

Appendix B

Results of Consultation on Electoral Cycle

The Council consulted with stakeholders for six weeks from 7 March until 15 April. The consultation was online and supported by a letter to every household in the borough.

There were 3,067 responses.

The overall results of the consultation were that 54% of respondents were in favour of the move to all out elections and 46% were in favour of retaining election by thirds.

The most common reasons for supporting the change were:

- Cost savings (about 200 responses in favour of all-out elections referenced this as a reason)
- Clearer / easier to understand (about 50 responses)
- Would enable better long-term planning (about 35 responses)
- Greater participation (about 30)
- Continuity / less disruption (about 30)
- Fairer / more democratic (30)

The most common reasons against the change were:

- Loss of accountability with fewer elections (about 80 responses referenced this as a reason)
- Continuity / stability (about 65 responses)
- By thirds system more democratic / fairer (about 30)

Responses were disproportionately high from older people, with 72% of those who completed the demographic data questions aged 55 or older.

As part of the engagement, a session was held with CLASP members.

The key issues raised by members included:

- That CLASP members valued their vote and almost all do regularly take part in elections
- The costs of holding an election and the alternative uses this money could be put to
- The fact that political parties in power might not want elections so often but those not in power might want them more often
- The fact that having all the same councillors for four years (rather than new ones almost every year) could help them form relations and come to decisions – so every four years might produce more stability
- That every four years is closer to what happens nationally and so might be easier to understand

After the discussion, an informal vote was taken with 8 members supportive of changing to all out elections, six members opposed and 4 members undecided.

Comments from respondents answering yes

I think that 'all out' elections is a much more logical system which will hopefully increase voting numbers.

Cost benefits, better long term planning.

The benefits highlighted of 4 yearly 'all out' elections seem to massively outweigh keeping the current system. The cost saving alone is worth it as the money could be better spent on other, more essential things that would have a greater position impact and benefit more people in Wokingham.

Take this survey into account

I want WBC to take the results of this survey into account

The advantage to the Parish (Swallowfield) of having one ward councillor to champion their interests rather than a situation which would have less clear leadership and create divided loyalties between the differing priorities of other T or PCs included within the ward.

Councils will benefit from not being in 'election mode' every year, allowing those elected to focus on the delivering rather than solely on the next set of elections.

Another benefit is that the leaders may be braver in making challenging decisions. If there is always an election on the horizon, it tends to result in maintaining the status quo or shying away from the difficult decision, especially one that may take some time to show the benefits.

Save Money

Waste of money to have so many elections

Yes it's a clearer option so that more people have an option if standing for a position as Councillor and sometimes a new set of councillors will have new and different ideas.

Substantial savings of over £4.3m

In today's financial climate, reducing overhead costs is important.

The savings to be made.

It's great that Wokingham council is open to change even if it isn't necessarily an older system being considered

In the hope that current wards will stay much as they are.

It says on the flyer that came through my door that The Local Government Boundary Commission for England have already stated that the current arrangements cannot continue as they are but no reason is given. It would be good to know the reason behind it.

Ensure savings are made

Ensure there is visibility of the forecast savings

In the all-out option the vote will be affected by short term issues and could mean that we are subjected to a skewed representation for an extended period of time.

The thirds option allows for a degree of continuity and therefore retained understanding of the council's activities. All out is more likely to be subject to the whims of temporary issues, especially those of a national nature

The election by thirds will better reflect the current feelings of the electorate at most times, the all-out elections will be like a stopped clock occasionally right but usually not.

1. "All-out" proposal seems more efficient but not acceptable without some form of recall mechanism to allow removal of badly-performing councillor before 4 years elapses

It's important that all parties support this if the consultation concludes that Wokingham should have all out elections. We don't need parties clinging on to a different system because it's better for them!

All out election gives time for decisions to be consistently effected

once every four years is good enough

The 'by thirds' option seems more costly, and given the each councillor still get voted on once every four years (albeit the population is staggered) there is no more democracy or accountability, just more admin and shorter term planning.

All Out option will reduce admin and cost and provide voters with

It may be necessary for Councillors to change Wards and this is impractical if not co-terminus.

It is the best option

It seems the best option

Wards need to stay linked to communities and this seems to be only way to do that
Council needs more space between elections to make difficult decisions (such as on climate issues) that are necessary but might be unpopular in short term

All councils need to save money and this is saving that won't harm residents

Simple system that is like general elections

Important to save money and works elsewhere

Cost savings are critical in current circumstances

The significant cost savings outweigh any benefits of the other options. I prefer the idea that local residents have a greater degree of options in changing the council if needed.

Wards should be single member

NOT BROKE DON'T MEND IT

IT'S NOT BROKE DON'T MEND IT

Saving money in this day and age is vital

Send out online surveys more often

We need to favour getting the younger generation involved in our democracy to strengthen future accountability.

Concerned about organisational issues for 3/4 elections as a lot of schools are shut when used for polling stations.

As an ex employee I believe the operation of the council will benefit by more stability therefore better service delivery

It is easier to understand. As it Mirrors Parliamentary Elections and is less complex to administer.

I think the issues of wholesale change and succession planning should be no worse than it is in parliamentary elections. I think the benefits of sustained local representation and the financial benefits well outweigh these issues.

The low numbers voting at council elections merely serves to confirm a depressingly low level of engagement between local authorities and the electorate they serve. In part this is also due to the low level of engagement between councillors and their electorates. A constant cycle of voting each year simply helps perpetuate the myth that it doesn't matter who people vote for because it won't make any difference. In my experience long serving councillors all too often lose sight of their role in representing the electorates interests and all too often get too cosy comfortable with council officials losing their independence in the process just becoming cogs in the machine.

It is important that ward boundaries reflect discrete communities as closely as possible

It would be more standardised approach, cost efficient and leaner. Reduce paper waste.

Just do it and save money.

Where will the savings go in terms of priorities?

I would guess that even with an all out system, some councillors with experience will continue to be elected?

Full transparency in how the financial savings will be re allocated or not

Enables a long term focus, is of benefit to younger people and is closely aligned to existing boundaries - of benefit to the community

This could potentially cause a significant number of changes in people at council. Would this have a destabilizing effect in the short term and what mitigation could be applied to prevent this.

The "Election by thirds" system is confusing, causes more disruption and will be more expensive. I can see no benefit at all to such a system.

The elections by thirds system risks election fatigue and may reduce participation

much more simple, gives those elected time to do things

would make it much simpler and also save the council money

The main criterion for me is to minimise changes to electoral boundaries, as the existing set-up closely aligns with natural divisions.

All out are fairer and cheaper

If we had an all out system I feel there would be more stability so councillors could think longer term about local issues rather than using effort to get re-elected so often

More frequent policy changes that can result from more frequent elections mean strategies and investment plans become more tactical, rather than strategic. This has a detrimental effect over the longer-term on any area under that type of management.

Given the pressure on the Council's budget and the use of Council Tax payers' money, the cost savings from the All-out Elections should be a major consideration in the decision-making.

A fairer, more equitable and clearer system which is easier to understand is the way forward.

No "Allout" we need once every three years

I think that councillors should not be voted in for a maximum of 3 terms

Sensible way to save time & money

Sensible way to save money

whatever is the best option for the residents.

With an odd non election year ('off') people could overlook one or more years that were in fact On. With three elections voters would get voter fatigue. Better to retain the community spirit of electoral areas corresponding to those sized communities. Much better to go all out

The cost

I think an all out system is fairer and clearer to the voting public, consistency will be achieved as some councillors will be re elected

Save money and reduce council tax.

The cost is a consideration in the current affordability crisis

It is less expensive

Holding at the same time as general election will increase turnout

With full elections every four years there is normally significant continuity as many councillors are re-elected

all out elections should be adopted - it is hard to engage people in local elections, having them more often would not be beneficial

Makes sense and saves money

Simple system for all the electorate to understand and participate in.

The "All out" option is the most logical, cost effective option

I want to be able to vote for all my councillors and make sure everyone is equally voted for

Why do we need a town and Borough Council, this seems excessive and expensive!

Having anything else just leads to voter apathy. About time we went "all out" and saved the taxpayer some money.

All councillors should stand for re-election if a 4-yr cycle is agreed within a short period of this change coming into effect.

An all out arrangement is the obvious and most understandable way forward and should also ultimately generate a greater sense of importance and a higher degree of voter turnout.

However it is essential to ensure that the change is introduced quickly overall even if Councillors elected under the current system have their current term of office curtailed to enable this. Any disadvantage claimed as a result of a sudden loss of experience is I believe overblown in effect unless the majority party at any time completely loses the support of its residents.

In addition to these expected saving in the election cycle the council could save more money by not sending reminders to the electorate telling them to expect postal voting slips on expensive cards sent by post. There are other examples of information sent out on glossy coloured paper where cheaper options are available.

Once every 4 years is a simpler system and much easier to hold the council accountable for results, compared to continually rolling change.

I agree that it will be simpler and a substantial cost saving cannot be ignored either.
Depends on the expense to residents! We don't want to pay any more than we do currently.
Purely to save money, otherwise would prefer 'Thirds'

Before committing themselves to stand for election under the all-out system, aspiring new councillors should be expected to undertake some training/mentoring from experienced councillors.

Seems fairer way to do it

Saves money and similar to general elections

It is a simpler process and in line with National elections

Keep it simple and save money, time and resources

Pass saving to reduce c.tax

Keep ward the number of councillors representing wards a similar size so they are not diluted and can still get the workload done

This seems to save handsome amount of money for council

By moving to all-out elections, I am advised this will enable cost savings. This money saved should then be put back into the borough so the people in the borough can see the tangible benefits from the money saved. Put it towards maintenance of green spaces and tree planting instead.

Don't know we moved away from all-out system in the first place. We don't do it at national level.

I think it is important to give a council both time to implement its elected mandate - 4 years is reasonable - and to demonstrate success. I also think that, if success on said mandate is not delivered - 4 years is reasonable for this - then the council should be holistically held accountable and the ability to replace it should be available. This is only possible with the "all out" system.

All-out appears to be simpler and make financial sense

Council Tax is quite expensive enough as it is. Any means of keeping costs down is welcome.

This should be an improvement

The current ward boundaries should be kept as close as possible to parishes and existing communities

It seems to have potential to save money which is crucial in these difficult times

Seems fairer and more cost effective

Cost savings are important

If this is designed to attract more young people to voting then I am all in favour

Worked in both systems as a senior officer. Every 4 years by far the more efficient.

Succession planning should be planned to allow successful handover and continuation between councillors.

This is a good idea as it means that the administration can present to the electorate and if elected implement, a full 4 year programme with a clear mandate.

I think moving to "all out" elections will increase interest and result in a bigger turn out than is currently the case. Also the Council should be looking to make savings wherever possible and this change makes good financial sense.

Be alot easier for us voters and also whoever is elected can have more of a say over better period

I think this leads to greater stability and ability to plan and execute. I do not think fears about the election of a wholly "new" council every four years are justified: many councillors serve for many years so there will always be "old hands" even with changes in the political balance.

If it saves the borough money go ahead

I think changing to every 4 years everywhere would make it much simpler to know when elections are going to happen.

Move to all out elections, save money and time

Support the 'all out', it is fairer and could save money.

Opportunity for major rather than incremental change. Fewer elections should save money. This would reduce the administrative burden on the council. Also, fewer election address letters and leaflets - better for the environment.

Sounds like it will help keep parishes together which is good
simpler and fairer system

There are too many Cllrs. Cut ward numbers to 42 and make Cllrs work. Too many spend time on outside activities and not on residents. Too many spend time on party politics and not residents.

We need to be fairer to all parts of the community and get as many different groups involved in deciding what is best for all of us.

I think 'all out' elections will stimulate quicker policy decisions and subsequent actions by whomever the controlling group happens to be during any single electoral term of four years, plus the suggested £4.0m costs' saving over the longer term are worth achieving.

The candidates that have the approval of their constituents would likely be re-elected in an all out election which would provide the benefit of stability.

Vote on the basis of what's best for the population not on the basis of protecting your own jobs/party please

This system is more likely to maintain wards more closely aligned to and serving community needs and also allows for a more long term view / approach to meeting community needs.

All out is simpler, although I do worry that we will see even less of our councillors if they only need my vote every 3 years. However, I don't agree that current ward boundaries "are closely aligned to towns and parishes and existing communities" (Wokingham Without for example) so would hope a sensible review of Ward boundaries also takes place.

Saving money is important.

Fairer and reduces costs

Equality matters most. Saving £4m a year could help in reducing fees in the area for all residents. It also makes sense to hold the local elections close to general elections.

all out and get Indians elected.

Having served on ETC for 32 years on a 4 year cycle and WBC for 16 years on the one third basis, I can categorically state that the benefits of a 4 year cycle more than outweigh any inconveniences. 10% of Officer and councillor time will be saved, hopefully reflecting in increased decision making and cost savings.

This type of elections are fairer, clearer and more equitable.

Elections by thirds

It seems to me that, given the financial benefits the Council has identified as arising from this option, its adoption is beyond argument. In the current financial environment, the Council should be making efficiencies wherever possible, and this is an instance where the benefits outweigh considerably any potential disadvantages. Indeed, I do not consider two of the three example benefits cited for the thirds system to be benefits at all. Moving to all-out local elections would also align better with national election arrangements and might serve to increase public engagement, which has to be positive (as I think many people tire of and disengage with the current model, which can be confusing for some and creates the sense of 'election overload'). The Council spends over ten per cent of its annual budget on democratic services, a significant sum that could be reduced by adopting the all-out system and put to much better use elsewhere.

Fairer and cheaper

Having served as both a Town/Parish councillor for 32 years and a Borough Councillor for 16, I can categorically state that the amount of time wasted each year in having the current election cycle has to be a deciding factor in changing to "all out".

Every year we have a period of indecision, 6 weeks spent electioneering, officers employing the "purdah" period to affect decision making and public participation. I first believed in the

current system, but can - very quickly - to appreciate the real benefits to all parties and interests in a change.

Less distribution and easier to administer saving money

The warren is the forgotten part of Sonning and warren

All out elections seem to have more benefits than any that may be attributed to elections by thirds .

There is a risk that in adopting an `all out` methodology, continuity is exposed in the event that committees can lose the majority of members at once.

I assume that not all councillors will be replaced at the end of their 4 year terms as some will be re-elected. This, together with the councils employed officers remaining in place will provide sufficient continuity.

I fundamentally believe that having less establishment around might lead to more accountability and if it saves money as well so much the better

Cost saving and fairness persuade me to select the 'All-out option'.

I would much prefer the present system to continue but would not like regrouping to have three councillors in every ward since it would increase the remoteness of councillors from electors.

Explain 'less tangible savings'

Cheapest and least disruptive

Anywhere we can save money and put it back into reducing our council tax works for me

Yes! Enable electors who do not use the internet (including many elderly people) a way of expressing their opinions (phone, mail etc).

Elections every 4 years should be cheaper and less disruptive to projectd

It makes more sense

A 4-year term is preferable for councillors as it provides continuity over a longer period. Less change to current ward boundaries. Reduced cost

It is both simpler and more cost effective.

The other system tends to favour the status quo.

Economically and logistically a better process.

Good to reduce costs

If the £4 million additional cost is a small percentage of the total budget, I would prefer option B? As stability and maturity with succession planning is a fundamental best practice . An impact of an immature incoming council could cost far more than the proposed saving.

Difficult enough to get people to exercise their vote every four years. Elections every three in four years would be likely to be less democratic due to poor turnout. Wholesale change every four years would, hopefully, reduce the risk of complacency within the council.

I think you should change to all-out elections every 4 years for compatibility with national elections. Your comments that elections by thirds means there is a mixture of new and old councillors assumes that the alternative is that every councillor will change on a 4-year cycle, which is highly unlikely

Nothing thank you

It seems to me that the 'all out' system must be fairer in that the 3yr system would never really allow the voters to change the 'governing' party.

Saving money

This approach will save a significant amount of time and money

Savings, stability and better planning cycles. All needed in the current political and economic climate.

Reduction in costs paramount in current financial crisis

In the current financial situation, any savings are essential and money can be put into social services.

Think of the costs

There are bigger problems than election cycles do not spend too much time on this

Money wasted on frequent elections

With all services being cut the cheapest option should be in place save schools having to close on election days to help all children seducation

Is there no option to do 50% change every two years?

I would be more likely to vote at every election if they weren't held so frequently.

From the info you have provided, "all-out" elections are likely to be more equitable and better represent the people of Wokingham, as well as being better value for money. The £300K saved over 4 years is better off going towards community services.

Fairer system, people more likely to vote, saves money, stops local schools being closed so frequently to act as polling station.

Reduce costs and make sure elected representatives are accountable for their decision for the full term

Try doing a local plan when your Council is elected by thirds. Nightmare! Also, Members may well want to help those of their colleagues up for election by thirds meaning they are diverted from the job of running the Council. All out elections gives you a stable political platform to work with for at least 3 years without electioneering getting in the way of business every year.

Preference for "all outelections"

I think it's very important that councillors remain more democratically accountable. Plus I can't help but think that experience and information will be lost by having an 'all out' approach.

Therefore I support the 'Election by Thirds'

It seems more transparent and fair

In today's economic climate the benefit of the cost saving just outweighs the loss of continuity Presumably if any councillor had to resign or was unable to carry on, there would be an election to replace them?

I feel the one third system provides more continuity and stability.

This is a MUCH better system and gives the elected party a reasonable time to make changes. I also feel that this is more engaging and that turnout would be higher.

Must listen and act for benefit of the public throughout the 4 yrs and NOT just the 6 months prior to the election.

Having elections three out of every four years would be a huge waste of money and bad value for residents. Since council tax seems to go up by the maximum 4.99% every year, do not waste this money on frivolous elections.

Lets get rid of the useless B**stards in one fell swoop

A far greater percentage of the population will vote once every 4 four years.

It will cost less

The estimated savings over the four year period and allowing us largely to keep current wards boundaries seems a no-brainer.

continuity and familiarity of councillors with the issues and the electorate will be of benefit should they decide to stand for re-election after 4 years in post

£4 million buys a lot, it's a 'no brainer'

Purdah is holding up key work.

Takes time to get results

under the existing system people are confused as to whether they are going to vote or not as many would be councillors do not visit people on the doorstep, so we are unfamiliar with the candidate. Pamphlets are just not the same as face to face interaction.

any possible overlap with national government elections.

Best idea you have ever had and should save money

National Elections are done this way, presumably the nation is at least as complex as Wokingham.

It would provide stability over a longer term and a 4 year voting cycle should ensure a greater attendance.

All out elections are more likely to engage voters' attention whereas the by thirds rolling frequency is more expensive for the Borough and more likely to be ignored by the constituents in the wards where the election will be held.

Saves money (over 4 years) no boundry changes

Every Councillor in whole Borough should get a consecutive 4 year term to implement its agenda. This will give enough time to parties to implement their manifesto and will save public money as well.

I am concerned about the culling of experience that might occur.

Currently it is unclear as to when local elections actually take place. All out elections would simplify this.

It will be cheaper

Voter apathy, more people will vote if it's once every 4 years, against people becoming tired with election promotions dropping on your doorstep.

It would be more efficient and fairer.

Minimises costs and nuisances of too many local elections .

The cost saving alone could make moving to "all out" elections a sensible step and bring the election "pattern" more in line with the national election pattern, quite apart from avoiding the need to significantly change ward boundaries which would be occasioned by retention of the current pattern. Additionally, I do not agree that the "election by thirds" process has necessarily an advantage in succession planning given the extreme unlikelihood that, say, as many as 50% of existing councillors would lose their seats at a single election.

All out election

My overriding concern is for simplicity. There is already a growing problem engaging people with local government. Anything to improve engagement has my vote. Use some of the money saved to make it more of an occasion for Wokingham (in a non partisan way) to raise its visibility and attract people to vote.

Not an easy decision. But getting a more diverse representation on the council is my overarching reason for choosing this option

£300k saving should be spent on schools

This should have been done years ago....

Cost reduction associated with change to all out.

Yes

LESS Expensive

The "all out" system saves you money , time and admin

Yes

I think it's very important to retain ward boundaries that reflect the actual local communities in the Borough, rather than having artificial boundaries just to get the councillor numbers right.

The financial savings are also an important consideration, particularly in these difficult times.

It would reduce costs and lead to greater stability in decision making

Yearly elections will lead to apathy...

Cheaper and less hassle

It would hopefully avoid situations when local elections are held at same time as European and Police & Crime Commissioner elections, which many people find confusing and many do not bother to exercise their voting rights in all cases.

Both my wife and I feel that the once in four year option is preferable

Cost saving has to be a priority

Will encourage greater participation and lower cost.

What is the cost saving for by thirds? Doesn't say on briefing notes. Will saving be passed to council tax payers?

Just that communication and signposting of how to evaluate the different options on offer should be available, such as clear instructions for how to research previous voting behaviour if people are standing again

All out elections are simpler, fairer and cheaper. I also think they are more democratic.

A uniform system has more benefits

I believe the cost savings (both tangible and intangible) make this very compelling.

Spend the money saved on local needs

In order to ensure continuity of function, there would need to be council paid staff to upskill new councillors in procedures, responsibilities etc

One of the most important considerations is encouraging engagement, especially among younger people who are less likely to vote. A single set-piece event every four years, with the potential to transform the make-up of a council, offers a better chance of stirring up interest in voting than a more marginal change offered three out of four years. It makes it easier to communicate the effectiveness of voting and the outcomes that result. It also frees up resources for parties and independents to spend on proper campaigning and messaging.

The approximate savings seem to make this a worthwhile option. I'm sure the Council can find a useful home for the financial savings

keep it cheap and efficient

It is not clear why with an all out system the members representing the wards can't also be balanced out?

Please tell us more about the less tangible savings

Reducing costs is essential

Long term planning

Stability for the wards

the benefits as outlined far outweigh the alternative "by thirds"

Easier to understand, and saves £300,000 per 4 years - sounds sensible.

Less expense, less hassle.

I would hope that local elections throughout the country would be staggered throughout an electoral cycle so as to avoid a situation where central government could influence all results in one go by announcing short-termist but crowd-pleasing policies just before the elections.

Cost of alternatives and a more decisive system

Cost savings and better representation of minorities interests

I do think that there should be something in place to allow for any councillor found not doing their job, or not fit to in any way to do their job to be removed or deselected.

We think that there is not a clear preferred option

A mechanism should be in place for any Deselection of any councillor found not fit to continue service if not representing the public or does not do the job properly.

The council should accept the vote as long as it is sufficient in quantity and truly representative of the Borough. If this is impossible to achieve the issue should be left until the next general election and a separate vote cast on this point

the survey does not make clear in a 4 year 'All Out' election that standing Councillors can stand again so there is continuity. Good performance is rewarded with re-election.

Tangible costs savings

My main reason for choosing 'all out' elections is based on personal experience of living in Blackpool where it is a mature system in current use. There seems to be no detriment to democratic representation compared with the 'election by thirds' method and there is a large financial saving. The noticeable difference is the intensity of political lobbying before the election as the outcome is normally unchanged for four-years.

I assume there are already arrangements in place to help transfer from existing to replaced members to aid continuity.

Cost savings and alignment with General Elections where possible

I regret this system will not easily cater for new and experienced councillors to sit together

If it will save money thats good, currently the community charge is outrageous.

Benefits to ethnic minority representation is important

I think this allows a clearer decision on who is running out council and will allow longer term decision making and parties to campaign on these matters. The savings could also be spent on helping the poorest.

Better to save the money and use for other purposes

Given the cost of hosting election, the less there are the better the finances will be spent

About time you stopped wasting money on thirds system

Ensure that people from different ethnicities are represented adequately when offering positions.

If this saves money this has to be a good option as the savings can then be spent on other essentials there will still be some stability assuming people can still stand for re-election if they want

I'd value more long-term planning and believe elections can distract from making the right decisions.

Saves money, clearer to understand.

Why cannot this be done like a mini referendum in May. My vote would go to once every 4 years with the cost savings and less disruption

Efficiencies

Any form of monetary efficiencies should be a high priority

In these troubled times the cost savings offered by moving to all-out elections are a major factor for me in making this decision.

makes budgeting much easier to look at four years ahead

Engaging more people in the democratic process, by simplifying it

All change at once can be just as beneficial as the alternative so there is no 'democratic benefit' either way. In any case the council is only responsive to residents who conform to the prevailing view, however flawed that view may be. Corporate defensiveness that is so widely and increasingly prevalent in authorities will not be solved by changing the electoral cycle so one might as well have the cheapest and least disruptive option.

Every 5 years would have been better to more save money

I think the money that would be spent on more frequent elections is better spent on services

Would be much more straightforward & more people would be engaged & vote.

I think All-out elections is better.

Doesn't all out elections give more stability over election by thirds because it means that the people in power stay in for longer?

£4m of them!!

I do think the Borough should have smaller single member wards. This allows electors and councillors to have a closer relationship- a councillor can meet all households in a 2,000 elector ward, but stand little chance in a 6,000 elector ward.

I have no objection to this cheaper system

People are more likely to vote in local elections if they feel there could be a real change. Plus voting just once every four years might be achievable for some of the less motivated voters.

I think this is the best way to get people to vote in the elections.

I feel this would be more cost effective

A four year cycle is a relatively short period but any less would be counter productive. Any candidate for election has already proven his/her ability by active input working with a team of like minded, dedicated people. Stability is better than uncertainty and the quality of our candidates has always been high. Being elected by the public to support and protect their interests for four years is a great incentive.

All out would give us the opportunity to replace the council should they not be delivering what we need.

Only due to cost saving at a time where all costs going up

Much better for ensuring projects get driven forward and making best use of time

They are more equitable and easier to understand

They are more democratic

Such a system would allow less money spent on local elections and give the elected councillors four years to develop and possibly implement their plans. Elections every year would introduce the risk that nothing is ever done as new entrants could help reject projects decided one or two years before they are elected.

Change is healthy and fairer

Stop spending my money on internal council stuff. Provide services instead

It is in line with parliamentary elections

Keep parish boundaries the same

It's cheaper to run and less hassle for the voters as they don't need to vote so frequently

Let's reduce the money spent on elections

Anything that will save money!!

More cost-efficient. Some Councillors would still retain their seats, thus giving continuity.

While reducing overall cost is a consideration, constantly changing the councillors will hamper longer-term plans which be revisited rather than moved ahead

It's better than now

Anything that saves money should be strongly considered

Money can be better spent and will drive equality

It would save money. It is clearer. It is easier to understand. It gives the same opportunities to all Councillors and to the population.

Cost efficiencies

This will save time and money for the council but it will also benefit the residents as they will not be bombarded every year with councillors or their agents - as it is the only time we hear from them is when they want us to vote for them.

Cost efficiencies

Saving public money

Good management requires balanced on going continuity not four year disruption.

Having worked for a number of local authorities, I have repeatedly experienced the disruption and delays that election in thirds causes to council business. Endless changes and purdah periods also put authorities at risk of missing out on time limited government funds for infrastructure due to the need to delay decisions or pause consultations.

Greater electoral accountability & saving money

Simpler and cost saving

All out

Easier to understand for everyone by taking this route. Synergies and savings for WBC with cost. Allowing funds to be vitally redistributed over the course of the term

Accept the views of the electorate on this issue for a change

For me seems more democratic

Consult over the best use for the monies saved by having elections every 4 years, put it to good use.

All out elections are fair, simple to understand and easier for accountability.

all wards would be approximate equal in population size and councillor per ward should be based on matching population ratio

It is unclear which option will give minority parties a greater chance of becoming representatives. I assume that if one person is elected each time it will be the largest party that wins each time, whereas electing a number of candidates allowed voters to split their vote in favour of a range of opinions in addition to any party loyalty, which I prefer

Definitely fairer and certainly would reduce the ability of the "old guard" incumbents from domineering or adversely influencing the new councillors with their "we know it all/better than you" ideas. The electorate has a chance of a "clean sweep" of a poorly run council.

This would make it much simpler

it would be cheaper, so we should do it

saving money

Savings by reducing the no of elections and would keep the current ward boundaries

Cost effective

I want a council that serves the ratepayers and NOT their lords and masters in Whitehall.
(Afterthought: & the infrastructure developers)

This would appear to be a move to a simpler system

All out is the best way as it's done for national parliament. Why not council use the same method

Stop wasting money. Stop building new houses

Money saving that can be used to other areas in need, like health and safety.

much fairer and saves money

Save money and reduce bureaucracy

Cost savings

Cost savings

Cost savings

I really do not care as I will never vote for any politicians of any party, at any level, again.
They are all corrupt and only looking after their egos and their selves.

Less time interrupting schools for elections

This option saves money and retains existing boundaries which is important to retain democratic accountabilities

I feel that more people are likely to turn out to an all out election giving more representative results

The Boundary Commission have already stated that present system is not acceptable so time to change

I was offered to take the questionnaire twice!

save money and time

None of Tories are worth a penny. So the cheaper option has to be better.

Just makes life simpler.

All our elections would be more cost effective and would also ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that elected representatives were collectively accountable for their actions.

It seems the cheaper option and the money could be put to better use and hopefully more people would vote

This is the opinion of both my wife and I

Less time with councillors who are wet behind the ears. Longer term gives better stability and less opportunity to wriggle out of unpopular decisions.

The 'all out' after four years election process will not necessarily mean all councillors will be voted out. Some may stand for re-election but I am unclear what the total length of tenure for any one councillor is. I am presuming it will be a multiple of four. How many election cycles may a councillor stand for re-election? If a councillor can remain for 16 or 20 years I do not believe that to be healthy for the Wards either - periodic new thinking is also beneficial.

I prefer a simpler and cheaper system

The cycle is similar to governmental elections and provides cash savings which can be used to benefit the community

Any change that saves money has got to be good.

Stop wasting our money

only that I think keeping the current boundaries as they are will have less of an impact

How can people who do not have this technology or email take part in this consultation

This gives greater stability to the council and saves money

There should be a review on the need for 54 councillors. This is far too many and could be cut by one third

Lower cost and more like Parliamentary elections

If all new councillors were elected would there be sufficient back up experience to go forward.

It makes sense with the cost savings

The cost savings are significant and that money should be used for providing services.

No gerrymandering please, I will be watching.

More information about boundaries would be helpful, the changes needed, this seems to be missing

Financial considerations are important, we need to save where possible

Far too much money is already spent on the election process already, so this option helps to reduce that cost.

This would be a clearer, more sensible option and it saves a significant amount of money.

I favour fewer elections = less cost + keeping existing ward boundaries

If the saving indicated in the leaflet sent to homes is genuine then this is the best option.

Election by thirds is more likely to have councillors from different parties serving alongside each other, resulting in greater opposition to everything and less being achieved. I'm sure many people will not be bothered to vote annually, so the elected councillors will only have the support of the minority who actually voted.

How would resignation, or death in service be dealt with in the 4 year period?

Keep it simple by all out

It will give an incentive to Councillors to get things done.

Use the money saved to help offset the cost of living in the county or even lower the council tax

Keeping people in office for longer would be beneficial and less disturbance.

may consider once every 3 years rather 4 years

I favour the all-out elections, less wasted time furloughing business.

I think the decision should be motivated primarily by whichever outcome will limit the number of Conservative party Councillors elected.

Equality and costs

fairer elections for less expenditure wins easily

The percentage of council tax spent on elections and meetings is far too high. Extensive efforts should be made to reduce this expenditure. This should only be the start of cost-cutting in this area

The electorate would be able to make informed electoral decisions based on the performance of the whole council

Go with the system people vote for under this consultation

Saving funds to spend on other useful projects

Clear deliverables to be defined up front with councillors held publicly accountable

This would be the best and cheapest option in my opinion.

Cost saving is key in the current times. I'm sure all elected representatives will do a professional job irrespective.

I don't think so thank you

Costs

Would appear to save money

Saving money in this way would be good e.g. elections still occur just in a different way. Less elections overall mean less knock-on work for the council e.g. swapping cllr emails, training cllrs on committees

All out elections provide an opportunity to effectively hold the whole council to account. It is clear that you are voting on the Council performance in the previous four year period. It enables you to judge the Council against their promises made and delivered. This system works for parliament, devolved administrations, the majority of local councils and our local town and parish councils and they are not less democratic for it. Although I live in a three

member ward the ability to retain one and two member wards to represent rural communities is also an advantage for those communities.

It is not clear why staying with the present system would require changes of wards. No explanation provided.

Financial aspects - spend voting money on other important services rather than voting every year.

Money comes first

I believe it will be less confusing all out every four years.

Does the new model benefit any one party at deficit of any others?

It is important that residents should know who their local ward councillors are, so they can approach them if necessary. So it is important to keep wards as stable as possible & not keep changing them.

Prevents election fatigue

Not keen on the potential creation of new ward boundaries, which could create "artificial" communities.

Changing to four monthly elections will save money and materials on the leaflets distributed by the candidates for 3 out of 4 years. The cost of hiring halls etc. will only happen every four years, if applicable. Printing all the voting material will be needed only one, etc. etc.

Elections should be held in conjunction with the other town and parish elections to maximise cost savings.

Also consideration for WBC Officers, having to "train" new incoming cllrs every year means their work will be less efficient and can be very time consuming.

I really do not want our boundaries to change so that's the main reason as to why I would prefer an all out election

An end to career councillors would be a good start.

A clean sweep is important...do it once every 4 years

1. The benefits of 4 yearly clearly outweighs those of three yearly/one fallow elections 2.

Clearly we are on our own in Local Govt elections

1. The stated benefits of fallout elections far exceed those of the three year / fallow year system, where benefits are dubious.

Obviously a significant cost saving over the 4 year cycle.

I think it would be fairer for each ward to have the same number of representatives giving people a choice of people to connect with and to share the load

4 yearly elections should be coordinated with town and parish elections to maximise cost savings.

The 4 yearly cycle should be co-ordinated with town / parish council elections so that they all take place at the same time and cost reductions can be maximised.

Having experienced both at Parish, Borough and County all out elections get my vote

All out elections would also reduce the number of elections held and consequently the use of polling places, in the case of Wokingham Without, use is made of Oaklands Junior School and the schools on site insist on complete closure which is unpopular with electors. While there will be a closure for elections in 2023 and 2024 there might be respite in 2025 if all out elections are agreed. I also consider that the survey gives an misleading impression of 'no change' i future ward boundaries. The recent electoral reviews in West Berkshire and the RBWM led to significant changes in ward boundaries despite both councils holding all-out elections.

The money saved would be quite substantial

The 'third' option says about stability but what percentage of councillors are elected for another term, which would give experience still in the all out system

Council will therefore remain constant for a sustained period of time and able to act rather than adapting every year and opinions possibly changing!

More efficient, fewer dates and time taken up arranging and staffing Polling Stations.

The cost savings of an all out election are significant so I prefer this option.

You did not comment on policy/leadership continuity. With the current 1/3 model then the direction and continuity of policies and commitments could change each year which may result in wasted effort if the politics of one party in control changes each year.

I support the 'all-out' system because it allows us to keep wards with just one and two Cllrs, thus avoiding the need to create arbitrary wards that do not align with natural community boundaries in order to comply with the Boundary Commission's demand that all wards should have three Cllrs if the 'by-thirds' system is retained. I live in Finchampstead which is currently divided into two two-councillor wards, a system that I believe suits the village well because it means the vast majority of Finchampstead is located within a Finchampstead ward, rather than being awkwardly attached on to wards where the majority of the electorate is located in another population centre. If the 'by-thirds' system were to be retained, some of Finchampstead would have to be carved off and represented by neighbouring non-Finchampstead wards because, whilst our current two wards are too small to warrant 3 Cllrs each, the village's electorate is too large for it to become a single three-councillor ward. Thus, the most likely, but by no means preferable, outcome would be that one ward would be combined with half of the other to create a 3 Cllr ward and the remaining half-ward would be attached onto a ward where the majority of the electorate lives in a neighbouring population centre, such as Swallowfield or Wokingham Town. Carving off bits of villages and sticking them in other settlements' wards is obviously undesirable, but is necessary to divide the Borough into exclusively three-councillor wards. By switching to the 'all-out' system, however, this can be avoided because one and two seat wards would still be allowed. This allows villages, like Finchampstead, which are too big for three Cllrs, but too small for six to get the number of Cllrs proportionate to our population without sacrificing boundaries that align with our community. Thank you.

The current is supporting the Conservatives too much with a total inability to grow any opposition due to the mathematics of the system. It is very unfair, restricting political diversity. Please give details of how the money saved will be spent

Give plans of how the money saved will be spent

If it saves money all out elections are the way forward

I think it simplifies the election system. Locals will have same Councillors for 4 yrs and Councillors will need to maintain public trust in their capabilities and representations.

If by voting every four years, the Council is saving money, surely this would be the better idea?

This will save a lot of money

I'm aware that this system is used by Bracknell Forest Council and it appears to work well for them.

Finchampstead currently has 3 wards and 17 councillors. Keeping a 3 year system would mean we only had 9 councillors which would definitely be limiting for us.

Secondly having elections once every four years would mean less class relocation on election days at the Hall i manage.

Use of resources

Elections every 4 years create more stability

Responses from people responding No

More regular elections make for better engagement with the democratic process
Councillors should be fine elected on a regular basis to be more than representative
The council should be held to account more regularly than every 4 years. There is little attention paid to residents in many areas as it is, this would become even worse with an all-out cycle.

This 'consultation' is ridiculously biased with all information provided reflecting the Conservatives' preferred option of all out elections, where they can use their deep pockets to swing the outcome in their favour.

Too disruptive to services.

See Saw policy making.

regular accountability at ballot box is highly beneficial

It doesn't give any consistency if you have all out elections.

We should retain regular accountability of elected councillors, which is better achieved by elections 3 years out 4, rather than only having elections every 4 years.

The lessons of the past 3 years have been that we live in an ever more quickly changing world that presents significant threats to our way of life. It is paramount to maintain a system where democratic action can be taken quickly should policies not be effectively addressing these challenges. Voters then have the opportunity to respond quickly and effect change in our representatives, where necessary, also signalling to other council members whose tenure expires in following 3rd periods.

An all out election every four years can cause a sudden change in policy and direction.

Elections by thirds should generate more government by consensus - which is what I and my friends would very much prefer.

Keeping some experience on the Council would be useful.

I think we need to stay as democratic as we can. This is why I want to have the opportunity to vote in three years out of every four years. This system would also provide greater continuity for the Council.

Yes. I believe that the elections should be held more often, because it enables local people to be more engaged with local issues. it also I believes keeps both the Council and local councillors on their toes to take account of local feelings and concerns. A large gap of 4 years can cause complacency and for council and councillors to take their eye off the ball.

Continuity and experience more likely in 3 out of 4 year cycle

How many would you like?

(i) Election by thirds forces the council to be at least marginally responsive to public opinion over the period where the election of all councillors for terms of four years will just encourage the staleness we see in this one member ward

(ii) It is going to be very hard to sustain local political activity when all seats in all wards come up for election very fourth year.

(iii) But there will then be occasional by-elections as councillors resign, die in office, and deprived of office (heavens above!).

(iv) We want rid of single member wards which the sitting members regard as personal fiefdoms

(v) the cost savings of moving to elections on a four year cycle appear to be trivial in the extreme.

The Tory group want to do this because they are scared of the current system. The current thirds gives new cllrs the chance to show residents what can be done to help and improve Wokingham instead of those non Tory wards being IGNORED.

Passing on knowledge and learnings is really important. Arguably humankind has succeeded most because of our ability to pass on knowledge. Therefore, having to reinvent the wheel every 4 years is a waste of resources.

Having all out elections would have a greater chance of leading to inexperienced councils. More democratic to vote in many years

Can I suggest that you make your arguments in more basic English. The leaflet I received could have been written in a simpler way giving more people understanding and therefore increasing engagement. For example, what does "less tangible savings" mean in plain English?

Councillors are more accountable with elections most years

Once every 4 years is totally unaccountable for most of the time

Like the government all out elections can affect how councils are run, just making a special effort for election year, and less concerned about the public for the non election years

Voting only every 4 years would be terrible for democracy

Tories are bad enough as it is - need to be more accountable

Retain the existing system, it prevents councillors from ignoring their constituents for too long or for issues in one particular year from determining the make up of the council for the next 4 years

Please renew councillor's regularly

Electoral choice is paramount and should be sought at every opportunity.

Politics will be as bad as a four year government, totally untrustworthy if not more accountable by election by thirds

years is too long to be out of touch with a ballot box to hold you to account.

Every 4 years seems far too long to keep councillors in power. It would be better to reduce it and have people held accountable to their goals ideally every 2 years. In the absence of this the current model forces councillors to be aware of shifting concerns of people living in the borough. I am particularly worried that this change will allow councillors to drive extremely unpopular changes such as accelerating new housing for mainly middle class to upper middle class and higher.

I want more accountability that this, look what is happening in government with four year accountability. I don't trust you.

Continuity of the 1/3 system is preferable.

I prefer the continuity provided by a 1/3rd system. I prefer to vote more frequently.

I value the ability to vote more often and the continuity provided by a 1/3 system. I don't find the case for all out to be persuasive.

Consider the view of the residents, don't just do a survey to tick the box and do what you originally planned regardless of the result. Listen!

I prefer thirds because it gives the voters more of a say and can adapt better to changing situations.

Councillors only fully accountable every 4 years, whereas with annual elections, political party groupings of councillors are more constantly accountable

Less opportunity to drive change

I think there is more continuity and councillors are more accountable to the electorate with Election by thirds system.

Annual elections allow proper and timely scrutiny of services, dealing with issues more easily as they arise. Elections every four years become too easily mini General Elections on national likes and dislikes.

I prefer the shorter time frame and if change of party a less dramatic transition which election by thirds offers

Thirds gives greater stability & smother transition

Current system is more accountable as you can vote for change more often
I do not think the leaflet is a balanced outline of the 2 options for example it does not reference the source of data for the elections by thirds statement

Electing the whole council at once can mean that there is no inherited knowledge or experience unless a large number of candidates are re-elected. In my committee experience that can lead to wasted time getting up to speed. There are some advantages to a complete clear out but I feel these are outweighed by disadvantages.

'all out' once every four years would consign local politics to stasis for about 3 years out of four. While there are benefits to linking Councillors to particular wards Councillors should work to get the right policies for the Borough rather than simply pursuing the interests of a small local ward. Individual Councillors will often have individual specialist skills and interests so good for wards to have three Councillors who between them should offer a diversity of expertise.

Less accountability from all in.

An "all-out" election frequently appears to become a referendum on central government performance. Knowledge and experience is limited in local councils so maintaining as much as possible is advantageous.

Current system allows some continuity of council members, all out elections could result in a mass change and flip flopping between conflicting policies

Having elections more frequently provides a control against complacency in the council and inspires everyone to work harder and listen to people more

I live in Spencers Wood, which is currently split across ward boundaries: I would hope that in future, Spencers Wood could all be in the same ward.

More people are likely to be aware of, and interested in, local authority activities if elections are held more often. Leaving a long gap between local elections means that national issues are more likely to be uppermost in people's minds and local issues ignored or downgraded in importance.

I strongly believe that an opportunity to vote more often will encourage and allow a more democratic voice from the public.

The communications on this website and by post have been decidedly biased in favour of moving to all-out elections, with no substantiation of the claims made. Better transparency within future communications should be provided.

I don't like the thought that we could end up with a group voted in that could be detrimental to town but then have to suffer consequences of that choice for 4 years

I feel it's better for democracy to have more regular elections, encouraging greater accountability and reflecting changes that occur within a four-year cycle.

I support the argument that more regular elections can encourage a greater accountability.

Consistency and succession planning

"By thirds" appears to be a more stable and democratic process to me. Thanks!

It is important to maintain the stability of the council with experienced members, yet provide a more frequent opportunity for new members to join.

This survey seems deliberately designed to influence you to choose yes.

With elections every three years makes the councillors more accountable to the electorate

The Council should look to the specific needs of each Ward rather than having a generic and general approach that doesn't deliver

Benefits of higher level of accountability

We need to change the system to make councillors more accountable not less. A vote of no confidence should be available to the constituency residents at all times and we should ensure that each of the three councillors' chosen is from a different party so that all constituents views are represented as far as possible.

Keep existing system plus minor modifications so as to provide stability to the council.

The current system works & should remain. Locking into four years is too long a period if a change is required.

You appear to me to be aiming at reducing accountability through this proposal
I fully agree any cost saving is a good thing. However I currently have to vote for Windsor and Maidenhead in national elections and this makes no sense as I pay Council Tax and come under WBC! I therefore vote for councillors that have little or no bearing on my life.

Better to have a mixture of new and old

I feel that if we voted once every 4 years the councillors would be less concerned about our views between elections.

The opportunity to vote in most years is important in holding the Council to account. Ward boundaries in Twyford & have not been well aligned to communities since the last round of changes. Hopefully, this will be an opportunity for improvement.

4 years is too long and gives the council a free reign for 4 years. Things may well change during this period and may not reflect the electorates views/needs.

It is better to have some continuity of serving members so that the reasoning for policy adoptions is carried through from election to election. In a four year election cycle there is the potential for all the members to be changed and for policies to be stopped, or started, without knowing the full background. This could also lead to unnecessary project delays.

Why is there no option to vote for the 3 out of 4 choice

I would have preferred your documentation to have avoided any mention or linkage to the LGBCE. It should have been based solely on the opinions of the Council.

I feel elections only every 4 years would reduce accountability

It's undemocratic

If its not broke don't fix it

Prefer current system of 3 years allowing better continuity. I do see there are cost savings by transferring to 4 year complete change which may over rule my preference.

This consultation is clearly biased. If we only have elections once every 4 years, who knows what they'll get up to between consultations

It's clearly more democratic to have councillors subject to more scrutiny and more frequent elections ensure they are regularly subject to the views of the electorate

4 years is too long

Regular elections require councillors and the council to take care over policies they propose and those they implement.

already answered this - survey is going round in circles

A non-online method of voting should be available. No indication of the date the vote was ending was on the leaflet.

I think for local authority decisions 5 years is too long a term without the opportunity to have a say by voting. I much prefer to existing system.

Two reasons why elections should be held 3 times every electoral cycle. First, it would be more democratic. Councillors should be asked to seek the regular endorsement of residents they serve. Second, it would lead to smoother changes in the composition of the council and political control. Elections held only once every 4 years would be more subject to temporary changes in political mood and more likely to produce volatile and unpredictable changes in political control..

I happen to think local democracy is enhanced by the more regular interaction with the electorate which voting in thirds provides. The modest extra cost is worth it, and the necessary changes to ward boundaries to enable this are fine by me.

Do not move to 'all out' elections because it reduces public engagement in council decision's
How would you ensure that the councillors are still listening to the voter's opinions if they do not have to do so regularly to be elected in?

1- the need for more continuous engagement with electorate than allowed with a 4 year gap

2- the cost of running by-elections for parish councils

3- Make this type of survey easier to complete (make it similar to other survey vehicles) - so please take into account the impact that the difficulty would have had on response

4-Take into account the "leading" nature of the information provided in the preamble and the

order of questions and the way these questions have been posed. They do not conform to best practice for an opinion poll - consult an expert to advise you on this point.

All out elections mean that if in year one the council does something the electorate disapproves of, there is nothing the electorate can do about it for another three years.

The Tories supporting it is a good indicator that it's a bad idea.

Keep at least some councillors that know what is going on!

We need greater accountability

Why can't the current arrangements continue. There is no benefit in either proposal. THEY WILL BOTH COST MORE IN TIME AND MONEY. WHY WASTE MORE MONEY.

It keeps the politicians accountable

Succession planning could save more than 300k over 4 years

The poll statement leaves the essential point to the end, the poll has been rigged. The democratic option is by thirds. The all out system is not fairer, more equitable, clearer, those are subjective statements. All out system will hand absolute power to the majority of one moment in time, for four years, this is abrogation of democracy.

I think long term planning is important and a big change in councillors every 4 years could mean a lack of that. It certainly happens with General Elections - each Government has new plans and aims so there is no consistency and general improvement

If only once in 4 years, the party in power doesn't need to listen to the views of the people.

It has all the drawbacks of the current system of parliamentary elections and gives the electorate limited opportunities to keep the Council accountable in the short term.

If they do do this then they should introduce a fairer voting system too, based on proportional representation principles.

Not as fair as the Elections by Thirds

I prefer the present system because it allows for change more frequently.

I wish as a resident of the book rough to be able to have my opinions considered more than once every 4 years.

I would definitely prefer to have access to a vote in 3 years out of 4, rather than 1 vote and then no further opportunity for 4 years. The latter is too similar to the national system and is inadequate for local democracy and accountability.

Why are you asking for the opinions of residents if you seem to have already made the decision to switch to 'all out' elections?

All out lacks democracy

I think 4 years is too long at a local level. if it has to be all-out i would prefer 2 or 3 years.

However the not all-out option allows knowledge of local area to be carried over and rarely would there be a councillor who was not already well versed in their area.

'All out' gives fewer opportunities to vote

4 year elections lack flexibility and create arrogance

I feel I can influence the direction of the council by having option to vote more often

There is nothing like an up and coming election to get councillors to do something!

Succession planning is crucial as is regular public voting at local level.

Wholesale change at one point in time is not helpful, particularly for continuity; plus accountability only at one point in 4 years is not healthy at local level.

Having all-out elections could result in an unstable make-up of councillors. One could envisage voters rebelling against the national government and the more balanced situation could lead to more extremes of policy. the present system with a year's break would seem to me to be the better option.

I would prefer to have the opportunity to hold the council accountable more frequently

Democracy is not cheap but nor is the alternative. We should have the right to review our elected members every year.

Elections every four years means that councillors can ignore the electorate in the meantime.

election by thirds is more democratic

Election by thirds is better.

Moving to all out elections is less democratic.

Yes, Election by thirds will hold my councillors more readily accountable

Having weighed up the pros and cons, I feel that we are able to hold local politicians to account better electing in 3rds. I have concerns that a lot of the political debate is already more politics than substance, and would not like to see this unfettered for 3.5 years and then 6m of political making nice.

Continuity very important as is potential loss of experience

The 4 year cycle is little more than a power grab by the Tories.

Have people without access to a computer or phone been given the chance to vote in this survey. In my view, it has not been very well advertised.

Introduce proportional representation

More frequent elections should mean councillors are more up to date with public thinking

I think the question could have been written more even handed than biased towards the first option

"All out" elections seem to mean less accountability for councillors and less involvement for the electorate, which I do not like.

vote every three years out of four.

For continuity THIRDS

Elections on a more frequent basis should discourage complacency

I prefer to choose council candidates every 3 years

I don't see how moving to all-out elections benefits certain groups like young people. I think that better stability for the council and regular voting by the electorate is more important

Having 1 election every 4 years, and not a rolling programme as at present means that voters can only express their opinions every 4 years at the ballot box. With the current system, some of the councillors for every party will be held to account for the actions of their party. That is why I want to keep the current system.

The proposed system disadvantages smaller parties and independent constituents movements. The advertised savings have not been cost presented to the public and cannot be trusted. The current system allows the larger wards a more regular opportunity to hold WBC to account for Manifesto promises and performance. A 4 year cycle disadvantages those who do not have a central funding pot. Party membership numbers are not a reflection of voting trends, but affect the ability to produce and deliver literature.

The succession planning and handover rather than wholesale change strikes me as a wiser approach.

All out elections would provide less continuity as now. It would also make Council even up size of council wards and provide more choice in wards with only 1 Councillor.

The key issues are:

1. Accountability - I have heard councillors comment that they prefer 'all out' because they can do highly unpopular things in the first years in the hope that voters will have forgotten by the time the next elections are due.

2. Quality of candidates - given the poor level of participation in local politics, parties might struggle to find candidates of sufficient calibre in an 'all out' election, with over 50 required.

The council would also lose a lot of experience as many councillors may retire at the same time.

Voting every year makes the ruling council more accountable for its actions. It also allows that council to monitor if people are happy with its actions. It also holds council accountable all the time and stops it 'playing' to the election cycle. I think Westminster would be greatly improved if it adopted this system!

The stability and continuity offered by 'election by thirds' is preferable.

All out means no guaranteed continuity of councillors so major upheaval every four years.

Whilst on paper the other option claims to save money unlikely to happen as it would be costly every 4 years whilst a completely new council finds its feet. Also every four years

councillors could play the blame game ie blame previous council for everything. Not a good idea at all

I think 4 yrs is too long and the change too great at election time.

This is not a valid consultation. Those who don't have internet access or the know how to complete it are disadvantaged. It's also not widely advertised so I suspect it's paying lip service only. Disgraceful

This survey is open to abuse. It can be accessed many times to influence the outcome.

This council needs increased accountability not decreased.

I value being able to have my say regularly

This is the first time that I have heard of compulsory boundary changes for the voting system currently in operation. Your survey has given no background to this or its justification.

Also, no idea has been given of when in the political cycle a 4 year poll would take place.

Would it be at the same time as a general election, just before or after, or midterm?

Having frequent council elections is more democratic, as their results can lead to a modification of a National and Local government's approach during its term of office.

All the benefits mentioned, stability, succession in dealing with projects and planning, greater opportunity for residents to be involved and makes councillors more democratically accountable.

The councillors should continually be held to account and the 4 year all in proposal appears to be negating that accountability. It will be 3 and a half years of pain then the pre election promises as typifies all elections.

Continuous monitoring of council actions is required and more frequent elections aids that.

Electors feel more engaged with more frequent elections.

Election by thirds allows more continuity of the running of the Council

Elections by thirds makes the council more accountable to the public by engaging it more frequently

Moving to a different system seems to be a clear way to ignore the electorate and will be more undemocratic

Planning decisions are a major area of concern for many residents and I think keeping the election by thirds can help ensure that councillors are more accountable to their electorate - especially when it comes to planning decisions and longer term plans for housing in particular.

All out elections is detrimental to the local residents. We are best served if elections are held " every three years out of four" as it makes the elected members more accountable.

There is a danger that an "all out" election system could result in many inexperienced Ward Councillors being newly elected all at one time. In order to maintain a good mix of experienced and inexperienced Councillors at any given time I have voted for Elections by Thirds (which is more similar to what we have now). I feel this is most important and would give the Wokingham public assurance of knowing at least one or two of their Ward Councillors personally, leading to better continuity for the whole Community.

I disagree that all-out provide the best benefits to the community. I vote for election by thirds.

I think elections by thirds give greater stability.

Make counsellors more democratically accountable

Elections three years in four allows greater public influence over the council - it's better for local democracy

Changing the electoral system at a time when the decades-long incumbent is nervous smells like gerrymandering to me.

I am strongly in favour of voting as often as possible for local councillors as this is the democratic option.

I prefer the greater democratic element of voting by thirds even if it costs a little more.

I believe all out elections would make it harder to hold councillors to account

I think local Councillors should be held to account every 3 years out of 4.

"All out" elections will reduce the council's accountability, particularly essential when one party dominates. This is not acceptable in local democracy

If a councillor proves unsatisfactory 4 years is a long time to change

Every 4 years reduces accountability

Change is good, potential for new blood every year means the council as a whole are not wedded to decisions of the past.

The Elections by Thirds system is vital for maintaining continuity, whereas the All-out Election system does not and is therefore far more disruptive.

Walking forwards is more stable than jumping forwards. Humans have a warm-up time, and need to learn from colleagues. Dumping them all at once guarantees a productivity deadspot and reduced learning opportunity.

The current system (3 years) means councillors are more accountable to the community they serve. In my opinion an all-out four year system would result in residents being ignored for 3 of the 4 years (i.e only viewed as important in an election year).

More regular elections allows voters to send a message to parliament between general elections ie if they are happy they vote for the governments party and if not they can vote for opposition.

It also allows for gradual change of councils so you are less likely to end up with inexperienced councillors running the council.

Fewer elections are bad for local democracy

It is important that councillors are as accountable as possible, as often as possible to the electorate. If elections happen only every four years, it is quite likely that existing councillors will become complacent (until nearing the possible end of their tenure)

It would not be as easy for voters to change their councillor if they were elected "all out". The council would not be as accountable. Policy could be changed through 180 degrees and projects cancelled mid way through

Option A may harm the democracy of are local area

Experience matters. There is a possibility that all councillors could be new after an election.

To possibly lose 54 experienced councillors at once would be a disaster.

Stability and accountability are my key concerns and I think this will be better served by the elections by third option

Councillors should be held to account on a regularly. Once every four years is simply not enough.

Your leaflet and the info presented here states "we cannot keep the current system" and blames the LGBCE for this. The cost savings stated are like statistics, they can be made to make bad seem good. Longer term focus is not always good. Just look at WKM centre, shops closing down, too many cafe and coffee houses all because rents are too high.

A move to 4 year full elections would allow a majority party to dictate policy for 3 years or more without listening to its constituents.

It is preferable that our councillors are answerable to the public every year , not just before the four yearly elections

Information is quite clear atm, I cannot see how some people cannot understand the process.

Elections more frequent

The 4 year all-out system disadvantages smaller parties who might not have sufficient resources to campaign for all their candidates in one year

all out elections do not give the benefit of succession planning. If one party is in for four years this does not allow for changes in public opinion to be reflected in that four year period.

Events move quickly and elections by thirds would enable voters to react in a more up to date manner.

We the electors should have a more regular say to ensure ongoing accountability. Regular turnover of councillors is good for local democracy

Regular accountability is a price worth paying. And I don't believe the scale of the alleged savings by changing. If we do change, we will hold you accountable to demonstrating those savings clearly and spending them wisely.

Being able to express a political expression in the middle of a wider electoral cycle is a way of applying pressure to an incumbent administration

Equal-size wards of three members are a great benefit of the by-thirds system (more democratic, fairer, more likely to provide a diverse and representative set of councillors) and the ability to stay engaged annually is very important.

The council is too stagnant as it is. It needs to be able to be held accountable without a 4 year wait.

ELECTIONS BY THIRDS (similar to what we have now) gives the electorate they say more often, and holds the councillors to account if they are not dealing with the issues that are effecting the local community.

All councillors should be accountable to the electorate on a three year system so they keep to what the people want !

By thirds provides continuity, stability and succession planning. It also ensures local democracy is not undermined by a single big issue that might cause a major upset to local government over which they may have little control e. g. Huge housing developments imposed by central government that the local electorate object to.

Should fit in like other council wards 3 out of 4

You should stick with the current system so councillors can change more regularly. Better for the borough. no one cares about ward changes!

Most balanced option is to 'elect half the local councillors every 2 years' (as mentioned on UK Gov website). Why were we not offered that option in this consultation ?

Need succession planning

I believe all elected representatives should be accountable to an electorate on as frequent a basis as possible.

"all out" will surely tend to promote tribal / factional policies which are reversed at each election since all councillors will be elected in the same political context. This seems likely to result in all councillors in a ward sharing political views, whereas "election by thirds" seems more likely to result in councillors in a ward having different political perspectives and better reflecting the diversity of views in their community.

I feel this system would provide greater accountability year on year

I object to not having the opportunity of voting for a different candidate each year. The thirds system already in place is more democratic, and motivates the councillor to stay on top of the job or get voted off.

NO to all out elections

An election by thirds ensures greater stability and the smoother continuity of ongoing programmes

Be more honest in the information provided on the survey delivered to homes. ensure we can't vote multiple times???

Proportional representation would be much fairer than the current first-past-the-post. Please lobby government to allow this.

Election by thirds allows residents to be more agile in responding to policies or plans produced by the Council in that year, thus making WBC more accountable to the public.

Moving to an all out system could allow unpopular key decisions to be made in year one in the hope that some of the ill-feeling would have gone away by the fourth year when elections would be held.

prefer the system wherein there is a mixture of new and existing councillors, councillors will be more accountable, four years is too long

By keeping "Elections by Thirds" brings stability to the Council over a longer period of time.

All out elections could see a change of control and in turn a change / reversal of prevailing policies. In effect a hidden cost and results in an ineffective council which could look to govern for only four year cycles and not in the publics interest.

It is not efficient not effective governance

Councillors need to be accountable which the 4 year option dilutes

I believe that any more loss of democratic accountability should be resisted at all costs. Therefore retaining a more regular voting system seems sensible.

Current system, in principle, of election by thirds seems reasonable.

Important to have a mix of experienced and new councillors.

silly consultation with a very biased information

As shown by the current council trying to push through ridiculous housing plans, yearly accountability needs to be kept otherwise the current doctrinal tendency of not taking into account local views would continue

'All out' elections could cause national issues to dominate local issues to the detriment of Wokingham particularly when in phase with national elections. Local elections should be about local issues. This what local democracy is about in my view.

If you move to "all out", my opinion is that you are reducing my democratic choices. I like being able to hold my councillors to account three years out of four. It makes them much more responsive and proactive, as they know that even if they are not up for re-election, one of their peers will be.

Elections by thirds makes councillors more democratically accountable

your bias in favour of 'all-out' elections is clear, if subtle, from the way you word the 'benefits' - this exemplifies why politicians cannot be trusted

Always best to have a mixture of experienced and new people.

Elections by Thirds is more democratic and provides for greater stability in the council.

Can we see a list of the 'less tangible savings of more than £4m over the four year period?

Thirds allows the sentiments of electorate to be more quickly felt and acted on

Boundaries are quite lip sided. This needs addressing. Stability in a safe conservative council causes lack of accountability to minority views and parties.

I strongly believe that the all out proposal would be a detriment to the area

Stick to the most democratic method; cost-cutting is not convincing. Long-term planning/visions are for dictatorships in this context.

The reasons given are not that clear; there are better reasons given for choosing to use a system with "elections in thirds". More frequent voting will hopefully encourage the politically elected not to take their constituents for granted, nor think they can be less transparent in their activities for the Council.

The political and social landscape, as well as the Borough's needs, can shift radically within a 4 year period. If elections are moved to an 'all out' style, there will be no opportunity for course correction in the short term if current councillors prove themselves to be unaligned with the needs of their constituents.

What happens if everyone changes at an election? Becomes more about keeping stability and less about who is best for the job

Too much change and too much time for the ruling party to have no fear of recrimination from the electorate - complacency.

Elections by thirds, allows succession planning & new people to come in

There does not seem to be sufficient reason to change from the "by thirds" principle. The Council's leaflet makes valid points in favour of "by thirds". The points in favour of "all-out" seem a bit woolly to me (apart from the cost savings - but "economizing" on democracy is a risky business).

I think it would be fairer to have equal size wards with the same number of councillors. There has been lots of housebuilding in this area so populations have changed. More frequent elections give more opportunity for people to express their choice. A gradual change of councillors ensures greater stability

I think the instability of a brand new Council outweighs any benefits. Otherwise at each 'regime change' there will be a battle to assert leadership whilst they should be addressing the needs of the borough.

"All out" would create too much change in one election year. "All out" means electorate only gets a change to make their views known every 4 years - this is unacceptable.

The current system improves accountability of Councillors as the electorate has the chance to 'punish' poor performance regularly.

I frequently worry about the instinct of political groups to deliver unpalatable policy changes in year one of a fixed term cycle and 'bribe the electorate in the final year. Currently our Councillors have motivation to 'do what is right' rather than 'do what is politically expedient'

I also think that there is poor engagement outside of national election years. At least in the current climate, we usually have elections at a similar time to national elections for some of our wards, the new system could lead to disengagement as we would have a vastly reduced chance of coincidence creating an overlap.

Finally, an all at once system overly benefits wealthier and better supported parties who can deliver a multi-ward campaign in a single strike. Essentially, everyone but the local Conservative association would suffer and independent candidates would be drowned out.

Overall, I can see no benefit of this over the existing system and I think that this is purely an initiative designed to unfairly disadvantage any party other than the Conservative party.

I am also highly dubious about the £300k per year saving and would be interested to see that clarified?

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More accountability

I think it's better to have a mix of experienced and new councillors, also if one is not performing well there is a possibility of replacing them after three years rather than four years. The current system allows for change when it is needed.

Inherent instability of local government, lack of turn-out could create uncertain results, and the whole council would be paralysed in advance of all-out elections, with all plans on hold.

Yes, why is this consultation so biased?

The 'all out' option reduces the need for the councillors to engage with the public, we will get a council who will offer election gifts prior to the election and ignore the electorate for the majority of the period - just like the Wokingham MP - Sir John Redwood, who turns up to fetes in an election year, but is nowhere to be seen otherwise

More frequent elections needed to hold councillors to account and deliver more democratic governance for borough residents.

Consultation and questionnaire is very biased in favour of election once every four years. The current system is far more democratic. A badly performing council can do a lot of damage in four years.

To enable the council to work effectively/efficiently there needs to be a mix of new and experienced councillors on the council. All-out elections would produce a more chaotic and less efficient council.

Accountability is important and the current system is a better way of maintaining this. A strong majority that can't be challenged for four years is a huge risk

the statements for each option are clearly biased against the 'by thirds' option, with qualifying phrases like 'benefits... have been stated' and 'arguments have been put forward'. The matching statements for 'all out' are simply presented as indisputable facts. It's good that you're consulting, but you must be scrupulously unbiased in how you present the arguments.

I think 1 vote every 4 years risks a lack of democratic accountability

The current system of electing by thirds has worked well and allows the electorate to express its views frequently, which can only benefit the community and good governance. It is worth accepting some changes to ward sizes and boundaries to ensure that this continues.

Election by thirds much less likely to have a single issue/moment in time to swing the vote one way. When that happens you have the possibility of one party dominating which is never a good thing. A single vote could also result in a disproportionate number of new inexperienced councillors.

3 councillors per ward and a thirds system is far preferable to all out and uneven sized wards. This could lead to policies that are not 'moderate'.

This makes councillors more democratically accountable

Addressing inequalities and creating opportunities/awareness to be councillors

Greater democratic accountability is worth the extra cost

Please do not trivialise the voting process you are accountable. Far too many changes happen in a short period that a 4 year wait whilst councils are able to just decide what's best, is not okay!

One silly issue at central government would affect the whole council for 4 years

It's important that councillors should walk round the ward and talk to voters at least once a year.

Also that arguments about stability in the Electoral commission report are nonsense. Clearly the yearly changes will allow attitudes to change incrementally.

The recent one way cycle scheme debacle in Woodley demonstrates that some councillors are completely incapable of judging when officers potentially place them in stupid and entirely unnecessary positions. If it wasn't for a looming election where Woodley (Conservative) councillors would have undoubtedly been voted out, this pathetic scheme may well have gone ahead and created utter chaos in the alternative local routes impacted by the proposal.

Earlier accountability will be the result

"All out" elections will result in short-term, political decision-making as councillors focus on winning votes or give up when they have no chance.

I strongly disagree with aligning all local elections with national ones as the issues tend to get conflated. I would favour the continuity provided by "one third out" elections.

Stay with Thirds

The issues for local government are different to central government and do not have to follow the same election process. More frequent elections helps keep the councillors up to date with current issues if they have to face regular election

All out is potentially too disruptive at local level and also leaves too long between opportunities to vote if a new set of Councillors proves incompetent

System whereby Councillors remain constantly accountable is preferred, and this appears to be better achieved with the 'Thirds' option.

Continuity of policies and accountability of councillors better under the Thirds scheme

Councillor need to be accountable and regular elections are essential for maintaining that

Voting for local councillor every three years out of four gives electors more frequent opportunities to respond to local issues and the policy and direction of the council. I believe that having the possibility of electing a completely new set of councillors every four years could cause problems with continuity of services, as the new council would have to spend time being brought up to speed on legislation and other possible restrictions on their proposed manifesto commitments.

Regrettably electors at this level are influenced by national events and political party senior figures. The latest national situation may easily affect the way people vote in our local elections.

I also like the idea of having equal size wards with three councillors so they can cover a wider range of local opinions and issues.

I would prefer my councillor to pay attention to my thoughts throughout their term of office. This is more likely if there is a more frequent election process.

All out elections can lead to distorted results if they coincide with a crisis or a spike of negativity about one party. Many examples arose in May 2019 when the Liberal Democrats won very large majorities because the Conservatives were in a short term bad patch lasting only a few months. The 3-phase cycle avoids such distortions.

Listen to the People

This is a party decision and yet is "badged up" as a council consultation. Therefore, the party concerned should have used its own resources rather than mine as a Council Tax payer to pay for a survey.

I welcome the opportunity to vote for a possible change of councillors more frequently. As changes to ward boundaries are involved with both options, I do not consider this to be a disadvantage to Election by Thirds which I favour.

Every 3 year cycle is more democratic as more chance to change council majority and the type of views heard.

3 year system gives more accountability to council and gives opportunity to change the council makeup and get more variety of views to be considered so more democratic.

WBC needs to be accountable and 4 years is too long

In my mind the benefits of Elections by Third outlined in your communication far outweigh the benefits outlined for "All Out" elections.

A clear out every 4 years is inefficient. There are benefits in having some experience carried forward

The wards are currently unequal with some councillors representing 100s and others 1000s. I'd actually like a longer term for councillors, so they can take a longer term view ...so something like a 9 year term with one seat swapped at a time

I don't believe an all out election is a good idea as it can lead to revolution rather than evolution

There would be no continuity if everyone were new each time - so they would always be reinventing the wheel - and have no inherent prior knowledge of anything (you cannot assume each candidate would be selected).

Would either system use proportional representation?

Young people and ethnic minorities will find it easier to understand an all out election system? Patronising? What is this view based on? What research are you using?

All out elections are fairer, more equitable, clearer and easier to understand. What research is this based on? You are making statements without providing any evidence to back them up.

The whole council changing every 4 years would be disruptive. It is much better to change 1 third of the councillors over 3 years, to maintain continuity. It also will make councillors more accountable.

The current system works. OK, tweak it if you must, but change does not mean better.

what about proportional representation

I prefer elections by thirds because it gives greater accountability and gives a mix of new & experienced councillors

the council need to remain accountable

Although there are substantial financial savings by moving to All-Out Elections the continuity in having a mix of experienced councillors given By Thirds is preferential .

Ensure that a proportion of candidates (say a third) were new, and not simply the old guard wanting to get back

Too much change in one go. Too large a gap between having a say!

In my opinion, the current system promotes stability in the Council whilst allowing for new ideas & opinions to be brought into the planning & governing cycle. It enables evolutionary change which I believe is best for the residents.

thirds offers more stability, continuity and experience, with perhaps less violent adjustments in policy that could come with abrupt changes in party control

Important to keep reservoir of knowledge on the council - provided by election by thirds.

Make up of council less affected by significant national political events.

I prefer the greater stability in the council that this process allows rather than an all at once change

This system would reduce accountability.

That the residents will be short changed on their ability to "have a say" 4 year elections are a blank cheque for more houses being built against the local wishes, like now, so much for local areas deciding local issues?

I think the "all-out" system will be too influenced by it's timing in relation to general elections and by national issues.

I think "by thirds" would lead to a more stable system without the possibility of wholesale changes in policy, and the elections are more likely to be fought on local issues.

I accept that "by thirds" may result in lower turnout, but it does give greater opportunity for the electorate to influence the council. Hence it is surely a more democratic system.

Please take into account that many people may favour "all-out" on the simplistic basis of getting it over in one go, and without detailed consideration of the issues.

Your mailshot and details given at the start of this survey are evidently biased in favour of "all-out" and so the results of this survey should take this into account.

I prefer the continuous engagement that the thirds system produces

The presentation of evidence here is weighted towards the 'all out' option and designed to elicit that result in the consultation. You should do it again in an even-handed manner.

Elections by thirds would seem to promote better engagement with the electorate

My comment is about the survey - after completing it and clicking submit, it takes you back to the opening page of "take the survey" - this is confusing, and makes me wonder whether my comments were actually submitted. Also there seems to be no bar to taking the survey multiple times, so people with strong views could make multiple submissions and so bias the results. Surely only one submission should be allowed from each computer/device.

I think that "all-out" elections will be influenced too much by timing depending on whether it is close to a general election or is mid-term - the result likely to be too much influenced by national rather than local issues. I think that "election by thirds" is more likely to lead to a stable council without sudden changes in who is in power, which could result from "all-out" elections and which could actually damage long term planning. "Election by thirds" is likely to be more influenced by local issues.

Please also take into account that many people are likely to favour "all-out" elections on the basis of getting it over in one go, with less tiresome campaigning, without a detailed consideration of the issues.

This is not helped by your mailshot, which seems to me to be biased in favour of "all-out" elections.

Stability of decision making. The "price-tag" of democratic elections should NOT be a consideration

On third change maintains continuity, all out change could lead to indecision

The 'thirds' system is more democratic and allows local people to take a more active role in deciding who represents them

The one third method maintains some continuity whereas a wholesale change could lead to a period of indecision

I think we should have a choice more often than 4 years. That is a long time to not have a say.

It is beneficial to always have some councillors with knowledge on how the council works in order to help new councillors with no knowledge

your survey is misleading because you are about to go through a LGBCE review which will redraw ALL boundaries. You are proposing this for political reasons rather than Capital/Revenue savings

Continuity

I have two concerns about the option The Electoral Commission is encouraging you to adopt.

First, democracy has a cost and saving money is a bad option if it weakens democracy.

Second, I believe a move to "all out" elections will discourage so-called Independent candidates and weaken the link between Councillors and the electorate.

Need to actively engage with residents all the time and not just leading up to elections. No Labour or Conservative councillor or candidate has visited since we moved to our new house 7 years ago. Shocking!

Elections by Thirds will provide a more stable system providing a mix of experience and more stability.

More frequent elections improve local democracy

It doesn't make sense to move to a system that makes councillors less accountable, planning more difficult and voters less involved. The "all out" election system is just less democratic - which sounds like the exact opposite direction we should be moving in.

Accountability is sharper

Annual voting is more democratic

having a number of elections gives residents a more frequent opportunity to voice their views and hold the council to account which hopefully focusses minds when making decisions

More opportunity to challenge if leave all out elections

Elections by thirds means that there would be more continuity and that representation on the council would be less affected by short-term issues such as partygate that might coincide with the poll

I prefer the on going accountability and engagement of regular election of thirds

Lack of continuity if move to all our system and less chance of a diverse group of councillors

In my view, wholesale change-out of the entire council would be detrimental to continuity of community engagement and projects. The current system (or thirds) allows projects to be tested by new eyes/ ideas, but without throwing the whole up into the air.

I think another advantage of election by thirds is it reduces the tendency to vote based on what the national government is doing and means experience is not lost all at once.

Election by thirds ensures that all councillors have a greater pressure on them to take account of the concerns of their residents, throughout the whole of a four year cycle. This is good for local democracy across all wards, irrespective of the political composition of the Borough.

They need to be frequent to prevent complacency

The Boundary Commission (BC) will implement boundary changes irrespective of the wishes of any elected body, so to say that the BC is driving WBC towards 'all-up, 4 year cycles of elections' is incorrect. Election 'by thirds' leads to individual councillors being more actively engaged with the concerns of their residents, which is healthy for local democracy, and vital in focussing the administration of the Borough on their resident's needs, rather than the political programme of any ruling group.

Election by thirds will perhaps keep the council more in touch with and accountable to local people.

I want to make sure that there is always a majority of councillors who have some experience.

Less democratic

An all out election may not give the required continuity

Progressive change of councillors works well to prevent any opportunity for an extreme during the 4 years. Favour having 3 representatives per ward

The timing of the "all out" election in relation to the general election could have a disproportionate effect on the result, and be more influenced by national rather than local issues. I tend to think that "elections by thirds" would give a more stable council, more influenced by local issues, though I accept that turnout may suffer.

Stability

I think all out elections would probably lead to periods of instability with too much change each cycle. It seems patronising to say they are more easily understood by young people and ethnic minorities.

Whilst having 3 council members per area leads to one election each time it seems to run the risk of adopting boundaries and groupings which do not match any sense of community or common needs. If I've understood correctly any ward change would not necessarily lead to parish changes, but a mismatch here would also seem to lead to confusion and difficulty in representing people. I can see the 3 council member model repeatedly mentioned on the LGBCE site with reference to communities as a balance, but I'm not sure if this is effectively achieved. I do understand the need to ensure that over time the number of voters to councillors doesn't get too out of line so some review makes sense but the solution (perhaps promoted by the LGBCE) seems a bit too simplistic.

Is WDC being a bit premature in putting these two proposals as the LGBCE review has not started yet?

changing all councillors at the same time is a risk. Perhaps the decision on the new lights would have been improved.

I think it is essential to always retain at least some experienced councillors, not risk a potential wholesale change at one election.

As well as better stability within a council that is not subject to all-out change, the election-by-thirds system prevents (1) a council blaming poor performance on its predecessors and (2) deferring difficult decisions to its successors. Furthermore, a local government electoral system that differs from a central government system should be safer and more stable in benefitting a democracy.

The regular turnover of councillors keeps things fresh and allows the electorate to have their say on a more frequent basis

Councils recommendation seems based on saving more at expense of continuity and fairness of councillors in each ward

To keep the Councillors on their toes I would advocate annual councillor elections. We do not see hide nor hair of our Councillor in Woosehill

Slow progressive change of management is better and more sensible than all change every 4 years

the only advantage of all out is the cost saving. However, if the Borough is not on the same cycle as Town/Parishes that is already a second election. The Police crime election is a third and general is a 4th. So I ask the question where would the savings be? If Borough is every 4 years I doubt I would see some of my Councillors. Very good Councillors sometimes don't get re-elected. To have to wait another 4 years I suspect we will lose very good people. I also think a massive change of members every 4 years will cause issue. Limited change each year much better. One last comment if you have a ward of 3 Councillors alas mostly voters place votes alphabetically. So it will be much harder for the best candidate from a party to get elected when a split vote between parties.

Election by thirds as you say, allows for succession. But why do we need more councillors?

That should be dictated by the population of the ward surely.

The chance of radical swings on the council is greatly increased in an 'all out' system of elections

Accountability

By thirds allows more participation from the electorate which is a fundamental goal of any functioning liberal democracy

advantage of having councillors not all changing at one point. This consultation output is not representative of the population as individuals can vote more than once.

Honestly you should move to 12 month elections for everyone to hold them all accountable and answerable to the public.

A series of rolling elections feels like it would give constituents more ability to hold councillors to account and ensure that they are taking action on the important topics that affect the borough - and beyond!

Danger of electing a Council that we then have to suffer for four years.

I prefer the stability of elections by 3rds.

For continuity thus enabling opportunities for longer term planning and strategies

I wish to make it known that the paper leaflet about this that I received is misleading. After the heading the next line says

"Would you prefer to vote for your local councillor:" This implies that one only have only one local councillor (corrected below but that is not the point). Assuming I am only represented by one councillor then the next line does not make a lot of sense as how can I vote "every three years out of four" if a) I have only one councillor and b) they are in office for 4 years. I feel a better way of putting the question is to say... "Should the whole council be elected" "Once every four years" OR "A third every year with a forth year with no election"

All out elections mean a temporary issue may influence the outcome for the full four years

Regular elections ensure accountability of elected leaders.

Keep it as present - more democratic

Election by thirds enables mix of council to progressively change over time.

Democracy isn't cheap but it's worth it.

WWBC have so far omitted to cover the disadvantages of each of these systems. Also, to say they cannot proceed with the current 'thirds' system and then propose that as one of the options available is puzzling to say the least. More effort is needed to fully explain each of the proposed options.

Every 4 years is too long and stops the opportunity for residents to reject poor councillors or council policy.

I believe elections by thirds facilitates long term planning.

Having 3 councillors for every ward sounds like a good idea to me and would provide a much better balance of views. Annual elections are also a good way to remind constituents of the work done by their council and encourage them to engage with the decision making process. I wouldn't trust the council on anything any longer so will automatically treat any recommendation with suspicion. Intangible savings can only be believed if audited independently.

elections by a third avoids being stuck with a bad council for 4 years. please NO.

I think the present system works well and allows continuity of service.

Are you saying ethnic minorities are too stupid to understand elections by thirds?

Where will the continuity and experience come from?

I like my councillors accountable

Why do we have to change?? I'd vote for the opposite the current council recommends.

A 'rolling' council ensures continuity and consistency with only 1/3seats changing at one time.

I prefer to have more elections than 1 off like a general election.

A gradual change of Councillors is preferred for continuity to a complete change.

You're asking people to decide between 2 systems without asking an impartial question. This survey is clearly biased towards the 'All Out' method of voting, the council need to present a fair argument for both cases and that includes what the new boundaries would look like under both systems. It is unfair and undemocratic to present such a loaded question as part of a key change to local elections.

Election by thirds allows the public to exercise their voting rights more regularly and provides them with more power.

Annual elections are much more democratic

Citation of sources and data used to write benefits for each option should be provided otherwise it is hard to assess it properly.

Prefer to have more continuity of councillors across all years rather than a cliff edge wholesale change. I also think this holds councillors more accountable.

1. Costs from long term project reversals/cancellations associated with wholesale changes from all-out elections could easily outweigh any election cost savings - this is not discussed.

2. There is no mention of the potential cost benefits from the continuity associated with the election by thirds. The only cost savings mentioned are in the all-out option there is not attempt at a real world comparison between the two - so the consultation information appears to be biased in favour of all-out.

All Councillors and leaders of WBC must be able to be held to account by the electorate, Leaders of WBC and Councillors must properly listen to the electorate and residents.

The claimed benefits of all out elections are suggested or intangible, in comparison to the real benefits stated for thirds. Stability and succession planning are both valid issues but cancel each other out.

We do not have any system like Shadow-Council where opposition keeps checks If current councillors are doing what they should. Only elections-by-thirds can keep fresh accountable ideas flowing and not take things for granted.

I think the benefits of the "by thirds" option you mention are overpowering.

Maintaining elections by thirds would allow for more democratic accountability

Issues arise every day. 1,459 days between election days is too long to wait. The public mood on one day does not represent the mood for four complete years.

Please don't, changes could be too radical, sudden and therefore disruptive. Making the parties accountable annually is far more powerful in driving continuous focus on residents needs.

I would prefer the council to hold more frequent elections by ward as believe it keeps the council up to date on local issues with frequent opportunities for candidates to actually engage with constituents. Not sure why number of councillors per ward needs changing! No explanation in consultation as to why they have to be by thirds with a year off. For wards with less councillors, they have less elections. Also, found the wording in the leaflet (suggesting young people and those from ethnic minorities found more than one election every four years too hard to comprehend) patronising and inappropriate. Wording is clearly focussed on trying to get people to vote for all our election.

The 'by thirds' system avoid lurches from one political stance to another and maintains stability.

Continuity is very important if the young do not understand what is it saying about them

By 3rds seem more consistent and less disruptive

I do not vote in local or even national elections as I believe them to be an irrelevance as decisions are made in secret by organisations higher than government

Benefits of by thirds seems better rather than just looking at the cost saving....also I think wards should have more than one councillor so should have three to ensure fair and democratic decisions

Your questioning is biased against older people. You require everyone to either have a computer or smart phone. Elections are supposed to be open to everyone. Most older people cannot scan QR codes! No clarity given on research by Electoral Commission except bias towards social media users. Every four years would not give sufficient breaks in information to view of public for Westminster to follow.

I would like to know how limiting local council elections to once every four years can be considered an effective way to administer local democracy.

"Thirds" allow more regular pulse of opinion and in my political view more likely to result in x-party consensus due to risk majorities changing each year.

Note: the paper flier was very poor. Obvious question was "why does LGBCE think that current arrangements can not continue?". Glad clarification on website. IMO, democracy poorly served by removal of this key piece of info by whoever wrote paper flier. When I first read flier, I did not want to take part in engagement as without that piece of info I felt wool was being pulled over our eyes -which indeed it was. Thankyou to whoever added clarification on This conflated a statutory boundary change with a political desire for a vote frequency change.

Listen to constituents

How accurate is this survey when it allows people to vote over and over again?

Four-year cycles allows councillors to make unpopular decisions without any electoral accountability for many years to come.

Elections three years out of four encourages the councillors to regularly listen to their voters.

All out elections will lead to an unstable control of ongoing projects and loss of expertise

Four years for an incompetent councillor to remain in office is far too long. It is better to have fresh blood entering each year as part of the council's makeup

Annual elections bring greater accountability and lessen the influence from national political issues.

Ethnic "minorities" and young people have the same mental capacity/decision making ability as 'any' other person living or working in Wokingham! To highlight them as an added reason for the changes is highly condescending and patronising!!

The language in the information provided uses biased language that will skew the results. It lists the benefits for the "All-Out Elections", whilst for the "Elections By Thirds" it includes the words "The benefits of this system have been stated as..." and "...and arguments have been put forward that this...". As a former Director of Customer Satisfaction in a multinational company, that designed and conducted regular surveys, I would send the author of such a survey for re-training, were they in my team.

All out elections only benefit those with the most money.

Stability is important. Besides, it is good that we can express our view every year and sure the parties will be more cautious when making decisions.

I prefer the current situation

All out would heavily favour the Conservatives, which is, of course why they are recommending it, because they have a far wider hold over the 4th Estate and can outspend all the other parties combined with pretty much unlimited budgets from anonymous billionaire off-shore donors, (including Russians! ;-)

Stability and succession planning key at local level

Neither option ideal, I think we should move to something in between ie replace 50%of council every 2 years, thereby saving money yet retaining continuity

Just take the most practical and the option that smooths out the councillors jobs, ie some old , some new to enable a more smooth approach

The current system gives more stability and a focus on local politics instead of on national politics.

Don't support all out elections as I believe they make elected members less accountable for long period.

Democracy is better for elections by thirds where dealing with only local issues

The leaflet you put through my door is only superficially "neutral", but is very obviously advocating for one of the two positions. It also creates the impression that you are hiding your real reasons for wanting to make the change to all out elections. The £4 million in "less tangible" savings just comes across as a Boris Johnson style lie (OK, a bit more subtle than his lies to be fair.)

The thought of being stuck with certain people !!! Democracy? They'd be out of touch and avoid scrutiny

Don't manipulate the boundaries to suit any political party.

Elections by thirds ensure governance continuity and are better for democracy.

I think that election by thirds is more democratic

Election by thirds has the advantage of reflecting changing views of electorate more frequently.

Having elections regularly allows a mix of new and established councillors to be in post and holds the council to account regularly.

This would leave a gap in the execution of day to day plans that the outgoing administration has done, and I believe that change should happen gradually.

I think the current system holds those to account better.

I believe elections by thirds will allow greater flexibility for new ideas to be considered, as well as providing continuity of knowledge and experience.

Two term limit for councillors, no multiple family members eg husband wife.

No continuity from year to year, at the end of a cycle there could be no plans for the following years. Some issues could not be address until the next voting cycle, less chance for residents to vote on matters relating to the individual wards. Less opportunities for new councillors to volunteer for election bringing new ideas to the council.

Stability and succession planning are critical. £4m intangible benefits are not clear or substantiated.

I believe elections every 3 years out of 4 will mean the electorate are better listened to

As mentioned in your somewhat biased introduction, election by thirds makes the councillors more accountable to the electorate - which is the most important principle of democracy.

It also means that at any one time the council comprises a mix of experienced and new councillors - which is a situation that any responsible organisation aims for

The ward boundaries need reorganising so that the wards have an equal population with three members per ward

Better to retain a mix of experienced and newer councillors

I think it important to maintain the thirds system as it increases accountability. An election every 4 years is more like an elected dictatorship where new issues can be decided soon after elections with no accountability for several years.

This system appears less accountable & therefore less 'Democratic'

I think we should continue the same approach as Elections By Thirds, as this keeps the Councillors closely aligned to public opinion and involvement. Giving a councillor free reign for complete 4yrs wouldn't be advisable as to keep a check on the council direction and progression

3 years of being a counsellor is enough to start to become effective. Go to four years and you dilute democracy.

I don't want our councillors to be voted out all at once by some mass reaction to the performance of national government.

Election by thirds provides stability and allows the community to vote more often.

Yearly elections allow voters to hold councillors to account and are therefore more democratic.

Seems less democratic to me

Election by thirds a better option

All out risks upheaval, elections by thirds has greater opportunity for succession planning waiting 4 years to vote off useless councillors is a backward step

This is a biased survey, designed to sway respondents towards the all-out option that reduces accountability

better democratic representation by having elections 3/4 years

More regular elections maximise accountability.

Continuity of ideas and experience

There are two separate considerations. First by retaining the one-third system Wokingham Borough residents maintain a more regular democratic influence towards their council – which in turn should help the council keep tabs on local opinion. Secondly electing each ward's

representatives all at one time four years runs a risk of an unbalanced and unrepresentative local authority which would be "loaded" with only one party.

I am against the idea of locking into to a group of elected Councillors for 4 years. If they are not performing earlier change is required as at present.

The elections by Thirds is a much fairer system

You work for us. We don't work for you. You sit where you are because of us. We get to choose if you stay. Any attempt to circumvent that democratic process and/or allows a sense of complacency or entitlement by those holding these privileged positions must be guarded against. We are watching you very carefully and will vote accordingly in alignment with our values and how you treat the most vulnerable in our local community. Personally, I believe there should be more local elections, not less.

Allowing Wokingham Borough residents to vote more frequently than just once every four years both helps maintain the important democrat link between voters and councillors and provides the council with a better idea of local opinion at any one time.

If it's not broke, don't try to fix it.

This will remove continuity of process and knowledge. Even with the 1 in 3 process, having a lot of new councillors makes the transition challenging. An all out system will result is loss of vital information and knowledge and mean that the councils work will be stymied whilst everyone settles in and learns

Each ward should have 3 councillors

I don't want us to lose democratic accountability 3 years in 4 to save a few quid. Democracy is something we should value.

Council wards should be reviewed to give fair representation to all voters

A more stable and accountable to the electorate system with elections by thirds

After the shambolic last 3 years of the Tory govt, I think it's vital we get the opportunity to boot them out as soon as possible

£300000 over 4 years is a small price to pay for the opportunity to hold the council to account. £4m "intangible" benefits is meaningless.

Elections every year more fairly represents the current views of the constituents. They are a way of reminding councillors that they are there to represent constituents and not their own agenda. It stops them being complacent and self serving.

Make councillors listen to us

Having more frequent elections is vital for local democracy as we can hold councillors to account more effectively.

All out means less accountability

I value democracy and the right of local people to hold elected members accountable to extend the period between these opportunities would undermine and reduce this right.

Concern councillors would become complacent

Free free

All out elections leads to an erosion of local democracy.

A move to elections every four years significantly lessens democratic accountability and scrutiny of elected councillors.

The third system provides a regular and more smooth turnover

This could be used to distort political bias as the ruling council will want to heavily influence the vote by being popular and also hoping the electorate forget some of the earlier bad decisions they have made.

Don't particularly like either system but election by thirds seems to be more democratically accountable and change is more gradual.

Stop trying to load the arguments in favour of the option you want. Go for option 2 with as little additional cost as possible. This is by far the more democratic option and gives greater continuity.

An all new Council would be inexperienced and unable to benefit by learning from existing Councillors

The "by thirds" system hopefully makes central government more responsive to public opinion as they will see trends more quickly that way.

I want annual accountability in elections and a mixture of experiences of Councillors advantage of having experience within the council would probably be cheaper to the council in the long run.

A young person's views won't be valid till until they are 23

It means that someone aged 17 wouldn't get a vote potentially in their home town until they are 21 .. to be honest Wokingham need to engage the youth,

It makes more sense!

Moving to an all out cycle will massively reduce accountability of the council and quite frankly the Tories can't be trusted not to F things up (any more than they already do. Sorry but it's true. Corrupt and incompetent, why don't you build houses in north of borough near Henley? Cos Tory leader lives in this area, and he is a NIMBY). Thank you

The current system works well, and numerous by elections would mean some of the proposed cost savings by a would be lost

An all out election every 4 years would be destabilising when you might have a complete council with no experience whatsoever - giving too much power to officials and not elected councillors

3yr cycle would better retain local relevance.

The election by thirds system gives much more continuity. New councillors can learn from those who have been in the job for a while. All-out elections lack this continuity.

I think the council does an excellent job and I'd worry about losing significant experience in one go with an all-out election process

The political and social climate within the Borough and the Country change, sometimes rapidly and frequently, and voters need to be able to reflect their opinions accordingly. Wards with fewer than three Councillors can still be accommodated because candidates can still be elected, by rotation, every three years. This is a much more democratic system and should not be sacrificed on the altar of political or financial expediency.

I feel election but thirds is more democratic. One only has to look at the state of our current government to see what happens when one group of people hold too much power for too long.

1/3rd every year for 3 years makes the council more accountable and allows the mixture of experienced and new councillors.

I favour the status quo

If the council is underperforming that cannot be allowed to do so for 4 years. People must be allowed regular input through the ballot box.

Useless councillors should not be in office for 4 years without the electorate having the opportunity to vote someone else in.

I believe it's better for succession planning and to ensure there is a mixture of new and experienced councillors.

The 3 out of 4 cycle seems incredibly more democratic, and appears to offer the delivery of greater accountability to the electorate.

All out is not an effective system

Greater accountability of the councillors towards residents. Greater stability for governance of our borough.

You need to be accountable at all times, not once every 4 years.

Cost and practicality

I don't want to wait 4 years for my councillors to be accountable

No safeguard against lack of continuity.

Thirds is a more dynamic and accountable system

Much better to have regular scrutiny of councillors by more frequent elections

I am concerned that this survey is only available to on line residents that is not democratic and under this system the results of the survey are flawed.

Continuing with the existing method ensures stability and greater accountability of councillors
Lies on the letter you sent

This survey has no checks to make sure I live in Wokingham. The question is not neutral. The letter we got from the council says we cannot keep the current system. But the current system is one of the options! What sort of survey is this? Looks a bit badly put together

All out elections are Bad for continuity

As stated in your leaflet, this system provides greater stability and allows for succession planning.

It also ensures the council will have new councillors along with those more experienced.

If keeping election 'by thirds' means significant boundary changes, then so be it.

All out elections will disrupt long term planning and make councillors less responsive to their constituents concerns.

Keeping knowledge after an election is very important

3 years so incompetence can be removed

No "all out" elections. Councillors are likely to become complacent in the model.

Lack of experience in councillors and maybe instability if they all leave in one go.

The supposed all-out cost savings are dwarfed by the costs of policy decision people may disagree with. So there needs to be constant check & balance since elections are the only time we get to have a meaningful impact. By-thirds may not be perfect but is more democratic than All-out.

The all, out system can lead to political instability in that complete change of administration could take place every four years. The current system gives gradual change

Retaining the 'election by thirds' process ensures that all wards are equally represented on the council.

The "all out" approach would replicate the general election and the "flip flop" instability that that creates. The transient sentiments at the time of the election can lead to an outcome that is undesirable. The continuity and progressive transition of change is a better model for local government.

Long term stability is important

You say that the Electoral Commission suggests all out elections are fairer, more equitable, clearer and easier to understand. No evidence has been provided and concepts such as fairness and clarity are highly subjective.

Maintain an element of stability

I want the council to be responsive and more frequently accountable to the electorate
Everybody elected at the same time would cause too much disruption to the work of the Council and make electioneering too intense at each election time.

The need to maintain experience whilst encouraged new people input

It is far better to have a mix of experienced and new councillors. It is good to vote regularly compared to once every 4 years.

All out after 4 years could make for a violent change of policy due to a short term popular issue.

It's important for the council to have more frequent democratic signals to help them serve us even better.

Councillors need to be democratically accountable. Electing by thirds encourages this.

Election by thirds

Stability and succession planning are critical

I think the council should be more accountable and this way they are

'All out' elections would sacrifice stability for cost savings. I see no other upside to it. Thanks
Continuity by way of a gradually-evolving council membership with a fraction being elected every year will give better continuity of council services. It will stop elections being dominated by events just before an election if that election is at a particularly advantageous/disadvantageous time for one political party.

The Borough council literature on the matter does not represent a balanced view- it is heavily skewing public opinion which is not right

Stop Start Politics

Stability and accountability

more chance for the electorate to voice their opinion

Most of the benefits of all-in-all-out can be applied to the 'election by Thirds' process. If election by thirds is more expensive move to online and make it cheaper, if it is hard to understand then try to understand why it's hard to understand and resolve. I don't understand how all in all out is more fair and equitable for ethnic minorities - show me the comparative data.

Constituents able to express approval (or otherwise) each year with modified thirds option.

A very demeaning justification presented for All-Out...."particularly the case for young people and those from ethnic minorities", appalling wording from the council, which is not a factor in my decision.

This system would give too much power to the party with the most resources

I feel the elections by thirds is actually the fairer route. It avoids a situation where a council is elected and then becomes stagnant as elections will not be for another 4 years. At least with the elections by thirds, there will always be a time when the council can be held accountable.

Accountability

I think it is helpful to have experienced councillors alongside newly elected ones.

1) which system ensure that each ward has the same number of voters, give or take 50 voters? 2) How fast can you change ward boundaries or create new wards to ensure that each councillor is representing the same number of voters? 3) where is the proportional voter option? 4) the savings quoted is this just for Wokingham or over larger area?

More frequent participation for the electorate preferable to once every 4 years.

1) Why is this consultation only available online?

The leaflet posted out by the Council gives no other options for consultation.

2) The leaflet sent out by the Council is very hard to read for anybody with even a mild visual impairment.

4 years is far too long for council elections

Things change over a four year period. the

once a year system does not allow for removing a "party".

wholesale change every four years

would lead to a lack of continuity

Simplify opinions and explanations.

Less obfuscation.

Elections by thirds offers continuous accountability

Elections by Thirds gives a thread of decisions or policies previously made

I think accountability is important so elections three years in four is important for providing the electorate to signal their satisfaction or otherwise!

phased elections for more stability

Stability

would prefer elections to be carried out as at present time

Do the same for parliament.

Benefits listed, although suggestion that the young and ethnic minorities favour all out as easier to understand is somewhat condescending, but no downsides given. Would Thirds require more councillors - additional cost? Preference is to stay with Thirds for the pluses given unless costs outweigh benefits.

Councillors are more democratically accountable

Elections by thirds maintains greater stability in council membership with a better balance of experienced and novice councillors, with more frequent opportunities for the electorate to react to changing governmental situations.

Elections by thirds gives a better balance of experienced and new councillors and reduces the impact

Moving to all out elections would be unfair to those youngsters just coming up to voting age. Depending on the timing they could just miss out on being able to vote then have to wait a further 4 years before they can have their say.

No explanation given as to why the current arrangements cannot continue. "Because the LGBCE say so" is not an explanation.

It would not be sensible to have a complete change of council every four years. You are likely to lose expertise

I am concerned that the way these options have been presented are biased. Favouring All-Out Elections. Please can this be taken into consideration as part of the result, and/or wording reviewed.

By thirds holds councillors more accountable to the electorate. There is a better blend of experienced councillors with new entrants.

having equal sized wards makes it more equitable for every voter

It's more democratic to have elections in thirds that is more important than the cost. After all as residents we pay for it - at least let's get value for money on something.

I believe that the current system means that the Council is more answerable to its electorate - always a good thing.

If it isn't broken, it doesn't need fixing. The existing system works well.

There has been no response from WBC to provide credible costings to substantiate the Tory Councillors claim that the current voting process costs £4M more than the alternative proposed. Nor have they answered when and how the change would be implemented if applied. The ONLY way if could possibly be a Fair process, is if the wards with multiple representation due to their size, were split so that each new ward had just ONE representative. THAT has not been consulted on and because of that, the proposal to change would be unconstitutional and as such I object to the proposal to modify the voting periodic. It would not be fit for purpose.

I also find that it is not substantiated the council employees are unavailable to carry out normal duties during election periods.. or are you intimating that the same number of staff are involved REGARDLESS of how many seats are up for election? In which case I find that indicates poor management of resources.

Accountability is important

I like voting!

Democracy is not free and it's worth the price

I'm concerned that the figures for financial savings are misleading (attributing fixed staff costs to an election cycle), thus biasing any responses

The by thirds system offers better accountability

Thirds approach is more accountable therefore democratic a 4 year cycle makes democracy and accountability more distant.

By thirds provides a mix of experienced and new councillors.

I would rather it stayed the same as it is currently.

So called all 'out option' makes the council less accountable. The projected savings are complete fantasy.

3 years out of every 4 retains the same accountability we have now. The boundary changes that go with 3 councillors per ward would be beneficial for our polling districts.

We need more accountability, not less

This consultation is biased. Shame on your WBC!

The Council would be held less accountable if elections were every 4 years. I think the way your survey has been written is phrased to lead people to the answer you would like, badly written. An example of why we need to be able to vote every 3 out of 4 years.

Why would we change this?

Try being more democratic

Accountability to electorate is more frequent.

there is a huge loss of accountability for the public this is not a good idea. Lazy/bad councillors get away with being paid for doing nothing and there are already too many of them It is not explained why the ward boundaries need to be redrawn with 3 cllrs per ward, rather than stick with the mix of 1, 2 & 3 cllr wards?

The current system helps keep residents engaged every year, rather than once in 4 years I propose we stick with "thirds"

There is a huge loss of accountability lost by having all out elections. There is also a chance of loosing all the experience in one go with all out elections. A stupid idea!

Succession is very important. The experienced need to 'teach' the inexperienced, provided the introduction of new ideas isn't despised. (It wasn't an easy choice to make!)

I don't think "easier for young people to understand" is a very fair comment. Young people are bright, they're just not engaged. Having fewer opportunities to vote won't increase engagement

Wokingham Borough Council needs to be more accountable, not less - Elect in thirds!

Unless the Tories lose control in May in makes no difference what the public say, the Tories have made up their minds regardless. Regular elections make the council more accountable and responsive to recent / current events. People forget about mistakes made years ago so elections every 4 years favour the status quo.

I feel the benefits of "by thirds" speak for themselves and should be retained

Less wholesale change - and more continuity

Regular and frequent elections (thirds) requires the council to be more responsive to changing local needs and opinion. There's no evidence the council would listen more under all out elections, indeed it would be less accountable. There's no evidence the notional staff time saving administering elections under an all out system would result in reduced Council Tax either.

I'm not persuaded your cost savings are genuine.

Keep the present system

Thirds is more democratic and has built-in BETTER succession-planning

I am convinced by the reasons for not doing so set out above

Having annual feedback is valuable and democratic

I think that it is better to have 3 out of 4 year elections as this encourages councillors to be accountable and will not risk having lots of inexperienced councillors all joining at the same time.

Regular accountability through regular elections.

This allows a council to rid roughshod over the residents of Wokingham Borough.

Having more frequent elections will hold councillors to account much more effectively and is a more democratic system. Ideally you should be looking at proportional representation.

All out elections destabilise and alienate.

All out elections are confusing and destabilising and tend to lead to an anti vote rather than a pro vote.

We need regular elections, we see from the General Elections that we end up with an Elected Dictatorship that only cares about democracy at Election time.

The current system of "by thirds" is more efficient because it ensures smoother changes and is fairer because it allows the electorate to respond to changes in the political landscape.

I prefer the stability and continuity from the current cycle. It also means the electorate have more opportunity to exercise their democratic rights.

Testing the opinions of electors only once every 4 years is less democratic than three times every 4 years. It would reflect the climate of opinion ONLY at that particular time - once every 4 years - and not accurately reflect changes in public opinion over the whole of the electoral cycle. It would also be more likely to produce sudden, rapid changes in who runs the council and the instability that goes with that.

More frequent elections ensure that the team listens to the public more often, which is a much better way to work.

Democracy would be much better served by staying with the current system.

I believe having regular elections promotes and drives diversity in residents needs and keeps the council evolving continuously. 4 year elections will slow the pace of continuous improvement.

This is not in the interest for public participation.

This option provides the best opportunity for the electorate to express its view on the performance of the Council. It is akin to continuous performance monitoring and is much better than the four year cycle . The four year cycle just leads to election driven gimmicks that the winner hopes will be long forgotten by the next election.

Undemocratic

Please stop skewing the argument to dodge accountability. If it works for the US Senate it should work for you. I want to keep electing in thirds and do not see frequent democratic mandate as a negative but a positive for citizen engagement and accountability

Every four years is undemocratic and does not allow voters to express their opinions every year

I believe keeping the council elections regularly in view is best for accountability.

Far better to keep the existing system, makes it more responsive to the electorate. The perceived cost savings (beyond the £300,000) are highly dubious.

Elections every year ensure accountability

The current system keeps all parties councillors on their toes as poor performance may affect the election of their colleagues more quickly and therefore even the balance of power in the council.

Regular and frequent accountability is vital to the functioning of local democracy

Current system allows for a more rapid reflection of voter opinion on performance of a party and stops the promising "give us 4 years" that almost never results in the improvements touted. Also the only significant savings can be in manpower so this would mean job losses and potentially temp staff during the election period.

Continuity of leadership and succession planning are essential. Regular accountability is also important. Residents are more engaged in local politics if they have the opportunity to vote annually

Need more regular chances to influence the council decisions

Reduces accountability

Loss of experience

An all out system makes councillors less accountable

The financial benefits that the Leader is trying to put across do not make sense with regards to "the council shutting down for 5/6 weeks prior to elections", which isn't true. If the consultation includes factual information around the financial gains for the council, I'd review my position on this consultation.

I believe that having an all out system could mean greater opportunity to change the council structure quickly in a negative way. This could result in leaving the Council vulnerable to pressure by enthusiastic minority groups who may not reflect majority opinion. There may be fewer experienced Council members thus leaving the elected Council more reliant on council advisors (who cannot be removed by the electorate) rather than elected members who are answerable to the public.

The Tory controlled council always vote by whip rather than argument & conviction. In the election fallow years they have consistently ignored the wishes of the electorate to follow Conservative party Head Office instructions. As the Sheeplands vote showed this week - frequent upcoming election cycles force the majority to be more responsive to the electorate. Huge overhead of new councillors would make it incredibly unproductive to replace the entire council in one swoop

Greater accountability if regular elections but also better to keep some experienced councillors each time

'All out' elections would make the balance of the council more affected by the public's feelings about the main government at that point in time and that effect would last for 4 years - not ideal.

The system is fine and seems to work well as it is. If you are voted in for 4 years you can be less active, which is not what the council require.

MAINTAIN THE FLEXIBILITY AND CONSISTENCY WHICH EXISTS.

Maintain the consistency which exists.

i don't want the same system of local govt as central govt, where the same people are in power for 4 years, spend the first three carrying out their plans, no matter the arguments against them, then in the fourth trying to placate the electorate with platitudes and PR.

More visibility required about how potential savings have been calculated. Is £4m figure a real saving?

To move to 'All Out' elections will diminish our democratic rights. How interesting that this reduction of our democratic right to vote is being proposed as the Tories' overall majority in the council is now clearly under threat

The result of this survey should be 100% binding on that decision

I strongly suspect that people's votes in council elections are "to make a political point" to the incumbent national government and rarely according to what the prospective councillors are promising. By continuing as it is, each annual election would have only 1/3 of their councillors influenced by whatever the hot national topic is.

All out elections will not allow the people to democratically demonstrate their will regularly. If a party has overall control but are not doing a good job, having to wait 4 years to make a change is rubbish

I cannot see where the 'less tangible' savings of up to £4m would be made

The one-third system uniquely allows for reflection of changes in circumstances and views during the 4 year cycle. A major argument against it appears to be that it harder to understand than the alternative - which I do not accept.

Present system gives continuation and experience of two thirds of the members.

Easier to change council if three out of four years.

More scope to change if not satisfied.

If you have all out elections you end up with the same problem as general elections when one party has a majority. Keeping to the present system means you have a variety of parties and views.

If you go to 'all out' elections you end up with the same problem as general elections where one party has a majority. If you keep what we have now you get a mix of parties and views. Stability is the overriding concern and not a wholesale change influenced by factors prevailing at one election time.

A more gradual movement should avoid boomerang policies

Elections by thirds is a wonderful idea which ensures a smooth representation of the electorate's sentiment, minimising knee-jerk responses to short-term events. The mixing of experienced and new councillors is an added benefit.

Each ward elects its councillors every 4 years, so no change needed. Spreading the elections over 4 years ensures some form of continuity

Bad idea, please no

Cost does not outweigh the benefits that a more stable 3 yearly system allows for

A partial change of Councillors is much more preferred as it provides continuity

I value continuity and support for new councillors.

Firstly I see no clear evidence that the current system of 1/3 election is a problem, but primarily I consider the benefits of 1/3 elections (particularly avoiding the risk of wholesale changes and the benefit of regularly testing residents opinion of WBC performance, and hence maintaining an ongoing focus on accountability as opposed to a focus once every 4 years) significantly outweigh the disadvantages.

First past the post with multiple candidates is the worst of all election systems.

All up elections allow the council to be unaccountable for 3 years then promise people they'll change come election time.

all changing at once leads to instability and loss of knowledge

Not sure why the system needs to change. Bracknell have all out elections - this means there are potentially less councillors. But for those of us who work at the elections, there's a danger that all-out council elections could coincide with a General Election, and that could get complicated and manic. My preference would be thirds.

It is better that the electorate can make their wishes known frequently

I want elections every year so the council can be held to account by residents.

The current cycle of elections makes for a more stable council.