



Member Wellbeing Survey III

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1. Introduction

After a request from the Corporate Infrastructure and Regulatory Services (CIRS) Scrutiny Committee, an initial member wellbeing survey was created and ran from 8th December 2020 to 4th January 2021. Following on from this, at the Member Development Steering Group meeting of 4th February 2021, Councillors agreed to repeat the survey before the end of the 2017-2021 term and before the 2021 local elections. This survey was repeated and ran from 14th April to 28th April 2021.

At the Member Development Steering Group meeting on 16th September 2021, Councillors agreed to run the survey for a third time to include the views of those elected in May 2021. This third Member Wellbeing Survey ran from 16th December 2021 to 21st January 2022.

The repeated survey asked the some of the same questions as the original survey, albeit in a different order. In addition, Councillors were asked about the induction process and their use of SharePoint:

1. Your name
2. Which of the following describes how you currently feel?
3. What are you doing to support your overall health and wellbeing?
4. How confident are you in...
5. Using SharePoint, have you accessed the recordings and resources from Induction/Masterclass sessions you were unable to find?
6. How often have you access the recordings and resources on SharePoint?
7. What was the best Induction Session and/or Scrutiny Masterclass you attended, and why?
8. Is there anything else that you would like to see as part of the Induction programme?
9. How well supported by DCC do you feel at this time?
10. What one thing could the Council do to support you better at this time?

Questions 1 – 6 and 9 were multiple choice answers while 7, 8 and 10 were open questions where respondents could input their own answers.

Just under two thirds of Councillors responded to this survey (39 out of 60 or 65%). This was a significant increase compared to the first and second surveys, which had response rates of 28.3% and 36.6% respectively. This increase in respondents is welcome as it allows the data and findings to be more representative of Members' wellbeing. The respondents to this survey are slightly different to the respondents of the previous surveys. The May 2021 Local Elections inevitably meant many Councillors retired or were not elected and 21 new Members joined the Council.

2. Summary

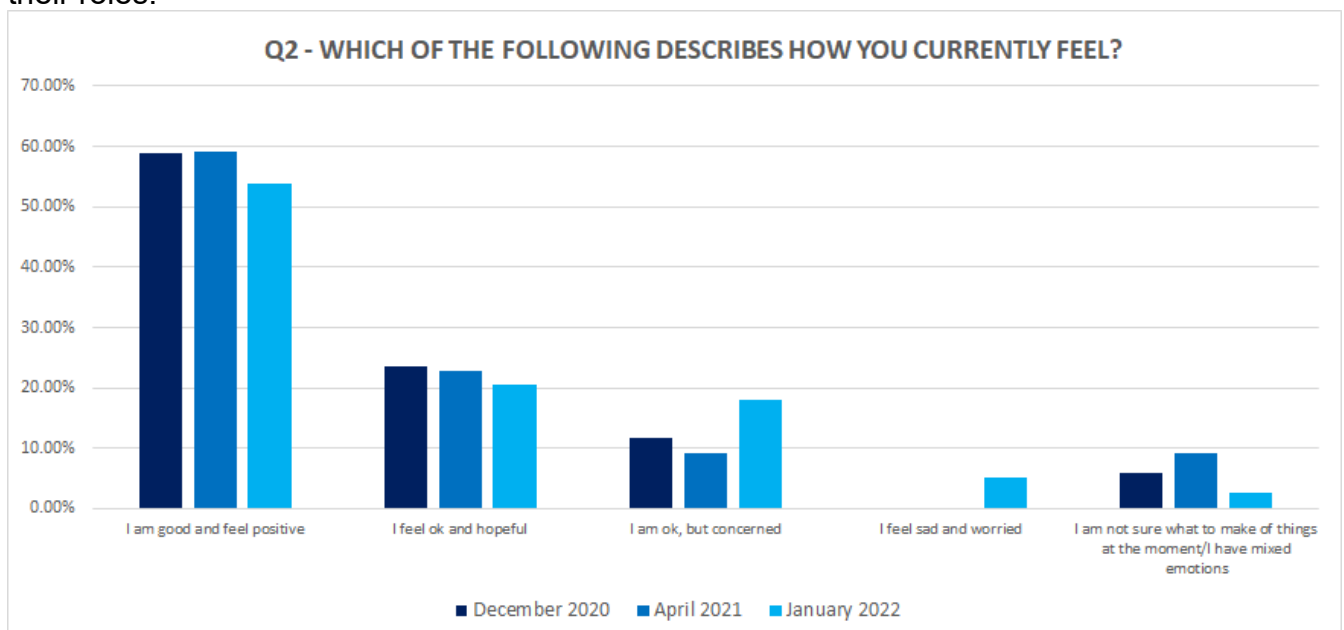
- Overall, the majority of respondents continue to feel positive, choosing between the two 'positive' responses. However, there is a smaller increase in respondents choosing the 'less positive' responses.
- The majority of respondents are carrying out a range of activities or ways to support their wellbeing, with maintaining a routine as the most frequent answer. There has been a notable decrease in respondents choosing to stay connected with others at DCC.
- More needs to be done to ensure more Members are confident in using SharePoint and councillors are utilising the resources and recordings.
- Overall, Members seem happy with the Induction sessions but the common concern is work/life balance and the amount of information they are expected to consume.
- The majority of Members responding to the survey continue to feel "well" supported by the Council.

3. Wellbeing

In response to Question 2 ("Which of the following describes how you currently feel?"), respondents had 5 options to pick from which currently reflected their wellbeing at the time of taking the survey.

Overall, the majority of Members responding to the survey continue to feel positive and have selected the two 'positive' answers. In this survey (January 2022), 54% of respondents selected "I am good and feel positive" and 21% selected "I feel ok and hopeful". However, the three surveys have seen the overall responses to 'positive' answers decline, while "I am ok, but concerned" has risen significantly in the latest survey. "I am ok, but concerned" has doubled from 9% of respondents in April 2021 to 18% in January 2022.

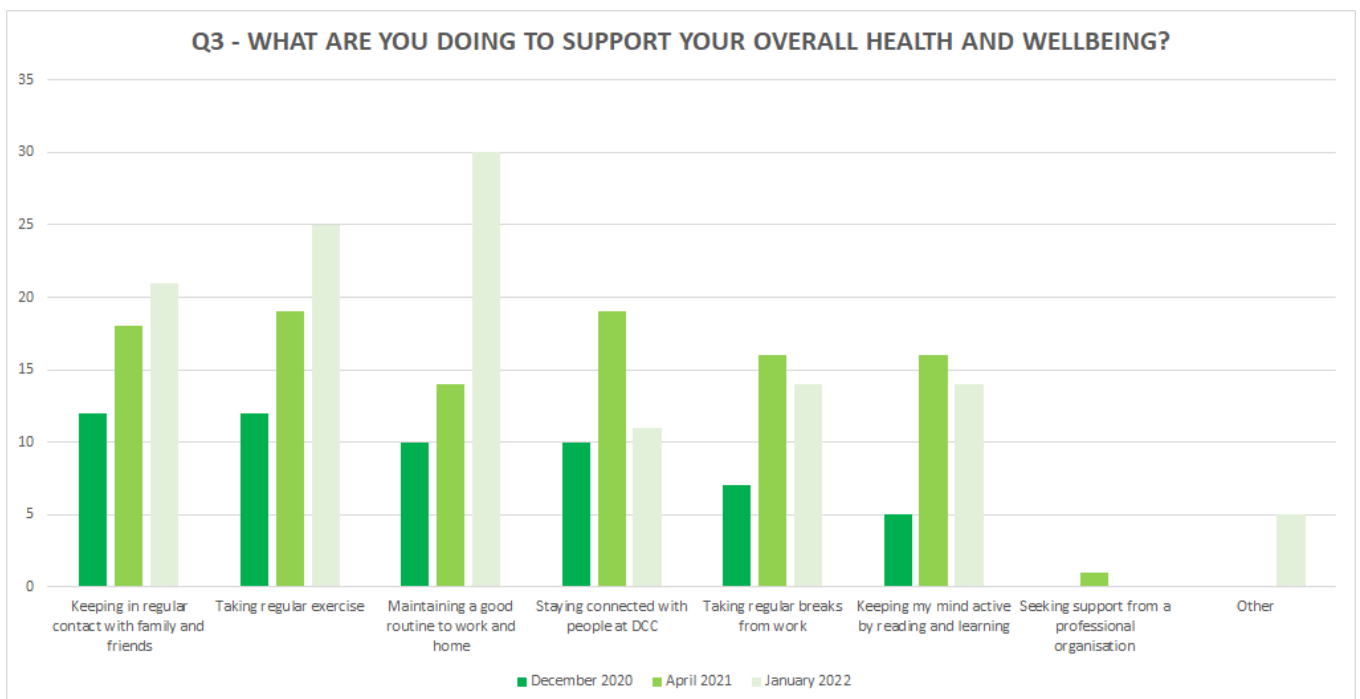
In addition, for the first time, respondents selected the "I feel sad and worried" answer, although this was only 2 respondents or (5%). The results of this question could reflect a small genuine decline in overall Members' wellbeing. However, some consideration needs to be made that the newer intake of Members are still finding their feet with the Council and their roles.



Question 3 asked Members “What are you doing to support your overall health and wellbeing?” and like Question 2, were given a selection of answers to pick from with an ‘Other’ box for respondents to input their own answers.

Overall, we can see still see evidence of the range of activities that respondents are taking to support their health and wellbeing. In total, 120 responses were given from the 39 respondents. On average, each Member had selected 3 activities. The higher frequency of activities selected reflects the higher response rate to this survey. The most chosen activity was “maintaining a good routine to work and home” (30), followed by “taking regular exercise” (25).

Other was chosen as an option for the first time (5) and the responses included: seeing a GP and diary management as ways to support health and wellbeing.



What is interesting is the lower frequency of respondents choosing “staying connected with people in DCC”. Only 11 respondents chose this answer, down from 19 on the previous survey and despite larger number of respondents. This is perhaps a product of the local elections in May with the election of 21 new Members, and those new Members not yet having built a wider range of relationships with officers from across the Council in the first few months as they find their feet.

Other answers that slightly dropped was “taking regular breaks from work” and “keeping my mind active by reading and learning”.

4. SharePoint

Question 4 asked Members “How confident are you in using the Members’ SharePoint to access information”, with responses given on a scale from “Extremely not confident” to “Extremely confident”. Results were mixed. 7.5% of respondents claimed they were extremely confident and 40% claimed they were somewhat confident. However, this left half of Members ranging from neutral (30%) to extremely not confident (10%). Such a result displays the need for further development and training to ensure that Members feel confident in using a resource which will support the effective undertaking of the work of a councillor – and thus improve wellbeing.

4. How confident are you in...

■ Extremely not confident ■ Somewhat not confident ■ Neutral ■ Somewhat confident ■ Extremely confident

Using the Members' SharePoint to access information



Subsequently, Question 5 asked Members “Using SharePoint, have you accessed the recordings and resources from Induction/Masterclass sessions you were unable to attend?”. Only 50% of respondents declared they did this, leaving 38% not reviewing recordings and resources and 13% not knowing how. Results show that additional work must be undertaken to both encourage Members to recap, and to assist them in navigating the SharePoint site.

5. Using SharePoint, have you accessed the recordings and resources from Induction/Masterclass sessions you were unable to attend?

● Yes	20
● No	15
● Don't know how to access	5



Finally, if Members answered yes to the previous question, they were prompted with an additional enquiry into how often they access recordings and resources. No Member

6. How often have you accessed the recordings and resources on SharePoint?

● Every time	0
● Frequently	5
● Sometimes	12
● Once	2



confirmed they accessed them every time, and only 25% accessed them frequently. This left 63% reporting they accessed them sometimes, and 11% accessing them once. Understandably Members have busy lives, but due to a poor turnout to Induction Sessions last year, it is hoped we find a way forward to encourage Members to engage with sessions they have missed – at the very least looking at the resources – otherwise there will be gaps in knowledge.

Ultimately, for those who use it the SharePoint has been an invaluable resource. This has been confirmed by Members in anecdotal evidence and conversation. However, results show that although the SharePoint site has been active for over a year now, too few Members are engaging with it – and those that do may struggle to navigate the site and use resources available.

5. Induction

Question 7 allowed Members to provide insight into the Induction and/or Scrutiny sessions they found most useful, asking “What was the best Induction Session and/or Scrutiny Masterclass you attended, and why?” 32% of respondents gave a generic comment that all sessions were good/informative/useful. Specific mentions of sessions Members enjoyed included Highways, Public Health, Adult Social Care, Children’s Scrutiny and CIRS.

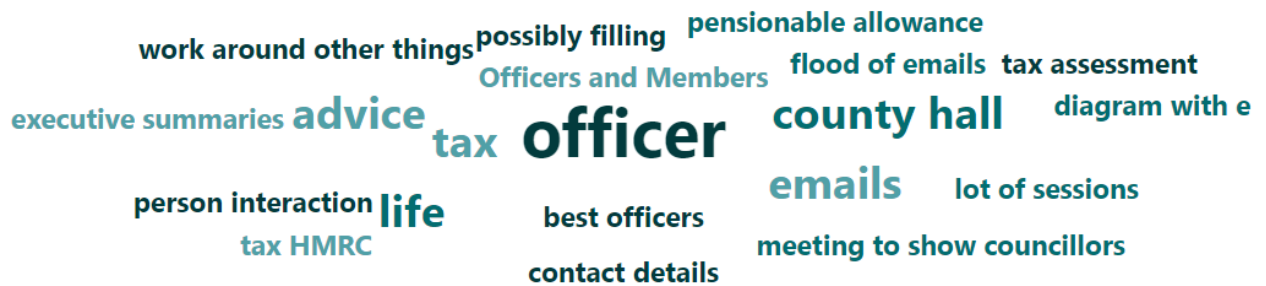
Some Members also used the space to provide feedback on possible improvements. One respondent claimed that sessions include ‘too much detail’ and asked for future sessions to be more of an overview. Another respondent said that the amount of detail they consume makes it difficult to comprehend everything. Some of this is inevitable, as role and remit of County Councillor is so extensive, but additional work should be undertaken to ensure Members are not being overloaded.

7 respondents (23%) answered **good** for this question.



Following this, Question 8 asked Members to suggest anything else they would like to see as part of the Induction Sessions. 39% of respondents answered no or not sure, leaving a range of comments for how Induction Sessions could be improved/developed going forward. 22% shared a common theme of achieving work/life balance, whether this be achieved through a specific session for Members and/or streamlining information provided to them. Specific content suggestions included EDI, organisational structures, balancing reduced income, having a tour of County Hall, and how to chair meetings.

3 respondents (17%) answered **officer** for this question.



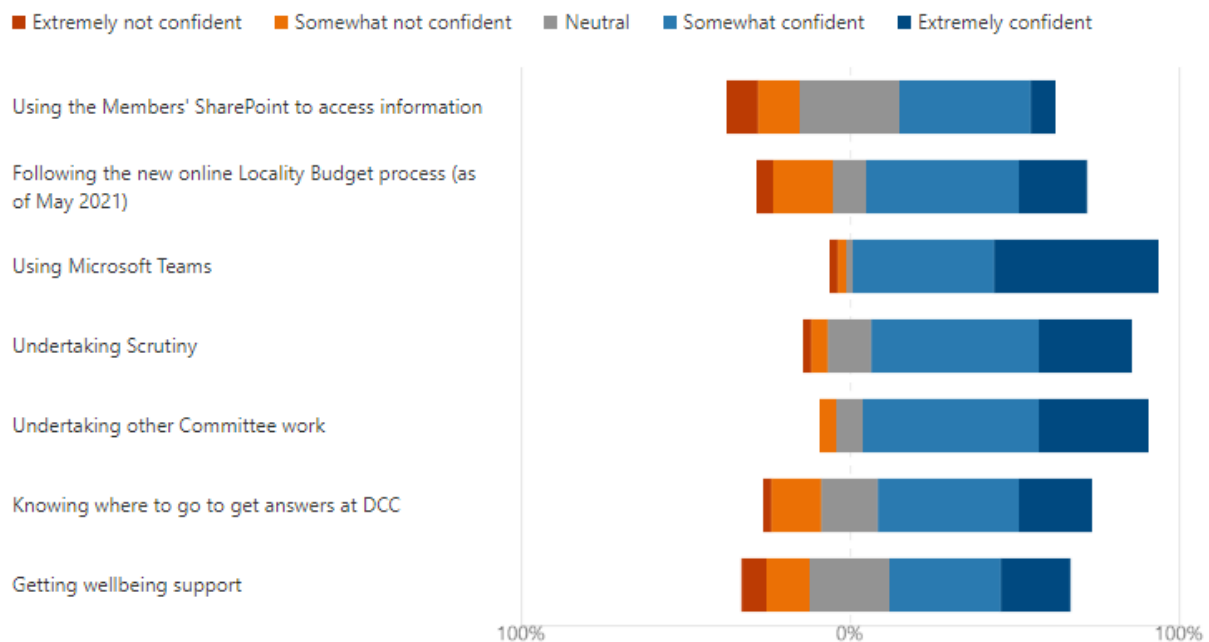
Overall, Members seem happy with the Induction Sessions but the common concern is work/life balance and the amount of information they are expected to consume.

6. Additional Questions

Question 4 also included additional questions around Member confidence in different responsibilities, duties and procedures.

4. How confident are you in...

[More Details](#)



When responding to “How confident are you in following the new online Locality Budget process”, 67% of respondents were either somewhat or extremely confident. This a positive result, but still shows a need for additional learning with 23% ranging from neutral (10%) to extremely not confident (5.1%). This a very important role involving the granting of public finance, so additional work should be undertaken to resolve knowledge deficits.

Responding to confidence in using Teams, 92.5% were either somewhat or extremely confident. This result isn't a surprise considering the two years of experience Members now

have. However, two Members claimed they either extremely not confident or somewhat not confident, making way for possible specific intervention and help.

When responding to the question of undertaking Scrutiny, 79.5% of respondents claimed they were either somewhat or extremely confident. This left 12.8% feeling neutral, and 7.7% feeling somewhat or extremely not confident. Additionally, when responding to the question of undertaking Committee work, 87.1% claimed they were either somewhat or extremely confident. 7.7% said they were neutral, and the remaining 5.1% somewhat not confident. These results show although Members feel confident in Scrutiny and Committee work in general, some may still need help and guidance in understanding their roles and responsibilities.

65% of surveyed Members claimed they were somewhat or extremely confident in knowing where to get answers at DCC. This is positive but leaves 35% ranging from neutral to extremely not confident. Following previously mentioned comments on the need for organisational structures and responsible Officers, Members will need additional clarity on who to go to – especially new Members.

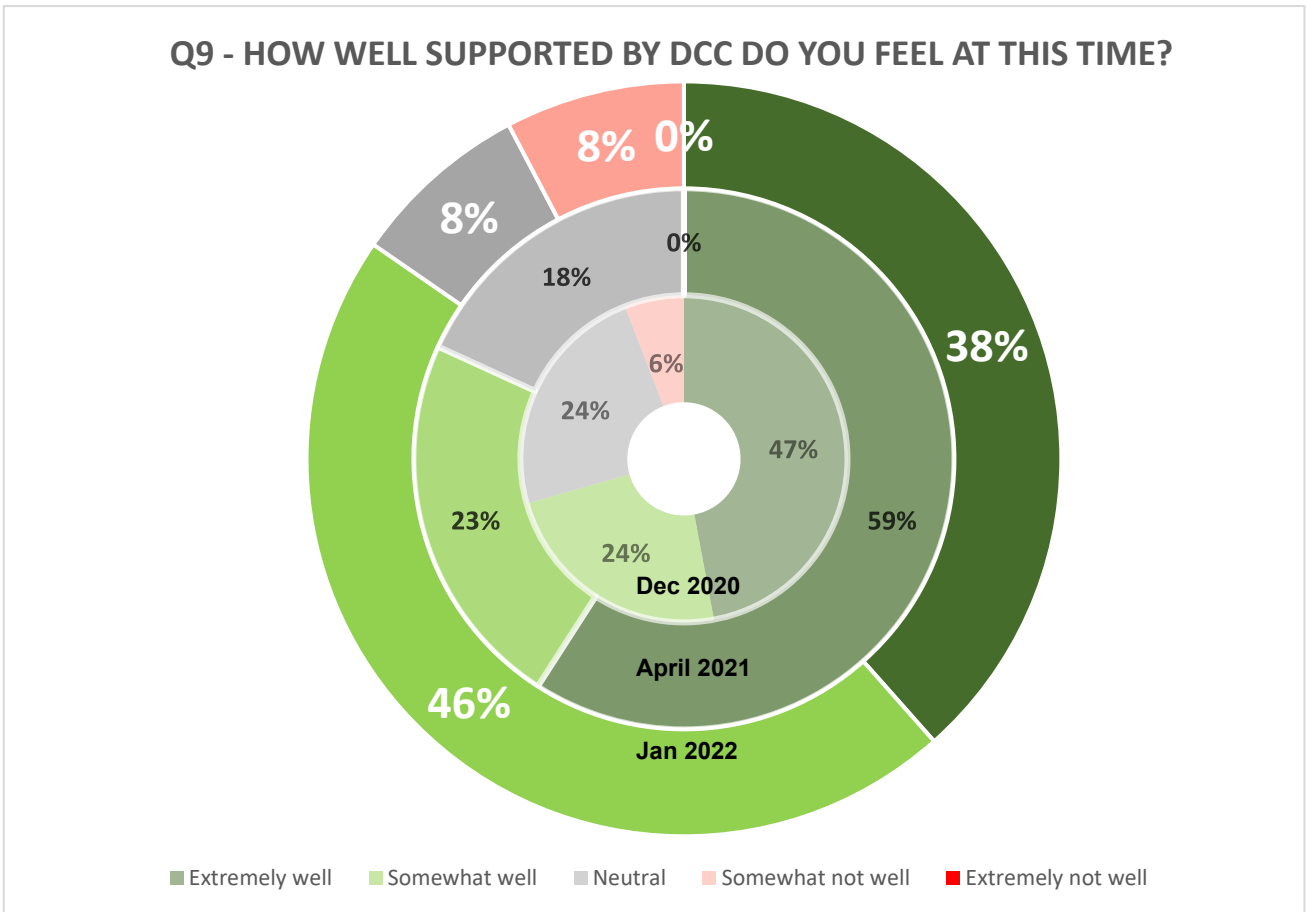
Following Questions 2 and 3, Members were also asked whether they felt confident in getting wellbeing support. Over half of Members (55.3%) said they felt confident, leaving a considerable percentage ranging from neutral (23.7%) to extremely not confident (7.9%). There is an additional need to find the barriers to Members accessing this support, in which the SharePoint site could play a vital role.

7. Support from the Council

Question 9 asked Members “How well supported by DCC do you feel at this time?” and gave respondents a scale of “Extremely well” to “Extremely not well”. The figure below shows the respondents from the first survey (December 2020, Inner ring), the second survey (April 2021, middle ring) and the third survey (January 2022, outer ring).

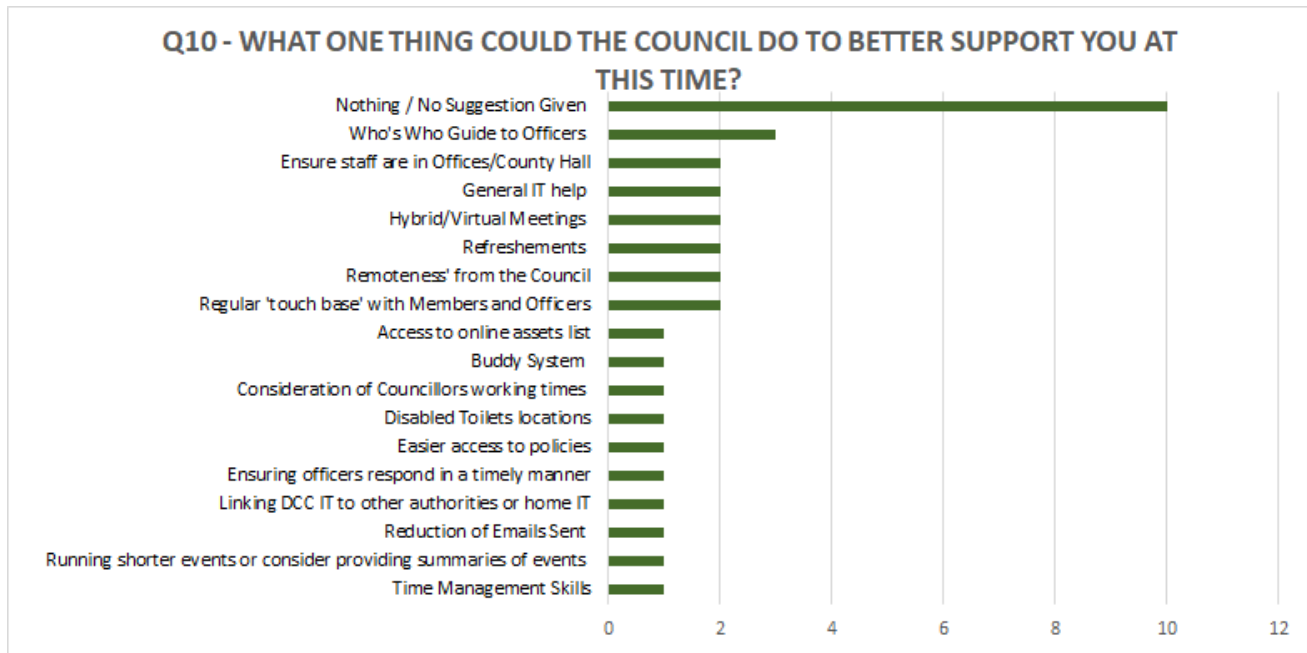
At first glance, it could be a concern that the results to the third survey (outer ring) show a significant reduction in respondents feeling “Extremely well” supported by DCC, from 59% to 38% and an increase in the respondents choosing “Somewhat not well” supported (8%).

However, this is coupled with a 150% increase in respondents choosing “Somewhat not well” from 23% to 46%. The third survey is the highest overall combined percentage for the “well” supported answers at 84%.



This result could be evidenced by the number of new Members from May 2021 who are still finding their feet in the Council. New Members may also not be aware of some of the support that is on offer. The majority of Members responding to this question feel that the Council could support them better in some way.

Question 10 directly links to Q9 and asks respondents “What one thing could the council do to better support you at this time?”. Many members offered more than one response, and these have been categorised into common themes or suggestions. The categorised responses, shown in the figure below, show that “Nothing/No Suggestion Given” had the highest frequency of responses (12). This has been the common most frequent response across the first and second Member Wellbeing Surveys.



A “Whos Who?” Guide to officers was the next frequent response (3). Members may or may not be aware that a SharePoint site was created for Members after the 2021 Local Elections. This is an ‘intranet’ type resource that includes a ‘Whos Who?’ of key officers and services, Induction and meeting information, IT help and a range of other resources and links.

8. Action points from the Member Wellbeing Survey

Suggestion	Action	Agency
Members may not be aware of the support or resources already on offer to them.	Creation of a “You Said, We Did” briefing note which can be circulated to all Members.	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Team
Ensuring Members know we have heard their suggestions, and where possible, acted on them		Member Development Officer
Members might be unsure of how to access SharePoint or not be aware of what information is on there	Briefing Note to Members to explain how to use SharePoint or a short online training session to walk Members through the site	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Team
Ensuring training on offer meets the needs of Members	Review of planning and potential training on offer.	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Team Member Development Officer

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for Organisational Development, Workforce and Digital Transformation:
Councillor Andrew Saywell

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Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Member Wellbeing Survey	16 th September 2021	Agenda item 9
Member Wellbeing Survey	4 th February 2021	Agenda item 44