

The cost of holding a council by-election

The cost of holding the recent by-election in Colinton/Fairmilehead has now been broken down by the Finance Convener – at least in part.

The councillor elected in November, Liberal Democrat Louise Spence, resigned after just six days in post – and it has been confirmed to us that she did not seek any payment for those six days.

But the cost to the council of holding an election is considerable. There will now have to be a repeat election in January.

Cllr Jason Rust, is the only remaining councillor serving the ward until the new by-election is called. He asked for a breakdown of the costs and the Finance Convener, Mandy Watt, has confirmed that it was a total of £76,758.87.

Cllr Rust asked if the Finance Convener would provide a breakdown, to include:

- (a) hire of polling stations
- (b) payments to polling station staff
- (c) payments to election count staff
- (d) production of ballot papers
- (e) publication of notice of poll and all advertising
- (f) council staff time
- (g) any other third-party payments
- (g) all other costs.

The answer published in council papers on 18 December is as follows:

- (a) £3,427.73
- (b) £10,203.05
- (c) £406.50
- (d) £14,050.35
- (e) £468.00
- (f) £1,977.33
- (g) £46,225.91 (third party and all other costs).

The Edinburgh Reporter has asked Cllr Rust if he has any further comment – and it is open to him to ask further questions at Thursday’s council meeting. That meeting will be webcast from 10am. [The papers are here.](#)



Louise Spence with her Liberal Democrat colleagues celebrating her by-election win in November. It all ended in tears six days later when she was told that living in Dubai she would not be able to do the job. The party then suspended her and she later resigned as a councillor.