

**FULL COUNCIL: 23 NOVEMBER 2015**  
**QUESTIONS**

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

**ORAL QUESTION 1 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR NEWTON:**

What progress has there been with the bidding process for Hornsey Town Hall?

**ANSWER**

**ORAL QUESTION 2 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABILITY FROM COUNCILLOR DORON:**

In light of the announcements made by George Osborne at the Conservative Party conference regarding the devolution of business rates to local government, can the Cabinet Member tell us what plans are being made by the Council to ensure that we continue to attract more businesses to the borough?

**ANSWER**

**ORAL QUESTION 3 - TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ENGERT:**

Transport for London have proposed 2 different routes that go through Haringey, one via Wood Green Station and the other via Alexandra Palace, which route is the council backing?

**ANSWER**

**ORAL QUESTION 4 - TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR G BULL:**

Given the importance of ensuring that every Haringey resident who is eligible to vote, is registered to do so; can the Leader update us on what the current registration rate is within the borough and what the Council is doing to reach and inform those residents that have not yet registered?

**ANSWER**

**ORAL QUESTION 5 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIS:**

The serious case review in Child O raised serious concerns about the way social services operate and the impact this has on the most vulnerable children in the borough, do you think it is acceptable that the issues raised by a previous review from 2010/11 were also a problem in this latest case?

**ANSWER**

**ORAL QUESTION 6 - TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES FROM COUNCILLOR JOGEE:**

Does the Cabinet Member share my concerns about the proposed police cuts that are expected to be announced within the Spending Review and can she tell us what the Council is doing to maintain and improve community safety in the borough?

**ANSWER**

**WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**WRITTEN QUESTION 1 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING FROM COUNCILLOR CONNOR:**

Why has there been so little progress on the St Ann's Hospital site development?

**ANSWER**

The planning application for the St Ann's Hospital site was presented to Members of the Planning Sub Committee on 16th March 2015, who resolved to grant full and outline planning permission subject to the signing of a section 106 legal agreement. The legal agreement was signed on 10 July 2015, and the Planning Permission was issued. There have been no further applications submitted to the council for the discharge of "pre-commencement" conditions.

It is for developers to enact on planning permission. Following planning approval the Council has been advised that the Trust is now working on the details of the proposed redevelopment of St Ann's Hospital and securing the necessary NHS approvals, which has taken some time. Once these are agreed, it will proceed with the marketing of the part of the site which will be surplus to NHS requirements. It is anticipated that this will be around spring 2016.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 2 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND REGENERATION FROM COUNCILLOR BEACHAM:**

Can you please provide the number of empty homes in the borough for each of the last three years with the proportion that have been the subject of an empty dwelling management order?

**ANSWER**

The numbers of residential properties that have been empty for over one year are as follows:

- 2013/14: 571 properties
- 2014/15: 725 properties
- 2015/16: 1099 properties (this is the forecast figure for March 2016)

The number of properties that were brought back into use through Compulsory Purchase (CPO) or Enforced Sale (ES) are as follows:

- 2013/14: 49 CPO and 10 ES
- 2014/15: 46 CPO and 7 ES
- 2015/16 (to date): 35 CPO and 3 ES

Empty Property Management Orders (EDMO) were introduced in 2006 but the legislation and process was not only resource intensive but also financially onerous on the local authority, should it attempt to bring properties back through this process. It became even more challenging when the government in 2011 made changes so you could only apply for an EDMO where:

- The unit was empty for a minimum of 2 years (previously 6 months)
- It is a serious nuisance/threat to the local community (Anti social behaviour/crime/dumping/graffiti/serious repairs affecting adjoining properties)

These properties would usually be in a very poor state of repair and would cost the Council large sums of money to bring up to a compliance and habitable standard. The outgoings can only be recovered through the rent. Any surplus has to be returned to the owner and any deficit supported by the authority. Therefore, the council's preferred enforcement route to bring empty properties back into use is through Enforced Sale and CPO - these are much easier to use and more resource-friendly.

Our process for dealing with empty units has been in place since 2006. Since then over 300 properties have been restored to use, with a recovery of just over £600K council tax.

The Housing Improvement Team provide enforcement activity on empty homes within the private sector. The team are typically working on up to 80 empty units at any one time that are empty with no reason or plan in place. The team try to trace the owners of these properties and offer advice and grant incentives to bring the properties back in to use. If a grant is accepted the units are used by the Council for private sector leases for a 5 year period at cost neutral to the Council.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 3 – TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR ENGERT:**

Can you please provide a breakdown of the council's spending on the re-development of the council website including any costs associated with integrating the new logo and brand?

**ANSWER**

The Council has developed a customer service transformation programme which aims to make it easier and quicker for people to access services and information online, reducing the need for face-to-face and telephone-based transactions.

This work involves two planned stages of website development. The first was a redesign of the website to improve navigation, which will include the integration of 'My Account' in November. The second stage is aimed at personalising the experience so that we are better able to pre-empt what the user is looking for. The cost of phase one was £68,888. The new brand was implemented as part of this but there were no specific costs attached because the work was already planned and needed to happen regardless of the council assuming a new identity. There will be a major return on investment with an expected reduction in demand of face-to-face and telephone transactions.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 4 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM COUNCILLOR ROSS:**

I understand the council will be approaching Highgate Primary School and North Bank in Muswell Hill to see if they can be used as children's centre sites for the west of the borough. If they are unable or unwilling to be used as children's centres, what your strategy be to ensure there is a children's centre in the west of the borough?

**ANSWER**

In response to the question and in respect of ensuring a Children's Centre in the West of the borough, the recommendation agreed at Cabinet in November was to seek a new provider through an open tender process. We will be using the specification agreed at Cabinet for the delivery of children's centre services and going to the market as soon as possible.

The Council will not be specifically approaching Highgate Primary School and North Bank in Muswell Hill to be used as a children's centre site, but will seek to work with them as part of our continuing development of a network of support for parents and families with young children across the borough. We are aware of the excellent work they already do and are keen to work with these providers to ensure that their services continue to support children and families.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 5 – TO THE LEADER FROM COUNCILLOR MORRIS:**

How many people in Haringey have not individually registered as a voter when they were previously on the household based electoral register?

**ANSWER**

This question is inherently difficult to answer, given the changeable nature of the electoral register. Residents' circumstances change, children reach voting age and a significant number of people move in and out of the borough each year, making it difficult to compare who was specifically on the last Household register with who is on the latest IER register. The answer to this question will also depend on which point in time the register is checked.

At the time of the 2015 parliamentary election, there was little difference in scale between registers under the Household and IER systems. The last Household Register had approximately 149,000 electors on the Parliamentary Register (i.e. British, Commonwealth and Irish citizens). At publication of the first IER register, this number had fallen to 137,000. However, the IER register reached 150,150 at the point of the parliamentary election this year – higher than at any parliamentary election since 1987. The number is expected to fall slightly again when published in December, but as efforts to register as many people as possible are boosted, more and more people are registering every day. We will not know exact numbers until publication in December, but we expect this will not be below the 137,000 mark of the first IER register.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 6 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING FROM COUNCILLOR HARE:**

Excluding green spaces, MOL and parks, how many square meters of public land is currently undeveloped?

**ANSWER**

There are 25.5 million square meters of land in Haringey. In addition to the Council's own property (leasehold and freehold) the public estate includes schools, highways, health and emergency services sites, offices and land of Government Departments, land held by TfL and the GLA and bodies such as the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. There may also be land held by a number of public authority pension funds. Defining an accurate answer to the question is therefore extremely difficult.

In February 2015, The Mayor of London and the Chancellor jointly announced the Long Term Economic Plan for London which included a commitment to establishing the London Land Commission (LLC). The aim of the Commission is to identify brownfield land for development in public ownership and to help co-ordinate and accelerate the pace of land released for much needed homes in London.

The LLC, through the Mayor of London's Office, and with £1m of funding from Government, is therefore leading on the collation and establishment of a register of public land.

The register aim is to compile a single source data portal on all public sector land in London, bringing together existing ownership data on land and property and its current uses. By agreement,

components of the register will be made available to the public as required under the Transparency Code.

The register will:

- Integrate the various datasets used by London Government to manage land
- Provide GIS mapping to aid analysis
- Promote better data gathering across the London Boroughs
- Provide new search tools to explore the data set to promote wider shared use of the information.

Haringey Council expects to participate in this project alongside the other London Boroughs and public agencies. Once complete, the Council would expect to be in a position to provide a more complete answer to this question.

### **WRITTEN QUESTION 7 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING FROM COUNCILLOR CARTER:**

In each of the last three years how many prosecutions of private landlords and agents have the council brought under the housing act 2004 compared to the number of complaints about private landlords and agents in the same period?

### **ANSWER**

The figures below show the number of complaints received that are likely to require action under the Housing Act 2004.

It should be noted that when complaints are received by the council, they are placed into one of a number of categories based on the information given. The figures below have been taken from complaints in relevant categories, however this is probably an over estimation as some may have been dealt with through other legislation. In addition, not all complaints will require formal action, as many are resolved through liaising informally with managing agents.

The Housing Act 2004 makes provision for a landlord to be consulted upon regarding the outcome of a Housing Inspection, where action is to be taken under the Housing Act 2004. Should the landlord respond positively to consultation and undertake works, no enforcement notice is required, and so no 'formal' action is taken. These incidences are therefore not included in the figures below under 'enforcement' action.

Figures for the number of Housing Health and Safety Rating (HHSRs) inspections undertaken have been included below, as this is the inspection method used to determine the enforcement action required.

It is also important to point out that many of our complaints that would be picked up under the Housing Act 2004 fall within the Council's Additional HMO Licensing Schemes or are Mandatory HMO properties so the licensing conditions will address these issues rather than action under the Housing Act itself. This action is therefore also not reflected in the figures below.

Number of complaints received which may require action under Housing Act 2004:

- 2012 = 1020
- 2013 = 1103
- 2014 = 998

Number of enforcement Notices Issues in relation to Housing Act 2004:

- 2012 = 19
- 2013 = 41
- 2014 = 75

Number of HHSRS Inspections undertaken:

- 2012 = 187
- 2013 = 223
- 2014 = 240

Number of Prosecutions taken:

- 2012 = 3
- 2013 = 22
- 2014 = 28

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

How many times in each of the last 2 years have waste and recycling collections been missed on local High Streets and shopping centres?

**ANSWER**

There have been no reported missed collections on our High Street and shopping centres over the past two years.

**WRITTEN QUESTION 9 – TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT FROM COUNCILLOR ELLIOTT:**

Can you explain why residents living above shops on Archway Road and Highgate High Street are not getting their supply of pink refuse bags and what is being done to resolve the issue?

**ANSWER**

Although this is a new and recently rolled-out addition to the service, we are not aware of any residents who have not received their pink refuse sacks in either Archway Road or Highgate High Street.

Sacks are delivered to Flats above Shops quarterly. The last delivery to these roads was on 20 and 21 August, when two rolls of green recycling sacks and two rolls of pink residual waste sacks were delivered to 889 properties. The next scheduled delivery will be during week commencing 16 November 2015.

If members are aware of any problems with residents not receiving residual waste or recycling sacks, they should contact Veolia through the usual channels.