

ORDINARY COUNCIL

13th MARCH 2024

Subject: Report of the Returning Officer - Elections Fees and Expenses 2024/25

1. Purpose of Report

This report is presented by the Returning Officer to Council to note the Returning Officer's scale of fees and associated expenses for Elections taking place during 2024/25, as shown in Appendix 1.

2. Links to Council's Priorities and Objectives

This links to all and particularly as Enablers.

3. Recommendations

- 1. To note the fees to be paid to the Returning Officer as identified as Appendix 1, Table A.**
 - 2. To note the Election Staff Fees to be paid as set out in Appendix 1, Table B for financial year 2024/25.**
 - 3. To note the fees for the Clerical Allowance as identified at Appendix 1, Table C.**
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4. Background

- 4.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires each Council to appoint an officer of the authority as Returning Officer to undertake various statutory duties in relation to election procedures. In addition, the Council must provide the Returning Officer with the necessary resources to enable efficient and lawful delivery of the elections.**
- 4.2 On appointment as Chief Executive Ms Angela Hutchings took up the appointments of Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.**
- 4.3 At the Special Council meeting on 21 February 2024, Council approved the budget provision for Borough Elections taking place this year. The Returning Officer will also administer the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner elections taking place on 2 May 2024 and the UK Parliamentary General Election when it is called.**

5. Proposals

- 5.1 The Returning Officer is held personally responsible for the organisation and conduct of every election held within the Borough. For national elections and**

referendums, the fee paid to the Returning Officer is set by statute and paid by central Government. For local elections the fee is paid by the local authority.

5.2 The Returning Officer fee for Borough elections is calculated using the formula shown at Appendix 1, Table A.

5.3 It is necessary to increase some of the fees payable to staff working in polling stations and on other electoral duties in order to meet the requirements of the National Minimum Wage and the pay bands set by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. The fees have also been benchmarked with neighbouring authorities to ensure parity and preserve the Council's ability to attract staff to work additional hours in the run up to and on the day of the local election. Appendix 1, Table B lists the scale of fees proposed to be implemented. This list needs to be reviewed annually in order to ensure that the rates paid remain competitive.

6. Corporate Implications

(a) Financial Implications

At the Special Council meeting on 21 February 2024, Council approved the budget provision for Borough Elections taking place this year.

(b) Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory obligation under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to provide the necessary resources to the Returning Officer to carry out her duties and deliver an efficient and lawful election.

(c) Human Resources and Equality Implications

It is essential that the Council can recruit and retain sufficient temporary staff to undertake the various statutory duties at election times.

(d) IT and Asset Management Implications

There are none to be addressed by this report.

7. Timescale for implementation and Risk Factors

Delivery of a democratically sound and effective election is the overriding objective of the Returning Officer and the Council's Elections Team. Achievement of that objective is heavily dependent on the work undertaken by numerous temporary staff recruited to assist in various activities in the run up to and during election day. Failing to offer appropriate remuneration to those temporary staff could result in fewer people wanting to work and so jeopardise the ability of the Council to deliver the election. Failing to meet the requirements of the National Minimum Wage would, of course, put the Council in breach of a statutory obligation.

8. Background Papers

None

Report Author:

Ms Angela Hutchings Returning Officer; Electoral Registration Officer.

**FEES AND CHARGES FOR
CASTLE POINT BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2024**

A. Returning Officer's Fees

	CPBC
For each contested Borough / Town council ward	£130.00
Plus for each 1000 electors or part thereof	£50.00
For each uncontested Borough/Town Council Ward	£60.00
Total for contested elections	£5320.00

The following are based on the pay bands recommended by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

B. Election Staff Fees

Role	Payment / Fee
Presiding Officer	£306.00*
Training (2 sessions)	£34.00
Travel	£20.00
Poll Clerk Fee	£208.00*
Poll Clerk Training (1 session)	£17.00
Poll Clerk Travel	£9.00
Polling Station Inspector	£272.00
Polling Station Inspector training (2 sessions)	£34.00
Poll Card Deliverer - per card	£0.30

Role	Hourly rate
Postal Vote Opening and checking assistant	£14.00*
Postal Vote Opening and Checking Supervisor	£16.00*
Postal Vote Opening Session Manager	£16.50*
Count Assistant (day)	£13.00
Count Assistant (night)	£19.50
Count Supervisor (day)	£17.00
Count Supervisor (night)	£25.50
Count TL/Supervisor Training	£17.00
Count Manager	£25.00
Count set up/ Take down assistant	£12.00
Count Set up/ Take down Supervisor	£15.30
Count Unused Ballot Papers Checking and Verification (day)	£15.00
Count Unused Ballot Papers Checking and Verification (night)	£22.50
Count Top Table assistant/data officer (day)	£16.50
Count Top Table assistant/data officer (night)	£24.75

*plus 20% uplift for combined poll

Role	Hourly rate
Count Ballot Box Receipt Assistant (day)	£12.00
Count Ballot Box Receipt Assistant (night)	£18.00
Count Ballot Box Receipt Supervisor (day)	£15.00
Count Ballot Box Receipt Supervisor (night)	£23.25
Count Media Officer (day)	£16.00
Count Media Officer (night)	£24.00
Reception staff – Count and general (day)	£11.65
Count Reception staff (night)	£17.48
Count Staff - IT support (day)	£15.50
Count Staff - IT support (night)	£23.25
Casual Admin Support	£15.00
Ballot Box Equipment / Issuing Assistant	£14.75
Ballot Box Equipment / Issue Supervisor	£17.50
Collection and prep of Equipment	£15.00
Poll Card Printing	£11.60
Printing co-ordinator (e.g. printing of letters)	£11.50
Poll Card Prep and Issue Assistant	£12.40
Poll Card Prep and Issue Supervisor	£15.60
Postal Vote Prep & Issue Assistant	£14.50
Postal Vote Prep & Issue Supervisor	£17.25
Staff payments / payroll	£16.90
Postal Vote Signature Adjudicators	£16.60
Poll card, postal votes and ballot papers - running data, checking and proofing	£16.80
Bookkeeping	£12.50
Overtime	Employee standard hourly rate