Debate Not Hate: Survey of councillors across all four UK nations 2026

In June 2026, the LGA launched the fourth edition of the annual Debate Not Hate survey. This year, the survey has been extended to councillors in Scotland and Northern Ireland, reflecting the four UK nations' joint commitment to promoting and defending civility in public life as expressed in the joint statement of October 2025.

18 Sep 2026
LGA

Summary

Background

In June 2026, the Local Government Association (LGA) launched the fourth edition of the annual Debate Not Hate survey. The Debate Not Hate campaign was launched following the finding in the 2022 Councillors' Census that seven in 10 councillors reported having experienced abuse or intimidation. Since 2023, the LGA has distributed an annual online survey to all councillors in England and Wales to investigate the extent to which abuse and intimidation remains rife in public life, as well as the nature and scale of abuse and intimidation. This year, the survey has been extended to councillors in Scotland and Northern Ireland, reflecting the four UK nations' joint commitment to promoting and defending civility in public life as expressed in the **joint statement of October 2025 (https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/guidance-and-resources/civility-public-life-resources-councillors/uk-local-government)** (link to statement opens in a new tab).

A total of 1503 councillors across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland responded to the survey – a response rate of 8 per cent. This was slightly lower than 2025, where 11 per cent of councillors in England and Wales responded to the survey. The responding councillors did however represent a wide cross-section of political affiliations, levels of experience and demographic characteristics.

Key findings

- **Abuse and intimidation remain widespread in public life**. More than three-quarters of responding councillors (78 per cent) feel at least some level of personal risk when fulfilling their role as councillor, while three-quarters (75 per cent) reported experiencing some level of abuse or intimidation in their role over the last 12 months.
- **Abuse and intimidation appear to be worsening, particularly in England**. More than half of responding councillors (52 per cent) reported that abuse and intimidation had increased sharply or slightly over the past 12 months. This was significantly higher in England (55 per cent) than Wales (41 per cent) or Scotland (36 per cent).
- **Abuse has a tangible impact on councillors' lives and democratic participation.** More than a third of respondents (35 per cent) had made, or felt they needed to make, security modifications to their home because of safety concerns due to their role. Furthermore, among responding councillors who were undecided about standing again or had decided not to stand, 30 per cent said the possibility of abuse or intimidation had influenced their decision.
- **Police reporting is relatively uncommon, and satisfaction is mixed.** A quarter of respondents (25 per cent) had reported an incident of abuse or intimidation experienced in their role to the police and of those that had, 34 per cent felt the issue had been addressed to a great or moderate extent whilst 33 per cent felt it hadn’t been addressed at all.
- **Operation Ford is showing signs of success.** More than half of all respondents in England and Wales (56 per cent) were aware of

the Force Elected Officials Adviser post – an increase from 40 per cent last year. Awareness was particularly high in Scotland, at 76 per cent. Of those who had engaged with the programme, three-quarters (74 per cent) found the engagement very or fairly useful.

Introduction

The Local Government Association launched its “Debate Not Hate” campaign in 2022 following rising concerns about abuse and intimidation in public life, including findings in the 2022 Councillors’ Census that seven in 10 councillors reported having experienced abuse or intimidation. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the damaging impact of intimidation on local democracy and lobby for changes to relevant legislation and improved protections for councillors.

The following survey was the fourth edition of the Debate Not Hate survey – the first having taken place in June 2023 – and aimed to understand the extent to which abuse and intimidation has changed since both the 2022 Councillors’ Census and since the last three editions of the survey, as well as the nature of this abuse and intimidation in greater detail.

Methodology

The LGA’s Research and Information Team sent an online survey to all councillors of all political affiliations belonging to principal authorities in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The survey was open for three weeks, from 17 June to 8 July 2026.

Around 18,350 councillors were invited to take part in the survey, and a total of 1503 responses were received. This represents a response rate of 8 per cent. This level of response means that these respondents should not necessarily be taken to be widely representative of the views of all councillors. Rather, they are a snapshot of the views of this particular group of respondents.

The response rate this year was slightly lower than previous years, at 8 per cent of councillors in England and Wales, compared to 11 per cent in 2025 and 10 per cent in 2024.

Caution should be exercised when interpreting findings for Northern Ireland due to the small number of respondents (n=26). The sample size is insufficient to support robust statistical comparisons with other UK nations, and any apparent differences should be treated as indicative only.

In addition, the following should be considered when interpreting the findings of this survey:

- Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. Please note that bases can vary throughout the survey, because certain questions were not relevant to all respondents they were therefore not required to answer them.
- Throughout the report, percentages may not appear to add up to exactly 100 per cent due to rounding.
- Demographic breakdowns have been included where the sample size is sufficient for comparison. Statistical significance is tested at a 95 per cent confidence interval.
- The * icon denotes a value that is above zero but less than 0.5 per cent, which would otherwise be rounded down to zero.
- Throughout the report, the term ‘abuse’ is used to describe abuse and intimidation.
- Time-series data for 2026 excludes respondents from Scotland and Northern Ireland to maintain consistency with previous years. Where this is the case, this is denoted by a black shaded table.

Debate Not Hate Survey 2026

This section contains analysis of the full results from the survey.

Respondent profiling

Response rate by nation

This year, the Debate Not Hate survey was expanded beyond England and Wales to include Scotland and Northern Ireland. Table 1 explores the survey response rate by nation, and shows that the highest level of response was received from councillors in Scotland (10 per cent),

followed by Wales (9 per cent), England (8 per cent), and finally Northern Ireland, with a response rate of 6 per cent (26 respondents in total).

Table 1: Response rate by nation

	Number of councillors	Number of responses	Response rate
England	15,429	1247	8%
Wales	1,234	111	9%
Scotland	1,226	119	10%
Northern Ireland	462	26	6%
Total	**18,351**	**1,503**	**8%**

Base: all respondents (1503). *The number of English councillors is lower than the number of English seats, accounting for individuals that hold more than one seat.*

Political affiliation

Respondents were asked to indicate their political affiliation. Table 2, Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5 display for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively, the political affiliation of survey respondents in comparison to the overall political distribution of councillors in each nation. Each table indicates that the sample of survey respondents reflects a broad distribution of political affiliations across each nation, however, there are cases of overrepresentation and underrepresentation of certain political affiliations.

Among respondents in England, as shown in Table 2, the survey sample reflects a slight overrepresentation of Reform UK councillors (22 per cent, compared to 14 per cent nationally), and an underrepresentation

of Conservative councillors (11 per cent, compared to 22 per cent nationally).

Table 2: Political affiliation: England

	Percentage of responses	Percentage of councillors
Labour	24%	24%
Reform UK	22%	14%
Liberal Democrats	21%	20%
Green Party	11%	8%
Conservatives	11%	22%
Independent or other	11%	12%

Base: all respondents (1247).

The sample of Welsh councillors, as shown in Table 3, is closely in line with the national distribution, noting however a slight underrepresentation of Conservative and Reform UK councillors and a slight overrepresentation of Green Party councillors.

Table 3: Political affiliation: Wales

	Percentage of responses	Percentage of councillors
Labour	41%	39%
Independent or other	29%	28%

Plaid Cymru	15%	16%
Liberal Democrats	7%	6%
Conservatives	5%	8%
Green Party	4%	1%
Reform UK	0%	2%

Base: all respondents (111).

Table 4 explores the distribution among the sample of Scottish councillor respondents. The table indicates an overrepresentation of SNP councillors (51 per cent of the sample, compared to 34 per cent nationally), and an underrepresentation of Scottish Labour, Independent, and Scottish Conservative and Unionist councillors.

Table 4: Political affiliation: Scotland

	Percentage of responses	**Percentage of councillors**
Scottish National Party (SNP)	51%	34%
Scottish Labour	15%	21%
Independent or other	14%	19%
Scottish Conservative and Unionist	10%	14%
Scottish Liberal Democrats	5%	7%

Scottish Greens	3%	3%
Reform UK	2%	2%

Base: all respondents (119).

As shown in Table 5, the small sample of councillors in Northern Ireland is largely in line with the overall national distribution.

Table 5: Political affiliation: Northern Ireland

	Percentage of responses	**Percentage of councillors**
Sinn Fein	31% (8)	31%
Democratic Unionist Party	23% (6)	26%
Independent/other	20% (5)	10%
Alliance	12% (3)	14%
Ulster Unionist Party	12% (3)	11%
Social Democratic and Labour Party	4% (1)	8%

Base: all respondents (26).

Time in post

Respondents were then asked how long they had been serving as a councillor. The survey was launched just over a month after a set of local elections in England, held on 7 May 2026. On this date, national elections were held in Wales for the Senedd, and in Scotland for the Scottish Parliament. No elections were held in Northern Ireland.

As shown in Table 6, almost a third of respondent councillors from England (29 per cent) had been serving less than a year or had been newly elected in May. This proportion is much higher than in Scotland (0 per cent) and Wales (2 per cent), reflecting the fact that local elections only took place in England. Twenty-three per cent of respondents from Northern Ireland had been serving less than a year (change of seat holder can take place outside of the election cycle, through co-option or by-election). The vast majority of respondents from Wales and Scotland had been serving at least two years, with over half of all respondents from both nations having served at least five years.

Table 6: Length of time serving as a councillor

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Less than one year / newly elected in May	**25%**	29%	2%	0%	23% (6)
1 to <2 years	**8%**	8%	4%	1%	0% (0)
2 to <5 years	**25%**	23%	42%	41%	12% (3)
5 years or more	**42%**	39%	52%	58%	65% (17)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1503), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119), NI (26).

Role in May 2026 elections: England, Scotland and Wales

Respondents from England, Scotland and Wales were asked to indicate their role in the May 2026 local, regional or national elections. Among respondents in England, where local and regional elections took place, 48 per cent of respondents were candidates, 7 per cent were election agents, 33 per cent were campaigners and 2 per cent held another role not listed, whilst 27 per cent did not participate at all. Among respondents in Scotland and Wales, the proportion of those who were

candidates was much lower than England, reflecting that for these two nations, there were national rather than local elections. As such, 19 per cent of respondents in Wales were candidates, whilst 37 per cent campaigned, 5 per cent had another type of role, and 41 per cent did not participate at all. For respondents in Scotland, 13 per cent were candidates, 6 per cent were election agents, 68 per cent were campaigners, 6 per cent held another type of role, and 18 per cent did not participate at all. The full results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Role in May 2026 local, regional or national elections

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland
Election candidate	**43%**	48%	19%	13%
Election agent	**7%**	7%	0%	6%
Election campaigner	**36%**	33%	37%	68%
Other, please specify	**3%**	2%	5%	6%
None of the above – I did not participate in any way in the May 2026 elections	**27%**	27%	41%	18%

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1477), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Role in most recent elections: Northern Ireland

As there were no elections in May 2026 in Northern Ireland, respondents within Northern Ireland were asked about their role in the most recent local and/or national elections. As shown in Table 8, more than two-thirds of respondents (69 per cent) were candidates in these elections, 42 per cent were campaigners, and one respondent was an election agent.

Table 8: Role in most recent local and/or national elections

	Northern Ireland
Election candidate	69% (18)
Election agent	4% (1)
Election campaigner	42% (11)
Other, please specify	0% (0)
None of the above – I did not participate in any way in the most recent local/national elections	0% (0)

Base: all respondents; NI (26). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Feeling at risk as a councillor

Respondents were asked how often, if at all, they felt personally at risk when fulfilling their role as councillor. Across all councillors surveyed, more than three-quarters (78 per cent) felt some level of risk (frequently, occasionally, or rarely), with 8 per cent frequently feeling at risk and 27 per cent occasionally feeling at risk. The full results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: How often, if at all, do you feel personally at risk when fulfilling your role as a councillor?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Some level of risk	**78%**	**78%**	**70%**	**81%**	**92% (24)**
Frequently	**8%**	8%	7%	8%	12% (3)

Occasionally	**27%**	27%	31%	26%	31% (8)
Rarely	**43%**	43%	32%	47%	50% (13)
Never	**22%**	22%	30%	19%	8% (2)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1503), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119), NI (26).

This question was asked across all four editions of the Debate Not Hate survey, and the results are shown in Table 10. For time-series comparisons, 2026 results are based on respondents from England and Wales only to ensure comparability with previous years. The table shows that in 2026 more than three quarters of respondents (77 per cent) felt some level of risk, either frequently, occasionally or rarely. This is a 4-percentage point increase compared to 2025. In addition, the proportion of those feeling frequently at risk has risen from 5 per cent to 8 per cent from 2025 to 2026.

Table 10: How often, if at all, do you feel personally at risk when fulfilling your role as a councillor? *(England and Wales only)*

	2023 survey	**2024 survey**	**2025 survey**	**2026 survey**
Some level of risk	**82%**	**74%**	**73%**	**77%**
Frequently	8%	4%	5%	8%
Occasionally	33%	27%	25%	27%
Rarely	41%	43%	43%	42%
Never	18%	26%	27%	23%

Base: all respondents; ‘23 (814), ‘24 (1734), ‘25 (1861), ‘26 (1358).

Table 11 shows this question broken down by different demographic groups. The table shows that female respondents are significantly more likely to feel at risk than their male counterparts, with 87 per cent of female respondents reporting feeling some level of risk compared to 71 per cent of male respondents. Ethnic minority respondents are also significantly more likely to feel at risk as reported by 86 per cent of respondents, compared to 77 per cent of white respondents. In addition, 87 per cent of LGBT+ respondents reported feeling at risk compared to 77 per cent of heterosexual respondents, and 85 per cent of disabled respondents felt at risk compared to 75 per cent of non-disabled respondents – again, both significant comparisons. The full results are shown in Table 11 and Figure 1.

Table 11: How often, if at all, do you feel personally at risk when fulfilling your role as a councillor? – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status*

	Some level of risk (frequently, occasionally, rarely)
Male	71%
Female	87%
White	77%
Ethnic minority	86%
Heterosexual	77%
LGBT+	87%
Non-disabled people	75%

Disabled people	85%

Base: all respondents; male (838), female (640), white (1308), ethnic minorities (154), heterosexual (1273), LGBT+ (133), non-disabled (1137), disabled (275).

Figure 1: Feeling personally at risk when fulfilling role as councillor frequently, occasionally, or rarely – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status*

Base: all respondents; male (838), female (640), white (1308), ethnic minorities (154), heterosexual (1273), LGBT+ (133), non-disabled (1137), disabled (275).

Support from the local authority

Respondents were then asked how effective or not they thought their authority's arrangements were for protecting them in their role as councillor. Table 12 shows that 57 per cent of respondents felt that their authority's arrangements were very or fairly effective. Nineteen per cent felt that the arrangements were not very effective, whilst 10 per cent felt that they were not at all effective. A further 14 per cent were unsure. Minor differences can be observed between the UK nations, however these differences were not statistically significant. The full results are shown in Table 12.

As shown in Table 13, this year's results were closely in line with 2024 and 2025.

Table 12: How effective or not do you think are your authority's arrangements for protecting you personally as you fulfil your role as a councillor?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Very or fairly effective	**57%**	**57%**	**53%**	**63%**	**45% (9)**

Very effective	**14%**	13%	20%	15%	15% (3)
Fairly effective	**43%**	44%	33%	48%	30% (6)
Not very effective	**19%**	18%	19%	21%	20% (4)
Not at all effective	**10%**	10%	10%	8%	20% (4)
Don’t know	**14%**	14%	17%	8%	15% (3)

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year; Tot. (1128), Eng. (880), Wal. (109), Scot. (119), NI (20).

Table 13: How effective or not do you think are your authority’s arrangements for protecting you personally as you fulfil your role as a councillor? *(England and Wales only)*

	2023 survey	**2024 survey**	**2025 survey**	**2026 survey**
Very or fairly effective	**44%**	**57%**	**58%**	**57%**
Very effective	9%	14%	14%	14%
Fairly effective	34%	43%	44%	43%
Not very effective	25%	17%	18%	18%
Not at all effective	15%	8%	8%	10%
Don’t know	17%	18%	16%	14%

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year: 2023 (654), 2024 (1531), 2025 (1598), 2026 (989).

Abuse and intimidation during campaign periods

Respondents in England, Wales and Scotland were asked how often, if at all, they experienced abuse or intimidation during this year's election campaign period. Respondents in Northern Ireland were asked this same question but relating to their most recent election. In all cases, the question was asked not only to candidates, but also campaigners, agents, and those with any other role in the electoral campaign.

The results for England, Wales and Scotland are shown in Table 14. The table shows that 75 per cent of respondents within England that participated in some way in the elections were faced with some level of abuse (frequently, occasionally, or rarely), whilst around two-thirds of respondents who participated in the elections from Wales (66 per cent) and Scotland (68 per cent) experienced some form of abuse or intimidation during the campaign period. It should be noted that the elections differed across the three nations, with council elections taking place in England and devolved parliamentary elections taking place in Wales and Scotland. These differences in electoral context may have influenced respondents' experiences, although the differences observed between the nations were not statistically significant.

Table 14: How often, if at all, did you experience abuse or intimidation during this year's local, regional or national campaign period?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland
Some level of abuse or intimidation (frequently, occasionally, or rarely)	**74%**	**75%**	**66%**	**68%**
Frequently	**11%**	12%	3%	11%
Occasionally	**31%**	32%	34%	26%

Rarely	**32%**	32%	29%	32%
Never	**26%**	25%	34%	32%

Base: all respondents who participated in May 2026 elections; Tot. (1077), Eng. (914), Wal. (65), Scot. (98).

Table 15 displays the results for this question among respondents in Northern Ireland, relating to the most recent local and/or national elections. The table shows that 81 per cent of respondents experienced a level of abuse and intimidation during the most recent elections. For around half of these, the abuse was rare, whilst about a fifth of those who experienced abuse experienced it frequently (four respondents out of 21). It must be stated that due to the small sample size, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Table 15: How often, if at all, did you experience abuse or intimidation during the most recent local and/or national election campaign period?

	Northern Ireland
Some level of abuse or intimidation (frequently, occasionally, or rarely)	**81% (21)**
Frequently	15% (4)
Occasionally	27% (7)
Rarely	38% (10)
Never	19% (5)

Base: all respondents who participated in most recent elections; NI (26).

Abuse and intimidation over the last 12 months

Respondents who had served as a councillor for at least a year were then asked how often, if at all, they had experienced abuse or intimidation in their role as a councillor over the last 12 months.

The results show that three-quarters of respondents (75 per cent) had experienced some level of abuse or intimidation in their role as councillor over the last 12 months, including 14 per cent who had experienced it frequently and 29 per cent who had experienced it occasionally. This was slightly higher among respondents within Scotland, with 80 per cent experiencing a level of abuse or intimidation in the last 12 months, and slightly lower among respondents within Wales at 69 per cent, however these differences were not statistically significant.

Among the 20 respondents within Northern Ireland, 80 per cent (16 respondents) had experienced a level of abuse or intimidation, with around half of those respondents experiencing it rarely (9 respondents). The full results are shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Over the last 12 months, how often, if at all, have you experienced abuse or intimidation in your role as a councillor?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Some level of abuse or intimidation (frequently, occasionally, or rarely)	**75%**	**75%**	**69%**	**80%**	**80% (16)**
Frequently	**14%**	14%	12%	15%	20% (4)
Occasionally	**29%**	31%	25%	26%	15% (3)

Rarely	**32%**	31%	32%	39%	45% (9)
Never	**25%**	25%	31%	20%	20% (4)

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year; Tot. (1128), Eng. (880), Wal. (109), Scot. (119), NI (20).

As shown in Table 24, the level of abuse and intimidation experienced over the past 12 months remains in line with levels observed in 2024 and 2025.

Table 17: Over the last 12 months, how often, if at all, have you experienced abuse or intimidation in your role as a councillor? *(England and Wales only)*

	2023 survey	**2024 survey**	**2025 survey**	**2026 survey**
Some level of abuse or intimidation (frequently, occasionally, or rarely)	**81%**	**73%**	**72%**	**74%**
Frequently	20%	9%	10%	13%
Occasionally	34%	31%	28%	30%
Rarely	27%	33%	34%	31%
Never	19%	27%	28%	26%

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year; 2023 (655), 2024 (1531), 2025 (1598), 2026 (989).

Table 18 explores how the level of abuse or intimidation received in the councillor role over the past 12 months differs among demographic groups. The table shows that female respondents were significantly more likely than male respondents to have experienced abuse or intimidation in their role as councillor over the past 12 months, as reported by 80 per cent of female respondents compared to 70 per cent of male respondents. Significant differences were also observed by ethnicity, sexuality and disability status. Eighty-nine per cent of respondents from an ethnic minority background had suffered abuse or intimidation in their role over the past year compared to 74 per cent of white respondents. Eighty-eight per cent of LGBT+ respondents had suffered abuse or intimidation in their role over the past year compared to 73 per cent of heterosexual respondents, whilst 85 per cent of disabled respondents had, compared to 71 per cent of non-disabled respondents.

Table 18: Over the last 12 months, how often, if at all, have you experienced abuse or intimidation in your role as a councillor? – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status*

	Some level of abuse or intimidation (frequently, occasionally, rarely)
Male	70%
Female	80%
White	74%
Ethnic minority	89%
Heterosexual	73%
LGBT+	88%

Non-disabled people	71%
Disabled people	85%

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year; male (608), female (503), white (1016), ethnic minorities (85), heterosexual (967), LGBT+ (98), non-disabled (841), disabled (226).

Channels of abuse or intimidation

Respondents who had experienced some level of abuse or intimidation were asked where this had occurred. Respondents were able to select more than one option, to reflect that they may have experienced multiple instances of abuse or intimidation. Overall, the most frequently reported channels of abuse or intimidation were public online platforms and in-person, each reported by 67 per cent of respondents. Twenty-three per cent reported receiving abuse or intimidation privately by phone or direct messaging channels including text, email, or WhatsApp, whilst 5 per cent reported receiving abuse or intimidation by post.

A key difference was observed between the UK nations, as respondents in England were significantly more likely to suffer abuse and intimidation in person compared to those in Wales and Scotland.

Respondents who indicated another channel of abuse or intimidation not listed had the opportunity to specify what this was. Responses included:

- Abuse or intimidation from other councillors or politicians, including at council meetings
- Protests at council meetings or surgeries
- Vandalism or criminal damage to house or car
- Complaints, including false complaints, to police, standards committee, or employer
- Abuse or intimidation on the doorstep whilst campaigning
- Coverage in the local or mainstream media
- Freedom of information requests
- Stickers or boards placed in public

The full results for this question are shown in Table 19.

Table 19: Where did the abuse and/or intimidation occur?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Publicly online, inc. social media, open forums	**67%**	65%	74%	77%	86% (19)
In person	**67%**	70%	57%	49%	41% (9)
Privately by phone, inc. voice message, through direct messaging, text, email, WhatsApp	**23%**	21%	29%	30%	36% (8)
By post, inc. messages and/or articles put through letterbox	**5%**	5%	1%	5%	9% (2)
Other (please specify)	**6%**	6%	4%	5%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents who reported receiving abuse; Tot. (1160), Eng. (959), Wal. (82), Scot. (97), NI (22).

As shown in Table 20, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of respondents in England and Wales who have experienced abuse and intimidation in person this year in comparison to last year, rising from 59 per cent to 69 per cent.

Table 20: Where did the abuse and/or intimidation occur?*(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	2026 survey
In person	59%	69%
Publicly online, inc. social media platforms or open forums	64%	66%
Privately by phone, voice message, or through direct messaging inc. text, email, WhatsApp	25%	21%
By post: inc. messages and/or articles put through letterbox	6%	5%
Other (please specify)	10%	6%

Base: all respondents who reported receiving abuse; 2025 (1352), 2026 (1041). Please note: respondents could select more than one option. Question was introduced in 2025.

Changes over the past 12 months

Respondents serving for at least a year who reported that they had experienced some level of abuse or intimidation in their capacity as councillor over the last 12 months were then asked how the volume of abuse or intimidation had changed over the past 12 months. Just over half of all respondents (52 per cent) reported that the volume of abuse and intimidation received had increased, including 25 per cent who reported that it had increased sharply. Thirty-eight per cent reported that the volume had stayed about the same, whilst 7 per cent reported that the volume had decreased either slightly or sharply. Respondents in England were significantly more likely to report that abuse and intimidation had increased over the last 12 months, as reported by 55 per cent of respondents in England compared to 41 per cent in Wales and 36 per cent in Scotland. The full results are shown in Table 21.

Table 21: And thinking about the last 12 months, how has the volume of abuse and intimidation you have received in your role as a councillor changed?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ire.
It has sharply or slightly increased	**52%**	**55%**	**41%**	**36%**	**38% (6)**
It has sharply increased	**25%**	27%	19%	12%	25% (4)
It has slightly increased	**27%**	28%	23%	24%	13% (2)
It has stayed about the same	**38%**	35%	51%	54%	38% (6)
It has slightly decreased	**5%**	5%	5%	5%	6% (1)
It has sharply decreased	**2%**	2%	0%	3%	13% (2)
Don’t know	**3%**	3%	3%	2%	6% (1)

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year who had experienced some level of abuse over the past 12 months; Tot. (843), Eng. (657), Wal. (75), Scot. (95), NI (16).

Table 22 compares this year’s results with 2024 and 2025. There has been a significant increase from 2025 to 2026 in the proportion of respondents who reported that abuse and intimidation had increased either sharply or slightly over the past 12 months; last year, 46 per cent

reported that they had experienced and increase, but this rises to 55 per cent this year. This increase is also observed in the proportion who felt specifically that abuse and intimidation had risen sharply over the last 12 months, rising from 17 per cent last year to 27 per cent this year.

Table 22: And thinking about the last 12 months, how has the volume of abuse and intimidation you have received in your role as a councillor changed? *(England and Wales only)*

	2024 survey	2025 survey	2026 survey
It has sharply or slightly increased	**49%**	**46%**	**55%**
It has sharply increased	14%	17%	27%
It has slightly increased	35%	30%	28%
It has stayed about the same	42%	40%	37%
It has slightly decreased	4%	5%	5%
It has sharply decreased	1%	4%	2%
Don’t know	3%	4%	1%

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year who had experienced some level of abuse over the past 12 months; 2024 (1116), 2025 (1148), 2026 (719).

When broken down demographically, female respondents were significantly more likely to report that the volume of abuse or intimidation had increased, with 56 per cent noticing an increase

compared to 48 per cent of male respondents. Minor differences were observed by ethnicity and disability status, however, these were not statistically significant. The full breakdown is shown in Table 23.

Table 23: And thinking about the last 12 months, how has the volume of abuse and intimidation you have received in your role as a councillor changed? – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status*

	Sharply or slightly increased
Male	48%
Female	56%
White	52%
Ethnic minority	55%
Heterosexual	51%
LGBT+	51%
Non-disabled people	50%
Disabled people	57%

Base: all respondents serving for at least a year who had experienced some level of abuse; male (428), female (403), white (747), ethnic minorities (75), heterosexual (707), LGBT+ (86), non-disabled (599), disabled (193).

Involvement of the police

Respondents were asked if they had ever reported an incident of abuse experienced in their capacity as councillor to the police. Twenty-five per cent of respondents answered that they had reported an incident to the police, whilst 73 per cent had not. This was higher in Scotland than in England, with 33 per cent of respondents in Scotland having reported an incident to the police, compared with 24 per cent in England. There was a slight increase among respondents in Wales compared to England, however this difference was not statistically significant. Lower levels were observed among respondents from Northern Ireland, however, the recurring caveat about sample size applies here. The full results for this question are shown in Table 24.

Table 24: Have you ever reported to the police an incident of abuse or intimidation you have experienced in your role as councillor?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Yes	**25%**	24%	28%	33%	19% (5)
No	**73%**	74%	69%	63%	77% (20)
Don’t know	**2%**	2%	3%	4%	4% (1)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1503), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119), NI (26).

As shown in Table 25, the proportion of respondents who had reported an incident to the police remained in line with 2024 and 2025.

Table 25: Have you ever reported to the police an incident of abuse or intimidation you have experienced in your role as councillor? *(England and Wales only)*

	2024 survey	2025 survey	2026 survey

Yes	23%	21%	24%
No	76%	77%	74%
Prefer not to say	2%	2%	2%

Base: all respondents; 2024 (1724), 2025 (1850), 2026 (1358).

Table 26 shows a demographic breakdown of this question. The table shows that a third of female respondents (32 per cent) had reported an incident to the police compared to a fifth (20 per cent) of male respondents, whilst 31 per cent of disabled respondents had reported an incident compared to 23 per cent of non-disabled respondents. In addition, a slight difference was observed between ethnic minority respondents and white respondents, as well as between LGBT+ respondents and heterosexual respondents, however these differences were not statistically significant. The full results are shown in Table 26.

Table 26: Have you ever reported to the police an incident of abuse or intimidation you have experienced in your role as councillor? – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status*

	Has reported an incident to the police
Male	20%
Female	32%
White	25%
Ethnic minority	29%
Heterosexual	25%

LGBT+	29%
Non-disabled people	23%
Disabled people	31%

Base: all respondents; male (838), female (640), white (1308), ethnic minorities (154), heterosexual (1273), LGBT+ (133), non-disabled (1137), disabled (275).

Police response

Respondents who had reported an issue to the police were then asked the extent to which the policing response addressed the issue of abuse or intimidation that had been reported. Experiences were mixed, as 16 per cent reported that the response addressed the issue to a great extent, whilst 18 per cent felt it was addressed to a moderate extent, and a further 30 per cent felt to a small extent. Thirty-three per cent of respondents reported that the policing response did not at all address the issue, and a further 3 per cent were unsure. The full results are shown in Table 27.

Table 27: To what extent, if at all, did the policing response address the issue of abuse or intimidation that you reported?

	TOTAL	**England**	**Wales**	**Scotland**	**N. Ireland**
To a great or moderate extent	**34%**	**29%**	**45% (14)**	**56% (22)**	**60% (3)**
To a great extent	**16%**	13%	19% (6)	33% (13)	40% (2)
To a moderate extent	**18%**	16%	26% (8)	23% (9)	20% (1)

To a small extent	**30%**	31%	32% (10)	18% (7)	20% (1)
Not at all	**33%**	37%	19% (6)	18% (7)	0% (0)
Don’t know	**3%**	2%	3% (1)	8% (3)	20% (1)

Base: all respondents who reported an issue to the police; Tot. (374), Eng. (299), Wal. (31), Scot. (39), NI (5).

Among those who had reported an issue of abuse or intimidation to the police, the proportion who felt that the policing response addressed the issue to a great or moderate extent saw a decrease this year compared to last year, falling from 39 per cent to 31 per cent. This is shown in Table 28.

Table 28: To what extent, if at all, did the policing response address the issue of abuse or intimidation that you reported? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	2026 survey
To a great or moderate extent	**39%**	**31%**
To a great extent	18%	14%
To a moderate extent	21%	17%
To a small extent	27%	32%
Not at all	30%	35%
Don’t know	4%	2%

Base: all respondents who reported an issue to the police; 2025 (397), 2026 (330).

Forms of abuse or intimidation

To understand the forms that abuse or intimidation may take, respondents were asked to indicate whether they or someone closely connected with them had been the victim of a specific range of violent activities due to the respondent's role as councillor. Respondents were presented with two questions, each containing a list of types of abuse and intimidation. Respondents could choose whether they personally had experienced it, or whether someone closely connected to them had experienced it specifically as a result of the respondent's role as a councillor.

Against the respondent themselves

Of all respondents who answered this question, 10 per cent reported experiencing a threat of damage to their own property, whilst 5 per cent reported being a victim of actual damage to their own property. A quarter (26 per cent) had suffered a threat of violence against themselves, whilst 2 per cent had experienced actual violence, and a further 7 per cent had suffered a death threat against themselves. The results for this part of the question are shown in Table 29.

Table 29: Due to your role as councillor, have you ever experienced any of the following?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Threat of damage to property	**10%**	9%	11%	13%	8% (2)
Actual damage to property	**5%**	5%	4%	1%	8% (2)
Threat of violence	**26%**	25%	23%	29%	50% (12)

Actual violence	**2%**	2%	3%	2%	4% (1)
Threat of death	**7%**	6%	9%	10%	25% (6)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1407), Eng. (1169), Wal. (103), Scot. (111), NI (24).

Table 30 compares this year's responses with 2024 and 2025, and indicates that responses remained broadly in line with previous years.

Table 30: Due to your role as councillor, have you ever experienced any of the following? *(England and Wales only)*

	2024 survey	**2025 survey**	**2026 survey**
Threat of damage to property	10%	8%	10%
Actual damage to property	5%	5%	5%
Threat of violence	22%	21%	25%
Actual violence	3%	3%	2%
Threat of death	5%	5%	6%

Base: all respondents; 2024 (1617), 2025 (1739), 2026 (1272). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Table 31 contains the results for the second part of the question. The table shows that more than half of all respondents (57 per cent) had suffered the publication of untrue or misleading information about their own personal or political conduct or character. Thirteen per cent had suffered the publication of private information, whilst a further 13 per cent had suffered abuse relating to a protected characteristic. Eight per

cent had had a member of the public attend their home in an intimidatory manner, whilst 7 per cent had been the victim of stalking, and 3 per cent had been the victim of sexual harassment.

The full results, including breakdown at national level, are shown in Table 31.

Table 31: And due to your role as councillor, have you ever experienced any of the following?

	TOTAL	Eng.	Wales	Scot.	N. Ire.
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political OR personal** conduct or character	**57%**	**56%**	**57%**	**65%**	**71% (17)**
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political** conduct or character	**48%**	47%	49%	58%	67% (16)
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **personal** conduct or character	**44%**	42%	46%	54%	46% (11)
Inappropriate publication of private information	**13%**	13%	12%	14%	17% (4)
Abuse related to a protected characteristic	**13%**	12%	15%	19%	4% (1)
A member of the public attending your home in a manner you consider intimidatory or inappropriate	**8%**	7%	11%	13%	17% (4)

Stalking	**7%**	7%	7%	8%	0% (0)
Sexual harassment	**3%**	2%	3%	5%	4% (1)
A public protest at your home	**1%**	2%	0%	0%	0% (0)
Other (please specify)	**6%**	6%	6%	10%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1417), Eng. (1178), Wal. (102), Scot. (113), NI (24).

As shown in Table 32, there has been a slight increase in the proportion of respondents reporting that they have experienced the publication of untrue or misleading information about either their personal or political character. Although the increases are not statistically significant, the results hint at a higher reported prevalence of this form of abuse in 2026 than in 2025.

Table 32: And due to your role as councillor, have you ever experienced any of the following? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	**2026 survey**
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political OR personal** conduct or character	52%	56%
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political** conduct or character	44%	47%
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **personal** conduct or character	41%	43%

Inappropriate publication of private information	11%	13%
Abuse related to a protected characteristic	8%	13%
A member of the public attending your home in a manner you consider intimidatory or inappropriate	8%	8%
Stalking	5%	7%
Sexual harassment	2%	2%
A public protest at your home	1%	1%
Other (please specify)	6%	6%

Base: all respondents; 2025 (1784), 2026 (1280).

Against someone closely connected to them

As well as experiences suffered personally by the respondent, the survey asked about experiences of those closely connected to the respondent, that directly related to the respondent's role as a councillor.

Five per cent of respondents indicated that due to their own role as a councillor, someone closely connected to them had suffered a threat of damage to property, whilst 3 per cent reported that someone closely connected to them had suffered actual damage to their property. Nine per cent indicated that someone closely connected to them had suffered a threat of violence, whilst 1 per cent reported that someone had suffered actual violence, and 3 per cent reported that someone had suffered a threat of death. The results for this part of the question are shown in Table 33.

Table 33: Due to your role as councillor, has a person closely connected to you ever experienced any of the following?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Threat of damage to property	**5%**	5%	5%	4%	0% (0)
Actual damage to property	**3%**	3%	4%	0%	0% (0)
Threat of violence	**9%**	10%	6%	8%	13% (3)
Actual violence	**1%**	2%	0%	0%	0% (0)
Threat of death	**3%**	3%	0%	4%	8% (2)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1407), Eng. (1169), Wal. (103), Scot. (111), NI (24).

Table 34 compares this year's responses with 2024 and 2025. Responses remained broadly in line with previous years.

Table 34: Due to your role as councillor, has a person closely connected to you ever experienced any of the following? *(England and Wales only)*

	2024 survey	2025 survey	2026 survey
Threat of damage to property	5%	4%	5%
Actual damage to property	3%	2%	3%
Threat of violence	8%	9%	9%
Actual violence	1%	1%	1%

Threat of death	2%	2%	3%

Base: all respondents; 2024 (1617), 2025 (1739), 2026 (1272). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Table 35 displays the second part of the question, and demonstrates that 13 per cent of respondents had suffered the publication of untrue information about the personal or political conduct of someone closely connected to them. Four per cent had suffered the inappropriate publication of private information relating to someone closely connected to them, whilst a further 4 per cent had experienced someone closely connected to them suffer abuse relating to a protected characteristic due to the respondent's role as a councillor. Furthermore, 2 per cent had experienced the stalking of someone closely connected to them. The full results for this question, including a national breakdown, are contained in Table 35.

Table 35: And due to your role as councillor, has a person closely connected to you ever experienced any of the following?

	TOTAL	**Eng.**	**Wales**	**Scot.**	**N. Ire.**
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political OR personal** conduct or character	**13%**	**14%**	**7%**	**12%**	**17% (4)**
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political** conduct or character	**10%**	10%	2%	5%	17% (4)
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **personal** conduct or character	**11%**	11%	6%	10%	8% (2)

Inappropriate publication of private information	**4%**	4%	0%	4%	4% (1)
Abuse related to a protected characteristic	**4%**	4%	2%	3%	0% (0)
A member of the public attending your home in a manner you consider intimidatory or inappropriate	**2%**	2%	0%	0%	8% (2)
Stalking	**2%**	2%	1%	1%	0% (0)
Sexual harassment	**0%**	0%	1%	0%	0% (0)
A public protest at your home	**1%**	2%	2%	0%	0% (0)
Other (please specify)	**1%**	1%	0%	1%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1417), Eng. (1178), Wal. (102), Scot. (113), NI (24).

As shown in Table 36, this year's results were closely in line with last year.

Table 36: And due to your role as councillor, has a person closely connected to you ever experienced any of the following? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	**2026 survey**

Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political OR personal** conduct or character	13%	13%
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **political** conduct or character	10%	10%
Publication of untrue/misleading information about your **personal** conduct or character	11%	11%
Inappropriate publication of private information	4%	4%
Abuse related to a protected characteristic	3%	4%
A member of the public attending your home in a manner you consider intimidatory or inappropriate	3%	2%
Stalking	1%	2%
Sexual harassment	1%	0%
A public protest at your home	1%	2%
Other (please specify)	2%	1%

Base: all respondents; 2025 (1784), 2026 (1280).

Protected characteristics

Protected characteristics are a list of characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, for which it is against the law to discriminate against somebody. Respondents who reported that they had experienced an incident relating to a protected characteristic had the opportunity to specify which characteristic(s) it concerned.

Those that indicated in the previous question (explored in Table 31 and Table 35) that they or someone closely connected to them had experienced abuse or intimidation relating to a protected characteristic

were asked which protected characteristic this related to.

The full results from this question are shown in Table 37. The results show that 33 per cent suffered abuse relating to sex, whilst 25 per cent suffered abuse relating to race. Twenty-two per cent suffered abuse relating to their sexual orientation, whilst a further 22 per cent suffered abuse relating to their religion or belief, and 21 per cent suffered abuse relating to their disability status. Eighteen per cent suffered abuse relating to age, whilst 7 per cent received abuse relating to their gender reassignment status, 2 per cent due to their marital or civil partnership status, and 1 per cent due to pregnancy or maternity leave.

Table 37: Which protected characteristic(s) was it related to?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Sex	**33%**	29%	38% (6)	55% (12)	100% (1)
Race (inc. colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin)	**25%**	25%	13% (2)	32% (7)	0% (0)
Sexual orientation	**22%**	24%	13% (2)	18% (4)	0% (0)
Religion or belief	**22%**	24%	6% (1)	18% (4)	0% (0)
Disability	**21%**	23%	0%	18% (4)	0% (0)
Age	**18%**	17%	31% (5)	23% (5)	0% (0)
Gender reassignment	**7%**	7%	6% (1)	9% (2)	0% (0)

Being married or in a civil partnership	**2%**	2%	6% (1)	5% (1)	0% (0)
Being pregnant or on maternity leave	**1%**	0%	6% (1)	5% (1)	0% (0)
Prefer not to say	**5%**	4%	19% (3)	0% (0)	0% (0)

Base: all respondents who experienced abuse or intimidation about a protected characteristic; Tot. (207), Eng. (168), Wal. (16), Scot. (22), NI (1). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

As shown in Table 38, responses to this question remained broadly in line with responses observed last year. There was an increase in the proportion of those facing abuse due to their sex, however this increase was not statistically significant.

Table 38: Which protected characteristic(s) was it related to? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	**2026 survey**
Sex	22%	30%
Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin	25%	24%
Sexual orientation	22%	23%
Religion or belief	18%	23%
Disability	21%	21%
Age	21%	18%

Gender reassignment	5%	7%
Being married or in a civil partnership	4%	2%
Being pregnant or on maternity leave	0%	1%
Prefer not to say	7%	5%

Base: all respondents who experienced abuse or intimidation about a protected characteristic; 2025 (180), 2026 (184). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Home modifications

Respondents were asked whether they had made modifications to their home since being elected due to concerns about their safety as a councillor. Overall, 35 per cent of respondents reported having made, or feeling the need to make, modifications to their home because of safety concerns associated with their role. This consisted of 22 per cent who had already made modifications and 13 per cent who felt modifications were needed but had not yet undertaken them. The full results are shown in Table 39.

Table 39: Have you made modifications to your home security since becoming a councillor due to concerns you have about your security as an elected member?

	TOTAL	**England**	**Wales**	**Scotland**	**N. Ireland**
Yes or no – but I feel I need them	**35%**	**34%**	**43%**	**31%**	**58% (15)**
Yes	**22%**	22%	31%	20%	31% (8)

No – but I feel I need them	**13%**	12%	13%	11%	27% (7)
No – but I do not feel I need them	**61%**	62%	54%	64%	42% (11)
Prefer not to say	**4%**	4%	3%	5%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1503), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119), NI (26).

Results from this year were closely in line with those from last year, noting a very slight increase year on year in those who had made, or feel they need to make, home modifications due to security concerns as an elected member; the full results are shown in Table 40.

Table 40: Have you made modifications to your home security since becoming a councillor due to concerns you have about your security as an elected member? *(England and Wales only)*

	2024 survey	**2025 survey**	**2026 survey**
Yes, or no – but I feel I need them	**31%**	**32%**	**35%**
Yes	20%	21%	22%
No – but I feel I need them	11%	11%	12%
No – but I do not feel I need them	66%	64%	61%
Prefer not to say	3%	4%	4%

Base: all respondents; 2024 (1734), 2025 (1853), 2026 (1358).

Those who had not made modifications but felt that they needed to were then asked why they had not yet made them. As shown in Table 41, half of respondents (51 per cent) reported that they were unsure what they should get, whilst 42 per cent reported being unable to afford home modifications.

Table 41: Why have you not made modifications to your home security despite feeling you need to?

	2026 survey - total
I am not sure what I should get	51%
I cannot afford them	42%
Other, please specify	25%

Base: all respondents who had not made modifications but felt they need them (187). Please note: respondents could select more than one option.

Twenty-five per cent indicated another reason and had the opportunity to specify their reasoning. Answers included:

- Intending to, but have not yet found the time/energy to make modifications (including some newly elected councillors)
- Currently in the process of making modifications
- Restrictions outside of their control (listed building, council tenant, communal areas, no outside power supply, freeholder permission needed)
- Consideration of family's privacy
- A sense of giving in to the abuse, letting the abusers win
- Moving house soon
- Planning to stand down soon, therefore security features will no longer be required.

Respondents who had made modifications were asked about the modifications that they had made. Fifty-eight per cent had installed a camera doorbell, whilst 56 per cent had installed CCTV or other cameras. Forty per cent had installed security lights, whilst 18 per cent had installed a house alarm, and a further 18 per cent had flagged their home address for police response. Fifteen per cent had installed new locks, whilst 12 per cent had installed an external post-box, 9 per cent had got a dog, and a further 9 per cent had reinforced their fences. Eight per cent had installed gates, and 7 per cent had installed a panic button or panic alarm. The full results for this question are shown in Table 42.

Thirteen per cent indicated other modifications, and these included:

- Removing home addresses from council websites or elsewhere
- Moving house
- Ensuring doors are shut and locked
- Removing or sealing external letterboxes
- Improvements to existing security measures (stronger sensors, brighter lights, reinforced doors or locks)
- Improved car security, including dashcams and steering wheel locks
- Installing a safe
- Having a rape alarm
- Downloading the police app for ease of access
- Putting up ‘Beware of the dog’ signage (despite not having a dog)
- No longer publishing surgery details.

Table 42: What modifications have you made?

	2026 survey - total
Camera doorbell	58%
CCTV or other cameras	56%

Security lights	40%
House alarm	18%
Home address flagged for police response	18%
New locks	15%
Installed an external post-box	12%
Getting a dog	9%
Higher/stronger fences	9%
Installing gates (manual or electric)	8%
Panic button/alarm	7%
Other, please specify	13%
Prefer not to say	1%

Base: all respondents who had made modifications (336). Please note: respondents could select more than one response.

Operation Ford – awareness and engagement

The government's Operation Ford, a policing campaign to support local councillors and candidates, introduced a post to every police force in the country dedicated to supporting local politicians whilst undertaking their role. This position is known as the Force Elected Officials Adviser, the Operation Ford Adviser, or the Elected Representative Safety Officer in Northern Ireland.

Respondents were asked whether or not they were aware of this post. Overall, more than half of all respondents (57 per cent) were aware of the post. Awareness was significantly higher among councillors in Scotland (76 per cent) and Wales (65 per cent) than in England (55 per cent). Awareness was lower in Northern Ireland, with 15 per cent of councillors aware of the position, however, due to the low sample size this must be interpreted with caution. The full results are shown in Table 43.

Table 43: Are you aware that your police force now has a dedicated officer for elected member safety called the Force Elected Officials Adviser (sometimes called the Operation Ford Adviser or the Elected Representative Safety Officer in Northern Ireland)?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Yes	**57%**	55%	65%	76%	15% (4)
No	**38%**	40%	33%	21%	81% (21)
Don’t know	**5%**	5%	3%	3%	4% (1)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1499), Eng. (1245), Wal. (110), Scot. (118), NI (26).

In comparison to last year’s survey, as shown in Table 44, the awareness among English and Welsh councillors has increased significantly, rising from 40 per cent awareness in 2025 to 56 per cent in 2026.

Table 44: Are you aware that your police force now has a dedicated officer for elected member safety called the Force Elected Officials Adviser? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	2026 survey

Yes	40%	56%
No	55%	39%
Don’t know	6%	5%

Base: all respondents; 2025 (1856), 2026 (1355).

Respondents were then asked whether or not they had engaged with the Adviser, for example by attending an Operation Ford security briefing, or other informal contact. As shown in Table 45, 40 per cent of respondents had engaged with the Adviser, whilst 58 per cent had not, and a further 2 per cent were unsure if they had. Engagement was significantly higher in Scotland than in both England and Wales, with almost three-quarters (73 per cent) of responding councillors in Scotland reporting that they had engaged in some way with the Adviser, compared to 38 per cent and 39 per cent in England and Wales respectively. Engagement was lowest in Northern Ireland, at 8 per cent of responding councillors, however once again this must be interpreted with caution due to the low sample size of respondents from Northern Ireland.

Table 45: Have you engaged with the Force Elected Officials Adviser, for example, by attending an Operation Ford security briefing or other informal contact?

	TOTAL	**England**	**Wales**	**Scotland**	**N. Ireland**
Yes	**40%**	38%	39%	73%	8% (2)
No	**58%**	61%	60%	26%	92% (24)
Don’t know	**2%**	2%	1%	1%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1496), Eng. (1241), Wal. (110), Scot. (119), NI (26).

Respondents who had engaged with the programme were asked how useful they found that engagement. Overall, around three-quarters (74 per cent) considered it to be either very or fairly useful, including one-quarter (25 per cent) who found it very useful. Similar proportions of respondents in England (73 per cent), Wales (88 per cent) and Scotland (72 per cent) found the engagement very or fairly useful, with no statistically significant differences between nations. In Northern Ireland, only two respondents reported engaging with the programme; one found the engagement fairly useful and the other not very useful. The full results for this question are shown in Table 46.

Table 46: How useful, if at all, did you find the engagement with Operation Ford?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Very/fairly useful	**74%**	**73%**	**88% (38)**	**72%**	**50% (1)**
Very useful	25%	26%	26% (11)	20%	0% (0)
Fairly useful	49%	47%	63% (27)	53%	50% (1)
Not very useful	16%	16%	9% (4)	20%	50% (1)
Not at all useful	8%	9%	2% (1)	7%	0% (0)
Don’t know	1%	2%	0% (0)	1%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents who had engaged with the programme; Tot. (597), Eng. (465), Wal. (43), Scot. (87), NI (2).

It should be noted that this year's survey had slightly more accompanying text in the question, detailing that the post may be known as the Operation Ford Adviser or the Elected Representative Safety Officer in Northern Ireland.

Personal safety training

Respondents in England and Wales were then asked whether or not they were aware that the LGA provides personal safety training to all councillors. Whilst more than half of all responding councillors in England and Wales were aware of the LGA's safety training offer, awareness was slightly lower this year (56 per cent), compared to last year (63 per cent). This is shown in Table 47.

Table 47: Are you aware that the LGA provides personal safety training to all councillors? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	2026 survey
Yes	63%	56%
No	31%	38%
Don't know	6%	5%

Base: all respondents; 2025 (1860), 2026 (1351).

Respondents in Northern Ireland were asked whether they were aware that the NILGA provides personal safety training to councillors. Awareness was similar to England and Wales, with 58 per cent of respondents in Northern Ireland aware of the NILGA's personal safety training offer. This is shown in Table 48.

Table 48: Are you aware that the NILGA provides personal safety training to all councillors?

	2026 survey

Yes	58% (15)
No	35% (9)
Don’t know	8% (2)

Base: all respondents who are councillors in Northern Ireland (26).

Standing at the next local elections

Respondents were asked whether they planned to stand at the next local elections in their area. As shown in Table 49, just under half of all respondents (45 per cent) indicated that they intended to stand for re-election, while around a fifth (19 per cent) had decided not to stand and a further 36 per cent were unsure.

Respondents in England were less likely to report that they intended to stand for re-election (43 per cent) than respondents in Wales and Scotland (both 54 per cent). Respondents in Scotland were also less likely to be undecided, with 26 per cent reporting that they were unsure whether they would stand, compared with 37 per cent of respondents in England. Similar proportions of respondents in England and Scotland (both 20 per cent) had already decided not to seek re-election.

In Northern Ireland, 20 of the 26 responding councillors indicated that they intended to stand for re-election, while one respondent had decided not to stand and five were unsure. However, these figures should be interpreted with caution given the small number of respondents.

Table 49: Will you be standing for election at the next local elections in your area?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Yes	**45%**	43%	54%	54%	77% (20)

No	**19%**	20%	14%	20%	4% (1)
Don’t know	**36%**	37%	32%	26%	19% (5)

Base: all respondents; Tot. (1503), Eng. (1247), Wal. (111), Scot. (119), NI (26).

As shown in Table 50, the sentiment among respondents in England and Wales this year remained consistent with 2025.

Table 50: Will you be standing for election at the next local elections in your area? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	**2026 survey**
Yes	44%	44%
No	19%	19%
Not yet decided	36%	37%

Base: all respondents; 2025 (1861), 2026 (1358).

Respondents who were unsure whether to stand, or who had decided not to stand, were asked whether the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation had influenced their position. Overall, 30 per cent reported that the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation had influenced their decision, while 65 per cent reported that it had not. Although there was some variation in responses between nations, these differences were not statistically significant. Across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, respondents were more likely to report that the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation had not influenced their position than to report that it had. The full results are shown in Table 51.

Table 51: Has the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation influenced your position on whether to stand?

	TOTAL	England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland
Yes	**30%**	29%	31% (16)	40%	33% (2)
No	**65%**	65%	65% (33)	58%	67% (4)
Don’t know	**6%**	6%	4% (2)	2%	0% (0)

Base: all respondents unsure or not standing at next elections; Tot. (819), Eng. (707), Wal. (51), Scot. (55), NI (6).

As shown in Table 52, the proportion of respondents from England and Wales who felt that abuse and/or intimidation had influenced their position on whether to stand remained largely consistent from 2025 to 2026.

Table 52: Has the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation influenced your position on whether to stand? *(England and Wales only)*

	2025 survey	2026 survey
Yes	26%	29%
No	67%	65%
Don’t know	7%	6%

Base: all respondents unsure or not standing at next elections; 2025 (1027), 2026 (758).

Table 53 shows a demographic breakdown of this question, and highlights that female councillors, ethnic minority councillors, and LGBT+ councillors are significantly more likely to be impacted by abuse and intimidation to the point that it has influenced their decision on whether or not to stand for re-election; 38 per cent of female

respondents reported that it had impacted their decision compared to 23 per cent of male respondents, whilst 43 per cent of ethnic minority respondents felt it had impacted their decision compared to 28 per cent of white respondents, and 41 per cent of LGBT+ respondents felt it had impacted their decision, compared to 28 per cent of straight respondents. Differences were observed between disabled and non-disabled respondents, however these differences were not statistically significant. The full results are shown in Table 53.

Table 53: Has the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation influenced your position on whether to stand? – *Broken down by sex, ethnicity, sexuality, and disability status*

	Possibility has influenced position on whether to stand
Male	23%
Female	38%
White	28%
Ethnic minority	43%
Heterosexual	28%
LGBT+	41%
Non-disabled people	28%
Disabled people	33%

Base: all respondents unsure or not standing at the next elections; male (444), female (361), white (719), ethnic minorities (76), heterosexual (702), LGBT+ (71), non-disabled (619), disabled (146).

Demographics

Respondents were asked a series of demographic questions to understand what impact, if any, certain characteristics have on experiences of abuse or intimidation in local politics. The questions were optional, and each had a 'prefer not to say' option.

Sex

As shown in Table 54, 43 per cent of respondents were female, whilst 56 per cent of respondents were male and a further 1 per cent chose not to specify.

Table 54: Sex

	2026 survey
Female	43%
Male	56%
Prefer not to say/blank	1%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Gender identity

Respondents were asked whether their gender identity is the same as the sex they were registered as at birth. As Table 55 shows, 96 per cent of respondents reported that their gender identity does align with their sex registered at birth, whilst 1 per cent reported that their gender identity does not align with their sex as registered at birth. Three per cent of respondents chose not to specify.

Table 55: Gender identity

	2026 survey
Gender identity **IS** the same as sex registered at birth	96%
Gender identity is **NOT** the same as sex registered at birth	1%
Prefer not to say/blank	3%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Age group

Respondents were asked to indicate their age group. As shown in Table 56, 1 per cent of respondents were under 25, whilst 4 per cent were between 25 and 34, 9 per cent were between 35 and 44, 15 per cent were between 45 and 54, and 28 per cent were between 55 and 64. By far the largest group, 42 per cent of respondents were 65 or over.

Table 56: Age group

	2026 survey
Under 25	1%
25-34	4%
35-44	9%
45-54	15%
55-64	28%
65 or over	42%

Prefer not to say/blank	2%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Ethnicity

Respondents were asked to indicate their ethnicity from a set list. Those who did not feel represented by this list had the opportunity to specify the ethnicity with which they aligned. As Table 57 shows, the majority of respondents to the 2026 survey (87 per cent) identified as white, whilst 4 per cent identified as Asian or Asian British, 3 per cent identified as being from mixed or multiple ethnic groups, and 2 per cent identified as Black, Black British, Caribbean or African. Two per cent indicated another ethnic group, and a further three per cent chose not to say or left the question blank.

Table 57: Ethnicity

	2026 survey
White	87%
Asian or Asian British	4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	3%
Black, Black British, Caribbean or African	2%
Other ethnic group (please specify)	2%
Prefer not to say/blank	3%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Sexual orientation

Respondents were asked to indicate their sexual orientation from a set list. Eighty-five per cent of respondents identified as straight or heterosexual, whilst 4 per cent identified as gay or lesbian, 4 per cent identified as bisexual, and 1 per cent identified as another sexual orientation not listed. The full results are shown in Table 58.

Table 58: Sexual orientation

	2026 survey
Straight/heterosexual	85%
Gay or lesbian	4%
Bisexual	4%
Other sexual orientation	1%
Prefer not to say/blank	6%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Long-term physical or mental health conditions/illnesses

Respondents were asked whether or not they had a physical or mental health condition lasting or expecting to last for 12 months or more which reduces their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. Eighteen per cent of respondents indicated that they did have a condition of this nature, whilst 76 per cent indicated that they did not, and a further 6 per cent chose not to say. The full results are shown in Table 59.

Table 59: Long-term physical or mental health conditions/illnesses

	2026 survey

Has a physical or mental health condition lasting or expecting to last for 12 months or more which reduces ability to carry out day-to-day activities	18%
Does not have a physical or mental health condition expecting to last for 12 months or more which reduces ability to carry out day-to-day activities	76%
Prefer not to say/blank	6%

Base: all respondents (1503).

Further comments

Respondents were asked to provide any comments about the safety of councillors, or civility in public life more generally. A total of 705 respondents provided comments, which were grouped into common themes. The following themes emerged most frequently from comments:

- **Abuse and physical safety risks:** Comments revealed that councillors face a significant and worsening landscape of abuse, intimidation and physical safety risks. This ranges from aggression on the doorstep and online harassment, to serious threats, stalking, property damage and physical violence. Some felt that councils, parties and the police could improve their efforts to protect elected members. This could include stronger reporting mechanisms, practical safety support and clearer consequences for perpetrators. In addition, some noted the broader cultural and media environment that normalises hostility towards public representatives.
- **Online abuse and misinformation:** For many respondents, social media platforms, particularly Facebook and X, have become the primary vectors for a severe and escalating crisis of online harassment and misinformation directed at councillors. Women, ethnic minorities and those holding powerful or controversial positions within the council (e.g. mayor, those on certain

committees) felt disproportionately targeted. Some felt that action is needed from social media companies, regulators, police and councils to restrict anonymity for abusers, enforce content moderation and provide meaningful support to councillors facing coordinated harassment campaigns.

- **Councillor-on-councillor abuse and misconduct:** Some respondents described incidents of abuse and misconduct on the part of other councillors, with some emphasising that other politicians were the primary perpetrators of abuse and intimidation that they suffered. Once again respondents felt that stronger enforcement mechanisms and clearer codes of conduct, along with a cultural shift within politics, were needed to address this behaviour that is driving councillors (particularly women) out of public life.
- **Abuse from parties and political polarisation:** In addition to more general councillor-on-councillor abuse, some respondents felt that the increasing political polarisation within the UK is serving as a catalyst of abuse and intimidation within public life. This sense of increasing polarisation was felt by those across the political spectrum, with some feeling that political divisions were enabling and amplifying abuse and intimidation. Furthermore, some felt that social media platforms amplified extremist rhetoric and enabled coordinated harassment campaigns.
- **Inadequate police response to abuse and legislative gaps:** Police responses to reports of abuse, threats, and intimidation against elected councillors were often seen as inadequate, with respondents experiencing dismissed complaints, limited or no investigation, or lacking awareness of relevant legislation such as Operation Ford. As such, legislative gaps could be an area for development, including extending employment protections to councillors, introducing background checks for candidates, restricting publication of councillors' home addresses, and introducing harsher penalties for those who intimidate or attack public officials.
- **Toothless standards and complaints mechanisms:** Among respondents, the current complaints and standards mechanisms

were generally regarded as ineffective and failing to protect councillors from abuse and harassment - whether from members of the public, fellow councillors, or organised groups. On the other hand, some respondents described how the systems were simultaneously being weaponised against councillors, with threats of malicious complaints used to intimidate and coerce councillors for political purposes.

- **Few or no issues experienced:** Some respondents reported little to no personal experience of abuse, intimidation, or safety concerns, often attributing this to rural or close-knit community settings where mutual familiarity fosters respectful interactions. However, many acknowledged their good fortune and remain conscious that abuse is a wider problem affecting colleagues and potential candidates elsewhere, particularly online.
- **Safety examples/suggestions:** Respondents suggested a range of practical safety measures that organisations could implement, including providing personal alarms, body cameras, safe transport after late-night meetings, defence training, and home security support, whilst also protecting personal details such as home addresses and private contact information from the public domain. Canvassing in pairs, early safety training, dedicated work phones, and clearer guidance on managing social media exposure and de-escalation were highlighted as essential steps that councils and political organisations could take proactively, rather than leaving individuals to arrange their own protection.
- **Abuse against specific groups of people:** Respondents noted that minority groups (including women, ethnic minorities, disabled people, religious communities, the trans community) face disproportionate levels of abuse, intimidation, and online harassment that actively deters a diverse group of people from standing for or remaining in public office. As such, some comments called for stronger action against online abuse, better protections for those with protected characteristics and a shift away from the normalisation of harassment as an accepted part of political life.
- **Councillor vs MP security disparity:** A few respondents highlighted that councillors receive significantly less security

support, funding and institutional protection than MPs, despite being more visible in their communities and thus potentially more vulnerable to abuse and threats. Responsibility for councillor safety is frequently passed between local authorities, police, and political parties, leaving individuals to manage threats largely alone, which some felt was inadequate in comparison to the personal protection afforded to MPs.

Annex A: Questionnaire

Debate Not Hate Survey 2026

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This is an LGA survey gathering information about councillors' experiences of abuse and intimidation across all four UK nations. The survey is run in partnership with the Welsh LGA (WLGA), the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), and the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), however, management of the survey and resulting data will be retained by the LGA.

You can navigate through the questions using the buttons at the bottom of each page. Use the 'previous' button at the bottom of the page if you wish to amend your response to an earlier question. To review the survey before completing it, you can access a PDF of the questions in English here (this links to a new tab).

If you stop before completing the return, you can come back to this page using the link supplied in the email and you will be able to continue where you left off. To ensure your answers have been saved, click on the 'next' button at the bottom of the page that you were working on before exiting.

All responses will be treated confidentially. Information will be aggregated, and no individual or authority will be identified in any publications without your consent. Identifiable information may be used internally within the LGA but will only be held and processed in accordance with our privacy statement. We are undertaking this survey to aid the legitimate interests of the LGA, COSLA, NILGA and WLGA in supporting and representing authorities. It is necessary for us to collect

and process special category data in relation to our work in monitoring differences in opportunities and outcomes among various protected characteristics, such as gender, age and ethnicity, which we do under condition (a) of Article 9(2) of the Data Protection Act 2018. Aggregate data only will be shared with COSLA, NILGA and WLGA.

You are in control of any personal data that you have provided to us in your response. You can contact us at all times to have your information changed or deleted. You can find our full privacy policy here: click here to see our privacy policy.

The deadline for completing this survey is 5pm, Wednesday 8th July. Please ensure you have submitted your response by this time.

1. Please amend the details we have on record if necessary. If you are a member of more than one council, please only complete this survey once.

- Name
- Authority
- Email address

2. Please indicate the type of council(s) of which you are a member. *Select all that apply. **Each list only shown to the relevant nation***

England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
District council	Principal council	Principal council	District council
County council	Town council	Community council	Borough council
London borough	Community council	Other (please specify)	City council

Metropolitan borough	Other (please specify)		Other (please specify)
Unitary council			
Town council			
Parish/community council			
Other (please specify)			

3. What is your political affiliation as a councillor?

England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
Conservatives	Conservatives	Scottish Conservative and Unionist	Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
Green Party	Green Party	Scottish Greens	Democratic Unionist Party
Independent (inc. Residents' Assoc.)	Independent (inc. Residents' Assoc.)	Scottish Labour	Green Party Northern Ireland
Labour	Labour	Scottish Liberal Democrats	Independent (inc. Residents' Assoc.)

Liberal Democrats	Liberal Democrats	Scottish National Party	Labour Party in Northern Ireland
Reform UK	Plaid Cymru	Reform UK	NI Conservatives
	Reform UK	Independent (inc. Residents' Assoc.)	People Before Profit
			Progressive Unionist Party
			Sinn Fein
			Social Democratic and Labour Party
			Traditional Unionist Voice
			Ulster Unionist Party
Other (please specify)	Other (please specify)	Other (please specify)	Other (please specify)

4. How long have you been serving as a councillor?

- Less than one year / newly elected in May ***Shown to Eng, Wales, Scot***
- Less than one year ***Shown to NI***
- 1 to <2 years

- 2 to <5 years
- 5 years or more

Shown to Eng, Wales, Scotland

5. Which of the following, if any, describes your role in the May 2026 local and/or national elections? *Select all that apply*

- Election candidate
- Election agent
- Election campaigner
- Other, please specify
- None of the above – I did not participate in any way in the May 2026 elections

Shown to NI

5. Which of the following, if any, described your role in the most recent local and/or national elections? *Select all that apply*

- Election candidate
- Election agent
- Election campaigner
- Other, please specify
- None of the above – I did not participate in any way in the most recent local and/or national elections

6. How often, if at all, do you feel at risk personally when fulfilling your role as a councillor?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Shown to respondents serving for at least a year

7. How effective or not do you think are your authority's arrangements for protecting you personally as you fulfil your role as a councillor?

- Very effective
- Fairly effective

- Not very effective
- Not at all effective
- Don’t know

The following questions relate to whether you have experienced abuse or intimidation in your role as a councillor and/or as a candidate or campaigner at the most recent local and/or general electoral period. These terms are defined as follows:

Abuse – words and/or behaviour that constitute abuse or mistreatment can include, but is not limited to, physical abuse, bullying, emotional abuse, unsolicited abusive communication, and harassment. It may be one-off or repeated.

Intimidation – words and/or behaviour intended or likely to block, influence, or deter participation in public debate or causing alarm or distress, which could lead to an individual wanting to withdraw from public life. It may be one-off or repeated behaviour.

Shown to England, Scotland and Wales respondents who participated in the May 2026 electoral period

8. How often, if at all, did you experience abuse or intimidation during this year's local and/or general election campaign period?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Shown to NI respondents who participated in the most recent local and/or national election campaign period

8. How often, if at all, did you experience abuse or intimidation during the most recent local and/or national election campaign period?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Shown to respondents serving for at least a year

9. Over the last twelve months, how often, if at all, have you experienced abuse or intimidation in your role as a councillor?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

Shown to respondents who have experienced abuse and intimidation (Q8 or Q9)

10. Where did the abuse and/or intimidation occur? *Select all that apply*

- In person
- By post, including messages and/or articles put through letterbox
- Privately, by phone including voice message, or through direct messaging including text, email and WhatsApp
- Publicly online, including on social media platforms or open forums online
- Other (please specify)

Shown to those who experienced abuse and intimidation in the last year (Q9)

11. And thinking about the last twelve months, how has the volume of abuse and intimidation you have received in your role as a councillor changed?

- It has sharply increased
- It has slightly increased
- It has stayed about the same
- It has slightly decreased
- It has sharply decreased
- Don’t know

12. Have you ever reported to the police an incident of abuse or intimidation you have experienced in your role as a councillor?

- Yes

- No
- Prefer not to say

Shown to respondents who have reported an incident to the police

13. To what extent, if at all, did the policing response address the issue of abuse or intimidation that you reported?

- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- Not at all
- Don’t know

14. Due to your role as a councillor, have you or a person closely connected with you ever experienced any of the following? *Select all that apply*

For the purposes of this question, a person closely connected with you could be your immediate or extended family, your partner, or a close friend.

- Threat of damage to property
- Actual damage to property
- Threat of violence
- Actual violence
- Threat of death
- None of the above
- Against you
- Against a person closely connected with you

15. And due to your role as a councillor, have you or a person closely connected with you ever experienced any of the following? *Select all that apply*

- Publication of untrue or misleading information about your personal conduct or character
- Publication of untrue or misleading information about your political conduct or character
- Inappropriate publication of private information
- Abuse related to a protected characteristic

- A public protest at your home
- A member of the public attending your home in a manner you consider intimidatory or inappropriate
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking
- Other, please specify
- None of the above
- Against you
- Against a person closely connected with you

Shown to those who reported that they and/or someone closely connected to them has received abuse relating to a protected characteristic

16. Which protected characteristic(s) was it related to? *Select all that apply*

- age
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- disability
- gender reassignment
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- Prefer not to say

17. Have you made modifications to your home security since becoming a councillor due to concerns you have about your security as an elected member?

- Yes
- No – But I feel I need them
- No – I do not feel I need them
- Prefer not to say

Shown to respondents who have not made modifications but feel they need to

18. Why have you not made modifications to your home security despite feeling you need to? *Select all that apply*

- I cannot afford them
- I am not sure what I should get
- Other, please specify

Shown to respondents who have made modifications

19. What modifications have you made? *Select all that apply*

- Security lights
- Camera doorbell
- CCTV or other cameras
- New locks
- Panic button/alarm
- House alarm
- Installed an external postbox
- Home address flagged for police response
- Higher/stronger fences
- Installing gates (manual or electric)
- Getting a dog
- Other, please specify
- Prefer not to say

20. Are you aware that your police force now has a dedicated officer for elected member safety called the Force Elected Officials Adviser? *The Force Elected Officials Adviser is sometimes called the Operation Ford Adviser or Elected Representative Safety Officer in Northern Ireland.*

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

21. Have you engaged with the Force Elected Officials Adviser, for example, by attending an Operation Ford Security briefing or other informal contact?

- Yes
- No

- Don’t know

Shown to respondents who have engaged with Operation Ford

22. How useful, if at all, did you find the engagement with Operation Ford?

- Very useful
- Fairly useful
- Not very useful
- Not at all useful
- Don’t know

Shown to Eng and Wales

23. Are you aware that the LGA provides personal safety training to all councillors?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Shown to NI

23. Are you aware that the NILGA provides personal safety training to all councillors?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

24. Will you be standing for election at the next local elections in your area?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Shown to those not standing, or unsure about standing

25. Has the possibility of abuse and/or intimidation influenced your position on whether to stand?

- Yes

- No
- Don’t know

Demographics: this section ask some questions about you. These questions are optional.

26. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

27. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

28. What is your age group?

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65 or over
- Prefer not to say

29. What is your ethnic group?

- White
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups
- Asian or Asian British
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African
- Other ethnic group (please specify)
- Prefer not to say

30. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Straight/heterosexual
- Gay or lesbian
- Bisexual

- Other sexual orientation
- Prefer not to say

31. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for twelve months or more which reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

32. Please use the space below to tell us anything more you'd like to about the safety of councillors, or civility in public life more generally.

Shown to councillors in England only

33. Please tick the box below if you would like to be involved in future work related to this area and/or the contents of this survey.

[ ] I would like to be involved in further work.