

Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET held at Hendon Town Hall, NW4 4BG on Tuesday, 14 July 2009.

PRESENT:

*The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Brian Coleman)

*The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Hugh Rayner)

Councillors:

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

*denotes Member present

24. PRAYER (Agenda Item 1.1):

The Mayor's Chaplain offered prayer.

25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1.2):

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Anita Campbell, Jack Cohen, Lynne Hillan, Linda McFadyen, Andrew McNeil and Marina Yannakoudakis.

26. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2009 (Agenda Item 1.3):
RESOLVED –That subject to the corrections to minutes 12 namely that the September 2009 meeting is to be on the 8th and not the 9th and the May 2010 Annual meeting is to be on the 17th and not the 19th, the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2009 be approved as a correct record.

27. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 1.4):

The Worshipful the Mayor welcomed the newly elected Members Councillors Darrel Yawitch and Alison Cornelius. He congratulated Councillor Marina Yannakoudakis on her election to the European Parliament and Mary Honeyball, a former Barnet Councillor, on her re-election to the European Parliament. Further congratulations were given to Councillor Maureen Braun's son, who recently became engaged and to the Chief Executive, Nick Walkley on the birth of his baby daughter Erica. Special mention was given to the new Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow, a former student of Frith Manor School, a London Borough of Barnet School.

The Worshipful the Mayor expressed his sorrow in announcing the death of former Councillor Peter Anthony (known as "Tony") Grosz. Mr. Grosz represented Hendon Ward between 1986 and 1990. A minute's silence was held for a departed friend and colleague.

The Worshipful the Mayor, on a lighter note, announced the success of the Borough's young athletes in the London Youth Games 2009 Finals that took place on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 July 2009. The squad, who were represented at the meeting, came 14th out of the all 33 London Boroughs. The Council joined the Worshipful the Mayor in congratulating all the participants on their achievements.

28. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (Agenda Item 1.5)

The following personal and non-prejudicial interests were declared relating to Agenda Item 3.5 - Motion in the name of Councillor Cornelius – Sheltered Housing, with the Members concerned participating in the discussion and vote.

- Councillors Monroe Palmer and Ross Houston as they are Council nominated Directors of Barnet Homes.
- Councillor Gill Sargeant as she works for Age Concern.

The following personal and prejudicial interests were declared relating Agenda Item 5.2.1 Report of the Ad Hoc Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the Members concerned leaving the chamber and not taking part in the discussions and vote.

- Councillors Kate and Brian Salinger as their son-in-law is one of the Officers named in the report.

29. OUTCOME OF BY-ELECTIONS: EDGWARE WARD AND TOTTERIDGE WARD (Report of the Chief Executive Agenda Item 1.6)

The Council was formally notified that Darrel Yawitch was elected as a Councillor for Edgware Ward and Alison Cornelius as a Councillor for Totteridge Ward.

30. BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING (Item 1.7)

None

31. QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS (Agenda Item 2.1):

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.

32. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

Councillor Joan Scannell, duly seconded, moved under Council Procedure Rule, Section 1, paragraph 10.2.2, that the order of business relating to Agenda Item 3 be varied so that Motions 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 be heard first.

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

RESOLVED – That the order of business be varied to allow Motions 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 to be debated and voted upon in advance of votes being taken on the other Motions on the Agenda.

33. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MONROE PALMER AS AMENDED BY COUNCILLOR MATTHEW OFFORD (Agenda Item 3.2)

Motion 3.2 in the name of Councillor Monroe Palmer was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Matthew Offord was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Matthew Offord was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion as amended was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council believes a Borough-wide ban on consuming alcohol would be an illiberal measure.

Council believes that resources should be focussed on areas with the greatest need, rather than enforcing a blanket ban. Council notes that the police currently do not support a blanket ban.

Council believes that to make the entire Borough a ‘no street drinking alcohol zone’ would unfairly prohibit law-abiding residents from enjoying events such as street parties and picnics.

Council requests that Cabinet continues to take guidance from the police regarding the designation of alcohol free zones.

34. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR FIONA BULMER (Agenda Item 3.3)

Motion 3.3 in the name of Councillor Fiona Bulmer was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton was moved. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Ann Hutton was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council notes that our faith schools sadly remain vulnerable to attacks motivated by racial hatred. Council believes that our Borough’s schools are particularly at risk from anti-Semitic attacks.

Council believes that it is unfair that parents have been forced to pay for private security in order to protect faith schools. Council believes that the delegated schools budget should be increased to cover the costs of securing the safety of the Borough’s faith schools.

Council calls upon the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State to request an increase in the delegated schools budget to meet the cost of securing the Borough’s faith schools.

35. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR ROBERT RAMS (Agenda Items 3.4)

Motion 3.4 in the name of Councillor Robert Rams was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Charlie O-Macauley was moved. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Charlie O-Macauley was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council welcomes the complete redevelopment of Burnt Oak Library which has expanded the services available on the site and enabled the Library to become a community hub. In addition to being a lending and reference library the site now has a customer service centre, allowing residents to speak to experienced staff and seek help from the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Council notes that the new additional services at Burnt Oak Library allows residents in this economically deprived area access to council services without the inconvenience of travelling to Barnet House.

Council believes that the refurbished Library represents the new and better way that public sector bodies are able to work together in order to provide better services to residents at reduced cost.

Council requests that Cabinet examine the success of Burnt Oak Library to assess what lessons can be extrapolated for use across council services.

36. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR GEOF COOKE AS AMENDED BY COUNCILLOR MIKE FREER (Agenda Item 3.1)

Motion 3.1 in the name of Councillor Geof Cooke was moved. Amendments in the name of Councillors Mike Freer and Alison Moore were moved. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Mike Freer was declared carried and the amendment in the name of Councillor Alison Moore declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion as amended was declared carried.

RESOLVED – Council notes the damage that has been caused to the political system by the parliamentary expenses saga in this country.

Council believes that creating an unelected, unregulated committee to decide on remuneration would be a retrospective step. Council believes that the setting of allowances in an open, democratic meeting which requires each councillor to make their own opinions clear is the most transparent system.

Council notes that the DCLG commissioned December 2007 report by the Labour-dominated Councillors Commission supported significant rises in allowances, severance pay for those that lose elections and state funding for local political parties.

Council notes that the level of councillor allowances are recommended by an independent review panel which considers the role, duties and responsibilities of members.

37. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR RICHARD CORNELIUS (Agenda Item 3.5)

Motion 3.5 in the name of Councillor Richard Cornelius was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton was moved.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Anne Hutton was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council notes that Cabinet has agreed to reform the allocation of assistance to vulnerable older people following an extensive consultation and review of the previous outmoded system.

Council notes that allocation of the service will in future be based on need, as opposed to tenure, expanding assistance to a greater number of older people in

the Borough, targeting resources at service users and clearly defining the roles of those involved in providing care to our older residents.

Council notes that a similar shift away from tenure to need has been made by local authorities across England and has been supported by the Essential Role of Sheltered Housing (ERoSH) charity.

Council requests Cabinet to ensure that the new policy is introduced compassionately and that residents are regularly kept informed.

38. **MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR RICHARD CORNELIUS (Agenda Item 3.6)**
Motion 3.5 in the name of Councillor Richard Cornelius was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Ross Houston was moved.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Ross Houston was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive motion was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council welcomes the announcement by the Minister of Housing that the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system is to be dismantled and replaced by a devolved system of responsibility and function.

Council congratulates the Minister for listening to the demands of Barnet and other London Boroughs.

Council requests Cabinet consider the reformed system when assessing the Housing Strategy Review.

Council calls on the Chief Executive to write to the Minister of Housing urging him to implement a fully self-financing locally devolved system in the shortest possible timetable.

39. **ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING.**

In accordance with the Agenda, the Mayor adjourned the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 9.00pm.

40. **ADMINISTRATION POLICY ITEM: TACKLING YOUTH AND LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT IN BARNET (Agenda Item 4.1)**

Councillor Matthew Offord proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the name of Councillors Alan Schneiderman and Wayne Casey were moved. Debate ensued on the Policy Item.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendments in the names of Councillors Alan Schneiderman and Wayne Casey were declared lost. Upon being put to the vote the substantive policy item was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council notes that the number of residents claiming unemployment benefit in Barnet has risen by 81% from May 2008 to May 2009. In the same period the number of claimants under 24 has risen 52%. This is the highest level of unemployment claimants the London Borough of Barnet has had since 1997.

Council believes that long-term and youth unemployment damages the social fabric of our Borough and that all public sector bodies have a duty to work towards eradicating it.

Accordingly, Council requests Cabinet:

- 1) **Work closely with the Connexions service to ensure they are focused on getting young people back into work**

- 2) **Ensure that the Borough's population is aware of the Mayor of London's scheme which enables those in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) or the new Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) half-price bus travel in London**
- 3) **Explore ways of seeking the assistance of voluntary and third sector in order to form a partnership tackling youth and long-term unemployment**

41. OPPOSITION POLICY ITEM: REVIEW OF 'THE LONDON PLAN' AS AMENDED BY COUNCILLOR MELVIN COHEN (Agenda Item 4.2)

Councillor Jim Tierney proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the names of Councillors Ross Houston and Melvin Cohen were moved. Debate ensued on the Policy Item.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Ross Houston was declared lost.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive policy item as amended was declared carried.

RESOLVED – The Mayor of London is due to review the London Plan this year which will impact on important local issues such as housing, transport, environment, economic development, etc.

Council notes the new London Plan and that all councillors have an opportunity to comment upon it, as do residents and residents' groups. This opportunity was taken up by the administration who submitted a response on 30 June 2009.

Council further congratulates the Mayor of London on his planning initiatives to date.

Council notes that it has hitherto avoided instructing scrutiny committees of their work programme.

Council notes that councillors had an opportunity to put forward the issue of the London Plan for consideration of the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee but failed to do so.

42. REPORT OF CABINET (Agenda Item 5.1)

None.

43. REPORT FROM THE AD HOC OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 5.2.1)

Councillors Kate and Brian Salinger left the Chamber.

Councillor Andreas Tambourides proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Upon being put to the vote it was,

RESOLVED –

1. **That Council notes and accepts the report of the external reviewers relating to the adoption/application of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy, with particular regard to deposits placed in Icelandic Banks.**
2. **That Council requests the Cabinet Resources Committee to oversee the implementation of all necessary actions to address the issues of concern identified in the report.**

3. That Council instructs the Budget and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee to incorporate into its work programme the scrutiny of the implementation of those necessary actions.
4. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees/Sub-Committees must ensure that the work of Scrutiny is reflective of the Council priorities.
The six priority outcomes are –
 - A successful city suburb
 - Strong and healthy
 - Promoting independence
 - A bright future for children and young people
 - Clean, green and safe
 - More choice, better value
5. The following are also priority improvement objectives –
 - Converse with local people to increase their participation in democratic engagement
 - Improve Member satisfaction with the Scrutiny process

Councillors Kate and Brian Salinger returned to the Chamber.

44. REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 5.2.2)

Councillor Joan Scannell proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Upon being put to the vote it was,

RESOLVED – That the report of the Standards Committee be approved and adopted.

45. REPORTS EXEMPTED FROM THE CALL-IN PROCESS BECAUSE THEY ARE URGENT (Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.1 (1))

These matters are reported to the Council to meet Constitutional requirements. No action is required by the Council and the decision has been implemented.

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

- (i) The Council was awarded £6.512m to create a new ‘community hub’ in Brunswick Park, in partnership with the PCT. The Leader of the Council on 10 June 2009 gave authority to accept the grant and to make a contribution of £1m capital funding to the project. Call-in would have been prejudicial to achieving the deadline of 10 June 2009 for acceptance of the grant.

46. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.1 (2))

Councillor Joan Scannell moved the nominations in her name.

RESOLVED – The following changes to the Committee Membership were approved.
Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to be added as member of the Committee.

- Councillor Darrel Yawitch to be added as member of the Committee.
- Councillor Mukesh Depala to be added as a substitute member of the Committee

Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Councillor Darrel Yawitch to be added as a member of the Committee.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to be added as member of the Committee.

Planning and Environment Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to be added as member of the Committee.
- Councillor Christopher Harris to replace Councillor Daniel Thomas as a member of the Committee.
- Councillor Darrel Yawitch to be added as substitute member of the Committee.

Licensing Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to be added as member of the Committee.

Corporate Joint Negotiation and Consultation Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to be added as member of the Committee.

47. **CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION – (Supplemental Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.1 (5(i)) and (5(ii))**
RESOLVED –
 (i) Council approve the revised wording in Article 7.08 of the Constitution as shown on page 42 of the Supplemental Report of the Democratic Services Manager.
 (ii) Council amend the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution to update the terms of reference of the Budget & Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee as outlined in Appendix A attached on pages 49-50 of the Supplemental Report of The Democratic Services Manager.
48. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2009/2010**
(Supplemental Report of the Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.1 (6))
RESOLVED –
 (i) Council noted the highlights of the 2008/2009 Overview and Scrutiny work Programme attached on pages 51-53 of the Supplemental Report of the Democratic Services Manager.
 (ii) Council approved the proposed forward plan work programmes for 2009/2010 identified by the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees/Sub-Committees attached on pages 54-73 of the Supplemental Report of the Democratic Services Manager.
49. **REPORTS FROM THE MONITORING OFICER (Agenda Item 5.4)**
 None.

50. COMMENTS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE CABINET (Agenda Item 6.1)

Comment: Councillor Susette Palmer

I see there is a new LGA toolkit to help maximise benefits to alleviate child poverty. Will it affect us that we're leaving the LGA. If we're not using their tool kit, what are we doing?

Response: Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Far better than what the LGA are doing.

Comment: Councillor Anne Hutton

I wanted to comment on the criteria used for assessing a complex qualitative service, that is excellent, solely on the basis of cost and I refer to Kaya House.

Response: Councillor Richard Cornelius

Kaya House is a sad loss but when it started it was an institution that was out of time. There are very few admissions at weekends. It's not needed anymore.

Comment: Councillor Ross Houston

Can the Cabinet Member investigate the real possibility of taking up the new freedom to build Council Houses?

Response: Councillor Richard Cornelius

When the HRA was first explained to me, I couldn't believe it was so complicated and infantile and I think all of us can welcome its ending.

Comment: Councillor Brian Salinger

Amber Close is a small development for which we didn't give planning permission but the Planning Inspectorate did. It is unfortunate but we now have a situation where we have a housing development in this borough, which cannot get a refuse vehicle onto the site. Emergency vehicles can get in, the fire engines can get in but with difficulty. But we cannot get a refuse vehicle in. This is unsatisfactory and I would like to ask the appropriate Cabinet Member if he will launch an inquiry to make sure that no such development ever gets approved either by us or by the Planning Inspectorate so that we can give a proper service to all residents in this Borough.

Response: Councillor Andrew Harper

I don't think that I can make the kind of undertaking that Councillor Salinger has asked for. He's absolutely right, the development was allowed on appeal following a public inquiry. We're left with a no win situation, The residents of that close are getting a highly individual and personal waste service so they're not being completely overlooked. But I'm very happy to meet with Councillor Salinger and relevant officers perhaps from Planning and Environment and Transport to consider further ways forward.

Comment: Councillor Alison Moore

In light of the recent fire in the block of flats in Camberwell in which six people died, will the Cabinet Member tell me whether there are any similar blocks of flats in Barnet either in Council ownership or owned by Housing Associations or other organisations to which Barnet makes housing nominations. Would he also tell me whether fire safety inspections have been carried out for all Barnet owned and leased buildings, including those now managed by Barnet Homes and in addition, whether there are records of fire safety inspections for all other housing to which Barnet makes nominations, including temporary accommodation. Finally would he tell me whether there are any risks presented by the type of window frames used to replace windows in Barnet Council properties as part of the Decent Homes work"?

Response: Councillor Richard Cornelius

I can't possibly answer that but we are attending to all fire matters with new and renewed zeal. The Member will be written to.

Comment: Councillor Kath McGuirk

It is now time to engage young people rather than demonise them. So whilst I'm no aggregate of the Leader Listens, I think it's high time that this Council look to setting up the young persons Cabinet Question Time to hear their views on issues that affect them. Do you think that this is the way forward?

Response: Councillor Fiona Bulmer

We already have a very successful youth board.

51. QUESTION TO REPRESENTATIVE ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Agenda Item 6.2)

From Councillor Monroe Palmer

Can Cllr Cohen inform the meeting how many times he has visited Golders Hill Park between 1st January and 1st July, excluding arranged committee meetings to the Park?
Can Cllr Cohen inform the meeting how many Corporation of London lunches he has partaken in that period?"

Response Councillor Melvin Cohen

Twice.

None.

The meeting finished at 10.35pm

Council Questions to Cabinet Members
14 July 2009
Supplementary Questions and Responses

Question 1**Councillor Dean Cohen**

Can the Cabinet Member tell me if the refuse collection over Pesach was a success?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Yes, it was. The new improved Pesach collections that we introduced this year aimed to deliver a more personalised service to residents of the Jewish community, whilst eliminating the potential for residents and other members of the public to abuse the service. The service, which was delivered in the run up to Passover proved to be very popular, collections were made from designated roads or pre-booked for residents who were not on a designated street. The tonnage was reduced in comparison to previous years however, the waste that was collected was more appropriate for the Pesach service. The service was delivered in line with the published timetable, all roads and collections were cleared by 9pm on the final day of the service. The revised service was well received by the Jewish community; the re-organised operation went extremely well and had a lower impact on the streetscene environment within the borough.

Supplementary Question 1**Councillor Dean Cohen**

I too had extremely positive feedback from residents and communal leaders who benefited from this much improved service. Can the Cabinet Member assure this Council that the reformed service will continue to be provided in future years?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I can so confirm Mr Mayor.

Question 2**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

Can the Cabinet Member advise the most up-to-date position regarding the progress of the Decent Homes program, and what is the Council's policy with regard to individual properties that are missed out, once an area / estate has been done?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I am advised by Barnet Homes that 85% of the retained homes are decent as of the end of July 2009, and that 91% will be decent by the end of the year. Where it is not possible to gain access after three written attempts the non-access is treated as a refusal.

Supplementary Question 2**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

How does Barnet Homes record miss when they keep a property on the property for Decent Homes, how can we verify that three written contacts have been made?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Well, I'm sure that people will complain if they have not received three written contacts and we would relay on such complaints in those circumstances.

Question 3**Councillor Wayne Casey**

Has a health and safety risk register been completed for Hendon Cemetery?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Risk assessments have been completed and documented for Hendon Cemetery and Crematorium and these are continually reviewed.

Supplementary Question 3**Counsellor Wayne Casey**

Is the Cabinet Member satisfied that all of the relevant health and safety risks have been identified at Hendon Cemetery and are being properly addressed?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

I take advice from Officers and they have assured me that they have taken the appropriate risk into consideration. If the Councillor has any other issues he wishes to bring to my attention, I would be pleased to hear from him.

Question 4**Councillor Dean Cohen**

Does the Council support the establishment of a bus route from Stamford Hill to Golders Green, linking the two Jewish communities?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

This relates to a proposal to extend the 210 bus route which currently terminates at Finsbury Park, to continue on to Stamford Hill. This would mean passengers would no longer need to change at Finsbury Park, something which members of the Jewish community have expressed concerns about.

The proposal would result in only a modest extension of the 210 route, but would be less straightforward now that the 210 bus route is operated by double deck buses as the obvious route to take to Stamford Hill has a low bridge. London Buses are looking at the proposals, but are as yet uncommitted to the idea.

The Council would in principle support this type of alteration. We have been lobbying London Buses to carry out a comprehensive review of the bus network, not least in respect of orbital routes, and be prepared to make some relatively radical changes. Although the proposed extension would increase operating costs, it is likely to make the route far more attractive to people who might currently do the journey by car.

Question 5**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

What are the current policies for applications for grants by charities? Can the Cabinet Member tell us how many B.M.E charities have applied to Barnet Council for grants in the last year, and how many have been successful?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

The Council is in a transitional period of funding the voluntary and community sector as it moves from grant awards to commissioning. A Third Sector Commissioning Framework agreed in 2008 sets out guidelines to bring consistency to the financial arrangements with the sector and to bring procurement from, and grants to, the sector into a single framework consistent with the council's procurement rules.

Transitional arrangements are being applied in 2009/10 as grant-funded services that will in future be subject to commissioning processes are identified. Organisations whose grants are affected will be given a minimum of six months' notice of termination of their grant funding. Meanwhile, grants are continuing to be awarded in accordance with existing policies and principles, having regard to the contribution to the council's key corporate priorities; the benefits provided to the local community; the effectiveness of an organisation in its service delivery; its overall value for money; its financial needs; and the budget available.

These considerations will continue to apply where grant funding continues outside of frontline commissioning strategies.

In 2008/09, the Community Grants & Charitable Awards Unit received 15 applications from voluntary organisations supporting minority ethnic communities in Barnet, each of which was awarded a grant, in many cases being the continuation of core funding. The awards also included help on a one-off basis and in establishing one new service.

The unit is currently assessing applications from six such groups seeking a grant in 2009/10.

Supplementary Question 5 **Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

Do B.M.E charities realise all the changes made in the demand for grants or for grant awards for commissioning; do they realise in time, when changes are made in policies by Barnet Council so they could make any adjustment when they could lose funding?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

As far as I am aware, all the voluntary sector through the Voluntary Sector Compact not the mechanisms are advised of changes in the procedures and the move towards commissioning.

Question 6 **Councillor Monroe Palmer**

Following the excellent training on Safeguarding meeting held in June and July, I understand that the Lead Members have had their training separately to other members of the Council. How did their training differ from the training attended by non-executive Members and why were Cabinet trained separately and when?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Lead Members had received separate training - for those taking part in the Safeguarding reviews I have initiated. That is not the same as having separate training sessions. In fact some Lead Members are attending the regular sessions and some may need additional individual training as their diary commitments may not have permitted them to attend.

Supplementary Question 6 **Councillor Monroe Palmer**

I thank Councillor Freer for the answer, these excellent training sessions initiated by the Chief Executive were very good, but I didn't understand Councillor Freer's answer because his email to me said 'I and other Lead Members have had training separately' and my questions are, why was it that the Executive Members needed to have separate training and whether all Lead Members have had their training and if not which ones have not had it?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The reason why it was done separately is because certain Lead Members were involved in a review of Safeguarding starting last December, long before these training sessions were arranged. Officers advised me that the issues that we cover and have covered in our Safeguarding reviews are exactly the same as the issues covered in the training sessions and from memory, the Executive Members involved, being myself, Councillor Bulmer, Councillor Braun, and Councillor Hillan. I shall have to check my diary for the others, but I will write to Councillor Palmer.

Question 7 **Councillor John Hart**

May I request the Cabinet Member inform me of the borough's policy concerning the use of both pesticides and herbicides in public spaces, and the annual cost thereof?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I shall answer this under two headings, Highways and Greenspaces.

1. Highways

The Council restricts the use of herbicides to products which are approved by the Pesticides Safety Directorate. Due to the recent withdrawal of the residual chemical *Diuron*, the road channels and footpaths are now sprayed using *Glyphosate* at least four times per annum. This is the first time that the Council has been unable to use a residual spray early in the season and therefore the outcome of the change is being monitored closely in order to consider the full impact. The annual budget for the roads and footpaths is £165,000 for 2009/10.

2. Greenspaces

Pesticides are used on bowling greens where it is necessary to maintain the playing surface, no pesticides are used other than on bowling greens. Herbicides are used to control weeds on hard surfaces and in shrub beds within the parks and openspaces. Where possible mulch is used on the beds as a weed suppressant, reducing the need to use a herbicide. In 2008/09 £10,000 was spent on pesticides and herbicides.

If the Member wishes, the service will send him a more detailed paper setting out policy on peat and pesticide minimisation.

Question 8

Councillor Andrew McNeil

Would the Cabinet Member advise what he is doing to address the concerns of East Finchley residents who have made recent complaints about the positioning of new street-lighting?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Residents within any road being upgraded through the street-lighting PFI contract have the opportunity to make comments and suggestions to the contractor prior to any build commencing. The contractor is restricted by a specification and set of criteria which includes ensuring that British Standard recommendations for lighting residential streets is met and providing this standard can be achieved whilst accommodating residents' wishes, we would expect the contractor to make relevant amendments, as has been the case in certain instances in East Finchley. If the contractor is unable to meet the residents' requests due to, for example constraints with on site constructions such as trees, crossovers and utility company apparatus, they will write to the resident and explain why this was not possible.

Question 9

Councillor Susette Palmer

Will the Cabinet Member join me in congratulating the pupils and teachers of the 78 Barnet Schools who made the Music Festival at Artsdepot such a brilliant and heart warming success?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Yes. I am happy to add congratulations to all those involved. Barnet is very privileged to have so many dedicated and skilled music teachers who make the festival possible and the event is a wonderful demonstration of the breadth of cultural experiences Barnet schools are able to provide.

Supplementary Question 9

Councillor Susette Palmer

Are we going to do it again next year?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

I certainly hope so. We have done it the past nine years so I see no reason why we would break that excellent tradition.

Question 10**Councillor Brian Gordon**

The Mayor of London recently set up a scheme, currently voluntary, whereby utility or service companies digging up roads would first publicise their intention beforehand in order to co-ordinate with other companies who may have the same intention. The purpose is to co-ordinate and streamline the work, reducing inconvenience to the public. Has this procedure been introduced in any way in Barnet, and what could we do to promote and advance it, for the benefit of our residents?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Under the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 and the Traffic Management Act 2004, there is a requirement for all utility companies and local authority contractors to notify the local highway authority of their intention to carry out works on a public highway. This has been the case for many years and enables the local authority to co-ordinate works activity. We also meet from time to time with groups of utilities to review how we work together.

Supplementary Question 10**Councillor Brian Gordon**

I am pleased to note that there is co-ordination of road work activity in our borough. Are we finding that the utility companies are actually in practice, co-operating with the Council and complying with their legal obligations as far as their works to roads are concerned, because at the end of the day, it is always the Council that seems to get the stick from residents when things go wrong?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Councillor Gordon is absolutely right. At the end of the day, we do tend to be the ones that get the stick and we do try as hard as we can to administer some stick to the utilities in so far as it is possible to do so, and I can assure Councillor Gordon that we do when necessary take a very tough line.

Question 11**Councillor Geof Cooke**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm how the Council is able to calculate the correct benefit or impairment that should be applied to the Pension Fund from investments or deposits made using pension fund money and pooled with other council monies if she is unable to say how much pension fund money has been put into individual investments or deposits?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Benefit to the Pension Fund through interest on cash held by the Borough on behalf of the Fund is calculated and applied on a rate equivalent to the Borough's average rate of return. We are not able to apply any impairment by Statute to the Pension Fund. In terms of recent activity regarding the Icelandic banks deposits, may I refer you to the narrative as presented within the Statement of Accounts for 2008/09 which states "Regulations prohibit the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and Pension Fund being charged and thus the total impairment will be charged in full to the General Fund." The latest guidance is contained in the LAAP bulletins, which can be sent to you upon request. Although the LGA is currently challenging this regulation, Barnet continues to abide by the statutory guidance.

Supplementary Question 11**Councillor Geof Cooke**

Please could the Cabinet Member clarify the meaning of the term impairment in this context, does it cover the sum deposited as well as the interest lost or any part either of those two, and if that is the case, it would seem that the Pension Fund is not at risk at all from deposits in Icelandic banks and if that is indeed the case, why has it taken so long for the administration to make this clear?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

This of course as Councillor Cooke has been told on many occasions, is subject to detailed guidance from both Central Government and CIPFA guidance. In terms of those specific queries he raises, I

will ask the Chief Officers to provide a technical and detailed response to them.

Question 12

Councillor Brian Gordon

Under new Department for Transport proposals, local councils would be given powers to reduce speed limits from 30 mph to 20 mph on roads in residential areas, and to reduce limits from the current 60mph to 50mph on single carriageways in the countryside. What would be our Council's position on this?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Councils already have powers to set appropriate speeds on roads for which they are the traffic authority. The national speed limits of 30mph in urban areas and 60mph on single carriageways in rural areas do not normally require any traffic signs to be put up. Introducing lower limits – for example 20mph in urban areas and 50mph on rural roads – can help to tackle accident problems, but some authorities are reluctant to do this as the cost of providing and maintaining signs can be considerable.

Some authorities have been lobbying for the national limits to be lowered so these lower speed limits do not require signing and could therefore be implemented at lower cost. Accident problems generally relate to specific issues with junctions or the characteristics of a particular road. This is the reason why the national speed limit is set at the higher level, and signs are used to indicate where lower (and in exceptional cases higher) limits apply. Whilst reducing the national limits would allow speed limits to be reduced on a 'blanket' basis, it would also mean that the limit was reduced on roads where the higher level of speed does not pose a problem. Reducing the speed traffic moves at means increasing journey times, and for commercial operators and work related journeys, this will have a measurable economic cost. Unnecessarily reducing speed limits would have the effect of reducing the efficiency of the transport network and increasing the cost of transport in the national economy.

In some cases, the existing national speed limit is appropriate for a particular road, and it might be possible for authorities to introduce speed limits which are higher than the new national one applying to that type of road, but this would involve providing signs and incur the significant cost attached to that. Therefore it is unlikely that authorities would be willing to maintain the current speed limit and this would result in roads unnecessarily defaulting to the new lower national speed limit.

It appears that the DfT have considered this idea, and are actually proposing that authorities look at reducing speed limits on a case by case basis, rather than as a national change.

Supplementary Question 12

Councillor Brian Gordon

Councillor Harper, although it was not clear from my questions, I am not at all happy about current low – what I consider to be - too low speed limits, and I do think that at many places they should be higher. Do I detect from your detailed answer to my question that basically under your watch, limits are not going to be reduced around the borough and we are likely, at least, to be maintaining the status quo?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I can assure Councillor Gordon that I am very much in favour of a case by case, as needed, approach rather than a blanket approach on these matters.

Question 13

Councillor Barry Rawlings

In the responses to The Leader Listens on the 1st April, a neighbour raised an issue about a local community centre to which the recorded action is 'Feed back the issues surrounding the centre to central government' – what is meant by this, which arm of central government is involved and has

such an action been proposed against any non-Somali centre?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

This event was chaired by Cllr Offord and he has no recollection of the referral to a central government. His recollection is that there was considerable emphasis was placed on mediation. No Central Government department has been contacted and this appears to be an administrative error.

Supplementary Question 13

Councillor Barry Rawlings

I thank the Leader for his answer, I don't think there seems to be any response, the written notes of the meeting went to all that attended the meeting, the minutes said there would be contact with Central Government. This is a worry for Somali Muslim Group and people who attended. Could an apology be sent to all of those who were sent the original note saying it was an administrative error as I do believe it was an administrative error?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

In fact officers have been in regular and close contact with the Somali Bravanese Centre and are not aware that any offence has been caused. I believe that they are fully onboard with the current issues and the steps that the Council are taking for community relations. I believe that the minutes have been amended and I take advice from the Director of Corporate Governance as to whether we need to send an amended set of minutes to those who were in receipt of the original ones.

Question 14

Councillor Dean Cohen

Can the Cabinet Member update Council on the most recent visitor numbers for the Borough's libraries?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Barnet's libraries have seen a significant increase in visitor numbers this year, following Barnet Council's £1.24 million investment to improve and develop libraries.

In a comparison of visitor figures for May 2008 and May 2009, there has been an average 17% increase in the number of visitors to Barnet Libraries per week. This equates to almost 8,500 additional visits per week.

The industry standard is for Library visitor figures to be measured through data sample for a week long period, twice per year, in May and October. These figures are then submitted to CIFPA for audit and review. Our May 2009 sample showed 57,802 visits in one week, compared to 49,273 for the same sample week in May 2008. This is an increase of almost 8,500 visits per week.

State-of-the-art self service terminals, wireless internet connectivity, better building access, and a reorganisation of the service were some of the improvements made helping to increase visits.

Question 15

Councillor Barry Rawlings

In the Internal Audit Annual Report no assurance could be given regarding the 'Telecare' system. This report was issued on 01/06/09 – a week before the cabinet meeting discussing the future of wardens in Barnet's Sheltered Accommodation and in which Telecare was cited as a major component of future provision. Were Cabinet informed that there were 'weaknesses in control that put the systems objectives at risk' before making their decision?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The Telecare system is a valuable technology that enables people in need of assistance to summon help immediately. This system has additional functions over and above the basic alarm service and is in its third year of operation.

Barnet's alarm monitoring service (Assist) has dealt with Alarm calls since 1989 from Sheltered Housing schemes and others. This operates 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. This exceeds Telecare Service Association good practice in terms of response. This will continue to provide service to all Sheltered Housing Residents.

The Telecare audit raised the issue of a service level agreement not being signed with the response support service. This agreement is now being finalised and will contain performance targets, reporting expectations and information sharing. The Cabinet made its decision regarding the replacement of the warden service in sheltered accommodation as a forward looking improvement and no specific allusions to the audit of past and present telecare system were made.

Supplementary Question 15

Councillor Barry Rawlings

Would you agree with me given this wasn't discussed with the Cabinet, that there has yet to be a full and frank discussion of the issues with the Cabinet?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

No.

Question 16

Councillor Brian Gordon

Could you please comment on a recent finance blunder by the Government's Learning and Skills Council and the way this has affected the funding of Barnet's schools?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

This failure caused considerable concern and anxiety in Barnet schools and it is very worrying that a Government body was able to make such a mistake. However, after sustained lobbying the Learning and Skills Council has identified further resources and both schools and colleges have been informed of their revised budgets which are now in line with original expectations and requirements.

Supplementary Question 16

Councillor Brian Gordon

Councillor Bulmer, doesn't this blunder by the Learning and Skills Council, one of a number that seem to come from the Department of Education, indicate that many of this government's quangos are just simply not fit for purpose?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

It is deeply worrying that we continue to get these mistakes and then we have to lobby long and hard in order to get the funding and appropriate policies that Barnet schools need.

Question 17

Councillor Barry Rawlings

In the Internal Audit Annual Report, no assurance could be given regarding the Meals at Home Service. This is more than 2 years after the failure of the invoicing system that caused so much distress to users of the service. How many years will it take to get it right and is this not further evidence of the administration's lack of competence?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The audit of the meals on wheels service was initiated by the Director. The report recognised that improvement work had started prior to Audit. The assessment and invoicing function continues to improve. All concerned are working to ensure that the invoicing will be right, very quickly and not in a timeframe measured in years.

Supplementary Question 17**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Can Councillor Cornelius enlighten me, getting it right will not be in the timeframe measured in years? Was he looking for epochs, aeons, millennia to get it right?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I was looking for a short period of time but I was reluctant to commit myself to a specific date.

Question 18**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Is Barnet Council going to be consulted by the Government regarding plans to make extended sex education compulsory in all State schools, with particular reference to exemptions for faith schools?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

The Council is still awaiting further information from DCSF on this requirement. Clearly there is particular need to ensure that any requirements are sensitive to the needs of Barnet's faith schools. So I hope proper consultation will take place but this Government has a track record of imposing inappropriate obligations on schools without discussion.

Supplementary Question 18**Councillor Brian Gordon**

I don't think there is any evidence that sex education in schools has led to a more balanced, moral or family oriented society, quite the contrary in my view. But can I have your assurance that in as much as our Council would have any say on the matter should it come to discussion nationally, we would fight for the freedom of faith schools to be completely exempt from teaching about sex if that was what they chose to do on religious grounds?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

I doubt very much that we will have any say on this, but this Council's policy has always been that these matters are a matter for the Governing Body of the school to determine, in accordance with the needs and demands of the parents at the school.

Question 19**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

The government has once again provided extra money to Barnet – in this case to provide 22 play areas for older children, with 11 to be ready for next May. Could the Cabinet Member provide a list of the 22 sites identified and indicate which 11 are earmarked for phase 1?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

Officers are currently finalising the list of sites in phase one.

Question 20**Councillor Brian Salinger**

With just over 3 years to go to the London Olympics, can the Cabinet Member outline what this Council has done and is planning to do to ensure that Barnet and Barnet residents benefit from the Olympics coming to London?

Answer by Councillor Dan Thomas

The Local Authority is currently working on Public Service Agreement (PSA)22 pertaining to the Olympic Legacy. The quantitative measure for this is NI 57.

(PSA 22 to “deliver a successful Olympic Games and Paralympic Games and get more children and young people taking part in high-quality PE and sport.”

National Indicator 57 defines national outcomes in terms of take-up of sport by children and young people as: “The percentage of 5- to 16-year-olds participating in at least 2 hours per week of high-quality PE and sport at school, and the percentage of 5- to 19-year-olds participating in at least 3

hours per week of sporting opportunities.”)

NI 57 will be measured in the following way:

- Percentage of 5 -16 participating in at least two hours a week of high quality **curriculum** time PE and sport at school is the measure for NI57.
- The two hour target will be measured until 2011.
- National target is 2010/11 is 88 – 92%.
- Trajectory milestones in the preceding years should reflect progress towards this target.
- Data relating to the percentage of 5-16s participating in at least two hours of curriculum time PE at school will be collected by the annual school sport survey.
- There is an expectation that systems are put in place to start collecting data around 5 hours however this data will NOT form part of NI57.

The National PE and School Sport for Young People Strategy (PESSYP) is delivered in Barnet through a strong infrastructure of Sports Colleges, School Sports Partnerships, Local Authority Sport Development Unit, Barnet Competition Manager and the Further Education Sport Co-ordinator. The annual school sport survey is undertaken each year in June by the School Sport Partnerships and the official results are published in each October. This years survey has just been completed and although NI57 was not reported last year Barnet achieved 71%. We expect to see an increase in this figure when the 2009 results are published this October.

The PESSYP infrastructure are using a tracking tool with schools to ascertain how many hours children and young people participate in PE, sport and physical activity in an average week. The PESSYP Steering Group and infrastructure uses this data to focus and inform it's work.

In the lead up to 2012 there will be a number of Children & Young People Olympic and Paralympic related events that will aim to increase sustainable participation. A successful athletics event for children and young people was held at Cophall Stadium on 17th September 2008 as part of the Paralympic handover and the intention is to build on this type of festival style event.

Schools have been encouraged to become members of the GET SET London 2012 educational programme and Cophall Stadium has been designated as a pre Games training camp for athletics.

The PESSYP infrastructure group works closely with the Community Sport and Physical Activity Network (CSPAN) for Barnet and the County Sports Partnership (Pro-Active North London) to consider how best to address adult participation in sport and physical activity to meet national targets of an annual 1% increase. The CSPAN leads on 2 adult based Sport England funded projects related to female and older adult participation as priority groups.

Supplementary Question 20

Councillor Brian Salinger

Can I thank the Cabinet Member for the very detailed reply he has given so far. Is he satisfied when all that his investment has been delivered, this borough will get any value out of the enormous investment that residents here have made through the council tax, that they have had to pay for. Can he tell Members if there has been any discussion with anyone about the possibility of this borough hosting a visiting nation in the run up to the Olympic Games?

Answer by Councillor Dan Thomas

First of all, covering the Council tax and funding, I don't think they know that the amount of money that Barnet tax payers are putting into this will be realised in Barnet, I don't think that at all. I think that the visitors the Olympics will attract - we have a very small number of hotels and bed and breakfasts and of course people will stay with their friends and family when they stay in Barnet, then

travel across to view the Olympics but I think that will have a very limited impact on the local economy. I do think that what I have put in my answer will hopefully have a lasting legacy in terms of the sports and awareness amongst a new generation and that more people will become active as a result. Regarding the second question, I don't believe that there have been any discussions as of yet, but I am happy to look into those and if my colleague has any suggestions, then I am willing to meet up with him another day.

Question 21

Councillor Barry Rawlings

What services would the administration cut if there were to be a 10% cut in government funding?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

As Mr Darling said 'To do detailed allocations running up to 2013-14 at the moment, with all the uncertainty, just does not make any sense'.

Supplementary Question 21

Councillor Barry Rawlings

I would just like to congratulate the Leader for now taking an economic mentor who knows what they are talking about.

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I'm speechless.

Question 22

Councillor Brian Salinger

How many new street/pavement trading licences have been issued since his predecessor reported to Council on 7th April? How many traders or others have been prosecuted or fined for failing to have a licence since the policy was introduced?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

28 licences have been granted since the 1st April 2009.

Enforcement Action:	Total since implementation
FPN's Issued	3
Prosecutions taken	0
Warning Letters	33
Problem premises being investigated	13

Supplementary Question 22

Councillor Brian Salinger

Members will know that I wasn't very happy with this policy and the numbers that are quoted here show that we are making very slow progress towards getting traders involved in this. Is there not a need to ensure that there is a complete level playing field across the borough and that all those that should be paying for this must do so and those that are not should be fined. Or could it be, Mr Mayor, that you were right in the first place when in December 2004, I asked for your views on this scheme. You said 'I oppose it and will not support it, it is anti-small business and will be a disaster area for the local media, the sort of officer led own goal that we should avoid'.

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Circumstances do change and people can reserve the right to change their views, as I'm sure Councillor Salinger will agree. I even recall that when I was the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport and he was the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environmental Health it was he who was proposing this scheme and so we can see someone else changing their mind. However, while this scheme is for trading on pavements, I think Councillor Salinger may be referring to some open

spaces in front of shops where the land is a private forecourt and those type of properties do not need to apply for a street trading licence. Therefore, not everyone has the need to apply.

Question 23

Councillor Zakia Zubairi

In April, Barklands cut down a number of trees in Annesley Avenue, Colindale – can the Cabinet Member confirm whether a survey was undertaken of the trees in that street prior to them being cut down, what the results of that survey were and what consultation with local residents took place regarding the cutting down of the trees?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

The Council would only have control over treatment of trees if the trees were included in a Tree Preservation Order or in its ownership – neither of which applied to the trees in question. Regardless of who had contracted Messrs Barkland to fell the trees for whatever reason, Council consent would not have been required to fell the trees, nor would the Council have had any powers or authority to stop the felling being undertaken.

Question 24

Councillor Brian Salinger

How many of the 63 councillors attended the training courses on 'Safeguarding' recently arranged for Members?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

12 on 18th June

12 on 7th July

Supplementary Question 24

Councillor Brian Salinger

Could I ask the Leader what steps are being taken to ensure that all Councillors recognise their individual responsibilities in this respect?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Two measures, Mr Mayor, members of Democratic Services will of course be reminding Members of their responsibility and further training sessions, I am sure, will be made available. In addition to that, there is a following planning report, new guidance for leaders and Executive Members, on their role in Safeguarding, so I think that this Council will ensure that all Members, whatever their role, are adequately trained and informed.

Question 25

Councillor Zakia Zubairi

Can the Cabinet Member say what action he will take to clean up the pond in the Grahame Park estate, which is in a filthy state?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

As part of the Grahame Park regeneration scheme the pond is to be completely refurbished, including the removal of rubbish and debris and its enhancement into a valuable habitat for wildlife. The pond is included in the works of phase 1a, which is scheduled to start imminently.

Question 26

Councillor Brian Salinger

Will the Cabinet Member please inform the Council of the details of all staff (suitably anonymised and broken down by department and including school staff) who have been suspended from work on full pay in the last 12 months, detailing the time that each of those members of staff has been suspended, the pay that each has received while not working and where appropriate the outcome of the suspension (dismissed, returned to work, or left after a financial settlement)

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The question can not be answered as posed as employees can be identified by department and outcomes.

Under paragraph 1 & 2 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) I am able to provide information as follows.

Suspensions in the last 12 months

Directorate	Number of suspensions	Total number of days	Total cost	Outcome
Total for the Council	31	2,856	281,684	12 – On going 5 – Final Written 5 – Resigned 3 – Dismissed 2 – Compromise Agreement 4 – Reinstated
Schools	10	1,377	106,063	6 – On going 1 – Resigned 2 – No Action 1 – Compromise Agreement

Supporting information

- Suspension is carefully considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the nature of the alleged misconduct.
- Recently revised guidelines from the ACAS code of practice on Disciplinary & Grievance (April 2009) is encouraging employers to only suspend where the nature of the case for both/either the employer or employee would pose difficulties if they remained in the workplace.
- Different management controls are in place (since April) and all cases are tracked by HR including a RAG status. Red cases are reviewed and continually risk assessed.
- One reality of today’s culture – some employees facing an investigation may notify us that they are now sick with anxiety and stress, which then hampers and prolongs the investigation. (cynical but true).
- Legislation continually asks for an employer to prove they have ‘acted reasonably’.
- Thorough investigations support any ET claims we are called to defend.

Supplementary Question 26

Councillor Brian Salinger

It has cost us some £400,000 in the last year, can I ask what discussions the Member with responsibility for HR has had with Officers over the particularly long running cases and whether he has had any input into a particular case involving a member of staff at the Pupil Referral Unit who has been on full pay. Does the Leader accept that there is an adverse impact on small parts of the organisation when one key member of staff is absent on gardening leave for the best part of the year?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

First of all, I discuss with the Head of HR and other Chief Officers the amount of staff that are on Long Term Sick or on Suspension. However, I have no access to those details by name or the specific reasons, particularly if there may well be disciplinary action involved and Councillor Salinger will be well aware of those rules. In terms of the impact, yes of course, any long term absence, for whatever reason, has an impact on the authority but I am sure that Councillor Salinger will not wish

the Council not to follow due process and to ensure that the Council and the employee are adequately protected.

Question 27

Councillor Anne Hutton

Will the Cabinet Member advise if Barnet is supporting the popular "Open House" programme this year? And if not, why not?

Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen

Although in previous years Barnet has participated in the London Open House architectural festival it has been decided, because of budgetary constraints and lack of public interest, that the borough should no longer be involved.

Participation in the 2009 event would have required the Council to make a £3,800 contribution to the Open House organisers. Given that few people visited council buildings in previous years it is felt that this contribution cannot be justified in these very difficult economic times and under continuing budgetary constraints.

Supplementary Question 27

Councillor Anne Hutton

I appreciate the Cabinet Member may not have them to hand, can you tell me the figures for the previous years please?

Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen

I will reply to the Cabinet Member

Question 28

Councillor Brian Salinger

Earlier this year, NHS Barnet organised Chlamydia testing for girls in Barnet schools. Can the Cabinet Member please tell Members what the results of those tests were (% of those testing positive) by schools or other institutions, as well as % who were actually tested. Will the Member list the schools which did not take part?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

As part of the national programme to improve young people's sexual health, NHS Barnet undertook a screening programme to identify possible genital Chlamydia infection and this was targeted at people aged 15-24 years. This included approaching all of Barnet's secondary schools to see if they would permit screening amongst their sixth-form students.

Young people were also invited for screening by letter and through other social marketing approaches. Screening was also performed in family planning clinics, GP surgeries and community pharmacies.

The results of the Chlamydia screening programme were not identified by school or place of contact inviting screening. The figures in the tables below are those of Barnet residents who responded to an invitation for screening from all of the various approach routes used.

Tests undertaken		Number of positive tests	
Age	Number	Age	Total
13	4	13	0
14	15	14	0
15	47	15	2
16	197	16	12
17	406	17	21
18	511	18	21
19	521	19	41

20	515	20	40
21	493	21	30
22	544	22	24
23	585	23	17
24	871	24	22
TOTAL	4709	TOTAL	230

The results, as detailed above show that some 4.9% of tests were positive. This is lower than the London average of 6.4%. These figures also show that the partnership of agencies is within our health target as set out in the Children & Young People's Plan – N1 113 – Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 25 year olds. This target will continue to be kept under review by the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership Board and in addition Cabinet will also be receiving regular updates as part of its tracking of 14 Health key performance indicators.

Supplementary Question 28

Councillor Brian Salinger

Can I ask the Cabinet Member whether she would agree with me or would accept with me a disappointment with a low level of take-up of young ladies for the offer of the free chlamydia testing. Given that I understand from other parts of London that in some places the incidence of chlamydia is as high as in to the 90% range, that in fact the figures that are here for those people who were tested are actually quite reasonable but still worrying?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

First of all, as Councillor Salinger knows, this screening was neither compulsory nor universal and I would very much oppose imposing any testing on any young person who does not wish to be tested. I also think that the way this testing was carried out and the results given, protected the young people's confidentiality and their own dignity and the information requested in Councillor Salinger's first question would actually have precluded this. I would also like to draw attention to Councillor Salinger's mentioning young girls, young boys, people of all ages, but particularly, young boys and girls are affected by chlamydia and as such both sexes are taking in for this screening, I would encourage people to have it but it is really up to them.

Question 29

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Can the Leader specify what safeguards are in place in Barnet to prevent expenses being claimed on bogus meals taking place?

Answer by Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

I am pleased to reassure Councillor McGuirk that the Council's procedures (detailed below) are significantly different from those she may be used to (and indeed those her Group Leader may be used to) in their roles of Parliamentary Assistant/Secretary and Constituency Agent respectively to Dr Vis MP; where they may have experience of the expense claims for second homes in Suffolk.

On the occasions where an employee needs to claim for meals the policy guidelines below are to be followed.

All employee claims are sent to their line manager for approval accompanied by the relevant receipts and a brief explanation as to why the expense occurred.

Once the line manager has approved the expenses it is passed to payroll for processing.

Senior employees on Barnet Bands 4, 5 and Chief Officers may not claim for any additional costs for meals whilst attending evening meetings. The exception to this is Barnet Band 4 graded employees who may claim for additional expenditure when attending evening governing body meetings.

Extract from the Policy

REIMBURSEMENT OF ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

Reimbursement of additional expenditure to staff will be paid in the following circumstances (and where staff are not able to take a meal or refreshments at a council canteen and where additional expenditure is incurred):

- *Post entry training courses*
- *Seminars*
- *Meetings away from the workplace*
- *Attendance at evening meetings*

2. PAYMENT

- 2.1 *Where reimbursement is being claimed, receipts should be submitted to the line manager. Claims should be made using e-forms (unless not available).*
- 2.2 *Only the difference between the average cost of a council canteen meal (£3.50) and the actual cost incurred (of a similar meal) will be reimbursed.*
- 2.3 *References may be made to the upper limits of the last nationally agreed rates. These are to be reviewed annually in line with the Retail Price Index.*

Question 30

Councillor Brian Salinger

Will the Cabinet Member for Resources please inform Members what legal advice for Members is covered by the insurance for which the Council pays an annual premium? How much is the premium paid for this cover, and how many claims have been made against this policy in the last 3 years?

Answer by Councillor Lynn Hillan

External legal expenses insurance has been arranged in relation to Members Standards Board, Ethical Standards and Monitoring Officer Case Tribunal investigations and Standards Board hearings. The cover available provides an indemnity limit of £50,000 per incident or cause, subject to an aggregate annual limit of £500,000.

The report to Cabinet on 18th June 2007 stated the cost was circa £2,000 per annum and that if this varied significantly it would be reported to a subsequent Cabinet Resources Committee. I can confirm there has not been a need to report to CRC as the annual premium remains the same as when cover was incepted.

Cover was first arranged in May 2007 and currently there have not been any claims made on the policy.

Supplementary Question 30

Councillor Brian Salinger

Can I ask why it is that it was necessary not to use this facility when a Member of the Council was faced with a case when he could have well claimed for it and didn't?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Starting at the front, when we took out the insurance policy, it was on the understanding that the firms used on the panel were London based firms with experience of London based Standards cases. So it was some what a surprise to find that the firm offered to us was in Cardiff and Mr Mayor, whilst the solicitor in Cardiff may well have a lower hourly rate, by the time you have to pay that solicitor to travel from and to London, the hourly rate is rapidly expended on travel. Secondly, I understand that the case was being dealt with expeditiously and there was also then a need to ensure that the Member had adequate representation with a firm based in London with significant experience in Standards matters and that is why the insurance policy firm was not used. I can also advice the Member that this Council has taken the matter up with the insurance policy as we do not believe that we got what we paid for.

Question 31

Councillor Ross Houston

Has the Council agreed final affordable housing targets with the Mayor of London yet, and if not, when does he think this will happen? And when will they be published?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The Council is in the process of agreeing a target with the Mayor of London. The target is ambitious and its achievement will depend on financial support from the HCA and GLA, as well as normalisation of the property market. In terms of quantum the target is likely to be in line with the LAA target ie 2269 affordable homes by 2010/11. Hopefully an announcement will follow in the next few weeks.

Supplementary Question 31

Councillor Ross Houston

This is the third time I'm asking, can the Cabinet Member confirm that we will see a marriage between the Mayor and the administration on this issue?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

We are complete in agreement with the Mayor of course.

Question 32

Councillor Brian Salinger

Will the Cabinet Member please tell Members, the amount of money currently held by the Council as deposits from builders or property owners to cover possible damage to pavements or roads in the vicinity of building works?

Answer by Councillor Lynn Hillan

The current total of deposits held is £719,964.81.

Question 33

Councillor Alison Moore

What is the Cabinet Member doing to ensure that parking meters in Barnet are operating correctly and are not undercharging or overcharging residents?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

We are currently in the process of undertaking a comprehensive review of our stock of pay and display machines. As part of this review we will ensure that the machines are operating correctly.

Supplementary Question 33

Councillor Alison Moore

Councillor Harper, I noticed when putting money into a meter today that you are not only reviewing your parking metres but you are also putting the pricing up so I hope those who pay 70p will actually get 30 minutes worth of time – as I have reported previously that wasn't always the case. But more seriously, can the Cabinet Member also explain why hundreds of residents are having enormous

problems renewing their CPZ permits and having to spend up to an hour waiting in a phone queue trying to resolve the problems. In some cases they are actually receiving tickets for parking in the meantime. Can you tell us why it's happening and what he is doing to resolve it?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Well, as Councillor Moore knows from Scrutiny Committees early in the year, the prices for parking, meters, permits and car parking across the borough have all risen this year following a three year freeze and those prices have risen in line with inflation and also in line with and not certainly out of sync with what neighbouring boroughs are doing. On the second point, I do agree as I said in the briefing that I sent to Councillor Moore and the Group Leaders just the other day that the Parking Process Team has not been enjoying its finest hour. Just recently, there have been a number of problems with the introduction of new technology around the issuing of permits, the renewal of permits, the issuing of visitor permits and those sort of things. The service is very rapidly catching up now, it is working as hard and fast as it can. I certainly am not satisfied with the levels of performance recently but officers are very well aware of that and dealing with it even as we speak.

Question 34

Councillor Brian Salinger

Will the Cabinet Member tell the Council how many deposits have not been repaid when works have been completed, the total value and the number of sites where monies have been withheld to cover the costs of remedial work in each of the last 3 years?

Answer by Councillor Lynn Hillan

A total of 21 deposits from April 2006 to March 2009 have not been repaid, the total value of these deposits is £24,687.50 to cover the costs of remedial work.

Supplementary Question 34

Councillor Brian Salinger

I am sure that most Members would be surprised, given that most of us walk around the borough, that there have been only an average of seven cases per year over the last three years where builders have been charged for damage either to the highways or to kerb stones or the roads outside their houses. We know as Members that a significant amount of damage to our pavements is done while these sort of major works go on. Can the Member who is going to answer for Councillor Hillan tell me what steps are being taken to ensure to where builders do damage to our property in this way that they are made to pay properly for it?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

First of all obviously the detailed answer will have to be sent in writing to Councillor Salinger. But from memory, there have been legal issues around the deposit schemes which I think has hampered the collection or the implementation in full of the deposit scheme, again, that information will be provided to the Member. But of course if Members are exercised by specific issues, they can of course write direct to the Directors and have this information provided direct to them rather than having to wait for this forum if that is more helpful to Members. There's a more expeditious system of simply writing to the Director.

Question 35

Councillor Kath McGuirk

What role does Barnet highways department play in agreeing road diversions on TfL roads?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Under the Traffic Management Act 2004, adjacent local traffic authorities have a duty to cooperate to discharge the Network Management Duty; this is especially the case where the proposals of one authority could impact on the network of another authority. This requirement applies to both the council and to TfL, and therefore both parties need to discuss and agree diversion proposals which might impact on the movement of traffic on the network.

Whilst there is a statutory requirement for boroughs to apply to TfL for their formal agreement if a borough proposal has an impact on the TfL network (the Network Assurance requirement), there is no equivalent statutory process applying to TfL proposals which might divert traffic onto borough roads.

The practice established in the Barnet area is for an informal agreement about the most appropriate way of handling traffic which needs to be diverted as a result of works on the TfL network. This informal arrangement allows issues other than those normally covered by the Network Management Duty to be considered - for example, the impact of diverted traffic on residents. Discussion takes place, using our local knowledge, to agree a method of working which attempts to minimise the overall impact of the work on a case by case basis.

The Council has no power to 'veto' TfL's reasonable proposals as the Network Management Duty requires us to co-operate, and in the spirit of this duty, the best result is usually arrived at through discussion. Likewise, there is no requirement for TfL to consult the borough on diversion proposals which only involve the TfL network, but the established practice is that the same level of discussion would take place to identify whether there could be any impacts on the local network.

Supplementary Question 35

Councillor Kath McGuirk

Looking at Councillor Harper's response, I think it's really detailed down to when they planned works but I am not totally convinced that's actually working as well as it could have. But this is when we have a state of emergency, we had the snow earlier in the year and I don't think TfL or the Mayor came out smelling of roses on that one. A few weeks ago, we had the hour and half downfall which flooded major roads across this borough and instead of actually directing transport including cars, buses, lorries and coaches down Borough Road, buses and cars were directed from Golders Green Road on the A41, which was totally impassable. Major public transport routes, national and local which were completely blocked and cars were not being directed down The Vale or Pennine Drive and when it got to flooding at the fly-over where water going down the foot path was exceedingly dangerous. Can you assure me that you will be going back to Transport for London and actually saying 'this relationship is just not good enough, we have to improve that to assure that we don't have gridlock in this borough and people are not inconvenienced and car drivers are not taking dangerous shortcuts'?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I very much agree with Councillor McGuirk on her last few points. I am not satisfied with the performance during the certainly exceptional downfall on the early evening of Saturday June 27. I have asked officers for a full report on the flooding on that evening and what exactly was happening on the roads that were controlled by TfL and what steps we need to take in terms of discussions with them to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Question 36

Councillor Brian Salinger

On 19th November last, the Leader submitted further papers relating to the Barnet Finance Plan to John Healey MP, then Minister of State at DCLG. Did the Minister respond and if so will he publish the response, and any other relevant correspondence that might have been exchanged between either himself and ministers or officials or officers of the Council and officials at the Ministry?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The updated position is that John Healey MP – now in his new role at DCLG – wrote to all Leaders and CEs on 18th May asking for brief details of any Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) schemes that LAs across the country were working on. There was a submission date of 30/6 Officers have meet with PwC and CLG officials and talked through our proposed draft submission which was based on

the Colindale pilot. We secured public support from our key partners TfL, MU, Choices, Fairview, and St George. We have also been invited to sit on a "TIF/ADZ Core Group" run by CLG. Correspondence is available if the Member asks the Deputy Chief Executive.

Question 37

Councillor Agnes Slocombe

How long will it take the Council to resolve underground cabling issues with BT so that plans for residents to park on West Hendon Broadway can be progressed?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

BT have indicated their forecasted fees of approximately £45,000 to carry out their aspects – ones that unfortunately, only BT themselves can legally undertake, which include the lowering of services and reconstruction of chambers to withstand vehicle loads. We are awaiting costings from EDF but I understand that there will be a necessity to divert high voltage cables.

Therefore, as previously advised the cost to introduce the footway parking bays (on West Hendon Broadway) is significant and at the present time there is insufficient funding available to justify such measures. However, given the above the decision on whether to proceed or not will be made later in the year when exact costings will have been obtained and a decision taken as to whether the known cost is warranted and whether the increased costs can be met.

Question 38

Councillor Brian Salinger

How many of the Borough's Scout Groups applied for the £500 donation that the Leader offered to each group?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

None.

Supplementary Question 38

Councillor Brian Salinger

Wasn't the Leader surprised at the answer?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Well Mr Mayor, if you ask a daft question you get a daft answer. The reason why there was none was because the Scout Groups didn't have to actually have to apply. It was an initiative on behalf of the Administration where the Scout Groups were simply awarded £500 so there was no application.

Question 39

Councillor Agnes Slocombe

Can the Cabinet Member confirm if councillors are able to liaise directly with BT over the billing of Members' council phone lines?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Enquiries have been made with BT One Bill. Individual councillors would be able to query their own bill by ringing 0800 2346356 and selecting Option 3 if prompted and quoting their One Bill account VP 87783270.

Question 40

Councillor Brian Salinger

Can the Leader tell the Council how in real practicable terms the London City Charter will change the way in which the Council operates and will he, with examples, spell out what difference the Charter will make to the residents of Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Our Corporate Plan positions Barnet as a city-suburb of London and this reflects the spirit of the charter and reinforces our position as a leading suburb.

By showing how the tiers of London Local Government are working together, it makes a stronger case for local government influence over other bodies in London and this reinforces Our Future Shape programme which works towards one public sector in the Borough.

It is a helpful statement of the shared interests- eg delivering better services for London and making the case for London- but different responsibilities of the two tiers. Therefore it is a good basis for dialogue rather than a confrontational approach around turf wars. It needs to focus on outcomes and the work areas identified are a good starting point and gain this underpins much of our work on Future Shape especially on the access strand.

Also our recent role in championing the views of our residents on the Barnet/Haringey/Enfield Clinical Strategy and the Trauma/Stroke consultation is in line with the role envisaged for Councils in health-making the case for greater local government involvement in health commissioning in London.

Question 41

Councillor Alison Moore

Cabinet has not yet worked up the detail of how many sheltered housing “hubs” or community teams will need to be in operation to ensure that the needs of residents currently living in sheltered accommodation, and those not living in sheltered accommodation are met. How does Cabinet know therefore that they are able to make a saving of £400k from the sheltered housing budget?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The option agreed by Cabinet to replace sheltered housing with an alarm service and floating support has been costed, based on the known costs of alarm service provision together with additional staffing costs to offset the removal of residential wardens to respond to day time calls and an analysis of needs data supplied by sheltered housing providers as part of the consultation process. The alarm service component is estimated to cost £215,000. Analysis of the needs data has been broadly consistent in indicating that up to one third of residents, about 450, receive benefits from the support services, although not on a continuing basis, and that a small minority up to 120 residents at any one time are at high risk. The rest make less frequent or occasional use of the support. It is intended that the new service should aim to meet the needs of up to 250 residents at any one time, which will in due course provide capacity to support older people living in the wider community. Based on costings from a recent floating support tender, the identified budget of £645,000 is sufficient to fund a minimum of 15 full time support staff, which would have the capacity to support 250 residents at any one time. A proportionally larger number of staff would be affordable if the establishment included a mix of grades and work will be undertaken during July and August 09 to develop the service specification and staffing profile in partnership with sheltered housing residents and sheltered housing providers.

Supplementary Question 41

Councillor Alison Moore

Councillor Cornelius, your answer appears to suggest that you are taking away one type of service support from 1500 residents to support 250 residents. As yet totally unidentified number and undefined number of residents who live outside sheltered housing accommodation. Have you actually got the figures to demonstrate the level of need in the community and what it will cost to meet that wider need or is this as ill-founded as the original scheme just to cut £950,000 out of the budget?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The cut is not £950,000 at all, there will be a saving by adopting this scheme and the figures there indicate exactly what we believe will happen now. The answer to your supplementary is contained in the answer typed out here.

Question 42**Councillor Sachin Rajput**

Can the Cabinet Member advise what action is being taken to deal with this year's unprecedented demand for primary school places?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

The Council has made arrangements to provide additional places at Colindale schools, Deansbrook Infants, Moss Hall Infants, Tudor School and Danegrove Infants.

These additional places should meet the current demand. However, officers and schools will continue to monitor the situation over the summer to manage any late applications.

Supplementary Question 42**Councillor Sachin Rajput**

As Your Worship is aware, we do have an unprecedented demand for primary school places this year in September. I do welcome the response from the relevant Cabinet Member advising that five schools have of course been provided to deal with some of this unprecedented demand. Can I ask the Cabinet Member whether or not all those people that are applying for a position in our primary schools in September will certainly be provided with one?

Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer

I am very pleased that officers and schools have worked very hard to meet this challenge and all those children seeking places that have currently been notified to us will get places for September. It has been a real challenge, but the Council has measured up very strongly to that challenge. Schools, I would like to very much thank schools for agreeing to accommodate these additional children. We will be continuing to support them and parents can now have the reassurance that we will be providing the places that they applied for their children. This shows them that this Council can act quickly to challenges that are thrown at us.

Question 43**Councillor Alison Moore**

Would the Leader confirm the basis on which the savings figures were calculated in the Future Shape report to the July 6th Cabinet?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The savings figures were calculated through an exercise conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers. They are based on an analysis of the way that staff spend their time. The outcomes of the analysis were then compared against a benchmarking database and areas highlighted where:

- The current spend in Barnet on these activities is higher than in other Authorities that have been counted in this way.
- There is considerable duplication of activity, for example where there are places within the Council that perform a large number of processes within a single function, implying a large amount of duplication and fragmentation and presenting opportunities to simplify, standardise and share processes.
- There is a significant gap between current practice in Barnet and leading practices elsewhere. Where this is the case there are opportunities for securing greater efficiencies. The use of private sector investment and contractual partnership structures have produced better value elsewhere.

Supplementary Question 43**Councillor Alison Moore**

Would Councillor Freer acknowledge that this whole exercise is one of cost-cutting based on privatisation rather than a move to improve services in Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Councillor Moore ought to know that if that was true, it would not meet the well being test, I suggest

you bone up on current legislation.

Question 44

Councillor Terry Burton

Would the Cabinet Member please give us an update on the latest tonnage on recycling and how it has improved over the past year? Also, how are we progressing with being able to extend the recycling service to blocks of flats and other such buildings including fast food outlets and businesses who throw out horrendous amounts of cardboard boxes every week, which could dramatically improve our tonnage rates?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

In 2008/09 we collected 31.18% of household waste for recycling, composting and reuse. This is an improvement from 2007/08 when we collected 30.71% for recycling, composting and reuse.

The actual tonnage collected for recycling in 2008/09 has slightly decreased from the previous year. In November 2008 we started to collect plastic bottles and cardboard from houses (collecting 1,277 tonnes of these materials), however, there has been a decrease in the other materials when compared to the previous year, such as paper down 346 tonnes, textiles down 475 tonnes and glass down 289 tonnes. It is likely that this reduction is connected to the current recession, for example free papers are smaller as there are fewer properties being advertised, fewer textiles are being put out for recycling as residents keep clothes for longer or mend / repair clothes instead.

From February 2009 we have been able to offer the collection of plastic bottles and cardboard from flats and schools in the borough. All schools have been offered the service and over 50 schools now have containers for these materials. For flats we are rolling out the service as managing agents contact us. Over 40 plastic bottle and cardboard sites have been installed on Barnet Homes sites so far.

Unfortunately our recycling figures are based on household waste only, therefore collecting cardboard from fast food outlets and businesses would not help improve our recycling figures. We are however aware that these establishments would like to recycle their cardboard and so we are investigating providing a trade waste recycling service to our existing trade waste customers. This potential scheme will continue to be investigated.

Supplementary Question 44

Councillor Terry Burton

I appreciate the detailed response that we have been given by the Cabinet Member although we are probably very sad to see that the tonnage rates have gone down. We certainly have been made aware in recent months of some irresponsible Councils dumping their recycling collections into land fill sites because the recession had devalued the prices on recyclable products, thus they felt it was cheaper for them just to dump the waste. What guarantees or perhaps reassurances can we give our residents that we do indeed recycle everything that we collect and we do indeed deal with our recycled products in a most responsible manner, which in turn we hope will encourage every resident in the London Borough of Barnet to be responsible enough themselves to recycle everything they can to help protect our environment?

Answer by Andrew Harper

I am very grateful for Councillor Burton's attention to this very important issue. I can certainly reassure the residents of this borough that everything that they put out goes for recycling. Anybody wishing to have more detailed information on exactly what happens to all the recyclates can visit the relevant section of the Council website. Or if indeed if they really want to, they can go back to an answer that I gave to Councillor Scannell on the same subject in this Council Chamber back in January this year.

Question 45

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Has the Council given notice to quit the LGA, and will Barnet lose out from not being a member?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

Yes. No.

Supplementary Question 45

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Can I ask how this isolationist decision will effect Barnet's representation of other Councils on negotiations regarding trying to get back the Icelandic deposits?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

First of all, it doesn't appear to have done Bromley any harm not being part of the LGA. In terms of our reputation, our reputation stands alone from the LGA and the LGA has done nothing to burnish our reputation, rather the reverse. In fact our work with London Councils is far more valuable than with the LGA although the LGA are seeking to change our mind. In terms of the work on the recovery of Icelandic deposits, then actually the work will be done by those creditors not necessarily by the LGA itself, and it is the role of the creditors to ensure that they are adequately represented on the resolution boards rather than seeking the LGA to represent them.

Question 46

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Can the Cabinet Member detail the contract monitoring activity for all currently externalised Council services?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

There are at least 400 contracts in place across the council, some of which are provided by external organisations and partnerships, and it would not be possible in this reply to provide comment on them all. Some contracts, such as the Primary School (PSCIP) Contract with Kier and the leisure contract with Greenwich Leisure London are managed centrally within Major Projects, though the majority of contracts are managed and monitored across the organisation by Directors and their heads of service. The Corporate Procurement Team manages corporate contracts and is available to provide advice and support to service directors in carrying out their contract monitoring responsibility. The monitoring of contracts and effective delivery of services remain important elements of these commercial arrangements.

Question 47

Councillor Geof Cooke

The most recent Future Shape report finally admits that there is a significant risk that the pension fund will not be able to meet its current commitments if many council services are privatised and employees leave the council's employ. What measures will be put in place to ensure that this does not happen under future Future Shape proposals?

Answer by Councillor Mike Freer, Leader of the Council

The Pensions fund like all pension funds is under pressure anyway as a result of the economic downturn and the pressure on public sector finances.

The use of the term privatisation is not particularly accurate in this context, there are a variety of

models available to attract private sector investment. Transferring services out of the Council permanently is one model, but this is only appropriate when it is judged that a service or group of services do not contribute significantly to the strategic aims of the Council and would best be provided by another party. In this instance, the impact on the Barnet Pension Fund would need to be considered as part of the overall business case.

Far more likely is the development of joint venture type arrangements where these have clear advantages in meeting the future shape tests. In these instances there are a number of considerations including the use of TUPE arrangements, and the status of any organisation that the Council partners with as an admitted body of the Barnet Pension Fund. Alternatively many Authorities have used secondment arrangements to ensure that employees remain within the Councils scheme.

It will be for the Commissioning and People streams in the Consolidation phase of Future Shape Programme to debate and make recommendations to the Programme Board as to how the pensions fund can be sustained in the future.

Question 48

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Will the Leader provide the latest data on the number and cost of consultants and agency staff across Council services?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan

Consultancy spend in quarter 1

Consultancy spend per directorate (quarter 1)	Spend
Corporate Governance	£0
Adult Social Service	£27,316
Environment and Transport	£61,700
Strategic Hub	£62,093
Future Shape Programme	£105,622
Resources	£125,162
Children's Service	£154,535
Planning, Housing and Regeneration	£566,606
Consultancy Sub Total	£1,103,034
Quarter 1 Agency Spend	£1,036,026
	£2,139,060

Question 49

Councillor Barry Rawlings

How much did the consultants report that informed the Cabinet report on Hendon Cemetery and Crematorium cost the Council?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The consultants report was provided by Sector, a subsidiary of Capita at a cost of £30,000.

Question 50

Councillor Ansuya Sodha

What is the basic pay scale for traffic wardens employed by the Council?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

The basic pay scale for Civil Enforcement Officers, as traffic wardens are now officially known, is spinal column point 20 – 26 (£20,004 – £23,733).

Question 51

Councillor Ansuya Sodha

What is the Council doing to ensure that local public swimming pools are accessible for all?

Answer by Councillor Dan Thomas

The Council-run swimming pools are compliant with disability legislation. In addition, the Council has been working with Mapledown School to introduce facilities at Barnet Copthall Leisure Centre that will allow more severely disabled pupils to access the pool. Equipment has been selected and will be purchased by the Council and a suitable location within the centre has been agreed with Mapledown and GLL, the Council's leisure partner.

Decisions of the Special Joint Meeting of Committees 14 JULY 2009

Present:

*Councillor Brian Coleman (Chairman)
Councillors

*Maureen Braun	*Ross Houston	*Lisa Rutter
*Terry Burton	*Anne Hutton	*Brian Salinger
Anita Campbell	*John Marshall	*Kate Salinger BEd (Hons)
*Wayne Casey BA (Hons) MIIA	*Kath McGuirk	*Joan Scannell
Jack Cohen	*Alison Moore	*Agnes Slocombe SRN RM
*Dean Cohen BSc (Hons)	*Jazmin Naghar	*Ansuya Sodha MBA (Middx) Cert Ed, DipM (CIM), AMBA
*Tom Davey	*Charlie O-Macauley	*Andreas Tambourides
*Eva Greenspan BA LLB (Hons)	*Susette Palmer MA	*Jim Tierney
*Brian Gordon LL.B	*Bridget Perry	*Daniel Webb
*John Hart BA MA	*Wendy Prentice	*Zakia Zubairi
	*Hugh Rayner	
	*Barry Rawlings	

* denotes Member present

- 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN (Agenda item 1)**
RESOLVED – That Councillor Brian Coleman be appointed Chairman of the meeting.
- 2. CHANGES TO SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Agenda Item 4)**
Councillor Joan Scannell moved the nominations in her name.
RESOLVED – The following changes to the Sub-Committee membership be approved.

Hendon Area Planning Sub-Committee

- Councillor Darrel Yawitch to replace Councillor Helena Hart as member of the Sub-Committee.
- Councillor Helena Hart be added a substitute member of the Sub-Committee

Hendon Area Environment Sub-Committee

- Councillor Darrell Yawitch be added as a substitute member of the Sub-Committee

Chipping Barnet Area Environment Sub-Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius to replace Councillor Brian Coleman as a member of the Sub-Committee
- Councillor Brian Salinger to replace Councillor Sachin Rajput as a member of the Sub-Committee

- Councillor Brian Coleman to replace Councillor Richard Cornelius as a substitute member of the sub-Committee.
- Councillor Sachin Rajput to replace Councillor Brian Salinger as a substitute member of the Sub-Committee.

Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

- Councillor Darrel Yawitch be added a member of the Sub-Committee
- Councillor Lisa Rutter to replace Councillor Daniel Webb as a member of the Sub-Committee
- Councillor Alison Cornelius to replace Councillor Brian Coleman as a member of the Sub-Committee.

Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee

- Councillor Alison Cornelius be added as a member of the Sub-Committee.
- Councillor Darrel Yawitch be added as a member of the Sub-Committee

3. APPOINTMENTS TO TASK AND FINISH GROUPS AND FUTURE SHAPE SCRUTINY PANEL

RESOLVED-

1. That the Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the remaining membership (5 Members, politically balanced 3:1:1) and the Chairman of the remaining three Task and Finish Groups identified by the Policy and Performance Committee on 30 June 2009:-
 - (i) Recycling and Waste Minimisation
 - (ii) Homelessness and Young People
 - (iii) Road re-surfacing
2. That the Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the membership of the Future Shape Overview and Scrutiny Panel (7 Members, politically balanced 4:2:1) and the Chairman, as established by the Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 June 2009.

Councillors Joan Scannell, Barry Rawlings and Susette Palmer moved the nominations in their names.

i. Recycling and Waste Minimisation Task and Finish Group (3:1:1)

Conservative Group Members
1. Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman)
2. Cllr Daniel Webb
3. Cllr John Hart
Labour Group Member
1. Cllr Kath McGuirk
Liberal Democrat Group Member
1. Cllr Jeremy Davies

**ii. Homelessness and young people Task and Finish Group
(3:1:1)**

Conservative Group Members
1. Cllr Jazmin Naghar (Chairman)
2. Cllr Brian Salinger
3. Cllr Alison Cornelius
Labour Group Member
1. Cllr Anne Hutton
Liberal Democrat Group Member
1. Cllr Susette Palmer

iii. Road re-surfacing Task and Finish Group (3:1:1)

Conservative Group Members
1. Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman)
2. Cllr Joan Scannell
3. Cllr Andreas Tambourides
Labour Group Member
1. Cllr Julie Johnson
Liberal Democrat Group Member
1. Cllr Duncan MacDonald

iv. Future Shape Overview and Scrutiny Panel (4:2:1)

Conservative Group Members
1. Cllr Wendy Prentice (Chairman)
2. Cllr Kate Salinger
3. Cllr Brian Gordon
4. Cllr Darrel Yawitch
Labour Group Member
1. Cllr Alison Moore
2. Cllr Barry Rawlings
Liberal Democrat Group Member
1. Cllr Jack Cohen
SUBSTITUTES:
Councillors Joan Scannell (Cons), Bridget Perry (Cons), Alan Schneiderman (Lab) and Monroe Palmer (Lib Dem)

The meeting finished at 10.40pm