



AGENDA

ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 29 March 2022, at 10.30 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Joel Cook**
Telephone: **03000 41692**

Membership (9)

Conservative (7): Mr G Cooke (Chair), Mr N Baker, Mrs P T Cole, Mr D Jeffrey,
Mr A Kennedy, Mr R C Love, OBE and Mr R J Thomas

Labour (1) Dr L Sullivan

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook

Green & Independent (1): Mr M Baldock

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

- 1 Substitutes
- 2 Election of Vice-Chair
- 3 Declarations of Interest on any items on this agenda
- 4 Minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2021 and 27 May 2021 (Pages 1 - 4)
- 5 Review of the 2021 Election (Pages 5 - 14)
- 6 Adjustments made to Scale of Fees 2021/22 (Pages 15 - 16)
- 7 Revised 2022/23 Kent Scale of Fees and Election Expenses (Pages 17 - 22)

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Monday, 21 March 2022

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee held in the Online on Thursday, 18 March 2021.

PRESENT: Mr G K Gibbens (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mrs P T Cole, Mr P C Cooper, Mr D Farrell and Ida Linfield

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Ms L Adam (Scrutiny Research Officer) and Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**14. Minutes of the meetings held on 30 July 2018 and 22 January 2021**
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2018 and 22 January 2021 were correct records and that they be signed by the Chair.

15. Election Update
(Item 4)

1. Mr Watts introduced the report, providing an overview of preparations and activity in advance of the May 2021 elections. He explained the challenging circumstances arising from the pandemic combined with the need to undertake additional elections which had been delayed from 2020. This had included working closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner election returning officer, Sarah Martin, at Dartford Borough Council and Mr Watts advised that they had been working to align the arrangements and preparations as closely as possible.
2. Mr Watts highlighted the excellent work by and good engagement with the District staff who deliver the elections. He highlighted some specific challenges at a local level such as identifying appropriate locations for polling stations and count venues as a number of relevant sites had been or were being used as testing or vaccination centres. Mr Watts also highlighted sections of the report which clarified some of the specific changes being made to the election arrangements in view of the pandemic, including PPE requirements and the reduction in the number of subscribers required to support a nomination.
3. Mr Watts responded to a number of questions from Members, including;
 - Confirming expectation that the KCC election count would be concluded in the day after the election.
 - Reassurance as to sanitation and cleanliness as polling stations.
 - Confirmation that the list of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable People had been shared with Districts to assist in the promotion of alternative methods of voting (to minimise COVID risk).

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

16. Scale of Fees

(Item 5)

1. Ms Adam introduced the report. She explained to there had been three relevant updates since the last consideration of Scale of Fees by the Committee, including a requirement to consider an increase in the bottom level of fees following the Budget County Council decision regarding minimum pay levels.

RESOLVED that the Committee;

- (a) note the uplift to the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses;
- (b) approve the additional uplift of Item 17 (For each Poll Clerk at the Polling Station) in the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses for 2021/22 in order to meet the County Council's commitment to increase the entry value of the lowest grade (KR2/3) to £9.55 per hour to maintain the position above the national minimum and marginally above the Living Wage Foundation for April 2021; and
- (c) delegate to the County Returning Officer and Deputy County Returning Officer additional minor adjustments to the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses.

Concluding the meeting, Mr Gibbens expressed his thanks to all Members of the Committee for their work and engagement with the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee activity during his time as Chair. In particular, he highlighted the significant activity in relation to the substantive Boundary Review.

Mr Gibbens noted that a number of Members of the Committee, himself included, would not be returning as Members after the 2021 election. He wished the best of luck to all staff supporting the 2021 election and thanked them on behalf of all Members for their hard work.

ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee held in the Mote Hall Leisure Centre, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 7RN on Thursday, 27 May 2021.

PRESENT: Mr N Baker, Mrs P T Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr A Kennedy, Mr R C Love, OBE and Mr R J Thomas

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr B Watts (General Counsel) and Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Election of Chair *(Item 3)*

1. It was proposed and seconded that Mr G Cooke be elected Chair of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee.

RESOLVED that Mr G Cooke be elected Chair of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee.

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From: Ben Watts, County Returning Officer
To: Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 29 March 2022
Subject: Review of the 2021 Kent County Council Election
Status: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- a) The election for 80 out of the 81 County Council seats took place on 6 May 2021, with the results being announced on 7 May. The election was held in conjunction with Police & Crime Commissioner election and other local polls which had been postponed from 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These elections were conducted in challenging circumstances and preparations were largely made during periods of lockdown across the County due to the ongoing public health emergency.
- b) The KCC Election and related activities would not have been as successful as they were without the hard work of many people in KCC and in the 12 District, City and Borough Councils. They have all been thanked directly, but this paper provides an opportunity to recognise their achievements for the record.

2. Election Planning

- a) In Summer 2020, the County Returning Officer (CRO), Ben Watts, who is responsible for the conduct of KCC elections, began to work closely with the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO), Sarah Martin, who was responsible for the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) election. As both the PCC & KCC elections were countywide, the PARO & CRO issued joint directions relating to the discharge of their functions in each council area.
- b) At the start of 2021, there was uncertainty if the scheduled polls would be postponed as the UK entered a third national lockdown. Confirmation was received on 5 February 2021 that the polls would go ahead as planned on 6 May 2021. This was announced alongside a [Delivery Plan](#) which included measures providing:
 - Additional funding to address the costs associated with making the elections COVID-19 secure.
 - Changes to the nominations process which reduced the number of signatories required.
 - Up-rated election expenses to provide a greater opportunity for candidates to campaign via digital channels whilst campaigning was not permissible during lockdown.
 - Changes to proxy voting to enable those who were self-isolating to vote.
 - Guidance on public health, social distancing and other safety measures for the election (in addition to the Electoral Commission's range of [guidance](#) published from September 2020).

- c) In February 2021, the CRO appointed the Chief Executives of the 12 District Councils as Deputy Returning Officers (DROs) to administer the KCC election within their council area on his behalf.
- d) The CRO and PARO met weekly to discuss strategic issues, in addition to regularly attending the Joint Kent Chief Executives meeting to provide updates, receive feedback and discuss issues related to the election with the 12 DROs.
- e) The CRO & PARO also met with Electoral Services Managers as part of the Kent Association of Electoral Registration Officers and Staff (Kent AEROS) on 12 January and 17 March 2021.
- f) The CRO would like to thank the twelve DROs, their Electoral Services Managers and Elections Teams for the safe delivery of the KCC election particularly given the challenges presented by COVID-19 and multiple polls being conducted simultaneously.

3. COVID-19 Secure Measures

- a) Utilising KCC's expertise with public health, health & safety and procurement, the CRO committed to providing advice and guidance on COVID-19 secure measures for the DROs and coordinating the supply and distribution of PPE and Other Protective Equipment required for the elections in Kent & Medway.
- b) Guidance was produced by KCC on conducting COVID-19 risk assessments, a COVID-19 secure polling station protocol (in conjunction with the PARO) & testing recommendations for election staff.
- c) PPE and Other Protective Equipment required for polling stations and count venues were identified by KCC which included the following items:
 - Hand sanitiser
 - Antibacterial wipes
 - Anti-viral disinfectant spray, disposable wiping cloth & gloves
 - Type II face coverings
 - Desktop Screens
 - Visors if a vulnerability assessment highlighted that it was required for staff with a specific issue to be mitigated against
- d) DROs were then given the option to place an order for these items from KCC. During this time, the Department of Health & Social Care confirmed that they would be making Type II face coverings and hand sanitiser available free of charge for the May 2021 elections. The free stock of face coverings and hand sanitisers were made available to order via KCC and distributed to the DROs with the other items they had ordered. All orders were delivered on schedule during w/c 12 April 2021.
- e) The CRO would like to thank Rachel Kennard for the procurement of PPE used at polling stations and count venues across the county & Andrew Scott-Clark (retired) Director of Public Health and KCC's Health & Safety Team (Flavio Walker (retired), James Johnstone, Jamie Callaway) for advice, guidance, and support on COVID secure measures.

4. Staffing

- a) There were initial concerns about having sufficient polling and count staff for the 2021 election. More staff were required to deliver the election safely including stewarding staff to support public health measures such as social distancing and standby staff to cover late notice absences due to COVID-19.
- b) Opportunities to work as polling and count staff across Kent & Medway were advertised on KCC's intranet site KNet and a number of staff supported this.
- c) KCC provided guidance to the DROs regarding polling station and count staff undertaking lateral flow testing ahead of polling day and/or the count including recommended timescales and how to access testing.
- d) Staff were provided with and wore Type II face coverings (or higher) at all times unless they were exempt.
- e) The CRO would like to thank all polling and count staff for delivering the KCC election including KCC staff who worked in a polling station or at a count.

5. Venues

- a) Difficulties were faced in securing polling stations and count venues across Kent as buildings:
 - remained closed due to the pandemic.
 - were being used for testing and vaccination sites.
 - were not able to be accessed and risk assessed due to keyholders' shielding or being classed as vulnerable.
- b) Further, there was a limited availability of mobile buildings, which would normally only be used when no other facilities are available, due to them being prioritised for COVID-19 related activity.
- c) The situation was impacted by the guidance in the Delivery Plan and subsequent letter from the Department of Education to all Headteachers and Returning Officers which discouraged the use of schools as polling stations particularly where it would result in the closure of the school. Schools are avoided where possible, but they are often the only option within a polling district when no other community or commercial facilities are available.
- d) 20 KCC buildings and 7 KCC-run asymptomatic testing sites were used as polling stations. Following feedback from the Electoral Services Managers, the use of KCC buildings was centrally coordinated, for the first time, by Property to ensure all sites were booked and managed in a consistent way.
- e) The districts were asked to submit their requests to Property who:
 - arranged access for the completion of risk assessments, the delivery & collection of polling station equipment and the arrival & departure of polling station staff
 - completed compliance checks and cleaning at each site
 - issued one day occupation licences and invoices
 - provided clear communication and informed key stakeholders that the site was being used as a polling station in the event of an emergency.

- f) In consultation with KCC's Corporate Management Team, the County Returning Officer agreed the following charges for the use of KCC buildings as polling stations in 2021 and beyond:

£75	where polling staff open and close the building
£150	where a KCC staff member is required to open and close the building
£350	where a KCC staff member is required to open and close the building and security is required on site.

- g) The CRO would like to thank Melanie Cowley for centrally coordinating the use of KCC buildings and asymptomatic testing sites to be used as a polling station or a count venue and all KCC staff who enabled the buildings and sites to be used.

6. Implementation of New Boundaries

- a) Following a Community Governance Review undertaken by Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council in 2016, there was a proposal for the [hatched area](#) to move from Malling Central to Malling Rural East. This alteration was supported by this Committee in July 2017 and was subsequently approved by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. [The Tonbridge & Malling \(Electoral Changes\) Order 2019](#) enacted this alteration and came into effect for the 2021 KCC elections.
- b) Following a Community Governance Review undertaken by Canterbury City Council in 2017, there was a proposal for the [hatched area](#) to move from Canterbury South to Canterbury City South. This alteration was supported by this Committee on 30 July 2018 and was subsequently approved by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. [The Canterbury \(Electoral Changes\) Order 2019](#) enacted this alteration and came into effect for the 2021 KCC elections.
- c) Both boundaries were successfully implemented for the 2021 election.

7. Nominations

- a) A statutory instrument was laid in February 2021 to temporarily reduce the number of subscribers required on a nomination paper from 10 to 2 for the May 2021 elections. This change was made to reduce the need for travel and person to person contact during the nomination period.
- b) Nominations were able to be submitted between 22 March and 8 April 2021 to the DROs in the 12 District Councils. 348 candidates were validly nominated.
- c) Details of nominations received were sent daily from the DROs to KCC to check that no candidates were nominated in more than one electoral division in the KCC electoral area. No duplicate nominations for were received.
- d) KCC Elections Project Team reviewed the Statement of Persons Nominated for each electoral division ahead of publication on 9 April 2021 at 10:00.

8. Elham Valley

- a) Following the death of a candidate in the Elham Valley division, the election in this division was countermanded on 15 April 2021. A new election was held on 17 June 2021 with the result being declared on 18 June 2021.
- b) The CRO would like to thank Dr Susan Priest, Paul Butler and Folkestone & Hythe's Electoral Services Team for their extended support in delivering both the main KCC election in the Folkestone & Hythe area and the Elham Valley election.

9. Polling Day

- a) Despite the challenges and concerns about the availability of polling stations and staffing, polling day went well and there were no reports of any significant problems. The CRO and Deputy CRO were both contactable from 5 – 7 May at all times for DROs and other election staff in case assistance or advice was required, but nothing of significance arose.

10. Verification and Count

- a) The CRO and PARO directed that verification must be completed by 12:30 on Friday 7 May 2021. This provided flexibility for verification to be completed overnight.
- b) The CRO further requested that the count for KCC elections commenced by 13:00 on Friday 7 May 2021. It was at the discretion of the DRO to confirm the start time of the KCC count in their area and how the KCC divisions were counted (e.g., all divisions are counted at the same time, done in groups or individually) to enable the count to be conducted in a COVID-19 secure way.
- c) All KCC results were declared by 19:40; the majority of results were declared at around 15:45.
- d) A KCC officer from the Governance, Law & Democracy division attended each count venue for the purposes of inputting the election results onto KCC's Modern.gov system as soon as possible after the result for each division was announced.
- e) The CRO would like to thank the KCC Count Team who uploaded the results Matthew Dentten, Anna Taylor, Andrew Tait, Jaime Palmer, Joanne Holmes, Hannah Lucey-Lamb, Léonie Harrington, Emily Kennedy, Kay Goldsmith, Theresa Grayell, and to Cantium Business Services for supporting KCC staff attending the count (VIP Support) and monitoring servers (Chris Beer and Carl Palmer).

11. Election Result System

- a) The interactive election results map developed by Digital Services for the 2017 election was updated for use in 2021 including the implementation of the new boundaries. The map was populated using the data from Modern.gov and was displayed on KCC's website and at count venues, at the discretion of DROs. The live election results page was viewed 56,541 times on 7 May 2021 with 10,622 unique page views.

- b) The result for each division was also published via KCC's Twitter feed.
- c) Due to public health considerations, a media hub in the Seminar Lecture Theatre, Sessions House was not arranged for the 2021 election. The Press Office liaised with the media remotely.

12. Public Awareness

- a) KCC's role was to promote voting, to encourage candidates to stand, and to publish the statutory electoral notices in relation to the KCC election.
- b) Social media messaging began on 19 March 2021 and continued until 7 May 2021 on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn & Instagram. On Facebook, there were 37 posts, which reached 83,358 people, generated 1,631 clicks, 7 comments, 310 reactions and 170 shares. On Twitter, there were 94 posts, which generated 279,601 impressions and 6,669 engagements (retweets/likes/clicks). On Instagram, there were 19 posts, which generated 8,635 impressions and 96 engagements. LinkedIn data is not available.
- c) Paid social media advertising began on 1 April 2021 and continued until 5 May 2021 on Facebook and Instagram. This generated 1,635,592 impressions, which reached 473,011 people, generated 1,899 clicks and 143 engagements (likes, shares and reactions).
- d) In total, social media and paid advertising generated just under 2 million impressions and reached up to half a million people in Kent. A variety of Electoral Commission images were shared along with a new KCC results day graphic. The animated video used in the 2017 election to explain the council services was updated with the election date and a new voiceover.
- e) KCC's election pages on the website were also updated; division maps, statutory notices and information for candidates and voters were provided. There were 119,744 unique page views of the election pages between 19 March and 18 May.
- f) In response to feedback received in 2017 regarding a lack of information about the candidates and their manifestos on KCC's website. Under the 'Who can I vote for?' heading, the following statement was included:

"KCC is responsible for publishing the statutory election notices. Details of the candidates in each electoral division (name and political party) will be published in the Statements of Persons Nominated on Friday 9 April.

KCC is not allowed to publish candidates' manifestos on our website; it is the role of the candidates to promote themselves as part of their campaign."

- g) A virtual Prospective Councillor Event was held on 9 December 2020. The event hosted by the then Chairman of the Council included a Member Panel with the political group leaders and backbenchers. Of the 90 people who registered to attend, 57 (63%) went on to stand as a candidate. Positive feedback was received in a post-event survey.
- h) The CRO would like to thank People and Communications for their support including Lidor Lapid and Nathanael Page for the election results map,

Kristie Lawton for the KCC Election webpages and notices, Lucie Beer for social media messaging, Lucy Mayor and the Press Office team for media liaison and Christina Starte and Andrew Bose for coordinating communication activity.

13. Candidates' Spending Returns

- a) In accordance with The Representation of the People Act 1983, agents for candidates standing at local government elections are required to submit a spending return and declaration to the Returning Officer within 35 calendar days of the election results being declared. This deadline was 11 June 2021. A separate declaration by each candidate must be submitted within 7 working days of the spending return being submitted.
- b) As of 21 March 2022, 22 spending returns are incomplete or outstanding out of a total of 343 candidates (excluding Elham Valley). The remaining documentation is available for public inspection in accordance with the legislation.

14. Election Accounts

- a) DROs are able to claim back from KCC the costs of running the KCC election in their area in line with the KCC Scale of Fees & Expenses.
- b) In 2017, the total cost of the KCC election was £1,950,000.
- c) Following a discussion with the Joint Kent Chief Executives in February 2021, the CRO agreed to pay DROs an advance payment, representing 40% of their estimated total expenditure for the elections in their area. DROs were required to complete an advanced payment form; the advance payment was only paid upon receipt and review of their Project Plan and Risk Register which were used to collate key information, planning and risks. Only 4 districts requested an advanced payment
- d) Further, the 2021 KCC election accounts have added complexity as they were held in conjunction with other elections so some of the claimed fees and costs have been split dependent on the electorate size and level of combination. There were also additional costs associated with making the elections COVID-secure. Additional funding via a Section 31 Grant to address these costs was paid directly from the Government to the districts as they administered the local polls. KCC has requested that its proportion of the funding should be deducted from the districts' claim to KCC.
- e) The deadline for the submission of the districts' election accounts was 31 January. To date, 11 district councils have submitted their final accounts. Of these, one has been settled and the remaining accounts are in the process of being reviewed. The estimated total cost is around £1,500,000 (prior to the deduction of KCC's proportion of the Section 31 Grant and subject to any checks made on behalf of the Section 151 Officer).

15. Feedback from the District Councils

- a) The CRO was keen to ensure that the 12 District Councils in Kent were given an opportunity to provide feedback on KCC's approach to co-ordinating the

elections, so that lessons learned can be applied for future elections. The CRO met with the Electoral Services Managers on 22 June 2021.

- b) There was a recognition of the additional support provided by KCC particularly in relation to the procurement of PPE including the free Department of Health face coverings and hand sanitiser and the provision of Kent specific public health guidance.
- c) A number of areas where we can make further improvements were identified relating to:
 - the confirmation of the use of KCC buildings as polling stations
 - the way and timing of our review of the districts' risk assessments and providing feedback
 - election template notices
 - the focused communication between the CRO & PARO with Deputy Returning Officers rather than directly with the Electoral Services Managers
- d) The CRO committed to reflect and improve on these areas for the next KCC election.

16. County Returning Officer and the KCC Election Team

- a) In 2017 the CRO was new in post and had not had the opportunity to shadow and be involved in the election planning process of a previous County election. In 2021, he had the benefit of his involvement in 2017 elections and the subsequent by-elections in Birchington and Rural, Canterbury North, Sittingbourne North & Northfleet and Gravesend West.
- b) The CRO was supported by Lizzy Adam, who was appointed as the Deputy County Returning Officer (Deputy CRO) during the 2017 election process. As part of continuous development and effective succession planning and to assist with the planning and preparation of KCC elections, the Deputy CRO completed the Association of Electoral Administrators' Certificate, the only professional qualification in electoral administration, in advance of the 2021 election. This included a secondment with Canterbury City Council's Electoral Services Team for the local and European Parliamentary elections in May & June 2019. The CRO wishes to thank Lizzy for her outstanding work, support and commitment which directly contributed to the success of the election.
- c) The CRO was further supported by the KCC Elections Project Team (Peter Healey, Siân Connelly, Rebecca Binstead, Jill Kennedy-Smith, Ryan Thomas, Joel Cook, Tristan Godfrey). The CRO wishes to record his thanks for the considerable efforts of the team in supporting the delivery of the 2021 election.
- d) In addition to assistance provided by the above-mentioned Elections Project Team and colleagues in Property, Communications, Public Health & Procurement, the CRO was further assisted by:
 - Fiona Dawson for enforcement activity relating to campaign material on KCC property
 - Lee Manser for insurance queries relating to the election
 - Anne Brierley for support with KCC boundaries and demographic data

17. Recommendation

The Electoral & Boundary Review Committee is asked to note the report and endorse the actions of the County Returning Officer in conducting the 2021 Kent County Council election, as set out in the report.

18. Background Documents

Association of Electoral Administrators (2021) '*AEA 2021 Post-Polls Review (12/07/2021)*', <https://www.aea-elections.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/AEA-2021-Post-Polls-Review.pdf>

Cabinet Office (2021) '*May 2021 Polls Delivery Plan (05/02/2021)*', <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/may-2021-polls-delivery-plan/may-2021-polls-delivery-plan#executive-summary-and-introduction>

Electoral Commission (2020) '*Guidance to support May 2021 elections during the coronavirus pandemic (30/09/2020)*', <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/returning-officer/guidance-support-may-2021-elections-during-coronavirus-pandemic>

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 11 December 2017
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=7824&Ver=4>

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 30 July 2018
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=8114&Ver=4>

UK Parliament (2019) '*The Tonbridge & Malling (Electoral Changes) Order 2019 (04/03/2019)*', <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/423/contents/made>

UK Parliament (2019) '*The Canterbury (Electoral Changes) Order 2019 (25/02/2019)*', <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/356/contents/made>

19. Report Author and Relevant Director

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From: Ben Watts, County Returning Officer

To: Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 29 March 2022

Subject: Adjustments made to 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses under delegated authority

Status: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- a) At its meeting on 18 March 2021, this Committee noted the uplift to the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses (KCC Scale of Fees) and approved an additional uplift of Item 17 of the Scale, it also approved a delegation to the County Returning Officer and Deputy County Returning Officer to make additional minor adjustments to the 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees.
- b) It was recognised by the Committee that there may be costs related to COVID-19 and other matters which would require further minor adjustments to the 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees, and that it may not be practical to call an additional meeting of the Committee to make any further adjustments.
- c) A commitment was made that any adjustments made under this delegation would be reported to the next meeting of this Committee.
- d) This report outlines the two minor adjustments to the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses made by the County Returning Officer on 19 May 2021 under delegated authority:
 - (i) In line with Cabinet Office guidance which confirmed that a standby fee for the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) election would be reimbursed for staff used to cover late notice absences due to COVID-19, an additional fee was added to the 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees on the following basis:

“If a standby fee does not exceed £50 per member of staff - not including the cost of any training - KCC will reimburse the relevant percentage of such a retainer for the KCC election”
 - (ii) Item 28 on the 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees, which is used to calculate a payment to the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) for the management and conduct of the election, was amended to enable the DRO to claim the maximum amount of £35.43 for each 1000 electors or part for the KCC election. The fee is usually required to be ‘shared equally with other elections, up to a maximum of £35.43’ but the DROs in their additional role as Local Returning Officers for this poll received a set fee for the management and conduct of the PCC election which made it not possible for the KCC fee to be ‘shared equally’ on this occasion. KCC and PCC elections are not usually combined but were in 2021 due to the postponement of the PCC election from 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Recommendation

The Electoral & Boundary Review Committee is asked to note the two minor adjustments made to the 2021/22 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses, relating to standby fees and DRO payment for the management and conduct of the KCC election, made by the County Returning Office on 19 May 2021 under delegated authority.

3. Background Documents

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 18 March 2021

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=8807&Ver=4>

4. Report Author and Relevant Director

Ben Watts, County Returning Officer

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Lizzy Adam, Deputy County Returning Officer

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From: Ben Watts, County Returning Officer

To: Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 29 March 2022

Subject: 2022/23 County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses

Status: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

- a) At its meeting on 8 March 2010, this Committee agreed that it would annually authorise and approve the County Scale of Fees and Expenses for Kent County Council elections (KCC Scale of Fees). This is consistent with the powers delegated to the Committee by County Council and recorded in the Appendix of the Constitution.
- b) Each year subsequently the KCC Scale of Fees has been uplifted annually using the average NJC pay award for local government. The 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees was an exception.
- c) In the absence of an NJC 2021/22 Pay Award, this Committee agreed on 22 January 2021 and noted on 18 March 2021 an uplift to the 2021/22 KCC Scale of Fees of 2%. This represented the percentage pay increase awarded to all Kent Scheme staff as part of the agreed 2021/22 Budget of Kent County Council. This was to enable election staff to be recruited and given details of their remuneration for the KCC elections.
- d) The proposed 2022/23 KCC Scale of Fees is attached in Appendix 1.
- e) In the absence of the NJC 2022/23 Pay Award, the KCC Scale of Fees has been uplifted by 3% which represents the percentage pay increase awarded to Kent Scheme staff who achieved a Total Contribution Pay (TCP) rating of 'successful' as part of the agreed 2022/23 Budget of Kent County Council.
- f) Agreement to the NJC 2021/22 Pay Award has only been reached and was published on 28 February 2022; there is no indication when the NJC 2022/23 Pay Award will be available.
- g) The Kent Association of Electoral Registration Officers and Staff Scale of Fees for District/Borough and Parish Council elections and Neighbourhood Referendum (Kent AEROS Scale of Fees) is usually uplifted by the NJC pay award for local government too. In the absence of the NJC 2022/23 Pay Award, the Joint Kent Chief Executives Group on 8 March agreed to uplift the Kent AEROS 2022/23 Scale of Fees by 2%.
- h) The Deputy CRO received a request from the Kent AEROS in January 2022 for the two Scale of Fees to be merged. Whilst the KCC Scale of Fees and the Kent AEROS Scale of Fees are broadly similar; KCC uses a calculation based on per 1000 electors and Kent AEROS uses a calculation based on per 500 electors to reflect the electorate of small parishes. The Deputy CRO responded to say this would be something KCC would be happy to explore ahead of the 2025 KCC election but was currently prioritising the review and settlement of

the KCC 2021 election claims. Any review of the existing KCC Scale of Fees or proposed merger with the Kent AEROS Scale of Fees would be brought to this Committee in the first instance.

- i) Further to the proposed 3% uplift to the 2022/23 KCC Scale of Fees, at KCC's Budget County Council meeting on 10 February 2022, Members agreed to an *"increase in our lowest grade to £10.00 per hour from April 2022 which will maintain our position above the national minimum and marginally above the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage announcement in November 2021."*
- j) The KCC Scale of Fees has been reviewed by officers and it is proposed that Item 17 on the 2022/23 Scale of Fees is additionally uplifted to ensure KCC meets its commitment to pay a minimum of £10.00 per hour.

2. Recommendation

The Electoral & Boundary Review Committee is asked to approve the County Scale of Election Fees and Expenses for 2022/23 including an additional uplift to Item 17 (For each Poll Clerk at the Polling Station) to ensure KCC meets its commitment to pay a minimum of £10.00 per hour.

Background Documents

County Council, 10 February 2022

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=113&MId=8754&Ver=4>

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 8 March 2010

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=3230&Ver=4>

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 22 January 2021

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=8730&Ver=4>

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 18 March 2021

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=142&MId=8807&Ver=4>

National Joint Council for Local Government Services (2022) *'Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2021-22 (28/02/2022)'*, <https://www.seemp.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LGS-Pay-01Apr21.pdf>

3. Report Author and Relevant Director

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**PROPOSED COUNTY SCALE OF FEES AND EXPENSES
2022/23**

1	Printing and publishing all notices, forms and other documents, providing stationery and sundries, and other miscellaneous expenditure including postage, telephone calls and faxes	Reasonable and appropriate cost
2	Stationery and equipment at each polling station, including depreciation	
3	Hire of any building or room for the purpose of the election and the expenses attending the use of any building or room, including temporary polling stations if necessary	
4	Fitting-up polling stations including the provision, transport and erection of voting compartments, the hire of necessary furniture (where this is not otherwise available) and the return to store afterwards	
5	Ballot Papers – provision and printing	
6	Register of Electors – purchase	
7	Printing or production of official poll cards and postal vote packs	
8	Delivery of official poll cards by hand	Second class postage rate
9	Travelling expenses to DRO's staff to make arrangements for the poll or otherwise in connection with the conduct of the election	45p per mile
10	Presiding Officer travelling expenses	£16.43 (see Note 2)
11	Poll Clerk travelling expenses	£9.27 (see Note 2)
12	Travelling expenses for staff in connection with the counting of votes, at the discretion of the DRO	£9.27 (see Note 2)
13	One Presiding Officer at each Polling Station – single election	£232.70
14	One Presiding Officer at each Polling Station – joint election or difficult station due to local circumstances (at discretion of DRO).	Shared equally with other elections, up to a maximum of £142.94
15	Presiding Officer who acts as a supervisor in a Polling Place where there are a number of polling stations (additional).	£11.29

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16	Polling Station Inspector – for every 10 polling stations overseen	£232.70
17	For each Poll Clerk at a Polling Station – single election	£160 (see Note 3)
18	For each Poll Clerk at a Polling Station – joint election or difficult station due to local circumstances (at discretion of DRO).	Shared equally with other elections, up to a maximum of £86.43
19	For each training session provided by the DRO for Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks or count staff	£199.49
20	For each Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk attending training	£51.65
21	An allowance for each polling station to have available a mobile phone on polling day	£5
22	For the employment of persons in connection with the counting of the votes, clerical and other assistance required by the DRO – for each 1000 electors or part in a contested election	£162.82 for single Member Divisions £212.30 for two Member divisions
23	For the employment of persons in connection with the issue and opening of postal ballot papers – for each 100 postal voters or part	£79.79
24	For the recount of votes – for each 1000 electors or part	£9.37
25	Contested single election – payment to District/Borough Council for the use of Council staff in the conduct of the election – each 1000 electors or part	£126.11
26	Contested joint election – payment to District/Borough Council for the use of Council staff in the conduct of the election – for each 1000 electors or part	£63.05
27	Contested single election – payment to DRO for the management and conduct of the election – for each 1000 electors or part	£52.84
28	Contested joint election – payment to DRO for the management and conduct of the election – for each 1000 electors or part	Shared equally with other elections, up to a maximum of £36.50
29	For each Counter attending training	£15

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30	For each Count Supervisor and Count General Assistant attending training	£30
31	Reasonable refreshments for staff involved in the verification and count	Maximum £5 per head
32	Payment to District/Borough Council for the use of Council staff (including the provision of a DRO) at an uncontested election – for each 1000 electors or part	£34.79
33	Insurance in respect of employer's liability and for injury or damage to persons and property of third parties, and for such other risks as advised by the County Council's Finance Director and the insurer's to the County Council. Costs incurred by the County Returning Officer only.	Reasonable and appropriate cost.
34	Additional expenses (if any) involved in and about the conduct of the election including (a) professional, clerical and other assistance, (b) professional and legal advice, (c) additional costs associated with a recount of the votes and (d) other disbursements	Such amount as may be approved by the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee at the appropriate time.

Definitions:

1. Single Election means a poll for the County Council Elections only.
2. Joint Election means a poll that is conducted at the same time as the County Council poll, which could be a District or Parish election or by-election or a National poll, such as a Parliamentary election or a referendum.

Notes:

1. The fees are calculated on the number of local government electors on the register of electors and entitled to vote at the last day for publication of the notice of election.
2. Items **10,11 and 12**: variable mileage rates may be applied where fixed travel is considered inappropriate.
3. Item **17** has been additionally uplifted to meet KCC's commitment to pay a minimum of £10 per hour.

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