

Public

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Castell-nedd

Democratic Services
Gwasanaethau Democrataidd

Chief Executive: Steven Phillips

Date: 11 January 2017

Dear Member

**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET BOARD - WEDNESDAY, 11TH
JANUARY, 2017**

Please find attached the following urgent item for consideration at the next meeting of the **Policy and Resources Cabinet Board - Wednesday, 11th January, 2017.**

Item

- a) **Urgent Report - Review of Fees Paid at Local Elections**
(Pages 1 - 8)

Yours sincerely

Mrs T.Davies

P.P. Chief Executive

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NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board

11 January 2017

Urgent Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Karen Jones

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Review of fees paid at local elections

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out for decision proposals relating to the review of fees and charges paid to staff appointed by the Returning Officer for Local Government elections. The reason the report is urgent is that arrangements need to be put in place for the appointment of appropriate staff.

Background

2. The current structure and scale of fees paid at local elections are based on those previously set by the former Neath, Lliw Valley and Port Talbot authorities. This Council adopted those scale of fees in 1996.

3. The fees were last reviewed prior to the Local Government Elections in 2012, and now need to be revisited once again to ensure they continue to reflect the fees paid at national elections.
4. The most recent national electoral event (excluding the Referendum on the United Kingdom's membership of the European Union held on 23 June, 2016) was the National Assembly for Wales and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections which took place on 5 May 2016. It is proposed that the fees paid for these elections are used as a benchmark for certain local election fees.
5. The updated fees and charges scheduled will ensure that an accurate up to date structure is in place prior to the commencement of the election timetable and the appointment of appropriate staff for the forthcoming Local Government Elections due to take place on 4 May, 2017.

Financial Impact

6. The cost of the ordinary local elections is met from the Elections Equalisation Reserve Fund, to which annual contributions are made from the Chief Executive's Office budget. The cost of the 2017 elections for the County Borough Council is estimated at £230,000.
7. Where elections to the County Borough Council and community councils are combined, the costs of the elections, including fees paid, are shared equally (except those costs attributable to a particular election only) between the Council and the relevant community council. Community councils will be recharged for their share of the costs following the elections.

Equality Impact Assessment

8. A screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, after completing the Screening Assessment it has been determined that this Policy does not require a Full Equality Impact Assessment.

Workforce Impacts

9. There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Powers

10. To support the discharge of the duty placed on the Returning Officer, as contained with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) to make arrangement to adequately administer the forthcoming Local Government Elections to be held on 4 May, 2017.

Risk Management

11. There are no significant risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

12. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

13. That the amended fee structure, as contained in Appendix 1 attached hereto, for Local Government elections be approved.

Implementation of Decision

14. The decision is for immediate implementation.

Reason for Proposed Decision

15. To agree the amended fee structure prior to the appointment of appropriate staff.

Appendices

16. Appendix 1 - Local Government Elections 2017 proposed fees and charges structure.

List of Background Papers

17. None.

Officer Contacts

Karen Jones - Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

e-mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Telephone: 01639 76

Rhys George - Electoral and Democratic Services Manager

e-mail: r.j.george@npt.gov.uk

Telephone: 01639 763719

Appendix 1

Local Government Elections 2017 Proposed Fees & Charges Structure	Current £	Proposed £
Returning Officer: Fee per contested Electoral Division or Community/Community Ward	165.00	165.00
Fee per uncontested Electoral Division or Community/Community Ward	25.00	25.00
Deputy Returning Officers: Fee for conducting a count and declaring the result per contested Electoral Division or Community/ Community Ward. (Subject to the Returning Officer's fee being reduced by 50% of the Deputies fee - i.e. £35.00 per contested Electoral Division or Community/ Community Ward)	70.00	70.00
Receiving and validating of nomination papers. and liaising with candidates/parties on behalf of the Returning Officer: Fee per Electoral Division or Community/ Community Ward	40.00	40.00
Polling Station Inspector (One per 6+ Polling Stations): Single election (County Borough or Community)	195.00	230.00
Combined election (County Borough & Community)	230.00	250.00
Presiding Officer (One per Polling Station): Single election (County Borough or Community)	195.00	215.00
Combined election (County Borough & Community)	230.00	250.00
Poll Clerk (One per 850 electors): Single election (County Borough or Community)	115.00	135.00
Combined election (County Borough & Community)	135.00	155.00
Training: – Deputy Returning Officers, Polling Station Inspectors, Presiding Officers	30.00	35.00
Training: – Poll Clerks	30.00	30.00

Local Government Elections 2017 Proposed Fees & Charges Structure	Current £	Proposed £
Delivery of training: Payable per session	50.00	50.00
Issue of Postal Votes: Payable to assistants per session (office hours) Payable for supervision per session (office hours) Payable to assistants per session (weekend) Payable for supervision per session (weekend)	25.00 40.00 35.00 55.00	20.00 35.00 30.00 50.00
Opening of Postal Votes: Payable to assistants per session (office hours) Payable for supervision per session (office hours) Payable to assistants per session (weekend) Payable for supervision per session (weekend)	25.00 40.00 35.00 55.00	30.00 40.00 35.00 55.00
Verification and Count: Count Assistant (Thursday Night) Chief Counter (Thursday Night) Count Control Assistant (Thursday Night) Count Assistant (Friday Day) Chief Counter (Friday Day) Count Control Assistant (Friday Day)	100.00 150.00 150.00 60.00 100.00 100.00	100.00 150.00 150.00 60.00 100.00 100.00
General Clerical and other assistance: Per contested Electoral Division or Community/Community Ward Per uncontested Electoral Division or Community/Community Ward	40.00 30.00	40.00 30.00

Travelling Expenses

It is also proposed that the payment of travelling expenses for election staff be reviewed.

At national elections 'fixed' travelling allowances are paid to staff who use their own transport. This arrangement reduces the administration of very large numbers of claims for travelling in connection with the election, and speeds up the process for paying staff.

Based on the fixed travelling allowance paid at the 2012 local elections it is proposed that the allowances set out in the following table are used for the 2017 elections, subject to use of own vehicle.

Local Government Elections 2017 Proposed Fees & Charges Structure	2012 £	2017 £
Presiding Officers – for travelling to training, collection of ballot boxes, travel to and from the Polling Station, delivery of ballot box to the count	15.00	15.00
Poll Clerks – for travelling to training, travel to and from the Polling Station	7.50	10.00
Polling Station Inspectors – for all travelling on Polling Day	15.00	Based on actual mileage of 0.45 a mile
Verification/Count Assistants – for travelling to and from the verification/count (unless already paid the Presiding Officer travelling allowance above)	5.00	5.00

Expenses at Actual Costs

In addition to the above charges, the following expenses are met at actual cost:-

- (a) Hire and fitting up of polling stations and Verification/Count Centres, including the provision of heating, lighting and cleaning
- (b) Stationery and postages
- (c) Polling screens, ballot boxes, etc. required to be purchased, hired, altered or repaired
- (d) Printing of Poll Cards, Ballot Papers and Postal Voting stationery (Quotations sought by the Returning Officer).
- (e) Conveyance of ballot boxes and polling screens.

