

**ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES BY MEMBERS - 1999/2000**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 To note the attendance at conferences and those already committed so far in 1999/2000 and consider the allocation of any remaining funds.

**2. Summary**

2.1 The approved Members' Conferences Budget for 1999/2000 is £5,600, of which £904 remains unallocated.

**3. Recommendations**

3.1 That the Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to:

(a) approve the attendance at the following conferences for the remainder of 1999/2000, by the number of Members stated:

Conference	Cost (where known or estimated)	Representative (No. of Members)			
		Lab	L/D	Con	Ind
CLEA/LGA Education	£800	2 in total - allocation tbc			
ADSS/LGA Social Services	£600	1	1		
LGA Housing Conference	£640	2 in total - allocation tbc			
North of England Education	£420	2 in total - allocation tbc			
SEE Annual Conference	£1080	2	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£3540</b>				

(b) to agree that no further conferences be attended by Members, unless provision can be found in a Directorate's budget for both the cost of the conference and travelling and subsistence costs.

4. **Background**

4.1 At the meeting on 8 July 1998 (Minute PR22/99 refers), the Policy and Resources Committee approved the following conferences for attendance by Members in 1998/99:

<b>Conference</b>	<b>No. of Members</b>
ADSS/LGA Social Services	2 delegates
Association of Direct Labour Organisations	1 delegate
Association of Recycling Cities	1 delegate
Chartered Institute of Housing	2 delegates
CLEA/LGA Education	2 delegates
European Energy Cities	1 delegate
Institute for Waste Management	1 delegate
Local Government Association Housing Conference	2 delegates
Local Government Association	4 delegates
Local Government Urban Commission	1 delegate
Local Government Information Unit	3 delegates
North of England Education	2 delegates
Planning Summer School	2 delegates
Passenger Transport	1 delegate
Society of Public Inspection Networks	1 delegate
South East Employers	3 delegates
Sustainable Transport	1 delegate

4.2 A budget of £5,600 was approved in 1998/99, which was overspent by £5,017, of which £1,591 was as a result of additional conferences which came up during the year, and it was considered important by officers that Members should attend.

4.3 The Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 8 July 1998, also agreed that the budget for 1999/2000 should be £14,000, subject to the availability of resources, which unfortunately were not forthcoming.

4.4 Therefore, a budget of £5,600 is available for conferences in 1999/2000. Of that budget, £4,696 has been spent/committed on the following conferences:

<b>Conference</b>	<b>Cost (estimated)</b>	<b>Members Attending</b>
ASS Recycling Cities	£133	Barton
Institute of Housing	£475	Conchie
European Energy Cities	£200	O'Sullivan
Institute of Waste Management	£500	Bristow, Pugh
LGA Annual Conference	£1,125	K Wilson, Gillingham, Morsley
LGIU Annual Conference	£450	K Wilson, Gillingham
ADSS/LGA Social Services	£600	1 Lab tbc, Monk (+ KW from Leader's Budget)
SEE Conference	£1,080	3 to be agreed
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£4,696</b>	

As a result, £904 remains unallocated.

- 4.5 The following conferences, approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in 1998/99, have yet to be committed for 1999/2000:

<b>Conference</b>	<b>Cost (estimated)</b>	<b>Number of Delegates</b>
CLEA/LGA Education	£400	2
Passenger Transport		1 - no attendee in 1998/99
Society of Public Inspection Networks	£195	1
Sustainable Transport		1 - no attendee in 1998/99
LGA Housing Conference	£320	2
North of England Education	£210	2
Planning Summer School	£500	2

## 5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The budget allocated for Members attendance at conferences is clearly inadequate to meet the demand. This may be detrimental to Members' ability to keep up to date with current issues, particularly at this time when local government is facing considerable changes, which could also be detrimental to the Council's future service provision.
- 5.2 The Sub-Committee is, therefore, requested to consider the following options (which are not mutually exclusive):

- (a) approve no further conferences in 1999/2000 for attendance by Members;
- (b) confirm the remainder of the list as agreed last year by the Policy and Resources Committee, or any variation there of, within budget limits;
- (c) restrict attendance at any one conference to one Member only, with a requirement that they report back to the relevant Committee; and
- (d) request that the Policy and Resources Committee approves a supplementary estimate to enable Members to all identified conferences and also possibly any additional conferences as they arise.

## 6. **Implications**

### 6.1 Environmental

None.

### 6.2 Equalities

None.

### 6.3 Financial

The approved Members' Conferences Budget for 1999/2000 is £5,600, of which £4,696 is already committed. If the Council was to meet the estimated costs in 1999/2000 of the conferences approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in 1998/99, it is likely that an overspend of £17,32 would occur.

To meet the cost of all conferences in 1999/2000 attended in 1998/99, would require a supplementary estimate.

Provision for conference attendance also exists in the Leader's (£1,500) and the Leader of the Opposition's (£450) respective budgets.

### 6.4 Legal

None.

### 6.5 Staff and Accommodation

None.

## 7. **Conclusions**

- 7.1 The sums allocated for Members' conferences in the Council's budget for 1999/2000 is inadequate to meet the costs of potential conferences identified, the Sub-Committee, therefore, needs to prioritise the attendance at conferences by Members.

Background Papers: None

