

**From:** Cllr Joe Harris Joe.Harris@Cotswold.gov.uk  
**Subject:** CLARIFICATION AND CORRECTION - Town and Parish Council Election Charges  
**Date:** 3 December 2021 at 17:31  
**To:** Caroline Braidwood clerk@prestonpc.org.uk



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## Parish and Town Council Election Charges

Dear All,

You may have seen the email sent out yesterday by Cotswold District Council about recharging town and parish councils for the cost of their elections.

Unfortunately, we hit send too quickly and the email that you received was a first draft and didn't contain the context for the Cabinet report or indeed the correct figures. Please accept my apologies for this and see clarification below.

### **The context**

We're considering this decision for two key reasons.

#### ***The Council's financial position***

As you will have seen from our recent budget consultation, the District Council's financial position remains uncertain.

Despite our efforts to rebuild the council's finances over the past two and a half years, the Government's fairer funding review (which has been postponed again) is likely to reduce our funding even further in the next few years. Inflationary pressures and pandemic uncertainty both add to the strain on our medium term financial position.

We therefore have to make decisions now to ensure we are in a secure position to weather the forthcoming financial storm.

#### ***Taking responsibility***

We're keen to modernise and enhance the relationship between the District Council and the town and parish councils in our District.

As those of you who attended one of the Town and Parish Council Fora will know this means a move away from the 'parent and child' relationship that one parish councillor once described to me, to one where we're partners with clear responsibilities and expectations of each other.

That is why in this instance we're considering asking parish and town councils to cover the cost of their own contested elections.

The Government covers the cost of general elections and national referenda. County Council elections are paid for by Gloucestershire County Council while Cotswold District Council currently pays for its own elections and all contested town and parish council elections in the district.

In light of this, we believe it is reasonable to be considering whether town and parish councils should pay for their own contested elections, as is the case in neighbouring Stroud, Cheltenham and Gloucester. The proposal before Cabinet on Monday is to implement this change for any elections after April 2023 including the next scheduled elections in May 2023. **This would allow town and parish councils to make provision for these costs within their 22/23 and 23/24 budgets.**

### **The figures**

Please disregard the figures in the table at the bottom of yesterday's email. We will provide revised indicative figures for the costs of by-elections and scheduled elections in each parish next week.

My apologies once again for any concern that yesterday's email may have caused. If you want to watch Monday's cabinet meeting where the decision will be taken please [follow this link](#). You can also [view the report](#) associated with this decision. The meeting starts at 6pm.

Kind regards,

Cllr Joe Harris  
Leader of Cotswold District Council

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