Ribble Valley Borough Council
Report to Policy and Finance Committee

Meeting date: 2 April 2019
Title: Returning Officers’ Scale of Fees 2019/20 – Borough and Parish Elections
Submitted by: Chief Executive
Principal author: Marshal Scott

1 Purpose
1.1 To agree the adoption of the Returning Officers’ Scale of Fees in connection with the Borough and Parish Council Elections taking place on 2 May 2019 and any other local elections or referenda that might arise in 2019/20.

2 Introduction
2.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires each Council to appoint an officer of the authority as Returning Officer to undertake various statutory duties in relation to election procedures. In addition, the Council must provide the Returning Officer with the necessary resources to enable efficient and lawful delivery of the elections. The Returning Officer for Ribble Valley Borough Council is the Chief Executive.

3 Background to Returning Officers Scale of Fees
3.1 The Returning Officer is held personally responsible for the organisation and conduct of every election held within the Borough and in the case of the General Election the Ribble Valley Parliamentary Constituency which extends into the neighbouring Borough of South Ribble.

3.2 For National Elections and Referenda the fee paid to the Returning Officer and the cost of the election itself is set by the Government and regulated by the relevant Returning Officers’ Fees and Charges Order.

3.3 For Local Elections the Council will set scale fees which the Returning Officer should not exceed.

3.4 In order to approach setting these scale fees in a broadly consistent manner within Lancashire, a working group of Election Officers developed a scale of fees to be used. This took place in 2007 and those fees have since been updated annually in line with inflation and more recently the general staff pay award.

3.5 It is clearly good practice for these fees to be approved by the Council to which they will apply.

3.6 For Parish Council Elections we agreed many years ago not to recharge the cost of administering these elections to Parishes but for the Borough Council to bear the cost.
4 RETURNING OFFICERS SCALE OF FEES 2019/20

4.1 The recommended Scale of Fees for 2019/20 are set out below:-

**Returning Officer**

For Borough Elections the fee to be as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Ward</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contested</td>
<td>£198.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontested</td>
<td>£99.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Parish Elections the fee to be as follows:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Ward</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contested</td>
<td>£99.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontested</td>
<td>£49.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Deputy Returning Officer**

Deputy Returning Officer with full powers – 75% of the Returning Officers’ fee

**Presiding Officers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Election</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borough Elections</td>
<td>£212.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Elections</td>
<td>£212.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined [20% uplift]</td>
<td>£255.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Poll Clerks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Election</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borough Elections</td>
<td>£128.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Elections</td>
<td>£128.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined [20% uplift]</td>
<td>£153.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Training Sessions**

Where these are held for Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks working on Borough and Parish Elections £25 per session.

**Issuing and Opening of Postal Votes**

An overall allowance of £85.00 per 100 votes or part thereof per ward for both Borough and Parish Elections to be deployed as felt appropriate by the Returning Officer.

**Count and General Clerical Fees**

An overall allowance for the Count and General Clerical Duties of £114.15 per ward per 1,000 elections or part thereof for both Borough and Parish Elections. Where an election is uncontested the fee will be £39.90 per ward.
The Council and General Clerical fee to be deployed as felt appropriate by the Returning Officer.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 Financial Implications
The Council’s overall budget for the Borough and Parish Council elections on 2 May 2019 is £120,000. The actual cost of the Elections will ultimately depend on the number of contested seats.

5.2 Technical, Environment and Legal
The Elections will be conducted in accordance with Election Law and appropriate procedures and guidance.

5.3 Reputation
The efficient and effective administration of elections is vital to ensure the public has confidence in the Electoral process.

6 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

6.1 Agree the Returning Officers’ Scale of Fees for 2019/20 Borough and Parish Elections as set out in Section 4 of this report.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE