

Appendix 1

Council Questions to Cabinet Members 22 January 2013 Questions and Responses

Question 1

Councillor Brian Gordon

There is considerable public concern regarding the excessive manner (both in terms of time taken and area of restriction) in which public roads within the Borough are sometimes being closed or partially closed to traffic due to works carried out by utility companies. Is there anything the Council can do to strengthen its influence or control over this?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

In accordance with the Road Traffic Act, all road closures carried out by utilities within the borough are done so either with permission from the police, for immediate & emergency works, or with prior consultation and agreement with the council to accommodate planned works. Utilities are only allowed to close roads if the council sees real benefits to safety and or a significant reduction to disruption/congestion within a given area. On occasions, the closing of a road can allow works to take place at a faster pace reducing the overall duration. Areas of restrictions and diversion routes are always agreed ahead of planned works. Council inspectors monitor all sites when works are in progress to review and amend if necessary. Planned works are publicised and in all cases the police and (where necessary) Transport for London are consulted. We can issue fixed penalty notices if the utilities have breached their permit conditions regarding the physical closure of the road and having the appropriate authorised traffic order.

Supplementary Question 1

Councillor Brian Gordon

Here are examples of roads which have been unnecessarily closed and if not unnecessarily closed, when there isn't even any work going on, Broadfields Avenue, Hale Lane and others around the borough. Residents have complained and it has often caused unnecessary delay and hold-ups in traffic. Can we be sure that there really will be action taken to ensure that this doesn't happen and when Members complain about this, the residents ask them to complain, that these matters of road closures will be looked into immediately by the officers concerned?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

I can give Councillor Gordon that assurance. Councillor Gordon will note from the answer, this authority is now in a position to issue fixed penalty notices to utility companies that breach any conditions of the road closure.

Question 2

Councillor Alison Moore

Over 7,000 people have now signed a petition calling for the One Barnet mass privatisation programme to be stopped and a referendum held on whether it continues. Given that this is significantly more people expressing a view than has ever been expressed in any council consultation on any subject, would the Leader now agree to suspend the One Barnet programme and hold a referendum on it with immediate effect?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

This programme is not a mass privatisation but a mixture of contracting out some services and bringing others such as waste in house. 11% of the council budget will be outsourced by means of the back office contract. The contract will be operational as soon as possible subject to current legal action. I see no need to revisit the decision of council on the 11th September. We operate as a representative democracy.

Supplementary Question 2**Councillor Alison Moore**

This Administration has unilaterally and without any consultation with local residents, moved Barnet to a Commissioning Council so that the majority of council services will be commissioned and delivered from and delivered by someone else. This is a radical change to local service delivery. When will you consult local residents on it?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Residents have been consulted in the last election.

Question 3**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor recently made an FOI request for details of all Councillors with parking permits. This necessitated Members providing full details of their permits to the relevant Council officers, which one would have thought should be in their possession already. Whereas a Councillor is quite entitled to make this request, do you not think that excessive attention and bureaucracy connected with this issue is something of a waste of time and public money?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

It might have been easier just to ask for the information but that is a matter for the Councillor and Officers concerned.

Supplementary Question 3**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Do you not think that it is rather an unhealthy obsession with scrutinising everything that is happening with Councillors' parking permits and there should be a little bit more common sense in this? There are, sometimes, more important things that should be dealt with than just looking into this issue and sometimes even persecuting Members of the council when they are parking quite legitimately.

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

If a particular Councillor has an issue that s/he wishes to enquire about, it is for that Councillor to decide whether it is important or not.

Question 4**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Given the cuts to Disability Living Allowance, child benefit and tax credits and the 'Granny Tax' could the Leader say why the Conservative-led Coalition government is working so hard to make life difficult for women, the elderly and the disabled?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The Coalition government is helping the whole population by avoiding the national bankruptcy that would have ensued if the country had stayed on Labour's inevitable path to disaster. At any time there have to be limits on the level of benefits. It can not be right for benefit to be higher than average earnings. Much needed reform is essential to bring a sense of logic to the whole welfare system and bear down on cost when the taxpayer faces crisis levels of tax.

Supplementary Question 4**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

On the issue of council tax benefit, for example, does the Leader think it is fair to impose a council tax increase on hard working families on low pay, when millionaires are being given a council tax-free freeze next year together with an income tax rebate of £40,000 each?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Taxation is at crisis levels at the moment to deal with the deficit that was not addressed by the last Labour Government. It is simply unreasonable to put it as you do. The taxes are very high on

income tax. If you drive income tax up in this country, you drive entrepreneurs away, much like your Socialist colleague in France is doing.

Question 5

Councillor Brian Gordon

Could the Cabinet Member use her authority to ensure that the Planning Officers are more directly accessible to councillors than is sometimes the case?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Members can contact planning managers directly if their matter needs to be dealt with promptly. There has been some turnover amongst planning officers recently but they should reply to any message from a Member within 24 hours of receiving it. Direct access to planning officers by telephone will be available by the end of March.

Supplementary Question 5

Councillor Brian Gordon

Why do we have to wait until March before we're told that the Planning Officers will be more directly accessible to Members? Can I seek an assurance that whatever new systems might come to operate regarding the running of the council generally, when it comes to issues like planning, direct access will mean just that? If you phone a planning officer, that planning officer will be available for you immediately and not some sort of answerphone system, which is being treated like the general customer access users amongst the public.

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

I don't think I can add anything to the answer already given. We hope to have direct access to planning officers by the end of March and I can add nothing further. If you have an urgent item, it can be emailed and you will be phoned back within 24 hours.

Question 6

Councillor Barry Rawlings

Given the nationally reported shortage of district nurses which has resulted in people staying in hospital longer than necessary, what is the situation in Barnet and its likely impact on patients?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

The District Nursing Service forms part of a range of Community Health Services which NHS Barnet CCG commissions from Central London Community Health Services NHS Trust. This service works with General Practice and other Health and Social Care professionals to support people to maintain their health either at home or in a community setting. There are also a range of other services supporting people such as the Rapid Response Service and the COPD service.

CLCH reports that the number of District Nurses is at the expected level and the NHS is not currently aware of people being delayed in hospital whilst awaiting District Nurse support. Recent changes in the admissions area at Barnet Hospital have led to a positive increase in the use of the Rapid Response Service.

The level of emergency admissions and excess emergency bed days at Barnet Hospital are relatively low which would tend to indicate the service is managing with the workload.

It should also be noted that recently CQC reported staffing pressures at Chase Farm Hospital do not relate to the District Nursing Service.

Supplementary Question 6**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Can the Cabinet Member write to me with another update because after putting in the question, I was at a CLCH meeting and asked the same to the head of District Nursing who said, in Barnet, they have had trouble recruiting. They have gone out to another round of recruitment and didn't get much of a response. They are worried about the agency they use. So although they may not have told the Cabinet Member there are difficulties with district nursing, they are telling everybody else there is.

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

The information that I had was the most up-to-date information obtained for me by the chief operating officer of the CCG, Mr Morton, who had double-checked with CLCH and this was the information they official gave him for this evening's meeting. So whether they are envisaging problems on the horizon or not, I really couldn't say but the position is, at present, that there are no delays in discharge due to lack of support from the District Nurse Service. But I'm happy to update Councillor Rawlings in due course.

Question 7**Councillor Brian Gordon**

At the recent Hendon Residents' Forum, concern was expressed regarding excessive amounts of furniture and structural merchandise being situated on pavements by traders in Watling Avenue and Burnt Oak Broadway. Similar concerns have also been expressed regarding other locations in the Borough. To the extent that such activity is unlawful and is causing obstruction on pavements, can the Council look into intensifying the enforcement measures?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Where goods or other items are placed on the public highway without authorisation, the Council has powers in accordance with various London Local Authority Acts and the Highways Act to deal with them. Accordingly I have requested that officers investigate and take necessary action to ensure the public highway is not obstructed and street trading regulated.

Supplementary Question 7**Councillor Brian Gordon**

I have raised this issue of Burnt Oak Broadway in particular and Watling Avenue pursuant to the Residents' Forum. I'd just like to ask, and you may not have the answer at your fingertips, but has this particular issue been looked into? It has been raised many times at my Forum and I gave an assurance to the people bringing this up that I would raise it at Council. So, if it hasn't been looked into could you please instruct the offices to do so and to take the necessary action about what is clearly an obstruction to the pavement.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Yes, I will get in touch with the officers. They have been contacted but I will get back in touch and provide an update.

Question 8**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Will the Cabinet Member agree to give a refund to people who paid to park for 2 hours or less on the weekend of 22/23 December when this should have been free?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

I Instructed officers on December 24th and refunds were processed the week commencing 7th January 2013.

Supplementary Question 8**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

I welcome the Councillor's answer and the decision to arrange swift refunds for the people who paid when parking was, in fact, free. But given this scheme is already too late and the lack of publicity meant that traders were denied the customers that could have been attracted, and given that people paid by phone, why did he not make the arrangements in advance with the pay-by-phone provider so that those residents would not have been charged in the first place?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The idea of this scheme was to bring residents and visitors into the high streets. Once they arrived, they came in because they saw adverts in the paper, they saw adverts in the shop windows and they heard about it by word of mouth. Obviously, there were a number of people that didn't hear about it and those people have been refunded.

Question 9**Councillor Barry Evangeli**

Will the Cabinet Member for Resources please advise the breakdown of costs to the council of the standards case which was an item at a recent Cabinet Resources Committee meeting? Please include costs incurred by the council for legal advice, representations and for officer's time.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Counsel's fees were £9625 + VAT. Officer time was 35.7 hours (apportionment of salary including on costs equates to £1406). This totals £12,956 and excludes the costs paid by the Council as resolved at the Cabinet Resources Committee meeting in October 2012.

Supplementary Question 9**Councillor Barry Evangeli**

Bearing in mind that the Councillor involved also has legal expenses, which were also met by the tax payer, does the Cabinet Member agree with me that this whole episode was a unnecessary waste of tax payers money?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I am disappointed that a disagreement between Members can cost the taxpayer so much. I think it is important that the new system will stop this from happening again and I would like to think if members do have disagreements they can resolve them between themselves and not feel that they have to take these formal proceedings because this clearly went too far and cost the taxpayer too much.

Question 10**Councillor Ross Houston**

Residents are very concerned about the safety of road users in the northern N12 section of Nether Street, particularly because of the schools there: Moss Hall Nursery, Infant and Junior schools and Morasha Jewish Primary School. The recent road resurfacing removed the mini roundabout at that junction and also removed the two speed bumps, one half ways between Moss Hall Grove and Essex Park and the other just across the railway bridge where the speed bump and pedestrian crossing were 'levelled', leaving just the crossing and motorists free to speed along over the bridge and on down to the Moss Hall junction and the schools with not even the mini roundabout to slow them up! I understand the Administration is opposed to speed reducing road humps and the policy is to remove them wherever they are without considering alternative measures. But speeding motorists are a danger anywhere and certainly in the vicinity of four schools. I put this on the agenda for the Finchley and Golders Green Area Forum, as an urgent

item back in January 2012. Residents attended and addressed the committee. All their concerns were acknowledged. But the traffic is still speeding along there and still no action has been taken to remedy the situation. Can the Cabinet Member please reconsider and as a matter of urgency and introduce measures to reduce traffic speeds on this stretch of road past the schools?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Officers have held meetings with both ward members and schools representatives since the beginning of 2012 to inform the wider safety remit around the school in question and to explore the possibility of benefitting from the Transport for London dedicated fund towards School Travel Plan-linked initiatives. The location did not make it onto the priority list for the 2012/13 financial year. However, residual investigations to review and alleviate commuter parking on Moss Hall Grove and other roads in the vicinity of West Finchley tube station are outstanding and these will be progressed as soon as the funding for 2013/14 becomes available. Periodic speed surveys and reviews since the road layout changes continue to be made to question the need for any traffic management measures. Results from these speed surveys are held on file and show compliant speeds when compared to the 30mph posted limit. The location remains on the list of sites that are being monitored.

Supplementary Question 10

Councillor Ross Houston

I am grateful for the continued monitoring; however I do think we need to take the special nature of Wards around schools into account when looking at these. This issue is not going to go away. Parents are still concerned. Can the Cabinet Member keep Ward Members informed if there are any further developments?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Happy to give the Member that assurance.

Question 11

Councillor Barry Evangeli

Can the Cabinet Member please tell this council how much per annum is spent on advertising in the local newspapers and if there is a contract, if so when does it expire?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Adverts and public notices are placed in both local newspapers, the Barnet Press and Barnet Times.

Below are details of payments made to Newsquest (owners of Barnet Times) and London and Essex Newspapers (Barnet Press) and TMP Media (for public notices and job adverts) for the financial year 2011/12 and this financial year to date. Please note these figures are inclusive of VAT.

	2011-2012	This Financial Year To Date
Newsquest	29,453.49	19,935.80
London and Essex Newspapers	21,359.58	20,670.38
TMP	125,565.43	117,762.69
TOTALS	176,378.50	158,368.87

Job advertising in local papers is carried out almost entirely by local schools and the placing of public notices is a statutory requirement for a number of actions by the council. The majority of spending on public notices and job adverts is to London and Essex Newspapers through TMP.

Supplementary Question 11

Councillor Barry Evangelii

In view of the popularity of the internet, doesn't the Cabinet Member agree with me that advertising on the council's website can save the council taxpayer in the region on £176,000 a year.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

As the answer suggests, a lot of these adverts are taken out on behalf of schools and so it is not really the council's money that is being spent. DCLG are looking at the need to put adverts in the press and we are hoping that they will take that need away. We are already advertising on our website so, hopefully, DGLC will say there is no need to put statutory notices in the press anymore. Then of course we are ready to just carry on advertising on the internet.

Question 12

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

At the last Council meeting, the Cabinet Member assured me that the Brunswick Park Health Centre would be open in December. It is still not open – why, and what is she doing about it?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

At the Council Meeting on 6th November 2012 I was unable to give a precise re-opening date for the Brunswick Park Health Centre as the Site was then awaiting the installation of a new gas main - the timing of which I clearly stated was beyond the control of both the Council and its partners. As a guide I said that it was then anticipated that the Centre would re-open in December.

I have continued to monitor the situation and together with Councillor Andreas Tambourides have actively been involved in helping to progress the works and ensuring that the Council has assisted in every way possible to progress the earliest possible re-opening of the Centre. I am pleased to report that all the works have now been completed and that the NHS is in discussions with the GP's concerned in relation to when they will move into the Centre.

Having continued to press for this much needed Centre to be re-opened at the earliest opportunity, the most up to date information I currently have is that the NHS will have a Lease in place for the new building and detailed discussions on this Agreement between them and the GPs concerned are now advancing and are expected to conclude shortly.

Supplementary Question 12

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

Is it possible to include me as well with the rest of the local Councillors to be involved with the monitoring of the situation?

Answer by Councillor Helena Hart

Councillor Ioannides really must appreciate that the actual responsibility, both financial and operational for the reopening of the Brunswick Park Health Centre lies entirely with the NHS, not with Barnet Council. The current situation, now that the gas main has been installed, is that negotiations are still in progress between the NHS NCL and the General Practitioners who are due to move into the centre. I have repeatedly requested that these negotiations are completed as quickly as possible and I have been assured by the Chief Operating Officer of Barnet CCG that everything possible is being done to facilitate the re-opening at the earliest opportunity. I repeat, this Administration is NOT responsible for the running and the financing of the Brunswick Health Medical Centre.

Question 13**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Could the Cabinet Member explain to us what other options for balancing the budget are available to him, aside from the One Barnet programme?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The savings generated from the One Barnet programme are significant – the saving from the NSCSO contract alone will save an average of £7m per annum (£70m over 10 years) on the core services included, and over £12m per annum (£125m over 10 years) including procurement savings and increases in Council Tax collection. If these savings were not achieved, more painful cuts would have to be made to frontline services. For context, £12m would be equivalent to the entire libraries, leisure and refuse collection/cleansing budgets.

- Libraries £4m
- Leisure services - £1m
- Refuse collection and cleansing- £7m

Supplementary Question 13**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does Councillor Thomas think these accounts will be an acceptable alternative?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Of course the list of services there shows equivalent cuts to services if we were to go down that route. They would be unacceptable to the residents of this borough. It would be unacceptable to this Administration. That is why we have achieved most of our savings through efficiencies and not through service reductions.

Question 14**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

What cuts in funding are each Library in the borough facing for the next two years?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The council has not approached the savings process on a per-library basis as implied by the question. The actual figures are outlined in the budget report agreed at Cabinet on 7th November 2012. These are 13/14 - £652K, 14/15 £85K and 15/16 £119K.

Supplementary Question 14**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

inaudible

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

All our savings have been identified.

Question 15**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Could the Cabinet Member please tell us how much support the council gives to the trade unions?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The council provides pre-agreed release time. In 2012-13 the budget is £113,320. This represents a cut of 65% from the 2009=10 budget. In 2012-13 £43,000 is budgeted to assist with the One Barnet programme. This will cease. There is also some un quantified, pre-agreed ad hoc release, use of offices, notice boards and meeting rooms.

Supplementary Question 15**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does the Leader think this funding and assistance is really justifiable considering the extent of savings being made elsewhere?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Trade Unions actually have rights which are enshrined in statute and local government agreed terms and conditions. The danger of reducing the pre-agreed sum is that ad hoc arrangements may actually end up costing more.

Question 16

Councillor Alison Moore

According to the latest Cabinet Resources budget monitoring report, car park income continues to forecast an overspend due to continuing low usage of Council car parks even after tariff changes. Given further tariff reductions are now being considered, will the Cabinet Member admit Barnet's parking charging policies are a shambles and explain what he is doing about it?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The majority of the car parks are on target and there are two or three which we are looking at proposals to improve the performance on. Overall the work done on car parks has been very successful. The first cashless machine has been installed in Lodge Lane car park to even offer a greater choice to the residents and we are sure this will improve the income even further.

Supplementary Question 16

Councillor Alison Moore

With respect, you can't even organise a free Christmas parking weekend without mucking it up; what guarantee can you give us that the income really will improve?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As stated very clearly in the answer to Cllr Moore.

Question 17

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Does the Cabinet Member know how many council employees are members of Unison, Unite or any other trade union organisation within the council?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The Council does not hold this information as not all Unions utilise payroll deduction facilities.

Supplementary Question 17

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Does the Leader think that this should be available under register of interest, considering the role of the unions?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I, personally, would be very interested to know these figures and I think we can look to try and find them some other way.

Question 18

Councillor Alex Brodtkin

What measures are being taken by the Council to ensure that the current state of Silkstream Path and the stairs behind Watling Avenue are permanently kept in good order?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Watling stairs are visited daily by the town keeper / assistant town keeper to inspect and remove any evidence of anti-social behaviour, informing Police and Community Safety as necessary. The graffiti team also visits daily Monday to Friday at 7.00am, they jet wash stair surfaces, landings and skirtings and introduce an appropriate deodorising disinfectant. Washing of stairs is deferred when there is freezing weather for safety reasons. There is a confirmation phone-call made from the graffiti team to the supervisor / Manager following every wash down to confirm actions.

The footpath called Silkstream path is walked daily by the town keeper / assistant town keeper to service all litter bins and remove litter etc. The footpath is swept manually every 6 weeks as per schedule and the area supervisor visits frequently during the week to inspect and monitor.

More permanent outcomes are being investigated in terms of lighting solutions to deter the anti-social behaviour, final options and costs are due to be received shortly. The Street Lighting PFI Contractor is obliged to scout all of our street lighting assets, including this site, on a weekly basis, to ensure the lighting that is installed is performing properly.

Supplementary Question 18

Councillor Alex Brodtkin

inaudible

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As it says in the answer, we are working on a permanent solution to this.

Question 19

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Can the Leader tell us what alternatives to the One Barnet Programme have been provided by the Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups in Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I am not aware that either party has proposed a means of achieving the level of savings planned by this programme, whilst protecting council services for residents and avoiding excessive rises in Council Tax.

Supplementary Question 19

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Does the Leader think that any opposition is less credible in light of the fact they have not proposed any alternatives?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

If one opposes a programme of cost-cutting and yet one knows that the council does have to cut its costs, it is intellectually dishonest not to come up with a similar programme of cuts. The current judicial reviews that are underway which are delaying the implementation of the two outsourcing plans that we have, the costs of those will have to be met from somewhere and I'm afraid that given the council spends most of its money on services for the public, that's where the cuts will come. It seems very unfortunate that this has happened and I think the potential loss may run up towards a £1,000,000 a month and it is a heavy responsibility for those who are causing this to bear.

Question 20

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

In the document '50 ways to save - Examples of sensible savings in local government' published last month by the Department for Communities and Local Government it says that councils could save up to 20% by following best practice to improve procurement. Given this, why does the Cabinet consider that Capita delivering just 5% savings on procurement is a good deal for Barnet?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Over the spending review period 2011-15, the Council has made, or will have made, savings totalling £72.5m, which is equivalent to more than 20% of the Council's budget, most of these through efficiency and better procurement.

The 5% procurement savings included in the Capita contract will ensure that the Council continues to drive down third party spend, improve efficiency and ensure that Barnet is exceeding the best practice noted in the recent DCLG publication.

Supplementary Question 20

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

I think the Cabinet Member's answer to my question is rather misleading. I asked why he thought 5% savings from Capita was good value when DCLG guidance says best practice can save 20%.

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Of course DCLG has to communicate to all councils and those in the lowest denominator mainly the Labour councils who are very inefficient and what this advice doesn't consider is that councils like Barnet are already very, very efficient and therefore there is less scope for us to make savings.

Question 21

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Could Councillor Thomas please explain how much council tax would have to rise to meet the reduction in funding should we not pursue a programme of cost cutting, within the current budget?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The savings over the next three years included in the draft budget proposals equate to a 38% increase in council tax.

Supplementary Question 21

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Does the Councillor believe that this is the kind of increase in council tax we would see from a Labour Administration, due to the lack of their alternative proposals?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I read with interest that there are some Labour councils up and down the country who are looking to get around the cap on council tax imposed by central government. So, clearly it says that Labour do, across the country, want to increase council tax. That is something that this Administration will not do.

Question 22

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

Does the Cabinet Member agree with closing police stations and reducing police station front counter opening hours?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The issue under discussion at present is not the closing of police stations, but the closing of some front counters and the more efficient use of police officers and staff where and when they are needed. The issue is efficiency and improving public access to our police.

Any decision is made by the Mayor of London Office for Policing and Crime.

Supplementary Question 22

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

Does the Member agree with the closure of the police station front counter in his Ward and the proposal that there will be no police station open to the public in the constituency in which he lives?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

There is no police station in the Ward where I live. I will be writing to the Borough Commander expressing my opinion that a second police front desk should be kept open in the north east of the borough and that will be High Barnet.

Question 23

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Could Councillor Cohen please assure us that the Borough is well stocked with grit in the event of another great freeze later this winter?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

This year we have stocked 3293 tonnes of salt and stocks will be replenished to no lower than 2000 tonnes by the end of January. 773 tonnes have been used thus far and if winter forecasts predict extreme winter conditions we have available 1000 tonnes on call off if needed from our

suppliers. In the meantime 194 tonnes have recently been delivered. Comparatively the salt usage over winter during; 2011/12 was 2039 tonnes and 2010/11 was 2766 tonnes and 2010/09 was 2544 tonnes. This year's scheme of Community Keepers for Grit has been taken up by 11 schools and 10 residents. The community keepers have been given salt, wheel barrows, snow shovels and advise on snow clearing. The community keeper's prime responsibility is the equitable distribution of grit stocks amongst the neighbouring residents for the purpose of keeping public roads and footways open during severe weather.

Supplementary Question 23

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Given all the snow in the last few days, does the Councillor think that the roads have been kept well gritted and efficient?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

I have to take this opportunity to commend all the staff that have worked throughout to keep the roads smooth and everyone safe. I have to say the work done by them is outstanding. Also, to note, the Community Keepers for Grit has also been another successful story and I'm sure next year that will grow further.

Question 24

Councillor Alison Moore

Is the Cabinet Member aware of the number of residents across the borough who received no refuse and recycling collection over the Christmas and New Year period, even when they had been informed that their designated collection day should proceed

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

There were no cancelled collections for either recycling or refuse over the Christmas and New Year period. All re-scheduled designated collection days were collected. All Christmas and New Year collections and revised collection schedules were advertised in the local newspapers and on the Council website. Specifically for this year and to ensure that households were aware of the collection days, Streetscene services placed additional information hangers (detailing revised collection schedules) on household refuse bins the preceding week.

Refuse and recycling requests for service

The numbers of information requests for the period between 24 December and 4 January have been analysed. These show that there were 107 requests for information regarding changes to the refuse and green waste collection schedules. The figure of 107 for rescheduled requests were received and answered in the call centre, with the call centre operative being able to provide the resident with their revised collection date.

290,000 Council collection services were made during the period of Monday 24/12/12 and Tuesday 08/01/13, covering the Christmas collection schedule and revised collection dates. 252,000 May Gurney recycling collection services were made during the period of Monday 24/12/12 and Tuesday 08/01/13, covering the Christmas collection schedule and revised collection dates. There were 80 enquiries regarding missed recycling collections (compared to the current two week average is 64).

Refuse

The Refuse Service including Green Waste collections were carried out as per the revised collection schedule. All roads received a collection during this period as per the revised collection schedule.

Recycling

Recycling collections were carried out as per the schedule however, due to the volume of waste

presented for recycling, approximately double the normal tonnage, there were some operational issues on Wednesday 2 January, Tuesday 8 and Wednesday 9 January. 48 and 15 roads from 453 roads (each day) did not receive their collection on the 2 January and 9 January respectively, these roads were all collected on the following day. On Tuesday 8 January 40 roads out of 451 roads did not receive their collection, these roads were collected on Wednesday 9 January and unfortunately a small number on Thursday 10 January.

Question 25

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

What options do residents have to grit their own roads should they find themselves snowed under?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

463 filled grit bins are located around various roads in the borough which enable residents to use the grit to help them as required to grit foot paths. The Council also operates 'pledge bank' a scheme which encourages residents to register their interest for obtaining equipment and salt. At least 10 roads and eleven Schools are signed up members to receive nearly 1 tonne weight of a salt bag and shovels and a wheel barrow.

Supplementary Question 25

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Has the pledge bank scheme been successful and do you intend to further push it?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As mentioned in the last answer, this scheme has been a great success; further on last year's and I hope next year it will grow even further.

Question 26

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

The too-little-too-late offer of some free parking on the Saturday before Christmas was, according to residents, not publicised in the car parks and led to people still trying to pay by phone. Why did the Cabinet Member not ensure that notices were placed in the areas affected?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Publicity for the event was made through the Press, the Council web site press online and poster advertising. Officers on street on the 22nd & 23rd observed a higher than normal usage of parking facilities including car parks around town centres. Those that did pay to park are in the process of receiving a refund.

Supplementary Question 26

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

As the first thing you do, you don't go onto the council website to see what the position is. Nor do you look to see if a local paper has been delivered to see if there's anything about it, you just actually go. So why was it not the first thing to think about, to put notices at those places, in those car parks rather than relying on everything else?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As mentioned, the idea was to bring people into the town centres.

Question 27

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Is the Leader pleased that the Dollis Valley Regeneration agreement has been signed?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I am delighted with this progress but will be better pleased when bulldozers are on site, after satisfying the Planning Committee.

Supplementary Question 27**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

As I am sure the Leader is aware, the Dollis Valley Regeneration has been taking a very long time. So can he give us his assurances that we will see the bulldozers on site as soon as possible?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I seem to remember I was asked a similar question by a Labour Member some time ago. It is my conviction now that this will actually happen. That the long heralded development will happen and I look forward to an early planning application and a commencement of works within the next year.

Question 28**Councillor Anne Hutton**

On 12 July 2012, residents in Torrington Park, North Finchley received a letter telling them that the footway between Friern Barnet Lane and Glenhurst Avenue was to be relayed, due to be completed by 23 November. The work was listed as 'in progress' on the Highways Programme of week beginning 22 October when residents say in fact the work had already stopped the previous week, leaving the worst section still to do. The footway in that section of Torrington Park is indeed in a terrible state with uneven, cracked and broken paving slabs; could the Cabinet Member please tell me why the work stopped without warning and when it will be completed?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The planned maintenance schedule for Torrington Park was published with a predicted time to allow the programme to be completed on time. However an injection of additional contractor resources completed the footway relay ahead of schedule. Additional funding of £1.5 million was allocated to the footway reserve programme which provided an opportunity to fund schemes such as Torrington Park as one of the reserve schemes. The project value of schemes with high estimate values were reduced to allow smaller value schemes to be selected to give a much greater spread of the budget bringing in higher number of jobs. Torrington Park initial estimate £550K was reduced to £125K The worst section which was in need of urgent repair in Torrington Park and the footway renewal work was carried out in sections between Friern Barnet Lane and outside number 113 and between Friern Barnet Lane and opposite Ashurst Road. We are unable to extend the works due to restraints of funding. Any section of the footway which has been left but requiring treatment will be taken into account as part of the formulation of 2013/14 highways maintenance planned works programme subject to meeting the relevant assessment criteria.

The footway relay scheme in Torrington Park finished short of the original limits as stated in the Council letter circulated to resident's (Friern Barnet Lane to Glenhurst Road) due to the fact that the footway was relayed on both sides instead of concentrating only on one side. The work commenced on one side from Friern Barnet Lane up to opposite Ashurst Road (Friary Park side) and from Friern Barnet Lane to just slightly past Ashurst Road. The work as completed in the two sections was deemed to justify full relay although there are further areas in need of attention. Additional contractor resources were made available and the work completed ahead of the scheduled completion date.

Supplementary Question 28**Councillor Anne Hutton**

The pavements in Torrington Park are in an appalling state and work suddenly stopped without any warning. At the last question time the Cabinet Member did say that income from parking would go towards highways improvement. Given the state of the pavement in Torrington Park, could the Cabinet Member assure me that this will be treated as urgent?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As with all schemes, they are set at the beginning of the year and as this one was, it was also made very clear that it's part of Torrington Park and not the whole of Torrington Park but I can give the assurance to Councillor Hutton that it will be put on the list for the next financial year.

Question 29**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does the tax that goes towards supporting the trade unions provide as much value for money as other council expenditures?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Unions have a historically useful function but I would hate to feel that tax payers resources were being applied to political activity.

Supplementary Question 29**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Is the Leader aware if there will be any legal consequences if such resources were being used for political activities?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

If, of course, there was any legal recourse we would take it, if it was something that was sensible to do.

Question 30**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

Can the Cabinet Member confirm that Librarians have been asked to take a competency based test?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

Competency based interview questions form part of the selection process for all library staff involved in the current restructure process. The selection process is fully compliant with the council's managing change procedure. The process has now started and the general feedback so far has been that the process is working well. This is also standard across both private and public sectors.

Supplementary Question 30**Councillor Arjun Mittra**

Can I ask how long the staff, who took these tests, were given between notification and when they have been asked to take the test, because a couple of very distressed librarians have spoken to me about it and I was just wondering the background behind it.

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

I'm not aware of the specific case referred to and I'll happily write to the Councillor afterwards, but competency-based questions and interviews have been part of local government, private and public sector for a long time and they are a valid resource and a valid technique by which to interview people and I fully support the use of them as someone who uses on a daily basis. But I will find out the timescale for you can get back to you on that.

Question 31**Councillor Joan Scannell**

How much influence do the trade unions have on Council policy?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

The unions have offered advice and it has been and will be listened to appropriately. The unions have a job to do representing their members but elected representatives make the decisions on policy.

Question 32**Councillor Alex Brodtkin**

Following the implementation of the Designated Public Place Order in November 2012, can the Council confirm that appropriate signage has been placed in all wards indicating that the Borough-Wide Alcohol Free Zone is now in force?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Signage in support of the DPPO has been put up around the borough. We have tried to balance the number of signs erected to inform the public and minimise the cost and cluttered signage. There are still a couple of additional signs to be erected in response to specific requests. If there are any problematic areas that do not have sufficient signage there is capacity to respond.

Supplementary Question 32

Councillor Alex Brodtkin

inaudible

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

If you are talking 'vague', all you said was the signage in place and the officers assured me the signage is in place. And it should all be in place by now. If it not, I will find out but if it is in all wards I will check and let you know.

Question 33

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Could the Cabinet Member please tell us who has paid for the wrap around advertising in the local newspapers in the name of BAPS?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I can not say who has paid for these advertisements however the names of several unions appear on the BAPS website claimed as supporters.

Question 34

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

Who maintains the car park behind the Brunswick Park Health Centre? There is a problem in the area with litter and rats - what actions is the council taking to stop this?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

The responsibility for this area of land is currently being determined, and the legal department are investigating the title documents and boundaries to determine the purpose of acquisition and ongoing responsibility.

In the interim, property Services are monitoring the area and have had the area cleared of rubbish. In addition Environmental Health have inspected the site and determined that the drains have now been capped off, and there is no evidence of rat activity or nesting on the site. The proximity of Pymmes Brook, 300 metres away is also considered unlikely to be the source of the problem.

Environmental Health are contacting five neighbours of the site to determine whether the source is from their properties. The site is now free from rubbish and there is no evidence of rat infestation, but the situation will continue to be monitored.

Supplementary Question 34

Councillor Andreas Ioannidis

When are the bins that were promised going to be placed there?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

This topic is extremely fresh as far as I am concerned and I will write to the Member with an update.

Question 35

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Will the Cabinet Member inform us if the Council will be pursuing legal action or consulting the press complaints commission due to factual errors in recent advertising found in the local press?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Sadly it would not be a sensible use of tax payers funds even though it is extremely irritating.

Question 36**Councillor Arjun Mitra**

Residents of Strawberry Vale in East Finchley are concerned about anti social behaviour going on around the estate, will the Cabinet Member press the police to review the situation there, and act on residents' concerns?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The police have been contacted in respect of this matter and will review the situation, taking action as necessary.

Question 37**Councillor Joan Scannell**

Does the Cabinet Member for Safety believe that ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) would be useful for Barnet?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Yes. Criminals are known to target Barnet because we don't have a fully operating ANPR system. Despite arguments that ANPR is an invasion of privacy, the technology will enable our police to track criminals more effectively.

Supplementary Question 37**Councillor Joan Scannell**

ANPR is a means of identifying vehicles which are not taxed and also if they are stolen. Does the cabinet member therefore agree with me that this is an excellent invention and that motorists who have taxed and insured their vehicles have nothing to fear, only the criminals.

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

I completely agree with my colleague.

Question 38**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

In view of the welcome news that Pinkham Way will not now be home to the proposed largest waste treatment site in Europe, does the Cabinet Member still plan to move the black refuse bin fleet there? If not, where will the lorry fleet be based once they have to vacate the Depot premises at Mill Hill?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Current plans are being discussed with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) in order to seek the most advantageous solution to cater for operational requirements for the Depot. Options for other sites including Pinkham Way are continuing to be explored.

Supplementary Question 38**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Which other sites are being explored for the building?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

There are different options; I can't give you the exact details tonight but I am quite happy to write to Councillor Webb and keep her informed.

Question 39**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Has the Cabinet Member (Cllr Longstaff) received any information from the police about how they are utilising the new anti-squatters legislation?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

Barnet police welcome the new legislation. There is a recognised link between illegal squats and crime. The police and council officers have worked closely together on taking action against illegal squats and will continue to do so.

Supplementary Question 39**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does Councillor Longstaff believe that this legislation should also be applied to squatters in public buildings?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

I certainly agree with Councillor Strongolou. I think it should be applied to public buildings and maybe with a special interest in libraries.

Question 40**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What action will the Cabinet Member take to help ensure that Barnet's town centres have a wide range of businesses and are not just an increasing number of chain coffee shops or betting shops?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Planning policy ensures significant protection against shops (Class A1) being changed to other uses. Coffee shops in general are classed as a mixed retail and restaurant type use and as such planning permission would be required for the change of use of an existing retail outlet to a coffee shop.

Planning permission would also be required to change a retail shop (Class A1) into a betting shop (Class A2) and in most cases this would be resisted on planning policy grounds. However, planning permission is not required for a betting shop to take over another Class A2 establishment like an estates agent's office.

In June 2012, Cabinet 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 create the right conditions to encourage growth and enterprise. This includes objectives around supporting our town centres. Last year the council delivered improvements to the Chipping Barnet town centre through the Mayor's Outer London Fund, and this year we will be delivering £3.7 million of improvements through the same Fund to deliver economic uplift through improvements to the appearance and vitality of North Finchley and Cricklewood town centres. This will include significant investment into the public realm, marketing and promotions and investment in improved shop fronts, exploring the concept of pop shops and other creative uses of vacant retail units. We are also supporting the Edgware Town Team who received a grant of £10,000 as part of the government's Mary Portas Review to help inject new life into high streets across the country. Improving the appearance, brand and ultimately the local economy within our town centres will support us in encouraging a wide range of businesses to locate in our town centres.

Supplementary Question 40**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

I understand the situation is not always clear-cut and some coffee shops could be able to open up in A1 premises if they were just heating up food as part of their overall business. Can she discuss this with planning officers to make sure that the rules are strictly enforced in order to try to minimise the proliferation of coffee shops taking over retail premises.

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Yes of course I will discuss this with planning officers and if Councillor Schneiderman could give me examples of what he's talking about, then of course I will take up the matter.

Question 41**Councillor Andrew Strongolou**

Does the Leader feel that giving tax payers money to trade unions is a good use of public finances?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

Not always.

Supplementary Question 41

Councillor Andrew Strongolou

Could the Leader tell us what services residents receive as a result of this funding and assistance?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

It is very hard to say: you pick and you choose.

Question 42

Councillor Alex Brodkin

If the Council were to introduce Automatic Number Plate Recognition in the Borough, what would be the cost implication of this?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

There are no costs available at the current time. I will update Cllr. Brodkin as and when costs become available.

Question 43

Councillor Ansuya Sodha

How many Barnet private sector landlords that the council uses to re-house residents in housing need are part of the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme?

Answer by Councillor Tom Davey

Barnet Homes has recently taken responsibility for facilitating the Landlord Accreditation Scheme in Barnet from Barnet Council. Camden Council is responsible for managing the scheme and we have requested they provide details of landlords accredited under the scheme.

Independently, we carried out a survey of our landlords. Of those that responded, 53.8% were accredited, with a further 41.2% not accredited but interested in becoming so. In response to the landlord survey we have set up a program of accreditation courses for the coming year. We are currently promoting these courses to our landlords, and updating our systems so that we can record which of our Landlords are accredited.

Since July 2009, 150 landlords have attended the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) landlord development course hosted by Barnet Council.

Question 44

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Following the North Finchley parking review, when will reviews for Barnet's other town centres be published?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

It is expected that the outcomes of the Town Centre and Shopping Parades Parking Reviews will be published in February 2013, although it is expected that the results for Chipping Barnet and Edgware Town Centres will be published slightly beforehand, towards the end of January 2013.

Supplementary Question 44

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Given that the parking policy in this borough still seems to be in total chaos, can he actually get on with it; reduce the prices in all of Barnet's town centres.

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

We are working our way through all town centres carefully to ensure that it's correct for that town centre. It's not just about pricing, it's about movement of traffic, correct bays in the correct locations.

Question 45**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

Now that hundreds of items from Church Farm have been sold at an auction in Warwickshire, how much did council receive from this sale? Please provide a list of the lot numbers, item descriptions and the hammer price for each item?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The council received £17,386.64 from the auction sale. A list of lot numbers and hammer prices will be provided separately to Cllr Coakley Webb. This money will be used to secure the retained items.

Supplementary Question 45**Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb**

I have not yet received the list that has been promised. I note that the Councillor has actually over £17,000 for the privilege of selling off assets that were donated by the public to our museum. But I would also like to know, that considering that this sale was about to take place and the Cabinet Member was happily tweeting that Barnet Museum could have whatever they want, why was this reneged on? Why were they actually stopped from having some of the items that they earmarked, that they would have liked for Barnet museum, rather than you wanting to pocket the proceeds from what are public donations?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

These were not all public donations; these were things that we have collected, bought over the years. We don't have the resources to store them anymore. They have now gone to good homes throughout the country. I'm sure the people of Barnet are pleased that a 'skirt lifter' is now not our property. Barnet Museum was offered a number of items and I believe they took some of those items. I am pleased that they were able to do that.

Question 46**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

What progress has been made to date on turning North Finchley library into a 'landmark library'? How much will these plans cost?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

The council has commissioned a feasibility study to look at options. I am currently considering this and we will make a decision about this alongside the other potential bids for capital resources in 2013/14.

Supplementary Question 46**Councillor Alan Schneiderman**

Cllr Rams has talked about turning North Finchley into a landmark library but this seems to be going the same way as the Arts Depot being a landmark library. He has announced it, put it in his blog but we have still got no plans and no funding. Is this going to go the same way as the Arts Depot?

Answer by Councillor Robert Rams

There are plans, there will be a much-improved library in fact a landmark library there that will benefit residents throughout that area and as soon as I can bring forward the proposals, I will do.

Question 47**Councillor Alison Moore**

What progress has been made on the parking recovery plans, and when will the Special Parking Account be brought back on budget?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The council has recently implemented a number of changes and continues to review the changes and proposals closely with a view to meeting the SPA. Current projections at the end of quarter 3

are projecting SPA budget to be met.

Question 48

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

Has the Cabinet Member noticed the increasing number of pot holes and deteriorating quality of Barnet's roads and pavements and if so where is the parking income being spent?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

Pothole repairs has shown decline in the overall defects attended and repaired in 2012. The potholes in 2011 were 3254 and 2012 have recorded an estimated 1545 number of potholes. We are currently seeing no excessive deterioration comparatively to previous years.

Question 49

Councillor Alison Moore

What percentage of the projected based budget savings were made by the new outsourced parking service in its first year?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

The current contract at 7 months is a little early to accurately say but savings have been made and the cost of the service is in line with the budget.

Question 50

Councillor Alan Schneiderman

What progress is being made in considering further tariff changes given the acknowledged continuing low usage of Council car parks?

Answer by Councillor Dean Cohen

As part of the borough wide Parking Review, changes have taken place at all paid for car parks and North Finchley town centre. Further reviews are taking place including Edgware, Mill Hill and High Barnet and further tariff changes may occur as part of the reviews.

Question 51

Councillor Brian Coleman

How many Police Stations does the Cabinet Member think the Borough needs?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

What the borough needs is an estate that is fit for the purpose of 21st century policing and located in the right place to deliver this. A simple number cannot be given to such a question as there are too many variables, i.e. by police station do you mean SNT patrol base? Response Policing patrol base? An administrative centre that houses custody and other criminal justice related processes? What I can say is that several different types of building are required to deliver the many facets of modern policing. These buildings could be part of a shared service agreement with other emergency responders or public services such as Probation or the Crown Prosecution Service.

Supplementary Question 51

Councillor Brian Coleman

Is it not slightly hypocritical to oppose police station closures when these were clearly signposted in the mayoral election campaign last year and wouldn't the Cabinet Member rather see police officers on the beat, than unused physical buildings, sitting empty in the borough?

Answer by Councillor David Longstaff

The plans for Barnet do actually include an increased number of warranted officers on the streets of Barnet. I think all the plans will be better for Barnet.

Question 52**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Could Councillor Thomas update the Council on the future of Stanley Road playing fields?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Sport East Finchley, who provided a community bid for the site, is now working with other groups and organisations to deliver wider community benefits for this location. We are monitoring progress and will report back to Members in the first half of 2013.

Supplementary Question 52**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Does Councillor Thomas have any further information because this matter at Stanley Road has been going on for a considerable number of years and surely it needs to be brought to a conclusion? Has he or officers explored with the proposed Archer Academy, whether the fields could be used as their playing fields when the school opens next September?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

We are well aware of the Archer Academy's desire for this land. But it is quite a complicated scenario and it depends on what capital receipt we get from DfE and, of course, with regards to the Stanley Road playing fields, Sports East Finchley, we asked them to work together with other bidders and people who are interested in this land. They then went to a public meeting and have got substantial public support for working with other people interested in this land. So we would like to see that through. And as I say we'll bring a report back by half of this year.

Question 53**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Does the Cabinet Member welcome the recent decisions of the Planning and Environment Committee and the Eastern Area Planning sub Committee concerning the Woodside Park and Barnet Erubs?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

Yes.

Question 54**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Where does Cllr Tambourides envisage Planning Officers will be based post the implementation of the DRS One Barnet project?

Answer by Councillor Joanna Tambourides

We are not able to disclose the contents of final tenders for the DRS contract. It is expected that Planning officers would be located within easy reach of the applications they are dealing with i.e. in Barnet.

Question 55**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Will the Cabinet Member list the gross costs to the Council (including redundancy payments, accrued holiday pay, pay in lieu of notice, pension contributions) paid out in relation to Assistant Directors and above who have not been given posts in the new management structure?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

Payments anticipated to be made to Assistant Directors and above who are leaving the organisation following the senior management restructure are below. The restructure will save the Council just over £1million over the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Redundancy Payment	£131,644
Accrued holiday pay	Nil

Pay in Lieu of notice	Nil
Pension cost	£54,561

Assumptions

- The notice period concludes at the end of March, therefore, the circumstances of those affected may change, i.e. redeployment opportunities
- All outstanding holiday will be taken prior to leaving. The leaving date is the 31 March and this is also the end of the holiday year so there should have been taken by this time.
- The principle is that the notice period will be worked and within the overall planning of the restructure time was allowed for this.

Question 56

Councillor Brian Coleman

Has the Leader managed to read all 8000 pages of the Capita contract?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I have not read every page but have relied upon officers, professional advisors and lawyers in reaching my conclusion as to the benefit to the Barnet taxpayer from the early implementation of this contract.

Question 57

Councillor Brian Coleman

Will the Cabinet Member consult Surrey County Council, Solihull Borough Council and Essex on line partnership (Essex CC and Districts) on their schemes to allow staff and members to use their own IT equipment and email addresses?

Answer by Councillor Daniel Thomas

I will ensure the above Councils are consulted.

Question 58

Councillor Brian Coleman

How is the so called "Modern Mayor's Office" review proceeding and will the Leader ensure that the traditional and well loved nature of the Civic Mayoralty remains intact?

Answer by Councillor Richard Cornelius

I have not seen this review. The role of the Civic Mayoralty is very important to the borough and appreciated by residents. The Mayor's office works well and operates as a credit to the borough. It is essential to make sure that the best means of upholding the dignity of the Mayor is maintained and that changes in the operation of the tax system do not adversely affect holders of this ancient office.