

Subject: Submission to Allowances for Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors – annual adjustment

1. The allowance for Mayor and Deputy Mayor in general, and in particular, category 3 Councils is out of step with both the allowance for Councillors and the general community wages. This is an allowance, and should not be designed a significant income source greater than a wage the majority of Mayor's would receive in their jobs. By having such a large wage, the focus becomes on some councillors trying to maximise their financial position by significant incomes rather than as a compensation for time and effort. While a larger Council for category 3 may take a little more time for the Mayor, it isn't warranted for \$25,000 more. A prime example in inner Melbourne is the City of Yarra compared to next door Darebin. Councillor allowance are much more line. The Mayoral allowance does not correlate with the community satisfaction survey performance of a Council in any way or service delivery. The Mayoral allowance should be frozen for a period of 5 years for category 3, and 2 years for Category 2 councils or until satisfaction survey averages increase.

In many councils, the governance reports fail to show the Deputy Mayor conducts significant additional activities in comparison to a regular councillor. The Deputy Mayor allowance should be frozen for one year.

Many councils have significant budgetary pressure along with the community councillors represent. More broadly, the Victorian public sector has very high levels of devicits and underlying debut. A freeze of the Mayoral allowance increase can offset increases proposed on submission point 2.

2) Councillors are significantly under compensated for the time and effort many put in to represent the role and the allowance does not adequately address this in comparison to the Mayoral allowance.

To reduce financial competition for the Mayoral position, and attract high value councillors who can bring their skills and experience to councils, an annual increase of 8% to category 1 councillors, 6% to Category 2 Councillors and a 5% increase to category 3 Councillors should be applied at the next increase period in December 2024 and announced in advance of the Council Elections scheduled for October 2024

3)in making any further decisions with regards to Councillor and Mayoral allowances, the tribunal should take into consideration enterprise bargaining agreements councils for each category strike with their workforce and as an ongoing rule, the mayoral and deputy mayoral increases should be capped at 0.5% below the average of the increase for the workforce for the given year to ensure Mayoralty allowances do not outpace employee wages

4) Council community satisfaction should be a consideration with regards to remuneration increases. Most employees are subject to performance reviews as part of salary increase. A similar performance metric should be considered as currently, councillor and mayoral, nor more broadly council performance, is not considered as part of any determination.

5) The average budgetary position of each Category of Council should be considered in determinations of Mayoral and Deputy Mayoral increases.

6) For Mayoral allowances compensating for time, any consideration needs to remember that this is an allowance and not a salary for a senior employee.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Regards

