

COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

Question 1 from Councillor Adams to Councillor Barker, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services:

"Would the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services comment on Skinners Court?"

Response from Councillor Barker:

"Skinners Court opened in December 2006, and celebrated its official opening with a visit from HRH The Duke of Gloucester on 19th October 2007.

This is a new model of delivery for extra care supported housing for older people in the Borough. The scheme was one of the few approved through Department of Health funding during 2004, and represents a major achievement for both London Borough of Enfield and external partners the Skinners' Company working with Hanover Housing who developed the scheme. The Skinners Charity undertook significant fundraising activities to ensure the scheme delivered to a "state of the art" high quality standard. This achievement has been acknowledged through winning the Evening Standard "Best New Development in the Affordable Homes Sector" 2007.

The built environment maximises people's ability to maintain independence through full accessibility, combined with a range of communal services such as health room, hairdressing facilities, on-site shop and cinema. Following consultation with tenants the local community uses the communal areas of the scheme and tenants can benefit from interaction with a whole range of community group activities such as the over 50's forum, the Parkinson's' society, Greek club, and a carers group. The team also offer bingo and quiz nights for residents. Tenants also have access to their own themed "sub-lounges" which support I.T and library facilities, and an art/craft room.

The vision for Skinners Court is to provide an alternative model to residential care. Each resident has their own flat, and has the choice to access on-site care and support, available 24 hours per day, or to directly purchase their own care through a direct payment. Care and support is individually tailored to meet each person's needs, and adapts as individual needs change. Our vision is to enable people to be supported to remain independent without the need to move on into residential care.

It is a development for which the officers involved should be congratulated and the Council can rightly be proud of it's part in ensuring that some of the more vulnerable members of our community can receive the care and support they need in such a high quality environment."

Question 2 from Councillor Bond to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Many residents who are keen to become members of the Friends of their local parks are being told that this is not possible until April next year. Given that Members on this side have been asking members of the public to become members of these organisations and not wishing to lose that enthusiasm to become involved locally, what is he going to do to rectify this matter?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“Any one who wishes to join an existing Friends Group can do so at any time. While we welcome the formation of new Friends Groups there is pressure on the officer support available for their meetings, assistance with writing a constitution and identifying funding opportunities. Due to our own success in recruiting Friends of the Parks groups, we have asked that the next group looking for support, Bush Hill Park Friends, wait until March when we will engage actively with them. This has been discussed with them and they understand the reason.

Councillor Bond should be aware that this Administration has increased financial assistance to Friends of the Parks Groups by setting up a small grants fund which has allocated £20k in the last two years and will allocate a further £10k this year. We have actively supported the Friends in applications for external funding and have an allocated officer working with them. The current number of Groups supported is fifteen which is the highest number for several years and well above the level in 2002 when his party controlled the Council. I am committed to working closely with Friends of the Parks Groups as I re-affirmed to them at the recent Green Flag celebration with the Mayor.”

Question 3 from Councillor Terence Smith to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Would the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene inform the council of Enfield’s success in the London in Bloom competition?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“Enfield has once again enjoyed a successful year in the London in Bloom competition, leading to the following awards, and I congratulate the winners and all the officers associated with these achievements.

Best front garden, Mr & Mrs Fletcher of Windward Close, Freezywater - absolutely fabulous display, not only in their front garden, but they also do the most amazing hanging baskets adorning one of the lamp posts at the end of their road - brightening up the area.

Best Town Centre, Palace Gardens – Gold - very prestigious, normally won by one of the inner London boroughs or Kensington High Street and an award highly sought after by the other boroughs.

Best Borough Large City - Silver Gilt - with this administration adopting a commitment to sustainable horticultural best practices and drought tolerant planting within Parks and Open spaces this is another excellent award and with the continuation of our hard work there is the potential for Gold for next year, which we will be striving to achieve.

Bowes Primary and Hazelbury Infants received Silver in the 'Schools' category. Both these schools joined our 'Schools Programme' Autumn 06 and were committed to improving upon their environmental and horticultural knowledge and best practices. Enfield in Bloom have worked both with staff and children in developing their gardens and have constructed raised planters on site as well as providing the seeds, trees, shrubs, raspberry canes, perennials and vegetables. Bowes School have also planted vegetables and seeds in our vegetable patch in the grounds of the visitor centre at Trent Park.

This years successes can be seen as a glowing endorsement of this administrations commitment to a Cleaner Greener Enfield, and I feel we can look forward with confidence to next years entries.”

Question 4 from Councillor Rodin to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Can Councillor Neville tell the Council when the review of priorities within the Council’s Parking and Enforcement Plan will be concluded and the results made available to all Councillors and the residents of the Borough?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“A draft report is currently being considered. A further meeting of the Joint Working Group made up of Enfield Business and Retailers Association (EBRA), Federation of Enfield Residents and Allied Associations (FERAA), Members of Enfield’s Special Project Scrutiny Panel and Environment, Parks and Leisure Scrutiny Panel was held on Monday 24th September 2007 to consider the initial findings from the Consultant’s review. I am currently considering this draft report and the comments made by the working group and I shall be meeting with the Consultants later this week to discuss.

The Parking Enforcement Plan forms part of the Council’s Local Implementation Plan which is a statutory document setting out how the Council intends to improve transport and the environment in Enfield. The Council has therefore a statutory requirement to consult various organisations including The Metropolitan Police, Transport for London, and neighbouring boroughs, on the outcome of this review. This statutory consultation will be carried out over the next three months and a final report detailing the outcome of the review and how to communicate the findings to residents is hoped to be submitted to Cabinet for approval in early spring 2008.

This Administration is committed to funding the priorities identified within the review from within the Parking Places Reserve Account or its own capital and revenue resources. It is anticipated many of the changes will be about hours and times of Controlled Parking Zones, bus priorities and intelligent allocation of road

space which generally require changes to notices and orders rather than extensive physical works.”

Question 5 from Councillor Eleftherios Savva to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Would the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene report the latest figures for road safety accident casualties in the Borough?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“I am pleased to tell the Council that statistics on the number of road accidents and casualties in Enfield for 2006 have been released and indicate encouraging improvements in road safety in the Borough.

The figures for 2005 showed that for the first time since the formation of the Borough of Enfield, 40 years ago, the total number of casualties on the roads in Enfield was less than 1250. The year 2006 saw a further reduction to 1054 – the lowest ever recorded, and representing a further improvement of 151 (13%) from the level in 2005. At its highest, the figure in 1978 was 2182. The figure for 2006 is well below the average figure for 1994 to 1998 of 1740, which is used as the agreed baseline for how the Council is making Enfield’s roads safer.

The number of people killed on roads in Enfield in 2006 was 21. However, an increase in number of people killed on the roads rising from 13 to 21 is of great concern but it is to be noted that this figure changes very sharply from year to year.

The number of cyclists injured on roads in Enfield fell from 48 in 2005 to 39 in 2006, and similar figures for pedestrians saw a slight decrease from 181 to 155. In addition, the total casualties for Powered Two Wheeler Users has fallen from 112 in 2005 to 96 and the number killed or seriously injured has fortunately seen a small decrease from 26 to 19.

However, the number of casualties on Enfield’s roads is still too high and there are sadly still a significant number of people who indulge in irresponsible driving on our roads.

The analysis of contributory factors to road accidents shows that over 95 % of the casualties are associated with driver/rider/pedestrian behaviour related factors. **In sharp contrast, only 1% of the casualties are associated with all the road environment related contributory factors.** As shown, the 12 most significant behaviour-related contributory factors (out of the 57) are associated with a total of over 85 percent of the accidents with the other 45 behaviour related factors associated with a further 10 percent of accidents. This pattern of association has been observed over a long period of past decades and, clearly brings into relief the importance of addressing the issues of road user behaviour.

ACCIDENT CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR	PROPORTION of ASSOCIATED ACCIDENTS (%)
1. ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR RELATED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS	
THE TWELVE MOST SIGNIFICANT ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR RELATED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS	
405 Driver/Rider Failed To Look Properly	21
602 Careless/Reckless/In A Hurry	15
307 Travelling Too Fast For Conditions	10
406 Failed To Judge Other Person's Path Or Speed	9
308 Following Too Close	6
403 Poor Turn Or Manoeuvre	5
802 Pedestrian Failed To Look Properly	4
410 Loss Of Control	4
808 Careless/Reckless/In A Hurry	3
302 Disobeyed Give Way Or Stop Sign Or Markings	3
601 Aggressive Driving	3
408 Sudden Braking	2
<i>TOTAL CORRESPONDING TO THE ABOVE TWELVE ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR RELATED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>ALL OTHER (45) ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR RELATED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS (Note 1)</i>	<i>10</i>
ALL (57) ROAD USER BEHAVIOUR RELATED CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS	95
2. ALL (15) ROAD ENVIRONMENT & VEHICLE DEFECT RELATED FACTORS (Note 2)	1
3. ALL OTHER (5) CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS (Note 3)	4

Notes:

- (1) - These 45 include disobeyed traffic signals, driving under influence of alcohol and drugs etc.
- (2) - These 15 include defective traffic signals, defective road surfaces, poor road layout and inadequate markings and signs etc.
- (3) - These 5 include Emergency vehicle on call etc.”

Question 6 from Councillor Bond to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Downs Road and Fotheringham Road in Southbury Ward are having the traffic flow changed presumably because of the 192 bus route. Can the Cabinet Member for Environment tell the Council why no consultation is taking place on this change of traffic flow, especially given that in another place his Party are

calling for referendums on all sorts of things, why can he not let the Southbury residents affected by this change have a voice?"

Response from Councillor Neville:

"The one way system currently being implemented in the Downs Road and Fotheringham Road area was in fact the subject of a comprehensive public consultation exercise. A consultation leaflet was distributed to all the homes in this area and 71% of respondents were in favour of this proposal. Objections were received from residents of Downs Road and these were also voiced at a public meeting attended by 50 - 60 Downs Road and Lincoln Road residents that was hosted by the Council. However, I have a responsibility to all road users and in October 2005 I approved a report that recommended the implementation of this scheme. This administration has a commitment to keep traffic moving and this one-way scheme will assist with this aim. It will aid the movement of all traffic and not just the 192 bus service.

Residents had a further opportunity to make their views known when the traffic management order for this scheme was advertised in December 2005. The same objections that were raised during the first consultation were sent in by residents of Downs Road and Lincoln Road in response to this. However, in line with my original decision I approved the report that considered these objections in August 2006.

While consultation is an important factor when considering scheme proposals it is not a referendum and is only undertaken to assist the Council in reaching its decision. There should be no assumption in any consultation that if the majority of those consulted are against a proposal that the Council would then automatically reject the proposal, as it has to take a wider view of benefits not just for the local community but for the wider community and the environment.

Question 7 from Councillor Murphy to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

"Given that for the last 6 years the fence around Brimsdown Sports Ground has been deteriorating at an alarming rate and the pre cast concrete fencing has been repaired with driveway wire, chicken wire and barbed wire in places, would the Cabinet Member for Environment agree with me that this fence has been left in a dangerous and unacceptable state of repair. Would he also give an undertaking to the people of Enfield to repair the fence to the standard seen in the west side of the Borough as soon as possible".

Response from Councillor Neville:

"I can report that the condition of the fence has nothing to do with its geographical location in the borough. The area is currently leased to Brimsdown Football Club who are at an advanced stage of renewing their lease on a joint basis with Enfield Town FC.

Parks staff have attended the sports ground at Brimsdown to assess the extent of works that need to be undertaken, and confirm that the fencing is in various

stages of disrepair around the circumference of both the grounds known locally as the "Downs" and the Brimsdown FC ground.

The condition of the fencing is being discussed with the club and a meeting is being set up between Officers of the Parks Department, Corporate Assets together with Brimsdown and Enfield Town Football Clubs to resolve the matter.

The Authority is seeking to resolve the lease negotiations as soon as possible which will enable the resolution of the condition of the fencing which clearly needs to be improved."

Question 8 from Councillor Bond to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

"On the Aley Croft Estate in Southbury Ward, the local residents since before May 2006 have been trying to have recycling bins placed on the estate so they could join in the recycling regime in Enfield.

First, they did a survey themselves. They were told that it was no good. Then Housing did a survey, which was just as good as the residents one, only to be told that the placement of bins had to be planned and that would take time. The residents only wanted six bins but were told they were to have twelve.

Months later, Housing Officers then met with Environment Officers to discuss the way forward. The Environment Officer has now left and the whole process of meetings has to start again.

Given that on one of his rare appearances at an Environment Scrutiny Panel the Cabinet Member went on at length (you can imagine) as to how he was going to involve the Council Estates in recycling in Enfield, what is he going to do so that this calamitous list of events does not repeat itself again? Other than blaming Housing Officers, of course?"

Response from Councillor Neville:

"Recycling officers are keen to provide recycling facilities to the Aley Croft Estates as soon as possible. Unfortunately with this site there have been difficulties in finding agreeable locations for the bins and this has delayed the implementation. The procedure for requesting recycling bins for estates is via the managing agent or for council housing via the Estate Manager. Part of this process identifies that a ratio of 1 x 1280 litre recycling bin should be provided for every 20 households. Recycling officers estimate that there are approximately 264 properties covered by the 6 blocks of flats on the Aley Croft Estate and therefore would provide each block with two recycling bins.

Recycling Officers are due to meet, on site, with the Estate Manager on the 9th November 2007 and the bins will be available from early December once the final locations are agreed with housing.

Whilst there have been some regrettable delays on this matter due to staff changes, our commitment to recycling on private or council estates is being pursued by officers from Environment and Housing.”

Question 9 from Councillor Georgiou to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Can Councillor Neville tell the Council if it is the policy of the Council's Environment Department to paint fresh double yellow lines in roads that are shortly to be resurfaced?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“Clearly it is not.

I have assumed that Councillor Georgiou is referring to Hereward Gardens, N13, although there is no trace of him raising this matter as a Members Enquiry. Following complaints and requests from residents in the road to undertake parking enforcement action the Head of Parking Services undertook a review of the level of illegal parking within the road and took the decision that enforcement action was required to protect residents in terms of access for emergency services. To enable the parking enforcement contract to take action against illegally parked cars which could not be challenged it was necessary for the double yellow to be repainted although officers were aware that the road was to be resurfaced in the near future. The cost of the exercise was £108 and it was the view of officers that it was necessary to protect residents.

Although roads are built into programmes, as Councillor Georgiou is well aware there can be delays related to statutory works, weather and re-programming which can always delay works.

In the circumstances of this case I support the officers view that £108 should be spent short term in the interest of public safety.”

Question 10 from Councillor Bond to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Since early 2007, this side has been asking when the lights are being restored on the water fountain in Enfield Town. We have been told that the cable was lost, now that LBE has to fund a new cable. When is this to be done?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“This matter was raised on numerous occasions during the construction phase of the Palace Exchange development at the Council's regular Progress Meetings with the developer and contractor.

A query, which remained unanswered, was whether or not the lights on the fountain were operational immediately prior to works commencing in this area in mid/late 2005. The considered opinion was that they were not.

Notwithstanding this, the developer/contractor were requested to investigate and see if a cable to operate the lights could be found in the immediate vicinity of the fountain. One was but it was not live. At the time of these investigations the fountain island was being paved and any provision of a live cable would have disrupted the programme further. It was therefore agreed that the work should not be undertaken, as it would be deemed a variation to the contract, which would have resulted in a claim from the contractor for a possible extension of contract as well as the cost of the works themselves.

The Authority is reviewing the lighting of the fountain alongside how the surrounding area can be utilised to enhance activity in the Town Centre. I would point out that had the previous Labour Administration ensured a better Section 106 agreement I would not be left to pick up the pieces of Enfield Town Phase II. However with the improvements and finalisation of the work we have achieved I am pleased at the level of shopper activity in the Town, attested to by the traders, and wonder why the Opposition have failed to celebrate this instead of making minor carping criticisms.”

Question 11 from Councillor Bond to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Can Councillor Neville explain why wheelie bins are not being tested anywhere within the boundary of the Enfield North Parliamentary Constituency after so many requests for them to be tested there?”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“Firstly Wheelie bins are not currently being tested anywhere in the borough although it is a matter I am considering. We are reviewing our entire approach to waste and street cleansing services across the borough to ensure that services are properly targeted and delivering value for money. The Waste Strategy introduces tough new targets for recycling and waste diversion that will be challenging even to a borough like Enfield, which in recent years has had an excellent track record. We also have to review the recent proposals of the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) and how we and the six other Boroughs concerned respond to these. This may involve all seven boroughs reviewing their collection systems to ensure a degree of compatibility to reduce or contain costs.

In addition the council needs to respond to the new challenges created by a thriving night time economy, the introduction of new legislation and ensure that the current in-house services are 'fit to compete' ahead of any Best Value or future market testing arrangements.

I can confirm once again however, that we will not be introducing alternate weekly collections and that we do not believe that the mooted 'pay as you throw' schemes are either reasonable or workable.

In respect of any trial schemes, which may be introduced, I can assure Councillor Bond that these will be decided upon the grounds of appropriateness and practicality not east/west or Parliamentary boundaries.”

Question 12 from Councillor Rodin to Councillor Rye, Leader of the Council:

“Can Councillor Rye tell the Council whether he considers that the private expenditure of Councillors is a matter that the public have a right to know about?”

Response from Councillor Rye:

“I assume Councillor Rodin is referring to my comments in the press on how Labour Councillors are using their Councillors allowances. When you go into public life we all know we lose privacy. If, as was alleged, Labour Councillors are following a directive from their party leadership to contribute part of their members allowance to prop up the ailing finances of the Labour Party nationally and at a time when the Prime Minister was trying to make his mind up to call a General Election, this is a matter of legitimate public interest. As Councillor Rodin knows, members’ allowances are paid to recognise the hours members put into their council work, to recognise the skills they bring to the role and to cover any expenses incurred in discharging their duties. In my view if any party is directing Councillors to contribute from their allowances to party coffers, it brings into question the purpose of allowances and raises the suspicion that when members approve an increase in allowances they are doing so only to subsidise their political party.”

Question 13 from Councillor George Savva to Councillor Barker, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services:

“At the last Cabinet meeting it was reported that the site has not been identified to build the new residential home. When are you likely to report to Cabinet the location of the new site?”

Response from Councillor Barker:

“When I introduced the report to Cabinet, I did mention that I had asked officers to ensure that recommendations about the location of the site of the new purpose dual registered care facility were brought to Cabinet within three months of the decision of this Council meeting. That remains my intention.”

Question 14 from Councillor Buckland to Councillor Neville, Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene:

“Will the Cabinet Member give assurances that the skate park on the A10 in Edmonton will be brought up to Health and Safety standards and be reopened shortly, given the plans for the cemetery are now on hold.”

Response from Councillor Neville:

“I can assure Councillor Buckland that we are urgently reviewing the condition of the equipment at the skate park on the A10. The current equipment is at the end of its life and needs extensive repairs. I have instructed officers to replace the existing equipment with more robust skate park facilities that will have a long life. We are also, through the Bury Street working party, deciding what new facilities

will be provided there for young people. In addition, we are looking at other parks in the borough as part of an overall Parks Strategy on facilities for young people in the parks.”