

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS: 30 January 2013

Question 1 from Councillor Vince to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

At the July council meeting the Cabinet Member assured the Council that monies owed to schools through the Schools Lettings Agency would be paid by the end of July. This was then changed to October, and at the last Council meeting in November, Councillor Georgiou informed the Council that all monies would be paid to schools by the end of November. To date, only a small amount has been paid. Would the Cabinet Member like to give a definitive date for all payments and what steps is she taking to ensure this is done?

How can she explain her department's lack of service delivery in this area?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

As reported previously, the Lettings Agency has been experiencing significant challenges due to staffing issues. This had resulted in a backlog in invoicing customers and then processing the payments to schools.

Additional resources were brought in to help with the backlog and there has been significant progress despite continuing staffing issues including maternity leave and long term sickness.

Where the full hire fee has been received, income for lets up to the end of October were issued to schools, which they received by the end of November 2012. This is in accordance with assurances made to Council in July 2012 and again in November 2012.

The next scheduled advance to schools will be in February which will cover the income received during November and December. This is in accordance with the normal schedule of invoicing.

There has been significant progress made in the last three months and I want to thank our schools for bringing this to my attention and to our staff for the sterling work since.

Question 2 from Councillor Stafford to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

Can Councillor Bond confirm how the decisions regarding the Edmonton Controlled Parking Zone implementation will be made and the use of any monies raised?

Reply from Councillor Bond

We are carrying out a second stage of consultation to see if residents in Edmonton Green would like a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). This follows on

from the grant of planning permission for the new shopping and leisure centre (approved by the previous Administration), which was subject to a s106 agreement that secured funding from St. Modwens to introduce a CPZ. Our approach to CPZs is only to introduce them where they are supported by the majority of local people. We will therefore await the results of the on-going consultation exercise before deciding whether the scheme should proceed any further.

Vehicles parked within designated bays in a CPZ during its operational hours must display a valid permit. A CPZ needs to be self-financing and a charge is made for permits simply to cover the Council's enforcement costs. Permit costs therefore differ depending on whether the CPZ operates for one-hour or all day. We also vary permit costs depending on engine size or vehicle emissions to encourage residents to use less polluting vehicles.

Question 3 from Councillor Smith to to Councillor Oykner Cabinet Member for Housing

Conservative members have drawn officers' attention to a licensing scheme that has been introduced by Newham Council to regulate the activities of private landlords. The purpose of the scheme is to ensure that private landlords provide good quality rented accommodation and services and to prevent overcrowding. Will the Cabinet Member request officers to study the Newham scheme and its potential to safeguard the interests of tenants in the private sector in Enfield and to dissuade irresponsible private landlords from operating in the Borough?

Reply from Councillor Oykenner

In January 2013, Newham Council introduced both Additional and Selective licensing covering the whole of their borough using the powers within the Housing Act 2004.

I will be pleased to ask officers to study the Newham scheme, its effectiveness and its potential applicability in Enfield.

Question 4 from Councillor Uzoanya to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Can Councillor Orhan give the Council an update on the progress of the innovative and recently launched Single Point of Entry (SPOE).

Reply from Councillor Orhan

The Head of Service for the Single Point of Entry (SPOE) has been in post since 8th October 2012, with the Launch event taking place on 19th October. This event was very well attended with approximately 100 participants representing a wide variety of agencies.

The SPOE includes officers from the Police, Health, Children's Social care, Education Welfare and the Community Parent Support Services, with a number of other partner agencies attending weekly on a part time basis.

Since the launch event there is evidence of an increase in the number of Common Assessments (CAFs) being referred through to the SPOE that are requesting a multi agency response and evidence that better information sharing is enhancing risk assessments of vulnerable children, ensuring that they receive the services they need when they need them.

Analysis of Police reports received in the SPOE in October 2012 identified that more than 80% of referrals featured domestic violence as an area of concern. In response to this, funding has been identified through Change and Challenge (Troubled Families) programme for a full time Independent Domestic Violence Advocate in the SPOE who will further inform risk assessments of vulnerable children and undertake direct work with children, young people and their families. Recruitment to this post is underway.

To date, 877 referrals have been received into the SPOE. Of these, 239 have been about children who are already open to statutory services. The remaining 636 have been researched and risk assessed by the SPOE partnership and subsequently lead agencies have been identified to take forward the response.

Question 5 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council

At the council meeting on 4th July the Opposition, despite several objections from the administration, demanded to debate and query the proposed lease terms in relation to the Morson Road site. Those terms were debated in detail and ultimately approved by a roll called majority. Nevertheless neither he nor Councillor Stafford notified the council during the debate that the financial implications of the transaction were materially different to those set out in the report, in particular an additional sum per annum (as detailed in the Part 2 report) previously earmarked to offset the revenue costs of the Morson Road scheme was no longer available because the Carterhatch Lane Site had already been agreed to be disposed of to Cornerstone and its proceeds not applied to the Morson Road acquisition. He and Labour members voted at the council to approve the terms of the deal either in the absence of full financial implications or in the knowledge that material terms of the report were materially incorrect. Will he confirm which of these two possible explanations is accurate, apologise to the Council for this failing, explain how and why it happened and confirm from where this material shortfall of at least £12m (twelve million pounds) over 40 years is to be found?

Reply from Councillor Taylor

Councillor Neville makes reference to a figure in Part 2 of the report based on asset disposals. As a Part 2 report, I do not intend to comment in detail. However I can assure him of the good faith in which Members on this side act,

and in providing explanations to the Council. As he will know the Council has adopted a proactive approach to selling surplus assets in order to help fund the Councils Capital programme. All disposal receipts from sale of Council assets including the Carterhatch receipt are pooled into a central fund during the year and are then applied to capital projects. I can assure Councillor Neville that as part of this process sufficient disposal receipts will be applied to the Morson Road project to reduce any borrowing costs to the levels as set out in the June cabinet report.

Question 6 from Councillor Simbodyal to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Can Councillor Orhan tell the Council why her department and the Teenage Pregnancy Unit welcomed a delegation from South Korea in December 2012.

Reply from Concillor Orhan

The request of the South Korean Government came to us through the Department for Education (DfE). The South Korean Embassy in London approached the DfE to request information on how the UK has been tackling teenage pregnancy. The DfE and Department of Health recommended that the South Koreans should visit Enfield as we are recognised, nationally, as implementing an exemplary strategy very successfully.

We saw this as an excellent opportunity to highlight and publicise the great work that we have been doing on teenage pregnancy in Enfield and to support the South Koreans in their efforts to reduce teenage pregnancy. They learnt a great deal from us and were amazed that we had managed to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy by a massive 43.6 percent reduction within 5 years. I hope that they can now go on and match this success in their own country.

Question 7 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

With further reference to the new depot at Morson Road, my Question 40 at the last meeting to Councillor Bond raised six points of which he only answered one. The remaining five fall within your portfolio and I now repeat them for answer by you.

1. Why Navigant was instructed in the search for a site for the consolidation and relocation of the depots?
2. What were Navigant's terms of reference?
3. Specifically, were Navigant required to report back on all sites coming to their attention which might be suitable?
4. When did Navigant report on the Suez Road site and to whom?
5. What fee was paid to Navigant?

Reply from Councillor Stafford

I will respond to this question in 2 parts -

Part 1 - Response provided by Councillor Bond at previous full Council as referred to by Councillor Neville in his question.

“The Agreement to Lease has been negotiated by Property and Legal on behalf of the Council with assistance from Navigant”

Part 2 - Response to items as stated for this meeting:-

1. Why Navigant was instructed in the search for a site for the consolidation and relocation of the depots?
2. What were Navigant's terms of reference?

The answer to 1 and 2 is that I refer you to the Cabinet Report Depot Relocation dated 20 June 2012.

3. Specifically, were Navigant required to report back on all sites coming to their attention which might be suitable?

Navigant were asked to complete a site search of available and suitable sites.

4. When did Navigant report on the Suez Road site and to whom?

The Suez Road site was identified in the middle of 2011. The site was reported to the Project Board.

5. What fee was paid to Navigant?

£20,787.50.

6. Who negotiated the terms for the lease of the former Aesica site to the Council?

The Agreement to Lease has been negotiated by Property and Legal on behalf of the Council with assistance from Navigant.

Question 8 from Councillor Keazor to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Can Councillor Orhan tell the Council how many copies of the update Youth Offer booklet and borough wide Youth magazine was distributed across Enfield by the end of 2012 and why?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

Both our updated *Youth Offer* and the widely distributed youth magazine are

responses to recommendations from the Council's Commission into the 2011 Disturbances.

As with our other new youth communications channels, such as the new [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), the printed materials aim to ensure that Enfield's young people are aware of the great range of services and activities that Enfield Council provide for them.

We have distributed 5000 copies of the *Youth Offer* booklet. These copies went to over 75 locations to keep, refer to and hand out when required.

We have also distributed 25,000 copies of the youth magazine, enough for every young person in the borough aged between 13 and 19 and these were distributed to over 100 locations across Enfield.

Question 9 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

With further reference to the Morson Road depot your answer to my Question 41 at the last Council meeting about Suez Road suggests that you are not aware of your officers' views. I have a statement that clearly shows that Suez Road was the preferred choice of officers – are you saying that you were never told that this site was a possibility?

Reply from Councillor Bond

As stated previously the site was too small to accommodate the entire range of Council services and was not available on a long term lease.

Question 10 from Councillor Hasan to Councillor Orhan Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Can Councillor Orhan give the Council an update on how many children and their families have benefited from the Labour Administration Manifesto Pledge of reinstating the Uniform Grant since its return in 2011.

Reply from Councillor Orhan

In setting out our commitments to fairness, growth and sustainability and strong communities within their election manifesto in 2010, we the Labour Group pledged to reintroduce school uniform grants for those families facing financial disadvantage.

Work has taken place to establish the best model for a new school uniform grant scheme that targets families' at the most appropriate time, and employs practical solutions that are not overly bureaucratic or complex to be both easily accessible for families and cost effective for the council.

Research was undertaken with local school outfitters and general clothes

retailers to arrive at a £85 cost level for the purchase of a basic secondary school uniform consisting of blazer, trousers/skirt, shirt/blouse, jumper, tie, PE shirt, PE shorts.

The cost of primary school uniform is significantly less although it also causes financial pressure at the first time of purchase for families facing economic disadvantage. We estimated that £22 would make a significant contribution to the cost of jumper/fleece, printed book bag, polo shirt (or similar) and trousers.

In order to make best use of the budget, resource the scheme and ease any bureaucratic burden the eligibility criteria is simple, straightforward and clear: that is that the grant is available as a one time only award to students entering primary school at year R (reception) and secondary school at year 7 (secondary transfer) who are also eligible for free school meals.

Since the grant was introduced in 2011, 1299 children have benefitted. Of these, 530 have been in reception classes and 769 have been in year 7. In total £77,025 has been spent on uniforms for children whose families would otherwise struggle to meet these costs.

Question 11 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

With further reference to Morson Road, in your answer to Question 42 at the last meeting, you said that the Suez Road site “was rejected due to proposed lease arrangements”. Did you consider asking officers about the possibility of acquiring the freehold and if not why not?

Reply from Councillor Bond

The freehold was not available for acquisition.

Question 12 from Councillor Robinson to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing

Can Councillor Oyken tell the Council what action he is taking to reduce the number of empty properties in the borough?

Reply from Councillor Oyken

Enfield has an acute shortage of affordable homes for local people. It is a priority for the Council to bring empty homes back into use for local people wherever we can use our influence or powers to do so. So far 34 properties have been returned to use between April and November 2012.

Bringing privately owned empty homes back into use can be challenging, therefore it is our practice to offer both incentives to owners who wish to work with the Council but take enforcement action if this is unsuccessful.

Using the Council tax records and local knowledge to identify empty properties, regular contact is made with owners of long term empty properties offering advice and assistance with options such as letting, leasing, selling, obtaining repairs, finance etc. Where the owner or their whereabouts is unknown then intense investigation is undertaken to locate them.

The community can also report empty properties and participation in television programmes such as the BBC programme 'Britain's Empty Homes', has raised the profile of the work of the Council.

Empty property renovation grants are available for long term empty properties as long as, once refurbished, the owner agrees to rent the property to a local family, for a minimum 5 year period.

However where an owner refuses to bring their property back into use, the Council has the option of taking enforcement action which can ultimately mean that a Compulsory Purchase Order is obtained. The Council has successfully tackled seven difficult cases using this method since April 2010.

The Council has launched public consultation on its Empty Property Policy, so the opportunity for further comment on the Council's approach is welcomed.

Question 13 from Councillor Lavender to Councillor Hamilton Cabinet Member for Community Well-Being and Public Health

Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals Trust is working with the Royal Free London Hospital Foundation Trust on a merger.

The recently enacted Health and Social Care Act 2012 confirmed that mergers between NHS Foundation Trusts would constitute enterprises ceasing to be distinct for the purposes of UK merger control.

Given the OFT's decision to refer to the Competition Commission, the proposed merger of the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Pool Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, will Councillor Hamilton instruct officers to monitor this referral, identify those issues that are relevant and consider whether a reference to the OFT of the proposed Chase Farm merger is appropriate to safeguard choice in service provision to Enfield residents.

Reply from Councillor Hamilton

I would like to thank Councillor Lavender for this question.

In respect of the proposed merger at Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust I understand that "The evidence considered by OFT is that the merger would combine two Trusts that compete closely for GP referrals for many specialties and it is likely that the merger would result in few realistic alternative providers

for patients and NHS commissioning groups." The OFT has referred the case to the Competition Commission for an in-depth investigation and review.

This merger will combine the only two NHS district general hospitals in Bournemouth and Poole, which compete across a range of clinical specialties, in many cases earning income based on the number of patients referred to them. The Competition Commission is expected to publish its final report by 24 June 2013.

Other merging hospitals will start to look at what the outcome of this investigation will mean for them and clearly the Royal Free NHS Hospital Foundation Trust and the Barnet and Chase Farm Hospitals Trust will have to review its relevance to the local situation. The OFT identified at least two key parameters for competition between the Trusts: 1. competing to attract patients; and 2. competing for funding from commissioners of NHS services. The potential relevance to Enfield Clinical Commissioning Group and patients may well be different to that in Barnet.

We will continue to work with Enfield Clinical Commissioning Group on reviewing any proposals for health care services for Enfield residents

Question 14 from Councillor Hasan to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing

Given the Government decision to pilot its Welfare Reforms in Enfield, what is the impact on the Council and Enfield residents of the decision to implement the reforms earlier than the rest of the country.

Reply from Councillor Oyken

Enfield was surprised to hear that it is one of the 4 pilot authorities for implementing the caps as this was unexpected.

Key concerns relate to the financial, housing and legal implications for Enfield. Many of these are unknown and a challenge to plan for, as the changes are so fundamental and unprecedented.

Enfield has over 2,000 families (6,000 children) affected by the cap, 700 of which are losing over £100 a week in housing benefit. Services are already seeing an unsettled private sector housing market, with an increase in threats of eviction and homelessness rising, it is anticipated that this will continue for the foreseeable future.

As a pilot authority Enfield will be incurring costs associated with housing homeless families in a highly competitive private rental market where local landlords will be able to demand higher rents and incentives from other London boroughs currently exempt from the pilot. We will have the situation where neighbours living in the same street, one will be capped whilst the other one won't because they have been placed in Enfield by another Council.

We will have to offer incentives to landlords to take our homeless families, as many are refusing to take capped families without guarantees of rent from Councils. If the 700 capped families in Enfield losing more than £100 a week were to become homeless and we have a duty to house them, this could cost the Council £1.4m to find alternative homes.

Enfield will also be experiencing a loss in housing rental income earlier than other Councils - estimated to be approximately £2m a year.

Legal challenges that will inevitably occur, as the Council deals with the fall out of the changes earlier than other parts of the country, this is unquantifiable with any accuracy at this stage.

'New burdens' money from the Government has been announced, to assist local Councils to manage the benefit changes. Enfield has been allocated £145k. This is expected to fund changes to computer systems, administration of social housing under-occupation, additional staffing costs to deal with enquiries, homelessness and discretionary housing payment claims whilst at the same time meet our legal housing duty, procure housing supply and mitigate our rent losses.

The Council has also received £3m to help assist local residents affected by the changes, however this is in the context of £11m being removed from local residents by the benefit cuts.

Question 15 from Councillor Smith to Councillor Goddard, Cabinet Member for Business & Regeneration

It is understood that Enfield is one of the few local authorities in London that haven't yet introduced a Borough Construction Infrastructure Levy. Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether it is intended to introduce this system, when it is intended to introduce this system and what the level of tariff for new residential development will apply?"

Reply from Councillor Goddard

Thank you for your question. My understanding is that very few Councils across London and England have introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). By the end of 2012 less than a dozen of over 350 local authorities nationally had already begun charging CIL. So far only 2 London boroughs (Redbridge & Wandsworth) and the Mayor of London have introduced CIL and several more boroughs are due to follow suit later this year (Croydon, Barnet & Brent). Another 18 London boroughs have reached the first stage of public consultation. Enfield is in the next group of boroughs that will publish a CIL rate for consultation.

Enfield's Core Strategy, adopted in 2010, states the Council's intention in the medium to long term to introduce a CIL which will set out a clear charging

schedule for developers' contributions towards local and strategic infrastructure. The Council is currently undertaking a detailed viability assessment to ensure that should a levy be introduced it is affordable and doesn't make schemes unviable, especially in times of austerity. This work is central to the calculation of the levy and will inform whether different rates for residential development across the borough are appropriate and justified. Once we are satisfied that this work has been completed, we will publish a preliminary charging schedule to seek the views of local residents, Members and the development community. The CIL will replace some elements of the s106 process and will be able to fund the development of infrastructure (roads, bridges, schools, etc) across the Borough. As you are aware the Mayor of London has introduced a CIL for London which adds £20 per sq m to all developments in Enfield to fund the Crossrail scheme. This must be taken into account when determining what a viable CIL rate for Enfield is. The CIL will be key to developing the infrastructure needed in the Borough to support the developments at Meridian Water, Ponders End and other major sites.

This slow start nationally is due to the amount of evidence and consultation required before a CIL can be introduced. Charging authorities need to have an up to date Core Strategy/Local Plan in place, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan and a comprehensive viability assessment to underpin the charging schedule. The adoption process also requires several rounds of public consultation and an independent examination before a CIL rate can be set.

Question 16 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Simon, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Simon

Certainly; they have gone too far already and display the Government's ideological and prejudiced approach to public services.

Question 17 from Councillor Smith to Councillor McGowan, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Care & Health

It is understood that the on cost applied by the Adult Social Services Department to the contracted out cost for home care packages is approximately 20%. Would the Cabinet Member provide information on how this figure compares with other outer London Boroughs and set out how he intends to reduce this figure?

Reply from Councillor McGowan

The £16.60 figure was calculated a number of years ago and reflected the average rates of the external home care providers, as well as our in-house services. To ensure we have an equitable basis, we have based it on the

average cost.

Not all service users pay the full cost of the service. Only those with savings over £23,250 would be expected to pay the full cost of service at £16.60 per hour. Currently 15% of people pay the full cost of services, 40% of people pay a contribution and 45% of people pay no charge at all.

Only those who pay the full cost of service could pay more than the direct cost and this recognises that the rate contributes to the cost of providing and arranging these services such as the contracting & procurement service and the invoicing and debt collection services.

It should be noted that this figure has not been inflated since April 2008 and therefore has not been increased since the time of the previous administration.

Question 18 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Simbodyal, Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Simbodyal

Yes. The Tory-led Government has imposed swingeing cuts of 28% on councils, with central government grant reduced over the current spending review period. In Enfield, we'll have had to reduce expenditure by around £80 million over five years. The Government has made bigger and earlier cuts to councils than any other part of the public sector. This frontloading of cuts has made it harder for councils to cope and has hit frontline services. These cuts are unforgivable when at the same time, the Government chooses to give a £3 billion tax cut for the highest earners in the country – worth an average of £107,000 for 8,000 people earning over £1 million. The Conservative chair of the LGA, Sir Merrick Cockell, has called plans to reduce council budgets in England by a further 2% in 2014-15 "unsustainable". The Government must prevent further cuts to Local Government to prevent the erosion of not just discretionary services, but to stop the devastating effects that could be caused when Councils are forced to cut vital frontline services in areas such as social care spending for children and the elderly.

Question 19 from Councillor Lamprecht to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

You have given personal public assurances at various meetings to consult thoroughly and appropriately in all your dealings about the Primary Expansion Programme ('PEP'), and at the meeting at Walker School, Andrew Fraser also made a personal commitment to act courteously and be as transparent as commercially possible at all times.

I am therefore surprised and very disappointed to find out that Walker School

and Governing Body did not get a copy of the informal consultation report but had to read about it in the local paper. Please can you tell me:

1. Why was Walker School not sent a copy of the report? Were any schools in the PEP provided with copies of their own reports?
2. Why were local Councillors not sent a copy of the report?
3. On what basis did the Local Authority decide to progress with the Statutory Notice at Walker School, given the results of the informal consultation.
4. Who made this decision to go ahead and what was your recommendation to Members?
5. I understand that one school has dropped out of the proposed expansion programme. Why was this?
6. What involvement did the PEP team or local authority have in this decision making process?
7. Why was Walker School not provided with the opportunity to discuss this option?
8. Why do consultations regarding school expansions not appear prominently on the council's web-site?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

1. Headteachers and Chair of Governors of all the schools involved in the PEP consultation process were emailed on 22nd November 2012 providing them with information of how to access the consultation report via the Council's website.
2. The results were publicised through the Council website. As there had been no direct requests from ward members to receive the individual reports no arrangement had been made to mail them directly.
3. The informal consultation process did not identify any educational issues why the school could not be expanded. However, the views expressed through the consultation process were used to help refine the plans for developing the school site.

This was an informal consultation process. There was no procedural requirement to consult members on moving forward with the statutory notice and no request had been made to do so. Members have the opportunity to comment in line with the statutory procedures.

4. The Cabinet agreed at its meeting on the 20 June 2012 to delegate authority to the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and for Finance and Property and to the Directors of Schools and Children's Services and Finance, Resources and Customer Services to deliver the additional capacity to schools to meet the increased demand for primary places.
5. Oakthorpe Primary School was withdrawn from the programme because of physical site constraints of the school site. The logistics of expanding the school and the costs involved meant that it was not viable for expansion within the available budget or in time to provide additional reception places for September 2013.
6. The Lead Member and Director have been delegated authority to take such decisions following advice of officers and the Council's agents.
7. There were not similar constraints at Walker Primary School as those experienced at Oakthorpe Primary School.
8. The results of the PEP informal consultation were placed on the carousel section of the home page of the Council website.

Question 20 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Rye, Chair of Crime and Safety and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Rye

I would agree with Councillor Taylor it would be preferable to have no further cuts to Local Government Funding, but he is well aware that the outgoing Labour Chief Secretary to the Treasury left a note for his successor in 2010 stating, "Dear Chief Secretary, I'm afraid to tell you there's no money left. Kind regards – and good luck! Liam." Given the huge national deficit run up by his Government the reality is all areas of government spending have had to be curtailed.

The real question is how do Local Authority's minimize the impact of savings on frontline services and their residents? Studying Labour's management of Enfield's finances I suspect he will be leaving a similar note to his successor in 2014.

Question 21 from Councillor Lamprecht to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

Will Councillor Orhan undertake to publish the full results of the Walker School expansion consultation at the earliest possible opportunity and will she give an undertaking to this Council to abide by whatever the result is of the Walker

School expansion consultation and in particular the views of the Governing Body?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

Although the results have already been published I will undertake to make copies available to all Members. Members should be aware that the consultation process sought to understand the views of residents, parents and other stakeholders to the principle of expansion. The results of the consultation process were analysed to inform the expansion process. The consultation process was not a ballot on whether expansion should take place. The views of the Governing Body have been taken in consideration as part of the statutory consultation process. As you know Councillor Lamprecht, the Governing Body voted not to proceed with the expansion.

Question 22 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Cazimoglu, Chair of Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Cazimoglu

The Government's mismanagement of the economy is hurting hard working families and the most vulnerable in our communities. The attack on Local Government funding is a cynical ploy to pass the blame for the cuts onto local authorities in order to cover up the Government's failing economic policies.

Question 23 from Councillor Lamprecht to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

Given that Walker Primary is not an inner city school, is in one of London's greenest boroughs and also adjacent to large open space, how can the council justify breaching Building Bulletin Briefing Framework for Primary Schools 99 guidelines for outdoor space by expanding without a sure commitment to expand the site of the school significantly.

Reply from Councillor Orhan

The Department for Education, Building Bulletin 99 provides guidelines for briefing primary school projects, they are not statutory requirements and there can be no breach of the guidelines. In terms of site area the guidelines give advice on confined sites suggesting the use of off-site facilities or all weather pitches to maximise available space. A confined site does not just apply to inner city schools. A school such as Walker which is in a Conservation Area or where there are boundaries such as roads, public footpaths or open space can also be confined sites.

The Walker site already has hard play areas for curriculum games and PE

together with attractive landscaped areas that provide opportunities for soft play on the grassed area and a number of habitat areas. The habitat areas allow the school to involve pupils in a wide range of activities that support the curriculum.

The School adjoins the Walker Trust Cricket Ground on two sides and already has some access to the Walker Grounds for outdoor activities. Discussions have taken place with the trustees of the Walker Trust and there is potential for the school to have greater access to the adjoining open space. There is also potential to improve the physical access between the school and the open space to the north by reopening a gateway in the school boundary wall that has been closed for many years.

Question 24 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Smith, Chair of Housing, Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Smith

The previous Labour Government ramped up financial support for local government to unsustainable levels on the back of an unprecedented financial boom and bust that it did nothing to control.

As a result as the Guardian has said recently, local authorities now face an existential crisis and a punitive pattern of spending reductions in future years. According to recent government announcements the likely level of revenue support grant to local authorities is likely to be cut very substantially between 2013/14 and 2014/15 (over 15%) and there is no reason to think that these reductions will not continue. In my view, therefore, local authorities in general and Enfield in particular have no alternative but to address the reality of this situation and to radically review their financial position in order to protect front line services.

Question 25 from Councillor Lamprecht to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

What contingency plans are in place in the event of a slip in the timelines of the rebuild at Walker School? How will the Council re house so many classes without causing huge disruption if the planned works over run?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

The Council is not planning to move forward with the expansion of Walker Primary School for September 2013 therefore there will be a requirement to identify alternatives.

Question 26 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Savva, Chair of Older People and Vulnerable Adults Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Savva

Thank you for raising this question with me in my capacity as Chair of the Older People and Vulnerable Adults Scrutiny Panel.

At the last Older People and Vulnerable Adults Scrutiny Panel, Members received a detailed briefing on the Government settlement for Adult Social Care and I am pleased to tell you that plans are in place to deliver a balanced budget for 2013/14 with no reduction in the delivery of front line services.

However, this does not give me any reason to be complacent. I am concerned that the financial pressures in future years will be significant as Central Government continue to expect us to do more with less.

Now I know that a lot of good work has been done and this will continue as we work more efficiently, develop more preventative services and get better value for money from the things that we buy.

Nevertheless, we have:

- More young people with severe disabilities who are surviving for longer into adulthood.
- More and older people are living with dementia and other debilitating long term conditions.
- An increasing population with more and more people who need our help and support.

Nonetheless, our priority continues to be the delivery of front line services to the people who need them most so, in response to the question, I absolutely agree that we must not see further Government funding cuts.

Question 27 from Councillor Lamprecht to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

I had understood that a planning application for the expansion of Walker School was due mid-December, but to my knowledge none has been made. I note that, as at week ending 8/1/13, there have been planning applications submitted in respect of the proposed expansions at Worcesters and Highfield Primary Schools, but none in respect of the other schools earmarked for expansion. When is the LEA planning to submit a planning application for the Walker School expansion?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

The Council is not planning to submit a planning application for the expansion of Walker Primary School at this stage.

Question 28 from Councillor Taylor to Councillor Sitkin, Chair of Sustainability and the Living Environment Scrutiny Panel

Would you agree that there should be no more cuts to Local Government funding?

Reply from Councillor Sitkin

Yes, because the Government cuts make it harder for Enfield's businesses and public sector to undertake the sustainability investments that are so crucial to our planet thus economy. Energy-efficiency, retrofitting, renewable fuels, green agriculture - these are all activities requiring long-term commitment, if only to provide potential investors with a reassuringly stable environment. This long view has been adopted by the Germans, Chinese, and Americans - not to mention the Scandinavians, Dutch and French. Only the Conservative-led government rejects it. The children of Enfield would never have forgiven the Conservatives for betraying our environment with their short-sighted self-interest. Thankfully the borough is run by a Labour Administration dedicated to sustainable regeneration.

Question 29 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

As Cabinet Member for the Environment with responsibility for parks, was he consulted about and did he approve of the application by Leisure Services for the use of Chase Green for year round entertainments at that site, and if so could he explain to the council his reasoning, given the enormous number of objections?

Reply from Councillor Bond

No, I had not been consulted and had not forwarded any comments.

Question 30 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Charalambous, Cabinet Member for Leisure

Was the Cabinet Member consulted on the making of an application for an all year round entertainments licence in respect of Chase Green open space?

Did he authorise this and, if not, who did?

Reply from Councillor Charalambous

I was aware that it is the 400th anniversary of the New River in 2013 and my officers had been exploring the possibility of creating a celebratory event, initially at Chase Green. Officers advised me of the event and the application

for the licence. The detail was left to officers to deal with. Recent applications for the town centre had been 'all year round applications' and the same process was applied to this application. Once this error had been identified the application was modified to 20 days per year. Following the application being awarded, I discussed the situation with the Leader and agreed to revoke the licence. I have discussed this process with officers in Leisure and in future more care will be taken to ensure that more bespoke applications are made. I can assure you this will not happen again.

Question 31 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council

Further to his reply to Question 50 on the last council agenda concerning the employment of consultants, the Leader of the Council confirmed that no consultants were paid through a service company "to avoid employers contributions". Can he also confirm that since May 2010 no consultants, whether former officers, or otherwise, are paid through a service company?

Reply from Councillor Taylor

I would refer back to the previous answer to this question and confirm that no consultants have been paid through a service company to avoid employers' contributions.

Consultants are engaged via the Matrix Agency, company no. 02227962, to ensure compliance with legislative requirements. The Council's contract with Matrix was procured initially in 2007 and renewed in 2011.

Question 32 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance and Property

With further reference to the Morson Road site, one of the alternative properties considered was at Suez Road, Enfield which "was rejected due to proposed lease arrangements". Did you consider asking officers about the possibility of acquiring the freehold, and if not why not?

Reply from Councillor Stafford

Please see response to Question 11.

Question 33 from Councillor Ann Marie Pearce to Councillor Hamilton Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing and Public Health

Councillor Hamilton will no doubt have been made aware of the report published by the Local Government Information Unit with the assistance of Westminster Council ('A Dose of Localism - The Role of Councils in Public Health') recognising the prevalence of obesity, and the costs to local government of the transfer of public health from the NHS to local government. Given local government's existing remit in relation to housing, planning, leisure

and environmental health, the report also recognises the opportunities afforded by the transfer of such functions of identifying a more holistic approach to tackling this and other health issues. Notwithstanding one of the suggestions has been the subject of some valid criticism by many (although it is clear that they have not even read the report), the report does properly prompt certain questions. Will the Cabinet Member request officers to study the report and make suggestions regarding opportunities for a more holistic approach to improving health outcomes for the people of Enfield?

Reply from Councillor Hamilton

With public health coming into the Council we have been looking at the opportunities to maximise health gain. We fully acknowledge that public health is much more than the work done by the Public Health Department, and is the responsibility of everyone in the Council and partner organisations. As a major step to this, we have already made it a requirement that all papers to Cabinet should clearly state the impact the proposal will make on public health.

Question 34 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

The Council has recently been awarded a government grant of £2.46m in connection with waste collection. I understand from the press release that an undertaking has been given "to maintain the residual weekly collection and to provide an organic waste collection service to support weekly bin collections".

Can Councillor Bond please confirm:

1. Which collection service is to be funded by this grant?
2. Whether this is an annual grant or not, and at what rate payments will be received?
3. How he proposes to spend this additional sum given that the cost of the weekly residual collection was already funded and included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy?

Reply from Councillor Bond

1. Partial funding towards mixed dry recycling and organic rounds
2. The grant is over 3 years, with the majority in 2013/14
3. To fund additional collections for organic waste to householders not on the current service (kerbside and estates) and unfunded pressures in the current service.

Question 35 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson announced that 2,000 new street trees are to be planted across 19 boroughs this spring thanks to funding from City Hall. Enfield was one of the lucky boroughs to have been awarded funds to plant 200 trees as part of round 1 of the programme. Please could the Cabinet Member inform the chamber which wards will benefit from the Mayor of London's investment?

Reply from Councillor Bond

Since 2010 we have planted 1,800 trees, the majority financed directly by the Council.

The target zone for planting for the Mayor's funding is N11/N13 encompassing Southgate Green, Bowes and Palmers Green.

The Council Programme will also include at least another 300 trees in 2013/14.

Question 36 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

Now that it is over two years since the former Brimsdown Petrol Station was illegally occupied and turned into a dumping ground, could the Cabinet Member inform the chamber how much longer it is going to take for his department to clear up this mess?

Reply from Councillor Bond

Over the past two years, Council officers have worked to try and secure co-operation from the land owners to take responsibility for the illegal encampment. This persistence finally resulted in the owners commencing legal action last year and the Courts are due to hear an application to evict the occupiers next month.

A warrant to enter the site was executed on 13 December 2012 by Planning enforcement officers accompanied by Envirocrime officers. This allowed the Council to assess the site in full in order to serve formal notice on all issues and seek to improve the site while the owners were obtaining an eviction notice through the courts.

Officers found six vehicles on the site that were untaxed, and these were removed for disposal in accordance with DVLA powers. The squatters have since brought more waste and vehicles onto the site.

The landowners were due to obtain the eviction order at a court date in February. However due to the success of the Council's raid and the squatters bringing more vehicles onto the site, the courts brought forward the hearing date and have now granted the eviction notice. We are working with the

landowners to arrange a multi agency approach to finally clear and secure the site until redevelopment can take place.

Question 37 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Taylor Leader of the Council

Would the Leader of the Council apologise to the residents of Town Ward, for his administration's shambolic handling of the Chase Green Licence Application?

Does the Leader of the Council agree that if the Leisure Department had withdrawn the Chase Green Licence Application prior to the Licensing Sub Committee date it would have saved thousands of pounds of tax payers money?

Could he please give the council a breakdown of the complete costs of this fiasco, from the original inception by the Leisure Department up to and including costs of holding a six hour meeting of the Licensing Sub Committee including costs of legal staff and minuting staff?

Reply from Councillor Taylor

I feel there is no reason for an apology as the legal process took its course. The additional costs (other than normal staffing costs) totalled £1,733.10. I trust that Councillor Laban is not suggesting that residents should not be able to oppose proposals from the Council.

Question 38 from Councillor Rye to Councillor Hamilton Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing & Public Health

The amendment to the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill tabled by Nick de Bois MP, known as "Enfield's Law", came into effect on 1 December. As well as congratulating anti-knife crime campaigners and the Enfield Independent for this success, will Councillor Hamilton also congratulate Nick de Bois MP who started the campaign and whose amendment to the Bill forms the actual law itself?

Reply from Councillor Hamilton

This Council has worked tirelessly with the police and other partners to reduce knife crime and other violent offences linked with gang activity.

We recognise the risks involving young offenders which is why we have targeted some innovative activity at that group including the Gangs Call In and work with young people through schools and the Youth Offending Service to highlight the risks of carrying a knife.

Our Trading Standards Officers have also assisted through targeted work in relation to age related sales. It is this approach and the systematic management of the work which won Enfield national recognition of the problem solving Tilley award!

Question 39 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

How many Street Hawks have signed up in Chase Ward in each of the past three years?

Reply from Councillor Bond

We have 181 members of Street Hawks in our records.

Our records of Street Hawks members only notes their postal addresses, not which ward they live in.

For some members there is not a record of when they joined.

The EN2 postcode is the one corresponding most closely with Chase ward.

There are 20 Street Hawk members in the EN2 postcode.

For 7 there is no record of when they joined. Of the others, people joined from 2005 to 2012. 1 joined in 2010, 4 in 2011 and 1 in 2012.

Question 40 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People

Which schools in Chase Ward has the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People visited since May 2010, and when? What plans does the Cabinet Member have to visit schools in Chase Ward in 2013?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

In response to Council Question 40, I would like to reiterate my commitment to listening/hearing and taking into account views from parents, staff, governors and students. This is done by visiting as many schools, children's centres and school councils as possible but also by speaking with staff, students, parents and school governors at various meetings and Borough wide events.

I have very regular meetings with the Director and officers in the Department, and am kept fully updated. There is an enormous amount of work that takes places around children, young people and their families, both within the Department, in Schools, Children's Centres, Youth Centres, and other establishments and also in the community, often run by young people and the voluntary community groups.

I have made 56 school/educational site visits from Feb 2011 when I began recording them. I do not choose which schools to visit according to the Ward they are in; although I can confirm I have visited three schools in Chase Ward. I have not yet planned my school visits for this year.

Question 41 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

What revenue raising options has the council identified that could be achieved by the local authority adopting Violet Avenue?

Reply from Councillor Bond

None

Question 42 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

At the previous full Council meeting, Councillor Sitkin argued that the Hilly Fields Greenway route would be used to "train the Olympic champions of the future". Was this use of the Greenway made clear to residents during the consultation phase, and is it still the administration's intention for it to be used in this way?

Reply from Councillor Bond

The Greenway network is intended to be shared by pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users. It has been specifically designed for use by people with disabilities. The routes provide a safe environment for families to enjoy our open spaces and I hope that they will inspire the borough's children to take up cycling in later life, either as a healthy means of transport or as a sport or even as an Olympian.

Question 43 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing

What is the administration's policy towards providing specified travellers' sites in the borough?

Reply from Councillor Oyken

The Council's Planning Policy regarding gypsy and traveller sites in the borough is set out in the Core Strategy of Enfield's Local Plan, adopted in 2010.

Core Policy 6 "Meeting Particular Housing Needs" states that applications for gypsy and traveller sites should meet the following criteria:

- There is vehicular access from the public highway and provision for parking, turning and servicing on site to ensure road safety for occupants and visitors;
- There is no harm to visual amenity and there is adequate landscaping and planting, with appropriate trees and shrubs;
- The site has good access to shops, health care, school and other education facilities;
- The site is not in an area at high risk of flooding, including functional floodplains; and
- The size of the site is appropriate to its local context, and in relation to the local infrastructure and population size and density.

The Core Strategy confirms that the Council will work with the Mayor of London to identify whether there is a requirement for pitches within the Borough, taking into account the existing supply of pitches readily accessible from the Borough in the wider area. Where need can be demonstrated, the Sites Schedule or relevant area action plan will consider appropriate sites for gypsy and travellers accommodation, having regard to the above criteria and any further guidance to be included in the Development Management Document as necessary. The presence of green belt and flood risk areas within the Borough will constrain and limit opportunities for identifying sites.

Enfield currently has no gypsy and traveller sites and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (March 2008) identifies that Enfield has the third lowest need for sites within London. The Mayor of London is reassessing the methodology for assessing allocation of sites across London, which is expected to inform the revision of the London Plan. This may result in a need for Enfield to identify sites, however, in the absence of clear and immediate need there is no justification for allocating sites in advance of the consideration of pitch numbers as part of a revision to the London Plan. This will be reviewed on an on going basis with the Mayor of London and if necessary relevant development plan documents will be reviewed where appropriate.

Question 44 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

What steps is he taking to ensure that double yellow line markings in the borough are clear, especially where some in the Lancaster Road area appear to have been put in place, then subsequently partially painted over in black?

Reply from Councillor Bond

The Council has a maintenance regime in place to ensure that all waiting and loading restrictions remain clear. I have asked officers to look at those in Lancaster Road.

Question 45 from Councillor Waterhouse to Councillor Bond, Cabinet

Member for Environment

How many individual speed humps have been installed in a) Chase Ward b) Southbury Ward since May 2010, and what is the respective cost of each?

Reply from Councillor Bond

- a) Across three 20 mph zones, covering seven schools, speed humps have been introduced at 106 locations in Chase Ward since May 2010. This is made up of 5 speed tables and 216 speed cushions (note that speed cushions are typically arranged in sets of 2 or 3 at each location). I find it interesting that when these three schemes were consulted on, Councillor Waterhouse made no comment and that only one of the three scheme reports was called in by the Opposition.
- b) In Southbury Ward 3 speed tables have been introduced and 28 speed cushions at 12 locations.

One speed cushion costs approximately £700. Speed tables vary in cost significantly because they vary in size and drainage requirements but as a guide they range between £10,000 and £20,000.

Question 46 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Levy, Chair of the Licensing Sub Committee

Could he explain to the council the rationale for his Sub Committee's decision to grant Leisure Services application for an entertainment licence for all year round entertainments on Chase Green given that over 300 objections were received from members of the public and residents of the ward, including councillors of both parties, who along with many residents spoke in opposition at the meeting?

Reply from Councillor Levy

If the Member had attended the meeting, he would have realised that the points raised by local residents were not matters which could be considered relevant under the Licensing Act 2003. This cross party Sub Committee made an objective decision based on relevant evidence presented to it, in accordance with quasi judicial duty under the Act.

Question 47 from Councillor Headley to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

In relation to the Controlled Parking Zone proposals in Edmonton can the Cabinet Member tell us how many consultation documents were:

1. distributed and what was the geographical cut off in the Edmonton area for these documents; and

2. the total number (not the percentage) who were in favour?

Reply from Councillor Bond

1. 8,429 leaflets were distributed in the first consultation, which asked if residents and businesses had a parking problem and would they support a CPZ. Leaflets were distributed as far north as Forest Road, east to Montagu Road, south to (but not including) Brettenham Road and west to (but not including) Dunholme Road. For the current consultation, premises outside the proposed CPZ but that were included in the first consultation, received a letter explaining this and asking for any comments, (I attach as an appendix, a copy of this letter which also includes a plan that usefully shows the original consultation boundary and the proposed CPZ boundary). Premises inside the proposed CPZ received a detailed plan, leaflet and questionnaire.
2. From the 8,429 leaflets that were distributed in the first consultation, 1,173 responses were received with 411 in favour of parking controls. From within the proposed CPZ, 438 responses were received of which 234 were in favour of parking controls. I am pleased to report that the response rates to the current consultation are significantly improved.

Question 48 from Councillor Headley to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

Can the Cabinet Member tell us the rationale for having a 7 day a week 10 hour parking restriction in place in Edmonton?

Reply from Councillor Bond

The hours of operation of the proposed Edmonton Green CPZ are based on the wishes of local residents as expressed in the first consultation. 88% of respondents felt the CPZ should operate all day and 57% felt it should operate all week. However if on careful analysis of the results of the current consultation these hours or days need to change, we will do. Indeed if the majority of residents do not want a CPZ, we will not introduce it.

Question 49 from Councillor Headley to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

Can the Cabinet Member tell us the forecast receipts this Controlled Parking Zone is forecast to generate in 12, 18 and 24 months?

Reply from Councillor Bond

There are no forecasts of receipts from the Edmonton Green CPZ.

Question 50 from Councillor Headley to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment

Can the Cabinet Member for Environment tell us which roads in Upper Edmonton ward and Haselbury ward are forecast to be included in a Controlled Parking Zone for around Silver Street Station?

Reply from Councillor Bond

The only future CPZ that may affect Silver Street Station is one associated with the development of the Spurs ground. Funding for such a zone was secured as part of the recent planning permission granted by Haringey Council for the expansion of the Spurs stadium in White Hart Lane. Consultation is likely to take place in the summer and the consultation boundary is envisaged to extend from the borough boundary to Chalfont Road. As with all our CPZs we will only introduce them where the majority of respondents want one. It should also be noted that residents at the southern end of Victoria Road have recently submitted a petition requesting parking controls to deal with commuter parking.