

Meeting of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet

TO BE HELD ON

Tuesday, 19 December, 2006 at 7.00pm

A G E N D A

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Council Meeting

**19 December, 2006
Agenda and Timetable**

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
	<u>Part 1 - Statutory formalities/ Announcements (15 minutes)</u>	7.00pm – 7.15pm	
1.	Prayer		
2.	Apologies for absence		
3.	Minutes of last meeting held on 7 November 2006		1 - 44
4.	Official announcements		
5.	Declarations of interest		
6.	Any business remaining from last meeting		
	<u>Part 2 – Question Time (30 minutes or until 7.45pm, whichever is the longer)</u>	7.15pm – 7.45pm	
7.	Questions to the Leader and Cabinet		To be circulated separately
	<u>Part 3 — Members' Motions (60 minutes)</u>	7.45pm – 8.45pm	
8.	Motions in the order in which notice has been given.		
8.1	From Councillor Brian Salinger		
	Barnet Council notes the publication by the Government Office for London and the London Development Agency of the 162 page 'booklet' entitled <i>Ten, (Town Centre Enhancement in North London....a design led approach to sustainable town centre intensification)</i> which sets out to demonstrate how various town centres across North London could be intensified.		

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
	<p>The Council however regrets that the document contains plans for North Finchley and Friern Barnet, neither of which are in any way acceptable to the Council and which must be confined to an appropriate waste bin.</p> <p>Council makes clear that it will not contemplate plans for multi-storey building on each and every car park in North Finchley to provide an extra 600 (car free) homes, in building up to 8 storeys high as well as 10,000 sq metres of retail space and 2000 sq metres of workspace. The plan also envisages a new mews development utilising existing back gardens.</p> <p>Council does not believe that any of the plans for North Finchley would do anything to enhance the town centre or improve the lives of people who live in the area.</p> <p>Council also makes clear that the ideas for Friern Barnet which include 1500 more homes created by re-building the Friern Bridge retail park with shops with housing over, building housing on the former sewage works site, the edges of the Muswell Hill Golf course and the building of luxury homes on part of the Coppetts Wood Nature Reserve are totally unacceptable. Council notes that the sewage works site and the golf course are in Haringey, and that plans for residential use of the sewage works site were rejected by that Council some years ago.</p> <p>Council believes that none of these proposals would do anything to improve life in the Friern Barnet or South Friern areas.</p>		

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
	<p>Council regrets that the public money was squandered on this ill fated research which appears to have been done with little or no reference to Councillors or officers of the Borough or to our published planning policies.</p> <p>Council instructs the Chief Executive to make the Council's displeasure with the ideas contained in the document in so far as they apply to Barnet, and the waste of money, known to Government Office for London and the London Development Agency</p>		
8.2	From Councillor Linda McFadyen		
	<p>Council deeply regrets that for the third year running Barnet's Adult Social Services has received just a one star grading by CSCI.</p> <p>Council further regrets that the Adult Social Services star rating has fallen since the Tory administration took control of Barnet Council in 2002.</p> <p>Despite what the ex-Cabinet member described as significant investment, the service still only manages to meet the needs of "some" of Barnet's residents, fails to meet the needs of carers, those with physical disabilities and those with HIV and AIDS and those with drug and alcohol problems.</p> <p>Furthermore the robustness of management, finance and performance data leaves much to be desired and does not support the accurate planning of provision and appropriate services.</p>		

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
	<p>Council requests the new Cabinet member give her firm assurance to Council that the service will have improved sufficiently by next year to be judged at least a “good” service if she fails to lead a service which achieves “excellent” status.</p> <p>Councillor McFadyen has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		
8.3	<p>From Councillor Alison Moore</p>		
	<p>Council welcomes the investment by the Labour Government and the Labour Mayor of London Ken Livingstone in the roll out of Safer Neighbourhoods Teams to all wards across Barnet and the proposed future expansion of those teams. This has already resulted in a 20% increase in police numbers in Barnet since 2001.</p> <p>Following the recent news that crime is falling faster in Barnet than any other London borough, Council recognises and applauds the success of the Safer Neighbourhood Teams role in reducing crime and the fear of crime across Barnet.</p> <p>Council asks the Chief Executive to write to the Borough Commander, the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and Ken Livingstone to congratulate them on the success of the scheme.</p> <p>Councillor Moore has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		

Item	Subject	Time for Debate	Page Nos.
8.4	From Councillor Melvin Cohen		
	<p>Council is proud of Barnet's Green Belt, which extends halfway down through the middle of the Borough, and protects the Borough's pleasant, suburban landscape.</p> <p>Council is equally proud to recall that the former Hendon Borough Council was the first Council in the country to designate land as Green Belt, back in 1937.</p> <p>Council is therefore dismayed that the Barker Review into Land Use Planning, commissioned by the Labour Government, is calling for more development on the Green Belt.</p> <p>Council believes that any relaxation in Green Belt restrictions will lead to rash of housing developments across the Borough, which would decimate Barnet's environment.</p> <p>Council notes that at least some of the Barker Review's recommendations are expected to go into the Labour Government's Planning White Paper next year.</p> <p>Council calls on the Chief Executive to make representations to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, opposing any moves to permit more housing on the Green Belt in the White Paper as a result of the Barker Review.</p> <p>Councillor Cohen has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.</p>		

8.5	From Councillor Mike Freer		
	<p>Council reaffirms its support for the Olympic and Paralympic Games as a national event. Council continues to urge the Olympic Delivery Authority to ensure the benefits are spread across the London Boroughs and that Barnet receives a fair share.</p> <p>Council is, however, extremely concerned about extra costs now being associated with the Games.</p> <p>Council notes that the original estimate (for the Olympic Park construction), of £2.4 billion, has now risen by £900 million to £3.3 billion.</p> <p>Council further notes that £625 million of the original cost is already set to be met by London taxpayers, costing our residents an average of £20 a year for 25 years.</p> <p>Council understands that the total bill for the Olympics is set to soar to over £8 billion.</p> <p>Council believes that the budget is spiralling out of control. Council is extremely concerned that Barnet taxpayers may have to “bail out” the Games, after a “Memorandum of Understanding” decreed that overspends are to be met partly from the Council Tax.</p> <p>Council calls on the Chief Executive to write to both the Secretary of State for Culture and the Chancellor, requesting that urgent action be taken to bring the Olympics budget back under control, and requesting that Barnet receives a fair share of investment in facilities.</p>		

	Councillor Freer has requested, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule, Part 4, Section 1, 31.5, that if the item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting it be voted upon at the council meeting.		
	Break	8.45pm – 9.00pm	
	Part 4 – Policy Development (60 minutes)	9.00pm – 10.00pm	
9.1	Administration Policy Item (30 minutes) Budget 2007/08		45
9.2	Opposition Policy Item (30 minutes) Supporting Solar Systems		46-48
	Part 5 – Statutory Council Business (40 minutes)	10.00pm – 10:40pm	
10.	Reports from Cabinet		
11.	Reports from Overview and Scrutiny committees		
12.	Reports from Other Committees		
13.	Reports of Officers		
13.1	Democratic Services Manager 1. Reports exempted from the call-in process because they are urgent. 2. Members' Allowances Scheme 2007-8		49 To follow
13.2	Monitoring Officer		
	Part 6 Accountability (20 minutes)	10.40pm – 11.00pm	
14.	Comments on the work of the Cabinet (10 minutes) –		

14.1	<p>From Councillor Wayne Casey</p> <p>To comment on the Council's, and the Cabinet Member's, influence over the Borough Commander's strategy for the deployment of police across Barnet.</p>		
15.	Questions to representatives on outside bodies (10 minutes)		None

Janet Rawlings, Democratic Services Manager
Town Hall,
The Burroughs,
Hendon, NW4 4BG

Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET
held at The Town Hall, Hendon, NW4, on Tuesday, 7 November, 2006.

PRESENT:

- *The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Eva Greenspan BA LL.B (Hons))
- *The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Terry Burton)

Councillors:

*Maureen Braun Fiona Bulmer	*Christopher Harris BA BSc MPhil	*Sachin Rajput BA (Hons) PgD Law
*Anita Campbell Wayne Casey BA (Hons) MIA	*Helena Hart *John Hart BA MA *Lynne Hillan	*Robert Rams *Barry Rawlings *Hugh Rayner
*Danish Chopra *Dean Cohen BSc (Hons) *Jack Cohen	*Ross Houston *Anne Hutton *Julie Johnson	*Colin Rogers *Lisa Rutter *Brian Salinger
*Melvin Cohen LLB *Brian Coleman, AM, FRSA *Geof Cooke *Richard Cornelius	*Duncan Macdonald *Caroline Margo *John Marshall *Linda McFadyen	*Kate Salinger BEd (Hons) *Gill Sargeant *Joan Scannell *Alan Schneiderman
*Jeremy Davies BA (Hons), CPFA *Mukesh Depala *Jane Ellison	*Kath McGuirk *Andrew McNeil *Alison Moore *Jazmin Naghar	*Agnes Slocombe SRN RM *Ansuya Sodha MBA (Middx) Cert Ed, DipM (CIM), AMBA *Andreas Tambourides
*Olwen Evans ACIS *Claire Farrier *Anthony Finn BSc (Econ) FCA	*Matthew Offord *Charlie O-Macauley *Monroe Palmer OBE, BA, FCA	*Daniel Thomas BA (Hons) *Jim Tierney *Daniel Webb *Richard Weider
*Mike Freer *Brian Gordon, LL.B *Andrew Harper	*Susette Palmer MA *Bridget Perry *Wendy Prentice	*Marina Yannoudakis BSc (Hons) MA *Zakia Zubairi

*denotes Member present

73. PRAYER (Agenda Item 1):

The Mayor's Chaplain offered prayer.

74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2):

Apologies were received from Councillors Fiona Bulmer and Wayne Casey.

**75. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2006 (Agenda Item 3):
RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12
September 2006 be approved.**

76. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 4):

The Worshipful the Mayor expressed her sorrow in announcing the recent deaths of Mr Andrew Pares, former Leader of the Council and Mayor of the Borough, Mrs Rene Sapstead, a past Mayoress of the Borough, and Mr Phil Langley, political assistant to the Labour Group.

At the invitation of the Worshipful the Mayor, the Leaders of the three political groups spoke in tribute to Phil Langley.

A minute's silence was held in remembrance of all three departed friends and colleagues.

**77. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS
(Agenda Item 5):**

The following Members declared personal and non – prejudicial interests in the items indicated, and remained in the room during the discussion and participated in the decision – making process:

- Councillor Helena Hart in Motion 8.2, as she worked at a dental practice which had a small contract with the Primary Care Trust, and her son was a research fellow at the Royal Free Hospital.
- Councillor Linda McFadyen in Motion 8.2, as she worked for the National Health Service.
- Councillor Brian Coleman in Motion 8.1, as he was Chairman of the London Assembly.
- Councillor Jeremy Davies in Motion 8.2, as he worked for the Royal Free and Hampstead NHS Trust. Councillor Davies felt the interest was non-prejudicial as the Trust was not mentioned in the Motion or amendment thereto.
- Councillor Jack Cohen in Item 10 as he was employed by the Probation Service.

78. BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING

None.

79. 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 an Appendix to these minutes.

80. 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 8.4, 8.1 and 8.3 be heard first and in that order.

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

**RESOLVED – That the order of business be varied to allow
Motions 8.4, 8.1 and 8.3 to be heard first and in that order.**

81. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR ZAKIA ZUBAIRI (Agenda Item 8.4):

Motion 8.4 in the name of Councillor Zakia Zubairi was moved.

Debate ensued. During the debate Councillor Lynne Hillan, duly seconded, moved that the Question Now be Put. On being put to the vote, the Motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED – That the Question Now be Put.

An amendment in the name of Councillor Gill Sargeant was moved orally.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Gill Sargeant was declared carried. The substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED – Council believes that local community, voluntary and faith groups make a massive contribution to the life and well-being of the London Borough of Barnet. Council recognises that continuing to work in partnership with these organisations is important to build stronger communities, and in particular to work towards successful and sustainable outcomes for the Borough's regeneration projects. The provision of, and access to, community facilities to support community, voluntary and faith groups is a priority for the Council.

Council welcomes community use of Grahame Park Community Centre from Monday to Saturday. Council supports the request from faith groups for the community centre to be open on Sundays, and Council believes this would also benefit many local community and voluntary groups contributing towards the successful regeneration of the Grahame Park estate. Council asks the Cabinet to work in partnership with Barnet Homes to work towards Sunday opening of Grahame Park Community Centre.

With the progress of the estate regeneration projects where facilities will be administered by organisations other than the council and with Barnet Homes working at arms length from the council, Council asks that the Cabinet consider fully how they will ensure that community centres and other resources are fully accessible to the communities they are intended to serve.

82. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MIKE FREER (Agenda Items 8.1 and 13.1.6 (i)):

Motion 8.1 in the name of Councillor Mike Freer was moved by Councillor Melvin Cohen. Amendments in the names of Councillor Alison Moore and Councillor Jeremy Davies were moved. Debate ensued.

Councillor Melvin Cohen accepted the amendment in the name of Councillor Jeremy Davies.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Alison Moore was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council is extremely concerned at Government proposals to give the Mayor of London greater powers over both planning and housing.

Council notes that The Mayor of London instigated, via the Secretary of State, the move that ensured LBB altered its UDP, raising the threshold for affordable housing and stipulating a 50% level for new developments.

Council further notes that the current Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has made no secret of his “love” for tall buildings or dense housing developments. Council also notes with concern the Mayor’s current powers with regard to strategic development within the borough; in particular the Mill Hill East Development Framework where the Mayor has identified the area and density levels within the London Development Plan.

Council believes granting the Mayor any new powers over planning and housing could further threaten Barnet’s pleasant suburban landscape, as he/she would be able to ride roughshod over local communities, local Councillors and local planning policies.

Council further believes this could effectively nullify the Borough’s Three Strand” Planning Policy, one that seeks to protect the suburbs while allowing for growth. The Mayor of London would not be bound in any way by this document, and could ignore all guidance therein.

Council agrees it is of the utmost importance that these proposals are strongly opposed, otherwise Barnet’s Planning Committees would have little or no say over major developments in the Borough.

Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to: (a) make representations about Council’s concerns and opposition to the Government’s proposal to grant further powers to the Mayor in the formal consultation process; and (b) write to the local MPs and GLA member to ask them to raise these concerns in Parliament and at the London Assembly.

Council also calls on Barnet's representatives on the ALG to work with the other London Boroughs, through that said body, in lobbying against these proposals.

83. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR ANNE HUTTON (Agenda Items 8.3 and 13.1.6 (iii)).

Motion 8.3 in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Fiona Bulmer was moved by Councillor John Marshall, and an amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew McNeil was moved orally. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Fiona Bulmer was declared carried and the amendment in the name of Councillor Andrew McNeil was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED – Council is pleased that the Joint Area Review OFSTED inspection report published on 10 October 2006 has found Barnet’s Youth Work practice to be “good” and offering “effective partnership working with the voluntary sector.”

Council is delighted that the report highlights the “recent improvements in the management of the service and leadership of the service”, meaning that “the capacity for further progress is good”.

Council notes that the report states of the youth service:

- **“Much well-planned and effective youth work practice” is in evidence.**
- **“Good personal and skills development in the performing arts.”**
- **“Young people benefit from the successful integration of Connexions and youth work.”**
- **“Good involvement of young people in planning and execution”.**
- **“Staff work well in partnership and are responsive to new ideas”.**
- **“A broad range of activities takes place.”**
- **”Accommodation...is generally of good quality.”**
- **“A wide range of strong partnerships with voluntary and independent organisations lead to successful work.”**
- **“The involvement of young people in the planning and evaluation of provision is good.”**
- **“Operational management is strong.”**

Council is proud that the strong work with the voluntary service has been boosted by this Administration, recently through the opening of the Church Farm Youth Centre in partnership with the Police and YMCA.

Council resolves to call on Cabinet to ensure this partnership working with the voluntary sector and with schools, much praised by the report, can be built upon so the Youth Service can be further improved. Council further calls on Cabinet to draw up a comprehensive directory of all the youth provision in the Borough, and to take steps to publicise the extensive range of activities that are available to young people across Barnet.

84. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR HELENA HART (Agenda Items 8.2 and 13.1.6 (ii)):

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

RESOLVED – Council welcomes and supports the All Party Statement, issued on 29th September 2006, on the Barnet, Enfield & Haringey NHS Clinical Strategy.

Council notes that this Statement came out of the recognition that none of the 10 scenarios originally put forward by the Barnet, Enfield & Haringey NHS Clinical Strategy represented any improvement in service for Barnet patients. Council further notes that these scenarios importantly took no account of Barnet's projected growth in population, especially in the West of the Borough furthest from Chase Farm and the health needs of our present and future generations.

Council believes that the four scenarios subsequently chosen for further work and consultation are equally unacceptable representing as they do an actual diminution of health services for the people of Barnet.

Council therefore applauds and re-iterates the 11th Scenario put forward by us.

However, Council remains gravely concerned regarding the future provision of in-patient maternity and obstetric services and the fact that any transfer of such services from Chase Farm to Barnet Hospital will put intolerable strain on an already overstretched service.

Council notes that with in-patient facilities currently being available at 6 sites across Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Camden and Islington, Barnet still does not appear to have adequate provision for its current population - let alone the Borough's projected increase of which a large proportion is in the 15-44 age range. Council believes this equates to a real need for additional maternity, obstetric, neo natal and paediatric services. Council implores that this Borough must not have a repetition of the case where, having developed unexpected complications during a natural birth, a mother was turned away from the nearest hospital with in-patient provision because it was full before finally being accepted by Chase Farm.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive to write to the Chief Executives of both Barnet PCT and all the various Trusts involved in the provision of in-patient maternity and obstetric services to inform them of our concerns. Council further requests that they ensure that systems are in place not only to provide safe and timely back up in these cases but that the Ambulance service is always in possession of the most up to date information and thereby able to immediately transport the mother to the nearest hospital with space available.

85. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR BRIAN GORDON (Agenda Items 8.5 and 13.1.6 (iv)):

Motion 8.5 in the name of Councillor Brian Gordon and amendments in the names of Councillor Mike Freer and Councillor Barry Rawlings were put to the vote without debate. The amendment in the name of Councillor Mike Freer

was declared carried and the amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Rawlings was declared lost. The substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED – Council welcomes the Government's U-Turn against introducing statutory quotas into state-aided faith schools.

Council considers that this policy would have constituted an unwarranted interference in educational freedom and parental choice, unlikely in practice to lead to more inter-religious tolerance and understanding.

Council affirms its pride in Barnet's faith schools, noting their excellent achievements. It is equally proud of the very good standard of inter-community relations prevailing within the Borough.

Council instructs the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills welcoming his change of mind on this matter, and seeking assurance that statutory quotas will not be enforced in the future.

86. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

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

The meeting reconvened at 9.00pm

87. ADMINISTRATION POLICY ITEM: 21st CENTURY LIBRARIES (Agenda Items 9.1 and 13.1.6 (v))

Councillor John Marshall proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the names of Councillors Anne Hutton, Barry Rawlings, Julie Johnson, Agnes Slocombe, Anita Campbell, Charlie O-Macauley, Zakia Zubairi, Kath McGuirk, Claire Farrier, Ross Houston, Ansuya Sodha, Andrew McNeil, Colin Rogers, Geof Cooke, Alan Schneiderman and Danish Chopra were moved. Debate ensued. Councillor John Marshall accepted all the amendments. Upon being put to the vote the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - 21st Century Libraries

Council believes that Libraries contribute to the education and well being of Barnet's population, but need to be modernised to continue to serve our residents effectively.

Council notes that, increasingly, Libraries are not only seen as a place to borrow books, but also a centre for the local community, an access point to the internet and local information, and a facility of the "ipod" generation.

Council believes that Barnet Libraries must:

- **Be close to retail centres**
- **Be close to transport nodes**
- **Make comprehensive use of modern technology**
- **Free up staff time from admin so they can concentrate on advising customers**

- **Offer comprehensive advice on a range of Barnet Council Services**

Council accordingly instructs Cabinet to develop a library service for Barnet that will make our libraries fit for the 21st century.

Council opposes any closure of East Barnet Library, and requests Cabinet not to close East Barnet Library.

Council opposes any closure of Friern Barnet Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Friern Barnet Library.

Council opposes any closure of Edgware Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Edgware Library.

Council opposes any closure of Hendon Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Hendon Library.

Council opposes any closure of Chipping Barnet Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Chipping Barnet Library.

Council opposes any closure of Burnt Oak Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Burnt Oak Library.

Council opposes any closure of Grahame Park Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Grahame Park Library.

Council opposes any closure of Golders Green Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Golders Green Library.

Council opposes any closure of Mill Hill Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Mill Hill Library.

Council opposes any closure of Church End Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Church End Library.

Council opposes any closure of Childs Hill Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Childs Hill Library.

Council opposes any closure of Hampstead Garden Suburb Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Hampstead Garden Suburb Library.

Council opposes any closure of East Finchley Library, and requests Cabinet not to close East Finchley Library.

Council opposes any closure of North Finchley Library, and requests Cabinet not to close North Finchley Library.

Council opposes any closure of South Friern Library, and requests Cabinet not to close South Friern Library.

Council opposes any closure of Osidge Library, and requests Cabinet not to close Osidge Library.

88. OPPOSITION POLICY ITEM: GREENER HOMES: IMPROVING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY IN LOCAL HOUSING (Agenda Items 9.2 and 13.1.6 (vi)).

Councillor Kath McGuirk proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. An amendment in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen was declared carried. The substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Greener Homes: improving environmental sustainability in local housing

This Policy Item sets out a brief overview of climate change and emissions, how housing contributes to emissions, the policy framework, and some principles and methods for reducing the impact of housing on climate change. The item raises some suggestions for the way forward and sets out initial recommendations.

Climate change and emissions

Many scientists are concerned that the global average temperature's natural fluctuation has been overtaken by a rapid human-induced warming that has serious implications for the stability of the climate on which much life on the planet depends. The greenhouse effect refers to the role played by gases that effectively trap energy from the Sun in the Earth's atmosphere. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, which are released by modern industry, agriculture and the burning of fossil fuels. Their concentration in the atmosphere is increasing, for example the concentration of carbon dioxide has risen by more than 30% since 1800.

The majority of climate scientists accept the theory that an increase in these gases will cause a rise in the Earth's temperature. Sea levels have risen 10-20cm as a result of the expansion of warming oceans. Most glaciers in temperate regions of the world and along the Antarctic Peninsula are in retreat; and records show Arctic sea-ice has thinned by 40% in recent decades in summer and autumn. If nothing is done to reduce emissions, current climate models predict a global temperature increase of 1.4-5.8°C by 2100.

Globally, the result is that we could expect more extreme weather events, with heat waves becoming hotter and more frequent. Many scientists predict more rainfall overall, but say the risk of drought in inland areas during hot summers will increase. More flooding is expected from storms and rising sea levels. The potential impact is huge, with predicted freshwater shortages, sweeping changes in food production conditions, and increases

in deaths from floods, storms, heat waves and droughts. Plant and animal extinctions are predicted as habitats change faster than species can adapt.

In London, the main risks are considered to be flooding from tidal, river and heavy rainfall, availability of water resources, higher temperatures, and subsidence.

How does housing contribute to emissions?

Domestic households are responsible for around 30% of UK energy use, some 27% of UK carbon dioxide emissions and around 24% of greenhouse gas emissions. So reducing emissions from existing homes and designing new homes to produce fewer emissions is key to tackling climate change.

Policy framework

National policy

The target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions is 12.5% below 1990 levels over the period 2008-2012. The 'Climate Change the UK programme' (2000) sets a higher target for reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20% by 2010. The climate change programme sets out a broad range of policies and measures across all sectors of the economy.

The 5-year plan published in January 2005, *Sustainable Communities: Homes for All*, promotes more sustainable, high quality design and construction, to reduce waste and improve resource efficiency. The Plan commits the UK to more sustainable buildings, saving energy, water and materials and to help to meet the target to cut UK carbon emissions by 60% by 2050. Key targets include:

- Making existing homes more environmentally friendly, including energy efficiency improvements to over 1.3 million social homes between 2001 and 2010, and
- Improving minimum energy standards for all new homes – reducing carbon emissions by around a quarter, and promoting best practice by establishing a new Code for Sustainable Buildings.

Tackling energy use goes hand in hand with tackling fuel poverty. Around 480,000 council homes in the UK have already benefited from improvements to their heating and insulation since April 2001. An estimated 50,000 vulnerable households in the private sector are being made more energy efficient each year.

National policy guidance on renewable energy is set out in Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22) *Renewable Energy*, which was published in 2004. PPS22 encourages local planning authorities to use planning policies to promote and encourage the

development of renewable energy resources, setting out the criteria that will be applied in assessing planning applications for renewable energy projects. Local planning authorities may adopt policies that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments, provided that this is viable and does not place an undue burden on developers.

Currently, the Building Research Establishment (BRE) operates the Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) in the UK. The BREEAM for domestic homes is 'EcoHomes'. This is an assessment method that rates the environmental qualities of new and renovated dwellings. Buildings are verified by independent assessors and rated on a scale of Pass, Good, Very Good or Excellent.

An Ecohomes Excellent Standard includes: better wall construction; additional window insulation; additional floor/loft insulation; FSC timber etc; dual flush toilets/spray taps; bicycle stowage; recycling facilities; 'A' rated appliances; home offices; drying space; an efficient heating system and; low energy lighting.

However, the national voluntary Code for Sustainable Homes, to be launched this year, will detail environmental standards that new homes will eventually need to meet. The Code will pave the way for future changes for tougher building regulations that will be more stringent regarding energy conservation. A new Planning Policy Statement on Climate Change is also expected to set out how the planning process is to work towards the reduction of carbon emissions in the location and design of new development.

Regional policy

The London Plan policy 4B.6 'Sustainable design and construction' sets out the London policies for the sustainability of all buildings, and not just housing: "The Mayor will, and boroughs should, ensure future developments meet the highest standards of sustainable design and construction and reflect this principle in UDP policies. These will include measures to:

- Re-use land and buildings
- Conserve energy, materials, water and other resources
- Ensure designs make the most of natural systems both within, in and around the building
- Reduce the impacts of noise, pollution, flooding and micro-climatic effects
- Ensure developments are comfortable and secure for users
- Conserve and enhance the natural environment, particularly in relation to biodiversity

- **Promote sustainable waste behaviour in new and existing developments, including support for local integrated recycling schemes, CHP schemes and other treatment options.**

Applications for strategic developments should include a statement showing how sustainability principles will be met in terms of demolition, construction and long-term management. Boroughs should ensure that, where appropriate, the same sustainability principles are used to address planning applications.”

The Mayor of London’s Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), published in May 2006, sets out in more detail essential standards and the Mayor’s preferred standards on environmental sustainability for buildings.

The more recent ‘Draft Further Alterations to the London Plan’ document sets out for consultation new policies to double the carbon emission reductions that developments must achieve through onsite renewable energy from 10% to 20% by 2015 as well as requiring new developments to connect to “decentralised” local energy supplies and achieve improved standards of sustainable building design.

Local policy

Barnet Council’s Unitary Development Plan (UDP) chapter on Environmental Resources sets out the authority’s policies on sustainable housing focussing on energy efficiency and renewable energy:

“Policy Energy: In planning for development in the borough the council will seek to conserve resources and minimise pollution by:

- i. encouraging energy and water efficient developments;**
- ii. promoting the use of renewable energy;**
- iii. seeking to reduce traffic generation; and**
- iv. improving air, water and land quality.**

Policy Env 1: The council will support and encourage proposals for efficient and environmentally acceptable forms of energy production such as renewable energy sources and the use of combined heat and power schemes where appropriate and will favorably consider plans to install equipment to provide alternative vehicle fuels where it is safe to do so.

Policy Env 2: The council will encourage energy efficient development through:

- i. seeking forms of layout, design, landscaping and materials used in developments, refurbishments and conversions that conserve energy;**

- ii. expecting new developments to meet high standards of energy efficiency and achieve an energy rating of national home energy rating (NHER) 8; and
- iii. encouraging the integration and mixture of land uses where appropriate.”

The Council is to produce for consultation a 'Sustainable Development - Design, Construction and Mixed Communities' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This will give additional detail and guidance to developers and registered social landlords (RSLs) to supplement the Environmental Resources chapter in the UDP. Whilst the SPD will not constitute council planning policy, it is an opportunity to set out guidance in more detail. In future, the Local Development Framework (LDF) will set out new planning policies.

Aside from the SPD setting out expectations for new housing, the Council must also consider how existing homes can be made more environmentally sustainable.

Reducing the impact of housing on climate change and emissions

Reducing the impact of new housing focuses on energy, materials, water, the natural environment, waste and construction.

As a set of guiding principles, the 'energy hierarchy' is a useful framework for an energy saving strategy:

- **Be Mean.** Use less energy by avoiding waste.
- **Be Lean.** Use energy efficiently.
- **Be Green.** Use energy generated from renewable resources.
- **Be Clean.** Use any remaining energy required from the least polluting sources of fossil fuels in the most efficient manner.

Renewable energy technologies include:

- **Solar panels systems** absorb energy from the sun to heat water passing through the panels, and can generate around 50% of a home's hot water requirement.
- **Photovoltaic panel systems** convert energy from the sun into electricity through semi-conductor cells. They can be mounted on the roofs of buildings or integrated with external cladding or glazing.
- **Wind energy.** Small turbines can supply power direct to single users, such as homes, schools and businesses or a single larger turbine can supply a whole development.
- **Gas** can be derived from the anaerobic digestion of domestic green waste. Although these systems produce carbon emissions the total amount is no more than the carbon absorption of the fuel during growth. The processes would be 'carbon neutral' were it not for the emissions from transporting the biomass to the plant.

- **Combined Heat and Power (CHP).** Large development projects have both the critical mass and financial ability to procure all of their energy requirements from sustainable sources, on-site.
- **Ground source heat pumps (GSHP).** Ground warmth can be collected by circulating water through pipes laid horizontally in the ground or down deep bore holes.

Whilst renewable energy technologies are very popular, the passive design of new homes can reduce the need for energy in the first place. For example, the orientation of buildings and glazing towards a southern aspect helps maximise light and heat, and orientation towards wind currents helps maximise passive ventilation. Balconies and terraces can be designed so that glazing is in full sun when the sun is lower in winter, and in full shade when the sun is higher in summer. Rainwater harvesting, heat recovery ventilation, low water use gardens, and greywater use can all assist housing be more sustainable. Reducing the amount of ground that is paved also allows water to run into the ground, rather than overload drains and sewers.

There is also a need to conserve and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity. For example, retaining deciduous trees and bushes, and planting more, provides shade in summer, but lets the sun through in winter.

Construction waste contributes 33% of the total UK waste stream. Sustainable construction and reducing waste are not only about measures such as recycling facilities and cycle stowage being designed into new developments and landfill, but also about the materials used for buildings. Can these be recycled from other construction? Are the materials able to be recycled themselves when the building comes to the end of its use?

There are six recognised 'principles of sustainable construction'. These are:

- design for minimum waste,
- minimise energy in construction and use,
- do not pollute,
- preserve and enhance biodiversity,
- conserve water resources, and
- respect people and the local environment.

A more sustainable approach includes looking at the cost of building itself, including the use of local materials that are not transported over long distances, and multi-purpose design so that buildings can be converted for different uses in future, and can also adapt to the expected increases in hot dry summers and wet mild winters.

Existing homes

The Sustainable Development Commission's (SDC) report 'Stock Take: Delivering improvements in Existing Housing' sets out that at least 75% of current housing will still be in use in 2050. The SDC puts the case for improving the resource efficiency of existing homes, rather than seeing widespread new build that is carbon intensive and carries many wider environmental impacts.

The SDC estimates that water savings of 30% may be achieved through reducing demand and retro-fitting efficient appliances and fittings. The SDC report sets out that more needs to be done to encourage take-up of existing widely available measures such as insulation, draught proofing, secondary and double glazing, improved heating systems, heating controls, and efficient lighting and appliances. The SDC is also encouraging micro-generation of energy for existing homes.

Way forward

The Council should establish an overall strategy for environmentally sustainable housing. One way forward would be a strategy of 'Planning, Partnership, Persuasion' within the SPD, but the strategy needs to be broader (than just the SPD) to incorporate existing housing.

The Council should introduce a renewable energy requirement guidance/policy to encourage (and then require) a percentage of the energy to be used in all new developments to come from on-site renewable energy. The UDPs of other local authorities demand a 10% reduction in carbon emissions whilst, as set out above, the London Plan proposed amendments include a requirement of 20%.

The Council should engage and involve local people and developers more about environmentally sustainable housing. The Council could produce a free "Greening your home" guide for all households in the council magazine, use a regular column on energy in the local media or council magazine, support the Local Agenda 21 groups, or offer training to developers on sustainable housing.

The Council should encourage local people to access energy efficiency grants and discounts. There are a large number of schemes that offer grants/discounts mainly offered by energy companies as part of their Energy Efficiency Commitment. These can change fairly regularly and therefore keeping track of details is difficult. Other local authorities are working in partnership to establish dedicated advice lines that residents can contact to find out what energy efficiency grants or discounts they are eligible for. Other schemes offer advice and information on renewable energy technologies that can be applied directly to people's homes, primarily solar hot water heating.

The Council should continue to work with registered social landlords (RSLs/ housing associations) to improve the environmental sustainability of existing and new homes.

Training should be offered to council planning and housing staff, and Members, to ensure the Council gets the maximum possible use of environmentally sustainable technologies and design.

Recommendations

This Council welcomes the drafting, by the current administration, of the 'Sustainable Development - Design, Construction and Mixed Communities' SPD. It asks that the Cabinet ensures the Head of Planning takes into consideration suggestions and comments from interested Members regarding the environmental sustainability of new homes ahead of its publication.

To ask the Cabinet to consult the Cleaner, Greener, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on how the Council can, in keeping with its lead role in the Borough, improve the environmental sustainability of existing homes.

To ask the Cabinet to ensure that the recommendations emerging from Barnet's Carbon Trust Audit, which aims to reduce the Carbon emissions of this authority, can be reasonably implemented.

89. REPORT OF CABINET 16 OCTOBER, 2006 (Agenda Item 10)

Councillor Mike Freer moved reception and adoption of the Report of Cabinet dated 16 October, 2006, with the following recommendations:

1. YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN (Report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services – Agenda Item 7)

Cabinet considered the report of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services enclosing the draft Youth Justice Plan 2006 – 2007, as circulated separately to all Members of the Council.

As approval of the Plan was a function reserved to full Council, Cabinet, for the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report,

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND – That the Youth Justice Plan be approved for submission to the Youth Justice Board.

2. WELSH HARP LOCAL NATURE RESERVE BYELAWS (Report of the Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee – Agenda Item 9)

Cabinet considered the report of the Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee dated 5 September 2006 together with the appended report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport submitting proposed byelaws for the Welsh Harp Local Nature Reserve, as circulated separately to all Members of the Council.

As approval of byelaws was a function reserved to full Council, Cabinet, for the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report,

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND – That Council approve the Byelaws relating to the Welsh Harp Local Nature Reserve as shown in the appendix to the report of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport.

Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, it was
RESOLVED – That the Report of Cabinet dated 16 October, 2006, be approved and adopted.

90. REPORT OF THE LICENSING COMMITTEE DATED 18 OCTOBER 2006 (Agenda Item 12.1):

Councillor Andreas Tambourides moved reception and adoption of the Report of the Licensing Committee dated 18 October, 2006, with the following recommendations:

GAMBLING ACT 2005 (Report of the Head of Planning and Environmental Protection – Agenda item 5):

The Committee considered the attached report of the Head of Planning and Environmental Protection, including the revised draft of the Gambling Licensing Policy following consultation. It was noted that the majority of respondents to the consultation were in favour of a resolution not to licence casinos in the borough.

The Committee

RECOMMEND that Council

- (i) adopt the Gambling Licensing Policy (also known in the Gambling Act as Statement of Principles), subject to the amendment of paragraph 10.5.1 of the Policy if the Council does not pass a resolution not to licence casinos.**
- (ii) instruct the Head of Planning and Environmental Protection to arrange for its publication before 3 January 2007.**
- (iii) make a resolution not to licence any casinos within the borough, in order to protect children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.**

Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, it was
RESOLVED – That the Report of the Licensing Committee dated 18 October, 2006, be approved and adopted.

91. LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION (Report and Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Items 13.1.1 and 13.1.5):

The Acting Democratic Services Manager submitted changes made by the Leader to his scheme of delegation.

The Acting Democratic Services Manager reported that the relevant changes would be made to Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, Responsibility for Functions.

92. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS (Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 13.1.2):

RESOLVED – That the following change in Committee Memberships be approved:

- Councillor Brian Salinger to replace Councillor Andrew Harper on the Teachers Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee.

93. FIRST CLASS EDUCATION AND CHILDREN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT OF PARENT GOVERNOR REPRESENTATIVES (Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager -Agenda Item 13.1.3):

RESOLVED - That Adam Fineberg be appointed as the parent/governor representative for primary/nursery schools on the First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending 26 October 2008, unless he resigns before that date or becomes ineligible.

94. REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON LONDON COUNCILS – CULTURE, TOURISM AND THE OLYMPICS FORUM (Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 13.1.4)

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

Nominations in the names of Councillor Joan Scannell and Councillor Linda McFadyen were moved.

RESOLVED – That the following persons be appointed or nominated as the case may be to fill the vacancies referred to for the period indicated in the report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager:

VACANCY REFERENCE	PARTICULARS OF APPOINTMENT OR NOMINATION	PERSON APPOINTED OR NOMINATED
LCCTOF1	London Councils – Culture, Tourism and the Olympics Forum (Nominee)	Councillor Robert Rams (Councillor Anne Hutton was unsuccessful)
LCCTOF2	London Councils – Culture, Tourism and the Olympics Forum (Deputy)	Councillor John Marshall (Councillor Kath McGuirk was unsuccessful)

95. SUPPORTING A SUCCESSFUL SUBURB - PROPOSAL FOR ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE - CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION (Further Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 13.1.8)

RESOLVED –that the Council agrees to the changes to the Constitution as set out in the report, appended to these minutes, and instructs the Acting Democratic Services Manager to take the necessary action at the appropriate time.

96. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (Agenda Item 13.2)

RESOLVED –

- 1. That the Council agrees to work in partnership with other authorities in the North London Waste Authority to produce the North London Waste Development Plan.**

- 2. That the Council agrees to regularise the previous decision of the Cabinet Resources Committee on 5 January 2006 and the decision of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environmental Protection on 28 June 2006 by approving the terms of the previous decisions set out in Paragraphs 2.3 and 2.5 accordingly.**

97. COMMENTS RELATING TO THE WORK OF CABINET (Agenda Items 14 and 13.1.7)

Councillor Barry Rawlings commented

The Tories decide to close South Friern Library, big local opposition, supported by Rudi Vis, the local Councillors, Tory U-turn, you plan, it goes out to tender, Councillor Freer comes to COSC and says that's fine they can all use Muswell Hill Library, we've got an agreement with Haringey. Haringey didn't know that, by the way. Now Muswell Hill Library is going to be closed. Bring this point up, some rubbish in the paper, I mean one is that you go to East Finchley because there is a bus route. The bus route passes 31 out of the 2373, well it is not part of the bus route. Those people who need to get hold of local papers to take part in choices for Barnet, housing choices, need to have the computer system, will not have that option in a mobile library. Where are they going to go? Are they just going to be dismissed in a little corner of the borough?

[Please note COSC is Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee]

Councillor John Marshall responded

Madam Mayor he's getting a new library, does he come and say thank you? No he comes and complains. That is the gist of what I'm trying to say. There will be three alternative libraries that local residents can go to. Friern Barnet, East Finchley and North Finchley. There are bus routes provided by TFL of which Councillor Rawlings is a great supporter and, of course, if people want to borrow books they can also go to Alexandra Park Library. The library will close on 16th December but it is to build a new library that will be much more visible than the existing library. Many people could miss the fact there's a library at South Friern as they passed it at the moment. The new library will be visible, it will be positive, it will be modern.

Councillor Alan Schneiderman commented

Thank you Madam Mayor. I'm sure we're all pleased about the introduction of the police Safer Neighbourhood Teams to all wards, thanks to our Labour Mayor for London. I certainly see the good work they're doing in Woodhouse as I'm sure they are in all other wards in the borough. They do, however, need a base. The Woodhouse team is one of those interested in moving into Friary House and I know some discussions have already taken place with the Council. Can I urge the Cabinet Member to help the police with their inquiries

and lend the Council's support to the Woodhouse and other Safer Neighbourhood Teams in seeking and securing suitable accommodation.

Councillor Brian Coleman responded

Yes, Madam Mayor.

Councillor Jeremy Davies, on behalf of Councillor Wayne Casey, commented

Madam Mayor under procedure rule 43.3 I'd like to speak on Councillor Casey's behalf tonight and I did ask through the break. Madam Mayor, a Mill Hill resident has approached Councillor Casey with a complaint about her treatment at the hands of the NHS. The details of her case have been given to the Cabinet Member on a confidential basis. While it would be inappropriate for the Cabinet Member to comment on this individual matter in the public arena, what assistance is she and most officers who support her, able to provide this resident and other residents in a similar position with their grievances against the health service? For if her role and the Council's role only can be strategic, to whom can individuals now turn with their personal concerns? Would she not agree that many vulnerable patients need advocacy to support them when they have a complaint against the NHS and, if so, is it not the Council's duty to provide such an advocacy service? Thank you.

Councillor Helena Hart responded

Thank you, Madam Mayor. In short the answer is no, it is not the role of this Council to represent individual Barnet residents and patients in their complaints against the NHS. I have in fact read this letter which is a sad catalogue of delays and misdiagnosis and general poor treatment at the hands of the NHS but as both Councillors well know, the role of the Council in this is not, as I said, to represent individual patients. The correct procedure is for the complainant to go back to the practitioners concerned as this lady, in fact, has done. Then her recourse is to the independent confidential patient advice and liaison service known as PALS and then if she has no joy from there to go up chain if necessary to the Health Commission and finally to the NHS Ombudsman service. My own role is actually set out in Part 3 of the Council Constitution, Responsibility for Functions.

Councillor Brian Gordon commented

Councillor Offord, I think we are all very interested to know what kind of awful legislation is intended in the Transport For London Bill. We know how hostile the Mayor of London has been to this Borough in so many different ways and how he has a propensity to waste, waste and waste public money and has no conception of what the public transport system means and even less so of what it means to have roads which are functional and where traffic flows properly and where drivers have the freedom that we this side of the chamber believe in. Could you enlighten us as to what this Transport For London Bill is going to do to cripple transport arrangements in Barnet and what we can do to oppose the machinations of this most mischievous and iniquitous Mayor?

Councillor Matthew Offord responded

Thank you, Madam Mayor. Barnet formally lodged a petition in the House of Lords opposing clauses in the TFL Bill which we believe were against the

interests of the Council and the Borough's residents. As a result of this opposition we are successful in securing several important changes to the Bill including that the Secretary of State is now part of the process of creating any new motorist offences. No new offences will be created, which includes a non-payment of congestion charge. Affected car park operators will be protected against any claims, losses or liabilities as a result of TFL's enforcement actions. The Council also secured a saving within the Bill which ensures any of the new powers TFL may get in relation to managing their roads will not override the planning process that will help to save the green belt in this area. But most of all the serious clauses, we have prevented TFL from revoking the legal orders to the improvements for the North Circular in the borough. However, before the issues were to be discussed before the House of Lords Committee, TFL decided to drop this clause from the Bill. This only occurred as a result of our opposition and the motion in the Council in December last year.

Councillor Geof Cooke commented

The zebra crossing on the A1000 High Road, North Finchley, near Friern Watch Avenue is extremely wide and, in my view, hazardous one. It is close to a secondary school used by local residents, more than one of whom is blind and one of our constituents in Woodhouse has told us of his fear in crossing that road given the speed and the quantity of traffic. It's out of the town centre, sometimes the traffic moves very fast and so we were very pleased to see in the consultation with ward members on the local safety scheme for North Finchley a great improvement on that crossing in that the width was to be reduced through building out of the central refuge and the kerb build out on the eastern side of the road. We were surprised and dismayed to see that when it went to public consultation the safety feature had been removed and the local councillors had not been told of this change but apparently officers were simply following the procedure laid down by the Cabinet.

Councillor Matthew Offord responded

There was an initial suggestion to make a small kerb alignment changes that extended the footway on the east side of the High Road and immediately south of Friern Watch Avenue junction. The cost of this was approximately £10,000. Following initial consultation with ward members a cost benefit exercise was conducted to ascertain the safety enhancement that would be realised. No personal injury accidents have been recorded within the last 3 years or police reports involving pedestrians. There have been two pedestrian injuries caused by collisions on the north bound A1000 part of the crossing and there are proposals to make adjustments to the central island measures being proposed as part of the local safety scheme seek to achieve accident savings while ensuring safe progressive movements on the Borough's major road network in line with the Council's 2002 Traffic Management Policy. With no accidents there was no justification to progress this minor element of the overall scheme.

The meeting finished at 10. 32pm

Council Meeting

7 November 2006

FURTHER SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE ACTING DEMOCRATIC
SERVICES MANAGER
Agenda item 13.1

**8. Supporting a Successful Suburb - Proposal for Organisational Change -
Consequential Amendments to the Constitution**

Arising from the decision of the General Functions Committee at its special meeting on 1 November 2006 approving the report of the Chief Executive titled " Supporting a Successful Suburb - Proposal for Organisational Change" some consequential amendments are required to be made to the Constitution to come into effect on 1 December 2006 or on such other date as the Chief Executive may implement the restructuring approved by the General Functions Committee:-

1. Article 12.01 (c) - to be amended to record that the post designated as Monitoring Officer will be the Director of Corporate Governance.
2. Article 14.04 and 14.05 - to be amended to record that the Director of Corporate Governance shall be added to the list of Officers authorised to authenticate documents; to affix the Common Seal and sign documents required to be sealed; to execute any document or deed not required to be under seal; to deal with those categories of documents that may be authorised by a facsimile of the Common Seal and to make entries in the book kept for recording the sealing of deeds and documents.
3. All references in the Constitution to "Borough Solicitor" (other than as referred to in Article 12.01 (c)) shall be replaced by "Head of Legal".
4. Clarifying proviso to be added to Article 12.01 (b) that the Director of Corporate Governance will have reserve powers to exercise all or any of the powers delegated to the Head of Legal under the Constitution.

**RECOMMEND - that the Council agrees to the changes to the
Constitution as set out and instructs the Acting Democratic Services
Manager to take the necessary action at the appropriate time.**

**Council Questions to Cabinet Members
7 November 2006
Questions and Responses**

Question No. 1**Councillor Brian Salinger**

I assume that the Cabinet Member for Community Services has read the article in the BCAB news (August 2006) regarding the discrepancies between average Barnet rents and the local reference rent used by the Rent Officer service in the advice that they give to the Council's Housing Benefit Dept.

Is the Cabinet Member aware if the claims made are supported by the staff in Barnet Homeseekers and if so what representations have been made to the Rent Officer Service to address this problem and to minimise unnecessary evictions which result in even more expensive and unsatisfactory options for some Barnet residents?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

I haven't asked each individual member of staff from Barnet Homeseekers for their opinion. However, it is the general opinion that reference rents are not a significant barrier to people finding solutions in the private sector.

The rental market in Barnet is particularly high compared with the rent officer's determination and is causing problems for some tenants.

Our Officers meet quarterly with The Rent Service of the DWP and they also offer advice on appeals when there is a discrepancy.

Supplementary Question No. 1**Councillor Brian Salinger**

Will the Cabinet Member acknowledge that her answer is in itself contradictory? In one paragraph she states that it's not a problem but in the second paragraph she states that it is a problem.

Does she understand that if the differential between the average rents and the rent officer determinations is significant, and it can be, it must cause problems that lead to an increase in evictions and homelessness and problems for tenants, and can the Member assure all of us that every effort will be made to minimise the differentials in the interests of all who are affected by this problem?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Thank you very much.

This is part of the Government's bid to reduce dependency on Benefits. I have had a few calls talking to me about the discrepancies in private tenancy housing advice. However, I am assured that our Housing advice service is talking now to the various landlords and estate agents and we are hoping to solve it. There is further capping to come, which at the moment we are estimating the costs and this will of course be passed over to the taxpayers. From what I gather, this is quite a blow to a lot of the private landlords who have previously enjoyed a considerably higher premium.

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

PWC have delayed the publication of the report. No firm date has been announced.

Supplementary Question No. 2

Councillor Jack Cohen

Thank you. Councillor Freer, I asked exactly the same question at the June Council meeting and you replied that the PriceWaterhouseCoopers report would be published by the end of July 2006. We are now in November and you are telling this Council that the report has been delayed. No firm date has been announced. I'm sure Councillor Freer will share with me and others that this is a situation that is now becoming unacceptable. Serious accusations have been made against former Councillors, existing Councillors and Chief Officers, which need to be dealt with one way or the other sooner rather than later. So would Councillor Freer assure me and the rest of the Council that he will do his best to ensure that this report is published and at the same time, will he provide me and other Councillors with the costs so far which at the last reckoning was over £1million that this is costing the local council tax payers?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Madam Mayor, of course I don't control the timetable that PWC choose to commit to. Clearly the delay is regrettable and we are continually trying to press for a speedy resolution but we have no powers to do so.

In terms of the costs, quite rightly, I will circulate the up-to-date costs. Yes I too share concern at the amount that the taxpayer has to pick up the tab but any resident has the right to make such complaints and that is the cost of democracy.

Question No. 3

Councillor Barry Rawlings

How many families have the Council placed in accommodation provided by private agencies where breakfast is also supplied?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

As at September 2006 there were 300 families, a reduction from 410 in April 2006.

Supplementary Question No. 3

Councillor Barry Rawlings

Thank you for your answer.

For too long we have been told in here that the Council have no families in bed and breakfast accommodation. Could the Cabinet Member assure that further reduction in numbers of these families will be a priority?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

It certainly is and our Housing strategy is addressing it. Its not ideal, of course, I agree with you that its not ideal to have families in bed and breakfast and we do try and move them on as quickly as we can and we are looking at alternatives.

Question No. 4

Councillor Brian Salinger

At the Council meeting on 12th September Councillor McNeill appeared not to know of the existence of the ECT site in Frith Lane. Can the Cabinet Member for the Environment please explain the differing roles of the 2 sites and can he detail the site constraints at Frith Lane that he referred to in his speech?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

There are two sites in Barnet which are run by ECT Recycling:

- Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre

This is located at Summers Lane, North Finchley and is open to the public, who are able to dispose of over 35 different items which are recycled or reused, as well as general waste.

- Depot at Frith Lane

The ECT depot in Frith Lane is where the 24 vehicles that collect the dry recyclables from residents in Barnet are based, as well as 4 support vehicles, and the bulking facility for the recyclables. This site is not opened to the general public. While the site is suitable for the existing bulking facilities there is insufficient room at the site for a materials' reprocessing facility, where mixed recyclables are sorted into different types. With the amount of recyclables having increased significantly in the last 3 years, there is simply not room at the site to allow the further collection of plastics and cardboard.

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

Thank you, Madam Mayor, and can I thank Councillor Offord for his answer. But in the last sentence of his reply, he states 'there is simply not room at the site to allow the further collection of plastics and cardboard'. Can he confirm that the Council is still committed, as it was in our manifesto at the last election, to the future collection of cardboard and plastic, and would he like to speculate on where ECT, or whoever is collecting the materials in the new contract, will site their centre if it's not to be at the site in Frith Lane?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Thank you, Madam Mayor.

I'm very happy to confirm that we maintain that commitment to recycling of cardboards and plastics when their contract comes up for renewal. Unfortunately, I'm not in a position at this stage where I'm able to advise where that location will be and that will be subject to the partnership working that we'll engage with those contractors or other partnership groups.

Question No. 5**Councillor Jack Cohen**

You did not attend the Cabinet and Overview Committee on September 11 and therefore the Committee was not able to quiz you on your reports. You sent your apologies giving the reason that you were absent on other council business. Please explain what this other business was and where did it take place.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I made myself available for the start of Cabinet Scrutiny before attending a dinner in the Town Hall. However order of business did not allow me to stay for my items.

The dinner was to establish relations with the new Representative Deputy Lieutenant; Aldermanic Sheriff John Stuttard and Common Councillor Anthony Eskenzi; and former Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee Catherine Mc Guinness CC.

The Deputy Leader was available for these reports.

Supplementary Question No. 5**Councillor Jack Cohen**

Thank you, Madam Mayor. Councillor Freer, I'm sure the Representative Deputy Lieutenant, the Aldermanic Sheriff, the Common Councilman, the former Chairman of the Hampstead Heath Management Committee are very nice people and pleasant company, but would you not agree with me that your priorities ought to lie with attending the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee so you can answer questions directly from Members of the Council and ensure that the proper democratic process of this Council is followed?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Thank you, Madam Mayor. I also place equal weight on ensuring that this Council's voice is heard with all those bodies that have something to do with this Borough. Also, we work as a team on this side of the Chamber and my Deputy Leader is perfectly capable of answering on my behalf.

Question No. 6**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

There has been a recent spate of rubbish being dumped in Burnt Oak, which presents a health hazard to many people. What is the Council doing to collect dumped rubbish in Burnt Oak, to clean the areas affected and prosecute the criminals involved?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Unfortunately this is not a recent spate but an on-going problem in Burnt Oak and, as such, is a priority area for this Council. Enforcement officers are targeted on known areas for fly tipping – and I would urge Councillor O-Macauley to accompany these officers on such a patrol to see the problem first-hand.

During September there were approximately 39 reported fly-tips in and around Gold Lane and Abbotts Road. In the last 4 weeks approximately 19 fly-tips have been reported in the Burnt Oak area. All were cleared in the time allowed for fly-tip clearance in the Corporate Plan. Officers investigate incidents of fly tipping as necessary and if a successful prosecution can be effected action will be – and has been taken.

Supplementary Question No. 6**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

Thanks very much, Madam Mayor, and thanks very much to Councillor Matthew Offord for answering my questions.

How many are the numbers of successful prosecutions that have been in Burnt Oak, and also in my knowledge there has been a sudden increase in the deposit of rubbish or refuse which I think more attention should be given for health and safety reasons in Burnt Oak so that we can bring that area to a very safe and clean area?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Thank you, Madam Mayor. I'm not quite sure that I agree there's been a sudden increase. I remember that under a former Labour Leader of this Council the problem was as acute as it is now. However, I can assure the Member, the new Member for Burnt Oak, that both myself and the Leader of the Council and also the GLA representative who is also on this Council have all taken a personal interest in the problems in Burnt Oak, and we shall be visiting the area to have a look at the problems and looking at how we can use legislation such as Cleaner Neighbourhoods and Environment Act to tackle the problems that you describe in your Ward and we'll be making that one of our priorities.

Question No. 7**Councillor Daniel Webb**

Has the Leader of the Council seen the recently published Report of the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into anti-Semitism? Does he endorse the findings? Will he congratulate the members of the Committee including Theresa Villiers MP, and will he ensure copies of the report are provided for Members of the Council in the Group rooms?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Yes and it is an excellent, balanced report. Copies have already been placed in the Group Rooms.

Supplementary Question No. 7**Councillor Daniel Webb**

Leader, were there any parts of this report that you found of particular use?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Thank you, Councillor. The report has been placed in all the Group Rooms and I do urge all Members to read it. When I was reading the summary, there were a couple of points which I thought were particularly striking.

There's a comment about what is termed anti-Semitic discourse which is a term used to describe the widespread change in mood and tone when the Jewish community is discussed. It is becoming increasingly acceptable to talk about the Jewish community in disparaging terms and that is now becoming a mainstream problem, and I think I will draw attention of Members to that because it is a very valid point. The other point, also in the summary, is it draws attention to the fact that many people when talking about anti-Semitic crime saying 'well it's not really a problem because it's much worse in other countries'. Well that may well be true. However, that's not much comfort to those members of our community who suffer and are victims of hate and violence, and that should not be an excuse because in this country we have lower levels of anti-Semitic crime than in the rest of Europe. It is not an excuse for tolerating it in this country and certainly this Council is committed to the findings of this report, and I do urge Members to read it.

Question No. 8**Councillor Wayne Casey**

Since May 2002 how many applications have been submitted for permission to erect mobile telecommunications masts in Barnet? In the same period, how many petitions of objection were received and what was the total number of signatures?

Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen

140 submissions for telecommunication masts have been received by Barnet Planning of which 90 have been refused and a further 14 withdrawn.

As for petitions of objection these are not recorded with planning data on a systematic electronic database as they form part of committee submissions. To research such data would involve manual checks of a considerable number of staff over many hours and days in both Democratic and Planning services. I do not considered this to be a good use of the Council's time and resources.

Question No. 9**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Councillor Marshall has admitted that the Council has a problem with boys being permanently excluded from school and he promised that the Council is putting additional resources into some schools to help those who are struggling at Key Stage 3. Which schools are being given these additional resources; exactly what form do these additional resources take; and how will the impact of the additional resources be monitored to ensure effective use and outcomes?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Last year saw a reduction in the number of pupils excluded permanently from Barnet schools from 57 (43 boys, 14 girls) in 2004-05 academic year to 43 (30 boys, 13 girls). Thirteen fewer boys were excluded – a 30% reduction.

A wide range of support is provided to all Barnet secondary schools to help them improve academic standards, behaviour and attendance. The exact nature of the support varies according to the specific needs of the school and that support is monitored and subject to formal evaluation.

Supplementary Question No. 9**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

This makes no sense, it's just a rehash of what Councillor Marshall said to me last month, and I don't doubt his sincerity because he was very sincere with the work that he did with the officers when he spoke to me so I have no doubts about it. What I simply wanted to know, which schools will be getting this support? It's no good saying to me, it varies, it could mean anything, pencil, pen, walking stick. What is it? All I ask Madam Mayor and to Councillor Fiona Bulmer, because it seems as though its her answer, is to give me the exact variation of the support to the schools. I want the schools names. It could be a school in my Ward so please let me know.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Sorry Madam Mayor, I'm taking Councillor Bulmer's questions this evening. In terms of specifics, additional intensive support is provided to six schools. Friern Barnet School, St Mary's CE High School, Whitefields School, Ravenscroft School, Bishop Douglas and Hendon School. They get additional twelve days support for English and nine days support for science, mathematics, foundation subjects and ICT. There is a range of support available to other schools to improve and tackle behaviour and attendance.

Question No. 10**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Would you please give us some information regarding the Council's campaign to remove mounting piles of food waste, from Barnet's streets, especially outside fast-food outlets?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I have to say Environment Officers and myself are not aware of mounting piles of food waste on Barnet's Streets. However, in September the Council carried out a fast food litter poster campaign in conjunction with the national campaign carried out by ENCAMS. Posters were distributed to Fast Food Outlets in Tally Ho, Finchley Central and Hollywood Bowl for displaying in outlet premises. Posters were distributed to 65 premises.

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

Councillor Offord, please forgive me if I gave the impression in my question that our streets are untidy. They're not untidy at all. In fact they've never been cleaner than they have been in the last four years. But, nevertheless, it is the case that some of the fast food establishments can produce a degree of litter outside. I have had experience with one of the restaurants in my Ward for example at Apex Corner, where there were complaints from residents on various occasions about litter outside the premises so I'd just like it if you could please assure this Council that the excellent anti-litter campaign which you are spearheading will continue and will be something which we shall see at least on an annual basis.

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Madam Mayor, I'm very happy to give that commitment to the Member. Only this afternoon whilst speaking to the Leader of the Council on his mobile phone, he was in the act of actually clearing up some of the mess left by an individual who had been at a fast food restaurant. But I can assure Councillor Gordon that the Council has drafted an operational strategy for the Cleaner Neighbourhoods and Environment Act and a clean borough strategy, and both these strategies will be used to promote street cleanliness in the widest sense of the word and this will include fast food restaurants.

Question No. 11**Councillor Monroe Palmer**

Would the Cabinet Member explain why the central reservations of North Circular Road and the areas surrounding Brent Cross Flyover are such a disgrace with continual uncleared litter and debris? If there is no intention of cleaning these public areas would he consider a descriptive plaque on the tin cans and bottles so that Barnet can market them as works of modern art?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

If the member had been at the last Council meeting he would have heard the answer to the same question asked by Councillor Ellison.

Cleansing of these areas is carried out by the Council's in-house cleansing team, which would include the routine cyclic cleansing of the central reservations and off side channels on all borough trunk roads 6 times per year. However, the operations can only be carried out in conjunction with traffic management (known as block closures) provided by TfL via their contractor WSP Civils. Without this in place, our teams are forbidden to gain access to the central reservation or offside channel.

TfL notified all operational partners that "*following further cuts from TfL's routine maintenance budget the planned block closures on the A1, A41 & A406 have been cancelled from 14th July 2006*". A second communication revealed that there would be no further block closures this financial year.

No, I reject the policy of marketing what you call art in public spaces as being irrelevant and frivolous.

Supplementary Question No. 11**Councillor Monroe Palmer**

Following on from the last answer, one would only hope that the operational strategy would relate to roads such as Brent Cross Flyover which is a complete and absolute disgrace. I take your comments, Councillor Offord, despite the discourteous way they're expressed in the written answer, but the mess existed before the 14th July and so, therefore, we have done nothing whatsoever to ask the TFL to deal with their responsibilities. I would hope that through the good offices of the Chairman of the GLA, who sits in front of you, some pressure may be given, may be made upon TFL to meet their responsibilities and just not to say we are not doing it which seems completely unacceptable, and if none of that succeeds may I suggest you consider in your overall operational strategy which you have just announced that we erect signs at Brent Cross Flyover to say this is nothing to do with Barnet Council it's all to do with Ken Livingstone and his TFL.

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Officers of this Council actually met with TFL on 27th October to discuss implications under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which is separate from the legislation I've alluded to earlier and looking at how we can address this issue which was so ably brought up by Councillor Ellison at the last full Council Meeting.

Question No. 12**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Last year several elderly council tenants and those with disabilities were left waiting for adaptations to continue living in their own homes because of the poor budget awarded by the Council to Barnet Homes. How much has the adaptations budget been increased this year to ensure this hardship is not repeated?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

The budget has been increased by £50,000 this year.

Supplementary Question No. 12**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Yes, I've got a supplementary here. Last year a number of residents in this borough and in my ward suffered extreme hardship because your administration said it did not have the funding to provide the basic amenities such as a toilet and a shower. Basic amenities. Can you now please assure the residents of this borough that £50,000 will be enough and no resident this year will suffer the hardship in their time of need and secondly on what basis have you increased the amount by £50,000?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Thank you. Well it's an increase in the budget, the extra £50,000. We've also put in a bid for a considerable increase for next year, £1.3 million, but I am not sure about your particular casework but I would quite happily have a look at it. It may well be that it is people where we are going to replace their kitchens and bathrooms as part of the decent homes or it may well be that we are looking at whether or not their needs will be better served by moving them into a better type of accommodation that would be much more suitable for them. But we're certainly increasing the budget and we'll certainly be catching up with the back log.

Question No. 13**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What is the Administration's view on the "No cold callers zone" recently established in Deans Way in Hale Ward and would we wish to see these emerge in other zones throughout the Borough?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

No cold calling zones are one of those ideas that look good on paper but in practice have huge problems. Indeed not only would it disrupt the normal process of Political canvassing but would prevent the Council from canvassing to compile the electoral role for example. The Police do not have the resources to enforce cold calling zones. We have no plans to introduce any in Barnet. This Administration does not believe in empty gestures.

Supplementary Question No. 13

Councillor Brian Gordon

Councillor Coleman, I would not have suspected for one moment our administration of indulging in empty gestures, least of all yourself. Your gestures are always very forthright and direct indeed, stabbing from the front indeed as you once told me, metaphorically speaking of course. But with regard to cold calling I see you're not very happy about the idea of these notices stopping cold calling. What will you and I tell all the residents of Deansway when we next go cold calling in that area, or canvassing as the case may be?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Madam Mayor, as ever I am grateful to compliments from Councillor Gordon. Cold calling zones look good on paper but the point is in this Borough, and indeed elsewhere, there is no point putting up notices if the zone is not going to be enforced.

And until the Metropolitan Police can assure me that they have the resources to enforce, whether it's cold calling zones or alcohol free zones, we're not going to roll them out because they are empty gestures and the betrayal of our residents. If this Council, this administration, decides to do something, we'll do it and we'll enforce it but we will not just implement it? Cold calling zones, the principle behind them is a good one in that there is far too much crime, deceit of particularly elderly residents who open their door to someone claiming to be the gas man or a Conservative Party Councillor, but the answer is not cold calling zones, the answer is to support the police as they track down these particularly despicable criminals who engage in this sort of crime and bring them to justice.

Question No. 14

Councillor Susette Palmer

Does the Member intend to continue with the all party Corporate parenting Group?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Yes, a date for the next meeting will be advised shortly.

Supplementary Question No. 14

Councillor Susette Palmer

Thank you. I was glad to get the calling notice for the meeting. What I would like to say is that in view of the success of this all party committee I would like to ask if the Cabinet considers whether there may be other areas in which we could have the same sort of non-confrontational working with representation of all three political parties.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I'd be delighted to look at any particular suggestions.

Question No. 15

Councillor Julie Johnson

What were the number of books, CDs and DVDs borrowed from each of Barnet's libraries for the years 2004/2005 and 2005/2006?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Library	Books 04/05	Books 05/06	CDs 04/05	CDs 05/06	DVDs 04/05	DVDs 05/06
Chipping Barnet	304,539	287,659	17,557	16,250	25,434	22,924
Church End	162,107	144,516	4,766	4,391	11,710	11,132
East Barnet	144,131	136,460	8,162	8,433	10,979	10,462
East Finchley	107,624	107,058	9,709	9,306	10,831	10,266
Friern Barnet	53,734	55,793	2,010	1,931	6,849	6,573
North Finchley	155,191	154,042	6,746	6,558	13,249	12,526
Osidge	73,554	76,737	2,546	2,517	5,557	5,609
South Friern	39,764	40,055	1,071	1,087	3,608	3,628
Hendon	156,406	327,511	11,698	17,747	19,206	29,244
Burnt Oak	64,675	60,925	2,041	1,820	7,378	5,467
Childs Hill	43,973	40,706	1,474	1,065	3,380	3,322
Edgware	190,976	179,307	7,072	6,218	12,551	11,142
Golders Green	164,226	135,680	5,103	4,030	9,156	9,450
Grahame Park	33,695	32,585	682	697	4,024	3,616
Hampstead GS	23,254	24,076	1,004	1,093	1,626	1,915
Mill Hill	101,838	94,752	3,997	3,641	8,585	7,012

The cassette format has been overtaken gradually by CDs so these are grouped together and similarly videos and DVDs.

Hendon Library was closed April – October 2004. The nearest libraries are Church End, Edgware, Golders Green.

I should like to praise the staff of the Libraries Service for all they do to maintain this high level of usage.

Supplementary Question No. 15**Councillor Julie Johnson**

I thank Councillor Marshall for his detailed reply. May I please have the separate borrowing figures for the mobile library service.

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Madam Mayor, it's not a figure that I keep at the back of my head. I'm sure however that Councillor Johnson will be given that figure. All I can say is if she looks at the figures she will see that the penultimate library which is the Hampstead Garden Suburb library does actually have increased book loans, increased CD loans and increased DVD loans so that is a library doing very well. I would like to congratulate the staff of that library upon the excellent work they do.

Question No. 16**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Is it not commendable that our Borough has been awarded "Green Flag Status" for four of its premier parks?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Yes of course it is. But in addition, it is also commendable for all the hard work put in by the Greenspaces team and the 'Friends of...' groups across the Borough. I am sure Councillor Gordon will be pleased to learn that the Mayor held a reception for a number of Greenspaces staff to show the Council's appreciation for all their hard work.

I would also personally like to thank Sharon Silverblatt who established the Friends of Hendon Park just over a year ago and who made a terrific contribution to the Park attaining Green Flag status.

Supplementary Question No. 16

Councillor Brian Gordon

Councillor Offord, while talking on the subject of parks would you join me in congratulating the Mayor, Councillor Coleman and others for the magnificent planting ceremony that took place yesterday in Sunnyhill Park which was a real delight and in which many of Barnet's schoolchildren participated?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Of course I am happy to do that.

Question No. 17

Councillor Susette Palmer

In view of the leaflet sent to all Councillors by Rt Hon Alan Johnson and the Green Paper, "Care Matters" what steps and training is the Administration taking to enable all Barnet Councillors to fully realise and fulfil our role and responsibilities as Corporate parents.

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

A training session for all members is being arranged and the role and responsibilities of councillors as corporate parents will be on the agenda of the next corporate parenting group.

Question No. 18

Councillor Geof Cooke

What percentage of completed appraisals of council employees has been achieved in each of the last four years, and which are the lowest performing services in this regard?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

We do not have records to show the number of staff receiving appraisals for 2003 and 2004.

The last two annual Barnet Council Staff Surveys show that in 2006 48% of staff received formal annual appraisals. It should be noted that 10% of all staff had worked at the Council for less than 12 months or were temporary staff for whom annual appraisals were not required. In 2005, 51% of staff received formal appraisals, with 8% of staff working at LBB for less than 12 months or as temporary staff.

SAP is the tool now used to monitor staff appraisals, and results recorded so far show that in 2005 49% of staff did not receive appraisals in Borough Treasurer's and Internal Audit. This was the highest recorded number of staff not receiving appraisals for that year, but it should be borne in mind that in the absence of formal appraisals there would still have been regular team and 1-1 meetings with managers.

Data for 2006 shows that Environmental Services have the highest number of staff awaiting appraisal at 54%.

Where some of the figures appear low this is not necessarily indicative of a failure by services to undertake appraisals. The figures show only the number of appraisals undertaken and then recorded on SAP, and in reality, more may have been undertaken but not yet recorded. As services begin to use SAP more consistently we will be able to establish a much clearer picture of how each service is performing in offering feedback to staff via formal appraisals.

Supplementary Question No. 18

Councillor Geof Cooke

The staff appraisal process should include an element of staff development and I'm concerned that the low level of carrying out staff appraisals and of recording them suggests a low level of commitment to the process both on the part of Council Managers and the administration. Is that not the case?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

No it's not.

Question No. 19

Councillor Brian Gordon

Was it not rather churlish of the Labour Party to refuse to attend the opening of the new London Academy in Edgware just because the Leader of the Conservative Party was invited?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Yes, but sadly churlishness is what we have come to expect from the Labour Party.

Supplementary Question No. 19

Councillor Brian Gordon

If a Senior Labour politician had been invited to this particular event at the London Academy would Conservatives have chosen to boycott it? Thus choosing to put petty party politics before the interests of the education of our children?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Well indeed, Madam Mayor, I and some of my concerted colleagues did attend the re-opening of Compton when the Secretary of State for Education, Alan Johnson, made a spectacular appearance. A very brief, but spectacular none the less. So yes, we do not get involved in petty party politics, this doesn't quite trip off the tongue Councillor, when we have ministers of the Government visiting us and in fact it is disappointing that Mr Dismore chose to absent himself from the opening of a fine school because, of course, the Academies were simply technology policies rebranded by this Government, but it was our policy to start with and it was a bit disappointing he didn't recognise that.

Question No. 20

Councillor Linda McFadyen

If the Cabinet Member would update Council on progress with establishing the Burnt Oak Alcohol Free Zone, which is supported by Burnt Oak's Councillors and the Burnt Oak Safer Neighbourhood Police Team?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

I fully support the introduction of an alcohol free zone in Burnt Oak but until the Police assure me they have the resources to Police it I will not proceed. Indeed at the moment the Police are unable to properly police the existing Alcohol Free zones in the Borough, as Councillors representing Finchley wards will know. This Administration does not believe in empty gestures.

Supplementary Question No. 20

Councillor Linda McFadyen

Thank you, Madam Mayor. Yes, I'm disappointed to see that I have got the same answer to my question as I had before and I note the Councillor's reference to empty gestures but I have been

assured by the local police that they have given him personally their commitment to police this alcohol free zone. Is he telling me that this isn't the case?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Yes, Madam Mayor.

Question No. 21

Councillor Brian Gordon

As much as we would, of course, urge all people to keep within the law, what's your view on the Barnet residents who are refusing to pay the part of the council tax attributable to the 2012 Olympics, on the basis that London council tax payers are not getting value for money?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Council Tax is not a hypothecated tax and therefore we can not pick and choose which bits we like and don't like. I share the sentiment that the Olympics will benefit the nation and should be paid for by the nation.

Supplementary Question No. 21

Councillor Brian Gordon

Leader, the Olympics may benefit the nation as a whole, although perhaps that is somewhat questionable, but how are they to benefit the tax payers of Barnet, and indeed several other London Boroughs, who seem to be paying a great deal to boost red Ken in his ego campaign, which is very much connected with the Olympics, and seem to be getting very little in return?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Well indeed, Councillor, and of course I think the vast cost that this borough will be paying towards the Olympics, which is a national event, we will simply get several hundred metres of cycle lane in return. And of course what the Government couldn't do to relieve the burden on Londoners is to simply refund the VAT which they seem to be determined to charge the Olympic project.

Question No. 22

Councillor Kath McGuirk

If the Cabinet Member could set out the criteria to judge which council car parks should be eligible for lower car parking charges under the new flexible car parking charges policy?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

There is no set criteria in relation to determining whether a Council car park could be eligible for a lower tariff but the key feature is flexibility which will enable tariffs to be set to reflect local circumstances. I thought the Labour Group would have welcomed such a proposal – but recent comments in the press indicate that it does not appear so?

Supplementary Question No. 22

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Yes, thank you, Madam Mayor. I was a bit concerned about comments earlier this evening that staff cuts seem to have led to the Leader of Council actually having to clean the streets of Barnet, maybe if you put him on the A406. I will not, though, thank Councillor Offord for his answers, he seems to make a habit of being purposely obtuse. What I will ask him is will he agree that it was a mistake to introduce the car parking charges at their original level in the car park in East Barnet Road?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

No, I would not.

Question No. 23**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What do you think about the revelation that there has been a burgeoning of new traffic lights under Mayor Livingstone's administration, and how in particular is this affecting Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I think it is a retrograde step, if all local authorities are intending to improve congestion, a key objective of the Traffic Management Act.

Barnet has 127 signal installations (2.7% of London's signals):

50 Junctions

61 Pelican crossings

10 Dual Pelican crossings

4 Puffin crossings

2 Toucan crossings.

In the past two years, the Council has relocated three pelican crossings; 2 on Watling Avenue and 1 on Mill Hill Broadway and installed 1 new dual pelican on Spur Road.

There has been new equipment installed by TfL (like for like) at the Quadrant, Edgware Road / Capitol Way.

There have been changes at the signals at High Road / Totteridge Lane / Oakleigh Road North junction (modification with additional pedestrian facilities) and A1000 High Barnet (o/s Police Station) to stagger the crossing.

Supplementary Question No. 23**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Thank you. A difficult question, Councillor Offord. Thank you for your facts and figures regarding Barnet's traffic controls. Would you not agree with me, well you might not, that the most effective red light of all will be one directed at the Mayor of London to curb his powers of spending, traffic mismanagement and flirtation with terrorists and world dictators all at the expense of London's tax payers?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Yes.

Question No. 24**Councillor Gill Sargeant**

Given that rendered surfaces are now often being used in redevelopments rather than brick surfaces, what research has the Council and/or its partners undertaken to see whether it is easier for graffiti vandals to deface rendered surfaces rather than brick surfaces, and whether it is easier to clean rendered surfaces or brick surfaces?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Operational experience provides the Council with considerable information and knowledge on the best process for graffiti removal subject to surface type. Graffiti offenders do not however distinguish between surfaces and a white painted surface of any type is always a temptation for them. Painted and rendered surfaces can be re-painted. Unpainted rendered surfaces can be a problem to clean as the jetting equipment is more likely to damage this sort of surface as a result of flaking render material. Encouragement should be provided where possible and practical for a suitable top coat on new developments and/or when resurfacing gable ends / walls etc which are subject to repeat graffiti.

Supplementary Question No. 24**Councillor Gill Sargeant**

My question is number 24 and my question is a serious one because it is an issue which I think I would like the details of what encouragement you have implied about graffiti that encouragement should be provided where possible and practical for a suitable top coat on new developments and when resurfacing and which are subject to repeat graffiti. I would like to know the details of what suitable top coats have been suggested for new developments and I would like a list of them because, as we know, it's all very well encouraging but I would like to have the details because we have many new developments and I think graffiti is very likely to be on these new developments which have got white and rendered surfaces rather than the traditional brick surfaces that we have at the moment.

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Madam Mayor, while I would not usually go into such operational detail such as the types of paints that could be used to prevent graffiti, I will ask the head of service to write to the member, but I would also urge her to look at the recent graffiti policy that went before the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Question No. 25**Councillor Richard Weider**

How many pieces of equipment and what percentage of council owned electronic road side furniture and street lighting is fuelled by renewable energy?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

100% of all electrical roadside equipment is provided with Climate Change Levy exempt energy. The new electricity supply contract is part of the Street Lighting PFI and covers all illuminated street furniture for a period of three years.

Supplementary Question No. 25**Councillor Richard Weider**

Thank you, Madam Mayor. As there are four types of climate change exempt levy energies could you tell me what percentage of renewable energies you currently use for street lighting and, if it's not currently 100%, what measures are the Council doing to increase this level?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I can confirm that it is 100%.

Question No. 26**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Will the Council consider erecting a blue plaque to former borough resident, the late Reverend Henry Hawkins, who was the vicar for the Colney Hatch Asylum and established the Mental After Care Association charity, which was the forerunner of modern social services?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

No.

Supplementary Question No. 26**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

I do wish Councillor Coleman would stop sitting on the fence. Here we go then. This, the blue plaque, is about remembering and respecting our past. This is about civic pride. Civic pride at a cost probably less than Councillor Coleman's weekly taxi bill. Will he reconsider this?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Madam Mayor, sadly the gentleman concerned is even less well known in this Borough than Councillor Rawlings. The answer remains no.

Question No. 27**Councillor Richard Weider**

What is the Council doing to make it easier for residents of Barnet to be able to buy their first home in the Borough?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Meeting people's aspirations to own their own home is a key element of the new Housing Strategy which will be put to Cabinet in November. There will be a range of exciting new schemes to assist our residents onto the housing ladder.

Supplementary Question No. 27**Councillor Richard Weider**

Thank you, Madam Mayor. I should declare an interest in this as I am currently looking for my first home. Does the Cabinet Member agree with me that there is no easy way to solve the difficult problems for first time buyers looking for houses in Barnet but, when you consider the Cabinet review, there should be ways to help all sectors of the community to buy first houses and it shouldn't be only limited to small niche groups in society who get aided with affordable housing?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Yes, we're working with developers and looking at various ways for low cost ownership and it won't be limited to anybody, it will be for the residents, particularly in Barnet, because they should be on the housing register. 49 were completed already and I'm really pleased to see that all the Beaufort house low cost flats have been sold already. We've got another 50 due to be ready in 6 months, a further 500 over the next two to three years and a thousand more within five years. It's proving to be very, very popular and it's enabling our young residents to get on the housing ladder.

Question No. 28**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

What opportunities are available for Barnet's black organisations and/or charities for funding towards the celebration of Black History Month 2007, and how is the Council engaging with communities to make this information and advice available?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

I agree with the Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality Mr Trevor Phillips OBE that as a Community we should concentrate on integration and any resources that are available should be spent promoting Community integration.

Supplementary Question No. 28**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

Thanks very much, Madam Mayor, and thanks very much to Councillor Brian Coleman for answering my question. I can look across and I can see the ethnic minority from alpha to omega across there. I think that my question has not been answered appropriately. I would like this Council to take a lead in diversity especially to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Freer. Us in the community in Barnet I think that the Council should work with their ambassadors and should have plans into looking into issues which will help to alleviate and promote equalities and diversity in this borough of Barnet.

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Madam Mayor, Councillor O-Macauley, as an example of the diversity that we have in this borough you only, Madam Mayor, have to look around this chamber to see what a diverse borough we are. I sometimes think the Council isn't diverse enough. We don't necessarily have enough members of black and minority ethnic communities serving our Council. As an administration we will relate and engage with all communities in this borough on a fair and equal

basis and members on all sides of this Council have a good record in doing that. We can all work harder at engaging with the communities that are making up this borough, we have to remember, Madam Mayor, that communities change. I had a meeting with the president of the National Federation of Poles in the United Kingdom, the Polish community is the fastest growing community in London at the moment. So times change, agendas change, agendas move on into community cohesion and community integration, on which all administrations in this borough have a good record, is the name of the game, all of us are working hard to promote that.

Question No. 29

Councillor Daniel Thomas

Please could the Leader of the Council outline how well, according to the latest CPA, this authority is performing, how much it has improved (particularly since the 1998 inspection), and its prospects for the future?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Barnet is one of only two local authorities nationally to have its CPA categorisation raised as a result of a Corporate Assessment score. Barnet's CPA categorisation has risen from 2 stars to 3 stars.

Barnet Council's Corporate Assessment outcome is in the top four when reviewing CPA Harder Test 2006 outcomes nationally.

Only Barnet, Newham and Manchester received overall scores of 3 as well as a maximum Ambition score of 4. Rotherham also received an overall 3 and a score of 4 under Performance Management.

No other councils nationally have received a score of 4 in any category.

Further analysis of the direction of travel made against the previous Corporate Assessment in 2002 shows that only Barnet and Rotherham have continued improving.

Newham remained the same and Manchester, while retaining the overall score of 3, actually moved backwards on both Performance Management and Achievement.

In the areas of Performance Management and Capacity we can see where the Harder Test is having implications nationally. Only five authorities have scored a 3 in Performance Management while neither Barnet, Manchester or Newham, three of the top performers nationally, scored more than a 2 in Performance Management. Clearly there is an anomaly in the method of analysis that needs to be addressed as a matter of some urgency by the Audit Commission and we have made our views explicit in this regard.

Notwithstanding our views on the analysis of Performance Management and Capacity, the move to an overall 3 is a great result for the authority and reflects the hard work and commitment of staff and members since the last assessment in 2002.

Barnet is well placed to move to an overall CPA categorisation of 4 in the near future based on a track record of good service delivery.

Question No. 30

Councillor Ansuya Sodha

What is the increase in the number of childcare places provided at the new Lakeview nursery?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

The former Lakeview Children and Family Centre provided 26 childcare places for children in need aged 2-5 years. The new Parkfield Children's Centre offers 49 childcare places so an additional 23 places have been developed. Some of these new places will be available to fee paying parents who are working or studying, with 20% funded for children in need. In addition, The Hyde Children's Centre, also in West Hendon, will offer a further 50 places, when it opens in 2008.

Question No. 31**Councillor Hugh Rayner**

Please could the Cabinet member for Learning Infrastructure outline the improvements that will be made to Fairway and Northway Schools, in my ward, over the next few years, and why they are so desperately needed?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

This proposal will enable us to replace three building which are reaching the end of their life. Both Fairway Primary and Northway Special School have a large maintenance backlog which neither could fund. The children's centre is on 3 floors which is not ideal. Fairway Primary suffers from excessive heat in summer and some of its classrooms are below the recommended minimum size. The new school will be fit for purpose for the 21st century and will help the Council fulfil its commitment of a first class education service.

Question No. 32**Councillor Julie Johnson**

When is the Welsh Harp Youth Sailing Base due to be rebuilt, and once rebuilt how it is to be funded?

Answer by Councillor Anthony Finn

The rebuilding for the Welsh Harp Sailing Base is currently proposed for the second half of Phase 1 of the West Hendon Programme. It is required by the draft Section 106 Agreement to be completed before we complete 30 residential units. If we assume the planned start on site for Phase 1 is in the first quarter of 2008 then the earliest the WHSB could be completed would be towards the start of 2010.

Under the Section 106 for West Hendon, our partners Barratts Metropolitan, Barratts Homes and Metropolitan Housing are obligated to provide financial contributions for improving the area's infrastructure, and existing/future provision. This figure is currently anticipated to be £834,000.00 but is dependent on the confirmation of the West Hendon CPO.

Question No. 33**Councillor Richard Weider**

Would the Leader please clarify the Administration's stance on the Governments proposal to require faith schools to take 25% of their intake from other faiths or from those of no faith.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I welcome the Government's U-turn on the proposal to require new faith schools to take 25% of their intake from other and non-faith communities. This Borough has an exemplary mix of faith and non faith schools and this Administration does not support any proposals that undermine the very ethos of faith schools.

Question No. 34**Councillor Gill Sargeant**

Graffiti vandals regularly target the newsagent's property on Sheaveshill Avenue in Colindale, and other Members will be aware of similar problems relating to private property in their wards. What is the council doing to remove graffiti on private properties where residents and small business are the victims of repeat attacks?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The shops including the newsagent's property in Sheaveshill Avenue fall within the Colindale Town Centre Zone where graffiti is removed and recorded by our graffiti team. High levels of graffiti have been recorded in Colindale and the Council is working with the police to identify the culprits.

A surveillance operation earlier in the year targeted Colindale Town Centre and intelligence led to an arrest warrant being served by the police on a person suspected of using the "REAVER" tag. Further information has been received recently and in the last fortnight the Council's graffiti officer wrote a statement for the police regarding another Colindale graffiti offender. This offender has been responsible for a large amount of damage to council (particularly Rushgrove Park) and private property. Police applied for a warrant for this offender on 25 October 2006.

There is CCTV in the town centres to the North (Burnt Oak) and the South (West Hendon). Street Enforcement Officers respond to all graffiti CCU dockets regarding graffiti within Colindale, where quotes for removal/graffiti kits are offered in line with council policy. This demonstrates that the council can be seen to be taking positive action on graffiti and working successfully with partners and the police.

Question No. 35**Councillor Marina Yannakoudakis**

Please could the Cabinet Member outline what proportion on the money spent on refurbishing the Compton School came from the Government, and the proportion from the Council?

Answer by Councillor John Marshall

Very little of the cost was met by grant from Central Government. Grants from the DfES accounted for £413,270, less than 10% of the capital cost. I was therefore surprised by claims to the contrary by certain members of this authority.

Question No. 36**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Which Cabinet Member attended the Conservative majority ALG/London Councils Grants Committee that rejected 25 possible grants priorities presented?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I attended the Leaders' committee that agreed the priorities.

Question No. 37**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Given that there is a primary school and a new nursery school on Park Road NW4, what is the Council going to do about actually improving road safety on Park Road now that the road safety measures have been removed?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The Council has recently invested in resurfacing Park Road NW4 and two humps were removed as part of these works. Consultation is currently being undertaken with local residents, ward councillors and the emergency services on whether the measures should be reinstated on this road as part of the Traffic Management Review.

These measures were not directly outside the school. However, there is a mini-roundabout between the removed measures and the school which should aid in slowing down drivers who travel along this road. The Council has also in the past year carried out some localised widening of the two pedestrian refuge islands directly outside the school to help pedestrians and to slow vehicles through this section of road.

Additionally, the Council has also introduced a School Crossing Patrol Officer and additional waiting restrictions at the junction of Park Road and Audley Road to assist children to cross the road. Furthermore, the WH3 and HC1 Controlled Parking Zones in this part of West Hendon are being extended into Park Road NW4 and will come into effect on 30th October 2006. As part of the scheme residents parking and yellow lines have already been painted on the highway, with the net result of alleviating some of the obstructive parking which has occurred in Park Road over the years. This should also have a safety benefit.

Officers from the Council are working with the school on their School Travel Plan which is also a planning requirement for the new Sure Start Centre which will help to develop any further measures that may be identified by the school that will help them reduce the number of unnecessary car journeys to school and increase walking.

As a recent school governor of Parkfield, I am well aware of the traffic conditions in the local vicinity and have taken a close interest in measures to improve road safety.

Question No. 38

Councillor Julie Johnson

On what date was the promised meeting held between Barnet Council and Brent Council officers and respective police teams to discuss addressing the problems of the Welsh Harp (if the meeting has not yet been held on what date is it to happen) and what are the resulting arrangements for increased security on the Welsh Harp / Brent Reservoir?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Operational officers from Brent, Barnet and the West Hendon Safer Neighbourhoods Team met on the 3 October to discuss the Welsh Harp and the implementation of the new (still to be adopted) byelaws.

At this time I am not content with the measures proposed and further discussions will take place on the 8-9 November with the Police, Brent and Barnet Council at a senior level to consider future options for implementation of the byelaws.

Question No. 39

Councillor Barry Rawlings

What budget does the Council have for the provision of blue plaques in the borough?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

Zero.

Question No. 40**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

How many blue plaques has the Council paid for and erected in the following financial years: 2002/3, 2003/4, 2004/5, 2005/6 and so far in 2006/7?

Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman

A plaque was erected in 1988, three during the 1990s and one in 2005.

Question No. 41**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

How many children coming into Barnet care for the first time do not have a Child Trust Fund compared to the total number of children coming into Barnet care for the first time, and is the Council ensuring that HMRC is informed so that the children are eligible for their £500 Child Trust Fund on entering care and the further £500 for which they are eligible when they reach the age of seven?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Since May 2005 the Council has been submitting a monthly return to HM Revenue and Customs. The form lists all children who became newly looked after over the preceding month who were born on or after 01.09.2002. HM Revenue and Customs check that all the children whose names have been submitted have a Trust Fund Account. If they do not then an account is set up which is managed by the Official Solicitor until the child leaves care or turns 16. The account cannot be accessed until the child is 18. Since the Trust Fund system is linked with the Child Benefit system it would be unusual if the child did not already have an account at the point of becoming looked after, unless they are very young babies. Since the system was established the council has notified HM Customs and Revenue of 70 children. A Trust Fund Account has been set up for approximately 50% of these children, usually because they have been looked after almost from birth.

Question No. 42**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

By signing 'The No Bin Bags Charter' (established in 2003 by 'A National Voice', an organisation run for and by young people who are or have been in care) the Council has pledged that Barnet's looked after children and care leavers are not provided with black bin bags to move their possessions between care placements or when leaving care – except in an emergency - and that instead the child will be provided with suitable luggage or a suitcase. How does the Council ensure looked after children are provided with suitable luggage; how does the Council monitor the implementation of the charter in Barnet; and how many looked after children moved their possessions in bin bags during 2005/6?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

All social workers, foster carers, residential workers and placement officers (who deal with external agencies) are aware that children should not move their personal possessions in bin bags. This expectation is implemented in various ways. Residential units will always have a supply of suit cases/sports bags and some of the social work teams also hold a central supply of bags that are given to young people as needed. It is preferable, however, that children choose and own their bags and this is the position that is promoted.

It is not possible to monitor every placement change however workers are periodically reminded of the position. Where young people are moving, for example, from semi independence into full independence and they have belongings accumulated over time, they will sometimes use bin bags and cardboard boxes to move some of their belongings. This position is accepted by *A National Voice*.

Question No. 43**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

What are the major issues the Council will be raising (aside from the usual request for additional finance) in its consultation response to the Government's Green Paper 'Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care', and how will the Cabinet Member, Education and Children Scrutiny Committee, care leavers and other interested parties be involved in drawing up the consultation response?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

As the consultation period for the Green paper does not end until January it is premature to outline the details of the Council's response. If the members of the Education and Children's Scrutiny Committee or the care leavers group wish to respond to the Green Paper then I am sure they will do so.

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Council: 19 December 2006

Administration Policy Item: Cllr. Mike Freer

Budget 2007/08

Council notes the components of the budget 2007/08.

Council further notes the Budget will be set after careful consideration.

Council believes this authority has been continually under-funded by Government, yet again receiving a Formula Grant increase lower than the London and England averages, and the lowest in the country.

Council is, however, proud that despite this shortfall, the Administration has brought both the Budget, and the levels of Council Tax in Barnet under control in the last 4 years.

Council calls on Cabinet to work to produce the Budget for 2007/08 within the constraints imposed by Government.

Opposition Policy Item

Supporting Solar Systems

Corporate priorities and policy considerations

This policy item is consistent with Corporate Plan (2006/07 – 2009/10) key priorities *Clean, Green & Safe* and *A Successful Suburb* and, with the Corporate Plan's emphasis on supporting an active community. It is also consistent with the obligation now placed on local authorities to provide leadership and to enable change.

Recommendations

1. That the Cabinet **considers** an amendment to the Corporate Plan to include an additional service objective under the key priority *Clean, Green & Safe* of "*encouraging the community to take positive steps to improve the energy efficiency of their homes – including through the installation of the new generation of solar energy systems.*" Further, that the Cabinet **considers** an amendment to the Corporate Plan to change key priority *A Successful Suburb* (service outcome 35) to insert the words "*energy efficient*" between the words "*high quality*" and "*sustainable*".
2. That the Cabinet **considers** investigating the feasibility of community-run local cooperatives and/or a single Barnet-wide co-operative for the production of solar energy, and, if feasible, establishing of a pilot project
3. Depending upon the outcome of (2), the Cabinet **considers** promoting the establishment of local cooperatives and/or a single Barnet-wide cooperative through *Barnet First* and the Barnet Council website
4. Depending upon the outcome of (2), the Cabinet **considers** the desirability, practicality and legality of contributing some of its roof space to the cooperative for the installation of its equipment

Risk management issues

The risks of the adoption of this policy item will be identified during the feasibility study and pilot exercise. The only risk worth considering at this stage would be the failure to recognise an opportunity and adopt an innovative scheme which would both utilise one of the Borough's chief strengths – its active community - and confirm Barnet Council's role as a leading local authority.

Legal issues

The legal issues arising out of the adoption of this policy item will be identified during the feasibility study and pilot exercise.

Financial, staffing and property implications

The role of the Council in respect of the adoption of this policy is to provide leadership and enable change. In the Corporate Plan (2006/07 – 2009/10) it states that "*...the Council is committed to promoting civic pride, supporting an active community...*" It is not the intention of

this opposition policy item to commit large sums of public money or resources to its delivery. It is consistent with the following statement from the Corporate Plan

“Barnet’s residents have always taken an active interest in civic affairs. A recent Citizen’s Panel survey showed that 26% of Barnet’s residents volunteer, and 79% have given up their time in the last year to help someone else... The Council have a pivotal role in encouraging and supporting such an active and involved community by listening to residents and working with them to build civic pride.”

Some staff resource will be required to undertake the feasibility study and to establish the pilot. Promotion of the scheme - if this policy item is adopted and found to be feasible - will be through existing facilities i.e. *Barnet First*, the Barnet Council website and through the press office.

The use of Council property for the installation of solar equipment (subject to the necessary approvals) is intended to utilise space that is currently of little use or value and will be at the cooperative’s expense.

Background Information

This Opposition Policy Item and its recommendations have been framed in such a way that it fully recognises the Cabinet’s responsibility for deciding whether to undertake a more formal examination of this proposal. This item is intended to start the debate – it does not represent the final word. Members are asked to consider the points made.

The solar energy Britain has the potential to use each year is 750 times greater than our national energy consumption, yet there are currently on 20,000 homes in the UK with such panels or photovoltaic tiles (similar, but more expensive) to help provide hot water for bathing and central heating.

Great Britain is a long way behind many countries: in Germany for example 140,000 homes have solar panels and there are 400,000 in Japan. Spain has issued national guidelines insisting that the number of solar-assisted (a more accurate term than solar-powered) homes increases tenfold by 2010.

Almost any property can be fitted with a solar-assisted water heating system: all that is required is for the house to have an area of roof that is roughly south facing, for maximum exposure to daylight. The solar panels or photovoltaic tiles absorb the sun’s energy and convert it into heat, which joins the heat generated by a standard domestic boiler.

On overcast days the boiler must do most or all of the work, but on brighter days the solar system can provide all of the hot water needed for an average house.

The technology now needed is 90% cheaper than it was in the 1970s and houses with solar roof tiles can in fact generate more electricity than is needed at certain times in the day. This surplus energy can be sold back to local electricity companies making solar energy very cost effective.

As with most renewable energy systems, however, the initial costs make setting up these projects initially quite expensive. Notwithstanding the fact that the savings on electricity bills in the long-term should make up for the initial costs year on year, and the fact that the costs are falling, many householders are discouraged from installing solar systems. This is particularly

the case where limited roof space means that too great a proportion of the installation cost would be spent on labour rather than the equipment itself. In some cases, the roof space available precludes investment in solar energy altogether.

One innovative solution to this problem has been investigated and proposed by a Childs Hill resident.

At its simplest, a cooperative of households could be established covering a discrete area (a terrace of houses, a whole street etc.). The cooperative would pay for the equipment and share the labour costs. More ambitiously, however, a cooperative might be established Borough-wide. The co-operative would again pay for the equipment and install it (with the appropriate permissions) in locations where installation fees could be minimised and energy production maximised. The energy generated would be sold to the energy companies with some of the income shared by the investors of the co-operative and the rest set aside for depreciation and development. This would give every Barnet resident the opportunity of investing in and encouraging the development of a highly sustainable source of energy - including those residents who are keen to invest in a larger installation than their small roofs allow and those whose circumstances mean that they cannot afford their own PV installation at all. If the co-operative achieved charitable status, donations could be made to it from those who did not want to benefit directly – e.g. those who might wish to offset their own carbon usage. Such donations could attract gift aid, resulting in them being grossed up by taxation.

Barnet Council's contribution to the development of this idea would be as follows:

1. Amending the Corporate Plan to include "*energy efficiency*" amongst the service objectives
2. Investigating the feasibility of the community establishing local cooperatives and/or a single Barnet-wide co-operative for the production of solar energy, and, if feasible, encouraging the establishment of a pilot project
3. Depending upon the outcome of (2), promoting the establishment of local cooperatives and/or a single Barnet-wide cooperative through *Barnet First* and the Barnet Council website

There is a further way in which Barnet Council could promote the establishment of a solar energy cooperative. Should the outcome of the feasibility study and pilot prove positive, Barnet Council might consider offering a proportion of the roof space on its own buildings to the cooperative for the installation of its equipment as a "contribution".

In order to lead in this innovation without incurring sizeable expenditure, it is proposed that a feasibility study be undertaken to agree in principle to giving access to rooftops for large scale installation of PV panels. Barnet could thus set the way forward for installers in cooperation with the PV industry, to at their own cost, install, insure and maintain the equipment.. Perhaps Barnet could make roof space available on public buildings.

Also to investigate whether the Council could encourage/promote a pilot cooperative in Barnet. Council would be seen to be actively promoting renewable energy sources, as technology improves and traditional energy costs continue to rise.

By establishing a residents' co-operative if everyone in a street, an area, or a new development put up panels the proportion spent on the labour content would drastically reduce.

If a local co-operative were established, it could purchase PV panels and install them on the roofs of public or quasi-public buildings. The electricity would be sold directly to the grid, producing income to members of the co-operative.

Council Meeting
19 December 2006

REPORT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

AGENDA ITEM 13.1

- 1. Reports exempted from the call – in process because they are urgent:**
These matters are reported to the Council to meet Constitutional requirements. No action is required by the Council and the decisions have been implemented.

In the case listed below the Chairman of the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision proposed was reasonable in all the circumstances, was urgent and therefore has consented to the proposed decision being exempted from call – in:

In view of the imminence of the commencement of replacement pipeline works by Thames Water in Rushgrove Park as part of the Colindeep Flood Alleviation Scheme, and to avoid any adverse effects on local residents if the necessary works compound was not available in time for the start of the works, the Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee agreed to note the response to the consultation carried out under Section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding the grant of a licence to Thames Water to erect a temporary site compound on public open space in Rushgrove Park and to use the main entrance for access for construction traffic.

Janet Rawlings
Democratic Services Manager