

QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL UNDER PROCEDURAL RULE 10.0
COUNCIL – 19th November 2014

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLOR NIGEL BELL

Received on 14.11.14

1. Question: How much Council taxpayers money has been spent on the Legal costs on the Farm Terrace case?

This is not just the Counsels fees for the 2-Judicial Reviews but the overall costs since the start of the preparations including of course 'Officer time' and what amount is the Council likely to have to pay if costs are awarded against it?

Answer

To date the Council has spent £18,560 on counsels fees. The time spent to date by members of the legal department is 216 hours.

All parties were required to make their submissions regarding costs to Mr Justice Ouseley by 4:00 pm on Friday 14 November.

If the Judge orders the Council to pay any of the claimants costs the Council will receive a detailed bill from the claimants.

Until we get to such a point I am unable to answer the last part of this question.

For more information please contact Carol Chen Head of Democracy and Governance

Ext: 8350

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLOR ASIF KHAN

Received on: 14.11.14

1. Question: How much money is spent on paper and how much is spent on printing during the last 3 years?

Answer

The In-house print service has been focused on reducing print costs year on year. They actively seek best prices from external suppliers and have recently implemented a more efficient, cost effective and sustainable council wide print and copy solution. Since changing to these new arrangements there has also been a 15% (approximately) reduction in A4 copier paper usage.

Below are the figures for paper purchases for three years. This includes all envelopes/laminates/labels and combs purchased by the Print Section for the Council:

2012/13 - £25,023.43

2013/14 - £21,942.35

2014/15 - £12,350.81

Below are the figures for costs of printing and stationery for three years. This will include all stationery and printing costs – external printing, stationery items (i.e., pens etc), paper (a breakdown of costs is above), print consumable items, publications, print and copy internal recharges from the in-house print department:

2012/13 - £257,381.60

2013/14 - £258,905.53

2014/15 - £142,040.00

*For more information please contact: Jago Durant/Tracy Langley
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QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLOR SEAMUS WILLIAMS

Received on: 14.11.14

1. What is current status of the PSN accreditation does it look like the council will meet this criteria.

If it does not meet the criteria what are the implications if it does not meet this accreditation in terms of financial implications.

Further on a report into the IT systems said that council data had been lost from a server and the back-up of that data was lost. Was there an investigation to what data was lost and if not why?

Answer

What is current status of the PSN accreditation does it look like the council will meet this criteria.

Watford Borough Council currently hold PSN accreditation. Submissions for Watford Borough Council for 2014 are required by 31st Dec 2014. There is a project (within ModerniseIT) in progress to address all requirements for the 2014 submission. The IT Health check, a requirement for the PSN submission has already been undertaken by a third party and Capita are currently working through all remedial actions required. Officers are confident of meeting the submission timeline and all associated requirements with ModerniseIT continuing to programme.

If it does not meet the criteria what are the implications if it does not meet this accreditation in terms of financial implications.

If Watford Borough Council failed to achieve PSN accreditation then ultimately there is the risk of being disconnected from using PSN services. This would mean the Council would not be able to transfer data securely to other public sector bodies such as DWP. However it should be noted that other local authorities have failed to meet their accreditation status in the last year and this has not resulted in disconnection. In addition to this failure to meet accreditation does not result in an immediate disconnection. Based on the experience of 2013, the authority would fall into an escalation procedure where we would work with the Cabinet Office to agree appropriate remedial works within an agreed timeframe.

Further on a report into the IT systems said that council data had been lost from a server and the back-up of that data was lost. Was there an investigation to what data was lost and if not why?

I am not aware of any formal investigation by the Internal IT service into this incident at that time. This references the executive summary of the IT Strategy paper written by Actica Consulting Ltd in May 2011, which was initiated by Watford and Three Rivers due to significant issues with the internal IT service delivery. The particular area referenced failing backup hardware infrastructure. This was the paper that was used overall by Joint Committee and Joint Management Board to support and progress the investigation into outsourcing the internal IT service.

*For more information please contact Emma Tiernan
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