



CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

17 MARCH 2021

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021

SCALE OF ELECTION EXPENSES

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Constitution Committee's approval with regard to a Scale of Fees to be used at the County Council elections in May 2021.

Background

2. The Chief Executive is the Returning Officer for elections of County Councillors and, as such, is responsible for conducting the elections in accordance with statutory rules. Officers of the District Councils are appointed as Deputy Returning Officers and the majority of the election work is carried out by their staff.
3. This election will be taking place during unprecedented times and will be administered in accordance with the Government's and the Electoral Commission's guidance to ensure that it is Covid compliant.
4. The County Council meets the fees and expenses of the elections, subject to these not exceeding a scale fixed by the Council for the purpose. The Scale of Fees which the County Council adheres to is normally one which is used by all the districts within the County as well as Leicester City Council and is known as the Leicestershire Scale of Fees.
5. In the past it has been the County Council's practice for members to agree the Leicestershire Scale of Fees for a general election of councillors and for the Returning Officer to be authorised to approve amendments to the scheme for any intervening by-elections.

Financial Implications

5. It is calculated that the total expenditure for the County Council election will be within the budget figure set of £0.8million. It should be noted that the costs of the election will be shared with the Police and Crime Commissioner election which are being held at the same time.

6. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the resource implications of this report.

Decisions Required

7. The Council's functions relating to elections are exercised by this Committee and this would normally include agreeing the Scale of Fees to apply to County Council elections. It has been the practice for the scale to be fixed by Members for a general election of Councillors and for the Returning Officer to be authorised to fix a scale for intervening by-elections (to enable the scale to be updated for inflation).

Equality and Human Rights Implications

8. The County Council, in conjunction with the District Councils, will ensure that everyone eligible to vote will be able to do so in a Covid compliant way whether that be by post, by appointing a proxy or in person at a polling station.
9. All polling stations will be kept under review, in accordance with the Electoral Commission's guidance, to ensure they are accessible to the whole of the Leicestershire community.
10. Various sections of the community will be employed as presiding officers, poll clerks and counting assistants. All those employed will be provided with the current advice re Covid as well as the appropriate personal protective equipment to perform their duties.

Recommendations

10. That the Constitution Committee agree:-
 - (a) that the attached scale of expenses be used at the County Council elections to be held on 6th May 2021 and for any subsequent by-elections held before 31st March 2022.
 - (b) that the Chief Executive be authorised to fix a scale for the purpose of by-elections occurring between 1st April 2022 and the next County Council elections.

Background Papers

None.

Circulation Under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Officer to Contact

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Appendix

Recommeneded scale of fees.

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