# Detailed survey responses

## Q9. Is there anything you would like to say about your workload as a councillor?

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| 1 | Inevitably it goes up as you become more embedded in the role. Hopefully you find strategies and collaborations to help, but at the same time the complexity of the problems - climate crisis, cost of living, increasing inequality which affects local development - adds to workload. |
| 2 | Difficult to do while balancing family commitments and a full-time job |
| 3 | I feel as though I could do with case management tool. |
| 4 | Weeks vary in time spent on Council work: e.g. before planning meetings involves a lot of reading and site visits |
| 5 | I have significantly reduced the amount of time I spend as a district councillor since I became Leader of OCC |
| 6 | There is a big increase in workload when campaigning on specific issues or during election times |
| 7 | responding to every constituent is unpredictable, time consuming on a case by case basis |
| 8 | Only elected in May and then there was the Gen Election. Not sure what a 'usual' workload is yet |
| 9 | Political work varies depending on upcoming elections, planning applications have vastly increased |
| 10 | No |
| 11 | it is a huge workload, but there is a lot to do |
| 12 | I spend a lot of time on email and social media into resident issues. |
| 13 | It was reasonable as a Ward Councillor, but I am still coming to terms with the workload on the Executive |
| 14 | The needs of residents is varied. Understand the policies both national and local means that time spent reading and being informed is crucial. |
| 15 | Its a challenge having a full time job as well as being a Councillor so its sometimes difficult to attend all meetings especially during the day |
| 16 | no |
| 17 | I expected it, but it must be a barrier to some good people |
| 18 | Reduced scrutiny has reduced accountability |

**Q10. How many town / parish or community meetings do you regularly engage with?**

| 1 | 4 |
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| 2 | 1 |
| 3 | 3 |
| 4 | Two parish Councils |
| 5 | 3 |
| 6 | 3 |
| 7 | Now only occasional parish/community meetings since no longer a town councillor |
| 8 | 2/3 per month |
| 9 | 5 |
| 10 | 2 |
| 11 | 4 |
| 12 | 2 |
| 13 | 1 |
| 14 | None as not required in my ward |
| 15 | 2, but there are other occasional meetings |
| 16 | 2/3 a week usually and it can be a lot being town and district councillor. |
| 17 | 3 |
| 18 | Three |
| 19 | 4 |
| 20 | 3 |
| 21 | every month |
| 22 | 1 |
| 23 | 2 |

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| 24 | One – but a big one with multiple meetings |
| 25 | 4 |

## Q11 & Q13. How comfortable are you with your workload as a Councillor? / How comfortable would you be with your workload as a councillor if your workload was to increase by 10%?
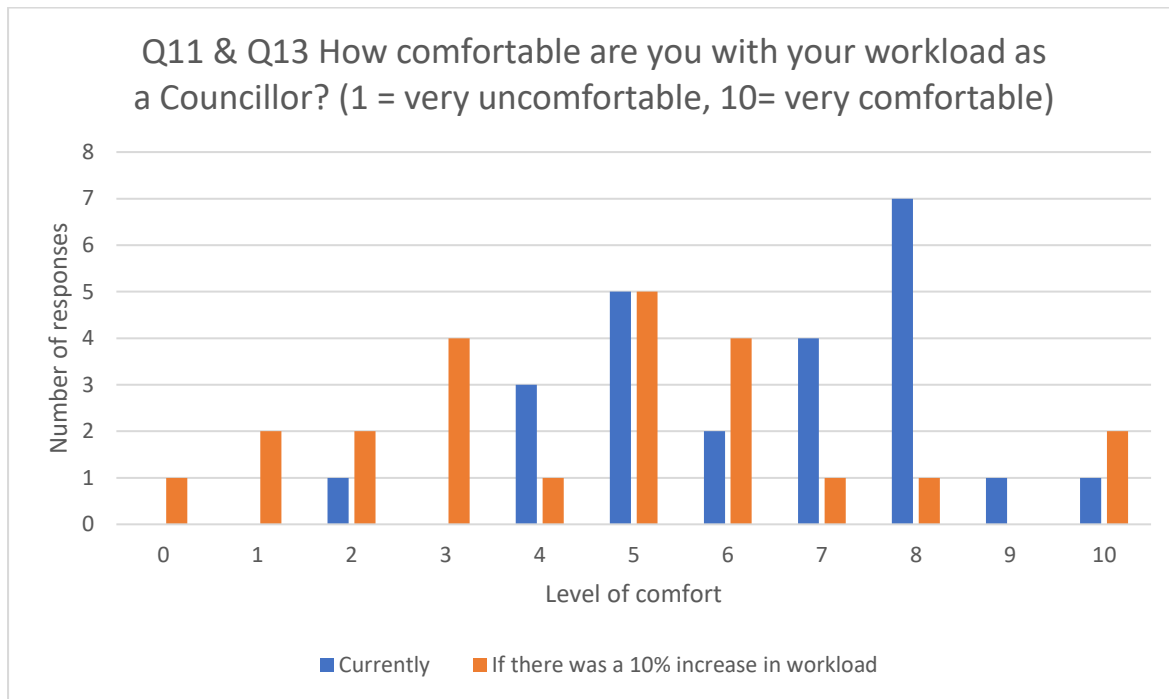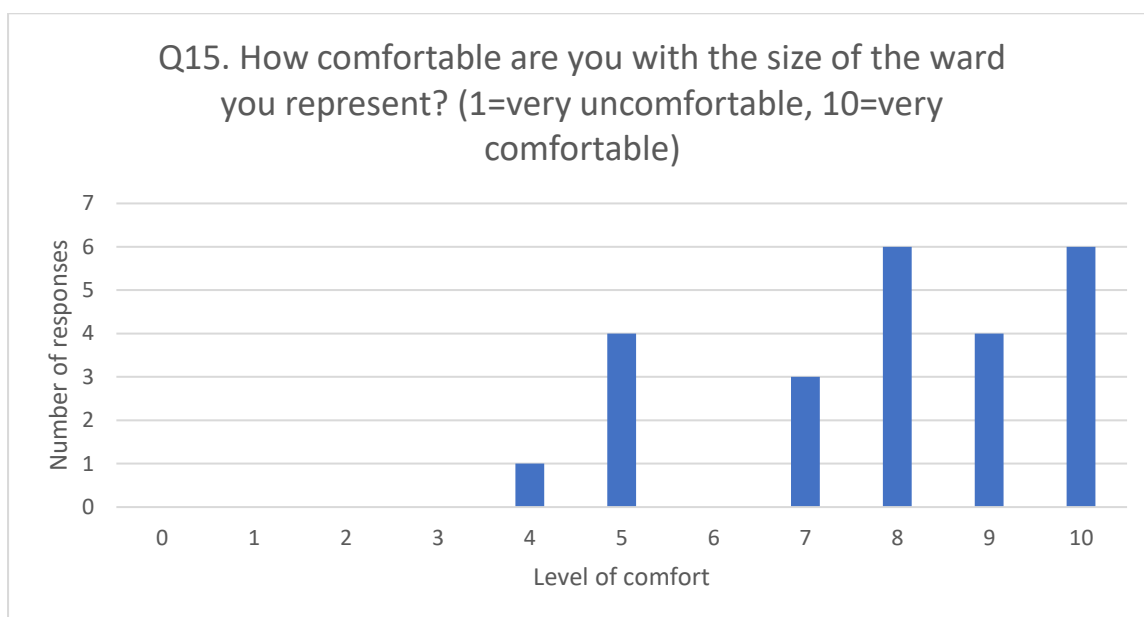


## Q12. What are the challenges (if any) you face in managing your workload?

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| 1 | The unpredictable and extremely diverse nature of the work. Lack of strong relationships with a wide range of officers, and lack of guidance about the relationship between councillors and officers. This should be in the induction process. |
| 2 | Council moving towards evening meetings is making it much harder for my employer to give me the facility time I need. |
| 3 | Being new and not always knowing (yet) how to translate a case into action. |
| 4 | Fitting everything in: Town Councillor as well as involved in other volunteers activities as well as District Cllr |
| 5 | Competing with job. |
| 6 | Balancing council work during busy work periods and campaigns |

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| 7 | not enough time in a week and holiday periods create a back up of work. |
| 8 | Co-incident meetings |
| 9 | Looking after grandchildren, especially during school holidays |
| 10 | none |
| 11 | My main employment and childcare |
| 12 | the reports are often lengthy, it would be helpful to have summaries, also some executive reports come late |
| 13 | Firstly I've had canvas every year since 2022 and this takes so much time away from the job! It doesn't look like to change either with 2026 my end date, re-standing and again 2027 due to boundary change and that's just very time consuming, overwhelming and at times as well as tiring. I've also had lots of development in my wards which has had lots of planning issues with little to none support from WODC officers to resolve which makes me look poor at the job and has been time consuming with emails and conversations with residents trying to get work done. I like the job, but I've had a tough ward from day 1 and I do t always get support from the other councillors sharing the work load so it feels I'm doing it all in own rather than sharing it which is awkward and also can become overwhelming at times. I'd be happy to have a other councillor within the ward if that's what it needs, or just more training for councillors so we know how to help and share our wards work loads better. |
| 14 | Balancing with my wish to support my extended family, members of which live abroad and therefore I have to spend extended periods outside the UK |
| 15 | Working full time |
| 16 | time, with a full time job and childcare commitments |
| 17 | None except balancing my full time Job |
| 18 | Not particularly relevant to this, but since you asked - The IT system! Constantly being logged out and the fact that the calendar doesn't allow syncing with my phone makes me constantly anxious I'll miss something! |
| 19 | Paying the bills. It is a full-time job with part-time remuneration. I work over hours and have other jobs to make ends meet. |
| 20 | Meeting that clash with other authority meetings....because nobody checks at start of year |

**Q15. How comfortable are you with the size of the ward you represent?**



Q15. How comfortable are you with the size of the ward you represent? (1=very uncomfortable, 10=very comfortable)

**16. Please tell us about any issues related to the size of your ward.**

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| 1 | I like the variety in my ward. There is Brize Norton, with most of the population, regular and active parish council, reasonably diverse population, lots going on, semi-town as on the edge of Carterton. Then there are the historic villages of Shilton (which includes the much more modern Bradwell Village) and the affluent villages in Asthall and Swinbrook parishes, north of the A40 and within the Cotswolds National Landscape. I get the feeling that "community cohesion" arguments would say that these two kinds of parishes should not be in the same ward, but actually I think that wards should all have a chunk of town plus a wedge of its hinterland, if possible. |
| 2 | Noting specific at the moment but the number of residents will increase markedly over the next few years |
| 3 | No significant issues |
| 4 | current size doable and makes geographical sense and size |

| 5 | There are 5 separate parishes, which have very different situations, so not necessarily a size issue. i.e. One parish with more overall people would be easier than 5 parishes with less overall people. |
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| 6 | Colwell Green has little in common with the rest of the ward and would be better as part of Witney |
| 7 | Rural ward, issues specific to the ward, size is manageable for 1 councillor. The ward is also the parish. |
| 8 | I have no issues |
| 9 | I think my ward is geographically, economically and socially cohesive. The issues seem to be more or less the same or similar across it. |
| 10 | Planning issues and officers don't seem to be other regarding the issues once planning is passed. |
| 11 | The size of the ward works well with common themes and issues |
| 12 | The disconnect between different parishes and the time driving between an outlying parish which is some distance away from the other 3. |
| 13 | Chipping Norton has three councillors and we all cover the whole town rather than being ward based. This arrangement works well |
| 14 | None |
| 15 | It is a sensible and coherent handful of communities, and it makes sense to those who live in it. |

## Q18. Is there anything else you would like to say about your workload as a Councillor or the size of the Council?

| 1 | Councillor numbers: either stay the same or a very few more. Obviously if it was 3 per ward it couldn't be 49. But I don't think it should be fewer. |
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| 2 | I believe that pretty much every layer of government could do with fewer representatives. We are anomalous in the UK. We should, however, receive more recompense. |
| 3 | 48 or 49 seems fine but population is increasing so that might change |
| 4 | Workload is fine at the moment. Key question is the purpose of the District Council and then a District Councillor. E.G. Size of council is too many councillors. It means the majority of the work is done by the executive and the majority of the councillors are less in touch with key activities and decisions. Less councillors with more of them involved in majority of work, issues and decisions would be better, i.e. the majority of |

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| | the work moves to ''Full Councill'' involvement. However this would increase the workload of the councillors and in-effect make it a full time job. This question and discussion makes no sense without also discussing the ''roles and responsibilities'' of the District Council. Feels a bit like re-arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. First lets discuss whether we should be on a ship or not and why are we in a position to be running into an iceberg. |
| 5 | The system seems to be working fairly well as it is with a mix of 1, 2 and 3 Member wards. |
| 6 | No |
| 7 | I think the number of councillors should reflect the size of population; perhaps the numbers of Councillors in wards that undergo more growth should be adjusted accordingly. |
| 8 | I feel more training for councillors on how to do the job, better working relationships with councillors and officers. I do believe that whatever happens we need to stop staggered elections for a number of reasons. |
| 9 | I have no strong views on this, except that I don't think it should become bigger, unless there was a strong reason |
| 10 | I would like to commit more time, unfortunately having a full time job alongside precludes this |
| 11 | No |
| 12 | It feels about right, though I question the 3,2,1 member ward thing. I recommend a team covering a larger geography, in other words 3 per ward with populations of around 7,000 voters. |
| 13 | Paperwork arriving too near meetings doesn't allow for quality reading and research |

## 20. Please provide details of any other issues you are aware of related to the ward boundaries within the district which you would like to see addressed as part of the boundary review.

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| 1 | In answer to Q19 above, I have put "would need more information" although I do already have quite a bit of information. But what I am not sure of is just how difficult it would be to manage the geographically large wards that would result if we were to have 3 members per ward. I imagine that, where all 3 councillors were from the same or allied political parties, they might share the load of the parish councils. But I know that if, say, I was the only Green of the 3, I would often feel obliged to go to all of the parish council meetings, and if my party was in opposition, that would be even more the case. And that would be too much, if there were 6 or 7 parishes. It's the number of parishes that matters, rather than the geographical area. Also, I will say again here |

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| | that I think that there is some advantage to wards having a chunk of town plus a wedge of rural hinterland. |
| 2 | Matching with county council and town council ward boundaries would obviously be preferable |
| 3 | Some of our wards already seem very stretched out involving a lot of small villages around larger communities which have other Cllrs: It seems re-organisation may be important if we are to develop three Cllrs for all wards as geographical arrangements currently seem sometimes rather odd and resulting in a lot of parish meetings for some Cllrs |
| 4 | Ward boundaries need to be adjusted to reflect the urban continuity and focus of settlements and not be based on irrelevant historic parish boundaries |
| 5 | travel expenses would need to be considered if boundaries were made bigger |
| 6 | |
| 7 | North Leigh ward covers a specific village and the parish is the same as the ward so it fits well as it is. It does not make sense to merge us into a larger rural ward as our neighbours are Freeland, Hanborough etc and these are much more urban with different issues, there is currently not much contact between North Leigh and those villages. It does not make sense to have a 3 member ward as the other 2 members would not know about North Leigh or be known to residents here and it would be confusing for residents to have to contact the 3 councillors (2 in Hanborough/Freeland who would not know about their issues). Why fix what's not broken? It makes more sense for North Leigh to stay as a single ward/parish. In larger areas such as Witney it makes sense to have 2 or 3 councillors covering the same patch but in a rural area it makes more sense for 1 councillor to cover 1 ward as the villages are all different. |
| 8 | Some wards are extremely varied in constituent numbers, this needs to be addressed to balance out workload. |
| 9 | I think that having local elections early is disruptive and interferes with continuity in the Members work. Although I have indicated that my political work takes 1-3hrs/week in re-election time, 3 months it is more like 30 hrs a week or more (every year). |
| 10 | I strongly favour the retention of single member wards in the rural area. There is direct accountability and a limited number of parish meetings to attend. Furthermore, the canvassing requirements at election time would become very onerous if they were combined into 3-member wards, partly the number of doors, but also the geographical spread. I am not in favour of combining rural and urban areas in a single ward as the issues faced are completely different. |
| 11 | I think it is important to retain the ability to have multi member wards as well as single member wards, because it better reflects the diverse nature of the District and |

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| | the way that different places are connected to each other. This means that I would endorse All-out elections every four years. It would also be cheaper, less disruptive to the efficient running of the Council, and would make for better decision-making, where long-term benefits can be balanced against short term costs |
| 12 | There needs to realign of parish councils in wards which have parishes spread over a large geographical area. There needs to be a realignment of parishes whose boundaries are closest to others. |
| 13 | Concerned of major Housing Development and i feel a boundaries commission is needed for Carterton |
| 14 | Wherever possible, natural communities should be the basis for wards. This might include "outer" wards ringing towns. They have as much in common as any town ward might. |
| 15 | Need to be careful that we don't draw the lines on political catchment |