

National census
of local authority
councillors **2008**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Contents

Foreword	v
Introduction	1
The scope	2
Executive summary	3
Table 1 Key facts summary, England 1997–2008	4
Section A: work as a councillor	8
Length of service (Table B.1)	8
Figure 1 Length of service as a councillor, England 1997–2008	8
Leading council responsibilities (Table B.2)	8
Membership of council committees (Tables B.3 and B.4)	8
Special responsibility allowance (Table B.5)	9
Average number of hours per week on council and political business (Table B.6)	9
Figure 2 Average number of hours per week spent on council and political business, England 2004–2008	9
How councillors spend their time (Table B.7)	9
Figure 3 Distribution of hours per week spent on council and political business, England 2006–2008	10
Party representation (Table B.8)	10
Figure 4 Party representation, England 1997–2008	10
Membership of other councils (Table B.10)	10
Training and development opportunities received (Table B.11)	10
Formal qualification (Table B.12)	11
Level of qualification (Table B.13)	11
Resources and learning that would be beneficial (Tables B.14(i) and important B.14(ii))	11
Section B: Issues and views of councillors	13
Reasons for becoming a councillor (Table B.15)	13
Most important things that councillors do (Table B.16)	13
Views on influence as a councillor (Table B.17)	13
Effectiveness as a councillor (Table B.18)	14
View on the importance of aspects of councillors' role as community advocates (Table B.19)	14
Figure 5 Importance of aspects of councillor's roles	14
When councillors would talk about their work (Table B.20)	15

Figure 6 In which situations councillors talk about their work, England 2008	15
Would councillors recommend the role to others (Table B.21)	15
Intention to stand for re-election (Table B.23)	16
How committed councillors think their authorities are to a range of activities (Table B.24)	16
Figure 7 How committed councillors think their authorities are to a range of priorities: England 2008	16
Section C: personal background of councillors	18
Gender (Table B.25)	18
Age (Table B.26)	18
Ethnicity (Table B.27)	18
Disability/long-term illness (Table B.28)	19
Figure 8 Gender, age, ethnic origin, disability, England 1997–2008	19
Caring responsibilities (Table B.29)	19
Main employment status (Table B.30)	20
Figure 9 Main employment status, England 1997–2008	20
Current occupation (Table B.31)	21
Figure 10 Current occupation, England 1997–2008	21
Employment sector (Table B.32)	21
Figure 11 Employment sector, England 1997–2008	22
Employers' support of work as a councillor (Table B.33)	22
Additional work activities (Table B.34)	22
Figure 12 Additional work activities, England 1997–2008	23
Education and qualifications (Table B.35)	23
Figure 13 Education and qualifications (NVQ equivalent), England 2004–2008	24
Councils and their constitutions in England	25
Frequency of local elections	26
Annex A Summary of responses to key questions	27
Annex B Breakdown of survey data, England 1997–2008	29
Annex C Comparison with Labour Force Survey data	41
Annex D Questionnaire	43

Foreword

Councillors are increasingly on the front line as community advocates and democratic leaders. It is therefore essential that all councillors receive the support they need, to help them to serve their communities effectively.

The Local Government Association (LGA) and Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) want to help councillors to achieve these objectives. That is why it is crucial that we know who councillors are and understand the challenges they face. It is also vital that councils and political parties are better equipped to understand their elected member colleagues. The responsiveness and capacity of councils to provide locally representative leadership is likely to be tested in the years to come and we need to make sure that councils are equipped to meet the challenges ahead.

This is particularly important in the changing context in which local government works, with economic and social pressures, alongside increasing levels of public expectation. Since the recent whitepaper on community empowerment, there has been an increased focus on councillors as community leaders. Hand in hand with this comes a commitment to working in partnership to improve places.

The biennial LGA/IDeA Councillors' Census for 2008 has explored these issues. The headline findings show that councillors as individuals are dedicated people, who devote a great deal of their own time to serving their communities.

As a group, however, councillors do not reflect the communities they serve in terms of gender, age and ethnic origin. Local government as a sector must actively take the issue of diversity of councillors seriously, not least because it has implications for the future of our democracy and community engagement, as highlighted by the 2007 report from the Councillors Commission.

Councils can take some steps to break down the barriers to people from all parts of the community becoming councillors. For example, we work with councils, providing information to potential candidates about standing for election, raising the profile of the role of a councillor and encouraging employers to support them. However, the political parties – who select the majority of candidates – will also need to address how they recruit candidates in the future.

The Councillors' Census is commissioned to ensure the sector, including the political parties, has accurate information on councillors' age, gender and background, and how they carry out their work. If councils are to continue to develop their community leadership role, we need to see action on recruiting candidates from more varied backgrounds while improving the support and development they receive while in office.



*Councillor Margaret Eaton OBE is the chairman of the LGA
Councillor Ian Swithenbank CBE is the chairman of the IDeA*

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) have carried out the fifth Census of local authority councillors in England. The Census provides a 'snapshot' of local government representation and, with previous years' data, analysis of trends over time.

Councillors are often in the front line as both community advocates and as leaders. It is therefore essential that they receive the right support to enable them to serve their community effectively in the rapidly changing context in which government works. The survey findings will assist the LGA and IDeA to better understand the needs of councillors which is of particular value in the context of the publication of the Councillors' Commission report, which raised issues about supporting councillors.

Given the scale of support from councillors, this survey provides the most comprehensive, timely overview of local government representation and how that has changed over time. The results will both inform central and local government and political parties in the development of strategies and policies for local government.

The 2008 Census collected data in the autumn of 2008 and updates the previous Censuses in 1997, 2001, 2004 and 2006.

Thanks to the support from member support officers and councillors, replies were received from 385 (99.7%) of the 386 local authorities in England¹ and from 8895 (45.3%) councillors in office.

The survey results show grossed estimates (by type of authority and region) for all 19,617 councillors/seats in England.

This report covers England. A summary of key findings by type of authority and English region is shown in Annex A.

More detailed information mapping the results of the Census by type of authority, region, gender, age, ethnicity, disability and party representation is available from the following website: www.lgar.local.gov.uk/lgv/core/page.do?pagelId=72117.

The report also includes comparative data for the wider population from the Labour Force Survey which is included in Annex C. This is intended to provide an insight into the representativeness of local councillors and will form the basis of more detailed work in the future.

¹ Excluding the Corporation of London and Isles of Scilly

The scope

The survey was in three sections:

Section A covered councillors' work:

- length of service
- leading positions held
- committee membership
- party representation
- membership of other councils
- responsibility allowance
- hours spent on council business
- political party
- training and development
- views on qualifications and resources.

Section B covered councillors' views on a range of issues:

- roles that best describe how councillors approach being a councillor
- why people wanted to become councillors
- important things that councillors do
- how much influence councillors considered themselves to have
- whether councillors view themselves as effective
- the importance of a range of issues related to the role of councillors as community advocates
- how committed authorities are about implementing arrangements for devolving power to communities.

Section C covered councillors' personal background:

- gender
- age
- ethnicity
- disability
- caring responsibilities
- employment status
- education and qualifications.

Executive summary

The following are key findings from the 2008 Councillor Census which was conducted in the autumn of 2008. See also Table 1 for a summary of the key facts (p. 4–7).

- Most councillors (68.4%) were male, 30.8% were female (0.8% did not respond). The proportion of female councillors had increased from 27.8% in 1997 although the proportion is still considerably lower than the adult population (51.3%).
- The average age of councillors has increased from 55.4 years in 1997 to 58.8 years in 2008. In 2008, 86.8% of councillors were aged 45 and over, compared to 51.9% of the adult population.
- 96.6% of councillors were white and 3.4% came from an ethnic minority background. Significantly higher proportions of the adult population were from an ethnic minority background (10.7%).
- The proportion of councillors who were retired increased from 34.1% in 1997 to 43.5% in 2008, compared to 22.3% of the adult population.
- 51.1% of councillors held a qualification equivalent to NVQ level 4 and above, compared to 28.8% of the adult population.
- On average, councillors had been members of their authority for 8.3 years, the same as in 2004 and 2006.
- 56.4% of councillors held a position of leading responsibility within the council and 53.2% of all councillors received a special responsibility allowance in addition to their basic allowance.
- 88.0% considered themselves to be effective or very effective in their role as councillors which was a slightly smaller proportion than was the case in 2006 when 92.1% considered that they were effective.
- 88.4% of councillors cited a desire to serve the community as their reason for wanting to become a councillor.
- 94.1% thought that listening to local views was the most important thing for councillors to do while 91.4% said that supporting the local community was the most important thing for them to do.
- Councillors spent, on average, 22 hours per week on council/political business.
- 93.7% of councillors had been in receipt of one or more training and development opportunities in the last 12 months and 46.0% would welcome the opportunity to gain a more formal qualification or recognition of their work as a councillor.
- From a list of eight resources or learning opportunities, councillors ranked administrative support (23.0%) and IT support (20.4%) as those that were most important to their role.
- Most councillors (62.5%) indicated that they thought it was very important that there was a greater role for councils in the accountability of key local services like health and police. 40.4% felt that it was very important that councils had a devolved, discretionary budget for individual councillors to spend on local amenities or initiatives.
- Around half (51.2%) said that their council was fully committed to allowing people to have a say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback. Nearly two-fifths felt that their council was fully committed to enabling people and communities to have an influence locally through active programmes of engagement, to providing better support for elected members and to having mechanisms to organise inquiries about contentious issues.
- 54.5% of councillors intend to stand for re-election at the end of their term in office and 81.8% would recommend taking on the role to others.

Table 1 Key facts summary, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Average length of service as a councillor (years)	8.8		9.2		8.3		8.3		8.3	
Average number of council committees/sub-committees senior positions held	5.7		3.8		3.7		3.8		3.7	
One or more positions					10528	53.6	10573	53.7	11059	56.4
No senior positions					9128	46.4	9116	46.3	8558	43.6
Receives special responsibility allowance					9192	46.8	9742	49.5	10435	53.2
Average no. hours/week how time spent (decimalised)							22	22		
Attendance at council meetings, committees							10	10		
Engaging with constituents, surgeries, enquiries							7	8		
Other							6	6		
Political party										
Conservative party	4349	21.6	6832	34.3	7593	39.0	7719	42.3	9436	48.5
Labour party	9212	45.7	7140	35.9	5586	28.7	4585	25.1	4201	21.6
Liberal Democrat party	4776	23.7	4208	21.2	4497	23.1	4427	24.3	4315	22.2
Green party	n/a	n/a	71	0.4	58	0.3	97	0.5	144	0.7
Independent	1472	7.3	1385	7	1483	7.6	1178	6.5	1143	5.9
Other	211	1	187	0.9	240	1.2	246	1.3	207	1.1
Previously been a councillor					6163	31.4	6604	33.5	8033	40.9
Would like to have the chance to attain/acquire a more formal qualification/recognition of the work of a councillor?							8213	41.7	9021	46.0
Resources/learning that may be beneficial to role										
Media training							6711	34.1	7366	37.5
Administrative support							5373	27.3	6318	32.2
Case worker							3961	20.1	4322	22.0
Political skills training							4518	22.9	4940	25.2
Better facilities for surgeries							4238	21.5	4599	23.4
IT support							5928	30.1	7067	36.0
Better information on role							3926	19.9	4541	23.1
Other							1251	6.4	1125	5.7
Why did you want to become a councillor?										
Serve community					16176	83.1	16654	86.9	17228	88.4
Resolve an issue					1558	8.0	2183	11.4	2436	12.5
Political beliefs					9633	49.5	9866	51.5	10032	51.5
To change things					8921	45.8	10020	52.3	10471	53.7
Because I was asked to					5603	28.8	5631	29.4	5909	30.3
Member allowances					189	1.0	312	1.6	384	2.0
Other					463	2.4	635	3.3	522	2.7

Table 1 Key facts summary, England 1997–2008 *continued*

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
What are the most important things that councillors do?										
Listen to the views of local people							18035	93.5	18344	94.1
Support the local community							16432	85.2	17807	91.4
Hold surgeries							876	46.0	9559	49.1
Address issues							14214	73.7	15184	77.9
Council meetings							13474	69.9	13333	68.4
Plan services							8745	45.4	10424	53.5
Deal with complaints							14020	72.7	14060	72.1
Keep the public informed							11020	57.2	12223	62.7
Represent local residents							8363	43.4	9713	49.8
Effective in your role:										
Very effective					3795	19.3	4290	23.5	4723	24.3
Effective					13135	68.6	12513	68.6	12366	63.7
Not effective					883	4.6	635	3.5	414	2.1
Not very effective					1436	7.5	798	4.4	539	2.8
Views on whether the following community advocacy roles for councillors were very important***										
A devolved discretionary budget for individual councillors to spend on local amenities or initiatives									7920	40.4
A greater role for councils in the accountability of key local services like health and police									12264	62.5
Mechanisms such as petitions to force debates on specific local issues onto the council agenda									4911	25.0
Rights for the sale or transfer of under-used properties, land or parks to community groups, co-ops and social enterprises									4205	21.4
Perceptions of whether authorities are fully committed to specific activities***										
Allowing people to have a role in allocating resources through participatory budgeting									612	18.4
Enabling people and communities to have an influence locally through active programmes of engagement									7506	38.3
Allowing people to have their say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback									10038	51.2
Having mechanisms to organise inquiries about contentious issues									7075	36.1
Providing better practical support for elected members so that they can act more effectively as local leaders									7510	38.3

Table 1 Key facts summary, England 1997–2008 *continued*

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Would you recommend becoming a Councillor?										
Yes							15045	76.4	16050	81.8
No							1224	6.2	1447	7.4
Don't know							1802	9.2	1820	9.3
Intend to stand for re-election?										
Yes					10611	54.0	12076	61.3	10694	54.5
No					2490	12.7	2250	11.4	3108	15.8
Councillors										
Total number of councillors	20226		19998		19657		19689		19617	
Gender										
Male	14591	72.1	14137	70.7	13825	70.3	13645	69.3	13417	68.4
Female	5614	27.8	5703	28.5	5711	29.1	5774	29.3	6038	30.8
Not answered	21	0.1	158	0.8	121	0.6	271	1.4	162	0.8
Age										
Average age (years)	55.4		56.9		57.8		58.3		58.8	
Proportion under 45	3655	18.4	2773	14.4	2410	13.1	2453	13.5	2486	13.1
Ethnic origin										
White	19521	96.8	19355	97.3	18765	96.5	17855	95.9	18176	96.6
Other ethnic background	653	3.4	531	2.7	674	3.5	764	4.1	633	3.4
Have long-term illness, health problem or disability										
	2125	10.5	2587	12.9	2443	12.4	2138	10.9	2602	13.3
Caring responsibilities										
One or more caring responsibility	6896	34.2	5492	27.6	4916	25.0	4757	24.2	5099	26.0
No caring responsibilities	13330	65.8	14506	72.4	14741	75.0	14932	75.8	14518	74.0
Employment status										
In full-time paid employment	6072	30.2	5358	27.2	4793	24.7	4346	23.5	4133	22.0
In part-time paid employment	1697	8.4	1886	9.6	2089	10.8	1924	10.4	1862	9.9
Self-employed	3071	15.3	3125	15.9	3181	16.4	2948	16.0	3047	16.2
Retired	6862	34.1	7240	36.8	7512	38.7	7548	40.9	8193	43.5
Other not working**	2427	12.1	2068	10.6	1851	9.5	1709	9.2	1579	8.4*
Additional work activities										
School governorship	10959	58.3	10874	54.4	9405	47.8	8546	43.4	8196	41.8
Public board	7748	41.2	8626	43.1	5905	30.0	5773	29.3	5425	27.7
Work for national/regional	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1232	6.3	1172	6.0	1143	5.8
Other unpaid voluntary	10766	57.2	10776	53.9	9790	49.8	9886	50.2	10088	51.4
Other	2332	12.4	1956	9.8	2425	12.3	2382	12.1	2168	11.1
Employer supports your work as a councillor:										
Whole-heartedly					2476	40.7	2297	40.9	2260	40.1
To a certain extent					2694	44.2	2583	46.0	2533	44.9
Employer is not aware I am a councillor					371	6.1	292	5.2	323	5.7
Slightly against					414	6.8	356	6.3	405	7.2
Completely against it					134	2.2	83	1.5	117	2.1

Table 1 Key facts summary, England 1997–2008 *continued*

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Education/qualifications held (NVQ equivalent)*										
NVQ level 4 and above					9862	50.2	9806	49.8	10018	51.1
NVQ level 3					2310	11.8	2278	11.6	2256	11.5
Trade apprenticeship					1131	5.8	961	4.9	641	3.3
NVQ level 2					2488	12.7	2478	12.6	2077	10.6
Below NVQ level 2					325	1.7	244	1.2	209	1.1
Other					790	4.0	986	5.0	878	4.5
None of these					2751	14.0	2936	14.9	3538	18.0

* see table 11 for full description

not all questions were answered by all respondents, see Annex B for details

** other not working = unemployed, permanently sick or disabled, not in paid work – looking after home, in FT education, not working for other reason

***new question in 2008

Section A: work as a councillor

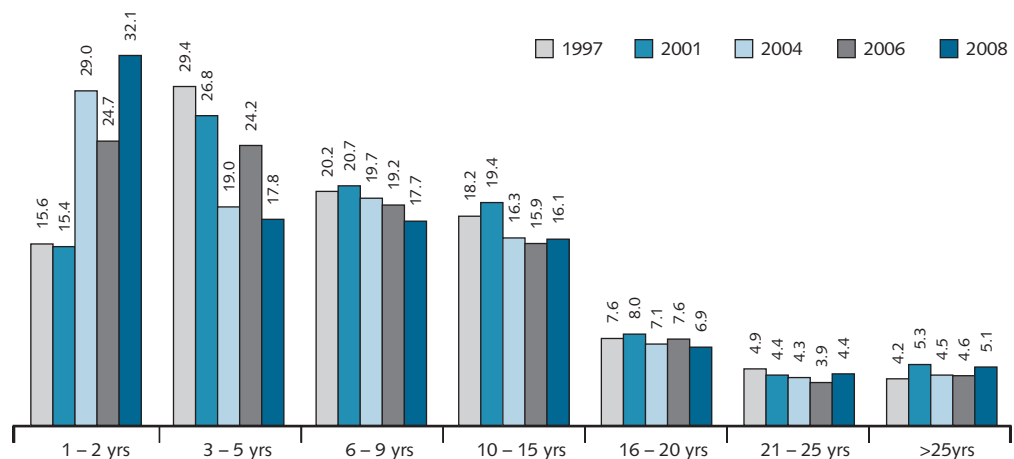
NB A summary of differences by each type of authority and region for key questions is provided in Annex A. Tables B.1–B.35 can be found in Annex B.

Length of service (Table B.1)

As was the case in 2006, the average length of service for a councillor was 8.3 years. However, a greater proportion had served for two years or less in 2008 (32.1%) compared with 2006 (24.7%).

Councillors in the Labour party had the longest average length of service (10.3 years). Those in shire counties and metropolitan districts had slightly longer average lengths of service (9.6 years and 9.1 years respectively) than those in other types of authority. See Figure 1.

Figure 1 Length of service as a councillor, England 1997–2008



Leading council responsibilities (Table B.2)

More than half of the councillors (56.4%) held at least one position in the authority. The most common positions held were cabinet / executive members (16.4%), chair or vice-chair of overview and scrutiny (12.9%) and chair or vice-chair of a regulatory committee (11.0%). The proportions who held different positions were similar to those in 2006 and, overall, there was a slight increase in the proportion who held one or more positions from 53.7% in 2006. There were differences between the main parties as a greater proportion of Conservative members reported holding one or more positions (64%) and fewer Liberal Democrat representatives (48.4%).

Membership of council committees (Tables B.3 and B.4)

On average, councillors were members of 3.7 committees or sub-committees which was a similar average to 2006 (3.8). Around one quarter (24.2%) were members of three committees and a slightly smaller proportion (21.6%) were members of two committees.

Special responsibility allowance (Table B.5)

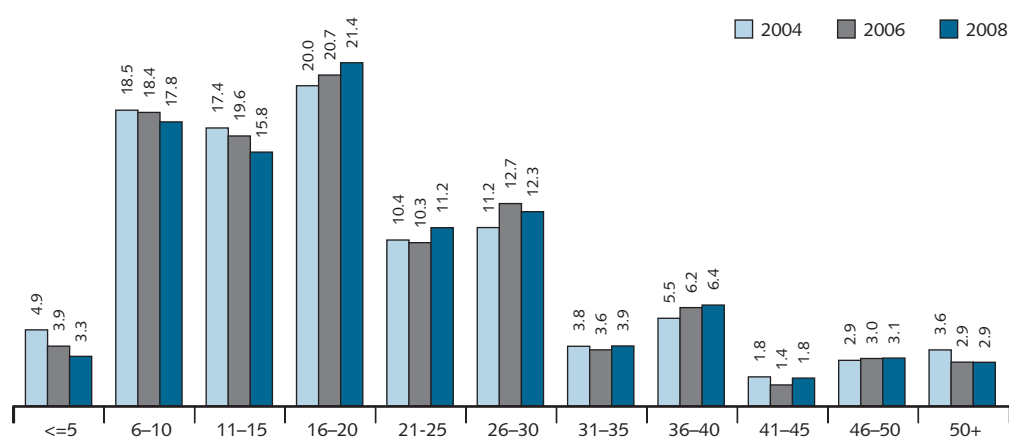
Slightly more than half of the councillors (53.2%) received a special responsibility allowance which is paid to those councillors who hold offices of special responsibility, as set by their authority. This proportion was slightly greater than in 2006 when 49.5% received such allowances and indicated a continued increase since 2004 when 46.8% received special responsibility allowances. The proportion of councillors receiving these allowances varied across types of authority between 61.4% of councillors in shire counties and 48.2% in shire districts. It also varied by region from 48.3% in the South West to 60.1% in London.

Average number of hours per week on council and political business (Table B.6)

Councillors provided estimates of the average number of hours per week that they spent on council and political business for their authority. They spent an average of 22 hours which was similar to the 2006 and 2004 figures. The largest proportion of councillors (21.4%) spent between 16 and 20 hours on such business while 7.8% spent more than 40 hours.

Councillors in metropolitan districts reported the highest average number of hours (28) and those in shire districts the fewest (19). Labour party members spent the most hours on average (25) among the main political parties. See Figure 2.

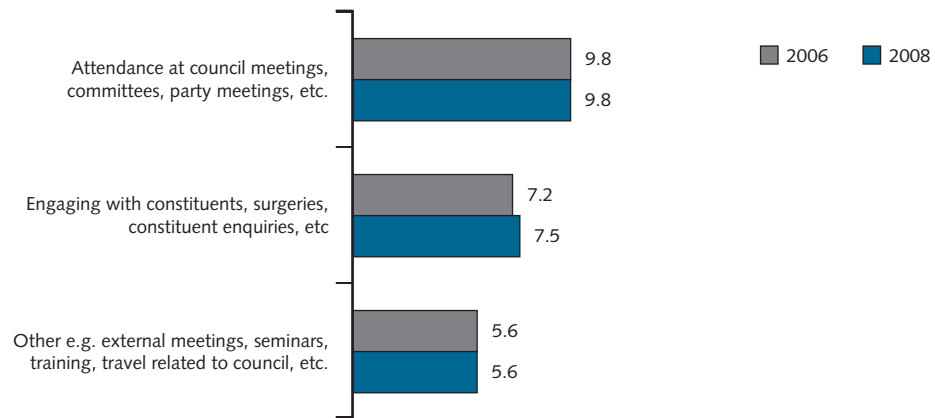
Figure 2 Average number of hours per week spent on council and political business, England 2004–2008



How councillors spend their time (Table B.7)

Councillors estimated the amount of time in a week that they spent on attending meetings or committees, engaging with constituents and on other council business, such as external meetings, training events or seminars. Fewer councillors were able to accurately provide this information and there is therefore a minor discrepancy with the total average calculated in the section above. It emerged that the greatest average amount of time was spent attending council meetings or committees (10 hours). Slightly less time, on average (8 hours), was spent engaging with constituents conducting surgeries and answering enquiries, and other activities (such as attending external meetings, training events and seminars) accounted for 6 hours of the week. See Figure 3.

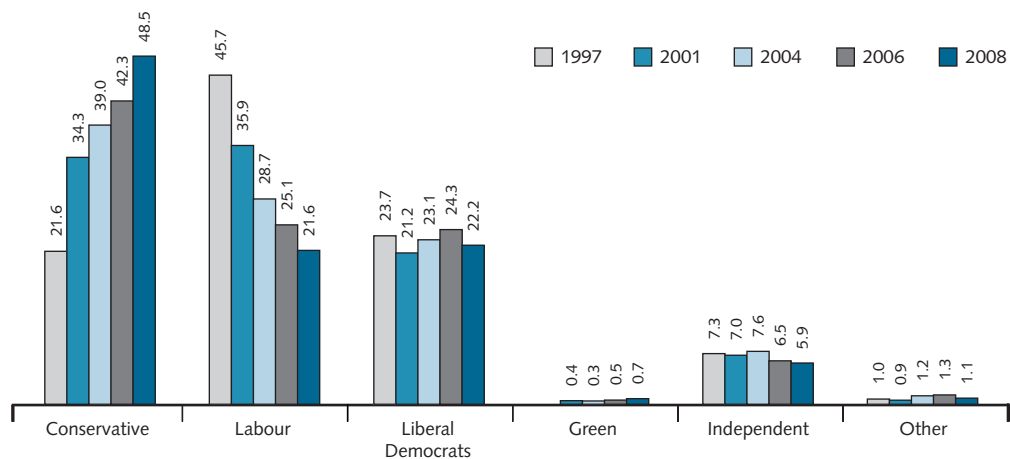
Figure 3 Distribution of hours per week spent on council and political business, England 2006–2008



Party representation (Table B.8)

Based on the survey data, the majority (48.5%) of councillors represented the Conservative Party while 22.2% represented the Liberal Democrats and 21.6% represented the Labour Party. A total of 5.9% were Independent members and a further 0.7% represented the Green Party while 1.1% represented 'other' parties. Representation of the Conservative Party was highest in shire counties (48.8%) and shire districts (55.4%) and lowest in metropolitan districts (28.1%). Labour Party representation was lowest in shire districts (13.1%) and highest in metropolitan districts (42.3%) and London boroughs (34.9%). Representation of other parties was more evenly spread. See Figure 4.

Figure 4 Party representation, England 1997–2008



Membership of other public bodies (Table B.10)

Some councillors were also members of other councils. In 2008, 15.7% were parish or community council members, 12.3% were members of town councils, and 11.5% were members of another local authority. A minority (4.1%) were fire authority members, 2.7% were police authority members and 1.0% were members of a national parks authority. These proportions were similar to those in 2006 although slightly more were local authority members than was the case in 2006 (9.6%).

Membership of other councils appeared to be closely related to the type of authority in which a councillor was located. In particular, representatives of shire counties were notably more likely to be members of another local authority (41.3%) while those in London boroughs (4.3%), metropolitan districts (2.8%), and English unitary councils (1.7%) were less likely to report this. Indeed, overall, members of these latter three types of council were less likely to report membership of local authorities, town councils and parish or community councils.

Training and development opportunities received (Table B.11)

The majority (93.7%) of councillors had received some training and development opportunities in the previous 12 months and this proportion was higher than in 2006 when 88.2% reported that they had received one or more opportunities. Indeed, the proportion of councillors who had received training and development was higher across each of the opportunities they were asked about. The increases were greatest in induction (25.2% in 2006 and 36.6% in 2008), receiving a personal development plan (19.3% in 2006 and 26.6% in 2008) and completing a training needs questionnaire (35.2% in 2006 and 43.5% in 2008).

The most widespread training and development opportunity among councillors in 2008 was attending seminars and conferences (71.2%) while 57.1% had attended other member development programmes. Training and development opportunities were similar across the types of authorities but were less widely reported among councillors in London boroughs, 87.3% of whom reported receiving one or more opportunity.

Formal qualification (Table B.12)

Councillors were asked whether, if it were available, they would welcome the opportunity to gain a more formal qualification, or recognition, of their work as a councillor. A total of 46.0% said that they would welcome this opportunity which was a greater proportion than was the case in 2006 when 41.7% of councillors said this.


Labour councillors (53.4%) and people from minority ethnic groups (69.6%) were more likely to want this opportunity while those located in Yorkshire and the Humber were least likely to request this (41.7%). In addition, it appeared that the desire to receive a formal qualification declined with age as 76.4% of councillors aged under 25 would have liked this opportunity while 41.4% of those aged 60 to 64 wanted to gain a formal qualification.

Level of qualification (Table B.13)

Where councillors did want the opportunity to gain a formal qualification, most requested a 'stand alone independent qualification' (57.1%). Smaller proportions requested a credit towards a post-graduate qualification (14.8%), a Level 3 qualification (12.9%) or a credit towards an undergraduate qualification (12.0%).

Resources and learning that would be beneficial (Table B.14(i)) and important (Table B.14(ii))

When asked which resources or learning opportunities councillors would find beneficial in their work as a councillor, the three that were most widely reported were media training (37.5%), IT support (36%) and administrative support (32.2%). These were also the three most widely

A vertical blue-tinted photograph on the left side of the page. It shows a landscape with a road bridge in the middle ground, a field in the foreground, and a hillside with trees in the background. A white truck is visible on the bridge.

mentioned in 2006, albeit by slightly fewer respondents. In all the areas of training and support listed, more people requested each than was the case in 2006 (see Table B.14 (i)). In 2008, around one quarter of councillors wanted each of the following: political skills training (25.2%), better facilities to hold surgeries (23.4%) better information on the role of the councillor (23.1%) and a case worker (22.0%). Administrative support was particularly required by councillors in shire counties (42.8%) and case workers were particularly requested by representatives of metropolitan districts and London boroughs. A greater proportion of female councillors wanted political skills training (31.0% compared with 22.5% of male councillors) and a greater proportion of councillors with minority ethnic backgrounds wanted training and support across nearly all aspects.

Those that identified resources or learning opportunities as being useful to them in their work as a councillor were also asked to state which of the list of eight presented they would consider to be the most important. The two aspects that were identified by the most respondent councillors were administrative support (23.0%) and IT support (20.4%). In addition, 13.0% identified better information on the role of the councillor and 11.7% indicated media training while for 10.0% a case worker was the most important resource. Smaller proportions of councillors identified administrative support, a case worker and political skills training as most important in 2008 compared with 2006 while a greater proportion identified better facilities to hold surgeries, IT support and information on the role of the councillor in 2008 (see Table B.14 (ii)).

Section B: issues and views of councillors

Reasons for becoming a councillor (Table B.15)

By far the main reason councillors gave for taking up the role was 'to serve the community' (88.4%). This was followed by a desire 'to change things' (53.7%) and because of 'political beliefs' (51.5%). Just under a third (30.3%) said that they had been asked to become a councillor and 12.5% became involved 'to resolve an issue'. The proportions identifying each reason were similar to those in 2004 and 2006. Labour party representatives were notably more likely to have become a councillor because of their political beliefs (73.4%) and to change things (65.1%) and were less likely to have been asked (18.7%). In contrast, Conservative Party representatives and those representing the Liberal Democrat party were more likely to have been asked (34.0% and 33.6% respectively). Councillors from a minority ethnic background were more likely to have become involved to resolve an issue (22.6%), to change things (61.7%) and were less likely to have been asked (17.1%).

Most important things that councillors do (Table B.16)

A clear majority of councillors considered that the most important things for councillors to do were to listen to the views of local people (94.1%) and to support the local community (91.4%). Furthermore, many felt that it was important that councillors address issues concerning the whole area (77.9%), deal with complaints (72.1%), attend council meetings (68.4%) and keep the public informed about councillor activities (62.7%).

There was some variation in different types of authority in the proportions who considered that holding surgeries was most important. Respondents in shire counties and shire districts were less likely to report this (41.4% and 41.8% respectively) while those in metropolitan districts and London boroughs were more likely to do so (71.6% and 60.8% respectively). A greater proportion of representatives of the Labour party reported that they thought it was important for councillors to hold surgeries (70.8%), address issues concerning the whole area (82.8%) plan local services (62.6%) and represent local residents' view to Government (55.8%) than was the case in England as a whole.

Views on influence as a councillor (Table B.17)

Reflecting on their influence as a councillor, 40.5% of councillors said that they had more influence to change things in their area than they expected before they were elected, and this was greater than the proportion in 2006 (35.6%). While 34.1% of 2008 respondents said that they had about as much influence as they expected, 25.4% said that they had less influence (29.3% in 2006).

Among the representatives of the main parties, it appeared that a smaller proportion of Liberal Democrat councillors felt that they had more influence than expected (33.0%). A greater proportion of female councillors and those from minority ethnic backgrounds indicated that they had more influence than expected (44.3% and 54.0% respectively).

Effectiveness as a councillor (Table B.18)

Almost nine out of ten councillors considered that they were effective (63.7%) or very effective (24.3%). Very few felt that they were not effective (2.1%) or not very effective (2.8%) while a further 7.0% said that they did not know or it was too early to say.

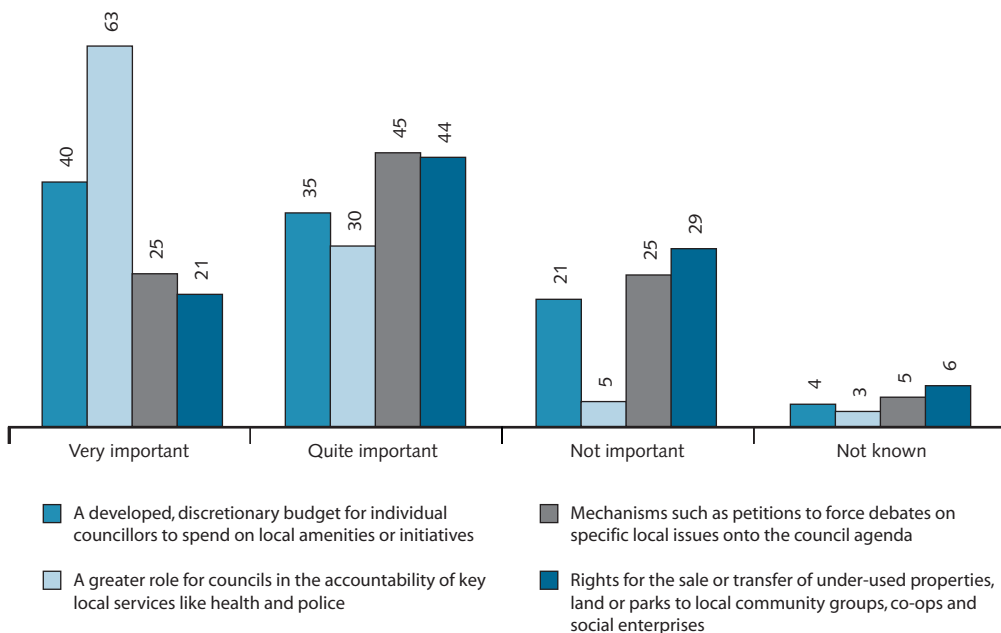
View on the importance of aspects of councillors' role as community advocates (Table B.19)

At the time of the survey, the Government was about to produce a White Paper on empowering individuals and communities to have more control over their lives. Part of this might involve councillors having a role as community advocates to encourage communities to exercise direct power. Councillors were asked to indicate how important they thought it was that various types of assistance were made available in their authority. A greater role for councils in the accountability of key local services like health and police was rated most important: 62.5% said it was very important, a further 29.8% said it was quite important and only 4.5% said it was not important. The next most common item was having a devolved, discretionary budget for individual councillors to spend on local amenities or initiatives: 40.4% rated it very important, a further 35.0% said it was quite important and 20.9% said it was not important.

Fewer councillors said that mechanisms such as petitions to force debates on specific local issues onto the council agenda (25.0%) and rights for the sale or transfer of under-used properties, land or parks to local community groups, co-ops and social enterprises (21.4%) were very important, although higher proportions thought that these were quite important (44.8% and 44.1% respectively).

Responses were fairly consistent across different types of authority except that a greater proportion of councillors in London boroughs said that having a discretionary budget was not important (27.8%). Among representatives of the main political parties, it was notable that a greater proportion of Conservative members said that each strategy was not important. For example, 25.2% said that a discretionary budget was not important, 30.3% said that mechanisms to force debate were not important and 34.6% said that rights for the sale and transfer of land were not important. See Figure 5.

Figure 5 Importance of aspects of councillor's roles



When councillors would talk about their work (Table B.20)

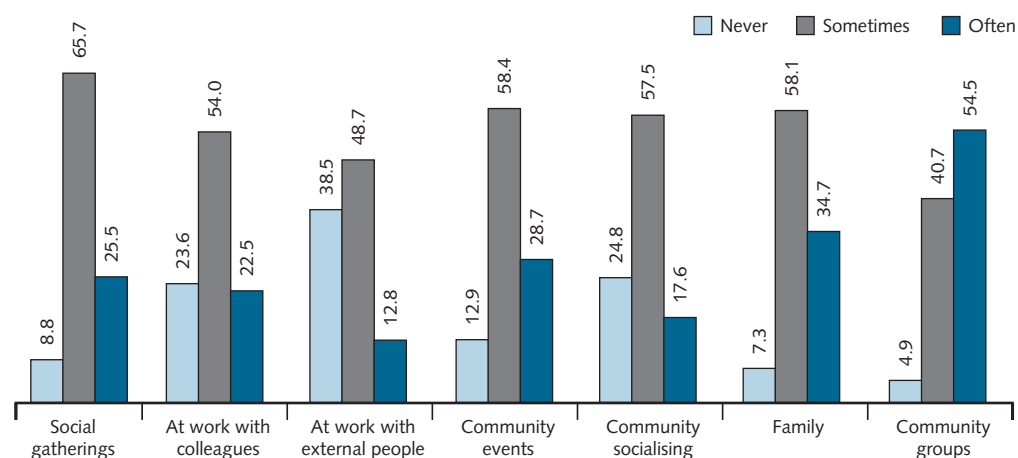
Councillors in 2008 were asked about the situations in which they would talk about their work as councillors. They were offered a list of seven different situations and asked to indicate for each whether this was a situation in which they would 'never', 'sometimes' or 'often' talk about their work as a councillor. Their responses were similar to those of councillors in 2006 and revealed the following.

The situation in which most councillors reported that they would 'often' talk about their work as a councillor were within community groups such as tenants' associations (54.4%) and with their family (34.7%). Councillors from metropolitan districts and London boroughs and those representing the Labour party were more likely than other groups to indicate that this was the case.

The situation in which most councillors indicated that they would 'sometimes' talk about their work as a councillor was at social gatherings with friends (65.7%), followed by community events such as street parties or school fetes (58.4%), with their family (58.1%), community socialising (e.g. in the local pub) (57.5%) and at work (54.0%)

The situation in which most councillors reported that they would 'never' talk about their work as a councillor was at work with external people (e.g. clients, business contacts) (38.5%). See Figure 6.

Figure 6 In which situations councillors would talk about their work, England 2008



Would councillors recommend the role to others (Table B.21)

Four-fifths of councillors (81.8%) said that they would recommend being a councillor to others, compared with 76.4% in 2006. Only 7.4% of 2008 respondents said that they would not recommend their role, compared with 6.2% in 2006. The proportions who would recommend becoming a councillor or not were not notably different across types of authority, political parties, gender and ethnicity.

Intention to stand for re-election (Table B.23)

Just over half of councillors (54.5%) said that they intended to stand for re-election at the end of their term and 15.8% said that they did not. A further 28.6% indicated that they did not know. In 2006 a smaller proportion said that they would not stand for re-election (11.4%) and a greater proportion said that they would (61.3%). A notably higher proportion of councillors in shire counties (70.8%) and London boroughs (66.5%) said that they did intend to stand again while this was the case for a smaller proportion of councillors in shire districts (47.4%). Among the main political parties, Liberal Democrat representatives were less likely to plan to stand again (18.8% said that they would not). A higher proportion of councillors with minority ethnic backgrounds intended to stand for re-election (68.9%) than was the case among councillors as a whole.

How committed councillors think their authorities are to a range of activities (Table B.24)

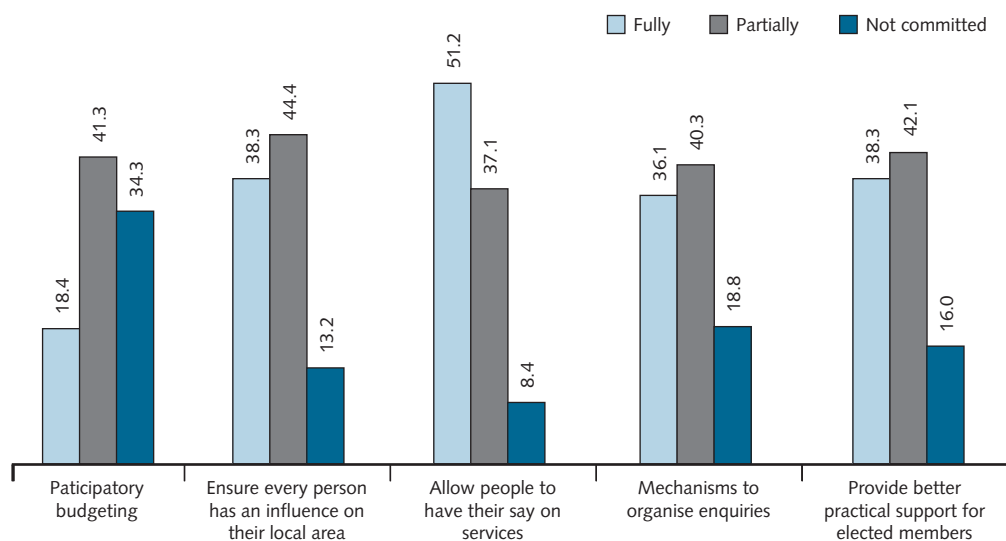
Councillors indicated the level of commitment that they felt their authority had to a range of activities. Their responses revealed the following.

The activity to which the largest proportion of respondents felt that their authority was fully committed was allowing people to have a say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback (51.2%).

Similar proportions of councillors considered that their authority was fully committed to enabling people and communities to have an influence locally through active programmes of engagement (38.3%), providing better practical support for elected members so that they can act more effectively as local leaders (38.3%) and having mechanisms to organise enquiries about contentious issues (36.1%).

The activity which the largest proportion of councillors felt that their authority was not committed to was allowing people to have a role in allocating resources through participatory budgeting (34.3%).

Figure 7 How committed councillors think their authorities are to a range of priorities: England 2008



Comparisons between responses revealed that female councillors and Conservative party representatives were more likely to report that their authority was committed to each of the activities while male councillors, and Labour and Liberal Democrat party representatives, were more likely to state that their authority was not committed. In general, responses were similar across different types of council. However, a greater proportion of respondents from London boroughs than was the case in England as a whole indicated that their authority was not committed to allowing people to have a role in allocating resources through participatory budgeting (39.7%), to allowing people to have their say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback (12.9% said not committed) and to providing better practical support for elected members (21.1% said not committed). See Figure 7.

Section C: personal background of councillors

Gender (Table B.25)

In 2008, the majority of councillors (68.4%) were male while 30.8% were female and the remaining 0.8% did not provide details of their gender. The proportion of female councillors was similar to the proportion in 2006 when 29.3% were female. It has climbed slightly each year since 1997 when it stood at 27.8%.

The proportion of female councillors was greatest in London boroughs (36.2%) and metropolitan districts (33.1%) and lowest in shire counties (25.6%). This reflects a similar pattern to the gender profile in different types of council in 2006 although the proportion in metropolitan districts had increased from 29.5% in 2006.

The greater proportion of female councillors in London boroughs is reflected in gender profile in each region. London had the highest proportion of female councillors (36.2%). The South East (32.5%), Yorkshire & Humberside (32.2%), the North West (31.9%) and the West Midlands (31.7%) had similar proportions of female councillors. The region with the smallest proportion was the East Midlands (25.3%). Among each of the main parties, the Green party had the highest proportion of female councillors (44.2%) while the 'other' parties and independent parties had the smallest proportion (24.3% and 26.3% respectively).

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) in autumn 2008 showed that 51.3% of the population aged over 18 were female and 48.7% were male compared with 30.8% and 68.4% of councillors respectively.

Age (Table B.26)

The average age of councillors was very similar in 2008 (58.8 years old) to 2006 (58.3 years old). As was the case in 2006, generally, councillors in shire counties were slightly older (62.3 years old on average) while those in London boroughs were slightly younger (53.9). Councillors from minority ethnic backgrounds had a slightly younger age on average (53.5) than other councillors (59.0).

Comparison with LFS data from autumn 2008 shows that the adult population was younger than councillors. More specifically, while 13.1% of councillors were aged under 45, 48.1% of the adult population was in this age group. For each of the age groups below 50 years old, the proportion of councillors is smaller than the overall population. The converse is true of the age groups of 50 years and older. In these age groups the proportion of councillors in each age group is larger than in the population as a whole.

Ethnicity (Table B.27)

In 2008, 96.6% of councillors were white while 3.4% were from a minority ethnic background. These proportions were similar to those found in previous years when 95.9% of councillors were white and 4.1% came from an ethnic minority background in 2006; 3.5% and 2.7% were from minority ethnic backgrounds respectively in the 2004 and 2001 Councillors' Censuses. The proportion of councillors who were white is greater than LFS data shows is the case in the adult population as a whole (89.2%).

A greater proportion of councillors in London boroughs were from minority ethnic backgrounds (15.9%) than was the case in England as a whole. The ethnic background of councillors

representing each of the main parties differed. The Conservatives had the smallest proportion of councillors from minority ethnic backgrounds (1.5%) and the Labour party had the largest representation of councillors from minority ethnic backgrounds (8.9%).

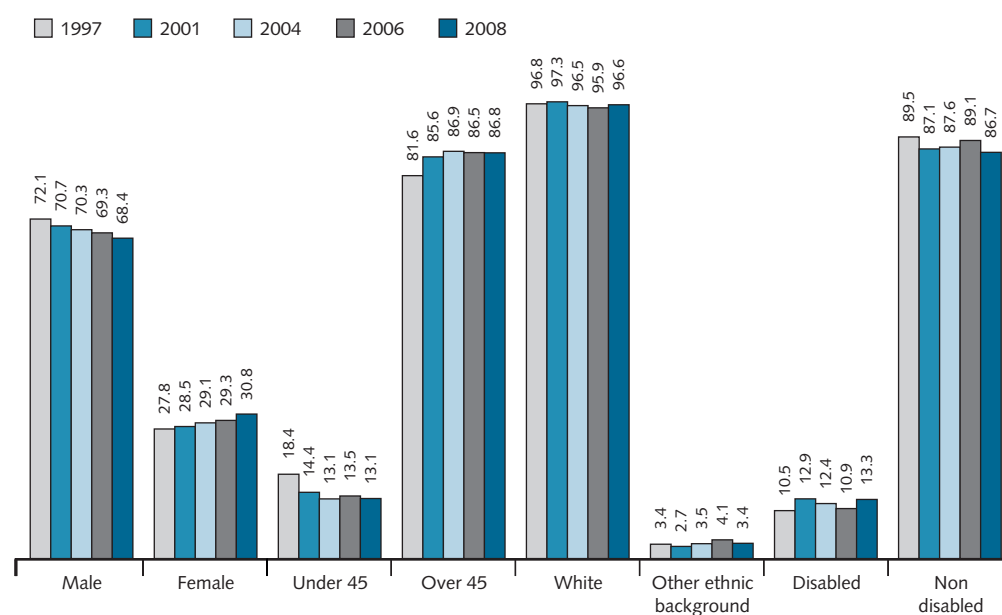
Disability/long-term illness (Table B.28)

A total of 13.3% of councillors in the 2008 census indicated that they had a long-term illness, health problem or disability that limited the daily activities or work they could do. This was slightly higher than in previous censuses when it has varied between 10.5% and 12.9%.

The proportion of councillors with a long-term illness, health problem or disability that limited the daily activities or work they could do was noticeably greater in metropolitan districts (16.3%) and lowest in London boroughs (11%). The proportions of councillors with a long-term illness or disability varied across the parties. Among Labour party representatives, 16% reported that this was the case as did 14.3% of independent councillors. Among Conservative councillors, 10.8% said that they had a long-term illness or disability. The regions with the greatest proportions of councillors who had a long-term illness or disability were the North East (17.9%), the North West (15.1%) and the South West (14.6%).

Compared with the adult population, where 9.5% of people have a health problem that affects the work or activities that they can do, a greater proportion of councillors experienced a health problem. Figure 8 presents the personal characteristics of councillors.

Figure 8 Gender, age, ethnic origin and disability, England 1997–2008



Caring responsibilities (Table B.29)

Just over a quarter of councillors (26.0%) in 2008 had one or more caring responsibilities. This is similar to the proportions in previous years of the survey (24.2% in 2006, 25.0% in 2004 and 27.6% in 2001) but was noticeably lower than in 1997 when 34.2% of councillors said that they had caring responsibilities. The most widely reported caring responsibility (by 13.5% of councillors) was for children while 9.3% were caring for a partner and 7.0% for a relative.

Councillors who represented the Labour and Green parties were more likely to have a caring responsibility (30.1% and 34.7% respectively). In addition, a greater proportion of female councillors had caring responsibilities (31.8%) compared with males (23.5%) and a greater proportion of councillors from minority ethnic backgrounds had caring responsibilities (39.3%) compared with those who were white (25.4%).

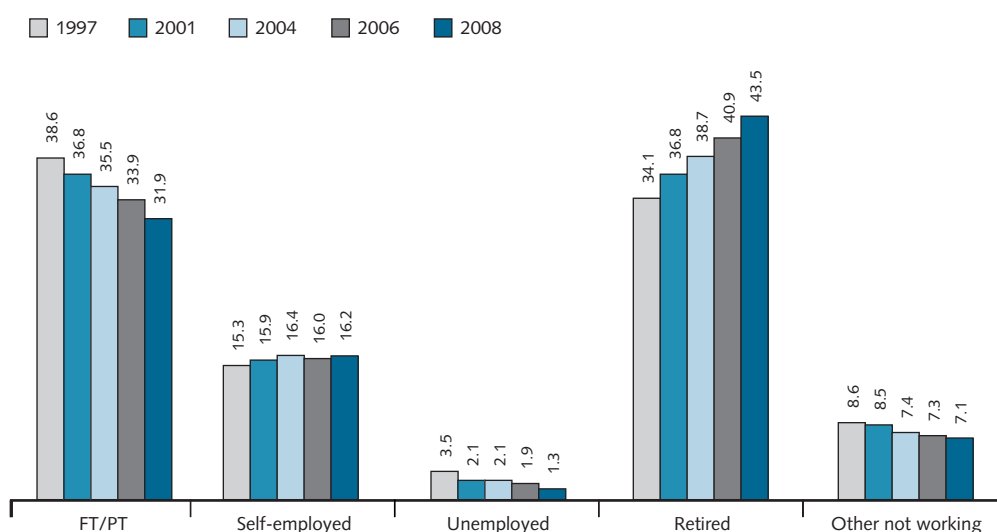
Main employment status (Table B.30)

The largest proportion of councillors were retired (43.5%) and this proportion has increased slightly each year from 34.1% in 1997 to 40.9% in 2006 and again in 2008. In other respects, the employment status of councillors was similar to previous years with 22.0% in full-time paid employment (which has correspondingly fallen each census since 1997), 16.2% self-employed and 9.9% in part-time paid employment.

There were notable differences in the employment status of councillors in different types of authority. The proportion of councillors in shire counties who were retired or self-employed was greater than in other types of authority (52.1% and 18.6% respectively) and, conversely, shire counties had the smallest proportion of councillors who were in full-time paid employment (10.6%). The greatest proportion of councillors who were in full-time paid employment were in London boroughs (30.1%). Councillors representing the Conservative party were more likely to be self-employed (20.8%) than those representing the Labour party (7.9%) and the Liberal Democrats (13.6%). Conservative councillors were also more likely to be retired (45.7%) than those who represented the Labour party (39.5%) or the Liberal Democrats (41.8%). Members of minority ethnic groups were less likely to be retired (26.5%) than other councillors (44.2%) and more likely to be in full-time paid employment (30.3% compared with 21.5%).

Comparison with LFS data reveals that the proportion of councillors who were retired is greater than is the case among the adult population (22.3%). While a smaller proportion of councillors were in full-time employment than is the case in the wider population (42.8%), a greater proportion were self-employed compared with all adults (7.5%). See Figure 9.

Figure 9 Main employment status, England 1997–2008

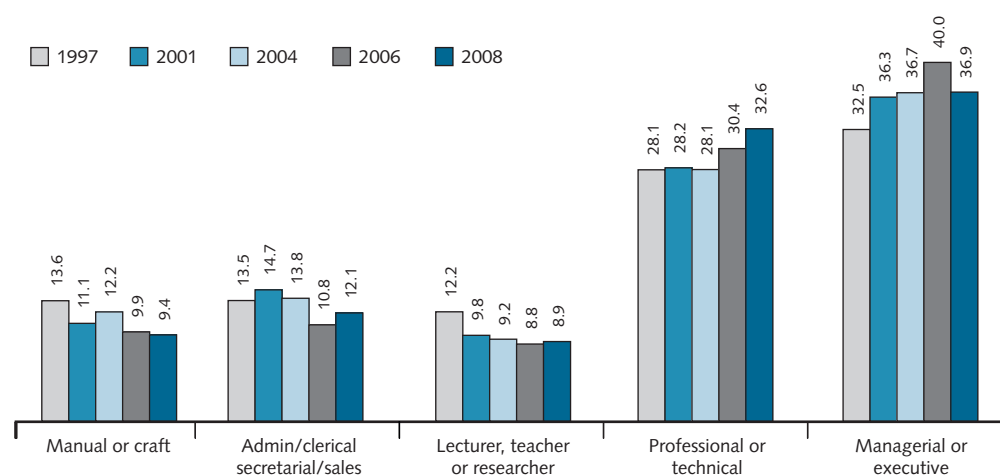


Current occupation (Table B.31)

More than one third (36.9%) of councillors who were in employment or self-employed were in managerial or executive positions and this was a slight decrease compared to 2006 when 40.0% were in such positions, but reflected the proportion in 2001 and 2004 when 36.3% and 36.7% respectively were in such roles. Conversely, the proportion who were in professional and technical occupations has increased to 32.6% in 2008 from 30.4% in 2006.

The proportion of councillors who were in managerial or executive positions were greatest in the shire district (42.7%) and London borough (42.3%) authorities. There were variations in the occupations of councillors representing the main parties. More specifically, those who were Conservative were more likely to be in managerial or executive roles (43.4%) and less likely to be working as a lecturer, teacher or researcher (5.1%) and in manual or craft occupations (7.9%). Labour and Liberal Democrat party representatives were less likely to be in managerial or executive roles (29.2% and 30.8%) and more likely than Conservative members to be lecturers, teachers or researchers (12.7% and 13.5%). A smaller proportion of female councillors were in managerial or executive positions (29.1%) and professional and technical occupations (28.8%) compared with males (39.5% and 34.1% respectively). Moreover, a smaller proportion of female councillors were in manual or craft occupations (4.8%) compared with males (11.1%). Greater proportions of females were lecturers, teachers or researchers (12.7%) and administration/clerical/secretarial or sales roles (24.7%) compared with males (7.6% and 7.7%). See Figure 10.

Figure 10 Current occupation, England 1997–2008



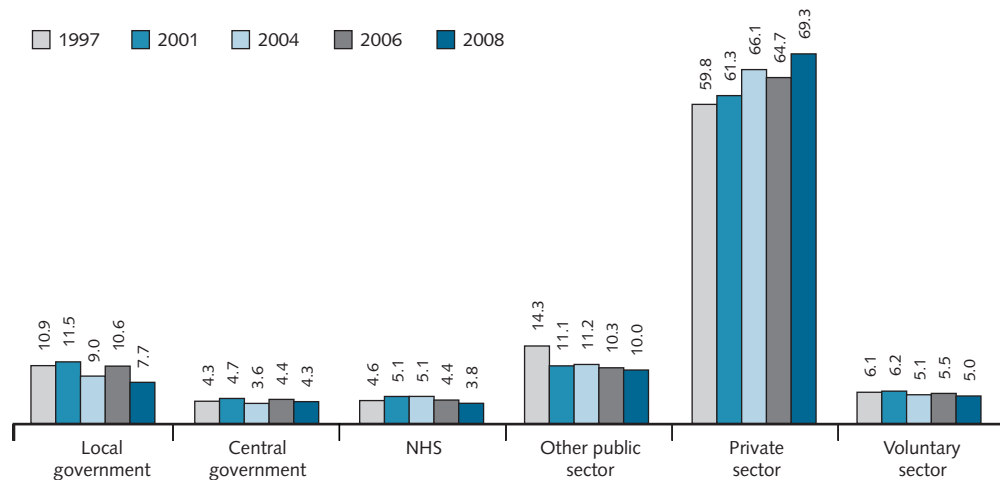
Employment sector (Table B.32)

As was the case in previous years, the majority of councillors who were employed or self-employed worked in the private sector (69.3%). This compares with 64.7% in 2006. Overall, in 2008 around a quarter (25.8%) were employed in the public sector, and 5.0% in the voluntary sector.

A greater proportion of councillors in shire counties and shire districts were employed in the private sector (75.4% and 73.3% respectively) and the smallest proportion of councillors in this sector were located in metropolitan districts (56.7%). Councillors in metropolitan districts (6.1%), London boroughs (6.8%) and English unitary authorities (6.0%) were more likely to work in central government than was the case overall.

Comparison with LFS data for the wider adult population shows that the sectors in which councillors worked were similar to the population as a whole. 71.7% of adults work in the private sector and 25.9% work in the public sector. A slightly higher proportion of councillors work in the voluntary sector compared with the adult population (2.4%). See Figure 11.

Figure 11 Employment sector , England 1997–2008



Employers' support of work as a councillor (Table B.33)

Overall, councillors reported that their employers supported their work as councillors. Two-fifths (40.1%) said that their employers 'wholeheartedly' supported their work as a councillor and 44.9% said that they supported it 'to a certain extent'. A minority of councillors (5.7%) said that their employer was not aware that they had this role. In addition, 7.2% of councillors reported that their employers were 'slightly against' their role while 2.1% were said to be 'completely against' it. The proportions who reported employers' support or otherwise were similar in 2008 to 2006

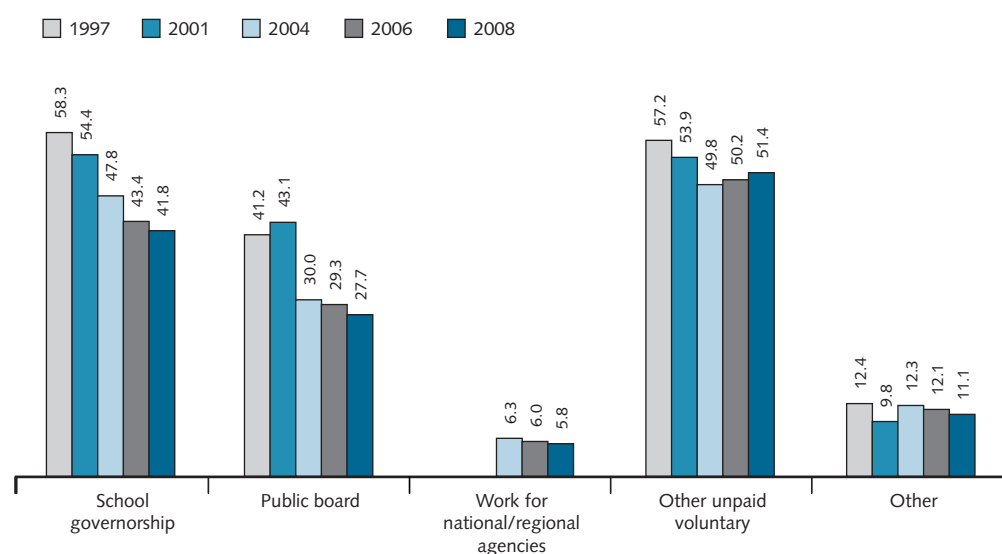
Across the types of authority, a greater proportion of councillors in shire county councils (48.4%) reported that their employers wholeheartedly supported them while smaller proportions of those in London boroughs (37.0%) and English unitary authorities (37.4%) indicated that this was the case. The smallest proportion of councillors who said that their employers were slightly against their role as a councillor were located in shire counties (3.2%) while the greatest proportions for whom this was the case were in metropolitan districts (9.2%) and English unitary authorities (9.1%). A greater proportion of councillors in the South West (44.3%) and Yorkshire & Humberside (44.4%) said that their employers supported them 'wholeheartedly' while the smallest proportion of councillors who stated this were in the North East (34.4%).

Additional work activities (Table B.34)

Many councillors undertook activities in addition to their role as a councillor. Around half (51.4%) participated in unpaid voluntary work while 41.8% were school governors and 27.7% were on public boards. In addition, 5.8% worked for national or regional agencies. While it is apparent that many councillors participate in activities in addition to their employment and councillor roles, the proportions participating in each of the activities has been decreasing in nearly every year since 1997. For example, in 1997 58.3% were school governors, 41.2% were represented on public boards or joint committees and 57.2% did other unpaid voluntary work.

Councillors' participation varied across the types of authority. A greater proportion of those in shire county councils were school governors (52.0%) and worked for national or regional agencies (10.8%) than was the case nationally. Similarly, a greater proportion of councillors in London boroughs and English unitary councils were school governors (63.0% and 56.7% respectively) while those in metropolitan districts were less likely to participate in unpaid voluntary work (45.7%). Councillors in shire district councils were least likely to be school governors (30.9%). Across the parties, it emerged that councillors who represented the Labour party were most likely to be school governors (59.6%) compared with Conservative members (37.3%) and Liberal Democrats (38.5%). Labour party members were also more likely to be members of public boards and joint committees (36.8%) compared with the other two main parties (25.8% of Conservatives had such roles and 26.0% of Liberal Democrats). See Figure 12.

Figure 12 Additional work activities, England 1997–2008



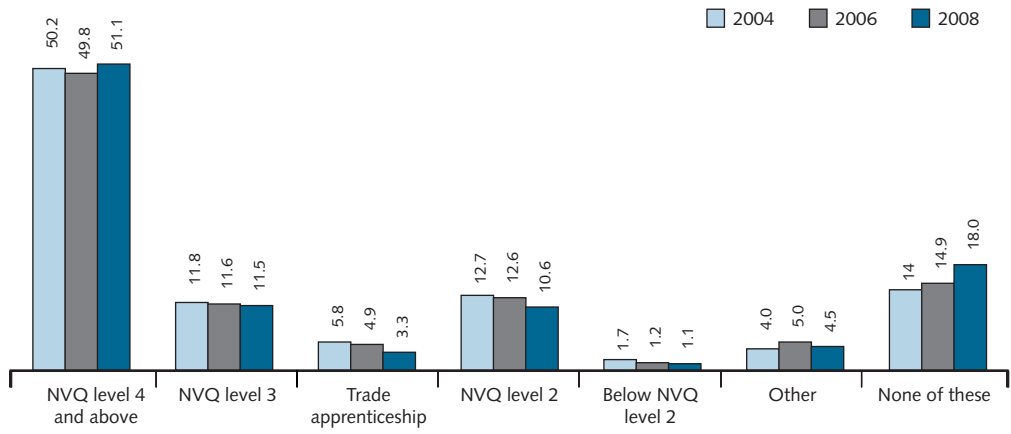
Highest qualification held (Table B.35)

Around half of councillors (51.1%) were educated to National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 or equivalent (degree or professional qualification). Fewer (11.5%) had attained NVQ Level 3 or equivalent (GCE 'A' level or National Certificate / Diploma) and 10.6% had achieved GCSE level or Level 2 as their highest qualification. A total of 18.0% had not achieved any of the qualifications listed and this proportion was greater in 2008 than was the case in 2006 when 14.9% indicated this.

The highest qualifications achieved by councillors were similar across the types of authority although a greater proportion of councillors in London boroughs had achieved Level 4 or higher (66.3%). The qualifications achieved were also similar across the main parties although a greater proportion of Liberal Democrat councillors had achieved level 4 or above (63.3%).

Compared with the adult population, a greater proportion of councillors had achieved qualifications at Level 4 NVQ equivalent or above (28.8% in the adult population). In addition, a slightly greater proportion of councillors had not achieved any of the qualifications listed, compared with the adult population (13.8%). See Figure 13.

Figure 13 Education and qualifications (NVQ equivalent), England 2004–2008



Councils and their constitutions in England

The constitution of councils, and the frequency of local elections are presented here for reference.

Table 2 shows the constitutional models chosen by councils.

Table 2 Constitutional models

	2008	
	No.	%
Mayor and Cabinet model	11	2.8
Leader and Cabinet model	318	82.4
Mayor and Council Manager Model	1	0.3
Alternative arrangements	56	14.5

Note: Excludes Corporation of London and Isles of Scilly.

The number of authorities by type and region is shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Authorities by type and region

	Number of authorities
Type of authority	
Shire counties	34
Shire districts	238
Metropolitan districts	36
London boroughs	32
English unitaries	46
English region	
East Midlands	45
East of England	54
North East	25
North West	46
South East	74
South West	50
West Midlands	38
Yorks. & Humberside	22
London	32
All England	386

Note: Excludes Corporation of London and Isles of Scilly.

Frequency of local elections

Table 4 illustrates the election cycles for different types of authority between 2005 and 2011.

Table 4 Election cycles

Type of authority	Electoral cycle and warding arrangements	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
County councils	Full council elections Single member electoral divisions	FC				FC		
London boroughs	Full council elections Multimember wards		FC				FC	
Metropolitan districts	By thirds. All wards have three members		1/3	1/3	1/3		1/3	
102 Shire districts and various unitaries	By thirds. Almost all wards have between 1–3 members		1/3	1/3	1/3		1/3	
175 Shire districts and various unitaries	Full council elections. Almost all wards have 1–3 members		FC					FC

Note: 52 authorities will not hold elections again as they are being abolished at the end of March 2009. FC = Full Councils.

Annex A Summary of responses to key questions

Tables A.1 to A.3 summarise responses to key questions in the survey by type of authority and English region.

Table A.1 Response rate, gender, age and ethnic origin

	Response rate of councillors	Gender		Average age (years)	Ethnic origin	
		% male	% female		% white	% other ethnic group
Type of authority						
Shire counties	45.1% (1051)	73.0	25.6	62.3	98.2	1.7
Shire districts	46.9% (4959)	68.7	30.4	59.8	98.6	1.4
Metropolitan districts	42.0% (1026)	66.3	33.1	56.8	96.1	3.9
London boroughs	42.5% (790)	63.3	36.2	53.9	84.1	15.9
English unitaries	44.4% (1069)	68.8	30.7	56.8	96.1	3.9
English region						
East Midlands	46.6% (939)	73.5	25.3	59.8	97.8	2.2
East of England	45.0% (1208)	71.0	28.3	59.3	97.7	2.3
North East	44.9% (602)	71.0	28.5	59.1	99.3	0.7
North West	43.9% (1145)	67.1	31.9	58.9	98.1	1.9
South East	49.7% (1787)	66.8	32.5	59.2	97.4	2.6
South West	45.2% (1065)	69.2	29.8	59.8	99.1	0.9
West Midlands	42.5% (808)	67.3	31.7	60.0	97.1	2.9
Yorks. & Humberside	43.8% (551)	66.9	32.2	58.2	96.8	3.2
London	42.5% (790)	63.3	36.2	53.9	84.1	15.9
All England	45.3% (8895)	68.4	30.8	58.8	96.6	3.4

Note: figures in brackets show number of responses

Analysis to different questions may be based on different groups of respondents

The figures may not total 100% as a result of rounding

Table A.2 Long-term illness/health/disability, caring responsibilities and employment status

	% long-term illness/health problem/disability	% one or more caring responsibilities	employment status			
			% full-time employment	% part-time employed	% self-employed	% retired
Type of authority						
Shire counties	13.7	21.2	10.6	8.7	18.6	52.1
Shire districts	12.9	25.4	22.0	9.2	16.8	45.5
Metropolitan districts	16.3	29.6	25.0	10.2	12.5	40.4
London boroughs	11.0	29.1	30.1	12.0	15.7	31.2
English unitaries	13.3	27.3	23.1	12.1	15.4	39.7
English region						
East Midlands	14.4	26.5	19.9	9.9	13.5	47.3
East of England	12.0	25.0	24.0	8.0	16.4	44.3
North East	17.9	30.7	22.0	8.3	12.0	46.7
North West	15.1	25.7	21.1	9.7	14.4	46.0
South East	11.0	24.2	22.2	10.9	17.5	43.0
South West	14.6	23.4	17.2	10.2	21.3	44.5
West Midlands	12.9	26.8	21.6	8.8	15.6	46.6
Yorks. & Humberside	13.1	27.0	19.5	11.0	16.6	41.4
London	11.0	29.1	30.1	12.0	15.7	31.2
All England	13.3	26.0	22.0	9.9	16.2	43.5

Table A.3 Length of service, position of leading responsibility, responsibility allowance, previous councillor role, hours worked per week and whether they would stand for re-election

	average length of service (years)	% holding one or more positions of leading resp.	% receives special responsibility allowance	% previously been a councillor	average no. hours/week (decimalised)	stand for re-election?	
						% yes	% no
Type of authority							
Shire counties	9.6	56.4	61.4	70.4	27.0	70.8	15.5
Shire districts	7.9	54.3	48.2	38.2	18.5	47.4	19.2
Metropolitan districts	9.1	59.4	58.4	32.1	28.1	59.3	11.1
London boroughs	8.5	58.5	60.1	32.4	24.9	66.5	9.1
English unitaries	7.8	60.9	56.4	40.0	26.2	55.8	11.6
English region							
East Midlands	8.7	56.3	55.0	43.2	21.0	59.1	12.5
East of England	7.8	53.6	52.8	44.2	19.5	54.6	15.1
North East	8.6	57.4	54.7	40.7	22.5	40.6	31.6
North West	8.9	56.1	53.1	36.5	23.1	51.0	18.3
South East	7.7	54.4	51.1	40.0	21.1	53.3	15.8
South West	7.8	57.7	48.3	46.3	22.3	49.8	17.4
West Midlands	9.0	56.6	50.5	44.5	23.3	57.8	14.6
Yorks. & Humberside	8.5	61.4	58.9	40.0	26.7	58.7	10.2
London	8.5	58.5	60.1	32.4	24.8	66.5	9.1
All England	8.3	56.4	53.2	40.9	22.3	54.5	15.8

Annex B Breakdown of survey data, England 1997–2008

All tables in Annex B show grossed results, i.e. estimates for all councillors derived from the response.

The base varies between tables; where the base is shown as 'Base (population)', the results have been calculated on all 19,617 councillors.

Where the base is shown as 'Base (respondents)', this is the 'Base (population)' less the estimate for non-respondents and non-applicable answers; e.g. 8319 were employed and indicated a current occupation (Table B.31).

This procedure has been adopted in order to remove distortions from the distribution caused by non-response.

Table B.1 Length of service as a councillor, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1 - 2 years	3125	15.6	3047	15.4	5503	29.0	4857	24.7	6292	32.1
3 - 5 years	5882	29.4	5298	26.8	3592	19.0	4757	24.2	3495	17.8
6 - 9 years	4051	20.2	4083	20.7	3727	19.7	3772	19.2	3469	17.7
10 - 15 years	3644	18.2	3831	19.4	3090	16.3	3133	15.9	3157	16.1
16 - 20 years	1527	7.6	1578	8.0	1341	7.1	1494	7.6	1351	6.9
21 - 25 years	981	4.9	877	4.4	823	4.3	776	3.9	854	4.4
>25 years	834	4.2	1057	5.3	855	4.5	901	4.6	1000	5.1
Base (respondents)	20043	99.1	19771	98.9	18931	96.3	19689	100.0	19617	
Average	8.8		9.2		8.3		8.3		8.3	

Note: councillors elected in 2008 occur in the category '1–2 years'

Table B.2 Leading responsibilities held, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Directly Elected Mayor	6	0.0	6	0.0	5	0.0
Deputy Mayor	279	1.4	314	1.6	338	1.7
Leader/Deputy leader of the authority	938	4.8	885	4.5	1020	5.2
Chair/Vice-Chair of Council/Civic Mayor	878	4.5	876	4.5	963	4.9
Cabinet/Executive members	2863	14.6	2969	15.1	3214	16.4
Chair/Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny	2633	13.4	2476	12.6	2532	12.9
Chair/Vice-Chair of Area forum committee	1297	6.6	2084	10.6	1473	7.5
Chair/Vice-Chair of Regulatory committee	2037	10.4	1238	6.3	2152	11.0
Chair/Vice-Chair of Standards committee	307	1.6	312	1.6	288	1.5
Chair/Vice-Chair of Main Policy	439	2.2	416	2.1	555	2.8
Chair/Vice-Chair of Other Major committee	859	4.4	1000	5.1	1292	6.6
Chair/Vice-Chair of Board	236	1.2	230	1.2	358	1.8
Member of Board	731	3.7	913	4.6	1318	6.7
Chair/Vice-Chair of Local Strategic group	n/a		261	1.3	370	1.9
Chair/Vice-Chair of Local Strategic subgroup	n/a		261	1.3	375	1.9
One or more positions	10528	53.6	10573	53.7	11059	56.4
No positions	9129	46.4	9116	46.3	8558	43.6
Base (population)	19657		19689		19617	

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.3 Number of council committees/sub-committees, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	12	0.1	5	0	38	0.2	54	0.3	205	1.1
1	300	1.6	1838	10.3	2004	11.0	1761	10.0	1856	10.3
2	1565	8.2	3842	21.4	4212	23.1	3815	21.6	3907	21.6
3	3012	15.8	4075	22.7	4171	22.8	4120	23.3	4374	24.2
4	3430	18	3154	17.6	3231	17.7	3243	18.4	3221	17.8
5	2828	14.9	1865	10.4	1737	9.5	1944	11.0	1693	9.4
6–10	6417	33.7	2799	15.6	2506	13.7	2392	13.6	2542	14.1
11–15	1102	5.8	250	1.4	278	1.5	252	1.4	201	1.1
16–20	231	1.2	60	0.3	53	0.3	34	0.2	28	0.2
20+	123	0.6	26	0.1	41	0.2	34	0.2	39	0.2
Base (respondents)	19020	94	17913	89.7	18271	92.9	17649	89.6	18065	92.1
Average	5.7		3.8		3.7		3.8		3.7	

Table B.4 Party positions held, England 2001–2008

	2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Party/Group leader	1367	6.8	1392	7.1	1414	7.2	1448	7.4
Party/Group Deputy leader	1189	5.9	1125	5.7	1109	5.6	1160	5.9
Other Party/Group official	3296	16.5	2667	13.6	2646	13.4	2719	13.9
Base (population)	19998		19657		19689		19617	

Table B.5 Receives special responsibility allowance, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Receives special responsibility allowance	9192	46.8	9742	49.5	10435	53.2
Base (population)	19657		19689		19617	

Table B.6 No. hours/week spent on council and political business (decimalised hours), England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<=5	921	4.9	720	3.9	618	3.3
6–10	3460	18.5	3424	18.4	3354	17.8
11–15	3245	17.4	3141	16.9	2982	15.8
16–20	3731	20.0	3852	20.7	4025	21.4
21–25	1937	10.4	1909	10.3	2117	11.2
26–30	2093	11.2	2356	12.7	2326	12.3
31–35	704	3.8	675	3.6	742	3.9
36–40	1032	5.5	1147	6.2	1203	6.4
41–45	336	1.8	263	1.4	342	1.8
46–50	543	2.9	563	3.0	586	3.1
50+	676	3.6	546	2.9	556	2.9
Average no. of hours	22		22		22	
Base (respondents)	18678	95.0	18596	94.4	18850	96.1

Table B.7 Distribution of hours/week of how time spent (decimalised hours), England 2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Attendance at council meetings, committees	10		10	
Engaging with constituents, surgeries, enquiries	7		8	
Other, external meetings, seminars, training	6		6	
Average	22		22	
Base (respondents)	16837	85.5	18143	92.5

Fewer councillors were able to accurately provide this detailed information and there is therefore a minor discrepancy with the total average calculated.

Table B.8 Political party profile, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Conservative party	4349	21.6	6832	34.3	7593	39.0	7719	42.3	9436	48.5
Labour party	9212	45.7	7140	35.9	5586	28.7	4585	25.1	4201	21.6
Liberal Democrats	4776	23.7	4208	21.2	4497	23.1	4427	24.3	4315	22.2
Green party	n/a	n/a	71	0.4	58	0.3	97	0.5	144	0.7
An independent	1472	7.3	1385	7.0	1483	7.6	1178	6.5	1143	5.9
Other	211	1.0	187	0.9	240	1.2	246	1.3	207	1.1
Base (respondents)	20137	99.6	19825	99.1	19457	99.0	18252	92.7	19445	99.1

Table B.9 Previous council experience, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008			
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Has previously been a councillor			6163	31.4	6604	33.5	8033	40.9
Base (population)			19657		19689		19617	

Table B.10 Member of other public bodies, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Local authority	1632	8.3	1888	9.6	2265	11.5
Town councils	2192	11.2	2161	11.0	2422	12.3
Parish/community council	2951	15.0	3102	15.8	3081	15.7
Police authority	474	2.4	558	2.8	525	2.7
Fire authority	703	3.6	717	3.6	798	4.1
National Parks authority	172	0.9	200	1.0	187	1.0
Base (population)	19657		19689		19617	

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.11 Training and development opportunities received, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Induction	4958	25.2	7171	36.6
Personal development plan	3794	19.3	5213	26.6
Training needs questionnaire	6940	35.2	8535	43.5
Seminars/conferences	13120	66.6	13961	71.2
Attended IDeA Leadership Academy	N/A		1439	7.3
Mentoring coaching	2404	12.2	3538	18.0
Attended other member development programmes	10896	55.3	11197	57.1
Skills training	7274	36.9	8024	40.9
Other	1940	9.9	1541	7.9
One or more opportunities	17369	88.2	18382	93.7
No opportunities	2320	11.8	1235	6.3
Base (population)	19689		19617	

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.12 Would like the chance to acquire a more formal qualification as a councillor, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Would like this chance	8213	41.7	9021	46.0
Base (respondents)	19689		19617	

Table B.13 If available, what level qualification would be appropriate, England 2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Credit towards A level/NVQ 3 equivalent	1147	14.5	1080	12.9
Credit towards undergraduate degree/NVQ 4	1150	14.6	1002	12.0
Credit towards post-graduate degree/NVQ 5	1430	18.1	1297	14.8
Stand alone independent qualification	4853	61.5	4785	57.1
Other	341	4.3	278	3.3
Base (respondents)	7890	96.1	8382	92.9

Table B.14 (i) Which resources or learning would be beneficial for the work of councillors, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Media training	6711	34.1	7366	37.5
Administrative support	5373	27.3	6318	32.2
Case worker	3961	20.1	4322	22.0
Political skills training	4518	22.9	4940	25.2
Better facilities to hold surgeries	4238	21.5	4599	23.4
IT support	5928	30.1	7067	36.0
Better information on role of ward / division councillor	3926	19.9	4541	23.1
Other resources or learning	1251	6.4	1125	5.7
Base (population)	19689		19617	

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.14 (ii) Which of these resources or learning is the most important for the work of councillors, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Media training	928	11.1	1438	11.7
Administrative support	2066	24.7	2822	23.0
Case worker	947	11.3	1225	10.0
Political skills training	847	10.1	1111	9.1
Better facilities	572	6.8	1024	8.3
IT support	1567	18.7	2509	20.4
Better information on role	986	11.8	1592	13.0
Other resources or learning	449	5.4	552	4.5
Base (respondents)	8362	42.5	12272	62.6

Table B.15 Reasons for becoming a councillor, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Serve community	16176	83.1	16654	86.9	17228	88.4
Resolve an issue	1558	8.0	2183	11.4	2436	12.5
Political beliefs	9633	49.5	9866	51.5	10032	51.5
To change things	8921	45.8	10020	52.3	10471	53.7
Because I was asked to	5603	28.8	5631	29.4	5909	30.3
Member allowances	189	1.0	312	1.6	384	2.0
Other	463	2.4	635	3.3	522	2.7
Base (respondents)	19475	99.1	19153	97.3	19496	99.4

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.16 Which are most important things that councillors do, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Listen to views of local people	18035	93.5	18344	94.1
Support local community	16432	85.2	17807	91.4
Hold surgeries	8876	46.0	9559	49.1
Address issues	14214	73.7	15184	77.9
Council meetings	13474	69.9	13333	68.4
Plan services	8745	45.4	10424	53.5
Deal with complaints	14020	72.7	14060	72.1
Keep the public informed	11020	57.2	12223	62.7
Represent local residents	8363	43.4	9713	49.8
Base (respondents)	19278	97.9	19487	99.3

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.17 Views on influence as a councillor, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
More influence to change things than expected	6717	35.6	7806	40.5
Less influence to change things than expected	5526	29.3	4908	25.4
As much influence as expected	6637	35.1	6575	34.1
Base (respondents)	18880	95.9	19289	98.3

Table B.18 How effective councillors are in their role, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Very effective	3705	19.3	4290	23.5	4723	24.3
Effective	13135	68.6	12513	68.6	12366	63.7
Not effective	883	4.6	635	3.5	414	2.1
Not very effective	1436	7.5	798	4.4	539	2.8
Don't know / too early to say*					1364	7.0
Base (respondents)	19159	97.5	18236	92.6	19405	98.9

Note: Don't know response option added in 2008. This should be taken into account when making comparisons with previous years.

Table B.19 Views on councillors' role as community advocates, England 2008

	2008							
	Very important		Quite important		Not important		Not known	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A devolved, discretionary budget for individual councillors to spend on local amenities or initiatives	7920	40.4	6869	35.0	4104	20.9	723	3.7
A greater role for councils in the accountability of key local services like health and police	12264	62.5	5853	29.8	883	4.5	617	3.1
Mechanisms such as petitions to force debates on specific local issues onto the council agenda	4911	25.0	8788	44.8	4911	25.0	1007	5.1
Rights for the sale or transfer of under-used properties, land or parks to local community groups, co-ops and social enterprises	4205	21.4	8659	44.1	5684	29.0	1070	5.5
Base (population) = 19617								

Question used for the first time in 2008 – no previous years' data available.

Table B.20 In which situations councillors would talk about their work, England 2006–2008

	2006						2008					
	Never		Sometimes		Often		Never		Sometimes		Often	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Social gatherings with friends	1571	9.0	11632	66.3	4335	24.7	1671	8.8	1244	65.7	4834	25.5
At work with colleagues	2900	21.3	7724	56.8	2964	21.8	3807	23.6	8710	54.0	3626	22.5
At work with external people	4884	36.7	6782	50.9	1650	12.4	6294	38.5	7969	48.7	2086	12.8
Community events	1742	10.9	9564	59.8	4680	29.3	2356	12.9	10694	58.4	5261	28.7
Community socialising	3282	20.2	9966	61.3	3017	18.5	4447	24.8	10312	57.5	3162	17.6
Family	1045	6.4	9282	57.2	5893	36.3	1332	7.3	10640	58.1	6353	34.7
Community groups	584	3.7	6375	40.0	9861	56.3	922	4.9	7626	40.7	10178	54.4
Base respondents			15921	80.9					18726	95.5		

Table B.21 Would councillors recommend the role to others, England 2006–2008

	2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	15045	76.4	16050	81.8
No	1224	6.2	1447	7.4
Don't know	1802	9.2	1820	9.3
Not known	1618	8.2	300	1.5
Base (population)	19689		19617	

Table B.22 When current term in office ends, England 2008

	2008	
	No.	%
2007	N/A	
2009	3455	17.6
2010	5305	27.0
2011	7867	40.1
Not answered	2991	15.2
Base (population)	19617	

Table B.23 Do councillors intend to stand for re-election, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	10611	54.0	12076	61.3	10694	54.5
No	2490	12.7	2250	11.4	3108	15.8
Don't know	6050	30.8	3948	20.0	5616	28.6
Not answered	506	2.6	1415	7.2	200	1.0
Base (population)	19657		19689		19617	

Table B.24 How committed councillors think their authorities are to specific activities, England 2008

	2008							
	Fully		Partially		Not committed		Not known	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Allowing people to have a role in allocating resources through participatory budgeting	3612	18.4	8096	41.3	6738	34.3	1170	6.0
Enabling people and communities to have an influence locally through active programmes of engagement	7506	38.3	8709	44.4	2598	13.2	804	4.1
Allowing people to have their say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback	10038	51.2	7286	37.1	1650	8.4	642	3.3
Having mechanisms to organise enquiries about contentious issues	7075	36.1	7903	40.3	3679	18.8	960	4.9
Providing better practical support for elected members so that they can act more effectively as local leaders	7510	38.3	8266	42.1	3131	16.0	710	3.6
Base respondents	No. 19617							

A slightly different question was asked in 2006: 54.9% said that their authority was fully committed to allowing people to have a say, 29.2% said that they were partially committed and 5.0% said that they were not committed. In 2006, 38.5% said that their authority was fully committed to providing practical support, 41.2% said that they were partially committed and 12.8% said that they were not committed.

Table B.25 Gender profile, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	14591	72.1	14137	70.7	13825	70.3	13645	69.3	13417	68.4
Female	5614	27.8	5703	28.5	5711	29.1	5774	29.3	6038	30.8
Not Known	21	0.1	158	0.8	121	0.6	271	1.4	162	0.8
Base (population)	20226		19998		19657		19689	100.0	19617	

Table B.26 Age profile, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Under 25					62	0.3	58	0.3	110	0.6
25–29					222	1.2	273	1.5	308	1.6
30–34					423	2.3	430	2.4	403	2.1
35–39					626	3.4	656	3.6	643	3.4
40–44					1077	5.9	1036	5.7	1022	5.4
45–49					1494	8.2	1368	7.5	1378	7.3
50–54					2148	11.8	1877	10.3	1746	9.3
55–59					3312	18.2	2992	16.4	2638	14.0
60–64					3465	19.0	3730	20.5	4119	21.9
65–69					2846	15.6	3009	16.5	3275	17.4
70+					2520	13.8	2778	15.3	3175	16.9
Base (respondents)	19919	98.5	19205	96.0	18195	92.6	18207	92.5	18819	95.9
Average	55.4		56.9		57.8		58.3		58.8	
Proportion under 45	3655	18.4	2773	14.4	2410	13.1	2453	13.5	2486	13.1

* age groups were changed in 2004, therefore no comparisons can be made with previous years

Table B.27 Ethnic origin profile, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
White:			19355	97.3	18765	96.5	17855	95.9	18716	96.6
British					4077	21.0	4871	26.2	5678	30.2
English					13193	67.9	11703	62.8	11430	60.8
Scottish					423	2.2	340	1.8	278	1.5
Welsh					383	2.0	335	1.8	307	1.6
Other British					284	1.5	198	1.1	149	0.8
Irish					260	1.3	281	1.5	198	1.1
Any other White background					145	0.7	128	0.7	136	0.7
Mixed:			62	0.3	114	0.6	127	0.7	82	0.4
White & Black Caribbean					30	0.2	32	0.2	16	0.1
White & Black African					12	0.1	12	0.1	9	0.0
White and Asian					36	0.2	36	0.2	38	0.2
Any other Mixed background					36	0.2	47	0.2	20	0.1
Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh:			356	1.8	455	2.3	519	2.8	423	2.2
Indian					198	1.0	236	1.3	206	1.1
Pakistani					128	0.7	143	0.8	120	0.6
Bangladeshi					60	0.3	55	0.3	44	0.2
Any other Asian background					69	0.4	85	0.5	53	0.3
Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, or Black Welsh:			94	0.5	91	0.5	93	0.5	97	0.5
Caribbean					57	0.3	42	0.2	53	0.3
African					26	0.1	43	0.2	30	0.2
Any other Black background					8	0.0	7	0.0	14	0.1
Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh, or other ethnic group:			18	0.1	14	0.1	25	0.1	31	0.2
Chinese					2	0.0	5	0.0	4	0.0
Any other background					12	0.1	20	0.1	26	0.1
Base (respondents)					19439	98.9	18618	94.6	18808	95.9
Ethnicity summary										
White	19521	96.8	19355	97.3	18765	96.5	17855	95.9	18176	96.6
Other ethnic background	653	3.4	531	2.7	674	3.5	764	4.1	633	3.4
Base (respondents)	20174	99.7	19886	99.4	19439	98.9	18618	94.6	18808	95.9

Notes: ethnic groups were changed in 2004, therefore only limited comparisons can be made with previous years
data for detailed ethnic categories should be treated with a degree of caution as they are based on relatively small numbers.

Table B.28 Disability profile, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Long-term illness, health problem or disability	2125	10.5	2587	12.9	2443	12.4	2138	10.9	2602	13.3
Base (population)	20226		19998		19657		19689		19617	

Table B.29 Caring responsibilities, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Child/Children					2743	14.0	2737	13.9	2641	13.5
Partner					1603	8.2	1521	7.7	1825	9.3
Relative					1138	5.8	994	5.0	1374	7.0
Other					219	1.1	207	1.1	322	1.6
One or more caring responsibilities	6896	34.2	5492	27.6	4916	25.0	4757	24.2	5099	26.0
No caring responsibilities	13330	65.8	14506	72.4	14741	75.0	14932	75.8	14518	74.0
Base (population)	20226		19998		19657		19689		19617	

Notes: caring groups were changed in 2004, therefore no comparisons can be made with previous years more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.30 Employment status, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
In full-time paid employment	6072	30.2	5358	27.2	4793	24.7	4346	23.5	4133	22.0
In part-time paid employment	1697	8.4	1886	9.6	2089	10.8	1924	10.4	1862	9.9
Self-employed	3071	15.3	3125	15.9	3181	16.4	2948	16.0	3047	16.2
Unemployed	696	3.5	411	2.1	403	2.1	360	1.9	242	1.3
Retired	6862	34.1	7240	36.8	7512	38.7	7548	40.9	8193	43.5
Permanently sick or disabled	534	2.7	470	2.4	339	1.7	247	1.3	183	1.0
Looking after home/family	801	4.0	685	3.5	602	3.1	601	3.3	645	3.4
In full-time education	85	0.4	36	0.2	60	0.3	36	0.2	69	0.4
Not working for other reason	311	1.5	466	2.4	447	2.3	465	2.5	440	2.3
Base (respondents)	20130	99.5	19676	98.4	19426	98.8	18475	93.8	18813	95.9

Table B.31 Current occupation, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Managerial or executive	3443	32.5	3691	36.3	3528	36.7	3329	40.0	3070	36.9
Professional or technical	2979	28.1	2874	28.2	2702	28.1	2523	30.4	2713	32.6
Lecturer, teacher or researcher	1297	12.2	996	9.8	886	9.2	734	8.8	744	8.9
Admin/clerical/secretarial/ sales	1428	13.5	1491	14.7	1322	13.8	898	10.8	1010	12.1
Manual or craft	1445	13.6	1128	11.1	1172	12.2	827	9.9	781	9.4
Base (respondents)	10592	97.7	10177	50.9	9610	95.5	8310	90.1	8319	92.0

Table B.32 Employment sector, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Local government	1158	10.9	1171	11.5	892	9.0	944	10.6	681	7.7
Central government	459	4.3	481	4.7	356	3.6	390	4.4	382	4.3
NHS	491	4.6	521	5.1	506	5.1	390	4.4	332	3.8
Other public sector	1511	14.3	1125	11.1	1115	11.2	916	10.3	879	10.0
Private sector	6338	59.8	6232	61.3	6585	66.1	5750	64.7	6110	69.3
Voluntary sector	646	6.1	630	6.2	509	5.1	493	5.5	437	5.0
Base (respondents)	10605	97.8	10162	50.8	9963	99.0	8883	96.4	8821	97.6

Table B.33 Does employer support work as a councillor, England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Wholeheartedly		2476	40.7	2297	40.9	2260	40.1
To a certain extent		2694	44.2	2583	46.0	2533	44.9
Employer is not aware I am a councillor		371	6.1	292	5.2	323	5.7
Slightly against		414	6.8	356	6.3	405	7.2
Completely against it		134	2.2	83	1.5	117	2.1
Base (respondents that were employees)		6089	88.5	5611	89.5	5637	94.0

Table B.34 Additional work activities, England 1997–2008

	1997		2001		2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
School governorship	10959	58.3	10874	54.4	9405	47.8	8546	43.4	8196	41.8
Public board	7748	41.2	8626	43.1	5905	30.0	5773	29.3	5425	27.7
Work for national/regional agencies	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1232	6.3	1172	6.0	1143	5.8
Other unpaid voluntary	10766	57.2	10776	53.9	9790	49.8	9886	50.2	10088	51.4
Other	2332	12.4	1956	9.8	2425	12.3	2382	12.1	2168	11.1
Did any additional activity									6857	77.1
Base (population)	20226		19998		19657		19689		19617	

Note: more than one response could be given so % do not sum to 100

Table B.35 Highest qualification held (NVQ equivalents), England 2004–2008

	2004		2006		2008	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
NVQ 4 and above: Degree/higher degree/ Professional qual./NVQ 4 or 5/Higher National Certificate/Diploma	9862	50.2	9806	49.8	10018	51.1
NVQ 3: GCE 'A' level/Scottish/Irish/ Higher Grade/NVQ 3 /Ordinary National Certificate/Diploma	2310	11.8	2278	11.6	2256	11.5
Trade Apprenticeship	1131	5.8	961	4.9	641	3.3
NVQ 2: GCSE/GCE O level/ School Certificate/NVQ2	2488	12.7	2478	12.6	2077	10.6
Below NVQ level 2: CSE (other than grade 1)/NVQ 1	325	1.7	244	1.2	209	1.1
Other	790	4.0	986	5.0	878	4.5
None of these	2751	14.0	2936	14.9	3538	18.0
Base (population)	19657		19689		19617	

Annex C Comparison with Labour Force Survey (LFS) data

	England		East Midlands		East of England		North East		North West		South East		South West		West Midlands		Yorks & Humberside		Greater London	
	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %
Sex																				
Male	48.7	68.4	49.1	73.5	48.6	71.0	48.5	71.0	48.5	67.1	48.2	66.8	48.4	69.2	48.9	67.3	49.0	66.9	49.1	63.3
Female	51.3	30.8	50.9	25.3	51.4	28.3	51.5	28.5	51.5	31.9	51.8	32.5	51.6	29.8	51.1	31.7	51.0	32.2	50.9	36.2
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	
Age																				
Under 25	12.1	0.6	12.2	0.5	10.9	0.7	13.2	0.5	12.8	0.7	11.1	0.7	11.1	0.3	12.2	0.5	13.6	0.2	12.5	0.9
25–29	8.6	1.6	7.9	0.7	7.8	1.7	8.2	0.7	8.2	1.5	7.8	1.5	7.3	1.2	8.3	1.5	8.7	1.4	12.3	4.9
30–34	8.1	2.1	7.3	1.7	7.7	1.1	6.8	2.1	7.3	2.2	7.7	2.2	6.8	2.4	7.4	1.5	7.3	1.5	12.4	5.5
35–39	9.3	3.4	9.1	3.1	9.3	3.6	8.4	3.7	9.0	3.2	9.2	3.2	8.5	2.3	9.1	2.1	8.9	3.4	11.2	6.3
40–44	9.9	5.4	9.9	4.8	10.0	6.1	9.5	3.5	9.7	5.4	10.2	5.4	9.5	5.2	9.7	4.9	9.5	5.7	10.4	7.2
45–49	9.1	7.3	9.2	7.2	9.2	6.5	9.3	8.7	9.2	6.2	9.4	6.2	8.9	6.5	9.0	7.7	9.0	8.3	8.6	9.6
50–54	7.9	9.3	8.0	9.3	8.0	9.3	8.5	7.5	8.1	9.8	8.2	9.4	8.0	7.7	8.0	9.1	8.0	10.0	6.9	11.2
55–59	7.5	14.0	7.9	13.5	7.8	13.6	7.9	15.7	7.8	14.1	7.7	12.9	8.1	14.8	7.7	14.0	7.6	18.0	5.9	12.4
60–64	7.6	21.9	8.2	21.9	8.2	20.8	7.8	25.0	7.7	20.3	8.0	22.6	8.6	23.7	7.8	21.2	7.6	23.1	5.3	19.7
65–69	5.7	17.4	6.0	19.0	6.0	17.3	5.9	18.1	6.0	19.1	5.8	18.3	6.6	19.1	6.1	16.7	5.7	14.1	4.0	12.0
70+	14.1	16.9	14.3	18.3	15.1	19.3	14.6	14.5	14.2	16.5	14.9	17.5	16.6	17.0	14.6	20.9	14.1	14.2	10.4	10.3
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	
Ethnicity																				
White	89.2	96.6	93.1	97.8	93.9	97.7	96.7	99.3	93.4	98.1	93.7	97.4	96.8	99.1	86.8	97.1	92.6	96.8	66.6	84.1
Mixed	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.8	1.2
Asian	5.2	2.2	4.0	1.6	2.5	1.3	2.1	0.2	3.8	1.7	3.1	1.7	1.4	0.4	8.4	2.1	4.4	2.1	13.8	10.8
Black	2.6	0.5	1.1	0.2	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.8	0.2	1.1	0.3	0.5	0.1	2.3	0.3	1.3	0.0	10.7	3.6
Chinese or other	2.2	0.2	1.3	0.3	1.8	0.1	0.7	0.0	1.4	0.1	1.3	0.1	0.8	0.0	1.8	0.1	1.2	0.7	6.9	0.3
NA	0.1		0.0		0.1		0.0		0.0		0.1		0.1		0.1		0.0		0.1	
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	
Health problem																				
Yes	9.5	13.3	10.2	14.4	8.2	12.0	12.8	17.9	11.4	15.1	7.6	11.0	8.6	14.6	10.3	12.9	10.2	13.1	9.0	11.0
Employment status																				
Full-time	42.8	22.0	43.5	19.9	43.0	24.0	40.9	22.0	41.8	21.1	44.2	22.2	41.0	17.2	41.2	21.6	41.7	19.5	45.5	30.1
Part-time	14.0	9.9	14.7	9.9	14.7	8.0	13.0	8.3	12.9	9.7	15.3	10.9	15.7	10.2	13.5	8.8	14.4	11.0	11.6	12.0
Self-employed	7.5	16.2	6.5	13.5	8.1	16.4	4.9	12.0	6.6	14.4	8.1	17.5	8.8	21.3	6.2	15.6	6.5	16.6	9.3	15.7
Unemployed	3.4	1.3	3.2	2.0	2.8	0.8	4.6	1.7	3.7	1.6	2.6	1.2	2.3	0.9	3.6	1.2	4.0	1.7	4.5	0.9
Retired	22.3	43.5	23.1	47.3	22.6	44.3	26.0	46.7	24.2	46.0	21.3	43.0	24.5	44.5	24.4	46.6	23.7	41.4	15.9	31.2
Sickness/disability	6.6	1.0	6.1	1.3	5.6	0.9	7.4	3.1	7.3	1.5	5.4	0.3	5.1	0.8	7.3	0.9	6.3	0.0	8.5	0.7
Not in paid work	1.5	3.4	1.2	3.7	1.6	3.3	1.4	3.5	1.6	2.7	1.4	3.1	1.1	2.9	1.8	3.1	1.2	5.0	1.8	4.8
In full-time education	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.8	0.7
Not working other	1.6	2.3	1.5	2.0	1.3	1.9	1.4	1.9	1.4	2.6	1.3	1.5	1.4	2.1	1.6	2.1	1.7	4.6	2.2	3.9
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	

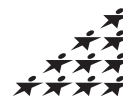
Comparison with Labour Force Survey (LFS) data *continued*

	England		East Midlands		East of England		North East		North West		South East		South West		West Midlands		Yorks & Humberside		Greater London	
	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %	Pop %	Clr %
Employment sector																				
Local gov. or council	11.6	7.7	12.2	11.1	11.7	6.3	13.7	12.0	12.5	8.0	10.3	5.8	10.7	6.9	12.9	10.1	13.0	5.7	9.9	7.7
Central gov. civil service	2.7	4.3	2.1	1.9	2.1	4.7	4.6	3.5	3.3	5.6	2.4	3.3	3.1	3.7	2.6	5.2	2.4	4.0	3.1	6.8
Health authority or NHS trust	5.7	3.8	5.5	5.2	4.6	3.9	6.7	4.7	6.7	5.1	5.4	3.5	6.1	3.7	6.1	2.3	6.2	2.5	5.0	2.8
Other public sector	5.9	10.0	4.2	8.9	6.9	8.3	4.3	15.3	6.2	9.3	6.0	9.5	6.1	7.4	4.8	10.6	5.3	11.7	7.0	12.9
Private firm or business or Ltd	71.7	69.3	74.3	68.5	72.3	73.4	68.6	57.2	69.2	68.2	73.2	74.1	71.5	75.1	71.6	67.2	70.7	67.6	71.9	60.4
Charity, voluntary	2.4	5.0	1.8	4.4	2.5	3.4	2.1	7.3	2.1	3.9	2.7	3.8	2.5	3.3	2.1	4.6	2.4	8.5	3.0	9.4
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	42.0	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	
Highest qualification																				
NVQ Level 4 and above	28.8	51.1	25.9	45.3	25.5	49.9	22.6	41.3	26.2	48.5	31.4	55.4	29.0	51.1	24.8	46.3	26.0	50.5	38.6	66.3
NVQ Level 3	15.3	11.5	15.8	11.2	15.6	11.3	16.7	11.5	15.1	9.9	16.4	13.5	16.9	12.1	15.1	12.1	15.9	10.1	11.7	10.1
Trade Apprenticeships	4.6	3.3	5.2	4.8	4.9	2.2	6.6	5.5	5.2	4.1	4.5	2.2	5.5	3.3	4.2	3.7	5.1	3.6	2.0	1.6
NVQ Level 2	14.4	10.6	14.4	11.0	15.3	12.8	16.7	7.1	15.7	10.9	14.9	9.7	15.0	11.7	15.2	13.0	15.2	9.9	10.1	7.3
Below NVQ Level 2	13.4	1.1	14.5	0.7	15.0	0.9	12.7	1.3	13.8	1.5	13.9	1.1	14.5	1.0	14.2	0.9	13.7	1.5	9.6	0.9
Other qualifications	9.8	4.5	9.6	5.1	9.8	5.0	8.2	6.8	7.9	4.7	8.3	4.2	8.4	4.2	8.6	4.3	9.8	4.2	15.3	2.3
No qualifications	13.8	18.0	14.6	21.8	13.9	17.9	16.4	26.4	16.1	20.5	10.6	13.9	10.6	16.5	17.9	19.7	14.3	20.2	12.7	11.4
Total	100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0		100.0	

Annex D Questionnaire



improvement and development agency



Local Government Association

NATIONAL CENSUS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY COUNCILLORS 2008

Local authority name

We would be grateful if you could contribute to the LGA and IDeA's understanding of the work of Councillors by completing this questionnaire. It should take about ten minutes to complete. You can complete it online if you prefer at www.nfer.ac.uk/lgz. When prompted, please simply enter your unique log-in id which is on the top right hand corner of this questionnaire. All responses are confidential and anonymous and the id number is simply to monitor response, so that you are not sent any reminder letters. No individual will be identified. Please complete the survey in black ink.

Should you have any queries, please contact Asiah Shafique on 01753 637312 or a.shafique@nfer.ac.uk who will be happy to help.

Section A – About Your Work as a Councillor

A1 How long have you been a Councillor in this authority? (in years)
(If less than one year, please enter 1)

A2 In this authority do you hold any of the following positions or their equivalents? (please tick all relevant)

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|----|
| Directly Elected Mayor | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Chair/Vice-Chair of Standards cttee | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 |
| Deputy Mayor | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | Chair/Vice-Chair of Main Policy cttee* | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 |
| Leader/Deputy Leader of the authority | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | Chair/Vice-Chair Other Major cttee* | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 |
| Chair/Vice-Chair of council/Civic Mayor | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | Chair/Vice-Chair of Board* | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 |
| Cabinet/Executive members | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | Member of Board * | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 |
| Chair/Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | Chair/Vice-Chair of Local Strategic Partnership Main group | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 |
| Chair/Vice-Chair of Area forum/cttee | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 | Chair/Vice-Chair of Local Strategic Partnership Sub group | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15 |
| Chair/Vice-Chair of Regulatory cttee e.g. licensing, planning etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 | | | |

**only applicable for small authorities*

A3 How many Council committees/sub-committees of your authority are you a member of? (incl. Chair/Vice-Chair role)

A4 In this authority do you hold any of the following positions? (please tick all relevant)

- Party/Group Leader
- Party/Group Deputy Leader
- Other Party/Group Official

A5 Do you receive a special responsibility allowance? (please tick one)

- Yes No Don't Know

A6 Please indicate the average number of hours per week you spend on council and political business for this authority.

(round to the nearest hour)

A7 If you are able, please estimate how much of the time specified in A6 was spent on the following: (this should total the hours in A6)

- Attendance at council meetings, committees, party meetings, etc. (incl. prep) Hrs
- Engaging with constituents, surgeries, constituent enquires, etc. (incl. prep) Hrs
- Other e.g. external meetings, seminars, training, travel related to council, etc. Hrs

A8 When last elected for which political party did you stand as a candidate?

(please tick one)

- Conservative Party 1 Green Party 4
Labour Party 2 An Independent 5
Liberal Democrats 3 Other, please write in 6

A9 Have you previously been a Councillor in this authority or any other local authority? (excluding parish/town councils)? (please tick one)

- Yes No Don't Know

A10 Are you a member of any other council? (please tick all relevant)

- Local authority council 1 Police authority 4
Town council 2 Fire authority 5
Parish/community council 3 National Parks authority 6

A11 Please indicate which of the following training and development opportunities you have had in the last 12 months: (please tick all relevant)

- Received an induction 1 Received mentoring/coaching 6
Received a personal development plan 2 Attended other member development programmes 7
Completed a training needs questionnaire 3 Received skills training e.g. IT, chairing skills, speed reading, etc. 8
Attended seminars/conferences 4 Other learning, please write in 9
Attended IDeA Leadership Academy 5

A12 If it were available, would you like to have the chance to attain/acquire a more formal (qualification) recognition of the work you undertake as a Councillor? (please tick one)

- Yes No Don't Know

A13 If you answered 'yes' in A12, at what level would you like the qualification to be pitched? (please tick one)

- A credit towards an 'A' level/NVQ 3 equivalent 1
A credit towards an undergraduate degree/NVQ 4 2
A credit towards a post-graduate degree (Masters)/NVQ 5 3
'Stand alone' independent qualification 4
Other 5

A14 Please indicate which of these resources or learning you would find beneficial to your work as a Councillor: (please tick all relevant)

- Media training 1 IT support e.g. PC, laptop, etc. 6
Administrative support e.g. dedicated PA 2 Better information on the role of ward/division councillor e.g. job description 7
Case worker 3
Political skills training 4 Other resources or learning, please write in 8
Better facilities to hold surgeries 5

If you ticked any of these: Which of the resources 1 – 8 is the most important?

Section B – Your views as a Councillor

B1 Why did you want to become a Councillor? (please tick all relevant)

- To serve the community 1 Because I was asked to 6
To resolve an issue 2 Member allowances 7
For political beliefs and values 3 Other, please write in 8
To change things 4

B2 Please indicate which of the following are the most important things for Councillors to do? (please tick all relevant)

- Listen to the views of local people 1 Plan local services 6
Support the local community 2 Deal with complaints 7
Hold surgeries for people with problems 3 Keep the public informed about Councillor activities 8
Address issues concerning the whole area 4 Represent local residents' views to Government 9
Attend Council meetings 5

B3 Which statement best describes your view of your influence as a councillor: (please tick one)

- I feel that I have more influence to change things in my area than I expected before I was elected
I feel that I have less influence to change things in my area than I expected before I was elected
I feel as that I have about as much influence to change things in my area as I expected before I was elected

B10 How committed is your council to the following activities:

(please tick one box for each line)

	Fully committed 1	Partially committed 2	Not committed 3
Allowing people to have a role in allocating resources through participatory budgeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enabling people and communities to have an influence locally through active programmes of engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allowing people to have a say on services provided locally through consultation and feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having mechanisms to organise inquiries about contentious issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing better practical support for elected members so they can act more effectively as local leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section C – About yourself

C1 Please indicate whether you are male or female

(please tick one)

Male Female

C2 Please enter your age in years

C3 Which of the following ethnic groups would you describe yourself as belonging to (choose ONE section from A to E, then tick the appropriate box to indicate your cultural background)

(Commission for Racial Equality categories)

A. White

British

 1

English

 2

Scottish

 3

Welsh

 4

Other, please write in

 5

Irish

 6

Any other White

background, please write in

 7

B. Mixed

 1

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Any other Mixed

background, please write in

 5

 6

 7

C. Asian, Asian British, Asian English, Asian Scottish, or Asian Welsh

Indian 12

Pakistani 13

Bangladeshi 14

Any other Asian

background, please

write in

 15

E. Chinese, Chinese British, Chinese English, Chinese Scottish, Chinese Welsh, or other ethnic group

Chinese 19

Any other background, please

write in

 20

D. Black, Black British, Black English, Black Scottish, or Black Welsh

Caribbean 16

African 17

Any other Black background, please write in

 18

C4 Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your daily activities or the work you can do? (please tick if you have)
(definition used in the Population Census 2001)

C5 Do you have caring responsibility for: (please tick all relevant)

- Child/Children
- Partner
- Relative
- Other

C6 Please tick the box that is closest to your current main employment status, excluding work as a Councillor (please tick the main one)

- In full-time paid employment (normally more than 30 hours per week) 1
- In part-time employment (normally less than 30 hours per week) 2
- Self-employed 3
- Unemployed 4
- Retired 5
- Permanently sick or disabled and unable to work 6
- Not in paid work – looking after home/family 7
- In full-time education 8
- Not working for some other reason 9

C7 If you are employed or self-employed, tick the box that is closest to your current occupation in your main employment status (please tick one)

- Managerial or executive 1
- Professional or technical 2
- Lecturer, teacher or researcher 3
- Administrative, clerical, secretarial or sales 4
- Manual or craft 5

Please write in your occupation

C8 If you are employed, or self employed, please indicate the sector of your main employment status (please tick one)

- Public - local government 1
Public - central government 2
Public - NHS 3
Public - other public sector 4
Private sector 5
Voluntary sector 6

C9 If you are an employee, to what extent does your employer support your work as a Councillor? (please tick one)

- Whole-heartedly 1
To a certain extent 2
Employer is not aware I am a councillor 3
Slightly against 4
Completely against it 5

C10 Do you undertake any work activities additional to your main employment status and work as a Councillor? (please tick all relevant)

- School governorship 1
Public board, joint committee etc membership 2
Work for national/regional agency 3
Other unpaid voluntary and charity work 4
Other 5

C11 Please tick the box that is closest to the highest qualification you have. (please tick one)

- Degree/higher degree/Professional qual./NVQ 4 or 5 /Higher National Certificate/Diploma 1
GCE 'A' level/Scottish/Irish/Higher Grade/NVQ 3 /Ordinary National Cert./Diploma 2
Trade apprenticeship 3
GCSE/GCE O level/School Certificate/NVQ2 4
CSE (other than grade 1)/NVQ 1 5
Other qualifications 6
None of these 7

Thank you for your help in completing this survey

Please return this form to NFER in the envelope provided



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