

**Wiltshire Council**

**Full Council**

**15 February 2022**

**Item 21 – Members’ Questions**

**From Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Corsham Ladbrook**

**To Councillor Laura Mayes, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member  
for Children’s Services, Education and Skills**

**Question (22-05)**

1. A few years ago, the Council acknowledged that it was falling short of its obligation to ensure there were sufficient pre-school places. Is this still the case?  
If not, how was the issue resolved?  
If it is what is the current unmet need?
2. How much money was spent on the conversion of a room at Springfield for use as a pre-school nursery?  
How much is it anticipated being spent to restore it to its previous use?  
Is there any opportunity of recouping any of these losses from the nursery provider who was contracted to run the service?

**Response**

1. There are currently sufficient pre-school places across Wiltshire. The need for additional childcare places in Corsham has not materialised as expected, and there is only 60% of the available capacity in the town and surrounding areas being used. The Council will continue to closely monitor demand across the county and ensure sufficiency is maintained.
2. £44,467.35 was spent converting the room at the Springfield Centre to enable it to be used as a pre-school.

There has not been a decision to restore the room to its previous use, and the Council is continuing to monitor the demand for places in the area. However, if the decision was made to restore the room, it would cost £13937.75. As the work was undertaken by the Local Authority the provider was not responsible for the cost of the conversion and there would not be an opportunity to recoup any losses if the room was restored to its previous use.