



FULL COUNCIL, Wednesday 13 September 2017

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Fire Safety Checks on Council Owned Buildings

1) **To the Leader of the Council**
From Councillor Julie Wilkes

In light of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, would the Leader of the Council confirm that all public buildings that the Council own or are responsible for have been comprehensively checked for fire safety and what, if any, further checks will be carried out?

Answer

All corporate Council buildings have a fire risk assessment carried out on them each year, and any shortfalls are identified and corrected. All fire risk assessment documents are retained and can be inspected by Members if required.

Funding is available to deal with any issues raised. All fire equipment and fire alarm facilities within each facility are serviced annually by an approved external contractor.

Health and Safety have written to all Community Schools requesting a copy of their current Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) and asking them to complete a declaration about measures they have in place for fire safety. Follow-ups will be carried out with individual schools as required.

Sports and Leisure Management (SLM), the Council's leisure operator has robust FRAs in place for all four of the leisure facilities in the borough. These are reviewed by each site health & safety coordinator on a regular basis and also by SLM's Regional Health and safety Coordinator bi-annually. Should any incident/accident occur they would be reviewed immediately.

All HRA Housing blocks have been checked in accordance with current regulations. New Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) have been carried out to high-risk property types and the scheduled programme of FRAs to lower-risk properties has been brought forward. The regime of daily inspections by caretakers and cleaners, and six-weekly inspections by estate surveyors will continue. A project team has been put in place to ensure that any findings from the FRAs and any recommendations which emerge from the ongoing inquiry into Grenfell Tower are addressed without delay.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader of the Council added that there was not a single overall report covering fire safety but that all fire risk inspections for Council buildings were available for inspection.

Tri-Borough Response Times

2) **To the Leader of the Council**
From Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Please provide an update regarding Tri-borough response times in comparison to other borough commands within London.

Answer

The highest priority calls to the police are classified as either “I” (“Immediate”) or “S” (“Significant”). The MPS aims to respond to “I” calls within 15 minutes and “S” calls within an hour.

Across the MPS, over the past 12 months, 84.8% of “I” calls and 76.2% of “S” calls have been responded to within the charter time. Within the East Area Command Unit (covering Barking & Dagenham, Redbridge and Havering), 67% of “I” calls and 56% of “S” calls were responded to within the target time.

It should be noted that the volume of calls requiring police attendance across the tri-borough was significantly higher during Quarter 1 of this financial year than it was during the same period last year. As a result, response teams were regularly challenged with an ‘outstanding calls list’ of 100+ incidents at the start of their shifts, which impacted on response times.

This is of course a pilot, and new ways of working have been implemented as areas of concern have arisen. A team of officers is now in place to deal with low risk, high volume calls on the outstanding calls list, freeing up response officers to deal with new emergency calls. Team Minimum Strengths have also been enhanced to increase resilience.. This reduced the unallocated call volume from 141 to 16 calls in its first week of operation.

Consequently, during recent weeks we have seen a vast improvement, with 90% of calls being met within the charter time on various days.

Response times continue to be monitored.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader of the Council denied that the tri-borough Police model had been a mistake. He added that the Metropolitan Police has requested to be part of the trial and that this allowed some influence on the model. It was accepted that response times had been a failing of the model but there had been improvements in areas such as domestic violence and safeguarding. Recent announcements by the Mayor of London concerning the proposed closure of Hornchurch and Rainham police stations were a major concern and needed to be reconsidered

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Parking Ticket Machines- Hilldene Shopping Area

3) **To the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety (Councillor Osman Dervish)**

From Councillor Keith Darvill

Will the Lead Member review the labelling/notices displayed on parking ticket machines in Hilldene Shops Harold Hill which are often defaced and vandalised?

Answer

I thank the Councillor for his question and am sure he would join me in condemning anyone defacing Council property.

You will be pleased to hear that the Hilldene machines are inspected by technicians on a fortnightly basis. When collecting the cash, the officers responsible also inspect the machines and the labelling, and arrange for any missing or defaced labels to be replaced. In addition, the technicians also make visits as and when needed in response to any reports from members of the public.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that he was happy to review parking payment arrangements in the Hilldene shopping area.

Emergency Planning

4) **To the Leader of the Council**

From Councillor Barbara Matthews

In light of the various tragic events that have taken place in both London and Manchester this year, would the Leader of the Council confirm what steps have been taken to review the Council's emergency planning and what contingency plans are in place in the event of a major incident in the borough?

Answer

Following these tragic events, all plans have been reviewed incorporating any actions agreed after the incidents. We have excellent relations with partners and other London Boroughs and continuously review plans in the context of potential and emerging threats.

Our plans are robust. We have regular Continuity and Emergency Planning Workshops with Health, Police, Fire and the Voluntary Sector services where real-life scenarios and lessons learnt improve our forward planning. We also work closely with Romford businesses to plan for emergencies.

The Havering Borough Resilience Forum work to the agreed standards for London and our plans are rigorously assessed annually.

The Emergency Planning Service transferred to the Chief Operating Officer's Directorate this year, ensuring full integration with corporate planning and other work including Prevent.

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The Council's response to a major incident is contained in the Major Emergency Plan. Risks are assessed quarterly and reflected in the Council's corporate risk register and reviewed by SLT.

The Council also has a 24/7 response team, a Borough Emergency Control Centre and a Business Continuity Suite with back-up power.

Council plans deal with all potential, high risk incidents and are subject to periodic review and testing.

Andrew Blake-Herbert was London Local Authority Gold for the London Bridge incident, and for the initial part of the Grenfell Tower incident.

The Havering Borough Resilience Forum work to the agreed standards for London and our plans are rigorously assessed annually. The next is due by the 14th September 2017 and will be signed off by the Chief Executive.

In response to a supplementary question, the Leader of the Council felt it was necessary to be mindful of best practice when considering the need for any borough-wide emergency exercises etc. The Leader was satisfied that services had responded as best they could to the recent explosion incident on the A127.

Green, New Zealand Way Rainham

5) To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Damian White From Councillor Graham Williamson

The "Green" off New Zealand Way, Rainham, is a high value green space. In view of the failure to get planning permission to build on the land or follow due process, will the Administration now consider self-registering the land as an open green space or Village Green within the Local Plan?

Answer

The Council has received an application for village green status, this is being progressed but is outside of the Local Plan process and will be determined by the Council as Registration Authority.

An amendment to the proposed local plan to identify the land as open green space would require a submission during the consultation period to the Local Planning Authority for consideration.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member added the application for village green status would be dealt with through the Council's planning policy and a decision would then be made.

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Parking Review

**6) To the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety (Councillor Osman Dervish)
From Councillor Jody Ganly**

A comprehensive parking review has been carried out in Havering. Would the Cabinet Member confirm the costs of the survey and the tangible benefits from it?

Answer

As part of the review, all of the borough's existing parking restrictions were surveyed; the information was collated and all traffic orders were switched from text-based to a map-based system.

The new map-based system has provided benefits by making all traffic orders and parking restrictions easy to access and understand for any resident or business that is interested, with historic paper-based traffic orders notoriously difficult for non-parking professionals to understand.

The new map-based orders are fully accessible on the internet by staff and members of the public and anyone wishing to look at the borough's parking restrictions. I would encourage you to visit <http://www.haveringtraffweb.co.uk/> if you haven't already to see for yourself.

As part of the review a cost effective way of preparing and advertising new traffic orders has been introduced. The total one-off cost for all the surveys, and the specialist software including maintenance is £122,790.

Upkeep of Open Amenity Space in Private Ownership

**7) To the Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Damian White
From Councillor David Durant**

Local councillors receive complaints about the condition of open land not owned by the Council which on occasion due to location has been tidied up by Environmental Services. However as this is not a long term solution what is Council policy regarding contacting owners, often management companies, to ensure they meet their responsibility to tenants and public to maintain their properties and amenity space, and in particular the open amenity space fronting the Capstan Drive Estate, by Rainham Station?

Answer

We have not received any complaints, nor have any issues been raised about Capstan Drive by members of the public, councillors or John Cruddas MP in respect of the condition of the open spaces in the area. A recent photograph, which I can

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provide upon request, confirms that the grass has been cut by the Management Company.

Where there are persistent or detrimental issues related to private land, the Council's enforcement team will consider issuing notice, and in most cases the threat of notice usually results in the land owner addressing the issue.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member agreed that there were small areas of land in Havering where ownership was yet to be determined. This was an historic issue and he was happy to discuss this with Councillor Tucker outside of the Council meeting.

New Homes and the Local Plan

**8) To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Damian White)
From Councillor Ray Morgon**

The Cabinet Member for Housing sent a letter last month to the Romford Recorder in response to letters in the newspaper alleging that Havering Council plans to build 30,000 new homes. He stated that it is now conclusively established in the draft local plan that this is not the case. Would the Cabinet Member confirm that he still stands by his statement?

Answer

Yes, that remains the case. However, we did publish a copy of the At the Heart which did include in error, reference to the incorrect 30,000 homes figure. Officers would like to apologise for this error.

Web-casting of Council Meetings

**9) To the Cabinet Member for Housing Development Company & oneSource Management, Councillor Ron Ower
From Councillor Michael Deon Burton**

Due to statutory legislation and to assist with public transparency Council and Cabinet meetings are webcast. This facility should be extended to planning meetings too, which can now be lawfully recorded by members of the public. This could be managed within the existing webcast contract, except there have been problems with the delivery of this contract. Please provide an update regarding these problems and an update on how they are being resolved.

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Answer

Meetings of Full Council and Cabinet have been webcast since 2009. The webcasts are available as a live feed and on playback via the Council's website. The Council's webcast provider reported a technical fault to the recording of the Full Council meeting which took place on 26 July. Although the meeting was streamed and watched live on the night, regrettably, despite attempts it was not possible to recover the recording. Members were notified of this on 1 August. The Council was not charged for the cost of the live webcast of that meeting. Initial attempts to rectify the fault proved unsuccessful with the meeting of Cabinet on 9 August unable to be webcast. The webcast provider has since attended the Town Hall to install replacement parts and I'm pleased to report that the webcast feed is now working.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed that any problems re webcasting of Council meetings should be reported to the Head of Democratic Services.

Town Centre CCTV Cameras

**10) To the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety (Councillor Osman Dervish)
From Councillor Stephanie Nunn**

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what checks are made to ensure that all Town Centre CCTV cameras are fully functional and what cost/benefit analysis is carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of cameras?

Answer

The cameras are in constant use over 24 hours, 365 days per year and faults are identified through this process. However, all cameras are proactively checked for faults every Wednesday. If any faults are identified they are recorded and reported to our CCTV maintenance contractor for investigation and or repair on our weekly maintenance schedule.

As well as deterring crime and ASB in areas where CCTV has been installed, we collate monthly statistics which show the effectiveness of the cameras. These statistics are reviewed at the monthly Antisocial Behaviour Problem Solving Meeting. They are also shared with the Community Safety Data Analyst and are available for the bi-monthly Tasking Enforcement Meeting.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member confirmed he could, if details of location were provided, supply records of checks on a camera in Elm Park that had been kept in the same position for some months.

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Parking Enforcement Policy

11) To the Cabinet Member for Environment and Community Safety (Councillor Osman Dervish)

From Councillor Reg Whitney

Would the Cabinet Member agree that the Council's parking enforcement focus on easy targets rather than apply Council policy fairly.

Answer

I certainly do not agree. The primary importance of the Council's Civil Parking Enforcement operation is to act as a deterrent, keep the roads of the borough free from congestion and safe for all highway users including motorists, pedestrians and public transport users.

Legislation, operational and statutory guidance dictate fully how the Council must manage the enforcement of both parking and moving traffic contraventions and we must adhere to those rules.

The deployment of Civil Enforcement Officers is managed according to need, in areas of high non-compliance and to manage parking in controlled parking zones. Robust enforcement is often required, especially around our schools at drop off and pick up times and also when there is illegal parking occurring which hinders residents and businesses alike. An example of this would be when residents find a car has parked in front of their driveway without their permission.

If a driver feels they have been issued a PCN for a parking offence or a moving traffic contravention incorrectly, there is a mechanism in place to appeal. The Council has a discretion policy (available on the Council's website) which is central to the enforcement and challenge process and provides a very transparent narrative against which our officers maintain the key aspects of civil parking enforcement in Havering. It supports the necessity to maintain legal compliance, fairness, transparency and consistency, and the Council's reputation.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member stated that the locations of the CCTV car were decided by need and that previous offences would have been reported at the site at which a CCTV car was located.

Land at Haydock Close

12) To the Cabinet Member for Housing (Councillor Damian White) **From Councillor Barry Mugglestone**

Planning application number P1388.13 (land at Haydock Close) was approved in 2014 with a condition that a financial contribution of £54,000 be paid towards infrastructure costs associated with the development. Would the Cabinet Member confirm that this contribution was paid and what local infrastructure projects it was spent on?

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Answer

The development built at Haydock Close was authorised by planning permission P1680.14, rather than P1388.13. The Section 106 Legal Agreement for that permission required the payment of a £30,000 infrastructure contribution which, to date, has not been received. Officers are currently pursuing payment and it is expected shortly. Once received, the monies will be allocated to an infrastructure project within the Borough.

In response to a supplementary question, the Cabinet Member added that all Section 106 payments were made according to a strict timetable. The precise way in which Section 106 money would be spent would be discussed with the planning department.