

# Executive

## Review of Scale of Election Fees for 2020/21

Item no: 6

**Report by:** John O' Brien  
**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020  
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**Summary**

The attached report deals with revisions to the scale of fees and expenses which can apply for elections in London boroughs in 2020/21. The report is prepared, as normal, by the London Branch of Electoral Administrators and is submitted by Ged Curran, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Merton and Chair of the London Elections Management Board.

The Executive last considered a report in February 2019 for the level of fees for 2019/20.

**Recommendations**

The Executive is asked to note and commend the proposed scale of fees and expenses, as outlined in Appendix 1, as guidance for the London boroughs, with effect from 1 April 2020.

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## **Review of Scale of Election Fees for 2020/21**

**Report by:** Ged Curran, London Borough of Merton

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### **Introduction**

1. A review of the scale of election fees, produced by the London Branch of the Association of Electoral Administrators, is attached as an appendix. London boroughs were first empowered to fix their own scales of election fees in 1974. It has previously been the practice of London Councils and its predecessor bodies to receive a report and commend 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 2020. 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. At the time of the publication of this report, the local government pay award has not yet been finalised. Therefore, it is proposed that as per 2019/20:
  - Part A fees are increased by 2 per cent for the twelve months commencing 1 April 2020. These are the fees received by Returning Officers and Deputy Returning Officers.
  - Part B fees are increased by 2 per cent for the twelve months commencing 1 April 2020. These are the fees paid to Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks and others engaged on the election.
  - A time and a half rate has also been added to cater for election counts that are held on bank holidays or weekends, as will be the case this year with the GLA count.

4. 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.
5. In Part B of the scale, most fees are 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.
6. 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**

The London Councils Executive is recommended to note and commend the attached Scale of Returning Officers' Fees and Expenses as guidance for the London boroughs.

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## **Appendices**

- **Appendix 1:** Proposed Scale of Election Fees 2020/21

## **Financial Implications for Chief Executives London Committee**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **Legal Implications for Chief Executives London Committee**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **Equalities Implications for Chief Executives London Committee**

There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## Scale of Returning Officers'/Counting Officers' Fees and Expenses 2020/21

### London Borough Council Elections, Referendums and Mayoral Elections

PART A - FEES			
	Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
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			
For each ward not exceeding five	235.00	239.70	287.64
For each additional ward	47.32	48.27	57.92
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	24.16	24.64	29.57
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	92.08	93.92	112.71
For each additional ward	28.76	29.34	35.20
In addition, for every 100 postal voters on the final day for applications in each ward	2.88	2.94	3.53
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	64.74	66.03	79.24
(ii) For every 500 cards or fraction thereof above 7,000 and up to and including 10,000 for each ward	8.25	8.42	10.10
(iii) For every 500 cards or fraction thereof above 10,000 for each ward	3.63	3.70	4.44
(b) For each revision after the first prior to the issue of the cards:	32.25	32.90	39.47
For each ward			

	Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
4 For a person appointed by the returning officer/counting officer to discharge his/her functions under the Representation of the People			
For each ward	126.76	129.30	155.15
II In an uncontested election			
For the services specified in paragraph I (1) of this part of the Schedule:			
For each ward	157.57	160.72	192.87
<b>PART B - EXPENSES</b>			
	Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
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 Presiding Officer			
(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	332.25	338.90	406.67
(b) For a presiding officer for each hour of opening at a polling station where opening hours vary from the normal hours, not exceeding	22.11	22.55	27.06
(c) For a presiding officer for each hour of opening at a polling station open on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	33.19	33.85	40.62
(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	20.81	21.23	25.47
(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	20.49	20.90	25.08
2 Poll Clerk			
(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	224.57	229.06	274.87
(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	14.98	15.28	18.34
(c) For a poll clerk for each hour of duty at a polling station open on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday, not exceeding	22.37	22.82	27.38

	Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
<b>3 Polling Station Inspector</b>			
(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	353.06	360.12	432.15
(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	23.51	23.98	28.78
(c) For a polling station inspector or visiting officer for each hour of duty on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, not exceeding	35.32	36.03	43.23
<b>4 Postal Votes:</b>			
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	109.09	111.27	133.53
(b) For the person or persons appointed to manage the processes for the issue or receipt of postal votes, for each ward, not exceeding	113.4	115.67	138.80
<b>5 Count Staff</b>			
(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 <b>night-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	27.84	28.40	34.08
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a <b>day-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	19.3	19.69	23.62
(iii) For each hour or part thereof on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, not exceeding	N/A	29.53	35.44
(b) For each person appointed to act as count supervisor:			
(i) For each hour or part thereof at a <b>night-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	38.03	38.79	46.55
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a <b>day-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	26.32	26.85	32.22
(iii) For each hour or part thereof on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, not exceeding	N/A	40.27	48.32
(c) For each person appointed to act as a senior count supervisor:			
(i) For each hour or part thereof at a <b>night-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	48.33	49.30	59.16
(ii) For each hour or part thereof at a <b>day-time</b> verification or count, not exceeding	33.34	34.01	40.81
(iii) For each hour or part thereof on a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday, not exceeding	N/A	51.01	61.21

		Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
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	1040.15	1,060.95	1,273.14
	For each additional ward	206	210.12	252.14
	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	62.37	63.62	76.34
7	Poll Cards			
	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	4.53	4.62	5.54
8	Training			
(a)	For the attendance at a training session of each person appointed by the returning officer/counting officer or deputy returning officer, not exceeding	33.45	34.12	40.94
(b)	For the provision of training any person appointed for the purposes of the election or referendum, for each training session, not exceeding	185.09	188.79	226.55
9	Expenses			
(a)	For travelling expenses incurred by the returning officer/counting officer 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		
(b)	For travelling expenses incurred by other staff in connection with the conduct of the election/referendum			
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		



		Existing 2019/20	Proposed 2020/21	Combined 2020/21
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	