generally shown a steady rise in the number of quarterly completions. South Derbyshire has seen the greatest proportion of completions (31%) with its average quarterly completion rate of 153 dwellings over the 17 years. However, if you look more closely at the latest trends for South Derbyshire, the rate of completions has increased to an average of 245 per quarter. All districts have shown average quarterly growth in the last six years except for Erewash whose average has dropped to 43.

**Quarterly Housing Completions Q1 2005 to Q2 2022**

| Housing Completions | Cumulative Q1 2005 to Q2 2022 | | Average growth per quarter | | | Trendline Q1 2005 to Q2 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total Completions | % of Total Completed | 2005-2022 | Last 10 years | Last 6 years | |
| Amber Valley | 5,280 | 15% | 68 | 73 | 73 | |
| Bolsover | 3,810 | 11% | 55 | 66 | 76 | |
| Chesterfield | 2,890 | 8% | 45 | 39 | 48 | |
| Derbyshire Dales | 3,020 | 9% | 42 | 51 | 60 | |
| Erewash | 2,580 | 7% | 50 | 39 | 43 | |
| High Peak | 3,080 | 9% | 49 | 54 | 68 | |
| North East Derbyshire | 3,410 | 10% | 54 | 57 | 70 | |
| South Derbyshire | 10,610 | 31% | 153 | 194 | 245 | |
| **Derbyshire** | **34,680** | **100%** | **515** | **572** | **695** | |

Recession
Q2 2008 to Q2 2009

COVID Recession
Q1 2020 to Q2 2020

Source: Q1 2005 to Q2 2022, Housing Supply Live table 253a Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 15 September 2022

The recession of 2008-09 and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic, have initiated recession disrupted housing markets. Housing completions did bounce back after the two recessions, albeit a little more slowly in High Peak, Chesterfield and Erewash. However,

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[5] TS071, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright
[6] TS003, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright

with the current cost of living crisis and rising costs of supplies, it is likely that the market will slow down again but to what extent is largely unknown.

Council Tax data also supports the completion figures and outlined increase. For example, South Derbyshire has increased the number of dwellings by 179% since 2011, the largest change being in band F (valued at £162,001 to £223,000 at April 1 2003, see chart below). These findings suggest that the increases are due primarily due to new build stock supporting inward migration rather than purely natural change.

**Increase in dwellings between 2011 and 2022 by Council Tax Band**
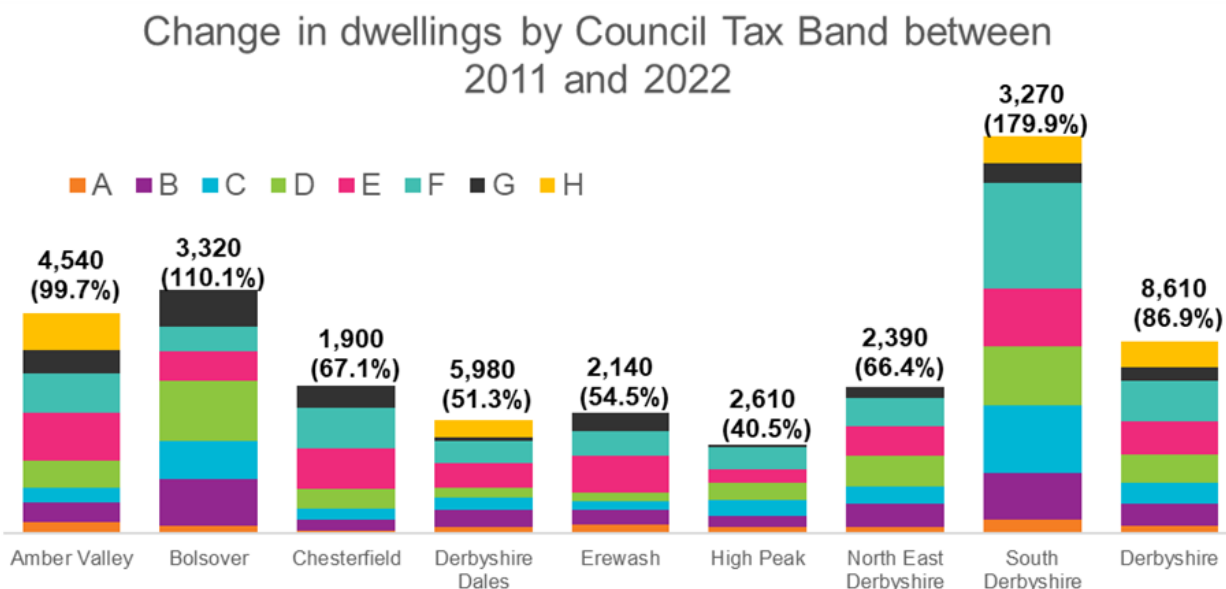


Source: 2011 to 2022 Properties by Council Tax Band, Valuation Office Agency, September 2022

Households are getting smaller in Derbyshire, with a decrease in average household size since 2011[7]. Future housing development will need to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of living spaces for smaller households.

The number of one person households locally has increased well above the national average, with 15.7% (6,800) more lone pensioners in Derbyshire alongside 12.6% (6,700) more working age adults living alone. Isolation was an issue that came to the fore during the pandemic and the significant growth of one person households is going to test this further.

There has also been above average growth in pensioner couple households, with a 25.0% (8,000) increase since 2011. This is likely to have led to greater levels of unpaid caring, and with the 65+ population in the county projected to rise at an above average level over the next decade, the demands on services for unpaid carers are likely to increase further.
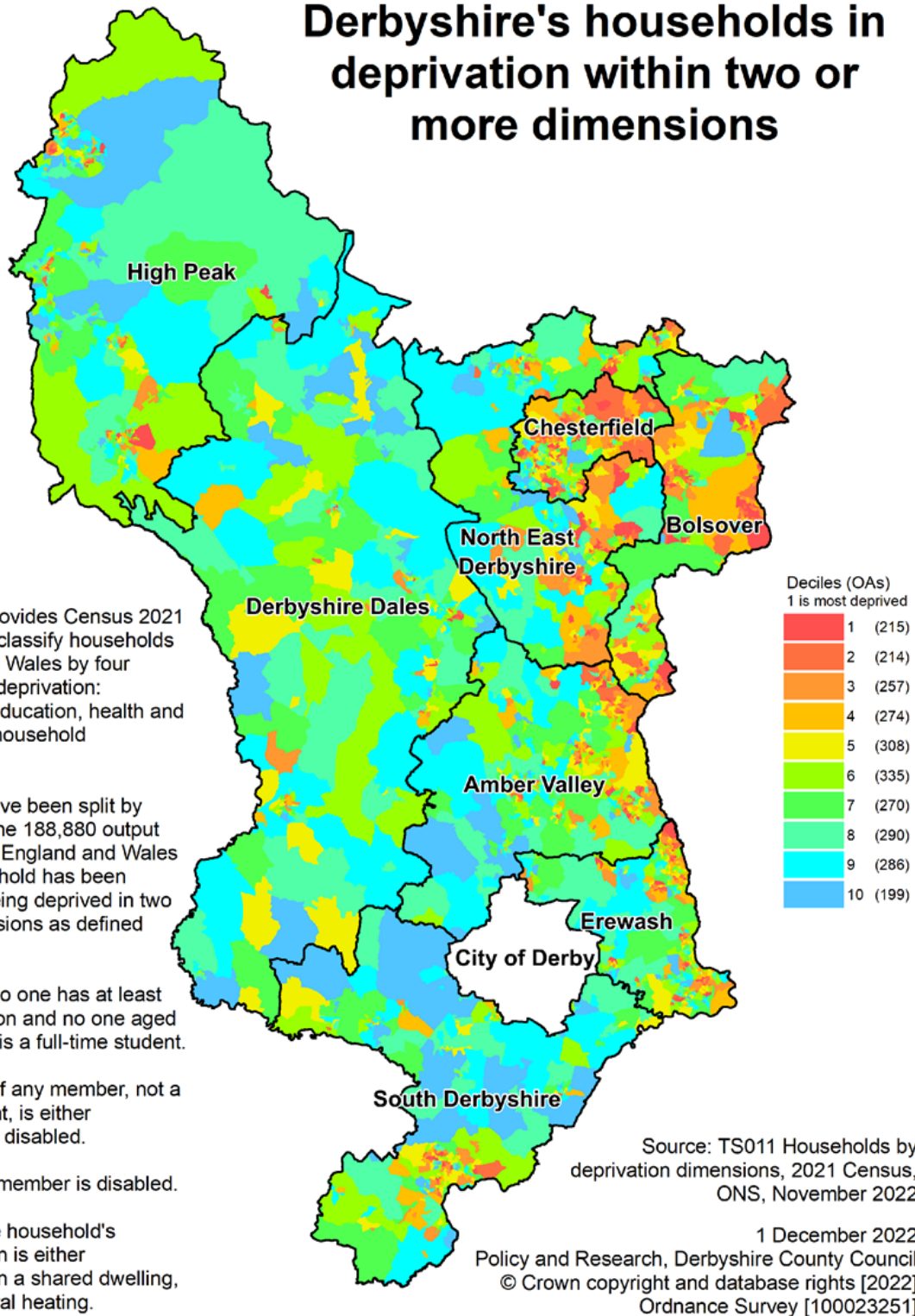
Although there has been a rise in the number of households with dependent children nationally over the last ten years, in Derbyshire there has been a fall of 2.6% (-2,200). If this trend continues it may ease pressure on support services for families with younger children as well as school admissions.

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[7] TS017, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright

According to the Census 2021 deprivation measure, there are nearly 62,800 (17.7%) households locally experiencing deprivation in two in more of the following areas; employment, education, health and disability or housing[8]. The pattern of deprivation looks very similar to the pattern defined by other measures of deprivation, such as the 2019 Indices of Deprivation. Higher levels of deprivation are mainly concentrated in the north and eastern side of the county in the districts of Bolsover and Chesterfield with pockets of deprivation spread across the county. There are 215 output areas in the most deprived decile in England and Wales (see the map below). Although there are 17,000 fewer households locally experiencing deprivation than ten years ago, the 2021 Census took place before significant cost-of-living pressures arose during 2022. These pressures are likely to put the greatest strain on those households that are already deprived.

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[8] TS011, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright

# Derbyshire's households in deprivation within two or more dimensions

This dataset provides Census 2021 estimates that classify households in England and Wales by four dimensions of deprivation: Employment, education, health and disability, and household overcrowding.

Households have been split by decile across the 188,880 output areas (OAs) in England and Wales where a household has been identified as being deprived in two or more dimensions as defined below:

Education - if no one has at least level 2 education and no one aged 16 to 18 years is a full-time student.

Employment - if any member, not a full-time student, is either unemployed or disabled.

Health - if any member is disabled.

Housing - if the household's accommodation is either overcrowded, in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

**Deciles (OAs)**
1 is most deprived

| Decile | Count |
|---|---|
| 1 | (215) |
| 2 | (214) |
| 3 | (257) |
| 4 | (274) |
| 5 | (308) |
| 6 | (335) |
| 7 | (270) |
| 8 | (290) |
| 9 | (286) |
| 10 | (199) |

Source: TS011 Households by deprivation dimensions, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022

1 December 2022
Policy and Research, Derbyshire County Council
© Crown copyright and database rights [2022]
Ordnance Survey [100023251]

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Historically, Derbyshire's employment profile has been centred on a strong industrial economy based around coal and heavy manufacturing. The coal industry has all but gone although manufacturing remains significant and is the county's largest sector representing

15.9% of all employment[9]. There is a close correlation between the footprint of the former coalfield and heavy industrial areas and those current localities where people are struggling across a range of issues such as income, education and health. For example, in the 2019 Indices of Deprivation more than 33.0% of areas within the former coalfields in the county experienced deprivation on health outcomes, much higher than for the non-coalfield area in Derbyshire at 5.4%[10].

Beyond manufacturing there is a broad-based economy, with the next largest sectors being health (12.6%), retail (9.2%), accommodation and food (8.2%), focused on a strong visitor economy, and education (8.0%).

Nationally, 34.0% of individuals have a level four qualification or above[11]. This is higher than the Derbyshire average, where the figure is 29.0%. Across the county, 42.0% (159,000) of residents are in higher level occupations, lower than nationally (46.0%).

Derbyshire has a lower skill/lower occupational level economy than nationally and lags behind on productivity, with productivity per hour worked more than 12.0% below that for England[12]. However, the county's 30,600 businesses[13] show good business survival rates and demonstrated solid growth in output coming into the pandemic and resilience during it.

Derbyshire and the wider East Midlands perform poorly on social mobility, the ability for people from more disadvantaged backgrounds to progress in the labour market. In Derbyshire, five of the county's districts have been identified as social mobility cold spots, being ranked in the worst 20.0% of districts nationally. These are Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Erewash and South Derbyshire[14].

Economic inactivity levels, particularly amongst older workers have come into focus following the pandemic, however Derbyshire has had high rates of economic inactivity historically, again linked to its older age profile and high levels of employment in heavy industry. Chesterfield (59.8%), Erewash (61.8%), and particularly North East Derbyshire (63.8%) all have levels of economic inactivity in the 50 year old age group above the national average of 56.8%[15]. In the last quarter of 2022, 89.0% of recruiting firms said they faced difficulty getting the people they needed. High levels of inactivity are making it more difficult for firms locally to be competitive[16].

Additionally, health conditions also make it difficult for many adults locally to work when they would like to. There are more than 22,600 (4.7%) adults in Derbyshire claiming Employment Support Allowance, more than the national average of 3.9% and in Chesterfield (6.4%),

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[9] Business Register and Employment Survey, 2021, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright
[10] English Indices of Deprivation, 2019, Housing, Communities and Local Government © Crown Copyright
[11] TS067, 2021 Census, ONS, November 2022 © Crown Copyright
[12] Sub-regional productivity in the UK, 2019 ONS © Crown Copyright
[13] UK Business Counts, 2022, ONS (Nomis) © Crown Copyright
[14] State of the Nation, 2017, Social Mobility Commission
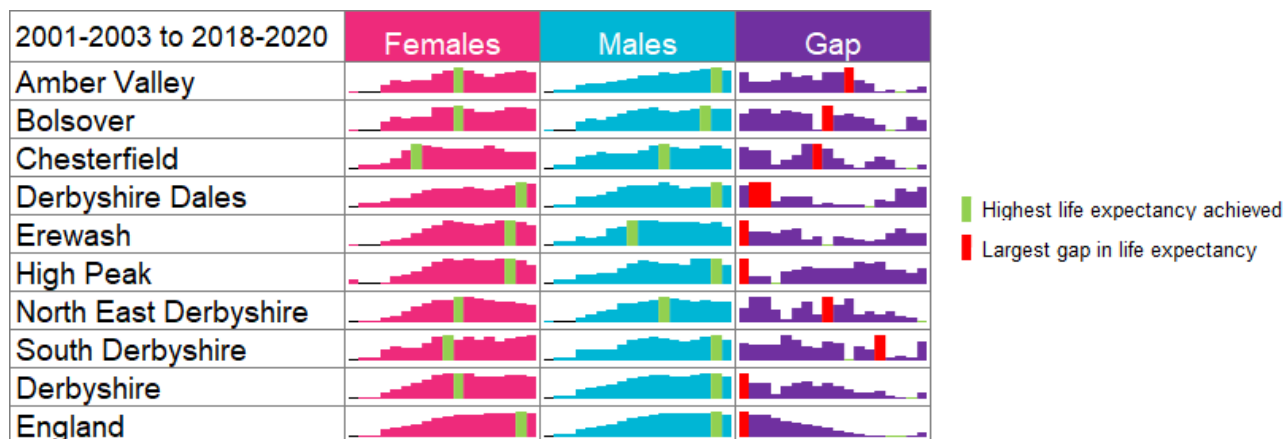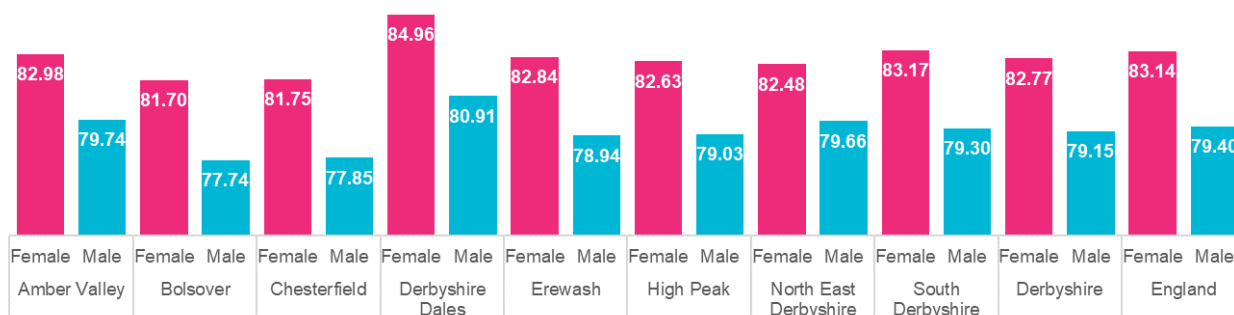[15] Annual Population Survey, July 2021 to June 2022, ONS (NOMIS) © Crown Copyright
[16] Quarterly Economic Survey, Quarter four 2022, East Midlands Chamber

Bolsover (6.1%) and North East Derbyshire (5.1%) all have very high levels, reflecting some of the health issues in the area[17].

Across Derbyshire, health outcomes can be poorer than across England due to the concentration of employment in heavy industry in the past and higher than average numbers of older adults. The county has a lower life expectancy at birth than the national average, at 82.77 years for females and 79.15 years for males with a gender gap of 3.62 years, as shown in the chart below[18]. The rate for both has fallen from the highest level achieved of 83.1 years for females in 2011-2013 and 79.58 for males in 2017-2019. Health related issues are relatively high on some indictors, for example, Erewash (33.0%) and Bolsover (32.8%) have amongst the highest levels of adult obesity in the East Midlands[19].

Life Expectancy at birth 2018-2020
(using 3-year pooled rates)



| 2001-2003 to 2018-2020 | Females | Males | Gap |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Amber Valley | | | |
| Bolsover | | | |
| Chesterfield | | | |
| Derbyshire Dales | | | |
| Erewash | | | |
| High Peak | | | |
| North East Derbyshire | | | |
| South Derbyshire | | | |
| Derbyshire | | | |
| England | | | |

Highest life expectancy achieved
Largest gap in life expectancy

Some of the key challenges for the county are:

• Despite solid economic growth there remains a significant gap in productivity performance with England.

[17] Department for Work and Pensions, May 2022, Stat-Xplore © Crown copyright
[18] Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, 2018-20, Life Expectancy at birth (3-year pooled rates) © Crown Copyright
[19] Percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as obese, 2020-21, LG Inform

- Qualifications are improving but there is wide variation across the districts.

- Inequalities are still present and deprivation is persistent in some localities.

- Digital exclusion, with low coverage of 4G broadband in Derbyshire Dales/High Peak and low internet use in Bolsover/Chesterfield[20].

- Housing affordability issues, with Derbyshire Dales house prices for example being 10 times the average wage.

- Homelessness is an issue in some areas, particularly Chesterfield[21].

- Amber Valley, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Erewash, and South Derbyshire are all social mobility cold spots.

- Rising costs of living, compounded by the conflict in Ukraine, leaves residents at increased risk of financial difficulty, with already high levels of debt locally and above average fuel poverty in Bolsover and Chesterfield.

- Ageing population with the 85+ population set to double, and uneven growth with the overall population in South Derbyshire set to rise by 30%.

- Transport viability of bus routes, and cost of the transition to electric vehicles and charging points, all potentially inhibiting access to services, employment and skills.

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[20] Internet User Classification, University of Liverpool, via Consumer Data Research Centre, 2018, and 4G coverage provided by at least one mobile network provider, mobile coverage local and unitary authority data, OFCOM, May 2021

[21] Statutory homelessness: Detailed local authority-level tables, April 2020 to March 2021, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (now Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) © Crown Copyright

## Council Size

The Commission believes that councillors have three broad aspects to their role.

These are categorised as: **Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulatory and Partnerships), and Community Leadership**. Submissions should address each of these in turn and provide supporting evidence. Prompts in the boxes below should help shape responses.

## Strategic Leadership

Respondents should provide the Commission with details as to how elected members will provide strategic leadership for the authority. Responses should also indicate how many members will be required for this role and why this is justified. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

| Topic | | |
|---|---|---|
| Governance Model | Key lines of explanation | ➢ What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?<br>➢ The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?<br>➢ If the authority runs a Committee system, we want to understand why the number and size of the committees you propose represents the most appropriate for the authority.<br>➢ By what process does the council aim to formulate strategic and operational policies? How will members in executive, executive support and/or scrutiny positions be involved? What particular demands will this make of them?<br>➢ Whichever governance model you current<br>➢ tly operate, a simple assertion that you want to keep the current structure does not in itself, provide an explanation of why that structure best meets the needs of the council and your communities. |
| | Analysis | Derbyshire County Council is currently composed of 64 Councillors, representing 61 electoral divisions. Three of the Council's electoral divisions are represented by two Members each.<br><br>Members are elected every four years with Council elections due to be held in May 2025. |

| | | A comprehensive induction programme takes place following the election of Members to the Council. A cross-party Member Development Working Group has also been established and meets regularly to oversee the development and training needs of Elected Members.

The current political make-up of the Council is as follows:

- Conservative: 42
- Labour 15
- Liberal Democrat: 4
- Green (ungrouped) 1
- Independent (ungrouped) 2

The Council has had a Conservative administration since 2017. Prior to this, the Labour Group were in control of the Council.

The Leader and Cabinet Members are very active and are closely involved with the day-to-day functioning of the authority requiring a significant input of time and commitment, on average the leader and cabinet members report they work a median of 29 hours per week on council business.

The Leader of the Council works closely with the Managing Director to build and maintain relationships with the Council's strategic partners, on a local, regional, and national level. Cabinet members sit on a variety of outside bodies, which require varying time commitments.

The Cabinet maintain a visible presence in the local press and are the primary focus of any media coverage relating to the authority, whether positive or negative.

The Council has operated a Strong Leader and Cabinet system of governance since the inception of the Local Government Act 2000. This system of governance works well for the authority and there is no appetite to consider an alternative. |
|---|---|---|
| Portfolios | Key lines of explanation | ➢ How many portfolios will there be?<br>➢ What will the role of a portfolio holder be?<br>➢ Will this be a full-time position?<br>➢ Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions? |

| | | The current administration, elected in 2021, are now operating with a Cabinet of nine members including the Leader who holds his own portfolio. |
|---|---|---|
| | Analysis | The current portfolios with responsibilities are as follows: |

**Strategic Leadership, Culture, Tourism and Climate Change (Leader of the Council)**
- Council Plan and overall Council strategy, policy and co-ordination
- Council performance
- Council budget strategy
- Climate Change
- Strategic lead Enterprising Council
- Strategic lead Vision Derbyshire
- Public Relations
- Policy and Research
- External Relations (East Midlands Councils, Local Government Association, Central Government & MPs)
- Regional Partnerships including Local Enterprise Partnership and D2 Economic Prosperity Committee
- Twinning
- Visitor Economy and Tourism
- Libraries and Culture
- Conservation and Heritage

Strategic leadership of any matter of significant local, regional or national importance that may otherwise fall within another portfolio

**Corporate Services and Budget (Deputy Leader)**
- Finance and Budget Monitoring
- Procurement
  Human Resources – Policy and Strategy
- Organisational Health and Safety
- Legal and Democratic Services
- Elected Member Development
- Property Rationalisation and Asset Management
- Efficiency and Value for Money
- Service Re-design
- Information and Communications Technology Services

**Highways Assets and Transport**
- Highways Assets and Highways Strategy
- Highways Asset Management and maintenance

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Highways Capital Programme<br>• Future Highways Model<br>• Highways Structures Management<br>• Road Safety<br>• Street Lighting<br>• Civil Parking enforcement<br>• Flooding and Drainage<br>• Public Transport<br>• Home to School Transport including SEN<br>• Adult Social Care Transport<br>• Community Transport<br>• Fleet Management and Maintenance<br><br>**Infrastructure and Environment**<br>• Environment and Natural Capital<br>• Countryside Services<br>• Local Nature Partnerships<br>• Strategic Planning and Local Planning Frameworks<br>• Minerals and Waste Planning<br>• Strategic Infrastructure (HS2, Chesterfield Staveley)<br>• Transport Strategy and Transport Planning (road, rail, other)<br>• Regional Transport Partnerships (Midlands Connect, Transport for Greater Manchester, Transport for the North and Transport for East Midlands)<br>• Digital Infrastructure<br>• Waste Strategy<br>• Waste Management<br>• Recycling<br>• Corporate Waste<br><br>**Clean Growth and Regeneration**<br>• Economic Development<br>• Economic Partnerships including Derbyshire Economic Partnership, International Partnership Boards<br>• Local Economic Strategy and Assessment<br>• Sector development<br>• Major regeneration projects<br>• Employment and Skills<br>• External Funding<br>Inward Investment and Indigenous Growth<br>• Apprenticeships<br>• Business Support and Start-ups<br>• Markham Vale |

| | | **Adult Care** |
|---|---|---|
| | | • Adult Safeguarding |
| | | • Better Lives Programme |
| | | • Information, advice and assessment for people with social care needs |
| | | • Personalisation |
| | | • Commissioning and Procurement of Services |
| | | • Provision of in-house services |
| | | • Social Care and NHS integration |
| | | **Health and Communities** |
| | | • Health and Wellbeing Board |
| | | • Relationship with the NHS CCG and Integrated Care Partnership |
| | | • Public Health, including: |
| | |    o Health improvement |
| | |    o Healthcare related public health |
| | |    o Health protection (infectious diseases and environmental health threats and preparedness) |
| | | • Prevention |
| | | • Health Inequalities |
| | | • Integration, including Integrated Care System |
| | | • Mental Health and Wellbeing |
| | | • Developing whole person wellbeing, health and care |
| | | • Strategic lead Thriving Communities |
| | | • Engagement with Communities |
| | | • Equalities |
| | | • Community Cohesion |
| | | • Community Consultation and Community Leadership |
| | | • Voluntary and Community Sector |
| | | • Crime and Disorder and Partnerships |
| | | • Domestic Violence |
| | | • Action on Drugs and Alcohol |
| | | • Emergency Planning |
| | | • Trading Standards |
| | | • District and Parish Council Liaison |
| | | • Registration Services |
| | | • Coroner Services |
| | | **Children's Services and Safeguarding** |
| | | • Designated Lead Member for Children's Services pursuant to Section 19 of the Children Act 2004 |
| | | • Overall strategy and policy for all Children's matters, i.e. Education, Children and Families pursuant to the requirements of the Children Act 2004 |
| | | • Children and Young People's Plan |

|  |  | <ul><li>Corporate parenting</li><li>Standards across statutory services</li><li>Statutory multi-agency partnerships</li><li>Early help relating to children and families</li><li>Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disability</li><li>Vulnerable youth including young people missing education, those at risk of exploitation youth offending</li><li>To act as champion for children and young people and in order to do so ensure that the Council engages with children and young people, parents and carers</li></ul>**Education**<ul><li>Supporting the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Safeguarding as statutory lead member given the breadth of the portfolio by providing:<ul><li>Additional capacity to drive improvements in school standards and educational attainment</li><li>Liaison with schools, academies, colleges and other representatives of the education sector.</li></ul></li><li>Implementation of strategic direction as set by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Safeguarding in relation to education, schools, and SEND</li><li>Implementation of policies and strategies agreed by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Safeguarding in relation to:<ul><li>Admissions, infrastructure, home to school transport policy and school organisation matter</li><li>Early years education and childcare</li><li>Provision for those children and young people at risk of educational exclusion for example those who are electively home educated, those in alternative provisions, and those who are missing education</li></ul></li><li>Post 16 education and skills policies and initiatives-including links with FE colleges, adult education, universities and training providers</li><li>Education inclusion</li><li>Educational outcomes for those at risk of poor outcomes</li><li>Specialist education services including the music partnership, sports outdoor and recreation and education, school sports</li><li>Governor appointment and development lead in line with local constitution</li></ul> |

|  |  | The Leader has appointed a Cabinet Support Member for each of the Portfolios. |
|  |  | The Cabinet meets as a collective approximately once per month, although it is not unusual for additional meetings to be called for urgent business. In 2021/22, the Cabinet met 16 times and dealt with a total of 212 reports. The current financial threshold for Key Decisions is £500,000 and some contractual matters require approval of the Cabinet, for example to award a contract that is not identified in the Forward Plan of procurements approved at the time of budget setting. |
|  |  | Cabinet maintains an overview of finance and performance through quarterly monitoring reports. It is also the decision-making body for new and updated strategies and other such functions which are reserved for the Cabinet. The Council has ambitious plans for delivering improved services and outcomes for local residents, businesses and communities and therefore the level of business considered by Cabinet reflects this ambitious agenda. |
|  |  | The number of Cabinet Members was increased from seven to nine in 2021 with responsibilities reprofiled. This meant that the Cabinet was able to provide a greater focus to a number of key areas including highways, economic growth and post covid recovery as well as a dedicated Portfolio that focuses on operational aspects Education. |
|  |  | Given the recent changes to Cabinet Member responsibilities outlined above, to reflect changes to Council priorities and functional responsibilities, the Council intends to continue with the existing arrangements set out above and maintain the number of outlined Portfolios. |
| Delegated Responsibilities | Key lines of explanation | ➢ What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?<br>➢ How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions? |
|  | Analysis | The Leader has delegated executive decision-making powers to individual members of the Cabinet on matters that fall within their Portfolio. This results in many executive decisions being taken at individual Cabinet Member level. Cabinet Members usually take such decisions following a briefing from the relevant Executive Director. As a guide, the sorts of decision taken individually are normally related to more routine |

| | | matters that would not benefit from collective discission at Cabinet. From an administrative perspective, the process for delegated decision-making works well because routine matters can be decided relatively quickly with more strategic items considered by the Cabinet as a whole. In 2021/22, 117 decisions were made by Cabinet Members.

Cabinet Members play an active role in the authority outside of constituted meetings. Cabinet Members attend regular briefings with Executive Directors and other lead officers within their respective portfolios. Cabinet Members also maintain oversight of key projects and capital schemes through representation on strategic programme boards, as well as sitting on a variety of boards involving the Council's external partners.

As the number of Cabinet Members was increased from seven to nine as recently as 2021, the Council proposes to maintain this level of membership.

Committee Structure
The table below gives details of Committees that the Council has established. The Council had appointed to 175 positions across its formally constituted committees which gives an average of approximately 2.7 seats per Councillor.

There are a large number of other bodies and joint committees that County Councillors play an important role on. These include the Derbyshire Fire Authority, the Police and Crime Panel, the D2 Economic Prosperity Committee, the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, the Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board. |
|---|---|---|

| Committee | No. of places | No. of meetings | Overall resource |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full Council | 64 | 6 | 384 |
| **Cabinet and Portfoilios** | | | |
| Cabinet | 9 | 13 | 117 |
| **Improvement and Scrutiny Committees** | | | |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Climate Change, Biodiversity & Carbon Reduction | 10 | 5 | 50 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Health | 9 | 6 | 54 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: People | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Places | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Resources | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| **Other Committees (inc. Regulatory, Licensing and Planning, Standards)** | | | |
| Audit Committee | 6 | 6 | 36 |
| Integrated Care Partnership | 3 | 6 | 18 |
| Governance, Ethics & Standards | 7 | 4 | 28 |
| Pensions & Investment Committee | 8 | 8 | 64 |
| Regulatory: Planning Delivery Sub Committee | 4 | 1* | 4 |
| Regulatory: Planning | 10 | 11 | 110 |
| Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education | 5 | 4 | 20 |
| Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee | 8 | 4 | 32 |
| Derbyshire County Council Trading Committee | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| **DCC Committees Total** | **175** | **91** | **1,062** |
| **Key Partnerships** | | | |
| D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) | 1 | 4* | 4 |
| Derbyshire Economic Partnership | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Health and Wellbeing Board | 3 | 4 | 12 |
| D2 Economic Prosperity Committee | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| **Outside Bodies** | | | |
| Derbyshire & Derby Development Planning Joint Advisory Committee | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| Fire Authority | 12 | 6 | 72 |
| Local Government Association (LGA) | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Peak District National Park Authority | 4 | 8 | 32 |
| Police Authority | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| Other Outisde Bodies (x130)* | 172 | 130* (Min of 1 per OOB) | 172 |
| **External Committees Total** | **206** | **174** | **322** |
| **Total excluding Other Outside Bodies** | **209** | **135** | **1,212** |
| Overall Total | 381 | 265 | 1,384 |

\* Estimated Number of meetings

Give the Commission details as to how the authority and its decision makers and partners will be held to account. The Commission is interested in both the internal and external dimensions of this role. **Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

| Topic | |
|---|---|
| Internal Scrutiny | The scrutiny function of authorities has changed considerably. Some use theme or task-and-finish groups, for example, and others have a committee system. Scrutiny arrangements may also be affected by the officer support available. |
| Key lines of explanation | ➢ How will decision makers be held to account?<br>➢ How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?<br>➢ How many task and finish groups will there be? And what will their functions be? What time commitment will be involved for members? And how often will meetings take place?<br>➢ How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?<br>➢ Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.<br>➢ Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value. |
| Analysis | The Council operates five improvement and scrutiny committees which aim to improve the services the Council provides by monitoring the work of the county council and its local partners, including local health services, and making recommendations to improve the services that are provided.<br><br>After elections in 2021, the Council established a new scrutiny committee to focus on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Carbon Reduction. This was done to provide a greater focus on scrutiny on this important and highly topical area of work, which is cross cutting in nature and highlighted as a key priority for the Council and partner agencies.<br><br>The Committees conduct a range of in committee scrutiny, pre decision scrutiny and member led working groups on a whole range of issues.<br><br>Improvement and Scrutiny Committees are supported by council officers to identify areas where scrutiny can add value to the Council's activity. Committee Chairs meet quarterly with |

| | | Executive Directors to discuss live and upcoming issues as ideas for scrutiny topics.<br><br>Committees will, on occasion, form working groups to consider specific issues in greater detail outside of scheduled meetings. For example, the Health Scrutiny Committee recently concluded a review in the use of Section 75 agreements for the joint funding of Health and Social Care packages. |
|---|---|---|
| Statutory Function | | This includes planning, licencing and any other regulatory responsibilities. Consider under each of the headings the extent to which decisions will be delegated to officers. How many members will be required to fulfil the statutory requirements of the council? |
| Planning | Key lines of explanation | ➢ What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?<br>➢ Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?<br>➢ Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?<br>➢ Will executive members serve on the planning committees?<br>➢ What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members? |
| | Analysis | **Regulatory Planning Committee** - The Council currently operates a single Planning Committee, comprised of 10 places, which meets monthly.  As a County Council, relatively low number of planning applications need to be determined by the Council with the majority of schemes dealt with at Borough and District level.  It is estimated that around 90% of matters are delegated to officers for determination. Cabinet Members are not permitted to serve on the Regulatory Planning Committee. |
| Licensing | Key lines of explanation | ➢ How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?<br>➢ And what will be the time commitment for members?<br>➢ Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?<br>➢ Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them? |
| | Analysis | Not applicable |
| Other Regulatory Bodies | Key lines of explanation | ➢ What will they be, and how many members will they require?<br>➢ Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Analysis | | The following regulatory bodies support Council business. No changes to the number or composition of regulatory bodies is proposed a result of this review.<br><br>• **Governance, Ethics and Standards Committee** - promotes high standards of conduct by councillors.<br>• **Audit Committee** (Cabinet Members may not sit) - oversees issues relating to financial probity.<br>• **Pensions and Investments Committee** - responsible for oversight of the Derbyshire Pension Fund.<br>• **Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee** - responsible for decisions relating to staffing including terms and conditions and senior appointments. It delegates some of its responsibilities to a Recruitment Panel.<br>• **Integrated Care Partnership –** responsible for Integrated Care Strategy and Outcomes Framework for health and social care needs<br>• **Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education** - responsible for provision of religious education and syllabus.<br>• **Derbyshire County Council Trading Committee** - responsible for oversight of joint ventures in Corporate Property.<br><br>Details of the number of places for Members and number of meetings per annum per is outlined in the table above. As evident from the table above, the time commitment required by members of the committees listed above varies significantly. |
| External Partnerships | | Service delivery has changed for councils over time, and many authorities now have a range of delivery partners to work with and hold to account. |
| Key lines of explanation | | ➢ Will council members serve on decision-making partnerships, sub-regional, regional or national bodies? In doing so, are they able to take decisions/make commitments on behalf of the council?<br><br>➢ How many councillors will be involved in this activity? And what is their expected workload? What proportion of this work is undertaken by portfolio holders?<br><br>➢ What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload? |
| Analysis | | Councillors are, at the request of the body or through a legal requirement, appointed to a wide range of Outside Bodies from a wide range of social, economic and cultural partners at a national, regional and local level. |

| | In 2022, the Council appointed to 130 such bodies. Appointments vary between cabinet members and other councillors, depending on the constitutional arrangements of the organisation requiring an appointment. Given the large volume of appointments the Council is asked to make, most councillors will hold at least one appointment to an outside body with many, particularly Cabinet Members, appointed to significantly more.<br><br>As with the some of the regulatory functions, the time commitment between each of the external partnerships/outside bodies varies considerably. For example, key strategic partnerships such as the D2 Economic Prosperity Committee chaired by the Leader and comprised of district and borough council leaders and chief executives, meets on average five times per year.<br><br>As outlined earlier in this submission, the Council is working with the three upper tier councils of Nottinghamshire, Derby and Derbyshire to secure a devolution deal for the area which will see the creation of a Mayoral County Combined Authority should proposals be progressed. The County Council will have a key role in decision making structures which will support MCCA governance arrangements as well as associated arrangements such as advisory boards and overview and scrutiny arrangements. Should proposals progress, there are also likely to be changes to sub regional governance arrangements at a county level, which alongside the MCCA would need to be taken into consideration in terms of future governance arrangements.<br><br>In addition, the Council has a leading voice in national bodies such as the Local Government Association (LGA) and County Councils Network (CCN). The Leader is the Vice Chair of the CCN and is a member of the LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board. |
|---|---|

## Community Leadership

The Commission understands that there is no single approach to community leadership and that members represent, and provide leadership to, their communities in different ways. The Commission wants to know how members are required to provide effective community leadership and what support the council offers them in this role. For example, does the authority have a defined role and performance system for its elected members? And what support networks are available within the council to help members in their duties? The Commission also wants to see a consideration of **how the use of technology and social media by the council as a whole, and by councillors individually, will affect casework,**

**community engagement and local democratic representation. Responses should demonstrate that alternative council sizes have been explored.**

| Topic | | Description |
|---|---|---|
| Community Leadership | Key lines of explanation | ➢ In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?<br><br>➢ Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?<br><br>➢ How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?<br><br>➢ Are there any mechanisms in place that help councillors interact with young people, those not on the electoral register, and/or other minority groups and their representative bodies?<br><br>➢ Are councillors expected to attend community meetings, such as parish or resident's association meetings? If so, what is their level of involvement and what roles do they play?<br><br>➢ Explain your approach to the Area Governance structure. Is your Area Governance a decision-making forum or an advisory board? What is their relationship with locally elected members and Community bodies such as Town and Parish Councils? Looking forward how could they be improved to enhance decision-making? |
| | Analysis | Derbyshire Councillors support their communities to ensure that views are represented on important issues. It is recognised that there is no one size fits all approach to how induvial members interact with the public.<br><br>In preparation for this submission, Elected Members were surveyed on a variety of issues, and it is evident that a range of methods are deployed to engage with communities. The findings of the survey show that Members spend a median of 10 hours per week on casework, 5.5 hours per week on community activities and 13.5 hours on Council business.<br><br>The survey also found that Members found the most effective way to represent their communities was in person interaction such as home visits, local canvassing and public meetings. Due to Derbyshire's rural nature and the desire for in person interaction with communities, a reduction in the number of councillors could result in engagement with constituents being more challenging. |

| | | The survey also found that along with face-to-face interactions with their communities, technology is increasingly relied upon by councillors to engage with communities. The use of social media, such as Facebook groups, has increased particularly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. |
| | | Councillors have reported that harder to reach groups, such as younger residents, are engaged with social media in a way that they wouldn't have been at the time of the last boundary review. |
| Casework | Key lines of explanation | ➢ How do councillors deal with their casework? Do they pass it on to council officers? Or do they take a more in-depth approach to resolving issues?<br>➢ What support do members receive?<br>➢ How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?<br>➢ In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors? |
| | Analysis | As with the role of community leaders, the approach to casework varies tremendously by Elected Member. Some Councillors rely heavily on the support provided by Member and Management Support whilst other councillors choose to resolve their own case work queries by contacting relevant service departments directly. As stated above, survey respondents estimate that they spend a median of 10 hours per week engaged with casework.<br><br>The survey also suggests that the volume of casework has increased over the last 12-month period with 13 of the 14 respondents stating this. Although a common reason for this was not identified, anecdotally the cost-of-living crisis has led to more electors approaching their county councillor for support. Additionally, it is found that the increasingly aging population has led to an increase in social care support queries which are often complex.<br><br>Councillors receive support from the Member and Management Support Team to carry out their roles. The level of support varies by councillor role but as a minimum, Councillors can call on the team for support with carrying out their community roles. |

## Other Issues

Respondent may use this space to bring any other issues of relevance to the attention of the Commission.

From the Survey and from discussions with members, there is an appetite to move from having divisions that represent two members to a pattern of single member divisions. Councillors have reported that the public are often confused by this arrangement especially where councillors may represent different political parties. A system of single member divisions, it is felt, would avoid confusion and make accountability clearer.

## Summary

In following this template respondents should have been able to provide the Commission with a robust and well-evidenced case for their proposed council size; one which gives a clear explanation as to the governance arrangements and number of councillors required to represent the authority in the future.

Use this space to summarise the proposals and indicate other options considered. Explain why these alternatives were not appropriate in terms of their ability to deliver effective Strategic Leadership, Accountability (Scrutiny, Regulation and Partnerships), and Community Leadership.

As part of this submission, members and officers have looked at three different options for the future size of the Council:

1) Increase the number of Councillors on Derbyshire County Council.
2) Maintain the status quo of 64 elected members for Derbyshire
3) Decrease the number of Councillors on the Council.

**Derbyshire County Council proposes that the number of Councillors for the County remains at 64.**

The evidence to support is as follows:

- The workload for Elected Members has not diminished since the last Electoral Boundary Review. The Leader and Cabinet Members are very active and are closely involved with the day-to-day functioning of the authority requiring a significant input of time and commitment. From the Members Survey Elected Members report they work a median of 29 hours per week on council business. To spread this workload between fewer elected members would not be in the best interests of the communities that Derbyshire serves. A reduction in Election Members would not be compatible with fair representation for the County.
- When comparing Derbyshire to other county councils in terms of electorate versus number of Councillors, the average Derbyshire councillor represents 9,696 electors. This is against the average of 9,145 This is found to be close to the average. This is forecast to grow by 2029 and based on the current council size of 64 will mean a new average of 10,282 electors per councillor, which is a slight increase. It is anticipated that with population growth nationally, Derbyshire would remain around the average for county councils.
- The current administration of the Council increased the number of Cabinet Members to nine at the last election in 2021. Although this is a relatively new arrangement, early evidence suggest that this is working well in terms of the impact it is having to Council services with the greater focus on areas identified earlier in this submission.

- The number of external partnerships and outside bodies that councillors serve on generates a high volume of work and requires a significant time commitment.

The Council did consider the option of seeking an increase in the number of Councillors. However, this was considered to be unpalatable at a time where many residents of the County are facing increased cost of living pressures. In many other public sector situations, increasing the size of the workforce is not affordable and the Council has applied this logic to its Council Size Submission. It is clear from public opinion that any increase in running costs of the Council as a result of the requirement to pay additional allowances to new members would not be welcome.

The Council did also consider reducing the number of Councillors as an option, however given changes to governance arrangements, current Councillor workload and projected electorate forecasts to 2029, this was not deemed to be an appropriate option to take forward at the current time.

With 64 Councillors in future, fair representation in terms of the elector to councillor ratio would be maintained when compared to other county councils. A Council size of 64 will ensure that the governance, decision-making and scrutiny functions will not be compromised and will remain effective, whilst still ensuring that Members are able to fulfil their representational role within their communities.

**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**Wednesday, 15 February 2023**

**Report of the Managing Director**

**Council Size Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Boundary Review**

## 1. Purpose

1.1 To inform Full Council about the Derbyshire Electoral Division Boundary Review and, in line with the first stage of the process, to determine the Council Size for the Authority, to be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

## 2. Information and Analysis

2.1 Background
In April 2022, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) initiated an Electoral Division Boundary Review of Derbyshire. Electoral Reviews can be initiated for a number of reasons, as follows:

- At the request of the local authority
- Electoral imbalance, if either:
  - one electoral ward / division has a +/-30% variance with the local authority electorate average
  - or, 30% or more of the electoral wards/divisions have a +/-10% variance from the local authority average
- Time period since the previous review, which is normally around 12 and 16 years or every two to three electoral cycles
- As a result of structural change – for example in an area where local government reorganisation is taking place.

2.2 In Derbyshire, the LGBCE initiated a Review by notifying the Managing Director, that 12 years had passed since the previous Electoral Division Boundary Review had taken place and that a review was due. In addition, the LGBCE confirmed that one of the Council's 61 electoral divisions, Etwall and Repton, had reached an electoral imbalance with the rest the county in 2021, having a 33% variance above the Derbyshire average number of electorate per electoral division.

2.3 The Council's previous Electoral Boundary Review in 2011 was a result of 30% of electoral divisions having a 10%+/- variance from the average number of electors per division. The recommendations of the LGBCE at the time resulted in the Council Size remaining at 64. However, the number of electoral divisions across the county reduced from 64 to 61, with three electoral divisions subsequently being designated as two-member divisions.

2.3 Electoral Boundary Review Phases
The Electoral Boundary Review process comprises a full review of all Council electoral divisions. There are five key stages as follows:
- Preliminary Phase – Information gathering and electoral forecasts
- Phase 1 – Council size i.e. proposals for the total number of councillors/electoral divisions
- Phase 2 – Consultation on draft proposals and divisional arrangements i.e. proposals for revised boundaries and names of electoral divisions
- Phase 3 - Parliamentary approval of recommendations
- Phase 4 - Implement new electoral arrangements

2.4 The indicative timescales for undertaking each of Phases outlined above are set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

2.5 Preliminary Phase
Information gathering, to support the Preliminary Phase of the Review, commenced in May 2022. The information required by the LGBCE during this Phase is significant and varied and has taken the cooperation of various council departments and all eight Derbyshire Districts and Boroughs Councils to complete.

2.6 A key element of the Preliminary Phase, is the requirement to produce electorate forecasts which are projected for five years post review to 2029 along with the evidence to support proposed projections.

2.7 The Council has recently completed electoral forecasts for Derbyshire. The draft forecasts, which are subject to approval from the LGBCE, before formally confirming, currently predict a 6% increase in electorate

to 658,060 by 2029 and based on the current Council Size of 64 will mean an average of 10,282 electorate per Councillor. Details of the current 2022 electoral and 2029 forecast electorate are attached at Appendix 3 to this report for information.

2.8    The draft forecasts have been calculated using: the previous three years electoral registers provided by the eight District and Borough Councils in Derbyshire; housing development information; and adult population projections and are calculated at Polling District level. The Polling Districts and Parish boundaries will become the building blocks for Phase 2 of the Review which will consider divisional pattern arrangements. The Polling District forecasts have been aggregated to the existing Electoral Divisions, and the variances from the Derbyshire average calculated.

2.9    Information provided at Appendix 3 also shows what the electorate position would be if there was no change to current divisions or council size. In total, five electoral divisions have a variance +/- 20% from the Derbyshire average with Aston and Etwall & Repton in South Derbyshire both forecast to have electorate at over 40% variance from Derbyshire's average, Boythorpe and Brampton South (-20%) and Walton and West (-21%) in Chesterfield and Wingerworth and Shirland (22%) in North East Derbyshire. In total, 20 electoral divisions (31%) would have a 10%+/- variance with the average forecast electorate, making changes to the divisional arrangements inevitable across the county.

2.10   Council Size County Council Comparisons
       To understand the Derbyshire's Council Size compared to other County Councils, benchmarking both current and forecast electorate data has been undertaken. When comparing the current electoral position to other County Councils, Derbyshire has 9,669 electors per Councillor which is above the national County Council average of 9,145. Of the twenty-four English County Councils, Derbyshire ranks 11th highest average electors per Councillor. Information outlined in Appendix 4 to this report provides details of the electorate for all County Councils. In terms of Council Size, the County Councils average is 63 councillors and ranges in size from 43 (Gloucestershire) to 90 (Lancashire). Derbyshire ranks 14th out of the County Councils.

2.11   All information collected during the Preliminary Phase of the Review will form the basis of the LGBCEs Council Size recommendation which will be published at the start of the consultation period on 21 March 2023.

2.12   Phase 1 - Council Size

During Phase 1 – Council Size, the LGBCE looks to make a judgement on Council Size that will enable the Council to undertake effective decision making, to discharge its business and responsibilities successfully and to provide for effective community leadership and representation.  The LGBCE seeks to understand elected member requirements across three aspects:

- Decision Making – how many councillors are needed to give strategic leadership and direction to the authority
- Accountability and Scrutiny - how many councillors are needed to provide scrutiny, to meet regulatory requirements and to manage partnerships between the local authority and other organisations
- Effective Representation - how the representational role of councillors in the local community is discharged and how they engage with people and conduct casework.

2.13   The Council has considered the three elements highlighted above in developing its Council Size Submission, taking into account the draft electorate forecasts outlined in the report. The Council has also considered developments that have taken place recently in terms of governance arrangements, particularly in respect of changes made to the number of Cabinet Portfolios in 2021, which increased from seven to nine and the introduction of an additional Scrutiny Committee to focus on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Carbon Reduction.

2.14   To support the Review Process, Councillors' Committee Membership and workload have also been reviewed and assessed and in all, there are 209 appointments for Councillors, across the range of Cabinet committees, Key Partnerships, and Main Outside Bodies (does not include Other Outside Bodies) which meet on 135 occasions per year. The Council has a further 172 appointments across 130 Other Outside bodies, which include for example Joint Health Scrutiny Committees, Town Deal Boards, Derwent Valley Mills Boards, for which meeting occasions vary.  Further details of Councillors Committee Memberships and Member workload can be found at Appendix 5 to this report.

2.15   In order to understand the effective representation of the local community in more detail, consultation with Elected Members was also carried out. As part of the process for completing the Council Size submission, an understanding of the effective representative role of Elected Members was deemed necessary. A short survey, asking a range of questions, was developed and circulated to all Elected Members with consultation taking place between 9 December 2022 and 6 January 2023 for a period of four weeks. A total of 14 responses to the consultation were received and as a result of the findings, a number

of changes were made to the Council Size document to strengthen the Council's submission. Further details in respect of the consultation are outlined at Appendix 6 to this report.

2.16 During consultation with Elected Members, representations about the current model of two-member divisions in three areas of the County have been made. Representations have indicated that operationally, having three two-member divisions is not conducive to representing the local community effectively and is confusing for the public in understanding who represents their local area. Given the representations made regarding the current model of two-member division model, it is recommended that the Council formally requests a single member division review. This system, should the request be approved, would increase parity and make accountability clearer.

2.17 The draft Council Size submission is now attached at Appendix 7 for consideration and approval. In developing the Council Size submission three different options for the future have been considered as follows:

- Increase the number of Councillors on Derbyshire County Council.
- Maintain the status quo of 64 elected members for Derbyshire
- Reduce the number of Councillors on the Council

2.18 Derbyshire County Council proposes that the number of Councillors for the County remains at 64. The evidence to support this proposal is as follows:

- The workload for Elected Members has not diminished since the last Electoral Boundary Review. The Leader and Cabinet Members are very active and are closely involved with the day-to-day functioning of the authority requiring a significant input of time and commitment. Elected Members report they work a median of 29 hours per week on council business. To spread this workload between fewer Elected Members would not be in the best interests of the communities that Derbyshire serves. A reduction in Elected Members would not be compatible with fair representation for the County.
- When comparing Derbyshire to other county councils in terms of electorate versus number of Councillors, the average Derbyshire councillor represents 9,696 electors. This is against the average of 9,145 This is found to be close to the average. This is forecast to grow by 2029 and based on the current council size of 64 will mean a new average of 10,282 electors per councillor, which is a slight increase. It is anticipated that with population growth nationally, Derbyshire would remain around the average for county councils.

- The current administration of the Council increased the number of Cabinet Portfolios to nine following elections in 2021. Although this is a relatively new arrangement, early evidence suggests that this is working well in terms of the impact it is having on Council services with the greater focus on areas identified earlier in this submission.
- The number of external partnerships and outside bodies that councillors serve on generates a high volume of work and requires a significant time commitment.

2.19 The Council did consider the option of seeking an increase in the number of Councillors. However, this was considered to be unpalatable at a time where many residents of the County are facing increased cost of living pressures. In many other public sector situations, increasing the size of the workforce is not affordable and the Council has applied this logic to its Council Size Submission. It is clear from public opinion that any increase in running costs of the Council as a result of the requirement to pay additional allowances to new members would not be welcome.

2.20 With 64 Councillors in future, fair representation in terms of the elector to councillor ratio would be maintained when compared to other county councils. A Council size of 64 will ensure that the governance, decision-making and scrutiny functions will not be compromised and will remain effective, whilst still ensuring that Members are able to fulfil their representational role within their communities. It is therefore recommended that the draft Council Size submission, proposing a continued Council Size of 64, be approved and referred to the LGBCE, following consideration by Council.

**2.**21 Next Steps
Following submission of information to support the Preliminary and Phase 1 stages of the Review, the LGBCE will consider all the information provided and make a recommendation on the Council Size, releasing a set of information, maps and electoral forecasts at the start of the consultation period on 21 March 2023.  This will mark the start of the formal review process.

2.22 Following the start of the formal review process, the Council and any interested parties can subsequently respond to the public consultation addressing division names and locations, alongside the number of elected members and parish and division arrangements, by 29 May 2023.  The Council Size will not be formalised until the Final Recommendations are agreed and published on 30 January 2024 and may change by +/- 1 from the initial recommendation if it is felt that modifying the number of councillors may provide a pattern of electoral

divisions that better reflects the three statutory criteria of Strategic Leadership, Accountability and Community Leadership.

2.23    Concerns have been raised about the current timescales of Phase 2 of the review, which is currently due to take place between 21 March and 29 May 2023. This period will present difficulties for a significant number of Elected Members who have dual electoral responsibilities at a County and District/Borough level, in being able to dedicate time to this vital part of the Review during the pre-election period of the District and Borough Council elections which will be taking place on 4 May 2023. It is therefore recommended that a formal request be made of to the LGBCE on behalf of the Council to delay the start of the Phase 2 consultation period until after the pre-election period ends at the earliest.

## 3.    Consultation

Details of consultation undertaken as part of the development of the Council Size submission are outlined within the main body of the report.

## 4.    Alternative Options Considered

4.1    Option 1 Increase Council Size - The Council did consider the option of seeking an increase in the number of Councillors. However, this was considered to be unpalatable at a time where many residents in the County are facing increased cost of living pressures. In many other public sector situations, increasing the size of the workforce is not affordable and the Council has applied this logic to its Council Size Submission.

4.2    Option 2 Reduce Council Size – Reducing the number of Councillors has been considered as an option, however given changes to governance arrangements, current Councillor workload and projected electorate forecasts to 2029, this was not deemed to be an appropriate option to take forward at the current time.

## 5.    Implications

5.1    Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

## 6.    Background Papers

6.1    Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Council Briefing.

## 7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Implications

7.2 Appendix 2 – 2024 Electoral Boundary Review Timetable

7.3 Appendix 3 – Electoral Forecasts

7.4 Appendix 4 – County Councils Electorate Ratio

7.5 Appendix 5 – Committee Membership June 2023 to May 2024

7.6 Appendix 6 – Consultation Analysis

7.7 Appendix 7 – Council Size Submission

## 8. Recommendations

That Council agrees to:

a) Approve the draft Council Size submission document attached at Appendix 7 to the report for consideration by the LGBCE, approving proposals for a continued Council Size of 64.
b) Make a formal request to the LGBCE for a single member division review, as part of subsequent phases of the Electoral Boundary review process to increase parity and make accountability clearer.
c) Note the indicative timescales for undertaking the key Phases of the Electoral Boundary Review 2024, as set out in the report.
d) Make a formal request to the LGBCE recommending that the start of the Phase 2 consultation period be delayed to take into account local District and Borough Council elections which are taking place at the same time.

## 9. Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 The approval of the Council Size submission document will ensure the Council's structure and key strategic priorities will be taken into consideration and in place to support the current and future electorate population ensuring fair and equal representation across the county.

9.2 To reflect representations that have been made regarding the current model of two-member wards, which Members believe contributes to electorate confusion.

9.3 To ensure that there is a shared understanding of the milestones for completing future phases of the review and to ensure that Members are kept informed of progress.

9.4 Current timescales present challenges for those Members who are likely to be involved in local District and Borough Council elections. The postponement of the next phase of the Review would ensure that Members are better able to support the Review process.


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**Implications**

**Financial**

1.1   There are no direct financial implications resulting from the Council Size Submission.  The Submission recommends that Council Size remain at 64 which would ensure that there are no additional costs to the proposals should they be approved by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)

**Legal**

2.1   The Local Government Boundary Commission for England are empowered to conduct a boundary review as per the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.  The legislation states that 'the total number of members of the council' forms part of an authority's electoral arrangements. The Commission refers to this more simply as 'council size'. The legislation does not set out how many members (or councillors) each authority (or type of authority) should have. It is the Commission's responsibility to determine the appropriate number of councillors for each authority. The Commission will always recommend a council size that, in its judgement, enables the council to take its decisions effectively, to discharge the business and responsibilities of the council successfully, and provides for effective community leadership and representation.

2.2   Section 57 of the 2009 Act enables any local authority that elects the whole council every four years, or has resolved to do so, to request that the LGBCE conduct an electoral review and make recommendations for single-member wards or divisions. The LGBCE expect that this is submitted at the same time that the authority makes its submission regarding the number of councillors to be elected to the Council. This is because it is important that anyone wishing to make a submission is aware of the grounds under which the review is being conducted should the request be agreed. A Council wishing to make a request should communicate this to the LGBCE formally. While the legislation does not require a resolution from a meeting of full council, the LGBCE will wish to see evidence that the request has been formally agreed through the normal decision-making processes of the authority as detailed in its constitution. The LGBCE will normally endeavour to meet such requests. If the LGBCE decline a Council's request for such a review they will always give their reasons for doing so.

2.3   If the LGBCE do conduct a single-member warding review, they are not obliged to recommend a uniform pattern of single-member wards or divisions. The LGBCE are specifically required to have regard to the

desirability of securing single-member electoral areas. However, this requirement does not override statutory criteria. This means that whilst the LGBCE will endeavour to recommend single-member wards, they may include one or more two or three member wards if a uniform pattern of single-member wards would result in the following:

- community identity and interests would not be reflected; and/or
- that obstacles to the effectiveness and convenience of local government in the area would be created; and/or
- that resultant electoral variances would be such that the LGBCE would normally consider an electoral review of the area.

## Human Resources

3.1   There are no direct Human Resources implications resulting from the Council Size Submission.

## Information Technology

4.1   There are no direct Information Technology implications resulting from the Council Size Submission.

## Equalities Impact

5.1   The Council's commitment to enhancing the wellbeing of communities and individuals and to promoting equality and diversity has been embedded throughout the Council Size Submission process.

## Corporate objectives and priorities for change

6.1   The Council Size submission clearly supports the Council's ambition, outcomes, decision making processes, accountability and scrutiny and priorities to ensure the continued effective representation of Derbyshire.

## Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1   There are no direct implications resulting from the Council Size Submission

**2024 Electoral Boundary Review Timetable**

The following sets out the current timescales for undertaking the review

| | |
|---|---|
| Preliminary Period (Information Gathering) | Now – January 2023 |
| Phase 1 – Council Size | Now – January 2023 |
| LGBCE makes council size decision | March 2023 |
| Phase 2 – Divisional arrangements | |
| Consultation on division patterns | 21 March – 29 May 2023 |
| Publication of draft proposals | 29 August 2023 |
| Consultation on draft proposals | 29 August – 6 November 2023 |
| Publication of final recommendations | 30 January 2024 |
| Phase 3 - Parliamentary approval of recommendations | Winter/Spring 2024 |
| Phase 4 - Implementation of new electoral arrangements | May 2024 |

# Electorate Forecasts by 2013 Electoral Division Boundary

| Electoral Division | 2022 | | | | 2029 Forecast | | | Difference | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2022 Electorate | Cllr | Electorate Ratio | % variance from Derbyshire | 2029 Electorate | Electorate Ratio (based on existing council size) | % variance from Derbyshire | Count | Percentage Change |
| **Derbyshire** | **621,358** | **64** | **9,709** | | **658,060** | **10,282** | | **36,702** | **6%** |
| **Amber Valley** | **99,755** | **10** | **9,976** | **3%** | **105,545** | **10,555** | **3%** | **5,790** | **6%** |
| Alfreton and Somercotes | 20,224 | 2 | 10,112 | 4% | 21,349 | 10,675 | 4% | 1,125 | 6% |
| Alport and Derwent | 10,715 | 1 | 10,715 | 10% | 12,225 | 12,225 | 19% | 1,510 | 14% |
| Belper | 9,030 | 1 | 9,030 | -7% | 9,214 | 9,214 | -10% | 184 | 2% |
| Duffield and Belper South | 9,213 | 1 | 9,213 | -5% | 10,201 | 10,201 | -1% | 988 | 11% |
| Greater Heanor | 9,637 | 1 | 9,637 | -1% | 10,303 | 10,303 | 0% | 666 | 7% |
| Heanor Central | 9,704 | 1 | 9,704 | 0% | 9,757 | 9,757 | -5% | 53 | 1% |
| Horsley | 10,542 | 1 | 10,542 | 9% | 10,779 | 10,779 | 5% | 237 | 2% |
| Ripley East and Codnor | 10,363 | 1 | 10,363 | 7% | 11,086 | 11,086 | 8% | 723 | 7% |
| Ripley West and Heage | 10,327 | 1 | 10,327 | 6% | 10,632 | 10,632 | 3% | 305 | 3% |
| **Bolsover** | **60,541** | **6** | **10,090** | **4%** | **64,433** | **10,739** | **4%** | **3,892** | **6%** |
| Barlborough and Clowne | 9,509 | 1 | 9,509 | -2% | 10,136 | 10,136 | -1% | 627 | 7% |
| Bolsover North | 10,500 | 1 | 10,500 | 8% | 11,717 | 11,717 | 14% | 1,217 | 12% |
| Bolsover South | 10,136 | 1 | 10,136 | 4% | 11,273 | 11,273 | 10% | 1,137 | 11% |
| Shirebrook and Pleasley | 9,619 | 1 | 9,619 | -1% | 10,130 | 10,130 | -1% | 511 | 5% |
| South Normanton and Pinxton | 10,198 | 1 | 10,198 | 5% | 10,500 | 10,500 | 2% | 302 | 3% |
| Tibshelf | 10,579 | 1 | 10,579 | 9% | 10,678 | 10,678 | 4% | 99 | 1% |
| **Chesterfield** | **78,058** | **9** | **8,673** | **-11%** | **81,872** | **9,097** | **-12%** | **3,814** | **5%** |
| Birdholme | 8,384 | 1 | 8,384 | -14% | 8,381 | 8,381 | -18% | -3 | 0% |
| Boythorpe and Brampton South | 7,820 | 1 | 7,820 | -19% | 8,188 | 8,188 | **-20%** | 368 | 5% |
| Brimington | 9,830 | 1 | 9,830 | 1% | 10,183 | 10,183 | -1% | 353 | 4% |
| Loundsley Green and Newbold | 8,868 | 1 | 8,868 | -9% | 9,243 | 9,243 | -10% | 375 | 4% |
| Spire | 7,644 | 1 | 7,644 | **-21%** | 8,324 | 8,324 | **-19%** | 680 | 9% |
| St. Mary's | 9,480 | 1 | 9,480 | -2% | 10,051 | 10,051 | -2% | 571 | 6% |
| Staveley | 9,086 | 1 | 9,086 | -6% | 10,289 | 10,289 | 0% | 1,203 | 13% |
| Staveley North and Whittington | 8,887 | 1 | 8,887 | -8% | 9,124 | 9,124 | -11% | 237 | 3% |
| Walton and West | 8,059 | 1 | 8,059 | -17% | 8,090 | 8,090 | **-21%** | 31 | 0% |
| **Derbyshire Dales** | **57,624** | **6** | **9,604** | **-1%** | **59,759** | **9,960** | **-3%** | **2,135** | **4%** |
| Ashbourne | 10,827 | 1 | 10,827 | 12% | 11,349 | 11,349 | 10% | 522 | 5% |
| Bakewell | 9,397 | 1 | 9,397 | -3% | 9,393 | 9,393 | -9% | -4 | 0% |
| Derwent Valley | 9,500 | 1 | 9,500 | -2% | 10,069 | 10,069 | -2% | 569 | 6% |
| Dovedale | 9,010 | 1 | 9,010 | -7% | 9,049 | 9,049 | -12% | 39 | 0% |
| Matlock | 8,747 | 1 | 8,747 | -10% | 9,429 | 9,429 | -8% | 682 | 8% |
| Wirksworth | 10,143 | 1 | 10,143 | 4% | 10,469 | 10,469 | 2% | 326 | 3% |
| **Erewash** | **86,660** | **9** | **9,629** | **-1%** | **90,139** | **10,015** | **-3%** | **3,479** | **4%** |
| Breadsall and West Hallam | 9,117 | 1 | 9,117 | -6% | 10,291 | 10,291 | 0% | 1,174 | 13% |
| Breaston | 10,266 | 1 | 10,266 | 6% | 10,262 | 10,262 | 0% | -4 | 0% |
| Ilkeston East | 9,684 | 1 | 9,684 | 0% | 10,200 | 10,200 | -1% | 516 | 5% |
| Ilkeston South | 9,864 | 1 | 9,864 | 2% | 10,732 | 10,732 | 4% | 868 | 9% |
| Ilkeston West | 9,436 | 1 | 9,436 | -3% | 9,563 | 9,563 | -7% | 127 | 1% |
| Long Eaton | 9,679 | 1 | 9,679 | 0% | 9,777 | 9,777 | -5% | 98 | 1% |
| Petersham | 9,955 | 1 | 9,955 | 3% | 10,209 | 10,209 | -1% | 254 | 3% |
| Sandiacre | 9,209 | 1 | 9,209 | -5% | 9,658 | 9,658 | -6% | 449 | 5% |
| Sawley | 9,450 | 1 | 9,450 | -3% | 9,446 | 9,446 | -8% | -4 | 0% |
| **High Peak** | **72,340** | **8** | **9,043** | **-7%** | **75,752** | **9,469** | **-8%** | **3,412** | **5%** |
| Buxton North and East | 8,973 | 1 | 8,973 | -8% | 10,492 | 10,492 | 2% | 1,519 | 17% |
| Buxton West | 9,114 | 1 | 9,114 | -6% | 9,353 | 9,353 | -9% | 239 | 3% |
| Chapel and Hope Valley | 9,580 | 1 | 9,580 | -1% | 9,849 | 9,849 | -4% | 269 | 3% |
| Etherow | 8,237 | 1 | 8,237 | -15% | 8,955 | 8,955 | -13% | 718 | 9% |
| Glossop and Charlesworth | 17,842 | 2 | 8,921 | -8% | 18,018 | 9,009 | -12% | 176 | 1% |
| New Mills | 9,787 | 1 | 9,787 | 1% | 9,940 | 9,940 | -3% | 153 | 2% |
| Whaley Bridge | 8,807 | 1 | 8,807 | -9% | 9,146 | 9,146 | -11% | 339 | 4% |
| **North East Derbyshire** | **82,325** | **8** | **10,291** | **6%** | **86,611** | **10,826** | **5%** | **4,286** | **5%** |
| Clay Cross North | 10,474 | 1 | 10,474 | 8% | 11,842 | 11,842 | 15% | 1,368 | 13% |
| Clay Cross South | 9,970 | 1 | 9,970 | 3% | 10,472 | 10,472 | 2% | 502 | 5% |
| Dronfield East | 9,897 | 1 | 9,897 | 2% | 9,893 | 9,893 | -4% | -4 | 0% |
| Dronfield West and Walton | 10,666 | 1 | 10,666 | 10% | 10,662 | 10,662 | 4% | -4 | 0% |
| Eckington and Killamarsh | 19,286 | 2 | 9,643 | -1% | 19,343 | 9,672 | -6% | 57 | 0% |
| Sutton | 10,378 | 1 | 10,378 | 7% | 11,866 | 11,866 | 15% | 1,488 | 14% |
| Wingerworth and Shirland | 11,654 | 1 | 11,654 | **20%** | 12,534 | 12,534 | **22%** | 880 | 8% |
| **South Derbyshire** | **84,055** | **8** | **10,507** | **8%** | **93,947** | **11,743** | **14%** | **9,892** | **12%** |
| Aston | 11,600 | 1 | 11,600 | 19% | 14,459 | 14,459 | **41%** | 2,859 | 25% |
| Etwall and Repton | 13,217 | 1 | 13,217 | **36%** | 15,329 | 15,329 | **49%** | 2,112 | 16% |
| Hilton | 10,377 | 1 | 10,377 | 7% | 11,146 | 11,146 | 8% | 769 | 7% |
| Linton | 9,875 | 1 | 9,875 | 2% | 11,982 | 11,982 | 17% | 2,107 | 21% |
| Melbourne | 9,607 | 1 | 9,607 | -1% | 10,177 | 10,177 | -1% | 570 | 6% |
| Swadlincote Central | 9,996 | 1 | 9,996 | 3% | 10,645 | 10,645 | 4% | 649 | 6% |
| Swadlincote North | 9,351 | 1 | 9,351 | -4% | 9,766 | 9,766 | -5% | 415 | 4% |
| Swadlincote South | 10,032 | 1 | 10,032 | 3% | 10,443 | 10,443 | 2% | 411 | 4% |

\* Highlighted cells are greater than or equal to +/-20%

## County Councils Electorate Ratio 2022

| 2022 Electorate | Nearest Neighbour | Electorate | Council Size | Electorate Ratio | % Electorate variance from Derbyshire |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **County Councils Average** | | **576,114** | **63** | **9,145** | **-5** |
| **Statistical Neighbour Average** | | **425,112** | **64** | **6,642** | **-31** |
| **Statistical Neighbour Average County** | | **571,876** | **67** | **8,535** | **-12** |
| Cambridgeshire | | 487,593 | 61 | 7,993 | -17 |
| Cumbria | Yes | 387,489 | 84 | 4,613 | -52 |
| **Derbyshire** | **Yes** | **618,814** | **64** | **9,669** | **0** |
| Devon | | 624,265 | 60 | 10,404 | 8 |
| East Sussex | | 417,498 | 50 | 8,350 | -14 |
| Essex | | 1,184,756 | 75 | 15,797 | 63 |
| Gloucestershire | Yes | 488,097 | 43 | 11,351 | 17 |
| Hampshire | | 1,053,414 | 78 | 13,505 | 40 |
| Hertfordshire | | 870,261 | 78 | 11,157 | 15 |
| Kent | | 1,146,341 | 81 | 14,152 | 46 |
| Lancashire | Yes | 911,852 | 90 | 10,132 | 5 |
| Leicestershire | Yes | 539,750 | 55 | 9,814 | 1 |
| Lincolnshire | Yes | 566,351 | 70 | 8,091 | -16 |
| Norfolk | | 697,364 | 84 | 8,302 | -14 |
| North Yorkshire | | 479,322 | 72 | 6,657 | -31 |
| Nottinghamshire | Yes | 529,554 | 67 | 7,904 | -18 |
| Oxfordshire | | 517,174 | 63 | 8,209 | -15 |
| Somerset | | 433,855 | 55 | 7,888 | -18 |
| Staffordshire | Yes | 663,671 | 62 | 10,704 | 11 |
| Suffolk | Yes | 569,296 | 75 | 7,591 | -21 |
| Surrey | | 809,221 | 81 | 9,990 | 3 |
| Warwickshire | Yes | 443,888 | 57 | 7,788 | -19 |
| West Sussex | | 659,680 | 70 | 9,424 | -3 |
| Worcestershire | | 455,559 | 57 | 7,992 | -17 |

Source: December 2021 Electoral Registers, Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), July 2022

Note: The Total Electorate for Derbyshire is slightly lower in this table as this extract was taken from the December 2021 Electoral Registers whereas the Electoral Forecasts use the 2022 Electoral Registers from the Districts and Boroughs provided between June and September 2022.

**Committee Membership June 2023 to May 2024**

| Committee | No. of places | No. of meetings | Overall resource |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full Council | 64 | 6 | 384 |
| Cabinet and Portfoilios | | | |
| Cabinet | 9 | 13 | 117 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committees | | | |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Climate Change, Biodiversity & Carbon Reduction | 10 | 5 | 50 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Health | 9 | 6 | 54 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: People | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Places | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| Improvement and Scrutiny Committee: Resources | 9 | 5 | 45 |
| Other Committees (inc. Regulatory, Licensing and Planning, Standards) | | | |
| Audit Committee | 6 | 6 | 36 |
| Integrated Care Partnership | 3 | 6 | 18 |
| Governance, Ethics & Standards | 7 | 4 | 28 |
| Pensions & Investment Committee | 8 | 8 | 64 |
| Regulatory: Planning Delivery Sub Committee | 4 | 1* | 4 |
| Regulatory: Planning | 10 | 11 | 110 |
| Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education | 5 | 4 | 20 |
| Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee | 8 | 4 | 32 |
| Derbyshire County Council Trading Committee | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| **DCC Committees Total** | **175** | **91** | **1,062** |
| Key Partnerships | | | |
| D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) | 1 | 4* | 4 |
| Derbyshire Economic Partnership | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Health and Wellbeing Board | 3 | 4 | 12 |
| D2 Economic Prosperity Committee | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Vision Derbyshire Joint Committee | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| Outside Bodies | | | |
| Derbyshire & Derby Development Planning Joint Advisory Committee | 6 | 1 | 6 |
| Fire Authority | 12 | 6 | 72 |
| Local Government Association (LGA) | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Peak District National Park Authority | 4 | 8 | 32 |
| Police Authority | 1 | 6 | 6 |
| Other Outisde Bodies (x130)* | 172 | 130* (Min of 1 per OOB) | 172 |
| **External Committees Total** | **206** | **174** | **322** |
| **Total** excluding Other Outside Bodies | **209** | **135** | **1,212** |
| Overall Total | 381 | 265 | 1,384 |

* Estimated Number of meetings

# Derbyshire Electoral Review - Member Consultation 2023

## 1. Introduction

The first phase of the Derbyshire Electoral Review is to inform the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) about the Council's proposals for future Council Size. During this Phase, the LGBCE looks to make a judgement on Council Size that will enable the Council to take its decision effectively, to discharge its business and responsibilities successfully and to provide for effective community leadership and representation. The LGBCE seeks to understand elected member requirements across three aspects:

- **Decision Making** – how many councillors are needed to give strategic leadership and direction to the authority
- **Accountability and Scrutiny** - how many councillors are needed to provide scrutiny, to meet regulatory requirements and to manage partnerships between the local authority and other organisations
- **Effective Representation** - how the representational role of councillors in the local community is discharged and how they engage with people and conduct casework.

To support the Council's response to the LGBCE and to gain a greater understanding of the current role of Elected Members, the Council undertook a consultation between 9 December 2022 and 6 January 2023 for a period four weeks. The Survey considered the key aspects of Elected Member community leadership roles, in particular:

- Time spent on conducting Council business and related activity
- Impacts on conducting Council business
- Community engagement
- Council Size

A total of 14 anonymous responses to the consultation were received and details of the survey questions posed follow the summary report.

Responses received during the consultation have fed into, and strengthened the authority's Council Size submission .

## 2. Key findings

- Councillors spend a median of 29 hours on conducting council-related activity, and in a typical week Members spend (in median hours):

  - 13.5 hours per week on Council business
  - 10 hours per week on casework
  - 5.5 hours per week on community activities
  - 3.5 hours per week on other activities such as attending Parish or Other Outside Body meetings or in conducting desktop research

- Half of the respondents felt that the amount of time spent on Council business was 'about what was expected'
- Almost all the respondents, 93%, feel that their workload has increased over the last twelve months
- Over a third of respondents (36%) feel that the local geography of their area affects their workload 'a great deal'.
- Almost 4 out of 5 respondents work with council officers to resolve issues (79%).
- Half of respondents engage 'a fair amount' with young people and hard-to-reach groups.
- The extent of engagement with Parish Councils affects 64% of respondent's workload 'a great deal'.
- 64% of respondents feel that the Council Size should remain at 64.

## 3. Results

**Time spent on conducting Council business and related activity**

Members were asked questions on how much time they spent per week on conducting council business, casework, community activity or other activities. As can be seen in Fig 1 below, the total amount of time varies from 18 to 70 hours, with a median[1] time of 29 hours per week spent on Council related activity.

_____

[1] Median hours have been used to analyse this question rather than the mean (average) due to the small number of responses received and to reduce the impact of outlier responses. The totals from the individual categories will not necessarily add up to the total overall as each category and the total have been analysed separately.

Fig 1: Estimated weekly time per week spent on conducting Council business and related activities (median hours)

- ■ Council business
- ■ Casework
- ■ Community activity
- ■ Other
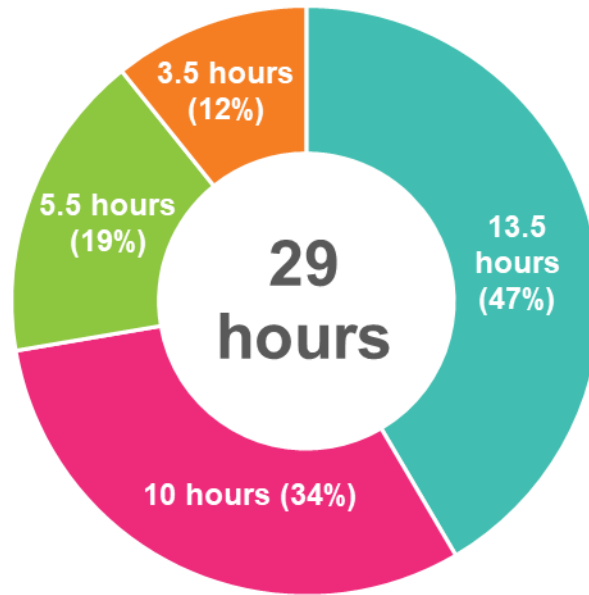
Note: Individual category median hours do not sum to the total

3.5 hours (12%)

5.5 hours (19%)

29 hours

13.5 hours (47%)

10 hours (34%)

Responses varied across the four categories, with the largest amount of time spent on council business such as attending meetings with a median of 13.5 hours (47%). Responses ranged from 4 to 25 hours within this category. Casework takes approximately 10 hours per week (34%), and answers varied between 2 to 20 hours.

Community activity again varied between 2 and 20 hours per week but with a lower overall median of 5.5 hours (19%).

Time spent on other activities such as attending Parish or Other Outside Body meetings or in conducting desktop research resulted in responses ranging from 0 to 10 hours with a median of 3.5 hours (12%).

Respondents also had an opportunity to specify how their time was spent and out of the ten who responded to this question, six mentioned attending meetings at Outside Bodies, four attending community events, four mentioned reading, desktop research or preparatory work, three mentioned attending Parish meetings and two mentioned travel time.

A follow-on question asked respondents their opinion on whether time spent on Council business activities was about what they expected. Fig 2 below highlights that 50% said they felt it was 'about what was expected' and over a third felt it was 'more than expected'. No respondents felt that the duties were 'less than expected'.

Fig 2: Have you found that the amount of time you spend on
Council business is what you expected?



More than
expected
36%

About what
was expected
50%

- More than expected
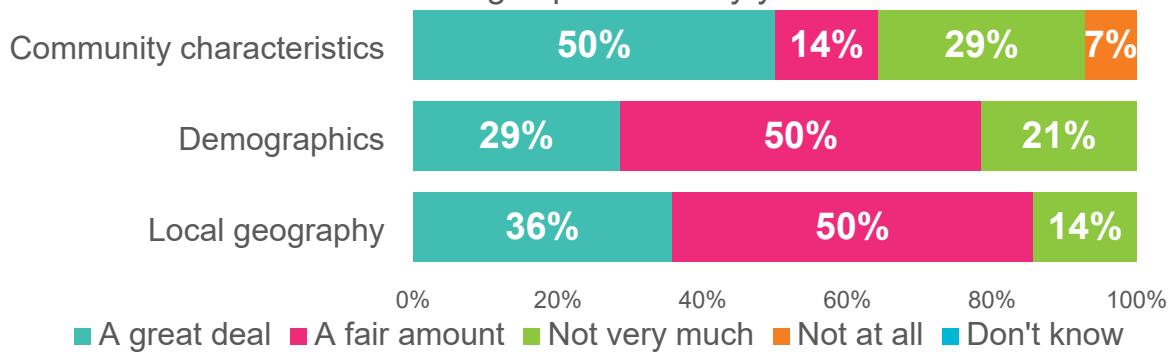- About what was expected
- Less than expected
- Other
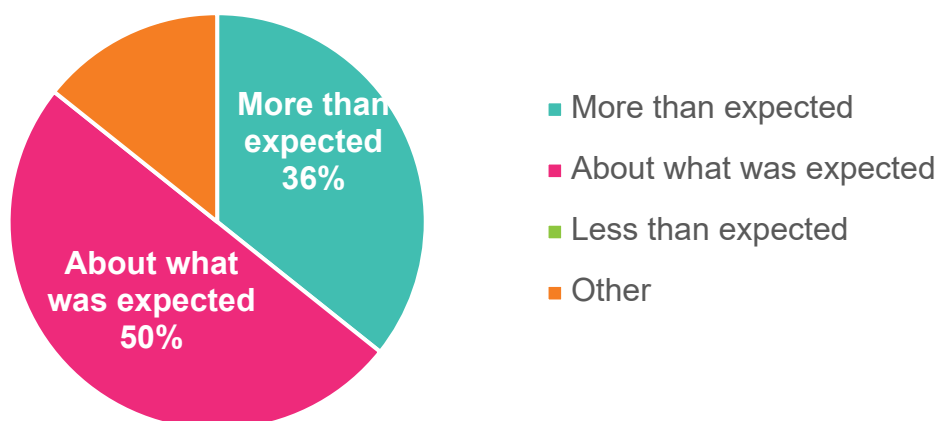
Respondents were further asked if they considered that their council business commitments had increased or decreased over the last twelve months with 93% (13) saying that their commitments had increased. No respondents said their commitments had decreased over the last twelve months.

## Impacts on conducting Council business

Elected Members were asked what might influence or impact the way they work, including local characteristics within their division, support from council officers and use of technology.
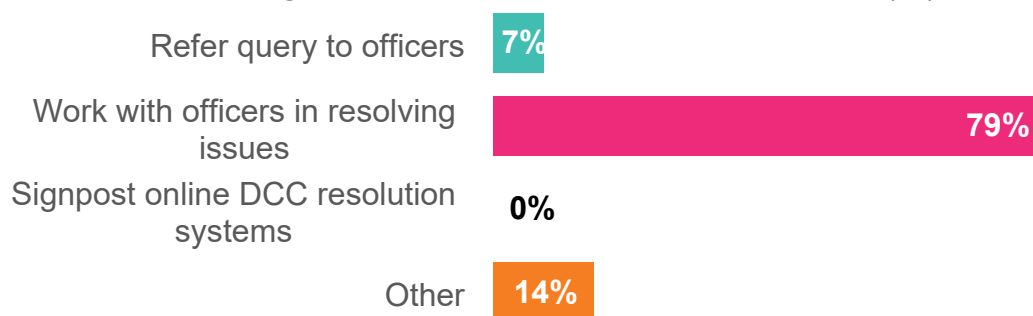
When asked how their local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on workloads and casework (see Fig 3 below), respondents reported that community characteristics have a high impact on Members' workload and casework with half of respondents indicating their work is affected 'a great deal'. Over a third of respondents (36%) feel that the local geography of their area affects their workload 'a great deal' and a further 50%, 'a fair amount' due to one of the following factors: the rural nature of their area; distance and frequency of attending Parish meetings and community groups; increasing numbers of housing development and lack of affordable homes; poor infrastructure in rural areas (i.e. roads, schools, GP appointments); pockets of deprivation being masked by wealthy areas; and increasing time spent on supporting the elderly with mobility and living support. Whilst it was felt that numbers in respect of casework may not vary, the length of time taken to respond to some of these more complex cases increased their workload.

## Fig 3: Thinking about your workload/casework, to what extent do the following impact the way you work?

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community characteristics | 50% | 14% | 29% | 7% |
| Demographics | 29% | 50% | 21% | |
| Local geography | 36% | 50% | 14% | |

■ A great deal  ■ A fair amount  ■ Not very much  ■ Not at all  ■ Don't know

Members were asked how they dealt with, and progressed, their casework within the Council (Fig 4 below). The majority, 79% responded that they worked with officers to resolve issues, 7% would refer the casework to officers and 14% responded 'other', which when looking at the responses referred to using all three options or a combination thereof.

### Fig 4: How Members deal with casework (%)

| | |
|---|---|
| Refer query to officers | 7% |
| Work with officers in resolving issues | 79% |
| Signpost online DCC resolution systems | 0% |
| Other | 14% |

On being asked how well supported Members felt by council resources and networks in discharging their duties, as can be seen in Fig 5 below, 78% of Elected Members felt supported (7% 'a great deal' and 71% 'a fair amount), 14% felt they received 'not very much' support, 7% responded 'other' and no responses were recorded for 'not at all' or 'don't know'.

### Fig 5: How well supported in discharging Council duties by council resources and networks (%)

| A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7% | 71% | 14% | 0% | 0% | 7% |
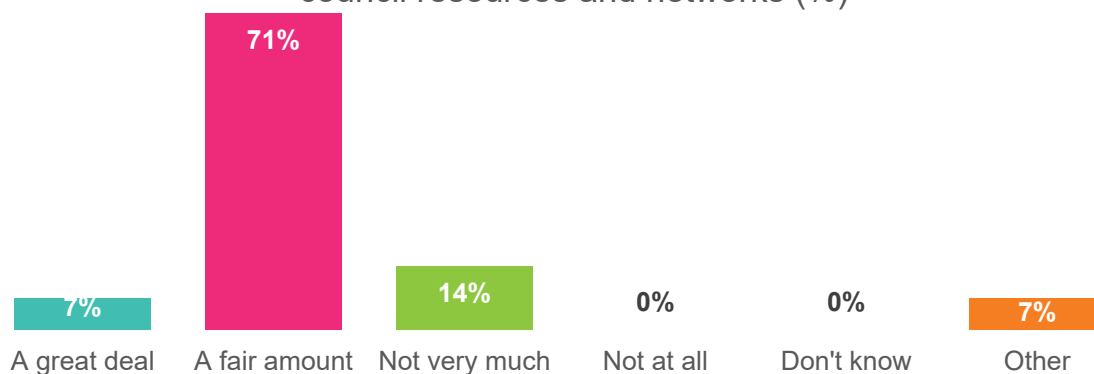
Members were also given the opportunity to add supporting comments to their responses. Of the four Elected Members who answered this question, all reported that they do not receive the same level of support as in the past.

Elected Members were asked how they felt that technological advances have influenced the way in which they work and interact with their communities, 79% of respondents felt that the influence of technology was 'much as expected', 14% reported 'to a greater degree than expected' and 7% responded with 'other', which based on the comments provided was 'not at all'. Overall, the majority of respondents say technology has influenced the way they work to some degree, however, this is a subjective question and Members' experience and ease with technology will vary.

Fig 6: How have technological advances influenced the way you work and interact with your communities (%)

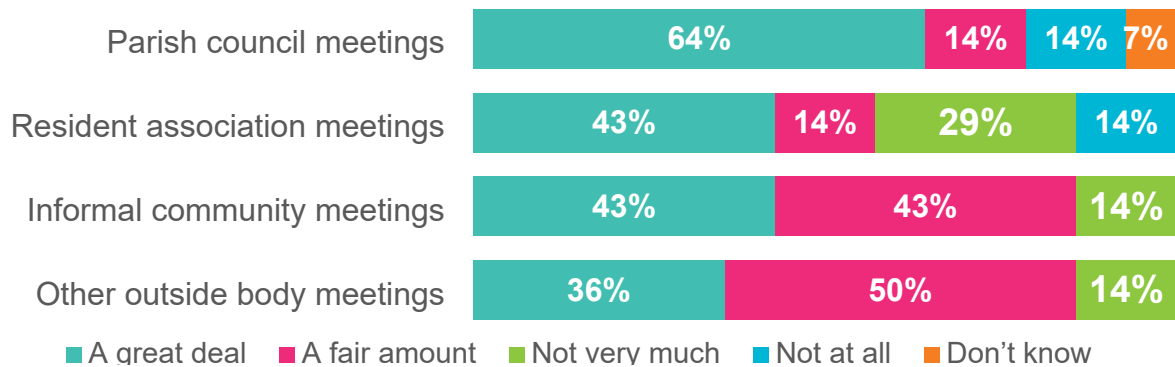| To a greater degree than expected | Much as expected | To a lesser degree than expected | Other |
|---|---|---|---|
| 14% | 79% | 0% | 7% |
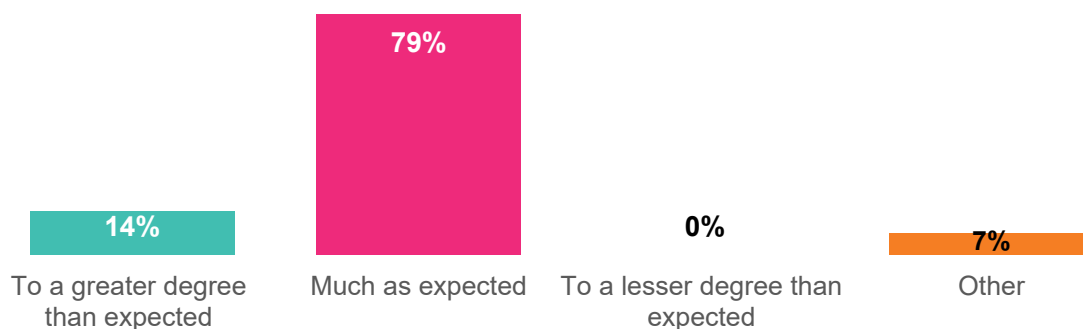
## Community engagement

Community engagement is at the heart of the work of an Elected Member and as such, to understand what this means to a Councillor, the impacts and how effective engagement with their constituents can make a difference was examined.

Elected Members were asked to what extent they engage with communities and how this affects their workload. For those Councillors who have Parishes within their Electoral Divisions, the extent of engagement and effect on their workload is relatively high compared to the other categories with 64% affected 'a great deal' - see Fig 7 below. Attendance at resident association meetings varies the most across the categories with 43% affected 'a great deal', 14% 'a fair amount', 29% 'not very much' and 14% 'not at all' affected.

## Fig 7: Extent Members believe they have to engage with their communities and how it affects their workload

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parish council meetings | 64% | 14% | | 14% | 7% |
| Resident association meetings | 43% | 14% | 29% | 14% | |
| Informal community meetings | 43% | 43% | 14% | | |
| Other outside body meetings | 36% | 50% | 14% | | |

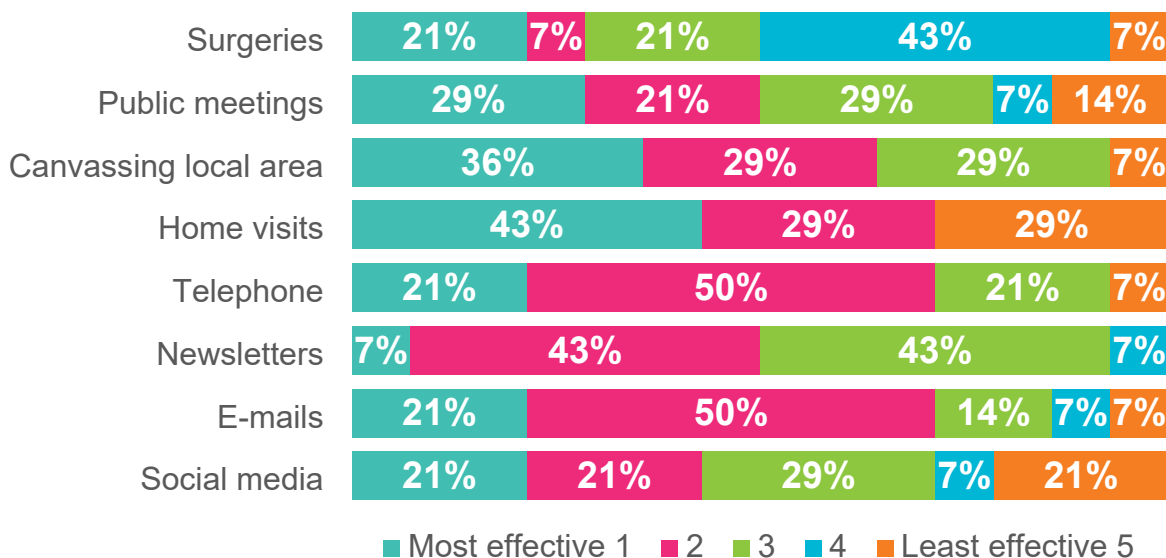■ A great deal  ■ A fair amount  ■ Not very much  ■ Not at all  ■ Don't know

A number of additional comments were received for this question with responses ranging from not having Parishes within their Electoral Division to detailing community events and door knocking to better understand the needs and wants of the community.

The respondents who answered 'a great deal' to the above question on all outlined categories were further asked to explain their choice. The comments included the importance of being seen, present and accessible at local, community and Parish meetings, as these meetings are at the heart of communities and a way to engage with residents in unparished areas.

Councillors were questioned on the most effective methods of communicating with their communities and asked to rank each method from 1 being the most effective to 5, the least effective. Fig 8 below provides an overview of responses with 43% believing that home visits were the most effective method of representing their community, closely followed by canvassing the local area at 36%. Conversely home visits were also noted as the least effective method by 29% of respondents. Telephone, emails, social media and surgeries, were each thought to be most effective by 21% of all respondents, with social media being seen a least effective by 21% of respondents. This may be as a result of both the constituents and the members confidence, experience and use of social media as a forum for effective communication.
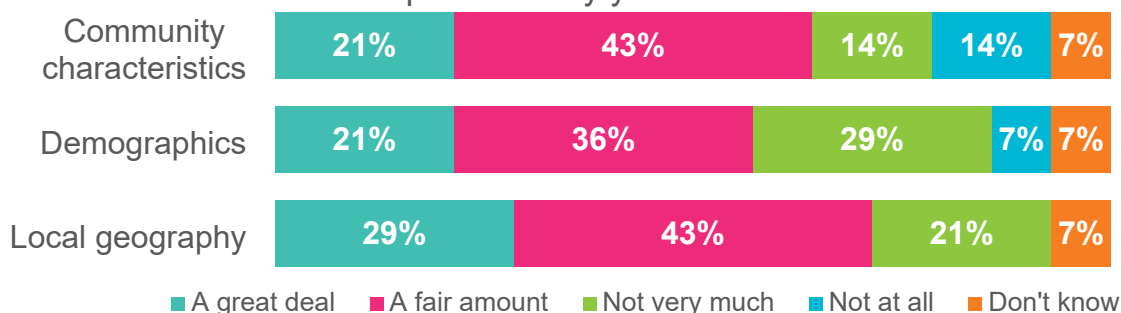
## Fig 8: When representing your community, what do you believe are the most effective methods
### (Rate from 1 = Most effective to 5 = Least effective)

| Method | Most effective 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Least effective 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Surgeries | 21% | 7% | 21% | 43% | 7% |
| Public meetings | 29% | 21% | 29% | 7% | 14% |
| Canvassing local area | 36% | 29% | 29% | | 7% |
| Home visits | 43% | 29% | | | 29% |
| Telephone | 21% | 50% | 21% | | 7% |
| Newsletters | 7% | 43% | 43% | 7% | |
| E-mails | 21% | 50% | 14% | 7% | 7% |
| Social media | 21% | 21% | 29% | 7% | 21% |

Councillors were also given the opportunity to add supporting comments and additional methods of representation which included harvesting personal relationships with community leaders, word-of-mouth, using texts and WhatsApp, being out and about in the community and also being present at meetings and community events.

Local geography has the largest impact on how Elected Members engage with the community and community groups (see Fig 9 below) with 29% responding they are affected 'a great deal'. Elected Member comments to supplement this answer expressed rural Electoral Divisions with small, poorly connected communities with differing agendas and concerns and varying degrees of deprivation being a key factor.

## Fig 9: Thinking about how you engage with your community and community groups, to what extent do the following impact the way you work?

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community characteristics | 21% | 43% | 14% | 14% | 7% |
| Demographics | 21% | 36% | 29% | 7% | 7% |
| Local geography | 29% | 43% | 21% | | 7% |

Engaging with young people, minority and hard-to-reach groups and those yet to become registered voters has always been slightly more problematic that when dealing with the majority of the public. Members were asked to what

extent do they engage with younger members of the community, those yet to become registered voters, minority groups, hard to reach groups and/or their representative bodies.  Fig 10 below provides an overview of responses with half of the respondents saying they dealt 'a fair amount' with these groups, 36% answered 'not very much' and only 14% said 'a great deal'.

Fig 10: Extent Members engage with younger members of the community, those yet to become registered voters, minority and hard-to-reach groups

| A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14% | 50% | 36% | 0% | 0% |
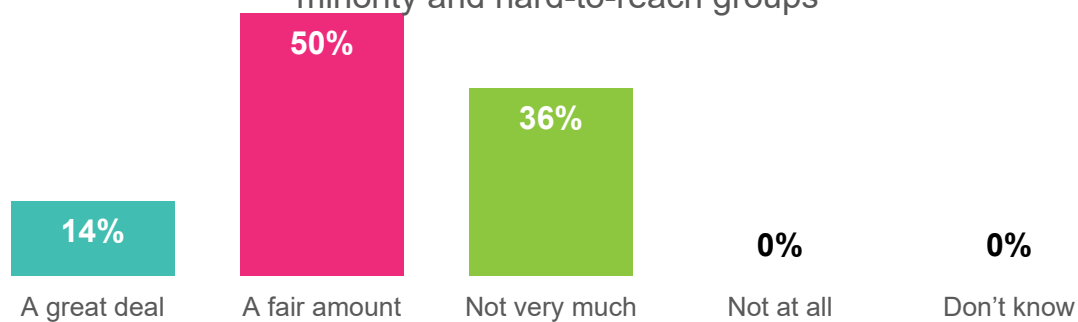
Councillors were asked a follow-on question to describe what methods were most effective and why when engaging with these communities. Fig 11 below shows that the majority, 79% responded that in person was the best way of engaging with these groups, being available and listening (29%) and making contact with your groups via other organisations and community groups such as school governor, girl guiding etc (29%).

It was also acknowledged that engaging with such groups and communities of interest can be hard to do (21%). It was also recognised by 21% of respondents that many local communities do not understand the structure of and roles within local government. A lack of willingness to engage or apathy amongst some groups to engage (7%) was also identified.

Fig 11: Most effective methods when engaging with younger members of the community, those yet to become registered voters, minority groups, hard to reach groups and/or their representative bodies



| Key phrase | % |
|---|---|
| In person | 79% |
| Listening | 29% |
| Young People | 29% |
| Connect via other groups | 29% |
| Hard to do | 21% |
| Lack knowledge of government | 21% |
| Unsupported by DCC | 7% |
| Apathay of groups to engage | 7% |
| Social Media | 7% |
| Youth Council | 7% |

## Council Size

The final question asked Elected Members their views on how many Councillors are required to satisfactorily represent Derbyshire's residents and conduct the Council's business. To which, 64% responded that the Council Size of 64 should remain the same, 36% thought 'more required', with no respondents selecting a reduction in numbers.

Fig 12: Members view on how many Councillors are required to satisfactorily represent Derbyshire residents and conduct Council business
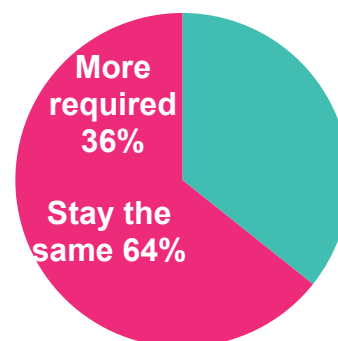
Supporting comments received during the consultation mentioned splitting the two-member led Electoral Divisions into single member divisions due to increased house building in some areas and the rural nature of others. The theme of increased housing developments, increasing population and the impact of rural areas were concerns raised by 21% of respondents.

# 4. Conclusions

The Survey found that Members found the most effective way to represent their communities was 'in person' interaction such as home visits, local canvassing and public meetings. Due to Derbyshire's rural nature and the desire for in person interaction with communities, a reduction in the number of councillors is not considered a good outcome for this review.

The Survey also found that along with face-to-face interactions with their communities, technology is increasingly relied upon by councillors to engage with communities. The use of social media, such as Facebook groups, has increased particularly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councillors have also reported that harder to reach groups, such as younger residents, are engaged with social media in a way that they wouldn't have been at the time of the last electoral boundary review.

**Policy and Research, January 2023**

# 5. Appendix 1: Questionnaire

**Q1 to Q4.** Please provide an estimate of the number of hours spent each week on:

| **Q1** | Council business, e.g. meetings | |
|---|---|---|
| **Q2** | Casework | |
| **Q3** | Community activity | |
| **Q4** | Other Council Activity | |

**Q5.** Please describe the other council activity (if required)

**Q6.** Have you found that the amount of time you spend on Council business is what you expected? (Use 'other' box to add any supporting comments)

| Less than expected | |
|---|---|
| About what was expected | |
| More than expected | |
| Other | |

**Q7.** During the last 12 months, would you say that your Council business commitments have increased or decreased? (Use 'other' box to add any supporting comments)

| Increased | |
|---|---|
| Decreased | |
| About the same | |
| Other | |

**Q8.** In dealing with casework, do you generally…?

| Refer query to officers | |
|---|---|
| Work with officers in resolving issues | |
| Signpost online DCC resolution systems | |
| Other | |

**Q9.** Thinking about your workload/casework, to what extent do the following impact the way you work? (Please select one for each category)

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Local geography** <br> e.g. rural / urban | | | | |
| **Demographics** <br> e.g. age profiles, housing growth | | | | |
| **Community characteristics** <br> e.g. areas of deprivation | | | | |

**Q10,** If you chose 'a great deal' on Q9 above for any of the categories, please explain why.

**Q11.** In relation to discharging your Council duties, how well supported do you feel by council resources/networks? (Use the 'Other' box to add any supporting comments)

| | |
|---|---|
| A great deal | |
| A fair amount | |
| Not very much | |
| Not at all | |
| Don't know | |
| Other supporting comments | |

**Q12.** To what extent do you believe you are expected to engage with your communities and how this affects your workload? (Please select one for each category)

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parish council meetings | | | | | |
| Resident association meetings | | | | | |
| Informal community meetings | | | | | |
| Other outside body meetings | | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | | |

**Q13.** If you chose 'Other' on Q12 please explain

**Q14.** If you chose 'a great deal' on Q12 for any of the options, please explain why

**Q15.** Thinking about how you represent your community, what do you believe are the most effective methods (please rate each method from most (1) to least effective (5)) (Please select one for each category)

| | 1 (most) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (least) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Surgeries | | | | | |
| Public meetings | | | | | |
| Canvassing local area | | | | | |
| Home visits | | | | | |
| Telephone | | | | | |
| Newsletters | | | | | |
| E-mails | | | | | |
| Social media | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | |

**Q16.** If you answered 'Other' to Q15 above or have any additional comments on effective methods of representing your community then please add your supporting comments.

**Q17.** How do you feel that technology advances have influenced the way in which you work and interact with your communities? (Use 'other' box to add any supporting comments)

| | |
|---|---|
| To a greater degree than expected | |
| Much as expected | |
| To a lesser degree than expected | |
| Other supporting comments | |

**Q18.** Thinking about how you engage more widely with the community and community groups, to what extent do the following impact the way you work?

| | A great deal | A fair amount | Not very much | Not at all | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local geography e.g. rural / urban | | | | | |
| Demographics e.g. age profiles, housing growth | | | | | |
| Community characteristics e.g. areas of deprivation | | | | | |

**Q19.** If you chose 'a great deal' for any of the previous three questions, please explain why

**Q20.** To what extent do you engage with younger members of the community, those yet to become registered voters, minority groups, hard to reach groups and/or their representative bodies? (Use 'other' box to add any supporting comments)

| | |
|---|---|
| A great deal | |
| A fair amount | |
| Not very much | |
| Not at all | |
| Don't know | |
| Other supporting comments | |

**Q21.** Thinking about opportunities for engaging with younger members of the community, those yet to become registered voters, minority groups, hard to reach groups and/or their representative bodies, please describe what you find to be effective and why.

**Q22.** What is your view on how many Councillors are required to satisfactorily represent Derbyshire's residents and conduct the Council's business? (Use 'other' box to add any supporting comments)

| | |
|---|---|
| More required | |
| Stay the same | |
| Fewer required | |
| Other supporting comments | |