

CHIPPING BARNET RESIDENTS FORUM

2 September 2009 – As at 2 September 09

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE FORUM MEETING

<p>Mr Newton</p> <p>What the Income and Expenditure budget is for the Planning Department in 2009/2010 and how much of the budget was it estimated would be met from Planning & Housing Delivery Grant (broken down between the grant elements)</p>	<p>Martin Cowie</p> <p>Total income received - £503,290,70 Total expenditure - £874,052,37 (Actual to date 28/08/09)</p> <p>HPDG (expected Oct/Nov 2009):-</p> <p>45% Planning Element - £170,500 55% Housing Element - £139,500</p> <p>Total – £310,000 (estimate)</p>
<p>Mr Newton</p> <p>What was the Planning Department Income and Expenditure outturn figures were for 2008/2009 and how much of the income was represented by Planning & Housing Delivery Grant (broken down between the grant elements).</p>	<p>Martin Cowie</p> <p>Total income received - £2,246,805,45 Total expenditure - £2,756,764,22</p> <p>HPDG:-</p> <p>60% Planning Element - £201,937,80 40% Housing Element - £134,625,20</p> <p>Total – £336,562,40</p>
<p>Mr Newton</p> <p>What the criteria and targets are for qualifying for the individual elements of Planning & Housing Delivery Grant.</p>	<p>Martin Cowie</p> <p>The overall aim of the housing and planning delivery grant (HPDG) is to incentivise local authorities to improve delivery of housing and other planning outcomes as part of their strategic, place shaping role and to provide more support to communities and local councils who are doing their bit to deliver new homes. It supports the delivery of the national target of delivering 240,000 new homes per year by 2016.</p>

Current allocation mechanism:-

- The housing element currently goes to all local authorities with net additional housing completions above 0.75 per cent of their existing housing stock. The data is taken from a rolling average of the previous three years. For each net addition above the threshold, the local authority receives one unit of housing grant. The amount per unit is calculated by the total amount of money for the year divided by the total number of units above the threshold.

- The planning element of the grant is based upon the local authority completing a range of activities that support housing supply:

- demonstrating sufficient land for housing in line with *Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) Housing*
- delivery of core strategies and development plan documents (DPDs) allocating more than 2,000 dwellings
- joint working on the production of development plan documents
- publication of a strategic housing market assessment (SHMA); and
- development control performance

Proposed allocation mechanism:-

- The housing element of the grant will continue to reward local authorities for net additional homes above the threshold. There are no reforms proposed for year 2 of the grant, but in recognition of the challenging circumstances in the current housing market the Government is proposing a minor tweak to the allocation mechanism in year 3. Year 2 grants are calculated on the basis of average net additions from 2005-06 to 2007-08. During this period house building was largely sustained and the number of eligible authorities is expected to remain broadly the same. With this in mind the Government is not proposing to make any changes to the allocation mechanism in year 2. Year 3 grants are calculated on the basis of average net additions from 2006-07 to 2008. Current estimates suggest that house supply numbers will be significantly less in 2008-09. In order to recognise the more challenging conditions in the housing market, the government is proposing to reduce the threshold from 0.75 to 0.65. This will go some way to ensuring fairness and equity across the board.

- The planning element will continue to reward local authority performance in plan-making across the original four elements. However, a number of minor reforms in year 2 are proposed to ensure

	<p>the allocation mechanism provides incentives for actions which will enable local authorities to respond positively and effectively to the economic downturn. Government is also intending putting in place the conditions which will enable housing supply to come back quicker and further when the upturn comes. In year 3 there will be further reforms to ensure continued progress.</p> <p>- Government intends to continue the current abatement mechanism on the plan making element of the grant where development control performances falls under any national planning standard included in NI 157 (processing of planning applications as measured against targets for major, minor and other application types).</p>
<p>Mr Newton</p> <p>What steps the Planning Department is taking to maximise the grant payment for each element</p>	<p>Martin Cowie</p> <p>The planning department is working hard to secure grant allocations over the next 2 years through the preparation of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and associated documentation and in sustaining high levels of performance via its development management service.</p> <p>Key LDF policy documents have been adopted including the Mill Hill East Area Action Plan or are nearing completion such as the Colindale Area Action. Others are in an advanced stage of preparation including the Core Strategy and the North London Waste Plan. It has commenced work on its Infrastructure Delivery Plan and is will begin preparing the Site Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Documents.</p> <p>The department has prepared its Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment (SHLAA) identifying development capacity in the borough up to 2021 and it continues to deliver upper quartile performance in relation to the processing of planning applications</p>

	Issues Raised	Response
1	<p>J McKenzie</p> <p>Is the council currently in dialogue with Tesco about its supermarket plans for New Barnet?</p>	<p>Martin Cowie (Head of Planning and Development Management)</p> <p>The council is not in dialogue with Tesco although it has been in communication in the past. Tesco was approached briefly by our planning consultants assisting in the preparation of the town centre strategy back in June to better understand its interest in New Barnet as were other supermarkets. Ward member, community and residents groups including Save New Barnet and Places were also approached.</p> <p>Tesco contacted the planning authority after the withdrawal of the Asda application to present a sketch proposal for its site but this went no further and we are yet to hear how its wishes to proceed with matters.</p>
2	<p>Mr Dix</p> <p>At the General Functions Committee of 5 August I understand that a revised corporate structure was agreed. One of the posts deleted from the current structure is the Executive Director for Communities. However, in the proposed new management structure there does not appear to be any senior management role that has specific responsibility for the community. Could the Council please explain who will have responsibility in the new management structure for ensuring the delivery of better community engagement and in particular, increasing opportunities for local people to participate in the democratic process and enriching the Council's understanding of the needs, wants and aspirations of Barnet citizens.</p>	<p>Nick Walkley (Chief Executive)</p> <p>In the revised structure the Chief executive will have overall responsibility for the issues raised by the question. The Assistant Chief Executive will have responsibility for the delivery of community engagement and enriching the Council's understanding of the needs, wants and aspirations of residents. The Director of Corporate Governance, will work closely with the ACE to ensure that we increase the opportunities for participation in the democratic process as part of our community engagement efforts.</p>

3	<p>Mr Howard</p> <p>1). Please can I have an update on who at the date of this meeting is operating the minor traffic offences legislation under the Civil Enforcement Area section of the Road Traffic Acts (Barnet or the Metropolitan Police?)</p> <p>2) When the JCOSS planning application was approved it was agreed that a number of individuals and groups within the community would be involved in agreeing the Green Travel Plan. Why is there reference to the travel plan in quotations from various bodies in the local press when the community representatives have not been involved at all to date?</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop (Assistant Director, Environment and Transport)</p> <p>1) The Met Police undertake the enforcement of minor traffic offences. This would be driving without a seat belt, jumping a red light, as examples</p> <p>2) The Unilateral Undertaking contained within the planning permission includes the requirement to implement a School Travel Plan (STP). This set out various measures that would be included within the STP, which for this development does include the requirement to have community involvement in the process. We understand that the school will not be in a position to appoint a School Travel Co-ordinator until January 2010 and therefore, to date, have not progressed the STP. This has been confirmed by the Head Teacher.</p> <p>The question makes reference to quotations in the local press, we are unsure what these quotations are in this context.</p> <p>The School Travel Plan is due for completion at the end March 2010. We can and will advise the School of any representatives from the local community who want to be involved in the development of the STP.</p>
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4	<p>Mr Howard</p> <p>What progress is being made on the Barnet Bond to raise money to fund the infrastructure required to serve the massive growth proposed by the Council?</p>	<p>Brian Reynolds (Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration)</p> <p>The Council submitted its detailed plan to raise money for infrastructure works to HM Treasury and Communities & Local Government (CLG) in November 2008. On the 18th May 2009 the Minister for Local Government, John Healey MP, wrote to all Council Leaders inviting them to submit expressions of interest for innovative funding models, particularly those that share similarities with US style Tax Increment Financing (TIFs), or the Government's own Approved Development Zone (ADZs) models. A deadline of 30th June was set.</p> <p>The Barnet Financing Plan (BFP) is very similar to a TIF: it relies on capturing the incremental growth in various tax and other income streams and securing those against a loan, that loan being used to pay for the infrastructure works.</p> <p>A summary of the November 2008 BFP submission was duly made by the deadline, and we now await a response from CLG.</p>
5	<p>Mr Howard</p> <p>The Councils Forward Plan of Key Decisions 15th August shows that the Cabinet on 2nd December will receive a full report on the New Barnet Town Centre Framework. What is the difference between a Framework and a Strategy and how will it affect New Barnet?</p> <p>When will the local community, residents and traders be consulted and will it be one meeting or a series of meetings?</p>	<p>Martin Cowie (Head of Planning and Development Management)</p> <p>The terms 'framework' and 'strategy' have been used interchangeably in the past and for the purposes of preparing a town centre policy document there is no difference. The planning service will however be using the word 'framework' in the final version as indicated by the Councils Forward Plan of Key Decisions.</p> <p>The local community will be consulted in October this year and the planning service is currently considering appropriate ways of undertaking this engagement. Key groups will be notified in due course however.</p>

6	<p>Mr Howard</p> <p>The Councils current performance on consulting residents is derisory. Will the council be taking on Board the benefits that come for all parties from holding Charrette consultations? Will the Council be sending officers to the training sessions being held at the University of Hertfordshire on 6 – 8th October?</p>	<p>Lucy Shomali(Strategy, Planning and Environment)</p> <p>There are a number of techniques for engaging communities in the development of plans and strategies for their local areas. A Charrette is an intensive process which takes place over a number of days and includes a series of meetings, presentations and workshops involving the design team, local residents and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Although the Council has not applied this approach directly a number of the associated methods of consultation have been used in developing key planning documents such as the Area Action Plans for Colindale and Mill Hill East which both involved intensive workshop sessions with key stakeholders at an early stage facilitated by the design teams, and exhibitions where consultant teams and planning officers were available to receive feedback and discuss emerging ideas in detail. It is proposed to use a number of consultation techniques for developing strategies for Barnet’s priority town centres including scoping meetings with local groups, participatory workshops and detailed exhibitions.</p> <p>The cost of the Charette consultation training at University of Hertfordshire is £990 per person. Given the expertise that the Council already has in house and its ability to access advice on planning consultation techniques through organisations such as the Royal Town Planning Institute, the Planning Advisory Service, the Town and Country Planning Association and Urban Design London it is not considered that this cost would be value for money – particularly given the tight financial constraints that the Council is now operating under.</p>
7	<p>Mr Constable</p> <p>During debate at the last meeting, residents made a number of positive suggestions to encourage attendance and participation at these forums, including a published deadline for submitting questions, better written / more explicit publicity, and advance email notifications of meetings. Is there any intention for these suggestions to be taken up?</p>	<p>David Seabrooke (Democratic Services Manager)</p> <p>We will be building-up the emails of interested parties into a list on which to issue reminders and information about the residents' forums. We are discussing a re-vitalised approach to publicity for residents' forums as some mechanisms, such as newspaper adverts may not be cost-effective. The issue of a deadline for questions is a matter for each forum to agree for itself; at the moment the approach is one of flexibility.</p>

8	<p>Mr Constable</p> <p>From September 2010 JCoSS intend to use both New Barnet Station and the Mount Pleasant Roundabout as drop off and pick up points for 5 coach routes running from Golders Green, Ilford, Bushey, Crouch End, and Pinner. Exactly where at the two locations has space been identified for coaches to be parked?</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop</p> <p>The catchment area for the school is yet to be determined. In terms of planning for the future transport requirements it is the intention to use New Barnet Station and Mount Pleasant area as potential drop off areas for Coaches/mini-buses for JCOSS. This initiative is to work in conjunction with the School Travel Plan with the aim of reducing car-borne trips to the School and promoting more sustainable modes of travel.</p> <p>As the School is not yet open it is not possible to confirm the catchment area of pupils and therefore the exact coach or mini-bus provision that would be required from specific locations. In addition, in Sept 2010 there will only be one year of pupils at the school..</p> <p>The proposed coach services and drop off can be incorporated into the emerging School Travel Plan Document.</p>
9	<p>Mrs Miller</p> <p>JCoSS - I would ask that Mr Cowie re checks the figure work on how many coaches/buses will be using the two drop off points, one being New Barnet Station and the other at Mount Pleasant roundabout and reclarify them to the forum. These figures should take into account the school at full capacity.</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop</p> <p>The School will be developing the coach services however it is not estimated that the full complement of coaches (approx 4 at each location) will be operating until 2017. As stated at the last meeting the expectation for coaches at full capacity is 9.</p>
10	<p>Mrs Miller</p> <p>JCoSS - If part of the granting of the planning application was the transport issue of the children, teachers and staff, then why was this not ironed out before permission was given?</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop</p> <p>The Unilateral Undertaking contained within the planning permission includes the requirement to implement a School Travel Plan (STP). This set out various measures that would be included within the STP, which for this development does include the requirement to have community involvement in the process.</p>
11	<p>Mrs Miller</p> <p>JCoSS - What plans do the Council have if any? What stage are they at?</p> <p>When do they anticipate to have final plans in place?</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop</p> <p>We understand that the school will not be in a position to appoint a School Travel Co-ordinator until January 2010 and therefore, to date, have not progressed the STP. This has been confirmed by the Head Teacher.</p>

12	<p>Mrs Miller JCoSS - Are they meeting with the JCOSS travel strategy team? When will local residents be notified?</p>	<p>Lynn Bishop The School travel plan coordinator has been in constant contact with the school and has offered her assistance to prepare their plans. As soon as the preparation commences the local community will be involved as stated above and as required by the STP.</p>
13	<p>Mrs Miller Is there any update on investigation on the distribution problems regarding the delivery of "barnetfirst" magazine? Is the Council paying for a service that is not being delivered as per its contract with the company involved? If yes what is being done to recoup any funds if applicable?</p>	<p>Jonathan Schroder (Communications) The distribution of Barnet First is carried out by a company called PLC Systems. They provide a 'solus' delivery service which means that the magazine is distributed door to door on its own. Whenever we receive notification from a resident that they have not received a copy of Barnet First we send the address to PLC who carry out a 'backcheck' on the alleged non-delivery address. This means they send out one of their representatives who goes to the address to find out if there is any particular reason why the magazine has not been delivered. In some cases they have a conversation with the occupant or they may take a photograph of the letterbox showing that it has been taped up or has a notice saying something like 'no newspapers/junk mail etc.' They report back on their findings by completing a Backcheck report establishing any reasons why Barnet First has not been delivered. The backcheck report is sent to us and in individual cases we go back to the resident to report the findings. We do not report back on block cases.</p> <p>PLC Systems have recently told us that they are retiring and handing over the business to a company called Impact. Impact has over 20 years worth of experience in devising and implementing leaflet distribution for a wide range of organisations including theatres, museums and galleries, orchestras, charities, heritage sites, visitor attractions, local authorities, retailers and festivals. All the information regarding any problem deliveries has been passed to Impact and they are aware of the recent difficulties.</p> <p>A meeting was held between council officers and Impact in August when they were informed that the distribution of Barnet First would be going out to tender shortly and that a contract would be put in place. Impact will be welcome to tender for the contract along with other distribution companies.</p>

14	<p>Mrs Miller I understand that Councillor Daniel Thomas, cabinet member for policy and performance, said in the local paper this week that Barnet Council was working hard to improve its range and quality of sports facilities. What exactly has been done?</p>	<p>Matthew Gunyon (Contracts Manager, Leisure Services)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council works very closely with its partners to improve the facilities and activities it offers. - GLL have its Club Wellness brand for 55+ years. From January 09 the club has been concentrating on the social side of keeping healthy and active, with classes, Quiz Nights and the GLL Club Wellness games. GLL have been working closely with the Council, Age Concern Barnet and representatives from the Older Peoples Forum in addition to Middlesex University to help deliver this complimentary programme across the borough. - GLL and the Council recently launched Over 60's free swimming and the Kids for a Quid schemes.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GLL in partnership with the London Borough of Barnet launched the London Track Stars Junior Athletics Programme at Hendon Leisure Centre starting on the 2nd June 2009. - The London Games is fast approaching and GLL want to give children and young people in London the opportunity to participate in the sport at a local level working in partnership with England Athletics. - The athletics courses will provide participants with a fun experience of athletics and will develop their athleticism skills so they can progress through the sport or participate in any other sport in the future. Athletics underpins the fundamental movement of all sports. - The courses at GLL's athletics centres will provide top quality coaching for children and young people aged 5-12 years old. The team of UKA qualified coaches are the best in London! They have been trained to deliver the national curriculum for athletics through the Elevating Athletics programme as well as having coaches with the technical knowledge to progress participants through the athlete pathway into club athletics.
15	<p>Mrs Miller I understand that a three-year plan has been put in place to guide how the council and health sector work with sports providers to improve their services - is this plan available to the public to view and pass comments?</p>	<p>Matthew Gunyon Julian Mauger is working on this plan, It has not been put in place yet but a Leisure Facilities Strategy is being formed for Barnet. In addition we have joint working initiatives within sport and health that can be found in the sport and physical activity strategy that is on line for public. GLL and the council are among a large group of organisations which meet once a quarter as part of Barnets CSPAN (Community Sport and Activity Network) which works to deliver sport and activity for all.</p>

16	<p>Mrs Miller</p> <p>What new opportunities have been looked at so far to increase the uptake of sporting activities across our communities, especially in the run-up to the 2012 Olympics.</p>	<p>Layla Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of Sport Unlimited programme, offering a range of new sporting activity for 5 – 19yr olds across Barnet - Club development and encouraging greater participation - Community Investments programmes for older adults, estate based and women - The development of the Barnet London Youth Games squad (representation in over 20 sports) developing player pathways and competitive opportunities that follow an Olympic theme.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of Street Athletics programme (estate based athletics). - Promoting Barnet's Olympic hopefuls at such events like the celebrating sport awards on 4th November- nominations still being accepted until 11th Sept to encourage and inspire. - Development of sporting festivals - Volunteer programme - School Sport Partnerships development <p>All info on programmes can be found on the website, follow links to leisure and culture – sports clubs and centres.</p>

17	<p>Linden Groves</p> <p>A question as to whether in the light of the lengthy waiting lists for allotments, and the high local demand, the council could create some new ones on the several areas of disused land in our area.</p> <p>Obvious locations are the waste ground next door to Coppetts Wood School (opposite the existing Trott Road allotments), the 'Skate Attack' land on Colney Hatch Lane/North Circular, and, in particular, the old sewerage works adjacent to Hollickwood Park at the bottom of Alexandra Road. Many local people are desperate for an allotment but the waiting lists are almost static so the creation of new allotments would be a welcome use to 'spare' land.</p>	<p>Jenny Warren (Parks and Open Spaces)</p> <p>The borough is well served with 45 allotment sites borough wide. Allotment plots are available on some sites within 6 months with the average waiting time being 2 years and 6 months.</p> <p>The Council are currently working with Barnet Allotment Federation to implement a better methodology for allocating vacant plots to reduce waiting lists, (as some sites prove to be more popular than others with extensive waiting lists, whilst a site within a mile may have vacant plots).</p> <p>Other work currently being carried out is a survey of all allotment sites to identify any land within the current site provision where there may be potential to create more plots. An action plan for how these can then be brought into service can be developed providing there is a demand and commitment to take them on.</p> <p>The creation of additional allotment sites is not financially viable as significant investment in infrastructure would be required.</p>
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18	<p>Mr Dix</p> <p>I have read some rather alarming details about proposed council policy in the Guardian newspaper making comparisons between the new structure and a budget airline. It would be helpful to understand three specific points as follows:</p> <p>1.Has the Council identified who was the "Council Spokesman" mentioned in the article who unofficially dubbed this project "Easy Council" and was their communication with the press authorised. If not, will there be any action arising.</p> <p>2.When will the Council discuss this radical policy in more detail with the residents so that we can understand exactly what is being proposed and how it will impact on our lives.</p> <p>3.Do the Council think that this sort of publicity benefits Barnet?</p>	<p>Jonathan Schroder</p> <p>The term 'Easycouncil' was used informally in response to queries from the media about an analogy with Ryan Air and Easy Jet used in an interview about future shape. That analogy was used to explain how the introduction of budget airlines has changed the relationship with customers that the air transport industry now has. As the Future Shape report sets out, the council is seeking to develop a new relationship with citizens. The Council is not proposing to base its future model of operation on the business model of budget airline.</p> <p>As outlined in question 1, there is no radical policy above and beyond the proposals set out in the future shape report which was agreed by Cabinet in July 2009. This has been published on the Council website and has been widely reported in the local media. It is not our intention to consult the public on the principles of the future shape programme. As we have stated elsewhere the programme is a response to known concerns, such as declining satisfaction and significantly lower grant settlements and the Council is showing clear leadership in addressing these issues directly.</p> <p>However there will be a process for engaging citizens in the 'commissioning' phase of the future shape programme to ensure that we understand how we can work with people to achieve better outcomes for the people of Barnet. Those areas will be discussed in the next future shape report. The timescales of this will vary depending on the issue but we would expect this process to start within the next 12 months and to involve large numbers of residents. The issue of charging for services that are additional to current freely available services will be part of those discussions.</p>
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19	<p>Mr Massey (late submission) Parking in High Barnet In Barnet Press 27 August a council spokesman said "we are currently looking at ... new ways to support local traders...including the pricing structure and location of parking controls". Are you able to say more on what is in mind and what form consultation will take?</p>	<p>Dan Ash</p>
20	<p>Mr Hope (late submission) Who has nicknamed the Council 'EasyCouncil'?</p>	<p>Jonathan Schroder The term 'Easycouncil' was used informally in response to queries from the media about an analogy with Ryan Air and Easy Jet used in an interview about future shape. That analogy was used to explain how the introduction of budget airlines has changed the relationship with customers that the air transport industry now has. As the Future Shape report sets out, the council is seeking to develop a new relationship with citizens,. The Council is not proposing to base its future model of operation on the business model of budget airline.</p>
21	<p>Mr Hope (late submission) Has the Council had any contact from or sought permission from easyGroup IP Licensing Ltd to use the phrase 'EasyCouncil'?</p>	<p>Jonathan Schroder The Council has not contacted Easy Group to ask permission to use this term because there is no proposal to adopt the term 'EasyCouncil'.</p>

22	<p>Mr Hope (late submission)</p> <p>In the light of the newly announced Ryanair 'we'll charge you for the air you breathe / try to charge people in wheelchairs to be pushed to the plane' business model, can the Council completely rule out introducing or proposing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Reducing the size of the standard wheely bin? ii) Charging to borrow Library books? iii) Reducing the loan time or the amount of books that can be borrowed from the Library service? iv) Charging a fee to return a Library book to different Library to the one it was borrowed from? v) Charging any fees for the public to dispose of items or introducing limits for household waste at Summers Lane amenity centre? vi) Charging for the kerb side recycling service, either for any service or for using more than one box? 	<p>Jonathan Schroder</p> <p>There are no specific current proposals relating to any of these points, and at this stage we are simply looking at possible solutions to the significant spending challenges that all councils will be facing over the coming years as part of the council's 'Future Shape' programme. Any future proposals to change the council's charging policies for any service will be subject to the council's normal processes and procedures.</p>
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<p>vii) Introducing a Borough wide CPZ so people will need to buy a 'Barnet Card' to park anywhere in the borough, including outside their own door?</p> <p>ix) Charging to use the toilets at the Town Hall?</p> <p>x) Charging for copies of printed papers for meetings at the Town Hall?</p> <p>xi) Extending charges for parking in Town Centres to 7pm, 8pm, 9pm or 10pm?</p> <p>xii) Extending charges for parking on Sundays in the remaining Town Centres?</p> <p>xiii) Accelerating spot revaluations of houses with extensions / improvements to increase Council Tax yield?</p> <p>ix) Introducing a charge for the instalments plan to pay Council Tax?</p> <p>x) Installing more bus lane cameras?</p> <p>xi) Using CCTV cameras to issue parking tickets in the post?</p>	
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