

EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING 4TH DECEMBER 2017

03/17

QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR M T FITZPATRICK

Can the Deputy Leader Enterprise advise members whether any local charities have approached this council for assistance, financial or otherwise, in their efforts to secure a 'winter night shelter' for the homeless this winter?

If they have approached this council, or should they approach this council, can the Deputy Leader share with members her response or likely response to such a request?

ANSWER BY THE DEPUTY LEADER (ENTERPRISE)

The Council was approached to work with the YMCA in securing the provision of a Night Shelter. The Deputy Leader (Enterprise), Head of Service and Housing Options Manager met with the YMCA Chief Executive and Service Development Manager on 19 October to discuss how the Council could assist.

The YMCA opened the Night Shelter for the winter period, December 2017 until the end of March 2018.

Whilst the Council was not able to provide direct financial assistance in this budgetary cycle we are supporting the Night Shelter's 'guest support and move on' meetings which start on Wednesday mornings in January 18. The aim is to proactively attempt to move individuals on to more settled accommodation. It is also worth noting that the provision of a night shelter does not obviate the Council's duties or actions regarding homelessness prevention, particularly during the winter months.

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The Leader will know that a new legal requirement has been placed on private and public employers employing 250 or more staff, to publicise their 'Gender Pay Gap analysis.'

Whilst ESBC is under this threshold, will the Leader commit to do this voluntarily to set an example to other local authorities and other employers of a similar size?

ANSWER BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

The gender pay gap is an equality measure which shows the difference between the average hourly earnings between men and women (this is not the same as unequal pay).

As an employer with a headcount of over 340 employees we will be meeting our legal obligation to publish our gender pay gap data in advance of April 2018. We have completed the registration process on the Government website in readiness, and our HR and Payroll team are currently in the process of preparing the information. A report will then be presented for discussion prior to publication, to explain the results and detailing any actions that are being taken to aim to reduce the gender pay gap (almost every organisation will have a gender pay gap).

Along with opportunities to develop their Local Government career, the Council has a number of family friendly policies and working practices that support all employees in managing a healthy work/life balance, and retain talent.