



FULL COUNCIL, Wednesday 27 January

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

### 1) To the Leader of the Council, Councillor Roger Ramsey

#### From Councillor David Durant

How much do Havering residents give the GLA every year via the GLA levy and as an estimate how is it proportioned between TfL, Police, emergency services and others?

#### **Response:**

The Mayor's draft budget proposals were made just before Christmas on 21 December. There is an indication that there will be a slight reduction of the current £295 in relation to a Band D household to £276 – this is a reduction of £19, or around 6.44%. This reduction includes an assumption that the Olympic levy of £12 will stop next year.

The £276 breaks down as:

- £206.79 to support the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (principally the Met Police)
- £50.35 for the London Fire Brigade
- £14.63 for the Mayor and GLA assembly
- £4.23 for transport and other services.

Consultation on the Mayor's draft budget proposals ended on 12 January.

### 2) To the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Robert Benham

#### From Councillor Keith Roberts

Following a site visit with a Council Officer it was clear action was needed to reduce flood risk and improve amenity by further maintenance and improvement of the River Ingrebourne by historical Rainham Village.

In recognition of a shortage of council funds can the Council:

- a) contact Veolia Environmental Trust with a request they fund reed and culvert clearance and improve the public area by/behind the New Angel Inn and
- b) contact Tesco with a request they assist with clearing the culverts by their Rainham store as this would reduce the risk of flooding by an estimated 20%.

**Council 27 January 2016**

**Response:**

The Environment Agency has historically taken responsibility for this location, however a recent investigation has shown that the area is the responsibility of Havering Council to maintain. As the culvert runs along the designated line of a main river, consent must be sought from the Environment Agency to undertake the works, which officers applied for on 4th January 2016. We hope that consent will be granted in time to complete the works by the end of this financial year, which will vastly improve the drainage of this and the surrounding area

The Council always hopes to obtain funding from partner organisations when undertaking larger works and I would support and encourage officers in making these applications. However, the budget for this project has come from Council funds.

**3) To the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Robert Benham**

**From Councillor Nic Dodin**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm:-

- a) what income has so far been generated from Moving Traffic Contraventions.
- b) whether consideration has been given to taking on any other police activities such as enforcement against motorists who exceed the speed limits for example within 20 mph zones.

**Response:**

Since the introduction of Moving Traffic Contraventions in September last year, the income generated is £137,986.50. Income raised from MTCs is ring-fenced and will be reinvested in Highways and road safety initiatives

The enforcement of speed limits remains a Criminal offence and therefore is within the powers of the Police. At present there are no proposals in place to empower local authorities to take on the enforcement of speeding violations.

**4) To the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services and Community Safety, Councillor Osman Dervish**

**From Councillor Jody Ganly**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what processes are in place to ensure that applicants are advised of the council's decision on their planning application within the statutory period.

**Response:**

There are a number of processes in place which ensure that applicants are advised of the Council's decision on their planning application within the statutory period.

## **Council 27 January 2016**

Officers process applications via a software system that chronologically lists the applications they are dealing with. Monitoring reports giving details of applications due for decision are emailed on a daily or weekly basis, as appropriate, to team leaders and managers within the service.

Case reviews are held between officers and team leaders to identify any issues with a proposal in advance of the decision being taken. The performance of the team is reviewed and monitored during the 1 to 1 process.

Extension of Time Agreements are used where it is evident that a decision will not be made within the statutory period.

In most cases, automatic emailing of decision notices and all prior approval decisions go direct to the applicant, or their agent where they have one, via email, but also by post.

### **5) To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Damian White**

#### **From Councillor Graham Williamson**

I welcome the Council's desire to ensure that rented Council and Housing Association properties are prioritised for Havering residents to give meaning to the term Local Homes for Local People, but can you confirm however that, unlike other Councils, we have not insisted that Associations give us 100% nomination rights and that, for example in my South Hornchurch ward, we turned down just under 20% of the properties in the new Passive Close development because they were 4 bedrooms.

Given the increasing number of new properties being built can we not ensure that our borough's waiting list is at least cleared first before any non-Havering tenants can move into such developments?

#### **Response:**

I can confirm that the Council has 100% nomination rights to all properties on new developments. We've also retained the standard re-let nomination rights to all the properties.

With regards to the new Passive Close development, 74 out of the 83 units were let to Havering residents. The remaining nine, which were four bedroom houses, could not be let due to a lack of demand for properties of that size at the time. The reason for an oversupply during that period was because there were three other developments which were all completed around the same time – at Briar Road, Hilldene and Harold Wood Hospital during the end of 2014/early 2015.

In order to minimise the level of void losses to Circle Anglia Housing Association, it was agreed that Tower Hamlets would be able to nominate their residents in exchange for smaller two and three bedroom units – for which Havering has the highest demand. As a result, seven of the units were let by Tower Hamlets and the other two units were let by Circle Anglia Housing Association as a transfer for their internal tenants. Tower

**Council 27 January 2016**

Hamlets have already rehoused four Havering tenants to compensate for this and are working towards offering the remaining three vacancies they still owe.

**6) To the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Robert Benham**

**From Councillor Jeffrey Tucker**

Outside our modern new Rainham library is a bus stop on a wide pavement by a green area next to a refurbished station, but with only one litter bin which often results in this expensively redeveloped area looking a mess. I know people shouldn't drop litter but it would help if more bins were provided to help reduce the litter problem.

Please can some more bins be provided by the library/bus stop/station and by the shops and other bus stops in the Rainham Village Conservation Area.

**Response:**

Four new litter bins have recently been installed in the Rainham Village area, and two additional litter bins are due to be placed before the end of January, outside the library and the station. This will bring the total number of litter bins in the area to 25. Once the new bins have been installed their impact will be assessed and, if necessary, additional bins will be installed.

The locations of the 4 bins recently installed are :  
Junction of Cowper Road with Wennington Road  
Junction of Melville Road with Wennington Road  
Outside Flames Kebab, Upminster Road South  
Outside Moments of Memory, Upminster Road South

**7) To the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Robert Benham**

**From Councillor Lawrence Webb**

Where someone lives within a controlled parking zone are they permitted to give visitor parking permits to all and any of their friends and relatives in advance of them coming to visit them?

**Response:**

Yes - residents who live within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) can purchase Visitor Permits at any time, and while it is preferable that Visitor Permits should be issued upon arrival of any visitor, there are circumstances where permits may be issued in advance, for example when a person visits someone frequently and convenience is a factor.

Council 27 January 2016

**8) To the Cabinet Member for Housing Company Development and oneSource Management, Councillor Ron Ower**

**From Councillor David Johnson**

I and a fellow Councillor visited Broadford School recently, although we had an excellent overall impression of the school and how it was run there were many issues that were brought to our attention.

One in particular as it is something I am very interested in having recently installed solar panels on my domestic property, my first impression was to congratulate the Council on installing solar panels on the roof of the School to cut the electricity bill and make money on the 'feed in tariff' payments, my enthusiasm was then dashed by being informed although installed in December 2011 the system had never been commissioned/connected.

How is it that the Council go to the trouble of installing solar panels and not actually get them connected? What was the cost of the installation and how much has been lost from the feed in tariff by them not being connected.

**Response:**

The photo voltaic panels on the school roof are connected and have been operating since the build of the school so they are contributing to lower energy bills for the school. Since installation in September 2011 the school is saving approximately £976.00 per year at current prices which equates to a total of approximately £4,300.00.

There is an issue with the Feed in Tariff (FiT) as the panels appear to not have been registered, meaning that the school is unable to enjoy the additional benefit of selling surplus energy to the national grid. In order to be registered for FiT the owner of the panels, which in this case is the school, needs to submit documentation and a letter from the school confirming their ownership of the panels and generation meter to EDF Energy. The school were advised at the time of the action that it needs to take and Council officers are assisting the school in carrying out these actions. Unfortunately the Council cannot register the panels on the school's behalf.

The contract cost for the PV system works by the specialist sub-contractor, PV Systems Ltd was £82,271.11

**9) To the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Councillor Meg Davis**

**From Councillor John Mylod**

Given the current Government's desire to move all schools to academies, would the Cabinet Member confirm what steps are in place to protect any Council assets being lost to the private sector and to ensure any services provided to academies are fully reimbursed.

Council 27 January 2016

**Response:**

When a school converts to an Academy, their estate and other assets have to transfer to the sponsor under a 125 year lease with the Council. This is contained in the Academies Act and is something the authority has no power to change. The range of statutory services that the schools would have received pre-conversion can then be purchased on a traded services basis from the Local Authority or any other provider.

**10) To the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services & Community Safety,  
Councillor Osman Dervish**

**From Councillor Reg Whitney**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm for the past 5 financial years the income and expenditure on the council's Licensing activities.

**Response:**

The total income from Licensing activities regarding the Licensing Act 2003 for the last five years is £758,965, the total expenditure is £887,205.

The expenditure figure includes officer's salaries, including National Insurance and pensions, and hearing costs, however it does not include all on costs or responsible authority costs.

Licensing authorities are entitled to charge a fee to cover the cost of issuing, administering and enforcing licences. The fees are not intended, or permitted to generate income for the Council.

The Licensing Act 2003 has fixed national fees set by central government which haven't changed since the introduction of the Act.

I can provide a breakdown of the totals for the last five years if Councillor Whitney requires them.

**11) To the Cabinet Member for Financial Management, Councillor Clarence Barrett**

**From Councillor Ray Morgon**

Would the Cabinet Member for Financial Management confirm what checks are in place to ensure that:-

- a) All contractors have fully documented contracts in place.
- b) Their business continuity plans have been checked.
- c) Their financial stability has been checked.

**Council 27 January 2016**

**Response:**

For contracts above £100,000 procurement rules require that individual and specific contracts are in place. All procurement activity above £25,000 has to go through the Councils e-tendering system which ensures that all the relevant requirements are in place. Below that figure contracts are derived from the Councils financial iProc terms and conditions, which suppliers must comply with to be a registered supplier. Business continuity and financial stability is based on the value and risk of the contract in line with all EU procurements. I can confirm that this is undertaken as part of the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire and Invitation to Tender process.

**12)To the Cabinet Member for Regulatory Services & Community Safety,  
Councillor Osman Dervish**

**From Councillor Barry Mugglestone**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how many more years will pass before a comprehensive plan is put together for Bretton Manor House and grounds.

**Response:**

A draft planning document is currently being prepared, to provide a framework within which the Council and potential partners may work together to shape the future of the Bretons site, so that the important heritage buildings can be improved and to encourage the development of a scheme that enhances the sport, leisure, education and recreational opportunities on the site.

Once the planning document has been agreed the Council will market the opportunity at Bretons, with the intention of receiving back proposals from interested parties later in 2016. It is intended that a decision on the future of the Bretons site will be made towards the end of this year.

**13)To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Damian White**

**From Councillor June Alexander**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what steps are being taken by the Council to ascertain the number of properties in Havering used by other Local Authorities to house their residents.

**Response:**

I can confirm that the majority of Havering properties are used by local people.

Only a very small number of properties are accessed by residents of other Local Authorities in exceptional circumstances. This is generally reached through the London Mayor's Housing Moves Scheme and where a reciprocal agreement exists with another Local Authority.

**Council 27 January 2016**

Under this agreement, Havering gets back a similar vacancy from that authority which is then used for Havering residents who may also wish to move out of the Borough – for example, in cases of harassment or domestic violence.

Over the last three years, Havering has housed 12 residents from other Local Authorities/Housing Associations through reciprocal agreements and 13 residents through the Housing Moves scheme.

I can provide a more detailed breakdown of the figures from the last three years if Councillor Alexander requires it.

**14) To the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services and Health, Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson**

**From Councillor Philip Hyde**

Is it possible to force the CCG to reduce patient to GP ratios to a level more consistent with the London wide averages. The average in London is around 950 but in Havering it is nearer 1250.

The average for our Borough masks some practices which are over 2,500 per GP. I ask this in light of recent national press reports of GPs closing their books to new patients. Given the extensive population growth in some wards, this situation will only go from bad to worse.

**Response:**

The Clinical Commissioning Group is made up of its GP members, with GP clinical directors on its governing body, and isn't able to 'force' individual practices – as private businesses – to do anything as such. As a priority, we are now developing a primary care transformation programme looking at a wide range of issues that affect both GPs and patients – including access and patient experience.

Last year, Havering GPs launched the first of the successful and popular GP 'hubs' across our area and these continue to offer late evening and weekend urgent, same day, GP appointments booked directly by patients. Posters advertising this service have recently gone up at Council poster sites across the Borough.

The CCG has been working closely with Havering Council's Communications Team to urge the public not to visit already overburdened hospital A & E departments except for real emergencies. Key messages are consistently included in all communication channels available to the Council. This joint approach will continue.



**15) To the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Councillor Robert Benham**

**From Councillor Julie Wilkes**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what steps are taken by Havering Council to check that businesses, and restaurants in particular, appropriately dispose of their waste.

**Response:**

Each year all businesses, including restaurants, are sent an advisory leaflet with the business rate demands, which sets out their responsibilities to correctly store and dispose of their commercial waste.

In addition, the Enforcement Team within Streetcare issue demands for Waste Transfer Notes, which is a document showing the type and amount of waste produced by the business, the collection arrangements in place, together with details of who collects the waste, and how it is disposed of.

Failure to provide copies of the Waste Transfer Note can result in a prosecution or a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

The StreetCare team issue demands for waste transfer notes on a random basis to ensure that correct waste management arrangements are in place, but also to any business which is suspected of illegally disposing of waste. Enforcement officers also regularly pay unannounced visits to businesses if there are visible waste management issues.

If the Councillor is concerned about a specific business or businesses then please provide the details to StreetCare who will investigate.