

SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE ELECTED MEMBERS' WORKLOAD

AILG, Unit 10 Manor Mills, Maynooth, Co. Kildare Phone: 01 - 610 6100 Email: info@ailg.ie www.ailg.ie



Cllr Colm Brophy
President of AILG

Dear Councillor Colleague

Since being elected President of the AILG, my top priority has been to deliver an improved package of terms, conditions and supports for all elected members reflective of the considerable increase in workload now associated with being a local public representative.

This special issue AILG Newsletter highlights how the Association has been working and fighting on your behalf in assessing the substantial increase in workload been experienced by elected members following the 2014 local government reforms.

Based on our recent members survey, with results detailed in the following pages, the AILG has presented the data on increased member workloads to the Minister for the Environment and to a high-level Departmental Advisory Group which is reviewing the impact of the 2014 reforms. Our findings and proposals for improved terms, conditions and supports

for all elected members, gives a true and accurate picture of the increased demands on our members as they fulfil their role as local public representatives. The reality of councillors' day to day lives is that they are on full time public duty available to citizens at all times, day and night.

The next phase of our campaign for improved supports for you, will be over the coming weeks during the course of the imminent General and Seanad Elections. This period will give all of us the opportunity to highlight this issue with all perspective candidates and is the time when we can have the greatest influence in our own political circles.

As potential Dáil and Seanad Éireann candidates look for your help we ask that you demand their commitment for a fair and proper package of supports for all local elected members.

We want local government to remain accessible to all and we need your help to ensure that the proper supports are in place to make that happen.

Cllr Colm Brophy,
President AILG 2015/16.

**WE NEED
YOUR HELP!!**



AILG EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2015/16

AILG Executive Committee:

Front row - Cllrs Patrick McGowan, Pat Fitzpatrick, Colm Brophy (Pres.), Pat Daly (Vice-Pres.), Pádraig McNally (Past Pres.); Back row: Liam Kenny, Director; Cllrs Nicholas Crossan, Michael Hourigan, Luie McEntire, Terry O'Flaherty, John Crowe, Pat Hand; Tom Moylan, Co-Director. Inset: Cllr. Rosaleen O'Grady, Cllr. Dermot Lacey

AILG

Elected Members Survey Results DECEMBER 2015

In July 2015 the AILG undertook an extensive and detailed survey of the 949 Elected Members across all Local Authorities in order to assess and evaluate the considerable increase in workload that all local elected members now undertake since the new local government structures were introduced. Surveys were distributed by AILG Member Delegates and completed surveys were returned with a 59% response rate (561 surveys). The AILG correlated and processed the survey results and the report below provides an overview of the survey results

- **74%** of elected members are spending 10+ hours per week attending Local Authority Meetings (including all various Local Authority Committee Meetings/Workshops)
- **3.03** is the average number of local authority meetings/workshops attended on a weekly basis
- **68%** of Elected Members are spending a further 10+ hours per week attending Community Meetings/Events

- **53%** of Elected Members are spending 10+ hours week spent travelling in order to fulfil their duties as a local Councillor including travel and time on general constituency work. This is representative of the increased geographical areas of new Municipal Districts/Electoral Areas
- **40%** of Elected Members now classify themselves as Full Time Public Representatives
- **33.15** hrs per week - a (mean) average time Elected Members spend fulfilling their role as a local public representative

FULL SURVEY RESULTS

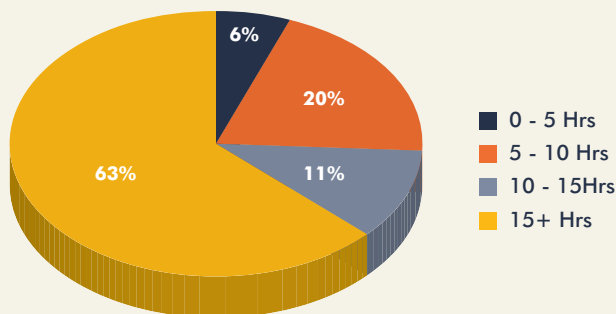
- Average Constituency Population base served per member

This indicates that elected members are servicing the entire geographical areas of their Municipal Districts/Electoral Areas.

26,619



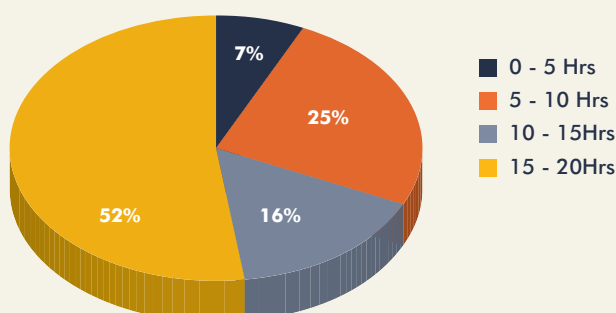
- Hours per week dedicated as an Elected Member for attending Local Authority Meetings (including all various Local Authority Committee Meetings):



Average number of local authority meetings/
workshops attended on a weekly basis is **3.03**



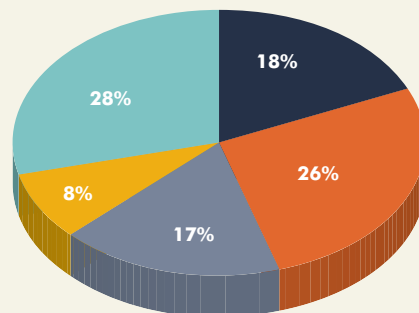
- Hours per week dedicated as an Elected Member for attending Community Meetings/Events:



➤ Hours per week spent travelling in order to fulfil duties as an Elected Member including travel and time on general constituency work.



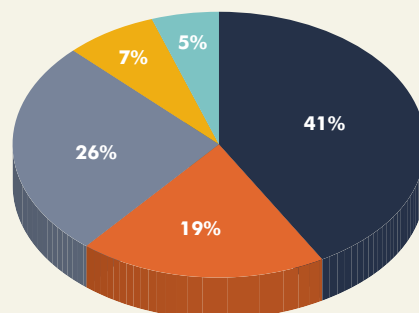
- 0 - 5 Hrs
- 5 - 10 Hrs
- 10 - 15Hrs
- 15 - 20Hrs
- 20+ Hrs



➤ How long have you've been an Elected Member



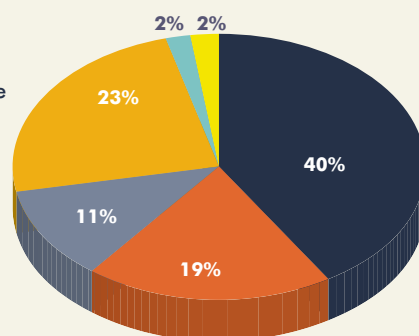
- 0 - 5 Yrs
- 5 - 10 Yrs
- 10 - 20Yrs
- 20 - 30Yrs
- 30+ Yrs



➤ Elected Members Current Employment Status



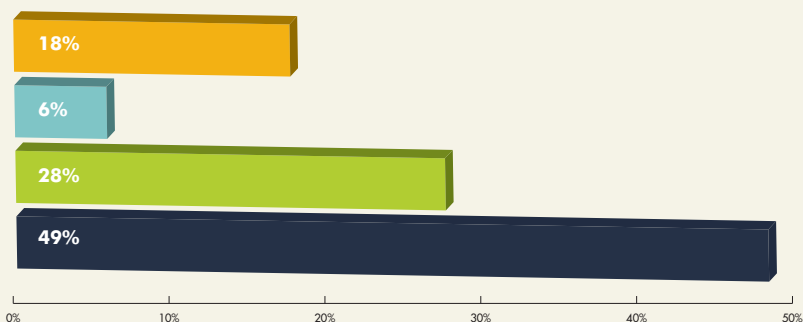
- Full-time Public Representative
- Full-time Employment
- Part-time Employment
- Self Employed
- Unemployed
- Other



31% of Elected Members pay no other PRSI Contribution other than Class K from their Representational Payment

➤ Other supports (financial/other) that elected members need to see being made available to them to support their work as an elected member:

- Improved PRSI Contribution
- More Training
- Increase in other supports e.g. office supports, broadband etc
- Increased Financial Support



➤ Noted Comments:

“Embarrassing to say that I can't afford to be a councillor at 25 years of age - living week by week”

“Need an increase in basic pay for increased workload”

“As a female member it is nearly impossible to be a mother, an elected rep and try to hold another job with the current payment that we receive”

“Technology training”

“Increased financial supports for extra work load & travel especially in rural areas”

“Secretarial back-up; full PRSI A Class”

AILG Proposals for Improved Terms, Conditions & Supports for Local Authority Elected Members

1. REPRESENTATIONAL PAYMENT

The current Elected Members Representational Payment is “linked” to a Senators salary (25%) and has been reduced by over 12% since 2008 when public sector wage decreases, pension levy and other deductions are taken into account.

AILG are seeking to align the Elected Members Representational Payment to the Local Authority Salary Scale and are proposing that it should be set at Point 1 of a Local Authority Salary Scale with a rate of €23,188 per annum.

The AILG are also seeking that the 80% attendance rule applied to the Elected Members Representational Payment be amended to take account of Maternity Leave/ Parental Leave for Elected Members

AILG Member Survey Results	Current & Proposed Representational Salary	Current Representational Rate per Hour	Comparison to current Minimum Wage	Comparison to Recommended National Living Wage
Average (mean) time of 33.15 hours per week fulfilling their role as a local public representative.	€16,565 P/Annum (Current)	€9.60 P/Hr	€0.95 P/Hr above current Minimum Wage	16% less than National ‘Living Wage’ of €11.45 P/Hr
	€23,188 P/Annum (Proposed)	€13.45 P/Hr	€4.80 P/Hr above current Minimum Wage	€2 p/hr above National ‘Living Wage’ of €11.45 P/Hr

2. FIXED ANNUAL ALLOWANCE

AILG are looking for an immediate increase in the annual fixed allowance across the three existing elements to the Fixed Annual Allowance of travel, subsistence and fixed representational element to reflect:

- » Increased travel and parking costs associated with larger geographical and population areas to represent.
- » Increase in subsistence due to attendance at increased number of meetings, committees, workshops and other local authority events now being experienced.
- » Increase in fixed representational element to help the elected members towards increased IT costs, equipment costs, secretarial support, stationery costs etc to reflect the increased workload.

3. CLASS K PRSI CONTRIBUTION

AILG’s proposal is that Local Authority Elected Members should have a separate PRSI Class or Sub Class (from other Office Holders as defined under the current Class K) similar to the current 4% PRSI Levy for Class E which would allow them to qualify for some social insurance benefits, namely the Contributory State Pension and Jobseeker's Allowance/Benefit.

4. ELECTED MEMBERS GRATUITY PAYMENTS

Current Retirement Gratuity Scheme must remain in place and must be protected in its current format.

The Department of Environment, Community and Local Government is currently carrying out a detailed evaluation of the Local Government Reforms, including all local government structures, one year on from the 2014 Local Government Reform Act. The AILG is fully participating in this process with the Department.

The AILG is insisting that the Elected Member’s Workload, Remuneration and Terms and Conditions be a top priority of this review and has presented its survey results and proposals to this review group.



The AILG has also presented both our survey findings and proposals for Improved Remuneration, Terms & Conditions to Ministers Alan Kelly TD, Michael Noonan TD and Minister of State Kevin Humphries TD and we appeal to all elected members to bring this issue to their own Oireachtas Representative over the course of the upcoming General and Seanad Elections.



The issue of Elected Members Terms & Conditions was also addressed at the AILG’s Autumn Seminar in October 2015, which included a panel discussion with Seanad Spokespersons on Environment, Community & Local Government under the heading of ‘Fair Recognition for the Work of the Elected Member’