

<b>FOI REF:</b>	15095
<b>RESPONSE SENT:</b>	04/02/2025

## Request

Find below a Freedom of Information request relating to the cost of local authority elections. Please provide between January 2021- December 2024:

- How often local election cycles are held excluding by-elections. For example, the full council is elected every four years or a third of councillors are elected every year except the county council year.
- The year or years local elections took place in the latest cycle since 2021 excluding by-elections. For example, if there is one local election where all councillors are elected once every four years then provide the year in which that election was held. If councillors are elected by thirds over a four-year period, then provide all years within the time period that these elections took place in the latest cycle to elect all councillors.
- The total cost of each local council election held excluding by-elections broken down by election. For example, if there is one election where all councillors are elected once every four years then provide the cost of running that election. If councillors are elected by thirds over a four-year period, then provide the costs for each of those three elections in the latest cycle.

Please see an example response below:

Full election date Cost of election

May-21	X
May-22	X
May-23	X
May-24	X

## Response

Winchester City Council elects councillors in thirds, and our fallow year we conduct the Hampshire County Council elections for the divisions within our district. Due to COVID the government delayed elections therefore 2021 was the unusual combination of PCC, County and local elections.

Full elections costs:

2021	WCC / PCC / HCC	109,749.21
2022	WCC	223,111.19
2023	WCC	299,186.77
2024	WCC / PCC	147,866.23

Winchester City Council elects' councillors in thirds, and in our fallow year we conduct Hampshire County Council elections for those divisions within our district. Due to COVID the government postponed polls therefore 2021 was the unusual combination of PCC< HCC and WCC elections.

2021- There were multiple polls therefore many costs were shared, i.e. polling stations, polling staff etc. However, due to covid regulations there were additional costs incurred for covid signage (mask wearing, social distancing etc) screens for polling stations and additional cleaning at postal vote opening venue.

2022 - Due to some changes in legislation all staff working at an election now have entitlement to holiday pay thus increasing our staffing costs.

2023 - Due to changes in legislation (Elections Act 2022) we are now required to provide more equipment to ensure elections are accessible to all. Grips for ballot pencils were purchased also an electronic device to assist those with poor, little or no sight to vote independently.

2024 - Combined poll where we share many costs, i.e. poll card printing and postage, polling stations and polling staff.

The table below shows where the costs are within our financial years:

workings re FY vs Poll Yr		
FY	prior FY re current Poll Yr	Total Poll Yr
108,061.66	1,687.55	109,749.21
221,864.79	1,246.40	223,111.19
291,992.79	7,193.98	299,186.77
133,247.49	14,618.75	147,866.23

