

23 May 2019

Dame Fran Wilde DNZM QSO JP
Remuneration Authority
PO Box 10084, Level 11, Midland Chambers
45 Johnson Street
WELLINGTON 6011

Dear Dame Fran,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Policy on Childcare Allowance for Elected Members of Local Government.

The following feedback was approved by Elected Members at a meeting of the Kāpiti Coast District Council on 23 May 2019.

Kāpiti Coast District Council fully supports the Remuneration Authority in addressing this issue which has been raised by members of other council's through submissions to the Authority.

People with young families who otherwise may consider becoming candidates for local government elections can find childcare a barrier to doing so. The Council commends the Authority for recognising such barriers and for acknowledging the need to address them.

There are two areas of the proposed policy which members felt required further clarification in the final determination:

An 'allowance' is usually paid as the same amount on a regular basis (e.g. weekly) as a contribution to a particular cost. The proposed policy sets a maximum amount per hour, which suggests the intention is in fact to reimburse actual expenses (up to a particular maximum). This point needs to be clarified to avoid councils having to try and interpret the proposed determination.

The draft policy is unclear as to what should happen when childcare is arranged for a meeting which finishes early. For example, Thursday is the regular Council and Committee meeting day for the Kāpiti Coast District Council. On this day elected members with children may need to make arrangements for childcare for the entire day as meetings days can be long and often run later than expected. If the meeting finishes early, however, the children are not being cared for while members are undertaking council business.

Council supports the proposed policy with the comments outlined above.

Yours Sincerely

K. Gurunathan JP, MA
MAYOR, KĀPITI COAST DISTRICT