

COUNCIL QUESTIONS – 17 JULY 2006:

Oral Question 1 – To the Executive Member for Housing from Cllr Cooke.

Could the Executive Member for Housing outline the success the Council has had in improving the satisfaction of tenants?

Oral Question 2 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Williams .

How much money has the Council wasted on the plans to place a skate park in Priory Park ?

Oral Question 3 – To the Executive Member for Community Involvement from by Cllr Dodds.

To ask the Executive Member for Community Involvement what she is doing to ensure there is full and comprehensive consultation on the development of a new Community Strategy to replace the current one which runs until 2007.

Oral Question 4 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Hare.

What specific measures has the council recently taken to conserve water supplies in view of the current water shortages in the London region.

Oral Question 5 – To the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee from Cllr Vanier.

Does the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny agree with me that it is important that members and residents alike get involved in scrutiny reviews, and if he does, can he outline the steps that he is taking to ensure that this happens?

Oral Question 6 – To the Executive Member for Organisational Development and Performance from Cllr Hoban.

What is the current spend that can be directly attributed to the Tech Refresh project?

Oral Question 7 – To the Executive Member for Children & Young People from Cllr Egan.

Does the new Executive Member for Children & Young People support Fortismere's bid for Foundation status?"

Oral Question 8 – To the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration from Cllr Weber.

What efforts have the Labour Council and Officers made to ensure that Haringey benefits from training and business opportunities as a result of the Olympic Games bid being successful a full year ago?

Oral Question 9 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Dogus.

Could the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation outline his priorities for the coming year?

Oral Question 10 – To the the Leader of the Council from Cllr Davies.

In response to a question at Overview & Scrutiny (03.07.06) on “proven competence” with regard to the reselection of the Executive Member responsible for overseeing the £10m overspend on IT Tech Refresh, the Leader of the Council said that the Executive took collective responsibility on the issue – why did not one single member of the Executive resign over this disastrous project?

Written Questions

Written Question 1 – To the Executive Member for Health and Social Services from Cllr Oatway.

If he will list the excess winter mortality rates in a) Haringey and if available b) Hornsey & Wood Green and c) Tottenham in terms of numbers and percentages for i) those aged 65-80yrs and ii) aged over 80 yrs and iii) all ages for each year from 2002 to 2005 inclusive.

ANSWER

The information requested is not held by Haringey Council as a matter of routine. However in the spirit of cooperation, we have requested it from the Director of Public Health who is employed by Haringey Teaching Primary Care Trust. Unfortunately the information was not available at the time that answers need to be prepared for Council and we will, therefore, circulate this as soon as we receive it from the TPCT.

Written Question 2 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Oakes.

To list clearly the number of engagements he has had in each council ward, since 1 November 2005, at which;

- a) he has attended on behalf of the Council in his capacity as Lead member for the environment and spoken to or met with local residents, and;
- b) he has attended on behalf of the council in his capacity as Lead member for the environment, and has been accompanied by council officers, and has spoken to or met with local residents.

ANSWER

To answer both your points in one, as your question refers to the Lead Member for Environment and Conservation, I have only been appointed to the post since May 2006 and we are now only in July 2006.

However, I will outline the following as examples within the last few weeks:

- June: March against NHS cuts in Haringey
- 6th June: Chestnuts Community Centre, N15
- 22nd June: Consultation Event Turnpike Lane
- 29th June: Margaret Giller (Sports Solutions in Haringey)
- 5th July: Garden Residents Association Meeting
- 6th July: Haringey Sports Council
- 6th July: Turkish Women's Philanthropic Association of England, Willoughby Rd
- 7th July: Tottenham Kids Football Presentation
- 11th July: Estates Walkabout – Legat Court, Warwick Gardens, N4
- 12th July: Crouch End Traders
- July: Gun and Knife Crime (Jackson's Lane)

Upcoming meetings:

- CPZ meetings with residents
- Edgecot Grove pest control issues
- Haringey Sports Development
- African Caribbean Leadership Centre
- Stroud Green Residents' Association (SGRA)
- Gun and Knife Crime (Jackson's Lane)
- Stroud Green Residents' Association (SGRA)

Not to mention surgeries and various other meetings within the Council which involves residents.

Written Question 3 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Williams.

What is the annual usage of water by Haringey council, and could he produce a table showing the trend in usage over the past ten years ?

ANSWER

Unfortunately we do not currently have detailed usage information for Council properties as the monitoring of water usage and the related expenditure is carried out by the individual managers of each of the properties.

Corporate Procurement aim to set up corporate water usage monitoring arrangements as the resources are available. They are currently deploying their resources on gas and electricity which in price terms is more volatile.

	Actual
	£,000
2003/4	3,221
2004/5	3,444
2005/6	4,127

The majority of water costs fall within the Housing Revenue Account and we know that in 2005/06 there was an average price increase of 21%, which accounts for the increase in costs shown here.

Written Question 4 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Mughal.

Would he please outline when a review of parking in Wood Green will take place given that it has been 4 years since any such review has taken place?

ANSWER

Draft consultation documents are currently with ward members for their information and views. Consultation will commence on the 28 July and 6 weeks will be provided for responses i.e. by the 15 September 2006. It is anticipated that the review will be presented to the Executive on November 8th 2006.

Written Question 5 – To the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety.

For each of the past five years, how many of the following actions have been undertaken:

- a) Enforcement instructions given to legal
- b) S330 requests for information served
- c) Enforcement Notices served
- d) Stop Notices served
- e) Breach of Condition Notices Served
- f) Prosecutions Sent to Litigation
- g) Proceedings Issued
- h) Successful Prosecutions

ANSWER

Since January 2004, the delivery of planning enforcement has been the responsibility of the Enforcement Service, but with enforcement decisions made through the Planning Policy and Performance Service.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total
Enforcement Instructions given to Legal	132	89	105	46	95	467
S330 Requests served	95	12	38	66	78	289
Enforcement Notices served	105	65	70	83	66	389
Stop Notices Served	4	7	2	0	1	14
Breach of Condition Notices served	0	0	10	6	7	23
Prosecutions sent to Litigation	4	NA*	8	8	4	24
Proceedings issued	1	4	8	8	3	24
Successful Prosecutions	1	4	1	0	2	6

* Figure is not available

Figures shown here only reflect the first 6 months of 2006 and in many areas this therefore shows significant increase in enforcement activity. Overall these results show a steady increase in activity over the last 3 years.

The reduction in legal instructions in 2005 actually reflects a reduction in the actual number of instructions with errors that had previously inflated legal casework. Increases in 2006 however reflect a genuine increase in enforcement activity.

There has also been an increase in matters taken to court. Figures per year however for successful cases can have a 2-3 year lag and do not therefore relate to activity in the year shown.

Written Question 6 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Hare.

How many tree preservation orders were made in each of 2004 and 2005 and in how many instances was there opposition from residents and other parties?

ANSWER

Based on reports on Tree Preservation Orders to Planning Applications Committee; there were no TPO's confirmed in 2004; TPO's on 8 sites in 2005, none of which were opposed. In the first half of 2006, TPO's on 31 different addresses were put forward for confirmation, and objections were received on 8 of these.

Written Question 7 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Engert.

When does the Council envisage that traffic calming measures will be implemented in Cranley Gardens, what are these measures and how much will they cost ?

ANSWER

The Cranley Gardens area has been included in our submission to Transport for London for funding as part of our 2007/08 20MPH Programme, £360k has been specifically asked for the Cranley Gardens area. If successful, discussions with residents for possible traffic calming initiatives would commence early in the new financial year.

Written Question 8 – To the Executive Member for Organisational Development and Performance from Cllr Rainger.

Why he claims in his report to the Executive that "significant improvements in performance have been achieved in the following areas: Average days to repair street lighting" when the performance indicators which his report are based upon explains that "The repair of cable faults by the distribution network operator, EDF, has been poor with the overall result (21.96 days) at more than double the target (10 days) and also double what EDF claim is their average time.

ANSWER

There are two indicators for measuring Street lighting repairs. The first is BV215a which measures the average time for the streetlights to be repaired; this is within the direct control of the Council as work is undertaken by the contractor. The second indicator is 215b, which the question refers to, is an indicator set to measure EDF and relates to cables faults which are outside our direct control.

The comment regarding the improved performance relates more appropriately to BV215a which is the councils own average time to repair streetlights. The target set for last year was 3.5 days and an average annual performance of 1.82 days was achieved. Performance year to date is 1.87 days, which maintains this good performance.

The target for 10 days for the EDF indicator was set based on their customer charter. There has been a concerted effort to ensure that pressure has been placed on EDF to improve their performance and year to date results are 3.65 average days, although these should be viewed with caution this early on in the year.

Whilst we can not comment specifically on EDF's own claims on performance, we do have engineers that sit on a London benchmarking group, and our performance is seems comparable to these.

Written Question 9 – To the Executive Member for Crime and Community Safety from Cllr Aitken.

How many enforcement actions have been pursued under the provisions to reduce the height of high hedges contained in the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003, what proportion of those actions has resulted in successful enforcement, how long on average did each case take from complaint to conclusion, and why does the Council levy a fee against residents suffering from this problem before taking action.

ANSWER

There have been three requests for service. Two have been resolved followed payment of a fee without the need for formal action. One complaint is awaiting payment of fee before an investigation will be undertaken.

The average time taken for the completion of cases is one month.

The Council is empowered under Regulations made under the Act to establish a fee that will recover reasonable costs. In Haringey our fee is based upon a standard officer rate of £75 per hour with a maximum cost of £200. In cases of hardship, a waiver of all or part of the fee can be considered.

At the time when fees were set, research showed that the average fee was just under £345 in England and £320 in Wales. In the consultation papers issued prior to legislation which enabled fee setting, the Government indicated that it believed the average cost to local authorities would be between £280 to £320 per case.

Written Question 10 – To the Executive Member for Children and Young People from Cllr C Harris.

What provisions are being made for youth between 14 and 17 in Noel Park, on and around the street property estate, for their occupation especially in the evening?

ANSWER

The Youth Service has no specific youth base in Noel Park. However young people from Noel Park use Wood Green Centre which offers a variety of activities every afternoon after school and 3 evenings a week.

In the first quarter of this year 47 young people (11-25) from Noel Park accessed provision at Wood Green with 29 of them being in the 14-17 age range.

Activities on offer at the Wood Green project include ICT skills, music workshops, discussion groups, sporting opportunities, counselling, advice and information and anger management.

Written Question 11 – To the Executive Member for Enterprise and Regeneration from Cllr Winskill.

What provisions are being built into the Wood Green Development Plan to enhance the survival of small businesses in the area?

ANSWER

Urban Practitioners, Donaldsons and Alan Baxter & Associates were commissioned in November 2005 to work in partnership with Haringey Council, The Mall Corporation and the Wood Green Town Centre Management Committee to produce a report on Wood Green that would constitute the first step in producing plans to ensure that the town centre can provide for needs in 5 to 10 years time. The report was produced in March 2006 with the aim of providing a robust evidence base that will inform future policy development to make Wood Green the major retail and leisure destination in North London; and to ensure that Wood Green benefits from the major new development that is proposed for Haringey Heartlands.

In this respect the Wood Green Town Centre Spatial Plan aims to build on the town centre's current strengths and to transform it into a major shopping and retail destination in North London, whilst also improving the quality of environment for local residents, businesses and visitors.

The report makes reference for the need to extend and widen the retail offer. Whilst the report identifies the need to attract new inward retail investment to maintain Wood Greens status as a metropolitan shopping area, the Council would seek to ensure that existing small business is not displaced and that long term sustainability is ensured. An example of where the Council is ensuring such policies are acted on is in Lymington Avenue where a proposed project would see the development of mixed use housing and retail units. Consultations have already taken place with local traders in this area and any future development will seek to ensure their survival either through temporary or permanent relocation within borough during construction. Moreover, traders are likely to be given first refusal on any new retail spaces developed. It is this type of in-depth business consultation approach that will also be a big part of the Wood Green Town Centre development which will aim to minimise negative economic impacts on small business whilst improving the overall retail offer.

In addition to the above, the Council is currently running a number of projects e.g. the Business Lounge in Wood Green Library, which are aimed at supporting local businesses in Wood Green. Specifically, these projects aim to help local business reduce their risk of failure, increase networking and knowledge opportunities as well as improve their sustainability. The Council also supports more general advice provision in the borough to all local businesses to help them grow and survive and this is, of course, available to Wood Green businesses.

Written Question 12 – To the Executive Member for Health and Social Services from Cllr Butcher.

Has Council Policy changed to mean that carers are getting fewer and more infrequent access to respite care for the people they are caring for?

ANSWER

No – the Council's policy has not changed. I am pleased to be able to tell you that in 2005/06 122 people received respite care, equating to 158 individual respite services. In the first three months of this year 61 carers have received 68 individual respite services.

We continue to invest in the Carers Centre. Work has also started on the site of the former Osborne Grove Home and a new respite care facility will open in 2007.

Written Question 13 – To the Executive Member for Health and Social Services from Councillor Hoban.

How many respite care visits took place in the following municipal year (or equivalent annual period) 2002/3, 03/04, 04/05, 05/06 and what was the average length of stay for each year?

ANSWER

The number of temporary admissions to residential care homes over the last four years is as follows:

2002/03 – 731
2003/04 – 437
2004/05 – 464
2005/06 – 570

The average length of stay during 2005/06 was approximately twelve days.

The drop in residential respite from the 2002/04 level demonstrates the successful implementation of our Community Strategy as the amount of community based respite [such as the sitting services and the night home care team] has increased.

Written Question 14 – To the Executive Member for Health and Social Services from Cllr Wilson.

What is the average length of individuals have with one social worker before they social worker is replaced?

ANSWER

As Councillor Wilson is aware, I am responsible for social care in respect of adults and older people. For these user groups there is no government or best practice expectation that a person will be 'allocated' a long term social worker. Rather, the service works within the expectation in government guidance that the 'ideal length of intervention' will be three

months. This allows time for assessment of need, an appropriate package of care to maximise independence being put in place and the package to be reviewed. Only in rare cases will a social worker continue to be involved beyond this time.

Written Question 15 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Edge.

When will the Council be doing a review of the last Stroud Green CPZ?

ANSWER

The Finsbury Park CPZ, in which the Stroud Green CPZ is included, was introduced in October 2003. It was reviewed in June 2004 and extended in January 2006. Any further review will be considered when developing future forward programmes. We are currently consulting on proposals for the possible introduction of a CPZ in the roads around Harringay Station. The consultation area borders the existing Finsbury Park CPZ

Written Question 16 – To the Executive Member for Community Involvement from Cllr Demirci.

How long does it take Haringey Integrated Community Equipment Services to issue equipment from receipt of form to issue and installation?

ANSWER

Community Equipment Services are a matter for the Executive Member for Health and Social Services as it is a jointly managed health and social care service.

However, I am pleased to be able to share with you that performance in this area is very good and last month we were able to deliver 91.7% of equipment in seven working days from the item being prescribed. This is clearly very good news and further work including electronic ordering and a new system of materials management is being developed. It is expected that this will further improve performance in this area.

Written Question 17 – To the Executive Member for Community Involvement from Cllr Gorrie.

How much money was spent on the Residents' Conference on 2 July and how many residents attended?

ANSWER

Four years ago, the Council held a Residents' Conference, when the new Neighbourhood Management Service was developing. The purpose of that conference was to hear about residents' key priorities and involve them in the various neighbourhood boards being set up. An undertaking was given at the time that a similar event would be held in the future.

It was decided to hold the second Residents' Conference on 2nd July 2006, to inform local people of the borough-wide roll-out of the Neighbourhood Management Service. In addition, the Residents' Conference was a key part of the consultation process for the Community Strategy. Officers working on the strategy were fully involved in the planning of the event. This date was chosen to hold this key event to celebrate the end of the

Beacon Year, which ran from April 2005 to June 2006. Therefore, Beacon Funding was used to pay for the event, as we are a Beacon Council for our work in getting closer to communities.

We have learned that how you present to the community is really important and this has been our focus from Area Assemblies to other areas of work. As Lead Member, I wanted to convey to residents, from the quality of the event, how important they are to working with the Council. Therefore, a lot of effort was put into the event, to show respect for local residents and to demonstrate the Council values their contribution. We also decided to try and run an event on a Sunday, to allow residents from the orthodox Jewish community to participate, as Saturday events automatically exclude this hard-to-reach group of people.

We wanted to create a positive environment so residents felt they could contribute their ideas and that they would be heard. We chose to offer a variety of different foods, to reflect our diverse communities, including Kosher food.

The cost of the event was £17k . This includes: publicity fees, hiring the venue, catering, the crèche facility, St John's Ambulance, transport, technical support, facilitation, entertainment and security services. Of this, £14k was funded from the Beacon Council budget, which was money given to the Council by the ODPM, as the reward for achieving Beacon Council status, which was to be spent on getting closer to communities.

We had 140 respondents reserve a place prior to the event and 90 residents came to the event. There has been some very positive feedback that has been picked up from the notes completed by residents on the bus tours. These include:

- 'I was really pleased to have the privilege to be driven round the borough to see what the Council is doing. I am amazed and happy at the whole lot of improvements in the borough'
- 'I enjoyed the tour. Well done Haringey Council'
- 'This event should be held every two years'

Whilst we had hoped to see a few more residents on the day, weather temperatures had an impact and just over 80 people, who had taken the time to pre-register, did not attend. However, it was encouraging that so many people, including some who had not pre-registered, did come on such a very hot day. In particular, twenty people attended from the 'Under One Sun Project'. These are Albanian speaking families who brought their children to participate and communicate on their behalf.

The discussion groups had even numbers in them, and not being too large, provided an opportunity for people to have their say.

We have many useful ideas and contributions from the notes made on the tours and the discussion groups and these are currently being typed up and will be circulated to all those who attended, and information will be posted on the Council's website. All these ideas will be used for the development of the Community Strategy.

Written Question 18 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Davies.

What research has the Council carried out and/or used in assessing the effectiveness of speed humps (and other forms of traffic calming) in (i) reducing speed and (ii) reducing serious injury and death on our roads and what other considerations are taken into account in deciding what proposals to put to residents for traffic calming?

ANSWER

The Council will use studies and reports produced by the Transport Research Laboratory regarding the use of road humps and other features for controlling vehicle speeds. Project report 18 H5/28 states that road humps are one of the most effective way of controlling vehicle speeds. Preliminary analysis of the accidents at traffic calming sites with vertical deflection measures showed that the accident frequency was reduced by 71%. When considering measures for an area the council will enter into discussions with residents to discuss initiatives that would be acceptable when offered as formal consultation.

Written Question 19 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Beynon.

When will the litter bin at the bus stop outside Barrington Court, Colney Hatch Lane (N10) which has been missing for several months since destroyed by fire, be replaced?

ANSWER

Orders have been placed for over 100 new litter bins for this financial year and the stock is due to arrive shortly. A new litter bin will be installed at the bus stop outside Barrington Court in Colney Hatch Lane within the next few weeks. The vast majority of new litter bins are manufactured from steel and are not likely to be destroyed by fire.

Written Question 20 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Portess.

Which roads are currently scheduled for resurfacing in this municipal year and when will the Executive take the decision on which roads to include next year?

ANSWER

Roads currently scheduled for carriageway resurfacing in this municipal year are detailed below

NON-PRINCIPAL ROADS

Albert Road, N22
Albert Road, N15
Bedford Road, N22
Buckingham Road, N22
Creighton Avenue, N10
Highgate High Street, N6
Northumberland Park, N17
Philip Lane, N15
St Ann's Road, N15
White Hart Lane, N22
Wolves Lane, N22

Birkbeck Road, N8
Cholmeley Park, N6
Clifton Gardens, N15
Crossway (The), N22
Croxford Gardens, N22
Eastern Road, N2
Ennis Road, N4
Higham Road, N15
Montenotte Rd, N10
Muswell Avenue, N10
North Grove, N15
St Loy's Road, N17
Stirling Road, N22
Tower Terrace, N22

PRINCIPAL ROADS

Priory Road, N8
 Lordship Lane, N22

The Executive takes the decision on which roads to include in next year's programme when it meets to consider the recommendations in the Report detailing the Department's Highways Works Plan for 2006/07. The recommendations are based on the road condition surveys that are carried out annually by an external agency. This meeting is usually held within the first quarter of each calendar year.

Written Question 21 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Newton.

Whose responsibility are the lights attached to the sides of property in Keynes Close (N2) and what steps will the Council take to eradicate the light pollution they are causing to properties in Fortis Green Avenue (without compromising security for residents of Keynes Close)?

ANSWER

The lights themselves belong to Homes for Haringey and are maintained under an SLA with the Street lighting Team within the Highways Department. We are aware of the issue and the two departments are working together to find the best solution to maintain security whilst addressing the lighting issue. It is anticipated that this will see the lights replaced as part of the maintenance programme.

Written Question 22 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Alexander.

Will he confirm that residents at those managed blocks of flats that have recently been given recycling bins are not being charged extra for them and explain why the same residents are charged extra for hire of their waste bins? Will he address this anomaly where all residents pay the same council tax but some receive free wheelie bins and others must contribute to bin hire?

ANSWER

There are currently no charges being made for recycling bins installed at blocks of flats.

Charges only apply for the hire of bulk waste containers. Bulk waste containers are more costly to purchase, maintain, store and transport to and from site than wheelie bins. Having examined the policy to charge for the hire of bulk waste containers the council holds the view that the charge is reasonable based on the higher costs involved in providing these types of bins.

Written Question 23 – To the Executive Member for Environment and Conservation from Cllr Reid.

When will there be any further discussion or decision by the Executive with regard to the recommendation of the scrutiny review on Allotments that the Council should appoint a dedicated Allotments Officer?

ANSWER

Clearly there are a number of challenges and indeed opportunities presented by the recent interest and focus on Allotments provision.

The Executive does not believe that the solution lies in the appointment of a dedicated officer for this function, but that improvement can be delivered through the overall enhanced officer resource in our Parks and Open Spaces Unit. In addition to our three Operational Area Managers and Officers (6) and Administrative Support Officer, we now have capacity with regard to Security, Public Relations, Quality /Health & Safety, Infrastructure Renewal, and Service Development, which has been put in place over the last 3 years. This resource supports service delivery and improvement across our open spaces portfolio, and we are now in a position to develop a bespoke improvement plan in conjunction with the newly formed Borough Allotments Forum.