

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Questions	Answers
<p><b>1. COUNCILLOR TIM BEARDER</b></p> <p>Could you please provide a list and value of all the financial settlements exceeding £10,000 of cases where legal proceedings had been issued and the sums (including legal costs) paid out since May 2017.</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR JUDITH HEATHCOAT, DEPUTY LEADER</b></p> <p>The information requested is being compiled and will be circulated to all councillors when available.</p>
<p><b>2. COUNCILLOR JOHN HOWSON</b></p> <p>According to accounts filed with Companies House, one Multi-Academy Trust in Oxfordshire spent £1.9 million on central costs in 2019-20, and another Trust spent £2 million on legal and professional fees in the previous year. How much per school did Oxfordshire spend providing central services to maintained schools in 2019-20?</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION &amp; CULTURAL SERVICES</b></p> <p>The majority of central costs like IT, HR, Finance, Governor services, Insurance are bought in by schools from a number of providers so costs appear in the schools accounts as do costs associated with support staff, they are not costs to Oxfordshire.</p> <p>There are costs like External Audit which are listed for Academies but the costs for maintained schools are within the audit fees paid by Oxfordshire for the whole Council and are not separated out.</p> <p>The central costs in the academy statutory accounts can cover a wide variety of costs. MATs may show depreciation &amp; pension finance costs in this part of their statutory accounts.</p> <p>For Oxfordshire mainstream schools, these costs are reported as part of the County Council statutory accounts. As part of the year-end scrutiny of accounts process the finance team have offered to support the Member with some more detailed examination and explanation of this area.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY</b></p> <p>Academy schools within Multi-Academy Trusts have no choice about paying a central services fee, often at the rate of 5%, whereas maintained schools can obtain services from any provider. What is your view as to whether or not this freedom of choice is a good reason for primary schools in Oxfordshire to remain as maintained schools and not convert to becoming an academy?</p>	<p>The benefits of being a maintained school are significant. I would like to consider my response and come back to you at a later stage.</p>
<p><b>3. COUNCILLOR LIAM WALKER</b></p> <p>Can the cabinet member for Environment &amp; Transport update me as to the next steps with the Burford HGV consultation. As she knows this trial is having a detrimental effect on residents living in nearby villages who have seen an increase in HGV traffic avoiding this restriction.</p> <p><b>SUPPLEMENTARY</b></p> <p>If after meeting with local groups it turns out that a pause can be put to the experimental order,</p>	<p><b>COUNCILLOR YVONNE CONSTANCE, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT (inc. TRANSPORT)</b></p> <p>The next steps regarding the Burford weight restriction and the recent consultation will be the analysis of the data from the traffic count survey carried out in early February as well as the responses received during the six-month consultation. This will pick up any issues for nearby villages.</p> <p>A report will then be produced for the June 2021 Cabinet meeting which will outline the survey and consultation analysis, as well as summarise the impact of the first six months of the weight restriction. Prior to the June Cabinet meeting, officers will meet with Burford Town Council, local members and other officers within the County Council to discuss the results of the survey and consultation which will feed into an officer recommendation on the way to proceed with the experimental weight restriction in Burford.</p> <p>If I gave a view on that now I would be hampering myself when it comes to making a decision. It will depend entirely on what the officers recommend.</p>

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
what would you gain by running the order until February?	