

COUNCIL QUESTIONS – 24 MARCH 2003:

Oral Question 1 - To the Executive Member for Equality and Performance from Councillor Milner

Please outline Haringey's recent achievements for the gay and lesbian communities given that, according to recent research, 83% of young gay people have experienced verbal abuse while 47 per cent have suffered anti-gay violence at some time"

Oral Question 2 - To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Laird

If he will make a statement on current overspend levels in each department?

Oral Question 3 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Santry

If he thinks the introduction of wheelie bins throughout the borough will assist with the problem of rats.

Oral Question 4 - To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Williams

Will he join with Highgate Councillors in opposing the closure of the post office on the Archway Road?

Oral Question 5 - To the Executive Member for Community Engagement and Communication from Councillor Wynne

Does Cllr Bull agree with me that Area Assemblies should not be used as party political fringe-meetings for political activism?

Oral Question 6 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Featherstone

Has the council changed its policy of removing graffiti only if it is considered racist or offensive, and if not, when does the Executive member envisage he may extend the policy to include other visible graffiti?

Oral Question 7 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Santry

If Accord's cleaning schedule now includes regular litter collections of grassed areas and pathways so that we can be confident that no area is missed.

Oral Question 8 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Hare

Since he has not supplied me as he promised with the answer to this question at the last Council meeting; can he now tell me what consultation was done on wheelie bins?

Oral Question 9 - To the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety from Councillor Milner

In early December the Home Secretary announced that his updated strategy would focus on the 250,000 hard-drug users responsible for 99% of the cost of drug abuse. In light of this and the fact, according to a recent report in the Economist which stated that the social and economic costs of drug abuse is between £10 billion and £18 billion per year, can Councillor Canver please outline what steps the Council

are taking to work with other agencies and local communities to target these hard-
drug users?

Oral Question 10 - To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Floyd

Are there any plans to provide a suitable Memorial to Victoria Climbié?

COUNCIL QUESTIONS – 24 MARCH 2003:

Written Question 1 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Aitken

What arrangements have been made for residents and local groups to obtain funding from Council for the removal of graffiti and what criteria will be used in deciding whether such bids will be successful?

Answer:

Council Officers will be presenting a graffiti action plan to the Executive early in June 2003. The aim is to review current policies and procedures and to develop a coherent action plan to deal with graffiti within the Borough. This will cover preventative action as well as removal. The action plan will develop the provision of free graffiti removal kits to Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators and residents/traders associations or any other recognisable group, which wishes to keep their local area, clean of graffiti. The criteria to be used in selecting these groups, will be included in the action plan.

Written Question 2 - To the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety from Councillor Aitken

How many addresses in Haringey have been the subject of search or arrest warrants connected with 'Operation Ore' and how many arrests have been made?

Answer:

Details of individual searches and arrests by Scotland Yard's Paedophile Unit will not be disclosed. Operation Ore is an ongoing operation and I have been informed that it is unlikely, even at the conclusion of the operation, that specific details will be made public.

Written Question 3 - To the Executive Member for Social Services and Health from Councillor Beacham

Please provide the number of agency workers currently employed by Haringey social services and comparable figures for the last three years?

Answer:

2001/02 £8,007,849

2000/01 £5,793,420

1999/00 £5,394,069

This needs to be viewed in the context of an overall budget for salaries and wages of approximately £40m. Allowing for inflation, the spend on agency salaries and wages in 2001/02 represents around 20.9% of the current years budget allocation. It is expected that as the ratio of permanent staff increases we will reduce the amount spent on agency staff.

Written Question 4 - To the Executive Member for Resources from Councillor Beacham

What proportion of housing benefit renewals were processed within the target time during 2002?

Answer:

42%

Written Question 5 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Bloch

When will he respond to my emails of 17 January, 30 January and 15 February requesting a meeting to discuss traffic calming measures in Cranley Gardens, Muswell Hill and is it normal for the Executive Member not to respond to such email requests?

Answer:

A Council officer has met with Cllr Bloch within the last year. Nonetheless I do apologise for not responding to your emails. The position is that the Council finances traffic calming measures mainly from funds from Transport for London (TfL). The criteria for traffic calming bids are Bus Priorities, Cycling, Streets for People (Homezones) and Road Safety improvements such as local safety schemes and Safer Routes to School. Cranley Gardens needs to meet the criteria for these schemes to be included in a future bid for funding. At present it is unlikely to meet such criteria. If you need further information I am happy to meet you.

Written Question 6 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Bloch

On what dates during the past 12 months have the gulleys in the Hillfield Park area, Muswell Hill been cleaned?

Answer:

Gulleys on all local roads are cleaned once a year. The Hillfield Park area falls under this category and was last cleaned on 31st July 2002. All principal road gulleys are cleaned every three months. Muswell Hill falls within this category and was cleaned on the 18 October 2002 and on 30th January 2003.

Written Question 7 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Davies

Please ensure that the application for Flood lighting on the Fortismere School site is brought before the Council's planning application sub-committee (and not decided under delegated powers), and to further ask if he will produce a comprehensive report on all applications relating to the Fortismere site, their progress, conditions attached, and completion dates.

Answer:

I am not in a position to instruct the Chair of the Planning Application Sub-Committee to insist an application capable of being decided under delegated powers be submitted through the Planning Application Sub-Committee for a decision, this is a matter for the Chair of the Planning Committee and the Assistant Director responsible for planning. However, I am informed that the planning application for Floodlighting at Fortismere School all weather pitch (HGY/2003/0303) will be reported to Planning Applications Sub-Committee; subject to workload, this is expected to be at the 1st May Sub-Committee. As part of that Report, a comprehensive report will be prepared on the history of the two main permissions, for teaching accommodation (April 2000) and Sports Hall (August 2000) and subsequent applications for approval of details, (landscaping, parking etc) as well as the recent appeal decision from the Planning Inspectorate which allowed an increase in size of construction vehicles going to the site.

Written Question 8 - To the Executive Member for Resources from Councillor Davies

The Council's headed paper could be recycled and carry the recycled logo. What would be the cost implications of this switch, and will he instigate it?

Answer:

Council letterheads are currently printed on sustainable forest paper stock at a cost of £54.00 per 1000. It would cost £56.00 per 1000 to do so on recycled paper. Recycled paper has to go through a bleaching process using Chlorine. This process is not environmentally friendly which is why we use paper made from sustainable forests instead. Also recycled paper is difficult to print on with the Doctutech as it doesn't have a consistent grain.

There are many requests for different logos (such as Investors in People) to appear on the council letterhead. At present, the corporate policy does not allow logos other than that of Haringey Council on the council letterhead. The council letterhead needs to remain uncluttered so that letters are easily legible and the Haringey logo is clear. As part of the Civic Pride campaign, the use of the logo is to be reviewed.

Written Question 9 - To the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning from Councillor Fabian

Please list outstanding items of capital works that need doing to the borough's library buildings, including their estimated cost and the budget allocated towards them in this and the next three financial years?

Answer:

The most recent assessments of works needed in the Council's libraries amounts to a programme of £535,000, ideally to be carried out over the next three years.

Arrangements to fund these works are being explored from a combination of capital, revenue and regeneration budgets. The capital budget has only been set for 2003/04 and includes £300,000 to support library costs.

Written Question 10 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Fabian

On what dates during the past 12 months have the drains in the car park behind Mark and Spencer in Muswell Hill Broadway been cleaned?

Answer:

During the last 12 months there have been no reports received of blocked drains and therefore it has not been necessary to clean the drains in the car park.

Written Question 11 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Featherstone

How much has the entire exercise to introduce wheelie bins to Haringey cost so far, including: - the pilot scheme, - the implementation of the wheelie bins, - the contract charge for one year of contract to collect the rubbish in the borough whether from wheelies or black bags, - the advertising and information (such as it is) - any modification costs?

Answer:

The cost of the introduction of wheeled bins is included in the annual contract for household waste collection, paid for over the lifetime of the contract. If the contract runs for the minimum length of 8 years the approximate cost per dwelling is £30. This includes all aspects of implementation.

Written Question 12 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Featherstone

What is the cost of one year of waste collection contract prior to introduction of wheelie bins?

Answer:

I am awaiting a detailed costing and will provide an answer to Members this week.

Written Question 13 - To the Executive Member for Housing from Councillor Floyd

What is the total amount of rent arrears owed by current and former tenants and if she will provide a breakdown of rent arrears for each Ward in the Borough?

Answer

The total arrears owed by current tenants is £8,179,420.

The total arrears owed by former tenants is £2,303,720.

It is not possible to break these figures down by ward, but information is available by Housing Area Office if required.

Written Question 14 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Floyd

How many abandoned vehicles have been removed since the start of ' Operation Cubit', and if he will provide a breakdown for each Ward ion the Borough?

Answer:

434 Vehicles were removed during ' Operation Cubit'. The statistics have not been broken down by ward.

Written Question 15 - To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Gilbert

Further to the answer given to written question no.15 (Council, 17 February) will he now publish the contents of the correspondence as requested in the question and will he explain why in his original answer to the question he neither published the contents of this correspondence nor gave a reason for not doing so?

Answer:

The previous written question concerned the publication of the Plank Report and I remind Councillor Gilbert of my reply last time which stated that his rights of access to information were not denied.

“The Plank report was received by the Chief Executive on 9 December. On 20 December 2002 he sought advice from the Secretary to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry as to any concerns Lord Laming may have if the report were published in advance of his Inquiry reporting. The Secretary to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry replied in a letter dated 15 January 2003, received on 17 January.

Councillors' rights of access were not denied. The first request for sight of the Plank report was received on the evening of 27 January 2003 when the Chief Executive and Director of Social Services briefed Members of the Liberal Democrat Group, who then requested copies of the report. Copies were provided to all Members of the Council the following day.”

As a matter of principle, the Council does not disclose the details of its internal administration, unless there is a clear need to know established.

Written Question 16 - To the Executive Member for Social Services and Health from Councillor Gilbert

Further to his answer to written question no.3, Council 17 February, which only referred to staff time, will he now answer the part of the question regarding how much money was spent and will he please list all Executive meetings in the last year at which decisions were taken (or recommendations made) to increase funding for media work related to the social services department and what the sums involved were?

Answer:

The decisions and recommendations of Council Executive meetings are matters of public record and as such available to Councillor Gilbert and other members. Expenditure on media related work in social services is not separately identified as it forms part and parcel of the work of the Communications unit and of senior officers.

£0.5m was set aside to provide support for our response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry. This includes media work, legal advice and additional staff management costs.

Written Question 17 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Hare

Further to the admission that the decision to block part of London Cycle Network Route number 54 with a gate was based on wrong information about whether or not it is a public highway (answer to written question no.12, council, 13 January), can the Executive Member please state whether any review of the original decision, including its legal status in light of the corrected information, has been made and if so what was its outcome?

Answer:

The original decision, was reviewed in light of the error around its status (i.e. we opened the gate). However the reasons for the original decision to close the gate are still highly relevant i.e. improving security and deterring dumping and therefore we are pursuing a change in the status of the highway. If we are successful the gate will be locked permanently.

Please note however, that this is not part of the London Cycle Network routeing as this is South of the library and not to the North. This routeing is unaffected by this issue.

Written Question 18 - To the Executive Member for Resources from Councillor Hare

In a previous written answer, he said the use of organic and local produce in the catering contract would be raised. Can he provide more information on exactly how and at what stages this has been (or will be) raised?

Answer

Officers are currently evaluating a bid from a major company to run our catering services from September. If this bid is deemed affordable the next stage will be discussions around specific areas of delivery and officers will raise this at that time.

Written Question 19 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Hoban

In relation to Park Road Swimming Pool, please confirm the following:

- i) Pool admission prices in each of the last 5 years, up to April 2003
- ii) Maintenance budget in each of the last 5 years, up to April 2003
- iii) Whole time equivalent employees in each of the last 5 years, up to April 2003.

Answer:

The information regarding Park Road Swimming Pool is set out below, for the 5 year period up to April 2003:

- i) Admission charges (see schedule below)
 ii)& iii) Repairs and Maintenance spend / fte employees

| Park Road Pool | 98/99 | 99/00 | 00/01 | ½ | 02/03 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|--------------|
| R&M spend | 88,299 | 71,862 | 78,039 | 81,082 | 37,176 |
| Fte employees | 23 | 24 | 24 | 25 | 25 |

| PARK ROAD POOL | 97/98 | 98/99 | 99/00 | 00/01 | 01/02 | 02/03 |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Swim/WmnOnly/ParTodd | 2.30 | 2.40 | 2.50 | 2.70 | 2.95 | 3.00 |
| Concession | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.20 | 1.25 |
| Junior | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.30 | 1.40 |
| Under 3 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Indoor Family x 3 | 4.00 | 5.00 | 5.30 | 5.50 | 6.00 | 6.50 |
| Indoor Family x 4 | 5.00 | 6.00 | 6.40 | 6.50 | 7.00 | 7.80 |
| Indoor Family +1 | + 1.00 | + 1.00 | + 1.00 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.20 |
| Adult Spectator | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 0.55 | 0.55 |
| Junior Spectator | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.30 | 0.35 | 0.35 |
| | | | | | | |
| Lido Adult | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.80 | 4.00 | 4.20 |
| Lido Concess | 2.30 | 2.40 | 2.40 | 2.50 | 2.70 | 2.70 |
| Lido Jnr | 1.50 | 1.60 | 1.70 | 1.80 | 1.90 | 2.10 |
| Sundowner (after 5pm) | 1.80 | 1.90 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.20 | 2.30 |
| Lido Fam x 3 | 6.50 | 7.00 | 7.50 | 7.70 | 8.30 | 8.65 |
| Lido Fam x 4 | 8.00 | 9.00 | 9.50 | 9.80 | 10.60 | 11.00 |
| Lido Fam + 1 | + 1.30 | + 1.50 | + 1.50 | 1.60 | 1.70 | 1.80 |
| | | | | | | |
| Sauna No Towel | 4.50 | 4.60 | 4.70 | 4.90 | 5.00 | 5.20 |
| Sauna Concession | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.80 | 3.80 |
| Sauna/Swim | 6.00 | 6.00 | 6.20 | 6.40 | 6.70 | 7.00 |
| Sauna/Swim Con | 4.50 | 4.50 | 4.60 | 4.70 | 4.80 | 5.00 |
| Sunbed | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.80 | 4.00 | 4.20 |
| Sunbed Con | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.00 | 3.10 | 3.30 | 3.30 |
| | | | | | | |
| Ante/Post Natal | 3.30 | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.85 | 4.10 |
| Concession | 2.10 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.30 | 2.40 |
| Waterobics | 3.30 | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.85 | 4.10 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Concession | 2.10 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.30 | 2.40 |
| Junior | 2.10 | 2.20 | 2.30 | 2.40 | 2.40 | 2.50 |
| Deep Waterobics | 3.30 | 3.50 | 3.60 | 3.70 | 3.85 | 4.10 |
| Concession | 2.10 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.20 | 2.30 | 2.40 |
| Towel Hire | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.20 | 1.30 | 1.35 | 1.40 |
| Main Pool club hire | 28.00 | 28.70 | 28.70 | 29.00 | 31.00 | 32.40 |
| Diving Pool hire | 22.00 | 22.70 | 23.00 | 23.50 | 25.00 | 26.00 |
| Galas private use | 132.00 | 136.00 | 140.0 | 145.00 | 156.00 | 163.00 |
| | | | 0 | | | |
| Galas Education use | 75.00 | 77.00 | 80.00 | 82.00 | 88.50 | 92.00 |
| Education use | 20.00 | 20.50 | 21.00 | 21.50 | 23.00 | 24.00 |
| Club Insurance | n/a included in fee | | | | | |
| Commercial Insurance | n/a included in fee | | | | | |
| DRY CLASSES | | | | | | |
| 60 Minutes | | | | | 3.85 | 4.10 |
| Concession | | | | | 2.30 | 2.40 |
| 60 Minutes Junior | | | | | 2.40 | 2.50 |
| Yoga 1.5 hours | | | | | 4.50 | 4.70 |
| Pilates | | | | | 4.50 | 4.70 |
| Yoga/Pilates Conc/Junior | | | | | 2.70 | 2.80 |

Written Question 20 - To the Executive Member for Regeneration and Partnerships from Councillor Hoban

If he will list the board members of the Bernie Grant Partnership outlining in each case their background and experience in projects of this kind and scale, and indicate in each case whether or not they are, or have been, members of the Labour Party.

Answer:

The Council required the appointment of at least 4 directors of standing and the Bernie Grant Trust appointed 2 directors. The current Board Members of the Bernie Grant Partnership Ltd are:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| David Warwick [Chair] | Chief Executive of Haringey Council |
| Michael Driscoll | Vice-Chancellor of Middlesex University |
| Paul Head | Principal of the College of North East London |
| Harry Platt | Chief Executive of Workspace Ltd |
| Sharon Grant | Appointed by Bernie Grant Trust Ltd |
| Trevor Phillips | Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Member of the GLA, journalist and broadcaster. Appointed by the Bernie Grant Trust Ltd |

The political affiliations of the Board Members are not relevant to their functions and therefore not held, although some are obvious from their profiles.

Written Question 21 - To the Executive Member for Lifelong Learning from Councillor Laird

If she will outline what actions were taken by the Council to avert the Unison strike and what provision was made or attempted to provide suitable alternatives for children at special schools in the Borough?

Answer:

Unfortunately, the action taken by Unison in terms of their strike at the special school in Haringey targeted some of the most needy pupils in the borough. It was simply not possible for either the school or the LEA to make suitable safe alternative provision for these pupils given their complex needs. As Councillor Laird will know, the action is part of a London-wide campaign and the Council's position is that this matter cannot be resolved through industrial action. I can assure Councillor Laird that I have written to the Unison national office expressing my regret at their action and I hope very much that their position with regard to future strikes will be carefully considered and not impact upon such vulnerable children.

Written Question 22 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Laird

What measures does he propose to take to improve the environment of the area around the junction of Priory Road, Park Road and Muswell Hill, and around the bus stops on Muswell Hill?

Answer:

There are no proposals that I am aware of. If the Councillor could provide specific details on his particular concerns I will be happy to discuss these with him.

Written Question 23 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Simpson

If he will consider the introduction of traffic calming measures in Wood Lane/Wood Vale N6?

Answer:

The Council finances traffic calming measures mainly from funds from Transport for London (TfL) The criteria for traffic calming; bids are Bus Priorities, Cycling, Streets for People (Homezones) and Road Safety improvements such as local safety schemes and Safer Routes to school. Wood Lane/Wood Vale N6 needs to meet the criteria for these schemes to be included in a future bid for funding. At present it does not meet such criteria.

Written Question 24 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Simpson

Could he please outline the administrative process for removing abandoned vehicles? In particular, I am interested to know: -

- What checks are made before the vehicle is removed?
- How and where are these checks documented?
- Is the vehicle's condition inspected thoroughly and fully documented prior to removal?
- How long does it normally take to contact the owner of a vehicle following removal, and what is the Council's target for doing this?
- What is the Council's procedure if vehicles are wrongly removed?

Answer:

A series of checks are carried prior to the removal of any vehicle. The first inspection involves examining the condition of the vehicle to establish whether or not it has been abandoned. If the officer is satisfied that the vehicle has been abandoned a notice is placed on the vehicle; a 24 hour notice for vehicles of no value and a 7 day notice for those of some value and that are not posing any danger to the public. Those notices advise the owner that the Council has due cause to believe that the vehicle has been abandoned and that if this is not the case the owner must contact the Council. The onus is on the vehicle owner to contact the Council in response to the notice placed on the vehicle.

On expiry of the notice each vehicle is re-inspected. If the vehicle has not been removed or 'claimed' by its owner a police check will be carried to ensure that the vehicle has not been stolen.

On receipt of clearance from the police details are sent to the Contractor for removal and disposal.

The vast majority of vehicles that are abandoned are not registered with the DVLA and as such cannot be traced.

If a vehicle is wrongly removed which is extremely rare, then a claim settlement procedure is followed.

Throughout the process all details are fully documented.

Written Question 25 - To the Executive Member for Resources from Councillor Williams

Will he authorise the addition, on request, of representatives of local organisations to the e-mail circulation of the Council's 'Weekly List' of meetings so that they may plan their meetings to avoid clashes with relevant Council meetings?

Answer

This information is already available on our web-site and publicised in Haringey People. However, there is no reason why outside bodies cannot be included in the email circulation of this information as well. I have instructed staff to write to all bodies - around 120 - to ask them to supply their email details if they would like to be added to the regular circulation list.

Written Question 26 - To the Executive Member for Environment from Councillor Williams

In one Highgate street, despite a number of requests from both residents and myself to rectify the problem, several street-lights have been on continuously for more than six months. How frequently does the Council check for streetlights that are on during the day? Is there an estimate of the number of lights on during the day across the borough? What is the average running cost (lamp plus electricity) per hour of streetlights?

Answer:

Street lights that are on during the day are reported through routine inspections by Council inspectors and by members of the public. It is estimated that the number of columns lit during the day across the whole borough is minimal. The Council pays an annual fixed cost for electricity supply to all street lights.

The Highgate area will be inspected for day burning street lights and Cllr. Williams informed of progress.

Written Question 27 - To the Leader from Councillor Winskill

Following the appearance of Mr and Mrs Climbie at the Council meeting on February 20th, can the leader confirm that he has responded to Mrs Climbie's question of why Haringey has continued to give references to members of Haringey Social Services department in their efforts to obtain jobs with other local authorities. Could he also answer Mr Climbie's question - Why didn't Haringey, out of all the agencies involved in the death of Victoria Cimbie, not contact the family?

Answer:

When providing a reference for a former employee, the Council owes a duty of care both to that employee and to any future employer to provide a reference that is fair and accurate. Where a public inquiry has published a report, which is freely available, and, having heard the evidence of a former employee, comments on their actions in that report, it is reasonable for the Council to refer any future employer to that report in a reference provided for that former employee.

Where disciplinary sanctions or processes have applied as a result of the case in question, or in respect of other cases, references will reflect that the member of staff is leaving with a disciplinary sanction still in place and not expired or that the member of staff is subject to a disciplinary investigation process which has not concluded.

The Director of Social Services in Haringey had met with Mr and Mrs Climbie during the public inquiry held at Elephant and Castle. In 2002 a vigil for Victoria was organised by her family and took place in Haringey, on the steps of the Civic Centre. The Council offered the family the use of the Civic Centre and offered to provide refreshments. The Council was represented at the vigil by both Members and senior officers and flowers in memory of Victoria were presented to her family.

A letter is being sent to Mr and Mrs Climbie outlining the summary of actions taken to improve services since Victoria's death. This is in response to the specific request to this end made by Mr and Mrs Climbie at the February Council meeting which they attended. This letter includes an invitation to Mr and Mrs Climbie to meet with senior officers and senior councillors within the Council upon their next or subsequent visit to the United Kingdom.

Written Question 28 - To the Executive Member for Housing from Councillor Winskill

Has the Council responded to the LGA's request for information about the potential impact at local level should the proposals to abolish the Local Authority Social Housing Grant be implemented this April? Would she outline the impact on Haringey for the short term, taking note of the GLA's refusal to revise the unrealistic target imposed on Haringey to find 19 000 new dwellings, would she further give her opinion on whether any new social housing will be built in the Borough over the next decade.

Answer

In response to requests from the ODPM, GOL, the Housing Corporation and others, the council is currently calculating the impact of the abolition of Local Authority Social Housing Grant (LASHG) on the provision of new, local affordable housing supply. The ODPM has now confirmed that this funding stream will be removed as of the 1st April 2003.

In broad terms, LASHG has been used by the council to secure net new supply for the benefit of local people of between 30/40 units per year. This funding stream has often secured new housing development which otherwise would not be supported by the Housing Corporation.

Transitional arrangements have been announced which protect current commitments for the financial year 2003/04. However, beyond these transitional arrangements it is unclear at present if, under the direction of the new London Housing Board, there will be a specific, local element of the Housing Corporation administered Approved Development Programme (ADP), which would directly replace the outgoing LASHG funding stream.

In the longer term there is a risk to the council that the abolition of this funding stream may result in a reduction in new supply, which will hinder the council's ability to deliver on the Mayor's already challenging targets for new homes.

As far as total new supply in the borough is concerned, the government has determined that funding for housing investment through the ADP will be allocated on a regional and sub-regional level. Analysis by the north sub-regional group, of which Haringey is a member, has demonstrated that Haringey will continue to contribute a significant proportion of the affordable housing in the region.

Written Question 29 - To the Executive Member for Social Services and Health from Councillor Oatway

Does he agree with Justice Bracewell's comments on 14 February about Haringey Council that "I am particularly concerned that this particular authority, which has been subject to criticism in a major inquiry, has not even put into place a procedure to ensure that cases in relation to care applications are efficiently managed"?

Answer:

A number of measures have been put into place to ensure effective management of applications to court. These measures have additionally been put into place against a backdrop of a steep increase in the number of care applications made during the course of 2002-03. Such measures include the permanent appointment of social workers, managers and lawyers working for the council, an arrangement for overspill work to be dealt with by a contracted private firm of solicitors, joint legal and social work training for practitioners provided by one of the inns of court, monthly monitoring by service managers and the senior social services lawyer and a bi-monthly issues review meeting to consider issues within the management of care cases to be chaired by the Assistant Director of the service. There has been a marked increase in the number of positive testimony to Haringey social workers from courts in the last 6 - 8 months and the failure in this case to file evidence on time had no detrimental impact on the court's timetabling, wherein nearly a year elapsed from application to the setting of the final date nor in the children's welfare.

Written Question 30 - To the Leader of the Council from Councillor Oatway

Can he please explain why, in answer to written question no.4 (Council, 13 January) he stated that all decisions on whether or not to amend motions are taken by councillors but the council's procedure guide on page 2 states that minority party motions are sent "To Relevant Director to consider amendment"? What is the explanation for the apparent discrepancy between his answer and the contents of the procedure guide?

Answer:

There is no discrepancy. Council staff make no decisions; all decisions are taken by Members.

