CHIPPING BARNET RESIDENTS' FORUM

MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2011

ACTION NOTES

held at: Chipping Barnet Library

Chairman: *Councillor Lisa Rutter Vice-Chairman: *Councillor Barry Evangeli *Denotes Councillor Present

Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
The Chairman welcomed residents to the meeting and introductions were made.		
Counsel and Care		
A presentation was delivered by Helen Finch on the work of the group Counsel and Care who offered free, independent, expert advice for older people, their families and carers. There were various information documents available at the meeting, which included contact details: 0845 300 7585 (Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm) www.counselandcare.org.uk		
Petition A petition had been submitted to the Council opposing the various proposed increases in onstreet parking charges and reminding the Council of their duty to ring fence income from these charges to highway improvements. Mr Byron Carter spoke to the petition on behalf of the lead petitioner Mrs Bayley.	Officers confirmed that all funds raised through parking charges were ring fenced for specific highways work. In response to a question from Mr Ashwood on how much funding was spent on road maintenance, it was confirmed that nearly £5 million was spent last year, with a similar figure for this year.	

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
	A lively debate followed with various issues raised by residents present. A summary of these issues is appended to the action notes. This summary was referred to the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member on behalf of the forum by the Chairman, Councillor Rutter.		
1	Parking Comparators Mr Massey asked what comparators were used when determining the parking charges e.g. Potters Bar, Hertsmere, Enfield. Mr Ackryod asked on what basis the Visitors Voucher was raised from £1 to £4	Interim Director of Environment and Operations In terms of the rise to £4 of the Visitors Voucher, it was confirmed that various options had been considered in consultation with the Cabinet Member.	Parking Manager Confirmed that no research had been undertaken re: Potters Bar and Hertsmere and it was not anticipated to devote any resource to this work. The current charges in Enfield (which might be reviewed) were: £70 Residents' Permit £1 Visitors Vouchers £1.50 typical hourly rate
2	Change of Free Bays to Pay and Display Mr Massey queried the legality of the proposed change in Vale Drive from free bays to pay and display.		Highways Manager/Traffic and Development There is a statutory procedure that must be adhered to when proposing such changes. This procedure has been followed and a decision on whether to proceed with the proposals will be made in due course
3	CPZ Charges Residents' concerns that CPZ charges are an additional tax on the 5% of the Barnet population who live in these areas and that this subsidises highways maintenance across the borough. Mr Dishman raised concerns about the Council's budget considered at Cabinet, in particular the increased CPZ and parking charges.	Interim Director of Environment and Operations It is considered necessary to review all charges for services across the borough, including parking charges. These were subject to detailed consultation before going through a rigorous approval process. If this review is not implemented then savings will have to be found elsewhere, a process that is likely to result in service cuts.	Highways Manager/Traffic and Development CPZs are introduced in those areas where there is a proven need to introduce on-street controls in order to manage the road network effectively. Therefore there is no obligation to introduce such restrictions on a boroughwide basis as the parking related concerns are identified and appropriate measures implemented depending on local conditions.

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
4	Parking Enforcement		Parking Manager
	A concern that enforcement		Has asked for additional
	in St Albans Road was		enforcement in this road.
	insufficient.		However, he felt that it would
			be helpful if residents in that
			road could identify specific
			worries.
5	Fall in Income	Interim Director of	No further update
	Mr Massey asked whether	Environment and Operations	-
	the Council had factored in	It was anticipated that the	
	the possible fall in income	increased charges will generate	
	from CPZ's and car parks	additional income. This income	
	due to the increased	is ring-fenced towards	
	charges	improvements to the parking	
		service and highway	
		maintenance works thereby	
		relieving the burden on the	
		Council Tax-payer. There were	
		a number of income streams	
		covered by the plans and any shortfall on one line will be	
		taken up by increasing the	
		emphasis on other sources of	
	04.1/2-24	revenue.	No Court on the Late
6	£4 Visitor Charge	Interim Director of	No further update
	Mr Massey asked whether	Environment and Operations	
	the Council had considered	As Visitor Vouchers were	
	the possible fall in revenue	available only to residents and	
	and damage to business in	were used for a small	
	the local area due to the £4	proportion of parking activities	
	visitor charge.	across the borough it was not	
		considered that any change in	
		the take up of this facility would	
		have a significant impact on	
		local business.	
7	Footway Crossovers	Interim Director of	No further update
	Mr Massey asked whether	Environment and Operations	
	the Council thought that	Whilst there might be an	
	there would be an increase	increased demand for footway	
	in footway crossovers, to	crossovers to allow residents to	
	the detriment of the	park within the boundary of	
	environment, due to the	their property rather than on the	
	increase in charges asked	street, it was not anticipated	
	_	that this would be at a level	
		which would have a significant	
		impact on the environment	
	<u> </u>	past on the official	<u> </u>

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
8	Flood Defences	Interim Director of	No further update
	Mr Mullen raised a question as to what the Council had put in place/planning to put in place in the Parkside Gardens/West Walk area in terms of flood defences since the Environment Agency redesignation in 2007 as this area now being in Zone 3 of the flood plain (it was previously deemed to be outside the plain).	Environment and Operations The Pymmes Brook is classified as a main river and the maintenance of flows in all main rivers is the responsibility of The Environment Agency (EA), not the Council's. The Flood Zones in this area were prepared in June 2007 as a result of the Lee Modelling & Mapping Study. This study took into account detailed information on local rainfall, river flows, river channel shape, historical information, local defences and local topography to map the extent of the Flood Zones. The EA update their flood zones from time to time when better information, or better techniques, to determine flood risk areas become available. Zone 3 has an Annual Excess Probability of 1:100 (Flooding with a probability of occurring of	
9	Gritting Mr Ashwood asked a question as to the cost of the operation on the night of 26 January 2011 as there was no hard frost/snow that night or the following day. What was the weather forecast for that night. How was it determined to grit that night.	Interim Director of Environment and Operations The Council's action on the evening of 26 January was to grit all eight Priority 1 routes with 20gr/m2 of salt. This decision was based on the 12.00 noon weather forecast and the 18.30 hrs weather update both of which are provided specifically for the Barnet area. This warned of: • Road temperatures of -1C as from 02.00 hrs on 27 January, • Snow showers after midnight, and • Increased risk of snow showers with accumulation of up to 1 cm from 06.00 hrs on 27 January. The weather forecast service provided to the Council by the Met Office and in general is very accurate. In this case, is	No further update

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
10	Gritting Mr Dishman had raised various issues as to how roads were prioritised and that gritting vehicles pass down low priority roads en route to another destination, and a view that they could grit as they went along	however, our records show that the lowest actual temperature on the night was +0.5C. It must be emphasised, however, that the Council considers the cost of gritting to be secondary to the need to keep the road network safe. The Council's variable cost for gritting the Priority 1 roads (238 kms) is estimated at approximately £2200. This includes the salt, the driver's time and fuel (variable costs) and does not include the Council's fixed cost for the provision of the gritting service (gritting vehicles, depot, etc). The figure did not include the cost implications of the fleet of vehicles etc. Due to financial constraints, it was not possible to grit all roads within the borough, and prioritisation had to be undertaken. Interim Director of Environment and Operations Carnavron Road can not be classified as a Priority 1 route as is neither a main commuter route nor a bus route. However, the presence of the library means that this road can be upgraded to Priority 2 and this will be done as from the next winter season. Normally the drivers of the gritting vehicles are instructed to grit a particular route and are not able to deviate from this. There are various reasons for this including:	No further update

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
		 All routes have been optimised to reduce as much as possible the dead mileage and to enable their completion to within 2 hours. Allocation of salt is done on a route basis and any departure from this will result in more salt spread than allocated. Please note that during the last few years we were required by the government to conserve the salt as much as possible and report the amount of salt spread against each route However, drivers of gritting vehicles can grit a road which is not on their route if they find the condition to be icy or by prior arrangements with their supervisor. It may well be that the gritting vehicle that Mr Dishman saw was not gritting a particular route but was supporting the refuse collection programme. In any case, please note that drivers are expected to report to their supervisor the condition of the roads they drive through. 	
11	Footpath Work vs Potholes A question from Mr Ashwood as to why work was undertaken on the footpaths at the junction of Underhill and the High Road, when there was more urgent work required to repair potholes	Interim Director of Environment and Operations The footway relay works on Underhill are being funded by TfL under the Safer Routes to School Budget, which seeks to promote safer walking routes to schools. This budget is ring fenced and can not be spent on routine highway maintenance and potholes. These works are on the north footway of Underhill between Barnet Hill and No 24 Underhill and are expected to be completed by the middle of March.	No further update

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
12	Temporary Repair of Potholes Mr Ashwood asked what was the reason for continuing to repair potholes temporarily when in many cases they are lasting only 6 – 12 months	Interim Director of Environment and Operations The Council aims to repair all potholes with a permanent repair. However, as a result of the numerous potholes created by the recent cold weather, the Council may use temporary low cost treatments on carriageway areas that are low trafficked and areas that may be dangerous to road users if left untreated, until a permanent reinstatement can be organised. At the meeting Mr Ashwood was offered to meet with the appropriate officer in respect of the temporary/permanent repair of potholes.	No further update
13	Supplier to the Council Clarification was sought by Mr Ashwood as to the Catalyst Group and what goods/services they supply to the Council.	Adult Social Services Catalyst delivers, on behalf of the Council, the residential and day care services within the borough. This service is subcontracted to a company called Freemantle. However, in addition to the care contract Catalyst is also responsible for the maintenance of the homes. A report in respect of the Care Home Contract is due to be considered at the next meeting of Cabinet Resources Committee on 2 March 2011	Report considered at Cabinet Resources Committee on 2 March 2011 was sent to Mr Ashwood
14	Stopping Up of a Road Mr Ashwood asked a question as to the legal status of a road that has been stopped up. The road in question was in the area of Ravenscroft School who are the only people who now use this road which is gated and locked. Was it legal to restrict the use of this stopped up road to a particular group?	Legal Services The stopping up of a road (or any other Highway) extinguishes any public rights over the road and as a consequence, permission to use the road would reside with the owner of the subsoil who can grant rights, easements etc over the road. Any person who uses the road other than with the authority of the Owner of the subsoil will be classed a Trespasser.	

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
		Any private rights which existed	
		before the stopping up of a	
		road are not affected by the	
		stopping up of the road	
		Information as to the ownership	
		of the land will be included in	
		the action notes	
15	Icelandic Bank Update	Deputy Chief Executive	No further update
	•	Our current balance sheet	
	Mr Ashwood requested an	assumes that the Council	
	update on whether the	retains priority status as a	
	Council had recouped any	creditor of the two banks	
	of the funds 'lost' during the	through the wind-up process.	
	collapse of the Icelandic	Priority status, and other	
	Banks.	matters, will be considered by	
	At the medical Ray And	the Icelandic Courts in	
	At the meeting Mr Ashwood	February and March 2011. Any	
	said that these lost funds	decision is likely to be	
	contributed towards the	appealed, so there is likely to	
	Council's deficit.	be a continued period of	
		uncertainty. The most	
		significant risk for the Council is	
		that ultimately priority status will	
		not be maintained leading to	
		a much lower level of eventual	
		recovery of funds. To mitigate	
		the potential disruption to our	
		financial plans, the Council	
		needs to set aside funds in the	
		risk reserve accordingly. The	
		additional potential cost is estimated at £14.1m, and this	
		could crystallise in 2010/11	
		when the accounts are closed,	
		or subsequently in accordance	
		with events in the judicial	
		process. The Council applied	
		for a capitalisation direction	
		in 2010/11 to provide additional	
		flexibility in dealing with the	
		potential additional cost, but	
		this was declined by	
		government. A key aim of	
		financial strategy is therefore to	
		set aside sufficient revenue	
		funding in the risk reserve.	
		Should this risk crystallise prior	
		to sufficient funds being	
		identified in the risk reserve,	
		other reserves would need to	
		be utilised and then	
		replenished as a priority within	
		the financial strategy.	

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
	the Council could justify closing down the museum or withdrawing funds as it was a local amenity run by volunteers, and was well used. It was part of the government's Big Society and was working well. Other residents felt that the museum should not be expected to run at zero cost and another resident raised concern at the speed at which the museum was being asked to make a decision as to its future. The museum curator corrected the information supplied in the last action notes as the facility ran activities seven days per week. She said that the footfall suggested in the last actions notes was inaccurate. Finally she said that it was not within the Council's remit to suggest particular consultation.	deliver the objectives of the transfer successfully, and a clear audit trail recording the decision-making processes for accountability purposes. The Council will apply these standards to consideration of future management of the museum buildings. Cabinet agreed that any future operation of the museums should be at zero cost to the Council.	
17	Barnet College Junction Improvements at Wood Street Mr Massey requested an update on the s106 monies due to be allocated for junction improvements, and an assurance that all the funds will be spend on this project. At the meeting Mr Massey asked whether all of the £85,000 would be spent on this particular project. He also suggested that it would not be difficult to carry out an experimental test scheme. Mr Howard said that it was imperative to address the issues of gridlock in that area.	Interim Director Environment and Operations Money has been secured to improve pedestrian facilities and amenities at this junction as part of the planning process of the Barnet College Site. A trial aimed at assessing the impact of banning the right turn from the A1000 into Wood Street and the left turn from Wood Street into the A1000 to provide a large area for pedestrians outside the church was cancelled in January due to traffic concerns in the area. The Council is currently reviewing options to improve pedestrian facilities at this junction without banning any traffic movement.	Interim Director Environment and Operations/Chris Chrysostomou To respond to the question as to whether all of the s106 funding would be spent on the junction. Additionally, to give an update on the outcome of the options review to improve facilities at the junction.

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
		At the meeting, the Highways Officer confirmed that the funds would be spent in accordance with the conditions of the agreement	
18	The Arts Depot Ms Pam Edwards raised a question regarding the contents of a consultation carried out in 2002 and whether this was in the public domain.	At the meeting Councillor Longstaff, a Trustee of the Arts Depot, said that there were no plans to make changes, including the provision of Community Focus.	The consultation documents to be located and sent to Ms Edwards
20	Pledgebank Mr Dix asked whether the council's investment in the new Pledgebank website represents value for money. Mr Dix was not satisfied with the response given by officers and said that so far only one of the five projects had been achieved. He added that there was already a planning alerts service in place. Various residents requested a response to two questions: 1. A request for a breakdown of how the £140,000 had been spent on My Society; 2. Was the contract awarded to My Society put out to tender? Payments Over £500 October – December 2010 Mr Dix asked when would	Communications The investment in Pledgebank is part of the a series of projects that Barnet Council is undertaking with My Society with a view to opening up council services and supporting wider community activity. My Society is a small not for profit agency with an excellent national reputation and we are confident that their work represents excellent value for money. The council already worked very successfully with My Society on Fix my Street and hopes to develop this facility further over the coming year. Unlike that first project, It was not possible to simply 'piggyback' on the existing Pledgebank site as there was concern that the national prototype was not technically robust enough for the council's needs. The next project with My Society, planning alerts for residents, will be launched by the council later this week. Assistant Director Financial Services The revised list was due to be published 22 February 2011	Communications/Sue Cocker To respond to the two questions raised at the meeting: 1. A request for a breakdown of how the £140,000 had been spent on My Society; 2. Was the contract awarded to My Society put out to tender? No further update

	Issue Raised	Response	Update (and by whom)
	At the meeting Mr Dix confirmed that the revised list had been published. However, he remained concerned that some 70 of the current redactions were for consultancy fees		
21	New Council Officer Post Mr Howard referred to the advertisement for the post of Director for Planning, Environment and Regeneration at a salary of £140,000 (£800pa more than the current post holder). He asked why the Council was not showing financial constraint by proposing to pay a sum in excess of the Prime Minister's salary. He also asked whether the Council would rethink its strategy.		HR/Jacquie McGeachie
22	At the beginning of the meeting the Chairman read out a letter of thanks from Ms Linden Groves for the work undertaken by Councillors and officers to re-open the Trott Road allotment site. Councillor Coakley Webb raised a concern that there was a further delay in the report being submitted to Cabinet Resources Committee which was now expected in April. She said that this delayed the growing period.	TDA	Property Services/Judith Ellis To explain why this report has been delayed
	DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING	ТВА	

The meeting finished at 8.35pm

Officers Present:

Chris Chrysostomou Environment and Operations

Martin Cowie Assistant Director, Planning and Development Management

Kim Sonnex Safer Neighbourhood Team, Metropolitan Police

Pauline Bagley Democratic Services

Councillors Longstaff and Coakley-Webb were also present. In addition, there were approximately 90 members of the public.

CHIPPING BARNET RESIDENTS FORUM SUMMARY OF VIEWS SUBMITTED TO THE LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER ON BEHALF OF THE PUBLIC

The forum was attended by approximately 90 residents and two Ward Councillors (in addition to the Chairman Councillor Rutter and Vice Chairman Councillor Evangeli).

A petition was presented to protest about the rise in the cost of resident parking permits and visitor vouchers, requesting the Council to urgently review its decision in terms of compliance with the provisions of the Parking Policy and Enforcement Traffic Management Act 2004.

The Chairman facilitated a full debate of this issue for more than an hour, and then, in response to some residents' requests, moved on to the various other issues that had been raised prior to the meeting.

At that point, some 60 people left the meeting, as they had only attended for the one item.

A summary of the issues and questions raised by residents:

- 1. What comparators from the surrounding areas have been used to determine the parking charges that would apply in High Barnet?
- 2. The possibility of car park usage falling, as it did five years ago, with the hike in charges.
- 3. Does the Council consider that the higher CPZ charges may lead to displaced parking in other areas?
- 4. The higher charges will result in more residents applying for crossovers, which would have a detrimental effect on the streetscene and environment.
- 5. The £4 visitor charge will reduce the number of visitors to the area and damage the local economy as people would shop in other areas where the charges were lower.
- 6. The increases are extortionate and way above inflation. Justification of these increases was called for including why there was a profit margin of 150%.
- 7. A reference to ring fencing the income from the charges and relieving pressure on other budgets. Residents said that income from the PPRA could not be used to fund other service areas as this would not be lawful.
- 8. When some residents were consulted, and they had agreed to CPZ's in their roads, they could not have been aware of the hike in charges.
- 9. CPZ's are introduced to alleviate parking problems but people are now being penalised.
- 10. Residents living in CPZ's are paying for highways maintenance and improvements all over the borough including areas where there are no on-street charges.
- 11. The Council should identify and cut out areas of waste various examples were given.
- 12. There was no proper enforcement in CPZ's.
- 13. Residents on fixed income, in particular the elderly, can't afford the increases.
- 14. The rise in charges will result in more displaced parking in areas outside the CPZ.

FORTHCOMING PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(meetings usually start at 7.00pm)

AREA PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE: - ALL TO BE HELD AT HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, NW4 4BG

Chipping Barnet

Democratic Services Contact: Pauline Bagley, Tel: 020 8359 2023

Hendon

Democratic Services Contact: Paul Frost, Tel: 020 8359 2205

Finchley and Golders Green

Democratic Services Contact: Stephanie Chaikin, Tel: 020 8359 2019

Forthcoming meetings:

Finchley & Golders Green Chipping Barnet Hendon 4/4/2011 4/4/2011

Public requests to speak at Area Planning Sub-Committees on planning applicationsWritten requests to speak on planning applications should be notified to the relevant Area Planning Officer by 10.00am on the 3rd working day before the day of the meeting.

Public requests to ask questions at Area Planning Sub-Committees

Any request to ask a question (exact wording) on the work of the Sub-Committee must be received by the Democratic Services Manager by 10.00am on the 7th working day before the day of the meeting.

AREA ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEES:

Venue: Hendon Town Hall, the Burroughs, NW4 4BG

Chipping Barnet

Democratic Services Contact: Stephanie Chaikin, Tel: 020 8359 2019

Finchley & Golders Green

Democratic Services Contact: Nick Musgrove, Tel: 020 8359 2024

Hendon

Democratic Services Contact: Jonathan Regal, Tel: 020 8359 2012

Forthcoming meetings:

Finchley & Golders Green	Chipping Barnet	Hendon

Public requests to speak at Area Environment Sub-Committees

Written requests to speak on issues on the agenda must be received by the Democratic Services Manager by 10.00am on the 2nd working day before the day of the meeting.

Public requests to ask guestions at Area Environment Sub-Committees

Any request to ask a question (exact wording) on environmental matters must be received by the Democratic Services Manager by 10.00am on the 7th working day before the day of the meeting.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Venue: Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4 4BG

Democratic Services Contact: Maria Lugangira (tel: 020 8359 2761)

Public requests to speak at Planning & Environment Committee

Written requests to speak on planning applications should be notified to the relevant Area Planning Officer by 10.00am on the 2nd working day before the day of the meeting for non planning issues and the 3rd working day before the meeting on planning issues.

Public requests to ask questions at Planning & Environment Committee

Any request to ask a question (exact wording) on the work of the Committee must be received by the Democratic Services Manager by 10.00am on the 7th working day before the day of the meeting.

Forthcoming meetings:

16/3/2011, 13/4/2011