

COUNCIL
23 FEBRUARY 2010

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

**QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLOR TREVOR CARBIN
HOLT AND STAVERTON DIVISION**

TO COUNCILLOR JANE SCOTT, LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Question 1

What is the projected annual cost of the production (including officer time), printing and distribution of 'Your Wiltshire Magazine'?
Is there a policy on acceptance and cost of advertising which takes into account the need to protect local newspapers from unfair competition?
What proportion of recycled paper is used in the production of the magazine?

Response

What is the projected annual cost of the production (inc officer time) printing and distribution of Your Wiltshire magazine?

Your Wiltshire magazine is distributed to all 200,000 households in the county. The first two editions were pilot editions where different approaches to design, print, advertising sales and distribution were tested. Copywriting and design were carried out in-house at a cost of £3,500 for those two editions.

The first two editions cost a total of £71,000 for production, print and distribution. Those two editions were done in partnership with Newsquest Wiltshire (Wiltshire Gazette & Herald, Wiltshire Times and Chippenham News) who secured the advertising and printed the publication. There is no evidence that the residents' magazine will impact on the viability of local newspapers. In fact, these two pilot editions have generated income for Newsquest through the percentage taken by the company of the total advertising income and the print cost paid for by Wiltshire Council.

It is now intended to tender for the magazine and to produce a maximum of 10 editions during a calendar year, omitting August and December. This calendar year it is intended to produce seven editions. The cost of the magazine will be offset against advertising (estimated at £150,000).

Is there a policy on acceptance and cost of advertising which takes into account the need to protect local newspapers from unfair competition?

The cost of the magazine will be offset against advertising and the target is to generate £150,000 a year. The advertising accepted by Newsquest Wiltshire, on the council's behalf, is in line with the council's advertising and sponsorship policy, adopted by Cabinet last autumn. There is currently no intention to run public notices and recruitment advertisements in the residents' magazine, these will continue to be placed in local newspapers and specialist publications.

What proportion of recycled paper is used in the production of the magazine?

The paper used by Newsquest Wiltshire is PEFC accredited (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification scheme). The printing arrangements of the magazine will be re-assessed as part of the forthcoming tender exercise and it will be our aim to use the most appropriate recycled paper possible.

Question 2

Under the European Energy Performance of Buildings Directive large public buildings have to display energy efficiency certificates. In the initial assessment (Oct 2008) no Wiltshire Council buildings scored the top 'A' grade and the distribution was skewed towards the bad end of the spectrum. The legislation requires the publication of annual updates.

Is more recent data on the performance of Wiltshire Council buildings available?

Will the leader undertake to publish energy efficiency ratings on the council's website so the public can see if energy and money are being wasted or conserved?

Response

The Council has 177 buildings affected by this directive.

Whilst it is correct that none of these buildings were rated as 'A' grade in 2008, 63% were within the remaining highest categories B-D. The figures for 2009 are now available and show a similar picture.

It should be noted that nationally in 2008, over 28,000 Display Energy Certificates were produced, of which only 150 were given an 'A' rating. Wiltshire's current position is not too dissimilar to the average pattern nationally, where the majority of properties are rated within the middle of the spectrum (categories D-E) with relatively low numbers being classified in the top and bottom categories (A & G).

The Workplace Transformation Programme will be concentrating on the disposal of the Council's poorest and least energy efficient buildings, and will also be aiming to improve energy efficiency of those buildings that are being retained, e.g., the Programme has an overall target of reducing carbon emissions from office buildings by 40% over the next 3 to 4 years.

Individual authorities are not statutorily required to publish annual updates. The relevant information is automatically collected from all authorities by LANDMARK – an organisation employed by DCLG – and published on their website, which is accessible to the public. However, officers are currently working on the development of a number of energy related web pages for Wiltshire which should be available for inclusion on the Council's website within the next 2/3 months.