

**Members Allowances
Survey
August 2018**

Purpose of the Survey and Methodology

On 11 July 2018 the Council requested the Governance, Audit and Finance Board for a further review on the Councillor Allowances Scheme, in light of the governance changes agreed by the Council on 9 May, and in particular, to:

- “(1) review the special responsibility allowances attracted by each position to ensure that the level set is fair in relation to the responsibilities associated with the post;
- (2) consider whether any other changes to the scheme of allowances are appropriate at the present time”

At its meeting held on 25 July 2018, the Governance, Audit and Finance Board asked the Governance Audit and Finance Scrutiny Panel (“the Panel”) to undertake the above review on its behalf.

The Panel considered that a main principle of its review was that all recommendations should be evidence based and part of this evidence should be the views of all members of the Council. To obtain these views the Panel requested the Democratic Services Team to send a questionnaire to all 38 Councillors prior to the review.

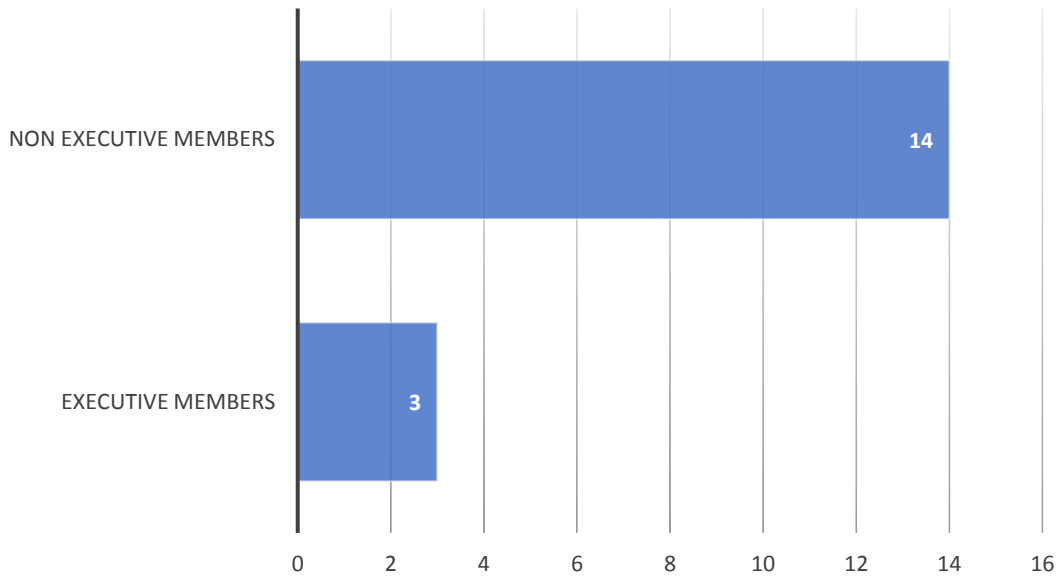
The full purpose of the survey was to:

- Obtain the views of councillors on the existing scheme and whether any changes were needed
- Provide details of the workload of councillors to enable the Board to calculate the basic allowance for the Council

Response Rate

17 out of the 38 (45%) of the Councillors surveyed responded to the survey.

Breakdown of Respondents



Workload

Basic Allowances' Workload

In a typical week how many hours do you spend on Council business relevant to your role as a front-line Councillor?

Answered: 17

Skipped: 0

(for the purposes of the survey the role of Front Line Councillor was defined as those activities covered by the basic allowance)

100% of the respondents responded to this question.

The initial analysis of the responses received indicated that the average min hours spent by Councillors on basic allowance duties was 18 hours a week with an average maximum of 20 hours per week. However, from the comments received it was clear that some Councillors had included Special Responsibility duties.

Removing the responses that appear to have included SRA work within the basic allowance workload from the initial results gave a minimum average of 16 hours a week and a maximum of 18 hours per week.

Comments Received

Attending meetings (including travelling)

“We have cabinet briefings, committee and panel meetings as well as the statutory meetings. I meet with my director, head of service and all managers within my portfolio on a weekly basis.”

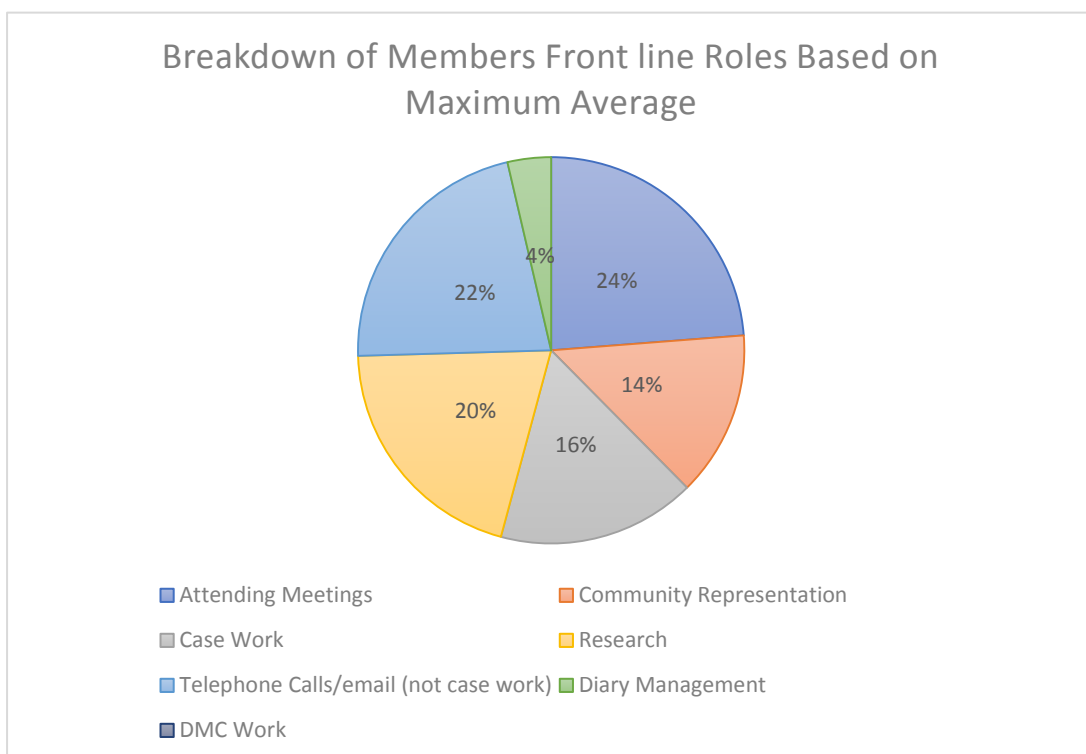
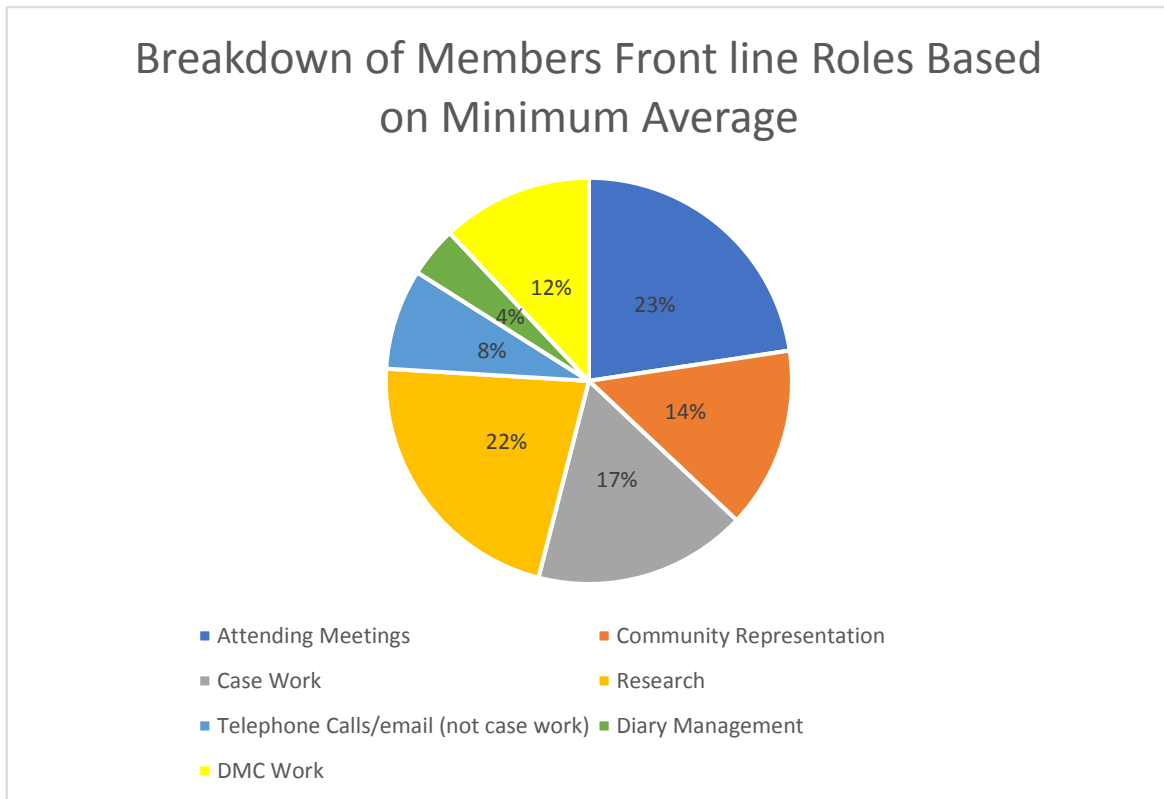
Community representation

“My ward is not over burdensome – there is a balance and not too much work generated. I tend to visit residents rather than exchanging emails as it gets things done faster” *[the remainder of these comments has not been printed as they can enable a reader to identify the respondent]*

Research

“Taking on a new portfolio, I have got myself up to speed with the legislation changes” *[some comments have not been printed as they can enable a reader to identify the respondent]*. “I have to understand my portfolio so that I can support and critically challenge”

This workload could be broken down as follows:



Public Service Discount

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0

The statutory guidance requires the maintenance of the principle of public service when setting an appropriate Basic Allowance. This is the notion that an important part of being a Councillor is serving the public and, therefore, not all of what a Councillor does should be remunerated; a portion of a Councillor's time should be given voluntarily ("Public Service Discount").

When asked how much of their time they believed should be voluntary, the responses varied, ranging from 0% to 100%. Out of the 17 members 13 responded. An average of the responses given gave a Public Service Discount of 46%.

The Rate for the Job

In 2003, the Panel utilised the Havant mean gross hourly wage rate as the rate for the job. In other words, to establish a rate for the job, it was recommended that a Member's hourly worth be on a par with the average hourly wage in Havant. The most recent figures show that the average hourly wage in Havant is £13.28*.

*nomis official labour statistics

Calculating the Basic Allowance

Using the above information and the formula used by Independent Remuneration Panels in the past and as set out in the Councillors Commission's guidance entitled "Members Remuneration" the Basic Allowance can be recalibrated as follows:

[time required to undertake roles minus public service discount] multiplied by rate for the job

Minimum

- = [832 hours per year minus 46 per cent] X £13.28 per hour
- = 387.72 hours X £13.28 = £5083 (rounded down to nearest £10)

Maximum

- = [936 hours per year minus 46 per cent] X £13.28 per hour
- = 430.56 hours X £13.28 = £5718 (rounded down to nearest £10)

The Council current rate of £5891 is above the calculated basic allowances

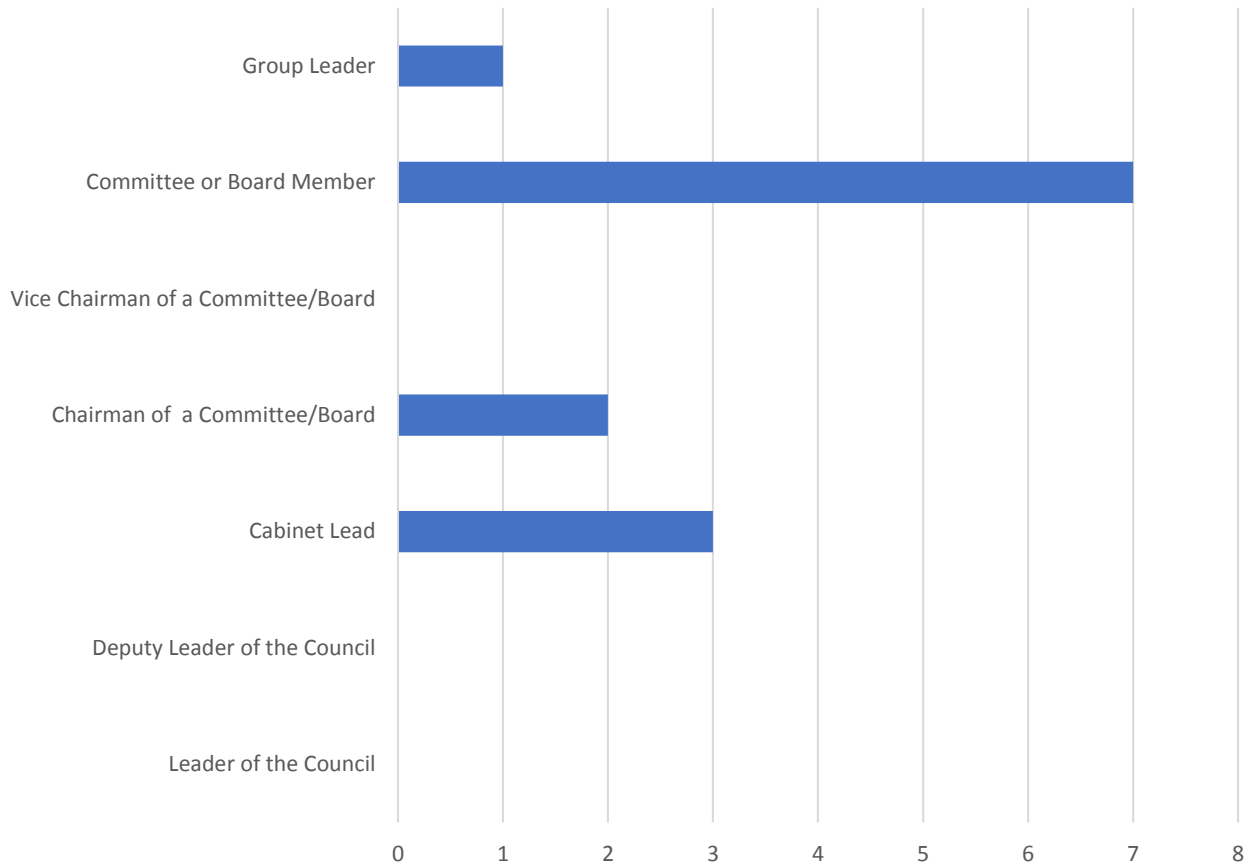
Council Roles

What roles do you currently hold at Havant Borough Council?

Answered: 12

Skipped: 5

The roles of the respondents that answered this question can be broken down as follows:



Nb. 1 respondent held more than one role

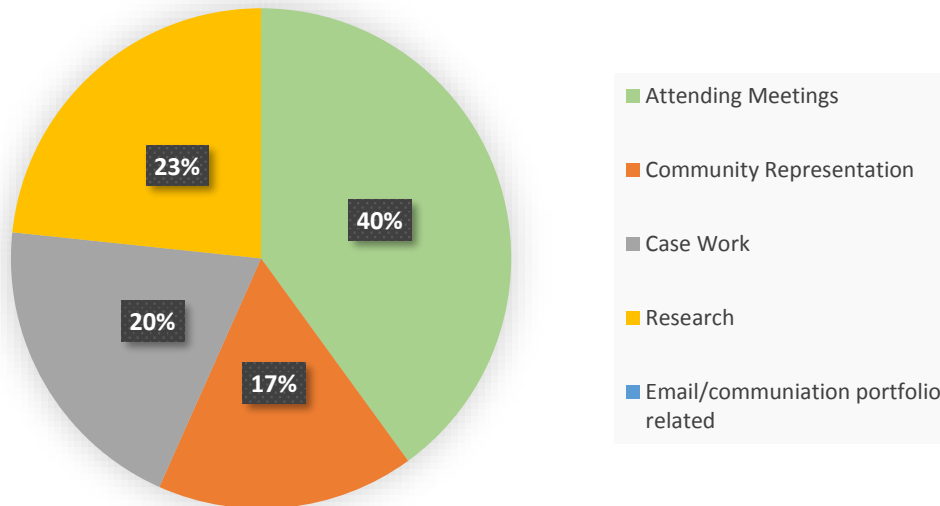
Special Responsibility Workloads

Answered: 3

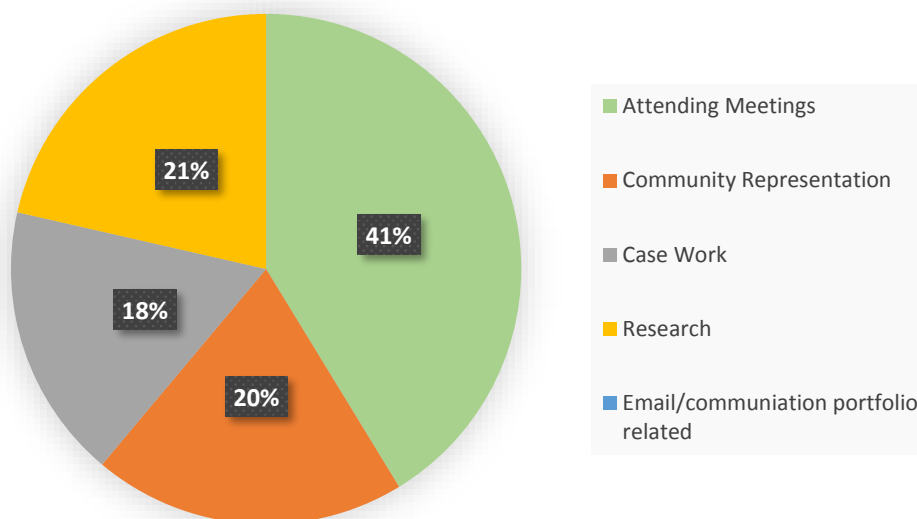
Skipped: 3

Only 50% of the SRA holders who took part in this survey answered this question. From the answers received the work of SRAs can be broken down as follows:

Breakdown Minimum Average time spent on SRA work



Breakdown Maximum Average time spent on SRA work



One respondent found it difficult to quantify hours “per week” and estimated the total hours per week at 2 – 3 hours.

Other Comments Received

Depends on the week

Cabinet

Council



Are not “every” week

[some comments have not been printed as they can enable a reader to identify the respondent]

Allowances

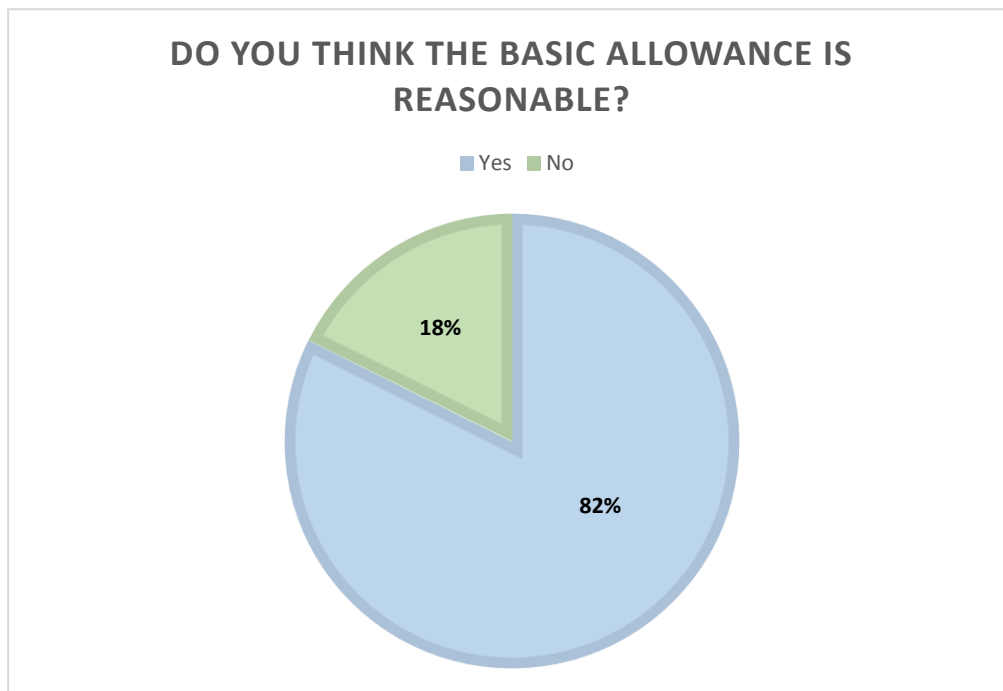
Basic Allowances

Do you think the Basic Allowance (incorporating a modernisation allowance of £461) of £5891 is reasonable?

Answered: 17

Skipped: 0

When asked if they thought the allowance level was appropriate, 14 out of the 17 members that responded to this question agreed it was reasonable.



Of the 18% who considered that the current basic allowance is unreasonable 100% considered that it should be higher. The levels considered appropriate range from £6000 to £7000.

What are your views on the level of Basic Allowance and its purpose?

“the basic allowance is appropriate to the role”

“I have no issue with the allowance”

“The amount is reasonable no increase needed”

The basic allowance in my opinion is adequate.

I am not in employment; the allowance is remuneration for the time I spend being a councillor.

Being a councillor was something I could never have considered when in full time employment, as the position I held would not have allowed me to take time off during the day, although I believe the allowance is there for that specific purpose.”

“I think it is reasonable but certainly not generous, especially for those of us who work full time and pay for tax on it”

“The Basic Allowance should give just that little bit extra to make up for some private time, post & expenses incurred.

“Lagging behind other authorities, may not attract calibre of individual if allowed to remain too low.

“the issue with the allowance is that some members see it as a salary; it is not.

I believe that it should be broken down into component parts; what is the assumed “hourly rate” for a councillor’s attendance on Council business?

Divide basic allowance into hourly rate to get number of hours per annum.

Worth noting that individual tax and National Insurance has to be taken into account. Just because each councillor receives the same basic allowance, it does not mean that they all get the same paid into their bank account”

To allow a person to receive some recompense for time/effort in performance of duties.

Must not be too high and attract wrong type of candidate”

“I don’t know how it was derived in the first place.

Do we have information about amount paid to councillors in comparative councils?

Does LGA give guidance on this matter?”

“The basic allowance in my opinion is adequate.

I am in full-time employment and moderate my hours there in order to carry out my councillor role. I feel that the allowance is remuneration for the time I spend being a councillor.

I have a 100% attendance at meetings and intend for it to stay that way. I am also hoping that as my experience and confidence grows, that I will take on more to represent my ward.”

“I feel that the basic level is very low, taking into account it is taxed. Councillors haven’t had a pay rise for well in excess of 12 years. The last so called pay rise of £80 p.a. was wiped out by an increase in contributions to CCA & Havant Conservatives who forced an increase to all councillors. Whilst I agree there are Councillors who do very little for the money there are others who work extremely hard and probably do a “pick up” of the work done or not done by Councillors in full time work”

“The basic allowance is acceptable for the level of work required. Perhaps the Council should adopt a zero-remuneration package but be performance related varying between the input each Councillor puts in. Time spent on case work should be voluntary.”

“Depending on level of hours worked. Some have lower case load. In addition, if there are 3 chairs, on one Panel earning the same that’s not advisable (Scrutiny Panel has 3)”

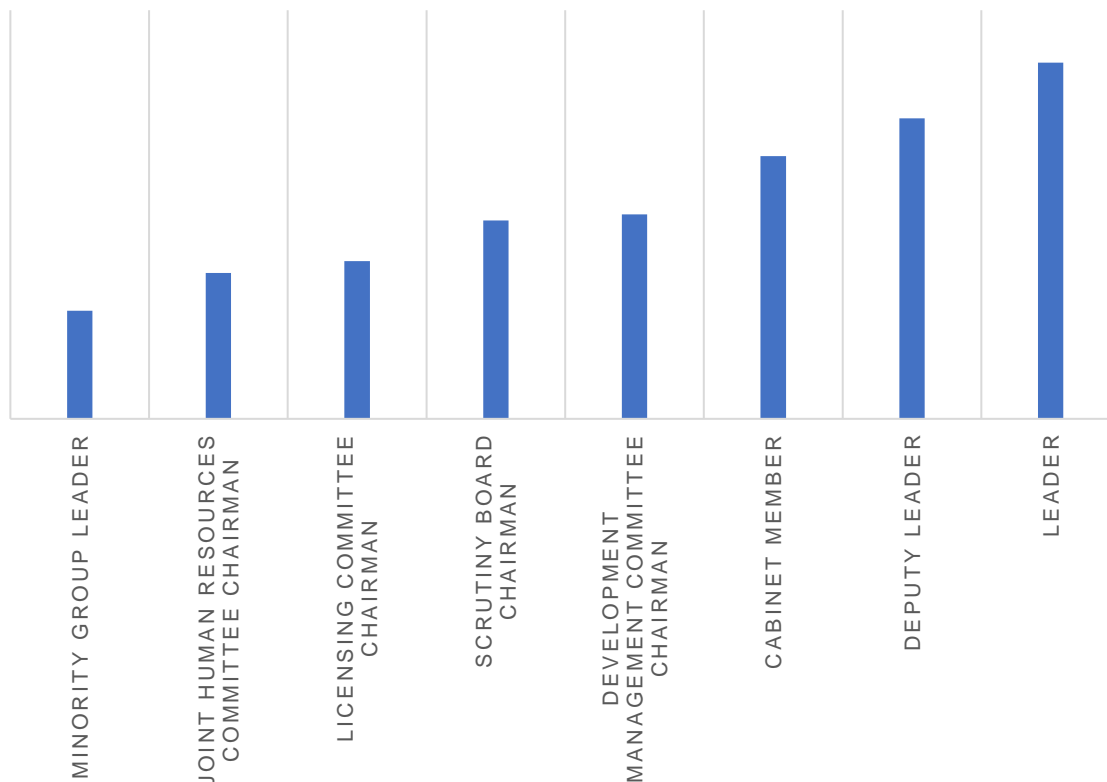
“I would like all Councillor to have access to a “private” Mod.Gov account. All paper distributed would cease. All members should provide themselves with an I-pad for Council business. If they are unable, their basic allowance is adjusted by £200 per year to cover the cost of an I-pad and they keep it at the end of their term. Those that provide their own maintain their basic allowance”

Special Responsibility Allowances

Answered: 15

Skipped: 2

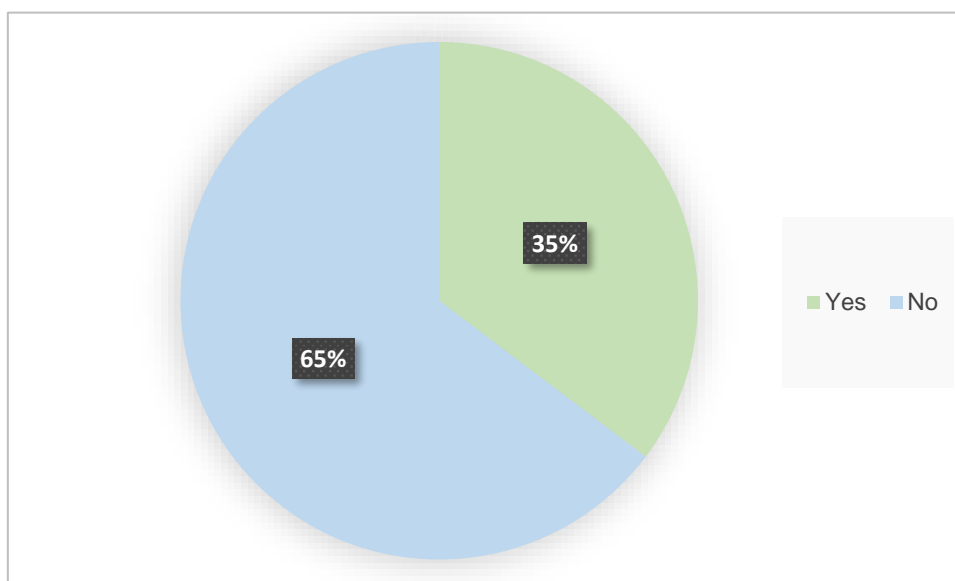
16 out of the 17 respondents, scored each role which attracted a special responsibility allowance in respect of order and importance as follows:



The Leader of the Council was considered the most important role with the minority group leader was seen as the least important. Compared to the current structure the only difference is that the Chairman of the Development Management Committee is regarded as slightly more important than the Scrutiny Board Chairman (1% higher).

Do you receive a Special Responsibility Allowance?

All the respondents answered this question. A majority of whom did not receive a SRA.



If Yes, do you think that the current allowance is reasonable for the duties you are required to undertake?

6 out of the 7 respondents considered that their allowance was reasonable. One Councillor was undecided.

Comments Received

“We undertake this role as we want to help our communities. I would not want to increase the allowance levels”

“It comes back to the hourly rate question.

The Licensing Committee Chair hourly rate must be in the hundreds of pounds per hour. The DMC Chair, could be as low as £10 per hour (probably less)”

“It may be too generous compared to DMC Chair – could agree to a slight reduction for likes of me if more increase for Cllr Buckley”

“My thoughts on SRAs are that they should reflect time and responsibility

DMC has no more time taken up – other than pre cttee mtg briefing than a member of the committee. He also has no more responsibility other than that of chairing the meeting. “Chairing” should attract a payment. I don’t agree with Chair having a casting vote. We should always aim for 7 members to sit – or reschedule the mtg.

“Chairs of Panels” seem to do the lion’s share of the work. Some members contribute nothing or little & some rarely even turn up, so the payment for chair is appropriate of scrutiny.

Licensing seems to involve chairing skills only; whereas a sub-committee of 3 involves time & responsibility, not paid for, for anyone seconded to such a sub-committee.”

“Although I do not receive a SRA this year, I believe this year’s levels of payments needs revising”

“Depending on level of hours worked. Some have lower case load. In addition if there are 3 chairs, on one panel earning the same that’s not advisable (Scrutiny Panel has 3)”

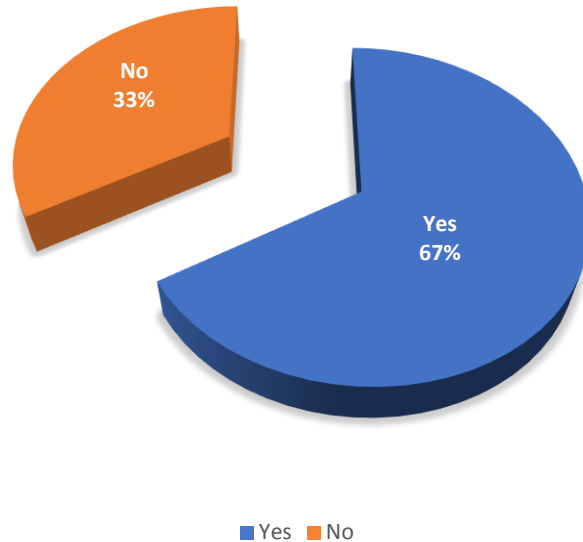
Additional SRAS

Would you like to see changes made to the current Special Responsibility allowances?

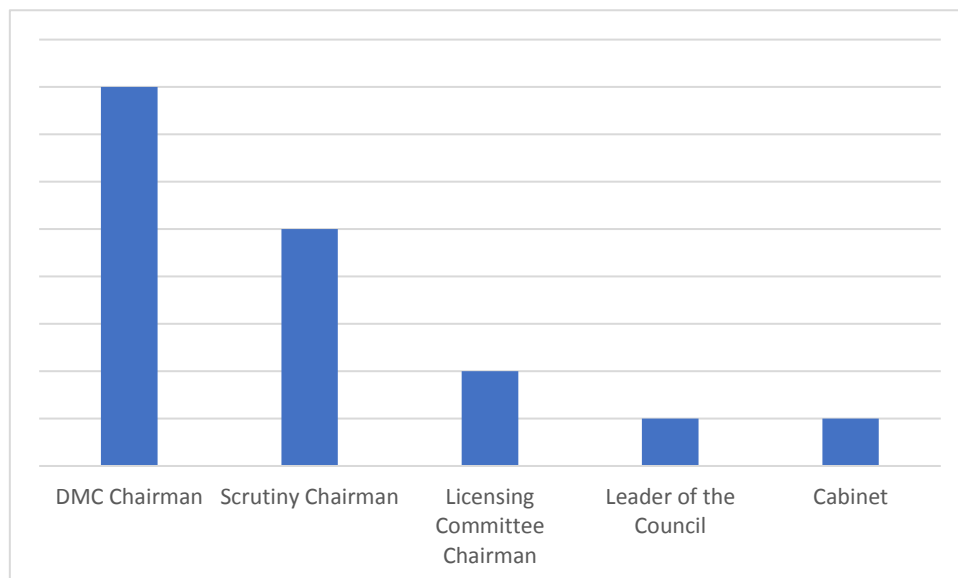
Answered: 15

Skipped: 2

10 out of the 15 respondents were in favour of changing the allowances (see below).



The changes suggested can be grouped as follows:



Comments Received Relating to Changes to Existing SRAs

[some comments have not been printed as they can enable a reader to identify the respondent]

“The DMC Chairman has a very responsible role the allowance doesn't reflect, compared to Scrutiny Chairman”

“DMC Chair Increase (based on number of meetings)

Scrutiny Chair Reduction (doesn't appear that active)”

“Dictated by responsibility as mentioned”

“Cabinet should be cut”

“Remuneration should be in line with time spent at meetings etc.
e.g. the Licensing Committee Chair should receive far less based on how little it meets”

“The current rate of SRA for Chairman of the DMC is disgraceful. This is the most important role of Chairmanship on the Council and draws a very high profile. Therefore, it should require a higher allowance than any other chairmanships.

The allowance being paid to the Chairman of the new boards is outrageous”

“DMC Chair should get the same SRA [*as DMC members (see below)*]¹ plus Chairman's SRA.

In my...yrs as a councillor, the Licensing Committee has met but a few times with little significant business to conduct compared to DMC. This seems to be a disproportionate number of members on Licensing Committee compared to (new) scrutiny committees and DMC.”

“.....perhaps £4500 for Scrutiny/DMC would be appropriate”

“Licensing Committee Chair paid £100 per meeting

DMC Chair should be higher than Scrutiny Board (Select Committee Chairs) – who should not receive than they did as “panel leads” under the old regime.”

“Leader of the Council is a huge responsibility. It should be much generously rewarded”

“All to stay same; perfectly adequate”

“Less disparity between Chairman of the DMC and the scrutiny chairmen. Current rate doesn't reflect responsibility of chairman of DMC”

“My personal opinion is that allowances should be performance led. If you achieve your outcomes set at the beginning of your term, you get your full allowance. If you are elected and contribute little to the running of the Council (this can be attending and contributing to meetings for back benchers) then you risk losing your allowance.

We are elected to represent Havant Borough Council, if we are not pulling our weight then we need to be replaced”

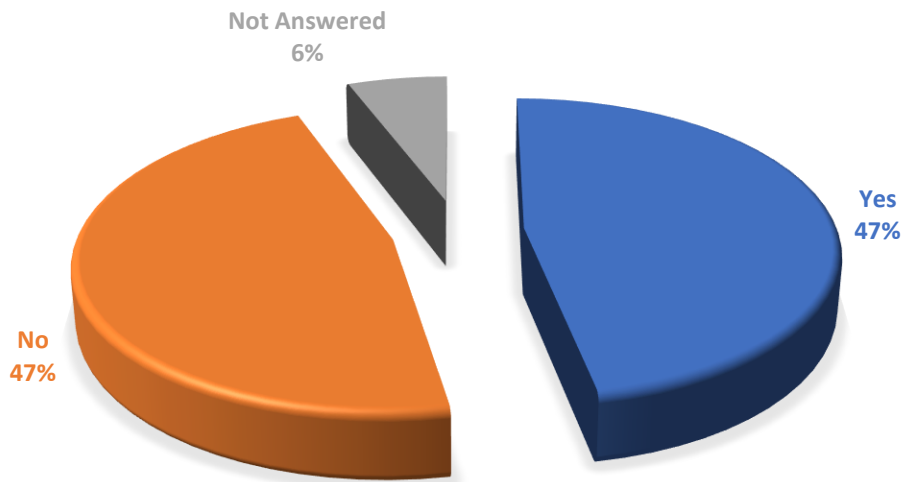
¹ [.....] inserted by editor

Would you like to see any new Special Responsibility Allowances introduced?

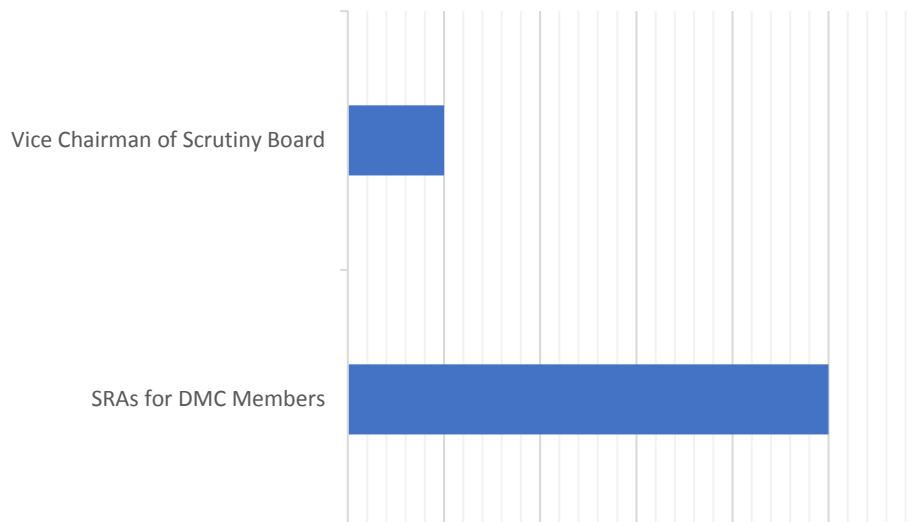
Answered: 16

Skipped: 1

There is not clear majority in support or opposition of introducing new SRAs.



The following changes were suggested



Comments Received Relating to New SRAs

“Possible attendance allowance for members of the DMC”

“Vice Chairs of Scrutiny Boards. They may lead panels. Maybe reduce Chairman’s pay to allow for this”

DMC Members are expected to undertake site visits, attend DMC meetings, pre-read (electronically on the portal and paper reports). All are time consuming (the Lidl application had almost 900 comments online), yet receive no recognition. I believe that they should be compensated for their commitment which is well above a basic member; and any other panel.

I also believe that members should be able to receive more than 1 SRA; particularly if DMC members were to receive one.”

“DMC committee member attendance allowance structure to take into account of time required to be on this committee, plus the level of responsibility of the position.”

“Because of the large amount of reading & research required for DMC, I believe all members of the Committee should receive an SRA. There can be hours of reading for this job which is essential to perform your responsibility”

“DMC members – meet very regularly”

What do you think about the different levels of Special Responsibility Allowance and their purpose?

[some comments have not been printed as they can enable a reader to identify the respondent]

“More thought should be given to the complexities of each role rather than a blanket level of allowance”

“Should reflect level and amount of work involved/responsibility and importance”

“ok”

“one level reward”

“Out of date, smacks of patronage, and should reflect output/effort, not title.

Members should be rewarded for their effort.

There is a list of attendance held by Democratic Services. Use that to determine who/which person/committees/panels works the hardest”

“I’m still learning, but the allowances should take into account the work we carry out and it provide some recognition”

“I think they may not quite reflect time and responsibility. It would be good to introduce a detailed structure of allowances, which clearly demonstrate time and responsibility. The SRAs are always justifiable”

“I feel that apart from the underpayment to the Chair of DMC, and overpayment to the 3 Chairmen of the boards, the rest are fair, and reflect the jobs the Councillors are undertaking”

“A complete review on the allowances should be on a scrutiny panel for review”

“To much for some, I’m on a board that has only met once, compared to Planning who meet regularly”

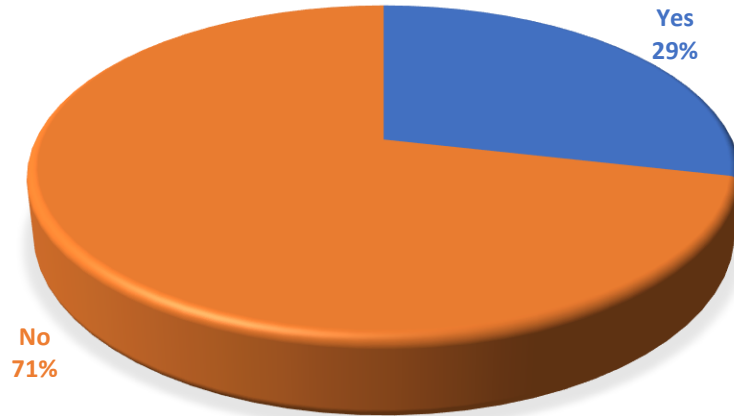
Additional Allowances

Would you like to see any changes to the current additional allowances?

Answered: 14

Skipped: 3

10 out of the 4 who answered this question did not wish to see changes to the current additional allowances



Suggested Changes/New Additional Allowances

Meal allowances – not relative to actual costs

Basic lap top for Council use only

Abolish Child Care

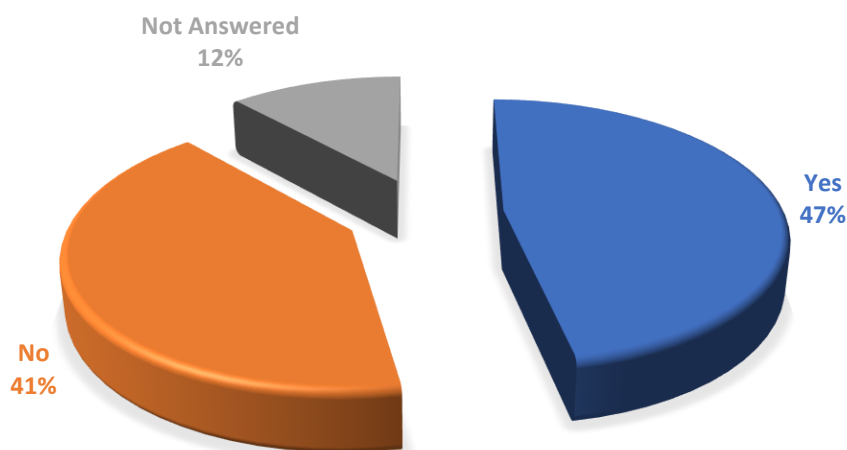
Additional Considerations

Do you agree that minor changes should take into account any pay changes applied to staff salaries?

Answered: 15

Skipped: 2

A small majority in favour of minor changes to the scheme (8 of 10 of those who answered) being linked to rises in staff salaries.



Reasons given for why minor changes to the scheme should be linked to rises in staff salaries

“Pay should be indexed linked or in line with other Council pay rises”

“If this system continues continuous Councillor remuneration should move in inflationary terms with civil servants at HBC.

Should staff wages stagnate, councillor remuneration packages should also”

“I don't know what is meant by a 'minor allowance'; however, if they are like 'additional allowances' & these a viewed in line with any review of 'additional allowances' that officers receive, then it should follow that 'minor allowances' paid to councillor should be treated the same”

“There is something immoral about councillors voting for their own allowance increases. It would be fairer and transparent if it was linked to staff pay and allowances so that any increase in officers' pay and allowances was echoed in Councillors' remuneration. Equally if no staff received an increase, nor would the members. Let's take the politics out of it”

“Councillors should receive the same cost of living increase as staff”