

## **Council Questions – Wednesday 25 February 2015**

### **Section 1 - Questions to Cabinet Members**

#### **Question 1 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Could he tell the council whether he approves of all women shortlists for Parliamentary seats as in the Edmonton Constituency?

#### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I do not think that this is an appropriate question for Council. This is a matter for each of the political parties to consider themselves.

#### **Question 2 from Councillor Doyle to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

At the last Council meeting you gave a response to an Emergency Question. Would you like to comment further on the answer you gave?

#### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

With regard to the urgent question to me at the last Council meeting, which was replied to in writing, some concerns were raised that inferences might be drawn which could be considered defamatory. I made clear by way of a personal statement at the time that there was no intention on my part to make such inferences, and indeed on reflection I do not believe such inferences could reasonably be drawn from the text. However I also made it clear that I was happy to apologise to the ex-member if he felt that to be the case, and I am by way of this reply reaffirming that point.

#### **Question 3 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

Do you agree that all female shortlists are the right way to select candidates for elections as in the Edmonton Parliamentary Constituency?

#### **Reply from Councillor Oyken**

I do not think that this is an appropriate question for Council. This is a matter for each of the political parties to consider themselves.

#### **Question 4 from Councillor Abdullahi to Councillor Sitkin, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

Could the Cabinet Member for Economic Development tell the Council about the efforts this administration is making to galvanise business support for the expansion of the West Anglia mainline?

### **Reply from Councillor Sitkin**

As members of the London, Stansted Cambridge Consortium – and in line with our policy of maintaining direct active contacts with all of Enfield’s businesses large and small – we have mobilised local companies in this campaign and passed their responses to the Government, together with Enfield’s own statement of support.

### **Question 5 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Education Children’s Services & Protection**

Do you agree that all female shortlists are the right way to select candidates for elections as in the Edmonton Parliamentary Constituency?

### **Reply from Councillor Orhan**

I do not think that this is an appropriate question for Council. This is a matter for each of the political parties to consider themselves.

### **Question 6 from Councillor Maguire to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Would the Leader comment on allegations of social cleansing in an inner London borough and the impact on Enfield?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

This term was used by the Opposition Leader in the London Borough of Westminster. It appears that Westminster Council is buying properties in Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Enfield in order to place residents in temporary accommodation. So far £6 million has been invested and a further £9 million is available for purchasing properties.

The impact of this is to reduce the supply of properties for Enfield residents.

### **Question 7 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

I refer to the written answer to my urgent question about the conviction of Councillor Erbil on two matters of fraud. When you drafted the answer I appreciate that you were hoping that you would be shortlisted for the Edmonton parliamentary seat and naturally wanted to be careful what you said about Councillor Erbil. Can you confirm that is the reason why you failed to indicate your own view as to his future membership of the council?

Now that you have not been shortlisted perhaps you would care to tell the council whether you believe that it is appropriate for somebody who has been convicted of two offences of fraud to remain on the council, having previously been elected at a time when he was facing these charges, but had presumably not declared them during the Labour party’s selection process.

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I was very clear in my response to the emergency question. The matters relating to Councillor Erbil are being considered by the National Party.

I would remind Councillor Neville that in my time as a Councillor there have been a small number of Members on both sides accused of misconduct. Some of these have been dealt with by reference to the police, some by the internal Standards Committee (until recently it was not known as the Councillor Conduct Committee). I do not recall commenting on any Councillor either during investigation nor afterwards and, I am not intending to change that on this occasion. I have been entirely consistent in my approach.

### **Question 8 from Councillor Fonyonga to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services**

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on improvements to Albany Park?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

In 2013 the Council developed a range of potential improvements as part of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Unfortunately the HLF bid was unsuccessful, but the Parks Service has since taken elements of the original concept and developed a revised draft plan to improve provision within the park. The Parks Service has recently met with a range of local stakeholders to test the proposed improvements ahead of a public consultation which will commence in late February. Subject to the outcome of the consultation and any revisions, the Parks Service will then start to raise the funding that is required to deliver the improvements. The delivery of the improvements will be phased as funding is secured.

### **Question 9 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

I refer to the written response to my urgent question concerning Councillor Erbil. My original question asked you when you became aware of what would have been a pending prosecution for the two offences of fraud. Your response did not answer that question. You said that you referred the matter to the national party "promptly after the member informed me of the matter on 21 January 2015". The following questions arise for clarity:

1. Prior to the 21 January 2015 had you any knowledge whatsoever, actual or anecdotal, of the fact that Councillor Erbil was facing prosecution or had indeed been convicted?
2. Did Councillor Erbil personally inform you on 21 January 2015 of his conviction, or was that the date on which you referred the matter to the national party having been made aware that the press were about to expose the convictions? It just happens that 21 January 2015 was the same date that the press contacted me!
3. You failed to answer the question as to whether you had referred the matter to the Councillor Conduct Committee by commenting that the Monitoring Officer was seeking clarification of the issues. It occurs to me that there was little

clarification to be sought. This was a member of your group who had been convicted of quite serious offences and you should have promptly referred him to the Councillor Conduct Committee. Can you tell the council why you did not do so?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

1. No
2. Yes that was the date of my first knowledge of this issue
3. I met with the Monitoring Officer who took the view that she should not rely on press reports but should get the full facts about the case from the Court. That was the issue of clarification.

I do not believe that she felt a reference to the Councillor Conduct Committee was appropriate. She will have been mindful of section 3.2 of the Procedure for Handling Complaints against Councillors and co-opted Members which states, 'Complaints will not be accepted where:

- (c) it would be more appropriate for the complaint to be dealt with by a court
- (e) legal action is under way

In that light this case would not appear to be relevant for the Councillor Conduct Committee.

### **Question 10 from Councillor Lappage to Councillor Georgiou, Deputy Leader of the Council**

It is important for local residents that Enfield Council continues to attract as much funding as possible as a result of raising the profile of the work it does and promoting its achievements. Can the Deputy Leader advise how many times has Enfield Council been positively featured in the national press and broadcast media in the last year?

### **Reply from Councillor Georgiou**

Enfield Council continues to work hard to get regional and national recognition for the great work being undertaken by the authority to create a fairer and better Enfield. Over the last two years (to 1 April 2014) coverage in the national and broadcast media has increased by 217%. In 2013/14 we generated 621 positive pieces in the national press and broadcast media.

These have included coverage of the Enfield Experiment on the front page of the Guardian, the successful bid for £30 million pounds to invest in Cycle Enfield, the establishment of the Housing Gateway property company, our innovative Gang Call-in programme and the flagship Meridian Water development in Edmonton.

We are proud of Enfield, and as community leaders we will continue to ensure it gets the recognition it deserves as a great place to live, work, visit, do business and invest.

### **Question 11 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

I refer to his answer to question 23 from me in the last council meeting in connection with enforcement action taken under the Housing Act 2004 over the past five years. Will he agree with me that out of some 26,000 plus houses let by the private sector the total number of enforcement actions taken is miniscule? Either those figures reflect the number of cases where action was called for, or if not, a lack of resource. Can he tell the council which it is?

### **Reply from Councillor Oyken**

The answer to the question was rather narrow and focused specifically on enforcement action – if Councillor Neville had asked me more generally about the pressures facing the private sector housing enforcement team I would have presented him with the following table, which shows an inexorable rise in complaints concerning private sector housing across the borough. This of course does not include all the data collected by the police or by environmental services, which shows a similar trajectory, but it does illustrate the point.

<b>Category</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>
Housing Disrepair Reports	539	745	995	1055	1017
HMO Disrepair & Licensing Issues	65	95	62	48	85
Formal Notices Served	34	36	43	101	106

### **Question 12 from Councillor Chibah to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

In Main Avenue, is a Housing Revenue Account shop, which was occupied by a Safer Neighbourhoods' Team. They left the shop some 18 months ago: they surrendered the lease 12 January 2015.

Can you tell the Council the cost to tax payers of London for this period of non-occupancy and does he agree with me that this money would have been better spent on police on the streets of Enfield?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

The Unit was surrendered on the 12 January, Capital contribution towards dilapidations, rates and legal cost were paid, together with 18 months' rent. This unit will shortly be offered to the market. Therefore there has been no loss of income to the Council. Whether the police have spent their money wisely over the last 18 months is a question for them.

### **Question 13 from Councillor Neville to, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

At the extraordinary meeting of the council 23 December 2014, I asked you to confirm whether prior to making your decision not to lock park gates at night, you did or did not consult the borough police. In your reply you state "officers spoke to the police prior to making the decision".

Your decision is dated 3 October 2014. Will you accept from me that in answer to a series of questions I raised under the Freedom of Information Act, the police have confirmed that they were not consulted until October 2014 and that their response was not sent to the council until 12 December 2014, in fact after the MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) meeting to which you refer, which took place on 2 December 2014, itself two months after you had made your decision.

In the circumstances will you concede that in your written answer of 23 December 2014, which presumably you had time to think about, you misled the council inasmuch as you had not consulted the police prior to taking that decision on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and your consultation with them, was only an afterthought following public protest and the calling in of the decision and general concern from members of the opposition.

Will you now apologise to the council for this serious failing not only to consult but more particularly for giving the council inaccurate information, which you must have known to be inaccurate, and resign from the cabinet.

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Informal discussions between the police and the Council's Head of Community Safety started in the summer, certainly no later than August 2014. The Police's position has always remained the same i.e. this is a decision for the Council.

### **Question 14 from Councillor Hasan to Councillor Brett, Cabinet for Community Organisations**

Can the Cabinet Member for Community Organisations advise how many families are currently being assisted by food banks in Enfield and how many children?

### **Reply from Councillor Brett**

Thank you, Councillor Hasan for raising such an important issue. Food Banks in the borough continue to provide a vital resource for some of our most vulnerable individuals and families. Enfield Council officers working with the North Enfield and Edmonton Food Banks have supplied me with some recent data that illustrates the scale of hardship some of our residents are facing.

The latest cumulative data from North Enfield Food Bank shows that since April 2012 they have fed a total of 11,191 people, of which 4,556 were children. Over 89 tonnes of food has been distributed that equates to over 100,000 meals. They report that the

numbers of clients accessing the service continues to rise and during January 2015 they fed 431 people of which 143 were children.

Edmonton Food Bank also continues to face significant demand. The latest 6 month monitoring we have from them (June 2014 - November 2014) shows that 780 families accessed their food bank, breaking down into 320 adults and 460 children.

The Council remains committed to doing what it can to help the food banks in Enfield assist local people in need. We are also working with wider partners to help build the kind of sustained prosperity and opportunity in the borough that means local people will have less cause to rely on services such as these in the future.

### **Question 15 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor Leader of the Council**

Would he list for the council a non-exhaustive list of circumstances, the occurrence of which should cause a cabinet member to resign his position?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

Within our constitution cabinet members shall hold office until:

- (a) he/she resigns from office; or
- (b) he/she is suspended from being a councillor under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000\* (although he/she may resume office at the end of the period of suspension); or
- (c) he/she is no longer a councillor; or
- (d) he/she is removed from office, either individually or collectively, by the Leader of the Council.

\*The authority cannot disqualify or suspend councillors: suspension was permitted under the Local Government Act 2000 regime however this was removed by the Localism Act 2011 which made fundamental changes to the system of regulation of standards of conduct for elected and co-opted members of local authorities.

The Local Government Act 1972 sets out when a person shall be disqualified for being elected or being a member of the local authority. Some of the provisions refer to employment in a company which is under the control of the local authority, the person is subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or has within five years before the day of election or since his election been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine.

### **Question 16 from Councillor Cazimoglu to Councillor Georgiou, Deputy Leader of the Council**

Meridian Water is set to bring thousands of jobs and homes to the borough, helping to drive the local economy for the benefit of all our residents for years to come. Can the Deputy Leader advise how the Council has helped to raise its profile in the last 12 months?

### **Reply from Councillor Georgiou**

Enfield Council has delivered lots of events and activity in the last year which has helped raise the profile of this flagship development. This has included regional and national events such as the launch of the Lee Valley Heat Network and local events such as the Meridian Water Festival.

As a result Meridian Water has featured in numerous pieces of press and broadcast media on outlets including BBC London TV, ITV London TV, BBC Radio London, BBC News website, LBC, Capital FM, Choice FM, Heart FM, Magic FM, Estates Gazette, Inside Housing, Housing News, – as well as being covered frequently by The Enfield Advertiser and The Enfield Independent.

It was particularly pleasing to see the recent full page article in The Evening Standard (4 February 2015) which encouraged readers to invest in a development set to rejuvenate the site and transform the area.

### **Question 17 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Stafford Cabinet Member for Finance**

Could he please tell the Council what are the current extra revenue charges in respect of the increase of £69 million in the general fund borrowing that has taken place since Labour took power in 2010?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

The £69m and £84.6m reflect the increase in the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) over the period and not the actual increase in borrowing. It also includes estimated borrowing in 2014/15 in respect of the General Fund.

Total borrowing to finance both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme actually increased by £49.5m. The actual increase in interest payments was £0.275m.

The General Fund Minimum Revenue Provision will increase by £2.5m. This is based on the General Fund CFR. There is no requirement for Minimum Revenue Provision in respect of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) although the HRA business plan does include provision for repayment of debt in later years.

### **Question 18 from Councillor Dogan to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services**

Can the Cabinet Member tell the Council of planned works to the Ridgeway?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

In 2015/16, we are planning to resurface a section of the Ridgeway (approximately between Oak Avenue and the junction with Lavender Hill). The Council has approved a plan to introduce a pedestrian refuge island on The Ridgeway a little way north of the access to Rectory Farm. This will facilitate safe crossing for pedestrians

and cyclists using the new Greenway from Enfield Island Village to The Ridgeway. The remainder of the Greenway, stretching to Hadley Wood, is planned to be implemented in 2016. The crossing will also facilitate the existing London Loop walking route.

**Question 19 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Stafford Cabinet Member for Finance**

Could he tell the council what are the current revenue charges in respect of the increase of £84.6million in the housing revenue account borrowing that has taken place since Labour took power in 2010 and how these are being funded?

**Reply from Councillor Stafford**

Please refer to the combined response to Question 17

**Question 20 from Councillor Pite to Councillor McGowan, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Services**

The NHS has come under enormous pressure over the winter period. Can the Cabinet Member advise what Enfield Council and Adult Social Care are doing to support hospital discharges and avoid delayed discharges?

**Reply from Councillor McGowan**

Adult Social has increased capacity within the hospitals through the introduction of seven day working, which has been in place since January 2014. Over the winter period, we have increased our social work, occupational therapy and enablement resources to cope with increasing demand and ensure that a whole systems and timely approach is in place for patients. We have moved some enablement assessing staff into the hospital teams to work with social work, ward and discharge staff to further support timely and safe discharge arrangements.

We have also increased our social work and occupational therapy capacity in the community over the winter period to work with community nursing colleagues and GPs to provide targeted, coordinated support to those who a) may be a risk of admission to hospital and b) reduce the risk of an unplanned acute admission. This includes reviewing the needs of those with complex health and social care needs and those in residential / nursing placements.

It has been acknowledged by both North Middlesex University Hospital (NMUH) and the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust that delays due to LBE social care are minimal, our performance remains strong and our weekend and bank holiday working is making a difference within the system, both the Haringey and Barnet Systems Resilience Groups have aired this and our performance has been acknowledged by them. The few delays we have had over the last couple of months in acute settings are primarily down to nursing care availability; this is resolved, for now. There were no Social Services delays in acute wards reported over the Christmas period.

At NMUH in January, a week was identified to 'reset' the system by running a 'perfect week' model. This means getting to a situation where we do not have patients in Accident and Emergency (A&E) for long periods awaiting hospital beds. As a result of this work, workstreams have been identified, in areas for improvement in the main causes of delays. This includes equipment, working with care home providers to improve their assessment timescales, Continuing Care Assessment processes and the discharge planning process.

We attend daily bed meetings, and twice weekly teleconferences, to discuss issues relating to discharge, which are increased during particularly challenging periods. We have improved systems to secure necessary community equipment with our colleagues in Integrated Community Equipment Services (ICES) through streamlining the equipment assessment and requisition process from ward staff to community nurses. Feedback indicates this is working well.

We continue to work in the community with those who require adult social care services to ensure they are safe. Over winter, we have increased provision for community based service users who may be at risk of admission / re-admission. We have experienced a 7% increase in the number of people receiving an enablement service and a 7% increase in the number of assessments completed across the whole service between November and January this year. These figures, along with excellent Delayed Transfer of Care performance and discharge numbers, indicate a successful approach to avoiding unnecessary, unplanned admissions to hospital. This is supported through integrated working in the community (Older Peoples' Assessment Unit, Integrated locality team; Care Homes Assessment Team; GP hotspots project).

#### **Question 21 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Does he accept the findings of the Institute of Fiscal Studies which reveal that total public spending will have fallen by a mere 2.3% over the lifetime of this parliament or less than half of a percentage point per annum helping the hard working residents in Enfield?

#### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I do not see public spending as a bad thing. The NHS, Defence of the Realm, the Police, Education and Social Services for example are paid for by public spending. An ideological desire to shrink the state does not protect the most vulnerable, allowing pooled resources for the greater good and enhance society.

#### **Question 22 from Councillor Anderson to Councillor Georgiou, Deputy Leader of the Council**

As an open and transparent Council, Enfield is committed to keeping Enfield's residents well informed about Council services, activities, events and decisions through traditional and new media. Can the Deputy Leader advise how many Council stories have the local press covered in the last year and how successful has the Council been in increasing engagement with local people through social media?

## **Reply from Councillor Georgiou**

Unlike many London boroughs Enfield is fortunate enough to have well established and well regarded local papers which play a vital role in keeping our local residents well informed about the Council and Council services - and accountable for our policies and decisions. Local newspapers remain residents' preferred source of information about the Council (2013), so we work hard to support the local press when they feature stories involving the Council, answer their enquiries, respond to criticism and help sustain a vibrant local democracy.

The Enfield Advertiser and The Enfield Independent continue to provide extensive coverage of Council-related services, initiatives, events, policies and decisions – both on-line and in their paper editions – 1667 articles in 2014 up from 1602 articles in 2013 despite the purdah period in May 2014. We value the vital role they play in building a stronger community in Enfield and providing a critical friend for the Council.

We also continue to drive forward new ways of communicating and engaging with local people which meet their changing lifestyles and needs. In the last two years we have increasingly used social media to connect with people who prefer this channel and reach residents who do not use more traditional media. The number of people who like the Council's main Facebook page has increased by 50% since April last year and the Council's main Twitter feed now has 6,024 followers – up 7% since October.

## **Question 23 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Does he accept the findings of the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS) which reveal that spending on social security will have actually risen during the lifetime of this parliament thus helping the less fortunate residents in Enfield?

## **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

It appears that Councillor Neville believes that increasing the welfare bill is a policy objective of the Government. I personally have not studied the IFS review.

## **Question 24 from Councillor Stewart to Councillor McGowan, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Services**

Can the Cabinet Member tell me what Enfield is doing to ensure that "Making Safeguarding Personal" is integrated into the Safeguarding Adults' Process?

## **Reply from Councillor McGowan**

Service delivery is the key area where change has occurred, which has been focused on engaging with the workforce to develop:

- Skills and competencies which seek to enable and equip staff to work with individuals to negotiate outcomes and seek resolution.
- Creating safeguarding adults champions within the adult social care team.

- Ensuring staff ask those who have been harmed about their outcomes at the beginning of the safeguarding process and the extent to which this has been achieved or resolved at the end.

The IT system has been reviewed and developed so that we can now evidence that we are working in a person centred way which clearly sets out outcomes. In addition, the Strategic Safeguarding Adults Service complete interviews with those who have been harmed and this has demonstrated an improvement in how adults have control and involvement in the safeguarding process.

Both internal and external audit reports have demonstrated a change in practice in line with Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) which ensures empowerment, partnership, proportionality, protection, prevention and accountability.

Advocacy has been developed, particularly in ensuring that this is available and offered within safeguarding. The Care Act has sharpened the focus on advocacy as there is now a duty to provide advocacy in safeguarding cases where an individual requires this. Additionally we have updated all of our local practice guidance to be MSP compliant.

Structurally a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is being developed and is to be operational from April 1, 2015. The MASH will contribute towards Making Safeguarding Personal through an effective and responsive service, to reports of abuse, that enables disclosure, establishes what the person being harmed wants, personalises risk management and puts the person in control.

Making Safeguarding Personal also has a strong preventative requirement which is met in Enfield by:

- Work planned with those who may be at risk of causing harm.
- Provider Concerns Process and Safeguarding Information Panel which seeks to prevent and work with care providers to minimise risk.
- Work with carers to support those at risk of being harmed by the person they care for and support when they are at risk of harming.

Enfield Council as the responsible body for setting up the Safeguarding Adults Board are also driving the Making Safeguarding Personal agenda to partner organisations on the Board. The Council has requested all partners to submit their action plans for how MSP will be implemented within their organisation. The Strategic Safeguarding Adults Service has completed presentations on MSP to the Board and provides updates to meetings on progress against our action plan. In turn, the draft Safeguarding Adults Strategy 2015-2018 is in the spirit of person centred and outcome focused safeguarding practice.

#### **Question 25 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Does he accept that, by scrapping the Labour government's planned annual fuel duty hikes, the government has saved the average motorist, in Enfield, £11 every time they visit the pumps?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

Tax raising is a complicated matter and I assume that a saving in this area is displaced somewhere else. Presumably abolition of this duty or road tax would save motorists even more.

### **Question 26 from Councillor Kepez to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Can the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety tell the Council how many meetings he has had with Friends of the Parks so far this year?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Since January 2015 I have met with Friends of Parks groups and representatives 16 times.

### **Question 27 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Does he agree with President Barack Obama who recently said "I would note that Great Britain and the United States are two economies standing out at a time when a lot of other countries are having problems, so we must be doing something right" thus benefitting the hard working and the less fortunate residents of Enfield?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

Can I congratulate Councillor Neville for becoming an Obama fan. Perhaps, however, the esteemed President is less sighted on the failure of the Conservative Government, than we are.

### **Question 28 from Councillor Brett to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

Can the Cabinet Members advise how much Enfield Council is receiving in discretionary housing payment in this funding round? Is the reduction fair?

### **Reply from Councillor Oyken**

Enfield Council has received one of the biggest cuts in discretionary housing payments in the country at 40%. This is despite a 50% increase in homeless enquiries and a 40% increase in people having to go into temporary accommodation. Our funding reduces from £2.7m this year to £1.6m in 2015/16, a cut of over £1m.

Discretionary housing payments are critical to preventing homelessness and have been used to reduce the impact of the Government's welfare reforms locally. The formula used by the Government has favoured councils with high levels of council/social housing stock which has meant the biggest cuts have been faced by councils such as Enfield with a large private rented sector.

This funding cut comes on top of a 40% reduction in emergency support payments

for people facing financial crisis and the wider funding reductions impacting on the Council, which taken together, represents an attack on the very poorest in our society.

**Question 29 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Does he agree with Robert Peston the BBC's Economics Editor, (not known for his support of the Conservative Party), that "real household disposable income per head is above where it was in the boom years by just over 1% largely because of low interest rates and welfare payments made to cushion the effects of the recession" thus benefitting the hard working and the less fortunate residents of Enfield?

**Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I have no idea if Robert Peston is a supporter of the Conservative Party or not. I do know that a study of Enfield shows increasing poverty and decreasing quality of life as a result of cuts and low wages.

**Question 30 from Councillor Lemonides to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services**

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on planned improvements to Turkey Street Station?

**Reply from Councillor Bond**

The council has successfully secured £100k from Transport for London (TfL)'s Major Scheme fund to develop proposals to improve the public realm around both Bush Hill Park and Turkey Street stations. The release of this first tranche of funding, which will enable designs to be developed and consultation to take place, is linked to works starting on another Major Scheme in Ponders End towards the end of 2015. It is anticipated that around £1m plus will be released in 2016/17 for the implementation of both schemes. These improvements will complement the station enhancements planned by TfL when London Overground takes over the running of stations and train service in May 2015.

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

Does Councillor Taylor accept that on the basis of a further quote from Robert Peston in an article in The Times on 30 December 2014 that "the median British household is worth about £220,000, 10% more than before the crash, and the median net worth of British adults is more than twice that of Americans" explaining that "average net worth is much higher in America but because wealth is shared much less equally in the United States the average exaggerates the prosperity of most Americans". Enfield residents will have benefitted to some degree from this improvement in national prosperity.

**Reply from Councillor Taylor**

While Robert Peston is a noted commentator I do not believe that Enfield residents

have felt any improvement in their prosperity. Indeed we have frozen the Council Tax again as a response to the pressures on working families.

**Question 32 from Councillor Doyle to Councillor Georgiou, Deputy Leader of the Council**

Despite halving the annual Council spend on communications activity over the last 5 years, Enfield Council has doubled levels of feeling informed about Council services among local residents. Can the Deputy Leader tell the Council how Enfield Council manage to ensure that it remains accountable as well as keeping residents informed about vital services and activities with reduced funding?

**Reply from Councillor Georgiou**

We constantly review and challenge the way we communicate with our residents to keep them well informed about the Council in the ways that they prefer and in the most effective and cost effective manner.

We work hard to engage with our strong and vibrant local papers - which circulate to the majority of households in the borough. We also produce Our Enfield which is the other top preferred source of information about Enfield Council with residents (2013) and is the only publication to be distributed to every household in the borough. This is also far more cost effective than alternative methods of reaching the same number of residents with information about universal services and news of borough-wide interest - such as placing more advertisements in multiple publications or producing and distributing lots of individual leaflets.

Information and campaigns that are relevant to more selective audiences are carefully targeted to ensure that the most effective and best value communications channels are used.

We continue to improve our digital offering to meet residents changing expectations about how they want to be kept informed and access services. Use and satisfaction with the Council's website continues to rocket as residents increasingly go on-line not only to find out information but to carry out transactions and communicate with us. More people than ever are also following and engaging with the Council through social media including residents that we find it hard to reach in other ways. Short term investment in technology is not only leading to an improved customer experience but will also contribute to considerable savings for Enfield's taxpayers in the medium and long term.

However, although we will continue to use technology to communicate with residents, in the ways they prefer, while delivering savings, we will not do so at the expense of the digitally excluded. Changes to the way we communicate with our residents will continue to be driven by their changing lifestyles and needs – not ours.

**Question 33 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

On the 4 February 2015 you used the Urgency Powers to appoint a deputy to Councillor Hamilton on the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority. In so doing it appears

that you broke with protocol, established over numerous years and administrations, that the deputy is chosen from the opposition benches. Am I to take it that this was a deliberate breach of protocol which if so affect ongoing business relationships between the parties?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I can confirm that the appointment of Councillor Levy, as the Council's Deputy Member on the Lee Valley Regional Parks Authority (LVRPA), was agreed by myself under the Council urgent action procedure on 4 February 2015. This was due to the temporary incapacity of the appointed member.

The Leader of the Opposition was advised of the decision and reason for urgency on the same day, with the details also included (for noting) on the February Council agenda.

The Council has not operated with a deputy member on LVRPA since July 2013, when the four year term of office of the previous representative (who was an Opposition Member) expired. Following the local election in 2014, we have now been able to regularise the position regarding the length of appointments to LVRPA so these now run concurrently with the four year term of each Council, allowing respective administrations to decide upon their own membership arrangements on this body. It was entirely reasonable where the majority side was not represented by the full member at the LVRPA that a deputy from the majority side should be appointed. That, however, is unlikely ever to be the case again because of the change to appointment dates.

### **Question 34 from Councillor Pite to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on the improvements to Pymmes Park?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

The Officers continue to work with the Friends of Pymmes Park on the agreed short, medium and long term items of the Park Priority Plan. This includes:

- A successful pilot litter campaign was conducted in Pymmes Park during the October 2014 half term.
- The decommissioning of the old automated toilet block (introduced by the Conservatives when in power and in my opinion a folly of an idea) ahead of putting the building to the market in the spring.
- Working with MIND in Enfield to expand the use of the Bowling Green in partnership with other local groups.

We have established a project group, including helpfully members of the Friends of Pymmes Park with a view to developing a wetland area with reed beds to encourage wildlife and birds to the area. This will involve investment by both Enfield Council and other agencies and will benefit park users today and for the future.

We have made significant improvements to the water quality in the lake, again supported by partner agencies and the Friends' group by direct action such as dredging the area periodically but more importantly by working with residents to ensure that where home improvements or building works involves plumbing, that the connections are correct and do not result in water from washing machines etc running into the surface water drains and then to the lake.

As the development continues, we hope to involve local schools and residents even more. We know that the more people make good use of the park, the better. Legitimate use of our parks will encourage more people to visit and discourage antisocial behaviour.

**Question 35 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Can he tell the Council:

- a) How much has been spent since January 2013 in clearing up fly tips?
- b) For the same period how much income has been received for bulky waste collections?

**Reply from Councillor Bond**

- a) Fly-tip clearance is integrated into the street cleaning operations with all teams tasked with collection of litter, street cleaning and also abandoned waste or fly tip materials. The cost of the service is £4.3m
- b) For the period January 2013 to date, £193k of income has been received for Bulky waste collections.

**Question 36 from Councillor Anderson to Councillor Brett, Cabinet for Community Organisations**

Given the strong attendance at Holocaust Memorial Day and from increasingly diverse communities this year and with a waiting list would the Cabinet Member consider moving it to a larger venue?

**Reply from Councillor Brett**

I would like to thank Councillor Anderson for highlighting the success of this year's Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD). I am sure he will agree with me that it is hugely reassuring to know that our residents retain a strong commitment to respecting and celebrating the diversity we enjoy in Enfield during what are very challenging times. Over recent years, the Council has made increased efforts to reach a wider audience, especially from the younger generations. So I am pleased that our annual HMD event, held at the Dugdale Centre, was at full capacity this year, and do acknowledge that we could have accommodated more residents if additional space had been available to us.

In the light of the high levels of local interest, I have instructed officers to look again at alternative venues that could meet an increased demand for places at our annual HMD event. I would be delighted to pass on any suggestions Councillor Anderson may have in this regard and look forward to another successful commemoration event in 2016.

**Question 37 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety explain to the chamber his department's proposals to stop fires occurring in parks where BBQs will in future take place?

**Reply from Councillor Bond**

An option has been included in the part 2 fees and charges budget report on this agenda to allow for a trial Parks BBQ scheme. This will be considered in any proposed trial.

**Question 38 from Councillor Lemonides to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

Can the Cabinet Member advise how much has the authority invested in capital projects over the last 4 years? What is the current level of borrowing for the London Borough of Enfield?

**Reply from Councillor Stafford**

From 2010/11 to 2013/14 the Council invested £478.6m in capital projects. The current level of borrowing at 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015 is £330.6m.

**Question 39 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety set out his plans to fund additional staff to clear up our parks after BBQs have taken place?

**Reply from Councillor Bond**

I refer you to my previous reply to Question 37. This will be considered in any proposed trail

**Question 40 from Councillor Levy to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Can the Cabinet Member give the Council an update on planned improvements to Bush Hill Park Station?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Please refer to the combined response to question 30.

### **Question 41 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety explain how his department will enforce the rules that will undoubtedly be put in place relating to conducting BBQs in parks?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

I refer you to my previous reply to Question 37. This will be considered in any proposed trial.

### **Question 42 from Councillor During to Councillor McGowan, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Services**

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on New Options?

### **Reply from Councillor McGowan**

Health, Housing and Adult Social Care (HHASC) took possession of the keys to New Options on the 26<sup>th</sup> January and the staff team spent the next few days unpacking crates and preparing the building for service delivery.

We were proud to welcome our customers to the new build for the first time on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and their response has been absolutely fantastic. Staff morale is high and the team are working with customers to co-produce the activities being developed in the new space.

We continue to work with the contractor with some small snagging issues and they are responding to requests.

Everyone is really looking forward to the official launch on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2015 and to sharing our fabulous resource, which so many people have worked hard to make a reality.

### **Question 43 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Does the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety not agree that to raise the price of crossovers as indicated in the fees and charges report does little to make it attractive for people to do the right thing and pay for a crossover before the cost of enforcement is necessary?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

The cost per square metre for constructing vehicle crossovers, as indicated in the fees and charges for 2015/16, is based on the rate provided by our new London Highways Alliance Contractor. Although this new contract will provide savings to the Council overall, the unit rate for constructing crossovers in response to residents' applications is significantly higher than our previous contractor's rate. Officers are therefore tendering this specific area of work to ensure that we offer the best possible value to our residents. I will therefore amend the rate for 2015/16 once a new contractor has been appointed for 2015/16.

### **Question 44 from Councillor Maguire to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Services**

Can the Cabinet Member give an update on policing figures for Enfield?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

In terms of Police Officer numbers, the current target strength for police officers in Enfield is 566 and the current actual number is 557. This target has been reduced from the original target of 583 because a number of functions are now centralised and not counted against the borough strength. The Council would like the Mayor of London to provide more officers to Enfield to reflect the high demand and geographical size of the borough in support of our local police teams. We need officers on streets and not behind desks.

### **Question 45 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Does the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety agree that if waste collection is to change to fortnightly, the Labour Group will be failing to deliver on its manifesto pledge to guarantee a weekly waste collection service?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

I have no intention of breaching our manifesto pledge.

### **Question 46 from Councillor Jiagge to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

Can the Cabinet Member for Finance advise how much the reductions in Local Government Funding have been over the last 5 years and how these have impacted on residents in Enfield?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

In the last 5 years this Council has had its Government funding reduced by £44m, with 2015/16 seeing a further reduction of £21.5m. The Council has of course done its utmost to minimise the impact of these reductions on residents in the Borough, through the implementation of "back office" savings like the Enfield 2017 programme

but there is a limit on the amount of efficiency savings that can be found and in future years the anticipated further reductions can only make it more difficult to protect all front line services.

**Question 47 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety explain why the 14/15 saving in relation to the Anti Social Behaviour Services Joint Services Review is taking so long to achieve?

**Reply from Councillor Bond**

The Joint Services Review recommended that there be greater integration between both the Community Safety Unit (CSU) Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Team and that of Enfield Homes. Obviously this needs to be managed to coincide with the re-integration of Enfield Homes, which is due to take place during the coming year. The implications for service areas are still being worked through and it would therefore not be appropriate to discuss the details of the proposals at this stage, In advance of discussions with individual staff members. Both Enfield Homes and the Community Safety Unit have been working hard to deliver excellent service to customers. The two teams currently share a single case management system to ensure appropriate information exchange

**Question 48 from Councillor During to Councillor Sitkin, Cabinet Member for Economic Development**

Could the Cabinet Member for Economic Development please update the Council about the recent progress:

- a. At Meridian Water
- b. On the Smart Homes agenda
- c. On Garden Enfield
- d. On the Town Centre Framework

**Reply from Councillor Sitkin**

**Meridian Water**

Progress continues to be made with regards to the delivery of Meridian Water. In particular the Council has advanced in land assembly terms. Three sites will be under the Council's control by the end of March and we expect two further sites to also be under our control by summer 2015.

Angel Gardens Phase 1 will be open to the public at the end of February 2015. Funding has been approved to complete the rest of the park, which will open by the year end.

Meridian Angel Primary School successfully secured planning permission (subject to Condition and S106 agreement) at January 2015 Planning Committee. The school will open in early 2016 and is set to accommodate 420 pupils by September 2021.

Progress continues to be made in finalising the railway investment proposals that will result in 4 trains per hour stopping at Angel Road Station in 2018. Work is underway to deliver Meridian Boulevard that will set the benchmark for the quality expected at Meridian Water.

An Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) Contract Notice has been published to procure a multi-disciplinary design team to kick-start the early delivery of housing with first completions anticipated in 2018. Housing Zone negotiations have been positive, with an announcement expected in spring 2015.

#### **a. Smart Homes**

Smart Homes offers grants of up to 75% of the cost for solid wall insulation and additional energy saving measures, to a maximum of £6,000 to Enfield residents. Haringey Council is leading the scheme and residents in the following boroughs can benefit: Enfield, Camden, Islington, Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest.

As of 10 February 2015, Enfield has 141 residents who are progressing through the grant process.

Some recent promotion of Smart Homes by Enfield includes:

- Articles in Our Enfield and Staff Matters
- A lunch time drop-in session for staff with a local installer
- Presentations at Area Partnership meetings to promote the scheme
- Promotion through community groups
- Liaising with colleagues in Housing and Adult Social Care who work with residents who could benefit
- Assisting Ecologic Energy with street-by-street promotion in a targeted area
- A targeted letter to residents signed by Councillors Bond, Sitkin and Oykenor to promote the scheme.

Through the Retrofit London Project, Enfield Council is working with local installers to help them promote the Smart Homes offer to residents. This is part of this Labour Administration's long-term economic plan to nurture a viable high value retrofitting activity in Enfield - a plan that unlike its namesake employed by others, is undeniably working for the people of Enfield.

The following drop-in sessions have been organised to enable local businesses to promote the offer to residents:

Date	Time	Venue	Installer
Tuesday February	17th 9am- 11am	Enfield Business Centre 201 Hertford Road, Enfield, EN3 5JH	Ecologic & Ecologistics
Wednesday February	18th 3pm - 7pm	Manor House Development Trust - The Redmond Community Centre, Kayani Avenue, London, N4 2HF	Ecologic
Thursday February	19th 10am - 2pm	Oakwood Library 185-187 Bramley Road, Oakwood, N14 4XA	Ecologic
Wednesday March	4th 11am - 2pm	The Dugdale Centre Thomas Hardy House, 39 London Road, Enfield, Middlesex, EN2 6DS	Ecologistics

Enfield has been informed by Haringey Council that Department for Energy and Climate Change has agreed to an extension of the project, and is awaiting confirmation on the duration of the extension.

## **b. Garden Enfield**

### **1. Commercial Growing**

- Project feasibility ongoing with good progress on the business plan (stress-testing simulations in light of feedback received from sectorial stakeholders with whom we have now started making contact).

### **2. Forty Hall Farm & Enfield Veg Co.**

- Enfield Veg Co. now in second year of operation, delivering to 5 drop-off points, and customer numbers up to 65, about double what it was ca 9 months ago.

### **3. Community Growing Projects - four projects underway**

- Friends of Albany Park and Eco Life: poly tunnel for aquaponics - under construction, orchard agreed: 30 volunteers involved in the project.
- Enfield Young Farmers Club: collaboration between the Football Club (Fit to Live) with Nightingale Academy: site on school campus has been cleared and ready for planting; young people from the football club are volunteering and learning through the project.
- Friends of Arnos Grove Park have a project plan and equipment to grow.

- Broomfield Park Orchard have a project plan for growing project

#### **4. Enfield Farm Start**

- Delivery partner appointed, Organiclea.
- Enfield residents will have the opportunity to receive training directly from their site at Hawkwood Nurseries, as well as become involved with the Enfield Farm Start project in Enfield.

#### **5. Education**

- There are now 62 schools growing or interested in growing.
- Over 20 work experience placements in the horticulture sector have taken place this year.
- The City Bridge Trust project will see ten learners starting their Level 1 introduction to horticulture course start in March alongside functional skills and work experience.

#### **c. Town Centre Framework**

A new Town Centre Framework was drafted in 2013. This was consulted fully with many retailers, businesses and stakeholders. All comments were received and amendments made to the framework. This is now complete and the finished document is to be made available for public consumption via the Council's website and also sent to retailers via email. This new framework will be the core strategic document to drive future strategy for the town centres and also look to develop new management models for the running and operation of town centres.

#### **Question 49 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

The budget report includes a proposal to increase football senior pitch hire fees for schools from £32.00 to £47.00 making physical exercise more expensive. Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety explain how this decision coincides with Enfield Council's health and wellbeing pledge to reduce childhood obesity and promote exercise to all?

#### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Schools book a variety of pitches within the borough. The increase is a reflection of the cost of providing this service to schools and remains significantly cheaper than the rate charged to adult football clubs. Addressing childhood obesity is a council wide challenge, not just the responsibility of the Parks Service.

#### **Question 50 from Councillor Jemal to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

The local MP for Enfield North is running a petition regarding weekly collections of waste, which is this administration's policy.

On the page to sign up to the petition two adverts appear one for waste collection operating from Chiswick and the other also outside the Borough is more expensive than LB Enfield costs.

Do you agree with me, that this goes against trying to get jobs in Enfield by advertising competitors from other parts of London and also provides poor value for any residents of Enfield lured into using the company, given the level of fees charged, which clearly has the support of Nick De Bois MP as they appear on his website.

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Yes, but when the Opposition tell us they want to copy Barnet and move our loyal, dedicated and hardworking staff to Northern Ireland, I suppose it is expected.

### **Question 51 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Bond Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Please could the Cabinet Member for Environment & Community Safety set out his plans on how his department will enforce health and safety in relation to BBQ's in parks if in the future he intends to stop locking parks at night?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

I refer you to my previous reply to Question 37. This will be considered in any proposed trial.

### **Question 52 from Councillor Doyle to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

Is it true that Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have sublet a property in Enfield to a charity? In so doing, is the HMRC avoiding paying business rates?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

HMRC have been the rate-payers for Capital House in Green Lanes for over 40 years. Their managing agent sub-let two vacant floors of the building to a charity in August 2014. Prior to this sub-letting, HMRC were responsible for paying business rates on the whole building totalling £150,000. By sub-letting two floors to a charity they have avoided paying business rates for these two floors. The loss to Enfield residents is not known at the moment as the agents for the HMRC have requested the rating assessment to be split to accommodate this reduction.

### **Question 53 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

On the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 the balance on the Risk Reserve is £6,669,000. On the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 it is projected to fall to £1,808,000.

Could the Cabinet member provide us with the breakdown with respect to any specific earmarked amounts in both these balances?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

The risk reserve has been set aside to cover such costs as the Local Plan (£1.8m), Sustainability, including Lee Valley Heat Network (£1.0m), Homelessness (£0.7m), a potential transfer of NHS liabilities as part of health reforms (£0.6m), Special Educational Needs transport pressures (£0.4m) and other potential costs relating to various cost risks (£0.4m). The remaining balance of £1.8m is there to meet further costs that may require one-off funding including reductions in Government funding and implementation of Enfield 2017.

### **Question 54 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Stafford, Cabinet Member for Finance**

On the 31 March 2014 the total balance on the General Fund Reserve is £69,810,000. This is projected to decrease by over £50m to £19,410,000 by the 31 March 2019.

Given this trend and that there will be further pressures on Local Government finances in which year does the Cabinet Member project that the Council will have no General Fund Reserves at all?

### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

Councillor Hurer is referring to specific reserves of £69.8m set aside for specific projects and requirements. The Council also maintains a General Fund balance of £14m as advised by the Director of Finance and Customer Services. The projection makes no assumptions on contributions to reserves which the Council may decide to make in future years depending on future Government funding and budget outturns. The Council may also decide to use the reserves for other purposes or retain them depending on the latest circumstances.

The Council reviews all balances and reserves every year as part of the budget setting process and will continue to ensure sufficient resources are maintained based on risks and statutory advice from the Director of Finance, Resources and Customer Services.

### **Question 55 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Stafford Cabinet Member for Finance**

S142, subsection 3 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 states that:

“The chief finance officer of a relevant authority shall make a report under this section if it appears to him that the relevant expenditure of the authority incurred (including expenditure it proposes to incur) in a financial year is likely to exceed the

resources (including the sums borrowed) available to meet that expenditure”.

Based on the current level of committed revenue and capital expenditure, projected revenue and capital expenditure, income (revenue and capital), borrowing, increased interest payments due to increased levels of borrowing and taking into consideration the downward trend in available reserves and that the projected budget gap in 2018/2019 will be in the region of £80m, on what date does he believe that the S151 Officer will make such a report?

#### **Reply from Councillor Stafford**

I don't believe he will, and I have no intention of putting the officer or indeed the Council in the position of needing to make such a statement.

#### **Question 56 from Councillor Milne to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration and Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

In light of the findings in Rotherham and just about every other serious case review, regarding the lack of co-ordination and communication between agencies in tackling serious matters affecting the public and in particular vulnerable members of society, do the Cabinet Members for Housing and Estate Regeneration and Environment and Community safety agree that it is a complete folly to run two separate Anti-Social Behaviour teams in this Council and the merger promised as a part of last year's budget savings should have been delivered long ago?

#### **Reply from Councillors Oyken and Bond**

Please refer to response for Question 47.

#### **Question 57 from Councillor Milne to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration and Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

What risk assessments and/or co-ordination with other agencies is undertaken to ensure law abiding members of society are not put at risk when the Council houses known or suspected gang members.

#### **Reply from Councillors Oyken and Bond**

The Community Safety Unit provides checks on suitability for housing placements if asked and in some cases co-ordinate offender management where people are subject to orders or other requirements. We have challenged the placement of offenders within the borough when they are moved from outside Enfield, if this places people at risk.

Where a person requires housing as part of a multiagency public protection response, the risks associated with that person are identified and risk managed in line with a strictly defined protocol.

Periodically the housing service may be required to assist gang members as a result of a professional referral, again this would be accompanied by a multi-agency risk assessment.

Since November 2014 we have a specific clause within the tenancy conditions for council tenants prohibiting involvement in gangs or gang related activity thus enabling enforcement action to be taken where there is evidence of such behaviour.

**Question 58 from Councillor Milne to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

What powers do the Council have to evict tenants that subject their neighbours to antisocial behaviour and since 2010 how many times have those powers been invoked.

**Reply from Councillor Oyken**

Eviction is the ultimate sanction against council tenants who exhibit antisocial behaviour. Schedule 2 to the *1985 Housing Act* sets out the Grounds upon which a court may grant an order for possession against a secure council tenant. Grounds 1 and 2 (as amended by section 144 of the *1996 Housing Act*) are the grounds relied upon to seek possession against antisocial tenants.

Ground 1 of schedule 2 to the 1985 Act provides for the granting of a court order where rent due from the tenant is unpaid or where an obligation of the tenancy has been broken or not performed. The council's conditions of tenancy contain a number of specific clauses prohibiting antisocial behaviour and can and have been relied upon in taking legal action against tenants and or members of their household or visitors. There is also a new "absolute" ground for possession for use against secure tenants in social housing. Where a landlord decides to use this ground the court will have to grant an order for eviction if the notice requirements have been fulfilled and, where relevant, review procedures have been followed, and any one of five specified conditions is met.

Since 2010 we have evicted three council tenant households who have been involved in antisocial behaviour. We have taken a range of other actions to prevent recurring antisocial behaviour including eleven acceptable behaviour contracts, four injunctions, four Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO)s and 94 tenancy actions including serving notices and securing suspended possession orders.

**Question 59 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

Can you please explain the timescales for the appeal on Landlords Licensing?

How much of the money raised by the Landlords Licensing Scheme can be used to employ enforcement officers?

How much has the Council budgeted for the legal appeal on Landlords Licensing?

Has the Council developed a 'Plan B' for a new consultation in case it loses the appeal? If so, how many boroughs will it run the consultation in? How much money has been set aside to run this new consultation? Will it be conducted in house or will it be run by external consultants?

### **Reply from Councillor Oykener**

As is usually the case, it is not possible to give accurate timescales for the appeal outcome as this is dependent on the resources of the Court. There has been no decision yet on the initial stage of the process, the application for permission which the Court of Appeal will first consider on the papers.

None of the funding raised through licensing can be used to fund enforcement officers, funding raised can only be used to cover the cost of the administration of the licensing scheme.

The Council has budgeted £9,000 for the legal appeal, but is anticipated that the actual costs will be less than this. As with every litigation, costs are reviewed at every stage of the process.

With regard to the development of a consultation 'plan B'- if required – the approach will be determined by the most up to date legal and best practice advice, combined with a value for money assessment regarding the best use of resources available. This will neither rule in or out the use of internal resources, or the use of external consultants.

### **Question 60 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council**

Do you agree with the Labour Leader in Scotland that Londoners, including those living in Enfield, should pay higher taxes in order to pay for services in Scotland?

### **Reply from Councillor Taylor**

I am extremely exercised by grant damping and its impact on Enfield. That is a more direct issue for me. The distribution of funding across the UK is a legitimate matter for public debate and I suppose the question is whether there should be redistribution or not of tax take.

### **Question 61 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bond, Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety**

Is he aware that the Green Dragon Public House on Green Lanes has been sold for possible redevelopment adding to a fairly long list of popular and long established public houses which now no longer exist? Given the history of the Green Dragon and pro public house policies in the Government National Planning Policy what action will the council take to protect the Green Dragon and other similar public houses?

### **Reply from Councillor Bond**

Alongside the commitments contained in national planning policy, the Council's recently adopted Development Management Document contains policy (DMD11) on the protection of community facilities. This can include pubs where they meet a community need and where community service provision is already low.

The introduction of greater flexibility into the planning system however means that certain changes of use can occur as permitted development without the need for planning permission. This includes change of use from a public house to various retail uses. Depending on the nature of the proposed use, the Council may not have any control over the loss of the public house.

### **Question 62 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing and Estate Regeneration**

- Since May 2010 can he tell the Council how many complaints of antisocial behaviour have been received in Council owned housing?
- How many tenants have been evicted on the primary grounds of antisocial behaviour?

### **Reply from Councillor Oyken**

During this period three tenant households were evicted for antisocial behaviour. The prime aim of our antisocial behaviour work is to prevent antisocial behaviour continuing and so we do use a range of other tools.

Over the same period we secured four injunctions, served eleven acceptable behaviour contracts, obtained four ASBOs and took 94 tenancy actions including formal notices and securing suspended possession orders.

### **Section 2 – Questions to Associate Cabinet Members**

#### **Question 63 from Councillor Chamberlain to Councillor Savva, Associate Cabinet Member for Enfield South East**

Could the Associate Cabinet Member please tell the council what meetings he has attended and with whom since last Council meeting?

### **Reply from Councillor Savva**

I would like to thank Councillor Chamberlain for his question.

Firstly as a result of this government appalling economic record and sheer disregard of working people's needs and hard up families, I have liaised with Cabinet members and officers to identify a way forward in assisting leaseholders living at council owned properties to help with the payments towards the costs of improvements on their estates and or houses.

As this administration is a caring one, unlike the national government, this authority offered a longer period in paying, and those who can pay immediately, will be given a 5% discount.

On the other issues:

- I have attended Corporate Asset Management Board, Strategic Leadership Forum, CAPE, a number of associate cabinet member meetings with cabinet members and directors.
- Chaired a well-attended Enfield Cycle meeting.
- Visited the North London Credit Union with Councillor Yasemin Brett (Cabinet Member for Community Organisations) and Councillor Bernadette Lappage.
- Attended residents' association meetings with officers at the Civic Centre.
- Undertaken an estate inspection at Klinger Hall estate on a rainy and windy morning.

From now until the end of the municipal year I will have attended no less than 5 Corporate Asset Management Board meetings, no less than 5 Strategic Leadership Forums, no less than 3 Cabinet meetings, at least 8 advice surgeries, plus a large number of other meetings with various local organisations, not mentioning other committee meetings and panels - too many to mention.

I do hope and trust Councillor Chamberlain works just as hard.

**Question 64 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Uzoanya, Associate Cabinet Member for Enfield North**

Could the Associate Cabinet Member please tell the council what meetings he has attended and with whom since last Council meeting?

**Reply from Councillor Uzoanya**

Since the last Council meeting I have attended the following meetings:

The Enfield North Partnership Board - 26/02/14

NB: Whilst the above meeting occurred prior to the date of last Council, it is important to make reference to it as I did not include details of the Enfield North Partnership Board meeting due to the deadline for responding to questions for Full Council

Small sites meeting organised by the Director of Council Homes - 2/02/15

The purpose of this meeting is to respond to the growing demand for homes and decent homes housing within the borough

Cabinet meeting - 11/02/15

Health and Well Being Board - 12/02/15

Council will be cognisant of the fact that little time has elapsed between the last Full Council on the 28/01/15 and Full Council scheduled for 25/02/14, hence the reason for amount of meetings attended listed above.

Councillor Laban may also like to know that I have other meetings planned for the following dates, which will have occurred since the deadline for response to the question she has asked and the date Council takes place as noted the paragraph above.

Cycle Enfield - 17/02/15

Strategic Leadership Forum - 17/02/15

I am more than happy to provide a supplementary answer to above meetings.

**Question 65 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Bambos Charalambous, Associate Cabinet Member for Enfield West**

Could the Associate Cabinet Member please tell the council what meetings he has attended and with whom since last Council meeting?

**Reply from Councillor Charalambous**

Since the last Council meeting I have attended the Cabinet meeting on 11 February 2015 in my capacity as Associate Cabinet Member for Enfield West and have meetings scheduled with the Directors of Finance Resources & Customer Services and Children's Services on 20 February. In addition I have had a number of informal meetings and discussions with members from both parties on issues including forum planning and localism.