

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval for relevant Member and officer attendance at the County Councils Network (CCN) Annual Conference to be held in Guildford, Surrey from 6-8 November 2016.

Information and Advice

2. This Committee's terms of reference include approving councillors' attendance at conferences for which fees are payable. It is proposed that approval be given for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Opposition Group to attend the annual CCN Conference, along with one chief officer.
3. The conference is organised by the CCN which is a cross-party special interest group of the Local Government Association which speaks, develops policy and shares best practice for the County family of local authorities.
4. The benefits of attending the Conference are that it is a key forum for county councils and county unitary authorities to share good practice and to hear from Government Ministers and sector leaders.
5. The County Councils Network's website includes the following information about this year's event:-

*Building on our campaign, Your County Matters, this year's conference will focus on the **Future of County Public Services**. With a new Government taking office, this conference will take place at a critical time for County Authorities and all those involved in promoting growth and delivering public services.*

It will explore opportunities and challenges facing our local government, debating the big political, economic and social reforms facing policy makers and influences in a post-Brexit landscape.

It will showcase CCN member councils' ability to drive forward county devolution and public sector reform at size and scale. It will emphasise how important the delivery of county services are economically and socially to our local communities, demonstrating to the new Government, MPs, and national stakeholders that upper-tier authorities are the

critical bodies for delivering devolution and service transformation in non-metropolitan areas.

The usual array of high-profile speakers have been lined up for the event, and expect plenty of debate around the political upheaval within Westminster over the past few months. Confirmed speakers include:

- *Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government*
- *Secretary of State for Transport*
- *Ben Page, Chief Executive, Ipsos MORI*

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

6. It is recommended that approval is given for attendance at the conference so that the County Council's representatives can continue to share best practice and network with colleagues, MPs and other partners in related fields.

Statutory and Policy Implications

7. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

8. The cost of attending the conference is £650 plus VAT per delegate, including accommodation at the venue on the 6 & 7 November. There will also be costs relating to travel to and from the event.
9. The costs of conference attendance, accommodation and travel for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Opposition Group will be met from the relevant Member Support budgets.

RECOMMENDATION

That approval is given for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Opposition Group and one Chief Officer to attend the County Councils Network's Annual Conference in Guildford, Surrey from 6-8 November 2016, together with any necessary travel and accommodation arrangements.

**COUNCILLOR ALAN RHODES
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Keith Ford, Team Manager, Democratic Services, Tel 0115 9772590

Constitutional Comments (SLB – 16/08/16)

10. Policy Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (SES – 19/08/16)

11. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraphs 8 and 9 above.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- CCN Annual Conference Website page <http://www.countycouncilsnetwork.org.uk/events>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.