

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Your request for information has now been considered and the Council's response to your questions is shown below.

You asked:

I read in the Mercury that Cllr Vi Dempster was at a conference in Eastbourne last week.

Can you confirm if this was the case and if yes, what conference it was and what costs were incurred inc. accommodation, travel, subsistence etc and anything else the Council paid for, and also if any of the expenses were paid for by another organisation / sponsor or if the Council paid for everything.

Did any officer attend with Cllr Dempster and what costs were incurred for them too please.

ANSWER:

We can confirm that Councillor Vi Dempster attended the National Children and Adult Services Conference 2012 in Eastbourne. This is an annual event sponsored by the Local Government Association. The conference gives lead members and senior officers the chance to hear from key government ministers, to share current thinking and challenges with colleagues from other local authorities and to learn about innovative work going on in the field of children's and adult services.

Councillors and senior officers from local authorities across the country attend the event, as well as key personnel in relevant organisations such as Age UK, Action for Children, NSPCC and the Alzheimer's Society.

As well as Councillor Vi Dempster, Leicester sent two other delegates to the three-day conference Rachel Dickinson, Strategic Director for Children's Services and Deb Watson, Acting Strategic Director of Adults, Health and Housing (and Joint Director of Public Health and Health Improvement with NHS Leicester City), who attended for part of the event only due to other commitments.

Given the wide ranging reforms underway in both adult and children's services and in the context of a very difficult financial outlook, this national conference is critical for directors and lead members to share their experience and expertise in tackling the challenges that lie ahead.

Speakers this year included Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, Edward Timpson, Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, and David Laws, Minister of State for Schools. Other speakers were Debbie Jones, President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services, and Sarah Pickup, President of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services.

This is seen as an important event for people working in these fields. It enables them to keep up with their roles and responsibilities, share imaginative ideas and innovative solutions to problems, and hear what's coming up in terms of national policy changes directly from key ministers.

The costs excluding VAT are set out below:

| | Conference fee | Accommodation | Travel |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Cllr Vi Dempster | £450 | £240 (3 nights) | £198 |
| Rachel Dickinson | £450 | £240 (3 nights) | £196 |
| Deb Watson | £250 | £55 (1 night) | £66 |

As a joint appointment with the NHS, costs relating to Deb Watson's attendance on this occasion were paid for by the NHS, not Leicester City Council. The costs for Councillor Dempster and Rachel Dickinson were paid for by Leicester City Council, so the total cost met by the council was £1,774

The legislation allows you to use the information supplied for your own personal use. Please be aware that any commercial or other use, for example publication, sale, or redistribution may be a breach of copyright under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 as amended unless you obtain the copyright holder's prior permission.

Not all the information that is supplied which is covered by copyright will be the Council's copyright, for example it may be the copyright of a government department or another Council. You should seek either the Council's consent or their consent as appropriate. The Council is willing to advise you of any such potential issues on request. In order to make a request to re-use the information please contact the Information Governance Manager using the details below.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request please write to:

Information Governance Manager
Information and Support
Leicester City Council
FREEPOST (LE985/33)
New Walk Centre
LEICESTER LE1 6ZG
e-mail: info.requests@leicester.gov.uk

Your request for internal review should be submitted to the above address within 40 (forty) working days of receipt by you of this response. Any such request received after this time will only be considered at the Council's absolute discretion.

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 700

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Please be aware that the Information Commissioner does not normally consider appeals or complaints until the internal appeals and complaints processes of the public authority which is answering the request have been exhausted. You are therefore advised to complain or appeal to the Information Governance Manager before contacting the Commissioner.