Purpose of report
To seek approval for new rates of pay for the authority’s canvassing activity being undertaken this Autumn.

1.0 Background

1.1 The authority’s 2017 canvass began on 23 August 2017 with the initial post out of Household Enquiry Forms (HEF) being released and arrangements to send the reminder stage data are now being carried out. Usually by this stage there would be a response rate of approximately 40-45%. For properties that do not utilise the electronic response method or return the HEF, the Electoral Registration Officer is required to arrange a personal visit.

1.2 This report details proposals for a fee structure for this year’s canvass and potentially future canvasses.

2.0 Issues to consider

2.1 Over the previous two canvasses the authority has paid the following rates of pay since the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration (IER):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at a briefing session provided by the Electoral Services Team</td>
<td>£25.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Administration fee which covers preparation of different forms being canvassed, visits and return of paperwork | £0.10 per form for urban rounds  
£0.15 per form for rural rounds |
| Property visit                                                           | £0.60 per property           |
| Mileage payable from first property visited to last property (mileage cannot be claimed from home or to home) | £0.45 per mile               |

2.2 The above fee structure was introduced in response to IER and the changes to canvassing i.e. canvassers have both a Household Enquiry Form (HEF) and, where applicable, an Invitation to Register form (ITR) to collect. When canvassing an ITR, canvassers are required to collect sensitive information from electors, such as dates of birth and national insurance numbers.

2.3 Over the previous two canvasses the return rates have dropped by approximately 6-8%. This is partly due to the introduction of IER and potentially due to the above payment scheme, which doesn’t give the canvasser an incentive to visit properties more than once. The Electoral Registration Officer is required to publish a comprehensive and accurate register, and to achieve this some properties require more than one door knock.

2.4 It is proposed that the following fees structure be adopted for this forthcoming canvass:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at a briefing session provided by the Electoral Services Team</td>
<td>£25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property visit</td>
<td>£0.21 per property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of a completed HEF or ITR</td>
<td>£1.00 per form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mileage payable from first property visited to last property (mileage cannot be claimed from home or to home)</td>
<td>£0.45 per mile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 It is worth recording that an additional incentive for canvassers is the opportunity to have first refusal on the same rounds for the delivery of poll cards for electoral events. With a fee payable of £0.21 per poll card, this makes canvass work more attractive and is widely recognised as the “pay off” to make the canvass more worthwhile.

3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

3.1 An initial Equality Impact has been carried out and all equality and diversity implications are neutral. Neither a positive nor a negative impact has been identified. The Equality Impact Assessment can be accessed as a background document.

4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 The authority is required under Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to provide the Electoral Registration Officer with the resources required to fulfil his statutory duties under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. This report is submitted to enable the authority to meet its obligation.

5.0 Risk Management

5.1 Failure to agree the proposed fee structure may present a risk in respect of the ERO’s ability to undertake his duties if he fails to publish a comprehensive and accurate Register of Electors for the 1 December 2017 publication.

6.0 Resource and Financial Implications

6.1 The staffing costs for the canvass process in 2016/2017 were £7,805. It is estimated that the canvass process for 2017/2018 using the proposed fee structure is £9,090. This estimate is calculated using the assumption that 25% (approximately 10,000) of properties will require a visit and that the door knock stage will return 6,000 completed outstanding HEF/ITR’s.

6.2 It is anticipated that the proposed change can be accommodated within the existing electoral registration budget.

7.0 Constitutional Implications

7.1 There are no constitutional implications arising from this report.

9.0 Implications for our Customers

9.1 As stated above, the proposal will promote the production of a more accurate and comprehensive Register of Electors which will be of general benefit to our customers.

9.0 Corporate Outcomes

9.1 The proposal contributes primarily to Effective Management by ensuring that the canvass process is successful in maximising electoral registration.
10.0 Recommendation

10.1 The Sub-Committee is recommended to approve the Fees Structure for Electoral Registration for the 2017 canvass set out in paragraph 2.4 and after the publication of the electoral register to review the canvass return rate and to consider if the payment structure needs to be reviewed prior to the 2018 canvass.

(Reason: To ensure that the canvass process is successful in maximising electoral registration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal</th>
<th>Power: Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Representation of the People Act 1983</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other considerations:

Background Papers: Previous report to Personnel Sub-Committee – 21 September 2015

Person Originating Report: David Oliver – Electoral Registration Officer
d 01832 742105  doliver@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk

Date: 22 August 2017

CFO | MO | CX |