

## Minutes

OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET  
held at The Town Hall, Hendon, NW4, on Tuesday, 11 April, 2006.

### PRESENT:

\*The Worshipful the Mayor (Councillor Andreas Tambourides)

\*The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Victor Lyon, BA (Hons))

### Councillors:

*Steve Blomer	* Arun Ghosh BSc BVSc&AH	*Matthew Offord
*Maureen Braun	MPhil CBIOL MIBIOL,	*Monroe Palmer OBE, BA,
* Fiona Bulmer	MSFAM, MAPHV, MRSM	FCA
*Terry Burton	*Brian Gordon, LL.B	*Susette Palmer MA
*Anita Campbell	Eva Greenspan BA, LL.B	Wendy Prentice
* Wayne Casey BA (Hons)	(Hons)	*Barry Rawlings
MIIA	*Andrew Harper	*Colin Rogers
*Danish Chopra	*Christopher Harris BA BSc	*Paul Rogers
*Jack Cohen	MPhil	*Brian Salinger
*Melvin Cohen LLB	*Helena Hart	*Gill Sargeant
*Brian Coleman, AM, FRSA	*Lynne Hillan	*Joan Scannell
*Katia David BSc, MBA, JP	*Sean Hooker, BA (Hons)	*Alan Schneiderman
*Jeremy Davies BA (Hons),	* Daniel Hope	*Gerard Silverstone
CPFA	*Anne Hutton	*Agnes Slocombe SRN RM
*Peter Davis Ctext, FTI,	*Mark Langton	*Ansuya Sodha MBA (Middx)
FCFI	*Malcolm Lester FCCA	Cert Ed, DipM (CIM), AMBA
*Aba Dunner MCIJ	*Kitty Lyons	*Susan Steinberg
FCA	* Duncan Macdonald	*Leslie Sussman, MBE
*Olwen Evans ACIS	*John Marshall	*Phil Yeoman
*Claire Farrier	*Linda McFadyen	*Soon-Hoe Teh
*Anthony Finn BSc (Econ)	*Kath McGuirk	*Jim Tierney
* Mike Freer	*David Mencer	*Allan Turner
	*Alison Moore	*Zakia Zubairi
	*Jazmin Naghar	Vacancy
	*Robert Newton	

\*denotes Member present

### 198. PRAYER (Agenda Item 1):

The Mayor's Chaplain offered prayer.

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

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Paul Rogers and Kitty Lyons.

**200. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2006 (Agenda Item 3):  
RESOLVED –That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 March, 2006, be approved.**

**201. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Agenda Item 4):**

The Worshipful the Mayor reported on the success of the inward municipal links visit during the week commencing 6 March, which included Barnet's first Twin Towns Associations' Open Day, on 8 March. The programme brought together all of Barnet's twin towns- Le Raincy and Chaville, France, Jinja, Uganda, Tempelhof and Siegen Wittgenstein, Germany, Morphou, Cyprus, Montclair, USA, and Ramat Gan, Israel. Visiting dignitaries included the Mayors of Morphou in Cyprus, Mr Charalambos Pittas, Montclair in the USA, Mr Ed Remsen, and Ramat Gan in Israel, Mr Zvi Bar. The Deputy Mayor of Chaville in France, Madam Mercury and the Head of Culture and Education from the German Embassy, Dr Anne Marie Schleich.

The Mayor was also pleased to report that the event was broadcast world wide and extensively reported in the Greek, Israeli and German press, firmly putting Barnet on the international map.

The Worshipful the Mayor then expressed appreciation for the service and dedication of those Members who were not standing for re-election and would be retiring from the Council after the local elections in May, namely, Councillors:

Allan Turner  
Susan Steinberg  
Phil Yeoman  
Malcolm Lester  
Leslie Sussman  
Aba Dunner  
David Mencer  
Katia David  
Robert Newton  
Gerard Silverstone  
Victor Lyon  
Peter Davis  
Kitty Lyons  
Arun Ghosh  
Mark Langton

The Worshipful the Mayor paid particular tribute to three retiring members who were also past Mayors, Councillor Leslie Sussman who had 38 years service, Councillor Malcolm Lester with 24 years service and the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Victor Lyon, with 28 years. The Mayor referred to their commitment and to the respect and kudos they brought to the borough with their Mayoresses.

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Brian Salinger, Councillor Alison Moore and Councillor Monroe Palmer joined the Worshipful the Mayor in wishing all retiring members a very happy future life.

The Council were also concerned to learn that Mr Edward Prentice, Past Mayor's Escort, was in hospital. The Worshipful the Mayor undertook to write to Mr Prentice, on behalf of the Council, expressing all good wishes for his speedy recovery.

**201. RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION (Agenda item 5):**

Moved by the Deputy Mayor, duly seconded and  
**RESOLVED –**

- 1. That we, the Members of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet, hereby express to the Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Andreas Tambourides, our appreciation of the excellent service he has rendered to the London Borough of Barnet as its Mayor during the period May 2005 to May 2006 and for the friendly and conscientious way in which he has performed the duties of that office. We also recognise the tremendous support given to him by his wife, Joanna Tambourides, during this time.**

**We offer him our gratitude for the concern that he has shown at all times to promote the welfare of the London Borough and its residents, particularly, for his willingness to support the many organisations and individuals who called on his time and services during his year of office. We congratulate him on the success of his appeal for Mind in Barnet.**

**We compliment him on the manner in which he represented the Borough and upheld the dignity of his office on all occasions and on his untiring enthusiasm and pleasant approach to his duties.**

**In particular, we applaud his efforts to support the Inter-Faith Forum and his work with the Greek Cypriot community in the Borough.**

- 2. That the foregoing resolution be engrossed over the common seal of the Corporation and presented to the Worshipful the Mayor.**

The Mayor expressed his gratitude to the Council for passing the resolution.

**202. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS (Agenda Item 6):**

The following Members declared personal and non – prejudicial interests, and remained in the room during the discussion and participated in the decision – making process in the items indicated:

- Councillor Helena Hart in Item 10.1 A close member of Councillor Hart's family was a Research Fellow at the Royal Free Medical School and received a small stipend for on – call vascular sessions, but would not be affected by the current proposals. Councillor Hart further indicated that if at any future time he were to become directly affected by such proposals, she would take no further part in the deliberations and withdraw from the meeting. Councillor Hart also had a personal but non-prejudicial interest in the finances of Barnet PCT as she was a Practice Manager of a Dental Practice

which had just signed a very small contract for the provision of children's NHS dental services

- Councillor Braun in Motion 9.1 as her house backed onto the land the subject of the motion
- Councillor Susette Palmer in Motion 9.8 as she was the Chair of the Barnet Borough Arts Council , which was not a Council appointment
- Councillor John Marshall in Item 15.1 Report of Cabinet – Unitary Development Plan as he was a shareholder in Tesco plc

The following Member, although declaring a personal and non – prejudicial interest did not participate during the discussion or the decision – making process in the item indicated:

- Councillor Jack Cohen in Motion 9.5 as some of the staff involved could be members of the union of which he was a representative

The following Members declared personal and prejudicial interests in the following items, left the Chamber during the discussion and did not participate in the decision – making process in the items indicated:

- Councillor Jeremy Davies in Item 10.1 as he was an employee of the Royal Free Hospital
- Councillor Teh who was a non – executive member of Barnet PCT.
- Councillor Lynne Hillan in Motion 9.2 as her business had dealings with Barnet Football Club
- Councillors Danish Chopra and Anita Campbell in Motion 9.2 because of on – going issues relating to the Football Club

(The Borough Solicitor also left the Chamber during discussion of Motion 9.2)

### **203. BUSINESS REMAINING FROM LAST MEETING**

None.

### **204. QUESTION TIME FOR MEMBERS (Agenda Item 7 and 16.1.5):**

Questions were put to the Leader and the relevant Members of the Cabinet. Those questions, together with the original answers provided and the text of any supplementary questions and answers are set out in the Appendix to these minutes.

### **205. VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS**

Councillor Jeremy Davies, duly seconded, moved that the order of business relating to Agenda Item 9 be varied so that Motions 9.1, 9.2, 9.8 and 9.3 be heard first and in that order.

Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – That the order of business be varied to allow Motions 9.1, 9.2, 9.8 and 9.3 to be heard first and in that order.**

### **206. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR WAYNE CASEY (Agenda item 9.1 and 16.1.4):**

Motion 9.1 in the name of Councillor Wayne Casey was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen was also moved.

Debate ensued. During the debate Councillor Wayne Casey, duly seconded, moved that the Question Now be Put. On being out to the vote, the Motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – That the Question Now be Put.**

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen was declared lost.

Upon being put to the vote the Motion in the name of Councillor Wayne Casey was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes with regret that St Joseph's College, Lawrence Street, the home of the Mill Hill Missionaries since their foundation by Cardinal Vaughan in the 1860s, is to close.**

**Council further notes that the estate includes a landmark Grade II listed building situated in the greenbelt in a Conservation Area.**

**Council welcomes the sincere efforts of the Mill Hill Missionaries to find a purchaser for the property who will respect both this important piece of the historic built environment and the preservation of the greenbelt. Council considers, however, that the preservation of the estate would be ensured by the attachment of a covenant, binding upon any future owner.**

**Council therefore resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to write to Mill Hill Missionaries advising them of the Council's views and recommending that they seek independent advice on the matter.**

**207. MOTION 9.2 IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CLAIRE FARRIER (Agenda Items 8.2 and 16.1.2 and 16.1.4 ):**

Motion 9.2 in the name of Councillor Claire Farrier was moved.

Amendments in the names of Councillor Brian Salinger and Alison Moore were moved. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Salinger was declared lost and that in the name of Councillor Alison Moore was declared carried.

Upon being put to the vote the substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council opposes the Council Leader's idea to misuse Montrose Park for a new stadium for Barnet Football Club.**

**Council notes that the Montrose Residents Association and the football club supporters' group Keep Barnet Alive both oppose the misuse of Montrose Park; and that the idea has got nowhere over the past five months.**

**Council notes that Keep Barnet Alive have the following concerns about the misuse of Montrose Park:**

- **contravention of local and national planning policy,**
- **parking problems and traffic congestion,**
- **a lack of public open space in Burnt Oak and Colindale,**
- **the risk of flooding, and**
- **the proposed stadium size would be inadequate for the construction of a stadium capable of accommodating a league standard football club.**

**Council asks the Cabinet to withdraw the idea of building a stadium in Montrose Park, and to instead support *Working Together* with Barnet FC (subject to planning).**

**Council welcomes the support of Councillor Terry Burton for Barnet Football Club, reported in the Barnet Times on 16 March, that: "I have never wavered in my support for such a prestigious football club."**

**Council supports the *Working Together* proposals (subject to planning) and Council asks the Cabinet and officers to negotiate with the Club to implement *Working Together*.**

**208. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR DUNCAN MACDONALD (Agenda items 9.8 and 16.1.4).**

Motion 9.8 in the name of Councillor Duncan Macdonald was moved. An amendment in the name of Councillor Mike Freer was moved. Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote the amendment in the name of Councillor Mike Freer was declared lost and the substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED –**

**Council Notes –**

- **That the Bull Arts Centre has moved from Barnet High Street to be incorporated into artsdepot in North Finchley**
- **That the former Bull building on Barnet High Street is owned by the Council and is now occupied on a short-term lease until July 2007 by the Susi Earnshaw Theatre School (SETS)**
- **That SETS is giving local community arts and drama groups in Chipping Barnet the opportunity to use the Bull building's facilities in the evenings and at weekends**
- **That local residents of all parties and of none have formed the Save the Bull Group to campaign for the Bull to remain a community arts centre**
- **That the Save the Bull Group supports SETS' occupation of the Bull building and has called on Council to grant SETS a longer lease**
- **That Conservative leaflets in High Barnet have, for several months, been claiming that SETS is being offered a long-term lease with immediate effect**
- **That no such long-term lease has actually been offered**
- **That the previous tender process for marketing the Bull building had to be abandoned after the building had been listed as being in the wrong planning category**
- **That a Planning Brief for the Bull building has been commissioned by Council**
- **That subject to satisfying all necessary legal requirements it would be possible for the Council to immediately commence to negotiate a long-term lease with SETS**
- **That SETS currently pays rent to Council and the Council could seek to negotiate terms for a rental under a long-term lease, so that the Council would not be subsidising the**

continued use of the Bull building as a community arts centre in the evenings and at weekends

**Council Believes –**

- That the Bull Arts Centre was created by the energy and vision of local people in the 1970s
- That there is a great desire in Chipping Barnet for the Bull to remain a community arts centre
- That Chipping Barnet residents deserve a fair share of local amenities, having already had their Register Office closed by this Administration
- That there is a great desire in Chipping Barnet to preserve community assets like the Bull and Barnet Football Club
- That it would be greatly to the advantage of residents for SETS to be offered a 25-year lease immediately
- That the current Administration has unacceptably stalled on granting such a lease for no good reason
- That if a long-term lease of the Bull building is granted to SETS it is possible that the need for a Planning Brief could be reconsidered
- That the previous tender process, which was aborted due to an error in the marketing documents, was a waste of Council resources and achieved nothing
- That Chipping Barnet residents have no desire for the Bull building to be converted into flats or a nightclub
- That the Bull's continued use as a community arts centre, rented from Council by SETS, will contribute to the diversity and viability of Barnet High Street

**Council Resolves –**

- To request the Cabinet to consider authorising negotiations to commence immediately for the grant of a 25-year lease to SETS.

**209. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR DANISH CHOPRA (Agenda Items 9.3 and 16.1.4):**

Motion 9.3 in the name of Councillor Danish Chopra and amendments in the names of Councillors Mike Freer, Kath McGuirk and Anita Campbell were put to the vote without debate. The amendment in the name of Councillor Mike Freer was declared lost and those amendments in the names of Councillors Kath McGuirk and Anita Campbell were declared carried.

Upon being to the vote, the substantive motion, was declared carried.

**RESOLVED – Council regrets that Barnet is the worst place to do business in London because the Conservative administration has cut support to local business and the borough's town centres, and has no strategy for improving the economy of Barnet.**

**Council recognises that the cut in funding and staff support for traders and small business, increased parking charges and attendants, closure of Council facilities in town centres, poor street cleaning, cuts to sustainability funding, and breakdown in**

**Council relations with traders' groups, has contributed to a catalogue of neglect and closures.**

**Council agrees with the Mayor of London in welcoming the job creation and low unemployment in Barnet since 1997, but believes the Cabinet must take responsibility as a community leader for the rejuvenation of the borough's town centres.**

**Council therefore urges the Cabinet to present proposals for better partnership working and engagement with local business to secure the future of the borough's town centres, and to consult all ward councillors on the particular problems their local town centre faces.**

**Council is dismayed at the continued proliferation of large chain stores in our High Streets and the continued closure of small, specialist shops.**

**Council believes this robs our town centres of their character, and leads to cloned, featureless, shopping centres.**

**Council understands this is part of a Londonwide problem, and is reflected in the fact that the Evening Standard newspaper has launched a petition, "Save our Small Shops", urging the Government to use planning law to stop large chains forcing out small businesses.**

**Council regrets the loophole in the new PPS 6 planning guidance, which permits the siting of large superstores on the edge of town centres, providing unfair competition to small firms in the High Street.**

**Council notes that the Association of Convenience Stores said that the clause would have a "damaging impact on the town centre". However the clause has remained in the final version of PPS 6.**

**Council welcomes Barnet's Planning and Environment Committee's decision to reject the "Tesco" application on Ballards Lane, West Finchley. One that, if realised, Council believes would have been extremely detrimental to the small business in the Finchley area.**

**Council notes the proposals of the Cabinet Resources Committee, chaired by Councillor Mike Freer, to build a "Tesco" supermarket in Watling car park on the edge of Burnt Oak town centre.**

**Council congratulates the hard work of staff providing access to Small Business relief, and congratulates the hard work of the Business Rates team.**



**Council congratulates the townkeeper and CCTV staff on their hard work for the borough.**

**Council is not complacent about the future of our town centres and believes more needs to be done on a national and local level to halt the decline in our High Streets and the loss of small shops.**

**Council welcomes all policies to improve the infrastructure of London's suburbs, making them more attractive places to do business.**

**Council resolves to call on the Leader of the Council to sign, on behalf of Barnet Council, in support of the Evening Standard's "Save our Small Shops" campaign. Council urges the Cabinet to write to the DTI and ODPM explaining our support for this campaign, and calling for urgent changes to planning law so the livelihoods of small business and the viability of our High Streets can be protected for generations to come.**

**Council notes that many residents are concerned that the Council is withdrawing support from High Barnet town centre. Council regrets the closure of the Register Office, cashiers' office and parking control office, the sale of the Bull Theatre, cuts to support for High Barnet traders and increased parking charges.**

**Council therefore urges the Cabinet to:**

- **re-open the Barnet Register Office in the Wood Street building or within Barnet Hospital,**
- **grant the Suzi Earnshaw Theatre School a long-lease on the Bull Theatre,**
- **take steps to deal with the growing problems of litter, dumped rubbish and graffiti in the town centre,**
- **monitor how full the car parks are so as to judge whether further adjustments need to be made to charges, and respond to the complaints from residents about the Bells Hill CPZ.**

**210. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR MELVIN COHEN (Agenda Items 9.4 and 16.1.4):**

Motion 9.4 in the name of Councillor Melvin Cohen and amendments in the names of Councillors Jim Tierney and Jeremy Davies were put to the vote without debate. The amendments in the names of Councillors Jim Tierney and Jeremy Davies were declared carried. Upon being put to the vote, the substantive Motion, was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes with dismay the current planning system that allows gardens to be treated in the same way as Brownfield sites when determining planning applications.**

**Council further notes that this means developers can treat the garden as part of the footprint for development and acquire permission to build over the garden's plot as well as that occupied by the house.**

**Council believes this permits the development of housing over gardens that can be out of keeping with the neighbouring area and-Barnet's pleasant, suburban landscape.**

**Council welcomes the Bill proposed by Greg Clark MP to close this planning loophole, meaning that Planning Committees could refuse applications for housing development on private gardens that they feel is out of character with the surrounding area.**

**Council supports this initiative that would stop family homes and gardens in Barnet being turned into potentially intrusive developments.**

**Council supports the Green Belt.**

**Council notes the recent national proposals to change the definition of a greenfield site, to enable more development on these sites, by reviewing the planning system.**

**Council believes downgrading greenfield sites in this manner could threaten the London Borough of Barnet's green open spaces and Green Belt.**

**Council therefore asks the Chief Executive to write to the Deputy Prime Minister setting out the London Borough of Barnet's opposition to a change in the definition of a greenfield site by a review of the planning system**

**Council rejects the "vision" expressed in the so-called *Sustainable Community Strategy* that by 2016 Barnet should be one of the "largest Boroughs in London" believing this to be an encouragement to over development and a threat to the green belt. Further, Council rejects the plans -attributed in the *Times* and the *Evening Standard* to Conservative MP George Osborne - for a redefinition of what constitutes a greenfield site and the removal of many of the current planning controls over property development. Council believes that the current controls over development are insufficient as it is and have led to the blight of over development in many parts of the Borough.**

**211. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR CHRIS HARRIS (Agenda Item 9.5 and 16.1.4):**

Motion 9.5 in the name of Councillor Chris Harris and an amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Rawlings was put to the vote without debate. The amendment in the name of Councillor Barry Rawlings was declared carried. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes the Youth Offending Team, which rehabilitates and engages young people involved in disorder and delinquency.**

**Council believes the Youth Offending Team is an essential part of the assault on anti-social behaviour in the Borough, particularly**

as concerns are being raised that ASBOs may be becoming a “Badge of Honour”. The work of the Council’s Youth Offending Team is intended to keep young people from re-offending; prevention as well as a cure.

Council congratulates the hard work of the Youth Offending Team staff on the successful rehabilitation of young people involved in disorder and delinquency.

Council further notes the video of the Youth Offending Team’s restorative justice project (“Time to Talk - Time to Listen”), piloted in five Primary Schools, won a prestigious award at the Communicating Youth Justice Awards last year.

Council also welcomes the initiatives piloted by the Youth Offending Team in engaging young people in Grahame Park engaged in anti-social behaviour, and the attendant successes seen.

Council believes it is due in no small part to the Youth Offending Team’s Work that we have seen a drop in Youth Crime in Barnet. The number of youths involved in offences in this Borough fell by 9% between 2003/4 and 2004/5.

Council is not complacent about the need for a multiplicity of facilities and activities across the Borough for young people, both by the Council, voluntary and private sector.

Council calls on Cabinet to ensure the work of the Youth Offending Team is strengthened and built upon, so that young people in the Borough can be directed away from crime, and we can drive the anti-social elements out of our streets and help young people themselves.

**212. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR BRIAN SALINGER (Agenda Item 9.6 ):**

Motion 9.6 in the name of Councillor Brian Salinger was put to the vote without debate and was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - That the Council of the London Borough of Barnet requests that The Worshipful the Mayor, on behalf of all citizens of Barnet, sends Loyal Greetings to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of Her Majesty's 80th birthday, and expresses gratitude for Her Majesty's contribution to the life of our Borough and our Nation.**

Council particularly recalls Her Majesty's many visits to the Borough.

**213. MOTION IN THE NAME OF COUNCILLOR BRIAN COLEMAN (Agenda Item 9.7 ):**

Motion 9.7 in the name of Councillor Brian Coleman was put to the vote without debate and was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council notes the recent comments from the Mayor of London concerning members of the Jewish Community and the American Ambassador. Council believes that the residents of this Borough deserve a Mayor of London that supports all communities and discourages racism of any sort. Council believes that the current Mayor of London fails to behave with the dignity befitting his office and in particular is making comments that appear to be giving rise to anti-Semitic attitudes. Council notes that the Community Security Trust has identified 11 anti-Semitic attacks that it says were triggered by the news story of the Mayor of London's outburst at an "Evening Standard " journalist in February 2005.**

**Council calls on the Mayor of London to apologise for his recent behaviour and instructs the Chief Executive to write to him requesting such an apology.**

**214. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

In accordance with the Agenda, the Mayor adjourned the meeting for 15 minutes.

The meeting reconvened at 9.05pm

**215. ADMINISTRATION POLICY ITEM: NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (Agenda Item 10.1 and 16.1.4)**

Councillor Fiona Bulmer proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the names of Councillors Monroe Palmer and Linda McFadyen and were moved. Debate ensued. Upon being to the vote, the amendments in the names of Councillors Monroe Palmer and Linda McFadyen were declared carried. Upon being out to the vote the substantive motion was declared lost.

**216. OPPOSITION POLICY ITEM: RESPECT FOR BARNET CAMPAIGN (Agenda Item 10.2, and 16.1.4).**

Councillor Alan Schneiderman proposed the item and moved that it be adopted. Amendments in the names of Councillors Brian Salinger, Sean Hooker and Anita Campbell were moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment in the name of Councillor Brian Salinger was declared lost and those amendments in the names of Councillors Anita Campbell and Sean Hooker were declared carried. The substantive motion was declared carried.

**RESOLVED - Council recognises that the number one priority of Barnet residents is tackling anti-social behaviour.**

**Council notes Nottingham City Council's Respect for Nottingham campaign that has successfully begun to tackle begging, prostitution, street drug dealing, environmental cleanliness and anti-social behaviour.**

**Council also notes the successful programmes instituted by Islington Council that have tackled youth boredom and cut car-**

related crime and accidents, which have led it to be awarded Lib Dem Council Group of The Year at the LGA award

Council believes that lessons can be learned from the Respect for Nottingham campaign and the respect initiatives of other local authorities, in particular that the Council just working harder does not by itself tackle perceptions or impact on the full range of respect issues residents are concerned about.

Respect must be earned, not imposed. Respect goes both ways. Demonisation and categorisation of young people are the quickest ways of alienating them from community initiatives.

Council believes the London Borough of Barnet would benefit from its own *Respect for Barnet* Campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour and promote respect within local neighbourhoods.

Council notes that the *Respect for Barnet* campaign will include:

- tackling anti-social behaviour through joint tasking with the police and Barnet Homes, use of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts – thus allowing other interested parties to be involved in a proactive and contractual resolution of problems, plus enforcement through intelligent and sparing use of ASBOs with a range of supporting methods to end anti-social behaviour, fixed penalty notice and tenancy agreements,
- dealing with youth disorder and young people becoming the victims of crime by involving young people in the design and management of youth facilities, creation of positive environments for young people, closer liaison with schools to ensure young people can report crime in a serious and safe manner to the police and teachers.
- changing perceptions of the environment which are strongly influenced by graffiti and fly-posting by both enforcement and removal. Whilst recognising that although the borough should be clean all year round, the Council could launch a *Big Spring Clean 2007* next year to focus efforts to tackle fly-tipping, abandoned cars, overgrown and unruly gardens, and graffiti, encourage people to report mess and dirt, encourage the feeling of ownership and responsibility for their environment
- joint work between the police, Council and community to combat drug dealing, and make the link between drug dealing and other criminal activity,
- addressing binge drinking and late night nuisance through Alcohol Free Zones, consulting residents on a licensing saturation policy, and a 24/7 noise nuisance service, and
- bringing back into use empty properties associated with anti-social behaviour.
- working with the police, ambulance, TfL and fire authorities to raise awareness of the dangers of, and tackle, car-related crime, joy-riding, drink-and drug-driving, accidents and dangerous driving amongst young people

- zero tolerance towards kerb-crawling in areas known to be centres of prostitution

Council agrees that the *Respect for Barnet* Campaign needs to use powers made available by the Government intelligently and effectively, involve and engage the community and partners, provide better quality services, and offer communication on progress to residents. Council calls on TfL to work with Council CCTV officers to share information, where legally permissible, in order to document and combat anti-social behaviour.

Council agrees that the *Respect for Barnet* Campaign needs to set out measurable targets for achievement and undertake regular survey work of residents to assess the impact and whether perceptions are changing.

Council notes that the capacity for a successful *Respect for Barnet* Campaign has recently been increased thanks to:

- the Mayor of London's additional 13 Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams introduced to Barnet from 3 April, which will mean 39 extra police officers and at least 52 extra Police Community Support Officers patrolling the borough's streets, and
- the Government's award to Barnet of £744,312 over the next two years from the Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund for youth services.

Council asks Cabinet to liaise with the police and other community leaders to bring forward proposals for the *Respect for Barnet* Campaign to tackle anti-social behaviour, provide youth facilities and promote respect as part of a holistic programme.

Council also asks the Chief Executive to invite Nottingham City Council to present a seminar on the *Respect for Nottingham* campaign open to all ward councillors, senior officers, community leaders and the local police.

Council also asks the Chief Executive to invite Islington Council to present a seminar on their successful programmes, open to all ward councillors, senior officers, community leaders, and the local police.

Council condemns the Council's failure to speedily tackle the recent problems of anti-social behaviour in Ridgeview Close, Chesterfield Road, Mays Lane and the Dollis Valley estate. Council supports the residents who have been forced to endure serious problems of anti-social behaviour and Council supports the local police who have done their utmost to protect residents. Council therefore particularly welcomes the new Safer Neighbourhood Police Team for Underhill ward.

**Given the recent problems of anti-social behaviour, Council urges the Cabinet to consider as a priority piloting the *Respect for Barnet* Campaign in East Barnet, High Barnet and Underhill wards.**

**217. COMMENTS RELATING TO THE WORK OF CABINET (Agenda item 11)**

**Councillor Anita Campbell commented**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I've been sitting on the stakeholder meetings at Barnet Hill School at regeneration of the Dollis Valley and in all those meetings we had a plan for a new Barnet Hill School funded by Warden who won the bid and this was on all the meetings we went to, for a new school, not now. What we've got is no school, not even a new school or the old school. So what I'm asking is where is the funding gone for this school by Warden? I can't get an answer from that, I have asked many times but nobody seems to know where this money is. The Council is proposing to shut Barnet Hill Primary School in Hammond Close, Councillor Bulmer has described this as good news. The Council plans to rebuild Whittings Hill School for the displaced children but there is no news yet on how the empty Barnet Hill School site will be used as part of the Dollis Valley regeneration. Again, whilst we support new school buildings we don't want this one to be, and all the parents don't want this school closed.

**Councillor John Marshall responded**

Thank you Mr Mayor, I'd like to thank Councillor Campbell for her last speech in this Council chamber. The reason we're doing this is to speed the regeneration of the Dollis Valley Estate and to provide a modern children's centre on the Whittings Hill site. When Councillor Campbell was part of the administration she did nothing for the regeneration of Dollis Valley, she did nothing to provide new schools for her constituents. We are seeking to do both, she in opposition is seeking to sabotage work which can only be to the benefit of her constituents and that is why she's going to lose on the 4<sup>th</sup> May.

**Councillor Steve Blomer commented**

Yes, Mr Mayor. The restructuring of street enforcement just isn't working, let me point out why. We have broken concrete traffic bollards as follows: one in Woodcroft Avenue, three in Watling Avenue, one in The Meads, all reported since January, not removed, not fixed, dangerous. We have concrete posts in Abbots Road reported January, not removed. Concrete posts broken down in Norbury Grove, reported, not moved. And we have posts in Deans Way that were reported last November and not moved. We have fly tipping in Abbots Road, a freezer by the sub-power station opposite Wolsey Grove, been there for three months nothing done about it though it's been reported. Dryfield Road and Luther Close have both had repeated phone calls from me about stuff not being removed and it's still there, the system doesn't work and you've made it like that.

### **Councillor Matthew Offord responded**

I suggest that if the Councillor has any problems he should actually call them in instead of grandstanding at the full Council meeting. The changes have had no negative effect and reports from the 13 town keepers for graffiti and fly-tipping have shown no change from normal day to day workloads. The service is continuing to achieve PI deadlines and customer responses. Additionally, the Council's performance in respect of BVPI 199 continues to improve and the most recent results for March 2006 shows 91% of the borough above the standard against the government's target of 75%. A clear indication that the Council's resources are being deployed to a good effect, whilst target services are being achieved and delivered. I'll also point out that the work being conducted by the Conservative candidates in Hale Ward is actually providing improvements with the work with NTL that we're doing. I suggest that Councillor Blomer takes a bit of advice from them in the remaining three weeks he is a Councillor in Hale.

### **Councillor Ansuya Sodha commented**

Mr Mayor, I'm going to talk about the Welsh Harp. When this Tory administration came in power in 2002 they issued these gimmicky plastic cases which says "Improving Urban Green Spaces". After four years what they have managed to do is actually destroy urban green spaces as you can see by these photographs of the Welsh Harp. What do you see, a bench in the water. What do you see, a burnt out bench which is still there, this bench had been there for nearly two months, nobody bothered to remove it. Bird hide damaged. The people living near this Welsh Harp are really scared, scared of these vandals vandalising their homes and setting fire. What we need, Mr Mayor, is Park Ranger, we had 82 street enforcement officers, we've got 12 now. At last week's area forum, area forum said we need Park Rangers.

### **Councillor Matthew Offord responded**

Councillor Sodha has brought this issue up on 8 occasions: on 30 November 04, 15 April 05, 23 March 05, 27 September 05, all as Member's items, 13 September 05 as a question, 14 April comments on the work of the Cabinet, 14 September 04 as a question, 26 October 04 as another question. This Council's wasted enough time on Councillor Sodha and her comments about the work of the Cabinet or whatever. I suggest that she should have put a line in their budget for this, but she didn't, she failed to do that, she failed the people of West Hendon and on May 4<sup>th</sup> she'll fail again.

### **Councillor Wayne Casey commented**

Mr Mayor I've set out the nature of my comment in the text.

### **Councillor Matthew Offord responded**

Thank you Councillor Casey. The Council is in discussion with Crest Nicholson to agree either replacements of the existing road surface to materials that we're able to take on maintenance liability or agree a commuted



sum with them for us to take on the maintenance of the block paving. These discussions are on-going. We have shown our keenness to move this forward as quickly as possible and we are waiting for Crest Nicholson to respond in a similar manner. What we will not do is take on responsibility for the road which does not meet, or which do not meet, the agreed specification because this will open us up for potential future maintenance problems.

**Councillor Jeremy Davies commented**

Thank you Mr Mayor. The nature of my comment is actually in the text but in particular I'd like to ask the Cabinet Member whether he will consider judicial review of the inspector's decision because I don't believe it's taken into account all the material facts that need to be considered in this application.

**Councillor Melvin Cohen responded**

Mr Mayor, I personally reviewed the decision of the inspector. Councillor Davies will know that an appeal will lie to the High Court on a point of law and I cannot see that the inspector has actually erred in law and I cannot support an appeal. He has considered all appropriate grounds. Firstly, whether the proposal amounts to inappropriate development on the green belt, he finds that it is. He then goes on to consider other factors to see if they outweigh any harm resulting from inappropriate development. He considers whether it would preserve and enhance the Mill Hill Conservation Area. He considers health matters. He considers the effect of the proposal on wild life. He considers the need for development at alternative sites. He advances reasoned arguments for the above and comes to the view and these are findings of fact that the development is justified on the basis of very special circumstances. Rightly or wrongly, my judgement is that the decision cannot be successfully challenged in law.

**218. REPORT OF CABINET 3 APRIL, 2006 (Agenda Items 13)**

Councillor Melvin Cohen moved reception and adoption of the Report of Cabinet dated 23 January, 2006, with the following recommendations:

**UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN – INTENTION TO ADOPT (Cab. Rept. 23/1/2006 – 2) (Report of the Cabinet Member for Planning & Licensing Services – Agenda Item 11)**

Cabinet received the report of the Cabinet Member for Planning & Licensing Services which is being circulated separately to all Members of the Council.

For the reasons set out in the Cabinet Member's report, Cabinet

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND – That Council agree to proceed to adopt the UDP by publishing a Notice of Intention to Adopt, in accordance with the Regulations.**

Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED – That the Report of Cabinet dated 3 April, 2006, be approved and adopted.**

**219. REPORT OF THE FIRST CLASS EDUCATION AND CHILDREN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE DATED 9 MARCH 2006 (Agenda Item 14.1):**

Councillor Andrew Harper moved reception and adoption of the Report of the First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 9 March, 2006, with the following recommendations:

**1. THE APPOINTMENT OF LA SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

The First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members submit, in the following terms, their proposed recommendations to Council on the appointment of LA School Governors. Councillor Andrew Harper will present the report.

At the Council meeting on 14 December 2004, it was resolved that the former Education and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee should investigate and if considered necessary recommend ways in which the Council could modernise how it makes appointments to School Governing Bodies.

The Committee considered a report on the appointment of LA governors on 19.09.2005, 28.11.2005, 1.02.2006 and 9.03.2006. The Committee agreed that the selection criteria for the appointment and removal of LA governors should be set out in a transparent way and that in the first instance, nominations from Political Parties be invited for consideration by the Council and if vacancies are not filled in three months, that the field of candidates be widened to incorporate applications from members of the local community, local groups and Council employees. Any vacancies which have been in existence for three months or more at the time of adoption be immediately open to nominations from the wider community. Where this does take place, the Committee agreed that these applications (from the wider community) are put forward by Governor Services according to the appointment criteria.

For the reasons set out in this report, the First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee-

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL-**

- 1. That the criteria for the appointment and removal of LEA Governors are set out in a transparent way.**
- 2. That in the first instance, nominations from Political Parties be invited for consideration by the Council.**

3. **That if vacancies are not filled in three months, that the field of candidates be widened to incorporate applications from members of the local community, local groups and Council employees. Any vacancies which have been in existence for three months or more at the time of adoption be immediately open to nominations from the wider community.**
4. **That applications from the wider community are put forward by Governor Services according to the appointment criteria.**
5. **That in 12 months time, a review of school governor vacancies is carried out by the First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”**

Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED – That the Report of the First Class Education and Children Overview and Scrutiny Committee dated 9 March, 2006, be approved and adopted.**

**220. REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE (CONSTITUTION REVIEW) DATED 22 MARCH, 2006, (Agenda Item 15.1).**

Councillor Brian Salinger moved reception and adoption of the Report of the Special Committee (Constitution Review) dated 22 March, 2006, with the following recommendations:

**Constitution Review 2005**

The Committee met on 11 January, 23 February and 22 March to consider aspects of the Council’s Constitution, which had been raised by both officers and members as matters requiring review, some of which would be addressed by another method. The Action Sheets relating to the Committee’s 11 January and 23 February meetings are attached as Appendix A1 and A2.

On 22 March the Committee considered reports of the Heads of Service concerned on all the matters on which the Committee considered they should make recommendations for change to the Council. Included in their deliberations had been the request from Council at their meeting on 8 November 2005 to consider whether there was a need for a change to the provisions relating to call –in and urgency procedures, as contained within the Overview and Scrutiny Rules.

The reports of the Heads of Service concerned, together with an Addendum circulated at the meeting would be circulated separately to all Members of the Council.

The Committee having noted the Action Sheet for the meeting held on 23 February made the following comments on the Officers’ reports:

## **Review 2006: Council Procedure Rules**

The Committee considered that provision should remain in the Council agenda for Comments on the Work of Cabinet.

The Committee agreed:

- (i) that the full list of Questions to Cabinet Members should be circulated two working days preceding the Council Meeting. As a consequence the deadline for the delivery of Questions to the Democratic Services Manager would be brought forward to ten working days before the meeting (Action Sheet 23/2/06)
- (ii) that the only change to the current arrangements to the Agenda for an Ordinary Council Meeting would for Statutory Council Business becoming Part 5 Business, with Comments on the Work of Cabinet at Part 6. If Part 6 business was not reached during a Council Meeting, the Cabinet Member concerned would be required to respond in writing to the Member concerned within 10 working days, and to send a copy to the Democratic Services Manager who would arrange for the response to be circulated to all Members of the Council.

In connection with the managing the business at Ordinary Meetings of the Council, the Committee believed that the situation would be eased by the General Functions Committee considering appointments to outside bodies and nominations to School Governing Bodies. The Committee considered that, in certain circumstances, consideration could be given to convening meetings of the General Functions Committee immediately prior to a Council meeting (at 6pm) to enable the Committee to refer appointments to Council should the need arise.

The Committee had previously agreed to

- (i) the Democratic Services' Manager's Supplemental Report being emailed to Members and delivered by hand on the day before the meeting (Action Sheet 23/2/06);
- (ii) Motions being capable of being amended and/or withdrawn by the Member concerned up until the deadline for submission of Motions (Action Sheet 11/1/06)

## **Review 2006: Overview and Scrutiny Rules**

The Committee:

- (i) considered that there should be further clarification included in the Rules relating to the Call-in arrangements of what would happen to items not dealt with by 10pm, where no vote had been taken, in accordance with the changes proposed.

In the circumstances the Committee agreed to the insertion at the end of paragraph 16(e) to the words "For the avoidance of doubt, where an

item has not been dealt with by 10pm, the decision will be implemented forthwith”.

- (ii) with regard to the rules relating to Call – in and Urgency, the Committee also agreed to amend the definition of absence.

### **Access to Information Changes**

The Committee noted that the proposals reflected the statutory changes now in force as a result of the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

### **Financial Regulations**

The Committee noted that Part 2 of the Financial Regulations were currently under review and agreed the proposed changes to Part 1.

### **Licensing Code of Practice**

The Committee noted that the Code was based on both legislation and guidance issued by the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services) guidance.

### **Review 2006: Public Participation Rules**

The Committee also had regard to an addendum.

- (i) considered that some of the issues raised in the Officers’ report would best be dealt with by Chairmen at meetings and should be included in the training for new Chairmen, together with a small amendment to the Members’ Planning Code of Conduct ;
- (ii) that where petitions were received by the Democratic Services Manager which related to Executive functions, not within the Terms of Reference of the Area Environment Sub – Committee, these should be reported to Cabinet;

### **Rules for the Disposal of Land and Real Property**

The Committee also had regard to the addendum.

The Committee noted that the proposed changes were designed to make the Rules more comprehensive and effective.

### **Amendments to the Constitution**

The Committee also had regard to an addendum.

The Committee noted that the changes proposed in the Officers’ Report relating to the:

- (i) Terms of Reference of the General Functions and Audit Committee had been agreed at the February meeting. They further agreed to the

clarification that the nomination of school governing bodies also was within the Terms of Reference of the General Functions Committee;

- (ii) Terms of Reference of the Area Planning Sub – Committees and , as a consequence to the Planning and Environment Committee, had been agreed by at the February meeting;
- (iii) Terms of Reference of the Licensing Committee and Licensing Sub – Committees paved the way for the implementation of the Gambling Act 2005; the clarification changes to the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Planning and Licensing Services clarified the position;
- (iv) Terms of Reference of the Special Committee (Constitution Review) were a formality.

In addition the Committee considered that all reports of action taken by Heads of Service relating to staffing matters should be sent to the Chairman of the General Functions Committee, with the situation reviewed after one year.

#### **Ancillary matters**

The Committee noted that the changes proposed reflected their views at the January and February meetings.

#### **RECOMMEND –**

- (1) **That with effect from 16 May, 2006, the changes to the Parts of the Constitution listed below and as agreed by the Committee be implemented:**

***Part 4, Section 1 – Council Procedure Rules (Appendix B) as proposed by the Borough Solicitor and amended by the Committee as follows:***

- **Statutory Council Business to become Part 5 Business**
- **Comments on the Work of Cabinet to become Part 6 Business.**
  - **Where Comments are not dealt with at the Council Meeting, the relevant Cabinet Member will respond in writing to the Member concerned within 10 working days, with a copy to the Democratic Services Manager who will circulate the Response to all Members of the Council.**

***Overview and Scrutiny Rules (Appendix C) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor and amended by the Committee by***

- **New paragraph 16(e) Conclusion of business at Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee including the addition of the explanation that any matters not dealt with by 10pm will implemented forthwith;**
- **Remainder of Rule 16 re-lettered, with the provisions relating to Call – in and urgency (now Rule m) being clarified by the definition of “absence”.**

***Access to Information Procedure Rules (Appendix D) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor***

***Financial Regulations (Appendix E) – as proposed by the Chief Finance Officer***

***Members' Licensing Code of Practice (Appendix F) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor***

***Public Participation Rules (Appendix G) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor and amended by the Committee in respect of: Petitions relating to Executive functions not within the Terms of Reference of the Area Environment Sub – Committees will be reported to Cabinet.***

***Rules for the Disposal of Land and Real Property (Appendix H) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor.***

***Part 3 – Responsibility for Functions (Appendix I) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor and Head of Planning and amended by the Committee by***

**the inclusion of the requirement for all reports of action taken by Chief Officers under delegated powers relating to staffing to be sent to the Chairman of the General Functions Committee.**

***Part 4 – Section 2: Committees and Sub – Committees (Appendix J) – as proposed by the Borough Solicitor***

***New Detailed Contents Page and List of tables (Appendix K) - as proposed by the Borough Solicitor***

***Change to Rule 2 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (Appendix L) – as proposed by the Chief Finance Officer.***

***Planning Code of Conduct for Members (Appendix M) -***

**To advise Members serving on planning committees that they should not frame questions so as to permit additional time for an individual speech as by permitting one individual to extend their speaking time could potentially be challengeable.**

- (2) That the reasons for the exclusion of the Licensing Committee from the Public Participation Rules be noted.**
- (3) That, in due course, the Borough Solicitor submit a summary version of the Constitution to the Committee.**

- (4) That, with respect to the General Functions Committee:
- (i) no action be taken with regard to the operation of minority referral at the General Functions Committee but the matter be reviewed in connection with the 2006/07 review and that the Borough Solicitor be instructed to make the appropriate arrangements;
  - (ii) consideration be given to convening meetings of the General Functions Committee, where appropriate, immediately preceding Council on the same night as Council, to deal with appointments to outside bodies and nominations to school governing bodies, to enable appointments/nominations to be referred up to Council, if necessary and the Democratic Services Manager be instructed to take the necessary action;
  - (iii) the situation relating to actions taken by Chief Officers under delegated powers with respect to staffing matters be review in a year's time and the Borough Solicitor be instructed to take the appropriate action.
- (5) That no changes be made at this time to the operation of the call – in and urgency procedures in respect of the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee in view of the few reports that had been exempted from call – in during 2005/2006.
- (6) That early during the next municipal year the Committee
- (i) initiate debate and discussions on the structure and purpose of the Council meeting;
  - (ii) consider the Terms of Reference of the General Functions Committee;
- and that the Borough Solicitor be instructed to arrange accordingly.
- (7) That the Borough Solicitor be instructed to arrange training for new Chairmen of Committees on the effective management of Committees, in accordance with Constitutional provisions.”

An amendment in the name of Councillor Jack Cohen was moved. Debate ensued. Upon being put to the vote the amendment was declared and carried.

**RESOLVED – That the Report of the Special Committee(Constitution Review), be approved and adopted, subject to paragraph 3.17 of Part of of the Financial Regulations being amended by the deletion of “regularly” and the insertion after “to” of the words “each and every ordinary”.**



Councillor Peter Davis moved reception and adoption of the Report of the Planning and Environment Committee dated 29 March 2006, with the following recommendations:

**BYELAWS RELATING TO AMUSEMENT PREMISES: QUICKSILVER, 164-166 CRICKLEWOOD BROADWAY, LONDON, NW2 (Report of the Director of Environment - Agenda Item 8)**

The Director of Environment circulated an Addendum to his report. The Committee considered the report of the Director of Environment. Both the report and the addendum would be circulated separately to all Members of the Council.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

- 1. That the hours of opening specified in the London Borough of Barnet Byelaws relating to Amusement Premises be varied, to allow the amusement premises situated at Quicksilver, 164-166 Cricklewood Broadway, London, NW2 to open between 9am and 12 midnight Monday to Saturday and between 9am and 10pm on Sundays.**
- 2. That the Director of Environment be instructed to take the appropriate action.”**

Debate ensued.

Upon being put to the vote, it was

**RESOLVED – That the Report of the Planning and Environment Committee dated 29 March, 2006 be not approved and adopted.**

**222. REPRESENTATION OF THE COUNCIL ON FRIENDS OF MOAT MOUNT CAMP SITE (Cl. Dec 7/3/06 - ) (Report of the Democratic Services Manager - Agenda Item 16.1.1):**

The Democratic Services Manager's report referred to the Council's previous decision, on 7 March, which was made in error and set out details of the appointment to be made.

Nominations in the names of Councillor Joan Scannell and Councillor Danish Chopra were moved.

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the Council rescind the appointment of Mr Hugh Rayner as a Council representative to Friends of Moat Mount Campsite.**
- (2) That Councillor Steve Blomer be appointed as the Council's representative to vacancy no. 0601 to Friends of Moat Mount Campsite for the period ending 19/03/06 (Councillor Brian Gordon was unsuccessful).**

**223. REPORT EXEMPTED FROM THE CALL – IN PROCESS (Item 16.1.3):**

In accordance with Constitutional requirements the Democratic Services Manager reported on the Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport which approved the final version of the Local Implementation Plan for submission to the Mayor of London for approval. As the Cabinet Member had to be with the Mayor of London by 24 February, 2006, and as the Cabinet Member was acting in accordance with his authorisation by Cabinet on 23 January to approve the final version, the

Chairman of the of the Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision was reasonable in all the circumstances, that it should be treated as a matter of urgency and consequently exempted from the call – in process.

**224. CONSTITUTION : ARTICLE 12 AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE (Item 16.1.6)**

The Democratic Services Manager reported on the exercise, by the Head of Paid Services, of his powers in accordance with Article 12 of the Constitution by determining the overall structure of the Constitution to meet current requirements, and submitted a revised list of Chief Officers which would form part of Article 12. As a consequence of these revisions, Part 7 of the Constitution would also be revised.

**RESOLVED – That the Democratic Services Manager be instructed to make the changes to the Council’s Constitution.**

The meeting finished at 10. 40pm

**Minute No. 204**  
**Council Questions to Cabinet Members**  
**11 April 2006**  
**Questions and Responses**

**Question No. 1**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

How might the government's proposal to give the Mayor of London greater powers on housing, planning and other matters affect the London Borough of Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

A response was submitted to the Government's consultation paper. In summary, our views on how the proposals (which were presented as a series of options, rather than a single proposal) might affect Barnet were as follows:

**Housing:**

The Mayor is potentially given too much power over our housing allocations. In particular giving the London Housing Strategy statutory force may gradually erode local authority influence in favour of the Mayor and reduce our ability to develop local strategies reflecting local needs and aspirations. Whatever extra powers the Mayor obtains need to be phased in over the first few years to allow us to meet existing commitments.

**Skills and training:**

While we support a more co-ordinated approach which reflects the fact London is a single labour market and does not respect Borough boundaries, we would oppose any attempt to centralise any Learning and Skills Council functions relating to planning and funding 14-19 learning.

**Planning:**

Our view is that since the creation of the Mayor and Assembly in 2000, the current system works well and the balance of powers between London and local level is about right. For example, in Barnet's case no strategic planning application referral has been directed for refusal since the Mayor took office. We therefore supported the option for minimal change.

The other options could result in a significant adverse impact on the local planning authority and Barnet's powers to plan for its own area effectively.

The proposals to give the Mayor powers of direction over the Development Plan are both unnecessary (as the Mayor already has significant power to ensure "general conformity" of a UDP or LDF and in Barnet's case the Mayor and GLA were fully consulted and significantly influenced the local and strategic planning policies).

The vitally important role of local planning authorities to be close to and reflect the views of their local community, including the linkage between LDF's and community strategies, could be undermined by giving greater powers to the Mayor. Local democratic accountability would be eroded, particularly if the Mayor became the planning authority or had powers to direct approval of a local planning authority refused application and the local Statement of Community Involvement undermined. Also, London Borough strategies such as the Three Strand Approach could be demoted or overridden by the Mayor.

The Mayor having powers to direct approval would undermine our ability to protect our communities and local environments and achieve sustainable development if strategic reasons for approval took no account of local impact or circumstances. The Mayor would be unlikely to address local community concerns or provide appropriate mechanisms for public involvement in decision making, something we have a track record of.

Finally, the Head of Planning has also expressed concern that an increase in GLA powers will lead to Planning Officers being 'poached' from the Boroughs to the GLA family.

**Waste:**

We agree in principle with a single waste disposal authority in London, although we would need to consider full details of remit and composition and would expect any London-wide body to have a partnership approach towards strategic waste planning and local waste planning making use of our detailed local knowledge and geographical expertise, and links with residents and businesses.

However there is no justification for the Mayor to have the power to allocate sites for waste facilities or make development control decisions. It is also totally inappropriate for the GLA to look after waste collection, which is a local service and one highly visible to local residents, although this does not preclude voluntary collaboration with other waste collection authorities.

**Supplementary Question No. 1**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Councillor Salinger, thank you for your very careful analysis of the pros and cons, clearly more cons than pros, of the Mayor of London's powers. In retrospect would you not agree with me that in most respects Londoners were far better off when there was no Mayor of London and, dare I say it, no GLA either.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I think if we were starting today we certainly wouldn't have created a body that looks like the GLA as it is today. There is a role for a body to provide some strategic guidance across London but it should not be the sort of body that we've got now with an exploding staff which has grown to such an extent that they can't even all fit in the office that was intended for them.

**Question No. 2****Councillor Wayne Casey**

How are the work programmes of the team responsible for street cleaning and the team responsible for maintaining grass verges coordinated?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Litter is removed from highway verges as part of scheduled sweeps which take place approx 7 times per annum (January to December) and this is coordinated with grass cutting where the schedules coincide, as grass cutting is a seasonal activity that takes place between April to October.

Litter is cleared prior to cutting by grounds staff to ensure effective operation and to leave sites in a neat and tidy condition. In addition, the highway verges (where present) are cleared of litter as part of the block cleanse and where the grass cutting cycle coincides with the block cleanse then the grass is cut and litter is removed as part of the overall operation.

Coordination activities are complicated and stopped by weather factors. Street cleansing and de-littering activities can take place under virtually all weather conditions but not so with grass cutting. Grass cutting is not carried out during wet conditions as the resultant cut tends to be poor and the removal of any grass cuttings from hard surfaces is problematic.

**Supplementary Question No. 2****Councillor Wayne Casey**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Mr Mayor, would the Cabinet Member be surprised to know that last year some of the block cleanses in Mill Hill were followed, within hours in some cases, by grass verge cutting and the consequences of that he can imagine for himself.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I'm certainly aware of that now but that's the kind of issue I would have hoped the Member would have brought up at the time - but I will follow that up with the relevant officers.

**Question No. 3****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Consultation with users groups is a very important part of providing and improving quality services. Why then does the Council not carry out consultation with a disabled users' group when considering services for disabled; and will the Council now consider my suggestions of setting up a disabled users group precisely for this purpose?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The Council undertakes a wide range of consultation with all members of the community. Adult Social Services has set up, in partnership with health providers, the voluntary sector and service users and carers, a Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board. Disability Action for the Borough of Barnet (DAbB) along with other organisations such as the RNID are active members of this Board.

In addition, the Council funds Barnet Council for Voluntary Service's support for the Physical Disability Network which provides the Council with an important mechanism for consultation with service users, carers and voluntary sector providers.

**Supplementary Question No. 3**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Thank you for your reply but it doesn't answer my question. People with disabilities use all Council services, not just social services, so they have opinions and views on all services. Will the Member agree to discuss with her Cabinet colleagues setting up a disabled users group so that the Council can listen to the views of disabled people on the full range of issues. I actually checked it out this afternoon with DAbB and at the moment there isn't one disabled users group in Barnet, so that's why I'm asking you to set up one.

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

I don't believe there is a need for an overall disabled users group, in fact I think that's rather patronising to disabled people. There are a whole range of different consultative mechanisms for each individual service and I think that's the best way and most sensitive way to get the views of all users as individuals, not as members of some collective group.

**Question No. 4**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Would you agree that the determined stance taken by the Edgware Councillors (Hart, Lester and Scannell) on behalf of residents in favour of scaling down the Spur Road/ Stonegrove development is an excellent example of how local Ward Councillors can have a constructive influence on Cabinet Policy?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Yes.

**Supplementary Question No. 4**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Leader, thank you for echoing the tribute that I paid to Edgware's councillors. Do you not consider that it is totally disingenuous of Labour and Liberal party candidates to be sending round literature suggesting that the amendments to Edgware's regeneration scheme had something to do with them.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, I just need a quick word with Councillor Finn here, but as far as I know I don't even know who the three Labour candidates are in Edgware. I know one of the three Liberal candidates, the rest of them as far as I know have not made any representations to me whatsoever, they certainly hadn't when I was the Cabinet Member responsible for it and I don't believe they made any representations in the last year either.

**Question No. 5****Councillor Wayne Casey**

Will the Leader write to the Royal Mail pointing out that the careless littering of the streets with elastic bands by their staff is now illegal under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Yes...I already have

**Supplementary Question No. 5****Councillor Wayne Casey**

Mr Mayor, would the Leader kindly share any correspondence he may have had with the post office about this subject to all Members.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Happily, Mr Mayor.

**Question No. 6****Councillor Anita Campbell**

Why has the administration not been active in listening to the residents' recent problems regarding anti-social behaviour in Ridgeview Close, Mays Lane and the Dollis Valley estate in Underhill ward and acting to combat it?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

It is quite wrong to suggest that the Council and its partners have failed to listen to, or deal with, the concerns raised by residents in the Ridgeview/Mays Lane area of Underhill. Officers of the Council and Barnet Homes have been working closely with residents since September of last year, and particularly since Christmas, when the level of complaints increased significantly. A combination of approaches has been used, including the use of the mobile CCTV van; a Police operation over a weekend which resulted in 9 fixed penalties for public disorder, 13 harassment warnings and action related to other offences; identifying the ringleaders and cautioning them and/or inviting them, with their parents, to sign Acceptable Behaviour Contracts; issuing Notices Seeking Possession where the perpetrators are Council tenants; and launching a local consultation on gating off the alley ways which have been both a focus of anti-social behaviour and provided an escape route for perpetrators. Our officers, and the beat officer, continue to monitor the situation closely and are in regular communication with residents.

**Supplementary Question No. 6****Councillor Anita Campbell**

Thank you, Mr Mayor. One of the main problems with dealing with the anti-social behaviour in Ridgeview Close, Mays Lane and Chesterfield Road was that residents felt that they were talking to a brick wall when it came to the Council, and it wasn't until I actually intervened and was asked by the residents of Ridgeview Close and arranged meetings with Andrew Wrigley, the PC, and the Council and Barnet Homes, that anything actually was done. PC Wrigley did a great job with the residents but the Council should have got involved much earlier at the very beginning and it might have stopped the aggravation that took place later which became very, very nasty. So I'm thinking now the Council and the Leader, we could ask the Council which lessons could be learned in the case of the Council's reaction will improve in future time and they will react much quicker to these problems of residents, thank you.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor I take personal responsibility for community safety and as soon as I was made aware of the problem certainly things started to happen. If Councillor Campbell had known about it before and not managed to get anything to happen, well one questions what she did to see things along. The fact is, I believe, that the steps and the measures that have been taken since it was brought to my attention have made the area very much more peaceful and the actions that we are proposing to take in the area including closing off some of the alley ways will again make it much more difficult for the young people who caused the problems there to behave in the way that they did. The work that we have done with those young people and with their families in getting them to sign anti-social behaviour contracts will in itself have a beneficial effect, not just in Ridgeview Close but in the wider area around that part of High Barnet.

**Question No. 7****Councillor Brian Gordon**

Does the Council have any authority at all to curb the excesses of clamping firms operating on private roadways within the borough who have been known to extort huge sums of money from motorists on the spot in order to release their vehicles?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The Council has no powers to intervene or regulate in this matter. Each case would be a private dispute between two parties.

Whilst compared by the courts to extortion and theft in Scotland in 1992, English courts have not concluded the same for this activity. Consequently, provided landowners have adequate notice to people entering the land in question that they or their agents may take action that results in charges having to be paid to release vehicles, such activity remain legal.



However, under the provisions of the Private Security Industry Act 2001, it is now illegal to operate as a car clumper without a licence from the Security Industry Authority. Trading Standards Departments had hoped that the SIA would take a proactive position, including handling complaints about licensed and unlicensed clumpers but that has not happened.

In the past year Barnet Trading Standards has received only 6 enquiries or complaints about clamping and we have either given civil advice or referred them to Consumer Advice London.

It is worth noting that Barnet Council's objection to Clause 6 of the TfL Bill is designed to prevent motorists clamped by TfL then becoming liable to a further penalty by the operator of the car park. My recollection is that the Liberal and Labour councillors voted against our motion to this Bill.

**Question No. 8**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

How many planning applications in Childs Hill Ward have been withdrawn by the applicant?

- A) year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2002
- B) year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003
- C) year end 31<sup>st</sup> march 2004
- D) year end 31<sup>st</sup> march 2005
- E) year end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006 (or as at today's 18<sup>th</sup> march date)

**Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen**

Attached is raw data on withdrawals of planning applications in response to the above question.

Data has been produced for Childs Hill ward specifically but to put it in context we have produced some other wards data within the Finchley & Golders Green Area, Hendon ward and the total for the borough at the end.

These figures show some increases across the board due to the correlated increases in planning submissions overall. However the percentage rate has not increased by any noticeable amount which remains constant at about 12 - 15% although there are variations in wards at different times and years due to the level of development activity. For example, where a number of major developments come forward in Childs Hill Ward, say The Crown Hotel the number of planning applications and consequently withdrawals may rise. Similarly, in other wards such as Hampstead Garden Suburb where increased development activity in Bishops Avenue, former Neurological Hospital site and a number of telecom mast applications has resulted in an increase in both submissions and withdrawals.

The ODPM has been advising local planning authorities on producing new and relatively tougher validation guidance for planning applications which Barnet is fully adopting. Therefore, total numbers of withdrawals due to inadequate first submissions has increased in recent years and the standard of quality of submissions expected has risen.

There is no reason to say that Childs Hill Ward has a specific issue or withdrawal problem any more than Hampstead Garden Suburb Ward or Hendon Ward. The Planning Service does not apply a validation or withdrawal policy for specific wards. We apply a consistent approach across the borough, irrespective of wards. Variations merely reflect the level of development activity across different wards at a particular time or year.

<b>Numbers of Withdrawn applications</b>						
	<b>Childs Hill</b>	<b>Golders Green</b>	<b>East Barnet</b>	<b>Garden Suburb</b>	<b>Hendon</b>	<b>Total</b>
2001/2	15	7	17	17	21	201
2002/3	24	19	21	74	21	457
2003/4	22	25	22	46	24	421
2004/5	37	22	21	66	39	599
2005/6	41	20	19	45	36	597

**Supplementary Question No. 8**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

Thank you Councillor Melvin Cohen for your reply. The reason I asked for the figures for only Childs Hill Ward was to try and save you and the officers time in searching through every other single ward. It is quite obvious there has been a significant increase in the number of planning applications withdrawn. Councillor Melvin Cohen can you tell me whether, when an application is withdrawn if it is resubmitted does the applicant have to pay another fee.

**Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen**

I don't know the answer to that question but I would have thought the answer is no, but I will write to the Councillor and tell him definitively whether or not a fee is payable on the re-submission after withdrawal.

**Question No. 9**

**Councillor Anne Hutton**

What plans are there for the use of Friary House in Friary Park?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The plan is to offer a lease to suitable bodie(s) to occupy the property with a use which satisfies planning and the general ethos of the location. We will be seeking potential occupants from the council's existing tenants who may wish to move there in the first instance. We continue to discuss the building as a potential home for a number of voluntary and charitable organizations. This is a long term solution.

**Supplementary Question No. 9**

**Councillor Anne Hutton**

Thank you, Councillor Freer, for your reply. I would just like to know if the Council is keeping its options open with regard to possible private use for Friary House.

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

I thought the answer was fairly clear that we're looking for community use.

**Question No. 10**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

What is your opinion concerning the recent Labour Party leaflet that described Barnet's conservative Councillors as "far right extremists"?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

It is a sad reflection of the desperate state of the Labour Party that they have to resort to abuse in this way.

Others have misguidedly accused me of being a socialist, now Conservatives in Barnet under my leadership are described as being far right extremists, so I guess that probably means we have got the political balance correct.

**Supplementary Question No. 10**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Would you not agree that if the term "extremist" had to be used at all in relation to Barnet Council, then it could best be applied to this Council's Opposition group, which very much reflects the left-wing "old Labour", which the electorate rejected again and again.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, I think the reaction from the Members to Councillor Gordon's left actually answer his own question. I think most of them are very proud to be old Labour, they're unreconstituted. Some of them still read the Morning Star in the Council Chamber.

**Question No. 11**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

1) In reply to my question number 5 at the Council Meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2006, you confirmed Barnet runs the Coroner's mortuary at Dolman Close. In respect of this mortuary

- how many staff are employed and at what grade
- are they directly employed by the London Borough of Barnet, if not who does employ them
- if employed by Barnet please provide details of the line management structure.

2) In relation to the Finchley Mortuary how many episodes were recorded of organs being removed from bodies in the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 (to date)

3) in relation to Finchley Mortuary when organs are removed from a body is there an audit trail that will confirm the organ parts are returned to the body and if so when was the last time the Council's auditors inspected the records.

## **Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

1a At present there is one Mortuary Manager who runs the Mortuary on a day to day basis. We are presently in the process of recruiting a Mortuary Assistant post who will be responsible to the Mortuary Manager.

1b The Mortuary Manager is directly employed and managed by the Council

1c Mortuary Manager  
Care & Repair Manager  
Environmental Services Manager  
Environmental Protection Manager  
Head of Planning and Environmental Protection  
Director of Environment

2 The incidence of any organ being removed and sent for further examination during post mortem is very rare and probably only occurs about once a year. It usually only occurs in criminal cases and those in which the cause and time of death can not be established by post mortem alone.

Finchley Mortuary is unable to provide further detail on this point as these documents form part of the Coroner's own records and the information can only be released by Dr Dolman himself.

3 If further examination of an organ is necessary the event is fully documented to ensure an audit trail - please see below:

Under the Coroners Act the Coroners Officers monitor all Coroners cases from start to finish and keep records which are held by the Coroner at the Haringey offices.

When a sudden or suspicious death is admitted to the Mortuary for post mortem the pathologist may decide that a certain organ needs further examination to establish the cause of death. The pathologist will ask the Coroner's permission and if the Coroner agrees the organ is collected, usually by the police, and sent for examination. When it is returned the Mortuary Manager at Finchley returns the organ to the body witnessed by a pathologist who signs confirmation of this fact. (see description of forms 1- 3 below kept by Finchley Mortuary to evidence this organ removal and replacement) The Coroner will also have records of this process which are kept at Haringey. NB - No major organs are ever removed from a body or retained without specific permission from the Coroner and only then to establish a medical cause of death. When this has been established the organ is reunited with the body.

These are the records kept by Finchley Mortuary during removal of an organ for further, specialist examination:

Form 1 Internal record of organ location - contains:

Name of deceased, date of post mortem, name of pathologist (carrying out post mortem), name of Coroners Officer, organ description, reason for retention, Coroners permission granted yes/no and relatives informed yes/no

Form 2 External record of organ location - contains:

Name of deceased, date of collection of organ, address removed to, signature of police officer collecting organ

Form 3 Record of organ return/disposal - contains:

Name of deceased, date of organ return, signature of police officer returning organ, date organ returned to deceased, signature of Mortuary Manager following reuniting of organ with body, witnessed by name of pathologist and signature.

Michael Bradley of the Audit section has confirmed that no audit has been conducted of Finchley Mortuary recently but that any audit should look at any and all high risk aspects of the service or function under review. He reports that the records of organ removal and return kept at Finchley Mortuary appear to be key records and would almost certainly form part of any audit.

**Supplementary Question No. 11**

**Councillor Jack Cohen**

Can I thank Councillor Freer for his detailed answer. This is a very serious matter which has been raised by local residents, two of whom whose sons have died in very suspicious circumstances and who are seeking information from the Coroner and in the course of seeking that information have discovered what they considered to be potential malpractices which could lead to a trade in body parts. Mr Mayor, I have a supplementary question, which I acknowledge is so detailed that I would not expect Councillor Freer to be able to answer that this evening. I have given him a copy of the supplementary and I've given a copy of that to the Committee Section and I would hope that Councillor Freer could respond to that in writing as soon as possible and that answer could be circulated to other Members of the Council. Thank you.

**Question No. 12**

**Councillor Linda McFadyen**

Would the cabinet member agree with me that June is too late to effect an AFZ in Burnt Oak to safeguard residents from nuisance this summer?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Given how cold it has been when I have been out and about in recent weeks, it is hard to predict what the weather might be in June, or when summer might start.

The introduction of new alcohol free zones is on the agenda and they will be introduced when the Council and the Police agree is the right time to do it.

**Supplementary Question No. 12****Councillor Linda McFadyen**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I regret Councillor Salinger's facetious reply to my question when Burnt Oak Safer Neighbourhood Police Team wants an Alcohol Free Zone in Burnt Oak, they say they will enforce it and they want it now, the Burnt Oak Councillors want a zone and even the Conservative Party manifesto says you want to introduce more zones. Will you agree that Burnt Oak can have its Alcohol Free Zone now to combat anti-social behaviour, yes or no.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I have actually asked officers to brief me on exactly the actions that the Council needs to take to introduce more Alcohol Free Zones and as soon as we are in a position to do it we will.

**Question No. 13****Councillor Brian Gordon**

How many members of the Council took the trouble to fill in the long questionnaire under the "Ethical Governments Audit"? Does the questionnaire actually achieve anything?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

30 of the 62 Council Members ( 48.39% ) responded to the Ethical Governance Questionnaire. This is considered to be a very reasonable return and statistically reliable. The questions asked covered Members attitudes to ethical values, their understanding of the Council's ethical framework and their views on standards of conduct and probity within the Council. The Questionnaire was part of a wider Ethical Governance Audit which included a staff questionnaire, citizens panel focus group and desktop review to ascertain whether the Council has in place the various policies and procedures to ensure a sound ethical framework.

The ethical framework forms part of the Local Government Act 2000. The objective is to help ensure high standards of conduct in local authorities and many other public bodies. The purpose of carrying out an ethical governance audit is to enable an assessment to be made of the extent to which there are robust and relevant ethical values of the Council which underpin the day-to-day behaviour of both Members and Officers. The audit verifies the extent to which the constituent parts of the ethical framework ( codes of conduct, good practice, etc. ) are in place but, also, more importantly, the extent to which those who are expected to follow that ethical framework actually do so and are seen to do so. It is equally important for the local authority to install confidence amongst the residents of the borough and beyond in its decision making processes and the administration which supports those processes. In order to do so, there needs to be a well developed ethical framework which is able to promote high standards of conduct and eliminate or largely reduce contraventions.

The framework needs to be an integral part of all of the Council's work. It is not sufficient for the Council simply to have codes of conduct in place. It has to ensure that they are well understood and that both Members and Officers receive the right levels of training and encouragement and support to comply with those codes of conduct.

Any well run organisation should have the necessary ethical framework in place and be prepared to review its effectiveness. Local authorities are no different in that respect and, given the important role that they play in people's lives, it is perhaps even more important that they adhere to the highest principles of ethical governance so that the public have full confidence in the probity of their elected representatives and the officers who implement their decisions. This is an aspect upon which local authorities can expect close scrutiny from Audit Commission corporate assessors.

The Council's Standards Committee considered a report on the outcome of the Ethical Governance Audit at their meeting on 21 March 2006. The view of the Committee was that this was an extremely useful exercise and approved an action plan designed to strengthen Barnet's ethical framework. The report to and decision of the Standards Committee are available on the Council's website.

**Supplementary Question No. 13**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Leader, your long answer is obviously well thought out and highly impressive. I have to say, first of all, however, will you forgive me for being one of the 30 Members who did not respond to the Ethical Governance Audit, simply because I found the style of questioning so abstract, woolly and meaningless, and as my colleague Councillor Coleman is saying, an absolute waste of time.

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I note Councillor Gordon's comments and I'll ask officers to have a look at the questionnaire. It's one that we are required to ask Members to complete and it is then up to them to do it or not.

**Question No. 14**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Does the Environment Cabinet Member agree with the Conservative Shadow Chancellor George Osborne MP that many areas of the green belt are little better than scrubland and should be used to provide social housing, and how will this be applied by the administration in Barnet?

### **Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen**

I refer the Member to Barnet's revised Unitary Development Plan Policy O2, which went through a public inquiry in 2004 and was agreed by the Independent Inspector and Secretary of State, in accordance with Government Green Belt Guidance PPG2. The revised UDP is on the Agenda tonight for adoption. Barnet's local planning policy on Green Belt is therefore UDP Policy O2.

### **Supplementary Question No. 14**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

I'd like to thank Councillor Melvin Cohen but I can't really because he hasn't answered the question so I'll give it another go. Nationally the Conservatives said they're going to review the definition of Green Belt. This is a belt, a plan to allow building on the Green Belt by the Conservative Party nationally. Speaking for the administration does he agree with his national party or doesn't he. A yes or no would do.

### **Answer by Councillor Melvin Cohen**

I'm not going to give you a yes or no answer. So far as I'm aware I'm the Cabinet Member for Planning and not Mr Osborne. Let me read you what he actually said, which you've twisted mischievously, "That is why I want to look with fresh eyes at the development opportunities that exist. We should be reviving our decaying suburbs as effectively as we have rejuvenated our city centres over the last two decades. We should take a fresh look at what we mean by green field site. Too often our current system protects the marginal scrubland because it is green field, whilst at the same time lets precious urban green spaces like gardens get built over because they are labelled brown field." That's your answer, Councillor Rawlings.

### **Question No. 15**

**Councillor Andrew Harper**

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport please update Council on LBB policy on cycling and its place in achieving a cleaner, greener borough?

### **Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The Council has recently submitted its Local Implementation Plan to the London Mayor and with regard to cycling makes the following comments:

Barnet's approach is to maintain:

- Well surfaced, uncomplicated carriageways on main roads which provide a convenient, safe and comfortable ride for confident, experienced cyclists;
- Well maintained carriageways on alternative routes along quieter roads; which although less direct, provide a comfortable, safer alternative for less confident adult cyclists and for children cycling with adults or alone; and
- A number of off road routes that complement the above.



In addition Barnet Council will work with cycle groups to identify where new cycle facilities are required, focussing particularly on:

- school journeys;
- providing secure cycle parking at stations;
- around town centres; and
- other potential cycle trip generators.

Before implementing improvements for cyclists on the main road network, the Council will be undertaking corridor studies to fully understand the needs of all road users and to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between the sometimes conflicting needs of all road users.

**Supplementary Question No. 15**

**Councillor Andrew Harper**

Thank you Mr Mayor, I'm grateful to the Cabinet Member for his detailed response to my question. I accept, of course, the need for a balance between the needs of all road users but I would ask the Cabinet Member if he would agree with me that cycling for adults and children can also make a contribution to a healthier Barnet, which I believe is what we want and which this Administration is also working towards, and that is another reason why it's worth this Council doing more to promote cycling and, perhaps, following the excellent example set by our national party leader, Mr David Cameron.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I certainly do agree with my Conservative colleague on the issue about a healthier Barnet. At the great risk of my comments getting back to the Conservative Party Leader, and I look at Councillor Silverstone who will back me up upon this, he will also know that I am quite a keen cyclist and cycle round Hendon. I used to cycle to work as well and that is where I identified the problems in Brent Street which I worked upon with Councillor Braun and Councillor Finn. Where we identify problems for cyclists we improve them, so I very much agree with what you have said and I very much agree with the priority of cycling. I am not only pleased that the new Leader of the Conservative Party cycles but also that he's followed our green agenda here in Barnet.

**Question No. 16**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

What criteria or methodology is used by the Council for tracing work done by undertakers ie tarmac areas on utility hazard boxes or around drains surface water areas? Is a record kept of each undertaker when any jobs are done (date) so as to recall a return to the area to complete the job properly?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The activities of the utility companies work on the public highway are generally governed by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. In accordance with the Act, Highway Authority's have a duty to maintain a street works register of this work and all utility companies are required to send a notice of intention to carry out work on the public highway.

This notice is sent electronically and the type of notice will vary according to type of work and classification of the street. The notice must state the commencement date and the duration. This register effectively provides a record of all utility activity. Additionally, the Act gives Highway Authorities the power to inspect street works by utilities at three stages of a works history; whilst work is in progress; within six months following interim or permanent reinstatement and within three months preceding the end of the guarantee period. If an inspection fails, a utility company has to carry out a repair within a set time depending on the potential danger of the defect. A charge for inspecting 10% of works in each of the three categories (i.e. 30% overall) can be made. Additional inspections are carried out and further defect notices issued until such time that the defect is resolved to the Council's satisfaction.

Also, all works in Barnet are inspected upon completion and any works that are found to be overrunning the notice period, are issued with a notice under section 74 of the act that allows for a charge to be levied on the utility company for each day that they overrun.

**Supplementary Question No. 16**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

I want to know why the letter sent to me said something different. The letter said "Although my officer has checked the statutory undertakers' information regarding the standing of this apparatus it has not been possible to ascertain the appropriate undertaker at this juncture. As such I have had no other alternative than to make safe the present road by tarmacing over the damaged utility box" and this is why this is different to the answer given by the Cabinet Member and I want to know why.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I have to say I share some of the Councillor's annoyance when these kind of incidents arise. Perhaps if she'd like to forward me the letter I can investigate it properly and come back and give a proper answer.

**Question No. 17**

**Councillor Wendy Prentice**

Could the Cabinet member for Environment and Transport please give me an update on the installation of CCTV in Mill Hill and High Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The CCTV cameras in High Barnet have been operational for eight months and are monitored on a 24-hour basis from the Council's CCTV Control Room. In that time it has been used in 300 incidents resulting in 99 arrests at the scene.

The CCTV cameras in Mill Hill are currently being installed. In terms of progress to date: All poles have been installed and electricity supplies have been installed into each of the poles. BT are currently installing Fibre Optic cabling to link the poles to the Control Room and on completion of this work the cameras will be installed. It is anticipated that the cameras will go live late April, early May 2006

**Question No. 18**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Whilst welcoming the millions of pounds from the Labour Government for the rebuilding of the Aerodrome bridges, how is the Council going to ensure that other infrastructure needed as a result of the redevelopment of the former RAF East Camp and other developments in Colindale will be met before and not after the massive developments planned for the area?

**Answer by Councillor Anthony Finn**

I'll remind you that the Government, Labour or otherwise, does not have any money, as it comes from the taxpayer not some businessman who wants a peerage.

In addition to the £7 million ODPM grant negotiated and secured by Barnet Council, over £22 million of Section 106 planning contributions towards infrastructure have so far been secured through the planning permissions at Beaufort Park and Grahame Park which will see the investment on a phased basis as housing developments comes on stream. New community, health, educational, transport and other infrastructure are already programmed and timed so that both existing residents and the growing population will benefit as Colindale is regenerated. In respect of transport infrastructure in the Colindale area, there are a wide range of highways works (including the bridges), appropriate parking controls, and pedestrian and public transport improvements that have been secured as planning obligations arising from the Choices and Beaufort Park planning applications. The triggers for these works / contributions will result in phased implementation, co-ordinated where possible, and largely reflecting the roll-out of development.

Phase 2 of the Colindale Development Framework will seek to establish the next wave of necessary infrastructure as other sites at the Hospital, tube station and Barnet College come forward.

**Supplementary Question No. 18****Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Thank you for my reply. My supplementary is on the phasing of infrastructure. Part of the Grahame Park open space is being built on in phase 1 of the regeneration but the replacement open space is not being made available until the very end of the regeneration. Will the Cabinet Member guarantee that local people will actually see the replacement open space and the rest of the promised infrastructure by the end of the regeneration.

**Answer by Councillor Anthony Finn**

I guarantee that we will keep to what we have promised, Councillor Zubairi. We guarantee that we will have an improved open space. We guarantee that there will be regeneration on Grahame Park as there will be regeneration on other parts of the borough. So be assured that we will carry out what we have promised.

**Question No. 19****Councillor Andrew Harper**

Please would the Cabinet Member for Resources outline the ratio of employees working in education and the rest of Barnet's payroll, who are classed as high earners (over £50,000 a year)?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

There are 229 employees who earn above £50,000 of which 168 employees (73%) are employed in Education and Schools

**Supplementary Question No. 19****Councillor Andrew Harper**

Thank you, Mr Mayor. I'm grateful to the Deputy Leader for his answer. Given the excellent educational results achieved by a growing number of schools in this borough in recent years and the fact that OFSTED reports consistently highlight the importance of effective senior management in our schools, would the Cabinet Member agree with me that this underlines the need to ensure the proper remuneration of our head teachers so that we can be sure to retain them working in this borough.

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

I do agree, in fact it is always disappointing that whenever we see data on our workforce that some members of the opposition seek to criticise that we have highly paid staff in this borough, particularly since nearly three quarters of them actually work in education. If we are to attract and retain the very best leadership in our schools that are so crucial to improving educational attainment then we actually have to pay the best salaries as well. So I do agree with you and this Administration will continue to pay the best to recruit and retain the best head teachers.

**Question No. 20****Councillor Colin Rogers**

Current Council plans for East Finchley have demolished The Herbert Wilmot Centre, the library has been downgraded, Stanley Rd Field is under threat, Martin Schools will be demolished and rebuilt (and their playing field reduced in size) and the Martin Schools allotments are under threat. This is East Finchley's bleak future. Apart from these smash and grab attacks on East Finchley, what plans does this Council have for ameliorating the ward's sorry plight - other than repaving the High Road again?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I take it from Cllr Rogers question that he would like the council to:-

- 1) Have retained The Herbert Wilmott Centre, which had long outlived its expected life, (from when it was constructed) and would have left the small numbers of children who still used the centre regularly playing in a potentially dangerous environment.
- 2) Leave the Stanley Road 'playing fields' to decay still further. They have been rented to a community trust who failed to maintain them and have been unusable for years.

I take it he would also do nothing to improve the facilities at Martin school, and would leave the playing fields in the same condition that they are now.

Can I also remind him that the previous Labour Liberal administration had secretly planned the destruction of the old library and the construction of a large Waitrose store (with a library on top) which would have involved the destruction of a number of small shops between Baronsmere Road and the Station.

The real threat to East Finchley would come from the re-election of a Labour/Liberal Council

**Supplementary Question No. 20****Councillor Colin Rogers**

I'm surprised Councillor Salinger didn't have a good word to say about his administration in East Finchley, but then I suppose nobody in East Finchley has a good word to say about his administration. Can Councillor Salinger name five things, alright can he name one thing, that the Tory Council is doing to support a successful suburb in East Finchley, other than selling off the playgrounds of course.

### **Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Mr Mayor, the three strands policy alone goes a long way towards protecting large parts of East Finchley as it does the rest of the borough and if we have done one thing for East Finchley more than anything else it was to make sure that it was not saddled with a great big Waitrose that would have destroyed all those shops between Baronsmere Road and the station, and the fact that East Finchley is still a very attractive place in which to live and that people still flock to live there in the same way as indeed my parents did when they moved there over 50 years ago is testament to the work that is done in that part of the borough.

### **Question No. 21**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

Would the Cabinet member for Resources care to comment on the state of the library service? In particular, how much money is spent on materials in proportion to other costs?

### **Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Materials expenditure as a percentage of Gross service Expenditure:

Authority	2004-2005 Actuals	2005-2006 estimates
Barnet	12.6%	12.9%
Bromley	12.2%	11.9%
Enfield	9.3%	8.8%
Sutton	12.1%	10.9%

As can be seen, we are increasing the % of our budget actually spent on materials. The other main costs are Employees and "support services costs" which covers recharges from other departments and central costs outside the department. Barnet continues to spend well above the norm on support costs.

Authority	Employees	Premises	Support Services costs
Barnet	£12,221	£1982	£5505
Bromley	£13,529	£2140	£1223
Enfield	£13,426	£3173	£1088
Hounslow	£15,166	£2749	£1473
Sutton	£12,590	£2541	£4153

Our strategy is to spend money on the front line not on back –office admin. We inherited a skewed approach to spending on Libraries, based on an odd belief that more spending equalled a better service. This is patently untrue and the previous administration failed to tackle endemic inefficiency.

**Supplementary Question No. 21****Councillor Olwen Evans**

It is good to see that you have increased the amount spent on materials such as books but I am worried that we spend a disproportionate amount on support services in comparison to other boroughs. Is this spending wise?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

I think Councillor Evans has got it spot on. No, spending on support services at the expense of the front line is not wise and what we inherited was actually a deeply inefficient service, where money was simply thrown at a service without actually seeing whether it was being efficiently spent. Our strategy is to strip out the waste and the bureaucracy at the back office of libraries so that we can pump money back into the front line by spending things on books and other media.

**Question No. 22****Councillor Alison Moore**

The Waste Management best value review sets out that “lowering costs indicates that at least one element of service provision will be affected – there is a tension between different factors in the value for money equation (quality, productivity, cost, user satisfaction and effectiveness”. Which of these elements does the Council believe would be affected and how?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The objective of the Waste Management Best Value Review was to review current waste management arrangements and to establish a strategy for going forward. The review was deliberately broad covering a range of waste management services. Research carried out as part of the review found in general that authorities with lower costs had lower satisfaction, and those with higher costs had higher satisfaction.

The first part of the strategy work has been completed, with the agreement of the Waste Strategy at the meeting of the Cabinet on 3 April 2006. The Waste Strategy considers the long-term framework for waste in Barnet. Its timeframe is 2006 to 2020, and it deals with overall strategic issues. The operational action plan that will cover individual materials, collection methodologies, specific targets and tonnages will be developed in the future. This work will also consider the different factors in the value for money equation, and the balance between them.

I know that you want some quote so you can scaremonger in the local elections but that simply will not happen. This administration has established an unprecedented level of trust with our residents in our sensible and managed approach to compulsory recycling. We will now do the same with waste management.

**Supplementary Question No. 22****Councillor Alison Moore**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Offord, the Waste Management Review leaves open the option of privatising the refuse collection service. I can't see any benefits to privatising it but can the Cabinet Member explain what he believes would be the benefits of privatising the collection of bins.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The document that you refer to is a very broad document, as she knows, and has been explained to her several times. It's one of three options. I suggest that you go away and read the document properly because judging by the questions you put down you really have not done that - have you? Now I wish I could take the opportunity that Councillor Cohen did and read out the speech where we could demonstrate where certain items have been twisted by certain members of the opposition. I would like that luxury but unfortunately I don't have the time available to me. I suggest she goes away and does it in private.

**Question No. 23****Councillor Maureen Braun**

Would the Cabinet member for Resources care to comment on how much this Borough spends, in proportion to its population, on Library facilities compared to other London Boroughs?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Net expenditure per 1000 population excluding Capital Charges

Authority	2004-2005 Actuals	2005-2006 estimates
Barnet	£22,762	£20,454
Bromley	£19,717	£20,035
Enfield	£21,497	£21,840
Hounslow	£21,300	£20,412
Sutton	£22,757	£22,959

We have now brought Barnet into line with similar Boroughs, but it must be remembered that we continue to have more libraries per head of population.

**Supplementary Question No. 23****Councillor Maureen Braun**

Councillor Freer, if I understand your answer correctly, you've reduced the spend per thousand of population while increasing the amount spent on materials, could you explain please how you've managed that.



### **Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Actually going back to actually stripping out the administration, one of the problems that we inherited was layer after layer of area managers and other management posts: by stripping that out we can start to turn the service around. The true test of efficiency is actually how the money is spent. Beacon status, I'm quite happy to explain, a few inspectors wandering around with a clipboard saying oh isn't this lovely and granting a Beacon status is not actually a true test of an efficient service, it's actually how the money is spent, and I'm sorry, Mr Mayor, I'm sorry that Councillor Palmer is going to bleat on again about Beacon status but she really ought to learn actually how beacons are awarded and it's not a test of efficiency. The actual true test is if you look on the CIPFA data the service we inherited was deeply inefficient. If you actually look at the CIPFA report, the CIPFA report is actually saying that money needs to be spent on electronic means of media not on expensive hardbacks and that is our strategy.

### **Question No 24**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

How many people are still waiting for adaptations to their homes, when are they likely to get these, and what is the timetable for finishing this work for those still waiting?

### **Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The numbers of people waiting for adaptations varies depending on whether they are tenants of Barnet Homes or have applied for disabled facilities grant funding. Equally the length of time anyone has to wait for adaptations varies depending on the nature of the adaptation. Adaptations are carried out as quickly as resources will allow.

### **Supplementary Question No. 24**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

I'm just surprised that this Cabinet Member is so complacent about adaptations but those of us who actually do the casework will know that there are hundreds of Barnet residents still waiting for adaptations to their homes and their life is being made miserable because they don't have ground floor toilet. Only yesterday I met a lady whose husband is in the hospital now and she was so distressed because she has been waiting, his case has been highlighted in the press, has been waiting for months and still doesn't know when they'll get ground floor toilet. This afternoon I had a call from another resident in West Hendon about his father and I was so moved by what he told me, that I immediately tried to send an e-mail to social services and, guess what, I sent it to six/seven people and it bounced back, the recipient can't take the e-mail. You know, had they all been fired and they'd been fired so quickly that their names have not even been removed from the global address list and when I rang somebody there the girl said well I'm new and I don't know, so who is actually doing this adaptations work? Do you think that it's now time that you allocated some money so that some of these people can have adaptation done to their house? All they're asking, you know, they're not asking for much, they're asking just for a toilet and a shower, I mean they're not asking for a five star hotel accommodation. Basic human necessity, and they don't have that. Councillor Bulmer, you're laughing, well I'm not laughing you know.

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

Well if Councillor Sodha cares so much about that why did she not manage to persuade her own group to allocate the millions of extra pounds she wants in their budget? The reality is we are dealing with adaptations and the huge increase in the number of people, disabled people, who are being allocated housing and we are dealing with them as fast as resources allow but if she wishes to cut other budgets to fund these then perhaps she will tell us which they are.

**Question No. 25**

**Councillor Helena Hart**

Please could the Cabinet member for Resources outline how much Barnet's Library Service spends on the average book?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The average cost per book for this indicator is simply a division of the total budget spent on books divided by the number of books purchased. It does not take account of procurement arrangements or contract terms. Barnet Libraries are affiliated to the Central Buying Consortium Library Book contract through the London Supplies group; achieving discounted terms which have been described as "at the cutting edge" of the market.

Barnet Libraries have been working actively with other library authorities to drive forward efficiencies in procurement in line with the recommendations of the PKF report "Public Libraries: Efficiency and Stock Supply Chain Review"

Authority	2003- 2004 Actuals	2004-2005 Actuals
Barnet	£10.31	£6.23
Bromley	£7.73	£9.27
Enfield	£7.73	£7.60
Hounslow	£8.53	£8.71
Sutton	£9.59	£6.95

The significant reduction in the average cost per book is due to several factors;

The high price of hardcopy Reference texts is a major factor in the overall average cost. In addition, the transition to online reference services, available at all libraries and 24/7 by customers with a library ticket has also reduced the number and range of hardcopy Reference books purchased but increased access considerably.

Stock planning at every library has been targeted to ensure a higher proportion of paperback titles are purchased which are the preferred medium of most modern readers and are more cost-effective.

The re-stocking of Hendon library in this particular year involved the purchase of a large number of 'backstock' paperback titles which are comparatively inexpensive. Barnet currently sits 17<sup>th</sup> out of 33 London Boroughs in the average cost per book league table. The norm will tend at current values to £7.50 approx which allows for a balance of paperback to hardback, popular titles with some more academic texts.

**Question No. 26**

**Councillor Anne Hutton**

Is it envisaged that plans for Friary House will be for community use long-term, and not just community use to get the administration through the election?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

See answer to question number 9.

**Question No. 27**

**Councillor Brian Gordon**

Would the Cabinet Member for Environment not agree with the statement made at last Council that a grotty area contributes to a feeling of neglect in a neighbourhood? Does he not feel this would logically extend to the state of the roads and pavements?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I would agree with the statement and the decision of the Liberal and Labour Groups to put an end to the road and pavements resurfacing and relaying programmes is an indication of how they do not want to improve Barnet but let it fall back to the disgrace it became under their administration.

**Question No. 28**

**Councillor Linda McFadyen**

The London Borough of Barnet won a Local Government Chronicle Award in the Public/Private Partnership category for the modernisation of care facilities for older adults. Given that the Cabinet Member for Community Services has sought to take the credit for the award, perhaps she could explain why Conservative councillors voted against this very programme to modernise care homes when the decision was taken at Council on 3 June 1999? When is she going to give credit where credit is due to Councillor Phil Yeoman - the Cabinet Member who actually got this decision through in the face of Tory opposition?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The award was for the implementation and management of the reprovision programme over the past four years. The credit is due to the staff in Adult social services for their work in ensuring the partnership with Barnet Community Homes has worked effectively and brought about real improvements in care for vulnerable older people in Barnet.

**Question No. 29****Councillor Terry Burton**

Does the Leader of the Council agree with me that Barnet FC is a great team, a vital part of the Borough of Barnet, and that it is in this Borough's interests that they both prosper and remain within the Borough?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I have consistently made clear that I want to see a successful football club in Barnet playing a full part in our local community.

In the year that I have been Leader I believe that I have tried to engage the Club in discussions to secure its future but sadly those efforts have been rejected by the club. For 10 years they have argued that they want to move from Underhill. Members should reflect on the fact that the club have refused to even come to the table to discuss the possible use of Montrose playing fields as a site for a new stadium.

**Question No. 30****Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Does the Cabinet Member for Housing agree with the Conservative Leader of the Opposition David Cameron MP that it is important to ignore 'nimbyism' when seeking to increase the provision of social housing?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The Three Strands Approach adopted by the Council ensures that new housing development will be managed in a way that protects and enhances those aspects which people most value about the character of Barnet. This approach is enshrined in the emerging UDP and a detailed Supplementary Planning Document providing detailed guidelines for new affordable housing, including social housing development, will back this up. Any individual schemes coming forward will be considered by the Planning and Environment Committee within the framework set by these policies.

**Question No. 31****Councillor Terry Burton**

I am aware of the following improvements made to Oakhill Park in East Barnet:

-Oakhill Park is one of the 16 Premier Parks in the Borough and has been entered for the national Green Flag Award as a Corporate target.

-The park has a five year management plan (as part of the requirements for Green Flag award submission) and this was implemented in full consultation with the East Barnet Residents Association, and where expenditure is targeted to specific tasks and projects over that period.

-The park is staffed by a dedicated Park Keeper who prioritises work to ornamental features such as rose beds, the rockery, paths and litter, as well as being the high profile public interface, recognisable by the issue of Corporate clothing.

-All the paths within the park have been cut back and edged to present a clean profile.

-The herbage alongside the Pymmes Brook is programmed to be cut once per year. This is due to the value of the stream corridor for nature conservation. Work will also be carried out

to remove seedling trees and shrubs where they impede the flow of water/and or the bank safety.

-The rodent situation has been identified and the councils cleansing section is dealing with any baiting required, but the situation of rodents alongside its natural home is exacerbated by feeding and fast food litter, so this is one of the Park Keeper and Cleansing sections priorities to keep bins emptied as often as possible.

-Tree work within the park has been programmed by the Tree Section and healthy and safety work has been targeted, with dead wood, canopy work and survey work within Oakhill Park Woods Local Nature Reserve as a priority, as well as new trees planted to give spring flower and colour.

-The Basket ball court was completely refurbished last year, with grants obtained by the 'Friends of Oakhill Park' and one of the Tennis Courts is programmed for refurbishment this year.

-Tarmac surfacing was carried out at the park include the widening of the entrance at Parkside and the Cat Hill/Rushdene Avenue area. Further footpath surfacing is identified for the 2006/07 financial year.

-New entrance fencing and bollards was installed at the main entrance at Parkside this year.

-New monohinge safety gates were installed at the playground, to comply with DDA requirements.

-Rose beds and shrub beds within the bowling green area were replanting last year, with the Bowling Club accepting responsibility for the maintenance of these features.

-New corporate style signage is on order and will be installed shortly -Ground Maintenance buildings have been renovated to improve aesthetics.

New fencing was installed around the bowling club and rear of the Cafe, to prevent the exterior of these buildings for being constantly graffitied.

-Fencing repairs are planned for this year to the fencing damaged by burnt out cars around the bowling green perimeter.

-The main pavilion was completely refurbished internally last year, painted in conjunction with the 'Princes Trust'.

-The Park Keeper targets the 'painting out' of graffiti as soon as it occurs.

-Security bollards have been installed at prominent points around the park to prevent 'joy riders' from burning out cars, especially the Daneland area.

-Greenspaces have worked with the London Wildlife Trust to prevent the same situation of cars being burnt out in the woods.

-A new hand rail is being installed at the Brookside flight of steps, for public safety.

-Orders have been raised and work currently in progress includes the Cafe and main Sports pavilion, to include roofing, veranda work, exterior lighting and we are working with the Charity 'First Step Trust' to paint the outside of the sports pavilion.

-The external WC's are now locked, due to the constant vandalism at this site, however the Park keeper will always allow access to these facilities whilst on duty. This locking up is for a trial period to try and deter the vandalism. We are conscious of the inconvenience and will re open them as soon as possible. This is one of the subjects we raise with Police liaison meetings.

-Poop scoop and litter bins are emptied at least once per week, but this situation is currently being reviewed with a more high profile service delivery being implemented by the council's cleansing section.

-A new style of Premier Park litter bin is being installed in 2008.

-This entire programme is another success story of this administration and is typical I'm sure for many parks and green spaces throughout our borough.

-Additionally we should thank our officers and staff on a job well done.

May I ask the Cabinet Member if he could outline any achievements I have missed, the plans for the future, and the money spent in the past year on this park and all parks across the Borough.

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I think that covers most of the issues that this administration has produced for the park. But the Member could mention the predicted investment in our parks and greenspaces across the whole of the borough, which is in the order of £4.61 million, and the spend for Oakhill Park of £157,407.

**Question No. 32**

**Councillor Agnes Slocombe**

How many black boys from African and Caribbean cultures have been excluded from primary and secondary schools in the last year and how many have been re-integrated in mainstream school?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

I should like to thank the Councillor for giving me an opportunity to point out that the number of permanent exclusions fell to only 5 in the Spring 2006 term. In the last 12 months 13 Black and Black Caribbean pupils have been excluded from school. 4 subsequently became 16 and left schooling. 3 have been reintegrated into mainstream schools and 1 has been placed by Brent. The others are attending alternative provision such as the Pavilion Pupil referral unit. When I visited the Pavilion a few weeks ago I was impressed by the dedication of the staff and their commitment to their pupils.

**Question No. 33**

**Councillor Terry Burton**

Mr Mayor, I see in the 2006/7 Budget that Asylum Seekers entering this borough during 2005/06 had an estimated cost to our tax payer of £157,800 to aid them. Thankfully, due to new Government legislation for 2006/07 there will be no cost to our taxpayers anymore, as apparently the Government will be paying all costs directly. What concerns me and I'm sure our tax payers is what percentage of this £157,800 from 2005/06 will be reimbursed to this council by the government and if so when?

**Answer by Councillor Christopher Harris**

We have applied for a special circumstances grant of £156,347 for 2005/6 to close this funding gap.

Our special circumstances bids for 2003/4 and 2004/5 were successful so we are optimistic. We await a government decision which is often not forthcoming until much later in the year. It would obviously be nice if we could ask for interest on the money but unfortunately I don't think this is part of the criteria we can work to.

**Question No. 34**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Of which is the Cabinet Member more proud: cutting funding for the Flightways Resource Centre in Grahame Park or cutting funding for the sheltered workshops for blind people?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

I am very proud of the massive improvements we have made to Adult social services over the past four years which mean that the most vulnerable people in Barnet now receive a significantly better service than they did when Cllr Zubairi's group ran the council.

**Question No. 35**

**Councillor Brian Coleman**

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment please comment on the state of the recycling service in Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Barnet has a comprehensive range of recycling services, through which items are collected for recycling and reuse. In 2005/06 Barnet had a statutory target of recycling 27% of all household waste, and a local public service agreement to recycle 30% of household waste. The recycling and refuse figures are still being collated for the full year, however it is anticipated that the recycling rate will be at the upper end of these levels.

**Compulsory Recycling**

Monitoring of the scheme continues, and shows that participation levels in the black box scheme are around 80%. This is a good level and continued monitoring improves this.

For those residents who continue not to recycle, letters and visits are made by our Recycling Assistants, and notices issued. During 2005/06 it was only necessary to issue one Section 46 notice (the first formal step towards prosecution), and this household started to recycle shortly afterwards.

**Kerbside recycling performance**

Over 25% more tonnage was collected on the black box scheme in 2005/06 than in 2004/05. The tonnage collected per household compares very favourably with other councils both within and outside London.

#### Green Garden and Kitchen Waste service

The service is now available to all residents in Barnet who have gardens, and approximately 55% of households have taken this offer up. Kitchen waste excluding meat bones was added into the collection service in October 2005. All the organic waste is taken to an in-vessel composting facility in Edmonton.

#### Civic Amenity & Recycling Centre

The site now accepts 39 different materials for recycling or reuse. The latest materials added are computer discs, CDs, videos and audio tapes which are collected for recycling, and spectacles which are collected for reuse and given to Vision Aid Overseas.

#### Publicity

This is a key area of work as it generates interest and participation in the services provided. Recent publicity has included a wrap around in The Times on 23 February, and a letter from myself that was delivered as part of the block cleanse programme, "tonnometers" on the back of ECT vehicles, and adverts around the borough ("Valentines" and "Let's recycle more").

#### Schools Work

The Schools Recycling Challenge continues to be rolled out to all primary schools. So far 35 schools have completed the challenge, and the challenge is underway in 7 other schools.

#### Office Recycling

A new office recycling service for the four main sites including the Hendon Town Hall complex started in March. White paper, mixed paper, cans, plastic cups and cardboard are now collected for recycling. A similar service will be rolled out to the smaller sites including the libraries later this year.

In addition to winning the Letsrecycle.com national award for Best Local Authority Initiative in 2005, the council's recycling schemes were highly commended in the Local Government Chronicle Awards on 13 March.

#### **Question No. 36**

**Councillor Colin Rogers**

Why is there no mention of Councillors of any description on LBB's website home page, and what is the mean number of clicks taken for our site's first time users to locate their ward councillor?

#### **Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

There are full details of every Councillor on the website (<http://committeepapers.barnet.gov.uk/democracy/council/listcouncillorname>) ; 2



**Question No. 37****Councillor Terry Burton**

Mr Mayor, I see yet again in the Revenue Budget for 2006 -2007 That Asylum Seekers (Unaccompanied Children) had a current estimate for 2005/06 of costing this council £198,230 to help and aid these unaccompanied children. I am further shocked to see that this expense to the council is expected to rise in 2006/07 to over £368.020. Can we please have an idea of when we may have a final actual figure on the cost for 2005/06 as well as 2006/07 and again I must ask, what percentage of these vast amounts of taxpayers money can we expect to be reimbursed to this council and if so when?

**Answer by Councillor Christopher Harris**

This relates not to the costs associated with 'looked after' unaccompanied asylum seeking children but to those aged 18+ who have now left our care but with respect to whom we have ongoing responsibilities under the Leaving Care Act.

The infamous Hillingdon ruling increased the cost to Barnet.

Final figures will be available when the Council's final financial 'out turn' for 2005/2006 is available

This expenditure is not reimbursed to the Council since the government have set a threshold of 40 which must be exceeded before any grant support becomes available Barnet's numbers are below this threshold.

**Question No. 38****Councillor Alison Moore**

Why is there no mention of moving towards recycling plastics and cardboard in the Waste Management Best Value Review or Waste Strategy?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The objective of the Waste Management Best Value Review was to review current waste management arrangements and to establish a strategy for going forward. The review was broad covering a range of waste management services, and did not consider specific materials.

This question is a little surprising as it was the Liberal / Labour administration that signed a contract which failed to include plastics and cardboard collection.

**Question No. 39****Councillor Brian Coleman**

Please would the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport tell me how many Councillors were consulted on the recent proposals for Partingdale Lane and how many responded?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

Elected Members in Mill Hill, Totteridge, Woodhouse and West Finchley were sent a consultation letter on the proposals. Only one councillor response was received as part of the consultation process.

**Question No. 40**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

How are the existing residents of West Hendon going to benefit from any planning gain (section 106) from the estate regeneration, and when will the residents be consulted on this?

**Answer by Councillor Anthony Finn**

The regeneration of the West Hendon estate will bring significant community, economic and environmental benefits to both the people and area West Hendon. In addition to the physical transformation of the area centred around the creation of a new urban quarter linking the Broadway and the Welsh Harp, the Section 106 agreement has secured 680 new affordable housing units; £6.35 million for improvements to local educational facilities including the re-provision of Lakeview Children and Family Centre; £1.39 million towards public transport and pedestrian improvements; a £1 million training and employment package targeted at local need; a new community and health centre, youth sailing base and sports pitch and £648,000 towards environmental improvements in and around the Welsh Harp. Critically the scheme also secures the part widening of the A5 with extensive improvements to pedestrian crossing facilities and highway junctions. Both the Mayor of London and the Government Office for London have supported the scheme whilst the Housing Corporation has committed significant housing grant to the delivery of affordable housing and improved decent homes.

The project will be delivered in a series of phases over a number of years and the planning benefits outlined will come forward to ensure that the needs of the community are fully met. Residents will be consulted comprehensively during the detailed planning stages of the project and will be given every opportunity to engage in and influence the regeneration of their changing area and community.

Cabinet last week approved to enter into a Principle Development Agreement, which sets out an ambitious programme to work with development partners and realise the benefits of the regeneration project for the people of West Hendon.

**Question No. 41**

**Councillor Leslie Sussman**

By how much has spending on temporary accommodation been reduced since 2002?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

The measures we have taken both to control the numbers of people needing temporary accommodation and to implement more cost effective ways of acquiring temporary accommodation means that we have succeeded in reducing expenditure by 81 % from £3.6m in 2002/03 to a projected out-turn of only £687k in 2005/06.

**Question No. 42**

**Councillor Anita Campbell**

Why is the administration only giving the Suzi Earnshaw Theatre School a one year lease for the Bull Theatre, and yet pretending that the building has been saved for community use?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The site was previously marketed with community use encouraged. This process identified a number of planning issues over the use of the site by groups other than theatre groups.

The current position is that we are negotiating the details of a lease for SETS to occupy the building to July 2007, whilst a detailed planning brief is undertaken to confirm the uses of the site. The process of the planning brief will take the views of the community into account.

There may be other bodies who could satisfy the resulting planning brief and so a fair and open process for determining who should be given the opportunity for occupation on a longer term will result. We cannot for reasons of probity extend a long lease to an individual body without going through this process. In addition we cannot offer a long lease to any organization until the uses such organizations propose are permitted uses. I am delighted SETS is using the site successfully but it would be improper for me to short circuit due process. Suzi Earnshaw is aware of the reasons why this approach is being taken.

**Question No. 43**

**Councillor Olwen Evans**

With the Government closing so many Post Offices, does the Cabinet Member for Resources have any plans to provide additional facilities for Residents to pay bills issued by the Council?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

In light of this Government's headlong rush to close Post Offices (which Labour MPs failed to oppose in Parliament), I am conscious that many residents may find it difficult to pay bills issued by the Council. However I am confident that the new Conservative Administration after May 4<sup>th</sup> will be able to offer a significant increase in payment options. The council's banking contract is being re-tendered this year, with the new contract expected to operate from 1 April 2007. The current intention is to bring together all existing banking and

merchant services contracts into a single contract, or at least to offer it on that basis in order to test the market on whether it would be practical and more cost effective to organise in this way. Merchant services include payment by dr/cr card over the website and the telephone payments system.

At the same time it is our intention to include other payment methods in the contract, such as paypoint or some similar service. Such services have a wide availability e.g. paypoint has 10 outlets in High Barnet alone and 6 in the NW4 postcode. We are committed to modernising and widening access even if the service isn't provided from a Council building .

**Question No. 44**

**Councillor Anne Hutton**

What plans are there to 'manage' car usage within Friary Park?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The management of car usage within the park is designed to remove the risk of pedestrian and vehicle accident. At present the only vehicular access permitted within the park is for its direct maintenance, for 3 permits for disabled members of the bowls club and deliveries to the park café limited to 20 minutes waiting time.

**Question No. 45**

**Councillor Eva Greenspan**

What progress is being made with the modernisation of facilities for people with learning disabilities in Barnet?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

Work began on site in September 2005 in the first phase of our partnership with Notting Hill Housing Trust which will see £24 million invested in transforming the council's services for people with learning disabilities. Listed below is the progress being made on each of the sites.

The new enlarged Rosa Morison centre, including a hydrotherapy facility, is scheduled for completion by the end of September 2006.

The new Flower Lane is scheduled for completion by the end of September 2006. Flower Lane will provide a centre of excellence for people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders delivering a multi disciplinary approach across health and social care and will be accredited with the National Autistic Society.

The new integrated replacement service for Broadfields is planned for completion by early August 2007.

At Grendon Lodge site a new 6-place care home is being constructed and completion scheduled for early October 2006 and will in part replace the existing Oaktrees Care Home.

The new Valley Way is making significant progress and completion is scheduled for early September 2006. This will deliver increased respite capacity (from 4 to 6 places) and again will be accredited with the National Autistic Society.

A new 6-place care home will also be constructed on the playground site adjacent to the existing Broadfields Resource Centre and the completion date is scheduled for early April 2007.

A new 10-place supported living scheme at Norfolk Close was completed and fully commissioned in early September 2005.

A new 9-place supported living scheme at Pricklers Hill that will replace New Fieldways residential care home is scheduled for completion in early October 2006.

A new 9-place supported living scheme at Grendon Lodge to assist in the reprovision of Oaktrees residential care home and flats is scheduled for completion in early October 2006. This scheme will also facilitate 4 service users moving from NHS campus provision at Harperbury into community accommodation.

**Question No. 46**

**Councillor Linda McFadyen**

When the Council Leader spoke to a local Burnt Oak police officer about the setting up of an AFZ in Burnt Oak the council leader gave his support provided it could be policed and would not be ignored and that he was given assurances that this was the case. Will the council leader therefore join me and support my request that the Cabinet Member urgently progresses the process of implementing an AFZ in Burnt Oak?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

I refer Cllr McFadyen to the answer given to Q 12.

**Question No. 47**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

When will South Friern library be closing, for how long, and what alternative library provision will be provided during the closure?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

It is not possible to give an exact date as legal services are still processing the documents of sale. We are still hoping for a summer start to the building of the new library. In the interim between the closure of the old and the reopening of the new we will be providing a mobile library service.

**Question No. 48**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

Why is the Council so complacent about taking action against anti-social behaviour on the Grahame Park estate?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The Council is not complacent about tackling anti social behaviour on Grahame Park or anywhere else in the Borough.

**Question No. 49**

**Councillor Colin Rogers**

Can you give an assurance that East Finchley Library will be able to continue to meet the Disability Discrimination Act?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

I am surprised that any East Finchley Councillor raises this question as the previous administration wished to relocate the library. The ground floor is accessible. The top and bottom shelves can cause difficulty. However as they are listed we are restricted in what we can do. As part of our strategy of refreshing the stock we are going to concentrate books as far as possible on the other shelves.

**Question No. 50**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

Does the Cabinet Member support the proposal contained within the Waste Management best value review for the Council to install 'spy' microchips in residents' bins to keep tabs on missed bins and over-heavy bins?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

I am sure you have not read the report so I will advise you what it says. The recommendation contained in the report is to "re-evaluate existing data collection methods in order to develop more precise information on specific areas, looking specifically at the costs and benefits of investing in technology that will improve service monitoring and efficiency such as GPS, on boarding weighing and chips in bins that will provide data". Currently we rely on collection staff to manually advise on missed and over-heavy bins.

I have to say I am not immediately convinced of this method, but will always consider any possibility of improving both the waste collection and recycling services – even if that means analyzing what (Labour controlled) Croydon council has done with microchips.

**Question No. 51****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

How many residents from Wendover Lodge (sheltered housing in West Hendon) have now been moved, how many are still there and can the member please reassure residents that they will have the full service of the warden until they are finally moved?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

12 residents from Wendover Lodge have now been rehoused, leaving just 3 residents and the resident sheltered housing officer (SHO). The SHO has been supporting the residents throughout the process and she will be the last person to move out of the block

**Question No. 52****Councillor Anita Campbell**

Why is the administration only opening a second register office in Barnet House for just six months?

**Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan**

The changing of registry services has to be approved under a statutory scheme which involves public consultation and approval by the Minister. Whilst committed to a scheme that serves the North of the Borough, we have still not fully explored all the available long term options, ie Barnet Hospital. It would therefore be wrong to carry out this consultation prior to committing to a permanent site.

**Question No. 53****Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Will the Education and Children Cabinet Member provide the results of the public consultation on the Primary Schools Capital Strategy?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

The Chief Education Officer will be reporting to a meeting of the Cabinet in June. Meanwhile the results of the consultation have been very supportive. There is a recognition that investment in our primary schools was neglected in the immediate past by the previous administration. Teachers welcome the commitment of this administration to invest in education. I myself received representations from Councillor Prentice about the possibility of relocating Foulds School on its existing site. Those who are concerned about education in Barnet welcome the commitment of this administration to a First Class Education Service.

**Question No. 54****Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

If the Cabinet Member could explain how the cuts to libraries since 14 May 2002 have improved the borough's libraries service?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

The latest survey of residents showed increased satisfaction with our libraries. As we look to the future we should be seeking to make greater community use of several of our library sites. I welcome the fact that unlike many authorities no long term closure proposals were included in the 2006-07 Budget.

**Question No. 55**

**Councillor Alison Moore**

If a Conservative administration runs a tender for the refuse collection service then will an in-house bid be allowed?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

A decision on whether to include or not an in-house bid will need to be established nearer the time for any market testing as discussed in the Waste Management BVR – there are balancing factors to be considered – an in-house bid can provide a benchmark for comparison but also act to scare off external interest and will also be influenced by the type and scale of operation being tested.

**Question No. 56**

**Councillor Anita Campbell**

Why were the residents living in the blocks of flats on the Dollis Valley estate told that the entry locks to their flats could not be repaired because there was no money allocated for this work -when their lives were being disrupted by vandals entering the flats and causing all manner of damage and threats?

**Answer by Councillor Fiona Bulmer**

A consultation exercise was held August 2005 when all residents were asked whether they wanted a new door entry system on the blocks or to leave the doors as they are. They were also asked whether residents would like us to replace broken windows in communal stairwells with metal grills. 10% of the people consulted replied of whom 19 wanted to leave the doors as they are while 15 requested a door entry system. 14 people wanted to replace the broken windows with metal grills. Because only a small number of residents responded and there was no clear mandate for either proposal the council decided not to proceed with either scheme at present. However, we are currently consulting on a pilot scheme in Millbridge to block off the interior corridors, which we would expect to provide similar benefits.

**Question No. 57**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

Given the £250,000 cuts in Children & Family Centres and that Meadway and Hampden are not part of the children's centres' plan, what are the Administration plans for these sites?



**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The £250,000 is an efficiency saving for 2006-07 whilst investment in the existing children and families centres is suspended during the period of construction of the new children's centres. The monies suspended from the budget are returned to the budget when the new centres open.

There is already a proposal for Hampden Way Nursery School to become a children's centre in a new building. This proposal is set out in the Primary School Capital Investment Programme and so has been subject to the initial, informal consultation with parents, staff and governors. If Cllr Rawlings has missed this detail I will, on request, happily arrange for a copy of the strategy to be forwarded to him, with the relevant section highlighted for ease of reference.

In time, all the existing children and families centres will become part of the network of children's centres. This includes Meadway.

These will complement Wingfield which has been awarded Children's Centre status by the DfES (our first in Barnet).

**Question No. 58**

**Councillor Zakia Zubairi**

When is Colindale ward going to get it's own premier park?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The objective of the Premier Parks Strategy was to provide a Premier Park with in 1 mile (1600m) of the majority of Barnet's residents - that did not mean that every ward would have a Premier Park.

As part of the regeneration of Grahame Park, the park that shares its name will be re-designed and landscaped to provide a Premier Park. In the mean time the residents of Colindale Ward can use the five Premier Parks that sit around its boundaries. Their distances from the ward boundary are as follows:

West Hendon Playing Fields	125m
Mill Hill Park	185m
Sunny Hill Park	260m
Watling Park	500m
Hendon Park	1000m

**Question No. 59****Councillor Alison Moore**

The Waste Management Best Value Review states about refuse collection: "The service will need to look forward and develop its own future, with the support of senior management within its new position in the corporate structure, otherwise it would be better off to be sourced externally." What criteria has or will be set to evaluate whether the service achieves this successfully, and therefore will not need to be privatised?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The objective of the Waste Management Best Value Review was to review current waste management arrangements and to establish a strategy for going forward. The review was broad covering a range of waste management services.

The first part of the strategy work has been completed, with the agreement of the Waste Strategy at the meeting of the Cabinet on 3 April 2006. The Waste Strategy considers the long-term framework for waste in Barnet. Its timeframe is 2006 to 2020, and it deals with overall strategic issues. The operational action plan that will cover individual materials, collection methodologies, specific targets and tonnages will be developed over the next year. In conjunction with this the service delivery mechanism will be examined. Once again I repeat, the criteria for evaluating the current refuse service has not been set.

**Question No. 60****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

What are the final figures for the number of compulsory redundancies, voluntary redundancies, early retirements and redeployments resulting from the service cuts in 2005/6?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Working from the assumption that the question relates to the service changes contained in the budget for 2006/7 originally reported at Council on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005.

- 14 staff at risk have been redeployed and posts previously occupied by agency staff have been filled by permanent 'at risk' employees
- 20 staff have volunteered for redundancy
- 9 employees have been made redundant
- 3 employees will be made redundant by the end of April if redeployment opportunities are not identified.

**Question No. 61****Councillor Anita Campbell**

Many residents in my ward and in other wards say that it is now very difficult to try to speak to, and get advice from, the Council these days, so how is the Council going to address this problem?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The initial results from the most recent Annual Residents Attitude Survey show that Barnet outperforms the average for the rest of London by 12% in regard to how easy it is to contact the Council by telephone. The figures for how well the Council listens to residents' concerns are well in line with the rest of London and there are also improvements in the figures for involving and responding to residents. Performance against the relevant performance and internal indicators shows that targets for speed of response from the corporate customer services functions are being met or exceeded. Major improvements to the two main reception facilities at Fenella and Barnet House have now been fully implemented and initial feedback from customers has been extremely positive. A major redesign of the website and the implementation of a new content management system have both contributed to the number of 'hits' rising from just under 50,000 in November 2005 to almost 170,000 in January 2006. The fact that this administration has recorded the highest customer satisfaction rating of any outer London borough is testament to the improvements in customer service we have delivered. We are delighted not only at this achievement but also to have reversed the decline in satisfaction the Lib/Lab administration presided over.

If the residents of Underhill wish to improve the service they are receiving they can make a 33% increase in service by electing a third Conservative Councillor to represent the Ward.

**Question No. 62****Councillor Barry Rawlings**

What will be the cost to the council for each of the next 15 years of the various PFI plans?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

The only Private Finance Initiative is the 25 year Street Lighting PFI contract, due to commence in April 2006. This contract will replace all street columns that require replacing. Completing the PFI contract will also deliver £56m of Government grant to Barnet residents over the next 25 years. The initiative actually reduces the annual cost to the Council.

**Question No. 63****Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Together with many council colleagues, I saw the wonderful work done by Community Focus in March at the arts depot. How is the Council helping them so that they can carry on this excellent work with disabled and able-bodied people?

**Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan**

Community Focus is respected throughout the Capital for the work that it does for arts provision for the disabled and elderly. Their grant has been approved to allow them to continue and expand this work and we are also grant funding a position of a consultant to assist them with this expansion and to advise on bidding for future grants. We will continue to support them in the future.

**Question No. 64**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

How much has the administration spent on consultants in 2002/3, 2003/4, 2004/5 and 2005/6?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

I will provide a verbal answer

**Question No. 65**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Only 1.88% of Barnet's workforce is classified as disabled. This puts Barnet right down to 21<sup>st</sup> Place in the London league table, and well below Lewisham (8.46%) Hounslow (5.91%) and Haringey (4.11%). How is the Council going to improve on this dreadful performance so far?

**Answer by Councillor Mike Freer**

Cllr Sodha is out of date. For 2004/5, the percentage of disabled staff was 1.88% based on the data held on the former HR system Delphi. This placed Barnet 21st out of 33 London Boroughs (including the Corporation of London).

However since this BVPI was reported considerable work has been undertaken to improve the quality of HR data.

The Performance and Strategy Unit have been conducting a detailed human resources data cleanse exercise to collect information from employees to enhance HR data and to support the Modernising Core Systems project.

Confirmed information gained directly from employees now demonstrates that 2.22% of Barnet staff are disabled under the definition contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. Based on the 2004/5 outturn this would mean that Barnet would be ranked 17th out of 33 London Boroughs.

The 2.22% includes employees who have not yet returned their data cleanse questionnaire. From those questionnaires returned the figure is, 2.57% of Barnet staff which would mean that Barnet would be ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of 33 London Boroughs.

It should be noted that there is a large variation between London Boroughs which may be due to the complexity of the counting mechanism for this BVPI. The percentage varies from 8.46% to 1.26% with only 1 Council in North London (Haringey) recording above 4%.

There are therefore no grounds to assume that the Council has to improve on it's performance as by definition 'Disabled staff' are those that identify themselves as such against the definition provided in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) and the Council has made every effort to identify disabled employees, hence the rise in the percentage of disabled staff.

Naturally we will continue to encourage employment applications from disabled staff and we will continue to employ the best candidate for the role. Equality & Diversity is not furthered by tokenism of any sort.

**Question No. 66**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

How much has it cost the administration - including officer time - on legal expenses regarding Partingdale Lane?

**Answer by Councillor Matthew Offord**

The costs expended since it was decided last year to investigate again the re-opening of Partingdale Lane are currently at £24,000 and include the consultation work carried out by Alpha Research and the safety audit by Capita Symionds Gwent.

**Question No. 67**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

Are the Teaching Assistants employed in special schools treated the same as Teaching Assistants in other schools in respect of their conditions of employment for eg pay and career structure?

**Answer by Councillor John Marshall**

Yes. The Teaching Assistant Agreement which was concluded last April and implemented in September applies to ALL teaching assistants.

**Question No. 68**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

How much has it cost the administration - including officer time - on legal expenses regarding Barnet Football Club?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

The Council has legal expenses in relation to numerous aspects of its dealing with Barnet FC. If the member would be more specific about which aspects of our dealings with the club he is referring to I will attempt to give a meaningful answer.

**Question No. 69**

**Councillor Ansuya Sodha**

What is the Council doing to ensure that youngsters in this borough have a chance to compete in the Olympics?

**Answer by Councillor Brian Salinger, Leader of the Council**

Barnet has made very good progress in improving children and young people's access to sport and PE in schools. The Schools Sport Partnership Programme is a national programme which has been rolled out over the past 3 years. The first schools sports partnership was developed in the south of the borough with Whitefield School (a school with sports specialise). Barnet was entitled to funding for just two school sport partnerships but because of the success of the programme here, the DfES agreed to double the funding. As a result we now have four partnerships which will include every school in the borough. The hubs for the four networks are Whitefield, East Barnet, Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School (in place) and St James High (starting in September 2006).

Detailed, school by school evaluations are showing:

- Improved quality of PE teaching
- Increase in pupils' participation in sport in both curriculum time and extra-curricular
- Greater enthusiasm from pupils
- Higher profile of sport and PE, including dance.

The last audit of sport within the curriculum showed that 75% of schools are offering at least two hours a week of good quality PE and sport. We anticipate that the next audit, at the end of this academic year, will show even greater improvement. Barnet is therefore well on track to reach the national target of 85% by 2008. Our new Children and Young People Plan has a specific target on improving participation in sports activities by young people.

At the London Youth Games in 2005, Barnet was the most improved borough moving from 29th to 16th.

These achievements will provide a good basis for future international successes by our young people.

We are also improving sports facilities in Barnet to help young people get good support with training

The Copthall stadium track should be refurbished this summer which will make such a difference to the user experiences when they visit. Refurbishment work has also taken place within the stadium to make it user friendly and DDA compliant. There could be the possibility that an indoor athletics and community facility will be sited within the stadium grounds but that idea needs more consideration and would be subject to Council approval.

The partnership with Greenwich Leisure Limited is currently in its 4th year and they, GLL, are actively involved within the 5 Olympic boroughs. There will be further work carried out by them within this borough to enhance the fabric of their facilities. There are currently three pools at Copthall Leisure Centre and a fully equipped Olympic gymnastics facility at Hendon Leisure Centre. These facilities, and the stadium, should enable the Council to attract an Olympic competing country into the borough prior to the games.

Should this be the case, then the spin offs for sports development and the continuing benefits for young people will be tremendous in terms not just of 2012, but of future Olympic games.

**Question No. 70**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

What is the walking distance from Greenways Close to its polling station?

**Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan**

The siting of polling stations is not an executive function and is dealt with by the General Functions Committee and the Returning Officer. All political parties are consulted about proposed location of polling stations.

**Question No. 71**

**Councillor Barry Rawlings**

What is the walking distance along lit roads from Parkwood to its polling station?

**Answer by Councillor Lynne Hillan**

The siting of polling stations is not an executive function and is dealt with by the General Functions Committee and the Returning Officer. All political parties are consulted about proposed location of polling stations.