

Council Size Submission

Derby City Council

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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.

The submission is provided as it has been 20 years since the last Local Government Boundary Review of Derby City Council in 2001.

Two of the Council's existing wards, Arboretum and Chellaston, are marginally out of tolerance with required electorate size limits. This review gives the Council the opportunity to correct the imbalance, consider the impact of population growth and new housing developments in the city, and determine whether the current number of councillors, as well as the shape of wards and polling districts, remains fit for purpose.

The draft submission has been prepared by Council Officers, in consultation with political Group Leaders and taking into consideration evidence collated as part of a survey of councillors that took place between Friday 20 and Sunday 29 August 2021.

Whilst this submission represents the Council's primary response, Political Groups have been encouraged to make their own submissions to the Commission should they wish to do so.

The final submission to the Commission is due to be considered at a Council meeting scheduled for 22 September 2021.

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 of its published criteria, then you are not required to answer this question.*

N/A

The Context for your proposal

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?

Derby City Council last fully reviewed its governance arrangements between May 2018 and January 2020, where the Council explored the possibility of moving from a Strong Leader and Cabinet model to a Committee System. The review concluded that most councillors supported retention of executive arrangements and that the existing governance system remained fit for purpose. However, approximately one third of councillors are known to favour a Committee System.

No wholesale change to the Council's governance structure has taken place since 2001, however, the Council undertakes continual review of its constitutional arrangements, in response to emerging issues and best practice recommendations. For example, widespread changes were introduced to the Council's licensing arrangements and the operation of licensing sub-committees from 2016, in response to a Report in the Public Interest (PIR) and subsequent national recommendations emanating from the Casey Review.

The Council has undertaken two recent public consultations on its electoral cycle in 2016 and 2020. The consultations demonstrated support from the public and the business community for a change to whole council elections from the current system of election by thirds.

On both occasions, a simple majority of councillors favoured changing the electoral cycle, however the proposal failed to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority required under relevant legislation. The electoral cycle continues to represent a topical discussion amongst councillors and it is conceivable that a further vote may be proposed during the boundary review period.

The Council's current Overview and Scrutiny structure was adopted in 2017, where the creation of an Executive Scrutiny Board put in place robust pre-decision scrutiny of decisions taken by the Council Cabinet. Similarly, the Council has undertaken continual review of its Standards regime in recent years, initially in response to the PIR and more recently in incorporating best practice recommendations from the Committee on Standards in Public Life and the Local Government Association.

Since the last boundary review in 2001, the Council has changed dramatically. Whilst unitary authorities like Derby have taken on additional responsibilities (notably public health, under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012), reductions in central government funding and increasing reliance on local taxation have fundamentally altered the composition of the Council. Since 2014 alone, the headcount at Derby City Council has reduced by 14 per cent, from 3806 to 3273 employees (when school staff are included this reduction is 38 per cent). Similarly, the Senior Officer Management Structure of the Council has been substantially streamlined over the same period.

The nature and focus of service delivery has also changed significantly since 2001 – the Council has moved from being an organisation that predominantly delivers services directly, to one that also commissions them or seeks to build capacity within communities as a means of early intervention. The role of councillors in this respect is increasingly important.

The Council works closely with other local authorities in the region on the delivery of a range of services – for example, Derby City Council is party to a joint waste contract with Derbyshire County Council. However, discussions in relation to devolution have not yet developed fully in the East Midlands. Variations of a Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Combined Authority have been discussed by political leaders in the region for several years, whilst Derby and Nottingham adopted a shared Metropolitan Strategy in 2018. More recently, both the Leaders of Derby City and Derbyshire County Councils have publicly stated positions in support of wider local government reorganisation

It is likely that these discussions will gather momentum in coming years, in response to national policy. Nevertheless, Derby is a city with a distinct identity and a complex set of challenges; locally elected representation remains fundamentally important to the city realising its broader ambitions.

Evidence collected as part of this review supports that assertion: it has demonstrated a sense from existing councillors that their workload has increased substantially, particularly in relation to casework and community leadership. The Council remains able to operate its existing governance arrangements effectively with the current number of councillors, but a moderate increase would ease capacity issues in relation to unfilled appointments to committee places and outside bodies.

A fully developed Council Size proposal is detailed at the conclusion of this document. It is envisaged that the proposal will ensure councillors are able to more effectively discharge

their existing duties and prepare the Council for further structural and demographic changes envisaged by the time of the next boundary review.

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?

Further to providing a description, the Commission will be looking for a submission that demonstrates an understanding of place and communities by putting forth arguments on council size based upon local evidence and insight. For example, how does local geography, demographics and community characteristics impact on councillor casework, workload and community engagement?

Derby is a compact city of 30 square miles with an estimated 111,227 dwellings (MHCLG, 2020) and is divided into 17 wards. It has been a unitary authority since 1997. It has links via the A38, A50 and A52 to the motorway network and is a historic centre for rail.

Population profile and growth

Derby has an estimated resident population of 256,800 (ONS, 2020), this has increased from 248,752 at the last census in 2011. Arboretum and Normanton wards have the highest resident population in recent estimates and are also the wards with the fastest growing populations.

According to the ONS 2020 mid-year estimates the age profile for the city is...

- 20.9% (53,600) aged 0-15 years.
- 62.6% (160,900) aged 16-64 (working age).
- 16.5% (42,400) aged 65 and over (including 6,400 aged 85 and over which is 2.5% of the population).

The population of Derby is projected to increase to the region of 274,266 by 2043 (ONS population projections, 2018) with the 0-15 age group expected to take a smaller proportion of the population (18.8%) and ages above 60 making up a larger proportion. Those aged 65 years and over are projected to rise to 21.3% of the population with 3.7% aged 85 years and over.

11.4% of dwellings in the city are owned by the local authority, 7.4% by private registered providers and the majority (81.1%) privately owned (MHCLG, 2020). 51% of the properties in Derby are in Council Tax Band A (Valuation Office Agency, 2020).

24.7% of the population are from an ethnic minority communities, increasing from 15.7% in the 2001 census. This includes 12.5% from an Asian / Asian British background (ONS, Census 2011). The “Other White” ethnic group, which includes migrants from Eastern Europe, made up 3.9% of the city population making it the third largest ethnic minority group in the city. The percentage of the population from ethnic minority communities varies significantly between wards with over 60% of people living in Normanton and Arboretum wards with an ethnic minority background (ONS, Census 2011).

Further information on population, demographics and ward profiles can be found on Derby’s Local Information System <https://info4derby.derby.gov.uk/>

Housing need and demand

As one of the top 20 urban areas in England, Derby has been affected by recent changes to the calculation of its housing needs; changes to the ‘standard methodology’ for calculating housing need introduced in December 2020 (MHCLG), resulted in Derby’s housing need increasing by 35%, which is expected to be met within the city area.

Over the past ten years, on average about 550 new homes have been provided in the city each year. The new, increased need is now for nearly 1,200 new homes a year going forward.

Planning for the next 20 years, up to 2041, will mean housing needs will be somewhere near 24,000 dwellings. This will have an impact on population growth as well as demands on services and spaces within the city.

As the city is already built up to its boundaries, the Council will need to plan how and where this significant housing need, as well as the required supporting infrastructure and services, are met from now until 2041. Government planning policy (National Planning Policy Framework) is that local authorities meet their housing needs by the sustainable development of land and in particular increasing densities, using land effectively and delivering housing on previously developed (brownfield) land. This intensification of housing stock within the city will change the nature of the existing neighbourhoods and therefore the resident numbers in certain locations and wards.

The diagram below shows the current wards and voter numbers, with the areas with the greatest number of voters shaded darkest and known residential housing developments overlaid in black. It is notable that several substantial developments are proposed in the two wards identified by the Commission as being outside of the accepted tolerance for electorate size (Arboretum and Chellaston); these include several proposals for high density, city-centre housing.



Note: the data provided is based on land allocations and planning permissions for housing which the Council has approved, but the delivery of the vast majority of housing is done by the development sector and we cannot control when they deliver. They are working within the economics of a housing market. The data provided is a best estimate, using dialogue with the development sector where possible, about the delivery rates on sites.

The sites identified are the larger ones where we have reasonable confidence that homes will be delivered in the timeframe (to 2027). There will inevitably be many more homes delivered on a range of sites across the city as new planning permissions are granted on 'windfall' sites. We cannot identify where these will be so they are not specifically identified, but they can cumulatively create large numbers of new homes across the city and contribute to overall growth.

Whilst not directly relevant to this review, it is notable that significant housing growth is taking place in the form of large-scale developments bordering the city in neighbouring local authority areas, particularly South Derbyshire. This is and will continue to lead to increased pressure on infrastructure and services within Derby City.

Details of the current [Local Plan](#) are available to view on the Council's website.

Deprivation

Derby is the 67th most deprived authority in England (out of 317 – 1 being the most deprived). Derby has areas of high deprivation with one in three residents living in an area regarded as one of the top 20% most deprived nationally...

- Arboretum ward had the highest proportion of neighbourhood areas within the 10% most deprived nationally, 90% are within the top 10% most deprived and 100% within the top 20%.
- Sinfin had 55.6% within the most deprived 10% and 77.8% within the most deprived 20%. Normanton had 44.4% within the most deprived 10% and 88.9% within the most deprived 20% nationally.
- Allestree, Blagreaves, Littleover and Mickleover have no LSOAs in either the top 10% or 20% most deprived nationally.

(MCCLG Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2019).

The 2017 Social Mobility Index produced by the Social Mobility Commission identified the city of Derby as being a social mobility cold spot falling into the worst performing 20 percent of all authorities being scored 22 of 65, a score of 1 being the worst.

Industry and Employment

Derby is home to major international producer businesses, notably Rolls-Royce and Bombardier, and Toyota which lies just outside the City. Derby is renowned for specialist industries – transport, railways engineering and hi-tech. The top industries of employment within the city are Manufacturing (19.6%), Human Health and Social Work (14.7%) and Wholesale and Retail Trade (repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles) (11.9%) (ONS, BRES 2019).

The percentage of the working age population with NVQ4 level and above qualifications is 44.2%, this is higher than both the East Midlands (37.2%) and Great Britain (43.1%). 4.8% of the working age population has no formal qualifications lower than both the East Midlands (6.3%) and Great Britain (6.4%) (ONS, APS 2020).

The number of people claiming out of work benefits is 11,045 in latest data (ONS claimant count, July 2021) which is 6.9% of the population (higher than East Midlands and England rates). Claimant rates vary significantly between wards, Arboretum and Normanton have the highest claimant rates within the city.

Life expectancy

There are lower than national average life expectancy rates at birth:

1. Derby males rate of 78.6 years versus the England average of 79.8 years.
2. Derby females rate of 82.1 years versus the England average of 83.4 years.

3. The inequality in life expectancy rates at birth is also higher than national rates for both males and females in Derby. Life expectancy is 10.2 years lower for men and 10.1 years lower for women in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas.

(Public Health England, 2017-19)

Council Plan and Recovery Plan

The Council Plan 2019-2023 sets out the long term vision for Derby and describes the opportunities and challenges that the city and council face, our priorities are under 3 themes:

- A city with big ambitions
- A city of health and happiness
- A council focussed on the things that matter.

[Council Plan 2019-23 FINAL 190719.pdf \(derby.gov.uk\)](#)

Since the start of the pandemic, the Council has worked with partners and stakeholders towards a common aim of supporting the city's response and recovery, mitigating risks and developing any opportunities emerging from the pandemic.

The Derby Recovery Plan 2021/22 sets out what actions we will take to support the city to build back and build back better.

[derby-recovery-plan-orig.pdf](#)

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	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>What governance model will your authority operate? e.g. Committee System, Executive or other?</i></p> <p>➤ <i>The Cabinet model, for example, usually requires 6 to 10 members. How many members will you require?</i></p> <p>➤ <i>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.</i></p>

		<p>➤ <i>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?</i></p> <p>➤ <i>Whichever governance model you currently 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.</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>Composition of the Council</p> <p>Derby City Council currently has 51 councillors divided between 17 electoral wards.</p> <p>The political composition of the Council following the May 2021 elections and at the time of writing was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservative – 21 - Labour – 13 - Liberal Democrat – 8 - Reform Derby – 6 - Ungrouped independent councillors - 3 <p>The full Council is scheduled to meet six times per year, but there have been several extraordinary meetings summoned in recent years to consider issues of significance or urgency.</p> <p>Derby City Council has operated a 'Strong Leader and Cabinet' governance model since 2001, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.</p> <p>Since the date of the last boundary review, the Council has had several variations of political control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labour majority control (2001-2003) - Liberal Democrat / Conservative coalition (2003-2005) - Labour majority control (2005-2006) - Labour / Conservative coalition (2006-2008) - Liberal Democrat minority control (2008-2010) - Conservative minority control (2010-2011) - Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition (2011-2012) - Labour majority control (2012-2018) - Conservative minority control (2018 to present)

		<p>The regular changes of political control reflect a closely contested political culture in the city, which is echoed in the operation of the Council's committees and the level of activity from opposition groups.</p> <p>Executive Arrangements</p> <p>The current Council Cabinet is formed of nine members, covering a range of portfolios which broadly align with the corporate structure of the Council and key themes reflected in the Council Plan and Derby Recovery Plan (see below). This is an increase of one Council Cabinet member from the 2020-21 municipal year and falls one short of the statutory maximum number.</p> <p>Council Cabinet meetings are scheduled to take place twelve times per year but are often required to meet more frequently. The current financial threshold for Key Decisions is £250k; the Council's Contract and Financial Procedure Rules detail several circumstances in which Cabinet approval is required; and the Council Cabinet maintain an overview of corporate performance via quarterly reporting.</p> <p>Taken together, this results in a high volume of decisions requiring Council Cabinet approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2018-19: 15 meetings, 148 decisions - 2019-20: 12 meetings, 116 decisions - 2020-21: 11 meetings, 92 decisions <p>The Leader of the Council has delegated executive decision-making powers to individual members of the Council Cabinet. These decisions are broadly categorised as non-key executive decisions with a financial impact of above £100k or approval of minor policies and procedures. These decisions are discharged at individual Cabinet Member meetings, which are held in accordance with statutory access to information provisions.</p> <p>The volume of decisions taken via individual Cabinet Member Meetings, or via Urgent Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2018-19: 28 meetings, 63 decisions - 2019-20: 24 meetings, 65 decisions - 2020-21: 25 meetings, 64 decisions
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		<p>The Council Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members play an active role in the authority outside of constituted meetings. Cabinet Members attend weekly briefings with the Council's Senior Leadership Team and with lead officers within their respective portfolios.</p> <p>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 (detailed later in this document).</p> <p>Committee Structure</p> <p>The Council operates the following committees to discharge non-executive functions and functions delegated by the Cabinet, constituted in proportion to the political representation of the full Council.</p> <p>Committees are relatively large in membership, to allow political balance requirements to be fulfilled across the Council's four established groups.</p> <p>Discounting the Council Cabinet, in 2021-22 the Council appointed to 133 positions across its established committees, scrutiny boards and joint bodies. This equates to 2.6 seats per councillor, although if members of the executive are discounted this figure increases to 3.1.</p> <p><i>Regulatory Committees</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Control Committee (12 members, 9 scheduled meetings per year) - Licensing Committee (15 members, 5 scheduled meetings per year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General Licensing Sub-Committee (3 members, summoned as required) - Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee (5 members, summoned as required) <p><i>Other Committees</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Parenting Committee (8 members, 4 scheduled meetings per year) - Audit and Governance Committee (9 elected members, 6 scheduled meetings per year) - Health and Wellbeing Board (6 elected members, 6 scheduled meetings per year) - Personnel Committee (9 members, 5 scheduled meetings per year)
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conservation Area Advisory Committee (3 elected members, 8 scheduled meetings per year) - Standards Committee (5 elected members, 4 scheduled meetings per year) - Appointments Panel (membership varies, summoned as required) - Disputes Resolution Committee (4 elected members, summoned as required) <p><i>Neighbourhood Boards, Forums and Ward Committees</i></p> <p>Councillors participate in Neighbourhood Boards, Forums and Ward Committees to discharge delegated functions relating to neighbourhood engagement and locality working:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ward Committees comprise of the three elected councillors and determine applications for use of Neighbourhood Board funding. - Neighbourhood Boards comprise of ward councillors and appointed representatives of residents, businesses, voluntary and community groups, to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. - Neighbourhood Forums are a consultative body open to all members of the public. <p><i>Joint Bodies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Derbyshire Fire Authority (4 DCC members, 6 meetings per year) - Derbyshire Police and Crime Panel (1 DCC constituent member, 2 DCC co-opted members, 6 meetings per year) - Derbyshire Development Plans Joint Advisory Committee (5 DCC members) - Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (4 elected members, 4 meetings per year) <p>The current size and political composition of each of the Council's committees is detailed at Appendix A.</p> <p>Councillor Champions</p> <p>The Council appoints to fifteen 'Councillor Champion' positions at its Annual Meeting. Whilst these roles remain constitutionally undefined, they play an important consultative role on a wide range of issues.</p>
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		<p>(for example, by chairing the Council's Diversity Forums).</p> <p>The current Councillor Champions cover the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability - Minority Ethnic Communities - Older People - Children and Young People - LGBTQ+ - Gender - Anti-Fraud - Safeguarding - Mental Health - Cycling - Armed Forces - Climate Change (one per political group) <p>Review of Governance System</p> <p>Between May 2018 and January 2020 the Council undertook a review of its governance system, exploring the possibility of moving to a Committee System.</p> <p>Whilst the review concluded that Strong Leader and Cabinet remained the preferred governance model for the majority of councillors, there remains a minority of elected members who are known to favour a Committee System. At the time of writing, the Council is aware of two active petitions seeking a referendum on the Council's governance arrangements.</p> <p>Therefore, the review of Council size must also account for the realistic possibility that Derby City Council may change its governance arrangements and operate a Committee System in the years following this boundary review.</p> <p>Other relevant information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A recent survey of councillors found that 40 per cent of respondents spent between 6 and 10 hours either preparing for or participating in committees each week. - By custom and practice, most Derby City Council's constituted meetings take place in the evening, except for Licensing Sub-Committees, the Audit and Governance Committee,
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		<p>Personnel Committee, Health & Wellbeing Board and Corporate Parenting Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting attendance at the Council and its committees is good – in the 2019-20 municipal year, councillors attended more than 90 per cent of scheduled meetings to which they were appointed.
Portfolios	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>How many portfolios will there be?</i> ➤ <i>What will the role of a portfolio holder be?</i> ➤ <i>Will this be a full-time position?</i> ➤ <i>Will decisions be delegated to portfolio holders? Or will the executive/mayor take decisions?</i>
	Analysis	<p>For the 2021-22 municipal year, the Leader has appointed eight Cabinet Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cabinet Member for Strategy and Policy (Leader of the Council) - Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Decarbonisation, Strategic Planning and Transport (Deputy Leader) - Cabinet Member for Governance - Cabinet Member for Finance, Assets and Digital Services - Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing - Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Skills - Cabinet Member for Place and Community Development - Cabinet Member for Streetpride and Public Spaces - Cabinet Member for Wellbeing, Leisure, Culture and Tourism <p>The current Council Cabinet portfolios, mapped against services, themes/programmes and Scrutiny Boards, is attached at Appendix B.</p> <p>The Cabinet meet monthly to take executive Key Decisions and hold individual Cabinet Member meetings to determine executive non-key decisions as the need arises.</p> <p>As detailed previously, the Cabinet has recently been expanded to accommodate key priorities and pressures arising relating to recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and community development in particular.</p> <p>The Leader and Cabinet Members are very active and are closely involved with the day-to-day functioning of</p>

		<p>the authority. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that their workload is equivalent to that of a full-time role.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council works closely with the Chief Executive 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.</p> <p>Cabinet Members receive weekly briefings from the Corporate Leadership Team, as well as Service Directors and Heads of Service within their respective portfolio areas.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Whilst the current Council Cabinet of nine is only one short of the statutory maximum, it is the view of Council Officers that this is appropriate for an urban, unitary authority like Derby.</p> <p>A large and active Cabinet ensures the effective discharge of the Council's functions and maintains democratic oversight of the wide variety of projects and programmes the Council is currently undertaking.</p>
Delegated Responsibilities	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>What responsibilities will be delegated to officers or committees?</i></p> <p>➤ <i>How many councillors will be involved in taking major decisions?</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>The extract below details the matters reserved to the Council Cabinet, Executive Leader and individual Cabinet Members, as detailed in Part 3 of the Council Constitution:</p> <p>The following matters are reserved to the Council Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making recommendations to Council on the budget and the policy framework; - Implementing the budget and policy framework in respect of all functions except non-executive functions; - Making key decisions about implementation of any of the council's functions except non-executive functions. This includes all policies

		<p>procedures and strategies not included in the policy framework;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinating and securing best value within the budget and policy framework agreed by Council; - Undertaking activities relating to virement and other issues specified under Financial Procedure Rules; - Making recommendations to Council on intended action following the receipt of reports from the external auditor, external inspectorates and the Local Government Ombudsman; - Forming partnerships; and - Monitoring performance indicators, general service performance and financial management. <p>The following matters are reserved to the Executive Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making executive, non-key decisions, within their area of responsibility, and within the limitations of the Financial Procedure Rules, which result in the council incurring expenditure or making savings of between £100,000 and £249,999; - Monitoring service performance and taking action to improve performance where necessary, in conjunction with the relevant service director; - Approving minor policies and procedures that do not have a significant impact on two or more wards, within his/her area of responsibility; - Approving consultation arrangements and initial proposals for policies, plans and strategies within the budget and policy framework in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules; - Making recommendations to Council Cabinet on matters reserved to Council Cabinet - Other than executive matters reserved to the Council Cabinet, to discharge executive functions which have not been allocated to an individual member of the Council Cabinet or an officer, or to arrange for the discharge of those functions by an individual member of the Council Cabinet or an officer; - Performing the functions of, or taking decisions on matters reserved to, an individual member of the Council Cabinet if the Monitoring Officer determines that the relevant individual member is unable to act;
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Taking decisions in cases of urgency in respect of any executive matter, including key decisions; - Receiving and considering petitions in accordance with the Petitions Scheme; and - Exercise of the Derby Homes Single Shareholder Vote. This function may be allocated by the Executive Leader to another member of the Council Cabinet. <p>The following matters are reserved to an individual member of the Council Cabinet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making executive, non-key decisions, within his/her area of responsibility, and within the limitations of the Financial Procedure Rules, which result in the council incurring expenditure or making savings of between £100,000 and £249,999; - Monitoring service performance, within his/her area of responsibility, and taking action to improve performance where necessary, in conjunction with the relevant service director; - Approving consultation arrangements and initial proposals for policies, plans and strategies within the budget and policy framework in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Rules; - Approving minor policies and procedures that do not have a significant impact on two or more wards, within his/her area of responsibility; - Making recommendations to the Council Cabinet, within his/her areas of responsibility, on matters reserved to the Council Cabinet; - Receiving and considering petitions in accordance with the Petitions Scheme. <p>The Council Constitution also delegates executive functions relating to human resources and corporate parenting to the committees detailed earlier in this document.</p> <p>The Council maintains a comprehensive scheme of delegation to officers, detailed within the Council Constitution. In general terms, these are decisions that fall below the £100k financial impact threshold that would require a decision to be made at an Individual Cabinet Member Meeting.</p>
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		Officers holding delegated authority will often consult Cabinet Members before discharging executive functions.
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Accountability

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>How will decision makers be held to account?</i> ➤ <i>How many committees will be required? And what will their functions be?</i> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>How many members will be required to fulfil these positions?</i> ➤ <i>Explain why you have increased, decreased, or not changed the number of scrutiny committees in the authority.</i> ➤ <i>Explain the reasoning behind the number of members per committee in terms of adding value.</i>
Analysis	<p>Derby City Council currently operates six Overview and Scrutiny Boards, which undertake a mixture of pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny.</p> <p>The Council's scrutiny culture is very active, with the Executive Scrutiny Board exerting considerable political pressure on the Cabinet due to the nature of its remit and the Council currently being under no overall control.</p> <p>The Scrutiny process in Derby is intended to be led by councillors – Chairs and Vice Chairs play an active role in co-ordinating the work programme of each Board and undertaking evidence gathering outside of scheduled meetings. This is partially a consequence in a reduction in the level of direct officer support provided to scrutiny boards. Like many authorities, Derby City Council now employs dual-hatted Democratic Services Officers, who fulfil both the role of scrutiny officer and clerk to the committees.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report for 2019-20 is attached at Appendix C, which details the volume of business</p>

	<p>considered by scrutiny committees and the topic reviews undertaken during this period.</p> <p>The specific role and remit of the six scrutiny boards is described below:</p> <p>Executive Scrutiny Board</p> <p>The Executive Scrutiny Board meets monthly on the evening before Council Cabinet meetings and comprises of 12 councillors.</p> <p>The primary function of the committee is to scrutinise the Cabinet agenda. Recommendations from the scrutiny board are considered by the Council Cabinet the following evening, with the responses from the Cabinet reviewed at the next scheduled meeting of the Board.</p> <p>The Executive Scrutiny Board also maintains oversight of Corporate Performance, maintaining a Performance Forward Plan and receiving presentations on areas of good practice or underperformance. The Board will make recommendations to the five Scrutiny Review Boards for matters they believe require further investigation.</p> <p>The Chair of the Executive Scrutiny Board exercises statutory responsibilities in terms of agreeing to the consideration of urgent or confidential business, when not contained within the Council Cabinet Forward Plan.</p> <p>The Executive Scrutiny Board is also responsible for considering call-in hearings and co-ordinating the annual Budget Scrutiny meeting – since the Board was constituted in its current form in 2017, four call-ins have been heard.</p> <p>Typically, the Chairs of the Scrutiny Review Boards are represented in the membership of the Executive Scrutiny Board. The large membership of the committee is necessitated by the need to achieve political proportionality, but also to ensure that all groups have fair opportunity to participate in pre-decision scrutiny of the executive.</p> <p>Scrutiny Review Boards</p> <p>The Council maintains five Scrutiny Review Boards, which comprise of seven councillors each. Between four and six meetings are scheduled at the start of the municipal year, although extraordinary meetings can be called if necessary or working groups formed to collate additional evidence.</p>
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		<p>The current Scrutiny Review Boards cover the following areas and are aligned to Cabinet Portfolios, as detailed within Appendix B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Services - Regeneration and Housing - Children and Young People - Adults and Health - Communities <p>The Adults and Health Board fulfils statutory health scrutiny responsibilities and the Communities Board acts as the statutory crime and disorder committee.</p> <p>Scrutiny Review Boards identify items on their annual work programmes for further investigation, receiving reports and presentations from officers, partners and stakeholders at their scheduled meetings.</p> <p>A Board will typically conduct one topic review over the course of a municipal year. Reports and evidence will be received over a series of meetings, before a report and recommendations are finalised for submission to the Council Cabinet or the relevant decision-making body.</p> <p>The Boards are supported by council officers to identify areas where scrutiny can add value to the Council's activity. Nevertheless, the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Board members are primarily responsible for sharpening their respective work programmes.</p> <p>Scrutiny Review Boards will on occasion form task and finish groups to consider specific issues in greater detail outside of scheduled meetings. For example, the Corporate Services Scrutiny Board recently concluded a review of women's representation in local government, having formed a working group involving members from the wider cohort of councillors.</p>
Statutory Function		<p>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?</p>
Planning	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>What proportion of planning applications will be determined by members?</i> ➤ <i>Has this changed in the last few years? And are further changes anticipated?</i> ➤ <i>Will there be area planning committees? Or a single council-wide committee?</i> ➤ <i>Will executive members serve on the planning committees?</i>

		<p>➤ <i>What will be the time commitment to the planning committee for members?</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>The Council operates a single Planning Control Committee comprising of 12 members, which meets nine times per year.</p> <p>More than 90 per cent of planning applications are determined by officers under delegated powers, whilst the remainder are considered by the committee. This has remained relatively consistent in recent years.</p> <p>The criteria for an application to be considered by the Planning Control Committee are set out within the Scheme of Delegations in the Council Constitution as follows:</p> <p><i>Determining individual applications for planning permission and advertisement control and any other application made under planning legislation where:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>15 or more duly made objections (within 28 days of notification of an application) have been received, which raise material planning considerations and the officer recommendation is to approve permission/consent (objections from the same house or household or family members will be treated as a single objection), or</i> b) <i>the application is contrary to a Local Plan allocation and the officer recommendation is to approve, or</i> c) <i>a Member of the Council has, within three weeks of being sent notification of an application, written to the Director of Planning and Transportation requesting its determination by the Committee, giving reasons for the request. Where the member concerned does not attend the meeting in person, or submit written representations, the application will be deemed to be determined in accordance with the recommendation of the Director of Planning and Transportation.</i> <p>The number of applications considered by the committee in previous municipal years has remained consistent:</p> <p>2016-17: 31 2017-18: 33 2018-19: 31 2019-20: 24 2020-21: 32</p> <p>The time commitment required by members of the Planning Committee is significant. Committee meetings typically last</p>

		<p>between 90 minutes to three hours and during the 2020/21 municipal year considered an average of 4 applications per meeting.</p> <p>Councillors are encouraged to review applications in detail and seek advice from officers prior to meetings. Councillors may also request site visits where appropriate, although the number conducted in recent years has declined given the availability of information online.</p> <p>Dedicated training is provided to Planning Control Committee members by officers in the Planning Department and external training is offered periodically – the training addresses the role and remit of the committee, governance and probity in decision-making, the legislative framework within which planning decisions are made and key policy developments. All councillors receive refresher training on planning policy as part of the Council’s annual Member Training day.</p> <p>Taken together, it is estimated that each member of the committee devotes around 8 hours to their role every six weeks.</p> <p>There are currently no plans to introduce area planning committees. Cabinet Members are permitted to sit on the Planning Control Committee, although none are currently appointed.</p> <p>The Council also operates a Conservation Area Advisory Committee, to which three elected members are appointed. The CAAC meets 8 times per year and advises on applications for planning permission and related consents that could affect the character, appearance or setting of a World Heritage Site, Conservation Area or buildings of historical, architectural or archaeological interest.</p> <p>Parts of Derby city centre fall within the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, and there are several conservation areas elsewhere within the city boundaries.</p>
Licensing	Key lines of explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>How many licencing panels will the council have in the average year?</i> ➤ <i>And what will be the time commitment for members?</i> ➤ <i>Will there be standing licencing panels, or will they be ad-hoc?</i> ➤ <i>Will there be core members and regular attendees, or will different members serve on them?</i>
	Analysis	<p>The Licensing Committee comprises of 15 councillors and meets five times per year, with its primary function to set, review and amend policies across a range of licensing</p>

		<p>disciplines that include alcohol licensing, taxi licensing and regulated entertainment.</p> <p>Taking its membership from the Licensing Committee, the General Licensing Sub Committee acts in a quasi-judicial capacity to determine the application, review (including expedited applications) and revocation/suspension of personal and premises licenses granted under relevant legislation, as well as for temporary events (TENs). Similarly, the Taxi Licensing Sub Committee determines applications for, and the suspension/revocation of, individual and operator taxi licenses under circumstances specified within the Council's policies.</p> <p>There is also the regulation of animal health, skin piercing, tattooing, adult entertainment, gambling, scrap metal, street and house collections, and caravan licensing which fall under the approval of these Committees at various times for approval and/or enforcement.</p> <p>Sub-committee meetings are not scheduled in advance and are summoned as business dictates. General Licensing Sub-Committees comprise of three members, whilst the Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee requires five. Either the Licensing Committee Chair or one of four Vice-Chairs are required to preside over hearings of the two sub-committees.</p> <p>The number of appeals considered by Licensing Sub Committees has notably declined in recent years, following the introduction of wholesale changes to the Council's taxi licensing policies in 2016 and increased use of delegated powers by officers. Nevertheless, the time commitment required from Licensing members remains significant.</p> <p>General Licensing hearings</p> <p>2016-17: 9 2017-18: 11 2018-19: 7 2019-20: 6 + 1 expedited review 2020-21: 4</p> <p>Taxi Licensing hearings</p> <p>2016-17: 12 2017-18: 6 2018-19: 14 2019-20: 4 2020-21: 0</p> <p>Hearings of sub-committees vary in length depending on their complexity, but some general licensing hearings have been</p>
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		<p>known to last more than one working day. In addition to the time of the hearing, councillors involved in the sub-committee will attend a pre-meeting with legal counsel and meet following the hearing to agree a decision notice. Moreover, in circumstances when a decision of the sub-committee is appealed in the Magistrates Court, a member of the sub-committee is required to give evidence.</p> <p>Dedicated training is provided to Licensing Committee members by officers in the Licensing and Legal Services departments, with external training offered periodically from organisations such as the Institute of Licensing. All councillors receive refresher training on Licensing policy as part of the Council's annual Member Training day.</p>
Other Regulatory Bodies	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<p>➤ <i>What will they be, and how many members will they require?</i></p> <p>➤ <i>Explain the number and membership of your Regulatory Committees with respect to greater delegation to officers.</i></p>
	Analysis	<p>Although they are not regulatory bodies, there are several other committees that discharge functions that cannot be dealt with by the Cabinet. These are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit and Governance Committee - Health and Wellbeing Board - Standards Committee - Appointments Panel - Disputes Resolution Committee <p>The Cabinet also choose to delegate executive functions to the following committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personnel Committee - Corporate Parenting Committee <p>The time commitment required by members of the committees listed above varies significantly, with the workload of members of the Audit and Governance committee equivalent to that of the two main regulatory committees.</p> <p>Similarly, the Personnel Committee, Health and Wellbeing Board and Standards Committee meet on several occasions per year and hold broad remits that generate a significant workload for their members.</p> <p>The current size and composition of these committees is detailed earlier in this document and at Appendix A.</p>
External Partnerships		<p>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.</p>

<p><i>Key lines of explanation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>What other external bodies will members be involved in? And what is the anticipated workload?</i>
<p>Analysis</p>	<p>The Outside Bodies and Charities to which councillors are appointed at the Council's Annual General Meeting are detailed at Appendix C.</p> <p>The Council makes appointments to a wide range of social, economic and cultural partners at a national, regional and local level, with councillors playing an active role in representing the Council and providing independent assurance to the respective organisations. At the 2021 Annual General Meeting, 77 appointments were requested from a wide variety of organisations.</p> <p>Appointments vary between portfolio holders 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 choosing to serve on two or three.</p> <p>Regional bodies to which the Council appoints includes the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership; East Midlands Councils Executive Board and the Environment Agency Trent Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.</p> <p>The Council also appoints to several delivery partners within the city. Notable examples include appointments to the Derby Homes Board (the arm's length management organisation for the Council's housing stock); Direct Help and Advice, who operate several Community Managed Libraires in the city; and, Community Action Derby, who play a co-ordinating role for other voluntary sector organisations in the local area.</p> <p>Councillors are also represented on the City Partnership Board, which acts as a leadership forum for partners across the city, as well as statutory local partnerships including those relating to Health and Wellbeing and Community Safety. Councillors also sit on boards for Marketing Derby, which is a public/private partnership seeking to attract inward investment in the city, and the two Business Improvement Districts that are located in the city centre.</p>

	<p>A wide variety of cultural organisations also seek appointments from the City Council, including the Derby Museums Trust, QUAD (a city centre venue for contemporary art and film) and Sinfonia Viva.</p> <p>A recent survey of councillors found that 80 per cent of respondents held at least one appointment to an Outside Body; 67 per cent of respondents spent fewer than five hours per week attending meetings of outside bodies, whilst 28 per cent spent between six and ten hours.</p> <p>The roles undertaken by councillors varied significantly, with councillors acting as representatives of the authority at large, their communities, or providing independent assurance. Time commitments also vary substantially between appointments.</p> <p>For example, members of the Derby Homes Board are required to attend six meetings per year and may also be appointed to other committees. Similarly, those appointed to the Fire Authority or the Museums Trust are also asked to sit on internal boards and committees. Other appointments require national travel and overnight accommodation. By comparison, some may only meet on one or two occasions per year.</p> <p>Councillors responding to the survey emphasised that sitting on Outside Bodies required a breadth of knowledge of relevant local and national issues, and that additional training was also necessary, to discharge their duties effectively.</p> <p>In summary, councillors are actively involved in representing the Council on a wide variety of organisations across the city and the wider region. For those most actively involved, it represents a considerable proportion of their workload and a substantial weekly time commitment.</p>
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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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>In general terms how do councillors carry out their representational role with electors?</i> ➤ <i>Does the council have area committees and what are their powers?</i> ➤ <i>How do councillors seek to engage with their constituents? Do they hold surgeries, send newsletters, hold public meetings or maintain blogs?</i> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>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?</i>
	Analysis	<p>Councillors fulfil a vital representative role in ensuring the views of local residents are reflected in the delivery of public services and the Council's long-term, strategic ambitions.</p> <p>Engaging with residents and undertaking casework is fundamental to the role of all councillors, although there is no centralised approach to ward work that is recommended.</p> <p>Instead, councillors are encouraged to develop working practices and forms of engagement that are most appropriate for their local communities. This may take the form of face-to-face surgeries, online meetings and communications, or neighbourhood walkabouts.</p> <p>A recent survey of councillors found that 100 per cent of respondents utilised newsletters and mail shots, whilst 95 per cent made use of online publications and social media; 85 per cent of respondents arranged community walkabouts, whilst 70 per cent conducted surgeries and public forums.</p> <p>As detailed earlier in this document, the Council has constituted Ward Committees, Neighbourhood Boards and Neighbourhood Forums to engage residents and make decisions on locally identified priorities, although these operate differently between wards depending on local circumstances. Ward Committees determine the allocation of neighbourhood budgets, whilst Boards and Forums involve residents and community groups directly in a consultative capacity.</p>

		<p>The Council provides support to councillors corporately via Democratic Services, as well as through colleagues based within wards in variety of different contexts.</p> <p>The Executive Support (Members) team consists of three support staff, who provide administrative support to all councillors and diary management to members of the Council Cabinet. The team will book and publicise surgeries for councillors, undertake casework and provide weekly bulletins on issues relevant to councillors' roles.</p> <p>Councillors are provided with an induction at the start of their terms of office and a handbook to support them with understanding key policies and processes relating to their roles – the latest Councillors Induction Handbook is attached at Appendix D.</p> <p>All councillors are invited to attend regular briefings on topics of relevance relating to their community leadership roles. This proved particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic, where key messages from public health colleagues could be communicated quickly and effectively to residents via their local councillors.</p> <p>Each ward is assigned a Neighbourhood Manager and Neighbourhood Partnership Officer to co-ordinate community capacity building and initiatives for resident engagement. Neighbourhood Officers work closely with Public Protection Officers, the Community Safety Team, Local Area Co-ordinators, the Police and social housing providers to initiate community projects and interventions on behalf of local councillors.</p> <p>The Council maintains several <u>Equality Hubs and Forums</u>, which allows councillors and officers to engage with under-represented groups. For example, the Council operates a successful Voices in Action Youth Council and holds annual citywide elections for a Youth Mayor, who attends meetings of the Council Cabinet. Councillors also actively engage with Community Associations within their wards.</p> <p>A survey of councillors found that councillors employed a variety of methods for identifying under-represented groups within their wards. For example, many engaged with schools, youth groups and the local Scouts/Guiding associations. Councillors would also attend Dementia Friendly groups or work closely with Local Area Co-ordinators, to engage with vulnerable adults and their carers. Moreover, councillors emphasised the increasing importance of social media as a means of gathering the</p>
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		<p>views of residents and incorporating them within their decision-making and wider activity.</p> <p>The survey also highlighted that many councillors are actively involved with groups that exist within their wards, that are not directly appointed to by the Council. For example, councillors frequently attend meetings of Residents and Community Associations, Friends of Parks, religious groups or special interest groups within their wards. The involvement of councillors within these groups ranges from observing meetings to chairing and administering proceedings.</p> <p>In summary, since the last boundary review, the extent of centralised officer support provided to councillors has reduced significantly and greater emphasis has been placed on councillors to work with partners within their wards to fulfil their community leadership roles.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of new working practices and online forms of engagement, but the Council retains the view that councillors are best placed to determine the methods and forms of engagement that work best for their communities and constituents.</p>
Casework	<i>Key lines of explanation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>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?</i> ➤ <i>What support do members receive?</i> ➤ <i>How has technology influenced the way in which councillors work? And interact with their electorate?</i> ➤ <i>In what ways does the council promote service users' engagement/dispute resolution with service providers and managers rather than through councillors?</i>
	Analysis	<p>The Council does not hold centralised data in relation to the volume of casework undertaken by all councillors. Individual councillors have different approaches to undertaking casework, with some choosing to utilise the support provided by Democratic Services whilst others take up cases directly with services.</p> <p>From 1 April 2021 to 13 August 2021, the Executive Support (Members) team had assisted councillors with 589 individual items of casework, with approximately one third of councillors utilising the support service during that period. However, a recent survey of councillors has indicated that the majority of casework is dealt with directly by councillors, who access advice from relevant service areas independently.</p>

		<p>Fifty per cent of respondents to the survey received between five and 20 enquiries per week that could be considered as casework, whilst 40 per cent received more than 30 enquiries.</p> <p>The survey highlighted the increasing volumes of casework received via social media, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, and councillors emphasised that many residents expected immediate responses to enquiries. Residents also expected councillors to undertake casework through third-party community Facebook pages, rather than necessarily via a direct approach to the councillor through official channels.</p> <p>An online Councillor Portal is currently in development which will allow councillors to raise casework via an online application, which will be passed directly to services for resolution and subsequent communication from the councillor back to residents. It is envisaged that this will provide a more comprehensive basis on which to assess the caseload of each councillor.</p> <p>Since the time of the last boundary review and increasingly in recent years, the Council is conducting a greater proportion of its transactions online, with residents encouraged to create online accounts to resolve straightforward enquiries (for example, reporting a missed refuse collection or pothole).</p> <p>Nevertheless, evidence collated as part of a survey of councillors would suggest that councillors remain exceptionally busy undertaking casework and that the shift to online self-service has not resulted in a discernible reduction in the number of residents seeking support. For more complex cases councillors often adopt a co-ordinating role, where responses may be required from multiple services, depending on the particular circumstances of the case.</p>
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Other Issues

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

Other issues highlighted by councillors as part of the recent survey that are pertinent to the review are as follows:

- Support for retention of three councillor wards, to ensure members can work together to undertake a high volume of casework and are able to sustain a manageable balance between work and home life.

- Complexity of some casework enquiries, particularly in wards with high levels of socio-economic deprivation.
- Difficulty identifying required number of back-bench appointments to committees when a group forms a minority administration.
- Difficulty councillors experience fulfilling duties alongside employment or caring responsibilities.
- Increased demands and expectations from residents during the Covid-19 pandemic and the broader impact of social media on the workload and wellbeing of councillors.
- Recruitment and retention of experienced councillors

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.

Having collated available data and undertaken consultation with councillors, three options have been considered in response to this Council Size submission:

- A reduction in the overall number of councillors
- Maintain the existing number of councillors (51)
- An increase in the overall number of councillors

Group Leaders have agreed by majority the following points of principle in making a draft submission to the Commission:

- 1) The Council would not support any reduction in the number of councillors.
- 2) The Council would not oppose a recommendation from the Commission to maintain the current Council size.
- 3) The Council would support a small increase in the number of councillors.
- 4) The Council supports maintaining three member wards.

Derby City Council therefore proposes an increase in council size to either 54 or 57 councillors.

The key pieces of evidence in support of this proposal are summarised below:

Population Growth

As detailed earlier in this document, the population of Derby has grown by 11 per cent since 2001 and is forecast to grow by a further 7 per cent of current levels by 2043.

At the time of the previous review in 2001, there were approximately 4524 residents per councillor, compared to 5035 in 2021.

- An increase in council size to 54 councillors would result in fewer residents per councillor initially, returning to close to the current ratio by 2043.

- An increase in council size to 57 councillors would return the ratio of residents per councillor to the level previously set in 2001 and is forecast to remain moderately below the current ratio by 2043.

Year	Derby Population	Residents per councillor (51)	Residents per councillor (54)	Residents per councillor (57)
2001	230,700	4524		
2011	248,752	4877		
2021 (estimated)	256,800	5035	4756	4505
2043 (projected)	274,226	5377	5078	4811

Council Size Expected Range

Evidence provided by the Commission indicates that Derby falls within the lower quintile of council sizes, when compared to fourteen councils of similar size and spending power, as identified by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The median council size amongst Derby's comparator authorities is 56.5 councillors.

Support for three councillor wards

A recent survey of councillors indicated broad support for three councillor wards.

Councillors cited benefits which included being able to work with counterparts to manage caseloads; supporting appropriate work/life balance and time away from public duties; allowing those with special responsibilities to let counterparts lead on ward business when needed; and, ensuring a broad range of skills and experience, whilst enabling succession planning.

Whilst these benefits are most often realised in wards where councillors represent the same political party, councillors in split wards can work effectively together in most circumstances.

Volume and type of casework

Since the last boundary review in 2001, the nature of a councillor's role has changed significantly. The advent of social media has fundamentally altered how many councillors choose to communicate with their electorate.

The recent survey of councillors undertaken emphasised this change: councillors cited significantly increased caseloads and an expectation from residents that enquiries would be answered immediately. More recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has also led to a substantial increase in casework volumes. Several councillors described the volume of casework they undertake as relentless, citing concerns that the current levels were unsustainable and may lead to councillors choosing to stand down and parties struggling to attract new candidates.

Appointments to committees and outside bodies

The Council operates relatively large committees, to ensure political proportionality requirements can be achieved across the four recognised political groups.

Whilst committees operate effectively with the current overall number of councillors, each opposition or backbench councillor sits on an average of three committees. This is

exacerbated within the current group comprising the controlling minority administration, once nine Cabinet Members are discounted.

A larger number of councillors would allow councillors to focus more closely on their particular specialism and take a more active involvement in the business of the committees to which they are appointed.

Similarly, there are several vacancies across the Outside Bodies and Charities to which the Council is asked to appoint. The recent survey of councillors emphasised the significant workload associated with some outside body appointments. A small increase in Council Size would allow appointments to be spread more evenly across the whole cohort of councillors.

Reduced officer support

The level of direct officer support provided to councillors has reduced substantially since 2001, in line with the overall reduction in headcount across the local authority.

Whilst councillors have access to administrative support via the Executive Support (Members) team and teams based in localities, members are mostly self-sufficient. Similarly, the Council has reduced the level of direct support provided to the Overview and Scrutiny process, with councillors expected to lead in scoping and undertaking service reviews.

Changing role of the Council

As detailed earlier in this document, the role of the Council in delivering services has altered significantly, in response to funding pressures experienced across local government. In many cases, rather than delivering services directly, the Council is focusing on building capacity within communities.

Like many post-industrial urban areas, Derby is tackling a complex and diverse set of socio-economic issues, several of which will likely take many years to address. Locally elected councillors with sufficient knowledge, skills and experience are fundamentally important to build the relationships and networks needed for a locality-based approach to be successful.

Recruitment and retention of councillors

The increasing pressures of the role have led to issues with the recruitment and retention of councillors by political groups.

In recent years, several experienced councillors have not sought re-election or stood down, citing the role as being incompatible with work or family life. Similarly, a recent report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel cited the need to attract candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds. Moreover, a recent Overview and Scrutiny review of gender representation highlighted that only 13 out of 51 councillors were women and explored the substantial barriers to entry that exist for female councillor candidates.

An increased number of councillors allows for the potential for the Council to be more representative of the city and in turn ensure the Council can be more responsive to the needs of Derby's residents.