

Leaders' Committee

Review of Scale of Election Fees for 2017/18

Item no: 8

Report by: Barry Quirk **Job title:** Chair of London Elections Board and Chief Executive of London Borough of Lewisham

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Summary

The attached report deals with revisions to the scale of fees and expenses which can apply for local government elections in London boroughs in 2017/18. This scale acts as guidance only for individual boroughs. Members will know that there are no planned borough, Parliamentary or other elections planned for this period. However agreement to the annual revision is required in the event that By-elections (or any other unforeseen election) occurs in this period.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note and approve the proposed scale of fees and expenses, as outlined in Appendix 1, as guidance for the London boroughs, with effect from 1 April 2017.

Review of Scale of Election Fees for 2017/18

Introduction

1. A review of the scale of election fees supplied to London Councils by the London Elections Board is attached as an appendix. London boroughs were first empowered to fix their own scales of election fees in 1974. It has been the practice of London Councils and its predecessor bodies to receive a report each February and recommend a London-wide scale of fees for adoption by individual boroughs.

Basis for Review of Scale of Fees for Local Borough Council Elections and Referendums

2. This report proposes the scale of fees and expenses that will take effect on 1 April 2017. Members agreed to adopt the thorough revision in fees that was recommended in 1990 and to revise the fees annually thereafter. The established practice has been to revise all fees and expenses (where not stated as “actual and necessary cost”) in accordance with the previous year’s local government pay increases.
3. In 2002, in the light of changes to the law on postal voting, the requirement for staff to attend training sessions and a government review of fees for polling station staff, it was agreed it was necessary to make additional revisions to some fees. A further revision was agreed for the full council elections in 2006. This took account of experiences in dealing with changes to the law on postal votes, a further government review of the fees paid for parliamentary elections, and a desire to set fees for polling station inspectors and senior count staff. An additional charge to help recognise the need for more staff to manage and supervise the issue and receipt of postal votes was agreed in 2008. No further changes to the basic structure of the fees and expenses are proposed for 2017.
4. It is likely a local government pay award of 1 per cent will be agreed for the coming year. Therefore, it is proposed that for the coming year:
 - Part A fees are not increased at all. These are the fees received by Returning Officers and Deputy Returning Officers; and that
 - Part B fees are increased by 1 per cent for the twelve months commencing 1 April 2017. These are the fees paid to Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and others engaged on the election.
5. It is proposed that the scale should continue to form the basis for fees and expenses for referendums under the Local Government Act 2000 and any subsequent London borough mayoral elections. The further scale is to cater for any combined London borough and mayoral elections. It is proposed that the formula – where its use is appropriate – remains as a 20% increase when a combination is required. This formula was reduced from 25% in 2010 to bring it into line with the government costing assumptions for combined polls.
6. Part B expenses for polling station and count staff have been rounded to the nearest five pence. Fees for polling station staff are also shown as hourly rates to cater for any staff working only part of the day and any elections and referendums using non-standard polling times.

7. The Maximum Recoverable Amounts (MRAs) for the services and expenses required to conduct polls no longer come with a list of assumptions upon which the sum is based. This makes the long-standing London Scale of fees and expenses an ever more important guide upon which most, if not all, London borough's base their poll, count and postal vote staff fees. Therefore, it is recommended that the fees and expenses as set out in Appendix 1, which have been in place and successfully underpinned the planning and budget assumptions for London Boroughs Returning Officers since 1990, are agreed.

Recommendation

Leaders' Committee is recommended to agree the attached Scale of Returning Officers' Fees and Expenses as guidance for the London boroughs.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Proposed Scale of Election Fees 2017/18

Financial Implications for London Councils

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications for London Councils

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equalities Implications for London Councils

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Scale of Returning Officers'/Counting Officers' Fees and Expenses 2017/18

London Borough Council Elections, Referendums and Mayoral Elections

Part A – Fees

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2017/18
I In a contested election:			
(1) For conducting the election and generally performing the duties which a returning officer/counting officer is required to perform under any enactments relating to the election of London borough councillors or mayoral referendums or mayoral elections, other than any duties for which separate fees are prescribed herein:			
For each ward not exceeding five	£225.87	£225.87	£271.05
For each additional ward	£45.48	£45.48	£54.57
In addition, if the number of registered local government electors in a ward on the fifth day before the election exceeds 2,000 there shall be paid:			
For every 1,000 electors or fraction thereof over 2,000 in each ward	£23.23	£23.23	£27.87
(2) For services in connection with the issue and receipt of the ballot papers of persons entitled to vote by post:			
For the first ward	£88.50	£88.50	£106.20
For each additional ward	£27.65	£27.65	£33.18
In addition, for every 100 postal voters on the final day for applications in each ward	£2.76	£2.76	£3.31

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2017/18
(3) Allowance for poll cards			
(a) For the preparation, first revision and the issue of the cards on the occasion of an election:			
(i) For each ward	£62.23	£62.23	£62.23
(ii) For every 500 cards or fraction thereof above 7,000 and up to and including 10,000 for each ward	£7.93	£7.93	£7.93
(iii) For every 500 cards or fraction thereof above 10,000 for each ward	£3.49	£3.49	£3.49
(b) For each revision after the first prior to the issue of the cards:			
For each ward	£31.00	£31.00	£31.00
(4) For a person appointed by the returning officer/counting officer to discharge his/her functions under the Representation of the People Act 1983, Section 35(4), where the functions of such person include those specified in Rules 45 to 50 of the Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006:			
For each ward	£121.83	£121.83	£146.19
II In an uncontested election:			
For the services specified in paragraph I (1) of this part of the Schedule:			
For each ward	£151.45	£151.45	£181.74

Part B – Expenses

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2016/17
In no case shall a charge exceed the sum actually and necessarily paid or payable by the returning officer/counting officer. Subject thereto the charges shall be as follow:-			
(1) (a) For the presiding officer at each polling station open the normal statutory hours of 7 am until 10 pm other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	£316.20	£319.35	£383.20
(b) For a presiding officer for each hour of opening at a polling station where opening hours vary from the normal hours, not exceeding	£21.05	£21.25	£25.50
(c) For a presiding officer for each hour of opening at a polling station open on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	£31.60	£31.90	£38.30
(d) In addition, a further sum may be paid to the senior presiding officer at the polling place (whether including one or more polling stations) who acts as overall presiding officer, not exceeding	£19.80	£20.00	£24.00
(e) In addition, a further sum may be paid to the presiding officer who acts as overall presiding officer at a polling place to which there are assigned not less than 3,000 voters (excluding absent voters other than those for whom proxies have been appointed), not exceeding	£19.50	£19.70	£23.65
(2) (a) For each poll clerk at a polling station open the normal statutory hours of 7 am until 10 pm other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	£213.70	£215.85	£259.00
(b) For a poll clerk for each hour of duty at a polling station open other than Saturday, Sunday or public holiday if not 7 am to 10 pm, not exceeding	£14.25	£14.40	£17.30
(c) For a poll clerk for each hour of duty at a polling station open on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	£21.30	£21.50	£25.80

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2017/18
(3) (a) For each person appointed as a polling station inspector or visiting officer if appointed for the normal statutory hours of 7 am until 10 pm other than a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	£336.00	£339.35	£407.20
(b) For a polling station inspector or visiting officer for each hour of duty on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday if not 7 am to 10 pm, not exceeding	£22.40	£22.60	£27.10
(b) For a polling station inspector or visiting officer for each hour of duty on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, not exceeding	£33.60	£33.95	£40.75
(4) For the remuneration of persons employed in issuing and receiving the ballot papers of persons entitled to vote by post:			
(a) For every 100 persons or fraction thereof of persons entitled to vote by post, for each ward	£103.80	£104.85	£125.80
(b) For the person or persons appointed to manage the processes for the issue or receipt of postal votes, for each ward, not exceeding	£107.95	£109.00	£130.80
(5) (a) For each person appointed as a count assistant in connection with the verification and counting of the votes:			
(i) For each hour or part thereof at a night-time verification or count, not exceeding	£26.50	£26.75	£26.75
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a day-time verification or count, not exceeding	£18.35	£18.55	£18.55
(b) For each person appointed to act as count supervisor:			
(i) For each hour or part thereof at a night-time verification or count, not exceeding	£36.20	£36.55	£36.55
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a day-time verification or count, not exceeding	£25.05	£25.30	£25.30

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2017/18
(5) (c) For each person appointed to act as a senior count supervisor:			
(i) For each hour or part thereof at a night-time verification or count, not exceeding	£46.00	£46.45	£46.45
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a day-time verification or count, not exceeding	£31.75	£32.05	£32.05
(6) For clerical and other assistants employed by the returning officer/counting officer or deputy returning officer for the purposes of the election or referendum, excluding charges for employer's share of superannuation contributions where payable:			
For each ward not exceeding five	£989.85	£999.75	£1199.70
For each additional ward	£196.05	£198.00	£237.60
In addition, if the number of registered local government electors in a ward on the fifth day before the election exceeds 2,000 there shall be paid:			
For every 1,000 electors or fraction thereof over 2,000 in each ward	£59.35	£59.95	£71.95
(7) For employment of persons on sorting, checking and other duties in connection with the issue of poll cards, for every 100 cards or fraction thereof	£4.30	£4.35	£4.35
(8) (a) For the attendance at a training session of each person appointed by the returning officer/counting officer or deputy returning officer, not exceeding	£31.85	£32.15	£32.15
(b) For the provision of training any person appointed for the purposes of the election or referendum, for each training session, not exceeding	£176.15	£177.90	£177.90

	Existing 2016/17	Proposed 2017/18	Combined 2017/18
(9) (a) For travelling expenses incurred by the returning officer/counting officer in connection with the conduct of the election/referendum (b) For travelling expenses incurred by other staff in connection with the conduct of the election/referendum	Actual and necessary cost Actual and necessary cost or such fixed sum as shall be settled by each returning officer/counting officer for appropriate employees in the light of the actual and necessary costs on average to be incurred having regard to the availability and cost of public or other suitable transport		
(10) Expenses incurred in printing and providing ballot papers	Actual and necessary cost		
(11) Expenses incurred in printing and providing notices, documents and devices required in and about the election or referendum and costs of publishing or purchasing the same	Actual and necessary cost		
(12) Expenses incurred in printing and providing poll cards	Actual and necessary cost		
(13) For hand delivery of poll cards	Not greater than the cost of Royal Mail postage		
(14) For hand delivery of postal ballot papers to addresses within the London borough of the returning officer/counting officer	Not greater than the cost of Royal Mail first class postage		
(15) Expenses incurred in the renting of any building or room for the purpose of the election and for expenses of heating, lighting and cleaning any building or room for such purposes	Actual and necessary cost		
(16) Expenses incurred in adapting and fitting up any building or room for the purpose of the election (including the provision of voting compartments and any necessary furniture) and restoring it to fit condition for its normal use	Actual and necessary cost		
(17) Expenses incurred in providing ballot boxes, including repairs	Actual and necessary cost		
(18) Expenses incurred in the conveyance of ballot boxes and ballot papers to and from polling places	Actual and necessary cost or such fixed sum as shall be settled by each returning officer/counting officer		
(19) Expenses incurred in the conveyance of furniture, equipment and documents necessary for polling stations and the count	Actual and necessary cost		
(20) For every stamping instrument required to be purchased, hired, altered or repaired	Actual and necessary cost		
(21) For general stationery, postage, telephone calls, bank charges, employer's share of superannuation contributions (where payable) and miscellaneous expenses	Actual and necessary cost		