Consultation Methodology

The consultation ran from 9am on Monday 9 May until 5pm on Friday 17 June. The public were able to submit their views online, or by completing a paper consultation form which were available from the Council Offices, Caterham Hill Library, Caterham Valley Library, Lingfield Library, Oxted Library and Warlingham Library.

The public were notified of the consultation through the following methods:

- News items issued to all our media contacts and partners.
- Dedicated webpage on council's website.
- Social media posts.
- Articles in some local, free, monthly magazines.
- E-mail footer on officers' e-mails.
- Articles in every Tandridge News and Events e-newsletter in May and June.

Officers were also encouraged to submit their views. They were informed about the consultation by e-mail and in our internal May e-newsletter.

Councillors were also invited to submit their views and there was an article in the June Councillors' bulletin e-newsletter.

Members were consulted on the information provided to respondents through Group Leaders prior to the consultation beginning on 9 May.

A copy of the consultation survey is below.

Consultation Survey

Public consultation about the district's election process

We are inviting residents to have their say on changing the district's election process.

District elections currently take place by thirds, which means a third of our councillors are elected each year. We are considering changing this, to move to an election every four years for every councillor, where all our councillors would be elected at the same time.

By responding to this consultation, you can have your say on the district's electoral process.

1. Are you currently one of the following:

- A district or county councillor
- A parish councillor
- East Surrey MP
- A council offcer

Yes/No

If you are a resident please give us your:

Title:
Full name:
Postcode:

2. Do you think Tandridge District Council should move to an all out electoral system? This means elections are held once every four years for every councillor.

Yes/No

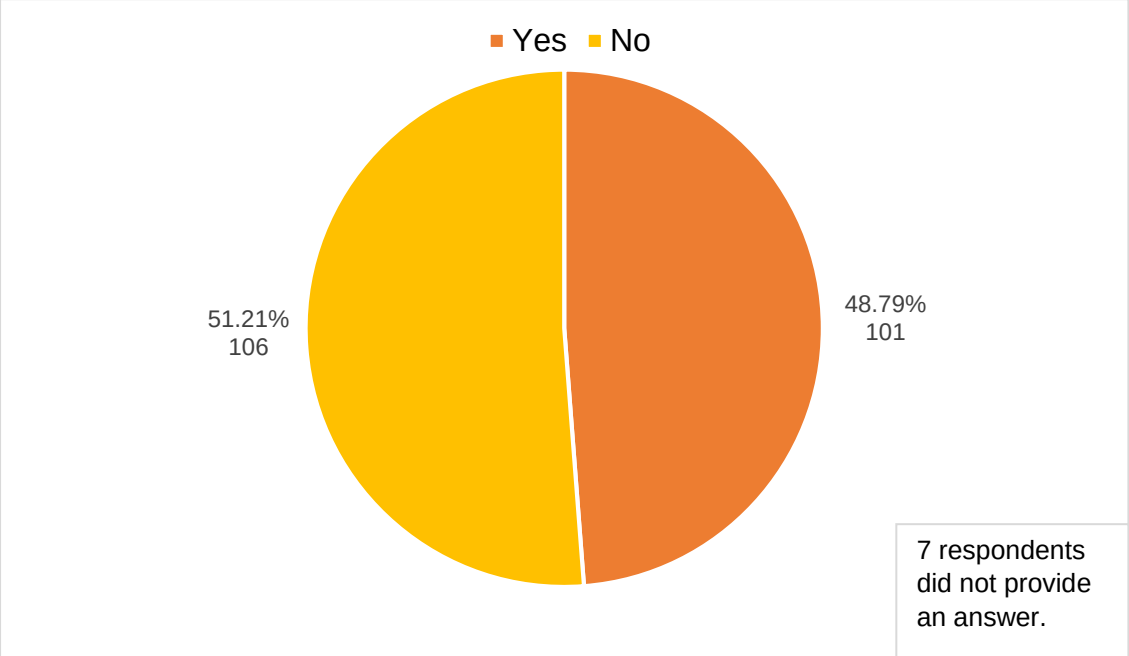
3. Do you have any comments you would like us to consider when deciding whether to move to all out elections?

Public Consultation Results

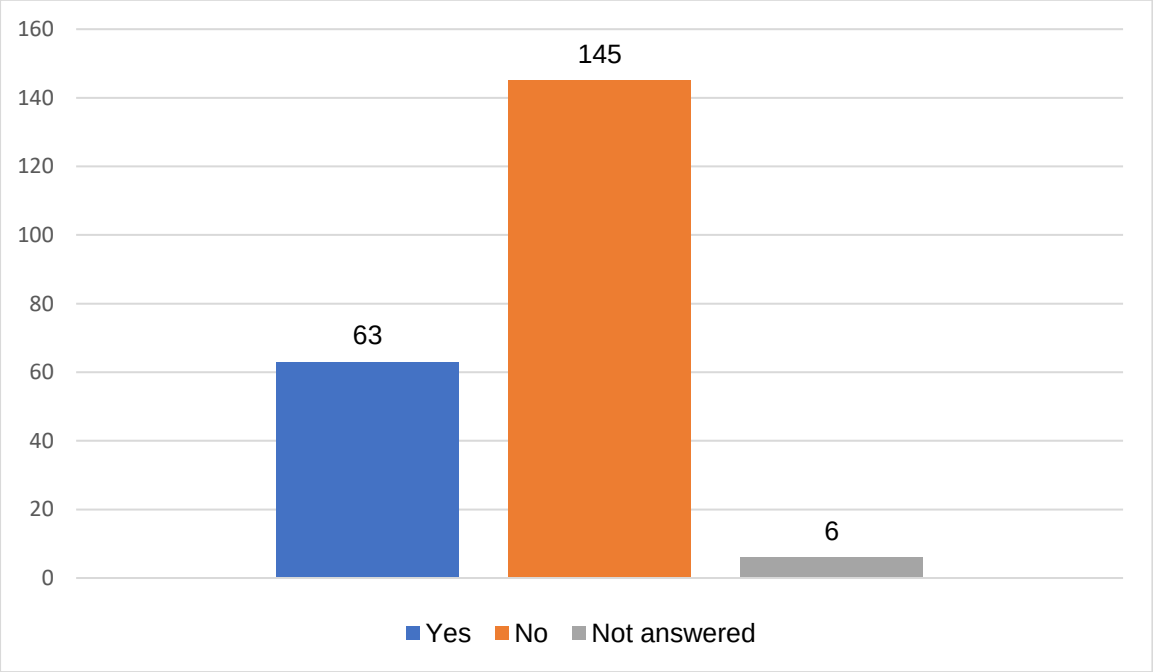
214

Total Responses

Do you think Tandridge District Council should move to an all out electoral system?



Are you currently a district, county or parish councillor, East Surrey MP or a council officer?



Consultation responses to "Do you think Tandridge District Council should move to an all out electoral system?"

Not all respondents provided a reason for their choice. Responses that identify individuals have been redacted. No other changes have been made.

Responses are collated in those that favour elections by thirds and those that favour whole Council elections.

Comments from respondents favouring elections by thirds

Response ID	Comments:
EjBjz5EU	I feel it would be too disruptive to the running of the council if all councillors are potentially changed at 4 year intervals.
NGB8yMpI	A gradual change is probably best as we have all seen how major changes can go wrong and have serious consequences!
hoDHtfex	Existing system gives valuable continuity conducive to service provision. Four year cycle will politicise the process benefiting few.
21B80ZJS	1. Locally, residents must have their say on issues affecting them more regularly than a four-year cycle. 2. With significant personnel changes, new councillor training may impact local decision-making. Electing in thirds helps mitigate this.
bFB8uJ8V	Once policies etc are in place for 4 years and are seen to be not acceptable then there's no way to change them quickly
x1DHiGfK	I don't agree. If the elected councillors aren't performing why should we not have the opportunity to replace poor performance and not have to wait 4 years! Especially now as the current independent party are practising not in my back yard politics!
llDHFt6h	Over four years councillors can become entrenched and complacent, which has happened in Tandridge. Annual elections allow people to express contrary views, limit damage caused by poor decisions and foster change over a shorter time period.
pWB8z00u	Current process maintains continuity, with gradual change. Engages electorate on regular basis and helps keep Councillors and groupings accountable. Gives activists and volunteers an opportunity to get involved in democratic process regularly.
A8DHKTpf	Losing all councillors every 4 yrs could be disruptive. At Brasted some councillors were available on the village green every yr to give the residents the opportunity to deliver their views on local needs.
scB86CKz	The major 'problem' that I perceive with the all out electoral system (other than, as you highlight, training incoming, inexperienced, councillors) is that what could be a 'rallying call' in Year 1 (eg partygate, expenses scandal, etc) might have disappeared completely by Year 5 and so the new councillors would have a completely different remit and take the council in a completely different direction, maybe making a 180 degree turn. On current basis, there is surely some 'continuity of thought'. Equally, under current system, if one or two councillors disagreed 'badly' with where council was heading, and felt out of tune with local populace, then they could resign - but under 4 year system, it is unlikely to be just 1 or 2, but a whole gamut of them. So, for these LOCAL elections, I say 'keep with'. IMHO.
lbB8jeQk	The current system is less disruptive and the council has time to change and absorb change.
jGDHEotd	I believe that the a third every year is more democratic
1SB8cqKJ	The present system seems to work well and avoid major disruption.
jaBjJwZN	It is more democratic to have the opportunity to vote every two years to reflect the current situation in the area and any contentious proposals or particular problems.
PrDHGFv1	Electing by 1/3 leads to a council driven by the needs of the community and not the electoral process. Wards for villages/rural/semi-rural communities need to be separate from the wards covering towns in order to ensure appropriate representation.

4IBjcpyG	I think it is useful to have a mixture of new and longer serving councillors, as with the current three-year system.
34B8jzZJ	the disadvantages outlined in your leaflet outweigh the benefits.
iXB8DueL	All out elections could mean a complete change of direction, which may be desirable in some instances but in many cases not. There could also be a massive loss of experience with new councillors taking months to find their feet.
PIB8r0yh	Moving to every 4 years will delay any solving any potential issues
9aBjOSHQ	All out elections allow councillors to cling to power whilst implementing unpopular undemocratic decisions. They dilute accountability. Councillors are servants of the people. Annual democratic votes allow electors to effect change when needed.
HEDHYjZq	The current system enabled people to object to the local plan in a timely manner. Under a 4 year system unwanted and a democratic changes would have been imposed.
vJDHJZxm	A one-off substantial change in councillors will cause loss of skills / knowledge and a period of inactivity. It also delays the opportunity to hold poor performing councillors to account.
xnB8Dblf	This will lead to even more bad policies than there are already. If the same administration is in power for four years there could be a great deal of damage done to our District.
x8B867sA	There was insufficient space for comments to restrict adverse comment I suspect, so would add: By electing a third we can in a small way try and weed out those Councillors who don't represent residents views and are just power hungry.
YKBjfkNM	It is important to have some continuity of experience. If everyone was new it would be a nightmare to manage. We are not government which has a lot of civil servants to hand to help.
HzBjGITk	Wholesale change every four years is far less fair and democratic. It dramatically reduces the voice of residents to determine how they are represented, and allows less-flexible, long-standing coalitions to build up amongst the elected members.
2VDHiGX2	Having a single councillor represent our village works very well. My son lives in a borough and finds the excellent local representation that we have in Tatsfield sadly lacking there. current system provides the continuity needed for local issues
7GBjkE4G	I think it is better to potentially avoid a lot of new untrained councillors at once and for voters not to have to wait 4 years between votes
pRB8CPgO	The annual opportunity allows for gradual change and yet still maintains an element of continuity in local government.
duDH9Hoo	The current system provides a level of continuity both in terms of knowledge and direction. All out elections could bring in large swings from one political administration to another.
4YBjTZNF	The back room staff stay the same no matter whether the councillors change or not
CEB8eraN	Current system ensures councillors remain attentive to local needs across the district throughout the council cycle.
P6B898qz	Moving to an all out electoral system will make councillors less accountable to electors Westminster elects every 4 years, not a good advertisement for this system. The more accountable councillors and the parties are to electors the better.
F2DHCZrU	All of a sudden there could be no experienced councillors to chair planning committees etc. I appreciate that it would be a lot cheaper to do this rather than every 2 years but don't think it is the way forward
aAB8MwUS	It takes months to understand how things work and how things are done in the council a large number of new councillors arriving in one go will totally disrupt the smooth running of council business to the detriment of our residents.
zlB86RS7	The system as it stands is very good. The thirds system allows the council to have members who have continuous knowledge
LAB80ddw	The 'all out ' election process makes sense because it would be easier and less of an expense however it also means residents would have less contact with the respective political groups and have less opportunity to voice their concerns.
vgB8L7N1	the rota of elections enables voters to change their minds it they are. 3 years is a long time in politics
eCB8H2jS	Current system provides better consistency and timelier decisions by voters. Voting every two years also makes parties more accountable to voters.
UGDHL5ZU	The proposal would harm the local electoral process as it would make results more dependent on what was happening at Westminster at that time.
LZDHHJjo	I consider the possibility of a large influx of new inexperienced councillors would be undesirable.

hcB8YxDS	The present system allows residents to indicate on a regular basis their opinion of the councils activities. This is more democratic than a 4 year system would be and a move to this electoral system would be a retrograde step.
XfB8rhP6	Election by thirds allows me and fellow voters to express our views on a regular basis, rather than once every four years, which will often be more influenced by the national situation than voters' views on council performance and services.
yyB89J6n	My preference for elections in thirds recognises the benefits of maintaining an awareness of the political process in the district.
dvBjLvOG	I believe all-out elections are not a good idea, they would be less democratic and whilst may be easier for Councils, the local polling stations etc any 'school or other disruption' is only 1 day pa.
SCB8y9fP	Election by thirds: a) maintains the expertise of the council body better b) is more continuously representative of public opinion c) means the make-up of the council is less influenced by national politics.
DFDHfBTK	This would mean that lots of inexperienced councillors would be making decisions on possibly legal, financial and planning issues outside their own ward with limited advice from colleagues.
ShBjKZlr	Having elections every year is more democratic as the councillors are more answerable on a regular basis. Waiting 4 years on local issues will entrench policies that could be detrimental and not be reflective of what the community needs or wants.
QrDHR5aR	All out elections are likely to be affected by prevailing national issues; loss of continuity of expertise. Smaller local parties may find it difficult to present a complete set of candidates for all seats in one year.
zqB8bg6z	I would not be supportive of a move to elections 4 yearly. At present if a councillor is failing to represent the views of residents and act in the best interest of the ward the electorate have a chance to effect change.
lCB8lEgZ	4 years is a lot longer than the present one year if you are not happy with a councillor
gzB8lZSN	Change in Councillors is good so more regular elections
tmB81fve	Like it the way it is
OlB8O2g6	I think by voting in thirds is a more democratic process
wQB8VwvP	Do not want all new people at once
M5B8nkjh	It needs to be controlled
rfB8VQwB	I would like things to remain as they are

Comments from those that favour whole Council elections

Response ID	Comments
EjBjfuwL	3rd prevents robust strategic decisions/leadership. Potential for too much change stops TDC from making real progress on strategic matters and direction setting. All out elections and a move to a cabinet system needed.
jrDH7fmf	More stability - less fluctuation
ADBjQKX5	Either way, it makes no difference if you continue with a first-past-the-post system which disenfranchises a large section of the public. I suggest that follow the Scottish government and adopt a single transferable vote system.
5TBjcrni	This will save money which is a priority for the council currently.
hUDHHVbC	Cost and time that would be saved by the Council not having to run elections every year
QiB8EVpg	Cost savings. Elections in 3rds can result in the administration changing every year now we have multi party rep. Single member wards preferable in all out elections- splits votes more complex to count. Mid Sussex took 14 hrs to count in 2019.
rgBjT2Ze	I am sure it will help the staff running elections to only have to run the local elections once every four years and therefore may hopefully benefit the council financially.
rkDHfmnq	This would provide a more cost effective option than the current system.
w1B8T7tu	The current system is costly and time consuming - whether it is the yearly election process itself and the work involved, the training of new councillors every year or the reluctance for councillors to take difficult decisions
5zB80UBT	It seems more efficient

oDBj3Uk7	As a Reigate and Banstead resident, the uniform pattern of 3 member wards has seen totally unrelated areas forced together and closely linked communities forced apart. I would not want Tandridge to face the same fate.
YOBjGwmS	It assists with the longer term planning and stability including financial. It allows officer and residents to have a clear understanding of the direction of travel for four years rather than changes every year.
RNBjjhaR	Elections every four years would be cheaper, give four years of stability to whoever is running the council and are easy for the public to understand.
8DBjA7Bp	Feels like we are constantly voting and if streamlined to every four years feel it would give better opportunity to see impacts
6TDHYi4X	How would the council deal with complaints about a councillor if they were not fulfilling their obligations within a 4 year period - can they still be removed from post? How would this occur?
AsB8fbTQ	Pros and cons to both. Holding it in thirds means officers gain more experience however, it also causes confusion for residents, presumably costs more money and leads to less stability.
yjDHCf1C	I believe that this would be the right way to go.
xRDHbiro	Electronic Voting would be good to implement.
m8B87BgZ	I think it is beneficial to keep ward boundaries largely unchanged plus given Tandridge's issues a stable administration for 4 years is preferable plus it will save money.
0UBjzuJa	As a past borough councillor in Epsom and Ewell borough, I found that knowing, you were in the council for four years and that ALL those around you would be there all that time, gave a much better continuity than the three year system does.
lNDHvjEv	I was a district Councillor 20 years ago. I thought then that we should move to all out elections every four years because with the current system, there is always electioneering rather than a focus on achieving longer term objectives.
TtDHFYVY	4-year cycle elections would give greater certainty and strategic capability which would be in the interests of residents as well as the Council.
eBB8YjIi	We couldn't vote because house bound and unable to post.
cgDHllLS	However unclear what it means for smaller communities like Limpsfield that would move from 2 to 3 councillors and therefore have to include communities that are not part of Limpsfield.
tUB8JhMl	With elections currently being held in thirds every year, this mean during pre-election period every year there is a period of time where work is stalled and no action taken. This is less efficient for officers.
lrDHS0Ho	Minimising costs, training time and disruptions One has to consider that the 30 odd% turnout reflects the interest that residents have, so a more stable leadership on behalf of all residents also makes sense.
bUDHsDeo	We have far too many District Councillors & I think that halving the number would save costs. A merger with another Council, perhaps Sevenoaks would save on costs but with a greatly reduced number of Councillors.
UvB85Xga	We should go to a proportional representation model for council elections
l2BjiEJL	More efficient and cost effective way of running Tandridge. Also gives electors a chance to judge council together on progress made in a four year period.
v1DHNQqX	Waste of time and money to have elections every year, never known any other council who does this. Archaic practice.
AGDHcC9L	It probably won't make any difference all the time that even the BASICS aren't dealt with by TDC or SCC on crime, litter, potholes and deliberately overbuilding.
vPDHMQeU	How will councillors just elected be impacted?
zqBjbPaE	Simple and easily understood process. Could stop a “hung” council. Electors will a have broader view in deciding their vote.
gVBjBUPw	All out elections every four years would be more cost effective and would enable greater political stability, providing the administration with a more reasonable timeframe in which to achieve their objectives. This approach works well elsewhere.
DyDHMA9X	I think it is easier to support and provide overviews of services for a whole lot of new councillors at one time.
g3Bj9lu2	Save money and people are more likely to come out and vote as they get sick of doing it every year.

TdBjLuu3	The election cost to TDC would only be incurred every four years. With annual elections, the potential for upsetting the political balance occurs annually. This doesn't allow all decisions to embed.
u7DHSCrm	I think this would make the administration easier and also improve the impact/influence of Councillors as they would be more 'all in'.
bIBjFKgO	This move will obviously save money firstly, but also would hopefully remove some of the political fighting and the toxic culture which the Council has experienced over recent years since becoming no overall control.
uiB8uNAc	Planning on a longer timescale than one year has to be better
BfDHRlvB	Hopefully it will lead to greater accountability and faster decision making with a Leader and Cabinet
nIBjLzCn	I'm assuming once every four years will considerably reduce costs and work.
VRDHFPRS	When are you going to encourage more than 35 % of the voting public to actually vote. This questionnaire is s meaningless when so few actually vote in the first place
g5DHpV73	One would think that there would be a saving to the council (even if not direct) by consolidating the elections into one as suggested by this public consultation and, given the current council budget short fall, would be of great benefit.
urDHZ9gE	Not only would this save money but it would save Officer time.
BSDHo2yP	A saving will be made as there will be less costs and time of TDC officers will be incurred
q6Bjf8Nj	Every 4 years and all at the same time will stop any collusion between parties to gain majority seats.
lvDH6WAL	Makes more sense and is in line with the nationwide trend to move to four yearly all out elections. Result in less time and money spent administering the elections, increased voter turnout and provide more stable political leadership.
AUB8P4Vw	People won't bother to vote if elections are too frequent
kWB8YNhm	A less burdensome system all over the country would be a good move in my opinion. Perhaps it would encourage more people to vote
w8B8WlpA	I am in favour of complete democracy and of fitting into a pattern similar to the rest of the country