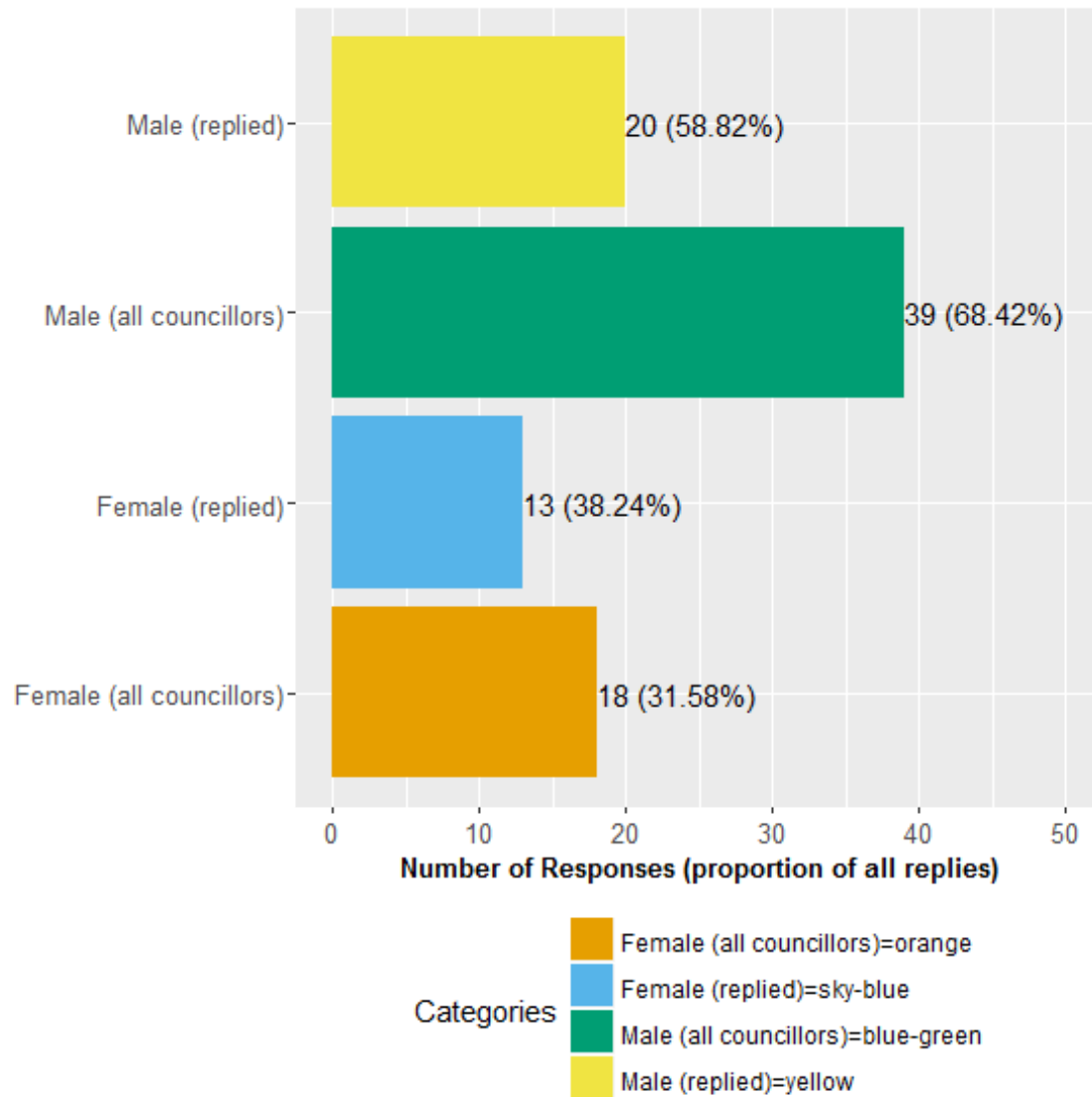


Swindon Borough Council Independent Remuneration Panel

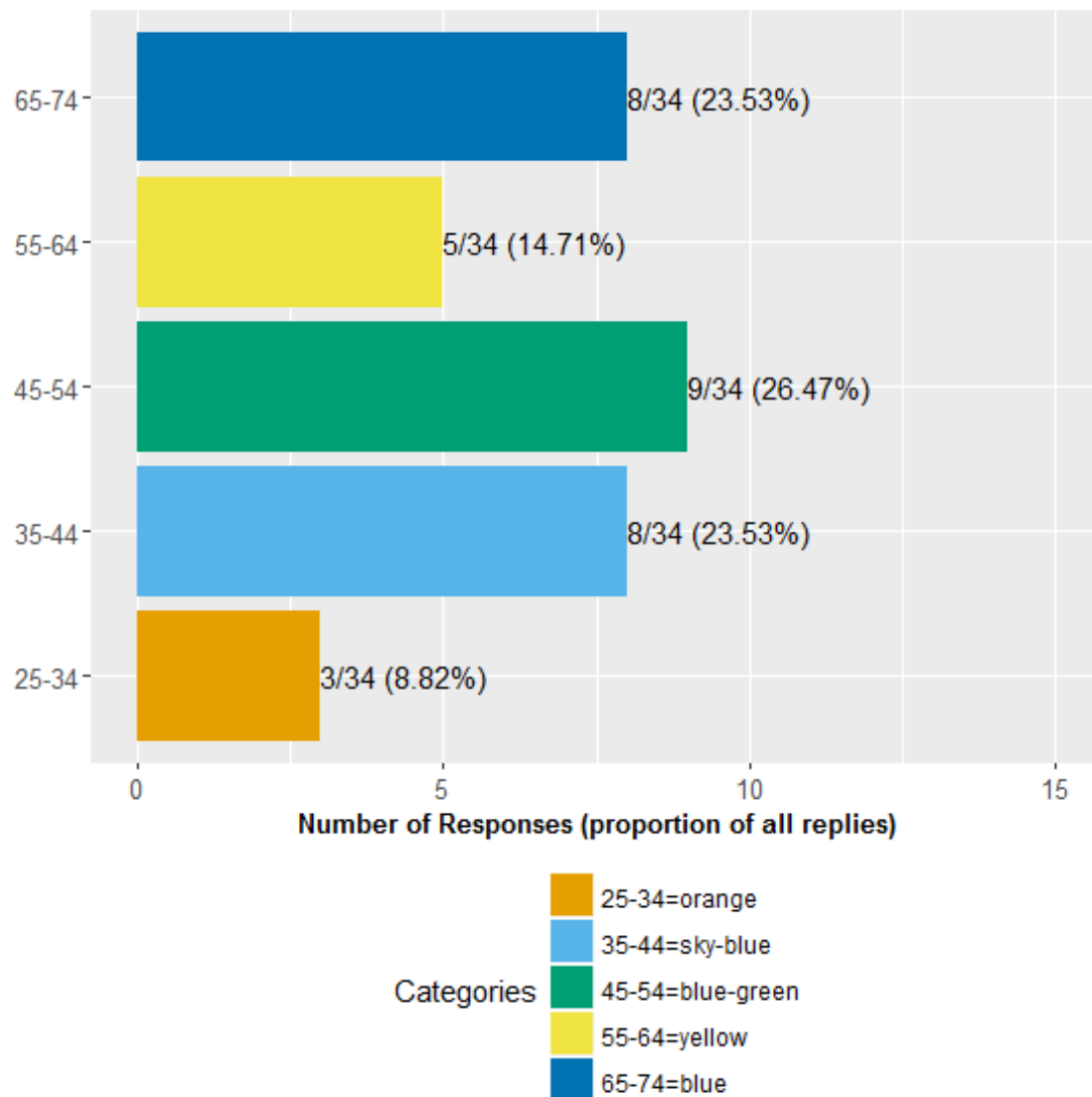
**Results from the Councillor Survey
January 2016**

Question 1. Are you Male or Female?



Number of responses to all questions=34

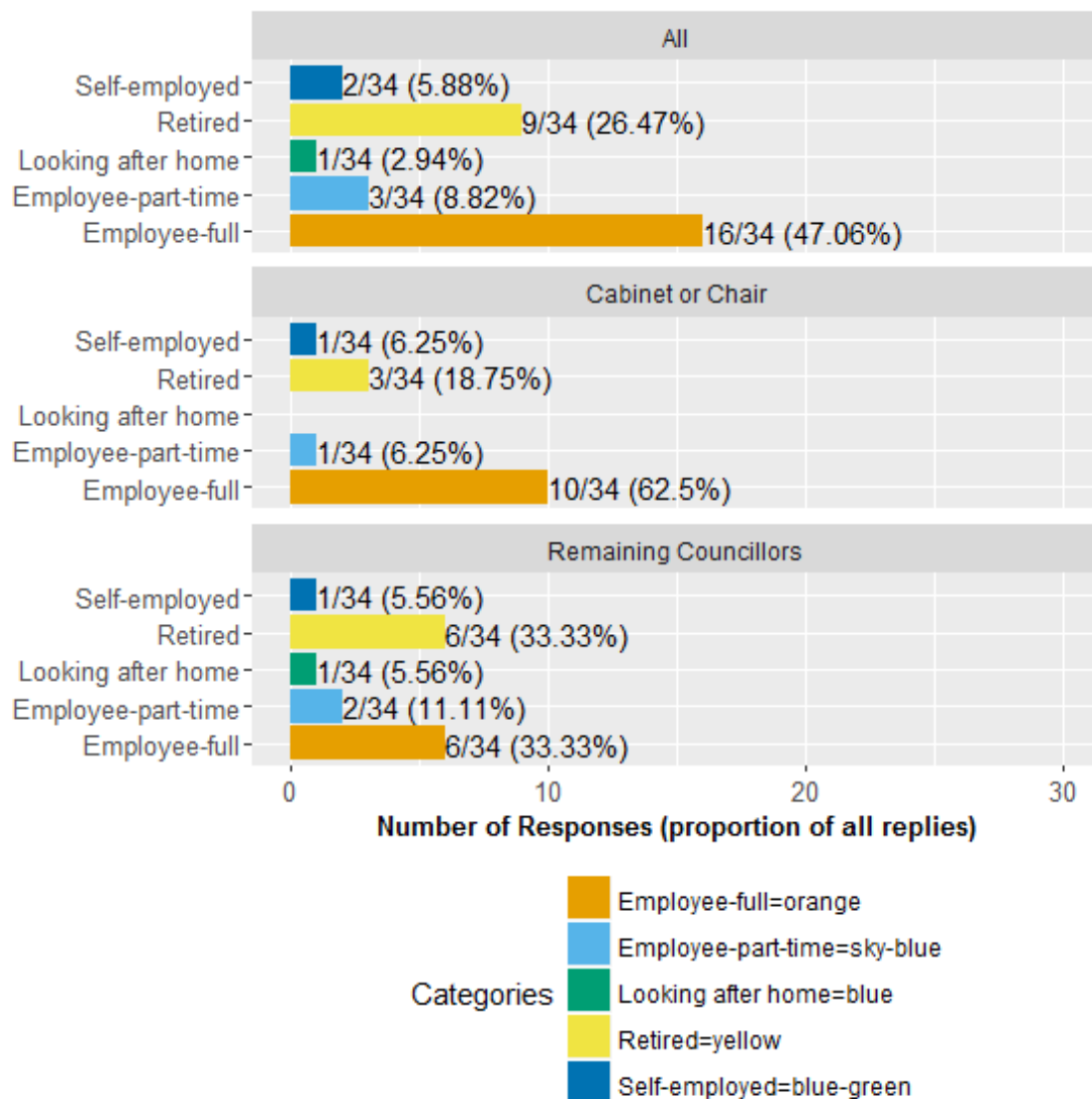
Skipped this question=1

Question 2. Please indicate your age range

Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=1

Question 3. Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?



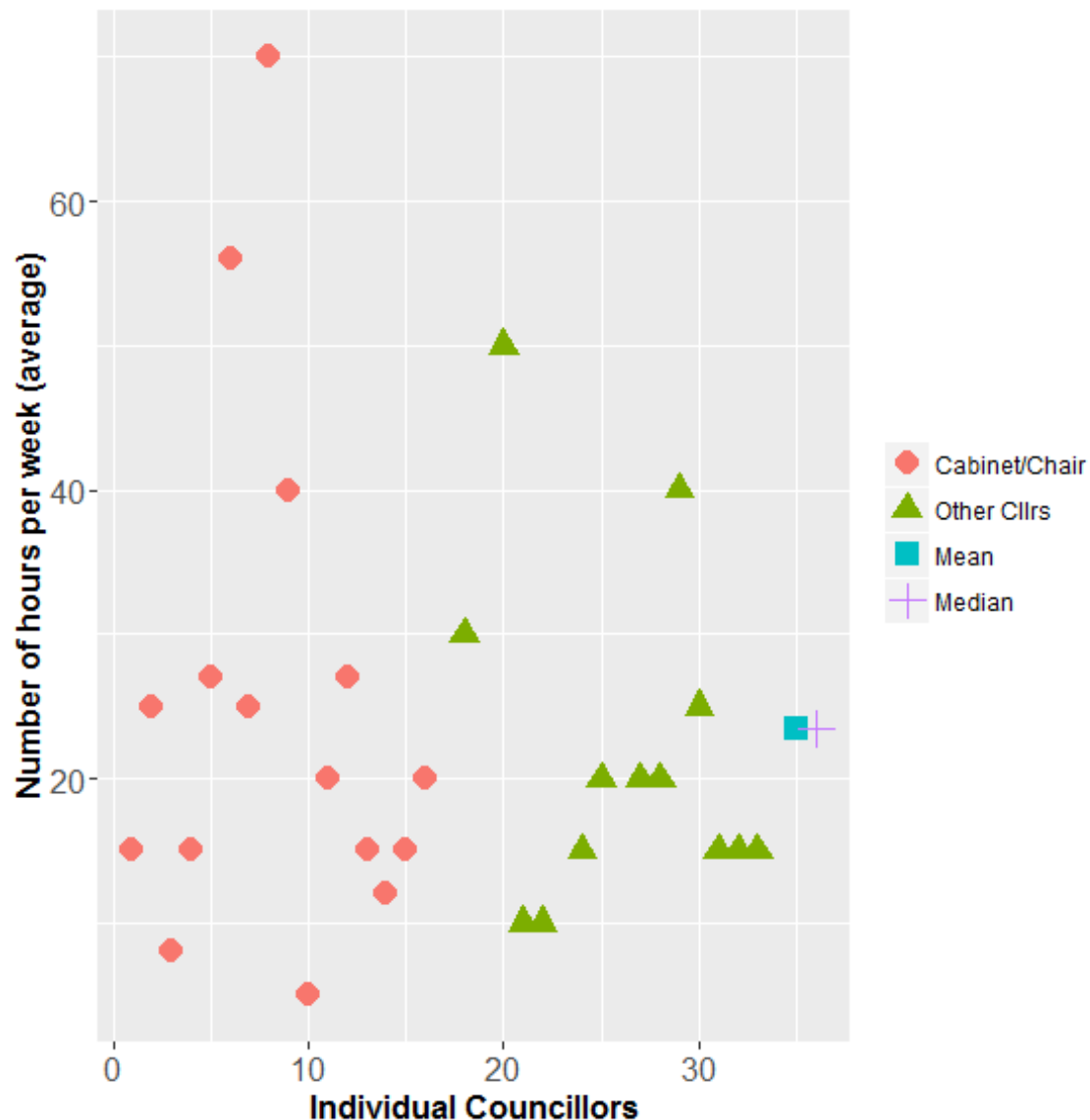
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=3

Individual Comments

- Also look after school age children

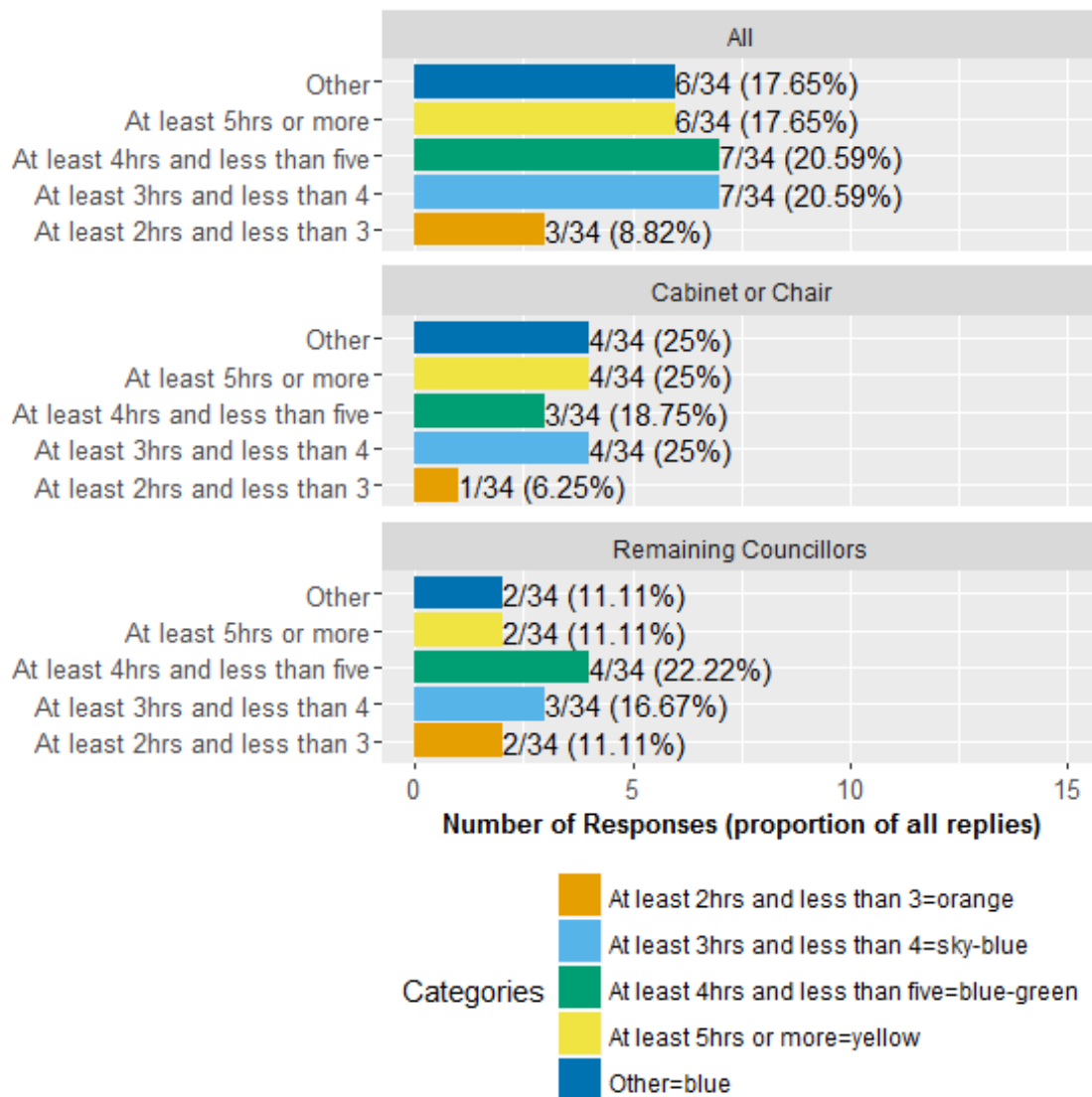
Question 4. What is the average number of hours per week that you spend overall on all Council activities (attending formal and informal meetings, briefings, reading reports, meeting voters, doing constituency work, etc.)?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=5

Question 5. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week attending formal meetings (Full Council, Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny, Regulatory etc.)?



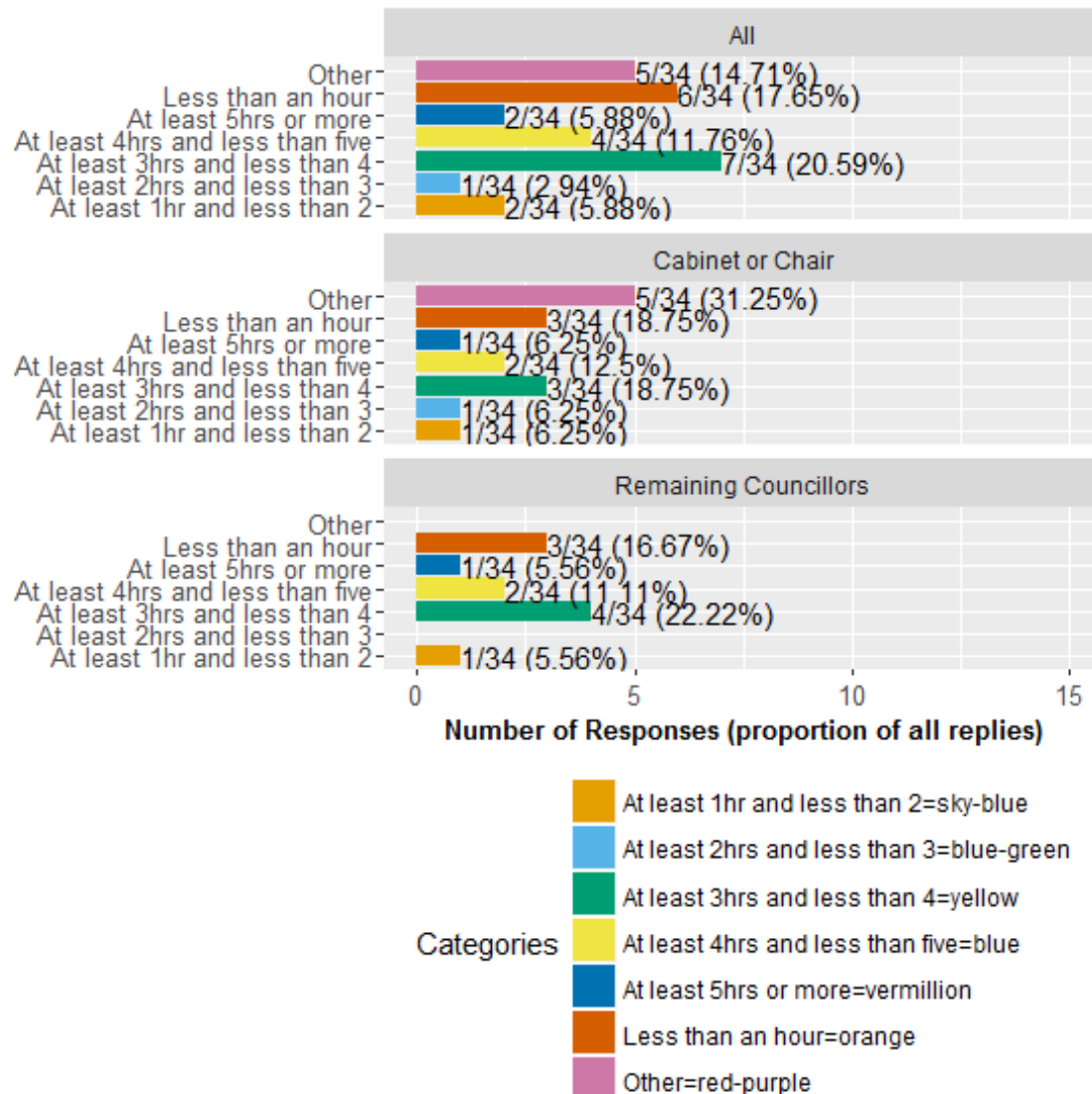
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=5

Individual Comments

- It varies!!
- It is variable.
- 12, 6, not sure - depends on the week! Can be less, can be much more

Question 6. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week attending informal cabinet/shadow cabinet meetings, Cabinet Member Advisory Groups?



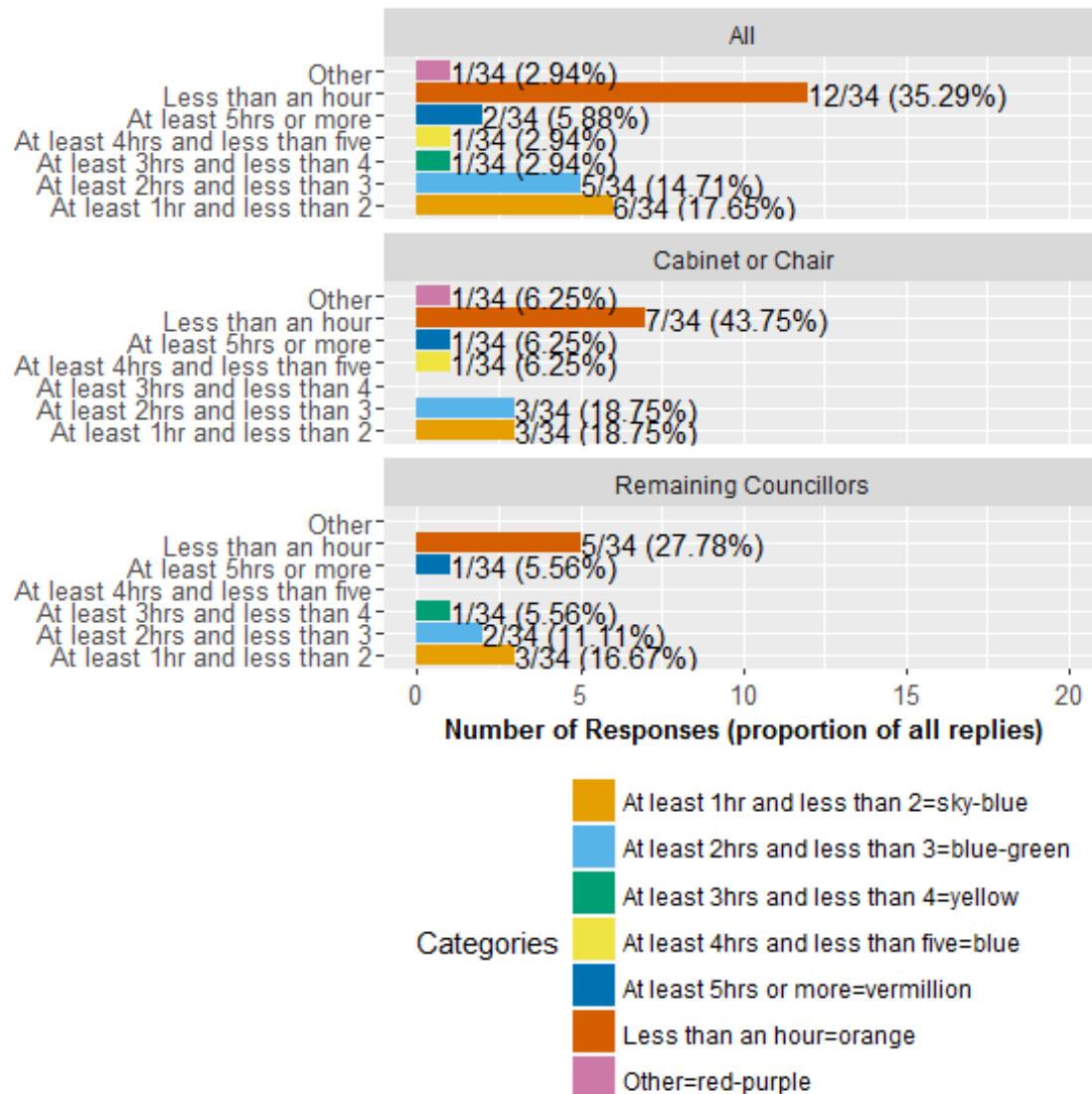
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

Individual Comments

- Can be up to 25 wk, 15, 20

Question 7. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week meeting with partner organisations e.g. CCG, Fire Authority, Police and Crime Panel etc. (if you are not a Member of the Panel/Authority)?



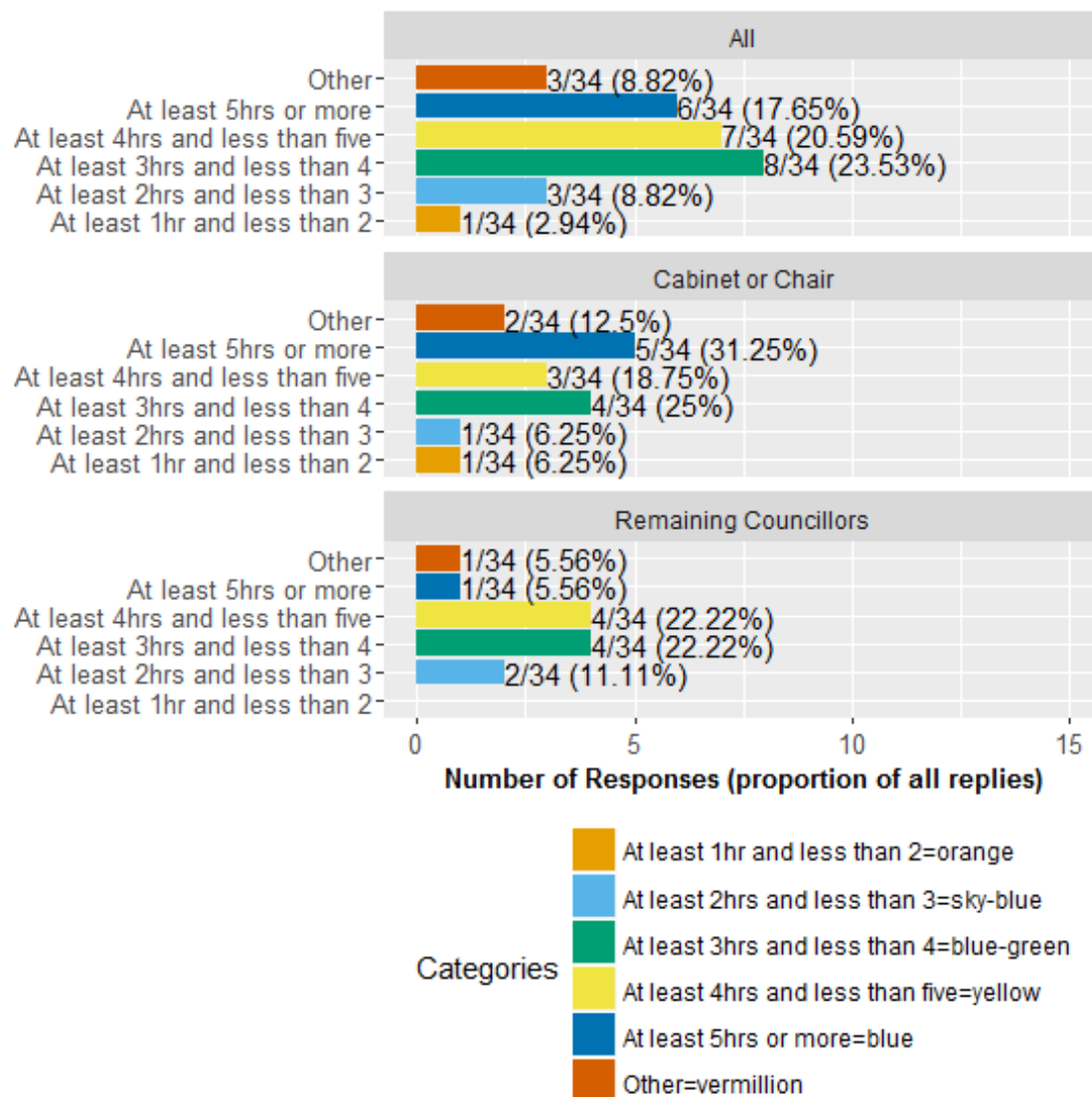
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=6

Individual Comments

- 10

Question 8. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week reading reports?



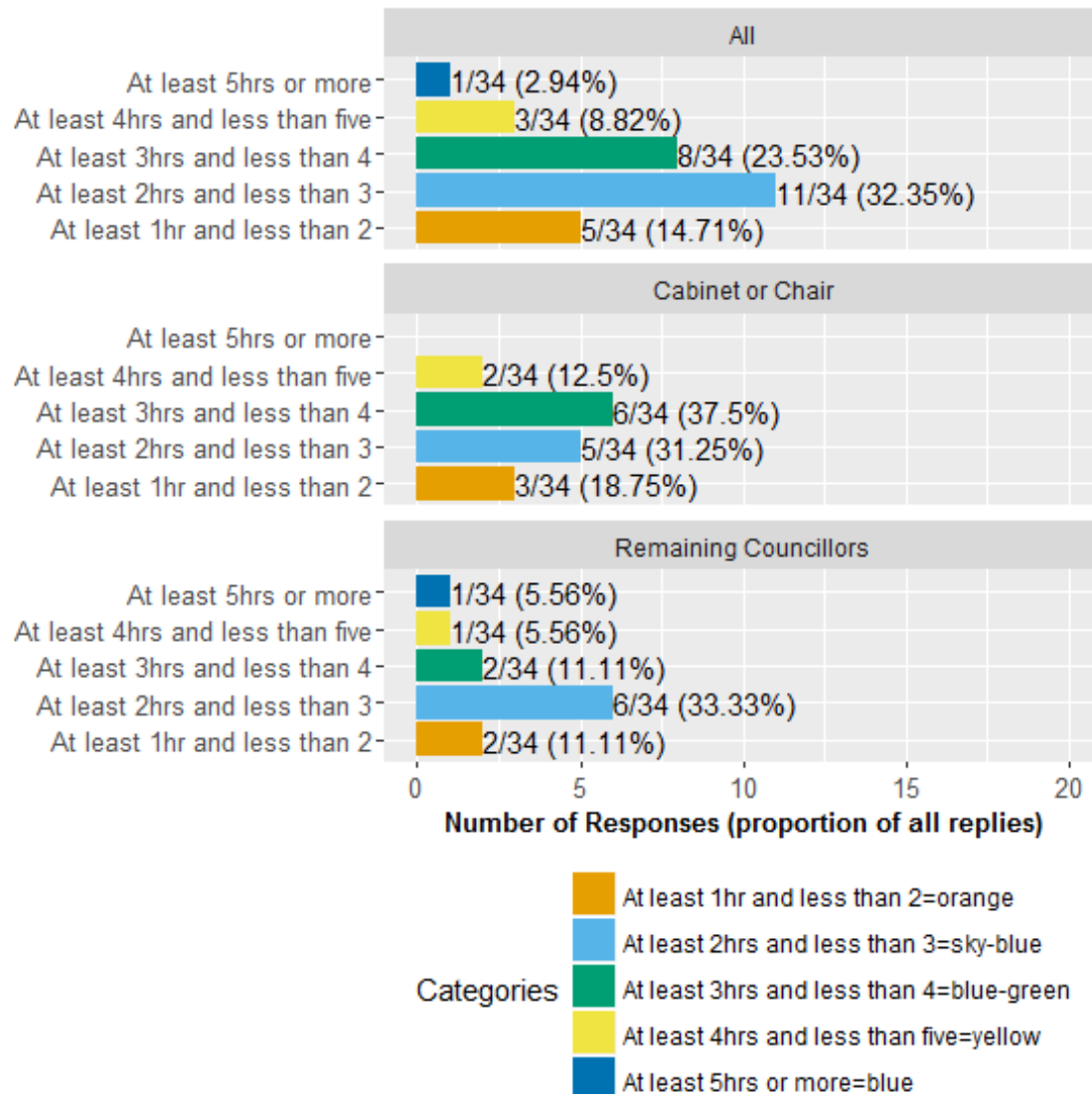
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=6

Individual Comments

- Varies.
- Always something being circulated.
- Monthly adoption that can take 2-3 days
- 10
- 6

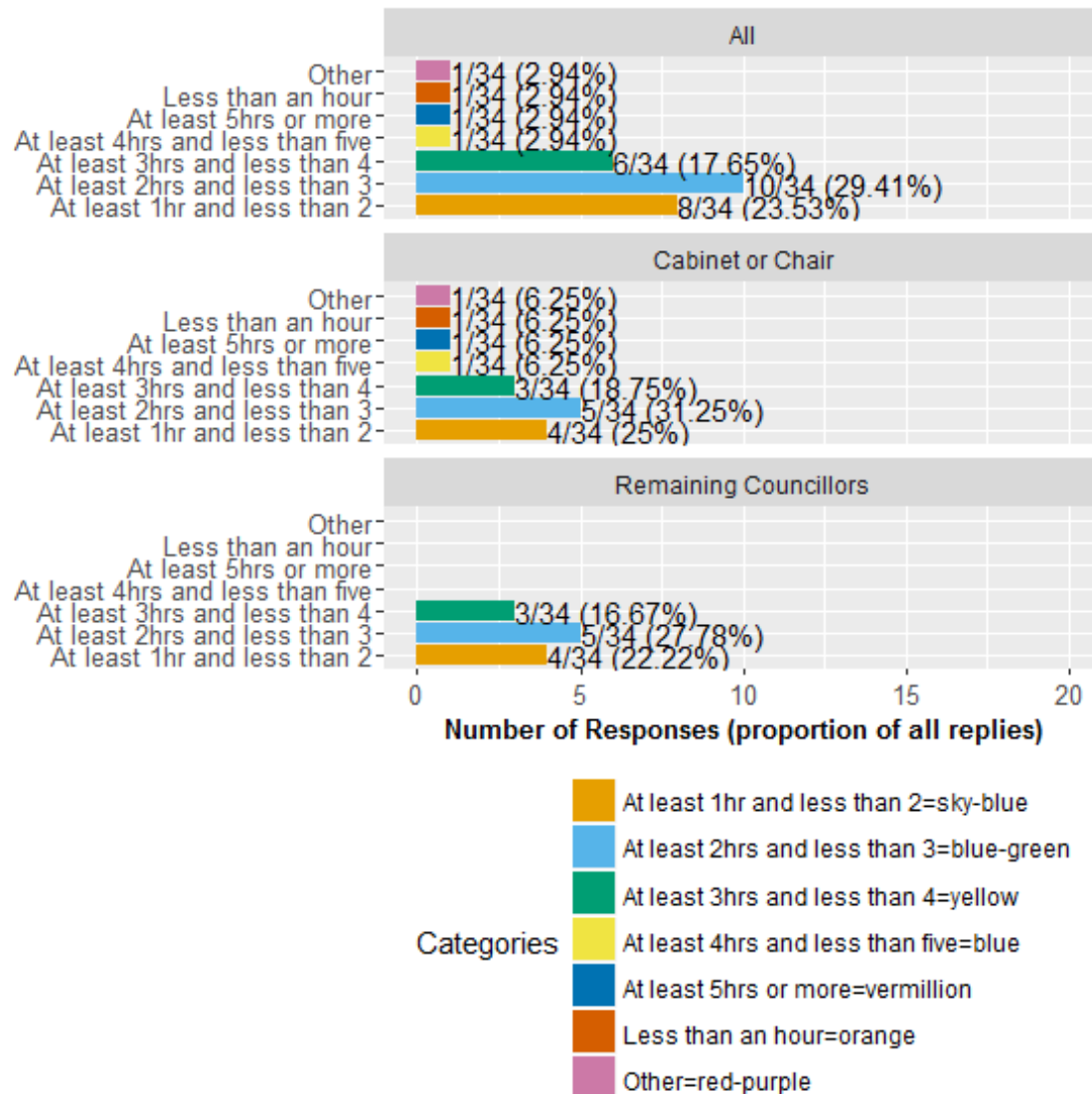
Question 9. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week attending meetings as ward members with a cabinet member or officer(s) about a ward/casework issue?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=6

Question 10. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week attending briefing meetings with officers (excluding Party Group meetings) e.g. policy briefings, Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation strategy, etc.?



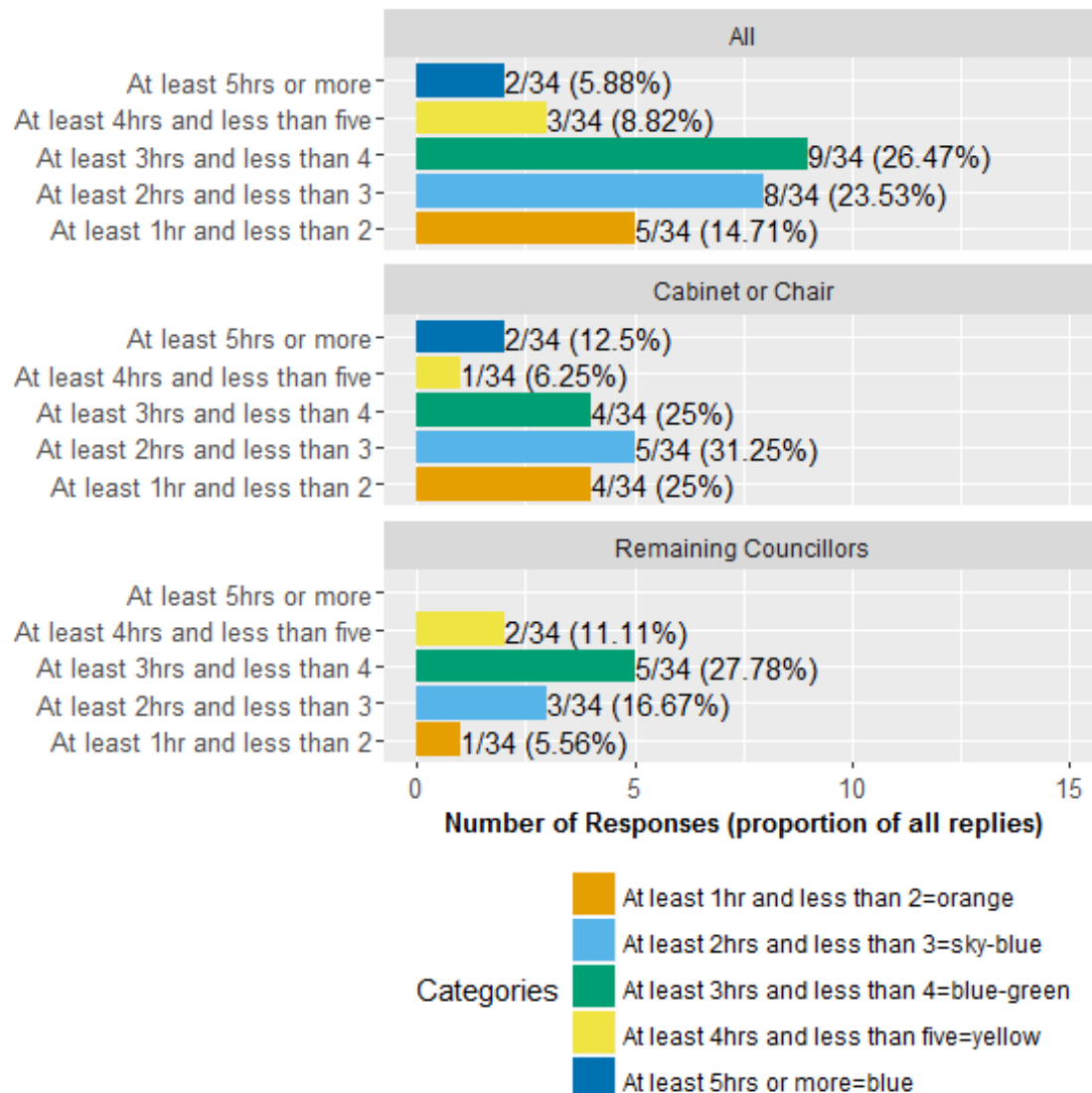
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=6

Individual Comments

- 10

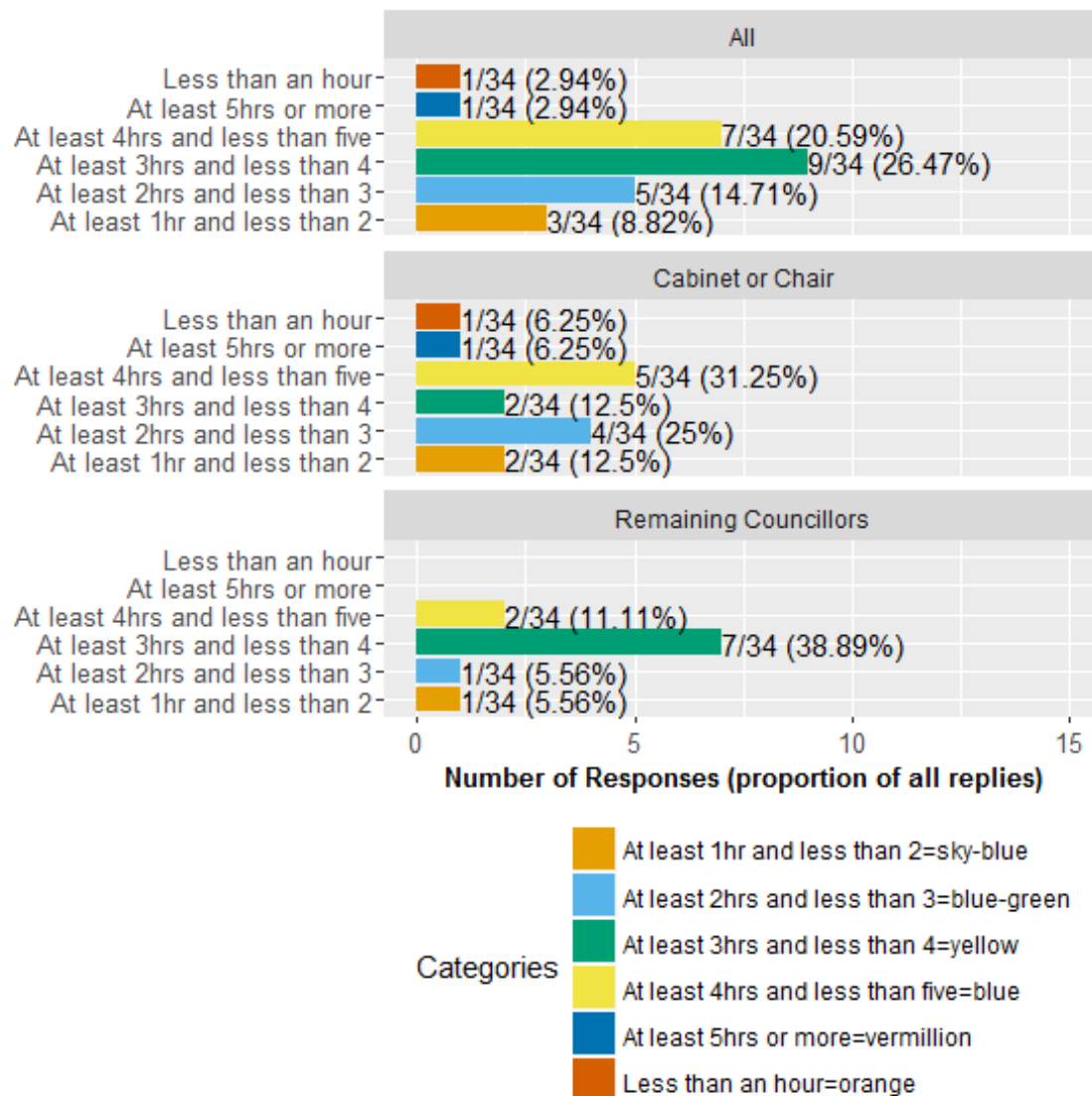
Question 11. What is the average number of hours that you spend per week attending Council political party Group or pre-meetings?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

Question 12. What is the average number of hours spent per week attending other bodies e.g. school governing bodies/town or parish councils, residents groups, regional or national bodies such as the LGA etc.?



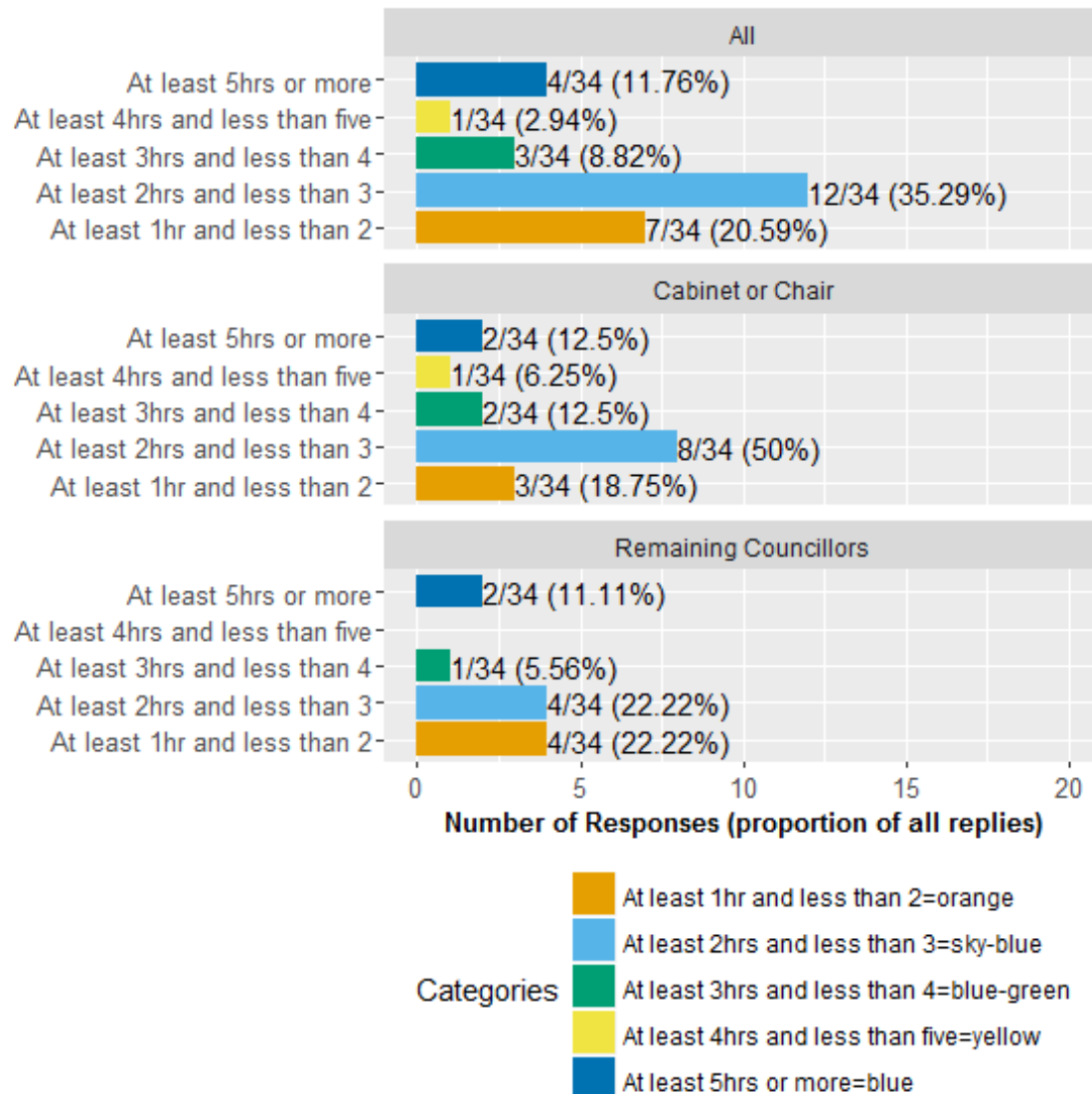
Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

Individual Comments

- Monthly not weekly

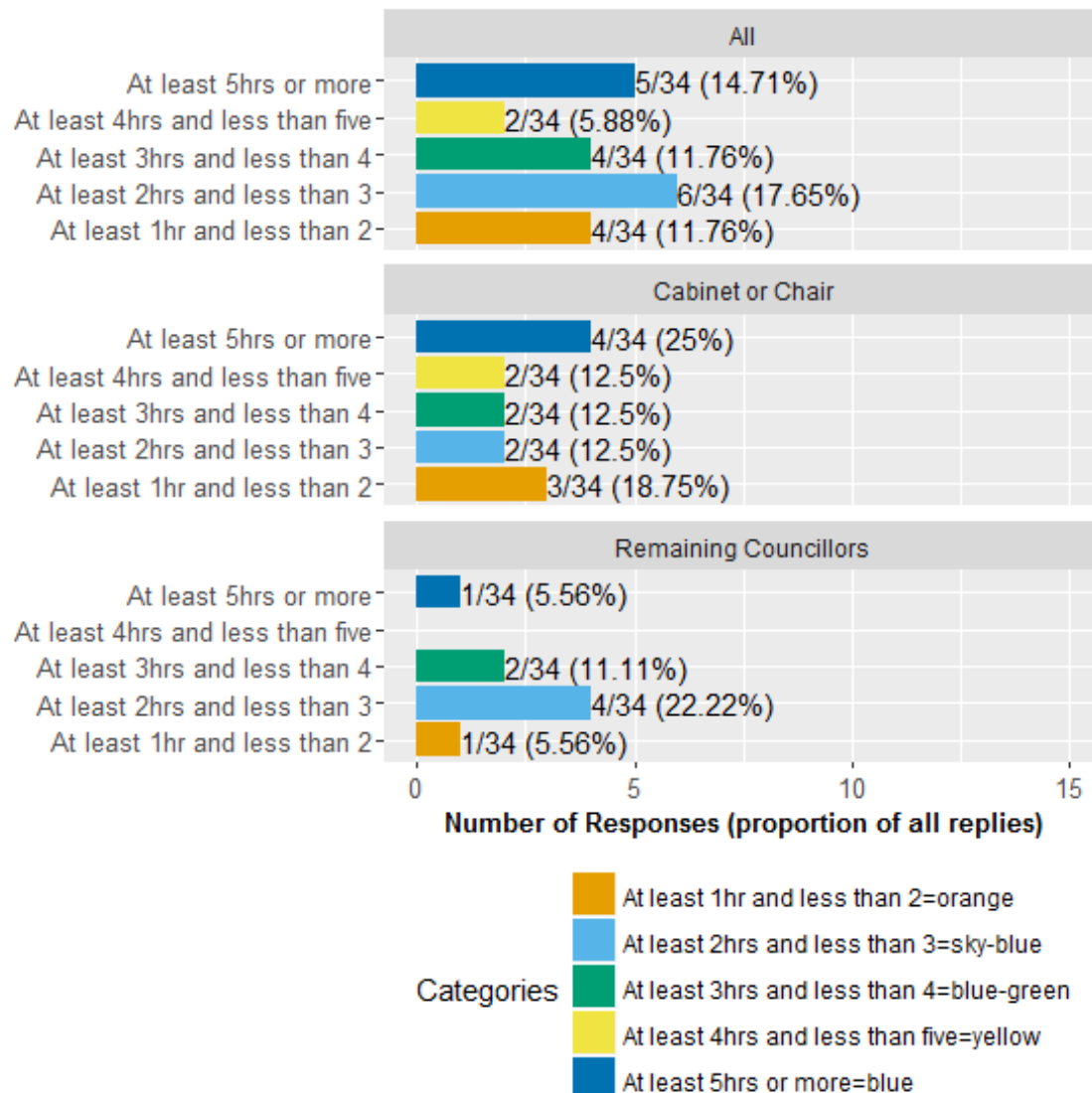
Question 13a. What is the average number of hours that you spend in direct dealings with the public (surgery/residents groups, civic functions, informal encounters when walking through the ward etc.)?



Number of responses to all questions=34

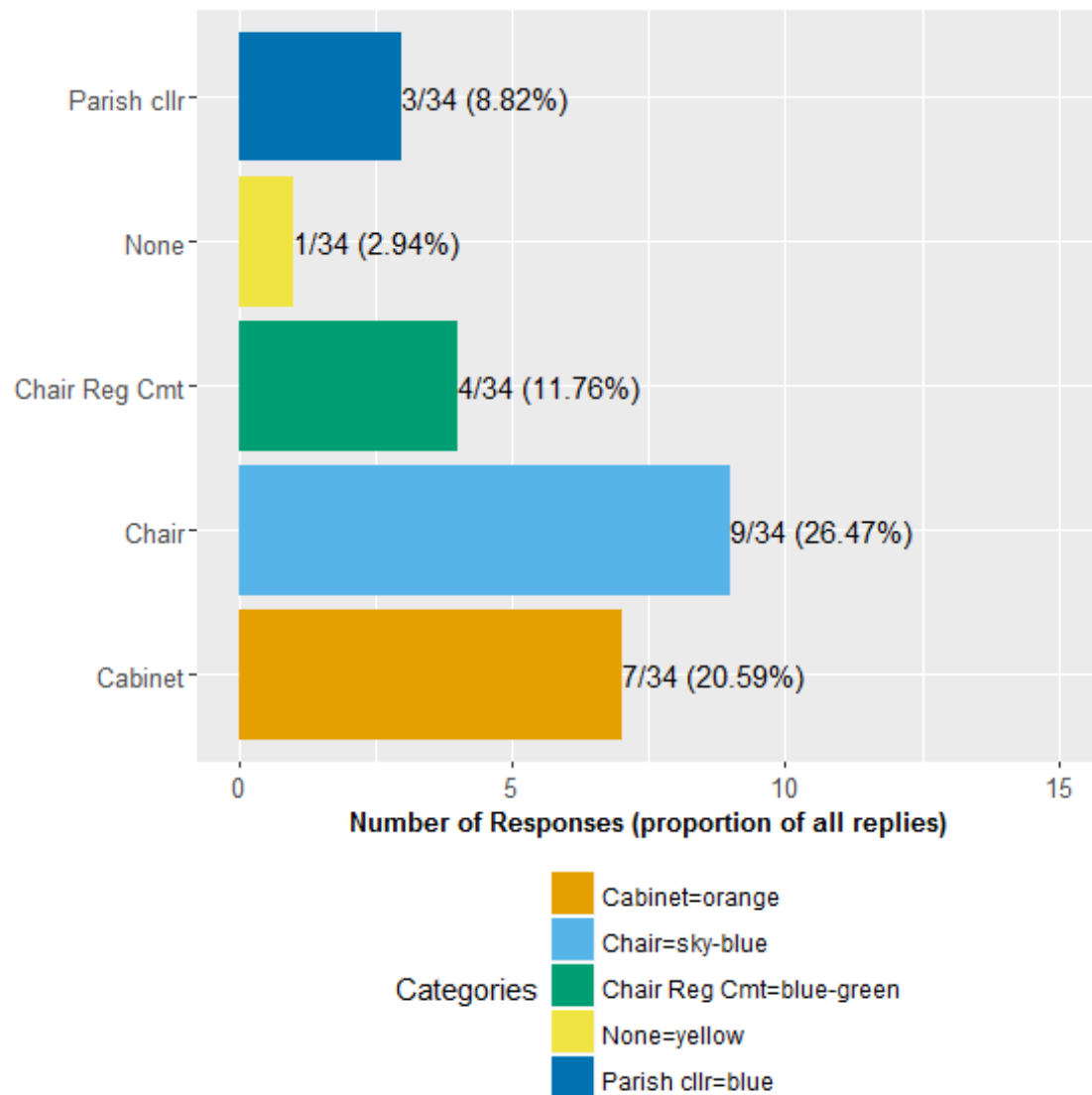
Skipped this question=7

Question 13b. What is the average number of hours that you spend on indirect dealings with the public (emails, letters, phone calls, social media)



Number of responses to all questions=34

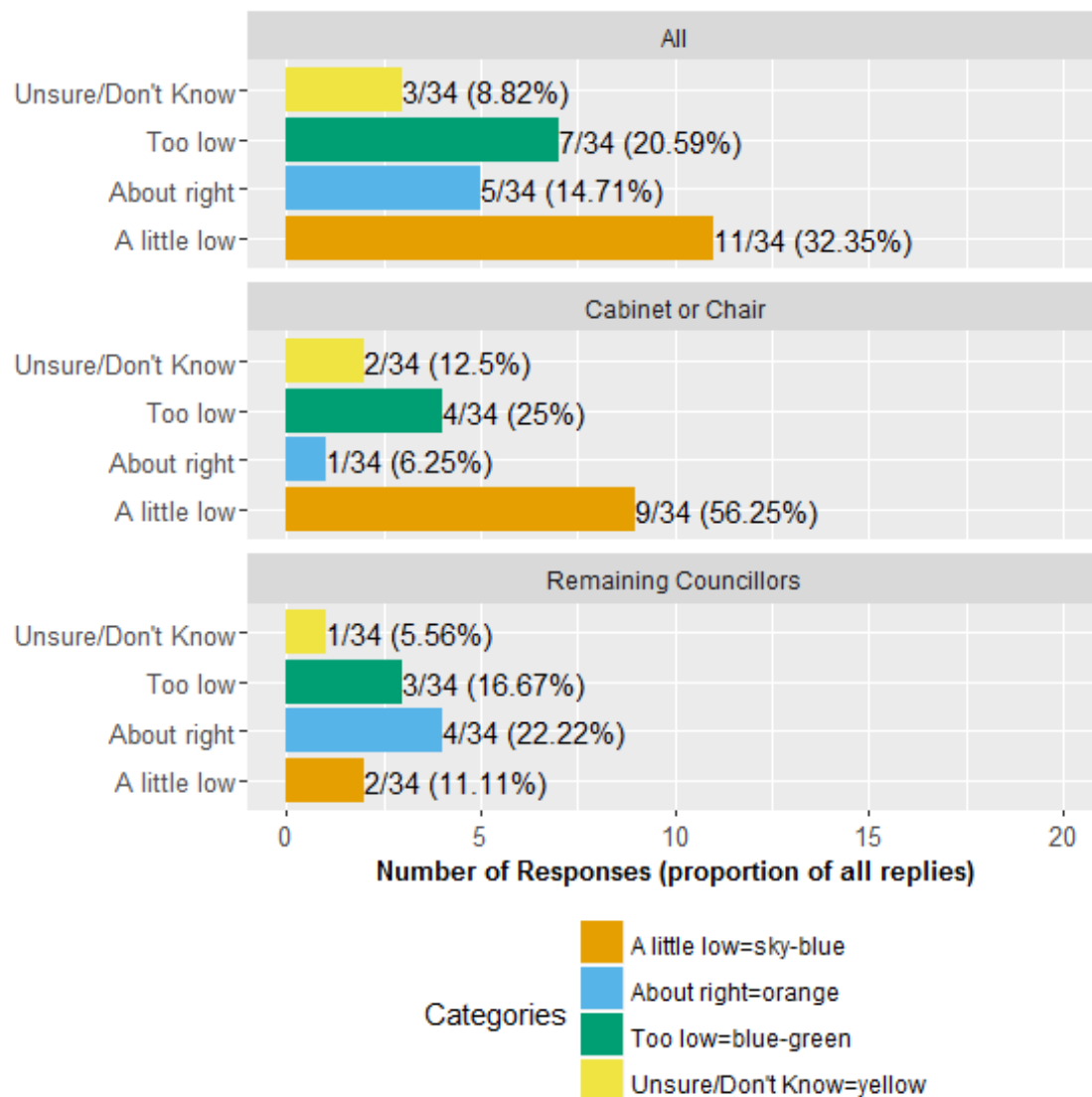
Skipped this question=10

Question 14. Which additional offices do you hold?

Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=10

Question 15. Do you think the Basic Allowance of £7880 is:



Number of responses to all questions=34

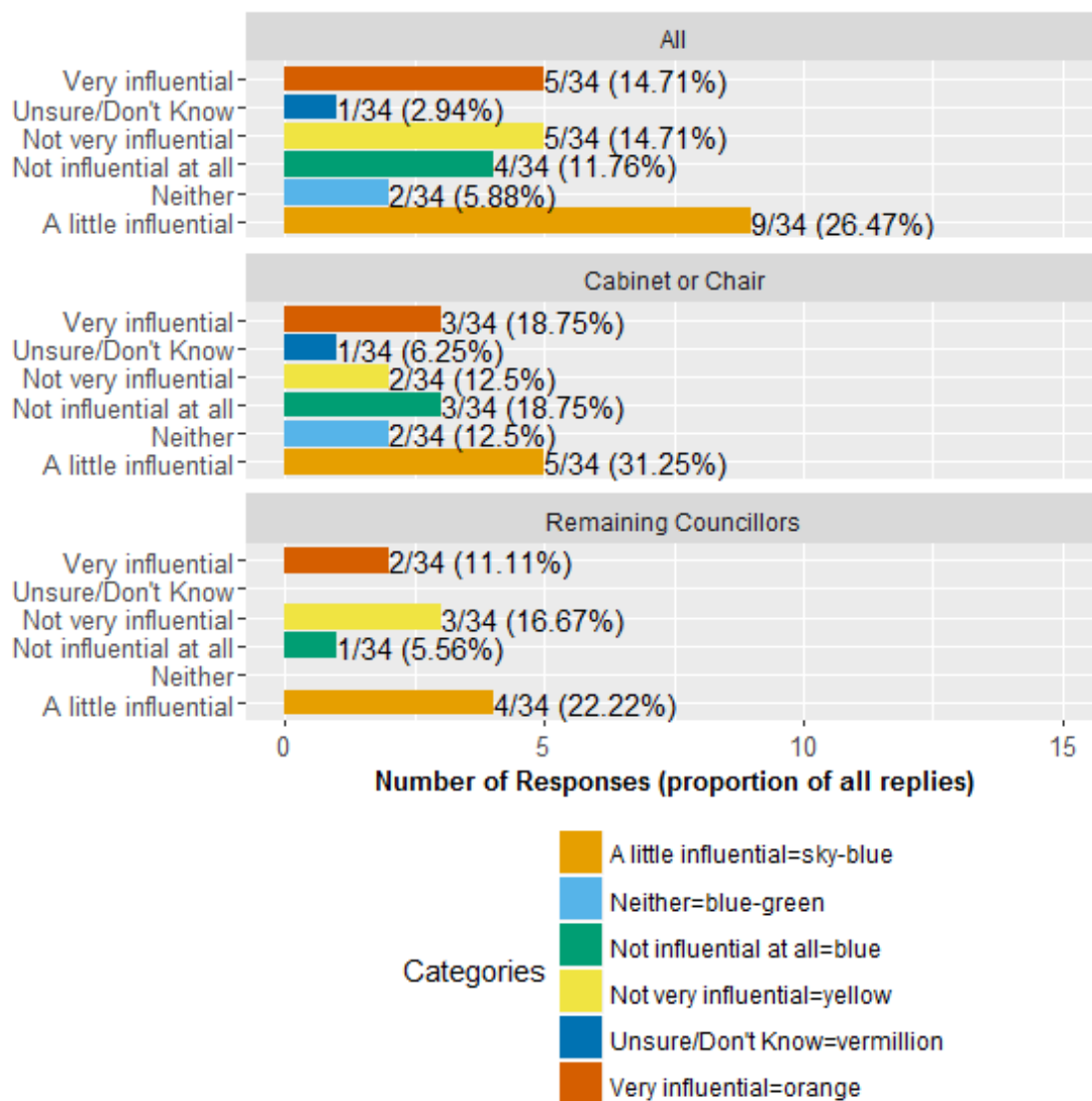
Skipped this question=8

Question 16. If you would like to see it changed, please state why?

- Relate pay to performance
- A sinecure for older Members but insufficient for new/younger Members to apply time
- The allowance is reasonably generous to cover the basic expenses incurred as a councillor
- An interesting question to be considered is to whether the allowance could be increased to compensate for lack of earnings / care costs to allow more people in full-time employment or caring responsibilities to become councillors
- If it does not go up it will limit the number of new people putting themselves forward. To run a large local authority you need a cross section of society but primarily well educated, dedicated, capable people of all ages. Unfortunately if you pay peanuts you get monkeys or Party hacks or worst of all people trying to get to positions of authority or parliament for the money or the power. You do get some for the right reasons.
- I am paid approximately £6.30 per hour this is less than the minimum wage. I have officers earning in excess of £100,000 per annum reporting to me is that right?
- Most people can't afford to be a Councillor
- Councillors that use smart phone/device are available to residents 24/7. I don't feel that the basic allowance reflects that
- Looking at other Borough Council one sees we are not in the top rung. However many of those have more members so the back bench work load is more evenly spread. So, besides representing a Ward they do little more. Equally applies to those who find it difficult to obtain day release from work
- Doesn't recognise the hours given, or meetings attended. Though I accept that some do more than others!
- Adoption Panel is a lot of reading
- Reflect the additional responsibility modern councillors have and that it has not increased for several years, For the amount of hours I work and how SBC compares to other local authorities, I think it should be higher
- I'm not convinced that it allows for all people in society to become Councillors. I believe that younger people, especially younger women, single parents and people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are excluded from being Councillors
- I publish a news letter every 3 months for which I pay and deliver. Also though retired from work my professional skills/qualifications as an accountant/auditor are used as a school governor, Fire Authority member and Swindon councillor
- The role of councillor is becoming more intensive, and is an active hinderance from pursuing a professional career. Its now a conscious choice not to progress because of council commitments. If we are serious about attracting a wide range of people that is representative, the low basic pay is a barrier. The pay supports shift and part time work instead of allowing someone to reduce their professional work hours

- I think this should be brought in line with other similar councils, Allowence should reflect the behaviour of the member, A lot depends on parishing. If that happens, we should review it down. Personally, I would be happier with a lower allowance because the role of a Councillor is, and should be, a public service
- With devolution the work of members has changed in the last few years and the requirement of time is far greater. Ultimately I would like to see fewer members with a higher basic allowance.

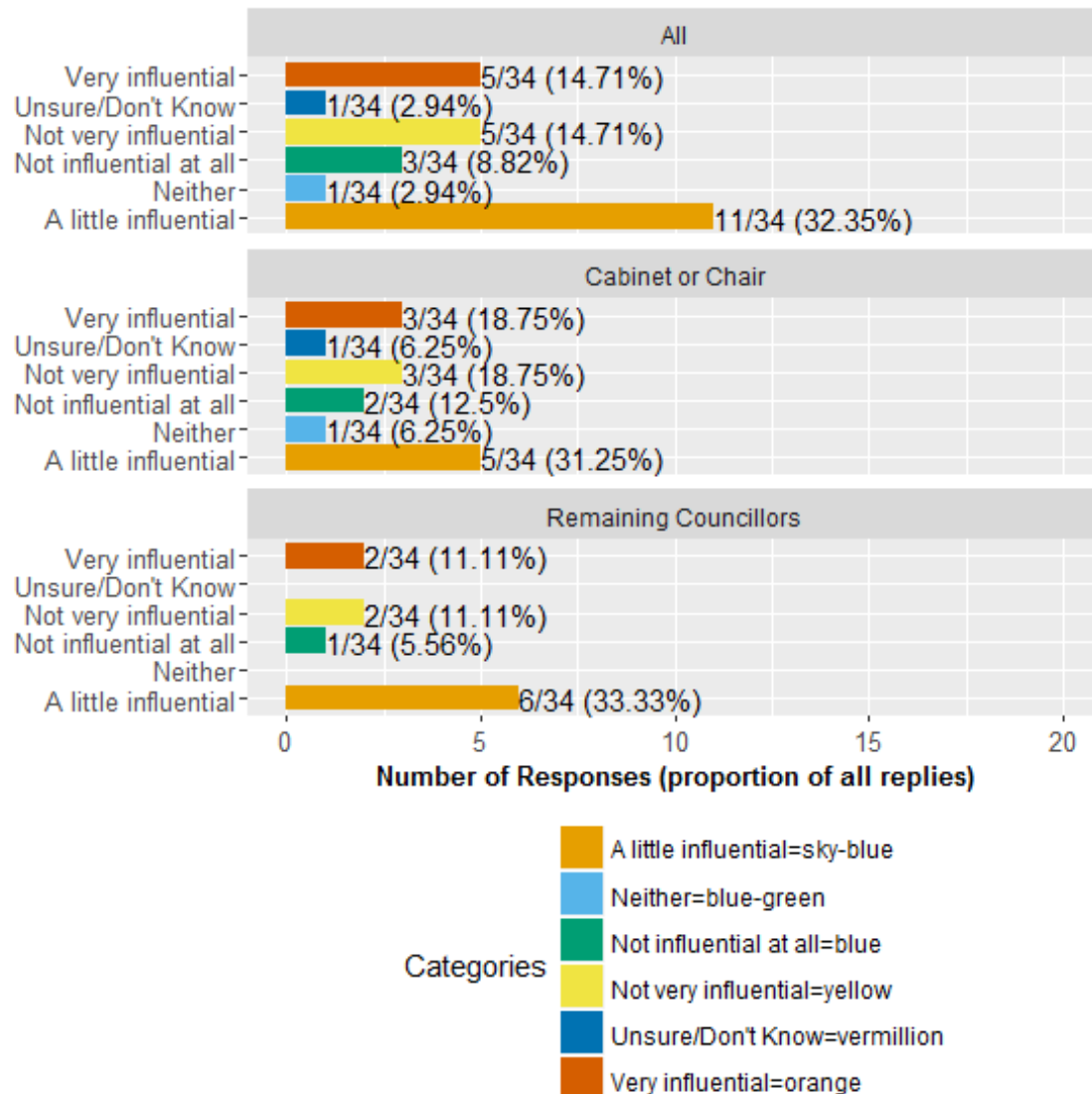
17a. How influential do you believe the level of Councillors Allowances (Basic / Special Responsibility Allowances) are in encouraging people to be Councillors?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=8

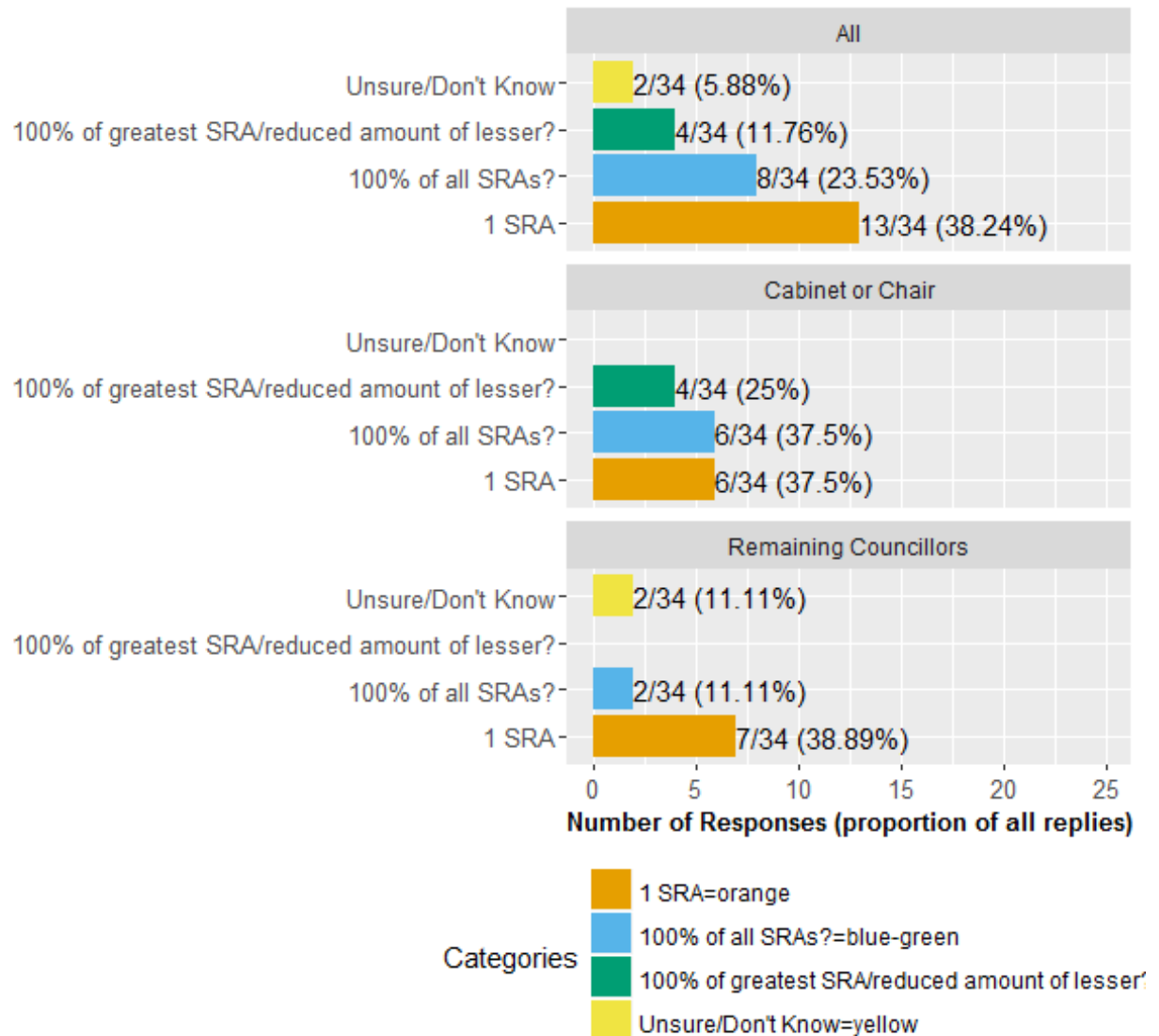
17b. How influential do you believe the level of Councillors Allowances (Basic / Special Responsibility Allowances) are in encouraging people to remain Councillors?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=8

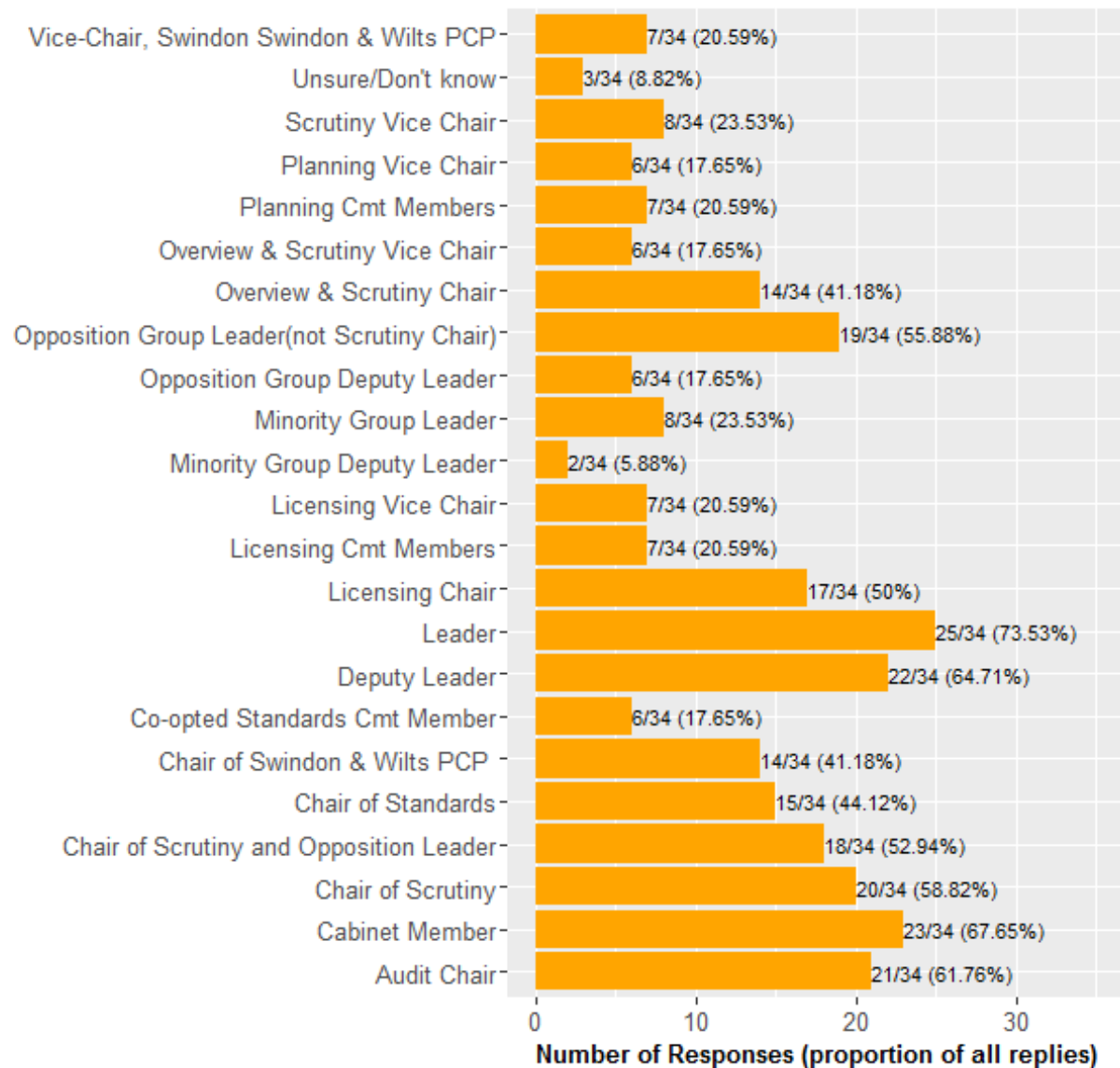
Question 18. Swindon limits the number of Special Responsibility Allowances to one per councillor, which is common but no means universal for all councils. Should councillors with more than one Special Responsibility receive:



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

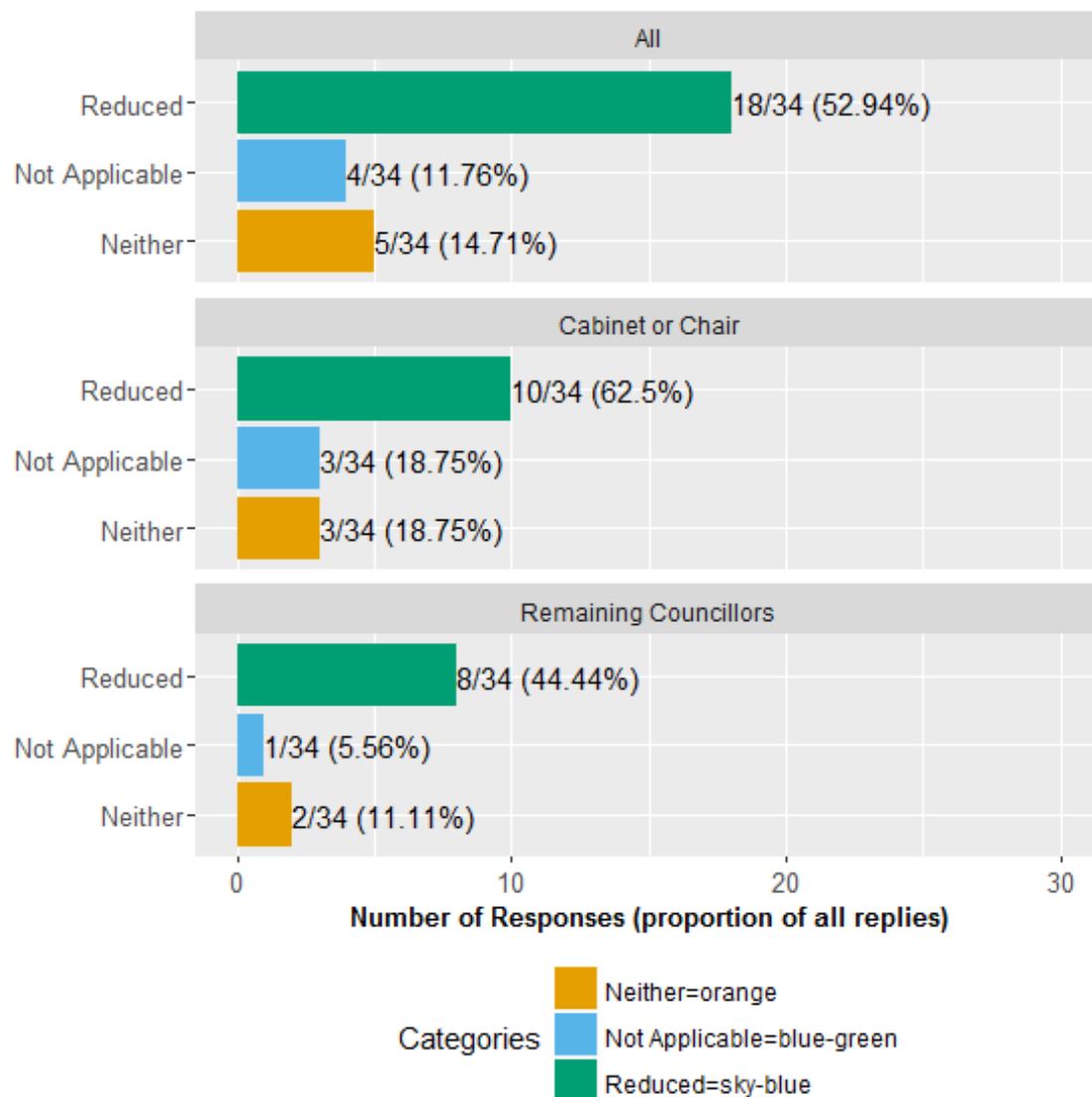
Question 19. In your opinion which of the following positions do you think should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

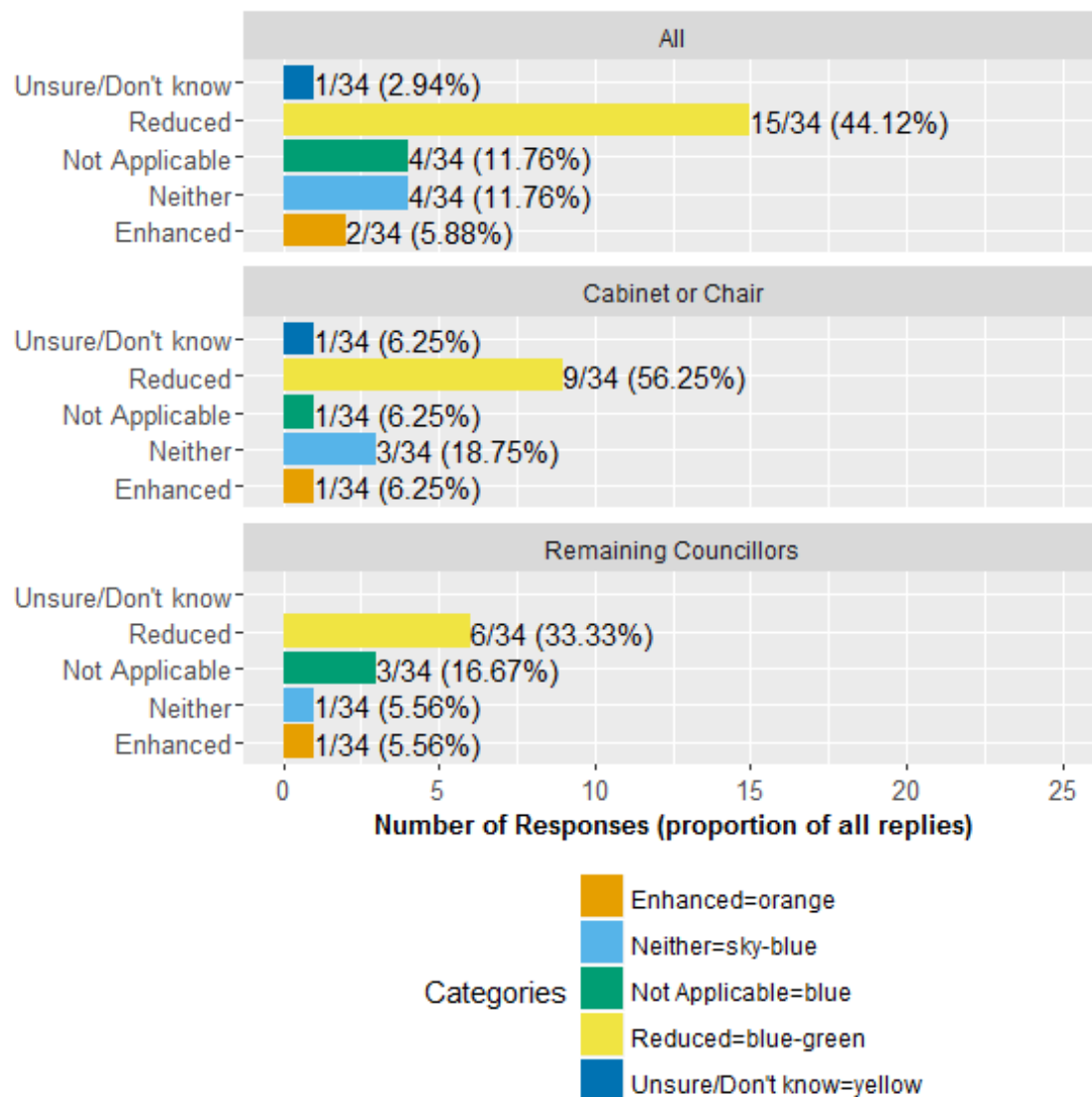
Question 20. In your opinion has being a councillor had any effect on your employment opportunities?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=7

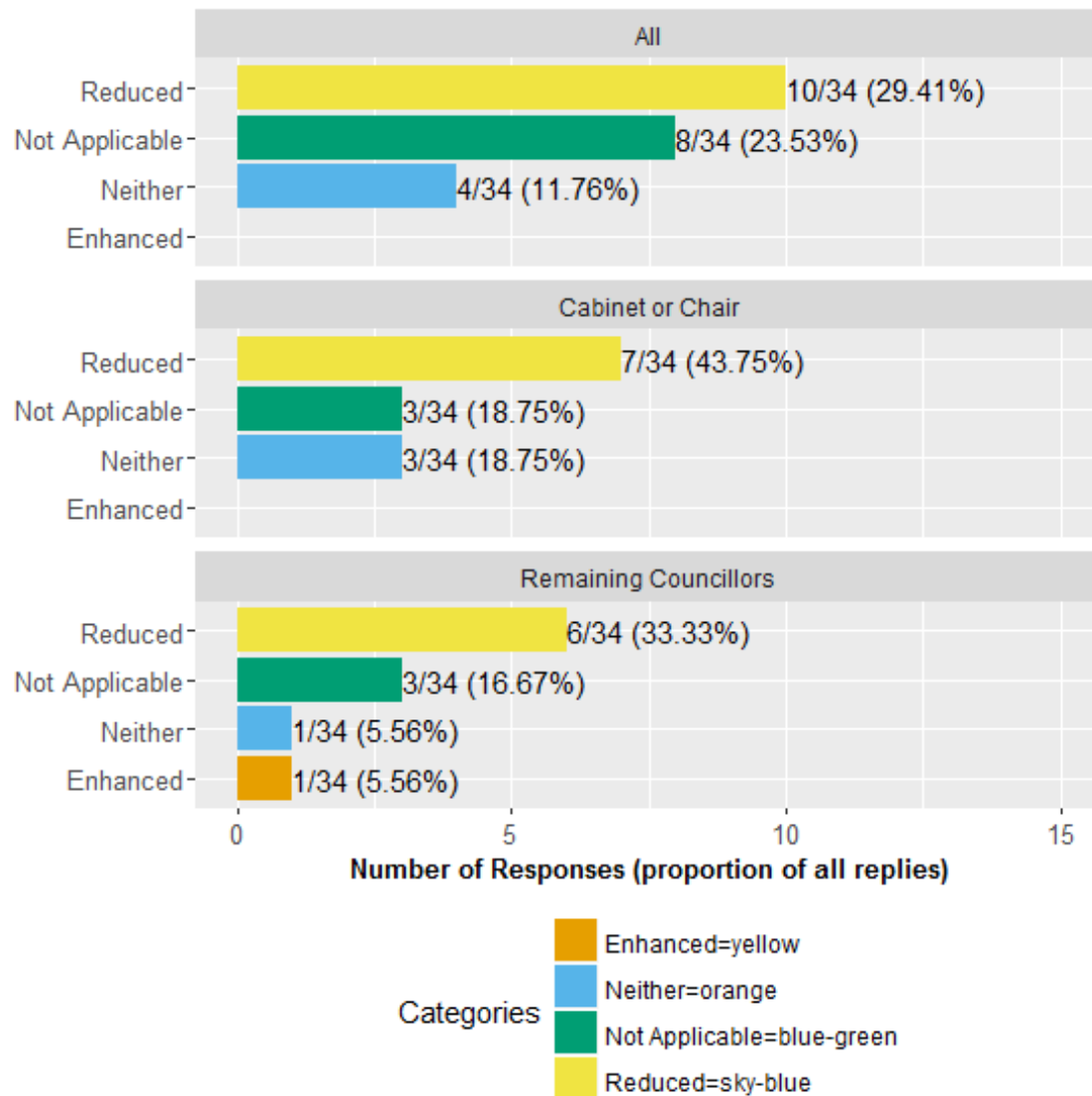
Question 21a. In your opinion has being a councillor had any effect on your salary?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=8

Question 21b. In your opinion has being a councillor had any effect on your opportunities for performance related pay/bonuses?



Number of responses to all questions=34

Skipped this question=12

22. Other Comments

- All payments should be performance based, Cabinet Members usually have a large supporting Officer team and the Member function is less onerous - a reduced allowance is appropriate. Responsible areas, such as Licensing are not onerous but do take considerable time and responsibility to perform properly
- I would like more secretarial/PA back up, I believe Councillors with more than one special responsibility should be paid the full allowances for each role
- Noted that there is no consideration for an allowance for a Group Whip. No lesser important at local level than at national where he /she is also a member of the Cabinet, Workloads have increased significantly as more is devolved to LAs and more complex judgements and decisions are required with more time needed to debate and explain them
- I think that remuneration should be part of a wider packages of benefits to support councillors. Having access to creche facilities would be just as useful in allowing a more diverse group of people to stand
- You don't consider the Fire Authority or Secondary School Governorship's to any extent. NB. Education is significant in the community
- Employers provide their staff with the equipment they need to carry out their duties. While cllrs are taxed as employees, there is no support towards technology costs for example. This itself acts as a barrier to sbc cutting costs by not printing agendas. 1/3 of cllrs seem to do all the work, 1/3 vote and attend meetings and 1/3 do the minimum. SRAs are useful but do not take into account the additional time which is required for daytime meetings. Ive used up 17 days of holiday to avoid taking a work payout. Special responsibility should be very limited to reduce all leaders power of patronidge
- It does not make sense that whilst both Planning & Liscensing committees are quasi-judicial, licensing c'ttee members get an additional allowance but planning members don't. Planning has a huge, lasting impact on all residents and we can't act as c'ttee members until we have undertaken the training. Also, which posts you get are determined in a subjective way - there are no objective rules or skills or experience that members must have before they are chosen to be given posts which attract additional remuneration
- No thank you, Licensing member should not get special responsibility in my opinion. Thank you for all you're doing, we do appreciate it