

**COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS**  
**1 JULY 2009**

**Question 1 from Councillor G Savva to Councillor Kaye, Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture, Olympics 2012 and Voluntary Sector**

Why is there not a library service for the infants of Haselbury School at a time when the mobile library stops for one hour but there is not provision for the infants.

What steps has he taken to ensure that the library service gives equal access and opportunity to the community apart from closing them?

**Reply from Councillor Kaye:**

"The mobile library stops at Haselbury Junior School every Monday afternoon from 2.30-3.45pm. Although on a school site any member of the public is welcome to use the mobile library while it is there. Haselbury Infant School is catered for as the site specifically allows access to the mobile library for three schools, Haselbury Junior School, Haselbury Infant School and West Lea School.

With regard to equality of access Enfield is well served by public libraries. We have the second highest number of branch libraries in London and statistics show that 99% of the Enfield population are within a mile of a branch library or mobile library stop. One mile is the standard for community access by which libraries are measured nationally. (Statistics are taken from CIPFA Public Library Actuals 2007-08, the latest published edition)

The mobile library timetable is kept under constant review and can be flexible to meet service priorities."

**Question 2 from Councillor John Boast to Councillor Michael Rye, Leader of the Council**

"Would the Leader of the Council confirm the number of votes cast for each party in the European Election on 4 June and comment on this result?"

**Reply from Councillor Rye:**

"The number of votes cast for each party in the European election on 4<sup>th</sup> June were

Conservative	20,345	31.1% of the votes cast
Labour	15,385	23.5% of the vote cast
UKIP	7,916	12.1% of the vote cast
Green	5,876	8.9% of the vote cast
Lib Dem	5,398	8.2% of the vote cast

BNP                                      3,145                                      4.8% of the vote cast

Total number of votes cast 65,439

Turnout 33.15%

This result demonstrated a collapse of the Labour party vote of well below any reasonable threshold set by their own party and suggests that Gordon Brown was extremely fortunate to survive the coup from among his own ranks.

The sooner the country has a general election and the opportunity to choose a new Conservative government, the better it will be for all residents of the London Borough of Enfield.”

**Question 3 from Councillor Tony Dey to Councillor Laban, Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety**

“What has been the results and outcome following the use of ANR (Automatic Number Recognition) system in the borough?”

**Reply from Councillor Laban:**

“Enfield Council secured £300k from the Home Office last year for the installation of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) CCTV cameras at the locations of significant major trunk roads within Enfield (seven sites). These cameras capture vehicle and number plate details from passing vehicles and match them with information contained on the police national computer system, in particular for lost and stolen vehicles (LOS), alerting the CCTV operators of a "hit" on the system. CCTV operators then check the images to confirm number plate match before alerting the Metropolitan Police of the hit alert who will agree and authorise resources for intercepting the vehicle.

Since October 2008 when the ANPR sites started operating up to May this year, the use of ANPR cameras has led to the recovery of 38 vehicles totalling an approximate value of £360,700 and has resulted in 87 arrests. These arrests are not just for stealing vehicles but also for other offences such as driving whilst disqualified and handling stolen goods.

Another six potential ANPR sites have been identified and costed in preparation for placing in other parts of the borough to create a "ring of steel" in order to deny career criminals use of public roads in Enfield to conduct their criminal activities.”

**Question 4 from Councillor Lee Chamberlain to Councillor Henry Pipe, Cabinet Member for Customer Focus, Communications & Corporate Improvement**

“Would Councillor Pipe update council on the progress to improve the council’s website?”

**Reply from Councillor Pipe:**

“Enfield Council is clear that the internet plays an increasingly important role in providing information and access to a range of services for customers, engaging local people on key issues through consultation and feedback and in promoting the reputation of the local area and local services.

We recognised that the website was looking dated and the quality of content needed improving. In order to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> century website with all the functionality internet users expect, the council decided it had to update its content management system.

The council procured JADU, one of the leading local authority providers, and I'm delighted to say that phase 1 of the project went live on Monday 15 June.

The new website has been completely redesigned, both in the way it looks and also its navigation structure. This follows consultation and a series of focus groups with residents, young people, older and disabled groups, staff and councillors.

The vision is for a site that is clear, clean and concise and offers the user a pictorial navigation. Ease and speed of access to our services and transactions are key drivers for the new site alongside a more intuitive search functionality through 'Google'. It is called Access Enfield because the aspiration is for the site to become a major source of information about the whole borough and all local services.

The site will be the platform for delivering Enfield's web 2.0 technology, delivering a site that moves beyond customer engagement and into involvement. It is truly accessible and available across multiple platforms –PC/ Mac / other devices regardless of browser type.

The design is based on the 'iphone' concept of reducing unnecessary text and using icons to navigate. A web content editor has been working with services to improve the quality of content and plain language used on the site, with the council aiming to achieve 'Plain English Crystal Mark' for its new site.

New facilities have been incorporated into the phase 1 website. In particular online services are more clearly signposted including the ability to pay online, report a range of issues including enviro crime and waste, renew library books and search for and submit planning applications.

We have also launched the '**Ask a question**' section where frequently asked questions are available but also web users can pose a question that will be answered via email. '**Have your say**' enables people to comment on a range of consultations and register interest in forthcoming surveys. Multi-media is available on the site including a range of downloadable media clips.

However the most significant development has been the '**My property**' and '**My borough**'. In 'My Property', web users can enter their postcode and find out a range of information including their ward councillor, their council tax band, their day of waste and recycling collection. They can also search for a range of 'find

my nearest' services including nearest park, school, library and partner information such as doctors surgeries and police stations.

The new content management system is based on enabling people within services to manage their content directly thereby ensuring that the information is kept up to date and new pages can be loaded quickly and easily.

Phase 2 of the website development (2009-2010) will see more opportunities for web users to engage with the council through online blogs and discussion forums and the introduction of customer registration. This will enable people to customise the site so that they see information relevant to them and their interests as well as pre-populate online forms and services so they do not have to enter their details each time. We will be using social media as an integrated part of our online presence.

The quality and range of content and online transactions will also be extended as we enable more customers to use the website as a major source of information and access to services. We will also be discussing with partners and members how we can extend the use of our content management system to enable them to upload information directly and achieve our aspiration for Access Enfield to be a resource for all."

**Question 5 from Councillor Peter Fallart to Councillor Matthew Laban, Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety**

"Would Councillor Laban update council on the progress made reducing the number of households housed in temporary accommodation?"

**Reply from Councillor Laban:**

"The number of households currently housed in temporary accommodation has dropped to the lowest number since 2003 and is currently 2868. The reduction in the numbers is currently continuing month on month.

This drop has represented a significant investment by the council in services to prevent households from becoming homeless and entering temporary accommodation.

Housing remains a key priority in Enfield and we are now using the private rental sector to provide homeless families with a home to live in, and are one of the most successful boroughs in London in terms of opening up the private sector to meet the needs of local people.

Last year 180 households were helped to keep their home having been under threat of eviction and 560 households were given financial assistance to access accommodation in the private sector.

In addition a new supported housing arrangement was put in place to support 16/17 year olds ejected from home by their parents to avoid housing them in temporary accommodation which has included a needs assessment for most of the young people supported and an accommodation package."

**Question 6 from Councillor Robert Hayward to Councillor Terence Neville,  
Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene**

“Would Councillor Neville comment on the transport implications of “A New Plan for London” which was recently published for consultation by the Mayor for London?”

**Reply from Councillor Neville:**

“The Mayor is currently reviewing both the London Plan and his Transport Strategy. “A New Plan for London” sets out how the Mayor intends to review the London Plan to deliver his vision of how London’s development should be shaped in the period up until 2021. Whilst this document is formally to allow the London Assembly and GLA family to comment on the Mayor’s proposals, informal comments have also been invited from other organisations. A full draft of the new London Plan will then be published in the autumn as part of the formal consultation process.

The overarching transport objective in A New Plan for London is to “create a city where it is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities”.

Chapter 6 of A New Plan for London includes several specific proposals relating to transport, including proposals for matching development to transport capacity; safeguarding land for transport; providing transport infrastructure and services to aid regeneration in Outer London; and reducing congestion.

In addition to the specific transport proposals set out in the transport chapter, many of the other proposals have significant transport implications, including those relating to housing, population and employment growth and the measures to address climate change.

The approach in general appears to be far more balanced than that of the previous Mayor, and recognises the importance of meeting local objectives and in particular the difficulties faced by outer London boroughs.

**Question 7 from Councillor Alan Barker to Councillor Terence Neville,  
Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene**

“Will Councillor Neville inform council of progress made in connection with the provision and encouragement of the use of electric vehicles?”

**Reply from Councillor Neville:**

“The Climate Change Act 2008 introduces tough new limits on carbon emissions which we fully support. There is much to be done to achieve these and the encouragement of the use of electric vehicles is but one tool in the armoury. At the present time I want to encourage fleet users to look at the options to change from the traditional diesel vans to an alternative fuelled option, which includes electric vehicles. We have registered our interest with Cenex to apply for funding

to set up the infrastructure to support the increased use of Electric Vehicles (EV's) and other alternative fuelled vehicles in the council's fleet. We are committed to reducing emissions from our own activities and National Indicator 185 which deals with this is one of our top priorities.

Electric vehicles are only suitable for certain tasks undertaken by this authority due to their limited daily mileage, however this should improve as these vehicles develop over time. All fleet vehicle specifications now include a request for suppliers to quote for an alternative fuelled option. The benefits to Enfield to operate EV's are zero emissions, nil road fund licence, reduced fuel costs and reduced noise pollution. We have installed two types of charging systems at Carterhatch Lane Depot for our commercial fleet to trial suitable EV's that are currently available.

Turning to facilitating public use of electric vehicles in Enfield we are installing two EV charging points in two parking bays in Genotin Road car park and are awaiting EDF to connect the electricity supply. We have a further two bays in Palace Gardens multistorey car park which will have EV charging points fitted as part of the refurbishment due to be completed by this autumn. The parking bays will be dedicated to those with electric vehicles and will allow the users to charge their vehicles free of charge."

**Question 8 from Councillor Henry Lamprecht to Councillor Terence Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene**

"Will Councillor Neville comment on the effects of the recent 48 hour strike by London Underground workers on residents of the borough?"

**Reply from Councillor Neville:**

"This 48 hour stoppage by London Underground members of the RMT whilst not gaining universal support, had a particularly bad effect on the many thousands of commuters who use the Piccadilly line to go to and from their place of work because the line was effectively closed down from between Arnos Grove and Acton throughout the strike.

This caused considerable inconvenience to commuters across London who were trying to get to and from work and was yet another example of Londoners being held to ransom by the RMT and its leader Mr Bob Crow. It was in my view, a totally unnecessary strike designed to cause maximum inconvenience to the travelling public and hence to the London economy.

I commend those London Underground employees who defied the strike and managed to keep parts of several lines working, including the Piccadilly line between Cockfosters and Arnos Grove."

**Question 9 from Councillor Jonas Hall to Councillor Ertan Hurer, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources**

"Would Councillor Hurer inform council of what action has been taken to make small businesses aware of the Small Business Rate Relief?"

### **Reply from Councillor Hurer:**

“Enfield Council takes a very proactive role in promoting the benefits of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) to small businesses within the borough. To maximise SBRR take up:

- Applications are sent to every property in Enfield before the start of the financial year;
- New occupiers are automatically sent a SBRR application;
- Information about SBRR is on the back of every bill, reminder, final notice and summons sent;
- SBRR forms and information are available on the council’s new website.
- SBRR forms are handed out by Rating Inspectors as they visit properties.

I would also like to mention the very productive meeting councillors held with small businesses in Edmonton recently, which was promoted for us by Enfield Business Retailers Association (EBRA) and the Angel Edmonton Traders Association. At that meeting, we discussed a number of issues and agreed actions to resolve them wherever possible. We also provided information about SBRR, and have made subsequent contact with EBRA to ensure they have the information they need readily available.

In addition, the Business Rates help line is answered by Rates Officers who can offer specialist advice regarding SBRR. Any of the borough’s businesses that would like to find out more can ring 0208 379 4766 for further information.

### **Question 10 from Councillor Robert Hayward to Councillor Terence Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene**

“Would Councillor Neville comment on the introduction of the date change for refuse collection?”

### **Reply from Councillor Neville:**

I am pleased to tell council that the overall impression is that the day change has gone very well, although with any change of this magnitude there have been some inevitable teething difficulties. The majority of residents however, have responded positively to the change of day and feedback from the council’s Contact Centre has revealed very few complaints. The council’s new web site launched on 15 June enables addressees to be looked up by postcode and property number, which has greatly assisted residents in independently checking and confirming their new collection day.

Fine-tuning of the service will continue over the coming weeks to maximise efficiency and deliver an integrated high quality standard of service.