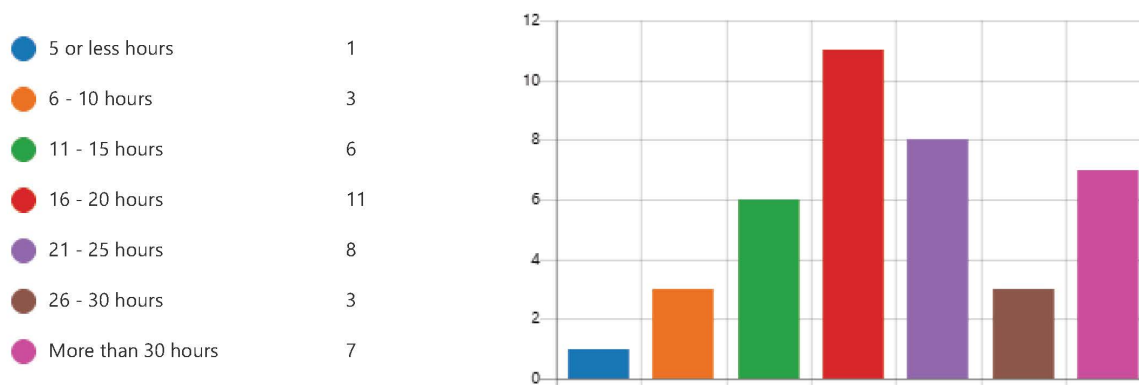


Independent Remuneration Panel Councillor Questionnaire Results

1. In a typical week how many hours do you spend on council business?



2. In the last couple of years (discounting the impact of Covid if possible) do you believe your workload has significantly increased, decreased or remained the same?

Reply	Number of replies
Increased	17
Significantly increased	6
Increased only slightly	1
Increased marginally from more responsibilities taken on	1
Increased but varies from week to week	1
Increased mainly due to number of planning applications	1
Increased as ward expanded in Boundary review	1
Remained the same	4
Remained the same but travelling time has reduced	1
About the same but virtual meetings involve less travel time	1
Decreased	2
Elected in 2019 so cannot compare	1

3. If you hold a specific role(s) within the Council i.e Group Leader, Chair/Vice Chair etc, how many hours do you spend in a typical week on Council business relevant to the role(s). Please specify specific roles below and hours spent on each role.

Reply	Number of replies
N/a	8
Armed Forces Champion for Suffolk. 2-hours per week.	1
As a Cabinet Member about 10 - 15 hours per week	14
As a member of the planning committee .	2
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny - no typical week. Average is 20 hours per month, or 5 per week.	1
Chair Planning Committee 20 hours	1
Cifco 0-10hrs	1
Trustee MEAL 0-5 hrs	1
Council leader (inc cabinet chair): 20 to 30 hours	2

Ward Business 5 to 10 hours	2
Holding Company 0-10 hrs	1
Funding Partnership 0-5 hrs	
Group leader: 1-2 hours	1
As a Cabinet Member 30 hours per week	2
Opposition Leader 5 to 10 hours per week	1
Vice Chair 4 to 5 hours	2
Planning – 5 to 10 hours	3
Licensing - 2 hours	1
Overview & Scrutiny - 2 hours	
Group Leader - 1 hour a week	1
Audit & Standards - 2 hours	1
Portfolio holder and Cabinet Member - 20 hours	1
Deputy Leader 5 to 10 hours a week	1

4. Do you incur any significant costs which you believe are not covered by your present allowance?

Reply	Number of replies
No	24
No just printing.	1
No: I claim travel expenses separately.	1
No but it is difficult to quantify loss of production within the day job	1
Costs would include extensive use of internet, and almost exclusive use of a room in the house to work and to store documents. The allowance is used to cover these.	1
Electricity, Internet, and home office space.	1
I do not claim any allowances	1
I have to employ a carer .	1
Just expenses of running an office from home.	1
Only travel costs, which I claim back.	1
only people with good employers or the retired are able to be Councillors, which limits those that have plenty to offer but cant afford to carry out the role.	1
Superfast broadband.	1
The allowance is taxed. It is therefore not to cover expenses.	1
There are additional consumables costs (such as printer paper, toner/ink) incurred in increased correspondence as a result of now being a ward member for more parishes, and also general correspondence in respect of planning applications from agents/objectors/supporters. There are also increased travelling costs incurred as a result of attending an increased number of parish council meetings, which I do not claim for as they are of a local nature.	1
With the increase in on line communication the need for home printing and its associated costs has increased. Computers are electronic devices prone to errors and the loss of some documents would be unacceptable.	1

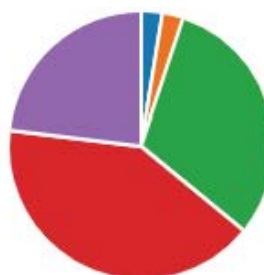
5. Government guidance states that "it is important that some element of the work of Councillors continues to be voluntary". As part of their deliberations, Independent Remuneration Panels will assess what Public Service Discount should apply to the basic allowance - that is the percentage of their time Councillors expect to give without any financial remuneration. What do you feel is an acceptable amount of time to be given unremunerated, if any, expressed as a percentage?

0%	8
1 - 10%	10
11 - 20%	8
21 - 30%	7
31 - 40%	6



6. The present level of Basic Allowance payable to all Councillors is £5,240. Do you think this is:

Significantly too high	1
A little too high	1
About right	12
A little too low	16
Significantly too low	9

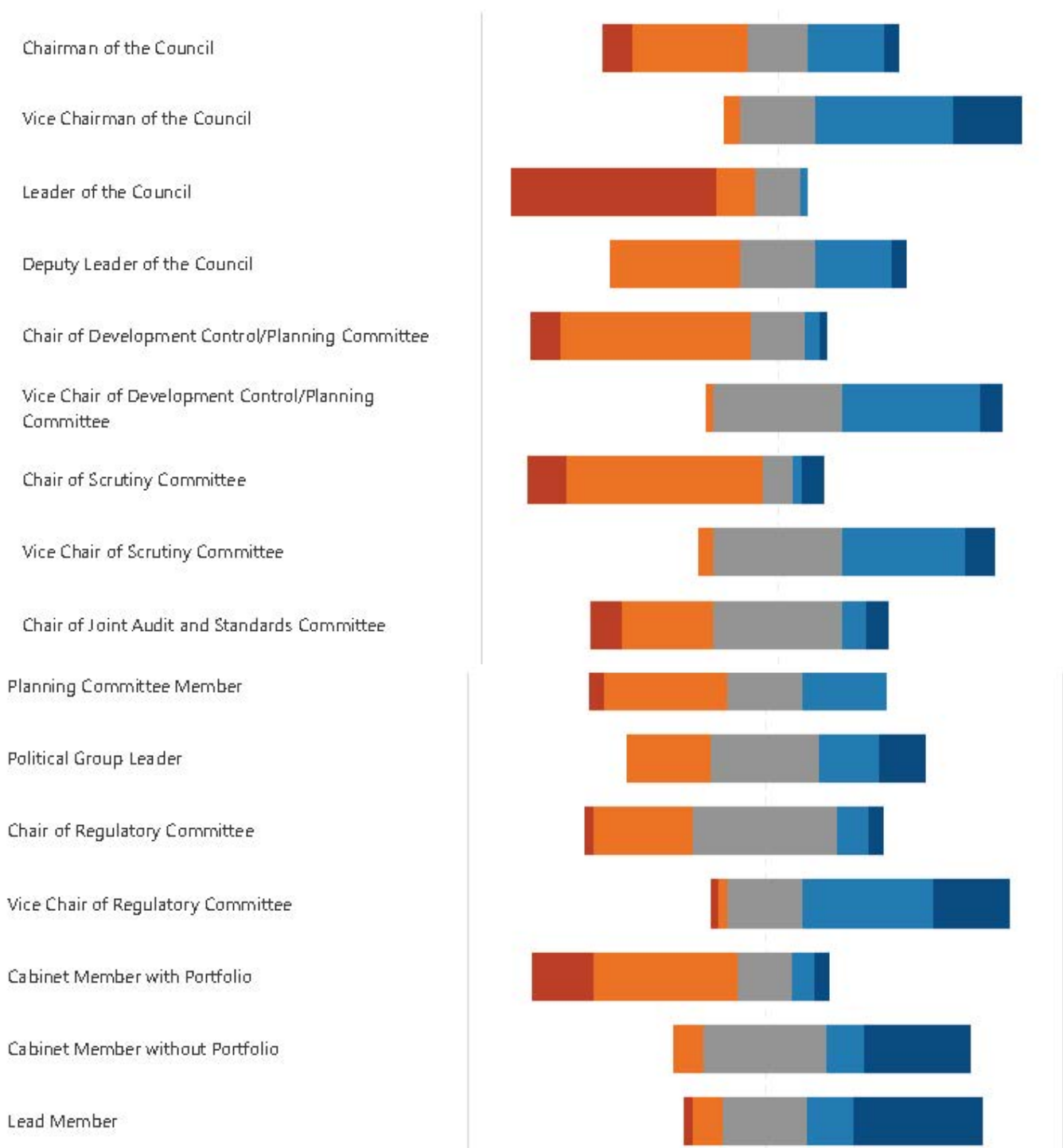


7. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) are currently paid as follows:

Chairman of the Council	£5,240
Vice-Chairman of the Council	£2,620
Leader of Council	£13,101
Deputy Leader of the Council	£6,550
Chair of Development Control Committee	£5,240
Vice-Chair of Development Control Committee	£1,310
Chair of Scrutiny Committee	£5,240
Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Committee	£2,620
Chair of Joint Audit and Standards Committee	£2,620
Planning Committee Members	£524
Political Group Leaders	£1,048
Chair of Regulatory Committee	£2,620
Vice-Chair of Regulatory Committee	£1,310
Cabinet Member with Portfolio	£6,550
Cabinet Member without Portfolio	£2,620
Lead Member (MSDC)	£3,930
Lead Member (BDC)	£2,620

To assist the Panel to produce a more consistent group of allowances, please can you score each role/position in respect of importance and impact.

1 Most Important 2 Very Important 3 Fairly Important 4 Important 5 Not Important



8. Would you like to see any changes made to these allowances?

Reply	Number of replies
No	8
Yes	2
Yes - Cabinet members spend significantly more time on council work - much more than double the time and responsibility. You should be able to have the Planning Committee allowance on top of the Cabinet one.	1

Yes because they do not reflect the amount of work involved to do it properly	1
Yes, some of these allowances could be increased. Certain positions require significant hours work if the job is to be done correctly	1
Yes. Why are other appointments not recognised in a similar manner?	1
Based on the effectiveness of the "cabinet" system cabinet member allowances should be reduced to the same as that for Planning committee members.	1
Cabinet Members as I have found out have such an increased workload, in my years as a councillor I can appreciate the difference from just representing your Ward,	1
Chairman of O&S very over paid same as Chairman of council	1
I do not believe that any one Councillor should hold the position of Chair of more than one committee as in certain circumstances this may well be perceived by the public as a potential conflict of interest.	1
I think allowances should at least keep pace with inflation if so this is fine. However, I would not like to see any reduction in allowances and I say that in the belief that a person doing a good job, should receive the level of remuneration that the role(s) deserves	1
If you are a vice chair i believe you should only get paid when chairing a meeting shouldn't be paid being a political leader	1
Increase linked to rate of inflation	1
Just pay every role ~£2k that'll make it simpler	1
Leader of the Council now has an enormous workload, almost full-time, and has to be very knowledgable across the entire Council agenda. Chairs of committees, and portfolio holders - if their jobs are done properly, will also have a significant workload. These allowances should be increased. Group Leaders do not receive an allowance unless they have four or more members in the group, but this does not reflect the additional meetings and consultations they undertake.	1
Leader/Deputy and Cabinet members with portfolio make all the major decisions and have a heavy work load. The district needs strong members for these roles.	1
Most increase to basic rate	1
Not in percentage terms.	1
Not sure of the role of a 'Lead Member' Are there any at MSDC? If so, and is they are not members of cabinet, I am unaware of their contribution	1
Planning committee members have a high workload, this should be reflected more. Vice Chair of Council has a very limited role and is paid too much.	1
Reduce allowances	1
Remove the cabinet member without portfolio.	1
The allowance for planning committee members should be doubled, at least. I don't understand why political group leaders should receive an allowance unless it is as a means of complying	1

with the regulation that one SRA should go to a councillor who is not a member of the controlling group.	
The relative values seem about right.	1
There should not be a Cabinet member without portfolio so this should not have an allowance. What is a lead member at MSDC? Why is this different to a Cabinet member?	1
They should still be based on multipliers of the basic allowance, but the multipliers used for Council Leader, Cabinet Member, Chairs of Scrutiny and Planning, and Planning Committee Member need to be increased to reflect the workload, importance and impact of these roles. Just for information: we don't have a vice-chair of Scrutiny, cabinet members without portfolio or lead members at Babergh.	1
Why does the vice chair of scrutiny receive double the amount than vice chair of planning ?	1

9. Would you like to see any new SRAs introduced?

Reply	Number of replies
No	18
No - except to recognise the work of all group leaders.	1
No - this is inappropriate. Special responsibilities should be shared in any case, and not place in the hands of a few councillors.	1
Yes	2
Yes. Council board members of Council Companies employing Non Exec directors are expected to shoulder the same workload and responsibility for no additional remuneration.	1
A case could be made for creating a deputy role to assist some of the more onerous cabinet positions.	1
A role specifically for leading climate change initiatives	1
Already too many	1
At the last review following comments from an Opposition Member there was a suggestion that a member should not receive more than two SRA's, that obviously conflicts in some way with my comment above, however I think perhaps 2SRA's carried out well by a single member works well and indeed provides the opportunity to bring a much better standard to that particular role.	1
I believe there are sufficient SRAs in place already.	1
MSDC: Leader, and deputy leader of the Opposition. They do a huge amount of work in holding the Cabinet to account - including reading (and understanding and questioning) ALL of the Cabinet reports regardless of portfolio. At MSDC the Opposition Group is half of all councillors and does a great deal of work. (Portfolio holders / Cabinet members can focus on their one allocated portfolio.)	1

Not as the Council presently set up. I think if the two councils were to merge then additional Cabinet support members with SRAs could be justified.	1
Only if it makes sense at that time.	1
Opposition group leaders increase	1
Overview & Scrutiny. Very time consuming and deserves remuneration as it is regular and more work than planning.	1
Possibly but would only vote yes when understanding the criteria	1
There is currently no allowance for leader of the opposition, apart from the political group leader allowance which is fairly small. In the current situation the leader of the opposition represents half the council, yet gets the same allowance as if she or he was leading a group of 4 or 5 Councillors.	1

- 10. The 2003 Regulations do not limit the number of SRAs which may be paid, nor do they prohibit the payment of more than one SRA to any one councillor. They do require that an SRA be paid to at least one councillor who is not a member of the controlling group of the Council. As the guidance suggests, if the majority of councillors receive an SRA, the local electorate may rightly question the justification for this. Do you feel it is appropriate to hold more than one SRA and why?**

Reply	Number of replies
No	5
No but Dev Control membership should be regarded as separate because of the amount of work involved	1
No I do not think it appropriate for members to hold more than one SRA	1
No waste of public funds.	1
No, more roles should be shared with the opposition	1
No, not if the overall remuneration is fair and just.	1
No, the roles should be distributed across the members forcing cross-party working and collaboration. People should not be wearing multiple hats,	1
No. Any Councillor who holds more than one should in my opinion only get the highest one. As the Administration refuses to share any of the S.R.A.s with the opposition this is a problem. If they were shared out no Councillor would receive more than one S.R.A except for Development Control Committee members!	1
no. One SRA per councillor	1
No. The holding of multiple positions that carry an SRA effectively makes it a financial commitment. The more members that hold additional positions of responsibility in addition to their ward responsibilities means that experience is gained and those with experience can contribute it to the council.	1
Yes - Planning takes up a considerable amount of time and is high profile.	1

Yes - some Councillors have more than one extra responsibility	1
Yes - The more committees etc Members are on, they are rightfully spending more time in preparation etc and this should be reflected in the allowances paid.	1
Yes , I do feel it is appropriate, following an election there is often an influx of new and inexperienced Councillors providing the Leader of the election winning group having to look to those with experience to form a Cabinet. and also Chairs of Committees. Given the situation within Mid Suffolk at the last election where there was a 50/50 split, it was the case that experience was essential, meaning that some members needed to take on 2 SRA's to ensure the Council had that experience in its administration while keeping a team of back bench members who could man the 50/50 Committees. Therefore I suggest it is appropriate for the Leader to have the flexibility to be able to appoint experienced Councillors to at least 2 SRA's if the need arises and if they so wish.	1
Yes if sitting on multiple committees (e.g. planning committee member + Cabinet, or committee Chair) given the time commitment involved	1
Yes, if carrying out more than one SRA	1
Yes, if one has the time to dedicate to these roles when not having to hold down full-time employment elsewhere.	1
Yes. The amount of time and commitment to these additional responsibilities should be recognised.	1
Yes. These roles are dependent on ability and skill base, or should be, and it may be that ability and skill base enables you to have several roles.	1
I do think it appropriate that Councillor's hold more than one SRA.	1
I don't think that any one councillor should receive more than one SRA. There are enough councillors within the council as a whole for this not to be necessary for an individual councillor to hold two positions. If this happens then the councillor does not actually have enough time to do both jobs satisfactorily.	1
If a Member chairs more than one committee then they should get a SRA for each but I think there should be very limited circumstances, if any, where a single Member is given more than one chairmanship.	1
Only appropriate in exceptional circumstances.	1
Only if it is in relation to planning committees due to the volume of paper work and training required. Otherwise only one SRA per member.	1
Only in situations where there is a paucity of available members who can devote sufficient time to take on such a role. I do not think it is appropriate for cabinet members with portfolio to hold more than SRA because their available time would be spread too thinly to do either job properly.	1

Realistically no Councillor should be chair or vice chair on more than one committee. However, certain roles require a lot of time commitment on members and in certain circumstances a max of two SRA's could be paid.	1
The flexibility to hold more than one SRA, should the council circumstances require it, is essential. There will always be insufficient councillors available for each to hold just one SRA - either because of time constraints or other factors. With fewer councillors than before, there will always be a majority who will hold an SRA.	1
The SRA's have to be set at the right amounts, if this was the case there would be no need for this question	1
Where SRA's are appropriate to the workload, they should be available to those members, perhaps no more than two rather than one.	1

11. The current scheme of travel allowances is linked to that recommended by HMRC and based on the rate for employees. Do you have any comments on the current scheme for Councillors?

Reply	Number of replies
No	18
No, it is fair and appropriate.	1
No, wish we could use public transport but none available at the moment that would get me to Ipswich in time for the start of many meetings.	1
Councillors should share transport to reduce costs	1
Don't claim too much hassle	1
Fair & Equitable	1
Has not changed in over 5 years, should reflect a link to rate of inflation.	1
I believe that the current scheme is too predicated on specific regular journeys and does not sufficiently reflect the amount of local travel entailed in carrying out the functions of a District Councillor - it would be difficult to fulfil this role without your own transport being available 24/7, particularly in rural areas where public transport is almost non-existent.	1
I believe the current rate of travel allowances are adequate as recommended by HMRC and they should remain,	1
I consider it to be adequate.	1
I do not claim as it is too complicated.	1
If I were not able to claim mileage allowance to attend formal meetings the cost of the round trip would be too much and I would be unable to continue as a Councillor.	1
If the Government changes the rules to allow for hybrid meetings, and that is adopted by our Council, then I am happy to forgo travel allowance. If I HAVE to travel to get to the Council Chamber, then I feel that at the least I should be compensated for the fuel and wear and tear on my car. There is no public transport I can take and I am not prepared to cycle down the A14.	1

It is fair.	1
Perhaps an increase to the allowance for cyclists and to add e-cycles	1
Rates are fine - wish it was easier to make a claim as it can take quite a while to enter all the information	1
Seems fair at present, though it does not take account of the travel time some members have to get to in-person meetings.	1
The rate at the moment seems fair	1
The travel allowances should encourage more councillors to travel by sustainable means. Currently those who drive will gain more. This does not fit with the declaration of a climate emergency.	1
Works fine.	1

- 12. Parental Leave Policy for Councillors – Currently there is no uniform national policy to support councillors who require parental leave for maternity, paternity, or adoption leave. However the LGA have developed a model policy that has been adopted by a number of councils which seeks to improve the diversity of these councils. Would you be supportive of a Parental Leave Policy for Councillors?**

Reply	Number of replies
Yes	18
Yes - but this does not need to be as long as that for employees - a month, perhaps. Councillors still have ward case work and representational issues to attend to. It would assist greatly if they could attend meetings virtually in these circumstances.	1
Yes to encourage younger and more diverse councillors to be able to afford to undertake the work.	1
yes, and more allowances should be made for women who are going through the menopause.	1
Yes, but it is of little value as the vast majority of Councillors are 60 plus. The system is broken and does not represent the electorate. Adding parental leave is just fiddling round the edges	1
Yes, if it improves the attraction of being a councillor for the younger generation of potential councillors.	1
Yes, in principle.	1
Yes, it is vital to enable a more diverse council.	1
Yes, we need to attract younger members especially stay-at-home parents.	1
Yes. Anything we can do to widen the representation and diversity should be implemented. The current allowances really do not help with achieving this.	1
As being elected is a personal choice it is one which should be balanced against ones life responsibilities. The electorate should not have to pay for the changes that it may bring to your life balance.	1

Difficult one if the Leader went on a years leave this could be problematic, I would rather see reduced hours and with the new found world we find ourselves in remote meetings would be possible.	1
I would not be against this subject to this not affecting the efficient working of council, which could be for instance administration and opposition having an really sound agreement around pairing members, so that a vote in council or committee can be secured and not lost because a single member is taking maternity, paternity or adoption leave	1
Ideally yes	1
No strong views either way.	1
No. This is really part of the role.	1
Not sure it is relevant or workable. Who would represent your residents in your absence?	1
This may help encourage a wider age group to take on the role so then yes I would be supportive.	1
We need to encourage young people to come forward as councillors so this is important	1

- 13. Dependent Relative Care Allowance – This should ensure that potential candidates are not deterred from standing for election and should enable current councillors to continue despite any change in their personal circumstances. Currently this is reimbursed at cost for registered/professional carers to £30 per hour but there is no provision for non professional people to undertake this role (e.g. other family members who don't normally reside with the councillor). Do you believe this is correct or should the scheme be extended (e.g. to allow this with appropriate receipts at an hourly rate based on the real living wage?)**

Reply	Number of replies
Yes, should be extended to include other help	14
This should be extended with receipts on a real living wage	1
It should be extended to other non-professional carers at living wage rate.	1
In principle, yes, but safeguards will be needed to ensure that it wouldn't get abused.	1
I think an allowance should be payable to a non professional	1
Yes should be extended to allow a family member or neighbour to be the paid carer	1
The scheme should be extended to take account of some real world situations that can only be expected to become more frequent.	1
the scheme should recognize non professional carers too	1
No	1
Leave as is	1
I have no view on this.	3
Cannot be extended as it would be too expensive.	1
Didn't know this existed, I should apply?	1

From personal experience I recognise that a responsible family member is more acceptable to the dependant Relative, however a professional and responsible and registered carer often has the experience of a different level of training. So I would suggest this could be allowed but with a lower level of hourly funding.	1
I would never have put my council work before my partner needs so the allowance would not have been needed. As has been mentioned, its a vocation rather that a job, and as we receive "allowances" rather than wages so are not employees this has to be considered.	1
I believe that relatives are insufficiently supported and any step in that direction would be good	1
I believe that the scheme should be extended, for the reason that I have given in my reply to question 12 above.	1
I think that the scheme should be expanded, non-professional carers play a huge role supporting families.	1
If structured correctly i see no reason why not.	1
Not sure. I support the current arrangements, but would want any extension of those arrangements to be properly protected from being abused.	1
Paying family members is fraught with danger. The system should remain as it is.	1

14. If you have any other comments on Members' Allowances, please detail below:

Reply
<p>Allowances are what 'allow' many members to undertake the role in the first place. A sacrifice in income is still involved, which accounts for the public service element in Question 5. At these levels of allowance the public service discount is automatically built in. A calculated hourly rate would involve levels that would be considered illegal elsewhere.</p>
<p>Basic Member allowance is to low.</p>
<p>I am very happy that on top of my Members Allowances, we receive really good IT kit and support to allow us to operate remotely. I want to continue to encourage that as it cuts down on our fuel emissions, time travelling, fuel costs etc</p>
<p>I do think that the statement: 'Government guidance states that "it is important that some element of the work of Councillors continues to be voluntary".' belongs to a different age. This may still apply to parish councillors, but the role of a district or county councillor has changed significantly over the past 30 years and requires a far more professional and dedicated approach.</p>
<p>I generally feel that allowances are far too low. A substantially higher allowance would encourage competition and attract a better calibre of Councillor in to the role. At present, the system tends to encourage retired people in the main. One has to question what relevance a retired member has to a large number of their constituents</p>

In my experience, there has been a significant increase in personal stress caused by increased workload and resident expectations. More residents communicate in an unpleasant, rude, or confrontational manner and it feels that we are figures that deserve to be treated in such unkind and abrupt manner. There is no call for this, but the situation is worsening and not improving, and remuneration needs to reflect this behaviour we councillors have to encounter.

In the main Councillors seem to be in the older age group with many retired. In order to attract younger people to take on the role, possibly with families, the allowances should be at a sufficient level to make it affordable. Even if the Councillor had to take on a part time job to make up the pay to an average wage. At the moment it is very difficult for younger, or even middle aged, people to commit to the role.

Members play a valuable link for communities and councils with less coming forward each election. More members don't stand for a second term because of the work load.

Personally I believe councillors should be paid more, across the country, at the minute the small allowance combined with the requirement to attend, for example, committee meetings during the day, strongly discourages people who work full time from entering politics, meaning that the majority of positions are held by people who can afford to do it as a hobby! Thus we're not getting proper representation

The arrangements at Babergh differ from those at Mid Suffolk by only allowing one SRA to be claimed. For the reasons I have given to previous answers I think this is completely wrong. We need to properly reflect the additional workload. I also attend Parish Council meetings in my ward (as do most councillors) and deal with issues and enquiries both individually and at a parish level. I have not included this in my figures, but have always taken the view that this commitment is partly the 'voluntary' (unremunerated) work referred to in question 5 and partly covered by the Basic Allowance.

The system should be structured to encourage younger people to stand for election. Why are the majority of councillors old? Because they have the time and money to take on the role.

The total cost of allowances (and expenses) should be reported to Council annually.

To maintain and attract Councillors in the future allowances have to reflect the time and commitment given by members.

You will note that on the percentage of Unremunerated amount of time that I would expect in a voluntary capacity is considered to be zero, this is because I look at Case Work which has grown in this past period and also the other work I do which I consider to be already given in a voluntary capacity and is not included in my time.