

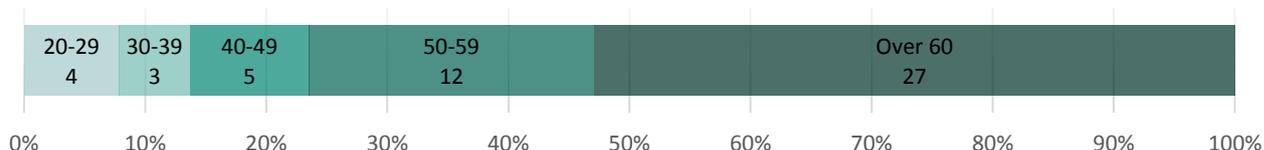
Rochdale Council Draft Submission on Council Size

Appendix 1 - Rochdale Councillor Workload Analysis

- 1.1 As part of the council size submission all 60 councillors were asked to complete a survey in order to provide a better understanding of their role. The survey was focused on the amount of time spent by councillors each month on council business, how councillors engage with constituents as well the additional representational roles of a councillor in Rochdale.
- 1.2 Councillors were asked specific questions regarding;
- Governance and decision making
 - Their representative role
 - Preparation for meetings
 - Engaging with constituents
 - Dealing with casework
 - Time spent on party political business
- 1.3 The survey also asked councillors to comment on how their personal workload and that of the wider council has changed over time.
- 1.4 51 members responded to the survey, this included the leader of the Council as well as all cabinet and assistant cabinet members.

Rochdale Councillors

- 1.5 Around a third of councillors have been in post for under 5 years; 45% 6 to 10 years and 24% have been post for over 10 years.
- 1.6 Over half of Councillors are aged over 60, and the second largest age group is 50-59 at 24%. There are fewer younger Councillors with only 14% (7 Councillors) under 40.



- 1.7 The majority of Councillors are from a white background, with 75% (38) reporting being British, English or Welsh. Almost a quarter are Asian/Asian British, including 7 Kashmiri, 4 Pakistani and 1 Bangladeshi Councillor(s).

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.8 Councillors reported being a member of up to 16 governance groups, with an average of 9 per councillor. The most common being Council, Township Committees and Sub Committees, Labour Group Meeting and Labour Group Executive Meeting.

- 1.9 16 Councillors (31.4%) from the 51 that completed the survey reported being a member of Greater Manchester groups, with the Combined Authority being the most popular, with 4 Councillors.
- 1.10 50% of Councillors have been appointed by the Council to additional outside bodies. With roles such as directors, spokesperson, chair, governor and board members, from a variety of bodies including;
- GM Transport Committee
 - Deputy Mayor GM Police & Fire
 - GM Pension Fund
 - Groundwork
 - Link4Life
 - LGA
 - Pennine Care NHS Trust/ Pennine Acute
 - Heritage Trust
 - Manchester Airport Group
 - North West Flood & Coastal Defence Committee
 - Salford University

Hours spent on Council business per month

- 1.11 A third of Councillors reported spending the largest amount of time (over 20 hours) attending council committees. Other tasks taking 20 hours or more were attendance at council meetings, and time spent on party business. Attendance at external meetings was far less, with the majority of councillors suggesting this was anywhere between 1 and 10 hours per month.
- 1.12 Interacting with constituents, such as engaging and dealing with enquires took 6 to 20 hours for the majority of councillors. There was a varying degree of time spent on community obligations, with a roughly even split across the time selection in the survey, with some councillors reporting up to 20 hours, but others as few as 1 to 5.
- 1.13 A third of Councillors reported spending 16 to 20 hours attending workshops, training and conferences, whereas over a half reported only taking 1 to 5 hours per month to do this. A similar pattern appeared in relation to travel, which would be an expected correlation due to travelling to workshops.
- 1.14 A quarter of Councillors reported spending 1 to 5 hours preparing for meetings, whereas 33% reported this task taking anywhere between 16 and 20 hours per month.

Case Work

- 1.15 65% of councillors deal with 11 to 25 cases per month, with 3 councillors reporting dealing with over 50 cases per month.

- 1.16 Councillors were asked how they dealt with casework and what support they received. Some of the responses are captured below:

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Conversations with ward colleagues, using Middleton township office, speaking to individual officers and committee services. Contacting 3rd party organisations (e.g. RBH) directly.

I deal with ward casework as and when it comes. Most of the case work is taken at our advice surgeries, but occasionally I undertake casework from residents. I get full support from officers and my colleagues

I mostly send the case work directly to relevant officers, if I am not sure whom to contact I use members services

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- 1.17 Over half of councillors spent more time on council business than they expected to, and 86% report the time spent on council business has increased since they were initially elected as a councillor.

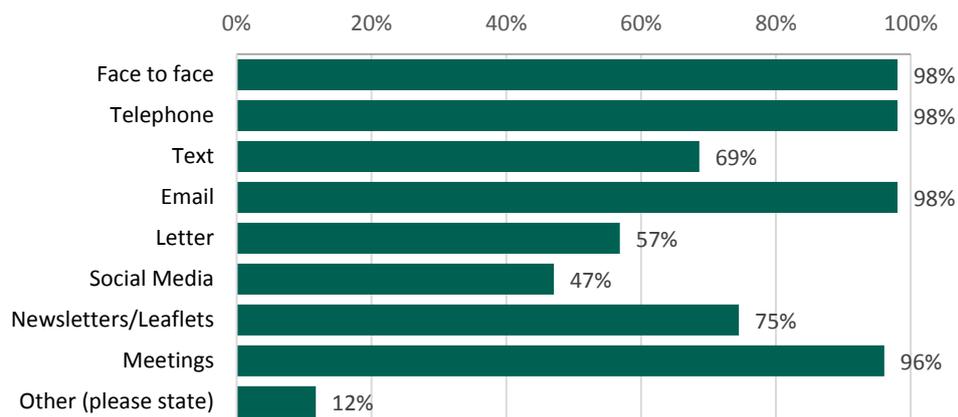
The increase has been due to;

- Understanding the role more, increased experience and responsibilities
- Being active in community engagement and networking
- Increase in poverty
- Increase in population
- More portfolio business
- Involved in specific community groups
- Less resource for Council services, more support to the public required.

- 1.18 Councillors suggest that aspects of the role increased mostly due to austerity, resulting in poverty and less resource and services to deal with the public's worries. The public feel the only place to turn to is their Councillor after exhausting all other avenues, and this in turn increases casework and the need for surgeries.

Engaging with constituents

- 1.19 Most Councillors engage with constituents through face to face contact, telephone, email and meetings. 47% use social media, while 57% write letters. Other means of communication include surgeries.



1.20 Use of communication channels differed for each Councillor but the most common response was the largest amount of time was spent using email, telephone and face to face contact. Social media and letters had a mixed response, with 10% of some councillor’s communication through letters, whereas 14 reported not using letters at all. Social media was used around 10% to communicate, but 21 Councillors reported not using it.

1.21 Almost all Councillors stated they have noticed a significant increase in the amount of meetings they attend and emails they write. A large proportion report communication via telephone, and face to face to have increased. From the Councillors using social media, they report its usage to communicate being on the rise.