



Networked councillors survey

What's useful for you?

How we introduced the survey to councillors

As part of our response to the Kirklees Democracy Commission's recommendations about [Local democracy in a networked society](#), our 'Networked councillors' project will be helping you to connect with citizens online.

Many citizens already use the internet as a place to collaborate for civic good. We want to make sure that our councillors are part of this civic conversation and can help it to grow.

There are opportunities for councillors to work with existing civic networks and active citizens online. You may like some support to develop your digital skills and confidence so that you can be more active in these networks. Or you may already be confident doing this, and have advice that you can share with other councillors.

We're asking you to answer a few quick questions, so that we can better understand what's useful and relevant for you. We'll use the information you tell us to help design opportunities for you to learn, share and connect with citizens online.

How we shared the survey

- 05/03/19 Advance email from Councillor Support
- 06/03/19 Direct link sent to each councillor via SurveyMonkey
- 13/03/19 Reminder email from Councillor Support
- 18/03/19 Reminder direct link sent to councillors who hadn't taken part yet
- 02/04/19 Printed version supplied to Councillors theme leads
- 27/06/19 Direct link sent to each newly elected councillor
- 23/08/19 Reminder direct link sent to each newly elected councillor

Who participated

- 29 councillors (42%) responded – 25 via SurveyMonkey, 4 via the printed survey
- 15 Labour, 6 Conservative, 5 Lib Dem, 1 Green, 1 Independent, 1 HW Independent

Survey results

Q1. In general, how confident are you with using digital tools to connect with citizens?

[on a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 is the highest]

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	1		2	2	3	2	2	4	8	4

Average score = **6.9**

Q2. Which of these do you already use for connecting with citizens, or would you like to learn more about using?

	Don't use	Use a little	Use a lot	Would like to learn more about
Text messaging (SMS, WhatsApp etc)	4	12	11	2
Photo sharing (taking photos with a phone or tablet and sharing online)	6	9	13	4
Video chat (Facetime, Skype, Google Hangouts etc)	19	6	1	3
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube etc)	3	10	14	5
Blogging (WordPress, Blogspot etc)	21	4	2	5
Collaborative working (Google Docs, Sheets, Slides etc)	19	6	3	2

Do you use any other digital tools? If so, please tell us which ones:

- what's app
- Emails
- i am using the new casework program which I am finding now easy to make work for me

Q3. If you're interested in learning more about any of these tools, can you give us an example or two of how you'd like to be able to use digital tools in your role as a ward councillor? We are particularly interested in what outcomes you'd like to achieve in your ward, and how we can help with that.

- main outcomes for any tools to use it to be more efficient, quicker turnaround, prompt results (in the eyes of the resident) any tool has to be easy on the eye - UX. It has to be collaborative meaning the resident, on most levels, should be able to use it.
- The fact that I do not use all these tools does not mean that I don't know how to so I am comfortable with my knowledge of technology.
- The photo sharing would be extremely useful contacting officers from various departments with local issues
- blogs / wordpress outcome as another form of newsletter type communications
- I often have to rely on others to get information e.g. re a public meeting or activity in the ward, into social media. There are also various groups that I do similar work with who I would like to be able to contact in 'one go' rather than laboriously repeating the information e.g. news of funding.
- I would like to be able to talk about decisions made in the council, and the reasoning behind them, either in the form of an electronic leaflet or a blog
- Google Docs would be immensely helpful when working with fellow ward councillors on joint initiatives. Blogging would be helpful in maintaining a connection with residents. Additionally I would like to know more about YouTube
- would like to use facebook to get to more people in targeted posts Need to be able to use word press and one note
- Getting message out to residents, using the observatory collating data - used to be able to access ward profiles with easy to read information now overcrowded -Better training.
- Having the appropriate device to use all social media effectively
- I would like to be able to present digitally, create a kind of newspaper
- Most villages have some sort of community page or website I'd like to use, but often it just generates negative comments from trolls which puts me off using them.
- some guidance on setting up a separate account to keep my personal social media separate from my private
- Using SMS/WhatsApp to broadcast updates to the wider community on issues that multiple residents have reported as a concern.

Q4. If you're not interested in learning more, please can you tell us why this isn't helpful for you?

- Face to Face is important to me
- Do not approve of anti-social media!
- I am happy with the knowledge I have and it serves me well
- Know sufficient to do the job I feel
- I prefer people to ring me or email.
- Already know what I need to know.

Q5. If you're already using digital tools to connect with citizens, would you be willing to share your experiences with other Kirklees councillors?

Yes, I would take part in an informal session with other councillors	Yes, I would give a quick video interview to help others learn	Yes, I would talk to officers so they can share my learning	Not sure	No
5	1	3	10	10

Additional comment: "I would be willing to work with anyone, but my skills are minimal".

Q6. Which of these activities would you find useful, to help you develop your confidence and skills with using digital tools to connect with citizens?

	Yes, a little	Yes, a lot	Yes (total)	Not useful for me
Sessions focussed on a particular topic or theme	12	7	19	7
Something informal where you can ask questions	8	8	16	9
Advice and support from other councillors	10	3	13	11
Collaborative sessions with citizens and groups	6	7	13	12
Good examples of effective digital content	8	13	21	4
Discussion groups about using digital tools	9	7	16	10
Practical sessions – setting up channels etc.	9	10	19	10
Templates that you can use on social media etc.	8	10	18	6

Is there something else you'd like? Please tell us:

- digital tool workshops for off the shelf tools that could be used to better the experience
- I'd like to be able to edit videos
- Easy to use quick guides for all councillors
- I would like skills in all these areas, but I would like to practice in an elemental course. My limitations are so great that I cannot even identify the range of practical deficiencies.

Q7. What active online networks are there in your ward? Please let us know about any facebook groups, community websites, email lists or other networks, and say whether you already participate.

- all of the above, and participated when required
- birkenshaw - east bierley & surrounding areas the birstall & howden clough area (community group) birstall moans gomersal matters group birstall matters hunsworth village chat
- Various facebook groups focussed around villages.
- Golcar Cowlersley Milnsbridge Longwood facebook use but probably not enough
- multiple facebook groups, telegram groups, whatsapp, Instagram, twitter,
- Facebook community page
- HeckyLights, Heckmondwike Matters, Friends of Firth Park, Friends of Heckmondwike Library. I have to send emails to get info on.
- at least 7 local Facebook groups exist that i look and, and some times make comment on
- Positively Marsden, Marsden a local place for local people, Outlane Banter. Too numerous to mention. I participate in several.
- dalton community fb group (I created) dalton councillors page (I created) 2 x kirkheaton community groups
- Facebook sites in Gomersal, Liversedge and Roberttown/Hartshead/Norristhorpe. Not on them.
- Almondbury Information #MyLepton LeptonLink Almondbury Past and Present Almondbury Library Friends (ALFA)
- None that I am aware of only are own Councillors facebook page. Community groups have there own websites but there isn't a community group as far as I am aware.
- Facebook groups
- Several Facebook Groups
- Facebook groups - Dewsbury Matters, Dewsbury Crimes, Dewsbury Pictures Old and New. I do participate in these groups.
- Loads! Yes
- Grange Moor Facebook Community Page
Flockton Facebook Community Page
Flockton Bypass Facebook Community Page
Shepley Facebook Community Page (there are several)
Stocksmoor website
Shelley Community Association
Friends of Shepley and Shelley Community Page (I am blocked)
Farnely Tyas Facebook Community Page
Thurstonland Facebook Community Page
Kirkburton and Highburton Community Group Facebook
Am a member of all above.

Q8. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about using digital tools to connect with citizens?

- only that the councillor portal is still lacking in a UX that a case can be logged on the run and can be managed and updated simply. It could use an app` based experience so we could have residents that could add cases after being vetted via councillors
- the myth busting and training is needed as many cllrs think its a place where you will get a lot of criticism if you post your activities and council related information. the understanding and training is needed that its most appropriate to have a personal separate platform and a separate professional platform. platforms such as twitter can be linked for wider reach.
- ? I don't know what I don't know.
- the most frustrating thing for me is officers not using social media groups to share information.
- Ensure that the art of conversation is not lost that whilst digital is effective also meeting people and talking to them is

Results summary

Some of the initial findings of our survey are:

- Participating councillors said they feel generally confident using digital tools to connect with citizens. The average score for confidence was 6.9 out of 10.
- Councillors who gave the same score for confidence had varied online activity. This may suggest that we don't have a consistent understanding about what good digital engagement looks like. It also shows that different approaches suit our local places.
- Some councillors told us that they lack confidence and basic digital skills.
- The digital tools used most by our councillors to connect with citizens are: Social media, Photo sharing and Text messaging.
- The digital tools used least by our councillors to connect with citizens are: Blogging, Video chat and Collaborative working.
- The things councillors said they would most like to learn more about are: Social media and Blogging.
- 35% of participants (including many with high confidence) said they were not willing to share skills with other councillors. 35% said they were unsure about sharing their skills. 30% were happy to share skills, preferring an informal setting for doing this.
- Participants were interested in all of the options for activities, with each activity being found useful by more than half of the councillors who answered this question.
- The activities councillors said would be most useful are: Examples of good content, Practical sessions, Themed sessions and Templates.
- Some participants gave specific examples that will help when planning activities.
- There's a need for improving understanding about digital culture (not just the tools).