

## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 000072  
Date            22 April 2016

### *Spending on Communications*

**Request:**

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information:

Spending on Communications

For the financial years 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 (if available) please specify for your organisation:

Please note that for questions 1 and 2 the figures provided are outturn for 2014/15, provisional outturn for 2015/16 and budgets for 2016/17. Budgets for 2017/18 will not be available until later this financial year. Provisional outturn figures are provided for 2015/16 as the accounts closedown process is currently in progress and will be completed by June.

1. The overall spend on communications – including advertising, marketing, media and PR - including for budgets held both within and outside of the Communications team?

The figures provided below have been generated by interrogating actual and budgeted expenditure against General Fund non-staff advertising and marketing account codes in the ledger. Schools and Housing Revenue Account expenditure is excluded.

2014/15 Outturn £429,573  
2015/16 Provisional Outturn £672,325  
2016/17 Budgeted £704,180

Please note that, whilst fluctuations in expenditure are to be expected due to factors like grant funding or the marketing of major development opportunities as and when they become available, this is an area earmarked for detailed review in the 2017/18 budget process with a view to identifying savings.

2. The overall budget for the Communications team – including staffing budget? The controllable net cost of the communications team is detailed below. The term controllable in this context means that purely internal transactions within the Council, such as internal support service charges, have been excluded.

2014/15 Outturn £445,525  
2015/16 Provisional Outturn £375,332  
2016/17 Budgeted £438,220

It is worth noting that the 16/17 budgeted costs represent a significant saving on the 2013/14 costs of £953,000 when the department was streamlined as part of our C3 Transformation Programme.

3. The overall spend on internal communications?

Internal communications:

Any member of staff who has internal communications as part of their role (either in part or fully), expenditure on staff satisfaction surveys, staff newsletters or any cost associated with the delivery of an internal communications strategy (excluding the costs of any intranet provision).

It's important to note that an informed and engaged work-force is more effective and productive – hence the council's investment in this area. This is backed up by a significant amount of national and international research. Internal communication and engagement is an essential part of managing the internal change and transformation that the council is going through at the moment.

In terms of corporate expenditure on internal communications we have an internal communications officer who was appointed in September 2015. Prior to that, the work was undertaken by various members of the corporate communications team on an ad-hoc basis.

The internal communications officer post is a grade 6, annual salary £27,123.

We have moved away from traditional communications methods such as printed newsletters and leaflets to digital approaches. Our intranet, City People, was revamped last year, and all the work was done by internal staff. Over 300 stories were published on there in the last quarter and 96% of staff say that this is where they get organisational information from. We also use email, a weekly electronic Core Brief information cascading system and employee briefings are held monthly by the Managing Director. We cannot capture the total costs of this process without each employee analysing the percentage of time spent on the relevant communication activities that form a small part of their wider roles. Examples of separately identifiable important internal engagement campaigns are, however, provided below:

- 14/15 - £3,000 on our 100:100 internal communication and engagement initiative which won a national Corporate Engagement Award last year, led to over 600 ideas from 350 staff and two ideas alone saved £33,000.
- 15/16 - £4,832 on the launch and communication of a new corporate plan and priorities
- 16/17 - £5,000 budgeted
- 17/18 – no information available

4. What % of your organisations overall budget is spend on external communications?

The following percentages have been calculated by comparing the figures in the response to Q1 to the Council's gross General Fund expenditure budget for 2016/17.

2014/15 0.09%

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

2015/16 0.13%

2016/17 0.14%

5. What % of your organisations overall budget is spent on internal communications?

Please refer to the response to Q3.