

CHIPPING BARNET RESIDENTS FORUM

15 SEPTEMBER 2010 – As at 15 SEPTEMBER 2010

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE FORUM MEETING

	Issues Raised	Response
1	<p>Mr Dix</p> <p>I note that the Council is planning to set up a Commercial Directorate (Delegated Powers Report 1151). From what I can understand, in addition to the £180,870-£194,960 cost of the Commercial Director, the £137,010-£147,600 cost of the Assistant Director and the £65,900-£70,730 cost of the recently appointed Strategic Planning Advisor, the Council want to appoint a further 8 people costing an additional £485,660-£523,000 a year. In total, the new directorate will cost around £900,000 a year in salaries and on costs. At a time when the Council is cutting front line services, how can the Council justify spending so much on back office management and to what extent have Councillors scrutinised this decision.</p>	<p>Andrew Travers</p> <p>With government financial support reducing by between 25% and 33% over the next four years, the Council faces significant challenge in meeting citizen expectations for improved public services. The Council's response is the One-Barnet programme which aims to provide improved public service outcomes while delivering the necessary savings. This will involve the Council working with local partners to commission services from a variety of delivery organisations. To do this effectively, it is essential that the Council has the necessary in-house expertise and capacity. It is for this reason that the Commercial Directorate has been established. The additional costs need to be seen in the context of the external consultancy which will not now be required, the wider savings proposed in the senior management of the Council, and the need to generate £35m of net savings over the next three years.</p>

2	<p>Mr Dix</p> <p>Is the (Acting) Deputy Chief Executive a direct employee of Barnet Council; for how much longer will he be paid via Halliford Associates Ltd., the company of which he is the sole director; why did the monthly payment to his company rise from £15,000 per month in May 2010 (Ref. Doc. 5000257036) to £17,500 in June 2010 (Ref. Doc. 5000260724) and how was he paid in April 2010.</p>	<p>Jacqui McGeachie</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive is retained on a contractual basis rather than a direct employee of the Council. This specific contract was put in place after a rigorous recruitment process failed to find a suitable candidate. The use of staff on a contractual basis gives the council flexibility when planning for the future. When filling posts in this way, the council makes sure that contracts stay within the existing budget for the post. The council will not for instance, have any further obligations to a post holder for pension or national insurance contributions. The months the invoices are paid are in arrears so; payments made in May are in relation to April, and so on. There maybe variations to the payments month on month but over the year this will not exceed the budget for the post.</p>
3	<p>Mr Gordon Massey</p> <p>These questions refer to the council's policy and practice in relation to the provision of vehicle crossovers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is the council persisting with the provision of a crossover at 27 Carnarvon Rd when the parking space does not meet the minimum space requirement? 2. What are the advantages of crossovers which remove only one car from the road? 3. Apart from conservation areas, when considering crossover applications does the council take account of any factors other than Sec 184 of the 1980 highways Act? 	<p>Paul Bragg</p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated that the Smart vehicle can be parked in the frontage without overhanging the public highway and as such meets our criteria.</p> <p>Everyone has the right of free access to their property and creating a crossover improves access.</p> <p>There are a number additional factors including but not limited to: Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, classification of road, type of building, hardstanding construction materials, safety, drainage, impact on street furniture including trees etc.</p>

	<p>4. Does the council acknowledge that parking in Carnarvon Rd is under pressure and the provision of crossovers will exacerbate this?</p> <p>5. The Sept 2005 report of the London Assembly Environment Committee 'Crazy Paving' identified that between 2000 and 2005 Barnet approved 2341 crossovers (85% of applications), whilst Camden approved just 34 (30% of applications). Can the council explain such a wide variation?</p> <p>6. Are changes to current policy under consideration?</p>	<p>Parking pressure was not evident at the time site surveys were conducted in Carnarvon Road.</p> <p>We can not comment on figures produced by another local authority.</p> <p>No</p>
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