

18 August 2021  
Our ref: 7573296

Thank you for your request received on 17 August 2021, for the following information:

**Can you please provide an itemised breakdown of costs of videoing and broadcasting Council meetings since the start of the pandemic, by meeting type e.g., cabinet, full council, scrutiny etc., the total number of meetings covered and over what time frame, and the total costs.**

**Can you also advise whether this was a procurement process and whether the decision had cabinet member approval.**

We have processed this request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **Response**

The council holds the information requested and it is attached/ the answers to your questions are below

***Can you please provide an itemised breakdown of costs of videoing and broadcasting Council meetings since the start of the pandemic, by meeting type e.g., cabinet, full council, scrutiny etc., the total number of meetings covered and over what time frame, and the total costs.***

***Can you also advise whether this was a procurement process and whether the decision had cabinet member approval.***

To deliver virtual committee meetings, Barnet accelerated the roll-out of Microsoft Teams. Teams roll-out across the authority (to replace Skype) was a project which was already in the pipeline as part of the council's roll-out of Microsoft Office 365. As such, there was no specific costs arising in this regard. Following the legislative change to enable virtual meetings to take place, officers from IT and the Governance Service initiated a project to review all councillors hardware, roll-out Microsoft Teams to their devices and to train them on how to use the software. The hardware refresh for councillors resulted in additional costs of £29,808.37. The roll-out of the software and training for councillors has no specific associated costs as these were delivered by officers in IT and the Governance Service.

Once virtual committee meetings had started, officers resumed sending out hard copy agendas to councillors (whereas we had been paperless prior to Covid) as councillors were unable to use their devices to both participate in virtual meetings and look at committee papers. Additional print costs were £7,855.04.

Virtual meetings took place between 27 April 2020 and 5 May 2021. All meetings can be accessed here: [Democracy Home - London Borough of Barnet \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://democracy.home.london.gov.uk/) This information is publicly available and can be collated by the requestor.

No procurement process took place, other than to purchase the refreshed hardware for councillors which are dealt with via requests on the Council's IT portal.

Hardware and additional print costs were funded from Covid-19 impact funding.

No Cabinet Member decision was made - Barnet operate a committee system of governance as so we don't have individual Member decision-making. Officers delivered the project in close consultation with Members of all political groups.

### **Further information**

If you are interested in the data that the council holds you may wish to visit Open Barnet, the council's data portal. This brings together all our published datasets and other information of interest on one searchable database for anyone, anywhere to access. <http://open.barnet.gov.uk/>

### **Advice and Assistance : Direct Marketing**

If you are a company that intends to use the names and contact details of council officers (or other officers) provided in this response for direct marketing, you need to be registered with the Information Commissioner to process personal data for this purpose. You must also check that the individual (whom you wish to contact for direct marketing purposes) is not registered with one of the Preference Services to prevent Direct Marketing. If they are you must adhere to this preference.

You must also ensure you comply with the Privacy Electronic and Communications Regulations (PECR). For more information follow this Link [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

**For the avoidance of doubt the provision of council (and other) officer names and contact details under FOI does not give consent to receive direct marketing via any media and expressly does not constitute a 'soft opt-in' under PECR.**

### **Your rights**

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review within the next 40 working days by writing to the Information Management Team at: [foi@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:foi@barnet.gov.uk). Or by post to Information Management Team (FOI) London Borough of Barnet, 2 Bristol Avenue, Colindale, NW9 4EW

If, having exhausted our review procedure, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you will have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF (telephone: 0303 123 1113; website [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)). There is no charge for making an appeal.