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**Subject:** Reforms to Councillor Numbers and Allowances  
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Thank you for the invitation to comment on the Reforms to Councillor Numbers and Allowances Discussion Paper.

I support the reasons for reform outlined on page 3 of the discussion paper.

I strongly support increasing councillor allowances to a figure that is commensurate with councillor workload and responsibilities. I live in Glamorgan Spring Bay, where ordinary councillors receive an allowance of \$13 185 annually. This figure cannot reasonably justify more than one day/week for the role of councillor. This is insufficient to fulfil the role effectively.

As concluded by the FoLRG, the low allowance prevents many eligible people standing for council. No one who has financial commitments, such as a mortgage or rent, could reasonably be expected to stand for council. This excludes most ratepayers from standing for council. For the most part, only retirees stand in GSB. I'd be interested to see some data about the average age of councillors. I suspect GSB may have one of the oldest set of councillors in the state. While it's great that retirees are represented as councillors, many other demographic groups are excluded, leading to the potential for decision-making to only represent select interests. This situation is undemocratic.

I'm also strongly in favour of reforming the LG sector more broadly. I believe that council amalgamations are essential to make the LG sector more sustainable on many levels. In terms of councillor allowances, it's clear that consolidating council management has the potential for large savings, that could be used to appropriately compensate councillors while maintaining overall cost-neutrality. It is inequitable that council staff are paid well, while councillors (at least in GSB) receive paltry allowances. Reducing the number of councillors could help address this inequality somewhat.

Increasing councillor allowance could make educating councillors more realistic. It seems unreasonable to expect councillors to give up their time for education without financial compensation. It would be far better to have a smaller number of well-trained, well-paid councillors who represent the diversity in the community than the current situation. I agree that councillors should receive superannuation.

I agree with allowing councillors to attend meetings online. This was done successfully during the COVID pandemic. Restricting online attendance is a direct disincentive for ratepayers who live further away from council chambers. Enabling online meetings would be a more democratic outcome. In rare instances where a quorum wasn't achieved and a time-sensitive decision needed to be made, I support making decisions in an alternate manner as outlined on page 9 of the discussion paper.

I'm hesitant to embed the number of councillors etc in legislation and I'm hoping for more substantial reform of the LG sector and wouldn't want to impose any

restrictions on this reform.

Reducing the number of GSB councillors by only one councillor, as suggested in the discussion paper, cannot realistically be expected to make any meaningful change, beyond preventing tied votes in the chamber. None of the objectives listed in the discussion paper will be met by this 'tinkering at the edges' approach. An allowance of \$17 888 is still insufficient to create democratic opportunities to stand for election, equitable salaries for councillors compared to staff, or sufficient education to fulfil the role well. This figure is unlikely to attract qualified and talented people to stand for election.

I'm left wondering about the cost of this latest in a series of proposed reforms to the LG sector. Can the cost be justified if GSBC only sees the reduction of one councillor. I cannot see a justification for more than 5 councillors in an area with a small population like GSB. While GSB is a relatively large area geographically, there are only 5 townships. Each could be represented with 5 councillors.

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I acknowledge the Paredarerme people on whose lands I live and work

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