

# **Licensing and Regulatory Committee**

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 February 2015, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 2.30pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Illingworth (Chairman); Councillors Doody, Mrs Falp, Mrs Gallagher, Gill, Mrs Higgins, Mrs Knight, Mrs Mellor, Pratt, Wilkinson and Wreford-Bush.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors De-Lara-Bond, Mrs Grainger and Mrs Goode.

Councillor Mrs Falp filled the Independent Group vacancy.

## **40. Substitutes**

There were no substitutes.

## **41. Declarations of Interest**

Minute Number 42 – Warwick District Council and Parish election Scale of fees 2015

All Councillors declared an interest because they were all Parish and Town Councillors.

## **42. Warwick District Council and Parish Election Scale of fees 2015**

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive which sought agreement for the proposed Warwick District Council and Parish Election Scale of fees for 2015.

The Council was required to establish the fees payable to persons employed by the Returning Officer at its elections held every four years and at any by-election held in between.

For many years prior to 1985, the scale of election fees was approved by Committee and eventually by the Council. In July 1985 the Council confirmed a recommendation from the then Policy and Resources Committee that the scale of fees should be increased on 1 April each year by the amount of the most recent average annual pay settlement awarded to staff.

The authority for approving these fees had now been delegated by Council to the Licensing & Regulatory Committee.

In September 2004 the Regulatory Committee agreed that the fees continue to be increased each year in line with the annual salary award. However, it was considered appropriate the Committee reconsidered this agreement.

The fees had been discussed by Warwickshire Elections Officers who considered these to be appropriate fees for the roles. The intention was to establish a set fee across Warwickshire. This was because for the

elections due to take place in May there was a significant level of cross boundary work between authorities (as a consequence of the Parliamentary Constituencies).

The scale of fees for 2015 was set out at Appendix 1 to the report and was subject to the inclusion of any increase as a result of a national pay award for Council workers as at 1 April 2015 and subsequent increase by the annual national pay awards for Council workers in each following year up to 2019.

The recommendation did not impact on the Council's Budgetary Framework and could be funded within the proposed budget for the Election in 2015. Members were mindful that some of this cost would be recharged to Parish Councils and that, in addition to this fee, a supplement would be made because of the UK Parliamentary General Election.

An alternative option was that the Committee could ask officers to undertake further assessment of neighbouring authorities fees, such as those in Worcestershire or Coventry. However, this could not be undertaken in time for the forthcoming election and an interim position would have to be agreed.

Members were mindful that this report should have been submitted earlier however they accepted that the introduction of Independent Electoral Registration (IER) had taken priority within the team. In addition, it was noted that the fees had not increased radically since last time and it was agreed that this would help to avoid staff being poached by other authorities.

It was therefore proposed, duly seconded, and

**Resolved** that the Warwick District Council and Parish Election Scale of fees 2015 are approved, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to the inclusion of any increase as a result of a national pay award for Council workers as at 1 April 2015 and subsequent increase by the annual national pay awards for Council workers in each following year up to 2019.

(The meeting ended at 2.44 pm)