

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**COUNTY COUNCILS NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021****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 Marlow, Buckinghamshire between 21-23 November 2021.

Information and Advice

2. This Committee's terms of reference include approving councillors' attendance at relevant conferences for which fees are payable. It is proposed that approval be given for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Minority 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. 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. The event will be held in line with relevant Government COVID-19 regulations
4. As one of the first major public sector conferences since the start of the pandemic, this will be a high-profile event with engaging speakers, discussing the main issues facing local government, including levelling up, county devolution, social care reform and the Spending Review. Confirmed speakers include:
 - Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Rt.Hon. Robert Jenrick, MP
 - Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed MP
 - Chair of the Health and Social Care Select Committee, Rt.Hon. Jeremy Hunt MP
 - Former Health Secretary and former Social Mobility Commission Chair, Rt.Hon. Alan Milburn
 - The government Levelling Up Advisor, Neil O'Brien MP
 - Chair of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care, Josh MacAlister
 - UK100 Chief Executive, Polly Billington

Other Options Considered

5. None.

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, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment 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 costs of the event for 2021 are £780 plus VAT per delegate, including accommodation at the venue (there will also be costs relating to travel to and from the event). Full refunds will be provided should the event be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
9. The costs of conference attendance, accommodation and travel for the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Main Minority Group will be met from the budget for Members' Conferences for which there is an allocation of £6,000 in 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATION

That approval be given for the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Leader of the Main Minority Group and one Chief Officer to attend the County Councils Network's Annual Conference in Marlow, Buckinghamshire from 21-23 November 2021, together with any necessary travel and accommodation arrangements.

**COUNCILLOR BEN BRADLEY MP
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

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

Constitutional Comments (SG – 6/8/21)

10. This decision falls within the Terms of Reference of Policy Committee

Financial Comments (RWK 10/08/2021)

11. The cost of 3 Members attending the CCN Annual Conference is estimated at around £2,340 plus travel costs. These costs can be met from the budget for Members' Conferences for which there is an allocation of £6,000 in 2021/22 revenue budget.

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 - [Conference - County Councils Network](#)

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All