

CHIPPING BARNET RESIDENTS FORUM

15 OCTOBER 2009 – As at 15 October 09

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE FORUM MEETING

	Issues Raised	Response
1	<p>Linden Groves</p> <p>Has there been any progress on finding new allotment space for residents of the Muswell Hill (Freehold) area? The council had undertaken to investigate the possibility of using the derelict land opposite the Trott Road allotments and was going to establish whether there was any truth to the rumour that it is contaminated land. I now understand that the land is not contaminated but rather is protected from development due to a slow worm population. Slow worms live very happily on allotments, making the allocation of this land the perfect solution to our allotment shortage problem."</p>	<p>Jenny Warren</p> <p>Response to follow</p>

<p>2</p>	<p>Mr Gordon Massey</p> <p>High Barnet CPZ review.</p> <p>a) What streets outside the CPZ area has the council consulted or intends to consult?</p> <p>b) what consultation has taken place with traders?</p> <p>c) Is the review considering the provision of parking for town centre workers, shoppers, and Barnet Hospital visitors?</p> <p>d) Are there any plans to consult with community groups on emerging findings or ideas for change?</p> <p>e) When does the council expect the review to be completed?</p>	<p>Neil Richardson</p> <p>Only properties within the roads included in the CPZ were consulted as part of the CPZ review by way of a questionnaire asking for views on how the CPZ is working in the road and area. Any consultation with streets outside the CPZ would be confirmed once we have established what if any changes might be made as a result of the review.</p> <p>The Council are holding a number of requests on file from roads on the periphery of the CPZ where residents have expressed concern with parking issues. These requests have been noted in anticipation of the review and the concerns will be given serious consideration and consultation carried out in those roads where it is considered appropriate in context of the outcome of the review.</p> <p>Traders were given the same Chipping Barnet CPZ review questionnaire as that delivered to the residents of the zone</p> <p>Due consideration will be given to all relevant comments received through the review and via other written representation received. Although it is not anticipated that the CPZ review itself will make recommendations regarding the type of parking demand referred to any comments received will be noted, and it is anticipated that a Town Centre Strategy will be developed that will place emphasis on the best way forward for a particular area and it is likely that parking demand such as those mentioned will be considered as part of this strategy.</p> <p>All properties previously consulted as part of the review will be informed of the outcome of the review, and anyone affected by any further actions or proposals will be consulted as part of the council's processes. The Town Centre Strategy referred to above would seek to involve all interested parties in the area through discussion to help in establishing concerns and possible outcomes</p> <p>Analysis of all responses and initial conclusions is expected by the end of November. However, at this time no date for recommended actions is confirmed as the conclusions may be included as part of a wider debate as part of the Town Centre Strategy.</p>
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3	<p>Mr Ashwood</p> <p>Who approved the design of the new Whittings Hill School and was there any resident consultation re the design carried out either by the Council, or the designers (Kaer I believe). It is Mr Ashwood's view that the building is ugly.</p>	<p>Response: Jacinda Kemps</p> <p>Consultation was undertaken in regards to Whittings Hill school. At the start of the programme a series of 'roadshows' were organised inviting local residents to express their views on the general principles. Then when the planning application was submitted, all local residents were consulted and invited to comment on any aspects of the design. The design was approved by the Programme Board before being submitted to the Planning Authority, who then also approved it.</p>
4	<p>Mr Ashwood</p> <p>Who authorised pension payments for Councillors and why is this on a selective basis?</p>	<p>Jan Willis (Interim Director of Finance)</p> <p>The Local Government Pension Scheme is a national scheme regulated by Government. Under current rules all Members of the Council are entitled to join the scheme and no Council approval is required should an individual Member wish to opt into the scheme. All Pension Fund benefits are paid in accordance with the rules of the scheme which are set by Government. Under the current rules Members of the Council who joint the scheme accrue pension benefits on the basis of career average salaries.</p>
5	<p>Mr Ashwood</p> <p>A request for an update on Barnet's Icelandic Banks deposits.</p>	<p>Jan Willis (Interim Director of Finance)</p> <p>The Council has lodged claims for all of its investments in the Icelandic banks. Negotiations are continuing with the administrators of the banks and a definitive statement on the amount of money that will be returned to the Council is not expected before the end of financial year 2009/10. The position remains that no money has been repaid to date. However, current available indications are that the Council will regain 100% of the monies deposited with Glitnir and 83% of the amount deposited with Landsbanki. It is also likely that the Council will recover a significant proportion of the interest due. Full provision has been made for potential losses in the Council's 2008-09 accounts in accordance with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy. The 2009/10 budget has also been adjusted to account for lower interest expectations, although the exact amount of potential loss cannot be quantified at this point in time.</p>

6	<p>Mr Ashwood A request for an update on the bridge at Mill Hill</p>	<p>Mr Ashwood has been supplied with the report agreed at Cabinet Resources Committee on 13 May 09 on the current situation regarding Aerodrome Road and Bridge Project Closure</p>
7	<p>Mr Ashwood Connaughts, one of Barnet Homes' contractors, has been accused of price fixing. Are this company's activities being monitored by Barnet Homes.</p>	<p>Mike Wiffen (Barnet Homes) The issue of price fixing was looked into by Barnet Homes when the original announcement was made by the OFT some eighteen months ago. It concluded there was no evidence of anti-competitive practice in the repairs tendering process that awarded the contract to Connaughts and that its procedures broadly followed the appropriate guidance from the OFT and the Office of Government Commerce. It is considered that no further action is necessary but the situation will continue to be monitored.'</p>
	<p>Mr Ashwood submitted several other questions, that were referred to the Director of Corporate Governance. Responses have been supplied to Mr Ashwood</p>	

8	<p>Mr Dix</p> <p>On 11 March this year I attended a Barnet Open Spaces, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment workshop. At the workshop no recreation facilities were included in any of the plans but it was promised that “they would follow”. Since that time I have seen no evidence of a follow up to this workshop, nor any output published. Has an Open Spaces, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment report been published yet and if not what is the anticipated timescale for its publication.</p>	<p>Cathy Munonyedi</p> <p>The PPG17 assessment provides analysis of the spatial distribution of spaces and facilities, including areas of deficiency. With respect to outdoor sports provision key issues raised at the March workshop included using additional resources such as Active People Survey (Sport England). The Active Places database has now been incorporated which provides details of the type of facilities offered and access arrangements and distinguishes between local authorities’ owned or private clubs which have public access. In addition the Active Places dataset has been used to identify school sites which allow public access outside of school hours. The study has not included a comprehensive assessment of non-pitch sports facilities, however sites included in this study included those which contain bowling greens, outdoor tennis courts, and basketball courts/netball courts which have all been mapped.</p> <p>Following the March workshop another workshop took place in June with Council Officers to examine draft findings and developments in the context if providing a robust evidence base for policies relating to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities.</p> <p>The study has been evolving and the draft final report has been received this week for comment by Council Officer’s and it is expected that the final approved version will be available in November 2009.</p>
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9	<p>Mr Dix</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What consultation has taken place over the last 12 months with residents of New Barnet regarding the proposals for New Barnet included in the LDF Core Strategy Direction of Travel Document. 2. Given that the New Barnet Town Centre Framework is due for approval by the Council in December, when will local residents be consulted on its contents. 3. When will the planning department find time to clarify the concerns raised in connection with the Town Centres Floorspace Needs Assessment, especially as this is a point raised through my local Councillor more than 3 months ago. 	<p>Martin Cowie</p> <p>The local planning authority is intending to consult with the community on a draft New Barnet Town Centre Planning Framework in November. The December date previously mentioned was a only a target set when the study was being scoped.</p> <p>A comprehensive response was provided to Mr Dix on the 17th August in relation to the Town Centres Floorspace Needs Assessment. Senior planning officers will be meeting with Mr Dix shortly to discuss this document and the New Barnet Town Centre Planning Framework in detail.</p>
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