

Council: Tuesday, 1 November 2011

Administration Business Item – 3.1: Councillor David Longstaff

Appropriate punishment for burglars

Barnet has an efficient police force that needs to be provided with the support needed to do its job. Once a criminal is detected, captured and convicted it is galling for all concerned if the sentence appears so light as to be derisory.

Barnet is moving up the league table of burglaries. Residents have an increasing perception they may become a victim of this distressing crime. Some of our wards have a disproportionate number of burglaries.

Council believes that effective deterrence of crime and actual crime levels is best served by robust and appropriate gaol sentences. Professional burglars who are actually locked up cannot break into people's homes.

Our Borough, served by fast trunk roads, offers tempting targets and getaway routes. Our increasingly elderly population have a right to expect that a convicted burglar who has committed multiple offences and been caught repeatedly, will be locked up for a long time. A repeat offender may get as little as eighteen months sentence under the current tariff.

Council calls on the Cabinet Member to work with the courts and probation service so that they understand the concerns of residents and their representatives on this council when they are determining sentences.