

Name: Harry Fone (TaxPayers' Alliance)

FOI ref: 2020-08-011

Information requested	Information provided and any exemptions applied
<p>Please would you provide me with the following information:</p> <p>For the financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21 to date:</p> <p>1. How much money has the council spent in total on overseas trips for council staff?</p>	<p>1 council officer participated in Somme Pilgrimage (30 June – 3 July 2019) - £771.13</p> <p>Council Economic Development staff participated in the following overseas economic development activities over the stipulated timeframe. The cost to the Council is noted below and assigned to each event as requested.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Latvia (16-20 October 2019) - £180.56 (2 officers)2. Finland (4-9 March 2020) – £536.68 (2 officers)3. Leshan, China (4-9 September 2019) - £2,442.08 (1 officer)4. London (11-12 Sept 2019) - £1025.18 (2 officers)5. Rybnik, Poland (13-16 June 2019) - £192.08 (1 officer)
<p>2. How much money has the council spent in total on overseas trips for councillors (elected members)?</p>	<p>7 members participated in Somme Pilgrimage (30 June – 3 July 2019) - £6,795.20</p> <p>Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council Elected Members participated on the following overseas economic development initiatives within the stipulated timeframe. The cost to the Council is noted below and assigned to each event as requested.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Leshan, China (4-9 September 2019) - £9,768.32 (4 Members)2. London (11-12 Sept 2019) - £1025.18 (2 Members)3. Rybnik, Poland (13-16 June 2019) - £418.19 (2 Members) <p>No Elected Members travelled to the events in Latvia and Finland referenced in response to Question 1.</p>

3. If time permits, I would be grateful for a breakdown of spending:

- Cost of any flights / ferries / coaches / taxis etc
- Class of travel purchased (e.g. economy, business, first)
- Cost of hotel stays and names of hotels
- Cost of subsistence (e.g. restaurant bills, drinks expenses)
- Any other fees / or costs incurred
- Reason for trips

1. Latvia (16-20 October 2019)

Note: This economic development activity was eligible for 75% Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and European funding support, so the costs reflected are those directly attributable to the Council.

- Flights: £92.61 (economy);
- Taxis: £10.66;
- Hotel: £71.09 (Hotel Tukums; Hotel Baltvilla);
- Subsistence: £6.20.

2. Finland (4-9 March 2020)

Note: This economic development activity was eligible for 75% Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and European funding support, so the costs reflected are those directly attributable to the Council.

- Flights: £131.72 (economy);
- Taxis: £51.63;
- Hotel: £182.72 (Hotel Arthur; Hotel Hittinharju);
- Subsistence: £106.98;
- Miscellaneous: £63.63.

Purpose of Latvia/Finland Trips:

GROW South Antrim visited Latvia and Finland respectively as part of a Cooperation Craft Project '*Roots to Craft*', where local crafters had the opportunity to learn from other crafters and cultures to enhance their business. Crafters also attended a craft market at each visit where they were successful in selling products and building relationships both with each other and with crafters from around the world. The project also included a

reciprocal, in-bound trip where Finnish and Latvian crafters visited Northern Ireland in September 2019.

The Latvian event (16-20 October 2019) was attended by 1 GROW Local Action Group member, 2 Council staff and 5 local crafters. The Finnish trip (4-9 March 2020) was attended by 2 GROW Local Action Group members, 2 Council staff and 8 local crafters.

3. Leshan, China (4-9 September, 2019):

- Flights: £12,210.40 (business);
- Taxis: Nil – costs covered by host;
- Hotel: Nil – cost covered by host (JZ Hotel);
- Subsistence: Nil – cost covered by host.

Purpose of Leshan Event: Attendance at the Sichuan International Tourism Expo. The visit was organised by The Organizing Committee Office of Sichuan International Travel Expo with the primary objective of creating international relations between Leshan and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council. The visit benefitted the Council by building international relationships. A reciprocal visit to Antrim and Newtownabbey was provisionally scheduled by the City of Leshan for April 2020, but suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. London (11-12 September, 2019):

- Flights: £655.84 (economy);
- Taxis/travel: £25.76 (taxi), £2.40 (Transport for London);
- Hotel: £1,018.40 (Best Western Plus Delmere Hotel);
- Subsistence: £60
- Miscellaneous: £148.00 Heathrow Express and £139.96 Airport Parking (Belfast City Airport).

Purpose of London Trip: Attendance at the 'NI Economy Reception' at the House of Commons, Westminster, organised

by Retail NI, Hospitality NI and Manufacturing NI to launch a new investment strategy for Northern Ireland.

5. Rybnik, Poland (13-16th June 2019):

- Flights - £558.98 (economy, 3 travellers)
- 1 Meal - £17.29 (total for 3 travellers)
- Bag into hold for return trip - £34.00

Purpose of Poland Trip: Antrim and Newtownabbey is twinned with Rybnik in Poland and was invited to attend their Rybnik Days festival in June 2019, including a celebration of 25-year partnership with Dorsten, Germany, who Antrim and Newtownabbey are also twinned with. Rybnik covered the cost of accommodation and subsistence during the festival for 2 Members and 1 officer.

6. Somme Pilgrimage

- Tour Provider £3,300.00
- Flights £1,423.80 (budget)
- Parking £32.76
- Hotel Ibis Budget Central Amiens Gare £1,756.34
- Luggage £55.98
- Meals And Venue Entrance £997.45
- Total £7,566.33

Purpose of Trip: Annual Pilgrimage to the Somme

My preferred format is to receive this information electronically.