

## Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET held at  
The Town Hall, Hendon, NW4, on Tuesday, 12 July 2011.

### PRESENT:

- \*The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Lisa Rutter)
- \*The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Barry Evangelì)

### Councillors:

*Maureen Braun	*Julie Johnson	*Kate Salinger BEd (Hons)
Alex Brodtkin	Sury Khatri BSc (Hons),	*Gill Sargeant
*Anita Campbell	MSc	*Joan Scannell
*Pauline Coakley Webb	*David Longstaff	*Brian Schama
*Dean Cohen BSc (Hons)	*John Marshall MA	*Alan Schneiderman
*Jack Cohen	*Kath McGuirk	*Daniel Seal
*Melvin Cohen	*Andrew McNeil	Mark Shooter
*Brian Coleman AM FRSA	*Alison Moore	*Agnes Slocombe SRN, RM
*Geof Cooke	*Graham Old	*Ansuya Sodha MBA(Middx),
*Alison Cornelius	*Charlie O-Macauley	Cert Ed, DipM (CIM), AMBA
*Richard Cornelius	*Lord Palmer OBE, BA,	*Stephen Sowerby
*Tom Davey	FCA	*Andrew Strongolou
Claire Farrier	*Susette Palmer MA	*Andreas Tambourides
*Anthony Finn	*Bridget Perry	*Joanna Tambourides
*Brian Gordon LLB	*Wendy Prentice	*Daniel Thomas BA (Hons)
*Eva Greenspan	*Sachin Rajput BA (Hons)	*Reuben Thompstone
*Andrew Harper	PgD Law	*Jim Tierney
*Helena Hart	*Robert Rams	*Rowan Turner
John Hart BA MA	*Hugh Rayner	*Darrel Yawitch
Lynne Hillan	*Barry Rawlings	*Zakia Zubairi
*Anne Hutton	*Colin Rogers	
*Geoffrey Johnson	*Brian Salinger	

\*denotes Member present

#### 1. PRAYERS (Agenda Item 1.1):

The Mayor's Chaplain offered prayer.

#### 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1.2):

Apologies for absence were received from the Councillors Lynne Hillan, Claire Farrier, Mark Shooter, John Hart, Sury Khatri and Alex Brodtkin.

3. **MINUTES (Agenda Item 1.3):**  
**RESOLVED – Council approved the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 17 May 2011 and 15 June 2011.**

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda Item 1.4):**

<b>Member:</b>	<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Interest Declared:</b>
Councillor Barry Rawlings	Item 4.1.1 Report of Cabinet - Safeguarding	Personal but non-prejudicial as Councillor Rawlings sits on some of the sub-groups of Barnet Safeguarding Children's Board in a personal capacity but was not involved in the annual report. Councillor Rawlings remained in the chamber and took part in the discussion and voting on the item.
Councillor Helena Hart	Item 3.1 – Winterbourne View  Item 4.1.1 Report of Cabinet - Safeguarding	Personal but non-prejudicial interest as Councillor Helena Hart is a Barnet representative on the Council of Governors of the Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust. Councillor Hart remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting on the items.
Councillor Lord Palmer	Item 4.3.1 Report of the Standards Committee	Personal but non-prejudicial as his work in the House of Lords, Councillor Lord Palmer is involved in the Localism Bill which contains alterations to Standards legislation. Councillor Lord Palmer remained in the chamber and took part in discussion and voting on the item.

5. **OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 1.5):**

The Worshipful Mayor regretted to announce the death of Mr Victor Lyon. Victor Lyon retired from Barnet Council in May 2006 where he served as a Councillor for 28 years. In 1978 he was elected Councillor for the Childs Hill Ward where he served until 1982. Moving his family to Whetstone that same year he was elected as a Ward Councillor for Totteridge where he remained until his retirement.

He served as Mayor in 1993 to 1994, with his wife Sheila as his Mayoress and twice was deputy Mayor in 1980 to 1981 and in 2005 to 2006. He was Leader of the Council from 2002 to 2005. Previously Mr Lyon was a Councillor in the London Borough of Camden from 1964 to 1971 and in the Metropolitan Borough of Hampstead from 1953 to 1965.

Mr Lyon also served as Chairman of Barnet Blind and Partially Sighted Bowls Club, a trustee of Barnet War Memorial Initiative which he founded whilst Mayor in 1994 and as a member of the Executive Committee of the London Mayor's Association.

In 2006 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Middlesex University in recognition of his contribution to Local Government, particularly in North London.

Mr Lyon provided a distinguished service to local government for over 40 years.

At the invitation of the Worshipful Mayor, Councillor Brian Coleman, Councillor Alison Moore and Councillor Jack Cohen spoke in tribute of Mr Lyon.

A minute silence was held in remembrance of a departed friend and colleague.

The Worshipful Mayor, further announced the success of the Boroughs young athletes in the London Youth Games 2011. In total the young athletes achieved a total of 15 medals. These included 5 gold, 6 silver and 4 bronze. Team Barnet came 10th out of the 33 London Boroughs taking part, with a top 10 finish across 25 individual events. Council joined the Worshipful Mayor in congratulating all the participants on their achievements.

The Worshipful Mayor informed Council that on behalf of all citizens of Barnet a card and gift had been sent to the Duke of Edinburgh who celebrated his 90th birthday on 10 June 2011.

**6. BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING (Item 1.6)**

There was none.

**7. 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.

**8. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Councillor Joan Scannell, duly seconded, moved under Council Procedure Rule 10.2.2, that the order of business relating to Agenda Item 3 be varied so that Business Items 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 be heard first. Upon being put to the vote, the Motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – That the order of business be varied to allow Business Items 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 to be debated and voted upon in advance of votes being taken on the other Business Items on the Agenda.**

**9. ADMINISTRATION BUSINESS ITEM – WINTERBOURNE VIEW (Agenda Item 3.1)**

Councillor Sachin Rajput moved the Administration Business Item in his name. 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 Barry Rawlings was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the Administration Business Item in the name of Councillor Sachin Rajput was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council is thoroughly disgusted at the systematic abuse and neglect that allegedly occurred at the Winterbourne View Hospital for people with learning disabilities in Bristol that was exposed on BBC *Panorama* and over which several people have been arrested.**

**Vulnerable adults with learning and physical difficulties deserve help and support, Council believes, not the appalling treatment that allegedly occurred at Winterbourne View.**

**Council is dismayed that the Health and Social Care Regulator, the Care Quality Commission, seemingly did not spot any of this alleged abuse and apparently failed to follow up on reports on the alleged behaviour of some of the workers from a whistleblower.**

**Council supports the Care Services Minister, Paul Burstow MP in his efforts to find out what went wrong, and supports his investigations into the workings of**

the CQC in this regard. Council believes there needs to be national learning into the failures at Winterbourne View and welcomes the Government's proposals to put Adult Safeguarding Boards on a statutory footing.

Accordingly, Council calls on Cabinet to work with our provider partners in social care and health to ensure correct procedures are in place to help prevent any similar situation from occurring in Barnet. Further, Council calls on all concerned with safeguarding to support the Minister's investigations into the CQC and asking that the failures in the inspection regime that allowed this alleged abuse to occur unhindered are rectified as soon as possible.

**10. OPPOSITION BUSINESS ITEM – THE PARKING SERVICE IN BARNET (Agenda Item 3.2)**

Councillor Kath McGuirk moved the Opposition Business Item in her name. Amendments in the name of Councillor Brian Coleman and Councillor Alan Schneiderman were moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Coleman was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Alan Schneiderman was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive Opposition Business Item as amended by Councillor Brian Coleman was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council welcomes the parking recovery plan and moves to modernise the service following a failure of the special parking account to reach its budgeted surplus for several years and a low satisfaction rating. Council notes that in the recent review of targets within the service by the Cabinet Member for Resources all the “red light” warnings had disappeared.**

Further, Council is pleased that, as a result of the plan, revenue for the parking service is now on budget. Council notes that despite their age 80% of parking meters in any one week are working and that over 80,000 Borough residents have opened cashless parking accounts and that plans are well advanced for 60 PayPoints across the Borough, which will be the first in the Country. Council notes the Police view that “anything that gets cash off the streets is to be welcome”, in the fight against crime.

Council notes that the surplus on the Special Parking Account contributes towards much needed highways repairs including making good potholes, and special educational needs transport and the costs of the Freedom Pass.

Council calls on the Cabinet Member to continue with the recovery plan and given the high-profile nature of the service, press ahead with proposals to reform and improve the service further via the One Barnet framework.

**11. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING.**

In accordance with the Agenda, the Mayor adjourned the meeting. The meeting reconvened at 9.05pm.

**12. NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBER BUSINESS ITEM – HOUSING ALLOCATIONS (Agenda Item 3.3)**

Councillor Rowan Turner moved the non-Executive Business Item in his name. An amendment in the name of Councillor Ross Houston was move. Debate ensued. 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 non-Executive Business Item in the name of Councillor Rowan Turner was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council would like to congratulate outgoing Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Richard Cornelius, on the much-needed overhaul of the previously inadequate and unfair Choice Based Lettings housing allocation strategy. Council would like to welcome the new Cabinet Member, Cllr Tom Davey, to his position and wish him well in his new role.**

**Council believe that Social Housing is a valuable asset, and that its allocation should be the subject of rigorous examination. Council further believes that those that work locally and contribute to the community should be recognised in the allocation process.**

**Council believes that it is vital that housing allocations reflect the needs of residents, and that those needs are fairly, honestly and openly assessed. Council is pleased that the new system focuses on the needs, and not the "wants" of residents.**

**Council regrets that Choice Based Lettings was unfair, giving many people the false hope of accommodation they would never receive.**

**Council warmly welcomes Barnet's new Housing Allocations Scheme, which ensures that those in the greatest need can access Social Housing in the Borough and works to help ensure those who live locally and work locally are assisted. Council is particularly pleased that former members of our brave Armed Forces are recognised in our new policy.**

**Council also notes that the new scheme is easier for residents to understand and access, and that pilots have indicated that residents in need are housed, on average, 5 days sooner under the new scheme.**

**Additionally, Council believes that turnover of Social Housing is essential to ensure it continues to fulfil its role to provide shelter to those in greatest need.**

**Therefore, Council welcomes the statement by the Minister for Housing, Grant Shapps MP that the prosperous should not be living in Social Housing.**

**Council also welcomes the plans in the Localism Bill to make Social Tenancies more flexible to ensure that Socially Rented homes are there for those that need them.**

**Therefore Council calls on Cabinet to work to ensure the new Housing Allocations Scheme is implemented successfully and ensures local people in the most need can access local Social Housing. Further, Council calls on the Cabinet Member for Housing to write to the Minister for Housing, Grant Shapps MP welcoming the moves to make Social Housing tenancies more flexible and supporting the Minister's desire to stop the wealthy living in housing meant for those in genuine need.**

**13. NON-EXECUTIVE BUSINESS ITEM – COMMUNITY RENTS AND CHARGES IN BARNET(Agenda Item 3.4)**

The non-Executive Business Item in the name of Councillor Pauline Coakley was not dealt with by the end of the meeting, and Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb did not specifically ask in her notice for the Business Item be voted on. In accordance with

Council Procedure Rule 31.5 the Item was referred to the Cabinet for consideration and any necessary action.

**RESOLVED – That the non-Executive Member Business Item in the name of Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb is referred to Cabinet.**

**14. REPORT OF CABINET – SAFEGUARDING IN BARNET (Agenda Item 4.1.1)**

Councillor Andrew Harper, moved adoption and reception of the report.

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. Council noted the content of the report, in particular the formal governance arrangements that exist to ensure that the Council conducts its statutory Safeguarding responsibilities properly, and the present Safeguarding activity undertaken by the Council and its partner agencies.**
- 2. Safeguarding training is to continue to be part of the induction process for newly-elected Members and senior officers/directors, and that opportunities for updated and ongoing training for current Members and Officers continue to be provided.**
- 3. An annual report on safeguarding continues to be submitted to Cabinet and Council.**
- 4. The agreed safeguarding procurement standards are put into effect.**
- 5. That there is continuing involvement and dialogue through the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that all providers of NHS services, including Primary and Acute Care, are fully involved in the Safeguarding Agenda.**

**15. REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 4.2.1)**

Councillor Hugh Rayner, moved adoption and reception of the report.

**RESOLVED - Council endorsed the Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11.**

**16. REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 4.3.1)**

Councillor Wendy Prentice, moved adoption and reception of the report. An amendment in the name of Councillor Agnes Slocombe was moved. Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Slocombe was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote, the recommendations as per report were declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council noted the Annual Report of the Standards Committee.**

**17. REPORT EXEMPT FROM CALL-IN: NORTH LONDON SUB-REGION:2011-12 RE:NEW PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 4.4.1)**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Richard Cornelius on 25 June 2011 approved authorisation for the Council to (i) enter into a grant agreement with the London Development Agency (LDA) to set up a North London RE:NEW Programme and, (ii) to commence the tender process for the appointment of managing agents for the scheme.

The decisions to enter into the LDA's Grant Agreement and to commence the tender process for the appointment of the managing agents for the scheme were considered to be urgent. A delay involved in awaiting call-in to the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee whose next meeting was not due to take place until 11 July 2011, would mean that the procurement process could not commence

until after this time, which in turn, would prejudice the spending of the L DA allocation by 31 March 2012.

**RESOLVED – Council noted the report exempt from Call-in.**

**18. FILMING AND RECORDING OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS (Agenda Item 4.4.2)**

Councillor Joan Scannell, Chairman of the General Functions Committee moved an additional recommendation to the report and requested that the recommendations are voted on separately. Upon being put to the vote recommendation 1 was declared lost. Upon being put to the vote recommendation 2 was declared carried. Upon being put to the vote the additional recommendation 3 as proposed by Councillor Joan Scannell was declared carried.

**RESOLVED-**

1. Council considered the current position of filming and recording of meetings by members of the public.
2. Council agreed to allow discreet, unlit, non-disruptive filming and recording of Council and Committee meetings by members of the public, from the public gallery.

**19. ADULTS IN-HOUSE SERVICES (MORE CHOICES) – APPOINTMENTS TO THE SHADOW BOARDS (Agenda Item 4.4.3 and 4.4.12(3))**

**RESOLVED - Council confirmed;**

1. The Local Authority Trading Company Holding Company Shadow Board and the Membership of its Shadow Board as set out below.

**LATC Holding Company Shadow Board**

- Cabinet Member for Adults as the Council Representative
- LBB Director for Adult Social Services and Health as the Council shareholder representation

2. The Adult Social Care (Local Authority Trading Company) LATC Subsidiary Shadow Board and the Membership of the subsidiary Shadow Board as set out below.

**Adult Social Care LATC Subsidiary Shadow Board.**

- Assistant Director for Strategic Finance as a Non-Executive Director
- Head of Strategic Commissioning and Supply Management for Adult Social Care and Health as Non-Executive Director
- LBB LD Service Manager as the Operational Director.

**20. COUNCILLOR LYNNE HILLAN – LEAVE OF ABSENCE (Agenda Item 4.4.4)**

**RESOLVED - Council approved Councillor Lynne Hillan's absence from meetings of the Authority for the current municipal year.**

**21. LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION – DEPUTY LEADER (Agenda Item 4.4.5)**  
**RESOLVED –**

1. Council noted the appointment of Councillor Daniel Thomas as Deputy Leader of the Council.
2. Council instructed the Head of Governance to make the appropriate changes to the Constitution.

**22. LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION – AMENDMENTS TO THE PORTFOLIO'S OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFETY AND RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT AND THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING (Agenda Item 4.4.6)**

**RESOLVED –**

- 1. Council noted the amendment to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Safety and Resident Engagement to include reference to Environmental Health.**
- 2. Council noted the amendment to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Housing to include Disabled Facility Grants, Hendon Cemetery & Crematorium and Finchley Mortuary.**
- 3. Council instructed the Head of Governance to make the appropriate changes to the Constitution.**

**23. LEADER'S SCHEME OF DELEGATION - ASSISTANT CABINET MEMBER (Agenda Item 4.4.7)**

**RESOLVED – Council noted the appointment of:**

- 1. Councillor Andrew Strongolou as Assistant Cabinet Member for Regeneration.**
- 2. Councillor Eva Greenspan as Assistant Cabinet Member for Housing**
- 3. Councillor Daniel Seal as Assistant Cabinet Member for Resources.**

**24. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Agenda Item 4.4.8)**

Councillor Joan Scannell move the nominations in her name.

**RESOLVED –** The following changes to Committee Membership were approved:

Planning and Environment Committee

- Councillor Andrew Strongolou is appointed as a substitute Member of the Committee.

Licensing Committee

- Councillor John Marshall replaces Councillor Alison Cornelius as Vice-Chairman of the Committee.
- Councillor Alison Cornelius remains a Member of the Committee.

Pension Fund Committee

- Councillor Anthony Finn replaces Councillor John Marshall as Chairman of the Committee.
- Councillor Mark Shooter replaces Councillor Anthony Finn as Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

Special Committee (Constitution Review)

- Councillor Melvin Cohen replaces Councillor Anthony Finn as Chairman of the Committee.
- Councillor Anthony Finn remains a Member of the Committee.

Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel

- Councillor Hugh Rayner replaces Councillor Tom Davey as Member of the Panel.



- Councillor Tom Davey replaces Councillor Hugh Rayner as a substitute Member of the Panel.

**25. CHANGES TO SUB- COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP (Agenda Item 4.4.9)**

Council noted that the following changes that were to be proposed at the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee on 20 July 2011.

**RESOLVED - West Area Planning sub-Committee**

- Councillor Maureen Braun to replace Councillor Eva Greenspan as Chairman of the sub-Committee.
- Councillor Eva Greenspan to replace Councillor Maureen Braun as Vice-Chairman of the sub-Committee.

Chipping Barnet Area Environment sub-Committee

- Councillor Barry Evangeli to replace Councillor David Longstaff as Chairman of the sub-Committee.
- Councillor David Longstaff to remain as a Member of the sub-Committee
- Councillor Andrew Strongolou to replace Councillor Barry Evangeli as Vice-Chairman of the sub-Committee
- Councillor Rowan Turner to replace Councillor Andrew Strongolou as a substitute Member of the sub-Committee.

Hendon Area Environment sub-Committee

- Councillor Brian Schama to replace Councillor Maureen Braun as Chairman of the sub-Committee.
- Councillor Maureen Braun to remain a Member of the sub-Committee

**26. CHANGES TO REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Agenda Item 4.4.10)**

Councillor Joan Scannell move the nominations in her name.

**RESOLVED – The following changes to Outside Bodies were approved:**

Barnet Community and Safety Group

Reference: BCPEG.1

- Councillor David Longstaff replaces Councillor Joanna Tambourides as a Council representative on the Barnet Community and Safety Group.

Barnet Housing Associations Liaison Group

Reference: 0047

- Councillor Tom Davey replaces Councillor Richard Cornelius as a Council representative on the Barnet Housing Associations Liaison Group.

Henry Smith Charity

Reference 1083

- Councillor Wendy Prentice replaces Mr Stephen Payne with as a Council representative on the Henry Smith Charity.

LGAs Urban Commission

Reference 0223

- Councillor Joanna Tambourides replaces Councillor Richard Cornelius as a Council representative on the LGAs Urban Commission

LHC - Building Components and Services

Reference 0116

- Councillor Tom Davey replaces Councillor Richard Cornelius as a Council representative on the LHC - Building Components and Services.

Local Government Association

Reference 0215

- Councillor Daniel Thomas replaces Councillor Andrew Harper as a Council representative on the Local Government Association

Local Government Association

Reference 0217

- Councillor Robert Rams replaces Councillor Lynne Hillan as a Council representative on the Local Government Association

London Councils – Greater London Employment Forum:

Reference 0001

- Councillor Richard Cornelius replaces Councillor Andrew Harper as a Council representative on the London Councils – Greater London Employment Forum

London Councils – S101 Leaders Committee

Reference 0198b

- Councillor Daniel Thomas replaces Councillor Andrew Harper as a Council representative on the London Councils – S101 Leaders Committee.

Stonegrove and Spur Road Partnership Board

Reference SSRPB1

- Councillor Tom Davey replaces Councillor Richard Cornelius as a Council Representative on the Stonegrove and Spur Road Partnership Board.

Valentine Poole Charity

Reference 1135

- Councillor Wendy Prentice replaces Mr Stephen Payne as a Council Representative on the Valentine Poole Charity

Wright Community Development Trust

Reference 0237

- Councillor Tom Davey replaces Councillor Richard Cornelius as a Council representative on the Wright Community Development Trust,

Youth Sport and Leisure Foundation

Reference 7368a

- Councillor Daniel Seal replace the vacancy on the Youth Sport and Leisure Foundation.

27. **DESIGN AND HERITAGE CHAMPION(Agenda Item 4.4.11)  
RESOLVED – Council noted the appointment of Councillor Daniel Seal as Design and Heritage Champion.**
28. **QUESTIONS TO COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Agenda Item 4.6)**
  1. **Councillor Pauline Coakley-Webb**

How have you represented to North London Waste Authority the concerns and opposition of many residents in Barnet regarding the proposed waste treatment plant at Pinkham Way?

**Response: Councillor Brian Coleman**

There are 14 Councillors on the North London Waste Authority representing all the residents of the this Borough. Sadly there are two Conservative Members and 12 Labour Members. Councillor Melvin Cohen and I make our views very vocal at all meetings of the North London Waste Authority but we are often out voted on matters.

2. **Councillor Barry Rawlings**

The alleged need for a waste treatment plant at Pinkham Way is partly a consequence of Barnet's failure to meet and increase re-cycling and waste reduction targets. What commitment have you made to NLWA to increase re-cycling and reduce waste in Barnet?

**Response: Councillor Brian Coleman**

Councillor Coleman did not respond to the question as he believed Councillor Rawlings was out of order for not reading the questions as submitted.

The meeting finished at 10:21pm

**Council Questions to Cabinet Members  
12 July 2011  
Questions and Responses**

**Question 1**

**Councillor Susette Palmer**

Could the relevant Cabinet Member please let us know when we are going to update Councillors outmoded windows 'internet explorer'?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

If any of the Councillors require the new browser then they should request this through the members support line and the Members Support Officer will action this request and provide any training and/or guidance that may be necessary.

**Supplementary Question 1**

**Councillor Susette Palmer**

Perhaps the Cabinet Member could explain to the Members of the Council who are not as up on IT as he and that if it is taking them a very long time to log on and if they have trouble with word 7 they need to update their browsers to Internet 7. We do have, them you just need to ask.

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Madam Mayor, I would like to thank Councillor Palmer for that tip and if other Councillors have got problems with their software they should speak either to Liam Mannion or indeed Councillor Palmer.

**Question 2**

**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does Barnet Council welcome the recommendations of the Munro report and how well-placed is it to respond to the recommendations if they are accepted in full by Government?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

We do indeed welcome Eileen Munro's recommendations which put the focus on doing the right thing to safeguard children. We are supportive of the increased emphasis on the professional judgement of social workers and agree that national and local performance information should be used to help facilitate improvement and promote accountability, rather than as the sole measure of performance. It is vitally important that we continue to work closely with our partners to continually improve the way we safeguard Barnet's children, and we would welcome Government research into the impact of health reorganisation on protecting children.

It is a testament to the existing good practice in Barnet that many of the recommendations are already part of our everyday work. We are already investing in early intervention and prevention services, which Munro sees as crucial. We are also involved in the SCIE (Social Care Institute of Excellence) pilot for learning from serious case reviews that Munro recommends as a way to understand the underlying issues influencing practice. We look forward to Government's response later in the year.

**Supplementary Question 2**

**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

When does the Cabinet Member expect to hear the government's response to the Munro report?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

I am advised that the response from the government will come within a matter of days and the signs are that the government is going to accept all the recommendations made by Professor Munro. I think we should congratulate both the Minister responsible, Tim Loughton and the Coalition government for commissioning this excellent piece of work which was not a knee jerk reaction to a particular incident or tragedy but a well thought out initiative to address a national problem. As I said in my written answer, I think here in Barnet we are very well placed to implement what I expect the recommendations will be.

**Question 3****Councillor Alison Moore**

Given that Barnet has missed its targets for reducing the attainment gap between children with SEN / on free school meals and their peers, would the Cabinet Member accept that education in Barnet is not serving all children to the same level?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

Like other London boroughs, in Barnet there is a disparity between the attainment of those eligible for free school meals and those with SEN and their peers. Overall attainment is high in Barnet – with 66% achieving 5 A\* to C GCSEs last year, compared with 55% nationally. Although there is an attainment gap, both children with SEN and those eligible for free school meals have significantly higher attainment than the national average. Last year 43% of Barnet's children on FSM and 31% of those with SEN achieved 5 A\* to C GCSEs, compared with 31% and 23% nationally. Performance for both these groups has been improving over time.

**Supplementary Question 3****Councillor Alison Moore**

Councillor Harper, each statistic actually represents a set of children and young people for whom we have failed to level the playing field. What is your strategy to continue to close the gap in achievement in Barnet children in the face of a Coalition Government driving for free schools and less control of schools and I mean that beyond the pupil premium?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

I think within Barnet the opportunities educationally are there for all of our children and young people. I and the Administration are determined to keep it that way. We have a very strong position set out in our Children and Young Peoples strategy, which has been endorsed by our Children's Trust Board and I can assure Councillor Moore that we will be keeping an eye on performance and attainment figures. I believe the opportunities are there and I am determined we should continue to make them available for all of our children and young people.

**Question 4****Councillor Susette Palmer**

Could the Cabinet Member please tell me how many apprenticeships for young people(16 -18 and for people over 19 ) Barnet has created in the past year and how many we currently have and in which departments?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

The Council has established an apprenticeship steering group that has been set up to increase both the supply of apprenticeships and to stimulate demand amongst young people. The plan produced by the group has a target to recruit an additional ten apprenticeships within the council by scrutinising vacancies as to their suitability, converting existing posts and replacing agency staff with apprenticeships where appropriate.

We currently have one 16-18 year old and eight 19-24 year olds in employment at Barnet under the apprenticeship scheme. Of these nine apprenticeships, five are directly employed by the council (created this academic year) and four are employed by our suppliers and contractors. Of the five that are employed by the council, two are based in libraries services, two are based in children centres and one is based in the leaving care team.

**Supplementary Question 4****Councillor Susette Palmer**

Thank you for the answer and will you please keep us aware of the deliberations of the apprenticeship steering group?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

Very happy to give that undertaking.

**Question 5****Councillor Brian Salinger**

At the Council meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> Jan, the then Cabinet member for Housing undertook to review the use made by the Council of the London Housing Consortium.

Can the Cabinet Member tell me if the Council was represented the last meeting of the LHC, what form the review took and what the outcome of the review was?

**Answer by Councillor Tom Davey**

The London Housing Consortium was set up about 20 years ago to provide a mechanism for local authorities to procure building work through framework agreements. Barnet Homes have used the London Housing Consortium to procure capital works to the Council's housing stock in the past, but not since 2008. We have not procured any work through the LHC since 2008.

We are still full members, and as such both in theory potentially liable for any deficits that the LHC may incur or a share in any surpluses generated. Members of the consortium will only benefit from surpluses if they have procured work through it during the financial year concerned, and there has never been a situation where members have been required to contribute to a deficit.

Barnet Homes do routinely consider using the LHC framework when procuring work to the Council's housing stock, although the opportunities for doing so were small whilst the Decent Homes contracts were in operation. In a recent example, Barnet Homes found that the LHC range did not include a range of suitable fire resistant block entrance doors needed as part of a fire safety programme, and in other instances LHC prices were found to be uncompetitive with those procured elsewhere.

Now that Barnet Homes have completed the Decent Homes programme, the Council has started work with the ALMO on developing a new investment strategy for council homes going forwards, and this could make further use of the LHC framework.

Barnet Council was not represented at the last meeting of the LHC.

**Supplementary Question 5**

**Councillor Brian Salinger**

Can I first congratulate Councillor Davey on his appointment as Cabinet Member for Housing. Does the Cabinet Member understand that the LHC supplies a large range of building materials and not just for houses and flats, they also take care of the requirements. A large number of Councils and even more Housing Associations cannot all be wrong. Will the Cabinet Member at the very least undertake to meet with LHC Officers to understand for himself what they offer and what the benefits could be for the London Borough of Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Tom Davey**

I welcome Councillor Salinger's comments and I see no reason why we could not contact LHC to see what further services they could offer to Barnet and if they are beneficial to Barnet there is no reason why Barnet could not partake in their services.

**Question 6**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

The special Internal Audit report on procurement of security services from MetPro exposed dreadful failings in the procurement function in Barnet including a lack of any central register of contracts but earlier routine reports on the central procurement team twice gave a verdict of 'Limited Assurance' rather than 'No Assurance'. Are there any plans to increase the staffing of Internal Audit?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Resource levels are kept under constant review and will be maintained at a level sufficient to maintain a robust internal audit service.

Following a review of internal audit by the external auditors, the external auditors submitted a report to the Audit Committee and noted in their conclusions that no significant issues were identified with internal audit's work, the CIPFA Code had been applied in all significant respects and the work was produced to a satisfactory standard.

**Supplementary Question 6****Councillor Geof Cooke**

Does the staffing level in Internal Audit that failed to spot the depth of the problems in procurement over 5 years provide a robust service to the people of this Borough at present?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

The external auditors have not found any problems with internal audit's work and I stand by my comments in the answer.

**Question 7****Councillor Susette Palmer**

Could the Cabinet Member please tell me how many children Barnet currently has entitled to free school meals and hence the pupil premium that Barnet is getting from the Coalition Government.

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

There are a total of 7,888 children in Barnet aged 5 to 16 (i.e. Reception to Year 11) who qualify for Free School Meals. This includes children who come from families where one parent is in the armed services (UK or other), looked after children, and those who are eligible due to their parents' financial circumstances.

Pupil premium funding from the DfE does not only include Free School Meals in its scope – it also includes funding for 'Service Children' and 'Looked After Children'. The total pupil premium funding consists of £3,422,400 of which £3,391,840 is contributed towards ensuring Free School Meals for the 7,888 children entitled.

It should be noted that the above arrangements and figures are likely to change in the near future as the number of schools converting to academies increases. Academies receive their funding, including pupil premiums, directly from central government, and the local authority has no oversight of the funding arrangements.

**Supplementary Question 7****Councillor Susette Palmer**

It does not look like there will be very much left over but is that going to be distributed to individual schools?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

I will have to come back to Councillor Palmer on that.

**Question 8****Councillor Brian Salinger**

At the Council meeting on 2nd November 2010 the Council unanimously approved a motion in my name in the following terms:

"This Council recognises the importance to all residents of Barnet of the need to safeguard our children. This Council welcomes and supports the decision of the government to confirm the roll-out across the country the measures that have become known as 'Sarah's Law' which will enable parents to request information on any adult with access to their children. They are required not to pass on this information to anyone else. Police will decide whether to pass on any information.

The pilot schemes have been a success with fewer requests than expected and these 315 formal applications from parents and carers resulted in the disclosure of the background of 21 convicted child sex offenders. The Home Office says more than 60 children were protected from abuse in that period. Council calls on the Cabinet to ensure that they work in partnership with other relevant agencies to ensure full and appropriate publicity is given to the measure when it is rolled out in London"

The measure was rolled out in London in March 2011.

Can the Cabinet Member tell the Council what steps have been taken to implement the Council decision?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

We recognise the importance of safeguarding our children and the role that measures such as Sarah's Law have to play. There is a range of communications from the Home office to publicise the Child Sex Offender Disclosure Scheme and we are posting these on our Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) website. This type of information is also included in safeguarding training. Parent's Protect is the organisation nationally tasked with ensuring parents and local communities have information to help prevent sexual abuse. BSCB has invited Parent's Protect to speak at its annual conference in November and hopes to work with them to run awareness sessions for parents and the wider community.

#### **Supplementary Question 8**

**Councillor Brian Salinger**

I think that most Members who supported the Motion, and it was passed unanimously, probably expected more than just a mention on the website as a result. How will the Cabinet Member expect Mr and Mrs A, parents of child C, living in street X who are concerned about someone in their street find out what they can do to check out a neighbour or someone else who has access to their child?

#### **Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

It is true that more and more residents are taking advantage of the information on the website and more people are sufficiently computer literate to be able to do that. But I take Councillor Salinger's point and I am very happy to look at ways in which we may need to publicise this information even more widely than is the case at present

#### **Question 9**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Why, years after millions of pounds was invested in collapsed Icelandic banks in contravention of the Council's Treasury Management policies, is Treasury Management still given only limited assurance by Internal Audit?

#### **Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

The Internal Audit report on Treasury Management was given a limited assurance due to one high priority recommendation on the use of unencrypted laptops within the section that did not comply with the Council's data security policy. Other issues included formalizing scrutiny arrangements and keeping reconciliations up to date. There were no exceptions found in relation to compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Investment Strategy/Policy. The priority one recommendations has subsequently been resolved through IT and Treasury Management will be subject to another audit during 2011-12 where we would expect the assurance to improve given progress against the action plan.

#### **Supplementary Question 9**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

3 years on from the exposure of the disastrous Icelandic Bank investments and repeated assurances that the Treasury Management Service would be fixed, does he not agree that it is totally unacceptable that 3 years on the service should have anything other than full assurance and what is he actually going to do to put this right immediately?

#### **Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

I do agree that it is unacceptable and I have also put in my written answer that next audit of the Treasury Management is to see improvements.

#### **Question 10**

**Councillor Susette Palmer**

Has Property Services set a rent or price for Church Farmhouse? If not when?

#### **Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Property Services received an enquiry from the Library Service regarding the use of Church Farmhouse by a community group. The enquiry was regarding expected rental price for the property and was received in April 2011. Property Services responded directly to the Library Service on 18 April 2011 with the relevant information regarding the expected rental price, in line with market evidence and with a note that any rental agreement would be subject to lease negotiation. My understanding is that we have not heard back from the group concerned and a



report regarding Church Farmhouse will be coming to the Cabinet Resources Committee in the near future.

**Question 11**

**Councillor Brian Salinger**

In the light of the changed method of allocating available council and housing association properties, can the Cabinet Member explain to the Council how any member of the Council or indeed any member of the public can be certain that any particular property that has been allocated, has gone to the family or the individual in greatest housing need?

**Answer by Councillor Tom Davey**

Applicants who fall into one of the priority bands under the new Allocations Scheme are offered a choice of suitable accommodation from a pool of properties that are available when they approach the Council for help. Priority is then determined by band and date of application where there is more than one suitable applicant.

Housing needs officers work hard to correctly identify the right properties for customers in priority bands but clients are expected to be realistic about what is likely to be available and can have their priority demoted if they refuse two reasonable offers of accommodation.

The Council is confident that the new system is more effective at prioritising those in the highest need than previously, as under the Choice Based Lettings bidding system (CBL) , those applicants with the highest priority often failed to bid for suitable properties, allowing some applicants in low priority need to secure a property.

Cabinet has agreed that the policy will be fully evaluated once it has been in operation for 6 months, and this will include an assessment of the fairness of the new scheme.

**Supplementary Question 11**

**Councillor Brian Salinger**

Does the Cabinet Member recognise and does he condone the fact we have returned to the dark ages of housing when faceless housing officers tell people where they are going to live? Does the Cabinet Member appreciate that when people in high housing need choose not to bid for properties that was their choice? Does the Cabinet Member acknowledge that transparency is the key requirement of whatever system we use and transparency is clearly absent from the process being used now?

**Answer by Councillor Tom Davey**

I do not believe we have returned to the dark ages with the new housing policy, I think Councillor Salinger's point mainly does relate to transparency and this probably the most important factor in housing allocation. As long as any system can promote full transparency to those who are using the system, then that system will be a good system, so transparency is something we will be promoting under the new allocation system.

**Question 12**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Will the Cabinet Member listen to the views of residents and not close Friern Barnet library?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

We have completed a major consultation exercise listening to views of library users and residents and using this information to propose a new library strategy. We have also completed a second phase of consultation to take to responses to the proposed strategy. I am very grateful to Councillor Kate Salinger, who organised a meeting with Friern Barnet residents so that I could hear their views and ideas. As with other activities, these responses will be considered as part of the consultation.

Cabinet will consider a final report on the library strategy at the end of July.

**Supplementary Question 12**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

While I welcome the belated u-turn by Councillor Kate Salinger and Councillor John Marshall demonstrated at the BMOSC yesterday evening in opposing the library closures, will the Cabinet therefore be supporting the views of over 2000 petitioners who want to retain their local library in Friern Barnet or is the consultation a sham with plans already in place to force closure? Is it also true that no library will be ready at the Arts Depot when the closure happens and would he agree that the method used to ascertain library use was based solely on numbers of books lent with no reference to other users, be it for IT or study use?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

I was there at last night's meeting. It is for the Cabinet Members to decide on their view on this, I have put forward my proposals for the Library Service and I believe these proposals are robust and will maintain the Library Service for many years to come. It gives us the opportunity to spend an extra £10,000 a year on books and open our Library Service for longer. I never believed these Library proposals would be popular with everyone, but I believe it benefits Barnet as a whole and I stand by them.

**Question 13**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

In relation to the April 2011 published "Expenditure by Supplier" please provide details of the services purchased for entry number 590 under Commercial Directorate paid on 27 April in the amount of £3514 .80 and marked "redacted -commercially sensitive"

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

This related to expenditure incurred on external legal fees in respect of the Adults Social Care project in the One Barnet programme.

**Supplementary Question 13**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

I did plough thorough the thousands of entries published online which shows our expenditure of over £500 and this one of a number of that caught my eye '...details redacted because it is commercially sensitive.' Your answer does not satisfy me because I can not imagine what could be commercially sensitive. If you can not give me an answer in public could you give it to me in private?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Councillor Cohen knows full well that commercially sensitive information is not in the public domain. Any Member can ask for more details of exempt information. I would happy to share this with Councillor Cohen.

**Questions 14**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

There is concern within the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) and indeed other SACRE bodies around the country about the low priority being given to religious education in non-faith secondary schools, pursuant to the omission of RE from the humanities list for the new English Baccalaureate. In view of the numerous people within Barnet with religious affiliations, could the Council take a pro active stance in monitoring the quality and quantity of religious education in our non faith schools?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

SACRE has oversight for religious education in the borough and publish an agreed syllabus for non religious schools to follow. SACRE is in the process of organising visits to schools to monitor implementation of the syllabus. Findings from this will be published in its annual report.

**Supplementary Questions 14**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Could we take a proactive stance in monitoring the content of religious education in the schools and perhaps work with SACRE in the particular respect . Would you not agree that in view of the considerable diversity of faiths there are in Barnet, probably more than anywhere else in the country, that religion and faith should be given a very high priority in all of our schools and we should see that it is properly taught and that everyone has opportunity to learn about their own culture and indeed other cultures?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

Firstly let me congratulate Councillor Gordon on his membership of SACRE and thank him for the dedication he brings to it and he is absolutely right about the diversity of faiths in this Borough, which we should welcome. Regarding the Council taking a proactive stance, I am not sure that this is really within our remit, but the Administration and Officers will certainly work with SACRE to help ensure opportunities are available in all of our schools for all of our children.

**Question 15**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

What plans does Council have for the Friern Barnet library building and surrounding green areas to each side?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

There has been a period of consultation to listen to the views of library users and residents. No actions have been taken at this stage. We have not developed any specific plans or proposals for the Friern Barnet library building and surrounding green areas.

**Supplementary Question 15**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Does this therefore mean that if the closure of Friern Barnet Library goes ahead as planned, the building will remain empty and unused because no specific proposals have been developed and neither will the library be ready for opening at the Arts Depot, no library will be open anywhere for the users of Friern Barnet? Could I also have confirmation if the £440,000 land value includes the green area to each side and the slip road or merely the building?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

I will write to the Member on the final question.

There are no plans at the moment because we are still in a period of consultation and once that consultation period is over we will develop our plans. But I am sure, Madam Mayor, you will be interested to learn that this recent conversion by Councillor Coakley Webb and her Ward colleague Councillor Rawlings to campaign for the Library has been fairly new. You would expect that as Ward Member she would be keen to lobby me or email me or try and meet with me to discuss the issue but I have had nothing, unlike other Ward Councillors who are very keen to try and support their libraries.

**Question 16**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

In relation to the April 2011 published "Expenditure by Supplier" please provide details of the equipment material etc purchased for entry number 473 under Environment and Regeneration paid on the 15 April in the amount of £4400.00 and marked "redacted personal information".

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

This related to works carried out by a contractor working at Hendon Cemetery. The name of the supplier was redacted as this was personal information (they are a sole trader).

**Supplementary Question 16**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

There is an entry in the amount of £4400.00 and marked "redacted personal information". The response from Councillor Thomas is nonsense. Are you telling this Council that when we make a payment to a sole trader for service, that sole trader's name is not allowed to be published? It seems to be utterly ridiculous. They are providing a service and that service is genuine we ought to know who we are making the payment to.

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

That is the advise I have been given.

**Question 17**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm that no pressure is being or will be exerted one way or the other by the Council on Barnet's schools to elect for academy status, and that the choice will be left entirely to the schools themselves?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

The Academies Act allows schools to apply to convert to academy status. It is the school's governing body that takes the decision on whether or not to apply for academy status, and the Local Authority does not input into the process. It is then the Department of Education that decides whether or not to grant academy status to a school.

Barnet is supportive of schools that have been granted an academy order and will continue to welcome their inclusion in the wider schools partnership. We are committed to maintaining strong relationships between all schools regardless of their status.

### **Supplementary Question 17**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Whereas I am pleased to see that we take an objective, dispassionate and neutral stance towards schools whether or not they are Academies, do you not feel as I do that the spirit of Localism would suggest that it is better we assess a situation where schools remain within the Barnet family and will be continually part of the LEA, in that way it shows that the schools are satisfied with the services and financial arrangements that Barnet can provide, or do we not feel that way.

### **Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

I know that Councillor Gordon is expressing a concern that a number of people have, but it is the policy of this Administration to both welcome the government's education reform agenda and to place ourselves at the disposal of those who wish to take full advantage of it, and that includes those schools who decided for themselves without pressure from the LA that they wish to go the route of applying for Academy status. I think that for the Local Authority to back off and allow schools to take decisions for themselves is itself entirely in the spirit of Localism and something we should support. Those schools that wish to go that route then receive every assistance from the officers of the Children's Service and indeed from myself from time to time. I would also say to Councillor Gordon and others who may be sceptical about this, that we have a number of schools that have already gone down the Academy route and I have seen no evidence whatsoever of them wishing to be no longer part of the Barnet family of schools, quite the contrary. They are continuing to make a contribution because they see mutual advantage in so doing.

### **Question 18**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

No Cabinet Members attended the last meeting of Budget & Performance Scrutiny, including the Cabinet Member responsible for Resources, and the Cabinet Member responsible for the easyCouncil programme. Does the Leader think this is acceptable, when important reports on the management of resources (MetPro and others) and important reports on easyCouncil outsourcing projects were on the agenda, and does he think this damages Barnet's reputation on accountability?

### **Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

I regret that I was not able to be at the meeting and further regret that no Cabinet Member was available to be questioned or comment. However senior officers were there and able to answer. Clearly it would be much better for relevant Cabinet Members to be in attendance.

### **Supplementary Question 18**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

Proper scrutiny and challenge of decisions and policy development is an absolute vital part of the efficacy of local government. I appreciate Councillor Cornelius that although you are committed to attending and indeed there are some Cabinet Members who are regular attendees at scrutiny meetings, we do struggle to get others and once again we had a struggle last night to get a Cabinet Member to attend the pre-decision scrutiny of the Library Strategy and appearing after 9:00pm when there was a packed public gallery of residents supporting libraries. This was not paying due regard to the people of Barnet or the desire to do pre-decision scrutiny on that. What will you be doing to ensure regular and timely attendance of your Cabinet Members who do get significant allowance for those scrutiny meetings right across the piece.

### **Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Personally I would encourage all Cabinet Members to attend the relevant meetings but occasionally there will be diary clashes. It is an inevitable factor of modern local government that we are very

busy people and there are clashes from time to time that are unavoidable. As regards last night the Cabinet Member concerned had a completely unavoidable engagement that he had to keep and he came as soon as he could and certainly his presence was appreciated I am sure by those who were there.

**Question 19**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

In relation to the April 2011 published "Expenditure by Supplier" please tell me the number of pens purchased for entry 505 under Central Expenses paid on the 11 April in the amount of £4214.10 and marked "pens to retired employees".

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

There was no expenditure incurred in respect of this item. A purchase order was goods receipted in error, and this was cancelled.

**Supplementary Question 19**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

I am told there was no purchase in the amount. Why was it on the list? Who issued the purchase order? And how come goods are receipted when apparently they were never received?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

I will get the answer to Councillor Cohen in due course.

**Question 20**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

How did the day of so-called industrial action recently pursued by the Trade Unions against the Government's very necessary economic stringency, impact upon the work of the Council and the services we provide to the public?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

The Council was not affected but some parents were inconvenienced when schools closed.

**Supplementary Question 20**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Would you join with me in saying to those people who joined in the industrial in-action be it in Barnet or elsewhere, that they were acting very irresponsibly and the strikes achieved nothing but causing inconvenience to the members of the public and damaged the position of the economy and workers themselves. Also that we look forward to the day that if such strikes continue, this government will bring in more legislation to curb the dictatorial, totally undemocratic action of union leaders, be it in Barnet or elsewhere

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Councillor Gordon expresses his opinion very forcefully and caution would suggest that I would not perhaps express them quite as expressively as that.

**Question 21**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

What is being done to rectify the injustice of the scrapping of the proposed bus stop in Summers Lane N12 near Sunny Way in which the lack of response to a 'consultation' letter giving the impression it was going ahead anyway has apparently been taken, completely wrongly, to indicate a lack of support for the proposal?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

It was decided not to proceed with the scheme on the grounds of

- 1) loss of parking space
- 2) increased congestion in Summers Lane
- 3) no need for an additional bus stop
- 4) grass area to be paved over with loss of amenity
- 5) unnecessary expenditure on a non priority matter in times of shortage of public money

**Supplementary Question 21****Councillor Geof Cooke**

Will Councillor Brian Coleman reconsider this atrocious decision in the light of information from the Ward Councillors survey of opinion amongst residents that over 90% of the people in the area who responded are in favour of this missing bus stop being reinstated? Also the last item of the stated reason which talks about public money, will he consider the waste of public money which is involved in writing off the thousands of pounds which have already been expended in designing the scheme and consulting interested parties including residents.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

The scheme was unwanted, unaffordable and for the reasons listed in my reply will not proceed.

**Question 22****Councillor Jack Cohen**

I refer the Cabinet Member to planning application f/05021/10 779 -783 Finchley Road NW11 reported to the Finchley and Golders Green Area Planning sub Committee on the 4 May 2011 and in particular the addendum report. Will the cabinet member confirm that the amounts set out to be paid by the developer to the Local Authority by way of section 106 have ( as reported at the committee) been now been paid. Will the cabinet member confirm that the amounts for Highways Improvement ( local to the site ) in the amount of £60,000.00 and open spaces ( ward level in the sum of £119,500.00 have both been paid in full. If so will the cabinet member tell me whether the monies have been spent for the purposes set out in the section 106 agreement.

**Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides**

- 1.1 The most recent planning permission relating to the site was permission reference F/05021/10 which was for an amendment to planning application C02856P/04 dated 7th April 2005; the council has previously received money relating to this application which is shown in the table below (fig 1).
- 1.2 The permission F/05021/10 granted was subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement which to my knowledge has still not been completed.
- 1.3 The £60,000 payment relating to Highways improvements has been paid and partially spent in accordance with the section 106 agreement relating to permission C02856P/04. £13,140 has been spent towards footway improvements outside Matilda marks school and £3,000 has been spent towards the improvements to the junction of The Ridgeway/ Hodford Road/ The Vale and Rodborough Road.
- 1.4 The amount of £104,336 has been received towards the £119,500 Open spaces contribution. None of the received funds have been spent.
- 1.5 Figure 1 highlights the payments due, the payments which have been received and how the payments have been applied.

**Figure 1**

Planning Obligation	Amounts required	Amounts received Under Previous S106 Agreements		Amount Spent
<u>Affordable Housing (financial)</u> A contribution towards the provision of Affordable Housing within the London Borough of Barnet. (Current application).	£127,452.00	£0	£0	

<u>Education Facilities (excl. libraries)</u> A contribution towards the provision of Education Facilities in the borough. (Combination of current application and the that carried over from application C02856P/04 dated 07/04/2005.)	£83,316.55	£60,515.00	£60,515- Spent towards improvements to Fairway/ Northway School
<u>Libraries (financial)</u> A contribution towards Library Facilities and Resources in the borough. (Current application).	£452.00	£0	£0
<u>Health</u> A contribution towards Health Facilities and Resources in the borough. (Current application).	£4,050.00	£0	£0
<u>Highways Improvement (local to the site)</u> A contribution towards local highway improvements within the vicinity of the development. Carried over from application C02856P/04 dated 07/04/2005.	£60,000.00	£68,821.33	£13,140 - Spent towards footway improvements outside Matilda marks School £3,000 – Spent towards improvements to the junction of The Ridgeway/Hodford Rd/The Vale/Rodborough Rd
Open Spaces (ward level) A contribution towards the improvement of open spaces in Childs Hill ward. Carried over from application C02856P/04 dated 07/04/2005.	£119,500.00	£104,336	£0
Monitoring of the Agreement Contribution towards the Council's costs in monitoring the obligations of the agreement. (Current application).	£2,838.00	£0	£0

### Supplementary Question 22

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

This is an important question is about how the Council spends Section 106 money and is in connection with a development in Childs Hill Ward. I am concerned that as part of the agreement a substantial amount of money is to be spent on local highway improvements in the vicinity of the development. Could the Cabinet Member assure me that the amounts for highway improvements and open spaces will indeed be spent as set out in the Section 106 and that she will lead with Ward Colleagues to work out the best way in which can use that money to improve the facilities for local people?

### Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

I have taken all the comments on board and will be writing to Councillor Cohen.

### Question 23

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Will the Leader reiterate his support (as stated at the April BMOSSC meeting) for the view that the Pinkham Way planning application should go to the Planning & Environment Committee for comment?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Yes

**Question 24**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

What is your assessment of the risk of progressing with a major expansion of outsourcing under 'Easy Barnet' before the Council's procurement operation has demonstrated over a sustained period the capacity, organisation and competence to support current outsourcing?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

I believe that risks are being mitigated against now that a Procurement Action Plan is in place and that the Council will be working with an implementation partner when outsourcing.

**Supplementary Question 24**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

Would the Cabinet Member agree with me that by taking this leap in the dark to continue with a gross increase in outsourcing without first demonstrating you can to the limited amount of outsourcing we have now, that course of action is anything but conservative?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

This is not a leap in the dark, there are lot of reports, facts, figures on this issue. Also there are other big contracts that this Council procures successfully, so I do not agree that we need to stop this programme.

**Question 25**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Since the breach of Treasury Management policies that resulted in investments being made in failed Icelandic banks, how many internal audits have been carried out on the Council's Treasury Management and what was the outcome of each one?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

An independent investigation was carried out for the Scrutiny Committee in 2008/09 and a detailed report was made with recommendations. A full system review was carried out in 2009/10 and No assurance was given. A full system review was carried out in 2010/11 and Limited assurance was given. No assurance to limited assurance is an improvement albeit limited assurance is not satisfactory. My response to a previous question on this issue demonstrates that issues highlighted are being addressed.

**Supplementary Question 25**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

The Treasury Management Service is just one of 30 services that received limited or no assurance reports last year. What is the Cabinet Member doing to turn around this appalling record?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

The internal audit function is doing its job when it come up with these grades and it is for the Services/Directors concerned to act on the Auditors comments and to turn things around. I will be meeting with Directors on this issue and I can assure you there will be improvements hereon in.

**Question 26**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

What is Barnet Council doing to prevent lone parents and single mothers from becoming the "shock absorbers" in the system as a result of the Conservative-led coalition government cuts?

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

In response to the economic situation Barnet Council has targeted its services towards those families in greater need. Our Children's Service received an additional funding of £2.5m within the base budget. These additional funds are being used to further improve early identification of families requiring support and providing that support directly with them. These services will enable families to move away from long term dependency on services and empower them to take full



responsibility for their children and for themselves. We are continuing to work closely with partners to ensure that parents, including lone parents, are aware of services available to them in Barnet.

**Supplementary Question 26**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

1 in 4 children and young people in Barnet grow up in poverty. Do you not think that providing sufficient affordable housing, affordable child care and investing in our young people through a properly invested Youth service would help prevent such families serving as shock absorbers to the Conservative led coalition government cuts.

**Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper**

I think that it is a great pity that many people across this Borough are suffering as a result of the disastrous economic policies of the previous government.

**Question 27**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

Are you comfortable that 6 members of the Conservative Group, including Cabinet members Cllr Brian Coleman and Cllr Sachin Rajput, have opted not to allow their declarations of personal interests to be viewable on the Internet so that residents wishing to check whether executive decisions have been unduly influenced have to attend a Council office to view a paper copy during working hours?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

The information is available to the public and if Members do not wish to show their interests online, that is a matter of personal preference with which I am comfortable.

**Supplementary Question 27**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

How can the public be assured that Executive decisions by Cabinet Members are taken fairly and without prejudice, when the Members involved make it so hard for the public to see what the interests of the Cabinet Member are?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

I do not consider it is hard.

**Question 28**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Does the Cabinet Member now accept that it is not acceptable to have a target of reviewing only half of the contracts held by the Council and if so what will the target be raised to?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

I believe that it is appropriate for the council to agree a performance indicator for 2011/12 to review 100% of contracts held by the council in excess of £25,000.

**Supplementary Question 28**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

I am glad the Councillor Thomas now agrees that 100% of contracts should be reviewed albeit that it took MetPro to make him change his mind. Does he not agree that it would be reckless to press ahead with the even more ambitious One Barnet/Easy Council Programme until all the routine existing contracts have actually been reviewed?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

As Councillor Schneiderman knows the Audit Action Plan should be completed by September and any contracts coming to this Council regarding the outsourcing will come in about 12 months time when the action plan can be completed.

**Question 29**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Given the fall in the percentage of waste recycled, and the fact that the target for reducing general waste is actually higher this year than last, why have successive Conservative lead members failed to make progress?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

A report on future waste collection options is being prepared for consideration by Cabinet in September 2011. The report will set out the cost and potential performance of a number of options.

**Supplementary Question 29**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

From your answer it appears that in your view in order to cut down on waste you are going to write another report. Doesn't the Cabinet Member realise that if this Council or other Councils in the North London Waste Authority reach their recycling targets put by the Mayor of London by 2017, there would be no need for the waste treatment plant at Pinkham Way because there would be more that 300,000lbs less general waste

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

I agree with Cllr Rawlings that the Constituent Boroughs of the North London Waste Authority should increase their recycling. I have said that to Labour controlled Waltham Forest, Labour controlled Islington, Labour controlled Hackney, Labour controlled Enfield and Labour controlled Haringey on numerous occasions. I am delighted that Conservative controlled Barnet is at the top of the league for recycling. I encourage Councillor Rawlings to speak to his Labour colleagues in those Boroughs to adopt Barnet's method and ways and reduce the amount of rubbish. But as Councillor Rawlings will note as I am sure has read the North London Waste Plan, Pinkham Way site is required even if recycling targets are met.

**Question 30**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

Regarding the Localism Bill, do you agree that 'elements of stealth centralism in the bill will add vast administration costs to local authorities at a time when they are looking to focus spending on delivering frontline services'?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

It will be up to us to make sure that any stealth centralism is resisted and I welcome the Members implied support in avoiding vast administration costs as we cope with the National and Local funding situation.

**Supplementary Question 30**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

The quotation is from Conservative peer Baroness Margaret Eaton who recently retired as the Chair of the Conservative-controlled Local Government Association. The time to resist 'stealth centralism' is surely before the Bill is passed, not after. What is this Administration doing to resist centralism?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

I am sure we can all congratulate Councillor Merrick Cockell, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea on his promotion within the Local Government Association to replace Councillor Eaton. I would say it is up to us all to continually resist centralism where ever it may come, particular when it is stealthy and it is a continuing process and a continuing struggle that all local Councils have fought against all governments.

**Question 31**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What were the projected savings from the easyCouncil One Barnet project for the 2011/12 - 2013/14 period at the time the 2011/12 budget was set and what is the latest projected level of savings achieved for the same period?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

The One Barnet programme is expected to make baseline budget savings of £4.7m in 2011/12, £4.1m in 2012/13 and £3.3m in 2013/14 as set out in the February budget. The 2011/12 savings are on track to be delivered. A series of business cases for projects have been approved recently – Development and Regulatory Services (DRS), Local Authority Trading Company (LATC), New

Support and Customer Services Organisation (NSCSO), and Parking. These have all indicated that lower savings will be realised in 2012/13 than originally anticipated, but greater savings will be realised in 2013/14 and in future years. These projects are only at the business case stage, and work is ongoing to enable these savings targets to be met in full.

**Supplementary Question 31**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Unfortunately Councillor Rams' answer is not entirely accurate. The Parking Service business case shows that the 2013/2014 savings will not be achieved. The prudent business plan for the Customer Service Organisation shows no savings at all. The new Support Organisation business plan shows that the planned savings will not be achieved until either 2012/13 or 2013/14. Will he go away and actually come back with a budget that is actually based on fact and not the fiction that we have had up until now?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

I do not agree with your figures. This is a transformation project that will many benefits for years to come for both our residents and the Council as a whole.

**Question 32**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

Just under half of the Council's performance targets were missed last year, and, according to the recent Residents' Perception Survey, only half of residents are satisfied with the way the Council is running things. Is the Leader satisfied with only half measures, and, if not, what is he going to do to improve performance and increase satisfaction ratings?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Missed targets are a disappointment. The target regime needs to be focused on where it is of importance. Barnet's targets as a high performing council are challenging. Half measures are usually unsuccessful and it will be important to maintain the drive for efficiency and economy that will lead to resident satisfaction.

**Supplementary Question 32**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

The achievement of only half the targets is nothing new, you have been failing to achieve half your targets year on year. Is the trend we highlighted last night at the Business Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee, where you were setting lower targets in key area like waste management, housing and outcomes for vulnerable young people a strategy to actually achieve more than half your targets in the future?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

We continually reassess targets to make sure they are appropriate for given economic circumstances and the big target we wish to meet is winning the next local government election.

**Question 33**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

The outdoor gym equipment at Oakhill Park has proved to be robust and popular with both children and adults. Are there any plans to introduce similar facilities elsewhere in the borough?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

No. At a time when there is no spare public money due to profligacy of the last Labour Government, Outdoor Gym equipment is hardly a priority.

**Question 34**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

The festival in Victoria Park Finchley has had to be cancelled this year due to Council asking an exorbitant figure from the volunteers to 'rent' the park for this event . What steps are being taken to ensure that the work of such worthy volunteers is not curtailed by Council asking for sums of money which are impossible to achieve?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

The Member is misinformed. I am delighted that the Finchley Carnival (to give it its correct and historic name) took place last weekend (facilitated by Barnet Council) as a free event for residents

which included the restoration of the traditional Firework Display .I am grateful to those who have been involved over the years and I have been approached by a number of people keen to come on board and restore this event to its traditional prominence after the sad decline over the last four or five years . I note that Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb plays a prominent part in the successful East Barnet Festival ( generously grant aided by Barnet Council) and perhaps she might wish to offer her expertise to rebuild the Finchley Carnival .

**Question 35**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Moss Hall Junior School, Moss Hall Infants School and Morasha Jewish Primary School are all located near a busy junction of three roads - Nether Street, Moss Hall Grove and Essex Garden Road. Now that the school crossing patrol has been removed by the Council, will the Cabinet Member support some sort of traffic calming and/or parking enforcement to improve the safety of children attending these schools?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

I assume the Member means Essex Park ? As a resident of the area I am unaware of a road called "Essex Garden Road". I would be very happy for parking enforcement to take place around this area.

**Question 36**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

Does the Cabinet Member support encouraging more residents of Barnet to cycle? And if so can he explain why a high profile cycling event in the Borough was refused a modest £700 grant this year?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

I support all modes of transport. Matters of grants should be referred to my colleague Councillor Robert Rams.

**Question 37**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Parkfield School no longer has a school crossing patrol to help children cross the road. There is speeding traffic and a dangerous bend near the school making the visibility of oncoming traffic difficult. Has the Cabinet Member considered the emotional cost to the family if a child is injured and the suffering of the child?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

Councillor Sodha can refer such matters as this to the Hendon Area Environment Committee.

**Question 38**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

How much has been spent on external security for Council meetings in 2009, 2010 and for each month so far in 2011?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

**Security Guard Charges for Full Council Meetings from April 2009 to June 2011-07-06**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Company</b>	<b>Cost (Excluding VAT)</b>
April 2009	Metpro	£144.50
May 2009	Metpro	£306.00
June 2009	<b>No Meeting</b>	
July 2009	Metpro	£ 85.00
August 2009	No Meeting	
September 2009	Metpro	£306.00
October 2009	<b>No Meeting</b>	
November 2009	Metpro	£136.00
December 2009	Metpro	£136.00
January 2010	Metpro	£136.00

February 2010	<b>No Meeting</b>	
March 2010	Metpro	£221.00
April 2010	Metpro	£170.00
May 2010	Metpro	£221.00
June 2010	<b>No Meeting</b>	
July 2010	Metpro	£144.50
August 2010	<b>No Meeting</b>	
September 2010	Metpro	£255.00
October 2010	<b>No Meeting</b>	
November 2010	Metpro	£110.50
December 2010	Metpro	£255.00
January 2011	Metpro	Nil Charged
February 2011	<b>No Meeting</b>	
March 2011	Metpro	£360.00
April 2011	Blue9	£435.00
May 2011	Blue9	£812.00
June 2011	<b>No Meeting</b>	

**Question 39**

**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

The youth club in East Barnet, run by the YMCA and supported by the local police is faced with possible closure due to a huge hike in their rental. Could the Cabinet Member update Members on the rent increase that is being asked and what efforts are being made to keep the youth club open?

**Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas**

Terms for a new lease have been quoted at £28,000 per annum. The previous lease which expired in May 2011 was £21,360 per annum. Officers are working with the YMCA to agree an interim solution and last met with the YMCA on 5<sup>th</sup> July.

**Question 40**

**Councillor Geof Cooke**

It is a British tradition for local authorities to introduce lasting physical enhancements to their areas to mark significant royal events. What is the Council doing to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in February 2012, only the second diamond jubilee in our country's history?

**Answer by Councillor David Longstaff**

Preparations for the Diamond Jubilee have been underway since early 2011. A Diamond Jubilee Preparations Steering Group (chaired by Barnet's Deputy Lieutenant, Martin Russell) held its third meeting on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> July.

Plans in place so far include a civic service to be held in February 2012, to mark the Queen's accession to the throne; a tree planting scheme in which schools will be offered the opportunity to plant a tree to mark the occasion; a series of beacons to be lit across the borough; a 'family fun day' to be held over the Diamond Jubilee weekend; and a range of other celebratory ideas still in the early planning stages.

The Council will also plant a single Black Poplar (Her Majesty's favourite tree) in a suitable location in the borough, which is being donated by the Lieutenancy. Barnet is also involved with London-wide preparations and is among the most advanced boroughs in terms of planning of events and ways in which to mark the occasion.

Further updates and information on how the public can become involved closer to the occasion will be publicised on the council's website.

**Question 41****Councillor Alison Moore**

The number of families in temporary accommodation has hardly reduced over the last two Conservative administrations. Why?

**Answer by Councillor Tom Davey**

Since April 2008, the number of households in temporary accommodation has reduced from 2457 to 2139 in March 2011.

The main reason that the reduction has not been faster is because the Council has used empty properties on the regeneration estates as temporary accommodation, which has provided affordably priced accommodation for homeless families often for a number of years.

Whilst the number of people in temporary regeneration homes has increased from 873 to 968 during the same period, the number in other types of temporary accommodation has fallen significantly by 25% from 1551 to 1171

**Question 42****Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

What is the update on the future of Barnet Museum and what annual rental figure are you asking the volunteers to pay in order to keep the museum open?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

Barnet Museum has submitted a proposal to operate the Museum independently. This proposal is currently being reviewed by officers

**Question 43****Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

Which local authority was 105 Dallas Rd sold to, and what financial benefit did Barnet receive for it? Residents want to know as they are now denied access to this open space when it was previously open to use by all?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

The land adjacent to 105 Dallas Road was formerly known as 107 and 109 Dallas Road, this was acquired by Department for Transport (DfT) probably sometime in the late 1960's or early 1970's for the construction of the M1 i.e. for highway purposes. After the construction of the M1 the land was transferred to LBB to maintain as highway land as the local highway authority but the freehold ownership of the land was not transferred to LBB.

From Land Registry records and titles it appears that DfT, in 2009 have sold off this land to the owners of 105 Dallas Road. LBB had been maintaining the land despite never owning it, until this time but it now appears to be in private ownership.

**Question 44****Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Is it acceptable to have residents sitting in the Town Hall for over three hours before they are able to speak on a planning application?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Chairmen try to accommodate speakers as early as possible in the agenda but during a busy meeting the last item will be at the end of proceedings. The timescale may be regrettable but is acceptable.

**Question 45****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

What is the Cabinet Member doing to tackle the problem of depression amongst elderly residents who feel isolated and alone given the cuts to day centre grants?

**Answer by Councillor Sachin Rajput**

The Council and its partners are addressing the causes of depression among Barnet's residents, including older people, through its programmes to tackle the causes of ill-health and to promote Barnet as a safe and prosperous place to live.

Shared opportunities and responsibilities are at the heart of our strategy. Barnet is a strong civic society in which people do things for themselves and more Barnet residents contribute their time and effort through volunteering than any other London borough. We will continue to support Barnet's Volunteer Centre and the work of organisations such as Barnet's Retired and Senior Volunteer Programme, winner of the Times' award for its innovative work in setting up telephone book clubs for Barnet's elderly people, helping older people to lead active and useful lives through participation in volunteering as well as receiving support.

We will shortly open consultation on future direction for day opportunities services for older people provided at present through voluntary sector organisations. These include day services for those people at risk of needing statutory services, lunch clubs for ethnic minority elders, care and repair to help people stay in their own homes through to health promotion activities such as exercise classes. We believe that it is right to continue to invest in support for people across the whole spectrum of need in order to give the right support at the right time, helping those with social care needs to stay as independent as possible and those with lesser needs to stay healthy and safe. Our recent review of the voluntary sector has identified that the day centres serve relatively few people and do not necessarily represent the preferred choice of those who would most benefit from support nor best value for public sector investment. Our forthcoming consultation on day opportunities services will seek the views of all those with an interest in shaping our plans

**Question 46**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

How many years does it take to develop a town centre strategy for North Finchley?

**Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council**

Whilst plans and strategies have their place it is important that North Finchley continues to thrive and we should all welcome the new Library plans that when realised will be an important attraction. Strategies may take years to create.

**Question 47**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

The lawns in Rushgrove Park are uneven and look untended. What is the Cabinet Member doing to ensure that our parks and green spaces are all kept to the same standard?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

I understand the park was mowed on July 4<sup>th</sup>

**Question 48**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

How many cars have parked in Lodge Lane car park in each of the following months: April 2011, May 2011 and June 2011?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

The number of cars parking in Lodge Lane Car Park during the controlled hours and either purchasing a ticket or paying by phone is as follows:

April	4,916
May	6,585
June	5,994

**Question 49**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

I was in Gadsbury Close in my ward recently and in the short time that I was there, I saw three huge rats on the street. The residents of sheltered accommodation told me that they cannot sit on the bench because of rats. What is the Council doing to deal with the rat problem in Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor David Longstaff**

This particular instance was passed to the Environmental Health service to investigate.

The investigation found the area of Gadsbury Close to be the responsibility of Barnet Homes. Barnet Homes have confirmed that on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011 they initiated the process of obtaining a quote from their contractor for both the treatment and proofing for rats in the area where the rats were seen. Barnet Homes reference X3737F11.

The Council deals with complaints about rats on a site specific basis. All rat complaints that involve privately owned land are investigated by the Environmental Health service to ensure that all infestations are treated. Legislative powers are used in accordance with the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

**Question 50**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What is being done to improve residents' satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in decision making in Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor David Longstaff**

The Council encourages residents to participate in decision-making through a number of channels. These include the conducting of formal consultations on specific issues, the provision to speak and ask questions at Cabinet and Committee meetings, the outward-focused engagement work of Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups and in empowering members of the public to raise street-based issues at Residents' Forums. The new Forum arrangements allow for issues to be formally referred to an Area Environment Sub-Committee meeting, held that evening in the same venue, for decision, thus increasing democratic accountability and transparency.

The most recent Residents Survey shows 48% of residents are satisfied with opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the Council, compared to 31% who are not satisfied and 21% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

In terms of future plans, the Corporate Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14 contains the strategic objective of increasing levels of democratic engagement and creating an open Council. This objective includes the target to implement at least three new initiatives to improve opportunities for democratic engagement this municipal year, for which proposals will be forthcoming in due course.

**Question 51**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

What is the reason for the non-replacement of printer ink cartridges in Libraries. Is this the effects of the policy of more for less – please will the Cabinet Member assure me cartridges will be replaced – complaint from residents.

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**

Printing is a valuable service to library customers and there is no intent to reduce the service.

In April, the Council moved from using a dedicated engineer to supply new ink cartridges, to using a pool of engineers. There were some teething problems with allocation of engineers which resulted in some requests not being fulfilled in a timely manner. This situation has now been rectified. In addition, as older printers reach the end of their life they are being replaced by more efficient standard printers and providing the facility to remotely monitor the ink levels to prevent this issue in the future.

**Question 52**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What action is being taken in the short term to reverse the large drop in the number of telephone calls to the Council being answered within the target time and in particular within the parking service where only 12% of calls are meeting the target?

**Answer by Councillor Robert Rams**



The drop in the proportion of calls being answered within the target time in quarter 4 last year was mainly related to the Housing Benefits system replacement and a seasonal increase in demand for Council Tax services.

Housing Benefits and Council Tax telephony performance fell significantly in March and April in the period when the information system supporting the services was being replaced. The transition between IT systems created a backlog of cases, which generated a higher than average volume of calls at a busy time of year. Staff activities were prioritised to clear the backlog and to deal with high volume of calls. The implementation of the new system has now been completed and performance has significantly improved in May and June. I expect performance to improve further in the coming months.

The Parking Contact Centre moved to Customer Services in April and an improvement plan is being implemented to tackle recurring issues that generate repeat calls. Information on the website is being updated to encourage customers to see this as the first port of call for contact. Additional work is ongoing to relieve pressure on the service from the volume of scanned paperwork received by the parking service. Performance has improved by ten percentage points in June.

**Question 53**

**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Will the Cabinet Member accept the recommendation of the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee that weekly refuse and recycling collections should be maintained?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

I am delighted that the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees with the Conservative Party manifesto for the Barnet Council elections in May 2010 which clearly states that weekly refuse collections for domestic waste will be maintained. Whilst this Borough is Conservative this will not change.

**Question 54**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

The play equipment in the playground at Colindale Park is in need of replacement. What is the schedule for repairs and refurbishments of our play areas in Barnet and when will the one in Colindale Park be upgraded?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Coleman**

There are no proposals to replace and upgrade the play equipment in Colindale Park. Priorities are centered on maintaining the infrastructure and facilities in the parks.

The Greenspaces team has been successfully working with a number of resident groups over the last 12 months to secure external funding to carry out such works. This has seen one group at Lyttleton playing fields secure £50k and there is another group at Mill Hill who are currently awaiting the results of their bid for £50k. There are many sources of external grant funds that can be tapped into by resident groups and the Council can work with them to increase their chances of success.