



# Regulatory and General Purposes Committee

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Wednesday, 31 January 2024</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>6.00 p.m.</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	Committee Room 1, Birkenhead Town Hall, CH41 5EU

**Contact Officer:** Daniel Sharples  
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Please note that public seating is limited therefore members of the public are encouraged to arrive in good time.

Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact [committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)

## AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
- 2. APOLOGIES**
- 3. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

- 4. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023.

## **5. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

### **5.1 Public Questions**

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Friday 26 January 2024 to the Council's Monitoring Officer via this link: [Public Question Form](#) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol for Public Speakers at Committees | Wirral Council](#)

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

### **5.2 Statements and Petitions**

Notice of representations to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, , Friday 26 January 2024 to the Council's Monitoring Officer ([committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk)) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee if provided to Democratic and Member Services no later than 10 working days before the meeting, at the discretion of the Chair. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding three minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. If a petition contains more than 5,000 signatures, it will be debated at a subsequent meeting of Council for up to 15 minutes, at the discretion of the Mayor.

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your statement/petition by the deadline for submission.

### **5.3 Questions by Members**

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

## **6. WIRRAL AWARD 2023 (Pages 7 - 10)**

## **7. REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES (Pages 11 - 24)**

## **8. POLLING PLACE REVIEW (Pages 25 - 32)**

- 9. BOROUGH ELECTION FEES & CHARGES (Pages 33 - 42)**
- 10. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The following items contain exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

- 11. WIRRAL AWARD 2023 EXEMPT APPENDIX (Pages 43 - 122)**

#### **Terms of Reference**

The terms of reference for this committee can be found at the end of this agenda.

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## **REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 23 November 2023

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	A Hodson (Chair)	
	Councillors	S Bennett C Cooke G Davies M Jordan L Luxon-Kewley C McDonald K Murphy	R Pitt M Redfern J Stewart Laing K Stuart M Sullivan E Tomeny J McManus (In place of B Hall)

### 21 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the webcast.

### 22 **APOLOGIES**

The Chair confirmed apologies had been received from Councillor B Hall who was deputised by Councillor J McManus.

### 23 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

### 24 **PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS**

The Chair reported that there had been no questions submitted from any members of the public or from any Members.

### 25 **STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS**

The Chair reported that there had been no statements or petitions received.

### 26 **MINUTES**

**Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2023 be approved.**

27 **MINUTES OF THE LICENSING PANEL**

**Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Panel held on 16 August, 8 September, 15 September, 21 September, 13 October and 20 October 2023 be approved.**

28 **HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH SUE HIGGINSON, OBE**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report requesting that Members of the Committee recommend to Council that Sue Higginson be admitted as Honorary Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held on 4 December 2023.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager reported that this was a very significant step for the Council to take. Very few people had been awarded this status and it should only be awarded to someone who had made an exceptional contribution to the Borough. It is considered that Sue Higginson falls within this category.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager advised Members of the Committee that all Political Group Leaders had been consulted and supported the proposals.

Councillor Cooke suggested whether a workshop could be arranged to discuss the Freedom of the Borough Protocol. The legal advisor to the Committee advised that this could be referred to the Governance Working Group and Councillor Cooke responded by stating he would discuss this further with Group Leaders.

**On a motion by Councillor S Bennett and seconded by Councillor M Redfern, it was –**

**Resolved –**

- (1) That in pursuance of the provisions of Section 249(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and in recognition of her dedicated service to the Borough, that Sue Higginson be admitted as an Honorary Freewoman of this Borough at an Extraordinary meeting of the Council to be held on 4 December 2023; and**
- (2) That officers be requested to take the necessary actions associated with (1) above and arrange a small civic reception for Sue Higginson and invited guests on a mutually agreeable date**

**following the Extraordinary meeting of the Council on 4 December 2023.**

## 29 **POLLING PLACES REVIEW**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report advising Members of the consultation outcome following the statutory polling place and polling district review which had been undertaken in September/October 2023 following approval to undertake a consultation by this Committee on 7 September 2023.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager reported that the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) must conduct a statutory review of polling places and polling districts every five years which can start no earlier than 1 October 2023 and must be completed within 16 months. Therefore, this must be completed by no later than 31 January 2025.

Members were informed that the statutory responsibility for reviewing UK Parliamentary polling districts and places rests with each relevant local authority in Great Britain for so much of any constituency as is situated in its area.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to undertake a full review of their Parliamentary polling places and polling districts within the Borough and make such changes as would be considered necessary to ensure they remain accessible to all electors.

Members were informed that the review formally commenced on 2 October 2023 with the publication of a formal notice at Birkenhead Town Hall and a publication on the Council's website. Notices had also been published on the Council's social media and online channels.

The Civic and Electoral Services Manager referred to the outcome of the consultation outlined within the report and advised that Electoral Services had received representations from electors and Ward Councillors and that representations had been received in the form of 39 'Have your say' responses and one email from a Ward Councillor.

The Chair, with the support of Councillor Sullivan thanked the Electoral team for their ongoing hard work.

In response to questions from Members, the Civic and Electoral Services Manager advised that the Acting Returning Officer had published notice of the review and had consulted with interested groups, including those with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people, or bodies including electors, political parties, MPs and Members of the Council.

Members were further advised that of the 103 polling places, 45 schools had been used in 2019 however this had now been reduced to 34 and that the use of schools was constantly under review.

**On a motion by Councillor S Bennett and seconded by Councillor J Stewart Laing, it was –**

**Resolved – That, in light of the consultation, it was not necessary to change any of the current polling places as a result of the review.**

### 30 **HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCES**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report seeking approval to remove the limit on the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicles that may be licensed in Wirral.

The Licensing Manager reported that on 23 January 2012 this Committee had resolved to impose a limit of 289 on the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences that could be issued by the Council and that further to a review of the limit by this Committee on 1 February 2018, it was resolved that the limit should be maintained. Members were informed that since that date there had been a significant reduction in the number of Hackney Carriage Vehicles that are licensed in Wirral from 285 at the time the limit was initially imposed to the current number which was 164. It was therefore considered that it was no longer necessary to limit the number of vehicles that may be licensed as Hackney Carriage Vehicles as it was highly unlikely that the Council would find itself in the position that it would have to refuse to grant a Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence due to the limit on the number of licences that the Council would issue.

**On a motion by Councillor S Bennett and seconded by Councillor J Stewart Laing, it was -**

**Resolved – That the limit on the number of licences that may be granted in respect of Hackney Carriage Vehicles be removed.**

### 31 **REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES**

The Director of Law and Governance submitted a report for Members of this Committee to consider whether to amend the current Hackney Carriage Fares.

The Licensing Manager reported that the current Hackney Carriage fares came into effect on 1 September 2022 and that a proposal to amend the current Hackney Carriage Fares had been received from Unite the Union on behalf of their members who are Hackney Carriage Drivers licensed by Wirral



Council. The current fares and the proposal to amend the fares were outlined in the appendices to the report.

The Licensing Manager informed Members that should the amendments to the current Hackney Carriage Fares be approved, the proposal must be advertised for a period of at least fourteen days. If no objections to the proposals are received, the revised fares could become effective in December 2023, however, should any objections be received they would be reported back to this Committee for further consideration in January 2024.

A representative of Unite the Union, Mr G Gregory addressed the Committee and informed Members that he represented 75 to 85 members of the Union. Mr Gregory advised that the proposal had been made due to an increase in the cost of running Hackney Carriage Vehicles. He also confirmed that Bank Holiday rates would be one set fare for the day and night.

A Hackney Carriage Vehicle Driver, Mr McCourt addressed the Committee who supported the proposals to amend the fares.

**On a motion by Councillor J McManus and seconded by Councillor C McDonald, it was -**

**Resolved – That the proposal to amend the Hackney Carriage Fares be approved subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process.**

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## REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday 31st January 2024

REPORT TITLE:	WIRRAL AWARD 2023
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES

### REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request agreement from the Committee that the Wirral Award be conferred on the nominees as recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party.

All nominations are considered annually by a working party of senior Councillors, and the Working Party's recommendations with regard to possible recipients of the Wirral Award are submitted to the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee for approval.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough and is not a key decision.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to:

- (1) agree to confer the Wirral Award upon the 11 nominees recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party; and
- (2) make appropriate arrangements for the recipients of the Award to be invited to a special ceremony as set out in paragraph 3.0 of this report.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 The Wirral Award is intended to confer civic recognition upon individuals or organisations resident or located in Wirral for an outstanding achievement within the previous twelve months, or for distinguished service to the Borough over a period of twenty years or more.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 That the Committee resolve not to confer the Wirral Award upon the nominees received and recommended by the Wirral Award Working Party, as detailed in the appendix.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **3.1 Nominations received and Wirral Award Working Party**

In total, seventeen nominations for the Wirral Award 2023 were received and considered by the Wirral Award Working Party which met on 19 December 2023. The Wirral Award Working Party comprises the Leader of the Council, the Mayor, and representatives of the political groups by way of Chair and spokespersons of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee. Their recommendations are attached as an exempt appendix to this report for consideration.

The appendix attached to the report is exempt under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. Consideration has been given to the Public Interest Test.

When considering nominations, generally the Council prefers to consider individuals rather than organisations unless the circumstances are exceptional.

A formal Award certificate will then be awarded to the successful nominees at a special ceremony to be held at a suitable venue.

#### **3.2 Presentation Ceremony**

Once nominations are agreed, a formal Award certificate will then be presented to the successful nominees at a future ceremony to be attended by:

- (i) The Mayor of Wirral
- (ii) Leader of the Council
- (iii) Group Leaders
- (iv) Chair and spokespersons of the Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee
- (v) Chief Executive
- (vi) Nominees and one guest each

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 As in previous years, the costs associated with the Wirral Award would be accommodated within the existing approved Civic Services budget.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.

#### **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 It is customary for the Council to cover the cost of any hospitality that may be provided for the Wirral Award. There is no specific budget head for this, but the funding required can be allocated from the Civic Services budget.

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 There are no known risks arising directly from this report.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 Nominations have been sought from all areas of the local community for consideration by the Wirral Award Working Party.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity. Measuring the impact of equality implications and mitigating any negative impact where possible is embedded into the core principles of good governance.

9.2 There are no known equality implications arising from this report.

#### **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no known environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

#### **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no known implications arising directly from the content of this report. The Wirral Award does however recognise and celebrate individuals who have contributed to the development of a resilient local community due to an outstanding achievement within the previous twelve months, or for distinguished service to the Borough over a period of twenty years or more.

**REPORT AUTHOR:** **Kris Cureton**  
Civic Services and Electoral Services Manager  
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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Nomination forms for consideration (Exempt)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Wirral Award application form.

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.2 (j) of its Terms of Reference.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Wirral Award 2020</b>	<b>19 January 2021</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Wirral Award 2021</b>	<b>20 January 2022</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Wirral Award 2022</b>	<b>1 February 2023</b>

## REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

31 JANUARY 2024

<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee to consider objections received in respect of a proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares.

The Wirral Plan sets out a number of priorities for the council to consider. The content of this report supports the priority of working for a prosperous, inclusive economy - helping businesses to thrive and creating jobs and opportunities for all.

This matter affects all Wards within the Borough.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is recommended to re-consider the proposed increase in Wirral Council's Hackney Carriage Fares approved by this Committee on 23 November 2023, in light of objections received.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 On 23 November 2023 the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee resolved that a proposed revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares would come into effect on 21 December 2023 should no objections be received. Objections to the proposal have been received and it is therefore necessary that this Committee re-consider the proposed increase in fares in light of these objections.

#### OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Committee must re-consider the proposed revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares in light of the objections received and it has the option to make no amendments to the proposed revised table of fares or make amendments in light of the objections received.

### 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The current Hackney Carriage Fares are divided into the following Tariffs:

Tariff 1	Day Rate (6:00am to 9:59pm)
Tariff 2	Night Rate (10:00pm to 5:59am) Public and Bank Holiday Day Rate (inc Easter Sunday) (6:00am – 9:59pm)
Tariff 3	Public and Bank Holiday Night Rate (inc Easter Sunday) (10:00pm – 5:59am)
Tariff 4	Christmas and New Year Day and Night Rate

Christmas is defined as the period from 6:00pm on Christmas Eve until 05:59am on the day after Boxing Day.

New Year is defined as the period from 6:00pm on New Year's Eve until 05:59am on the day after New Year's Day.

- 3.2 On 23 November 2023 the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee considered a proposal from Unite the Union to increase the Hackney Carriage Fares. Members resolved that the proposed increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares be approved subject to any objections being received as part of the consultation process.

The proposal submitted by Unite the Union to amend the Hackney Carriage Fares is as follows:

- Tariff 1 (Day Rate): Maintain the initial hiring distance of 300 yards and the initial hiring charge at £3.60. Reduce the subsequent charging distance from 207 yards to 175 yards but maintain the charge of 20p per subsequent charging distance.
- Tariff 2 (Night Rate): Remove Bank Holidays and Public Holidays night rate from Tariff 2 and move this to Tariff 3. Reduce the initial hiring distance from 1392 yards to 300 yards and decrease the initial hiring charge from £5.00 to £3.80. Reduce the subsequent charging distance from 172 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 25p.
- Tariff 3: (Public and Bank Holidays Rate): Add Bank Holidays and Public Holidays night rate to Tariff 3 (this was previously Page 12 Tariff 2). Reduce the initial hiring distance from



1160 yards to 300 yards and decrease the initial hiring distance charge from £5.00 to £4.50. Increase the subsequent charging distance from 120 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 25p.

- Tariff 4 (Christmas and New Year Rate): Reduce the initial hiring distance on from 880 yards to 300 yards and increase the initial hiring charge from £5.00 to £5.70. Increase the subsequent charging distance from 107.5 yards to 165 yards and increase the subsequent distance charge from 20p to 40p.
- In addition to the fare and associated tunnel fees, introduce a £5.00 additional charge for any journey terminating in Liverpool.

- 3.3 A table showing the current Hackney Carriage Fares is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. A table showing the proposed Hackney Carriage Fares is attached at Appendix 2 to this report. A table showing the effect of the proposed increases is attached at Appendix 3 to this report. Details of the Hackney Carriage Fares applicable in other neighbouring authorities can be found at Appendix 4 attached to this report.
- 3.4 The proposed increase was advertised in the Wirral Globe on 6 December 2023 providing an opportunity for objections to be made no later than 20 December 2023. Notification that the proposed fares were subject to consultation was sent to every Hackney Carriage Driver informing them of the proposed increase and providing details of the opportunity to object to the proposal.
- 3.5 In response to the consultation 9 individuals responded with their objections to the proposed increase to the current Hackney Carriage Fares. A table providing details of the objections is shown at Appendix 5 attached to this report.
- 3.6 The objections received include seven objections stating that there should be no increase to the Hackney Carriage Fares at this time as it is considered any increase would have a detrimental effect on the Hackney Carriage Trade. There are four objections in respect of the proposal to charge an additional £5.00 for journeys to Liverpool. Two objections include reference to making no changes in respect of Tariff 1 (Day Rate).
- 3.7 Should Members of this Committee determine that there should be a revised table of Hackney Carriage Fares this must take effect no later than 21 February 2024.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications resulting directly from this report.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Section 65(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides the Local Authority with the power to set Hackney Carriage Fares as follows:

- 1 A District Council may fix the rates or fares within the district as well for time as distance, and all other charges in connection with the hire of a vehicle or with the arrangements for the hire of a vehicle; to be paid in respect of the hire of a hackney carriage by means of a table (hereafter in this section referred to as a 'table of fares') made or varied in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- 2 When a District Council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the table of fares or the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall not be less than fourteen days from

the date of first publication of the notice, within which and the manner in which objections to the table of fares or variation can be made.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

6.1 There will be an impact on the Licensing Team should there be a revision to the Hackney Carriage Fares. Following any revision it is necessary to verify that the meters in Hackney Carriage Vehicles are calibrated to take into account any changes. New fare tariff cards will also be required to be produced and issued to all Hackney Carriage Drivers. This work will be undertaken within existing resources.

## **7.0 RISKS**

7.1 The rate of Hackney Carriage Fares can be a factor that determines whether members of the public choose to use Hackney Carriage Vehicles or Private Hire Vehicles. Should members of the public consider the fares are too high this could result in a reduction in the number of people choosing to use Hackney Carriages. The rate at which the Hackney Carriage Fares are set may determine whether drivers have sufficient incentive to provide a service when it is needed. A rate that is too low may deter drivers from working at particular times.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 The proposal was advertised in the Wirral Globe on 6 December 2023 inviting objections to be received no later than 20 December 2023. Notification of the proposed increase was sent to all Hackney Carriage Drivers providing them with an opportunity to object until 20 December 2023.

8.2 In response to the consultation 9 objections have been received to the proposed increase in the Hackney Carriage Fares.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. The Equality Impact Assessment relevant to a proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares is available via <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments>.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Hackney Carriage Vehicles contribute to harmful emissions including particulate matter, hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide which can be harmful to health.

10.2 Hybrid and electric cars emit less greenhouse gases and air pollutants than petrol and diesel cars. (Source: *European Environment Agency report 2018*)

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none arising directly from the content of this report.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Current Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 2 Proposed Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 3 Table showing the effect of the proposal

Appendix 4 Neighbouring Local Authorities' Hackney Carriage Fares

Appendix 5 Objections received to the proposed fare increase

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Written proposal from Unite the Union

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Regulatory and General Purposes Committee	27 July 2022
Regulatory and General Purposes Committee	23 November 2023



## HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

The below table of fares is the **MAXIMUM** that can be charged within the Borough and up to 4 miles beyond the district boundary. Unless a separate fare has been **AGREED IN ADVANCE** for a hiring to a destination beyond 4 miles of the district boundary, the fare payable is that shown on the taximeter.

<b>TARIFF 1</b>		<b>TARIFF 2</b>	
<b>DAY RATE</b>		<b>NIGHT RATE</b>	
<b>6.00am – 9.59pm</b>		<b>10.00pm – 5.59am</b>	
		<b>PUBLIC &amp; BANK HOLIDAYS</b>	
		<b>6.00am – 9.59pm</b>	
First <b>300</b> yards (0.17 miles)	<b>£3.60</b>	First <b>1392</b> yards (0.79 miles)	<b>£5.00</b>
Each subsequent <b>207</b> yards (0.12 miles)	<b>20p</b>	Each subsequent <b>172</b> yards (0.10 miles)	<b>20p</b>
<b>TARIFF 3</b>			
<b>PUBLIC and BANK HOLIDAYS</b>		<b>10.00pm – 5.59am</b>	
First <b>1160</b> yards (0.66 miles)		<b>£5.00</b>	
Each subsequent <b>120</b> yards (0.07 miles)		<b>20p</b>	
<b>TARIFF 4</b>			
<b>CHRISTMAS RATE</b>		<b>24 Dec 6.00pm – 27 Dec 5.59am</b>	
<b>NEW YEAR RATE</b>		<b>31 Dec 6.00pm – 2 Jan 5.59am</b>	
First <b>880</b> yards (0.5 miles)		<b>£5.00</b>	
Each subsequent <b>107.5</b> yards (0.06 miles)		<b>20p</b>	

### Extra Charges

Waiting time – for each minute or part thereof	<b>30p</b>	Carriage of bulky items	<b>£5</b>
Each animal (other than an assistance dogs)	<b>£1.00</b>	Fouling charge	<b>£35</b>
Each passenger in excess of two per journey (excluding children under 5 years of age)	<b>10p</b>	Tolls including return journey (e.g. Mersey Tunnel to/from Liverpool)	

**HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES**

The below table of fares is the **MAXIMUM** that can be charged within the Borough and up to 4 miles beyond the district boundary. Unless a separate fare has been **AGREED IN ADVANCE** for a hiring to a destination beyond 4 miles of the district boundary, the fare payable is that shown on the taximeter.

<b>TARIFF 1</b>  <b>DAY RATE</b> <b>6.00am – 9.59pm</b>	<b>TARIFF 2</b>  <b>NIGHT RATE</b> <b>10.00pm – 5.59am</b>
<b>First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £3.60</b>  <b>Each subsequent 175 yards (0.099 miles) 20p</b>	<b>First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £3.80</b>  <b>Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 25p</b>
<b>TARIFF 3</b>  <b>PUBLIC and BANK HOLIDAY RATE</b>	
<b>First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £4.50</b> <b>Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 25p</b>	
<b>TARIFF 4</b>  <b>CHRISTMAS RATE</b> <b>24 Dec 6.00pm – 27 Dec 5.59am</b>  <b>NEW YEAR RATE</b> <b>31 Dec 6.00pm – 2 Jan 5.59am</b>	
<b>First 300 yards (0.17 miles) £5.70</b> <b>Each subsequent 165 yards (0.094 miles) 40p</b>	

**Extra Charges**

Waiting time – for each minute or part thereof	<b>30p</b>	Carriage of bulky items	<b>£5.00</b>
Each animal (other than an assistance dogs)	<b>£1.00</b>	Fouling charge	<b>£35.00</b>
Each passenger in excess of two per journey (excluding children under 5 years of age)	<b>10p</b>	Journeys terminating in Liverpool	<b>£5.00</b>

Table Showing Effect of Proposal

	Distance	Current Tariff	Proposed Tariff	Percentage Change
<b>Tariff 1</b>	1 mile	£5.00	£5.40	7%
	2 miles	£6.80	£7.40	8%
	3 miles	£8.40	£9.40	11%
	4 miles	£10.00	£11.40	12%
	5 miles	£11.60	£13.40	13%
	10 miles	£19.80	£23.40	15%
<b>Tariff 2</b>	1 mile	£5.60	£6.05	7%
	2 miles	£7.60	£8.80	14%
	3 miles	£9.60	£11.55	17%
	4 miles	£11.60	£14.05	17%
	5 miles	£13.80	£16.80	18%
	10 miles	£24.00	£30.05	20%
<b>Tariff 3</b>	1 mile	£6.00	£6.75	11%
	2 miles	£9.00	£9.50	5%
	3 miles	£12.00	£12.25	2%
	4 miles	£14.80	£14.75	0%
	5 miles	£17.80	£17.50	-2%
	10 miles	£32.40	£30.75	-5%
<b>Tariff 4</b>	1 mile	£6.80	£9.30	27%
	2 miles	£10.00	£13.70	27%
	3 miles	£13.20	£18.10	27%
	4 miles	£16.50	£22.10	25%
	5 miles	£19.80	£26.50	25%
	10 miles	£36.20	£47.70	24%

## Neighbouring Local Authorities' Hackney Carriage Fares

Hackney Carriage Fares which apply to other Local Authorities in the Liverpool City Region, and also Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council) have been provided for comparison purposes.

The following table shows the comparative cost of using Hackney Carriage Vehicles in accordance with the proposal from Unite the Union and each of these areas.

In addition to the fare charged, each Local Authority sets their own *tariffs* which determine the days and times that each fare is charged. For the purpose of clarity details of each Local Authority's tariffs are included after the table.

### Wirral Council (Proposed)

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£5.40	£7.40	£9.40	£11.40	£13.40	£23.40
Tariff 2	£6.05	£8.80	£11.55	£14.05	£16.80	£30.05
Tariff 3	£6.75	£9.50	£12.25	£14.75	£17.50	£30.75
Tariff 4	£9.30	£13.70	£18.10	£22.10	£26.50	£47.70

### Liverpool Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Day Rate	£5.00	£6.80	£8.80	£10.60	£12.40	£21.60
Night Rate	£6.25	£8.50	£11.00	£13.25	£15.50	£27.00
Peak Rate	£6.95	£9.45	£11.95	£14.45	£16.95	£29.45
Extra Rate	£7.50	£10.20	£13.20	£15.90	£18.60	£32.40

### Sefton Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.70	£6.70	£8.70	£10.50	£12.50	£22.30
Tariff 2	£5.85	£8.35	£10.85	£13.10	£15.60	£27.85
Tariff 3	£6.80	£9.80	£12.80	£15.50	£18.50	£33.20

### St Helens Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Rate 1	£4.30	£6.30	£8.30	£10.30	£12.30	£22.30
Rate 2	£5.40	£8.20	£11.00	£13.80	£16.60	£30.60
Rate 3	£7.00	£10.60	£14.20	£17.80	£21.40	£39.20

### Knowsley Council

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.80	£6.60	£8.60	£10.40	£12.20	£21.40
Tariff 2	£5.35	£7.15	£9.15	£10.95	£12.75	£21.95
Tariff 3	£7.20	£9.90	£12.90	£15.60	£18.30	£32.10

### Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council)

	1 Mile	2 Miles	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	10 Miles
Tariff 1	£4.60	£6.40	£8.00	£9.80	£11.60	£20.40
Tariff 2	£5.75	£8.00	£10.00	£12.25	£14.50	£25.50
Tariff 3	£9.20	£12.80	£16.00	£19.60	£23.20	£40.80



### **Wirral Council (Proposed)**

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 9:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 10:00pm – 05:59am
Tariff 3	Public and Bank Holidays 00:00am – 11:59pm (all day)
Tariff 4	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

### **Liverpool Council**

Day Rate	All journeys between 6:00am – 8:59pm
Night Rate	All journeys between 9:00pm – 05:59am and at any times on Easter Sunday and all Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year period)
Peak Rate	Saturday 11:00pm – Sunday 06:59am
Extra Rate	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

### **Sefton Council**

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 10:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 11:00pm – 5:59am and Fri/Sat 9:00pm – 5:59am Public Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year), Easter Sunday and the Grand National Festival Rank (from 4:00pm)
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

### **St Helens Council**

Rate 1	08:01am – 10:59pm
Rate 2	All journeys between 11:00pm – 08:00am and Bank Holidays except as described in Rate 3, and Easter Sunday
Rate 3	24 Dec 10:00am – 27 Dec 07:59am and 31 Dec 10:00am – 2 Jan 07:59am

### **Knowsley Council**

Tariff 1	All journeys between 6:00am – 8:59pm
Tariff 2	All journeys between 9:00pm – 05:59am and all Public Holidays except Christmas and New Year
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

### **Ellesmere Port & Neston (Cheshire West and Chester Council)**

Tariff 1	All journeys between 06:00am – 9:59pm
Tariff 2	Mon - Sun 10:00pm – 05:59am and anytime on Bank Holidays (other than Christmas and New Year)
Tariff 3	24 Dec 6:00pm – 27 Dec 05:59am and 31 Dec 6:00pm – 2 Jan 05:59am

## Objections received in response to proposed increase in Hackney Carriage Fares

No.	Details of Objection
1	I personally would like to object to a fare increase as we are currently losing customers to private hire companies. Uber alpha and more are cheaper. The 5 pounds charge discriminates people who work or live in Liverpool not to mention those who go there for the nightlife I don't want to be the dearest taxi in the Liverpool region 🚗
2	I formally disagree with the proposal to increase the Hackney cab fares.
3	I am a Hackney driver on the Wirral for over 40 years and would like to see an amendment to the fare increase, the suggested £5.00 surcharge to Liverpool should be scrapped. Liverpool city centre is nearer to Birkenhead or Wallasey town centres than Ellesmere port Chester even Eastham, Heswall, West Kirby, Bromborough, and you don't get jobs back to town from those destinations. On this basis, I object to the proposed fare increase.
4	Day rate does not need changing and therefore should stay as it is and to put £5 on a Liverpool is a joke they get the tunnel on fare anyway or put a fixed price on the job like £20 to city centre
5	To whomever it may concern, I would like to oppose the proposed fare increase as outlined in your email. Firstly, I don't agree with the fare increase at all during the current economic climate. Customers are finding it hard to make ends meet and to add a further burden by increasing taxi fares I feel is unacceptable, the current fair table is more than adequate. Secondly as a licensed taxi owner/driver I find it unacceptable to charge an extra £5.00 just for going to Liverpool. There is no recommendation as to when this excess is to be applied so, during a very quiet time of day would it be acceptable to apply this charge if a customer wants to go through the tunnel on a Sunday morning to be dropped off on the cobbles at William Brown Street outside the museum? Some drivers would be more than happy to charge anytime however I for one wouldn't be happy to be charged the £5.00 excess and would never let it happen twice and I'm sure no customer would be happy with it. Maybe a small surcharge could be applied during weekend nights only between certain hours however £5.00 is too excessive. I just can't see how and when this charge could really be added, so I object.
6	My name is XXXX XXXXXXXX, Hackney plate number XXX badge number XXX. I am writing to you to register my opposition to the proposed fare increase. I feel given the current cost of living climate it will have a detrimental effect on my business and as we have not long had a fare increase I do not feel we need another so soon. I feel the increase will penalise wheelchair users and young families. Why would people use the service we provide when private hire prices are so much lower? I fear the proposed increase will dramatically affect my earning potential in the future, so again I would like to register my complete opposition to the proposed increase.
7	I wish to object to the fare increase its too much the people who use Hackney's now are struggling as it is. any increase would put people off and would kill the Hackney trade. we rank up for long periods now..
8	I would like to object to the current DAY fare rise what's been proposed , I think if they are going to go up on the day fare then 40p a mile is way too much of an increase .I think leave the day fare as it is , BUT the night rate definitely needs to go up also the tariff 4 needs to go up as well and I have no problem with the five pound extra charge rate going over to drop in

	Liverpool aswell , just leave the day rate as it is now , but change everything else thanks
9	<p>Hello,</p> <p>RE - Hackney carriage fare increase</p> <p>Objection.</p> <p>At the moment in time with the current climate I don't think it's the right time to increase hackney carriage fares.</p> <p>The reasons are basically, there is less foot fall in the the town centres Birkenhead/Liscard for Hackney carriages as more shops shut. Recently Wilko being a big name.</p> <p>Secondly buss fares currently capped at £2 which doesn't help the Hackney carriage trade. Now is not the time to put the prices up when bus fares are being lowered. Especially after a big increase last year.</p> <p>Maybe come back to this in a years time and look at this again then. I do agree Hackney drivers are struggling to earn money however an increase at this time won't help it will drive customers away.</p>

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## REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

31 JANUARY 2024

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>POLLING PLACES REVIEW</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW AND CORPORATE SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out the findings following a review undertaken in respect of the use of a polling station venue in the Moreton West & Saughall Massie Ward, which is currently used as a polling place for the purposes of Local Authority, Parliamentary and other elections.

The report details guidance on selecting polling places and an outline of alternative polling places which have been identified by the Returning Officer. Local ward members have been consulted in respect to options and costs associated with the hire of the alternative venue are detailed in the exempt appendix 2 to the report.

The appendix attached to the report is exempt under Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information. Consideration has been given to the Public Interest Test

The recommendations contained within this report meet the objectives in the Wirral Plan 2021 – 26 in respect to the safe and pleasant communities and inclusive economy.

The recommendations in this report do not constitute a key decision.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is recommended to

- a) Consider and comment on the report; and
- b) Agree to the relocating of the polling place as detailed in section 3 of the report, in readiness for the May 2024 Police & Crime Commissioner and Combined Authority Mayoral Elections.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 A review of a venue used as Polling Places in May 2023 was commissioned by the Returning Officer, because the previous venues is no longer available. Options, associated costs, and member views are presented for consideration in appendix 1 of the report.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 There are no other alternative options as the current polling place has refused to be used for future elections. An alternative option is presented to the Committee for consideration and discussion.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 When considering the overall suitability of a polling place or polling station the following criteria are considered:

External areas access and facilities:

**Location:**

- Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district?
- Is the building clearly identifiable?
- Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.?
- Does the building have level access or an alternative disabled route?
- Are the doors wide enough, and light enough, to be opened by someone using a motorised scooter / wheelchair?
- Are there convenient transport links?
- Are there adequate parking facilities for disabled people and polling station staff?

Internal areas access and facilities:

**Entrance doors & Corridors:**

- Are all external and internal doors easy to open?
- Are there any internal steps or hazards?
- Is the floor covering nonslip?
- Is there adequate heating and lighting?
- Are there toilet facilities for staff?
- Are there kitchen facilities for staff?

**Size:**

- Is there sufficient space inside to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?
- Is there suitable furniture available for staff and voters, where required?
- Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required?
- If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place capable of accommodating all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?

**Availability:**

- Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?
- Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?

**Accessibility:**

- Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?

3.2 **Moreton West & Saughall Massie Ward** - Moreton Community Centre is currently used for Polling District YB, the manager of the venue has stated that it cannot be used as a polling station as it is disruptive to the regular users and classes at the community centre. Moreton Methodist Church has been identified as a suitable alternative venue. The church is within the polling district and is easy to locate. The venue is keen to be used for future elections to encourage residents from the local community to visit. The distance from the community centre to the church is 0.1 mile and is an approximate three-minute walk.

3.3 In summary, it is recommended that the Polling Station for Polling District:

- a) YB is moved from Moreton Community Centre to Moreton Methodist Church as detailed in Appendix 1.

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The total cost of the scheduled elections for 2024 will be met from Central Government (for the Police & Crime Commissioner Elections) and from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (for the Combined Authority Mayoral Elections).

4.2 Polling stations costs in 2023 were £30,411. The cost of polling stations increased from £30,300 to £30,411 in May 2023 due to changing 3 venues.

4.3 The total hire cost for the polling station that was used in 2023 is £350.00, the individual costs are detailed in Appendix 2.

4.4 The total hire cost for the proposed venues will be met from the elections budget. The individual costs, where confirmed, are detailed in Appendix 2.

4.5 If the proposal is implemented the anticipated increased costs will be circa £180-230, however, this is subject to a potential increase in costs for all polling stations due to the rise in energy costs across the UK.

4.6 All costs will be met from existing and provided budgets. There may also be external grants provided from central government to cover additional requirements associated with the implementation of the Elections Act 2022, however, the level of grants is yet to be confirmed.

**5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There is a legal duty on the local authority to provide accommodation for polling stations with the Representation of the People Act 1983, Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III, paragraph 22.

- 5.2 Planned elections do not have an impact on the 190 statutory days of education (189 days for –2022) as the 28 schools that do not open to pupils set a planned INSET day. Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999.
- 5.3 In the exception of an unexpected school closure due to unscheduled elections, a school can mitigate by a move to online virtual learning where an INSET day has not been planned.
- 5.4 Polling stations must be accessible to all -Section 20, 29 and 31, Equality Act 2010.
- 5.5 Use of schools and public rooms- Rule 20(1)(a), The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.
- 5.6 Provision of polling stations Rule 23(1-4), The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 6.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 There is a legal duty on the local authority to provide accommodation for polling stations with the Representation of the People Act 1983, Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III, paragraph 22.
- 7.2 If a certain school or room is deemed to be the most suitable venue, then the school cannot refuse to allow it to be used. The benefit of designating a school as a polling station ensures that the venue can be used, free of charge, for scheduled and unscheduled elections. All schools have appropriate disabled access. Schools can allocate an INSET day if they choose to close on polling day. Unscheduled elections, for schools that close, may cause disruption to staff, parents, and pupils.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 Ward councillors for the affected ward of Moreton West & Saughall Massie have been consulted on the proposed moves and there have been no objections to the proposals.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Wirral Council has an ongoing responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (S149) to take equality implications into consideration in policy decision, implementation, and day to day activities. The impact on those with protected characteristics under the Act were taken into consideration during this exercise when assessing the overall suitability of a venue. Any changes to venues and or arrangements will be assessed with equality impacts in mind and other voting practices such as proxy and postal voting remains in place for those who wish to use it.



## 10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

## 11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The use of privately owned venues benefits local businesses financially, but it also promotes and enhances the social network in the local area. Furthermore, it redirects wealth back into the local community.

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## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary findings doc

Appendix 2 – Cost implications (contains exempt financial information)

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Representation of the People Act 1983

Equality Act 2010

The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.

Education Act 1996

Polling Place visit reports

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is presented to Committee in accordance with section 8.2(i) of the Committees terms of reference.

## SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Regulatory &amp; General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022</b>
<b>Regulatory &amp; General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2022</b>
<b>Regulatory &amp; General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>Wednesday 01<sup>st</sup> Feb 2023</b>
<b>Regulatory &amp; General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023</b>

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## Appendix 1 – Summary Findings

Proposed Polling Stations to be moved.				
Ward	Polling District	Current venue	Alternative Venue	Recommendation
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	YB	Moreton Community Centre	Moreton Methodist Church	<p>Suitable alternative venue. All ward Councillors have been consulted and support this proposal.</p> <p>Recommend Moreton Methodist Church as the most suitable venue for polling district YB.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Cost implications (contains exempt financial information)

Ward	PD	Current Location	Current Cost	Alternative	Cost
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	YB	Moreton Community Centre	£350.00	Moreton Methodist Church	£480.00

Current hire charge for the venue listed above is £350.00 (based on 2023 election costs)

Proposed Total cost to implement change circa £180.00-£230.00

Potential rental increase of £130.00

Please note that signage will be required at the polling station to advise electors that the polling station has moved. The banners are approximately £50.00 - £100.00 each.



## REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

31 January 2024

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>BOROUGH ELECTION FEES AND CHARGES</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF LAW &amp; CORPORATE SERVICES</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the proposed fees to be paid to the Returning Officer and his staff employed to undertake duties at the elections held within the Borough.

The next scheduled Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and The Combined Authority Mayoral elections (CAM) will take place on Thursday 02 May 2024.

The election fees for 2024 are set out in Appendix 1.

Fees and charges have been considered and endorsed by the Returning Officer.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee are invited to comment on the report and to endorse the decision of the Returning Officer pertaining to the fees as outlined in Appendix 1.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

1.1 It is considered good practice to present election fees to this committee.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

2.1 Consideration has been given to a range of fees which could be paid to the Returning Officer (RO) and his staff. To prevent disparity between the fees paid by Local Authorities, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has worked closely with the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Elections Funding Working Group (EFWG) to develop a pay structure for all staff working on polls funded from the Consolidated Fund. The recommendation put forward has been informed by both national guidance, the EFWG, and information gathered from other Merseyside Local Authorities.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

3.1 The cost of a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Election is met from a Central Government funding grant and the Government will provide a Fees & Charges order that will detail fees to be paid. The cost of the Combined Authority Mayoral (CAM) Elections are met from the funding provided by the Combined Authority, provisional agreement has been provided by the Combined Authority that the fees to be paid will be in line with the PCC Fees & Charges Order.

Each of the 41 police areas in England (excluding London) and Wales has a Police Area Returning Officer (PARO). The Secretary of State is responsible for designating a PARO for each police area, who must be an (Acting) Returning Officer for a UK Parliamentary constituency falling wholly or partly within the police area. The PARO is by law responsible for:

- publishing the notice of election
- the conduct of the nomination process
- ensuring that the requirements as to the content of candidate election addresses, and the procedures for submitting them, are complied with, and.

- The calculation of votes given for each candidate and the declaration of the result
- the overall conduct of the election of the Police and Crime Commissioner for their police area and for liaising with and co-ordinating the work of Local Returning Officers in the police area.

3.2 A Local Returning Officer is appointed for each voting area, for example each local authority area within the police area. The appointment of Local Returning Officers for the PCC elections flows automatically from appointment as the Returning Officer for local government elections in that local authority area.

3.3 At a Combined Authority Mayoral Election, the person appointed as Returning Officer for principal area elections will be the Local Returning Office for the Combined Authority Mayoral Election.

The combined authority must also appoint one of its officers, or one of the officers of a constituent council, to be the Combined Authority Returning Officer (CARO) for the election. The CARO is responsible for the overall conduct of the combined authority mayoral election, and for liaising with and co-ordinating the work of ROs within the combined authority. The CARO will also have specific responsibilities for the election, including administering the nomination process and calculating and declaring the result.

3.4 The Local Returning Officer is the employer of the staff engaged specifically to run elections.

3.5 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed scale of fees for the Local Returning Officer (LRO) and his staff employed in relation to running the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Combined Authority Mayoral elections.

3.6 The fees have been determined by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) who have devised a set of pay bands that apply to all polls across Great Britain paid for by the consolidated fund. These pay bands have been calculated based on data provided by the Elections Funding Working Group (EFWG) and in turn uplifted and updated to reflect additional responsibilities introduced by the Elections Act 2022 as well as changes to average public sector pay and national minimum wage since then.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The fees and charges payable are set out in Appendix 1 of this report. Fees and charges will be met from the funding allocation grants.

## **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Such implications are set out in this report  
The role of the Local Returning Officer is prescribed by legislation.

## **6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

6.1 Such implications are set out in this report. The Local Returning Officer has a statutory obligation to provide for such resources as considered necessary to run effective elections.

## **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

7.1 In order for elections to be administered, election staff must be paid for work undertaken. Furthermore, it is imperative that election staff are engaged in election training for which a training fee is paid.

7.2 Failure to agree a fees and charges structure could undermine the effective administration of elections and result in the Local Returning Officer not being able to appoint the staff required to run elections which will expose the Council and Local Returning Officer to considerable risk and liability.

## **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

8.1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the five Merseyside election authorities have been consulted and election fees have been compared. The Local Returning Officer has considered and agreed the fees and charges.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct equality implications relating to this report. The temporary election roles are open to all people who have relevant experience.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no known environment or climate implications.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**



11.1 Residents from the Wirral and Combined Authority area are employed in temporary roles. Elections create local employment opportunities. Local venues are hired for use as polling places. Not only does this create a source of income for local businesses but it also generates interest and inclusion in local business events that may not have existed if the footfall into venues had not been created.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1- scale of fees for the Local Returning Officer and his staff employed in relation to running elections.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Representation of the People Act 1983

MRA Allocations for the Police Area and Local Returning Officers at the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections on 6 May 2021 (including subsequent by-elections)

Retail Price Index- Office for National Statistics

Regulation 3(2) of the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Functions of Returning Officers) Regulations 2012.

3 Regulation 4(1) of the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Functions of Returning Officers) Regulations 2012.

## **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>20 March 2019</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>22 March 2021</b>
<b>Regulatory and General Purposes Committee</b>	<b>23 March 2022</b>

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## Appendix 1 Schedule of Election Fees 2024

	Fees agreed by RO
Role	
Returning Officer / Acting Returning Officer- £475 per 10,000 electors or part thereof	
Deputy Returning Officer (full powers)	10% of ARO fee
Deputy Returning Officer (Specific powers)	TBC
Election Project Management in conjunction with a Deputy Returning Officer with full powers	10% ARO fee
Presiding Officer	£18.00ph
Polling Station Inspector	£18.00ph
Poll Clerk	£12.00ph
Training Presiding Officer/Polling Station Inspector	£40.00
Training Poll Clerk	£25.00
Postal Vote Opening Supervisor (per hour)	£18.50
Postal Vote Opening Reviewers (per hour)	£14.50
Postal Vote Opening Clerks (per hour)	£12.00
Senior Count Staff Training	£30.00
Verification/Count Supervisor	£29.40/hr night 9.30pm-8am/Sat rate £19.60/hr day rate
Head Counter	£27.00/hr night 11pm-8am / Sat rate £18.00/hr day rate
Senior Counter	£21.00/hr night 9.30pm-8am / Sat rate £14.00/hr day rate

Verification/Counting Assistant * Guaranteed minimum payment of 4 hours	£16.00/hr night 9.30pm-8am /Sat rate) £12.00/hr day rate
Poll Card Delivery per card	0.20p
Clerical (per 10,000 electors or part)	£546.60
Travelling Expenses Travelling expenses of the Returning Officer and any other officer employed by him where necessary to plan for the poll or otherwise in connection with the conduct of the election.	£0.45p per mile

\* Rates for work undertaken during evenings and Saturdays can be uplifted up to a maximum of **1.5x** the hourly daytime rate for the role.

\* Rates for work undertaken on Sundays and bank holidays can be uplifted up to a maximum of **2x** the hourly daytime rate for the role.

## **TABLE 2**

### **Proposed Returning Officer Fees and Charges for Elections**

<b>SCALE OF FEES</b>	<b>£ gross</b>
<b>Services</b>	
Printing and provision of ballot papers	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Printing official poll cards.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Printing and providing notices and other documents required in and about the election or poll and cost of publishing such notices and documents	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Renting of any building, room or equipment for the purposes of the election and for expenses of heating, lighting and cleaning any building or room or repairs to equipment.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Hiring or constructing a polling station for the purposes of the election and for expenses of heating, lighting and cleaning any building or room or repairs to equipment.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Providing ballot boxes, including repairs	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Conveyance of ballot boxes, equipment etc.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Delivery and collection of voting compartments	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Printing copies of the register of electors	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Postage.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Election stationery and materials, general stationery, telephone calls, bank charges, cost of delivery of documents to the Returning Officer and miscellaneous expenses.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Premium for Employer's Liability, Third Party and Personal Indemnity Insurance.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
<b>In an uncontested election</b>	

For printing and providing notices and other documents required in and about the election and costs of publishing such notices and documents.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>
Postages, telephone calls and any other necessary miscellaneous expenses.	<b>Actual and necessary</b>

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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## **Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Terms of Reference**

The principal role of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is as the administrative committee, established as an ordinary committee and acting under delegation pursuant to sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, and responsible for making decisions as licensing and registration authority on all regulatory matters not otherwise delegated to the Planning Committee or reserved to the Licensing Act Committee.

The Committee is charged by full Council to fulfil all of those functions, more particularly described as set out at Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), and associated matters, including but not limited to:

- (a) functions relating to licensing, registration and ancillary matters other than those falling within the remit of the Licensing Act Committee, including but not limited to:
  - acupuncture, tattooing, ear-piercing and electrolysis;
  - caravan sites;
  - charity collections and street collections;
  - hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences, drivers and operators;
  - entertainments;
  - market and street trading,
  - pleasure boats and pleasure vessels;
  - scrap yards;
  - sex shops and sex establishments;
  - solemnisation of marriages;
  - theatres and cinemas;
  - zoos, animal trainers and exhibitors and dangerous wild animals;
- (b) functions relating to health and safety at work, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the authority's capacity as an employer;
- (c) functions relating to sea fisheries;
- (d) functions relating to statutory nuisance and contaminated land;
- (e) the passing of a resolution that schedule 2 to The Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the authority's area;
- (f) commons regulation and town and village greens, the power to apply for an enforcement order against unlawful works on registered common land, the power to protect unclaimed registered common land and unclaimed town or village greens against unlawful interference and the power to institute proceedings for offences in respect of unclaimed land;
- (g) the power to make a closing order on a takeaway food shop;
- (h) the obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976;

- (f) functions relating to elections and electoral registration not otherwise reserved to Full Council, including the making of recommendations to the Council as to recommendations to the Secretary of State on ward boundaries;
- (g) Power to consider and make recommendations to the Council on matters relating to the name and status of the Borough and individuals; and
- (h) making recommendations to Council on the promotion or approval of local bill.