



Appointment of Combined Authority Returning Officer

To: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board

Meeting Date: 27 January 2021

Public report: Yes

Lead Member: Mayor James Palmer

From: Robert Parkin, Monitoring Officer

Key decision: No

Forward Plan ref: n/a

Recommendations: The Combined Authority Board is recommended to:

Appoint John Hill, Chief Executive, as the Combined Area Returning Officer for the purposes of Article 6 of the Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 for the Mayoral election to be held on 6 May 2021.

Voting arrangements: A simple majority of all Members present and voting

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Appointment of Combined Area Returning Officer (CARO) for the Mayoral election to be held on 6 May 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 at Article 6 (1) states:

6. – Combined Authority Returning Officer

(1) The Combined Authority must appoint one of its officers, or one of the officers of a constituent Council, to be the Combined Authority Returning Officer in relation to the election.

Election in this context means an election for the return of a Combined Authority Mayor

- 2.2 John Hill, the current Joint Chief Executive of the CPCA, was the CARO for the 2017 Mayoral elections. He has also been appointed as the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO) for the Police and Crime Commissioner elections for 2021.
- 2.3 The CARO is a significant and complex role responsible for the overall management of the Mayoral elections with specific responsibility for administering the nomination process, calculating and declaring the result and production of candidates addresses.
- 2.4 The timetable and process for the Mayoral elections are very closely aligned with the PCC elections and with similar requirements for the approval of election addresses and the two stage voting process. It is therefore important to align the arrangements for PARO and CARO where possible.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The cost of the 2017 Mayoral elections was £1.037 million. The Combined Authority has allocated £1.04 million for the 2021 elections based on an annual provision of £260,000 over four years. The costs of the 2021 elections will be significantly affected by the cost implications of COVID 19 and the number of other elections coinciding with the Mayoral election. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the current budget allocation for the 2021 Mayoral elections will suffice. Further updated cost estimates will be forwarded to members when available.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The legal implications are summarised in the report.

5. Appendices

None

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Electoral Commission Guidance - [Guidance and resources for Returning Officers administering local government elections taking place in England and Wales, as well as our guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers administering a combined authority mayoral election in England](#)
- 6.2 Electoral Commission Guidance - [Planning Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers](#)
- 6.3 Electoral Commission Guidance - [Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers on the delivery of key processes](#)