

COUNCIL ASSEMBLY
(ORDINARY MEETING)
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER
QUESTIONS ON REPORTS

Item 8.2: Constitutional Review 2013/14

1. QUESTION TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR TIM McNALLY

Has any review of the value for money that the deputy cabinet members provide for their allowances taken place since the posts were introduced? In the past month, how many hours have each of the deputy cabinet members spent on duties relating to their respective portfolios, and on what specifically was this time spent?

RESPONSE

Our deputy cabinet members (DCMs) are doing important work for the council. Councillor Williams is currently reviewing how we can improve the standard of private rented housing in the borough, Councillor Merrill has been working closely with officers to ensure that residents receive the best levels of customer service from our new in-house contact centre, and Councillor the Rt Revd Oyewole has been further strengthening the council's links with faith communities in the borough. As a point of comparison, DCMs receive a band 1a special responsibility allowance (SRA). This is the same band as, for example, the opposition whip or the deputy leader of the opposition.

It is right that we should scrutinise DCMs and that members be satisfied that they are delivering for the borough in the same way that any members with an SRA should. We therefore proposed this year that the overview and scrutiny committee should be able to interview deputy cabinet members in the same way as cabinet members. I understand that OSC are currently considering how they want to do this. This will give members an opportunity to question them about their work and the value they bring.