

TITLE OF REPORT: ELECTORAL SERVICES – SCALE OF FEES 2016/17

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 2016/17.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Scale of Electoral Services Fees (Appendix A) for 2016/17 be approved.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable the Council to set a Scale of Fees for 2016/17.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 An inflationary increase was considered.
- 4.2 This has not been proposed as it is considered that the Scale remains comparable with neighbouring local authorities, and no general staff pay increase will be applied during the early part of the year when the bulk of elections are held.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 5.1 Informal consultation with neighbouring local authorities indicates that the Scale will remain competitive for elections due to be held on 5 May 2016.

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 of £600 recommended for 2016/17 is to cover the Governments recommendation that a 20% uplift for polling station staff be applied (10% payable by

NHDC) where polls are combined. 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 the scheduled district council elections for May 2016 will be combined with the Police and Crime Commissioner elections and the fees set out within the scale will be shared with 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 2016/17 which offset the additional £600 required to apply the recommended 10% uplift of fees for polling station staff where polls are combined. Unforeseen bi-elections, emerging during the year, 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 2016/17.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 None.