## REPORT OF THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

**MARCH 2021** 

The Independent Remuneration Panel currently comprises the following persons:

Ms Sally Dubery – Chief Officer, Central Surrey Voluntary Action Dr Emily Glorney – Senior Lecturer, Royal Holloway University of London

Mr Christopher Shrubb - Senior Partner, Hamlyns LLP, Chartered Accountants, Woking

The Panel met with Ray Morgan, Councillor Ayesha Azad, Councillor Simon Ashall and Julie Northcote for an initial meeting on 25 February 2021 over Zoom. Consideration was given to the papers provided which gave information on Members Allowances in other authorities, particularly in Surrey and the South East. The latest South East Employers Members Survey information for 2020-21 was provided to the Panel. The Panel reviewed the current level of allowances and compared allowances of other Councils in Surrey and the South East. Councillor Ashall asked the Panel to consider the approach adopted by Runnymede Borough Council in its review, as its quantification was considered to be transparent. Councillor Azad drew attention to the difficult financial constraints faced by the Council and highlighted both efficiency saving and increased transparency for residents as motivation for reviewing allowances. The Panel also discussed the current Members' Allowances Scheme after which there was detailed discussions on how best to carry out the review and the purpose of the Allowance scheme.

The Panel met again on 22 March 2021 over Zoom to discuss the findings of the Member survey and to consider these in the context of remuneration models elsewhere in Surrey and the South East.

The Panel considered the structure of the current Members' Allowances Scheme and believed the reasoning behind its structure was still sound and considered that there was no reason to change. By way of a reminder, the Panel's rationale has been as follows:

- The Panel's view is that it is not appropriate to determine a level of allowance by reference to earnings lost whilst on Council business. The Panel felt strongly that there is an element of the Members' work that is voluntary and to ascribe a monetary value to each hour worked was also inappropriate. It was also felt that the allowance is set at a level that encourages participation from all walks life to ensure to ensure the body of councillors as a whole is representative
- The Panel does not believe that an allowance should merely reflect a payment for attending meetings. The Panel's view is that a Councillor is probably more effective by being 'out and about' engaging with the local population, rather than merely attending meetings.
- From previous research undertaken by the Panel, it has been demonstrated that an allowance was not a major factor in deciding whether a person wished to participate in Council affairs, but rather an interest in local community matters and the desire to "make things happen". However, a basic allowance that is set as such a level that does not exclude diversity in Councillor membership has been a guiding principle of the Panel. We believe that the Basic Allowance offers recognition of contributions by Members and the financial and personal consequences for family members.
- Once involved in Council business, the level of commitment (e.g. to become a portfolio holder) is the personal choice of the individual. The time required for roles

with special responsibility is recognised as an additional commitment and the Special Responsibility Allowances offer some compensation in this regard, and so as not to disadvantage opportunity within the Membership.

A brief online survey was emailed to all 30 Councillors in order for the Panel to gain an understanding of opinions about remuneration for their roles, including those that carry additional responsibilities. Councillors were invited to complete the online survey in order to assist the Panel in effecting an appropriate review of Members' allowances. A copy of the survey is attached at Appendix 1.

Twelve Councillors and one Co-opted Member completed the Panel's online survey and their responses are summarised in Appendix 2.

The Panel noted the respondents were all very active in their roles, regardless of their position in the Council. Furthermore, there was a wide range of time spent on a variety of Council activities, partly reflected in half of the respondents holding a position of Special Responsibility.

In line with previous surveys, most of the respondents were unaware of the remuneration attached to the role when they chose to stand for election as a Councillor. However, this does not mean that financial recognition of time spent doing Council business is irrelevant to Members.

Over a third of Councillors indicated that they were financially disadvantaged as a consequence of taking on the role and a similar proportion said that they considered the Basic Allowance to be too low. One Councillor commented "the level of the basic allowance is a disincentive for a lot of people, i.e. they will not be able to afford to serve as a Councillor". Another commented "I had to give up one day a week of my job to do this. Lowering the allowance would make it difficult to justify the time needed to be a good Councillor and result in residents being poorly represented", and "encourage people of working age to be Councillors, any reduction will prevent many from standing". Yet another commented that the Basic Allowance "should be more realistic so that people are not put off from being a Councillor".

When asked whether the level of Basic Allowance was too high, 92% of respondents said 'no' and of particular concern to the Panel was the comment that "I am not surprised that most Councillors are retired and of an older age group because the level of remuneration will never attract young people, which is such a shame". These comments suggest that the Basic Allowance has attracted some people of working age (in line with our original recommendations for a higher allowance to encourage diversity in the Membership) but that a reduction of Basic Allowance might further exclude potential Members on the basis of financial disadvantage.

The Panel was of the view that the SRA paid to the Leader of the Council remained adequate. Furthermore, that the SRAs as a percentage of the Leader SRA remained adequate:

Deputy Leader – 30% of the Leader SRA
Portfolio Holder – 20% of the Leader SRA
Licensing Chairman – 5% of the Leader SRA
Planning Chairman – 20% of the Leader SRA
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman – 10% of the Leader SRA
Opposition Group Leader – 10% of the Leader SRA
Group Leader – 5% of the Leader SRA

The Panel continues to be of the opinion that a Member should only receive one SRA. In a situation where a Member holds more than one position which attracts SRAs, then the Member would receive the SRA carrying the largest amount. For example, if an Executive Member (SRA of £2,400) also held the position of Licensing Committee Chairman (SRA of £600) then the Member would only receive an SRA of £2,400.

The Panel considered alternative models to remuneration of the Basic Allowance. One model (Runnymede Borough Council) was based on the average hourly rate of the Council employees and 40% of the equivalent salary time was remunerated. In the view of the Panel, this argument reflects one in line with a salary and it is important that the Members are not perceived by the electorate to be Council employees. The Panel are strongly of the view that the remuneration for the role of Councillor is just that; a compensation for time invested in the role and not a salary. Furthermore, and as evidenced by the range of time allocated to tasks indicated by respondents to our survey, there is no consistency in time and effort expended across Councillors and related roles. Therefore, a salary equivalence model is not appropriate.

The Panel do not recommend a reduction in the Basic Allowance and, on the basis of the survey responses, do not believe that this would be in the best interests of Councillors or constituents.

The Panel considered some of the other allowances set out in the Members Allowances Scheme, such as Travelling and Subsistence, and the Dependent Carers' Allowance. The Panel was minded to recommend as follows:

#### TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE

#### Travelling Expenses

The Panel recommends that the mileage rate continues to be 45p per mile (up to first 10,000 miles) which is the HMRC approved mileage rate. (This rate is also used by the majority of Surrey authorities). The HMRC mileage rates includes 5p per passenger per business mile for carrying fellow employees in a car or van on journeys which are also work journeys for them.

#### Bicycle Allowance

The Panel recommends the Bicycle Allowance to continue at 20p per mile which is the HMRC approved mileage rate. (This rate is also used by the majority of Surrey authorities).

#### Subsistence Expenses

The Panel recommends that the Subsistence Allowance be linked to employee indexation.

#### **DEPENDENTS' CARERS' ALLOWANCE**

The Panel recommends that the Dependents' Carers' Allowance be linked to the National Living Wage of £8.91 per hour. This is the rate of reimbursement used by the Local Government Association (LGA). For information, the current allowance is £7.83 per hour.

#### Summary of Recommendations

- 1. The Basic Allowance remains at £7,200.
- 2. The framework for the overall budget for Members Allowances increase over the next 3 years by the percentage increase in the total Employee Budget.
- 3. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) remain as follows for 2021/22 and future years (pro-rated to the Leader SRA currently set at £12,000):

Deputy Leader – 30% of the Leader SRA (£3,600)
Portfolio Holder – 20% of the Leader SRA (£2,400)
Licensing Chairman – 5% of the Leader SRA (£600)
Planning Chairman – 20% of the Leader SRA (£2,400)
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman – 10% of the Leader SRA (£1,200)
Opposition Group Leader – 10% of the Leader SRA (£1,200)
Group Leader – 5% of the Leader SRA (£600)

- 4. Travelling allowances to remain in line with HMRC approved mileage rates (45p per mile for motorised vehicles, 20p per mile for bicycles).
- 5. The Subsistence Allowance be linked to employee indexation.
- 6. The Dependents' Carers' Allowance be linked to the National Living Wage of £8.91 p/h. This is the rate of reimbursement used by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- In case of query regarding the rationale for remuneration of Councillors, please refer enquirers to the reports of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REVIEW OF WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Please take the time to fill in this brief questionnaire, answering questions as comprehensively as possible. We would like to gain an understanding of your opinions about remuneration for roles like yours, including those that carry additional responsibilities.

Part of the rationale for introducing the same level of basic allowance for all Members was to encourage a more diverse Membership. In order to monitor the effect that this reform of Members' allowances may have had, we would like to know some basic information about you. This information is strictly confidential and anonymous and will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (2018).

The Independent Remuneration Panel\_is reviewing whether current remuneration is appropriate both in supporting Membership diversity and in line with changes in function of some Council roles since the last full remuneration review. All information will remain anonymous. This information will assist the Independent Remuneration Panel in effecting an appropriate review of Members' allowances.

Please complete the online survey by 17 March 2021.

#### Use of your personal data

In order to receive your response to the Members' Allowances Questionnaire, we (Woking Borough Council) need to collect and store some of your personal data.

Unless the law allows us to do so, we will not share the personal data you are providing with any external organisations nor will we use it for any unrelated purpose.

We will hold your personal data for no longer than 7 years after you submit your questionnaire response. You can contact us to ask us to access, rectify or erase the personal data we have about you.

Please note that by using Survey Monkey you consent to your information and data being processed in and transferred or disclosed by Survey Monkey in countries outside of the European Union including the United States.

You can find out more at woking.gov.uk/dataprotection or by contacting our Data Protection Officer:

- Email: dataprotectionofficer@woking.gov.uk

Phone: 01483 755855

#### About you

Please complete the following information about yourself. Tick all grey boxes that you feel best describe you. You do not need to fill in anything that you are uncomfortable with.

This will help us to:

- ensure that the council provides quality services that meet the needs of and are accessible to all sections of the community;
- identify which groups are under-represented within our service users;
- make sure that discrimination is not taking place.

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		White (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British)	Party Comments of the Comments	Caribbean	
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			<b>□</b> [	No religion	3
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Gay or Lesbian		Bangladeshi			
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Coping with any long term		Other Asian background (please specify)			
illness, health problem or disability which limits daily activity?	20 E 4 2000 C				

What is your occupational status? (please circle one response)

**Employed** 

Self-employed

Unemployed

Retired

Homemaker

Student

The information contained within this form will be used for monitoring purposes only and no individual will be identifiable. In compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 all details are kept in strict confidence at all times.

Please turn over to questions about Members' allowances

TOUT HIDGE TO THE POST OF THE PROPERTY OF THE	Your i	nput to	the r	ole	of Council	Member
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1. Do you consider yourself to be an active Member of the Council? YES / NO (delete as appropriate)

2. How many hours per month do you estimate that you spend on each of the following **Borough Council activities?** 

	Hrs
Attending Council and Committee meetings	
Preparing for such meetings	
Serving on outside bodies	
Community work	
Dealing with individual constituents	
Political party meetings relating to Council business	
Other (please specify)	

YES / NO

3.	Do you hold a position of responsibility in the Council?	YES / NO (delete as appropriate)
<u>Yc</u>	ur opinion on remuneration for the role of Council Member (delete as appropriate in the following questions)	
4.	Were you aware of the level of remuneration available to prior to taking up the role of Council Member?  (If NO please go to question 6)	you YES / NC

5. Did the level of remuneration have any influence on your decision YES / NO to become a Council Member?

6. Do you consider yourself to be financially disadvantaged, YES / NO as a result of your role as a Council Member?

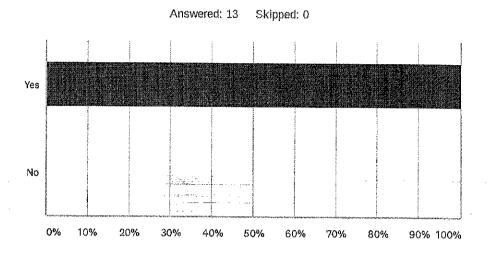
7. Do you think that the basic allowance is too low? YES / NO (Please add any comments here)

8. Do you think that the basic allowance is too high? YES / NO (Please add any comments here)

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factor wo	nsidering whethe buld the level of al ircle a number on nt)	lowances b	e for you?			
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Thank y Members	ou for your time. s' allowances.	Please a	dd any furth	er comments y	∕ou may ha\	√e regard
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## Q1 Do you consider yourself to be an active Member of the Council?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
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No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

## Q2 How many hours per month do you estimate that you spend on each of the following Borough Council activities?

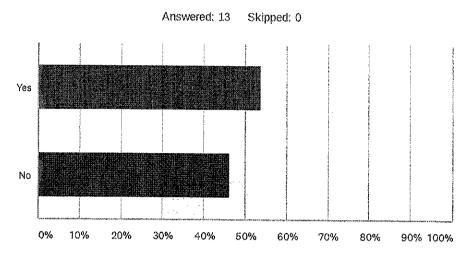
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ANSWE	RCHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attendin	g Council and Committee meetings	100.00%	13
	g for such meetings	100.00%	13
	on outside bodies	76.92%	10
		76.92%	10
Commur		100.00%	13
	with individual constituents	100.00%	13
Political	party meetings relating to Council business	38.46%	5
Other (pl	ease specify)	30.4070	
#	ATTENDING COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS	DATE	
1	40-50-60 (Depends on the time of year)		
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3	3		
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7	10		
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9	10		
10	40		
11	32		
12	20		
13	15		
#	PREPARING FOR SUCH MEETINGS	DATE	
1	30		
2	10		
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4	15		
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#	POLITICAL PARTY MEETINGS RELATING TO COUNCIL BUSINESS	DATE
1	22/25 Rising to 40/50 at times	THE STATE OF THE S
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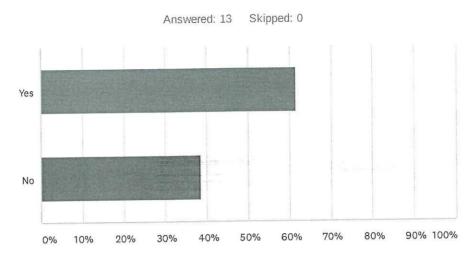
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9	10	
10	10	
11	5	
12	2	
13	4	
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Reading up on changes to legislation etc. 20	
2	Not an elected member so no political duties but role requires more than simply attending committee meetings.	
3	10 Post meeting admin, briefings, training, officer communications 10	
4	30 reading & answering emails.	
5	Independent non pecuniary board member, 4 hours every quarter	

## Q3 Do you hold a position of responsibility in the Council?



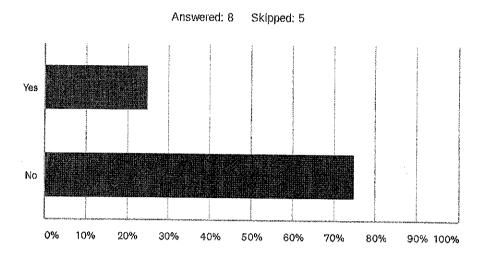
ANSWER CHOICES Yes	RESPONSES 53.85%	7
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No	46.15%	6
TOTAL		13
# IF YES PLEASE SPECIFY		ATE
There are no responses.		
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## Q4 Were you aware of the level of remuneration available to you prior to taking up the role of Council Member?



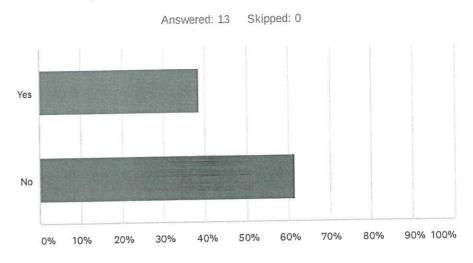
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.54%	8
No	38.46%	5
TOTAL		13

## Q5 Did the level of remuneration have any influence on your decision to become a Council Member?



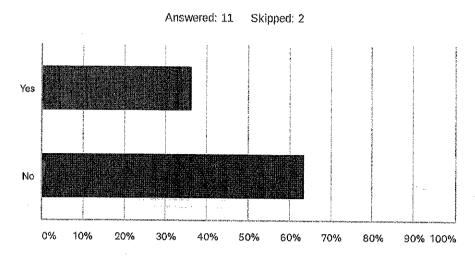
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	25.00%	2
PROCESSOR OF THE SECOND PROCES		
No	75.00%	6
TOTAL		8

# Q6 Do you consider yourself to be financially disadvantaged, as a result of your role as a Council Member?



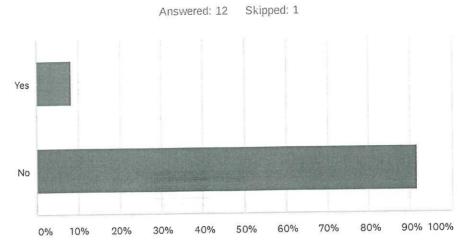
RESPONSES	
38.46%	5
61.54%	8
	13
	38.46%

## Q7 Do you think that the basic allowance is too low?



ANSWER	CHOICES RESPONSES	- Produktor († 1865) 1985 galdade (h. 1865)	
Yes	36.36%		4
No	63,64%	itive teco reasestationeministrative visit in the interest in	7
TOTAL			11
	PLEASE ADD ANY COMMENTS HERE	DATE	
1.	Given the amount of time involved even for a backbench member, the level of the basic allowance is a disincentive for a lot of people i.e. they will not be able to afford to serve as a councillor.		
2	I believe the basic allowance is about right.	MINES (MATERIAL CONTO PARAMETER MATERIAL CONTO AND	Michigan or constitution of constitutions
3	It is ok, though I think members of the planning committee and LDF working group who regularly have agendas in excess of 300 pages could potentially warrant additional money. Especially as there are far more planning committees each year than any other committee and the time taken to visit each site As well as checking the plans themselves takes far longer than just reading the agenda. I don't believe all members of the committee do this but an additional payment might enable them to put in the time to do the job properly.	Wilescherferen von Gescher und der Schale und der S	
4	As a co-optee I receive only a small portion of the allowance and it would be unfair of me to comment on the sufficiency of the full allowance.	eriege (1909) II. BARA Mondey (1909) III. Bara (1909) III.	
5	It's ok but only just. You definitely don't do it for the money.	THE PARTY AND DESCRIPTION AND ADDRESS OF THE PARTY ADDRESS OF THE PARTY AND ADDRESS OF THE PARTY	TO A TANDON MATERIAL A MEDICAL AND A MEDICAL
6	It is ridiculously low compared to the amount of hours that I spend working as a Councillor	THE RESERVE OF THE PROPERTY OF	
7	As a fully engaged councillor I think it is to low, However there are a hum of councillors that do not spend as much time as I do, on council business.	**************************************	elektronen en
8	This is difficult as not all Councillors put in the same amount of time and effort, but should keep line with inflation I suggest	Wilder of the state of the stat	

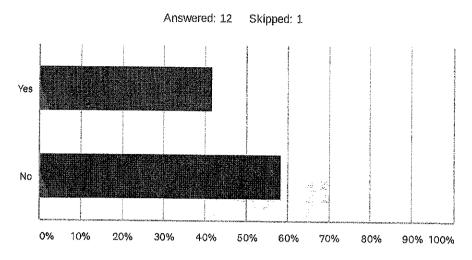
## Q8 Do you think that the basic allowance is too high?



ANSWE	ER CHOICES RESPONSES		
Yes	8.33%		1
No	91.67%		11
TOTAL			12
#	PLEASE ADD ANY COMMENTS HERE	DATE	
1	I had to give up one day a week of my job to do this, lowering the allowance would make it difficult to justify the time needed to be a good councillor & result in residents being poorly		

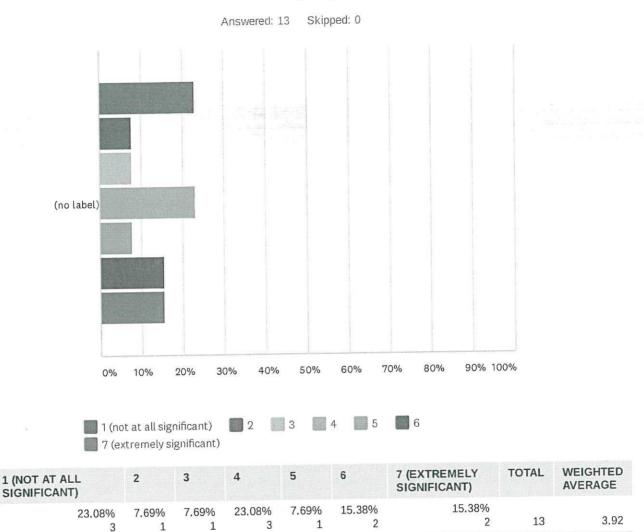
#	PLEASE ADD ANY COMMENTS HERE	
1	I had to give up one day a week of my job to do this, lowering the allowance would make it difficult to justify the time needed to be a good councillor & result in residents being poorly represented.	
2	As above	
3	Woking is an outlier when set again every other Surrey authority and plenty from neighbouring counties. It has a high basic allowance intended as a flat award but has added responsibility allowances to this, both negating the principle of a flat award while not properly recognising this shift in the ratios of amounts awarded.	
4	Definitely not. I am not surprised that most Councillors are retired and of an older age group because the level of remuneration will never attract younger people, which is such a shame	
5	As above	

## Q9 Do you consider that the current level of allowance is satisfactory?



ANSWER	CHOICES RESPONSES	
Yes	41.67%	5
No	58,33%	7
TOTAL		12
	PLEASE CONSIDER ALL ALLOWANCES AS A PACKAGE - E.G. BASIC, SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY, CHILD CARE, TRAVEL, IT SUPPORT - AND ADD ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE BELOW	DATE
1	To deliver for residents - it is essential we play a full part and that costs in terms of time and commitment. Council meetings of every sort set and work through our aims and promises. It's full on!	
2	One issue is I have never claimed for travel, but the issue is time to look at planning sites not the cost of the travel itself. Also the process of claiming is not made clear & there is a worry that political opponents might use the fact that I have claimed for things like travel against me in an election. I do feel the mayor claiming for the same amount this year when she had already claimed the previous year so should have a full set of clothes and no need for travel as most occasions were online was morally very wrong.	от в неводительной дента в станов не в достоводил станов не достоводительной дента в неводительной дента в нево
3	As a co-optee I think that the portion of the allowance that is granted to co-optees no longer reflects the role undertaken. The role has changed over the years and additional responsibilities have been added (eg elections panel and consultative work on discrete issues). In order to properly undertake the role of Chairman of Standards and Audit I must remain abreast of the work of the council which involves more than the papers for and attendance at the scheduled Standards and Audit committee meetings.	
4	Councillors who chair task groups are just as active as chairs of committees but receive no additional awards	"PARAMAMANYA YA YARISI MARKAMA" ARIP YA MANAMAKANO PAYA JA MAMAMAMAMA WATI MARKAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMAMA
5	I only get the basic. Nothing extra.	
6	This binary question isn't helpful - I think some parts are satisfactory and others are not.	YPPERAMENTAL PARTIES AND
7	Definitely not!!	ener (W. S. Alla S. Alla Antonio Martin, S. S. Alla Antonio P Vento, S. Alla Antoni
8	I do not claim any extra expenses in my roles, apart from printer ink and paper. So apart from the special responsibility as being an executive portfolio holder, of which I hold 3 at the moment and spend many hours working on them.	
9	I believe that the special responsibility allowances are inconsistent for the amount of work entailed.	

Q10 When considering whether or not to stand for re-election in the future, how significant a factor would the level of allowances be for you? Please choose a number on the following scale, 1 = not at all significant -7 = extremely significant



(no

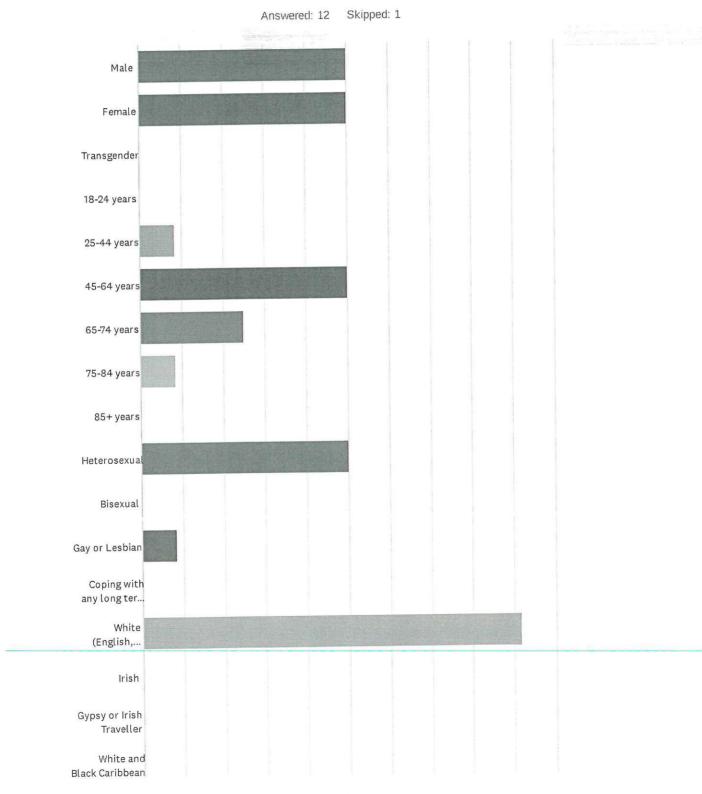
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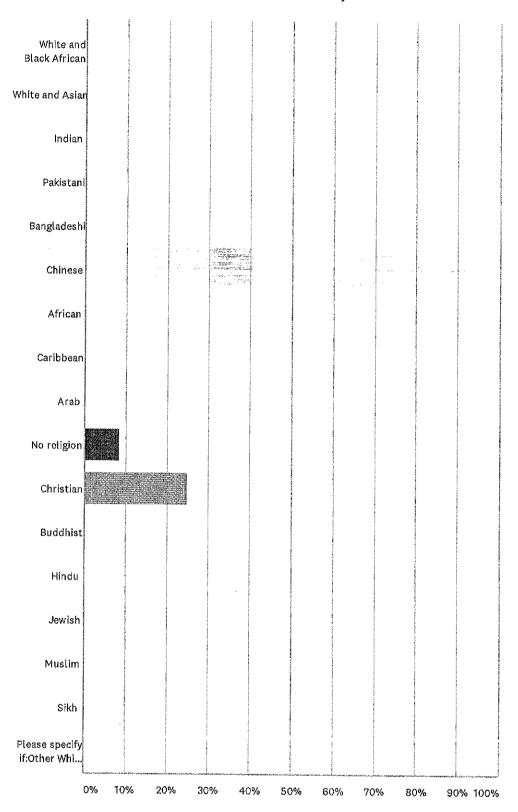
# Q11 Please add any further comments you may have regarding Members' allowances.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 7

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	You need to encourage people of working age to be councillors, any reduction will prevent many from standing.	W WEST TO STATE AND AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE AND ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE AS
2	All other committee chair positions attract a special responsibility allowance but this is not recognised for the Standards Committee. Practices at different Authorities vary but recently advertised roles at neighbouring authorities have attached a greater value to this role (and in each case the committee was just Standards and did not include the audit role or ancillary roles such as elections).	
3	Active and inactive members receive the same, which seems unfair.	A S MANGAN MARCA PER SANGAN PER PER SANGAN PENGANGAN PEN
4	I wouldn't do it for less	er och staten der er staten der er e
5	This really should be made much more realistic so that people are not being put off from being a Councillor	n. Suga van staat elektronis suurista kontraktiin muuta kun kalkista kan ka kiri ka
6	Sometimes allowances are disproportionate to the amount of work, more or less, due to the commitment of individuals councillors	ta Negrata talah 16 dinan-rasalahan kemangkan sebagai ketabah kemangkan ketabah kelalah kelalah ketabah sebagai

Q12 Please complete the following information about yourself. Tick all the boxes that you feel best describe you. You do not need to fill in anything that you are uncomfortable with. This will help us to: ensure that the council provides quality services that meet the needs of and are accessible to all sections of the community; identify which groups are under-represented within our service users; make sure that discrimination is not taking place.

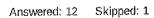


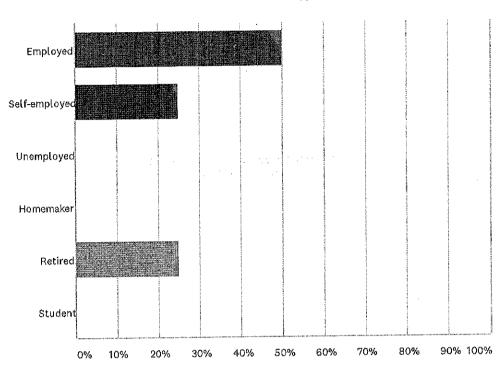


//ale	50.00%	6
- Female	50.00%	6
ransgender	0.00%	0
.8-24 years	0.00%	0
25-44 years	8.33%	1
15-64 years	50.00%	6
ip-o4 years	25.00%	3
55-74 years	8.33%	1
75-84 years	0.00%	0
35+ years	50.00%	6
Heterosexual	0.00%	0
Bisexual	8.33%	1
Gay or Lesbian	WIT 4111AVIELVA 4001 (111111111111111111111111111111111	
Coping with any long term illness, health problem or disability which limits dally activity?	0.00%	0
White (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British)	91.67%	11
Irish	0.00%	0
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0
White and Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
White and Black African	0.00%	0
White and Asian	0.00%	0
Indian	0.00%	0
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
African	0.00%	0
Carlbbean	0.00%	0
Arab	0.00%	0
No religion	8.33%	1
Christian	25.00%	3
Buddhist	0.00%	(
Hindu	0.00%	C
Jewish	0.00%	C
Muslim	0.00%	C
Sikh	0.00%	(
Please specify if:Other White background Other Mixed backgroundOther Asian backgroundOther Black, African,	0.00%	C

# PLEASE SPECIFY IF:OTHER WHITE BACKGROUND OTHER DATE
MIXED BACKGROUNDOTHER ASIAN BACKGROUNDOTHER BLACK, AFRICAN,
CARIBBEAN BACKGROUNDOTHER RELIGION
There are no responses.

## Q13 What is your occupational status?





ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Employed	50.00%	b
Self-employed	25.00%	3
Unemployed	0.00%	0
Homemaker	0.00%	0
Retired	25.00%	<b>3</b>
Student	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12