

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEMBER AND EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

10 JULY 2013

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report prepared by Neil Harris

1. CALCULATION OF ELECTION EARNINGS

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 The Panel when considering the report of the Chief Executive regarding the pay policy statement at its last meeting requested further detail on election earnings and specifically on the calculation of the fee payable to the Returning Officer.

1.2 Recommendation of the Chief Executive

1.2.1 That the report be noted.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The calculation of fees for elections has a standard format. However responsibility for setting the fees rests with different organisations depending upon the type of election or referendum carried out.

- a. For borough/district elections the fees are set by agreement across Kent. The calculation of the fees is considered by the Kent Association of Electoral Registration Officers and Staff then submitted to the Kent Chief Executives. The approval is at this level because the Kent Chief Executives are the local returning officers for the area. The fees are reviewed annually.
- b. In respect of county elections the Kent County Council is responsible for setting the fees but it is common practice for them to agree an identical schedule of fees to the schedule in force for borough / district elections at that time.
- c. For Parliamentary and other national elections, such as European elections, the fees are set by the Treasury through the issue of a Fees and Charges Order. These orders are issued individually for each occasion.

d. Referenda and other similar events also have a fee set which is calculated either locally or by the Treasury depending upon responsibility for the event.

1.3.2 Attached at Appendix A to this report is the agreed schedule of fees for local elections as set by the Kent Chief Executives in September 2011 and in force for the May 2012 local elections. This is provided as an example of the format and type of fees set for all elections and referenda. This clearly sets out a rate of pay for some individual tasks and allows a maximum costs per 500 electors for other functions. This enables the local authority to decide the level of staffing and individual fee paid for parts of the election such as the count.

1.3.3 The Panel should note that the returning officer's fee is calculated using a fixed fee per 500 electors whenever an election is contested. In uncontested elections there is a simple fixed fee. For the Borough Council election in 2012 the returning officer fee was calculated from a combination of three of the four fees as follows:

Type	Units	Fee	Total
Uncontested Parish	16 parishes @	£17.52 =	£280.32
Contested District	187 (units of electors of 500) @	£29.87 =	£5,585.69
Contested Joint	22 (units of electors of 500) @	£41.26 =	£907.72
	Fee Paid		<u>£6,773.73</u>

1.3.4 The payment of the fee to the Returning Officer is made in two stages. The first payment is 75% of the fee and is paid immediately. The second payment of 25% is performance related and paid on successful completion of the election, all administration and required returns to Central Government.

1.3.5 The Council has some flexibility on the numbers of staff employed in different roles and the fees paid to staff at the count. Appendix B sets out the final cost paid in each category and shows that, overall the election in 2012 cost £17,635.14 less than the schedule's values.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The report was being submitted to the Panel for information.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 This is an information report and there is no impact on Corporate Objectives.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 As this is an information report there are no risk management issues.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1.	Financial	X
e.	Staffing	X
f.	Legal	
g.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
h.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	
i.	Community Safety	
j.	Human Rights Act	
k.	Procurement	
l.	Asset Management	

1.7.2 The financial and staffing issues relating to this report have been covered in detail in the reasons for recommendation.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Kent Association of Electoral Registration Officers and Staff Scale of Fees for 2012.

Appendix B – Election Earnings Schedule Borough Council 2012.

1.8.2 Background Documents

None.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED

Yes

No

If yes, this is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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