

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The following questions have been received from Councillors and will be taken as read along with the written answer to be circulated the meeting. The Councillor asking the question may then ask one relevant supplementary question which shall be put and answered without discussion.

(a) Councillor Kitcat

"At the Council meeting 16th December 2010, Cllr Alford replied to my question in item 50(d) about media monitoring stating that:

"However, we now use an agency called Meltwater to monitor online news sources. The cost for 2011/12 will be £3,250, around half the annual cost we were incurring by monitoring print publications."

Yet an invoice dated 08/11/10, number 196845 and stamped received by BHCC on 14th January 2011 shows that the council is paying £1,762.50 for the "Guardian Digital Archive". The customer is marked as "15301/Brighton & Hove CC".

Why was this cost not included in Cllr Alford's response to my question in December 2010? And why, if as Cllr Alford stated that "Meltwater monitors 130,000 online news sources" is the Council spending £1,762.50 on access to the Guardian's news stories which surely must be covered by the Meltwater service and anyway is freely available via their website?"

Councillor Alford, Cabinet Member for Central Services, will respond.

(b) Councillor Kitcat

"Could the Leader explain why her administration, unlike Councils up and down the country including Kirklees and Lewisham, does not permit opposition councillors and the public access to the line-by-line budget?"

Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council, will respond.

(c) Councillor Kitcat

"Why were Cabinet Members - or the Leader - not present at all Scrutiny meetings examining their Budget proposals?"

Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council, will respond.

(d) Councillor Kitcat

“Does the Leader really believe that the provision made in her budget for commissioning community development work is adequate to support the needs of deprived communities across the city?”

Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council, will respond.

(e) Councillor Kitcat

“Has the administration considered the joint impact on vulnerable individuals of BHCC service cuts and national government cuts, such as changes in the Disability Living Allowance? What evidence is there of this and can it be made public to allow a full scrutiny of the budget?”

Councillor Mears, Leader of the Council, will respond.