

## Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET  
held at The Town Hall, Hendon, NW4, on Tuesday, 28 June, 2005

### PRESENT:

\*The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Andreas Tambourides)

\*The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Victor Lyon, BA (Hons))

### Councillors:

*Steve Blomer	Arun Ghosh BSc BVSc&AH	*Matthew Offord
Maureen Braun	MPhil CBIOL MIBIOL,	*Monroe Palmer OBE FCA
*Fiona Bulmer	MSFAM, MAPHV, MRSM	*Susette Palmer MA
*Terry Burton	*Brian Gordon, LL.B	*Kanti Patel MEng, MCIOB
*Anita Campbell	*Eva Greenspan BA, LL.B	FFB, MCMI
*Wayne Casey BA (Hons)	(Hons)	*Wendy Prentice
MIIA	*Andrew Harper	*Barry Rawlings
*Danish Chopra	*Christopher Harris BA BSc	*Colin Rogers
*Jack Cohen	MPhil	*Paul Rogers
*Melvin Cohen LLB	*Helena Hart	*Brian Salinger
*Brian Coleman, AM, FRSA	*Lynne Hillan	*Gill Sargeant
*Katia David BSc, MBA, JP	*Sean Hooker, BA (Hons)	*Joan Scannell
*Jeremy Davies BA (Hons),	*Daniel Hope	*Alan Schneiderman
CPFA	*Anne Hutton	*Gerard Silverstone
*Peter Davis Ctext, FTI,	*Mark Langton	*Agnes Slocombe SRN RM
FCFI	*Malcolm Lester FCCA	*Ansuya Sodha MBA (Middx)
*Aba Dunner MCIJ	*Kitty Lyons	Cert Ed, DipM (CIM), AMBA
*Kevin Edson	*John Marshall	*Susan Steinberg
*Olwen Evans ACIS	*Linda McFadyen	*Leslie Sussman, MBE
*Claire Farrier	*Kath McGuirk	*Soon-Hoe Teh
*Anthony Finn BSc (Econ)	*David Mencer	*Jim Tierney
FCA	*Alison Moore	Allan Turner
*Mike Freer	*Jazmin Naghar	*Phil Yeoman
	*Robert Newton	*Zakia Zubairi

\*denotes Member present

### 19. PRAYER (Agenda Item 1):

The Mayor's Chaplain offered prayer.

### 20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2):

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Allan Turner, Arun Ghosh and Maureen Braun, and from Councillor David Mencer for lateness.

**21. MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 17 MAY 2005 (Agenda Item 3):**

**RESOLVED** – That, subject to the addition of the letters AM FRSA after Councillor Brian Coleman's name on the first page, the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2005 be approved.

**22. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 4):**

A minute's silence was held to remember Mrs Iris Hirschfield, former Mayoress of the London Borough of Barnet, who had passed away.

The Worshipful the Mayor announced that Joanna Ankier, a former pupil of Henrietta Barnett School, had received a Special Athletics Award from Sport Aid London.

The Worshipful the Mayor presented certificates and prizes to four children from London Borough of Barnet schools, Nemanja Miletic, Joshua Bristow, Charlotte Nolan and Nadia Khomami, who were the winners and runners up in the local heat of the International Essays competition organised by the Ramat Gan Foundation.

**23. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (Agenda Item 5):**

Councillor Phil Yeoman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 8.4 as he worked for a government department dealing with the issue.

**24. QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7):**

Questions were put to the Leader and the relevant Members of the Cabinet. Those questions, together with the original answers provided and the text of any supplementary questions and answers are set out in the Appendix to these minutes.

**25. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Councillor Joan Scannell, duly seconded, moved that the order of business relating to Agenda Item 8 be varied so that Motions 8.6, 8.7 and 8.4 be heard first.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – That the order of business be varied to allow Motions 8.6, 8.7 and 8.4 to be heard first.**

**26. MEMBERS' MOTIONS (Agenda Item 8):**

The Mayor stated that, using his discretion under Rule 34.2, he would allow 20 minutes each for Motions 8.6, 8.7 and 8.4 and then put the remaining Motions and Amendments to the vote without debate.

**27. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MATTHEW OFFORD (Agenda item 8.6)**

Motion 8.6 in the name of Councillor Matthew Offord was moved.

Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes the bottleneck on the A406 North Circular Road between New Southgate and Green Lanes that causes misery to all road users.**

**Council believes that work is necessary on this section to increase capacity and improve traffic flow.**

**Council however condemns the half-hearted current Transport for London (TfL) plans for this section. Their proposals will result in fewer lanes available to motorists, which we believe will actually cause more congestion.**

**Council welcomes the initiative taken by the administration to work with Enfield Council to find a more sustainable and effective solution to the long-term traffic problems on the A406.**

**Council urges Cabinet to support this partnership with Enfield Council to produce a comprehensive, long-term scheme that will both increase capacity on this section of the North Circular and cut the queues that have long plagued the road.**

**28. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR GERARD SILVERSTONE (Agenda item 8.7)**

Motion 8.7 in the name of Councillor Gerard Silverstone was moved.

Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council notes the campaign, led by celebrity chef, Jamie Oliver, to make School Meals more nutritious for children in order to help combat childhood health problems such as obesity.**

**Council welcomes the scheme piloted by Barnet Council at four of the Borough's schools that has seen kitchen staff trained in how to prepare healthy meals for children. This makes Barnet only the second local authority in the Country to act after the campaign to improve school dinners was launched.**

**Council further welcomes the news that 14 other Barnet schools will join the initiative over this year.**

**Council urges Cabinet to ensure this scheme is rolled out to all primary schools should the trial prove a success.**

**29. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR SUSETTE PALMER (Agenda item 8.4)**

Motion 8.4 in the name of Councillor Susette Palmer was moved .

An amendment in the name of Councillor Alison Moore was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment moved by Councillor Alison Moore was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – This Council Notes –**

- **That the Labour Government has returned to its aim of introducing compulsory ID cards for all adults in Britain.**
- **That the Treasury is insisting that this policy be self-financing – that the citizen must pay or face fines and imprisonment**

- That the Government has reported that this will cost £93 per person.
- That the London School of Economics (The Observer, Sunday May 29<sup>th</sup> 2005) has reported that the costs of the technology will be more likely to be £300 per person.
- That The Times has also reported a rise, to double that of the Government figures (Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2005)
- That the Independent reported that the US Government has approached the UK government in asking for compatible technologies in order for US government agencies to obtain access to the information held (Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2005).

**This Council Believes –**

- That this is an unacceptable infringement of civil liberties and a further domination of Government over the citizen.
- That it is unacceptable for the citizens of Barnet to have to fork out up to £300 per person, costing them an estimated £75 million, no matter their ability to pay.
- That this implies costs to the Council itself in terms of ensuring compatibility to operations.

**This Council resolves:-**

- To submit its objection to this policy and legislation to the Government, specifically Charles Clarke and Gordon Brown
- To ask Cabinet to investigate future costs and risks involved to council operations as result of ID cards coming into operation
- To ask the borough's Members of Parliament to state their position on ID cards.

**30. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR STEVE BLOMER (Agenda Item 8.1, 15.1.1a and 15.1.9d)**

Motion 8.1 in the name of Councillor Steve Blomer and amendments in the names of Councillor David Mencer and Councillor Brian Gordon were put to the vote without debate. The amendment in the name of Councillor David Mencer was declared lost. The amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Gordon and the substantive motion were declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council welcomes the investment made by Barnet Council in 2004 to refurbish Stoneyfields Park in Edgware. This included the rebuilding of the children's play area, revamping of the picnic site, safety improvements to the lake and stream and the installation of a 5-a side football pitch.**

**Council further welcomes the fact that these improvements were achieved by Barnet Council listening to the concerns of local residents and responding accordingly.**

**Council notes the petition from residents concerning anti-social behaviour in the park.**

**Council further notes the Motion from Cllr. Helena Hart in 2003 that established the locking of Stoneyfields Park, and other Borough parks, at night.**

**Council supports the ongoing work being undertaken with the Greenspaces department to ensure the gates are locked and backs their moves to build out anti-social behaviour (such as motorbike use) from the park.**

**Council calls on Cabinet to support these continuing efforts being made in conjunction with local residents, in order to ensure Stoneyfields Park continues as a first-class recreational facility that can be enjoyed by all local people.**

**31. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR LINDA MCFADYEN (Agenda Item 8.2 and 15.1.1b)**

Motion 8.2 in the name of Councillor Linda McFadyen and an amendment in the name of Councillor Anita Campbell were put to the vote without debate. The amendment was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes its support on 9 September 2003 for the Government's Civil Partnership registration scheme to support stable families, and to provide legal recognition to the relationships of registered same-sex couples, which will benefit many Barnet residents. Council welcomes and supports the Civil Partnership Act, which will come into effect from 5<sup>th</sup> December.**

**Council calls upon the Executive to ensure the Barnet Registration Service is ready and fully prepared to register civil partnerships, and that the partnerships registration service is advertised to the LGBT community.**

**32. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR ANSUYA SODHA (Agenda Item 8.3 and 15.1.9e)**

Motion 8.3 in the name of Councillor Ansuya Sodha and an amendment in the name of Councillor Matthew Offord were put to the vote without debate. The amendment and the substantive motion were declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes the promotion by this Administration of national Poop Scoop Week 2005, from 27 June to 3 July, organised by the charity Dogs Trust to promote responsible dog ownership and that it is a dog owner's duty to clean up after their dog.**

**Council notes that uncollected dog waste is not just a nuisance, but a public health risk to young children because dog waste containing the roundworm Toxocara can affect sight if the eggs of the parasite are swallowed.**

**Council supports the promotion by the previous Conservative Government of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, which means an offence is committed if a person in charge of a dog fails to clean up its waste. Council believes that suitable numbers of**

correctly placed waste bins are essential to encourage dog owners to be responsible.

Council urges the Cabinet to ensure there are appropriate waste bins across the borough and that these are emptied regularly in order to encourage dog owners to be responsible. Council notes the Authority's active participation in Poop Scoop Week 2005 and urges it to do the same again next year.

**33. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MONROE PALMER (Agenda Item 8.5)**

Motion 8.5 in the name of Councillor Monroe Palmer and an amendment in the name of Councillor Kath McGuirk were put to the vote without debate. The amendment was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - This Council notes –**

- That the Transport Secretary, Alastair Darling is proposing the introduction of variable rate Pay As You Go road-charging.
- That this system will cost as much as £1.34 per mile in peak rate traffic
- That Londoners already face the extension of the GLA Congestion Charge
- That the system will be administered by a satellite GPS system compulsorily attached to personal vehicles.

**This Council believes –**

- That this is a radical but extremely flawed system
- That Barnet's residents will be double-whammed for using their cars
- That it eliminates any incentive to use pollution-efficient vehicles
- There is no indication of whether the money is going to the Treasury or straight to improving transport for public and private use as well as environmental improvements.
- There is no indication as to who will foot the bill for the equipment, though it is likely to be the taxpayer
- That once the technology is in place, it is open-ended for further price increases
- There is no local say involved in the amounts charged
- That drivers will find it difficult to judge their budget
- That the government has no need to track the location of all vehicles

**This Council Resolves –**

- To register its opposition with all three major party leaders on these grounds
- To ask Cabinet to promote the use of greener fuel efficiencies throughout Barnet and its own vehicle fleet

**34. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

In accordance with the Agenda, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 9.00pm.

**35. SUSPENSION OF COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULES**

Councillor Daniel Hope, duly seconded, moved that Council Procedure Rule 3.2, relating to the matters to be dealt with at Ordinary Council Meetings, be suspended, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.1, to enable Councillor Matthew Offord to detail proposed changes to the operational policies of the Council's Parking Service, using five minutes of the time allocated for agenda item 9.1.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – That Council Procedure Rule 3.2 be suspended to enable Councillor Matthew Offord to detail proposed changes to the operational policies of the Council's Parking Service, using five minutes of the time allocated for agenda item 9.1.**

**36. PARKING SERVICE**

Councillor Matthew Offord gave details of proposed changes to the operational policies of the Council's Parking Service.

**37. ADMINISTRATION POLICY ITEM (Agenda Item 9.1, 15.1.9a and 15.1.9b)**

Councillor Brian Salinger proposed the item and an amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Coleman and moved that it be adopted. An amendment in the name of Councillor Jack Cohen was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Coleman was declared carried. The amendment in the name of Councillor Jack Cohen was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was declared carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED - Council notes that Barnet contributed £24,850,000 towards Policing in London last year, more than any other London Borough.**

**Council regrets that Barnet receives proportionately fewer Police Officers back for this investment. Barnet is only being allocated 2 more Police Officers this year, fewer than the average for London, and many fewer than neighbouring Haringey, which is being allocated 14 more Officers.**

**Council notes the implementation of the Government's new licensing regime permitting more late-night opening of pubs and potentially creating more disorder on our streets.**

**Council welcomes Barnet's bold expansion of the No Alcohol Zones into more town centres, but highlights the Cabinet report finding these must be properly Policed in order to prove effective.**

**Council further welcomes the statement by the Borough Commander that more police on the Borough's streets would shift the "balance of power" away from Criminals.**

**Council believes that given our residents contribute proportionately more to the Metropolitan Police Budget than other Boroughs, Barnet people deserve more Police on their streets.**

**Council supports the “Barnet Press Group” Campaign “More Bobbies for Barnet” and encourages all Councillors to contribute to the lobbying effort.**

**Council calls on Cabinet to seek an urgent meeting with the Metropolitan Police Authority to rectify the problems in their Resource Allocation Formulation and ensure that Barnet receives the extra frontline Officers it desperately needs.**

**38. OPPOSITION POLICY ITEM (Agenda Item 9.2, 15.1.9c and 15.1.15)**

Councillor Barry Rawlings proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. An amendment in the name of Councillor John Marshall was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment moved by Councillor John Marshall was declared carried. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council believes that Barnet LEA is amongst the best in the country as evidenced by:**

- \*excellent A Level results**
- \*excellent GCSE results**
- \*excellent Key Stage 2 results**
- \*excellent OFSTED reports on many Barnet Schools**
- \*the willingness of parents living outside Barnet to send their children to our schools**

**Council welcomes the fact that several schools, most recently Underhill Junior School, have come out of special measures.**

**Council congratulates the heads, teachers, staff and governors of these schools.**

**Council condemns the actions of the Labour Group libelling the LEA and seeking to ignore the progress made since May 2002.**

**39. COMMENTS ON THE WORK OF THE CABINET (Agenda item 10 and 15.1.13)**

**Councillor Gill Sargeant commented**

The regeneration of Grahame Park and, in particular, the Choices proposal did receive planning permission last year. As yet the Agreement is still not signed. This has caused great hardship to a number of residents in Grahame Park and they have requested me that I address you on this. I really am very concerned that there is still no date as to when that is going to be signed.

I do appreciate that the housing costs since this was first planned, in 2001, where the costs were around £211 million will have increased. I have noticed that in the intervening period the St Georges development has now come on stream. Residents will know in future it is going to be called Beaufort Park and has very pretty pictures of blue water. I do not know where the water is coming from, but I think the concern is that with this development coming on stream that this may well affect Choices.



There are two points I really want addressing: do we have a time as to when this will happen, and do we also have some revised figures of how this is going to be developed?

**Councillor Anthony Finn responded**

Your points are well made. Let me just say that Council is continuing to work with Choices for Grahame Park. As you know, Choices for Grahame Park is the joint vehicle of the Genesis Housing Group and the Notting Hill Housing Trust and we are working with them to review the business plan, discuss the sensitivities of future markets and to consider the risk share between the Council and the Housing Associations, for the overall regeneration proposals and to satisfy the requirements for the proposed funders of the project. The recent confirmation of selection of Countryside Properties plc will assist in this process, allowing them to bring their considerable expertise and regeneration experience to assist in finalising arrangements for the project.

I and the Leader have set up a meeting tomorrow with the two executives of the RSL's and we will be discussing key issues. We hope to be able to report a successful conclusion to our discussions at the Cabinet Meeting either in August or, if not then, in October. By then you will have some positive feedback.

**40. STATUTORY COUNCIL BUSINESS (Agenda Items 12 and 15)**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 43, the Worshipful the Mayor allocated 17 minutes for Agenda Item 12.1, 17 minutes for Agenda Item 12.2 and six minutes for Agenda Item 15.

**41. REPORT OF CABINET 31 MAY 2005 (Agenda Item 12.1 and 15.1.11):**

Councillor Brian Salinger moved reception and adoption of the Report of Cabinet dated 31 May 2005 with the following recommendations:

**1. CORPORATE PLAN & BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE PLAN (Report of the Cabinet Member for Policy & Performance – Agenda Item 4):**

**(1) That Council approve the draft technical appendix (BVPIs) to the Corporate Plan.**

Councillor Salinger also moved reception and adoption of the revised technical appendix (BVPIs) to the Corporate Plan attached as Appendix D to the Democratic Services Manager's Supplemental Report. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED – That the Report of Cabinet dated 31 May 2005 be approved and adopted and that the technical appendix (BVPIs) to the Corporate Plan attached as Appendix D to the Democratic Services Manager's Supplemental Report be approved.**

**42. REPORT OF CABINET 9 JUNE 2005 (Agenda Item 12.2):**

Councillor Brian Salinger moved reception and adoption of the Report of Cabinet dated 9 June 2005 with the following recommendations:

**1. UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN – PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS (Cab. Dec. 22/11/2004 - 7) (Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning & Licensing Services – Agenda Item 4):**

(1) That, with reference to the revised papers incorporating the above-mentioned amendments that have been separately circulated to all members of the Council, Council:

a) agree the schedule of proposed modifications set out in Appendix A to the Cabinet Member's report ;

b) agree the schedule of reasons for not making the Inspector's recommended modifications set out in Appendix B to the Cabinet Member's report; and

c) make the documents publicly available in accordance with the Regulations involving a 6 weeks statutory consultation deposit period.

Debate ensued. Councillor Melvin Cohen thanked all the staff who had worked on the Unitary Development Plan to this stage.

Upon being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED – That the Report of Cabinet dated 9 June 2005 be approved and adopted.**

**(P) CHANGES IN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS (Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 15.1.2, 15.1.12 and 15.1.14):**

**RESOLVED – That the following changes be made to the memberships of the Committees indicated**

- Councillor Brian Salinger be removed from the list of substitutes on the Corporate Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee (Health, Safety and Welfare)
- Councillor Malcolm Lester replace Councillor Joan Scannell on the Cleaner, Greener, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Councillor Jeremy Davies be appointed as a substitute on the Standards Committee
- Councillor Daniel Hope replace Councillor Andreas Tambourides on the Planning and Environment Committee
- Councillor Andreas Tambourides replace Councillor Daniel Hope as a substitute on the Planning and Environment Committee
- Councillor Mark Langton replace Councillor Alan Schneiderman on the Planning and Environment Committee
- Councillor Alan Schneiderman replace Councillor Anne Hutton as a substitute on the Planning and Environment Committee
- Councillor Paul Rogers replace Councillor Soon-Hoe Teh as a substitute on the Planning and Environment Committee.

**(P) VACANCIES ON SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 15.1.3):**

The Democratic Services Manager's report set out details of the appointments or nominations to be made.

Nominations in the names of Councillors Joan Scannell, Alison Moore and Jeremy Davies were moved.

**RESOLVED –**

**(P) That the following persons be appointed or nominated as the case may require to fill the vacancies referred to for the period indicated:**

<b>VACANCY REFERENCE</b>	<b>PARTICULARS OF APPOINTMENT OR NOMINATION</b>	<b>PERSON APPOINTED OR NOMINATED</b>
VP2.2	All Saints CE N20	Miss B Maltby
VP1.2	All Saints CE School, NW2	Mr Stephen Philips
P.23.1	Brookland Infant and Brookland Junior Schools	Defer
P.10.3	Brunswick Park Primary School	Defer
P.11.1	Church Hill School	Defer
P.11.2	Church Hill School	Councillor Daniel Hope
S.03.1	Copthall School	Mr J Howard
P.39.1	Courtland JMI School	Defer
P.07.1	Danegrove Primary School	Mrs Pamela Diffey
P.07.2	Danegrove Primary School	Defer
P.41.3	Dollis Infant School	Mr Vinod Sodha
P.45.2	Grasvenor Avenue Infant School	Defer
P.48.2	Hampden Way Nursery School	Defer
SP.01.1	Mapledown School	Mr Suraj Sehgal
SP.02.2	Northway School	Defer
SP.03.2	Oakleigh School	Defer
P.30.2	Parkfield JMI School	Councillor Matthew Offord
FS4.1	Queen Elizabeth's Foundation School	Councillor Brian Coleman
VP.17.1	St Josephs RC Infant School	Councillor Sean Hooker
VS7.1	St Mary's CE High, NW4	Mr Richard Martyn
P.16.1	Summerside Primary School	Defer
P.50.4	The Orion Primary and Goldbeaters Primary Schools	Defer
P.27.2	Wessex Gardens Primary School	Mr Alan Maund
P.27.3	Wessex Gardens Primary School	Mrs Vanessa Gearson
P.03.4	Whitings Hill Primary School	Mrs Judy Copping-Joyce

**45. VACANCIES ARISING FROM RECONSTITUTION OF SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 15.1.4):**

The Democratic Services Manager's report set out details of the appointments or nominations to be made.

Nominations in the names of Councillors Joan Scannell, Alison Moore and Jeremy Davies were moved.

**RESOLVED –**

(1) That the following persons be appointed or nominated as the case may require to fill the vacancies referred to for the period indicated:

VACANCY REFERENCE	PARTICULARS OF APPOINTMENT OR NOMINATION	PERSON APPOINTED OR NOMINATED
P.26.1	Bell Lane Primary School	Mr Andrew Sherling
P.26.4	Bell Lane Primary School	Mr J Hickman
VP.05.1	Christ Church CE JMI School	Dr Rex Palmer
VP.05.2	Christ Church CE JMI School	Mr R Lawson
P.07.1	Danegrove Primary School	Mrs Pamela Diffey
P.07.2	Danegrove Primary School	Defer
S.07.4	Friern Barnet School	Mrs Margaret Johnson
S.07.5	Friern Barnet School	Councillor Anne Hutton
P.48.1	Hampden Way Nursery School	Mrs J G Lodhi
P.21.2	Manorside JMI School	Ms Jane Moore
P.09.1	Monkfrith JMI School	Councillor Andreas Tambourides
P.09.2	Monkfrith JMI School	Mrs J G Lodhi
P.18a.2	Moss Hall Infant School	Ms Kim Zeital
P.18a.3	Moss Hall Infant School	Ms Miriam Aquilina
P.17.4	Northside Primary School	Ms Margaret Pond
S11.4	Queen Elizabeth's Girls School	Mrs D Wilkinson
VP.15.2	St Johns CE School N20	Mr D Merritt
VP.20.1	St Marys CE School, N3	Mr Jeremy Moodey
P.22.1	Tudor JMI School	Councillor Alison Moore

**46. REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 15.1.5):**

The Democratic Services Manager's report set out details of the appointments or nominations to be made.

Upon nominations in the name of Councillor Joan Scannell, it was **RESOLVED** – That the following persons be appointed or nominated as the case may be to fill the vacancies referred to for the period indicated:

VACANCY REFERENCE	PARTICULARS OF APPOINTMENT OR NOMINATION	PERSON APPOINTED OR NOMINATED
1002	Almshouse Charities of Samuel Atkinson and Others	Defer
1058	Finchley Charities	Mr Roland Carpenter
1066	Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Greater London	Councillor Terry Burton

47. **REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON AVENUE HOUSE ESTATE MANAGEMENT (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda item 15.1.6).**

**RESOLVED** – That Councillor Jeremy Davies replace Councillor Susette Palmer as the Council’s representative on Avenue House Estate Management and that Councillor Susette Palmer replace Councillor Jeremy Davies as substitute representative.

48. **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda item 15.1.7).**

**RESOLVED** – That the Calendar of Meetings be corrected to indicate that the Group Meetings for the November meeting of Council be held on Thursday 3 November instead of 2 November.

49. **DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda item 15.1.8).**

**RESOLVED** – That, in variation of the Council’s decision of 1 March, 2005, the powers relating to the certification and authentication of documents, notices, orders, byelaws, currently vested with the Democratic Services Manager, be re- allocated as follows:-

<b>Power</b>	<b>Allocated to</b>
<b>Signing of traffic Orders</b>	<b>Head of Highways and Design</b>
<b>Requisitions for Information</b>	<b>Borough Solicitor</b>
<b>Notification of Public Inquiry</b>	<b>Head of Planning</b>
<b>Notices connected with tree preservation orders</b>	<b>Head of Planning</b>
<b>Notices relating to budget, council tax, accounts inspection and audit</b>	<b>Borough Treasurer</b>
<b>Housing sales and other landlord issues</b>	<b>Borough Solicitor</b>
<b>Certification of byelaws</b>	<b>Borough Solicitor</b>

50. **APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OFFICER APPOINTMENT PANEL – HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda item 15.1.10).**

The Democratic Services Manager’s report referred to the need to constitute a Chief Officer Appointment Panel to appoint a Head of Environmental Services.

**RESOLVED** – That the following appointments be made to the Chief Officer Appointment Panel for this purpose:

- Councillor Brian Salinger (Chairman);**
- Councillor Matthew Offord (Vice-Chairman);**
- Councillor Olwen Evans;**
- Councillor Robert Newton;**
- Councillor Kath McGuirk;**
- Councillor Jim Tierney;**
- Councillor Monroe Palmer.**

**Substitutes:**

**Councillor Brian Coleman**  
**Councillor Christopher Harris**  
**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**  
**Councillor Colin Rogers**  
**Councillor Wayne Casey**  
**Councillor Jack Cohen**

The meeting finished at 10.37 pm

**Council Questions to Cabinet Members  
28 June 2005  
Questions and Responses**

**Question No. 1**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

How do you think the proposed increase in the Mayor of London's congestion charge from £5.00 to £8.00 will affect Barnet's motorists?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The increase in the daily charge will clearly affect those residents in Barnet who enter the congestion charge zone in their cars during the operational hours of the scheme.

The change in charge rate by £3 equates to an increase of 60%, and occurs only 29 months after the scheme was introduced. This is likely to cost the average motorists an additional £15 a week – or £60 a month.

**Supplementary Question No. 1**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Offord, thank you very much for explaining the economic consequences of the increasing congestion charge. In short, would you not agree with me that this charge is a barely disguised form of daylight robbery? It is a totally unwarranted assault against innocent hard-pressed motorists and it is crude, a very crude method of bullying people into using public transport which, under Mayor Livingstone, is more inefficient and more expensive than ever before?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Thank you Councillor Gordon, I do concur with some of your comments. I think it is a bit rich coming just 29 months after the original introduction of the charge and I do have some concerns about the increase as well.

**Question No. 2**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

On the 1 November at the launch of the Community Support Network you said "Barnet is one of the safest Boroughs in London" Do you still believe this to be true?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Yes.

**Supplementary Question No. 2**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

Yes, thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Salinger, may I remind you of the front page of the Barnet Press, Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 'Just what has happened to our borough', and it says, 'Barnet's quiet and leafy streets have been rocked by murders, rapes and burglaries, leaving many residents feeling under siege by criminals'. Councillor Salinger, inside The Press reminds us, 'Crime in Barnet has soared in the past year, reaching levels of many notorious inner-city boroughs. Barnet now has more crime than Haringey and Hackney'. Councillor Salinger, either you are complacent, either you do not believe what The Press has written is true. Which is it?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, we are going to debate the role of the Police later on this evening and I am anything but complacent. But the question that I was asked was, "is Barnet one of the safest boroughs in London?" and the answer is still, yes, it is. That doesn't mean to say that there is not more that can be done to make this borough safer, but I have to say that when The Press compare our crime statistics on a straight basis with places like Hackney and Haringey and fail to take into consideration the fact that we are the second largest borough in London and the tenth largest unitary authority in the country, you would expect to find those raw figures looking that way. When you analyse those figures on the number of crimes per thousand population we are, of course, infinitely safer than boroughs like Hackney or Haringey. We have a lot more to do. I am not complacent. I hope he (Cllr Cohen) will play a positive role in the debate later this evening.

**Question No. 3**

**Councillor Phil Yeoman**

Members of Barnet's Muslim Community hire out Grahame Park and Watling Community Centres every Friday for prayers, but are unable to do so when bank holidays fall on a Friday and therefore have nowhere to meet and pray. What can the Council do, working in partnership with Barnet Homes and the Watling Community Association, to help overcome this problem to assist the borough's Muslim residents?

**Answer by Councillor Katia David**

The Council is prepared to work with the Muslim community; Barnet Homes and the Watling Community Association to seek a solution to this issue. I have asked Council officers to contact each group to agree an appropriate way forward.



**Supplementary Question No. 3****Councillor Phil Yeoman**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I just welcome the support from the Cabinet Member on this issue. Could I just ask her to keep me posted of the developments and just write to let me know how the negotiations are going and which officers are involved, if possible.

**Answer by Councillor Katia David**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Of course I will Councillor Yeoman.

**Question No. 4****Councillor Brian Gordon**

What is the up to date position regarding the continuation of the Barnet Register Office?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The responses to the public consultation are being forwarded to the General Register Office.

Any change to the statutory scheme by which the registration district operates requires Ministerial approval and GRO signing off.

**Supplementary Question No. 4****Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Salinger. One recognises that the right decision has to be made in connection with the Barnet Register Office but could I urge that, in view of the amount of public uncertainty that seems to be about this, that we do everything we can to see that the decision is made on this particular issue as speedily as possible?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Yes I am sure it will, but the representations will go to the General Register Office and, in fact, at the end of the day it is their decision.

**Question No. 5****Councillor Susette Palmer**

Despite debate as to the overall environmental cost of disposable nappies it remains the fact that they form 4% of landfill waste. Some councils like Mid- Devon and Waverley have a space on their website encouraging the use of reusables. Are we proposing to have such information on our website?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Barnet's recycling website already contains information on the alternatives to disposable nappies. This information can be viewed at

[http://www.barnet.gov.uk/environment\\_transport/recycling/a-z/n-p\\_recycling.php3#nappies](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/environment_transport/recycling/a-z/n-p_recycling.php3#nappies)

**Supplementary Question No. 5****Councillor Susette Palmer**

Actually, you know, [www.barnet.gov.uk/environment\\_transport/recycling/a-z/n-p\\_recycling.php3#nappies](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/environment_transport/recycling/a-z/n-p_recycling.php3#nappies) isn't actually very friendly. I had actually got by going via the webpage as far as the environment and recycling. Can I ask please that you put the subject, which actually is of considerable concern to young mothers and fathers, on the left hand side list of the environment page? There is already a list of topics. Could we please add this one?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Mr Mayor, I was trying to be helpful by actually including the website address but thank you for the question. I would just like to point out that the Council is keen to promote the use of alternative nappies so that parents can make an informed choice about the nappies they use. Both mothers and also their fathers. Our options include using disposable nappies, local laundering service or home washing and we are also participating in the scheme where the North London Waste Authority are providing a £51 subsidy so that parents can take advantage of that as well.

**Question No. 6****Councillor Kath McGuirk**

If the Cabinet Member would join me in congratulating the in-house Refuse Collection management and staff on their continuing excellent performance over the past decade, and provide to Council the resident satisfaction ratings that prove the hard-work and dedication of the refuse collection staff is highly valued by the residents of Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I am surprised that Cllr McGuirk thinks she needs to ask me this question.  
Annual Residents Survey Results re Refuse Collection Satisfaction Ratings

Year	% Satisfaction	Year on Year Change
2002/03	68%	-4% (from 2001/02)
2003/04	84%	+16%
2004/05	81%	-3%

**Supplementary Question No. 6****Councillor Kath McGuirk**

Thank you Mr Mayor. What is clear from the residents' survey from anyone who does regular surgeries, especially on this side of the Chamber, is that the in-house refuse collection team continues to be excellent by providing a first class service to the residents of the borough with the rating they have already mentioned. On behalf of all councillors, will the Cabinet Member undertake to write to each in-house refuse collection staff member to express our thanks to them for their hard work and dedication and will look forward to them continuing to supply such a good service for many years to come. I know you have probably written a great speech, Councillor Offord, but I just need an answer yes or no.

### **Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I am always happy to convey our thanks to members of our staff who work hard on behalf of the residents and on behalf of the Borough.

### **Question No. 7**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What progress is being made regarding the Council's battle against graffiti in the Borough?

### **Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The Council's graffiti removal policies were approved by Cabinet July 2003. The focus of pro-active graffiti removal in Barnet is on:

- 1) The 13 Town Centres with a Town Keeper
- 2) The removal of racist and offensive graffiti
- 3) The removal of reported graffiti facing "A" roads

The 13 Town Centres are surveyed daily. Graffiti is removed by either the Town Keepers or the Graffiti Removal Teams, subject to quantity/complexity.

The last two years has seen progress with utility companies. In 2004, 350, NTL/BT graffiti covered green street cabinets were reported to the companies and the graffiti was subsequently removed by the utility companies. NTL/BT have since supplied green cabinet paint to the council and the town keeper service use this paint to paint over graffiti on cabinets within the town centre zones. The Graffiti Officer is continuing to work with NTL/BT to improve coordination of activities.

Current developments include the removal of graffiti and clean up of the defined Childs Hill Town Centre. This will involve the Safer Neighbourhoods Police Team as well as traders. The Probation Service may be involved with the supply of people serving community sentences.

The Council is also working with the probation service and has launched Payback in Barnet. Payback involves offenders who have community sentences working on graffiti removal/clearance of rubbish/ flytip. Youth offenders carry out graffiti removal reparation work. The Graffiti Officer co-ordinates with the youth offending team to identify sites where this work can be carried out safely. Between 2003-2004 twelve clean ups have taken place on park pavilions. In 2004 Princes Trust volunteers carried out the re-decoration of the graffiti damaged Oakhill Pavilion. The trust carried out this work free of charge with the support from the council of some paint and brushes.

A major graffiti clean up project took place in Burnt Oak in July/August 2004. 80 volunteers from Soul in the City worked with LBB and Burnt Oak safer neighbourhoods' police team to remove 3000 m2 of graffiti along Watling Avenue and Watling market. The council undertook to maintain Watling Avenue as a graffiti free zone backed up with funding from safer neighbourhoods.

**Supplementary Question No. 7****Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Offord, thank you very much for explaining how this Council's excellent anti-graffiti policy is operating. Graffiti is undoubtedly a scourge. One of the most moronic manifestations of urban vandalism, I am sure you will agree. Would you agree that under our Administration, Barnet is looking a good deal tidier and cleaner than it was under the Administration of our predecessors, of not very blessed memory?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Yes I would Councillor Gordon and I am glad that not only you have noticed it but also many residents within the Borough.

**Question No. 8****Councillor Sean Hooker**

Would the Leader describe a three inch advert on page 91 of a local paper an adequate consultation on something as important as the future of the Wood Street Registry Office?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

There is no legal requirement to consult the public about a new scheme or changed scheme. However, the General Register Office "advice" is that "the local authority shall consult as widely as possible on the issues so that any representations or objections received are taken into account and resolved locally". As suggested by the GRO, a public notice advertisement was placed locally (Barnet Press) giving details of the proposed changes and when they are intended to come into effect (1 October 2005). The advertisement ran for 2 weeks with a closing date of 10 June 2005. Letters inviting representations were also sent to local hospitals, residential care homes, burial societies and other "stakeholders" as well as to the local MPs. The notice did make it clear that the consultation was for the purpose of amending the statutory scheme and representations would be forwarded to the GRO

**Supplementary Question No. 8****Councillor Sean Hooker**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I just have to say, it's a good thing that the Liberal Democrats believe in consultation. On this issue we put over 2,000 flyers out to local households around there. I believe the Labour Party did a very similar thing. I do note that you had no legal obligation to do this but I want to ask Councillor Salinger that had he made a promise at a packed public meeting, in the face of a 1,000 signature petition that there would be a full consultation on this, would he be happy with what has actually happened on this consultation? Would you actually be happy? That is the question I would like to ask.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The consultation is carried out on behalf of the General Register Office and it was done in accordance with their advice.

**Question No. 9****Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Residents, including the East Barnet Parish Residents' Association, have been drawing together plans for a skate park in Oakhill Park, to provide local young people with an activity to keep them occupied and divert them from becoming involved in anti-social behaviour. Will the Cabinet Member offer her support to these proposals in principle; what discussions has the Council had with the residents on these plans; what assistance is the Council offering; and what progress has been made?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Any proposals would need to be considered in the light of funding priorities and would require widespread consultation with local residents and the police who may not all consider that this would be the best use of the space.

**Supplementary Question No. 9****Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Does the Cabinet Member actually support the skate park proposals for Oakhill Park? Just yes or no. Thank you.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I support the local residents.

**Question No. 10****Councillor Brian Gordon**

What measures are being taken by the Council to try and eliminate election fraud, especially in the field of postal votes?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

We do not believe that we have the sort of problems discovered in Birmingham and elsewhere but we have put in place checking procedures to make sure. These include spot checks of a random selection of 5% of postal votes, comparing the signatures on the certificate of identity and the application form and, where available, the signature on the electoral registration form (not all electors have to sign the electoral registration form).

Checks were first carried out on the Colindale Ward By-election postal votes and nothing suspicious was found. The checks on the General Election postal votes revealed a very small number of signatures that do not appear to match and these are being followed up.

As part of a special project, the Head of the Council's Anti Fraud Team has been asked to oversee the arrangements for next year's municipal elections and the preceding compilation of the electoral register. Whilst this is being done primarily because it is felt that the organisational skills of the officer concerned will be well suited to this task and not because there are particular concerns of fraudulent activity in Barnet's elections, she will nevertheless bring her existing knowledge and experience to the project and this will further assist efforts to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to identify, deter and prevent electoral fraud.

The Electoral Commission has made recommendations for change to the process of registering to vote and applying for, receiving and casting a postal or proxy vote, together with recommendations relating to the process of voting in person at a polling station. Amongst other things they recommend that all electors should provide individual identification details that could be used to check a voter's identity at the polling station and all applications for postal or proxy voting. The Government is currently considering the recommendations and the Department of Constitutional Affairs is to carry out a consultation exercise over the summer period on proposals for change.

**Supplementary Question No. 10**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

I am interested to note that there are recommendations by the Electoral Commission to require voters to provide personal identification details. Surely this can best be done by making it mandatory for all voters to bring their polling cards to the polling station, which is something which, it seems, the majority of voters do anyway. This would be far better than introducing more schemes which would be very difficult to implement and far too elaborate. Do you not agree with that particular idea and, if you do, is it possible for this Council to make representation to that effect?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The question was actually about postal voting rather than voting at polling stations, but I think the Government have learnt its lesson from the abuse that we have seen and the conviction of Labour and indeed Conservative councillors elsewhere in the country. I think we will have to watch and see what the advice is from the Government as to how this should be handled in the future. But if you ask for my personal opinion, I think it is only a matter of time before residents turning up to vote will need to bring some form of identification with them to polling stations. No it does not have to be an I.D. card, it can be anything else and I think that we will also see a move towards personal registration rather than one person signing on behalf of a household.

**Question No. 11**

**Councillor Sean Hooker**

Does the Cabinet Member agree with Councillor Brian Coleman when he said in 2003 that pavements are for people? If so then why does this administration persist in allowing large commercial wheelie bins to obstruct the pavements?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I think you have taken Councillor Coleman's comment out of context, as the vast majority of the Council's Trade Waste customers do not place Trade Waste Containers on the adopted footways-pavement. However, there are a few locations where the lack of space at a business premise, both inside and to the rear, precludes storage and/or collection of Trade Waste Containers.

**Supplementary Question No. 11**

**Councillor Sean Hooker**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I think it's Councillor Offord that is getting things out of context. It's a clear statement. Pavements are for people. That's what Councillor Coleman said. It doesn't matter what context is there, it still is a statement that pavements are for people.

With this Council it is not just this issue of trade bins. This Council still forces most of the householders to put their own domestic bins onto the pavement as well as the obstructions that are for elderly and disabled people with the amount of street clutter that we have got.

The question that I would like to ask Councillor Offord is when are you going to sort out this problem before you start spending all this money on footpaths, when are you going to put pedestrians first?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Well I am glad that the Councillor has actually acknowledged that this Administration is listening to local residents and now providing a focus on footpaths, away from our successful and more than adequate policy on the resurfacing of roads which I know that his group on the Council oppose.

In terms of our residents, we already undertake the work that he asks us to do through our Street Enforcement Service and we actively monitor problems and obstructions on the pavement and will continue to do so.

**Question No. 12**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

Will the Cabinet Member for Resources guarantee that there will be no cuts during this financial year, and, if not, in which services is he currently considering making cuts?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

If efficiencies can be achieved, we have a duty to deliver these as soon as possible and not wait until 1 April.

The Labour Group has a habit of suggesting to residents that the poor annual grant settlements we receive from Central Government allow us to deliver low council tax increases with no reductions in services. This Administration, however, believes in being more honest with residents about the choices that have to be made – a message that has been consistent in the budget consultation we have undertaken in previous years.

**Supplementary Question No. 12**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Judging by the quality of the answer, all I can say is bring back Tony Finn, all is forgiven.

Is it not the case Councillor Patel that you are planning cuts in every part of this service? You are planning cuts everywhere. As a start, perhaps you can tell us how many staff you are planning to sack in the Borough Treasurers Service this year as a result of the Modernising Core Systems project?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

Mr Mayor. I think the Member should be quite aware that I do not and I do not believe in playing a pantomime.

My record proves it. I will take a very pragmatic approach towards the services and they are clearly spelt out in our Corporate Plan. In jovial notes, I am not interested. I have come here to serve the public and if an action has to be taken, and if the service has to be streamlined, I will not be afraid to do so, in the interests of this Borough. Thank you.

**Question No. 13**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

At the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 28 February Cllr. Alison Moore claimed that she frequently saw parking meters that were not working. Can the Lead Member tell me from the Council's records how many such broken meters were reported as needing action by Cllr. Alison Moore?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I was not at the meeting so I did not hear what was said and I can only advise that from information supplied to me Cllr Moore is not recorded as having reported a defect to the parking team and there are no records of e-mails from Cllr Moore reporting machine defects - but this does not mean that she may not have done so.

**Supplementary Question No. 13**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

Thank you Mr Mayor.

Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that Members who see something which needs attention or repair, should report it to the relevant officers?



**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Yes I do Councillor Evans. I believe that we are not only here to administer the Borough but also one of the duties of an active councillor within our local communities, and I would encourage anyone, whoever that may be, who has suggested that they've seen a parking machine or broken paving stone or even a rubbish bin left out on the footpath, that they actually report it so that action can be taken on behalf of local residents.

**Question No. 14**

**Councillor Steve Blomer**

Why did the Council not inform the Head teachers of Fairway, Parkfield and Underhill primary schools (and presumably other schools' head teachers) of the safe routes to school proposals, supported by investment by the Labour Mayor of London Ken Livingstone but to be implemented by the Council, before the plans were considered and agreed by the Hendon Area and Chipping Barnet Area Environment Sub-Committees on 24 May, and how will such a failure in communication between the Council and schools be avoided in future?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Reports are formally presented to the Area Environment Sub-Committees to allocate funding to individual schools. Schools selected are full partners and any measures to be progressed are taken from the work already identified within the school's own transport plan and a digest is presented to Members for information.

Therefore, all schools receiving financial support in this way are fully engaged with the Council in developing proposals specific to their location prior to any committee meeting.

**Supplementary Question No. 14**

**Councillor Steve Blomer**

I would like to thank the Member for his answer but unfortunately on this occasion, he is at odds with the facts.

I was phoned by the Head Teacher of the Fairways School on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of June at 4.40pm. That is, what 15/16 days after the Sub-Committee meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup>. She informed me that she knew nothing about the plans whatsoever until she had been told so the day before by one of the parents. She also informed me that, and I have to take her word on this, that she had spoken to the Chief Education Officer who also knew nothing about this whatsoever.

I therefore took it upon myself to apologise on behalf of the Council myself there and then for this lack of communication. Will the Member now take the opportunity to apologise to both the Head Teacher and the Chief Education Officer and promise that this will not happen again?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I can say that I wasn't privy to any of the conversations that the Councillor does describe. I am very happy to apologise to the Head Teacher, officers are a different matter. But I can assure you as I have laid out in the answer, the mechanism that we use for that process, it is unfortunate if it has on that occasion broken down.

But I would just bring your attention to a matter that has been brought to my attention. I understand that a letter seems to have been sent to local residents from something called the Labour Action Group misleadingly informing that the school itself had been awarded this funding. This has caused confusion with some schools as to whether this was direct funding or not. Many of the local residents have received this letter, also parents and children attending the local schools and some took the view that this money could be used for schools for other improvements.

But on the final note, I am sure you will be pleased you mentioned Mayor Livingstone but you will be comforted to know that TfL have now released all the money they withheld last year for promoting safer travel to school and any subsequent delay and measures will now be implemented.

**Question No. 15**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What can this Council do to address the problem of the shortage of police officers within the Borough and the consequent increase in the crime rate?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I ask Councillor Gordon to listen to the debate that will follow later this evening which will address this issue.

**Supplementary Question No. 15**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Salinger, I will, indeed, be listening very carefully to the debate later on and note that you will be proposing the motion. Would you join with me in expressing the hope that this motion is indeed passed to show that our Council genuinely is concerned about tackling crime and dealing with issues of law and order unlike the Members of the Opposition over there, who there just pay lip service to these issues.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Indeed, and I hope that when we reach the motion it will have the support of every Member of this Council.

**Question No. 16**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

If the Cabinet Member responsible for equalities could please outline the consultation and liaison with the borough's ethnic minorities undertaken by the Barnet Safer Communities Partnership, and how this is being implemented by the Partnership?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The major consultation on the Safer Communities Strategy was undertaken at the Barnet Civic Network in October 2004. Invitations were sent widely to voluntary and community groups in the Borough, and a large number of groups from BME communities attended (albeit that we did not specifically target them). The discussions at the Network fed directly into the new strategy.

A core part of the work of the Safer Communities team (at Colindale Police station) is working with vulnerable communities, particularly BME communities. Indeed a post of Hate Crime Officer (Sara Sutherland) is funded from the Government Office for London's Safer and Stronger Communities Fund, and part of her role is specifically to work with BME communities.

Recent Visits and Contact have included:

Barnet Hindu Cultural Society  
Sangam  
Barnet Asian Women's Association  
Somali Family Support Group  
Barnet Refugee Forum (which represents 30 different groups / organisations within Barnet).

The Safer Communities vehicle and trailer is also taken out to community events to convey key messages and involve the community. The Safer Communities Team this year has already attended:

Sangam Open Day  
Passover Funfair, Copthall  
Barnet Multi Cultural Day  
Barnet Refugee Festival.

The Safer Communities Team also supports Forums that tackle particular issues of diversity in Barnet.

Multi Agency Racial Harassment Group (MARHG) membership includes Barnet Refugee Forum and the MARHG has established and effective links to The 'Community concerns' Gold Strategy Group, the Multi Faith Forum and the Community Security Trust.

There have been a number of joint projects and outreach work to tackle issues of racial harassment at a community level. These include:

- √ Burnt Oak Drop In Service
- √ Outreach work by the Peer Support Workers (tackling racism within the Burnt Oak Area, working particularly with young people)
- √ Joint police operation with the Menorah school to tackle incidents of anti-Semitism. Key consultation took place with the CST and Gold Group.

The Domestic Violence Forum's membership includes Barnet Asian Women's Association, Sangam, Somali Family Support Group and Jewish Women's Aid.

Outreach work with Jewish Women's Aid, involving the Partnership Trailer, has taken place in Golders Green. Further Outreach work is being planned with Barnet Asian Women's Association. Domestic Violence Training organised by the Safer Communities Team has also involved the above groups.

The Team also works with the Barnet Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Network whose membership includes Naz Project (A sexual health and HIV / AIDS charity working with Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in London). Over the next year Barnet LGBT Network hopes to work with the Borough on Black History Month to promote the inclusion of BME LGBT communities.

The Safer Communities Team will continue to work together with the Metropolitan Police to promote community safety in the home and on the streets of Barnet. This entails working in partnership with BME groups, Neighbourhood watches, resident and community groups, to solve problems at a local level.

We endeavour to contact as many BME groups and organisations as possible and increase awareness of the Third Party Reporting scheme which enables people to report racist incidents and other Hate Crimes at locations other than police stations- including several Council establishments such as youth centres and Housing offices. The Safer Communities Partnership recognises the need to obtain feedback from all members of the community as to how they feel about living and working within Barnet and what changes they would like to see.

Consultation and liaison with Barnet's BME communities needs to be an ongoing issue and the Hate Crime Officer along with the new Diversity Officer at the Police will continue to effectively liaise with and visit BME communities within Barnet.

**Supplementary Question No. 16****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

I am not criticising the good work that is done by various groups but what is of concern is that there appears to be no structure to consult with ethnic minorities on what community safety problems there are and how services can address these.

One in four people who live in Barnet come from an ethnic minority, so when will there be at least one member of the Safer Communities Board who comes from an ethnic minority? Can you please give us the date?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, the consultation on the community safety papers is open to every resident of this Borough and in some ways every resident has an individual responsibility, whatever their ethnic background, to take part in such consultation exercises. The same would apply to people of different sexual orientation, different backgrounds, and we have tried to reach out to every group, and frankly if people don't respond and don't use the opportunities that are open to them, and this is for each individual as well, then that is for them. I think that what you have got here, set out in this reply, details the extent to which such a consultation was taking place.

As far as the ethnic background of the members of the board are concerned, they are there by virtue of the positions that they hold, not their ethnicity, and if it so happens that people are appointed to those positions, and I hope that every one of them has been appointed on merit, then that is how they get there, and I would expect that that is something that she would endorse.

**Question No. 17****Councillor Brian Gordon**

What is your assessment of the general election results, as far as it affects the citizens of this Borough?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The Council at the annual meeting on 17th May congratulated the 3 successful candidates. If the result is looked at as a whole it is clear that overall more people voted for Conservative candidates than Labour candidates and that in itself is an endorsement of the policies adapted by this council since the local elections in 2002.

**Supplementary Question No. 17****Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Salinger, although none of us on this side of the Chamber would wish to be complacent, would you not agree that the obvious trend away from the Labour Party, as seen at the General Election, makes it look that the chances of a Labour return to control of this Council next year is about as likely Saddam Hussain returning to power in Iraq.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I think Saddam Hussain probably holds out more hope than the Leader of the Labour Party.

**Question No. 18**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

In light of the two murders and attempted rapes in West Hendon recently, when will the Council be installing CCTV cameras in West Hendon (operating during the hours when the bus lane cameras are focused on the road)?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

There are five CCTV cameras in West Hendon. When they are not being used to monitor bus lanes they are used for more general surveillance. The 2 murders were both within premises and neither would have been caught on any form of CCTV. In the light of the question from Cllr Slocombe, officers have visited Colindale police station and they were unable to find anyone who knew of any recent alleged attempted rapes in the area.

**Supplementary Question No. 18**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

He has not answered the question. He has missed the point. Transport for London has five bus lane cameras on The Broadway, used to monitor the bus lanes during operation. The question is when is the Council going to install its own cameras to operate around the clock?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

As I understand it, when the cameras are not being used to monitor the bus lanes, they are available and used to monitor anything else that can be seen from them.

**Question No. 19**

**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Does the Cabinet Member consider that all Comprehensive Barnet Secondary Schools are taking their fair share of pupils previously excluded from other schools? Can he give figures for the numbers of previously excluded pupils admitted to Barnet's secondary schools?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

All the comprehensive schools seek to help those children who have been previously excluded. This 'second chance' is very important. Without it there is a risk that the children concerned could become much more disruptive as they grow older. Mere statistics alone do not underline the commitment all these schools demonstrate. I believe that the phrase 'fair share' is not a good guide to this commitment. Various factors determine which school a pupil goes to.

	Permanent exclusions from the school	Excluded pupils placed at the school
Ashmole	1	
Bishop Douglass	11	
Christ Church CofE	1	1
Christ's College	3	
The Compton	2	
Copthall	2	
East Barnet	1	1
Finchley Catholic	1	
Friern Barnet	3	1
Hendon	4	
Mill Hill County	5	1
The Ravenscroft	7	
St James' Catholic	3	
St Mary's CofE	4	
Whitefield	2	1

**Supplementary Question No. 19**

**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I am grateful to the Cabinet Member.

Will the Cabinet Member investigate the rather dodgy practices of some of our secondary schools in this Borough in order to get rid of difficult pupils off their pupil roll? They dress up the character and reports on that pupil to persuade other Head Teachers to take those pupils in.

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

Mr Mayor, I am sure that Councillor Coleman really doesn't think that our Head Teachers engage in dodgy practices, but if he would like to have words with me afterwards I would be very happy to hear from him.

**Question No. 20**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Following the Council's decision to remove funding from the Royal Society for the Blind sheltered workshops in 2005/6, what consultation has been undertaken with service users as to the future of the service, and what progress has been made with re-assessing the Community Care needs of clients?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

Following the cabinet decision to undertake a consultation regarding the removal of funding for the sheltered workshops, a letter was sent out to the three service users, followed by contact from the social workers to carry out the community care assessment. These assessments are still proceeding at present.

Alongside this, consultation has taken place (and is on-going) with the service users and their Trade Representatives (National League of the Blind and Disabled) to ensure appropriate representation of the service users who are employed by the workshops.

**Supplementary Question No. 20**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Thank you Mr Mayor. The letter that was sent to the blind residents in April was not a consultation. It just stated that the Council was going to cut the funding and their needs would be reassessed. The assessment is not due to be completed until six months since the Council first announced the cuts. How will the Council be compensating these registered blind people for six months of worry and distress?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

You seem to be wanting it both ways. You are saying there isn't a consultation but then you are saying that it's taking too long. There is a detailed consultation going on with these users and their trade union representatives and it's their choice that is taking a little bit longer.

So I really think that the process that we are following is as sensitive and appropriate as possible.

**Question No. 21**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

Do you have any plans to change the operational policies of Barnet's Parking Service?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Yes.

**Supplementary Question No. 21**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

Can the Cabinet Member enlighten us as to what his plans are?



## **Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Thank you Mr Mayor. As this is a very important issue I intend to provide a very full and comprehensive answer.

Since the decriminalisation of parking in 1994, it has fallen to local authorities to issue penalty charge notices against road users who contravene parking restrictions. In the last few months there have been a number of criticisms made of our parking service and I have taken the opportunity to consider these and reflect on whether or not changes might be warranted.

On taking over parking enforcement, London authorities looked at the matter of observation times and I don't believe that we have reviewed this since. Currently, the only observation taking place is during the preparation of the penalty charge notice which will I will now refer to as the PCN, or in the case of pay and display, the time it takes to determine whether a ticket is being purchased from a machine. To my mind, a significant element of parking enforcement and the issues surrounding what is considered fair in the issue of PCN's occurs during these observation periods. With loading and unloading in Barnet, a motorist may load and unload in a restricted street for up to 20 minutes. There is no requirement for the action to be continuous or observed by a parking attendant. It is for each Council to decide whether such a vehicle should be observed for a period of time before the parking attendant issues a PCN.

Neighbouring boroughs describe this strategy in a telephone survey as no observation or two minutes. Following my answer about the fairness of observation times at a previous Council meeting, I believe that it is necessary to review our observation arrangements. I think the Council needs to consider what an appropriate observation period might be in areas where loading is permitted and how this might be best included in parking attendants' operational procedures.

The appeals process is a mechanism which motorists who claim to be loading or unloading and receive a PCN may challenge a ticket. If hard evidence is supplied that a vehicle is loading or unloading the PCN will be cancelled.

I believe that such a practice perpetuates a Kafkaesque view of councils, one where they are tied up in bureaucracy and promote a system in which residents feel it is easier to pay rather than taking the time, energy and effort to appeal, time which could be better spent promoting their business or simply living their lives. It is one of those problems that everyone loathes but accepts as a fact of life. Well it is not. I think the Council needs to accept that for some people for certain loading acts will simply not have detailed dockets providing the loading operation took place in the same way as a large delivery company might and if a PCN is issued in these circumstances the Authority needs to consider what other evidence it is prepared to accept. For example, simple statements of

witnesses or receipts for goods they are collecting. I am also aware of an innovative new paging system for those making commercial deliveries called 'Moovit'. The simple principle is that rather than waiting for a driver loading, a parking attendant can use a transponder on a vehicle to page a driver who can return to the vehicle to verify that loading is taking place.

Delivery companies can be potentially saved time and effort by not having to make a representation and the Council.

I will sum up. I will sum up in seven sentences and provide a copy of my speech to local press.

**Question No. 22**

**Councillor David Mencer**

On 6 July last year the Council unanimously agreed: "Council resolves to collate figures of anti-Semitic incidents" following the appalling arson attack on Aish HaTorah Synagogue in Hendon on 18 June 2004. Could the Member please set out the figures as collected by the Council for anti-Semitic incidents in the London Borough of Barnet from July 2004 to June 2005?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Out of a total of 66 racial incidents recorded through the Council's systems between June 04 and May 05, 5 have been identified as being of an anti-Semitic nature.

I am aware that other figures are collated by the Police and the MAHRG has asked the data analysts to work on better integration of the Police and Council returns. In the short time available since the question was tabled it has not been possible for me to collate and reconcile the figures from other agencies.

**Supplementary Question No. 22**

**Councillor David Mencer**

Well, I am a bit concerned about this answer that there have only been, I think the answer is, five anti-Semitic incidents recorded by the Borough of Barnet in the last year. This Borough is home to the largest Jewish community in the country. This Council voted unanimously to collect the figures. This is quite a shameless attempt to, actually I don't think it is sinister in any way, I just think it is a pretty bad show actually, a pretty shameless, pretty pathetic attempt to collate figures. There is already an organisation called the Community Security Trust which the Police work with, which is based in this Borough, not five minutes walk away from here actually which does collect these figures. Can I ask the Council now to do what every single Member in this Chamber voted unanimously to do, and to collect in the correct way all the anti-Semitic figures which are occurring in this Borough, so that we can see the true size of this problem?

I can tell you from my own personal experience that I receive abuse on my way to Synagogue on a Saturday afternoon and there certainly have been more than five incidents in this Borough.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, I was not aware that there was a time limit on answering questions but I will keep this one fairly brief.

The question asked about those that had been collated by the Borough and that is the answer I have been given by officers and it is principally those that are through the Housing Department, which is where the Head of Housing, who is also responsible for community safety, is based. I did say in my response that there are other figures collated by the Police and by the MARHG and those certainly do reflect a far greater incidence of anti-Semitic incidents and I will, as soon as I have had a chance to reconcile those figures with the officers who have prepared them for me, be prepared to circulate those to all Members of the Council.

Where there are detailed questions of this nature, if the Labour Group, as has become their habit, sit on all their questions until the very last minute before handing them in, there will be occasions like this where full replies are not possible in the time that is available. We do our best to get the figures and the stats and anything else ready but if others Members of this Council can manage to put their questions in a lot earlier and as the issues arise, then I can't see any reason why Labour Members cannot do the same.

**Question No. 23**

**Councillor Mark Langton**

What consultation was undertaken with, or information provided to, residents prior to Barnet Homes and the Council cutting down and pollarding trees in Coniston Close; what consideration was given to the wildlife; and when will replacement trees be planted?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The tree work in Coniston Close was part of the planned cyclical work for this estate and was prompted by requests from residents. During inspection of the trees prior to the work commencing the Arboriculture Officer consulted with residents. The response of residents to that work has been overwhelmingly positive.

It is the Council's intention to replant a tree on the green in Coniston Close during the winter months 2005/6.

**Supplementary Question No. 23**

**Councillor Mark Langton**

Can I ask, the written answer doesn't say, what form consultation took and whether all residents were consulted? The first thing that residents who have contacted me knew was when they got home from the work that the trees had been cut down. What consultation is there now going to be with residents to do with the replanting and replacement of trees? And I should say, it's pretty shabby when our Arboricultural Department cuts down trees because someone requires the parking not to drop leaves on their cars.

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

Well that's certainly not the information I have had. I understand that one of the trees was unsafe and the other tree was blocking light from the streetlamp which clearly caused concern. As far as I am aware, all the residents were consulted. Only one resident has objected to the work and the others have been overwhelmingly positive about it, and clearly when residents raise concerns it's important that the tree officers respond and take appropriate action, which in this case I believe they did.

**Question No. 24**

**Councillor Colin Rogers**

Why has Barnet Homes spent money erecting a fence at Brownswell Road N2 given that Barnet Homes cannot tell me of a single resident who made such a request and there was no consultation with residents before the fence was erected, and how much did putting the fence up cost?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The request for the fence came from two residents from separate addresses. The cost of the work was £2070. After the work was carried out residents' views were surveyed and, of those who replied, a majority were in favour. At the request of residents shrubs will be planted by the fence which will help reduce its impact.

**Question No. 25**

**Councillor Kath McGuirk**

What are the performance targets the Council has set for its parking attendants, and what is the target number of parking tickets each parking attendant is expected/required to issue during the financial year?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The Council does not set "performance targets" for penalty charge issues and has no target number of penalty charge notices that each parking attendant is expected or required to issue for a year.

**Question No. 26**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

How many parking attendants are currently employed by the Council and how many were employed in May 2002, May 2003 and May 2004?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

May 2002	25 officers of which some were supervisors, covering 15 Controlled Parking Zones
May 2003	41 officers of which some were supervisors, covering 17 Controlled Parking Zones
May 2004	43 - 35 PA's and 8 supervisors, covering 26 Controlled Parking Zones

**Question No. 27**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

Is the Cabinet Member for Resources to build up the financial reserves of the council this year whilst cutting services to the most vulnerable in our community?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

Had the Member read the budget report presented to Council in March he would have known that there are several areas of change in the funding that this council receives from Central Government in the coming years, e.g. ongoing reductions in specific grants, balance of funding review, dedicated schools grant, council tax revaluation, Formula Grant data and methodology changes.

He will also recall that his Administration left a gaping hole in the council's budget when it used £11m of balances to reduce the council tax in the 2002/3. Balances can only be used once, so this £11m had to be made good from council tax in 2003/04.

The External Auditor has advised all Members of Council very clearly through successive Annual Audit Letters the level of balances the Council should have, and my Administration is working hard to deliver this.

**Question No. 28**

**Councillor Steve Blomer**

What has been the cost to the Council of repairing, and making good, damage to Council property caused by the increased population of rats in the borough, and what is the Council doing to tackle this problem?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

An investigation in to whether the Council was fulfilling its statutory duties to ensure the control of rats was conducted by officers from DEFRA's Wildlife Management Branch in February of this year. They concluded that the council was complying with its statutory obligations.

I am not in possession of any information that indicates there is a cost to the Council in repairing, and making good, damage to council property caused by rats.

**Question No. 29****Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

The No Waiting sign under the bridge on Brent Park Rd has been uprooted for the last 10 weeks with no warning to the public. When is this going to be resolved?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The sign-post that was knocked over in Brent Park Road was removed and the surface repaired sometime ago. The "At Any Time" waiting sign that was attached to this post does not need to be replaced because of the new regulations that came into force a while ago.

**Question No. 30****Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

New legislation comes into effect from 1 June 2005 enabling the Council to take action - following a complaint from a resident - against the owners of high hedges which cause nuisance to the neighbours. How many complaints has the Council so far received; what support will the Council be offering to residents adversely affected by high hedges; and how will the Council be advertising its new powers to residents so that local people are aware of the right to complain and have action taken by the Council to address the problem?

**Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen**

Part 8 of Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 took effect on 1 June 2005. This legislation places a requirement on the Council to determine complaints from owners and/or occupiers of domestic property regarding high hedges (defined as two or more evergreen trees or shrubs in excess of 2m in height) and their adverse impact on the reasonable enjoyment of property. The purposes of this new provision are explicit. Such action is intended as a last resort and a complainant is obliged and must demonstrate to have taken all reasonable steps to resolve the matter before referring the complaint formally to the Council.

Whilst there have been a number of enquiries from residents, to date there have been no formal complaints.

The legislation clearly stipulates that the Council's role is one of arbiter; it cannot therefore support action by one neighbour against another but instead must remain impartial and make a balanced decision based on the facts. The Council's final decision could come down on the side of the home owner or the complainant, depending on the facts and merits of the case in question. There are also formal rights of appeal for both parties to the Planning Inspectorate of which the Council and principle parties will be expected to defend their position.

However support is provided in other ways: there is a 50% reduction in the £450 fee (subject to Cabinet Resources approval) for complainants on state benefits and guidance is provided, free of charge, from the planning office and the planning website. Furthermore advice on the processes is available to telephone callers.

The new powers are 'advertised' on both the Planning Service and Government websites. There has been substantial press and media coverage both nationally and locally. In addition, the Government has published a useful guidance leaflet for customers and this is available on the ODPM website and hard copies will be provided at the Council's Planning Reception at Barnet House.

It appears that there is some confusion over the role of the Council for it is suggested that it is there to investigate complaints. This is not strictly the case and instead its role is to arbitrate on complaints once all else has failed.

**Question No. 31**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Following the report to Cabinet Resources Committee in April 2005 concerning the council's golf courses, what progress has been made with Oakhill Park golf course; and if the Oakhill Park golf course is not taken over by another operator or operated by the Council, what are the Council's plans for the golf course?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Tenders have been received and are being evaluated. Should the bids be unacceptable then alternative proposals will be brought forward.

**Question No. 32**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

If the Cabinet Member for Resources would make a statement on the performance of the Council's pension fund managers over the past year?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The performance of the pension fund investment managers is not an executive responsibility - the Pension Fund Management Advisory Panel comes under the General Functions Committee. He is well aware that the contract with one of the fund managers is being terminated and that a replacement fund manager is soon to be appointed. However it is true to say that the pension fund managers have commented that performance may be affected by the slowing UK economy; drop in retail sales; and the depressed housing market/consumer confidence.

**Question No. 33**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Why was Franklin House not block cleansed last year or this year?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The Block Cleanse is provided on the West Hendon Estate three times a year (as per the published schedule on the Council's intranet) and the adopted highway/footway through the estate has been block cleansed

This was on 4 October 2004, 26 January 2005, 23 May 2005 and will reoccur on 13 September 2005 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

**Question No. 34**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

If the Cabinet Member for Resources will explain what steps are currently being taken by him to improve the quality of financial information to all members, and when this will become apparent?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

This is a repeat question No:---!

**Question No. 35**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Why has it taken so long to replace the flagstones outside 100 West Hendon Broadway and why is the area not cordoned off to protect the public walking on the pavement?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The work to replace some damaged areas of block paving, caused by a wagon over-running onto the footway, was requested on 10 June and carried out on 14 June. Whilst on site it was noted that further areas of footway needed attention. This work was carried out over the past weekend. The areas were coned but there is an issue with people removing the cones which are being replaced as and when missing.

**Question No. 36**

**Councillor Danish Chopra**

Does the Cabinet Member for Resources agree that all residents in Barnet should be properly consulted on the level of council tax they will have to pay for 2006/07, and could he explain how this will be achieved?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

No decision has been taken yet about how residents will be consulted over Council Tax for 2006/7. We will look to consult residents in the most cost effective way. The leader has already made clear that he expects any rise in tax to be as low as possible dependent of course on the grant settlement that we receive from the Government.



**Question No. 37****Councillor Danish Chopra**

If the Cabinet Member for Resources will make a statement on the discussions he has had with the Borough Treasurer on improving the quality and speed of financial information provided to Members and the public?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

Has the Member not heard of the Modernising Core Systems project that has been in progress for the past 18 months, and the SAP system which is scheduled to go live on 1 August?

**Question No. 38****Councillor Danish Chopra**

If the Cabinet Member for Resources could inform Council of the level of Balances as at 31st May 2005?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

As my colleague Councillor Finn who held the Resources portfolio said on a number of occasions previously, balances are the product of a comprehensive year-end accounting process involving accruing in full for all creditors and debtors. The concept of balances at a point in time is, therefore, meaningless.

**Question No. 39****Councillor Danish Chopra**

If the Cabinet Member for Resources could inform Council of the level of Reserves as at 31st May 2005, along with the provision of a detailed breakdown of those reserves giving the amount and the nature of the reserve?

**Answer by Councillor Kanti Patel**

The 2004/05 Statement of Accounts will be presented to General Functions Committee on 28 July, at which time balances and reserves as at 31 March 2005 will be set out in full detail. I can assure Members of Council, however, that the target £5m balances at the end of 2004/05 was achieved.