



**Wigan**  
**Council**

Find below a Freedom of Information request relating to the cost of local authority elections.

Please provide between Jan 2021- Dec 2024:

1. 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.

*For Wigan Council a third of councillors are elected every year except the county council year (also known as a fallow year and the next one being 2025.)*

2. 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.

*May-2021 Councillors elected by thirds (Please note 2021 would have normally been a fallow year but due to COVID the delayed 2020 Local & Mayoral combined elections took place in May 2021 instead.)*

*May-2022 Councillors elected by thirds*

*May-2023 All out elections due to Local Government Boundary Changes*

*May-2024 Councillors elected by thirds combined with GM Mayoral Elections.*

3. 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.

With reference to your request for information, I would like to draw your attention to the distinction between the roles of the local authority and those of the Returning Officer for local elections.

The role of the Returning Officer is separate from that of the Chief Executive of the local authority and the responsibilities and duties associated with the former roles are personal to the postholder. A list of public bodies and local authorities that are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act is available at the following website:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/schedule/1>

As you will see, the Freedom of Information Act does not list any person appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (or related electoral legislation). It therefore follows that the (Acting) Returning Officer or any other person appointed under the 1983 Act (or related electoral legislation) such as the Counting Officer, are not subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

However, given that some of the information is held by our finance department we have on this occasion been able to answer your questions.

May-21= £215,557 (combined Local & Mayoral election cost shared with GMCA)  
May-22= £331,306  
May-23= £488,156 (All out elections due to Local Government Boundary Changes)  
May-24= figures are not yet available due to combined poll and costs have not yet been split between GMCA and Wigan Council.