

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE – 10 MARCH 2009

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2009
SCALE OF ELECTION EXPENSES

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 June 2009.

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 much of the election work is carried out by their staff.
3. 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/borough within the County as well as Leicester City Council and is known as the Leicestershire Scale of Fees.
4. In the past it has been the County Council's practice for members to agree in effect 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.
5. As members will be aware the County Council elections have been combined with the European elections. The Returning Officer for the European elections has stated that he is still awaiting confirmation of the allocation of resources to fund the European elections from the Government. Not until the actual funding is known can a Leicestershire Scale of Fees be determined. It is understood that the funding allocation will not be known until after the Constitution Committee meets.

Financial Implications

6. It is calculated that the total expenditure for the County Council election, even after the Leicestershire Scale of Fees has been determined, will be within the figure set within the 2009/10 revenue budget (£500,000). It should be noted that because the County Council election has been combined with the European Parliamentary election there has been a saving as the fees for

polling staff and the cost of hiring polling stations will be shared on a 50:50 basis.

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

Decisions Required

8. 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. However, to avoid the need to hold a meeting of the Committee specifically for the purpose of agreeing the Scale of Fees, members may wish, on this occasion, to delegate this matter to the Chief Executive. In the past the Committee has given authority to the Chief Executive to determine the Scale of Fees to apply at by-elections.

Equal Opportunities Implications

9. Persons from various sections of the community will be employed as presiding officers, poll clerks and counting assistants on the day of the poll. All polling stations have been looked at with a view to improving access for disabled persons.

Recommendations

10. That the Chief Executive be authorised :-
 - (a) to approve the Scale of Fees to apply to the County Council elections on 4th June, 2009;
 - (b) to approve the Scale of Fees to apply at any by elections prior to the County Council elections in 2013.

Background Papers

None.

Circulation Under Sensitive Issues Procedure

None.

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