

**Council Questions to Cabinet Members
27 June 2006
Questions and Responses**

Question No. 1

Councillor Brian Gordon

Would the Leader not agree that the excellent Conservative achievement in Hale and other wards in Barnet with seats previously held by Labour or Liberal Democrat Councillors will bode well for even better government of this Borough over the next four years?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I agree with Councillor Gordon. The fact that we were able to win seats underlines that the achievements of the Conservative Administration appealed to a wide audience. A strong Conservative council will continue to pursue improved quality of services in conjunction with offering value for money.

Question No. 2

Councillor Jack Cohen

When will the Auditors' report on the "sale of land at Underhill" be published?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

PriceWaterhouseCoopers believe they will be ready to report before the end of July 2006.

Question No. 3

Councillor Ansuya Sodha

War memorials, including the Hendon memorial in Watford Way, are in memory of those who gave their lives, for which we ought to be forever grateful. I have received concerns from a resident about why the Hendon Memorial appears to be neglected and not maintained; what is the Council doing to put this right following the reductions in the war memorials' maintenance budget?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I too received the e-mail but the writer was not specific in the points raised.

The grounds around the memorial have recently received maintenance but there remain some issues around the built structures that surround the memorial – not the memorial itself. These involve the condition of retaining walls and the entrances and ramps to the subway and are within the remit of Transport for London to maintain and repair. We are actively pursuing TfL to carry out the necessary work to improve the appearance of this sensitive area.

Question No. 4

Councillor Brian Gordon

Please would you give an update on the success and effectiveness of the security mirrors installed at Stoneyfields Park.

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Prior to the installation of the mirrors, occasional complaints were recorded by the Greenspaces Division due to individuals reaching the end of a rather long alleyway restricted on both sides by tall palisade fencing only to find the gate locked and having to retrace their steps. Following the installation of the mirrors and a notice informing people that the gates at the far end were locked at dusk no further complaints or correspondence on the matter have been received.

Question No. 5

Councillor Jack Cohen

Congratulations on your appointment of Leader, how will your leadership be different, please provide me with six examples of how your leadership will be different to Councillor Salinger.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I would hate to prejudge my Leadership. I will let you judge any differences.

Question No. 6

Councillor Geof Cooke

What are the principles applied by Barnet Council in determining the rental payable under leasing agreements with amateur sports clubs for the use of Council-owned land?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The principles the Council follow for determining a market rent are in accordance with our duties under the Local Government Act 1972 to achieve best consideration in the "disposal" of any interest in Council owned land. The Council will achieve best consideration by charging a market rent, which is informed by knowledge of local supply and demand and through equivalent comparables using standard valuation practices for the type of interest being marketed. Clearly assets with a restricted marketability due to usage/restrictions on usage will drive down the 'market rent'. There should be no hidden subsidies to clubs through reduced rents and this has been the policy of this Administration and the previous Lib/Lab Administration. Should the Council wish to support such clubs, it will do so transparently through the grants process.

Question No. 7**Councillor Brian Gordon**

It is being reported that more schools are being encouraged to develop direct working relationships with the Police as the Government expands its Safer School Partnership Scheme. The programme in certain cases include a dedicated police officer being allocated to one school or a group of schools. Is such an arrangement being envisaged for this Borough?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Barnet currently has 7 Safer School Officers. Since January 2005 both East Barnet and St James have had a full time dedicated officer along the lines of the Safer Schools Partnership.

In Friern Barnet, St Mary's and Bishop Douglass there are 3 officers each of whom works for 2 days a week at these schools

There are 2 further officers who work across the other secondary schools.

The remaining time is dedicated to our primary schools.

Question No. 8**Councillor Monroe Palmer**

Could the Cabinet Member comment on the vast wood pile that hovers over the Staples Corner junction. This is the site of a large fire in July last year.

This site could be described as the biggest potential health hazard and public safety danger in the Borough. The fire last July brought chaos to Barnet and shut the M1, A406 and the main line; this caused fear and the risk to health to those living on and near the Edgware Road such as The Terraces NW2. It shut down businesses and leisure facilities. Can Barnet Council coordinate a plan of action with the Fire Brigade, Network Rail and any other regulatory authority to deal with this hazard?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

I share Councillor Palmer's concern over this site. I have convened an officer/member working party (including the London Fire Brigade) to consider what needs to be done to ensure there are no further problems with this site and I will keep Councillor Palmer informed of progress.

Question No. 9**Councillor Alison Moore**

What progress has the Council made with the Council policy, agreed at the April Council meeting, to work with Barnet Football Club to implement the *Working Together* document?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I met with the Chairman of BFC in May for a general discussion about the club and its future. Their immediate priority was the completion of landlord's consent for improved access and parking arrangements for both themselves and Barnet Cricket Club. The negotiations had proved protracted, however, they were successfully concluded and work commenced during the second week of June. In terms of the Working Together proposals I have had an initial discussion about these with the club Chairman and will be meeting him again shortly. I will then bring a report to Cabinet setting out a formal response to the proposals.

Question No. 10**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What is the result so far of the tougher line this Council has been taking against the parents of children in the Borough playing truant?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Councillor Gordon will welcome, as I do, the steady improvement in attendance at both primary and secondary schools. Secondary school attendance is well above the national average. In primary schools attendance is marginally below the national average. However we are introducing first day of absence calls to parents at primary schools which we believe will be effective in increasing attendance further.

Question No. 11**Councillor Duncan Macdonald**

Can the relevant cabinet member please advise on any proposed improvements for cyclists in Barnet with particular reference to improved cycle routes?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

With the exception of the M1 motorway, all public highways in the borough are routes that may be used by cyclists. The Council's approach has been to seek improvements to the whole road network in the borough, rather than providing specific 'cycle only' measures.

The Council's programme of road resurfacing has led to significant improvements in the condition of borough roads. Poor road surfaces affect cyclists far more than other road users, so the Council considers a good road surface, free from potholes, to be a major improvement for cyclists.

Question No. 12**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Please provide a breakdown of the children currently using the Pavillion Centre by ethnicity and gender; and when will they be returning to mainstream education?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I should like to thank the Councillor for allowing me to point out the tremendous progress made during the past year when the exclusion rate has fallen.

Of the children at the Pavilion PRU, White British account for 31 - 20 boys, 11 girls. Mixed Race-White/Caribbean is 3, all boys. Mixed Race White & African - one (a boy). Mixed race-White & Asian - one boy. Black African heritage - 2 boys. Black- other 7 boys, 2 girls. Other - 2 Turkish boys and 1 Iranian boy. Thus there is a predominance of boys rather than girls. 40% of the pupils there are white British boys. Of the 50 pupils there, 20 are in Year 11 who will be leaving shortly. Of the 30 remaining we have integration plans for 7, reducing the number of pupils to 23. I do hope that the Councillor will welcome this movement.

It is clear that we have a problem with a small minority of boys. That is why I am determined that the quality of vocational education should improve. We are putting additional resources into some schools to help those who are struggling at Key Stage 3.

I visited the PRU some months ago and was much impressed with the commitment of the staff.

This progress reflects well on the Authority and this administration.

Question No. 13**Councillor Brian Salinger**

Will the Leader of the Council make a statement detailing the outcome of any discussions that he or officers have had with Barnet Football Club since 16 May 2006?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Following an informal meeting I had with Mr Kleanthous a working relationship has been established and to date progress has been made on resolving the issues relating to both Priory Grove access and the Landlord's Consent for the drainage, car park and turning area works.

Question No. 14

Councillor Barry Rawlings

Will the Administration be keeping its election promise to rebuild Foulds school on the same site against the wishes of the Head and Governors of that school?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I asked the officers to consider and cost this option. My instructions are, as Councillor Rawlings would expect, being carried out

Question No. 15

Councillor Brian Salinger

Will the Leader please set out what he sees as the timetable for the regeneration of the Cricklewood/Brent Cross area detailing any milestones that he expects to be reached during the next 12 months?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Brief Overview

- **Preparation of the outline planning application**

The Development Partnership is currently preparing a Development Specification which defines the principal components of the development that are the subject of the outline planning application.

Current Work Priorities/Milestones

- **Land Evaluation and Disposal**

CB Richard Ellis was successful in tendering for work around the evaluation and disposal of the Council's land. Approval of the requested fee has now been received from the developers (as required under the Collaboration Agreement). Work has commenced and is expected to be complete by **end August 2006**.

- **Legal Matters**

The preparation of the Principal Development Agreement (PDA) is progressing. The next meeting with the Development Partnership has been scheduled for late June and thereafter meetings will be held on a fortnightly basis. The Development Partnership have confirmed that they would like the PDA to be ready for presentation to Cabinet **in November 2006**.

- **UDP**

The UDP has now been adopted by the Council and notice to this effect has been published in the London Gazette and local press. The Council has received letters from Tesco and Toys R Us asking the Council not to adopt the UDP. Tesco's objection is centred around the positioning of the Town Centre boundary and the position of its store within that boundary. The Toys R Us objection focuses on the process of adopting the SPG for the Eastern Lands and the fact that the store would be faced with a CPO in the course of scheme delivery. It is the opinion of the Head of Planning that the objection from Toys R Us poses the greater problem (albeit mainly one of delay) for the Council since it is challenging procedure whereas the Tesco objection is a matter of commercial positioning. The Head of Planning has confirmed that discussions will take place with both organisations.

- **Cricklewood Brent Cross Delivery Plan**

The first draft of the Delivery Strategy (prepared by EDAW) has been completed and is with Council officers for comment. The Strategy sets out the principles for the implementation of the Development Framework and will cover areas such as land ownership and viability, phasing and delivery, necessary physical and social infrastructure required to support development. The Delivery Strategy will be subject to consultation with key stakeholders and finalised by **end January 2007**.

- **Pre-Application Consultation**

A communications strategy for the regeneration scheme is currently being prepared by London Communications, consultants working on behalf of the Development Partnership. Consultants working on the pre-application consultation strategy envisage that consultation will begin in **September 2006**. The Development Partnership have been asked to present the full Communications Strategy to the Leader, Member for Strategic Development and Council officers alongside their presentation of the scheme Development Specification/parameter plans at a meeting to be arranged in July.

Key Dates

- May 2006 – UDP adopted (subject to 6-week legal challenge period)
- September 2006 – proposed start for pre-application consultation
- November 2006 – Principal Development Agreement ready for presentation to Cabinet
- January/February 2007 – Outline planning application submitted by developers

Question No. 16

Councillor Colin Rogers

Why is the Council stealing park keepers from, and as a result running down, some of the so-called 'premier' parks and sending them as additional help to the five hoped for 'green flag' status parks?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

While individual Park Keepers may spend a greater proportion of their time at one given site, this has to be balanced by the needs of the total premier parks and all grounds staff are and will continue to carry out operations across all premier parks as required by seasonality, special events and the operational peaks and troughs associated with the provision of the Council's comprehensive and large scale grounds maintenance service.

All premier parks are maintained and measured against the green flag criteria and no premier parks are being run down. All premier parks have management plans and improvement/development programmes. The improvement/development programmes of premier parks are programmed over time and accordingly some are earlier in the programme than others. This approach is reflected in the current round of site improvements and green flag applications/inspections.

I recall that before the elections the Labour Group were proposing that they would have withdrawn from the Premier Parks policy – these erroneous comments are just another step in that direction and would ensure mediocre parks for all in Barnet.

Question No. 17

Councillor Caroline Margo

What progress is being made in the programme to provide new residential care homes for older people?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

To date, three homes have been built and opened - Dellfield with 40 places, Apthorpe Lodge with 108 places and Meadowside with 68 places . Apthorpe Lodge and Meadowside include purpose built day centres, with specialist day provision for people with dementia. Planning for the final two homes is well underway.

The homes are being built to the highest modern standards and provide a very wide range of facilities for residents, underlining this administration's commitment to investing in high quality care for Barnet's most vulnerable residents.

Question No. 18

Councillor Zakia Zubairi

Given the still appalling state of the pavements in Varley Parade, which I first reported to the Council in April 2005, why is the work to rectify this being delayed until 2007/8 when Council taxpayers' money is being wasted on resurfacing other pavements which are in perfectly good condition?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The relaying of pavements in Varley Parade (adjacent to the shops) has been included in the current Planned Maintenance Programme, approved by the Hendon Area Environment Sub Committee in March 2006, as part of a scheme in The Hyde NW9 between Hyde Estate Road and Hillfield Avenue. Unfortunately, there has been a mistake in reporting this scheme and the wrong limits have been reported. The correct limits of this scheme should be between Hyde Estate Road and Sheaveshill Avenue, instead of Hyde Estate Road and Hillfield Ave. This mistake will be corrected and the correct limits of the scheme inserted at the next meeting of the Hendon Area Environment Sub Committee in September 2006. The work is planned to start in August 2006.

Perhaps you would like to identify, in your qualified opinion, where the Council is wasting money on pavements – particularly in your ward, in order that I can convey that opinion to residents in those locations and explain how you do not want their local environment improved?

Question No. 19

Councillor Robert Rams

Please could the Cabinet member for Education give this Council an indication of how healthy school meals are in Barnet?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

The Council has been improving the quality of school meals. We spend more than government guidelines. The healthy menu has been rolled out since June 2005 and will cover ALL primary schools by the end of this term. The emphasis on fresh foods has been widely welcomed and has, I am told by heads, led to even better behaviour. Many more teachers are now eating school lunches which is a testament to these meals. I have also enjoyed several. When Councillor Rams visits schools in his ward he will be equally impressed by the standard of the meals.

Question No. 20

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Why is the Council so complacent about tackling anti-social behaviour that no progress has been made to implement the Council policy to establish a *Respect for Barnet* campaign?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Respect for Barnet was the theme of the Labour Party manifesto in the recent Council elections. The electorate overwhelmingly rejected Labour in this Borough and across London. This Administration does not do pointless and expensive PR campaigns, instead it works with the Police and our other partners to tackle real problems.

Question No. 21**Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Community Safety advise Council about how he will tackle street drinking in hot spots in the Borough such as outside Tesco at Finchley Central?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Council will be aware of this Administration's introduction of alcohol free zones in a number of areas in the Borough including Finchley Central. They have had limited success. In my view they require stronger Police enforcement and I have had discussions with the Police on this and will be taking it further with the new Borough Police Commander. Whilst keen to role out further zones in hot spots across the Borough (including Burnt Oak) a few notices on lamp posts do not solve a problem. It may well be that we need to look at a full range of anti social behaviour measures including the use of ASBOs against hardened street drinkers .The installation of CCTV in Finchley Central (due to become operational within the next few weeks) should help considerably.

Question No. 22**Councillor Anne Hutton**

Does the Administration intend to keep its promise to replace South Friern Library with a new one of the same size and on the same site?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Yes. I should like to thank Councillor Hutton for providing me with an opportunity to reiterate this commitment.

Question No. 23**Councillor Daniel Webb**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Community Services and Housing give this Council an update on the Court Case forcing us to house jobless EU Nationals?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

After the court case, which would have forced Barnet and other councils to provide housing to any unemployed EU citizen, the Government changed the regulations, overturning the court's judgement. This means we can now put Barnet's residents first instead of having to give priority to people with no connection with Barnet.

Question No 24

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Although the Council just reached the 27% statutory recycling target; why did the Council fail to achieve its Local Public Service Agreement 30% recycling target and how much money has the Council failed to receive from the Government as a result?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I think your question is very disingenuous to the people of Barnet who responded well to the recycling challenge and increased the amount collected from 30,372 tonnes in 2004/05 to 38,846 in 2005/06.

We did not achieve the 30% because we needed to collect a greater tonnage of recyclables. I am surprised you do not know that we would have received £629,227 in performance reward grant as this has been published in many Council documents.

Question No. 25

Councillor Richard Weider

Please could the Cabinet Member for Education outline how many, if any, Secondary Schools in this Borough are in Special Measures?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I am pleased to say that there are NO secondary schools in special measures.

Question No. 26

Councillor Geof Cooke

What does the Administration intend to do with the cricket ground at Arden Field, East End Road, Finchley N3 if a financially viable agreement is not reached with Finchley Cricket Club?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Should a financially viable agreement not be forthcoming, it is assumed that this would involve Finchley CC surrendering the lease that they are currently "holding over" on. Should this be the case, the Council would seek to secure best consideration by advertising the ground for leasing to other cricket or sports clubs. However, Officers are involved in ongoing discussions with the Club to find a mutually satisfactory resolution.

Question No. 27

Councillor Richard Weider

Please could the Cabinet member for Environment and Transport outline the latest accident figures for Barnet's roads?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The most recent accident data available is for the period ending December 2005. This shows that there were a total of 1365 road accident casualties in the borough during 2005. Of these, 146 casualties received serious injuries or died as a result of the accident (Killed or Seriously Injured = KSI).

Comparing the totals for 2005 to 2004, the figures show a reduction of -13.6% in the total number of casualties and a reduction of -15.1% in KSI's.

The Government has set a national target of reducing KSI casualties by 40%, over a baseline figure taken between 1994 and 1998, and to achieve this reduction by 2010.

By 2005, the number of KSI casualties in Barnet has reduced by -45.7%. This exceeds the national target and is five years before the target date.

Question No. 28

Councillor Alison Moore

If the Leader of the Council would set out the achievements of - and congratulate - the previous Council leader, Councillor Brian Salinger?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Yes.

Councillor Salinger was committed to extending housing in the Borough, was an ardent supporter of the ALMO decision and Barnet Homes; was successful in pursuing the many regeneration schemes; was forceful in his drive to reduce the number of homeless and families in temporary accommodation and was innovative in his suggestion of Montrose Park as a home for Barnet FC.

Question No. 29

Councillor Dean Cohen

Please could the Cabinet Member for Education tell Council how many, if any, Primary Schools in Barnet are in Special Measures?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I am pleased to say that there are no primary schools in special measures.

Question No. 30**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Who is responsible for the garages on Layfield Road, NW4 and what can be done to resolve the problem of garage number 10 which has been vacant for months with the door broken off completely and dumped rubbish inside?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Barnet Homes are responsible for these garages and they are taking action to repair the garage door and remove the rubbish.

Question No. 31**Councillor Marina Yannakoudakis**

Would the Cabinet member for Public Health agree with me that urgent work needs to be done to tackle health problems in our ethnic communities?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

Indeed I would, even though variations in health problems attributable to ethnicity should be seen against a background of generally positive headlines, e.g. premature deaths from the main disease groups being low in Barnet (mostly in the best quartile nationally) and low infant mortality. As elsewhere, we don't always have local data, but quite a lot is known about how black and minority ethnic communities are differentially affected. However, it is less clear to what extent the information is acted upon.

We are fortunate that here in Barnet we have one of the most ethnically diverse communities of any London Borough. Of course, each has its own particular health needs and health outcomes vary between communities. Inequalities in access to health services also arise, brought about as much by cultural differences as by difficulties with language. The only way to combat these is by directly getting into the communities themselves. That is why I was so concerned to hear that the Primary Care Trust had cut its Ethnic Outreach nurse and immediately contacted the Chief Executive to take this up with him. His response is detailed below:

“The work of the Ethnic Out Reach Nurse has been valued by Barnet Primary Care Trust during a time when nursing services were struggling to meet the needs of Black and Ethnic minority communities. Our nursing teams have improved their understanding and skills in developing targeted services to BME groups. The model of community nursing in the future is built on the premise that the teams will deliver locally based health care services aimed at addressing key public health issues in their specific locality, including the BME diversity this brings for BME communities. Services are to be mainstreamed. We believe that the whole population of Barnet of which 25% are from BME groups are entitled to the full range of nursing services provided by our teams. It is the responsibility of all nurses to reach out

to BME communities. The danger of investing this responsibility in one individual is that other services fail to mainstream services to the whole population. Approximately 200 nurses are affected by the Community Nursing Workforce Plan and all of these nurses have a responsibility for engaging and out reaching with the BME community.”

Personally, I have yet to be convinced that this is the right way forward and after further discussion, the Chief Executive undertook to keep the matter under review.

Indeed, it is generally accepted that there are specific problems in reaching out to the ethnic communities and the PCT does have a “Health Promotion Intervention Programme with BME Communities” written this year, covering diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, obesity, respiratory disease and mental health. This and the Health Improvement & Modernisation Plan recognises variations by ethnicity in terms of disease patterns, different lifestyles, different rates of take-up, the need to record patients by ethnicity, the need to target BME groups, the need to tailor some services (including provision of interpreting), perceptions of health and expectations and experiences of health services. However, neither report is a commitment to action and resources have not yet been committed to the intervention programme. These much needed health promotion interactions with the ethnic communities will be actively pushed and promoted through all our partnership boards and a very watchful eye kept on the PCT’s assurances in this respect.

Having said that there has already been some BME-targeted work, e.g.

- The PCT equalities adviser helps frontline staff access BME communities and recently took a team to Tesco, Finchley, to meet south Asians in particular about smoking and diabetes

- Work done with BME communities on raising awareness about diseases such as sickle-cell anaemia / thalassaemia, stroke prevention and coronary heart disease.

- Work with local African businesses is effective in preventing HIV infection and improving awareness and has been linked to promoting smoking cessation.

- The new mental health strategy will apparently have a focus on ethnic minorities
- Promotion of smoking cessation at Finchley Mosque.

However much more needs to be done and, as a result of the importance we have put on this:-

- The LSP agreed on 13th June to look at options for improving joint PCT / Council delivery arrangements for health improvement. Addressing health inequalities needs to be written into the process and governance will need to be considered at the same time.

- The new Corporate Plan includes a target to reduce obesity and diabetes in the local population (over 4 years) and gives scope to work with BME communities.

- The Sustainable Community Strategy includes a project to identify further vulnerable groups (including BME groups) whose needs could be better met and to deliver against a small number of them in years 2-3 of the Strategy.

Question No. 32**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

The original cost for the Primary School Capital Strategy was £213m. That was a few months ago - what is the estimate now?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I should like to thank Councillor Rawlings for letting me underline this administration's commitment to modernising our primary schools - an area where the Labour/Liberal administration failed completely. We are not yet at the stage of costing individual projects. When this process starts we will be able to revise, if necessary, the £218m estimate which was of course at 2007/08 prices. We are on track for the 2009 start date.

Question No. 33**Councillor Hugh Rayner**

How many Barnet schools were inspected by OFSTED between September 05 and April 06? How many were graded as 'Outstanding'? How many were graded as 'Good'? How do these figures compare with national outcomes?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Eighteen Barnet schools were inspected between September 2005 and April 2006. Of these 22% were described as 'Outstanding' and 61% as 'Good'. This is far in excess of the national trends and reflects great credit on the officers of the LEA and the dedication of our teachers. It also reflects the determination of this administration to ensure that all our pupils have a first class start in life.

Question No. 34**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

What action is the Council taking to repair broken pavements and remove the graffiti in Colin Crescent?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Colin Crescent is not included in the current year's planned footway programme for the Hendon Area as the overall condition of the pavements is fair.

Colin Crescent will be reassessed when formulating the 2007/2008 Footway Works programme for the Hendon Area in accordance with the prioritisation criteria approved by the Cabinet.

There has only been one request recently from a Colin Crescent resident to assist with graffiti removal. The resident was issued with a graffiti removal kit and some paint to cover graffiti on a wall at the side of their property.

The majority of graffiti in the area of Colin Crescent is on private property but the graffiti in the pedestrian foot tunnel has been reported to the Highways Agency for removal.

Question No. 35

Councillor Anne Hutton

The announcement of the opening of a youth club at Church Farm was made a year ago in a blaze of publicity - a year later it is still not open - what excuses do you have for your failure?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

I should like to thank Councillor Evans and Councillor Hillan for their commitment to this project. I can assure Councillor Hutton that it will proceed. The lease has been finalised and the YMCA appointed a project co-ordinator in March. There was a delay caused by leaks in the roof in May. I am sure that this project will be a major success.

Question No. 36

Councillor Kath McGuirk

In what year will the Administration achieve its target to recycle 40% of all domestic waste produced in Barnet, and how does the Cabinet Member envisage doing this?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Barnet Council has set itself a target to recycle and compost 40% of household waste in 2009/10.

To achieve this recycling and composting target more residents will need to take part in the services that we provide and residents will need to recycle or compost more materials.

Question No. 37

Councillor Alison Moore

In December 2002 the former Council leader, Mr Victor Lyon, promised that the Conservative administration would achieve an "excellent" rating in the next Comprehensive Performance Assessment that has recently taken place; has the current Council leader ditched this commitment?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

No. I am sure all of us would wish this Council to receive the official recognition it deserves.

Question No. 38

Councillor Agnes Slocombe

What arrangements have been made since Barnet Homes has taken over the housing stock for the Council tenants on Layfield Road who were promised replacement windows before the ALMO took over?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Barnet Homes plans to invest almost £100 million in the period to 2010 to bring its properties up to the decent homes standard. Work at Layfield Road is scheduled for 2007/08. The precise extent of the works will be identified when the properties are surveyed nearer the time.

Question No. 39

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Will the Cabinet Member rule out any change from weekly refuse collection to fortnightly collection of refuse during the current administration?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

A Waste Strategy for Barnet was agreed at the meeting of the Cabinet on 3 April 2006. We are now in the early stages of putting together the operational action plan that will set out how we will achieve local and national targets over the coming fourteen years. It is far too early to say what will be or will not be in the operational action plan and I will not be bounced into making Council policy in the forum of Council Questions.

Question No. 40

Councillor Alison Moore

Will the Council Leader give a commitment that full Council meetings will continue to be held in the Council chamber at Hendon Town Hall for the lifetime of the current administration and not moved elsewhere?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I can not foresee any reason why we would not use the Council Chamber at Hendon (subject to acts of God and force majeure). However as you will know there have been unsuccessful initiatives to provide more modern facilities on the Town Hall complex. I am pleased that progress has been made and fruitful discussions have been had with Middlesex University on a joint initiative to further develop Hendon as the University's teaching and administrative campus. The Town Hall will benefit and will remain the Civic focus for the Borough. It is a sign of confidence in the Borough and the Council that the University should seek to consolidate further in Barnet.

I plan to bring a detailed paper to Cabinet in the Autumn.

Question No. 41**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Could the Council please give the highest possible priority to promoting adoption by ensuring that Adoption Panel members are provided with keys to the Council car park so that hearings – often all day - are not begun late whilst panel members hunt for a parking space and that hearings do not have to be suspended every two hours for panel members to feed the meters?

Answer by Councillor Christopher Harris

The First Contact reception have a supply of car park keys which they will loan to Panel Members to give them access to the staff car parks at the rear of the Town Hall and in Egerton Gardens.

Council Officers will notify First Contact of the names of the Panel Members who should be issued with keys on their arrival at the Town Hall. These Members will be asked to sign for the keys and return them to reception when they leave the building.

Question No. 42**Councillor Alison Moore**

With regards to the Local Public Service Agreement, which targets have and have not been achieved; what was the total sum of money the Council could have received if it had achieved all the targets; and how much money has the Council received or is to receive as a result of those targets met?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Of the 12 targets, we are on track to meet three (3, 4 and 11) and to miss four (5, 6, 7 and 9). The other targets were divided into sub-targets, some of which we have met and some not. On each of those we expect to get some money.

We expect to gain £3,076,223 out of a possible maximum reward grant of £7,550,730. This is still provisional as the final figures have not yet been confirmed.