

Full Council - Monday, 20th July, 2015

ITEM 12 - ANSWERS TO ORAL AND WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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FULL COUNCIL: 20 JULY 2015
QUESTIONS**ITEM 12****ORAL QUESTIONS****ORAL QUESTION 1 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY FROM COUNCILLOR WRIGHT:**

The Cabinet Member will share the concern not only of members in and around Wood Green but also of residents across the borough at the news that Marks and Spencer is planning to shut up shop in Wood Green after more than a hundred years of trading. Could the Cabinet Member tell us what representations the council have made to M&S?

ANSWER

Marks and Spencer's announcement is enormously disappointing news for the thousands of shoppers who come to Wood Green every day from all over north London. But it also makes no sense as a business decision: everyone knows that Wood Green has had its challenges, but with Crossrail 2 coming to Turnpike Lane and thousands of new homes planned for the wider Wood Green area, our High Street has as bright a future as any in London. Just at the point where our Wood Green Investment Framework is setting out an exciting new vision for a revitalised town centre, M&S has made this short-sighted decision and risks missing out on what promises to be London's next success story.

On 2 July, the Leader and I wrote to the Property Director at M&S, to point out the short-sightedness of the decision, and to request a meeting to discuss how M&S can join other local businesses in shaping Wood Green's future. The letter is published on the council's website, and a meeting with M&S has since taken place. Catherine West MP has also taken this up personally with M&S. We know local people feel as strongly about this as we do, and we will doggedly continue make the case for Wood Green to M&S and any other retailer who wants to get in at the start of something very special.

**ORAL QUESTION 2 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND
REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR ENGERT:**

Do you agree with local residents that Hornsey Town Hall should be listed as a community asset?

ANSWER

Hornsey Town Hall is one of Haringey's local gems and we are determined to see it brought into use in a way that will see both the building brought to life, and cover the costs of preserving it for future generations. As I have already said publicly, we share the community's desire to see the best possible future for the building. That's why bids submitted through the current process will not be considered unless they show a clear commitment to an open door policy.

As I have already said publicly, we welcome the nomination to list Hornsey Town Hall and square as an asset of community value, but it would be wrong of me to pre-empt the decision of the panel. The application will be considered in the usual way with a decision made by the panel following the statutory process and guidelines.

ORAL QUESTION 3 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING FROM COUNCLLOR AMIN:

Can the Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing update us on access to primary care, particularly GP access in Tottenham, and the work of the NHS England Task and Finish Group?

ANSWER

A draft strategic commissioning plan, commissioned by NHS England (NHSE), has been produced which highlights the need to increase current GP capacity in two areas: Tottenham Hale and Northumberland Park. In Tottenham Hale, a pilot is being proposed to develop a new practice on a temporary site in Hale Village with a view to the practice moving into a permanent site in the future. It is expected that this new practice will open in the autumn. Current need in Northumberland Park is to be addressed through a successful NHSE Infrastructure Grant to extend clinical space in a local GP practice.

The report also describes the future need in these areas as well as Noel Park and the Harringay Green Lanes area. In the next six months, work will continue to ensure that there are plans in place to meet these future needs. This includes identifying potential locations which would house new or expanding GP practices, conducting further work to look at risk factors which might contribute to practices closing (for example through retirement in single-handed practices) and consideration of any ways the council, CCG and NHSE could work together to encourage clinical staff to work in Haringey. This will ensure that future potential investment through subsequent years of available NHSE Infrastructure Grant funding can be rightly prioritised into those areas of greatest need.

ORAL QUESTION 4 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR NEWTON:

Do you agree that viability assessments are a barrier to increasing the level of affordable housing on developments?

ANSWER

The Coalition government introduced changes to legislation (Localism Act 2011) and clarified planning policy and guidance to make explicit the need for Local Planning Authorities (LPA) to have regard to financial considerations (particularly development viability) in their consideration of planning applications and the associated planning obligations.

National Planning Guidance sets out the range of financial considerations that the Council must have regard to in considering development viability, notably; gross development value,

development costs, land value and the need for a competitive return to developers and land owners. These considerations therefore form the basis for “viability assessments.”

Viability assessments have therefore emerged nationally as a tool for assessing financial considerations such as affordable housing provision and S106 payments when making decisions on planning applications. These assessments are an attempt by the developer – where they claim not be able to meet the Council’s policy requirements - to demonstrate what is, and what is not affordable. In Haringey we undertake our own independent assessment of an applicant’s viability appraisal as a means to challenge the conclusions of these reports. Because the determination of some of the costs and values requires consideration of future, as well as current conditions, there nevertheless remains uncertainty surrounding the conclusions that are reached, making this a less than perfect process. Where the conclusions appear to be improbable, officers will challenge the appraisal’s findings.

Unfortunately it is the effect of the last government’s reductions to affordable housing grant that have made affordable housing financially difficult to deliver.

ORAL QUESTION 5 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCLLOR GUNES:

Could the Cabinet Member update us on the percentage of Haringey Schools now judged to be Good or Outstanding by Ofsted?

ANSWER

In total 89% of Haringey Schools are judged to be good or outstanding by Ofsted and 91.4% of pupils are attending schools that are good or better. 100% of secondary schools, special schools and nurseries are good or outstanding.

ORAL QUESTION 6 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR HARE:

What is the council’s position on the building of a third runway at Heathrow, given the impact it will have on air quality across London and the borough?

ANSWER

The 2M Group, of which Haringey is a member, is an all-party alliance of 24 local authorities concerned at the environmental impact of Heathrow expansion on their communities. Members are not anti-airport but believe a policy of uncontrolled growth is unsustainable. The group represents more than five million people and membership comprises of the London Boroughs of Brent, Camden, Ealing, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham, Haringey, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Richmond, Sutton, Southwark and Wandsworth, plus the boroughs of Reading, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, Wycombe and South Bucks District Council.

We are obviously concerned about air quality in Haringey and across London, but also recognise that airports, including Stansted, provide strategic transport links, jobs and training for thousands of people and play a crucial part in maintaining London's global competitiveness. As highlighted in the recent Airport Commission report, it will be at least 15 years before any new capacity is ready and there are significant challenges that still need to be overcome, not least the need to meet stringent environmental conditions.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

WRITTEN QUESTION 1 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ENGERT:

Thames Water have said they will replace some water mains in the Muswell Hill area; what will the council, TFL and Thames Water be doing to ensure these works cause minimal disruption for local residents?

ANSWER

The council is working with Thames Water to design traffic management arrangements, minimising the impact of the works on residents, businesses and road users. Thames Water have developed a detailed communications and engagement plan that will involve the distribution of leaflets to local residents and businesses, as well as drop in sessions that will be designed to give the residents the opportunity to ask questions and seek information from Thames Water representatives about the project.

Thames Water has already made initial contact with ward councillors. The communication and engagement with residents and businesses commenced on 13 July 2015 and involves adverts in local news papers and a letter drop to residents in effected streets. The first drop in session is expected to be held one week before works commence, with the second is scheduled to take place within two weeks of works commencing. Works are due to start on site in early August and the programme is expected to take 52 weeks to fully complete.

Advance warning signs will be erected in strategic locations to warn the travelling public of the upcoming works a number of weeks in advance of works commencing. This will give the travelling public adequate time to establish alternative routes and plan their journeys accordingly.

Transport for London and London buses will be involved in the development of traffic management plans allowing them adequate time to understand and mitigate the impact on their services and to develop a comprehensive communication plan notifying their users of changes to services.

WRITTEN QUESTION 2 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR CARTER:

How many complaints have there been about the Wireless Festival this year and what did residents complain about?

ANSWER

A total of 122 complaints were received about the Wireless Festival this year. A breakdown of the complaint categories are highlighted below for both this year and last year:

2014

Noise including vibration: 170

Public behaviour: 26

Traffic: 5

Police: 1

Park issues: 15

Total: 217

2015

Noise including vibration: 85

Public behaviour: 11

Traffic: 9

Police: 5

Park issues: 12

Total: 122

In total there has been a 44% reduction in the level of complaints compared to last year. However while it is positive that the number is reducing, we are determined to learn from this year's complaints to further reduce numbers for future events. As we did last year we will be holding a 'lessons learned' review with public participation in order that future events are even better managed.

WRITTEN QUESTION 3 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR NEWTON:

When will the improvement works to Wood Green High Road be completed and why have the works overrun?

ANSWER

The Wood Green Major Scheme works were originally programmed to take 52 weeks for full completion, and were due to finish by 31 May 2015.

The main paving works were completed on the 6 July 2015 and the soft landscaping and tree pit works are programmed to be completed 24 July 2015. We expect the street and architectural lighting to be completed by 31 July 2015. This slight delay in completion is due to:

- Changes to the design and additional works being added.
- The manufacture of faulty lighting units, which were rejected, but meant that the lighting units had to be manufactured again. We have just taken receipt of the replacement units and now expect installation to be complete by the end of 31 July.

- The delays in UK Power Networks (UKPN) providing new power connections to the new lighting columns, resulting in old columns still being in service awaiting disconnection and removal.
- Industry shortage and limited supply of key materials required for fabrication of specialist items.

WRITTEN QUESTION 4 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING FROM COUNCILLOR BEACHAM:

Has the council had any discussions/correspondence with TfL or the Mayor of London on proposals for a housing development on Pinkham Way and changes to the north circular, if so what were the conclusions of those discussions/correspondence?

ANSWER

The transportation planning and planning policy team officers have had three meetings with TfL when the concepts for alterations to the North Circular Road in the vicinity of Pinkham Way were outlined and initial traffic modelling outputs discussed. In addition, the former transport Commissioner, Peter Hendy, wrote to the council on 27 March outlining the potential benefits of reducing congestion and unlocking development land in the vicinity of a planned Crossrail 2 station at New Southgate. Transport for London's response to SA52 in the Site Allocations Consultation confirmed that the Mayor of London was exploring options for redesign of a number of key road networks in the capital in order to unlock growth and make the capital a more attractive place to live and work:

“One of these locations is the A406 in New Southgate, where decking or a mini-tunnel over this junction on the North Circular would unlock land for new homes and connect the area around the proposed Crossrail 2 station. TfL will wish to discuss this further with Haringey (and Barnet and Enfield) councils. As such we would suggest including a new bullet in the development guidelines of “*TfL is investigating options for decking or a mini tunnel over this part of the North Circular as part of the Mayor's 2050 Infrastructure Plan, which if progressed could change the development context for this site.*”

The proposals are at an early stage. The plans provided online and associated with the press release outline a potential portal entrance to a new tunnel for the North Circular Road, or alternatively, residential development on a part of the Pinkham Way site. TfL is developing its business case for the options which will be shared with the council once completed.

The adopted UDP identifies the site as a joint Employment site and as a SINC. The recent “regulation 18” draft of the Site Allocations DPD does not change that designation. The council has yet to formally express in-principal support for either option.

WRITTEN QUESTION 5 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR ROSS:

Do any organisations have circular rent or peppercorn rent arrangements with the council? If so please list them with the rental figure.

ANSWER

Six organisations are on a peppercorn rent arrangement with the council and six organisations are on a Circular Funded Rent arrangement.

The identities and rental information is confidential and commercially sensitive as it relates to financial or business affairs between organisations and the council. In order that the council's impending negotiations with those organisations are not prejudiced we cannot publicly provide the information requested. However, a list of the organisations in question, together with their respective subsidies, can be provided to members on a confidential basis.

WRITTEN QUESTION 6 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER PLANNING FROM COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT:

What criteria are used for accepting local community asset nominations and what criteria are used for rejecting local community asset nominations in Haringey?

ANSWER

The criteria for accepting nominations and assessing nomination for Assets of Community are defined in the Localism Act 2011 and the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012. The checklist and criteria published on the council's website are attached as background.

Section 89 of the Act and Regulations 4 & 5 set out who is entitled to nominate land. Notably, the nominating body must be able to demonstrate that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the local authority's area or with a neighbouring authority's area and any surplus it makes is wholly or partly applied for the benefit of the authority's area or the neighbouring authority's area. Local authorities cannot list land on their own initiative.

When nominating a community asset, the body must also show a local connection as follows:

- **Parish Councils.** May nominate an asset in its own area, or that of the neighbouring parish council or, if the land lies within an unparished area, it lies within the area either of the same local authority as the parish council or of a local authority which shares a boundary with the parish council...
- **Unincorporated groups.** Nominations can be accepted from any unincorporated group whose membership includes at least 21 local people who are registered as local authority electors at an address within the area of the local authority, or a neighbouring local authority.
- **Neighbourhood forums.** The procedure for becoming a neighbourhood forum is set out in section 61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. There can only be one neighbourhood forum for an area.

- **Community interest groups with a local connection.** These must have one or more of the following structures:
 - a) A charity
 - b) A community interest company
 - c) A company limited by guarantee that is non profit distributing
 - d) An industrial and provident society that is non profit distributing

WRITTEN QUESTION 7 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIS:

How many children that the council is responsible for went missing from care last year and the year before?

ANSWER

The number of children that went missing from care in 2013-14 was 22, and the number of children missing from care in 2014-15 was 31.

WRITTEN QUESTION 8 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR HARE:

Traders on Archway Road, Green Lanes, Muswell Hill and Tottenham High Road have experienced poor, missed and badly timed rubbish collections causing mounting rubbish and disruption to traffic, what will the council do to address this problem?

ANSWER

We have been made aware of some instances of missed collections following the introduction of a new afternoon collection service on our high streets, which started from the 1 April 2015. In order to address these concerns we are working with Veolia taking further measures to engage with residents and traders to continue to inform them of the new collection times. We are also monitoring Veolia's performance to ensure that waste is collected at the prescribed times.

It's worth noting that there has been no reduction in the number of collections from flats above shops or from traders on our high streets, which still remains at 14 collections per week (twice daily).

WRITTEN QUESTION 9 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES AND CULTURE FROM COUNCILLOR CONNOR:

How much has the council and Homes for Haringey spent on interims, consultants and agency staff in each of the last two years?

ANSWER

Both the council and Homes for Haringey have planned an increased use of more flexible resources in this period of significant change. The use of these flexible resources allows for

an injection of transformation capacity and expertise but also ensures that we do not recruit into substantive roles that may be deleted in workforce plan restructures.

There is a significant amount of management oversight of this area with senior sign-off for all resources. In addition, there is a regular report presented to Staffing and Remuneration Committee where the details of the use of external resources are published. In particular, the committee looks at the longevity of interim and consultant contracts, the number of contract extensions and the extent to which they are delivering value for money.

Council

2013/14

Interim: £3,731,225.00
Consultant: £4,271,953.00
Agency: £15,491,615.00

2014/15

Interim: £4,795,980.00
Consultant: £3,798,309.00
Agency: £19,144,373.00

Homes for Haringey

2013/14

Interim: £423,131.00
Consultant: £112,354.00
Agency: £1,699,240.00

2014/15

Interim: £839,922.00
Consultant: £191,835.00
Agency: £1,846,571.00

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