

April 2017 - Council questions

Question 1 from Councillor Erbil to Councillor Oykenor

This Labour Administration's attempt to deal with the housing crisis in the Borough is imaginative and exciting.

The Tory opposition wish us to go back to eighties when Westminster Council under Dame Shirley Porter exported residents to other parts of the UK and sold off housing estates to private landlords.

I am aware that many other local authorities have been in touch to see how we are achieving our aims and promises to local residents.

In the light of this can the Cabinet Member give us the figures for planned new Council homes in the next 5 years in Enfield?"

Reply from Councillor Oykenor

The Council is planning for over 400 new council homes to be delivered over the next 5 years.

Question 2 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council

I reproduce below an email dated 31 March that has come into my possession about "Budget Challenge". It is addressed to "all LB Enfield staff without councillors" I am assuming he may not have seen it.

"Sent: 01 March 2017 13:15

To: All LB Enfield Staff without councillors

Subject: Budget Challenge [SEC=OFFICIAL:ALL STAFF]

Classification: OFFICIAL - ALL STAFF

Dear Colleague,

We wrote to you in earlier in the year (June 2016) to explain the budget challenge faced by the Council. We would like to thank everyone that has helped us to support this on-going challenge so far this financial year.

However, further effort is required to balance the budget for 2016/17.

*As you will be aware, at present only spend that is absolutely essential against **certain categories** has required authorisation and temporary arrangements to procure have been assigned on a case by case basis.*

*Whilst this has been helpful to mitigate forecast overspends, there have been some attempts to spend money in unauthorised categories and, given the current financial position we need to stop this, as well as **cease all non-essential expenditure** regardless of its nature. This will have the effect of reducing the forecast outturn on the budget, and may create an underspend. This change, including underspends, should be reflected in your forecast outturn.*

The Corporate Management Board thanks you for your support with this particular action and the efficiencies and savings being driven this year. Your continued support will prevent the need for more rigorous action being taken in the future.

Regards

Corporate Management Board”

I find it incredulous that Councillor Taylor could possibly think that savings of £5.4m could be made within the space of 20 plus working days. If this action was to be taken at all, it should have been taken at the latest, when we called in the Cabinet’s decision “To Note” the then £7.9m overspend on 4 October 2016. Please could the Leader let the Council know his view?

Reply from Councillor Taylor

As you will be aware, the budgetary situation that the Council is in has been made difficult by Government policies, however we have managed the reductions in funding and financial pressures we face through robust financial management and budget setting process.

The robust approach continues throughout the year and the outcome is reported through the monthly financial monitoring reports, which include how the departments plan to deal with any overspends.

The email in question that was sent to all staff was just one of a number of actions we have been taking to manage the budget deficit and the expectation was not that this action alone would resolve the £5.4m gap. The Revenue Monitoring report provides the details on how we plan to contain the deficit for 2016/17.

Question 3 from Councillor Jjagge to Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council

Can the Leader report the response of the Secretary of State to his letter on the closure of the Job Centre in Edmonton?

Reply from Councillor Taylor

The letter to the Secretary of State regarding the closure of the Edmonton Fore Street JCP office raised major concerns about the impact this causes to residents in Enfield’s most deprived part of the borough. This is particularly ill-timed given the Council’s ambitions to ensure that Edmonton residents are first in line to access the 1000s of job opportunities being created through the Meridian Water development. I await a reply.

Question 4 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Oyken, Cabinet Member for Housing & Housing Regeneration

The Government’s Housing White Paper says that any local authority failing to meet 25% of its housing need by 2018 and 65% by 2020 would have to have a ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’. This will effectively force councils to grant permission for schemes. Estates Gazette has identified Enfield as one of the local authorities most under pressure by the new changes.

Would the Cabinet Member please inform Council how this Administration is going to respond to ensure that inappropriate development on Green Belt land does not take place across the Borough, given the strong possibility that the Planning Inspectorate might overturn any refused planning decision on appeal because this Council has failed to deliver on its housing targets?

Reply from Councillor Oyken

Resisting inappropriate development in the green belt is a policy that holds firm with this Council. Although the government white paper indicates the green belt is “sacrosanct” this position is not absolute if the 25% requirement is not met. The expected significant hike in Enfield’s annual housing delivery target means we must plan for new homes in the Lea Valley, our town centres and around transport hubs. To deliver this we will need a firm commitment from government to supporting infrastructure, particularly 4-tracking and Crossrail 2. But we also need to know where local people think housing growth should be accommodated which is one of the purposes of the Enfield Conversation.

Question 5 from Councillor Jemal to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment comment on progress against the Council’s commitment back in 2014 to plant 2,000 more trees.

Reply from Councillor Anderson

I am pleased to say that we have exceeded our manifesto commitment and can advise that we have already planted 2,040 trees since 1st April 2014 and there are many more to come. Of these 1,929 are adjacent to the highway.

Question 6 from Councillor Dines to Councillor Orhan, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services and Protection

Would Councillor Orhan inform Council of the number of times, including details of dates and names of those contacted, in the past three months that the Property Service and Education Department have initiated communication with the government in regard to the location of the Wren Academy?

Reply from Councillor Orhan

I am able to inform Councillor Dines, yet again, that I have not had any recent conversations with the Wren Academy. The Council only has contact with the Education Funding Agency (EFA), not directly with the Wren Academy. It is the responsibility of the EFA to organise the site and I am sure they will inform us when they have done so.

Question 7 from Councillor Maguire to Councillor Lemonides, Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency

Can the Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency explain why local authorities carry long term borrowing and what our approach adds to the provision of services to the people of Enfield?

Reply from Councillor Lemonides

The Authority’s main objective when borrowing money is to strike a balance between securing low interest cost and certainty over the period which funds are required.

In summary, the council borrows for the following reasons:

- Investment in infrastructure and other assets in the borough, such as playgrounds, roads, pavements, buildings etc.
- Managing cash flows, to cope with the peaks and troughs of the Council's day to day cash inflows and outflows.
- Enabling an entrepreneurial approach to solving issues faced by the people of the borough (such as homelessness, fuel poverty etc), by providing the upfront capital investment that is repaid from subsequent financial returns from projects that also deliver significant social benefits.

The benefits of short term borrowing are monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long term rates are forecast to rise.

The Executive Director of Finance, Resources and Customer Services monitors interest rates in financial markets and takes a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short term rates (e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation), then long term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.
- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from an acceleration in the start date and in the rate of increase in central rates in the USA and UK, an increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised. Most likely, fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are lower than they are projected to be in the next few years.

The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as investment returns are low and counterparty risk (for investments) is still an issue that needs to be considered.

As at 31 March 2016 UK Debt Management Office (DMO) borrowed £64.3bn.

Question 8 from Councillor Chamberlain Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Will the Cabinet Member please set out all confirmed expenditure on quieter neighbourhoods 2017-18 as compared to both what has been budgeted for as against what residents requested? The latter would be the estimated cost of all changes that were considered by the Cabinet Member.

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The 2017/18 budget and programme for the Quieter Neighbourhoods element of Cycle Enfield is currently being finalised in consultation with TfL.

Question 9 from Councillor Dogan to Councillor Fonyonga, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health

Can the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health please explain the purpose of Serena?

Reply from Councillor Fonyonga

Serena is a new friend to the Civic Centre which everybody should aim to visit at least once a month. It is a health kiosk in the foyer which will measure your blood pressure, heart rate, height and weight, and is one of many efforts by the Council to improve residents' health. Both obesity and high blood pressure increase the chances of heart disease, kidney disease, dementia and stroke, the main causes of early death and disability in our residents.

Serena will help by quickly measuring your blood pressure, as well as your height and weight, and provide you with a small printed summary of this information. We recognise that your privacy is important and so your blood pressure and weight will only be printed on the small paper ticket that you take away from the machine - your blood pressure and weight will NEVER be visible to anyone else, unless you choose to show them your ticket.

More good news is that eating well, not smoking, not drinking heavily and keeping active help to keep excess weight and high blood pressure at bay. High blood pressure is treatable by taking prescription medications alongside living a healthy lifestyle. So I encourage all of us to know our numbers and to live well.

Question 10 from Councillor Rye to Councillor Cazimoglu, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

At the budget setting meeting of the Council the Conservative Group was pleased to support the 3% increase in Council Tax this year to support Adult Social Services. Can Councillor Cazimoglu inform the Council exactly how this additional tax will be spent, in particular how many extra individuals might be helped by this money?

Reply from Councillor Cazimoglu

As Councillor Rye will be aware the pressures on Adult Social Care budgets are significant. We not only have an increasing population of vulnerable adults and older people who need support but increased pressure on our care provider markets with the impact of new legislative requirements linked to the cost of services including the national living wage and pensions.

I think we will all acknowledge that social care has always been considered a high pressure and relatively low reward employment sector and as a result is really struggling to attract and retain care staff. Many people working in the sector and providers are leaving the care market for this reason. The additional funding provided through the precept is, therefore, very welcome and makes a contribution to the increased cost of services. This will support us to sustain the adult social care

provider market, enabling this Council to ensure that people working in the social care provider sector do receive a decent wage for the very challenging work that they do.

Question 11 from Councillor Abdullahi to Councillor Brett Cabinet Member for Community, Arts & Culture

Can the Cabinet Member tell the Council how many families are now affected by the Benefits Cap and how are we helping support such people?

Reply from Councillor Brett

As at end of February 2017, there were 1,073 households affected by the benefit cap, of which 960 are families with children.

737 families live in the private rented sector, with the rest living in social housing. 234 of the families have the double challenge of being benefit capped, homeless and living in temporary housing.

482 of the households affected have had their benefit cut by more than £50 per week.

The Assessment Hub is working in partnership with co-located Job Centre Plus (JCP) staff and other agencies to provide a consistent approach, offering advice and support. The other agencies include children centres, schools, Citizens advice, Enfield Disablement Association.

95% of those affected by the benefit cap have been contacted and offered a 1-1 session by phone, interview, attending one of the 2 events set up in November 16 or by JCP work coaches where they are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance and are coming in to update on searches for work. These conversations are focused on assisting people into work or to apply for an exempt benefit.

Department for Work & Pension (DWP) and Council systems are updated with all communications and are used to assist with decisions made on Discretionary Housing Payments to help with rent shortfalls to avoid threats of homelessness.

Question 12 from Councillor Rye to Councillor Cazimoglu, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

Would Councillor Cazimoglu inform the Council the exact date on which the new council owned care home at Elizabeth House will open to receive its first resident as well as by which date the home will be fully occupied, including what impact does she expect these additional care and nursing places will have on bed blocking at local hospitals?

Reply from Councillor Cazimoglu

I can confirm that Cabinet have agreed that the new care home will be managed by Independence and Wellbeing Enfield, the Council's wholly owned trading company.

Good progress is being made on the fit out programme within Bridgewood House

and it is anticipated that all existing residents from Bridge House and Coppice Wood Lodge will move during May. We will be making sure that the process is done carefully and sensitively to ensure there is minimal disruption to our service users. This is our first priority.

A process is also already well underway to recruit the leadership team and clinical nursing staff who will be needed to run the nursing and continuing healthcare units within the home. We anticipate that they will be in place from June and ready to accept nursing placements from July.

The additional 18 nursing beds that will then become available will provide homes both for people currently living in the community and for people with complex care needs being discharged from hospital. We have acknowledged that the lack of availability of nursing home beds has been an area of pressure for the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and accounts for a large proportion of our delayed transfers of care. We are, therefore, confident that the additional beds will significantly reduce the number of people whose discharge from hospital is delayed.

Question 13 from Councillor Barry to Councillor Lemonides, Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency

Can the Cabinet Member for Finance & Efficiency update the Council on the work that we are undertaking on behalf of Enfield to achieve a fairer financial settlement from the government. What has been the outcome?

Reply from Councillor Lemonides

Enfield Council has raised many times the inequity of the current funding distribution mechanism. Because of grant damping, Enfield has lost c£10m per year for many years, compared with what it has been assessed as needing. In addition, the data for the formula has not been updated for many years. Enfield has consistently been given less money than the Government of the day calculates they need, while inner London boroughs are given more than they need. For example, in 2017/18, Enfield receives £331.43 per person compared to Westminster, which receives £593.76.

Officers and leading members have taken every opportunity to protest the impact of damping and promote a fairer funding formula. There have been meetings with Ministers, and a range of correspondence, both unilaterally from this borough, and jointly working with other disadvantaged Outer London boroughs.

In addition, the case for fairer funding has been consistently made in Borough publications such as Our Enfield, to encourage residents and representative groups to support the lobbying process. A key partner is the Enfield Over 50s Forum, which has campaigned hard on this issue.

The Government is currently reviewing the formula, and a consultation is expected shortly.

Enfield will again submit a response urging the Government to review its approach to damping and updating the formula. The early indications are that the Government will be broadly supportive of these requests. However there is still an intention to

include an element of smoothing in distributions, and Enfield will be making the case that this smoothing must take place over a short period, with authorities achieving their assessed funding level within a reasonable level of time.

Question 14 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Sitkin, Cabinet Member Economic Regeneration and Business

Would the Cabinet Member for Economic Development explain to the chamber how many hours the Assistant Director Regeneration has spent in the South of France during March this year and the cost to Enfield Council?

Reply from Councillor Sitkin

The Assistant Director of Regeneration and Planning spent five days in Cannes during March whilst attending the MIPIM property conference on behalf of the Council. The event did not cost the Council a penny but did successfully promote Enfield as a growth borough, Meridian Water as a fantastic development as well as future housing opportunities in the borough. Enfield was just one of dozens of local authorities that attended MIPIM this year.

Question 15 from Councillor Levy to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment comment on the recent record £300,000 fine against Asda for a mouse infestation at their Enfield depot?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

Indeed I can. Enfield's food safety officers carried out a routine inspection at the Asda Home Delivery Centre on 27th May 2016. Members should note that food from this depot is sorted and delivered to customers across Enfield, Essex and West London. Shockingly, along with a completely inadequate cleaning regime, they discovered dead mice, associated mouse droppings and food packets that had been gnawed and damaged by mice.

Enfield's Food Safety Team brought the case to court and on the 3rd March 2017 Asda were found guilty and issued with a £300K fine and almost £5K in costs.

Magistrates assessed the court fine for Asda under strict new sentencing guidelines for food safety and health & safety offences, which are likely to lead to higher fines for businesses when prosecuted as greater weighting is given to the severity and impact of the offences.

We would hope that going forward cases like these, which show that our Food Safety Team will not hesitate to prosecute, coupled with these higher fines, should be a strong deterrent to food businesses that are negligently putting consumers' health at risk. Robust enforcement is part of our strategy to improve the compliance of food businesses whose standards are deemed unsatisfactory.

Question 16 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Would the Cabinet Member inform the Council how many green wheeled bins have

been placed out for collection on the wrong week since the service changed to fortnightly collection, confirming that communication with residents needs to and will continue over the next couple of months until the change has bedded down?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The number of bins placed out on the wrong week during the first two-week cycle of the green bin service change has been 12,184, which is just 14% of the total bins the Council collects, clearly indicating that the implementation has been very successful.

Nonetheless, as a further reminder of the changes, bin hangers have been placed on any residents' bins that were incorrectly put out on the wrong week informing them of the new collection dates. This process is in alignment with the planned communication strategy, which has clearly assisted in the transition since by week three of the service change the number of bins put out for collection on the wrong week was down to approximately 5%.

The plan is to continue this communication strategy until the end of the 4th week of the service change (i.e. 2 collection cycles) to ensure that residents are fully engaged with the new fortnightly service.

Question 17 from Councillor Chibah to Councillor Fonyonga, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health

Reporting on Domestic Violence is increasing, could the Cabinet Member for Community Safety & Public Health update the Council on the work that the Community Safety Team is doing to tackle this abhorrent issue?

Reply from Councillor Fonyonga

Tackling Domestic Violence is a key priority of the Community Safety Team and so we have adopted a strategic multi-agency approach, where we now are leading a number of efforts to address this issue. Two recent highlights include:

- 1) Our “ *He Doesn't Love You if...* ” campaign - where we are encouraging young women to recognise the signs of domestic violence and have the confidence to report and escape it. Critically, we also aim to reduce repeat victimisation and are incredibly pleased that over 4000 people have already engaged with our campaign
- 2) Identifying and commissioning an extra two Independent Domestic Violence Advocates to support survivors. We are also working on a full tendering process to ensure best value when our IDVA provision increases.

Question 18 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how many households have changed their green wheeled bin arrangements since the introduction of fortnightly collections including specifically the numbers of those swapping from 140 litre wheeled bin to a 240 litre or hiring an additional bin due to the cut in collections?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

Since the shift towards the fortnightly green bin service commenced 50 residents have asked to hire an additional bin and just 70 residents have so far asked to swap their 140 litre bin for a 240 litre bin.

Question 19 from Councillor Simon to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment provide an update on the progress made to address the problem of contamination in residents' recycling?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

We have undertaken a Borough-wide proactive communication campaign across multiple media streams to ensure that residents are fully aware as to which items can go into their blue-lidded recycle bins. This has been supplemented by additional crew training and support along with additional complimentary recycling services, such as free household textile and electronic items collections.

In addition, the Domestic Waste and Recycling Quality Policy has been amended and updated to make it clearer and easier for residents to follow. This has been accompanied by a more intensive education approach targeting around 19,000 properties over two complete recycling rounds. This approach has been demonstrably successful with the percentage of non-recyclable items in the recycling stream falling from over 15% in April 2016 to under 10.5% for November 2016 and the trend has continued. We will therefore be continuing with this approach for a further two rounds starting from May 2017.

Question 20 from Councillor Laban to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Will the Cabinet Member for Environment confirm or deny that his department's review of the toilet provision in our parks will ultimately lead to their closure?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The review has taken account of the views of the Friends of Parks and a pragmatic approach will be pursued. It is important to note that this is not a one size fits all.

Question 21 from Councillor Keazor to Councillor Fonyonga, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health

Would the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Public Health update the council about the efforts of the Council to tackle gang violence in Enfield?

Reply from Councillor Fonyonga

Tackling gang violence and serious youth crime is also a key priority of the council and the Community Safety team continues to lead a vast range of measures to address this problem.

Critically, the Council works very closely with the police to share information to protect young people and reduce the chances of them getting involved with gangs. Our Gangs partnership group meets each fortnight and members are in contact constantly to monitor and intervene with identified cases. Successful interventions include working with the Youth Offending Unit and the police to address County Lines - where gangs seek to establish drugs sales networks outside the area and often in county areas.

Furthermore, we have commissioned youth outreach and youth club work with Oasis, which includes employment training for young people (i.e. in mechanics and hairdressing) to provide practical alternatives for those susceptible to joining a gang. We commissioned the St Giles Trust to provide mentoring to young people at high risk of involvement in gangs. We have also recently commissioned 2 LIFE courses run by the London Fire Brigade (LFB) to teach teamwork and discipline to targeted groups, and funded trips to the Ben Kinsella exhibition for youth groups to see the consequence of knife crime.

Question 22 from Councillor Chamberlain to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Given the series of accidents occurring along the Cycle Enfield routes directly attributable to the scheme, in particular at Mason's Corner, and the apparent failure to progress beyond stage 1 of the safety audit, will the Cabinet member now undertake to immediately review the scheme's safety? Bearing in mind that both the immediate safety of the works and the longer term danger posed by the less than obvious new obstructions being placed in the road should be reviewed and either made more obvious or removed.

Reply from Councillor Anderson

I am aware of some concerns that have been raised over the visibility of the low-level segregation islands, which you should note are TfL approved. It will inevitably take some time for motorists to get used to the new road infrastructure. Nonetheless, officers are currently reviewing them as part of the on-going safety audit process to determine what else needs to be done to highlight these features. We, of course, want to ensure that the scheme delivers, as we believe it will, significant road safety benefits, not just for cyclists, but for pedestrians and motorists alike.

Question 23 from Councillor Hasan to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Could the Cabinet Member provide an update on the progress to deliver London's first inclusive play facility at Albany Park funded by the London Marathon Trust?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

I am very pleased to confirm that work will commence this month on North London's first fully inclusive play area. The project, which is being delivered after the Council secured a £150,000 grant from the London Marathon Community Trust, will be supplemented with Section 106 funding. It will take up to ten weeks to complete.

With the help, advice and support of the Cheviots Centre, our aim is to create a top

notch facility that will ensure that children are given the same opportunities, irrespective of their individual circumstances, as well as facilitating physical activity as part of our healthy living, Move More Enfield strategy.

Question 24 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

A number of businesses have reported reductions in sales of up to 30% during the construction phase of Cycle Enfield along Ridge Avenue and Green Lanes.

Will Cllr Anderson apologise to the business owners for the losses incurred and the stress caused to them as a result of his failure to listen to their concerns?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

I disagree with the premise of the question. I, along with my colleagues, have listened to the concerns of businesses. This scheme is the result of next to two years of extensive consultation that has led to considerable changes to the detail of the resulting scheme. However, we are now in the implementation phase, which unfortunately involves road works which are inevitably disruptive and our contractors are doing all that they can to complete the works, which are on schedule, as quickly as possible.

Nonetheless, we are of course cognisant of the short-term impact of such works, particularly on local businesses. To that end our contractors have implemented ongoing adaptive mitigation measures wherever practicable. In addition, we have contacted all businesses in the locality to advise them to contact the Valuation Office Agency and apply for possible business rate relief, which may be applicable in such circumstances.

However, it needs to be borne in mind that the goals of Cycle Enfield are long-term and aimed at providing residents with a safe, healthy and efficient way of travelling around the Borough. Indeed, with the projected population growth, my view, and that of my colleagues, is that if we had not proceeded with the scheme the resulting impact would have been far more damaging to the long-term viability of our town centres.

Question 25 from Councillor Simon to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Who is responsible for maintaining the surface of the Lea Navigation towpath? If it is not LBE, how can we work with responsible authority to improve the drainage so that there are many fewer puddles and mud spray?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The majority of the towpath is maintained by the Canal and River Trust (formerly British Waterways), however some sections are owned by Enfield Council and private developers.

The Council has undertaken improvement works to some sections of the towpath in recent years, funded through developers and Section106 sources. We are also

aware that the Canal and River Trust are in early discussions with TfL regarding opportunities for further improvements to some sections of the towpath.

If Councillor Simon has any concerns about a particular stretch, then I would be happy to ask officers to follow this up.

Question 26 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

A number of businesses have reported reductions in sales of up to 30% during the construction phase of Cycle Enfield along Ridge Avenue and Green Lanes.

Will Cllr Anderson lobby the Cabinet Member for Finance and Efficiency asking him to support those businesses on the routes affected by the construction phase of Cycle Enfield to secure a reduction in their business rates?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

As I have already indicated in response to question 24, officers have already written to businesses in the locality advising them to contact the Valuation Office Agency for possible business rate relief if they feel that their business has been detrimentally affected by the temporary road works.

Question 27 from Councillor Ulus to Councillor Sitkin, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Business

Would the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Business update the Council on Crossrail 2's possible effects on the Brimsdown Industrial sites and options currently being explored in that regard?

Reply from Councillor Sitkin

There are, at this stage, no published plans which include specific reference to impacts upon Brimsdown and nearby industrial sites. Route alignments, station locations and designs and level crossing closures all have yet to be determined. The Council understands that the Crossrail 2 team, comprising TfL and Network Rail, has submitted a draft business case to Government (DfT) for its consideration and a response is anticipated sometime over this Summer which will set out their thinking on growth options around potential stations. The Council believes strongly that local people should tell us what they would like to see happen if Crossrail 2 is confirmed which is why we will soon be starting the Enfield Conversation.

Question 28 from Councillor Hurer to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

A number of businesses have reported reductions in sales of up to 30% during the construction phase of Cycle Enfield along Ridge Avenue and Green Lanes.

Will Cllr Anderson demand an apology from the company who undertook the business impact assessment with respect to the effects on business during the construction phase, a refund for the fees paid to them and use the fees refunded to compensate local businesses for their losses?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The company concerned were commissioned to undertake a high-level assessment of the Cycle Enfield A105 proposals on both Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill town centres. However, the report was never intended to be a specific forecast on the impacts of the construction phase on individual businesses. It was, however, helpful in identifying a range of both short and long-term mitigation measures to maintain town centre vitality.

I would reiterate that any business that believes it has been detrimentally impacted during the construction works should apply to the Valuation Office Agency for potential business rate relief.

Question 29 from Councillor Ekechi to Councillor Sitkin, Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Business

Would the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Business update the Council on the Built Environment Training Centre?

Reply from Councillor Sitkin

The Built Environment Training Centre remains a priority project associated with Meridian Water, to be delivered by the Master Developer Partner, Barratts. Through a recently established Employment and Skills Strategic Group, the Council's Neighbourhood Regeneration team is working closely with Barratts, colleges CONEL and Barnet & Southgate, DWP and the Council's Education services to shape the direction of this headline project. The Built Environment Training Centre will during the early years be used to describe a virtual centre where jobs, training and apprenticeships will be coordinated ahead of a physical centre being constructed. The work is on track to support local people into construction jobs from 2018.

Question 30 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

The Cabinet Member will doubtless have been made aware of the judgement given at the beginning of February by the Court of Appeal in a case involving Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in which the Appeal Court held that councils will have no defence for failing to repair potholes unless it had put in place "reasonable arrangements for properly evaluating and responding out of hours and at weekends to reports of highways defects which might be potentially serious and represented an imminent hazard requiring immediate attention".

Can he please confirm to the Council that Enfield has in place procedures that are fully compliant with this Court of Appeal ruling?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

The Council operates an out of hours call centre on the 8379 1000 telephone number, where any calls from the public are assessed for the urgency of response required. Any urgent issues are referred straight to Enfield's Highway Maintenance Contractor.

The Council's Highway Maintenance Contractor operates an out of hours service, which includes weekends with a contractual requirement for them to respond to emergencies and to make safe any urgent safety issues on the highway within 2 hours. Permanent repairs will then be arranged in accordance with Enfield's Highway Maintenance Plan.

The Council also operates an out of hours stand-by rota where a Highway Officer is always available to be 'called out' should there be a need for the highway authority to provide direction to the contractor.

Question 31 from Councillor During to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

Could the Cabinet Member for Environment provide an update on the Mayor of London's emerging Transport Strategy and how this relates to the Borough?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

A draft of the Mayor's Transport Strategy, which sets out his long-term vision for transport in London, is due to be consulted on in the near future with the final version due in autumn. Councillor During will be pleased to know that emerging priorities include cycling and walking as part of his healthy and safe streets agenda, which follows a similar approach to our Quieter Neighbourhoods proposals.

There is also a continued focus on improving the rail network with the delivery of better services including new trains on London Overground services from 2018; something we have long pushed for. Other key areas include improving accessibility and air quality, both of which have been highlighted as issues in Enfield.

Question 32 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

The Cabinet Member will recall at the budget setting meeting I drew his and the Council's attention to the fact that capital for highway maintenance had not been included in the Capital Programme 2017/18, but had merely been shown in the "Indicative Programme". The net result of this was that the resolutions passed at the Council Meeting mean that there is no new money available beyond 1 April 2017 for repairing borough roads as distinct from those which are the responsibility of TfL (main roads) save for a shameful but fortuitous underspend of £1.793m.

Would the Cabinet Member explain to the Council how this absurd situation arose including what steps he is taking to remedy the problem to ensure there is new money available for borough road maintenance beyond 1 April 2017?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

As I have previously explained to Councillor Neville, we have identified £6.45m for 2017/18 for our Highways and Streetscene Programme, £6m of which is for the maintenance of Enfield's highways and associated assets; and £0.45m for the maintenance of highway structures and watercourses. These figures were shown in the Council's budget statement as indicative and are due to be approved this month.

I have already held discussions with officers, over which specific schemes will be

included within the programme, which will ensure that funding is prioritised to achieve the maximum benefit to Enfield's highway network.

Question 33 from Councillor Neville to Councillor Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment

With reference to the c25% underspend (£1.793m) on highway maintenance in 2016/17, which is shameful given the state of Enfield's roads and pavements, will he tell the council the reason for the underspend including what action did he take throughout the year to monitor this spending?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

Once again, Councillor Neville has got the wrong end of the stick. Of the £1.793m he refers to, £1.4m is for the Hertford Road Corridor Improvements and not highway maintenance. This is capital funding that has been made available to implement public realm improvements at Ponders End to support a significant amount of development in that area. The funding is being carried forward from 2016/17 into 2017/18 to better suit the delivery of the Ponders End Improvement Scheme.

Of the remaining £393k carried over from 2016/17 into 2017/18, £265k is due to necessary re-programming several footway and highway improvement schemes to align with network management and contractor resource issues; and £128k is a carry forward to complete the street lighting trimming and dimming programme where a small percentage of the existing street lighting units are not compatible with the required technology. Officers have been working with the Council's PFI provider to develop the most cost-effective solution to implement the programme.

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

Would the Cabinet Member confirm that the construction phase of Cycle Enfield along the A105 is on time to the day per the contract or if not indicate how far behind the contractors are running?

Reply from Councillor Anderson

As I have already stated in my response to Councillor Hurer in Question 24, the Cycle Enfield works along the A105 are progressing in accordance with the agreed programme, which is available on the Cycle Enfield website.

Question 35 from Councillor Rye to Councillor Cazimoglu, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care.

Would the Cabinet Member inform the Council how much extra money was allocated for pressures in Adult Social Care to all local authorities nationally in the Chancellor's Spring Budget 2017, including the amount specifically for Enfield's Adult Social Services, providing details on exactly how this money will be spent?

Reply from Councillor Cazimoglu

I can confirm to Councillor Rye that in the Chancellor's Spring budget £2 billion was allocated for pressures in Adult Social Care over three years. This is one off bridging

money taking us to 2019/20 when the increased Better Care Fund money becomes available to Councils. In 2017/18 this will mean an additional £5.7m of funding for Adult Social Care in Enfield. The money will sit within the Better Care Fund and there are conditions attached to the funding with a focus on supporting people to avoid hospital admissions and to support appropriate and speedy discharge from hospital.

I will also take the opportunity to reiterate here that whilst the additional funding is a welcome first step to addressing the chronic underfunding of Adult Social Care, it does not yet go nearly far enough. Over the last four years the funding for Adult Social Care has been reduced by £25m. Add to this the context of increasing numbers of people who need services year on year, increased costs of services and you will understand the scale of the challenge facing this department so we welcome the additional funding but we also need to make it very clear that a longer term sustainable funding solution is needed from government if we are to ensure that our most vulnerable residents continue to receive the best quality care and support to help keep them safe.