

West Sussex County Council – Written Questions

14 December 2018

1. Written question from **Mr Jones** for reply by the **Leader**

Question

Can the Leader please confirm how many Away Days have been held and attended by (a) the Cabinet and (b) the Executive Leadership Team during 2018/19, and let me have a breakdown of the costs associated for each, and the venues where they were held.

Answer

- (a) The Cabinet has had two away days during the year as follows; the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) were also in attendance.

Date	Cost	venue
9 October 2018	£290.83	Chichester yacht Club
6 November 2018	£247.00	Chichester Yacht Club
Total	£537.83	

- (b) ELT have held two away days (jointly with all Directors and with other senior officers):

Date	Cost	Venue
10/11 May 2018	£3,977.84	Roffey Park Institute
15/16 November 2018	£5,048.50	Roffey Park Institute
Total	£9,026.34	

2. Written question from **Mrs Mullins** for reply by the **Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources**

Question

In the outturn 2016/17, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources agreed a one-off £1.0m reserve entitled, 'Counselling Services to Schools', for the 2017/18 academic year. I understand that £0.56m was drawn down from the reserve and allocated to schools, through an application process. Can the Cabinet Member confirm how much of that £1.0m reserve was not allocated to schools for counselling services, whether a counselling service for schools reserve still exists, and if not, what happened to the remaining funding?

Answer

During 2017/18, following an application process open to all maintained schools within the county, a total of £0.617m was drawn down from the £1.0m counselling reserve set aside following the full Council meeting in February 2017.

As schools were expecting these monies to be one-off in 2017/18; no further application process has been carried out during 2018/19. As a result, to date, no further funds have been drawn down this year and the remaining £0.383m is currently held in reserves.

3. Written question from Mr S J Oakley for reply by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Question

Further to my written question for the 16 February 2018 full Council meeting regarding West Sussex County Council Pensions, from what resource were the annual £11.2m cash lump sums and the raised level (from 16.3% to 24.9%) of employer contributions funded?

Answer

Employer's pension contribution is revenue expenditure and treated as the same as any another expenditure category in the budget setting process. Any increase to employer's contribution is pressure on the budget. Likewise any reduction to employer's contribution is a savings to the revenue budget.

4. Written question from Mrs Mullins for reply by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure

Question

Over five years ago a process was initiated to look at solutions to parking problems in our towns and villages. So far there has been one full audit, carried out in Chichester, with a full report out to consultation, but no actions as yet taken and one partial audit, carried out in Crawley, with a very brief interim report, available for comment.

- (a) What was the final cost of the Road Space Audit for Chichester and how was it funded?
- (b) What is the estimated cost of the Road Space Audit for Crawley and how will it be funded?
- (c) What is the estimated cost of other road space audits in the county and how will they be funded?
- (d) What pressure is there, both now and in the future, on the finances of the Parking Account and the ability to finance other parking initiatives?

Answer

Road Space Audits (RSAs) are an innovative approach so there was some learning as the County Council implemented a new way of thinking about parking and road space. Originally, the service was trying to manage the work alongside business as usual, which has not proved to be sustainable, and a new post has been created in the last six months to create capacity. The County Council has worked

hard to keep stakeholders on board; this inevitably builds in more time but is helpful in the long run in creating proposals that have better prospects of local support.

- (a) The feasibility work that led to the production of the RSA document for Chichester cost £32,000. The design/consultation costs for the first stage of the RSA (Parking Management Plan) will cost £50,000. The full £82,000 is funded from the County Council's On-Street Parking Account.
- (b) To date, feasibility work leading to the production of a draft RSA for Crawley has cost £36,000 (including VAT). It is expected that design/consultation costs will replicate those of Chichester and come from the same account. The production of a draft design for a parking plan in Manor Royal (Mrs Mullins' division) has been carried out in-house and informal consultation is currently being carried out by the Manor Royal Business Improvement District with technical input from County Council officers.
- (c) In each area, £110,000 has been allocated from the On-Street Parking Account - £60,000 to cover feasibility and £50,000 to cover design/consultation for Parking Management Plans. The one-off costs of implementing any parking management plans (e.g. signs and lines) may be met from the following sources:
 - Capital funding
 - Additional income generated from new parking controls implemented
 - Section 106 funds
 - Community Infrastructure Levy
 - Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Programme Funding
- (d) The On-Street Parking Account is regularly monitored and profiled in order to ensure that it does not fall into deficit. The costs of running the Civil Parking Enforcement Service (including enforcement, maintenance and development) will continue to be met from that account and on-street parking charges will also be reviewed on an annual basis. Officers are equally keen to identify areas for improvement where necessary. Each Agency Agreement is under continuous review in order to ensure that every opportunity is taken to reduce costs and improve the efficiency of the service. As an example, the recent introduction of a new back office case management system (Chipside) in Chichester District is expected to result in significant processing efficiencies and annual savings of £15,000 per year, with further savings projected through the introduction of virtual permits. Chipside was also introduced in Crawley Borough Council in April 2017 and Mid Sussex in January 2018 and it is hoped that the remaining district/borough councils in West Sussex will follow suit over the next two to three years. Coupled with other opportunities, such as development of contactless on-street parking payments (with an associated reduction in cash collection costs) and scaling down the production/distribution of parking vouchers, it is expected that a further efficiency saving of £250,000 could be achieved countywide over the next one to two years.