

COUNCIL MEETING – 9 FEBRUARY 2009

Labour – Proposed budget amendments

1. We wish to continue investing in the **Child Poverty Strategy** and are proposing to spend another £100k in 2009/10 in addition to the £100k we have already committed this year. This will include:

- funding a benefits campaign manager, based with the Citizen's Advice Bureau, to identify the best methods of increasing benefit take in the borough and targeting those families most in need;
- providing additional support to the Reaping the Benefits campaign, in the form of running evening advice sessions, in eight different venues in some of our most deprived areas
- organising further 'Claim It' events through out the year and additional on-going publicity to raise the profile of this;
- production leaflets and publicity materials for residents on how to claim benefits including in work credit, out of work benefits and free school meals. These will be distributed to target families at schools, children's centres, GP and health centres and libraries.

2. The quality of the street environment remains a vital issue for residents in the borough, who tell us that crime and clean streets should be priorities for improvement.

We are proposing an investment of £160k per year in the **Environmental Crime service** which will improve outcomes for residents, by directing resources towards the areas of greatest need, and enabling a proactive approach to tackling environmental problems.

By reshaping the service we will increase its effectiveness and visibility. Every ward will have a named warden, giving us the flexibility to respond to priorities in a local area. The warden will work with local residents and councillors, and with partner agencies, to coordinate service interventions and to address key issues using a problem-solving approach which will deliver sustained improvements.