

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

20 July 2021

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**Item 17 – Members’ Questions**

**From Cllr Brian Dalton, Salisbury Harnham West Division**

**To Councillor Richard Clewer, Leader of the Council**

**Question (21-03)**

Wiltshire Air Ambulance

On 21 July 2020, I tabled a motion to council (Motion 22) about Wiltshire Air Ambulance, which if memory serves me well, as it’s not attached to those minutes, it was unanimously approved by full council and resolved:

***To support the amended motion as set out below. This Council acknowledges the outstanding work of all those emergency, armed forces and other services, including our own staff, who responded to the Novichok attack in Salisbury and Amesbury. Among those who put themselves at risk were the Wiltshire Air Ambulance team. This Council notes the commitment made by Government to meet the costs incurred and the losses made by this Council and the other services involved including the Wiltshire Air Ambulance.***

*This Council calls on Government to honour that commitment This Council calls on its leadership to:*

- 1. meet with the leadership of Wiltshire Air Ambulance to formulate and execute a campaign to recover the costs*
- 2. make further representations directly to Government to meet the costs incurred by Wiltshire Air Ambulance in the Novichok attack*
- 3. work with our Wiltshire MPs to continue to support this campaign for the fair treatment of the Wiltshire Air Ambulance*

**One year on:**

- Can I ask if the council has met these three requirements (as at 13/07/21)?
- And if so, what has been the outcome of those three requirements?

## Response

Wiltshire Council has met with the Air Ambulance to discuss these outstanding costs. It was understood at that meeting that the direct costs from that incident – medical equipment and PPE – had already been covered through South Western Ambulance Service.

The charity has identified some indirect costs as follows from the period of closure (1 August – 14 August 2018):

- Charity team relocated to alternative offices in Trowbridge
- Volunteers unable to return equipment, cash tins or buckets
- Cash counting to be done manually and no cash counting facility
- Cancellation of Events as did not have access to fundraising equipment, marquees etc
- Paramedics relocated to Chippenham Ambulance Station
- Helicopter grounded

It was noted that Wiltshire Council had supported the Air Ambulance through this period by providing alternative office accommodation.

In addition, the charity discussed some sunk costs that might be considered, such as

- Pilots unable to fly
- Employed staff who were specific to the closed building – receptionist and facilities staff
- Depreciation cost on all assets – buildings, aircraft, medical equipment and aviation equipment
- HP interest on aircraft
- Associated costs of flying – CAA fees and the Chief Pilot Services
- Light, heat and water

These costs sit outside the commitment given by Government. The Government's position is that any business interruption impact should be covered by insurance. The charity did have business interruption insurance in place, however they note that this only covered the increased costs of working and not any potential loss in income.

Nonetheless, the query regarding the indirect costs was raised again with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on 26 February 2021 and followed up on 2 September 2021. While a response has been delayed due to re-deployment in the Department, they will consider whether further support is appropriate and respond in due course.