

23-05 Finance Committee

Agenda item: To consider moving the elections budget to an ear marked reserve

Councils are required by law to cover the costs of local elections, which are organised by the returning officer at the local district council.¹

As this is a legal requirement, budgetary provision needs to be available to cover these costs. Setting aside a budget reduces the risk of the council having insufficient budget available to cover election costs.

If this was set-up as a reserve this can be built up and then topped up annually accordingly rather than re-allocating the full amount every year, potentially freeing up funding for other expenditure.

The 2023/24 budget is £7,500. This is a reasonable budget, considering the indicative cost of a full election in the parish is currently around £2,500.

There are currently a number of vacancies on the council available for co-option, and the election was uncontested, meaning there will not be a full election charge.

To protect the expenditure from other areas, it is recommended the budget is ring-fenced rather than ear marked.

Recommendation: Finance Committee agree to move £4,000 of the elections budget to a ring-fenced reserve fund, which can be built upon in future years.

¹ Representation of the People Act 1983, section 35 and 36