

FOI Ref

11903

Response sent

2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 22

(CCC) FOI request about energy costs

I am sending this request under the Freedom of Information Act to ask for the following information:

1. How much are you expecting to spend on energy costs this winter (October – April) compared to the same period last year?
2. Are you planning to cancel or spend less than the year before on festive events or decorations because of costs? These include but are not limited to Christmas lights, bonfire night, Christmas markets, Christmas trees, etc.
3. How much money are you projected to save if the council cancels any festive events or decorations?
4. Are you planning to spend less on other council services, such as street lighting, than in 2021 to save energy and fuel costs? What changes have you made?
5. Has the council decided to close any of its community spaces such as halls, libraries and leisure centres, either temporarily or permanently for the remainder of 2022 and/or 2023 to reduce energy and fuel costs?
6. If so, how many community spaces will close and how much money does the council estimate this will save on its energy and fuel costs? Please can you include the type of community space in your response.

**Response:**

Thank you for your request for information above, which we have dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I hope the following will answer your query:

Further to our earlier email. Please see our response to question 1 of your request. I have also included the responses to questions 2 – 6 for convenience.

1. Like much of the private and public sector, the Council has found itself subject to significant increases in utility prices.

The Council spent the following amounts on electricity and gas in the 6 month period 1 October 2021 – 31 March 2022:

Electricity: £692,342

Gas : £196,714

The Council is working with its energy suppliers to determine its exposure to increases in energy prices. Indicative rates suggest that electricity unit costs have increased by 110%. This will not, however result in the equivalent increase in spend. This is for two reasons:

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- i. The Council continues to review the use of Council-owned premises to reduce the Council's carbon footprint in line with the Council's climate strategy. The volume of energy used is continuing to reduce and this will mitigate the impact of rising prices on the Council's financial position; and
- ii. The Council will benefit from the Energy Relief Scheme introduced by government. The complicated rules of the scheme, which depend on a range of factors outside the Council's control, mean that it is difficult to forecast accurately how much this will impact on the unit rate the Council pays for its energy.

Forecasts for energy costs for the six month period 1 October 2022 – 31 March 2023 are currently being finalised as part of the Council's budget monitoring procedures. Earlier forecasts produced are being updated to take account of the latest unit rates, which have only been confirmed recently, and the impact of the energy relief scheme. Details of the expected cost for this period will be available in January 2023.

2. No – festive events and decorations are organised by Cambridge BID and not Cambridge City Council.

3. n/a – these events and decorations are provided by Cambridge BID.

4. We are not planning on spending less on other council services like street lighting.

5. We are not planning on closing any community spaces like halls, libraries and leisure centres to reduce energy and fuel costs.

6. n/a – please see response above.

We aim to provide a high quality service to you and hope that you are satisfied with this response. If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Further queries on this matter should be directed to <a href="mailto:foi@cambridge.gov.uk">foi@cambridge.gov.uk</a>
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