

Council Questions to Cabinet Members
10 July 2012
Questions and Responses

Question 1

Councillor Jack Cohen

What is the address residents should write to if they wish to appeal or query a PCN, if this is a box number please provide the box number and in addition the full address including street and premises number. What is the email address or telephone number should residents prefer to phone or email.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Online Services

Motorists can make an online challenge to the validity of a PCN by visiting our website:
http://www.barnet.gov.uk/info/930111/parking_tickets_pcn/516/parking_tickets_pcn.

There you will see under the heading ***“How to challenge a Penalty charge notice (parking ticket)”***, details on the various options available regarding the PCN, including making an online challenge. Currently, NSL are not promoting an email contact method but may review this at a later date.

Postal Services

There is an option to submit a challenge by post using the address listed at the above address on the website, under the heading **“Barnet Parking Services”**. The postal address is: Barnet Parking Service, PO Box 4894, Worthing, BN11 9WT.

Telephone Contact

To report a suspected Abandoned Vehicle: 020 8359 2000

Request for immediate enforcement – such as a vehicle blocking a driveway: 020 3375 4242

General PCN queries: 020 8359 7446

Supplementary Question 1

Councillor Jack Cohen

Thank you Councillor Dean Cohen for your response, but the question has not been answered. I asked for the physical street address and this has not been given. As helpful as ever, and so that it can be put on the record so members of the public will know, the actual street address you should write to you if you have got queries with your parking tickets is NSL Ltd, c/o RR Donnelly, Unit 1 and 2, Chartwell Business Centre, Chartwell Road, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 8FD. I also note, that since the 1st May, motorists cannot telephone with an appeal which would be the most efficient way to deal with a glaringly wrong ticket and they also cannot email at all. So could the Member tell me how this change from in-house to NSL meets the key principal of One Barnet, a relentless drive for efficiency, delivering more choice for better value, as there clearly is less choice?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

I thank Councillor Jack Cohen for his question but the answer is very clear. However I have asked officers to push NSL for an email address and will move that forward.

Question 2

Councillor Brian Gordon

Will the Leader congratulate the Representative Deputy Lieutenant and his Committee on their efforts to organise the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in the Borough and will he comment on their success?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

I have thanked the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for his work, verbally and will write to him and the Committee to thank them for their sterling work. This was a successful and popular festival.

Barnet celebrated the Diamond Jubilee with style and Residents showed their affection and admiration for our excellent Head of State. May she reign over us for many years.

Supplementary Question 2

Councillor Brian Gordon

Would you not agree, that amid all the political argument that takes place, and some of the rancour that does occur between political parties, to have a Royal Family as we do, and the fact that Barnet has been in the forefront as you indicate too, of celebrating the Diamond Jubilee, is very much a bedrock of this country's democracy and we as a Council should be very proud that we have played our part and our Borough has played its part in honouring the Royal Family? The existence of the Royal Family and its strength is no longer it seems a matter of political controversy.

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

Mr Mayor yes.

Question 3

Councillor Alison Moore

If the billion pound One Barnet mass privatisation gamble fails what is the Leader's Plan B?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

There is no plan B save mass redundancies, closure of facilities, cessation of services and massive increases in Council Tax. There is no gamble but a carefully planned change in the way we do things to ensure that we continue to provide the better services that are needed at the best possible cost. I do not pretend that it will be easy but with determination to make it work we will achieve what we have set out to do.

Supplementary Question 3

Councillor Alison Moore

Other Councils are not going down this route, including Westminster. Will you meet with me and discuss the Plan B?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

Councillor Moore knows that there have been many plans discussed and all kinds of different outcomes have been discussed. This is clearly the best offer that we have as a Council.

Question 4

Councillor Jack Cohen

For the financial years ended 31st March 2012-2011 and 2010 please provide the total section 106 library contributions split between the amount agreed, the actual amounts received and the actual amount spent on libraries, in relation to the amounts of money spent on libraries please provide a breakdown of where and how the monies were spent.

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Income

For the financial years ending 31st March 2010-11 and 2011-12 the total library contributions received were £22,740 and £56,495. The current total pot of s.106 contributions available to support the libraries programme is £133k.

Expenditure

In 2008-09 a small portion (£103k) of the s.106 'Education and Libraries' funds from the development of the former Barnet college site in Russell Lane were allocated to a programme of key libraries investment works. These works delivered the following improvements:

Osidge Library: Replacement of existing wooden shelving with light and more flexible shelving adjustable for different sizes of stock and to lighten appearance in particular to encourage children to use the books; also creation of a teen zone with bean bags and a listening post.

East Finchley Library:

Redecoration of the ground floor of the library including new and safer carpeting, creation of a teenage room to include listening post, graphic novel stand, seating and bean bags.

Friern Barnet Library:

Minor redecoration to address water damage

East Barnet Library:

Open up floor space on ground floor replacing the existing large counter/enquiry desk with a smaller desk, and service and information 'pods', laying new floor covering, re-cabling of staff computer terminals and installation of WIFI for public usage to create a more modern, spacious and welcoming feel to the library.

Mill Hill Library

Redevelopment of the entrance area including repairing and redecorating the front windows, replacement of the existing large, old counter with new, smaller, lighter service and 'pod' to open up access and give modern working environment, addition of a public toilet and installation of WIFI for public usage.

Finchley Church End:

Installation of WIFI for public usage.

Having just delivered this programme of improvement works, the libraries contributions collected during 2010-11 and 2011-12 from all developments were provisionally allocated towards supporting delivery of the Council's emerging Libraries Strategy. This is now moving into the delivery phase and therefore application of contributions will commence in the near future. To ensure that future application funds recognises the direct linkage between development and the contributions offered by the developers, we are ensuring that an appropriate proportions of the current s.106 libraries pot are applied to the identified investment projects closest to the developments from which they arose.

Supplementary Question 4

Councillor Jack Cohen

My question has not been fully answered. First of all I asked for how much s106 money had been agreed in planning applications and all I have been given is the monies received, not the figure agreed. I also asked for the three years ended 2010, 2011 and 2012. I have only been given two years figures. However, having said that it appears to me that the Council is holding onto a hundred and thirty three thousand pounds which it could have spent for example in saving Friern Barnet library. I have noticed and I welcome at the very end of the Cabinet Members answer that in future monies received for planning gain, will be allocated to libraries nearer the planning development itself. But can she confirm that this money that the Council is receiving will be used to protect our libraries?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

The money will be used for our emerging library strategy as I have already said. If Members have particular projects they would like to pursue or suggest for their local libraries, please get in touch with our libraries department. I am sorry I did not give the final bit of information that Councillor Cohen wanted but as I said it is being put towards the emerging library strategy. If Councillor Cohen would like any further information he can email me but I have given him as much information as I can.

Question 5

Councillor Brian Coleman

Will he tell the Council how many street parties had permission to take place from the Borough during the Jubilee weekend?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

110 Queen's Diamond Jubilee Street Parties were given permission to take place between 26 May - 1 July 2012, through the pledgebank.

Supplementary Question 5

Councillor Brian Coleman

Will Councillor Longstaff accept that following the success of the Jubilee Street Parties, and presumably we will have some Olympic ones, that these would in fact have fallen foul of the proposed new alcohol ban across the borough? Will he either reconsider the proposed alcohol ban or specifically put in that consultation, that street parties or public festivals are exempt, because it is not in the consultation at the moment.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

If Councillor Coleman has read the consultation, he will have noticed that the consultation is aimed at those likely to cause anti-social behaviour. I would like to think that those attending Street Parties, Party in the Parks are not likely to cause anti-social behaviour.

Question 6**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Nearly 88,000 racist incidents were recorded in Britain's schools between 2007 and 2011, the BBC has found. Data from 90 areas shows 87,915 cases of racist bullying, which can include name calling and physical abuse. Can the Member please tell me how many racist incident were recorded in Barnet Schools over the same period?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

Between financial year 2007/08 and 2010/11 there were 1,322 racist incidents in Barnet schools. There were 407 homophobic incidents. During this period there has been a general downward trend in racist incidents, from 349 in 2007/08 to 278 in 2010/11.

Supplementary Question 6**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

I am pleased to know that the numbers are going down but can you give me some idea of what is being done by the school, or the Council, to provide some kind of racism awareness training to both staff and students or pupils?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I believe this kind of training is covered, certainly in respect to the Safeguarding training that is made available, not only to council staff but also for all who work in our schools. But I hope Councillor Sodha will join with me in noting the overriding sense of racial harmony that is always in apparent in our schools and will congratulate the schools on the efforts that they go to in order to promote that harmony within their establishments.

Question 7**Councillor Susette Palmer**

Will the Cabinet Member join with me in publicly congratulating all the children and staff taking part in this years Barnet Schools Music Festival. It is an amazing event.

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

I am very pleased to join Councillor Palmer in congratulating everyone who took part, both those who performed and those who worked so hard for it behind the scenes. I always find attending the festival is a sheer delight - it's a true highlight in our borough's calendar.

Question 8**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Has the Cabinet Member been following the recent debate on wind turbines and will she look at the proposed changes that Lincolnshire CC are making to their planning guidelines and what action does she propose to prevent any more of these hideous monstrosities despoiling the Barnet skyline?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

I have been following the debate on wind turbines, particularly in Lincolnshire. It is not clear whether the planning guidelines set by Lincolnshire CC are compliant with the National Planning Policy Framework document and whether they form part of adopted local planning policy. Barnet's new Local Plan policies have recently been passed as sound by a Planning Inspector and as such significant weight can be attached to those policies. Policy DM01 of the Local Plan requires, in part, development to preserve or enhance local character and respect the appearance, scale, mass, height and pattern of surrounding buildings, spaces and streets. Furthermore, Policy DM04 requires, in part, development not to generate unacceptable noise levels close to noise sensitive uses (like houses). It is considered that these policies would ensure that inappropriate wind turbine proposals would not acquire planning permission.

Supplementary Question 8**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Will Councillor Tambourides continue to do all she can to prevent these monstrosities from appearing across green areas of our borough?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Yes, I certainly will do everything I can.

Question 9**Councillor Alex Brodkin**

How many people, since the start of June 2011, has Barnet Council discharged its housing duty to under s.193(5) Housing Act 1996?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

From 1st June 2011 up to 30th June 2012 we ended the main homelessness duty to **31** households because the applicant refused a suitable offer of rehousing.

Supplementary Question 9**Councillor Alex Brodkin**

Given the seriousness of the situation that 31 households have actually had their housing duty discharged by the council, e.g. they have been made homeless, I would like to think there was a far more prescriptive and definitive policy than a suitable offer of rehousing. Surely Councillor Davey can appreciate that ones conception of what is suitable might differ from council officer to housing applicant. The people that I meet, almost on a weekly basis, struggle with their distinction of what is a suitable offer. So can you now provide me here, or later, commit to providing what is meant by suitable offer of housing in the borough?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

What is meant by a suitable offer of housing is clearly contained within all of our policy documents and in response to Councillor Brodkin you can not help those who won't help themselves.

Question 10**Councillor Susette Palmer**

In view of the Council's expressed desire to help business in these trying times is the Cabinet strongly considering 30-45 minutes free parking in high streets. This would make a great deal of difference to shopkeepers and shoppers alike.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As you are aware I have announced a review of parking charges in the borough's town centres and a series of changes to policies on parking charges. These are currently proceeding through the formal decision making process.

I have announced that:

- Half day visitor vouchers for controlled parking zones will be introduced as soon as possible. These will be priced at £2.20.
- Credit card machines will be introduced in eight of the council's car parks that currently charge for parking.
- No new car park charges will be introduced in the currently free car parks in the borough.
- No fee will be introduced for Dawes Lane car park, although I have asked for a review of the operation of the car park to manage commuter parking issues.
- To increase the availability of parking vouchers, businesses will be able to buy vouchers at a discount.

I have also asked officers to explore the possibility of introducing a 50p for fifteen minute parking tariff. I appreciate that many people just want to nip into a couple shops and this would make it much easier. I have asked officers to explore the possibility of introducing such a voucher although we have to look at the economics of this.

I have also launched a review of parking prices in each of our town centres and major shopping parades. We need to strike a balance between ensuring there is a steady turnover of spaces for

cars in these areas but also that people have time to shop. I will be consulting with businesses in each of these centres before coming to a final decision.

I have also asked officers to review the pricing in our council run car parks.

Supplementary Question 10

Councillor Susette Palmer

Do I take it Councillor Cohen that you are not in favour of 30 to 45 minutes free parking, which is clearly what both the businesses and the residents of this borough need for the high streets?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As I clearly stated in the answer there are reviews of each town centre taking place. The first one was yesterday and it commenced in North Finchley. Depending on what comes out of the review then a decision will be made and all options will be considered.

Question 11

Councillor Rueben Thompson

Would the Cabinet Member please describe what is being done to improve Princes Park, given the high use and prime location in our ward of Golders Green?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Proposals to deliver new and enhanced play equipment designed in areas catering for under 5's and over 5's have been agreed. After numerous surveys with local schools and park users, as well as three separate consultation / activity days to discuss options, space and equipment mix. Residents, users, children and parents have been very forthcoming with ideas and comments. The new scheme will provide the area with more swings and a large multi-unit climbing frame, which will be completed for the second week in August.

Supplementary Question 11

Councillor Rueben Thompson

Would the Cabinet Member also share the views he has heard from residents in our Ward to the council in relation to these improvements?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The responses, from residents locally, is extremely positive. Work has already commenced and the completion of this project should be the first week in August.

Question 12

Councillor Arjun Mitra

What efforts is the Council making to improve the energy efficiency of Council offices, bearing in mind that the council has missed its targets this year by some way, and the indicators show that the situation is getting worse?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Barnet Council has actively undertaken Energy and Water Conservation Management within its operational estate and schools. The opportunity for undertaking improvements within the estate can be restricted by landlord arrangements and the ability to achieve a satisfactory payback on properties the Council does not own. The Council is also undertaking energy efficiency improvements within the community with a major programme of improvement works to its street lighting infrastructure to deliver both financial and environmental savings.

We have focused on operational areas but equally have been looking at the council offices however with the increased energy usage reported for the Council's main offices was principally influenced by additional weekend building usage at NLBP Building 4, the largest of the Council's offices. Proposals on appropriate changes to the building's services to more efficiently facilitate out of hours usage will be considered.

Supplementary Question 12

Councillor Arjun Mitra

It is quite embarrassing to walk into the Town Hall and NLBP building 4 for many reasons. One of which is that both prominently display behind visitors desk the fact that those buildings have the worst energy efficiency rating. So will Councillor Thomas look into this and make sure that the energy rating for the buildings that are most used by the public are decent and not embarrassing.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I can confirm as my answer states that we are looking at proposals to make improvements and we welcome any other ideas to be fed into the process.

Question 13**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Regarding current plans to modify the planning application process to reduce the number of hearings going to Committee, could the Cabinet Member please confirm that such modifications will not restrict the existing right of Ward Councillors to refer matters to the Committees in any event if there are reasonable grounds for doing so.

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

The changes to delegated powers agreed by the last Planning & Environment Committee do not affect the existing right where a Ward Councillor can request in writing, with valid reason(s), that an application should be presented to the appropriate Area Planning Sub-Committee.

Supplementary Question 13**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Thank you for confirming that the Councillors' will still have the right to be able to refer matters to the planning sub-Committees. Do you not agree with me that it is very important that Councillors' should remain aware of this particular right and that residents should be aware that Councillors have this facility because too often things happen too late and the residents will say to Councillors why couldn't you do something about it.

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Yes I do agree with you. All Councillors' do have this right and residents should be aware of it. Obviously if residents have concerns about a planning application they should contact their local Councillor in any case and ask them to bring it forward.

Question 14**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

When will the parking review announced by the Cabinet Member for the Environment be completed? How can residents and traders input into this review?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The review as detailed in my earlier response (Q10) has already commenced with a number of the initiatives expected to roll out through the summer months that will we believe make parking in the borough easier and importantly more attractive, encouraging visitors to our high street areas and therefore revitalising trading conditions.

We will also again as previously indicated be carrying out more detailed reviews which will include questionnaire based investigations designed so that the local community can input into changes they might like to see in the areas that affect them.

Subject to constitutional procedures some changes can be made relatively quickly, eg tariff changes and these will progressed without the need to engage further with the community, particular important as we are making these changes in response to listening to concerns.

Other matters, such as for example parking bay improvements will be delivered after consulting with the affected local community whose input will shape the outcome of the projects.

There is no end to the review really as we will continue to react to the needs of the community as required, but the intention is that the package of measures initially identified will where possible be introduced over a period of the next few months into Autumn.

Supplementary Question 14**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

I thank the Cabinet Member for his answer but he talks endlessly about reviews. When is he actually going to cut parking charges to boost our town centres and help residents?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Mr Mayor, Councillor Schneiderman's question was very clear and the question, I repeat, was 'when will parking review announced by the Cabinet Member be completed?' My answer is clear and the North Finchley review went underway yesterday. The other reviews will be following and we have asked visitors to reply within two weeks so we can move forward with this quickly.

Question 15**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Did the Council monitor the number of street parties taking place throughout the Borough for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and if so, how many were there?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The Council monitored all applications for Queen's Diamond Jubilee Street Parties in the Borough. A total of 110 Street Parties were given permission to take place between 26 May - 1 July 2012, through the pledgebank.

Question 16**Councillor Alex Brodtkin**

At what stage in the housing allocations process is the housing applicant informed of the possible consequences of refusing to accept a Council-recommended property, namely that the Council will discharge its housing duty to them under s.193(5) Housing Act 1996? Is this information given before, whilst or after viewing the recommended property?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

When the main homeless duty is accepted under s.193, a decision letter is issued to the applicant confirming that the Council has a duty to provide suitable accommodation. This decision letter specifies that the council can end its duty to provide accommodation if a suitable offer of accommodation is refused.

In addition, the housing needs officer will also reaffirm to the applicant the consequences of refusing offers of suitable accommodation as part of their housing options advice.

As well as the formal advice as set out above, there is ongoing dialogue and advice around nominations to properties between housing staff and applicants.

Supplementary Question 16**Councillor Alex Brodtkin**

There is a difference Councillor Davey in not being able to help those who can not help themselves and not being willing to help those who actually need your help. Do you not think it is appropriate when we are dealing with discharging a housing duty that you make the applicant aware before the viewing that actually if they refuse the offer of the property then the housing duty is discharged? The current position as indicated by your answer is that this happens subsequent to the viewing.

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

No I think Councillor Brodtkin is mistaken. It clearly states that the applicant is informed before, during and after. And if it is not clear in there I can reassure you that applicants are told at every single stage of the process and if there is anybody who wishes to claim otherwise then you can highlight those specific case details to myself and to the relevant officers and we can look into those.

Question 17**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Could the Cabinet Member please update the Council on the strengthened measures being introduced to tackle violence and anti-social behaviour on our streets, in particular activity that is alcohol-related.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Following requests from Councillors, Partners and Residents to tackle alcohol related nuisance, the introduction of a borough wide Designated Public Place Order is currently being consulted upon. Such Orders have been commonly referred to as Alcohol Control Areas or Controlled Drinking Zones. The results of the consultation are scheduled to be reported to Cabinet on 17th July 2012 and if approved, to Council for ratification in September 2012.

There are currently four designated public place orders covering:

- North Finchley Town Centre
- Finchley Town Centre
- Hendon Town Centre
- Cricklewood Town Centre

Requests have been received for further areas covering;

- West Hendon
- Edgware
- Golders Green
- Burnt Oak

Considering the extent of existing areas and those requested a borough wide order is being considered due to the impact of displacement.

If the Order is approved a Police Officer or PCSO will be able to request an individual to stop drinking in a public place or confiscate alcohol from them if they believe a nuisance is or is likely to occur from the consumption of alcohol. If an individual fails to comply with such a request then an offence is committed and they could be arrested, liable to prosecution with a maximum fine of £500, or a penalty notice for disorder issued. The power is discretionary and it is not intended to disrupt peaceful activities such as enjoying a glass of wine in a park whilst having a picnic.

Trading Standards and Licensing, working in partnership with the Police, continue to focus on the regulation of licensed premises and certain operations have been delivered and more are planned to target problem premises associated with nuisance and disorder from the consumption of alcohol. In addition the on going delivery of a regulatory programme to tackle the sale of alcohol to those underage is continuing.

Supplementary Question 17

Councillor Brian Gordon

It does seem that there is an argument for making an alcohol free areas borough wide in all main streets, either we have it or we do not. And I see that you do say in your answer this is being considered. So could you say a bit more about that otherwise you are going to get this uneven situation, as you say, where people will be displaced from one area to the other? So I suggest either we have it in all main roads or not at all.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The consultation is to bring in a borough wide ban on street drinking. When it says to contemplate other ideas it means that if the proposal is rejected then I will expect emails, letters from residents and from Councillors for West Hendon, Edgware, Golders Green and Burnt Oak to bring in individual Banning Orders in those Town Centres.

Question 18

Councillor Julie Johnson

According to the revised impact assessment on the Household Benefit cap, Barnet is one of the 17 London boroughs with 1000 or more households affected by the overall benefit cap. How many households are in private rented accommodation where the local authority assisted under prevention and relief of homelessness powers, and how many are children (or adults) who are at risk/in need?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Since April 2004, we have helped 3,603 households find accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

The recent DWP snapshot data sent to Housing Benefits indicated there were 761 households affected by the benefits cap who are currently resident in the PRS. At least 55 of these were originally assisted into the PRS by the Council in the last 5 years.

It is not known how many of these are children or adults who are at risk/in need. This information is held across multiple databases and could not be provided without a substantial manual check.

Question 19

Councillor Brian Gordon

Residents are often confused as to whether Monday to Friday parking restrictions apply on Bank Holiday. Could there be some clarification regarding this, and possibly improved publicity or signage?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

On bank holidays, with the exception of Christmas Day (public holiday), all bus lanes and all on-street and off-street parking restrictions may be enforced unless street signs indicate otherwise. On Christmas Day, only double yellow lines and pedestrian crossings (zigzags) will be enforced. During bank holidays and public holidays, free parking is available in all our council car parks. On other bank holidays officers will not enforce against vehicles parked in a marked bay.

'Marked bays' consist of the following:

- Residents bays
- Business bays
- Pay to park locations

However, light enforcement will be in place during these days to keep the borough moving safely. Civil enforcement officers will enforce contraventions in bus lanes, yellow lines, footway parking, dropped kerbs, and double parking. Parking restrictions will be enforced unless street signs indicate otherwise. Officers will also enforce obstructions, for example of disabled bays and individual resident requests for enforcement.

On Christmas Day, only double yellow lines and pedestrian crossings (zigzags) will be enforced. Should a resident require immediate enforcement due to blocked driveways, they can ring 020 3375 4242

The advice on the website has recently been rewritten to be clearer and I have asked that we publicise bank holiday parking restrictions more widely close to the appropriate dates.

Supplementary Question 19

Councillor Brian Gordon

I know you are doing everything you can to try and improve aspects of parking. But the question of Bank Holidays, it is my view, and I would like to know whether you think there is merit in it, that Bank Holidays should be treated the same as Sundays. Residents are very confused by this. Would you not consider that wherever there is Sunday allowance for parking then that should also apply for Bank Holidays? And if not why not?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As it says in the answer the three areas, Resident space, Business space and Pay to Park locations are free to park on Bank Holidays. And some places even more so than Sundays. And in terms of yellow lines and double yellow lines as on a Sunday their restrictions will apply as they do on Sunday.

Question 20

Councillor Alison Moore

Following on from my previous questions and Comment on the Work of the Cabinet on fire safety checks in residential blocks - can the Cabinet member give me an assurance that full fire safety checks have been carried out in all Barnet Homes buildings, that the council has sought that assurance from all the registered landlords in Barnet and from all properties used for temporary accommodation by Barnet inside and outside the borough.

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Registered landlords (housing associations) are regulated by the HCA (formerly the TSA). There is a statutory responsibility for landlords to carry out fire risk assessments for their residential

properties and this is enforced by the local fire authority not the local authority. However as part of partnership working, the Council has provided information about local housing associations to the Fire Service and has promoted good practice by raising the issue at the regular liaison meetings with housing associations including attendance by the Fire Service to offer guidance.

Barnet Homes has undertaken fire risk assessments of communal spaces it manages. These have been completed to all communal areas. Dependent upon the risk rating of a block will depend upon the frequency that blocks are resurveyed. We have an ongoing programme of resurveying communal spaces. Around 120 communal areas per month are surveyed.

Barnet Homes also carries out cyclical fire safety checks as part of a fire safety contract. This work includes cyclical inspections of fire safety equipment such as:

- hard wired fire alarm systems to sheltered blocks/community centres/boiler houses/hostels
- fire detection equipment such as smoke alarms
- emergency lighting checks within residential blocks (where installed),
- smoke and heat detector checks within sheltered properties,
- fire fighting equipment testing and replacement such as extinguishers
- dry riser testing

Supplementary Question 20

Councillor Alison Moore

Councillor Davey I have been told that one resident in a tower block in my Ward was told the best strategy in the event of fire was to throw a mattress out of the window and jump. I would be grateful to know do you think that's good advice?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Generally not, but it depends what floor you are on.

Question 21

Councillor Darrel Yawitch

Please can the Cabinet Member advise me of the outcome of the recent consultation about installing new play equipment in Edgwarebury Park.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Two consultation / activity days have been held a further day will be held w/e 6th July 2012. Observations received to date have requested that the two areas be brought together and that equipment is robust and vandal-proof. Once the final day has been held these ideas will be finalised along with survey results from local schools into design proposals. Works are expected to start commence on site in September.

Supplementary Question 21

Councillor Darrel Yawitch

I and my fellow Edgware Ward colleagues have been working very hard for improved play facilities in Edgwarebury Park so we welcome the recent consultation and thank the Officers and the Cabinet Member. Will you join me in welcoming the formation of the new Friends of Edgwarebury Park Group which has been formed as a result of this and commit to working together with them to make further improvements.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Yes I'm happy to support Councillor Yawitch and his Ward colleagues in doing so.

Question 22

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

How much has been spent on the Russell Lane Traffic Improvement Scheme, including officers' time?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The implementation cost of the scheme is estimated at £26k. The total projected spend is £41k of which £15k has already been spent. The accidents recorded by the police show that there have been 2 slight and 1 serious accident over the last three years up to February 2012. The slight accidents involved a pedestrian and car and the serious accident involved a motorbike.

Supplementary Question 22**Councillor Andreas Ioannidis**

I need to clarify that in his answer Councillor Dean Cohen says that it is going to cost £26k to implement the scheme and the total is £41k. And they already have spent £15k. As we heard in the Resident Forum it was only on consultation process and already they say they have spent all the money there is allowed for Officers' time. Is that correct? Does that mean it is already overspent? Does that mean it is over budget?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Mr Mayor, this project is on target.

Question 23**Councillor Rueben Thompstone**

Would the Cabinet Member please provide an update on Barnet MPs 'Operation Formidable'?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The operation is in respect of burglary. It started on the 2nd April 2012 and is due to conclude on 8th July 2012.

To date there has been 188 arrests, 1071 stop/searches and 796 stop/accounts.

The operation has used officers from various policing units in an intelligence led targeted response. They have used a variety of tactics such as, search warrants, ANPR operations and uniform high visibility patrols and covert surveillance. There were officers from Traffic, Territorial Support Group, local SNTs, Police Dog section and staff from Colindale. In all there have been 2438 staff employed on this operation over the time period.

The effect has been a reduction in burglary year on year data by 9%.

Supplementary Question 23**Councillor Rueben Thompstone**

At the recent Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Cook described meetings relating to community safety as a waste of time. Does the Cabinet Member agree?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

It was very disappointing to hear those comments. It is thanks to those meetings that we are able to have a Safer Community Partnership Strategy Board and it is thanks to those partners on the Board that we have been able to build such things as the Integrated Offender Management System which opened its offices on June 6th this year and the IOM Team will deal with approximately 100 cohorts. But it's through meetings that we are now building the Safer Community Partnership Programme and we will be looking to deal with more offenders and that has got to be good news for the residents and its good news for saving money as it will involve less police time, court time, prison time and probation. And it's thanks to those meetings that we've also been focusing on burglary and anti-social behaviour in the borough. The multi-agency approach to anti-social behaviour wouldn't even get off the ground unless there were meetings. So I would like to say to the Member that at the Budget and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee when he said meetings are a waste of time, my answer is I don't think so, they are very productive.

Question 24**Councillor Alex Brodtkin**

If the Council discharges its housing duty under s.193(5) Housing Act 1996 to a parent with a young child at a school in Barnet, what support does Barnet Council provide the family after they receive the notice of eviction?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Once the homeless duty has been discharged the housing department no longer has a duty to provide accommodation to the applicant. However, when there are dependant children in the household a protocol has been agreed with Children's Services to assist the Council with fulfilling its Children's Act duties.

A copy of the letter discharging the homelessness duty will be sent to Children's Services duty team advising them that the duty has been discharged. The applicant will also be referred to "Let to Barnet" which is the team that sources properties within the private rented sector. The applicant will

then be given a period of eight weeks to find alternative accommodation after which their temporary accommodation will be cancelled.

If they are not successful in finding private rented accommodation and they are evicted Children's Services will make an assessment as to whether the children are at risk and if so whether they trigger further Children's Act assistance.

Question 25

Councillor Rueben Thompstone

Can the Cabinet Member confirm that Boris Johnson's 'Help a London Park' initiative has completed work on the Dollis Valley Greenwalk and that the project has finished on-time and on-budget?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The Greenwalk was completed on time and on budget. The delivery of a 3 year programme to revitalise seven miles of the Dollis Valley Greenwalk including 15 bridges, refurbishment of the decoy pond at Brent Park with new viewing platform, 2 further play areas at Riverside Walk and Windsor Open Space. As well as works to 5 entrances, repair and improvement works to paths, management of vegetation and trees, treatment and removal of invasive species alongside significant improvement to signage.

Supplementary Question 25

Councillor Ruben Thompstone

I understand in addition to the amount awarded by the London Mayor, an additional £250k was secured from Transport for London for cycle and footpath investments and £30k from Walk London to improve signs in the area. However at the Mill Hill Preservation Society AGM on 24th May, the current GLA Member for Barnet and Camden claimed that the project had run out of money and had not been completed. If that is not true will the Cabinet Member have Officers write to the current GLA Member and the Mill Hill Preservation Society and correct his assertions?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

I confirm that the statement that Councillor Thompstone just made is correct in terms of the monies and the work that Councillor Brian Coleman did in that has to be praised.

Question 26

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Will the option of introducing a free parking period for short stays be part of the parking review?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Yes, but the introduction of any free parking period has the potential to result in a significant loss of income to the Special Parking Account. Note a more detailed response has been given in questions 10 and 14.

Supplementary Question 26

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

I thank the Cabinet Member for his answer which he refers to a significant loss of income if a free parking period is introduced. But will he take into account the actual economic benefit to our town centres and to our communities of introducing something that was first proposed by a Parking Finish Group back in 2010 and would greatly improve the vitality of our town centres?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As I have said in the previous answers, reviews are happening and the outturn of that will determine on how we move forward within each individual town centre on an individual basis.

Question 27

Councillor Rueben Thompstone

Can the Cabinet Member please advise if Members of this Council – or officers – have ever taken a recorded decision to operate a deliberate policy of non-enforcement in cases of planning breaches or non-compliance of planning law for reasons of 'risk-aversion'?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

It is Council policy to always take appropriate enforcement action where a breach of planning control has occurred and where that breach is causing demonstrable planning harm. There are occasionally cases when a breach of planning control has occurred but where the breach is

considered not to cause any demonstrable planning harm, and then no formal enforcement action is taken. This is in compliance with Government guidance. In such instances where formal enforcement action is not taken against a breach of planning control, then those who bring the matter to the Council's attention are notified of the Council's decision.

Supplementary Question 27

Councillor Rueben Thompstone

At the Mill Hill Preservation Society AGM on 24th May the current GLA Member for Barnet and Camden claimed that a political decision had been taken by Barnet Council over planning enforcement. And this was enforced at a political (with a small p) level by the Planning Department. If this is incorrect will the Cabinet Member have Officers write to the current GLA Member and the Mill Hill Preservation Society and correct his assertions?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

I can confirm that no political decision has ever been taken by the Planning Department over planning enforcement in this way. This is absolutely ridiculous. If the GLA Member has any information about a political case, a particular case, he should tell me or the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration and we will investigate it thoroughly. But if we have no information about what he is talking about or what his insidious comments relate to then how can we react? He has to give us the information.

Question 28

Councillor Alison Moore

Following the recent incidents at Upper Fosters can the Cabinet Member assure us that wiring and electric safety checks are being carried out in all council residential blocks and what is the timetable for those to be completed?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Barnet Homes have surveyed and identified a forward programme of planned major communal electrical replacement work based on risk. Upper Fosters was on the programme and was due to commence in July 2012.

Checks are carried out to the emergency lighting as part of a cyclical Fire Safety Contract. Furthermore, cyclical checks are carried as part of a periodic cyclical inspection programme of Landlord supplies within residential blocks. Tenanted properties are subjected to regular inspections and testing. The frequency that a property is tested is determined in accordance with BS 7671:2011 (otherwise known as the 17th edition wiring regulations).

Barnet Homes have also in placed an emergency process to deal with any major residential block electrical failure.

Question 29

Councillor Kate Salinger

Can the Cabinet Member assure me that, as a result of drawings for the Landmark Library being drawn up, that there is no plan to move Community Focus from the rooms they currently occupy and use in the Artsdepot?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

As Councillor Salinger knows, a range of options are being consider to secure the best use and value for money for the building. The council is working hard to ensure that all stakeholders are fully involved in the drawing up of options. I very much value where they are but going forward I am sure she would agree with me that there maybe better options for them that would provide better space and facilities.

Question 30

Councillor Julie Johnson

What is the Cabinet Member's plan for re-housing with the hundreds of non-secure temporary tenants living on the Council's regeneration estates?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Non –secure tenants on the regeneration estates will receive an holistic assessment some months prior to their being required to move, and will generally be offered a home elsewhere in either the

private rented sector or social housing depending on the availability of accommodation at the point that they are required to move.

Supplementary Question 30

Councillor Julie Johnson

I thank the Cabinet Member for his answer. Why is the Cabinet Member not able to offer a further assurance for these non-secure tenants?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

I assume the question relates to why non-secure tenancies are not being made secure tenants. And the answer is that we have to make the best use of the stock we have available to us and manage the secure tenants first.

Question 31

Councillor Rowan Turner

Does the Cabinet Member agree that council tenants who deprive others of much-needed social housing by sub-letting their own council homes for profit, should be prosecuted wherever possible?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Barnet Homes has recovered 20 homes in the last year that have involved illegal occupation. The government has recently consulted on providing local authorities with more powers to prosecute council tenants who sub-let properties in this way, and I have written to the Housing Minister expressing my concern that there should be tougher powers in place to deal with perpetrators, including the recovery of any profits made through illegally sub-letting homes.

Question 32

Councillor Alison Moore

Does the Leader agree with the Council position that the addition of a new section on risk management when commissioning services fails the key decision test and thus is not eligible to be "called in"?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

The rules are clear.

Supplementary Question 32

Councillor Alison Moore

Are you genuinely committed to scrutiny and challenge within this Council?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

Absolutely.

Question 33

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

What parking offences will be considered for enforcement by CCTV as part of the review of CCTV in the Borough?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Parking offences are not part of the CCTV review.

Supplementary Question 33

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Councillor Longstaff said at that famous Budget and Performance Meeting that it would be reasonable to consider enforcing parking restrictions such as parking on a double yellow line by the use of CCTV. Has he changed his mind now or is that still going ahead?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Mr Mayor, no I certainly have not changed my mind. But then the decision is not mine it belongs to the Lead Member for the Environment.

Question 34

Councillor Barry Rawlings

With reference to Quarter 4 Performance Report ORG0011 – can the Cabinet Member explain the following statement 'Prepare business case for members decision on future involvement with the NLWA, including decision on the Inter Authority Agreement?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) is procuring contracts to deal with the waste arising from its seven constituent boroughs (Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Islington and Waltham Forest). The NLWA is seeking the signing by all of its constituent boroughs of an Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) to provide certainty to bidders to the NLWA procurement of the close working relationship and commitment between boroughs, in order to reduce the amount of risk bidders price into their solutions. A report to the meeting of Cabinet on 3 November 2011 set out details of the IAA, and noted that an agreed IAA is essential to achieve the best outcome from the NLWA procurement. Cabinet agreed to the signing of the IAA and to authorise the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member for Environment to agree the final form of the IAA on the basis set out in the report.

Question 35**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

What is the Council doing for local business owners and traders in order to find ways of helping the local economy?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

We have just announced a package of £1m of support for local businesses to take on young people into employment. This is funding direct to businesses to allow them to invest in their workforce at a time when investment in skills is so important to businesses and the wider economy.

Our local package of support complements the government's work programme which commits £1bn of support to businesses and young people over the spending review period and we will ensure that businesses and young people in Barnet get their fair share of this funding.

My colleague, the Cabinet Member for Environment, is also piloting some work around parking in order to help support town centres.

In addition, the Council has established a new programme of business engagement including quarterly consultation events .

Supplementary Question 35**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

The £1m support for local businesses to take young people into employment would be fine if local businesses could see the economy improving. But sadly with Government policy landing us back in recession, businesses and small traders are not brimming with plans for expansion. If anything they are contracting and are still laying off staff or folding completely. The pilot work around parking is too little, too late and small traders have suffered greatly. So will the Cabinet, therefore, properly engage with all local traders? Will he assist with the street scene of empty businesses and will he work with local traders to improve both, the image, the marketing and the footfall of our trading areas?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I am sure those businesses who want this investment to work will make it work. And I'm sure those businesses who want to engage with us and attend the quarterly consultation events will attend and take full advantage.

Question 36**Councillor Andreas Ioannidis**

If the Russell Lane Scheme is approved what is the estimated costs of implementation?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The implementation cost of the scheme is estimated at £26k. The total projected spend is £41k of which £15k has already been spent. The accidents recorded by the police show that there have been 2 slight and 1 serious accident over the last three years up to February 2012. The slight accidents involved a pedestrian and car and the serious accident involved a motorbike.

Supplementary Question 36**Councillor Andreas Ioannidis**

Accepting the argument of Councillor Dean Cohen that the implementation cost will be £26k, and we have already spent £60k. I just want to ask where does the money for Officers' time in order to analyse the consultation will come from?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

This is a repeat question Mr Mayor. My answer remains the same.

Question 37**Councillor Alex Brodtkin**

How many CCTV cameras are in operation (and working) at the moment, compared with at the start of June 2011?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

On 1st June 2011 there were 129 CCTV cameras in use and three not working. Today there is the same number of cameras, with five not working to full capacity.

Question 38**Councillor Julie Johnson**

How many households in Barnet will be affected by the overall benefit cap, and in how many of these are there children taking public exams etc...

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The work we have done so far shows that the figure is 957 households. This is broken down as follows;

- Barnet Homes tenants – 71
- Temporary accommodation – 26
- Registered Social Landlords - 99
- Private tenants 761.

We are unable to establish at present how many of these households have children undertaking public exams however I will forward this information as soon as it is available .

Question 39**Councillor Alison Moore**

Given the risks presented by the One Barnet Commissioning Council model why has only one Cabinet Member attended the APSE presentation outlining the problems?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Because it is a left wing organisation that produced a report that offered no alternatives and Cabinet Members have better things to be doing with their evenings. As the report says, "elected members of the Council are perfectly entitled to develop and pursue their vision for the authority" and that is what we are doing.

Supplementary Question 39**Councillor Alison Moore**

APSE works with 300 Local Authorities across the country. You do such a professional organisation a disservice. More importantly APSE and Unison have been seeking a meeting with you and the Leader to discuss alternatives. Would you commit to meeting them?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

No. I would not waste my time.

Question 40**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Will CCTV cameras be removed from any locations in the Borough where they are currently installed?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

There are no plans to remove cameras.

Supplementary Question 40**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Can I take it from Councillor Longstaff's answer that the CCTV review will look at where additional cameras can be installed or the replacement of the current cameras and that I can reassure residents that no areas currently covered by CCTV cameras will have those removed.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The CCTV review, if you bother to read the documentation, is about the technology.

Question 41**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Has Barnet formally objected to the application for village green status to the site on Pinkham Way?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

London Borough of Barnet and the North London Waste Authority has jointly instructed leading Counsel to robustly defend and object to the village green application and to defend this at a Public Inquiry when this is convened. The formal objections has not been submitted given that deadline for sending the Landowner's (LBB/NLWA) objections to Haringey, as Registration Authority, is 20 July.

Question 42**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

Will the Council continue to press forward with efforts to reclaim the Old Barn for community use?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Yes, the Council is pressing forward with efforts to ensure that this facility is open for community use.

Supplementary Question 42**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

I have to say that this is an absolutely feeble response from Councillor Rams. There are serious problems on The Grange with youth crime and knife crime partly because the Old Barn Community Centre is out of use. When I ask him are you continuing to bring the Old Barn into public, I want to know the details for God's sake.

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Mr Mayor, I don't think that's quite appropriate language for a Councillor but I will write to him on such matters.

Question 43**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Does the Cabinet Member agree that empty business premises are a blight to the local economy and, what plans does the cabinet member have to tackle this problem?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I agree that empty business premises can be unsightly and represent under utilised space in our town centres. The Council cannot tackle this problem alone and there are factors outside of its control such as the struggling national economy.

Cabinet recently approved the Skills, Employment and Enterprise Plan for Barnet 2012-2015. The Plan sets out the actions the council will take, in partnership with the local public sector and community groups, to help tackle unemployment in the borough and create the right conditions to encourage growth and enterprise. This includes objectives around exploring innovative uses of premises for business incubation or affordable workspace, and to develop a proactive approach to respond to the high level of vacant offices. Empty premises represent an opportunity for charity and community groups to secure temporary accommodation at a discounted rate with the cooperation of landlords of course.

We have just announced a package of £1m of support for local businesses to take on young people into employment. This is funding direct to businesses to allow them to invest in their workforce at a time when investment in skills is so important to businesses and the wider economy.

Our local package of support complements the government's work programme which commits £1bn of support to businesses and young people over the spending review period . We will ensure that businesses and young people in Barnet get their fair share of this funding.

In addition, the Council has established a new programme of business engagement including quarterly consultation events .

Supplementary Question 43

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

I really do not think that the answer is trying to answer the question that I put. True you may not be able to tackle this problem of vacant properties alone, but you could, as seen across the country, by many other Councils', assist with this problem. Will you work with Freeholders of empty properties by using the valuable window space and door space to promote Barnet and local traders rather than just leaving it all an unsightly mess?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The unsightly mess we are in with the economy was due to Labour. If it was not for the Coalition Government in power now the situation would be a lot worse. I'm sure those businesses who attend the quarterly consultation events, we will be able to work with them on this matter.

Question 44

Councillor Julie Johnson

How much has Temporary Accommodation cost the council each year from 2006?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

The council has successfully recovered the cost of temporary accommodation during the period concerned through the rents that are charged and largely met through housing benefit.

Question 45

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

How many accidents/road traffic collisions have there been on this section of Russell Lane?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The implementation cost of the scheme is estimated at £26k. The total projected spend is £41k of which £15k has already been spent. The accidents recorded by the police show that there have been 2 slight and 1 serious accident over the last three years up to February 2012. The slight accidents involved a pedestrian and car and the serious accident involved a motorbike.

Question 46

Councillor Zakia Zubairi

Many parents that use Wingfield Children's Centre are concerned at the funding cuts to child care that the council is proposing to impose. What will happen to those parents and children that cannot access child care at Wingfield once the cuts are implemented?

Answer by Councillor Andrew Harper

The consultation was on redistributing the allocation of £4.3m to more effectively meet the needs of vulnerable families and communities. The total budget for Children's Centres remains the same at £4.3m and there are no funding reductions.

Wingfield Children's Centre is planning to make changes in its childcare delivery from 1 September 2012. Wingfield CC is proposing to reduce the number of weeks of childcare provision from 48 weeks to 38 weeks and to reduce the opening hours from 8am - 6pm to 8.30am - 3.30pm. This is due to low take-up of childcare during these times. For example, during the Easter holiday period 2012, Wingfield CC only had 3 children access childcare. Wingfield CC will be increasing childcare sessions for its popular sessions.

We would support families that need alternative childcare.

Question 47

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

What is the current average cost to a Barnet resident of the Council installing a crossover? How much was it (a) 2 years ago, (b) 4 years ago?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The total charge for a cross over installation is made up of the contractor's costs to construct the crossover which is based on the size of the crossover requested by each individual applicant plus a

40% administration charge and a £175 Legal Fee. Contractor's costs are set in accordance with current contract rates using a competitively tendered contract.

It is not possible to produce the information on average costs in the timescale given to respond. However, the cost of vehicle crossovers has always been based on the cost of the works, the administration charge and a set legal fee as agreed annually through the Fees and Charges report. Therefore for an average crossover the costs of installation will only have increased over the time periods stated by an amount equivalent to the contract inflation rates during each time period.

The administration charge covers the cost of the resources required to administer the process and the council's overheads and therefore a profit is not made by the Council.

Question 48

Councillor Alison Moore

In the Community Safety Implementation and Enhancement Report that went to CRC, success depends in part on an integrated approach by Council services. How will this be achieved when regulatory services such as Planning and Trading Standards are commissioned via the One Barnet Programme?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The successful achievement of any major change requires cooperation between the Council and its partners. The delivery of regulatory services by an external party will not change this. To ensure that the provider of these services does work in partnership with the Council in this way, we will be including clauses in their contract that incentivise effective partnership working and penalise uncollaborative behaviour.

Question 49

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

Residents have approached me with concerns about the future of Osidge Library – can the Cabinet Member assure me there are no current plans to close the library like you did with Friern Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

I am sure that the Councillor has read the libraries strategy, which ensures more money is spent on books, our libraries are open longer and that every primary school child becomes a library member as well as building a new landmark library in the artsdepot. He will also be clear, if he has read the document, that plans for Osidge are to improve the current site, and that is what we are working on plans to do

Question 50

Councillor Julie Johnson

How many households have been placed in temporary accommodation outside the Borough and/or outside London each year since 2006?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

In 2011/12 – 382 Households were placed in out-of-borough Temporary Accommodation. In most instances this would have been emergency nightly purchase accommodation for relatively short periods. Where emergency out of borough accommodation has been provided, it has predominantly been in our neighbouring boroughs of Enfield and Haringey. 13 Households requested our assistance in securing long-term accommodation outside of Barnet in the period June 11 to May 12. One household has been housed outside of London in the last 12 months at the household's request.

The data in respect of number of households placed in temporary accommodation out of borough in previous years has been sourced from the P1E return submitted to DCLG – this provides snapshot data only and may not reflect all the movements into emergency out of borough accommodation within the year as is reflected more accurately in the 11/12 data above.

2005/6 – 84

2006/7 – 102

2007/8 – 174

2008/9 – 51

2009/10 – 47

2010/11 – 102

Question 51**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Out of the cost paid by residents for crossovers, what percentage goes to the contractor and what percentage goes to the Council?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The total charge for a cross over installation is made up of the contractor's costs to construct the crossover which is based on the size of the crossover requested by each individual applicant plus a 40% administration charge and a £175 Legal Fee. Contractor's costs are set in accordance with current contract rates using a competitively tendered contract.

It is not possible to produce the information on average costs in the timescale given to respond. However, the cost of vehicle crossovers has always been based on the cost of the works, the administration charge and a set legal fee as agreed annually through the Fees and Charges report. Therefore for an average crossover the costs of installation will only have increased over the time periods stated by an amount equivalent to the contract inflation rates during each time period.

The administration charge covers the cost of the resources required to administer the process and the council's overheads and therefore a profit is not made by the Council.

Question 52**Councillor Alex Brodwin**

How will the Community Safety Strategy be affected by the government's cuts to police and probation services?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

There is currently a Community Safety Strategy in place until 2014. All partners have signed up to deliver the strategy. The Council has recently embarked on a piece of work to review the implementation and enhancement of that Safer Communities Partnership Strategy.

Question 53**Councillor Julie Johnson**

1 affordable home for rent was started last year, while every quarter showed a rise in those accepted as homeless, including a 45% increase in the last quarter. What is the Lead Member going to do about it?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

The total number of affordable housing starts for the capital as a whole was less than 60.

The main reason for this was the changing of the rent and funding regime for Registered Providers. Most providers where possible, brought forward schemes planned for last year to 2010/11 to take advantage of the previous more generous grant funding model.

There were also delays in the registered providers adapting to the new funding regimes, agreeing new rent policies and businesses cases, obtaining permission from their boards, as well as agreeing an acceptable contract with the HCA. The most recent projections for starts this year is approximately 239.

The Council has seen an increased number of homeless applications and is responding to this in the following ways:

Housing Allocation Scheme – Barnet's new allocation scheme which was introduced last year aims to refocus resources on households with the highest housing need.

Local tenancy strategy – Barnet is to implement a local tenancy strategy which is to make use of fixed-term tenancies for new tenants. The fixed term tenancies will be reviewed every 5 years on whether the household still requires affordable housing. We are also working with our housing associations partners to encourage the use of fixed term tenancies.

Registered Providers – Working with the Registered Providers on securing new affordable homes through the new Affordable Rent programme.

New affordable housing is only one source of housing accommodation available to us to meet housing need. Other sources include partnerships with private landlords, leasing schemes with housing association/registered providers, relets through both the Council's own stock and housing

Question 54

Councillor Barry Rawlings

What is Barnet's response to the (North London Waste Plan) Planning Inspector's comments as to their failure to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate under Section 110 of the Localism Act?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

The Planning Inspector for the Examination in Public into the North London Waste Plan has given his preliminary view about the matter that led to the suspension of the hearings on their first day. He has concluded that the North London boroughs have a duty to co-operate with authorities in areas outside London to which waste from North London gets sent for landfill. He has now asked the boroughs to send him information about how they have co-operated with these authorities in drawing up the Plan. The seven North London Waste Plan boroughs are considering their response to the Planning Inspector. Barnet is disappointed with the way that the public examination into the North London Waste Plan has been delayed because of this issue of procedure, but accepts that the Planning Inspectorate need to consider the legal requirements of plan making.

Question 55

Councillor Arjun Mittra

Will the Council consider the drainage problems in Cherry Tree Woods, which have prevented the East Finchley festival from going ahead this year.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Cherry Tree Woods is naturally the lowest point in this area of the Borough and the park is naturally the flood plain for excess water. During the current year greenspace officers are intending to provide additional park ponds and wet scraping (seasonal pond) measures to enable the park to cope better and to promote wild-life.

This year the particularly wet weather has meant that the Festival was not able to go ahead, this is very unusual. Unfortunately this has been the case for a number of parks events, due to the extreme weather conditions identified.

Question 56

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Does the Council make a profit out of crossovers and if so how much?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The total charge for a cross over installation is made up of the contractor's costs to construct the crossover which is based on the size of the crossover requested by each individual applicant plus a 40% administration charge and a £175 Legal Fee. Contractor's costs are set in accordance with current contract rates using a competitively tendered contract.

It is not possible to produce the information on average costs in the timescale given to respond. However, the cost of vehicle crossovers has always been based on the cost of the works, the administration charge and a set legal fee as agreed annually through the Fees and Charges report. Therefore for an average crossover the costs of installation will only have increased over the time periods stated by an amount equivalent to the contract inflation rates during each time period.

The administration charge covers the cost of the resources required to administer the process and the council's overheads and therefore a profit is not made by the Council.

Question 57

Councillor Barry Rawlings

The Council spent £40,000 on a lift at artsdepot – was this to provide access to the library?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

I am personally not aware of any money being spent on a lift but will provide a fuller response at the meeting.

Question 58**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

Does the Council support the Government's proposals for Gay marriage? If not, why not?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

People chose to live with whom they will. That choice can be legally codified by civil partnership or marriage and the union marked by a ceremony and its dissolution by legal divorce. I do not have any difficulty in civil partnership becoming marriage. However, it seems intolerant to compel any religious organisation to conduct or bless a "marriage" when that is contrary to the faith of the organisation and contrary to its definition of marriage. This would seem to me to be just the sort of intolerance that made life so difficult for the Gay community in the past.

Question 59**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Does the Cabinet Member agree that taking away the ability to pay by cash for parking in Barnet has added to the problems that local traders are facing and will he reintroduce parking payment by cash across the borough?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The final removal of Pay and Display machines in November 2011 whilst possibly making access to paid for parking a little more difficult for some, cannot be blamed for what was and still is the continued economic downturn being seen in and affecting ourselves and neighbours.

We continue to provide ways to pay to park by selling vouchers through our library and on line services and the paybyphone network is widely used across Barnet, London and the UK.

We are currently reviewing the sales and access to vouchers. One option is to allow their availability directly from the high street which we are currently considering on a discounted basis.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen**Question 60****Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Will the energy saving programme for street lighting result in a reduction of lighting levels in any areas or lights being switched off in any areas?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

It will involve lights being dimmed at times when pedestrian and vehicular volumes are reduced. i.e. from around midnight to 5a.m. The lighting levels will at all times be maintained to ensure compliance with the lighting levels recommended in the Highway Lighting Code of Practice Guidance document. It is not intended that any lights will be completely switched off.

Question 61**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

When will the village green application for the land next to Friern Barnet Library be considered?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

This village green application for land next to the previous Friern Barnet library has to be presented to the Planning & Environment Committee (P & E). The next available P & E Committee meeting is being held on 23 July and the one thereafter is being held on 23 October. It is not possible for the application to be presented to the July meeting so it is anticipated that the application will be presented to the P & E Committee being held on 23 October.

Question 62**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Preserving local employment and increasing the opportunity for people in Barnet to find employment would seem to be a sound and sensible idea. Why then is Barnet Council insisting on outsourcing local jobs to other areas, as has already been seen with the parking service?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The Council has a commitment to local taxpayers to ensure that services are provided as cost effectively as possible, and given the financial context of huge reductions in government funding, continuing to deliver services in the same way in the same location is not always an option.

The Council has a number of levers to help stimulate local employment. For example, we are committed to creating employment opportunities through our regeneration schemes. Section 106

agreements oblige development partners to agree to local labour targets and deliver apprenticeships in construction and other related fields. The Council has also agreed a £1m package of support for young people getting into work will directly offer local work opportunities for residents.

Question 63

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Is it permitted for anyone to film all public Council meetings?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius, Leader of the Council

Filming is permitted by members of the public within the well understood limitations that were set out at the time of the Council vote.

Question 64

Councillor Barry Rawlings

At the Hollickwood School Fete the entire Coppetts Safer Neighbourhood Team was present – 1 Police Officer and 2 Police Community Support Officers. The Sergeant is shared and this is a deficit of 1 Police Officer and 4 PCSOs. The Officer is leaving on the 16th July to be replaced by a probationer who cannot patrol alone for the first 6 months. Will the lead member lobby the Mayor of London to reverse the cuts to police in Barnet that will leave so many residents vulnerable?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Coppetts SNT currently has one sergeant, two PCs and two PCSOs, with a new PCSO joining imminently. The MPS is in the process of recruiting and training to get teams back to full strength as quickly as possible.

Question 65

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

How can the One Barnet programme be described a medium/high risk in the 2011-12 quarter 4 corporate risk register when procurement is described as a high risk?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The One Barnet programme includes a portfolio of projects. Many of these have now been successfully completed (such as the creation of a Local Authority Trading Company and the letting of a Parking Contract). Others, such as the optimisation of our revenue collection, or the Community Coaching initiative, are not procurement projects. Consequently, it is logical that the risk rating related to the programme is not automatically the same as that related to procurement activity.

Question 66

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

Has any agreement been made yet with Barnet Museum to keep it at the current location and at a rent which they can afford?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Officers are working hard to make this happen. The council has offered a lease on a peppercorn rent to be reviewed in five years, subject to the group taking the relevant utility bills and the running being at no additional cost to the council.

Question 67

Councillor Barry Rawlings

Given the cuts to the voluntary sector how many day centres for older people and those with learning difficulties and mental health problems are expected to close?

Answer by Councillor Sachin Rajput

A review of voluntary sector provision was conducted during 2010/11. This review found that services were not sufficiently aligned with commissioning priorities such as increased personalisation and greater outreach.

The Council has recently closed the consultation on Older Adults Day Opportunities and a paper on the proposed new model is scheduled to go to the next Cabinet. The proposals are intended to redress the inequality of current distribution whereby existing day centres benefit only small numbers of older people. It is anticipated that the proposed new service model will reach greater

numbers of older people and be provided from a greater range of locations across Barnet which is considered a positive step forward.

The need for some ongoing day centre places for the most frail is recognised, however, the expectation is that fewer, higher quality places will be needed as the proposed model for day opportunities is implemented. It is also anticipated that these will be funded through the use of Personal Budgets over time.

Whilst, it is acknowledged that the Age UK day centres (Meritage and Ann Owens) and the BME day centres at the Multi Cultural Centre are very likely to close without Council funding, Council funding will be available to support neighbourhood based services and we are working with providers to work out what the opportunities and risks are and to ensure a smooth transition to this model. In line with the Council's community care responsibilities, those people with eligible social care needs will continue to have their needs met and a full transition plan will be taken to Cabinet in September if the proposed model is accepted.

Question 68

Councillor Alison Moore

Various projects within the Council's revenue budget and capital programme are supported by time-limited grants. How much external revenue and capital income has been foregone by the Council because of delays in implementing projects, in what areas have these occurred and for what reasons?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

No external revenue or capital income has been foregone by the Council because of delays.

Question 69

Councillor Alison Moore

What is the explanation and implications of the failure of the Council to meet satisfaction targets in planning services, particularly in the light of the anticipated outsourcing of the service? [CPI 1008]

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

The Planning Service has had an unprecedented number of officers leave their posts either permanently or temporarily over the last year. Filling the vacant positions with suitable replacements has been challenging. As a consequence, remaining officers have had to take on significantly larger case loads than normal and these have proved to be difficult to manage. This has resulted in planning applications, on average, taking longer to deal with and this has impacted on customer satisfaction, together with the reduction of time officers are able to spend with customers on the phone. Every effort is being made to ensure the Planning Service has sufficient resource to deal with demands. The recent changes to delegated powers will also help in reducing the amount of time officers spend on processing planning applications for presentation at committee. It is anticipated that customer satisfaction will improve as the backlog of planning applications is reduced. The Service is confident of meeting customer satisfaction targets before transfer to the new provider and the new provider will be required to continually improve customer satisfaction.

Question 70

Councillor Alison Moore

What is the Cabinet Member's view on the issue of avoidable hospital re-admissions – what are the explanations and mitigating actions? [CPI 6013]

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

Whilst a certain proportion of re-admissions will be always be unavoidable, particularly with an ageing population and increases in the prevalence of long term conditions (LTCs), it has been widely recognised that a good proportion of re-admissions could be avoided if the appropriate systems and services are put in place. This includes more proactive management of people with LTCs and the commissioning of community services which provide a viable alternative to admission.

The Council has been working in collaboration with NHS North Central London Barnet and the Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group to address this issue. Work has included:

- The development of a rapid response Palliative Care Service for people in their normal place of residence (including Care Homes). This recognises that people often have multiple admissions in the last few months of their lives which could be avoided if proper, intensive support was available quickly.
- A rapid response service for GPs to avoid admissions in the frail elderly (phase 1 of the frail elderly pathway). This service sees the Council commissioned enablement service working in an integrated fashion with the health commissioned intermediate care service to provide a 2 hour response time to ensure older people are supported in their own homes – especially important when the impact of a hospital admission on a person's mental health is taken account of. The enablement + service provides short term night time support to people who might otherwise not feel confident to stay or return home.
- Agreement was reached last year with our two main Acute Hospital providers to implement initiatives in A&E to manage older people differently to avoid admission. This includes rapid assessment of older people in A&E by a geriatrician, the use of community services to support people at home (funded by the Acute Hospitals for the first 72 hours) and the use of "hot" clinics – i.e. A Clinic that people can be brought into for certain treatments that do not require admission.
- Phase 2 of the Frail Elderly Pathway work is due to be implemented from the 3rd quarter. This will see more proactive management of Older People in a community setting to avoid exacerbation of medical conditions and social need. There will also be a Frail Elderly Assessment Centre included in the redeveloped Finchley Memorial Hospital.
- Robust discharge planning is also important in the avoidance of re-admissions and work with hospital providers will be included in the Frail Elderly work once phase 2 has been implemented.
- Evidence shows that Older People who are more isolated move along the Frail Elderly Pathway more rapidly and are therefore at greater risk of admission. Work being led by the Public Health Team to implement Ageing Well will help to address this issue.
- Care Homes are a source of re-admission – although data analysis shows that this is not as large an issue as might be expected. Work is underway through a Care Homes Local Enhanced Service (a service provided by GPs) to improve proactive management of people in Care Homes. This will be linked to Council work on the development of quality and performance management of Care Homes.
- Public Health is also leading work – with the Joint Commissioner for Older People – on development of the Falls Pathway. This includes implementation of a Fracture Liaison service. Falls are a common cause of admission and re-admission.
- Carers are crucial to the avoidance of admissions and a range of initiatives are being implemented. This includes better support for carers when a family member is discharged home and work with local hospitals to ensure carers are properly considered in the discharge process.

Health commissioners are also developing a range of services intended to improve the management of LTCs such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Diabetes. In addition the Council and health colleagues will also be taking forward a project to increase the use of Tele-care and Tele-health in Barnet.

Question 71

Councillor Alison Moore

What is the impact of the postponement of the Inspector's Inquiry on the NLWA Plan on this indicator? What would the financial and service implications for Barnet be if the Plan had to be reformulated? [ORG0011]

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

It is too early to identify what the impact of the postponement may be. The North London Waste Authority (NLWA) remains responsible for identifying and delivering outlets for the treatment and disposal of waste from its constituent boroughs, as part of its procurement programme. It is not possible to comment on any financial or service implications at this stage.