

**Providing Council with Written Responses to Questions at Council –
23 June 2015**

1. Councillor E W Fitzgerald

Question:

What is the cost of sick absence to the Authority and what are the reasons for the sickness?

Response of the Leader:

COST OF SICKNESS ABSENCE – APR TO MAR 2014/15

- During April – March 2014/15, the equivalent of 65,849 FTE working days were lost to sickness.
- Assuming a full-time worker will work 235 days a year, this level of sickness is equivalent to 280 full-time staff.
- If those staff are employed at around the mid-point of the pay scale (£21,734), this amounts to approximately £6 million

The cost highlighted above form part of the budgeted salary payments in respect of staff who are sick. Additional costs over and above this will only be incurred in specific areas where, for operational reasons, cover must be maintained. This information is difficult to produce.

TOP 10 REASONS FOR SICKNESS 2014/15

Reason	% lost
Stress	23.68%
Hospitalisation	9.38%
Back Injuries	7.40%
Stomach Complaints	6.64%
Lower Limb Injuries	5.27%
Personal	4.72%
Chest Infections	4.37%
Body Injuries	3.87%
Carcinoma/Cancer/Leukaemia	3.56%
Influenza/Cold	3.53%

2. Mrs Lis Davies

Question:

A cost of £11.6 million relating to sickness at Coventry Council and the position of CCS between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. However the response made no reference to costs.

What were the monetary costs to CCS relating sickness levels between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015?

Response of the Leader:

COST OF SICKNESS ABSENCE – APR TO MAR 2013/14

- During April – March 2013/14, the equivalent of 58,182 FTE working days were lost to sickness.
- Assuming a full-time worker will work 235 days a year, this level of sickness is equivalent to 247 full-time staff.
- If those staff are employed at around the mid-point of the pay scale (£21,734), this amounts to approximately £5.3 million

COST OF SICKNESS ABSENCE – APR TO MAR 2014/15

- During April – March 2014/15, the equivalent of 65,849 FTE working days were lost to sickness.
- Assuming a full-time worker will work 235 days a year, this level of sickness is equivalent to 280 full-time staff.
- If those staff are employed at around the mid-point of the pay scale (£21,734), this amounts to approximately £6 million

The costs highlighted above form part of the budgeted salary payments in respect of staff who are sick. Additional costs over and above this will only be incurred in specific areas where, for operational reasons, cover must be maintained. This information is difficult to produce.

3. Mrs Lis Davies

Question:

Have the estimated Capacity figures for 2022 within the report taken into account the proposed new build allocations in the Draft LDP? Prime example being the student village, Sketty. If 300 houses were approved for the student village where would the children be educated? Parklands, Sketty and Henderfoilan Schools are either near or at full capacity.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education

The LDP developments are still under consideration and are subject to change. Figures do not include LDP implications as these are still at planning stage.

Additional information

If the Henderfoilan student village was developed with 300 units, the impact on education would depend on the number of 'houses' this site would generate.

A development of this size does not facilitate a new school building.

We are working with planners regarding potential impact of the LDP on education and will seek contributions from developers to provide improved or additional education accommodation.

4. Mrs Lis Davies

Question:

I also question the inaccurate figures relating to Dunvant School Number on roll 276 Capacity - 322 unfilled places - 46. There are presently 337 pupils attending Dunvant Primary; 61 more pupils than recorded in the report and 15 more than capacity. In view of the discrepancies, one would have to question the accuracy of the content within the report as a whole.

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education:

The figures quoted in the report are correct.

There were 46 unfilled places in Dunvant Primary School as at January 2015.

Surplus capacity is calculated by excluding both nursery pupils and nursery accommodation.

5. Mrs Lis Davies

Question

Whilst the response refers to the fact that the CCS has to pay the legal costs of the claimants, it makes no reference to any payment to an un-named pupil attending Bishop Vaughan Catholic School.

(Q) Why has that detail been left out of the report?

(Q) Would the Leader assure me that no further public money will be wasted on appealing the court ruling?

Response of the Leader

All Claimants were represented by the same firm of solicitors and as such any reference to the Claimants legal costs include the un-named pupil. The costs referred to are legal costs and are payable to the solicitors firm representing the group of claimants for their professional fees incurred.

The Council will not be appealing the decision of HHJ Wyn Williams.

6. Councillor A M Day

Question:

The surplus capacity figures for Primary Schools of 12.08% as outlined on page 59, hides the difference between English and Welsh education. The Authority needs to ensure that there is sufficient capacity for Welsh medium education. What measures and mechanisms are in place to address this?

Response of the Cabinet Member for Education:

The QEd Programme identifies a proposal for an additional Welsh Medium Primary School and that is being progressed.

Proposals are being considered to increase the capacity at Gwyr (use of the vacated Gowerton Infant site from 2016). All schools are kept under review where projected overcapacity is identified and this includes all Welsh medium provision.