Scotland's Councillors 2017-2022

improvement **service**

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Executive Summary

Key Findings

33.3% of Scottish councillors responded to the current survey. The average councillor who responded is a married white male, aged 50-59, who is a well-educated homeowner coming from a managerial or professional occupational background. The only difference between the average councillor in 2017 and the average councillor at the time of the 2013 survey, is that they are now younger.

Age

- The average age of councillors who responded is 53.
- 67% of councillors who responded were aged 50 or above.
- Less than 20% were aged below 40 years-old.
- 6.9% of councillors were aged between 70 and 79, which was 1% higher than the percentage who were aged between 18 and 29.

Gender

- Of those councillors who responded to the survey, 65.7% were male, 32.6% were female, and 1% described their gender in another way.
- When asked in a separate question, 1.2% of respondents considered themselves to be a trans person.

Ethnicity

- 98% of councillors responding to the survey selected 'White' as their ethnic group. This is a little overrepresented compared to the Scottish population (96%).
- Only 0.2% of councillors that responded to the survey are Asian, which is an underrepresentation compared to 2.3% the Scottish population.

Religion

- Most councillors who responded belonged to a religious denomination (58.6%).
- The Scottish demographic shows a more equal distribution between those belonging to a religious denomination and those not belonging to one, with 48.5% stating they belong to a religious denomination (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

Marital Status

- 65.2% of councillors responding to the survey said they are married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership. This is higher than the 47.3% of the Scottish population who have these legal marital statuses (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

Education

- In general councillors have a high level of education as 62.8% said their highest level of qualification is a degree or professional qualification.

- This is much higher than the Scottish population where only 30.3% state a degree or professional qualification as their highest-level qualification (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

Occupation

- Most councillors responding were in additional employment alongside their councillor role (52.2%).

- A smaller proportion were employed full time (14.5%), compared with those employed part time (18.4%), and those who were self-employed (19.4%).

- Councillors came from a variety of occupational backgrounds. However, a higher proportion came from managerial or professional occupations compared with those from manual or service occupations.

Housing Tenure

- Of councillors who responded, 83.3% own their property outright or are buying with a mortgage. This is much higher than the 60.8% of the Scottish population who occupy their accommodation in this way (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

Councillors' Responsibilities

- When asked how many hours they spend, or anticipate spending on their councillors' duties, the largest proportion of councillors selected between 26-30 hours per week.

- Across the range of hours selected, councillors who had been previously elected were more likely to select a higher number of hours spent on councillors' duties compared with the anticipated time newly elected councillors thought they would spend.
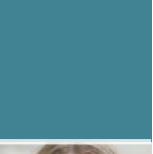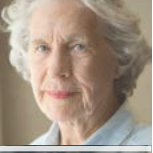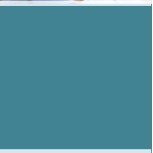
- Councillors with additional employment were most likely to state that they spent or anticipated to spend 26-30 hours on councillor duties (22.1%) and either 16-20 hours at their additional employment (17.0%) or 36-40 hours (16.5%).

- Of the councillors who also stated to be in additional employment (excluding those who are self-employed), 32.8% were permitted to have at least some paid time off for councillor duties, while 34.3% were permitted at least some unpaid time off.

Health

- 85% of councillors rated their general health as good or very good, which is comparatively higher than the 73% of the Scottish population who rated their health in this way (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

- 28.3% of councillors confirmed having a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more, comparable with the Scottish population (30.4%) (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

- Of those who did state to having some condition or illness, only 2.7% agreed that this condition reduces their ability to carry-out day-to-day activities a lot. 53.1% agreed that it limited them a little and 44.2% stated that it did not limit them at all.

Elections

- 33.3% of councillors across Scotland responded to the survey.

- Out of the councillors who responded, 43.9% had been previously elected prior to the 2017 election and 56.1% were new councillors.

- Many of the councillors selected multiple reasons for standing at the election but the most popular choices were, 'interest in the community' (86.6%), 'to improve services and/or local area' (81.7%), 'duty/public service' (59.4%) and 'to promote party objectives' (45.3%).

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

In July and August 2017, the Improvement Service carried out a survey of all councillors in Scotland. This report details the findings of this survey and explores how councillors compare with the Scottish population. The purpose of this survey was to develop a better understanding of Scotland's current councillors following the May 2017 election. The survey examined the demographic profile of councillors, such as their age, gender and ethnicity but also looked at questions relating particularly to the councillor role, for example additional employment status, how councillor duties are managed and why councillors chose to stand at the election.

The survey is like the surveys of councillors carried out by the Improvement Service in 2007 and 2013. The report contains some broad comparisons with the most recent 2013 survey. However, it should be noted that the sample sizes for these surveys differ, and both surveys are not reflective of all Scottish councillors, therefore comparisons should be treated with caution.

This report also makes comparisons with the most recently published 2016 Scottish Household Survey. This survey is a representative sample of the characteristics of the Scottish population and has a sample size of approximately 9,600 (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). Although the Scottish Household survey does not include the entire Scottish population it is the most up to date representative source when compared with the National Census which was carried out in 2011. Where possible, the current survey questions have been designed to be directly comparable with the Scottish Household Survey. Another issue to be aware of when interpreting comparisons with the Scottish Household Survey is that adults are classed as 16 and above, whereas councillors are 18 or above, thus by default some comparisons will have a different age composition. Nevertheless, these comparisons are the most up to date available, and given that the councillor survey only reflects a sample of all of Scotland's councillors these comparisons are intended as a best understanding of the make-up of councillors.

1.2 Response Rate

There were 408 responses to the survey, out of 1227 councillors, which gives a response rate of 33.3%. This was an increase of 7.1 percentage points from the response rate to the 2013 survey. Differing from the 2013 survey, the current survey allowed councillors to complete a paper response if they were unable to complete the survey online. This gave

councillors greater flexibility in their responses. However, it is likely to have only marginally impacted the response rate as only 2.5% of councillors submitted a paper response. Not all questions in the survey were completed by every individual therefore the percentages reported are not always based on 408 responses.

1.3 Political Affiliation

The political affiliation of respondents is closely representative of the political affiliation of councillors across Scotland, except for the Labour Party which is underrepresented in the proportion of survey respondents. This is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - Political Affiliation

Political Party	Survey Respondents	Total Scottish Councillor Population*	Difference
Scottish National Party (SNP)	37.0%	35.1%	1.9%
Labour Party	17.4%	21.4%	-4.0%
Conservative and Unionist Party	24.0%	22.5%	1.5%
Liberal Democrats	5.4%	5.5%	-0.1%
Scottish Green Party	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%
Independent	14.0%	13.7%	0.3%
Other	0.7%	0.3%	0.4%

* (SLGE2017 Summary Results Data)

Figure 1 displays the proportion of councillors in each party, and Independents, that responded to the survey, by whether they were previously elected or not.

Figure 1 - Political Party Affiliation
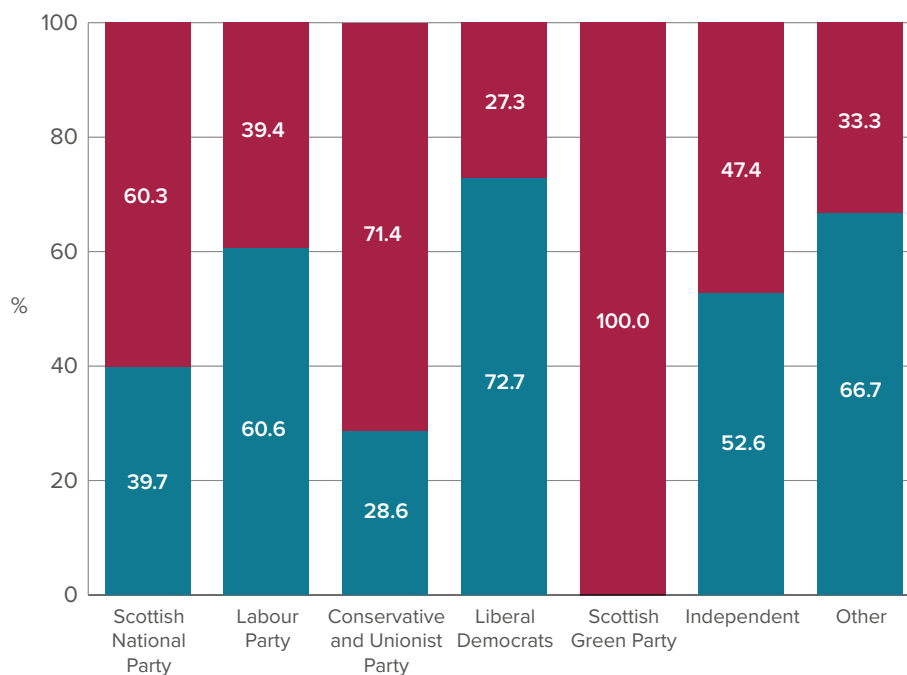
1.4 Council Affiliation

Table 2 shows a breakdown of responses by the council they represent and a comparison with the distribution of the total councillor population (Local Government Elections 2017, SPICe Briefing).

Table 2 - Council Affiliation

Council	Survey Responses	Total Scottish Councillors*
Aberdeen City	2.5%	3.7%
Aberdeenshire	7.4%	5.7%
Angus	3.2%	2.3%
Argyll & Bute	3.4%	2.9%
City of Edinburgh	4.7%	5.1%
Clackmannanshire	2.7%	1.5%
Dumfries & Galloway	2.5%	3.5%
Dundee City	2.5%	2.4%
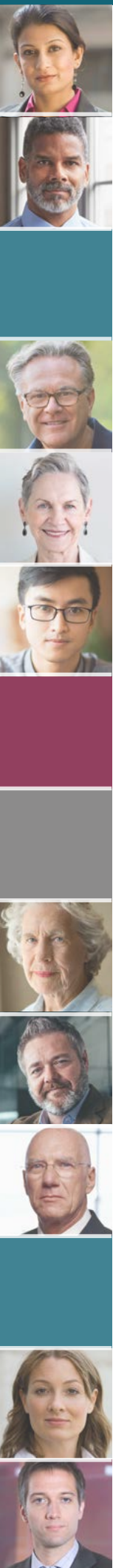
Council	Survey Responses	Total Scottish Councillors*
East Ayrshire	2.7%	2.6%
East Dunbartonshire	1.7%	1.8%
East Lothian	2.0%	1.8%
East Renfrewshire	1.7%	1.5%
Falkirk	3.2%	2.4%
Fife	4.7%	6.1%
Glasgow City	5.4%	6.9%
Highland	4.2%	6.0%
Inverclyde	2.0%	1.8%
Midlothian	2.2%	1.5%
Moray	1.7%	2.1%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	2.5%	2.5%
North Ayrshire	3.2%	2.7%
North Lanarkshire	3.9%	6.3%
Orkney Islands	0.7%	1.7%
Perth & Kinross	5.9%	3.3%
Renfrewshire	2.9%	3.5%
Scottish Borders	3.4%	2.8%
Shetland Islands	1.5%	1.8%
South Ayrshire	2.5%	2.3%
South Lanarkshire	5.6%	5.2%
Stirling	2.7%	1.9%
West Dunbartonshire	1.7%	1.8%
West Lothian	3.4%	2.7%

*(Local Government Elections 2017, SPICe Briefing)

2. Demographic Profiles

2.1 Age

Figure 2 shows the age breakdown of councillors who responded to the survey. The majority (60.1%) were aged between 50 and 69 years old, whereas only 17% were aged below 40. The average age of councillors who responded to the survey was 53 years old.

Figure 2 - Age Profile of Councillors
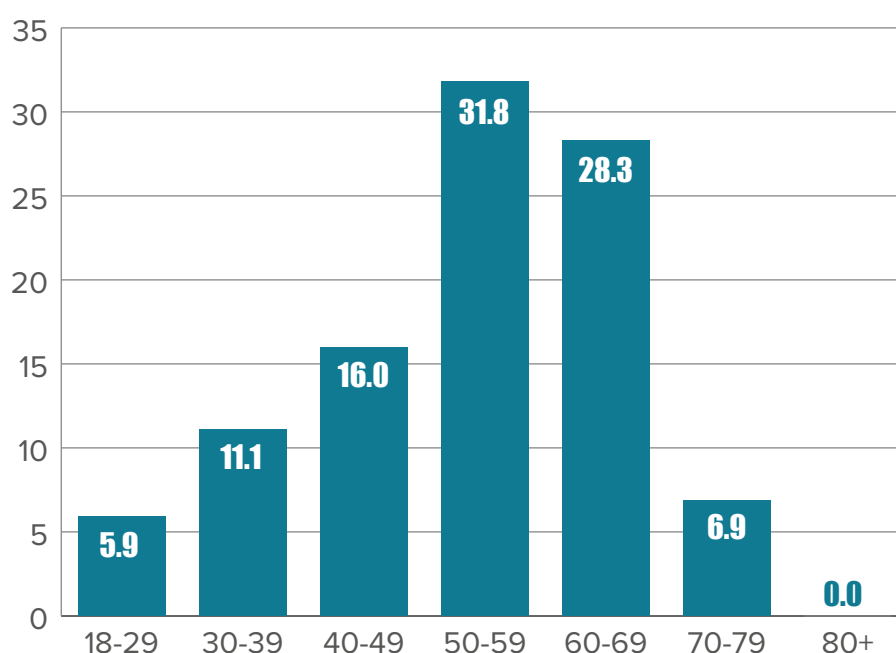
2.1.1 Age Profile of councillors by party

Figure 3 and Table 3 display the age distribution of councillors within each political party and Independents. The average age of councillors who responded from the Scottish Green Party (41 years old) was substantially lower than the average age from other parties/Independents. For the rest of the political parties the largest proportion of councillors responding were in the age range 50-59, following the overall trend. For Independents and Others, the largest proportion were in the age range 60-69.

Figure 3 - Age Breakdown/Median by Political Party and Independents
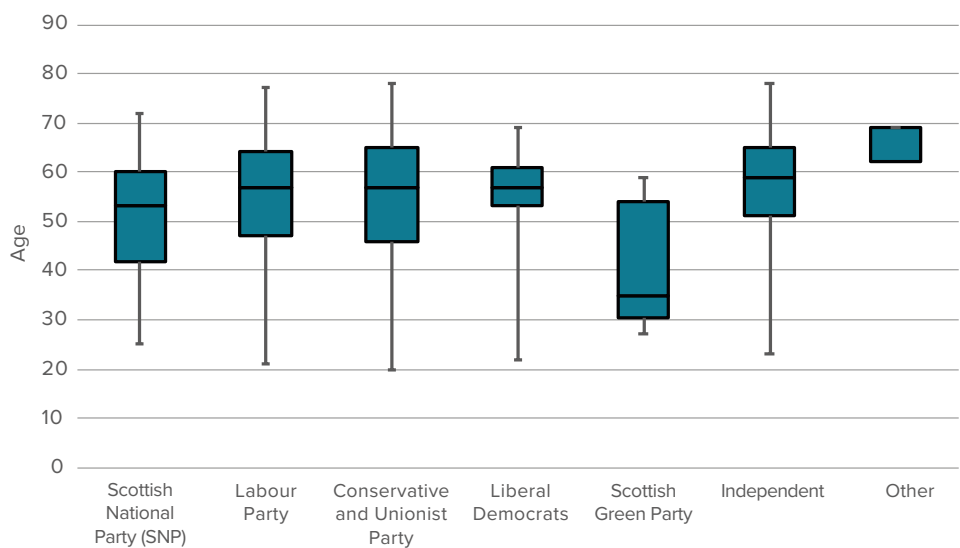
Table 3 - Age Breakdown by Political Party and Independents

Political Party	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Average
Scottish National Party (SNP)	25	53	72	51
Labour Party	21	57	77	55
Conservative and Unionist Party	20	57	78	55
Liberal Democrats	22	57	69	55
Scottish Green Party	27	35	59	41
Independent	23	59	78	56
Other	55	69	69	64

2.2 Gender

The responses indicate a gender imbalance among councillors, with 65.7% describing themselves as male, compared with 32.6% female, and 1% 'In another way'. There was also 0.7% who preferred not to say. This sample is very similar to the gender split amongst all Scottish councillors. Females are only slightly overrepresented in the survey, with figures indicating that across Scotland 30.5% of councillors are female and 69.5% are male (*Local Government Elections 2017, SPICe Briefing*). However, it should be noted that that these

figures in the SPICe Briefing do not include those who describe their gender in another way or those who prefer not to say.

Compared with the Scottish population, gender is highly disproportionate. In Scotland, the adult population is 48% male and 52% female (*Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey*).

2.2.1 Gender by political party and Independents

Amongst all Scottish councillors, the Scottish Green Party are the most equal party in terms of gender, and in this survey are vastly overrepresented by their female councillors. Of the five main parties, the Conservative and Unionist Party has the smallest proportion of female respondents which is also the case for the actual figures across Scotland. Independent councillors are the least gender balanced in terms of the survey and the actual figures across Scotland. Table 4 displays this breakdown. It should be noted that this table does not include survey respondents who described their gender in another way or those who preferred not to say as there were no comparative figures for the total Scottish councillor population.

Table 4 - Gender by Political Party

Political Party	Male		Female	
	Survey Responses	Total Scottish Councillor population*	Survey Responses	Total Scottish Councillor population*
Scottish National Party (SNP)	53.0%	58.7%	45.0%	41.3%
Labour Party	66.2%	68.1%	33.8%	31.9%
Conservative and Unionist Party	81.6%	78.7%	16.3%	21.3%
Liberal Democrats	50.0%	67.2%	50.0%	32.8%
Scottish Green Party	16.7%	54.6%	83.3%	45.4%
Independent	82.5%	81.6%	14.0%	18.4%
Other	66.7%	81.6%	33.3%	18.4%
Total	65.7%	69.5%	32.6%	30.5%

*(*Local Government Elections 2017, SPICe Briefing*)

2.3 Ethnicity

Table 5 displays a breakdown of ethnicity for the councillors responding to the survey, compared with the ethnicity of the Scottish population. White councillors are overrepresented in the survey (98%), compared with 96% in the Scottish population. Not all 'White' ethnicities are overrepresented however, as there were no 'White Polish' responses despite making up 1.8% of the Scottish population. It should be noted that 1.5% of councillors refused to respond to the question

Table 5 - Ethnicity of Councillors

Ethnicity	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
White	**98.0%**	**96.0%**
White Scottish	78.7%	78.9%
White Other British	15.2%	11.9%
White Irish	1.5%	1.0%
White Gypsy/Traveller	0.0%	0.0%
White Polish	0.0%	1.8%
Other White ethnic group	2.7%	2.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
Asian	**0.2%**	**2.3%**
Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British	0.0%	0.7%
Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British	0.2%	0.5%
Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British	0.0%	0.1%
Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British	0.0%	0.5%
Other Asian ethnic group	0.0%	0.5%
African	**0.0%**	**0.5%**
African, African Scottish or African British	0.0%	0.3%
Other African ethnic group	0.0%	0.2%
Caribbean or Black	**0.0%**	**0.1%**
Caribbean, Caribbean Scottish or Caribbean British	0.0%	0.1%

| Ethnicity	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
Black, Black Scottish or Black British	0.0%	0.0%
Other Caribbean or Black ethnic group	0.0%	0.0%
Other Ethnic Group	**0.2%**	**0.7%****
Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British	0.0%	0.2%
Any other ethnic group (please specify)	0.2%	0.6%
Don't know	**0.0%**	**0.0%**
Refuse	**1.5%**	**0.1%**

*(*Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey*)
**Total percentages may not add up due to rounding up of sub-category percentages

A group which is overrepresented in the survey is 'White Other British', with 15.2% of survey respondents selecting this ethnicity compared with11.9% of the Scottish population (*Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey*). However, this figure may be skewed. 2.21% of councillors raised an objection to the term 'White Other British' stating that they felt the word 'Other' should be dropped to allow them to choose between 'White Scottish' or 'White British'. The wording of this category used the same wording as the Scottish Household Survey and was kept the same to allow a meaningful comparison with the general population.

2.4 Religious Denomination

Of the councillors who responded to the survey, 58.6% belonged to a religion or religious denomination. A breakdown of these religions is displayed in Figure 4. This proportion is higher than the Scottish population where there is a more even split between religion (48.5%) and no religion (51.5%) (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). There is also less diversity in the religions selected by councillors, as displayed in Table 7. The councillors who responded belonged predominately to a denomination of Christianity.

Figure 4 - Religious Denomination of Councillors
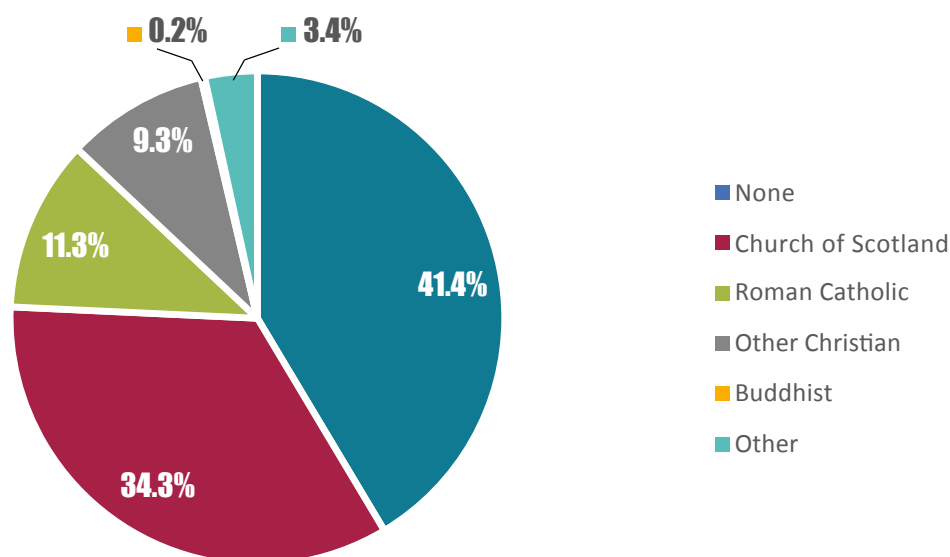
Of the councillors who selected the option 'Other' a number of these councillors stated they belonged to the Church of England. This group accounts for 1% of the survey responses. Other responses that were represented include 'Humanist' and 'Spiritualist'.

Table 6 - Religious Denomination of Councillors

Religion/Religious denomination	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
None	41.4%	51.5%
Church of Scotland	34.3%	24.0%
Roman Catholic	11.3%	13.8%
Other Christian	9.3%	7.8%
Muslim	0.0%	1.4%
Buddhist	0.2%	0.3%
Sikh	0.0%	0.1%
Jewish	0.0%	0.1%
Hindu	0.0%	0.3%
Pagan	0.0%	0.2%
Other	3.4%	0.6%

*(Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

2.5 Marital Status and Sexual Orientation

Table 7 shows that most councillors who responded to the survey are married or in a registered same-sex civil partnership (65.2%). This is substantially higher than the proportion of the Scottish population who share this marital status (47.3%) (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). It is possible that this result may be related to the older age range of the councillors who responded.
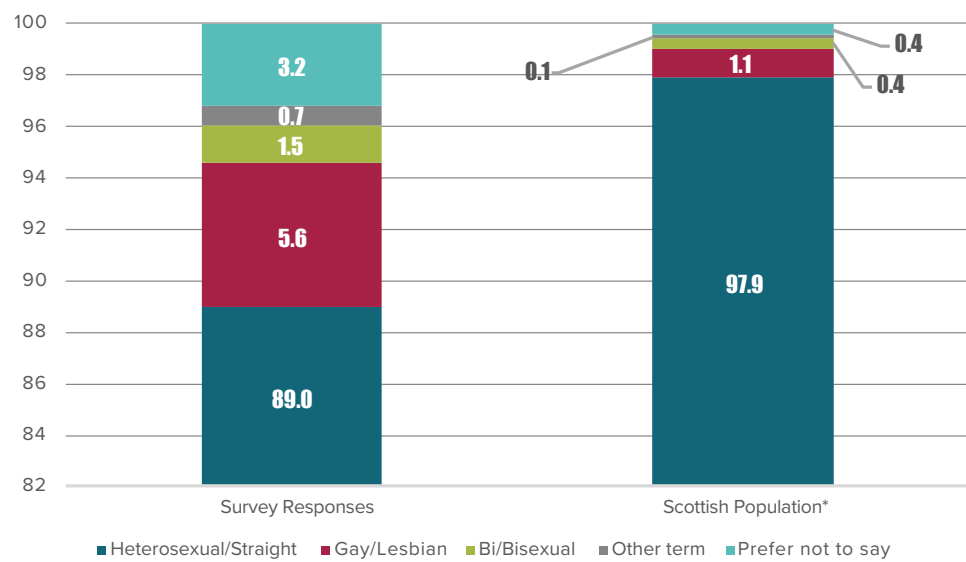
Table 7 - Marital Status of Councillors

Marital Status	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
Never married and never registered in a same-sex civil partnership	20.3%	35.8%
Married	64.7%	47.1%
In a registered same-sex civil partnership	0.5%	0.2%
Separated, but still legally married/ in a same-sex civil partnership	1.5%	2.4%
Divorced	10.0%	7.5%
Formally in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	0.0%	0.0%
Widowed	2.9%	6.9%
Surviving partner from a same-sex civil partnership	0.0%	0.0%

(Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey).

Compared with the Scottish population the councillors who responded to the survey had more diverse sexual orientations (*Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey*). As displayed in Figure 5, 5.6% of councillors who responded identify as gay/lesbian and 1.5% identify as bi/bisexual, compared with 1.1% and 0.4% of the Scottish population.

Figure 5 - Sexual Orientation of Councillors

Legend: ■ Heterosexual/Straight ■ Gay/Lesbian ■ Bi/Bisexual ■ Other term ■ Prefer not to say

Survey Responses: Heterosexual/Straight 89.0, Gay/Lesbian 5.6, Bi/Bisexual 1.5, Other term 0.7, Prefer not to say 3.2

Scottish Population*: Heterosexual/Straight 97.9, Gay/Lesbian 1.1, Bi/Bisexual 0.1, Other term 0.4, Prefer not to say 0.4

(Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey)

3. Education and Employment

3.1 Education

Most councillors who responded to the survey are highly qualified, with 62.8% holding a degree or professional qualification (or equivalent) as their highest-level qualification. In the Scottish population only 30.3% hold this as their highest-level qualification (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). Furthermore, only a very small proportion of respondents had no qualifications (3.5%) compared with 19.6% in the Scottish population (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). A breakdown of councillors' highest-level qualifications is displayed in Table 8. It should be highlighted that the adults included in the Scottish Household Survey data are aged 16 and above, compared with councillors who are aged 18 and above, and this difference in age may account for some of the differences between councillors and the Scottish population. Nevertheless, councillors who responded to the survey are still highly educated in their own right.

Table 8 - Councillors' Highest Level Qualification

Highest Level Qualification	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
Degree, Professional Qualification (or equivalent)	62.8%	30.3%
HNC/HND or equivalent	12.8%	11.1%
Higher, A level or equivalent	11.5%	16.5%
O Grade, Standard Grade or equivalent	6.3%	17.4%
No qualifications	3.5%	19.6%
Other qualification	2.3%	4.4%
Qualifications not known	1.0%	0.7%

(Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey)

3.1.1 Gender Comparison

Female councillors who responded to the survey held on average higher-level qualifications than males who responded. 75.8% of female respondents held a degree, professional qualification or equivalent as their highest-level qualification. This proportion is considerably higher than the 55.6% of male councillors whose highest qualification was a degree, professional qualification or equivalent. This gender difference is much more evident than in the Scottish population where the proportion of females with a degree, professional qualification or equivalent is 30.4% compared with 30.1% of males (Scotland's People Annual

Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). A detailed breakdown of the gender differences of highest level qualifications is displayed in table 10.

*Table 9 - Gender Breakdown of Highest Level Qualification*

Highest Level Qualification	Survey Responses		Scottish Population*	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Degree, Professional Qualification (or equivalent)	55.6%	75.8%	30.1%	30.4%
HNC/HND or equivalent	15.7%	7.6%	11.4%	10.9%
Higher, A level or equivalent	14.2%	6.8%	17.9%	15.2%
O Grade, Standard Grade or equivalent	7.3%	4.5%	16.4%	18.4%
No qualifications	4.2%	2.3%	20.0%	19.2%
Other qualification	2.3%	2.3%	3.6%	5.1%
Qualifications not known	0.8%	0.8%	0.6%	0.8%

(Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey)

3.2 Employment Status

Just over half of councillors responding were in additional employment alongside their councillors' duties (52.2%). Of those councillors who were not in additional employment the most common response was 'Permanently retired from work' (23.3%), which is much higher than the percentage of the Scottish population who are retired (5.5%) (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). There was also a relatively large proportion of councillors who selected the option 'Other' (11%). 60% of councillors who selected this option believed that the position of councillor required full time commitment and thus they did not have time for additional employment. Other responses to this option included; councillors who left their job to take on the role of councillor, councillors who were volunteering, councillors with carer responsibilities and those who were split between multiple roles. A breakdown of councillors' employment status is presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6 - Employment Status of Councillors
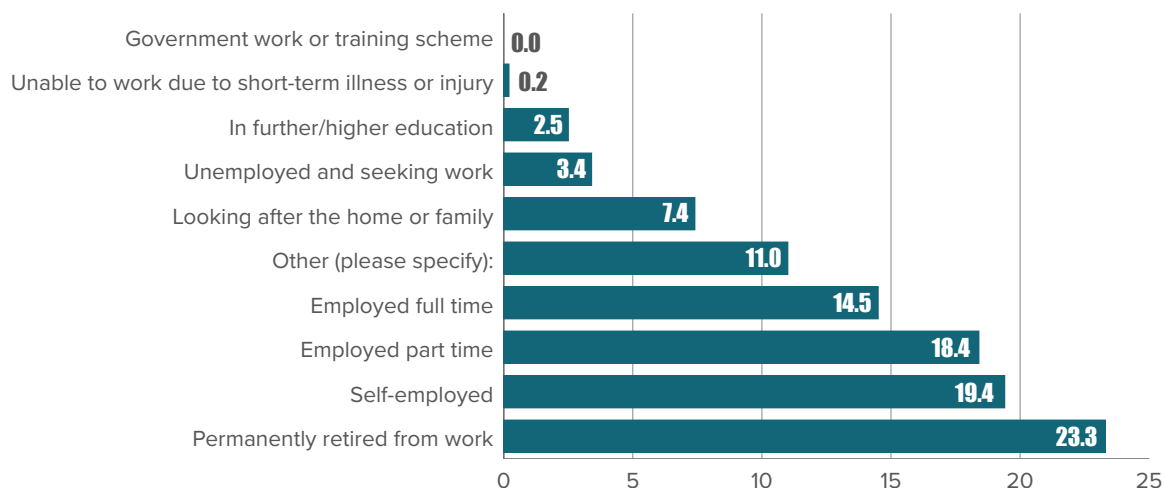
The role of councillor appears to mainly attract people from managerial or professional backgrounds. As seen in Table 10, 28.4% of councillors' occupational type, or most recent occupational type, fell under the category 'Modern Professional'. This occupation, alongside senior management positions, were slightly more common in female councillors, whereas male councillors were greater represented in technical and craft occupations.

Table 10 - Councillors Occupational Type

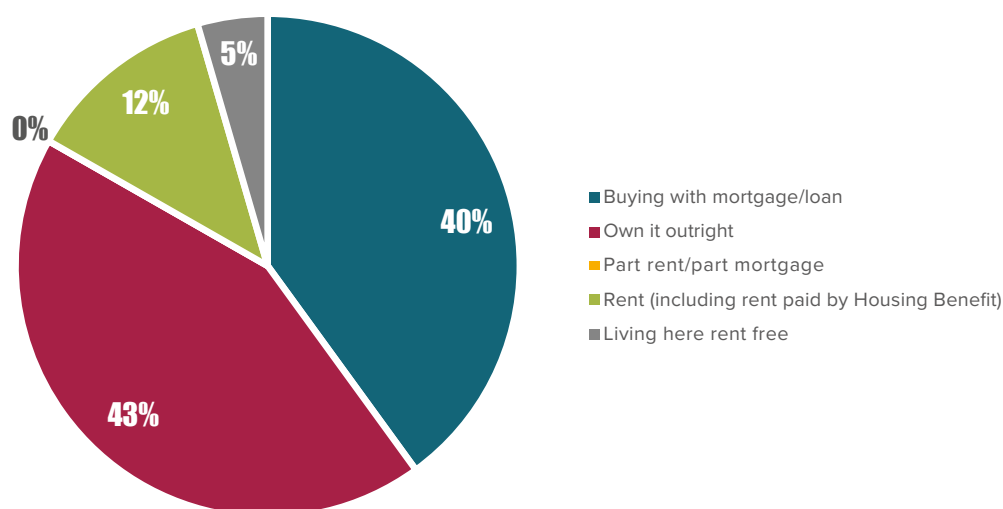| Occupational Type	Male	Female	All
Modern Professional (e.g. teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, welfare officer, artist, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer)	27.2%	32.3%	28.4%
Traditional Professional (e.g. accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil/mechanical engineer)	17.5%	8.3%	14.5%
Clerical and intermediate occupations (e.g. secretary, personal assistant, clerical worker, officer clerk, call centre agent, nurse auxiliary, nursery nurse)	7.8%	15.0%	10.0%
Senior Managers or Administrator (usually responsible for planning, organising and coordinating work and for finance) e.g. finance manager, chief executive	17.5%	19.5%	18.6%
Technical and craft occupations (e.g. motor mechanic, fitter, inspector, plumber, printer, tool maker, electrician, gardener, train driver)	6.0%	0.8%	4.2%

Occupational Type	Male	Female	All
Semi-routine manual and service occupations (e.g. postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, receptionist, sales assistant)	4.1%	3.0%	3.7%
Routine Manual and service occupations (e.g. HGV driver, van driver, cleaner, porter, packer, sewing machinist, messenger, labourer, waiter/waitress, bar staff)	1.9%	3.0%	2.2%
Middle or Junior Manager (e.g. Officer manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager, publican)	9.3%	7.5%	9.1%
Not Applicable	8.6%	10.5%	9.3%

4. Housing Tenure

4.1 Housing Tenure

Most councillors who responded to the survey own their property or are currently buying with a mortgage/loan (83.3%). This is much more uncommon in the Scottish population where 60.8% occupy their accommodation in this way (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). Again, this difference may be a result of the higher age range of councillors which may make it more likely that they will own their own property. Figure 9 displays a breakdown of housing tenure and shows that of the councillors who own their property, there is an almost equal distribution between those who own it outright and those who are buying with a mortgage/loan.

Figure 7 - Housing Tenure of Councillors

- Buying with mortgage/loan
- Own it outright
- Part rent/part mortgage
- Rent (including rent paid by Housing Benefit)
- Living here rent free

5. Councillors' Responsibilities

5.1 Hours spent on councillor duties

Table 11 shows the hours per week councillors spend on councillor duties, or anticipate spending if they are a new councillor. Both returning councillors and new councillors were most likely to respond with between 26-30 hours per week. An interesting difference is that returning councillors were more likely to select a higher number of hours than new councillors. For example, there was an 8.1% difference between the proportion of returning councillors who selected 46-50 hours per week (11.2%) and the proportion of new councillors who anticipated spending this same amount of time (3.1%). Returning councillors who selected 56-60 hours per week (5.0%) was 4.2% higher than new councillors (0.9%). This may indicate that councillor duties take up more time than councillors first anticipate when they take on the role, which is consistent with anecdotal evidence from councillors.

Table 11 - Hours Spent on Councillor Duties

Hours Spent/Anticipated to Spend on Councillor Duties	Returning Councillors	New Councillors
5 or less	0.0%	0.0%
6-10	0.0%	1.3%
11-15	1.7%	6.6%
16-20	7.3%	0.0%
21-25	12.8%	20.1%
26-30	19.6%	21.8%
31-35	14.5%	13.1%
36-40	11.2%	11.4%
41-45	10.1%	6.6%
46-50	11.2%	3.1%
51-55	3.9%	0.4%
56-60	5.0%	0.9%
61-65	1.1%	0.4%
66-70	0.6%	0.4%
71-75	0.0%	0.0%
76-80	0.6%	0.0%
80 or above	0.6%	0.9%

5.2 Additional Employment

Most councillors who responded to the survey are employed in addition to their councillor duties (52.2%). Of the councillors who are in additional employment the largest percentage of these councillors stated that they spend, or anticipate spending, 26-30 hours on councillor duties (22.1%). This was also the most common response from councillors who were not in additional employment (19.5%). However, councillors who had no additional employment were more likely to spend, or anticipate spending, over 30 hours on councillor duties compared with councillors who managed their duties with additional work commitments. This relationship is displayed in figure 10.

Figure 8 - Hours Spent/Anticipated to Spend on Councillor Duties
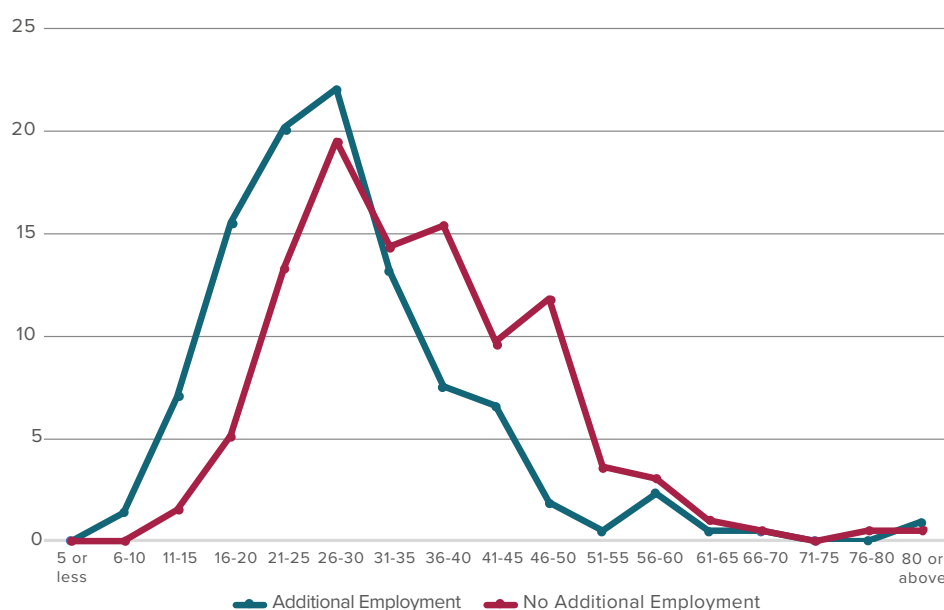
5.3 Hours spent in additional employment

Only a small proportion of councillors who are in additional employment spend over 40 hours in this employment (12.1%). A breakdown of the average weekly working hours' councillors spend in additional employment is displayed in Table 12.

Table 12 - Hours Spent in Additional Employment

Average Hours Spent in Additional Employment	% of Councillors in Additional Employment
5 or less	3.6%
6-10	5.8%
11-15	7.6%
16-20	17.0%
21-25	14.7%
26-30	11.2%
31-35	11.6%
36-40	16.5%
41-45	5.8%
46-50	3.1%
51-55	0.9%
56-60	1.3%
61-65	0.0%
66-70	0.0%
71-75	0.0%
76-80	0.0%
80 or above	0.9%

5.4 Time Off from Paid Employment for Council Business

Councillors who are employed in addition to their councillor duties vary in how they manage their councillor duties with their employer. A breakdown of this can be seen in Table 13. There is only a very small proportion of councillors whose employer does not allow time off for council business (2.2%). There is a slightly higher proportion of councillors whose employer only allows unpaid time off (34.3%) compared with those who can take paid time off (32.8%). Councillors who are only able to take unpaid time off may find it more difficult to manage employment on top of their councillor duties, especially if their duties demand more of their time than anticipated. A large proportion of councillors stated other ways in which they manage their employment (22.4%). Approximately 43% of those who selected this

option stated that they had a flexible working schedule which enabled them to fit in their council business. There were also a number of councillors who stated that they had reduced their hours since becoming a councillor, and others who used their annual leave for council business.

It's worth noting that employers are required under the Employment Rights Act 1996 to give reasonable time off for public duties, though this doesn't have to be paid.

Table 13 - Time Off Employment for Councillor Duties

Time Off Employment (Excluding Self-Employed)	% of Survey Responses
My employer allows me unlimited paid time off for council business	9.0%
My employer allows me limited paid time off for council business	23.9%
My employer allows me unlimited unpaid time off for council business	13.4%
My employer allows me limited unpaid time off for council business	20.9%
I have never asked for time off for council business	8.2%
My employer will not allow time off for council business	2.2%
Other	22.4%

6. Health

Table 14 shows the self-related health of councillors responding to the survey compared with the Scottish population. On average, the councillors responding were more likely to rate their health as good or very good (85%) compared with the Scottish population (73%) (The Scottish Health Survey 2016: Volume 1: Main Report).

Table 14 - General Health of Councillors

Health in General	Survey Responses	Scottish Population*
Very Good	35.3%	31.3%
Good	49.6%	41.8%
Fair	12.8%	18.4%
Bad	2.3%	6.5%
Very Bad	0.0%	2.1%

*(*The Scottish Health Survey 2016: Volume 1: Main Report*)

The proportion of councillors who had a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more was comparable with the Scottish population (28.3% Survey responses, 30.4% Scottish population) (Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey). Of those councillors who did have such a condition only 2.7% stated that this condition reduced their ability to carry out day to day activities. 53.1% felt it reduced their abilities a little and 44.2% felt it did not have an impact.

7. Local Government Elections

7.1 Returning and newly elected councillors

43.9% of councillors were returning councillors who had previously been elected prior to the 2017 council elections. Figure 10 shows that this is comparatively lower than the percentage of returning councillors responding to the 2013 survey (66.7%). Of the returning councillors in the current survey, 53.1% were previously elected before the 2012 council elections.

Figure 9 - Returning and Newly Elected Councillors
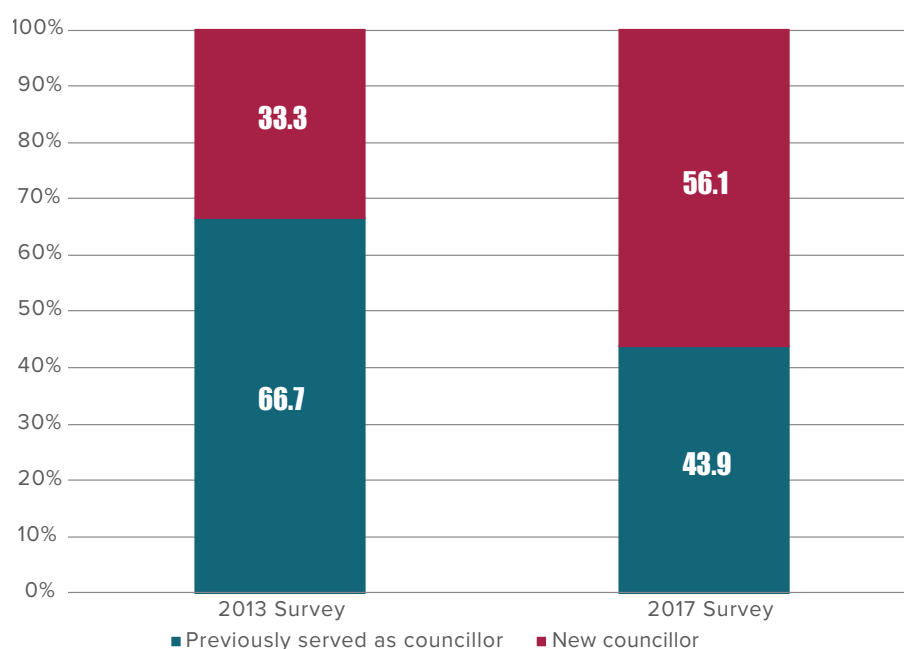
7.2 Councillors' motivations for standing for elections

Figure 11 shows councillors' reasons for standing at the election. The two most popular reasons for standing were 'Interest in the community' (86.6%) and 'To improve services and/or local area (81.7%). Table 15 shows each councillors' top motivation for standing, out of the reasons they had selected. Interestingly 45.3% of councillors selected 'To promote party objectives' as one of their reasons for standing, however only 4.8% of councillors stated this as their top motivation. This may suggest that for many councillors, party politics contributes to their decision to become a councillor, but local considerations remain the biggest motivator for councillors in Scotland.

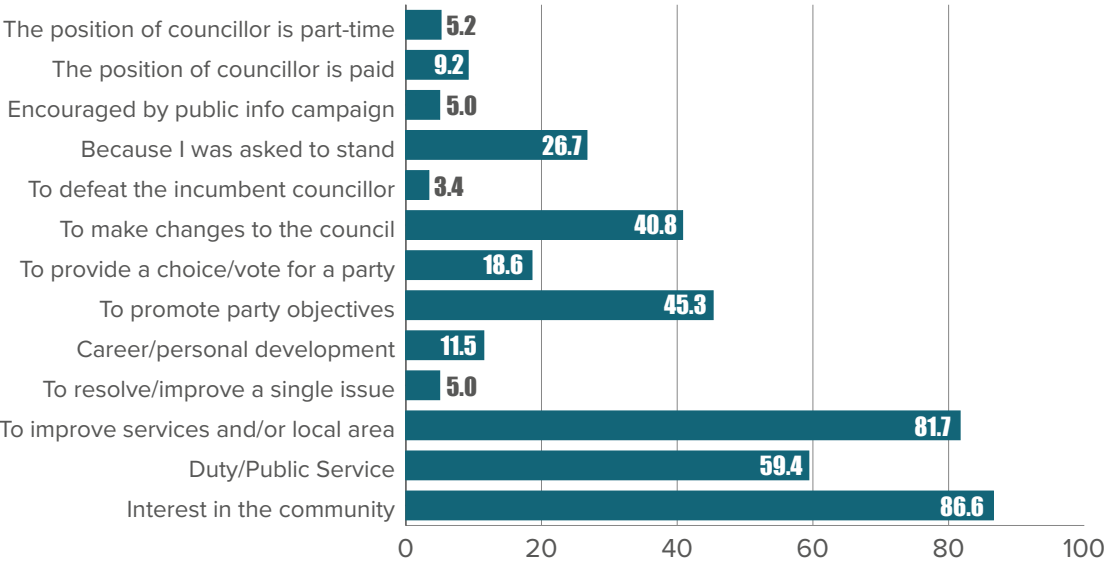*Figure 10 - Councillors' Motivation for Standing at the 2017 Election*

Motivation	%
The position of councillor is part-time	5.2
The position of councillor is paid	9.2
Encouraged by public info campaign	5.0
Because I was asked to stand	26.7
To defeat the incumbent councillor	3.4
To make changes to the council	40.8
To provide a choice/vote for a party	18.6
To promote party objectives	45.3
Career/personal development	11.5
To resolve/improve a single issue	5.0
To improve services and/or local area	81.7
Duty/Public Service	59.4
Interest in the community	86.6

Table 15 - Councillors' Top Motivation for Standing

Top Motivation for Standing	% of Councillors
Interest in the community	31.3%
Duty/Public Service	18.1%
To improve services and/or local area	31.9%
To resolve/improve a single issue	1.8%
Career/personal development	2.4%
To promote party objectives	4.8%
To provide a choice/vote for a party	1.2%
To make changes to the council	4.8%
To defeat the incumbent councillor	0.0%
Because I was asked to stand	3.0%
Encouraged by public info campaign	0.0%
The position of councillor is paid	0.6%
The position of councillor is part-time	0.0%

References

Aiton, A. and Berthier, A. (2017). *Local Government Elections 2017*, SPICe Briefing. https://digitalpublications.parliament.scot/ResearchBriefings/Report/2017/5/19/Local-government-elections-2017-1-1

The Scottish Health Survey 2016: Volume 1: Main Report

Scotland's People Annual Report: Results from the 2016 Scottish Household Survey

SLGE2017 Summary Results Data. Electoral Management Board. http://www.electionsscotland.info/downloads/file/351/slge2017_summary_results_data

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