

TITLE OF REPORT: ELECTORAL SERVICES – SCALE OF FEES 2015/16

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR JULIAN CUNNINGHAM

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist Council in setting a Scale of Fees for certain electoral events to be held during the Financial Year 2015/16.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Scale of Electoral Services Fees (Appendix A) for 2015/16 be approved.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable the Council to set a Scale of Fees for 2015/16.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 A standstill scale was considered by officers.
- 4.2 This has not been proposed as it is considered that, in order for the Scale to remain comparable with neighbouring local authorities, an increase in line with the staff pay award effective from 1 January 2015.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 5.1 None undertaken.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 A scale of fees is required to cover costs associated with any election, parish poll, Business Investment District poll (BID) or local referendum held during a financial year, unless otherwise directed by central government or Hertfordshire County Council. It should be noted that the costs associated with electoral events, other than district council elections, local referendums and successful BIDS, are fully recoverable.

8. ISSUES

- 8.1 The increase recommended for 2015/16 is in line with local government wage inflation. Informal soundings indicate that the levels recommended will be comparable with neighbouring authorities in the key area of polling station staff in a competitive market

(residents of North Herts and employees of the Council have, realistically, six other returning officers to offer their services to). It should be noted that, for the foreseeable future all scheduled district council elections will be combined with other elections and the fees set out within the scale will be shared with other local authorities or the Government.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Representation of The People Act 1983, (section 36), requires local authorities to set a Scale of Fees.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The cost of the proposed Scale is contained within the proposed budget assumptions for the financial year 2015/16. Unforeseen chargeable events, emerging during the year (bi-elections, local referendums), would be subject to the quarterly budget review process.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Council needs to ensure it complies with the statutory obligations set out in the Representation of the People Act 1983.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no equal opportunities implications.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendation made does not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no human resource implications.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A – Recommended Scale of Fees 2015/16.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 None.