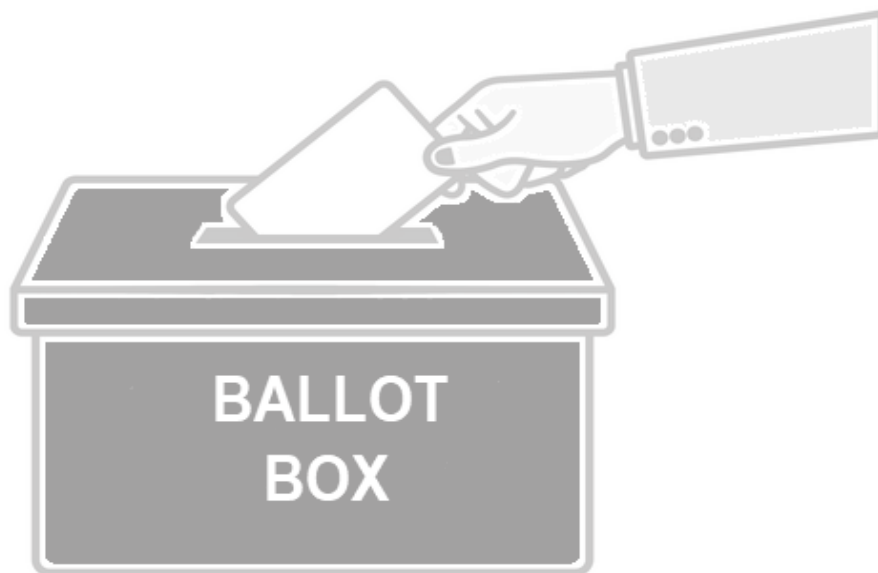


Appendix A

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

Public Consultation Report Electoral Cycles



Consultation: 1 August 2022- 16 September 2022

Report: 30 September 2022



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1.0 Executive Summary

Sandwell Council consulted the public on whether it should change to 'whole council' elections or continue with the current system of 'elections by thirds'.

The council currently uses a 'by thirds' electoral system. This means that over four years, elections are held in years one, two and three for one of the three councillors in each ward. In the fourth year there are no elections. The change to 'whole council' elections would mean the whole council would be elected at the same time once every four years.

The consultation was commenced as part of the council's commitment to actively explore the move to whole council elections from the current arrangements as outlined in the council's Improvement Plan.

This consultation relates only to Sandwell Council local elections. No other elections will be affected by any future change in Sandwell Council's electoral cycle. Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner and Combined Authority Mayoral elections will continue their normal electoral cycle.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement Health Act 2007, amended by the Localism Act 2011, the council has the power to change its electoral arrangements to whole council elections.

Through this consultation, the residents of Sandwell were asked to provide their view on if the Council should move to an all-out election system, where the whole council would be elected at the same time once every four years or stay with the current cycle of electing by thirds.





Figure 1 Illustration of Council electoral cycles

The findings of the consultation were as follows:

How often would you prefer to elect councillors to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council?

- 69.4% said Option 1 – By Thirds
- 30.6% said Option 2 – Whole council elections

2.0 Methodology

Through the electoral cycle consultation, the residents of Sandwell were asked to tell us their view on a possible move to an all-out electoral system. A set of background information was provided to assist residents to be able to make an informed decision when responding to the consultation.

The consultation question was “How often would you prefer to elect councillors to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council?” The possible answers were Option 1 – by thirds or Option 2 – whole council elections.

The consultation was carried out between 1 August 2022 to 16 September 2022. The approach used was an online public survey published on a dedicated webpage in the Elections part of the council’s website. The survey was also published on the council’s consultation webpage.

Residents were also able to respond to the consultation via paper copies of the survey. Copies of the survey as well as posters and leaflets were located in every Library and



Sandwell Local offices. Paper copies were also posted to home addresses upon request. A dedicated email address was also set up which allowed residents to ask questions, provide further comments etc.

The consultation was publicised in the following ways:

- Press release
- Internal staff updates
- Member update via e-newsletter
- Targeted email to all elected members
- Social Media posts
- Residents e-newsletter via GovDelivery
- School engagement
- Website – dedicated consultation webpage with promotion via elections homepage banner and carousel
- Voluntary and community sector e-newsletter
- Digital screens in council buildings
- Faith sector groups e-newsletter
- Posters and leaflets in all libraries and Sandwell Local offices

2.1 The Poll

Following closure of the consultation, the online, and paper copy responses were collated and reported as one result.

2.2 Analysis of Respondents

Respondents to the online and paper version of the consultation were asked to provide demographic information about themselves. It must be noted that this was optional and that not all respondents included this information. This data allows the demographic results to be included in this report to enable analysis of the scope of responses and representation from different demographic groups.

2.3 Interpretation of Results

In terms of the results, it is important to note that the public consultation is not representative of the overall population but provides information on the opinion of those residents who engaged.



3.0 Results

In total, 487 people responded to the consultation. 470 responded online and 17 responded via the paper survey

The majority of respondents would prefer that the Council retains its current electoral cycle of electing by thirds. This was consistent across both the online and paper versions of the survey.

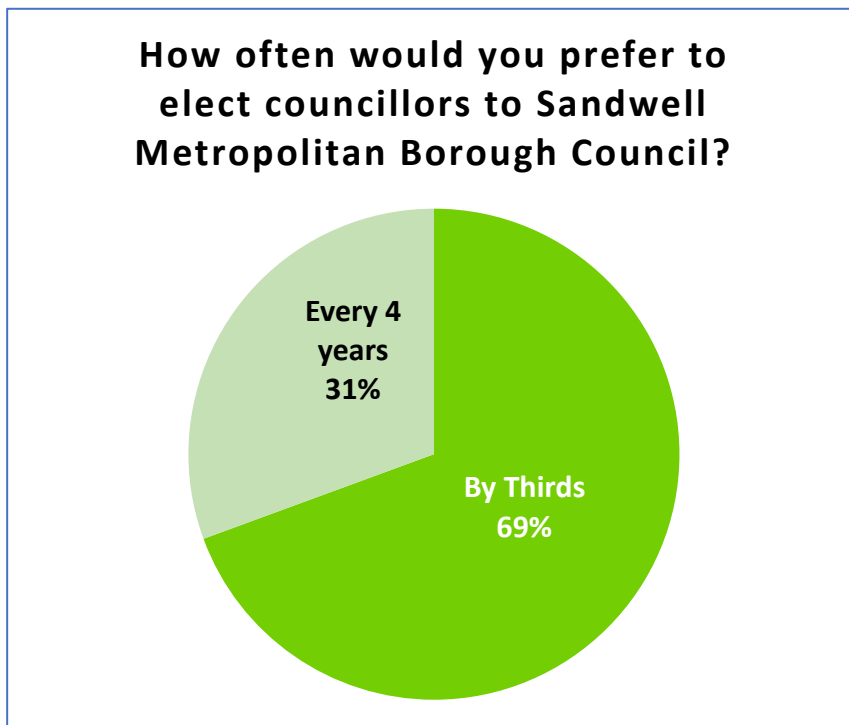


Figure 2 How often would you prefer to elect councillors to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council



Total of responses to the Consultation by response type				
Response	Online	Paper	Total	% of Total
Option 1 – By Thirds	325	13	338	69.4%
Option 2 – Whole Council	145	4	149	30.6%
Total	470	17	487	100%

Table 1 Responses to the consultation by response type

4.0 Demographics

Both the online and paper version of the consultation asked the respondent to provide certain demographical information about themselves to ensure that the results were representative of the residents of Sandwell.

The survey asked the respondent to provide their gender identity, age bracket, ethnicity and which of Sandwell’s towns they were resident in. These questions were not compulsory and as a result, some respondents did not answer them or chose to select the ‘prefer not to say’ option.

The demographics results are summarised below:

99.6% of respondents said that they were residents of Sandwell. The remaining 0.4% (2 respondents) either did not answer or selected ‘prefer not to say’.



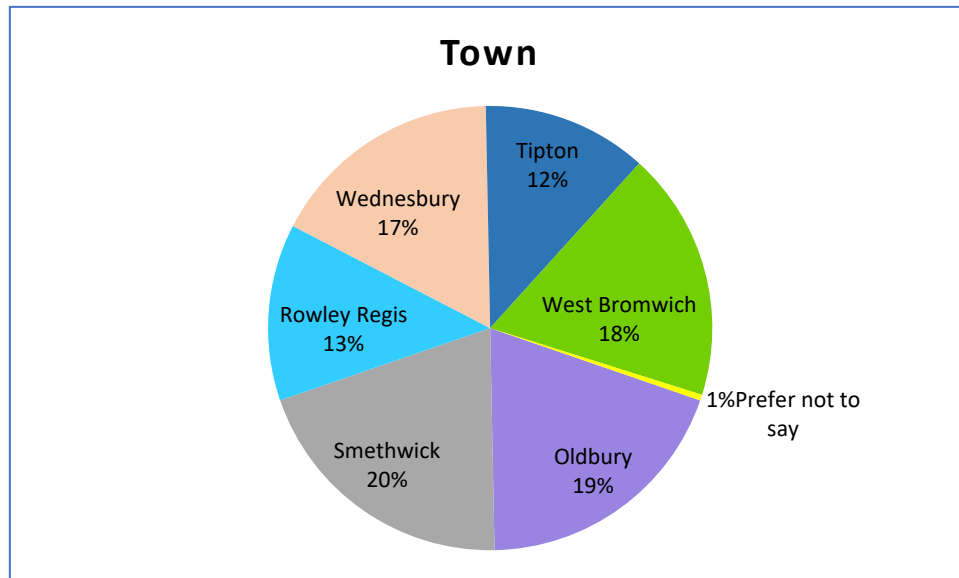


Figure 3 Which Sandwell town do you live in?

	Total	Town						Prefer not to say
		Oldbury	Smethwick	Rowley Regis	Wednesbury	Tipton	West Bromwich	
	474	92	95	61	81	57	86	2
		19.4%	20.0%	12.9%	17.1%	12.0%	18.1%	0.4%
How often would you prefer to elect councillors to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council?								
Option 1: I would prefer to elect councillors by thirds (a third of councillors are elected every year for 3 out	329	63	73	39	53	37	62	2
Option 2: I would prefer to elect all councillors once every four years	145	29	22	22	28	20	24	0
	69.40%	68.48%	76.84%	63.93%	65.43%	64.91%	72.09%	100.00%
	30.59%	31.52%	23.16%	36.06%	34.57%	35.09%	27.91%	0.00%

Table 2 Responses to the consultation by town

In terms of gender identity, 243 respondents stated they were male, 220 were female, 2 gender neutral, 3 transgender, 1 nonbinary, 1 other and 17 preferred not to say.



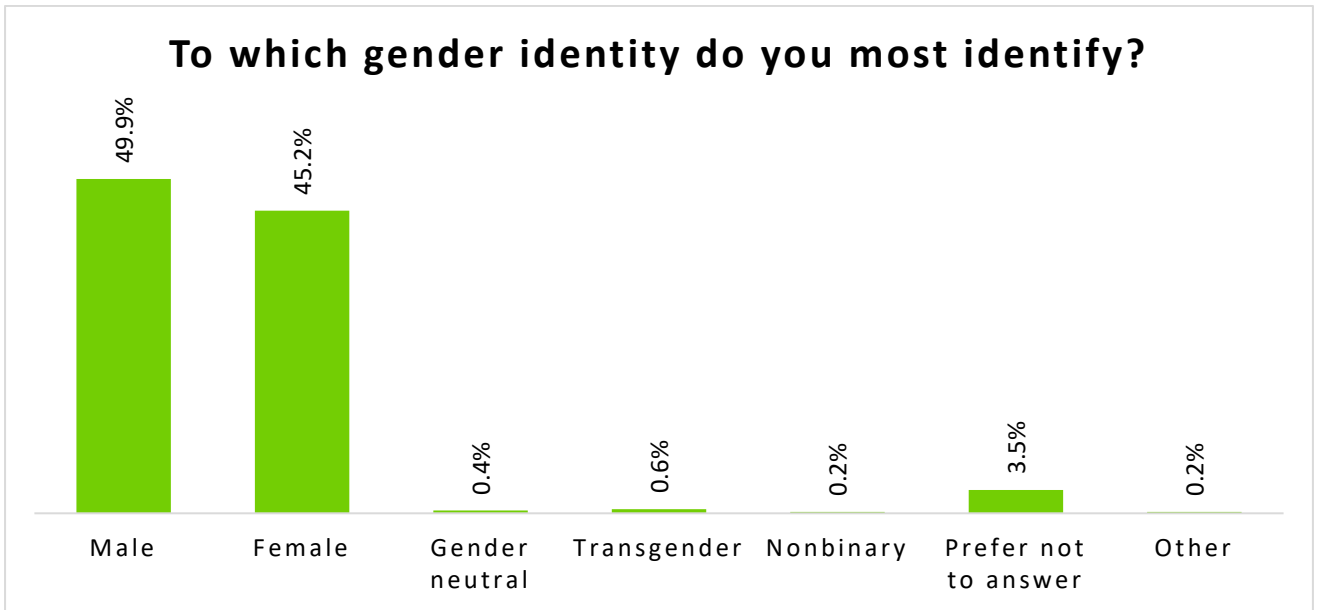


Figure 4 Gender identity of respondents

The results also show that the respondents represent a wide range of ages, with responses from every age group. There were 18 respondents who chose not to answer the question.

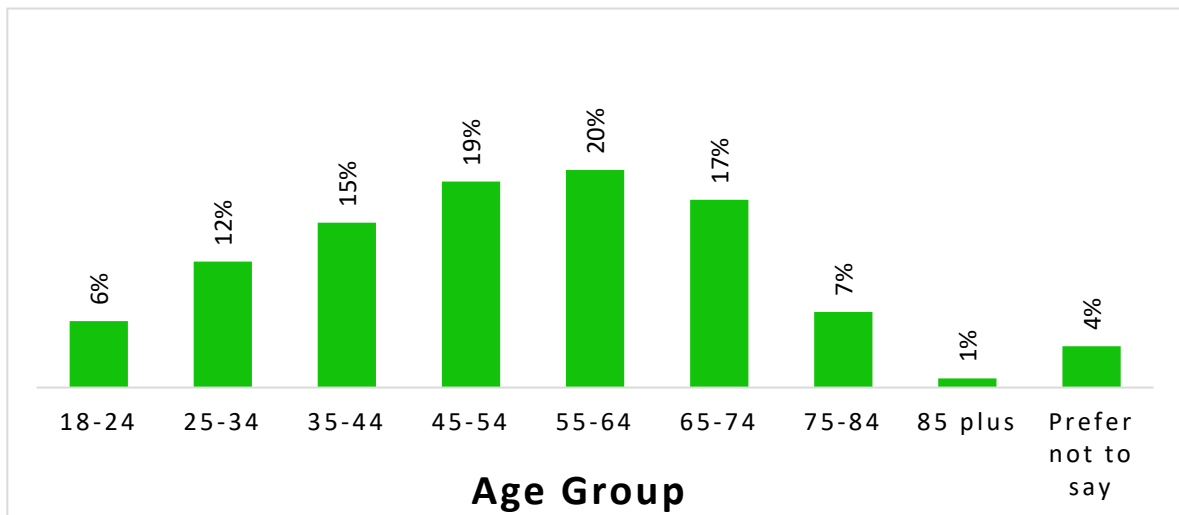


Figure 5 Which age bracket do you fall into?



	Total	Which age bracket do you fall into?									Prefer not to say
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85 plus		
Base	478	29	55	72	90	95	82	33	4	18	
	%	6%	12%	15%	19%	20%	17%	7%	1%	4%	
How often would you prefer to elect councillors to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council?											
Option 1: I would prefer to elect councillors by thirds (a third of councillors are elected every three years)	332	23	40	47	59	56	65	26	4	12	
	69.46%	79.31%	72.70%	65.27%	65.55%	58.95%	79.27%	78.79%	100.00%	66.67%	
Option 2: I would prefer to elect all councillors once every four years	146	6	15	25	31	39	17	7	0	6	
	30.54%	20.69%	27.30%	34.73%	34.45%	41.05%	20.73%	21.21%	0.00%	34.33%	

Table 3 Responses to the consultation by age

In terms of ethnicity, the majority of responses were from respondents who stated their ethnicity as white (341 respondents). 83 respondents stated their ethnicity as Asian, 16 stated their ethnicity as mixed, 12 as black, 1 as other and 27 as prefer not to answer.

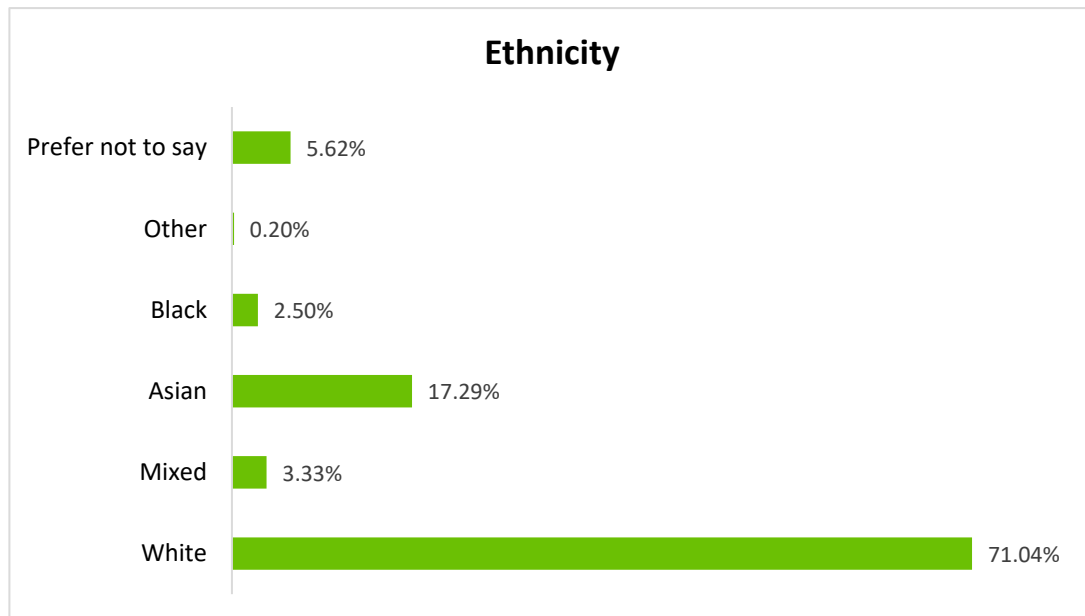


Figure 6 Choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background



5.0 Additional Comments

Response ID	Comments in support of having elections “by thirds”
6	FEEL ELECTION BY THIRDS IS MORE DEMOCRATIC AND ALLOWS FOR BETTER CONTINUITY AND BUSINESS PLANNING FOR COUNCIL FINANCIAL PLANNING.
7	Present system appears to work OK.
14	Voting by thirds allows us, the electorate, to let you know how you're doing each year. Four yearly elections removes that check on the Council's performance.
27	I think this is fairer all round - I might well have changed my mind about who I want to represent me within four years
30	Continuity with 3rds
35	Having elections every year - as that way we see more things done plus we get to see our councillors more. If the elections are done once every four years then we will have problems like Birmingham four years no one there to help.
36	The current system is more cost effective from my point of view as a business owner and also maintains a level of continuity.
40	Election by thirds provides for a regular democratic process, which is diluted by elections every four years. There has be no rationale advanced for why the electoral system in Sandwell should change other than a cost saving. The principal consideration should be governance.
41	I believe it's more democratic to have to fight an election more frequently. I think councillors could become complacent in four years.
46	By having elections on thirds you get consistency of skill etc every four years could end up with a very inexperienced council.
54	By thirds means that the political parties have to work to keep in touch with the electorate.
58	I think its better to have it every year so local councillors are out.
88	Election by thirds ensures that the political composition of the council reflects more accurately local views as they change. With all out elections the political composition of the council can be up to four years 'out of date'
95	It is now running well
96	Running ok
105	The system is running well. Why change something that isn't broken.
115	Despite the additional costs of elections by thirds, the more frequent engagement of the the electorate in the electoral/political cycle is an advantage worth the additional cost.
130	I think this allows for continuity of policies, and means that new councillors can work alongside established ones when they are first elected. Four year terms rather than three would also extend the time an ineffective councillor held the position.
145	I am of the opinion that keeping the system as thirds is the best way forward for the following reasons: Thirds is familiar and understandable to the electorate. To change to fourths would complicate matters and could cause dis-engagement with people. Thirds allow local Councillors to engage annually with residents and get a sense of current views which can be fed back and acted on quickly. With a mix of new and old Councillors thirds offer a gradual change which allows Councillors to be held to account which is a good thing. Fourth in my opinion would not work as



Response ID	Comments in support of having elections “by thirds”
	well. Experienced Councillors could be lost which could cause disruption to the continuity of the Council and its vision. It could also cause dis-engagement with residents.
155	You need to have the opportunity of new councillor faces every three years, otherwise decisions by councillors go through unchallenged.
166	Option 2 (whole Council elections) is an all or nothing approach. And worrying to do an en masse election every four years. Prefer the thirds cycle as it ensures we retain an ongoing process, gradual turnover / changes (if that happens) and allows more opportunities for people to be candidates (more / equal scope for involvement).
174	The current system allows for easier change when there is dissatisfaction.
179	Every year is good as it will give councillors and residents to engage frequently. some residents do not engage with councillors other than election time. This will also provide continuity with experienced councillors vs new councillors or a sudden shock response i.e. if election is held at times of a national crisis or economic down-turn then people likely to respond by voting on impulse and not necessarily thought-through decision.
183	Keep it as it is - I like to vote every year to keep things fresh.
190	Having worked for a local authority I know the consistency of members on scrutiny committees and in cabinet can make an important difference to the efficiency and effectiveness of the running of council business. To potentially start completely from scratch with all new members every four years will slow progress and mean key initiatives in the community get abandoned.
191	No need to change
199	There is merit to both systems, but I think a system that allows for better continuity is better overall for stability and execution of longer term projects - important at all levels, but particularly local level. Massive swings become inefficient, and better cross party communication and cooperation would be beneficial at all levels of politics.
217	System works as it is
232	Steady elections reduce the violent swing of politics based on the mood immediately prior to the once every four yearly elections.
249	We would like the elections to happen every year that's the only time we get to see the more things done.
258	Elections every year allow for the people of Sandwell to ensure they are being listened to and are able to hold politicians to account every year by the power of democracy and their vote.
261	Nobody in Sandwell has asked for this change, and people understand the system as it currently is, so why change it? It's unlikely to increase voter participation if it's once every four years, as seen with Birmingham City Council Also, the system as it is means people have more opportunities to vote on what's important to them, so the council can act in the best interests of the people.
263	Electing councillors by thirds means SMBC and its councillors are more responsive to the wishes of the electorate. Each year a third of constituencies are voted for so this compels councillors across the authority to be more attuned to constituents' needs & demands, as councillors' delivery across the authority is assessed more frequently at the ballot box. Election by thirds also provides the opportunity for a more frequent introduction of new councillors and fresh ideas.



Response ID	Comments in support of having elections “by thirds”
264	If it's not broken, don't fix it!
265	Election by thirds makes sure the council have to keep an eye on what the public think. If elected once every four years for the first two/three years can ignore public views.
269	Retaining the current system helps with long term decision making
272	I resent Whitehall interference in local politics, the current system works and should be left as is.
281	Current system working well in Sandwell
283	I think that the current system allows for a regular, measured way to consider the performance of individual Councillors. It also provides an opportunity to propose and make changes should it be believed that those individuals are not adequately representing the needs or views of their constituents.
284	This change is being ideologically imposed by Whitehall, it is not being done in accordance with the wishes of Sandwell residents. Being able to see and hold our representatives democratically accountable on an almost yearly basis is something which the general public of Sandwell, of which I am one, is in favour of. The current system allows for a more responsive council, and we have seen the effect that changing has had in Birmingham next door, where the general public has lost out.
287	Why try to fix what is not broken? Please leave the elections as they are, all this is a waste if time, money and effort. Sandwell council always wasting money this needs to stop
289	I believe this leads to a consistently greater participation. Residents need to be able to make regular choices.
311	I am opposed to voting once every four years as I believe that the electing councillors by thirds makes the elected member more accountable to the electorate. Elections once every four years allows for elected members to do nothing for four years except collect their council payments/expenses and avoid being answerable to their electorate! Yearly regular intake of new councillors promotes opportunity for change and new ideas whilst experienced councillors remain for continuity and experience. election of all councillors every four years has a high risk of destabilising the council. I have read the document you have provided regarding advantages and disadvantages of option 2 (all out/whoel council elections) and question the validity of some of the reasoning. I consider that the case being made for option 2 is biased. The local residents understand the current system and I do not believe there is a reasoned case for change. I think that moving to elections only once every four years will only serve to increase voter apathy! I do not understand why you are trying to change something which is not broke!!!
312	A yearly election allows voters to have more regular say on governance based on local competence, rather than national.
315	With option 1 (elections by thirds) you're more often in touch with the voters which is very important
317	By allowing election of a third of the council each year I can express more clearly my political choice.
326	Although it may be more cost-efficient for the taxpayer, having elections in thirds provides the residents of Sandwell to have more say over which individual candidates they want to select to represent that ward. The issue with all-out elections is the election cycle will become more based on the political party, rather



Response ID	Comments in support of having elections “by thirds”
	<p>than the individual candidate and their skill set if it was to be every four years. I personally believe that this will in turn provide a disconnect between local councillors and their communities over the long run and will potentially lead to a scenario where the residents of sandwell have to wait for four years before voting out the local government. The more frequent say not only allows residents to speak loudly about their approval of said local government but it also is healthy for local democracy and accountability. Some extra points. The public in sandwell are already used to the current system and switching to a new one would be confusing and unhelpful for local residents. More frequent elections engages more active participation in politics on a local level and allows new people into local government on a frequent basis to give fresh ideas. It also holds the local government to a greater and more frequent account. It may also be noted that a Conservative national government are imposing this on a local Labour council against its wishes. It could potentially help the local Conservative federation in establishing a political foundation to build upon in West Bromwich and Sandwell. This sort of collusion is unacceptable in modern democracy. The residents of Sandwell should decide if they want a conservative local government by voting for them frequently every year, not voting for multiple councillors at a time to get more tory councillors in the chamber to disrupt the local governments business or indeed take over from them despite potentially not having a majority vote share in the all out elections.</p>
334	<p>Present system allows for better reaction to council performance. Greater use of postal voting helps regular voting.</p>
337	<p>Councillors can prove they are making a difference in the community by consistency</p>
338	<p>For stability and to lesson shock of popular upswings, such as UKIP. the current system suits fine.</p>
341	<p>I think that elections should be held frequently otherwise voters will disengage, but there needs to be more information made available to the public. I have worked in elections and many voters state that they don't know very much about the councillors who are up for election or what they promise to achieve.</p>
365	<p>I believe continuity and organisational memory are best preserved by the election by thirds process.</p>
370	<p>Election by thirds offers more consistency and stability, it means that national politics will be less likely to substantially alter the councils make up.</p>
375	<p>Council is more accountable on large decisions in the borough if peoples' opinions can be felt by the council every third. This give the council a true feeling of the rate payers.</p>
382	<p>Very comprehensive summary of pro and con issues. Pro and con for both - no perfect answer. I prefer the 'thirds' as it ensures new councillors to be brought up to speed.</p>
388	<p>I feel the present system offers the most democratic local option. It also makes Councillors more accountable and aware that their re-election is dependent on performance and accountability.</p>
390	<p>I highly suggest the councillors are elected in thirds as it keeps them knocking my door. If it's a four year term they will become lazy like the Birmingham councillors</p>
391	<p>Definitely thirds, keep them moving</p>
399	<p>The current system has both continuity and renewal allowing for longer term work to proceed smoothly but not inhibiting an influx of new ideas</p>



Response ID	Comments in support of having elections "by thirds"
404	The current system is the best and fairest way, every four years is not
411	A 'thirds' approach gives me a say in how the Borough is run three times more often than once every four years. Option 2 ("Whole council" elections) is undemocratic
413	The system as it is works well so there is no need to change.
415	I believe if councillors are elected by thirds it gives public a fair chance on how the councillors are performing rather than having no choice for four years
418	I find my councillors are more accountable when they can be voted in or out more regularly.
433	Why change when everyone is used to the current system. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
439	This allows for the council to function without having too many inexperienced councillors at one time. This means continuity of performance and less training needed to bring people up to speed.
453	Whilst the proposed change may bring financial savings for the local authority. I believe the status quo should remain until such time the number of councillors should be reduced to two per ward
455	To ensure continuity and experience electing a third of the council achieves that in the interest of residents.
463	Holding councillors to account is important, elections by thirds means that the councillors have to be mindful of public opinion on a more frequent basis than four-yearly elections will allow.
P2	I understand the current system and cannot see any reason to change it. A yearly election of councillors allows for new councillors whilst maintaining continuity.
P3	I agree with all of the advantages (for thirds). It gives me a voice.

Response ID	Comments not in support of elections by thirds
158	Elections every four years will reduce the two major issues with Sandwell Council, extreme voter apathy and council corruption. Barely any residents vote as they think their vote will not change anything nor get the council to listen to them. Labour Sandwell does what it likes regardless even when residents voice their concerns. Voting by thirds ensures the current party always has overall control hence why we've had a one-party council for nearly 50 years. Time for major changes.
172	After one party rule for 48 years under the present system we have to find a more realistic way of deciding who sits on the council. Turn-out is very low and would probably increase with the positive engagement process that would be needed for all-out elections. There may be a need for more by-elections -- just as there is for parliamentary elections.
187	Sandwell Council is not fit for purpose, any change will be an improvement.
P5	I didn't know only "thirds" councillors elected - The current system is more confusing.



Response ID	Comments in support of having “Whole Council Elections”
9	This will keep the public engaged on local issues and we have a minimum guaranteed continuity of council membership in scrutiny boards, and committees and in other policy matters affecting the council
15	This works well right across the country and successful next door in Birmingham who changed in 2018 to all outs.
23	Would save lots and lots of public money. Only having to vote and campaign once every four years would also help teams build and make a difference. With yearly elections there can be too many variations and also I imagine they have more time to focus on communities as campaigning takes lots of time and preparation from everyone .. even the councillors not up for election as they support their fellow representatives.
64	Costs less money and time
65	Think this would be a more cost effective way of running elections
71	This must be more cost effective?
76	It would be cheaper and more efficient to elect everyone at once.
98	Having all out saves the council money and the turnouts are higher.
123	I think this is very positive move to do this and it should to good for people to decide what and who are making the decision for my area. Thank you
129	Surely the cost of the event alone would be so much less. Along with councillors focussing on their role for a longer period, rather than promoting themselves and settling in to new roles each year. You would get more productivity out of a four year role and save money.
136	Yes this would be a fairer way to do it and we also need a recall for any councillors that are not doing the job that they are paid to do. Also it would save us tax payers a lot of money
139	This would provide stability of members to allow the Council objectives to be met more easily
153	Better system - least you got same councillor for four years
163	My opinion is that I would like to see all councillors elected every four years. The reason for this is so that councillors may have more incentive to fight for their position to stay aboard as elected members and not become complacent in their role. I think residents have a right to see how a councillor performs and judge accordingly. Are they Good listeners or do they ride rough shod over the electorate in order to push through their agendas. Positions shouldn't be taken for granted. So I choose every four years.
167	People will come out to vote once every four years instead of every year. Simplifies the process.
182	It would cost less to complete it every 4th year.. more money to be used back into the borough
184	Bring four-yearly elections on. Perfect opportunity to vote any rot out in one swoop.



201	This is a good idea. It aligns local elections timetables with a general election format and allows the local residents to judge performance over a longer period
221	Four yearly elections bring more stability and should be encouraged.
236	Every four years this will give the councillors time to sort issues in there constitutional areas. By the time they get going elections are back again
245	Allows a stronger and more stable group of Councillors
253	More cost effective.
288	Would create a more stable council
306	More accountability to constituents. No reason why retiring councillor couldn't stand again.
325	Surely this will be a way to save money (see budget consultation). I feel there are too many elections and turnout is low.
335	Reduce cost of elections and hopefully reduce number of councillors
347	If the elections are held every four years this would lead to less disruption to school children as usually the schools are used for polling stations and have to close to pupils.
348	I believe that the advantages of this outweigh the disadvantages, particularly in terms of political stability.
353	When we are trying to save money, it is a really important opportunity by changing the election system to once every four years. Also, develop a robust process whereby people can vote online - thus reducing the cost further.
373	There should be more stability over a four year period, with the option to vote an occasional odd seat that becomes available through illness etc
377	Every four years gives an opportunity to encourage more to come out to vote and a chance to break the apathy that has caused so many poor turnouts. By-elections are not restricted to option 2 (all out elections), there ought to be more anyway. Do not agree that it could lead to loss of experienced members, if they do the job correctly there should be no issue in getting re-elected. There is a clear opportunity to train more to become better Councillors. There may well be more candidates as there are more opportunities at one election to be elected. Procedure for staff to conduct elections ought to be clear and officers trained to sort and conduct. The Commissioners have the ability to implement this change. It is very clear that Labour do not like this option and are/will be asking all of their members and supporters to choose option 1 (elections by thirds).
379	It's cheaper for the local authority to have one election every four years. Other local authorities do this and it works perfectly well.
380	Some councillors do NOT represent the constituents. Option 2 (whole council elections) is the best option to sort these councillors out
406	If it is more cost effective and saves money that can be used elsewhere then it should be given a chance
407	I prefer continuity
412	This option will save money increase turnout.
414	Moving to an "all-out" election cycle will not only allow the incoming administration to plan effectively over a longer period but will reduce the costs of yearly elections and avoid the current voter fatigue as shown in turnout at the current annual local elections



421	I think the Council should move to all out elections to enable more long term strategies of governance as well as a more cost effective approach.
441	Hopefully to get more people voting
P7	I would prefer councillors to be voted in every four years. As in my opinion it would give them more time to make important decisions on our behalf as a community.

Response ID	Comments not in support of "Whole Council Elections"
3	I think once every four years makes our councillors less accountable to the electorate.
20	Feel councillors and the party need to be accounted for yearly rather than every four years which is too long.
38	I would like to see activity from elected members throughout the years not only once. It will become a terrible state like Birmingham were you have councillors only coming around once every four years. It will be a big loss for the residents to have a four year term system as it will get abused just like what's happening in Birmingham
52	The risk of having a council full of brand new councillors who don't understand processes or ongoing issues is too high
69	I believe for continuation of service it would be better to maintain 2/3 councillors. Inducting a large number of new councillors every four years may be challenging for services with regards to systems training. It may also lead to gaps in service and a lack of long term plans.
70	If democracy means anything, it means politicians listening to voters. Elections every four years are a way of disengaging the electors from their elected representatives.
85	It would be good to have some change so that the areas don't all change together. I.e. if everyone left at the same time everyone would need inducting and it would take time to see any productivity, so disruption over every area.
92	'All out elections' would be horrendous with no continuity or accountability for the residents. The current system works really well and the councillors work closely together... that would all be lost.
100	Undemocratic changing the system. Reduces accountability Councillors will become lazy
128	I don't think people in Sandwell understand the more complicated elections such as PCC, Mayor etc where there are more than one vote. I am concerned that the wrong candidates could be elected or turn out really poor (lower than usual) and more spoilt ballot papers.
173	Makes sense to vote all at once also help the voters when voting.
177	I feel the perceived benefits of elections once every four years to be somewhat over rated. Every year has the chance of a General Election, Regional Mayor or PCC election so local elections three times out of every four years seem complementary to me. I also feel a four year gap in local, democratic activity would dull and reduce political reports back to the electorate. So, thanks, but no thanks for the All out every four years, I don't get or believe the social, political or over-stated cost reduction benefits that have been claimed.
181	I don't want to be stuck with a conservative council for four years. Not that I think they will win. They need to more intune with the common people.



Response ID	Comments not in support of "Whole Council Elections"
185	Knowing the Sandwell area for at least 79 years I know that most are not well educated to say the least. To ask them to make three choices at one election could be beyond their mental capabilities. By leaving the system as it is allowing two councillors to assist a new councillor in their new role.
225	Feel the length of time will increase unwillingness to vote. Keeps Councillors 'on their toes' rather than feeling complacent.
234	Councillors require help with their campaigns they get this from their work colleagues who a lot of are also councillors not up for election Councillors would therefore not be able to spend time helping their fellow councillors with their campaigns because they would be working on their own campaigns If all councillors were up at the same time it would mean months before the election there would be. A lot less case work completed because the campaigns take up the councillors time. Far less case work would be done during this period if all councillors were up for election at the same time. Thanks
247	This is an unnecessary exercise imposed by bureaucrats in Whitehall who are obsessed with this idea, without much evidence basis , and a Government Minister who had never served on a local Council . It is also very much based on the system in London Boroughs . The public in Sandwell understand the current system which they have used for decades and which keeps the Councillors (and the Council Officers) in touch with public opinion every year , not once every four years. The argument that a four year cycle will improve voter participation is not borne out by the evidence elsewhere. Furthermore local elections are often affected by temporary swings in national opinion and can be seen as referendum on the Government of the day. In London this has led to massive swings back and forth with a considerable impact on stability and effective governance and a loss of experienced councillors, 1968 was a dramatic example.
248	In my view I see that any future changes regarding the Elections by thirds is a deliberate strategy to undermine accountability ratings from the General Public . What we need right now is FAR MORE ACCOUNTABILITY NOT LESS .Its my opinion that all Councillors should be Legally bound and required to sign LEGALLY BINDING CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT WITH THE ELECTORATE WHEREBY THE ELECTORATE SHOULD NEED TO BE CONSULTED AT VERY REGULAR INTERVALS AND BE GIVEN A LEGALLY JUSTIFIABLE RIGHT TO OVERRULE THE COUNCILLORS OWN OPINIONS AT ALL LEVELS OF ACTIONS AND ENGAGEMENTS. WE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON AT ALL LEVELS OF FISCAL POLICIES,. WAGES AND SPENDING AS WELL AS WITH HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS AND ESPECIALLY WITH REGARDS TO OPEN GREENSPACE AND THE LACK OF IT BEING A MAJOR IMPACT OF AND ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND OUR OWN GENERALL HEALTH AND WELL BEING!
254	To reduce to a four yearly cycle disenfranchises the voting public further and will lead to even less stability in this sector. RETAIN THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF THIRDS
255	Too disruptive if everyone is up for election at same time



Response ID	Comments not in support of "Whole Council Elections"
268	Sandwell struggles to recruit staff to man polling stations this will be made more difficult if elections are run every four years assuming other less popular election would be piggybacked on top increasing the workload with no additional remuneration.
299	Lots can change in four years, for candidates and voters so I'm not convinced this would benefit the Local Authority in the long term
302	I believe allowing Councillors to sit for four years would be a disadvantage to tax payers. It has been and is still being evidenced in Sandwell that the elected representatives do not have the interests of the public at the forefront of their decisions. Councillors on the whole lack experience and have/ make bad judgements and decisions.
305	Once every four years is too infrequent. Perhaps once every two years would be more appropriate.
330	Probably make no difference as the electorate would elect a pig wearing a labour rosette
344	I am concerned that if all councillors were elected once every four years, it would make it difficult to respond to new events or information. Also, councillors will be elected based on a snapshot point in time which may not reflect a longer term perspective.
354	Councillors will be distanced from their residents. Work done by Councillors will not be completed
386	Four years is too long to wait to hold a council to account
398	It would mean that council election outcomes were even more subject to the popularity or otherwise of the incumbent government than they are now rather than the focus being on relevant local issues
401	Elected councillors do little to engage with their constituents but you can be sure they will start door knocking every May to try and win votes, however if the changes to vote every four years were applied they would just vanish once voted in and have zero engagement until next election is due. By having yearly elections they have to remain proactive at some level to try and win votes, making it four-yearly would be a big mistake.
419	The move would not allow residents to send a political message to the controlling parties if they feel policies are being introduced that they disagree with, yearly elections would allow the residents to express their discontent. Also some party representatives are not seen or heard of until the election time, so we may less contact with Political party representatives during a four year cycle.
435	Birmingham Council has done the four year one and it has not help so therefore we need yearly
462	Turnout at Council elections is very low and I feel it would decline further if elections were only held every four years.
P1	Continuity of service is best served by having a mix of more experienced councillors as well as new ones. Changing everyone simultaneously slows down processes and adds delays
P10	There is enough apathy now. If you go to four years, people will be much less inclined to vote. What percentage vote now? It also feels if you go to four years, there is much less accountability and more opportunity for corruption. Do away with "Cabinet Member for" and bring back decisions by Committees.
P11	Too many disadvantages to whole council elections



