

Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET held
at Hendon Town Hall, NW4 4BG on Tuesday, 26 January 2010.

PRESENT:

*The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Brian Coleman, AM FRSA)

*The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Hugh Rayner)

Councillors:

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

*denotes Member present

131. PRAYER (Agenda Item 1.1):

The Mayor's Chaplin offered prayer.

132. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1.2):

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Danish Chopra, Ansuya Sodha, Maureen Braun and Terry Burton.

133. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2009 (Agenda Item 1.3)

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2009 be approved as a correct record.

134. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 1.4)

The Worshipful Mayor regretted to announce the death of former Finchley Ward Councillor, Miss Jean Parmar. Miss Parmar was elected to the Council in 1974 and served for eight years until 1982. She served on Libraries and Arts Committee, Social Services, Allotments, Public Works, Town Planning and Research and Central Divisional Planning Sub-Committee. She remained active working in a voluntary capacity particularly in Finchley.

The Worshipful Mayor congratulated all residents of the Borough who had been Honoured in the New Years Honours list and in particular congratulated former Councillor Frances Crook former Councillor Frances Crook, now Director of the Howard League for Penal Reform, was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in the 2010 New Year Honours, for services to Youth Justice.

On Friday 22 January the Worshipful Mayor visited the Mill Hill Depot to thank the staff who 'went above and beyond' to keep the borough running through the severe weather. On behalf of the Council he also thanked Officers across the borough.

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

Member:	Subject:	Interest Declared:
Councillor Wayne Casey	Motion 3.4 – Labour's new Charity Tax	Prejudicial Interest as Councillor Casey is an employee of a National Charity, working at a local branch. Councillor Casey left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion or voting on this item.
Councillor Geof Cooke	Agenda Item 5.2.2 – Report of the Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Personal and prejudicial interest as Councillor Cooke is an employee of National Grid and has small shareholdings. Councillor Cooke left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion or voting on this item.

136. BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING (Item 1.6)

There was none.

137. QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS (Agenda Item 2.1)

Questions were put to the Leader and Members of the Cabinet. These questions, together with the answers provided and the text of any supplementary questions and answers are set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

138. 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.

139. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR JEREMY DAVIES AS AMENDED BY COUNCILLOR DANIEL THOMAS (Agenda Item 3.2)

Motion 3.2 in the name of Councillor Jeremy Davies was moved. Amendments in the name of Councillors Daniel Thomas and Geof Cooke were moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Thomas was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Cooke was declared lost

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

RESOLVED - Council recognises the efforts of its officers in responding to the recent outbreak of ‘severe weather’ and expresses its thanks for all their hard work.

Council also recognises the efforts of staff and residents who checked on elderly and vulnerable neighbours to ensure they were safe and well. Council further recognises and thanks the Leader, Cabinet Members and Ward Members for the time they spent in East Barnet during the gas outage, knocking on residents’ doors and ensuring the vulnerable were safe.

Council recommends the establishment of a ‘task and finish’ working group to ascertain what lessons, if any, the Council can learn.

The Council requests this working group consider the specific issue of ‘gritting’ in terms of the availability of equipment and material, the number and positioning of grit boxes and the decisions around which roads to grit and which to overlook, and the cost implications of any changes.

140. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR HELENA HART (Agenda Item 3.3)

Motion 3.3 in the name of Councillor Helena Hart was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Alison Moore was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Moore was declared lost.

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

RESOLVED - Council notes that the Government has refused to commit to extending the funding grant to Hospices after March 2011, leaving Hospices in Barnet uncertain of their future.

Council believes that, in view of the vital work they perform, Hospices such as the North London Hospice must receive the maximum possible support from both Central Government and local Primary Care Trusts if appropriate and compassionate end of life and palliative care for Barnet’s residents is to be provided.

Council believes that the funding grant to Hospices should be guaranteed beyond March 2011. Council therefore welcomes the Conservatives' commitment to extend the payment for children's hospices and the policy of introducing per-patient funding of both child and adult end of life care which would see overall funding double.

Council requests that the Chief Executive write to the Minister of State for Care Services asking that the funding grant be extended beyond March 2011 to secure the long-term future of hospices that serve the residents of Barnet.

141. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR DARREL YAWITCH (Agenda Item 3.4)

Motion 3.4 in the name of Darrel Yawitch was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Rawlings was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Rawlings was declared lost.

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

RESOLVED - Council notes that under new proposed government regulations voluntary groups and charities in Barnet will be forced to pay for a performance right license.

Council believes that requiring charities and voluntary organisations in our Borough to pay what is in effect an additional tax is deeply unfair, particularly at a time when charitable donations have fallen in the recession. The tax is an additional burden on, and state control of, organisations that have already suffered from the imposition of countless regulations and requirements under this government.

Council therefore calls upon the Chief Executive to write to the three Members of Parliament that represent constituencies in the London Borough of Barnet asking them to vote against these regulations when they come before Parliament.

142. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CLARE FARRIER (Agenda Items 3.1)

Motion 3.2 in the name of Councillor Claire Farrier was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Jeremy Davies was moved. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Davies was declared lost.

Upon being put to the vote the motion was declared lost.

143. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING.

In accordance with the Agenda, the Mayor adjourned the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 8.55pm.

144. ADMINISTRATION POLICY ITEM: FUTURE OF RECYCLING (Agenda Item 4.1)

Councillor Daniel Thomas proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. An amendment in the name of Councillor Kathy McGuirk was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor McGuirk was declared lost.

Upon being put to the vote Policy Item was declared carried.

RESOLVED - Council notes that a landfill tax of £2.50 per tonne for inactive waste must be paid and strict EU targets for reducing the amount of waste going to landfill are in place.

Council believes that in recent years strong progress has been made through increased composting, including the recent decision to move leaves to allotments rather than burn them and the kerbside collection of plastic bottles, tetra paks, cardboard and kitchen waste pilot. Council notes that there is still some distance to go before household recycling rates reach the desired level.

Council believes that to reach this target it is necessary to move away from the outdated concept that it is possible for the state to tax and legislate its way to changing people's behaviour.

Council further notes that successful pilot schemes here and in the United States which rely on incentivising people to recycle more have had a radical effect on increasing the rate of recycling.

Council requests that Cabinet closely examine these pilot schemes and draw up proposals for rewarding residents who reduce their waste, and/or increase their recycling rate, by granting a rebate or other form of reward.

145. OPPOSITION POLICY ITEM: ENFORCEMENT IN BARNET AS AMENDED BY COUNCILLOR MATTHEW OFFORD (Agenda Item 4.2)

Councillor Kathy McGuirk proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the name of Councillors Matthew Offord and Anne Hutton were moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Offord was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Hutton was declared lost

Upon being put to the vote, the substantive Policy Item as amended was declared carried.

RESOLVED- Council notes the concern of local people about anti-social actions carried out by a minority, including dropping litters and allowing their dogs to foul. Powers already exist to implement Dog Control Zones in accordance with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act and the Police are able to prosecute for littering and dog fouling offences.

Council further notes that a review of enforcement powers is currently being undertaken by officers, and asks Cabinet to bring forward an updated policy on this issue once this review is complete.

146. REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE – REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS (Agenda Item 5.2.1)

Councillor Andreas Tambourides moved reception and adoption of the report.

REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

17 DECEMBER 2009

Members:

Independent Members:

*Reverend Bernd Koschland (Chairman)

* Stephen Ross
* Ron Rosenhead

Michael Barber
Deborah Sanders

Rabbi Dr Jeremy Collick
* David Sparrow

Councillors:

Joan Scannell
* Andreas Tambourides

* Agnes Slocombe
* Claire Farrier

Jack Cohen
* Monroe Palmer

*denotes Member present
\$denotes Member absent on Council Business

REGISTRATION AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS (Report of the Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer – Agenda item 8):

As contained in the supplemental of the Acting Democratic Services Manager, Council noted corrections to Page 49, paragraph 9.8 of the Report to the Standards Committee.

At its meeting on 17 December 2009, the Standards Committee noted the factors supporting the recommendation for the publication of Members' Register of Interests. These factors included:

- The London Borough of Barnet is now one of the few London Boroughs not yet to publish the Register of Interests online
- There is a legal requirement to make the Register of Members' Financial and Other Interests publicly available. Publishing the Register of Interests online would significantly increase ease of access for the public and for Members themselves as well as promoting greater transparency and accountability in governance as promoted by the Local Government Act 2000 and developments since.
- Publishing the Register of Members' Interests on the Web would be an opportunity for Barnet to make a significant step forward in line with the current climate generally and complementary to the recent Council decision asking the Executive to publish all expenditure over £500.
- With the register available via the Internet, and particularly if maintained by Members themselves, the risk of Members inadvertently breaching the Code through failure to declare would be reduced.

The Committee discussed the attached report and noted that twenty-four out of the thirty-three London boroughs (thirty-two boroughs plus City of London) currently placed their registers online. The Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer emphasised that, if the Committee agreed that the Register of Interests be published on the Council's Website, the consent of individual Members would be sought for their entries in the Register to be posted online. If any Member were not to give his/her consent, the opt-out would have to be indicated on the Members webpage and the excluded information would still be available for public inspection at the Council's offices.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Council approves that the Members' Register of Interests be published on the Council's Website (Barnet Online), with the consent of individual Members sought for their entries in the Register to be posted online, and that the register for each Member would usually be posted as a whole. If any Member were not to give his/her consent, the opt-out would have to be**

indicated on the Members webpage and the excluded information would still be available for public inspection at the Council's offices.

(2) That Council note the corrections to the Report to the Standards Committee.

147. REPORT OF THE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 5.2.2)

Councillor Hugh Rayner moved reception and adoption of the report.

REPORT OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 JANUARY 2010

* Chairman: Councillor Hugh Rayner

* Vice-Chairman: Councillor Lisa Rutter

Councillors

* Fiona Bulmer	Alison Moore	* Wayne Casey
* Alison Cornelius	* Barry Rawlings	* Jack Cohen
Brian Gordon	* Kath McGuirk	* Susette Palmer
Terry Burton	Ross Houston	
John Marshall	* Zakia Zubairi	
Brian Salinger	Charlie O-Macauley	
* Wendy Prentice	Anne Hutton	
* Dean Cohen	* Agnes Slocombe	
* Eva Greenspan	Ansuya Sodha	
* Tom Davey		
* Joan Scannell		
* John Hart		
Jazmin Naghar		
* Bridget Perry		
* Andreas Tambourides		
* Kate Salinger		

*denotes Member present

Councillor Joanna Tambourides substituted for Councillor Brian Salinger
Councillor Mukesh Depala substituted for Councillor John Marshall
Councillor Claire Farrier substituted for Councillor Alison Moore

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY APPOINTMENTS (Report of the Overview & Scrutiny office – Agenda item 6)

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council the establishment of an Ad Hoc Overview & Scrutiny Committee to investigate the recent utility problems in East Barnet, and the other incidents in Mill Hill and Finchley.

The committee shall specifically enquire into the following aspects:

- (i) The circumstances of the incident and its impact;
- (ii) The response of the utility companies;
- (iii) The response of the London Borough of Barnet;
- (iv) The impact on public services;
- (v) How future incidents might be averted.

In enquiring into these aspects, the committee shall ask for evidence and attendance from the National Grid, utility supply companies, public service partners, Council officers and residents.

Council is asked to establish the Ad Hoc Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the following membership:

	Conservative (4)	Labour (2)	Liberal Democrat (1)
1.	Andreas Tambourides	Claire Farrier	Duncan MacDonald
2.	Joanna Tambourides	Gill Sargeant	
3.	Tom Davey		
4.	Lisa Rutter		

Substitutes:

	Terry Burton	Anita Campbell	Wayne Casey
	Hugh Rayner	Jim Tierney	Jack Cohen

RESOLVED - That an Ad Hoc Overview & Scrutiny Committee be established as set out above.

Councillor Joan Scannell moved an amendment to the report was moved changing the Membership of the Ad Hoc Committee.

RESOLVED – That the following changes to the membership of the Ad Hoc Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approved

- Councillor Brain Coleman to replace Councillor Joanna Tambourides as Chairman of the Committee.
- Councillor John Hart replace Councillor Terry Burton as a Substitute Member of the Committee

148. RESIGNATION OF COUNCILLOR CHRISTOPHER HARRIS (Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.1)

RESOLVED – That Council note the resignation of Councillor Christopher Harris

149. POLITICAL BALANCE FOLLOWING RESIGNATION OF CHRISTOPHER HARRIS AS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL (Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.2)

RESOLVED - That Council note that as a result of the current vacancy arising from the resignation of a member, the variation in the calculation of the political balance between the political groups represented on the Council is not sufficient to require

any change in the allocation of seats to the political groups on the Committees and Sub-Committees to which the political balance rules apply.

150. **JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (JHOSC) – “Shaping health services together – consultation on developing new, high quality major trauma and stroke services in London.” (Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.3)**

RESOLVED - That Council note the conclusion of the pan-London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC).

151. **CHANGES TO REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.5)**

The Conservative Group indicated that they wished to make the following changes as detailed below:

RESOLVED – That the following changes on the Outside Bodies be approved:

North London Waste Authority

Reference 134:

- **Councillor Andrew Harper to replace Councillor Lynne Hillan as a Council representative on the North London Waste Authority.**

152. **CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Further Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.6)**

The Conservative Group indicated that they wished to make the following changes as detailed below:

RESOLVED –

(1) That the following changes in Committee Membership be approved:

Policy and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- **Councillor Mukesh Depala to replace Councillor Brian Gordon as a Member of the Committee.**
- **Councillor Mukesh Depala’s substitution position on the Committee to be replaced by *Vacancy*.**

Budget & Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- **Councillor Brian Gordon’s substitution position on the Committee to be replaced by *Vacancy*.**

153. **LEADER’S SCHEME OF DELEGATION – (Supplemental and Further Supplemental Report of the Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.8 & 5.3.9)**

(a) Change to Cabinet Membership

The Leader had advised the Acting Democratic Services Manager that Councillor Matthew Offord had stepped down as Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Community Safety. As a consequence of this, the Leader had appointed Councillor

Joanna Tambourides as the new Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Community Safety

(b) Appointment of Assistant Cabinet Member

The Leader had advised the Acting Democratic Services Manager that she had appointed Councillor Tom Davey, Assistant Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That Council approve the appointment of Councillor Joanna Tambourides as the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Community Safety.**
- 2) That Council note that Councillor Joanna Tambourides will no longer be the Assistant Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport**
- 3) That Council note the appointment of Councillor Davey as the Assistant Cabinet Member for Children's Services.**
- 4) That the Acting Democratic Services Manager be instructed to make the appropriate changes to the Council's Constitution**

154. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Further Supplemental Report Acting Democratic Services Manager – Agenda Item 5.3.10)

The Conservative Group had indicated they wished to make the following changes as detailed below:

RESOLVED -

- (1) That the following changes to Committee Membership be approved:**

Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

- **Councillor Matthew Offord to replace Councillor Joanna Tambourides as Chairman of the Committee.**

Policy and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee

- **Vacancy to replace Councillor Joanna Tambourides as a substitute Member of the Committee.**

- (2) RECOMMEND – That the Policy and Performance Overview & Scrutiny Committee be asked to confirm the following change:**

Adult Social Services Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee

- **Councillor Lisa Rutter to replace Councillor Joanna Tambourides as a substitute Member of the Committee.**

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

Comment: Councillor Barry Rawlings

People may not know it is the Centenary of Friary Park – they want to highlight this for local residents groups and all Barnet residents. There are many Council and Civic community events that happen in the park. All I want to know what is the level of Council support for this is, not necessary finance, but time, effort, advertising the case, allowing

the Friends of Friary Park advertisement banner and so on. I'm trying to gauge the level of support the Council will be giving to Friary Park.

Response: Councillor Daniel Thomas

Thank you Mr Mayor. The Council does support this event. We did send the Friern Barnet Local History Society an application pack to hold an event in late May last year. We've since heard nothing back. We've offered them a discount on the fee to hold the event of £400 which just makes the fee £137. Though, we have not heard back we have even offered assistance there are grants and things they may be eligible for to host the event. But, until they make a formal indication of intent to holding this event then of course we cannot help.

Comment: Councillor Julie Johnson

Thank you Mr Mayor. Before Christmas, the residents of West Hendon Estate presented a petition to Barnet Council requesting replacement windows to those blocks that still have the original ones. The recent very cold spell made it difficult for elderly and young families on the Estate to keep their homes warm. This problem was compounded by the dreadful conditions of their front windows with many held together by metal brackets. Even, if Barnet Council's given a grant to kick start the regeneration, it will be at least a decade and a half before the regeneration is completed. We are looking at an even longer time frame if the Council's bid for funding is unsuccessful. Quite frankly, this is too long to expect residents to wait for windows to wait for windows fit for purpose. Marsh Drive is the last phase of the generation we cannot simply expect people to live in these conditions until 2018 or even later. Decent homes standards must and should apply. Tenants and leaseholders have over many years contributed to HRA and service charges towards the upkeep and maintenance for this Estate and they deserved decent accommodation.

Response: Councillor Richard Cornelius

Mr Mayor, I remember going as a very junior Assistant Cabinet Member with then Cabinet Member for Housing, the Leader, and Councillor Hart to West Hendon Estate and looking at the windows there a couple of years ago. As a result of that visit, we were able to find the money and get the bulk of the worst windows done. I appreciate that there are some windows that are not in the best of condition there. But, money is tight, life is hard, however, I have sought an assurance from Barnet Homes that they will look sympathetically on the very worst windows there.

Comment: Councillor Lisa Rutter

Mr Mayor, I'm very pleased that Church Farm Youth Club in Brunswick Park Ward has received a grant. This is great news not only for residents benefiting in my ward but also our neighbouring ward of East Barnet, and I would like to thank the Cabinet Member.

Response: Councillor Daniel Webb

Mr Mayor, it is great to conclude the formal part of the Council meeting with a very positive comment from my colleague, Councillor Rutter. This is just one example of prudent focused commissioning by this Council, and Councillor Rutter would be well aware of the good work, superb work in fact, Barnet Church Farm Youth Club, does not only with local youths, but also with autistic groups locally. This grant funding is going to enable Church Farm to continue the good work in both those spheres.

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

There were none.

The meeting finished at 9.55pm

Council Questions to Cabinet Members
26 January 2010
Questions and Responses

Question 1**Councillor Jack Cohen**

What has been the cost so far to the Council of defending the Judicial Review of the decision to scrap the Sheltered Housing Wardens?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

The additional legal costs incurred by the Council through defending the Judicial Review have totalled £23,000. This represents 5% of the planned efficiency saving for one year.

Supplementary Question 1**Councillor Jack Cohen**

I have a supplementary Mr Mayor, Councillor Hillan the latest earmark return says the Council is setting aside £5 million for litigation. Why is this Council continually having to fight legal battles? Is it because the Administration doesn't know what it is doing?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Thank you. There always a number of legal battles going on. Indeed, one of the legal battles that we are fighting as you know is Catalyst which had absolutely nothing to do with this Administration. I believe it is your battle there, but there are always ongoing battles at any Council. It is only prudent for us to set aside that sort of money to face them all.

Question 2**Councillor Dean Cohen**

Can the Cabinet Member inform us what action was taken to keep Barnet moving during the coldest weather in a generation?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Council has a formal winter maintenance programme which ensures that the Borough's principal roads, footways and town centres remain clear and free flowing during winter months. The Council's normal procedures for dealing with severe weather conditions such as snow and ice are to grit Priority 1 roads – i.e. major roads and transport hubs across the Borough.

The Council's Priority 1 roads cover a length of approximately 238 kms or 35% of the Council's whole road network. Priority 1 roads are normally gritted when there is frost or snow expected. If the snow is persistent and after the Priority 1 roads have been cleared, the Council may go onto the side roads and pavements (Priority 2 or 3), as necessary. The Council has provided approximately 320 grit bins on the side roads across the Borough, which residents can use to assist themselves and their neighbours.

The Council had been prepared for severe weather, and had stockpiled more salt. As of the week commencing 29 November 2009, the Council's salt barn was at full capacity (2,014 tonnes). This enabled the Council to cope with the snowfall and icy conditions that affected the Borough during December.

Nevertheless, the longest cold snap for 30 years has understandably had a severe impact on salt levels. This has not been helped by the gas outage in East Barnet during December, which absorbed significant resources. Additionally, all side roads in the affected area and their pavements had to be gritted to ensure a safe working environment for the utility companies.

Nevertheless, the longest cold snap for 30 years has understandably had a severe impact on salt levels. This has not been helped by the gas outage in East Barnet during December, which absorbed significant resources. Additionally, all side roads in the affected area and their pavements had to be gritted to ensure a safe working environment for the utility companies.

The use of grit this season began during the week ending 6 December. Since then we have used in excess of 2,300 tonnes of salt to treat the road network and the footways of Town Centres and other strategic locations. Some of this salt was spread in order to keep the Council's Refuse Collection service during the week before Christmas and to deal with the emergency conditions created by the gas outage in East Barnet. As of 15 January, the Council has received some 700 tonnes of salt against a total order in excess of 3,000 tonnes. Of the salt orders placed with the Council's supplier during the period 17 December 2009 – 15 January 2010, the majority is therefore still outstanding. This has meant that the Council has had to rely on already depleted supplies and during the week ending on 10 January the salt stock fell to below 100 tonnes.

While the Council has been proactively searching for solutions and dealing with the current situation as effectively as it can, the grit supply is largely out of the Council's control, with the Government responsible for determining who gets further salt supplies. This was done via the established national "Salt Cell" and regionally the London Salt Cell which has been working together with TfL and the London Local Authority Coordination Centre.

During the recent weather all London Councils and Local Authorities have been asked to adopt a reduced or resilient Network in order to save grit. The Council decided to adopt its resilient network on 7 January, a day earlier than the advice that came from London Councils. The Resilient Network adopted by Barnet is estimated at approximately 135 km which is just over half of the Priority 1 network or 20% of the road network. In some cases the Council had to grit roads additional to the Resilient Network following requests from Emergency Services.

Costs are being reported in the CRC report, obviously winter conditions will continue until March.

Supplementary Question 2

Councillor Dean Cohen

Thank you Mr Mayor. Please could the Cabinet Member advise when the location and quantity of grit bins will be reviewed as for example in my ward there are about two grit bins?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, I thank Councillor Cohen for his question. I anticipate as a result of tonight's meeting there will be a task and finish group set up – it is up to them to set a timetable for their work. And I have asked Officers to look into their handling of the severe weather and I will touch upon that later on in tonight's meeting should the motion be discussed.

Question 3

Councillor Alison Moore

What is the latest guidance on apportioning impairments arising from lost deposits in Icelandic Banks, and what contingency is being set aside by the Leader for the £10 million+ losses that are likely to arise from the incompetent deposits that were made under the Leadership of her predecessor?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Based on information issued from CIPFA in May 2009 (LAAP 82), an impairment adjustment of £4.3m was made in the 2008/09 accounts (without the need to defer the cost to future years under government regulations).

Legal advice from Bevan Brittan, solicitors acting for the Local authority creditors and being co-ordinated through the LGA, stated that they expected all local authority's creditor claims in Icelandic Banks would have preferential creditor status in accordance with Icelandic law.

Following submission of formal claims to the Landsbanki Winding Up Board (WUB) on 30 October, the Landsbanki WUB confirmed it had accepted all local authority claims as having priority status.

On 10 December, the Local Government Association (LGA) advised that the Glitnir Winding Up Board (WUB) had notified Bevan Brittan that all local authority claims had been accepted as general unsecured claims, rather than priority claims.

This decision runs contrary to the decision of the Landsbanki Winding Up Board (WUB) and contradicts Bevan Brittan's legal advice that local authority deposits have priority status under Icelandic law, notwithstanding that any such decision would be subject to challenge by other non-priority creditors. Bevan Brittan, are already challenging the Glitnir WUB decision.

The difference in terms of overall recoveries by the local authority creditors from Glitnir is 100% in the event of priority status being secured or around 25-30% if they are deemed to be general unsecured creditors. There is no impact on recovery from Landsbanki, where it remains the case that Councils expect to recover 83% of their deposits.

The LGA and Bevan Brittan believe that the Glitnir WUB's reasoning is unsound and that the decision will eventually be reversed, either by agreement or thorough litigation. The LGA and Bevan Brittan are in continuing dialogue with the Glitnir Winding Up Board (WUB) about the reasons for their decision and potential grounds for appeal.

Bevan Brittan actively challenged the decision of the Glitnir WUB prior to the Creditor's meeting on 17 December 2009, but, it was not possible to reach an agreement. They will now challenge the decision via a mediation process to take place early in 2010. In the event that the mediation is unsuccessful, the matter will be referred to the Icelandic courts.

As a precaution, officers submitted a 2009/10 capitalisation request to Central Government on 15 December 2009. This was for the sum of £10.36m using the revised impairment calculator provided by CIPFA. The impairment calculator stipulated that a recovery rate of 83% be used for Landsbanki deposits. Central Government expect to announce their decision on whether to grant the Council's request on 29 January 2010.

At present there is too much uncertainty for any firm indication to be made of the likely monies being returned to authorities or the timing of repayment. As such there are no further impairment figures proposed for 2009/10 or the 2010/11 budget pending further details and clarification from the lead parties involved.

Supplementary Question 3

Councillor Alison Moore

Thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Hillan, isn't the most likely outcome that the Council will lose £10 million and this will have a disastrous impact on Council services? In that case, what, Councillor Hillan, are you going to do about it?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Thank you Mr Mayor. I sincerely don't think that is going to be the outcome, the LGA and Bevan Brittan are very confident that these are deposits and that they have got a very good case. Of course, nobody ever knows and we have to make contingency plans for it. We have requested that we be allowed to capitalise and it would not affect Council services

Question 4

Councillor Jack Cohen

In the light of High Court Decision will you confirm that you will not proceed with plans to scrap Sheltered Housing Wardens?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

The High Court judgment referred to the manner in which the decision was taken and not the proposed changes to the sheltered housing which if implemented would provide a service based on need rather than tenure which I believe is the right way to target support to older people in Barnet. Cabinet will be receiving and considering a report setting out the details of the judgment at the next Cabinet meeting on 3 February 2010 which will inform next steps.

Supplementary Question 4

Councillor Jack Cohen

Thank you, Councillor Hillan. If as you say in your reply that the Cabinet will consider the judgement at the Cabinet meeting on 3 February and this will inform next steps. Why have you already announced that you will appeal the judgement? Is this because you are riding roughshod over your Cabinet colleagues?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

No, we haven't announced that we are going to appeal the decision. All we've done is apply to the Court for leave to appeal that allows us to make that decision at the Cabinet meeting.

Question 5

Councillor Tom Davey

Will the Cabinet Member join me in praising the staff of Barnet's libraries, who ensured that the libraries were open during the freezing weather?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The Libraries, Museums and Local Studies service maintained an excellent service during the recent period of snow and freezing weather. Despite reduced staffing levels and difficult transport links, all branch libraries opened each day during the period of adverse weather, opening sites all week and over the weekend. Evening openings were suspended for a small number of sites on three evenings, and the mobile library patterns were inevitably disrupted during this time and we thank our users for their patience and support over this time.

I congratulate the Libraries team who have worked very hard to keep our services open in difficult circumstances, to keep providing an excellent service to our residents, and for making excellent efforts to get to work and co-ordinate the opening of our services.

Question 6

Councillor Julie Johnson

What has happened to the Council's review of domestic violence, and what were the findings?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The findings of the review of Domestic Violence are:

- Conduct a commissioning exercise:
 - Needs analysis;
 - Gap analysis;

- Identify commissioning options within budgets available; and
- Implement preferred option.
- Produce a new Domestic Violence strategy incorporating and balancing the following approaches:
 - Prevention;
 - Provision; and
 - Protection.

With a greater focus on prevention.

- Review and implement revised governance arrangements; and
- Review and implement a revised performance management structure.

Supplementary Question 6

Councillor Julie Johnson

Thank you for your reply Councillor Offord. Could you please advise what year the review was undertaken and whether all recommendations have been implemented? Also, how many prevention cases were identified to 2008/9 and how they are measured?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Mr Mayor, in 2008/9 there were 3136 domestic violence incidents reported to the Police. Of those, 1575 were identified as domestic violence and this resulted in 366 charges and 334 domestic cautions. The Council continues to work with its partners in this important area and it is work that will continue to be undertaken.

Question 7

Councillor Jack Cohen

Will you provide the latest information regarding the Council's Deposits in the Icelandic Banks?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

See answer to Question 3 above.

Supplementary Question 7

Councillor Jack Cohen

Thank you, in view of the losses up to £27½ million, would you agree with me that investing in Icelandic banks was wrong?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

As you saw the Treasury Management policy, the decisions made were perfectly correct at the time as were the decisions made by Liberal Council Somerset, Liberal Brent, Liberal Cambridge, Liberal Sutton, Liberal Vale of White Horse, Liberal Louth and Liberal Burnley – maybe Councillor Cohen will be served if he joined the rest of his party and joined us in fighting this.

Question 8

Councillor Darrel Yawitch

How has the Council coped with the level of calls received during the recent period of heavy snow and ice?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Webb

The very significant increase in calls to the Council during this period has put a lot of pressure on our street based services contact centre. A normal week in December would see around 1,500 telephone calls to this contact centre. In the week of 18-24 December the centre took over 4,000 calls. This high volume of calls has continued through the New Year weather problems.

That the Council has continued to provide good telephone service during this period is down to two factors: astute management and utilisation of staff from a number of customer service functions, ensuring we have the right people in the right place at the right time; and admirable staff commitment – for example, working through the weekend of 9 and 10 January to ensure residents had the information they needed and to reduce pressure on the emergency out of hours service.

Inevitably, this huge volume of calls has impacted on the contact centre's ability to answer every call as promptly as we would wish. However, it is testament to staff that despite this difficult period they have actually improved the contact centre's quarter on quarter performance on the time it takes to answer calls.

Question 9

Councillor Julie Johnson

What organisations work with schools in Barnet to raise awareness of domestic violence?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

In Barnet, there are three organisations, the Council, Jewish Women's Aid (JWA) and the Tender Project who are working with schools in the borough to raise awareness of domestic violence. Details of what they do are set out below.

LB Barnet

Barnet's Safeguarding Children Board engages with schools through provision of a comprehensive safeguarding programme that incorporates messages regarding domestic violence as a safeguarding concern for children. This is also included in whole school INSET sessions on child protection and safeguarding.

All schools are encouraged to have safeguarding training and the designated safeguarding person in schools is encouraged to attend the safeguarding training provided in Barnet. The local Safeguarding Children Board also host meetings every term for head teachers and designated safeguarding staff in education, which provide an opportunity for dialogue with social care managers to raise any issues of concern including Domestic Violence.

Jewish Women's Aid (JWA)

JWA have employed a part time Education Co-ordinator (16 hours per week), funded partly by London Councils and partly through general donations.

Using trained volunteers, JWA run programmes for 12 to 17 year olds in Jewish schools and Jewish children in mainstream schools, many of which are in Barnet. These programmes focus on educating young people about positive and healthy relationships. JWA believe that this is a vital part of the strategic prevention of domestic violence in the upcoming generation.

The sessions are designed to be interactive, informative and, where possible, fun. Different media are used to engage the young people in debate about issues that affect their current peer and intimate relationships, as well as preparing them for adulthood. JWA have learnt from best practice in domestic violence education from Women's Aid, Jewish Women International (a US-based organisation) and colleagues in other London boroughs, like Hounslow, who have been commended for the excellence of their work.

Much of the work undertaken in Jewish schools is as part of a consortium of Jewish charities. This 'Lifeskills' group consists of JWA, Streetwise, Drugline and JAT.

Activity:

	2009-10 (Q1&Q2)	2008-09	2007-08
Number of children reached in education programmes	Approx 1,100	2495	Data not collected

In a survey done as part of the routine monitoring for London Councils, 63% of pupils reached over a nine-month period were from the LB Barnet.

The Tender Project

Since 2005, the Tender Project have delivered a 12 week education programme to the schools - see chart below:

Barnet School Participating in the Tender Project 2005-2009

School	Type of class	Year	No. participated in workshops	No. who saw performances	No. who received resources	Total
East Barnet Secondary School		10	12	60		72
Hendon School	Drama	10+ 11	96	309	410	815
Northgate Hospital School		9+	30		100	130
Pavilion PRU	PSHE	10	25	8	40	73
Dollis Valley	Youth Group		11	34	85	130
Copthall School	Drama	11	18	180	100	298
Queen Elizabeth School for Girls	Citizenship	10	24	150	100	274
Total			216	741	835	1792

Tender promote healthy relationships based on equality and respect and have pioneered preventative education programmes in domestic abuse and sexual violence using drama and arts to engage and empower young people. Working with specialist creative workshop leaders, young people develop performance, films, plays, exhibitions, campaigns and resources to raise awareness and actively prevent domestic and sexual violence amongst young people and their wider communities.

The education programme enables young people to explore the early warning signs of abuse, the range of emotional and physical abuse, excuses of the perpetrator and the difficulties in leaving abusive relationships, all underpinned by the latest research and statistics on the issue.

Hendon School was featured in the BBC3 documentary *Dangerous Love* in March 2009.

In 2009, Tender were independently evaluated by CRG Research Ltd and found that:

- 89% enjoyed learning about domestic abuse;
- 90% understood more about the issues of healthy relationships and abuse; and
- 81% recognised that abusers abuse to gain power over their partner.

Supplementary Question 9

Councillor Julie Johnson

Thank you for your detailed and comprehensive answer Councillor Harper. Could you please tell me whether there are any plans by these voluntary organisations to extend these discussions on domestic violence to other Barnet schools?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I think, Mr Mayor, that this is maybe an issue that we should be taking up to the reconstituted Safeguarding Children Board. And, indeed I had a meeting earlier today with the new Independent Chairman of that Board and it is an issue that I wish to take forward there.

Question 10

Councillor Jack Cohen

How many residents visited the Budget Simulator on the Council's Website and what the result of their input was?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

- To date (7 January 2010) a total of 430 residents have accessed the consultation online tool
- Just over half of the respondents did not complete or change the budgets for the service areas
- The service areas where residents wanted to reduce budgets the *most* were:
 - Democratic Services;
 - Council website;
 - Planning;
 - Mobile CCTV unit; and
 - Planning, Housing and Regeneration Directorate.

The service areas where residents wanted to reduce budgets the *least* were:

- Support for vulnerable children;
- Day services for disabled adults;
- Support for vulnerable families;
- Recycling and refuse collections; and
- Highways and pavements.

The detailed analysis is currently being worked on and will be placed on the Budget page of the Council's website in due course.

Supplementary Question 10

Councillor Jack Cohen

Thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Hillan can you give us some assurances that the comments of the residents who took the trouble to access this simulator, that their views will be taken notice of and it will be reflected in your budget decisions?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

You have my full assurance.

Question 11**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Can we have an update on how services are being used at the newly refurbished Burnt Oak Library, with particular reference to the Citizens Advice Bureau service incorporated there?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Since the opening of Burnt Oak Library and Customer Service Centre in October 2008, over 68,000 customers have visited the centre, with numbers growing by 43% over a year.

The number of payments taken has increased by 82%, steadily growing month by month with an average of 802 payments being taken every month.

The Citizens Advice Bureau has had a presence in the new centre since it opened. Its surgery takes place weekly on a Thursday and is consistently fully booked, receiving 279 visitors in the past 14 months. The surgery also operates a waiting list and as such cancellations can be filled quickly.

Job Centre Plus has been based at the centre since early November 2009 and to date has carried out 307 Parent/Parents work focussed interviews.

Her Majesty Revenue and Customs has also been based at Burnt Oak centre since early November 2009 and to date has carried out 1,035 face to face interviews with a further 374 customers referred to the self-service telephone located on site.

Based on visitor figures across the year, Burnt Oak library is projecting to have over 100,000 visits to the library in 2009/10, an increase of 10,000 visits from 2007/08.

Supplementary Question 11**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Thank you very much for your reply showing how Burnt Oak Library is really proving a boon and an asset for the Borough that of which we can be proud. I wonder whether you can pass on I am sure the wishes of many people and my own feelings and the residents who have spoken to me gratitude to the staff and all those people who work in the Library and Customer Service Centre about the very courteous service they receive and the very efficient way in which the facilities there are being run.

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

I will be delighted to do that.

Question 12**Councillor Julie Johnson**

What is being done by the Council to help meet the different performance targets set to reduce domestic violence?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

The integrated approach to tackling Domestic Violence is recommended as supporting victims across the three key areas of *Protection, Provision and Prevention*.

Protection – delivering an effective criminal justice system:

Investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator programmes.

Provision – helping women and girls to continue with their lives:

Effective provision of services, advice and support; emergency and acute services; refuges and safe accommodation.

Prevention – changing attitudes and preventing violence:

Awareness raising campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification/intervention and training.

Supplementary Question 12

Councillor Julie Johnson

You are a bit thin on detail Councillor Offord, could you write to me with precise details of each of these programmes, themes and campaigns, and, an analysis how they have been practiced and performed?

Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord

Mr Mayor, this is the problem with politics. Some politicians are trying to address the important issues that we are facing while others are simply trying to catch me out. That is not the type of politics that we need. Both myself and this Council have been supporting events to mark, amongst other things, the White Ribbon campaign, and I believe by signing up to something like that all we are doing is showing some kind of gesture politics. But, in regard to domestic violence we, as political representatives, need to take responsibility and real action and not just take the easy route of signing up to public campaigns. I prefer real action not gesture politics, such as the visit I made on Friday to the Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre in Croydon so that I could learn what services we need in Hendon. But, as I said we are working closely with Boris Johnson on the issue of domestic violence and also rape to ensure that the people of this Borough have the type of centres that they have in Croydon, as under the past Mayor for London there was only one such centre. That is real action that we take seriously on this side of the Chamber.

Question 13

Councillor Jack Cohen

Will you provide six examples of how your leadership will differ from that of Councillor Freer?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Councillor Freer and myself are strong supporters of the Conservative Party principles and, as such, do not differ as far as policy is concerned. We believe in:

- ❖ Efficient and effective local Government that is answerable to the residents of Barnet;
- ❖ Protecting, enhancing and growing our Borough to the benefit of Barnet people;
- ❖ Embracing and supporting our small business culture, particularly through the recession;
- ❖ Supporting our elderly and people with disabilities into independent living;
- ❖ Creating an environment to encourage the building of attractive properties that our residents want and need; and
- ❖ Providing first class services at the best possible value for our taxpayers.

If there are any differences in style, it could be due to the feminine touch!

Supplementary Question 13

Councillor Jack Cohen

Mr Mayor, I am sure that you'll appreciate that I have to be careful with my supplemental in view of the response that Councillor Hillan says the only difference between her and her predecessor is the feminine touch! But, Councillor Hillan, you seem to also, if rumours going around are correct, that you have a tough and ruthless side to you. Is it true that you made promises to Members of your Group that if they supported you in the Leadership Election you would give them a Cabinet post and is it true that you reneged on that promise to one of your Members?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Councillor Cohen I fear yet again you are so obsessed with blogging that you are tending to believe the wrong people.

Question 14**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Could we have some feedback on the free parking arrangements at Council car parks and pay and display sites that operated between 7th December and 3rd January?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

During the operation on street parking and the use of car parks was monitored by Civil Enforcement Officers. Changes in parking revenue were monitored throughout and the Council's communications team are issuing a questionnaire to businesses across the Borough. A report will be prepared bringing together all of this information over the next few weeks.

Supplementary Question 14**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Can I say that the feedback that I have had from people on the free parking arrangements during December was very, very good indeed – a welcome relief from the criticisms that we get about parking and sometimes I am a bit responsible for that as well. But what I would like to ask is can we make this into a regular arrangement and is it anticipated that December this year and so on we make part of our festive treat to the public that we should give them these free parking facilities.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, I am pleased to hear that Councillor Gordon has heard that this is a success and it goes with traders that this is going down well. We are carrying out a review as it did cost about £100,000 and we need to make sure that £100,000 does generate the business and generate the extra footfall in our town centres and only then really can we look at whether this can be repeated in the future.

Question 15**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Are the rumours true that the Council will be twinning with Reykjavik?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

No.

Supplementary Question 15**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Thank you to the Leader for her answer. Does this mean, despite our heavy investment in the Icelandic economy, we don't even get a school trip out of it?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Thank you, whilst I understand that the Councillor is trying to crack a joke and he should not give up his day job. There is a more serious side to this – Iceland's economy is burdened by Government debt and so is Gordon Brown's Government. Iceland have a poor financial reputation in the international community and oh dear so have Gordon Brown's Government. Iceland were poorly prepared and didn't see the crash of banks coming and neither did Gordon Brown. Perhaps, there are so many similarities, and Councillor Rawlings is quite right, and the whole of the UK should be twinned with Iceland.

Question 16**Councillor Jeremy Davies**

Will the Leader confirm the current provision set aside for the financial impairment (loss) on Icelandic deposits and confirm the position for the next financial year?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

See answer to Question 3 above.

Supplementary Question 16**Councillor Jeremy Davies**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Can I ask the Leader, if the Government does not grant the capitalisation of the impairment of £10 million – how much will this cost in terms of council tax rises to the residents of this Borough to recover that £10 million short fall?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

It will not affect the council tax, I say it again and again, it will not affect the council tax.

Question 17**Councillor Brian Gordon**

In view of new regulations to co-ordinate and streamline the digging up of roads by utility companies, has there be any noticeable improvement on this within Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Traffic Management Act 2004 made provision for the introduction of permit schemes to control the operation of Utilities and other companies working on the highway. Since then many Highway Authorities have been working to establish such schemes.

Following application to the Secretary of State for Transport approval was given for Barnet Council, in partnership with 17 other London councils and Transport for London (TfL), to operate the London Permit Scheme (LoPS). The aim of the scheme is to enable the Boroughs to plan and better coordinate the timing of when roadworks take place.

As the scheme only came into operation on 11 January 2010, there will be a period of settling in and overlap with the previous process so it will take some time before the benefits can be identified.

It should be noted that the scheme will not restrict Utilities carrying out emergency works to repair faults such as burst mains and to restore lost services.

Supplementary Question 17**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Thomas, in your answer you showed that this scheme to coordinate repairs by utility companies on road only came into operation quite recently which indeed we know is the case and that there will be a period of settling in and overlap. Can you give an idea, if you know, how long that period of settling in and overlap is likely to be and when we will see hopefully the benefits that will arise from this streamlining arrangement?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, I would envisage a period of at least 6 months, and Mayor Johnson is hopeful that this scheme will work and so am I. There are over 100 organisations that are permitted to dig up our roads. This scheme will make a difference and we will have to let this filter through for at least 6 months from now.

Question 18**Councillor Ross Houston**

Has the Council agreed affordable housing targets with the Mayor of London, if so what are they, and if not, why not?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The affordable housing target has not been finalised with the Mayor of London. Until funding is agreed nobody is in a position to know what is possible.

Supplementary Question 18**Councillor Ross Houston**

Thank you for your reply Councillor Cornelius. Isn't it becoming a farce? Does the Cabinet Member think that Tory Mayor Johnson set some achievable targets and doesn't this really show a lack of political will by this Administration?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Not at all, it is just a question that the market has changed, funding is difficult – Central Government is to blame. There is no difference in view between the Mayor and ourselves.

Question 19**Councillor Jeremy Davies**

Will the Cabinet Member confirm the date of closure of the pedestrian crossing in Mill Hill Broadway (the one located outside Boots and Iceland); why it was closed and when it will re-open?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The works at the pelican crossing started at the beginning of December as planned work relating to modernisation of the signal equipment which had reached the end of its serviceable life, and is being carried out by Transport for London. The works were due to be completed by mid January although this may be delayed due to the adverse weather conditions recently experienced. Whilst such works are normally completed within a week or two, TfL have confirmed that a problem with the signal controller has resulted in the work taking longer than would normally be expected.

Supplementary Question 19**Councillor Jeremy Davies**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I have to say this closure for over a month caused widespread inconvenience to residents in Mill Hill. I ask, the Cabinet Member, in future when crossings are renewed in this fashion that if they to be shut for 4/5 weeks that temporary arrangements are put into place to ensure there is minimised inconvenience for residents.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, that is a fair point, but this was unexpected, it was only meant to be a few weeks. The weather did cause this to be delayed with circumstances outside our control. No doubt Councillor Davies has already raised this with TfL.

Question 20**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Is it possible to improve upon acoustics at Planning meetings, as members of the public still sometimes complain that they cannot hear what is being said by Committee Members around the table.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Webb

Thank you for raising this matter. As a result, the Head of Facilities at Hendon Town Hall is working with technicians to see whether acoustics at meetings can be improved so that the public can follow proceedings more easily.

Supplementary Question 20**Councillor Brian Gordon**

I must say I am a little bit disappointed about the fact with all the money and effort that has gone into refurbishing the Town Hall we still find as you can see from my question that the acoustics at planning meetings are unsatisfactory. And, particularly as planning meetings are the shop window of the Town Hall and probably more people see those meetings and are very concerned to hear what is going on there than any other meeting that the Council actually has.

So, I really do hope, and I will ask, what we going to do to ensure that these planning committee meetings are more user-friendly and that people can hear what is going on because its vital at these meetings that people are able to feel and be part of democracy in action.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Webb

Personally, I have had no problems at Chipping Barnet Area Planning with members of the public being able to hear me. I understand there is a problem at other committee meetings and facilities are looking into the problem now and I will write to the Member once I take action.

Question 21

Councillor Charlie O-Macauley

What are the current Town Keeper arrangements for Burnt Oak?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Burnt Oak has one Town Keeper and one full time assistant who work Monday to Friday between 07.00 and 15.00, it is also manned by our late shift sweeper from 14.00 to 22.00. During weekends and bank holidays the town centre is covered by the Town Keeper or his assistant.

Supplementary Question 21

Councillor Charlie O-Macauley

Thank you very much Mr Mayor. We are very pleased to hear about the town keeper, can the Cabinet Member be able to show more evidence of his presence?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, no, I have written down in the supplementary, the allocation to Burnt Oak and Councillors are quite welcome to meet the teams themselves and actually see whether they exist.

Question 22

Councillor Jeremy Davies

Would the Cabinet Member confirm that The Rise in Mill Hill was not gritted in the recent cold weather? Why was this road not gritted when a vehicle skidding out of this road onto the A1/A41 could cause a major accident?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

As described in question 2, all roads in the Borough are prioritised for treatment and this is further adjusted by the requirements detailed in the answer to question 25. There will be a review of winter maintenance operations which will include a review of the priorities. The issue of joining roads has been highlighted and will be specifically considered as part of the review.

Supplementary Question 22

Councillor Jeremy Davies

Thank you Mr Mayor. I would like to ask Councillor Thomas as a follow-up as I have not actually received a proper answer to my question and clearly I posed the question as it did actually happen in terms of somebody nearly skidding onto the A41. Clearly, if they had crashed into other vehicles this would have blocked one of the routes of the London resilient network. And, clearly I have not received a satisfactory answer and would ask the Cabinet Member to take it into consideration that there is a duty of care on the authority to ensure that the resilient network and the major routes throughout Borough are kept operational during times of bad weather and this will require gritting side roads?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, I am well aware of the duty of care that this Council has to its residents and in fact we increased our resilient network. We had a risk assessment and we brought more priority 1 roads into the resilient network and we've had pressure from regional and national bodies to actually decrease our resilient network. So, I think we did more than perhaps we had pressure to do. There will be a review of the whole gritting scheme, priority roads, resilient network and Councillor Davies and all Members are invited to comment on that, and perhaps in fact some of these regional and national bodies are putting pressure on us to grit less.

Question 23**Councillor Kate Salinger**

Rumours are being spread around Coppetts Ward that Friern Barnet Library is being threatened with closure. Will the Cabinet Member please assure me that this is not the case?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The proposed 2010 – 2011 budget headlines considered by Cabinet do not include any savings from Friern Barnet library nor impact on the operating hours of Friern Barnet library. You can tell your constituents that the closure of Friern Barnet is not being considered.

Supplementary Question 23**Councillor Kate Salinger**

Thank you very much Councillor Rams for your answer I was delighted to read it. But, I wonder if you could prognosticate a little further for me.

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

I prefer not to at the moment.

Question 24**Councillor Charlie O-Macauley**

What is the Council's budget for gritting and winter maintenance each year since 2006, and what will it be in 2010/11?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Council's budgets since 2006 are:

2005-06	£570K
2006-07	£480K
2007-08	£435K
2008-09	£600K

The cost for the current year 2009-10 is not known but is currently estimated in excess of £600K, which is more than the 2009/10 winter maintenance budget of £470,770. To date, half way through the winter maintenance season, the variable cost (cost of salt and gritting runs) is estimated to be approximately £250K, which is higher than the whole of the previous year.

As a result of the unprecedented weather, significant additional expenses incurred to date include, for example:

Street Scene

- Over time costs for green waste collections – Double refuse and green waste weekday collections have now been completed.
- Overtime costs for Town Centre gritting.

Parking

- Loss of income since the snowfall on 6 January. Parking restrictions have not been enforced given the conditions.

There will be further potential costs for E&O, Planning, Housing and Regeneration, and Corporate Services due to burst pipes, potholes and reactive maintenance and costs will increase if the bad weather continues. For E&O, while a certain level of allowance is made within maintenance budgets for ad hoc winter repairs, the duration of the cold weather and the amount of salt applied is likely to exacerbate defects which otherwise would not have required intervention. The cost of this is still being evaluated as the extent of the problem becomes apparent.

Supplementary Question 24

Councillor Charlie O-Macauley

Thank you very much Mr Mayor. Clearly, the budget is not sufficient, what are you doing to remedy?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, I am aware that the current Labour MP for Hendon is trying to blame the snow and the gritting shortage on fluctuating budgets. But, so do his Council colleagues, but I can tell you now that finance had nothing to do with the grit shortage, our grit stock was full at the start of December and no amount of money was going to get us some grit any quicker. As I say we had a full grit storage and it was enough for previous winters and there were many variables to take into consideration when deciding the gritting budget. The winter maintenance budget has fluctuated throughout the last few years and if you look at 2005-06 it was £570,000 and you look last year it was £600,000 – you can hardly say it's going downwards it does fluctuate. We can't budget for a once in a generation severe weather incident every single year that's what contingencies are for. There are many variables that you have to take into account when we decide our winter maintenance budget – the state of the roads etcetera and those decisions are taken on the circumstances of the day.

Question 25

Councillor Jeremy Davies

Will the Cabinet Member please update Members on the Council's priority regarding gritting of non-major roads and any risk assessment?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

During the recent weather all London Councils and Local Authorities have been asked to adopt a reduced or resilient Network in order to save grit. The Council decided to adopt its resilient network on 7 January, a day earlier than the advice that came from London Councils. The Resilient Network adopted by Barnet is estimated at approximately 135 km which is just over half of the Priority 1 network or 20% of the road network. In some cases the Council had to grit roads additional to the Resilient Network following requests from Emergency Services and to grit roads with water main bursts.

A risk assessment was undertaken of all of our priority 1 routes and those that were identified as high risk were added to the resilient network. The risk assessment included consideration of factors such as steep inclines, seepage routes (water run-off from fields) and major bus routes.

Initially the Resilient network comprised of the core or strategic transport routes which included the roads providing access to the emergency services, bus stations and rail and underground stations. Further priority 1 routes were added during the week ending on Friday 16 January which considered comments received from London Buses.

Supplementary Question 25**Councillor Jeremy Davies**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I would like to ask Councillor Thomas about Hammers Lane in Mill Hill. It wasn't included in the resilient network but no doubt because it wasn't gritted it caused a major transport diversion of the 240 bus that could not get up Hammers Lane. I would like that included in the review in future because that bus serves Edgware Station, serves Mill Hill Station, serves Golders Green and prevented many people from easily getting to work on public transport on that day.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Councillor Davies points will be taken into account at review.

Question 26**Councillor John Marshall**

Can the Cabinet Member explain what challenges the Council faces in collecting recyclable waste?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Council faces a range of challenges in collecting recyclable waste, which include:

- Challenging national targets to recycle 40% of household waste in 2010, 50% in 2020, and potentially more ambitious targets for Barnet as a member of the North London Waste Authority. Barnet's household recycling rate for 2008/9 was 31.18%, against a target of 35%. Barnet households disposed of an average of 732 kgs of waste, against a target of 690 kgs.
- Rising landfill tax costs, which are currently at £40 per tonne but are rising by £8 per tonne each year, creating pressure on Council resources.
- Engaging residents in making full use of existing and future services, and in reducing their waste. With existing services, it is already possible for Barnet residents to recycle or compost 72% of their household waste.

In response to these challenges the council has taken a number of actions:

- A new recycling contract with May Gurney (from October 2008) that has enabled the range of materials collected from houses, flats and schools to be expanded to include:
 - plastic bottles
 - cardboard
 - tetra paks (e.g. fruit and milk cartons).

Since the start of the new contract, more than 2,319 tonnes of plastic bottles and 949 tonnes of cardboard have been collected for recycling. Tetra paks have been collected from 14 December 2009. There have been reductions in tonnages of paper and glass presented by residents, which we believe is due to the recession. In Barnet this is partly offset by the fact we have been collecting plastic bottles and cardboard as part of the new contract. All the new materials will be recycled in the UK, and the quality of material being collected is high, and thus helps to maximise the income from the sale of materials. 73% of residents stated they are satisfied with the kerbside service in 2008/9 compared with 68% in 2006/7.

- At the Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre in Summers Lane N12, the proportion of waste diverted for recycling, reuse or composting at the site has risen to 60.4%, against a target of 50%. This is partly due to the collection of MDF and plasterboard, which began during the new contract.

- Flats recycling facilities continue to be rolled out, including additional containers for plastic bottles and cardboard / tetra paks. During the first year of the contract the number of flats sites in the borough with recycling facilities rose to 832 sites. 106 additional frames of wheeled recycling bins were installed, including 57 at Barnet Homes sites during the first year, enabling residents to recycle a wider range of materials.
- A Waste Action Plan is being developed to take forward opportunities to expand the services available to residents, and to engage residents more effectively in making full use of the services already available to them. This will include improved use of intelligence and more effective targeting of communications with residents.

Supplementary Question 26

Councillor John Marshall

I thank the Cabinet Member for his answer which I'm sure you'll agree with me it is slightly disappointing. He'll be well aware of Mayor Johnson's campaign to get more recycling done in London. Can I ask him to try and encourage more recycling by commercial operations as in the London Borough of Southwark where I work we regularly recycle from my office I would think tons of paper every year? Can we encourage other offices in Barnet to do a similar thing?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, Councillor Marshall is absolutely right. All stakeholders in society should recycle more – residents, businesses and manufacturers. I don't see why this cannot be included in our waste management action plan.

Question 27

Councillor Kathy McGuirk

Is the Council aware of the surge in the number of people who have injured themselves by falling on ice on Barnet roads or pavements?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

We have recorded 8 slipping on ice claims for the period 1 December 2009 – 18 January 2010 which is an increase of 5 claims from the same period last year.

I am waiting for further information from the local NHS.

Question 28

Councillor Joanna Tambourides

What action was taken to care for the vulnerable affect when gas supplies were interrupted in East Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Sachin Rajput

Further to the relevant gas supply issues in East Barnet to which the question relates, adult social services played a significant role in relation to caring for vulnerable persons and worked closely with the Council's incident controller. A coordinated effort ensured that vulnerable persons were identified using a variety of sources. The said vulnerable persons were contacted in person or by telephone and contact was maintained throughout the situation to ensure that those in need of additional support were provided the same. This included but was not limited to providing home meals, additional homecare hours and extra heaters. When the rest centre was opened adult social services provided social workers to assess the needs of the vulnerable and worked closely with relevant service providers to ensure proper assessment by them of those persons they are instructed to provide for and for them to inform adult social services of any additional identified need(s) considered to require addressing as a result of the gas supply incident concerned.

Additionally, staff from the Learning Disability In House Services offered support at home for the affected users where applicable and adult social services also ensured that extra staff were in place to deal with issues as they arose over the Christmas and New Year period.

Supplementary Question 28

Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Rajput, I understand that you live on the periphery of the affected area and I wonder if you were able to visit the operations centre during the affected period. And, if so, what were your impressions?

Answer by Councillor Sachin Rajput

Thank you Mr Mayor. Can I thank the Member for the supplementary question. Of course, I didn't declare an interest earlier I'm not expecting a financial award of any sort on my part. I do live near to the area, Mr Mayor I attended as both an Oakleigh Councillor and a Cabinet Member. I am aware that it affected East Barnet and Brunswick Park too and I am also aware that Members of those Wards attended as well. Mr Mayor, indeed, it has been brought to my attention that you attended in the capacity as first citizen of the Borough, and of course Madam Leader also attended. Can I say from those I spoke to they were extremely grateful at the response on behalf of this Borough to an issue not created or anticipated by this Borough, but certainly by external factors. Of those that I spoke to they were extremely happy with this Borough's response.

Question 29

Councillor Colin Rogers

Why are there so few grit bins in East Finchley, how often are they filled, how are residents made aware where their nearest grit bin is and how many grit bins have been removed in the last five years?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

There are approximately 20 grit bins in the East Finchley area. We filled these grit bins at least 4 times this season. Grit bin locations have been published on the Barnet website. According to our records no grit bins have been removed from the East Finchley area. A number of grit bins have been added since we last reviewed the locations in 2006.

Supplementary Question 29

Councillor Colin Rogers

Thank you Mr Mayor and fraternal greetings from Comrade Crook. Councillor Thomas, according to a map published on the Council's website there are less than 10 grit bins in the East Finchley area. Could you suggest and tell my unacquainted residents to the locations of these bins?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I'm happy to send details to Councillor Rogers to pass onto his residents.

Question 30

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Why is the Administration proposing to spend £3 million next year on a bureaucratic Council re-organisation whilst cutting similar amounts from Children's services and adults' social services?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

£2m is identified as restructuring and re-organisation costs as a result of the budget proposals for 2010/11 as well as looking forward to the implementation of the Future Shape programme and workforce review. This includes costs related to redundancy and pensions. It does not therefore related wholly to Future Shape.

£1.5 million is set aside to invest in implementing Future Shape. This is an invest to save provision. This includes establishing a programme office, preparation of business cases and other project related costs. These items reflect the fact that the scale of change envisaged by the Future Shape programme cannot be implemented without cost, but are necessary to deliver the significant savings expected from Future Shape, including the £3 million saving attributed to Future Shape proposals within the budget.

Supplementary Question 30

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Thank you Mr Mayor. As part of the budget consultation will Councillor Hillan agree to allow residents to suggest what they would do with that £3½ million rather waste it on the lawyers and consultants needed to set up Future Shape?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

We are, as you know, consulting residents and we will take into account everything they say. However, we do need to deal with the situation that is coming in view of the financial crisis that Gordon Brown led us into and we know we are going to have some tough times to come. So, the £3 million is being invested and that will show savings in future years.

Question 31

Councillor Alison Moore

Given the outcome of the Judicial Review that the Administration's decision to remove sheltered housing wardens was illegal, is the Leader now going to abandon those plans, and if not why not?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

See answer to Question 4 above.

Supplementary Question 31

Councillor Alison Moore

Thank you very much. Your opinion that the proposed changes are the right changes is not shared by thousands of local residents. Does that worry you and are you actually going to power ahead regardless of their views?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

I'm not sure where Councillor Moore gets her information from, but thousands of local residents are not complaining about it. In fact, we do have residents complaining that they will not now be getting the service they were promised at least not initially. As you know, the majority of the complaints against us were either dropped or dismissed – there is only one item that we need to address and we will looking very closely at it in the near future.

Question 32

Councillor Kathy McGuirk

Has the Administration quietly abandoned its Premier Parks policy?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I can confirm that The Premier Parks Strategy has not been abandoned. The strategy is under review in favour of a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy; following the recent Scrutiny Review in 2009, declining customer satisfaction and the Strategy being five years old. A decision has been taken not to submit Green Flag Applications for any Barnet Parks in 2010, as the increasing expenditure and resources required to achieve a flag cannot be justified in the current economic climate.

Question 33**Councillor Alison Moore**

Why has the Administration been promoting the idea of charging extra for people to jump the queue in the planning process when this is clearly not legal?

Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen

The Administration has not promoted the notion of additional charging to 'fast track' planning applications as suggested. Planning fees are set by Central Government not locally and Barnet is committed to delivering a fast, effective and high quality service to all applicants. Our planning department's performance in processing applications is consistently in the upper quartile nationally.

Supplementary Question 33**Councillor Alison Moore**

I'm sorry to correct you Councillor Cohen, but your Administration has promoted the idea of charging extra to jump the planning queue, it was splashed all over The Guardian last summer and your Leader is quoted talking about it in The Times at the end of last year. Isn't it true that the Future Shape programme is simply a project for charging more and doing less?

Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen

Mr Mayor, I am sick and tired of this disinformation, we did not write The Guardian, we did not write The Times – maybe it's Councillor Moore who wrote it, I have no idea. Let me say to avoid any doubt, this Authority, this Administration has not been promoting queue jumping in the past, is not promoting queue jumping at the present time and will not promote queue jumping in the future QED.

Question 34**Councillor Gill Sargeant**

What is the latest position on the Aerodrome Road bridge over spend?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The position remains within the profile last reported to Cabinet Resources Committee. A negotiated settlement has also been achieved with regard to the property and land issues. Financial closure is now underway and lessons learned report will be submitted to a future CRC meeting.

Supplementary Question 34**Councillor Gill Sargeant**

Thank you very much indeed. As I can see, the issue of the Aerodrome Road is going to be reported to the Cabinet Resources Committee – I know it is not in Councillor Daniel Thomas' power to give me the answer to this but I would like a written reply to it because I would like to make the suggestion that what happened to Aerodrome Road and its overspend is of great importance given the redevelopment and the regeneration of the whole of Colindale. And, I would like to suggest that Councillor Thomas takes the idea that we look at a task and finish group and report this in the future to a subsequent meeting of Council.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Mr Mayor, Councillor Sargeant knows it is not in the gift of Cabinet to tell Scrutiny what to scrutinise.

Question 35**Councillor Kathy McGuirk**

Given public confusion about what the Council will and will not grit and clear in adverse weather will the Administration ensure that better publicity is issued at the start of the winter to enable residents to be better prepared?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Council has been clear about its prioritisation of road gritting. The Council's gritting routes were published on the website at the start of the season. This includes the location of all grit bins and general advice in dealing with adverse winter conditions. The Council's Resilient Network has also been published on the Council's website as from the evening of 7 January 2010. Regular updates and information bulletins are being posted on the website for the benefit of the residents.

I have asked officers to also publish information in Barnet First ahead of next winter. This issue will also be considered by the review carried out by officers and I welcome proposals for a scrutiny review which will compliment this.

Question 36**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What training is being directed at members with responsibility for governance of the treasury management function?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

Proposals for the provision of a customised Member training programme are being commissioned from independent treasury management advisers and it is the intention of the Director of Finance to present a series of options to CRC in February.

Supplementary Question 36**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Thank you Mr Mayor. The external auditor's report on resources back in October last year said the Council should introduce training for Members' who have responsibility for the governance of Treasury Management. The Council's response in that same report said that training is being directed at Cabinet Members and the impact would be evaluated. But, we now find out that the options will not come to Cabinet Resources until February. Was it Councillor Hillan or the previous Cabinet Member for Resources who gave the auditors the misleading impression that training had started?

Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan, Leader of the Council

As I said in my answer, there is a Member training programme being commissioned from independent treasury management advisers; and I think that is a step forward.