

No.	Questioner	Question	Response
1	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	Item 7  Strategic report p5 How will YCB make up the £2.558m deficit? Does the later statement (p7) that 'LBB has guaranteed' the deficits mean that it is providing this money and therefore there no longer is a deficit, and, if not, what does it mean?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report – p5 (p17 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The £2.558m loss relates to The Barnet Group, after accounting for pensions under International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS 19). The operational loss for the Group was £0.871m but IAS 19 pension fund accounting entries amounted to a further loss of £1.687m, hence a total loss after tax of £2.558m. In respect to the pension deficit, there is a full valuation of the fund every three years and based on this, the independent actuaries set the in-year contributions percentage and deficit contributions. The in-year and deficit contributions are paid by Barnet Homes and Your Choice from their fixed management fee income and payment by client income respectively. These contributions are included in the budgets set for both organisations and include pension deficit payments for staff prior to the creation of both companies.</p> <p>The deficits will remain until the independent actuaries determine that a deficit no longer exists in the funds after their valuations.</p>
2	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p9 As private sector rents are so high and climbing, when will Barnet Homes and/or LBB increase the number of council homes planned and bring forward the date for building them in order to save the council money more quickly?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report – p9 (p21 in the papers)</b></p> <p>Barnet Homes has planning permission and approval for 38 homes and these are due to begin on site shortly. Approximately 280 further homes have been identified and Barnet Homes are seeking further approvals from the Council to begin the planning process. In addition, Barnet Homes has been offered a grant from Great London Authority to build a further 101 homes. Funding opportunities to enable these to be started are being explored.</p> <p>The Housing Strategy, recently considered by the Housing Committee and due to be consulted on, sets out further development activities what will support development of more affordable housing.</p>

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3	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p9 Compare 'Principle source of income is ... paid monthly in advance' with p10 'Principle source of income is ... paid monthly in arrears': since it can't be both, what was the date of the transition of the former to the latter?	<b>The Barnet Group Annual Report – p9/10 (p21/22 in the papers)</b> 'Principle source of income is ... paid monthly in advance' (page 21 in the paper) refers to Barnet Homes and 'Principle source of income is ... paid monthly in arrears' (page 22 in the papers) refers to Your Choice Barnet income. The two companies receive their income on different payment terms.
4	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p11 Why does the target for arrears vary while all the other targets are unchanging?	<b>The Barnet Group Annual Report - p11 (p23 in the papers)</b> In previous years we have varied the target depending on the time period, as historically the arrears vary during the year. For example, arrears tend to be higher at the end of quarter 3 (December) where tenants are also paying for Christmas. For 2014/15, the quarterly target has been set at 2.83% for each quarter to keep it consistent with the other indicators.
5	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p13 Given the 'variations in budget', none good, as a result of privatisation, what reason is there to continue with a failed financial model?	<b>The Barnet Group Annual Report - p13 (p25 in the papers)</b> These were one-off payments in last year's accounts that were made in order to reduce on-going costs and ensure that the model does not fail financially in future years.

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6	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p13 Utilisation is above target in 4 out of the 5 service centres. What is the explanation for the lower utilisation at BILS? What are the 'small changes' to facilities or working practices that allow an 'expansion of capacity'?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report - p13 (p25 in the papers)</b></p> <p>Generally the Barnet Independent Living Service (BILS) was under-utilised in 2013/14. The utilisation rate for BILS in Q1/2014-15 was 98% compared to the Quarter 2 figure of 87%. Feedback from some customers was negative in relation to the location and the (Flightways) building.</p> <p>Changes to include higher levels of community access and inclusion would allow for an expansion of capacity if we are not restricted to building-based services which can only accommodate a finite number of people.</p>
7	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p14 The first two tables on this page seem to indicate that there were 52 referrals, of which 30 became clients. How many of the 30 were Barnet residents?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report - p14 (p26 in the papers)</b></p> <p>Of the 30 new clients in 2013/14, 25 were funded by London Borough of Barnet (from 15 referrals from London Borough of Barnet and 15 self-referrals).</p>
8	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	p14 Of the remaining 8%, what percentage were not met and what does that mean numerically? In the percentage that were not reviewed, what was the reason for the lack of review?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report - p14 (p26 in the papers)</b></p> <p>This indicator seeks to measure the extent to which service users' agreed outcomes are met. 8% equates to 18 people; these outcomes are not met because a small number of outcomes are not applicable in all services and therefore are not achieved.</p>

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9	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	Financial report 13.2 What is the total number of staff and what proportion of them are agency staff? What is the hourly rate for employees and what is the hourly rate for agency staff? Are employees on zero-hours contracts?	<p><b>The Barnet Group Annual Report (p31 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The total number of staff including agency was 572 on average. Agency staff on average made up 17.8% of total staff in 2014.</p> <p>The hourly rate for employees varies upon the type of work undertaken.</p> <p>There is a small number of <i>as-and-when</i> staff working for YCB and Assist (Barnet Homes alarm call service) who do not have guaranteed hours, however they are provided with training and support and paid annual leave, also there is no restriction on working for other organisations unlike other traditional zero-hour contracts.</p>
10	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	Item 8 Budget outturn: What is the explanation for 'an adverse variance of £3.739m (1.3%) against the revised budget of £286.412m'?	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p56 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The explanation for this is that at the end of quarter two it is forecast that there will be an anticipated over spend of £3.739m against the council approved revised budget for the 2014/15 financial year. The reasons for this variance are then explained in section 1.11.1 of the report.</p>
11	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	1.8 (p66) Why is 'Barnet are in the top percentile in England for the proportion of people with needs relating to sexually transmitted infections who have a record of having an HIV test at first attendance at 99% (excluding those already diagnosed HIV positive)' considered a success? .	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p66 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The indicator shows that 99% of people attending a sexual health clinic were given an HIV test at their first attendance. This is an excellent result. Early diagnosis of HIV has many benefits. The treatment for HIV is both clinically effective and is cost effective. Modern drug treatments now allow people with HIV, if diagnosed early, to have a near normal life expectancy. Early diagnosis is also cost effective in that it avoids the complications associated with late diagnosis such as reducing the number and frequency of hospital in-patient episodes for treatment of difficult to treat infections. Finally, people who know their HIV status are more likely to practice safe sex in future and thus reduce the transmission of HIV.</p>

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12	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	1.8 To what extent are the current arrears and temporary accommodation arrears a result of people being unable to pay because of the imposition of (a) council tax and (b) the bedroom tax?	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p66 in the papers)</b></p> <p>As at October 2014, 573 Barnet Homes customers had a deduction to their Housing Benefit as a result of under-occupying their accommodation (what you have referred to as the bedroom tax) - 325 of these were in arrears. This has impacted on rent arrears by approximately £30,000. Tenants are being assisted with exploring ways to maximise income wherever possible. No households have been evicted for these arrears.</p> <p>When a customer discloses they have arrears in rent and Council Tax, the Council and Barnet Homes work together to ensure that an affordable repayment plan for both rent and Council Tax is established.</p>
13	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	1.10 What is the current situation with regard to finding an alternative depot?	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p67 in the papers)</b></p> <p>A detailed report on the depot relocation is part of an additional Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee meeting on the 12 November 2014.</p> <p>The agenda of this meeting, with the published papers, is available at:  <a href="http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&amp;MId=8144&amp;Ver=4">http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=696&amp;MId=8144&amp;Ver=4</a></p>

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14	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	<p>1.11 What do the following phrases mean in plain English, and what are the amounts of money referred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘unrecoverable regeneration staffing expenditure’,</li> <li>• ‘as a consequence of exceeding the private developer agreement (PDA) value’</li> </ul> <p>and how will the ‘anticipated under spends of £0.175m within other staffing budgets’ be achieved?</p>	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p70 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The variance due to unrecoverable regeneration staffing expenditure as a consequence of exceeding the private developer agreement (PDA) value are staff costs incurred in relation to work on Private Developer Schemes. It will not be possible for the council to invoice the developer for all the costs incurred due to them exceeding the original agreed amount with the developer that would have been set out in a private developer agreement (PDA). The PDA would have set a specified council staff cost value.</p> <p>In regards to the ‘anticipated under spends of £0.175m within other staffing budgets’. The budget of £0.175m will not be used as the staff that used to be funded in this area of the HRA are now recharged to the HRA in a separate area. This is due to the staff moving to the joint venture Regional Enterprise (Re).</p>

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15	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	1.11.1 Parking Does '£0.467m additional contract payments to ensure contractually required enforcement' mean payments to NCL? If so, • why are the payments 'additional'? • why is this company being paid at all when it seems to be failing in its basic task of issuing only appropriate PCNs, as every appeal lost by the council costs it money? • Why is 'a £0.606m reduction in PCN income due to ... reduced volumes' anticipated?	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p73 in the papers)</b></p> <p>The additional payments to NSL are related to the additional hours of enforcement resource deployment. In order to keep on top of the levels of non-compliant parking which are evident in certain areas of the borough the Civil Enforcement Officers have been deployed up to the hours the restrictions end rather than finishing earlier in the evening.</p> <p>The number of Appeals as a percentage of PCN's issued is extremely low – less than 1%.</p> <p>The historical level of non-compliance has been used to inform this year's potential budget in relation to PCN income. As the level of non-compliance is not as high as last year the volume of PCN's being issued is consequently lower and hence the level of income from this area is also lower. Although the level of income has reduced this is seen as a positive outcome as the purpose of parking enforcement is the drive improvements in compliancy levels and therefore the increase in deployed resources is seen to having the desired impact.</p>
16	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	1.11.1 HB Public Law Why is the current income not being achieved: • was it wrong to base the budget on historical assumptions or were the assumptions themselves wrong? • what was assumed that has not proven to be accurate?	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p73 in the papers)</b></p> <p>It was not wrong to base the budget on historical assumptions, this is done with most income targets. This target has been devised based on income received in previous years and the assumption is that this level of income will be received this year, however, amounts do vary year by year as does the profile of income received. It is still expected that at the end of the year this target will be reached.</p>

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17	Mrs Barbara Jacobson	<p>Appendix I 6.1 • Why wasn't CSG able to provide the service needed by the schools from the outset: was it not briefed or badly briefed, or, if the brief was adequate, did it fail to implement the brief?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When is Phase 3 scheduled to complete and is it the final phase?</li> <li>• Is this situation relevant to a KPI in the contract?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quarter 2 Monitoring Report 2014/15 (p153 in the papers)</b></p> <p><b>6.1 • Why wasn't CSG able to provide the service needed by the schools from the outset: was it not briefed or badly briefed, or, if the brief was adequate, did it fail to implement the brief?</b></p> <p>Originally CSG planned to implement schools (and other) systems over a 12 month period, this would have allowed for full engagement and testing. But it was agreed, in order to preserve the savings from the CSG contract that we would deliver the key system transformations and service relocations in 7 months ready for an April 2014 go-live. This reduced the timescale of engagement and testing.</p> <p>While CSG did present to a number of schools and undertake road-shows on how the systems would work, the focus of the transformation was about moving to self-service and automation and away from the highly manual processes that schools had previously carried out. The level of manual work had always meant that schools faced higher error rates and longer delays in getting payroll requests processed and this had to be the priority along with better customer service.</p> <p>Feedback on customer service has been good and the move to electronic submission has been hugely successful with fewer than 20 manual submissions in the first payroll of over 5,000 staff paid. Customer Service is also seen to have improved with the service more responsive and helpful to schools. This has inevitably meant a significant amount of change for schools given the starting point of a paper based process that had been in-place for many years and has resulted in feedback, particularly around the usability of the electronic self-service facility.</p> <p>CSG have listened to this feedback and are now in the process of upgrading the self-service facility in-response and we will continue to engage with schools managers to ensure that these enhancements resolve the issues they have raised. It is also worth noting that some schools have adjusted well to the changes we have introduced (see the quote below) however that is not to suggest CSG are complacent and are, as a consequence, rolling out a series of changes that will respond specifically to the feedback received to-date.</p> <p>Following quote from: Tim Bowden</p>

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			<p>Headteacher Holy Trinity CE Primary School</p> <p>Chair of Primary Schools Forum</p> <p>“I found that when the changes were introduced in April there was little lead in time for schools to familiarise themselves with the new systems. Capita did provide a full programme of training and support however I wasn’t able to engage closely with the changes due to other priorities at the time. On reflection I think that it should have been made a priority for Heads to get involved in the training and familiarise themselves with the new systems at the beginning.</p> <p>I now use the systems on a regular basis, as do my Business Manager and Secretary, and feel they are easy to use. They support me to effectively manage staff in my school, and I like the fact that I can raise queries in AskHR which provides me with an audit trail of the contact I have with the service. I receive timely responses to queries and I actually feel the service is better than when it delivered by Barnet.</p> <p>I feel that Capita are listening and responding to queries raised by schools and are demonstrating their commitment to work with our schools. In doing so, they have offered interim solutions, allowing schools to use forms whilst some service developments are in progress. They have also improved the payroll reports to provide schools with data they have requested.</p> <p>Representatives from the service are willing to engage with schools to obtain feedback which will help develop the services further.</p> <p>After this significant change in the way services are delivered, I feel everything is bedding in, and I actually support this new way of working.”</p> <p>Tim Bowden 7th November 2014</p>

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			<p><b>• When is Phase 3 scheduled to complete and is it the final phase?</b></p> <p>In fact we have already completed and made live a number of key enhancements requested by schools which were implemented during the recent half-term break and in November, these impact usability in the entry of timesheet data and performance and we are engaging with schools now to confirm the impact of these on their experience. A further tranche of improvements are planned for the first quarter of 2015 that address some additional areas of feedback. As we continue to engage with schools over this period we will look to understand whether any further refinements are necessary and respond promptly if that proves to be the case.</p> <p>Through our service improvement forum we are understanding further requirements from schools and are currently building the Phase 3 roadmap.</p> <p><b>• Is this situation relevant to a KPI in the contract?</b></p> <p>Schools service has no specific KPIs in the CSG Contract. This is part due to the fact that the schools that they buy do not map easily to the services that CSG provides to the Council and the way that KPIs are applied. For example, the ICT KPIs for Critical Systems and Incidents do not include the systems that schools use, as they are often from other providers not CSG, and incident resolution for schools is provided by a dedicated schools based IT team and the range of IT services bought varies hugely between schools. Where service credits become due, these are also paid to the Council not to any supported Council Partner.</p> <p>During the bid phase we did discuss with schools that Service Levels could be applied to their services but to do so would require individual contracts to be established. This is something we will be looking at in year 2.</p>