

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

Note: Questions 1 to 10 were answered at the meeting. In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 10.6(a); the remainder were treated as if put for written answer

NOTE: Reference to supplementary questions and replies has yet to be added to this document.

1 WEED SPRAYING CONTRACT

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm why the weed spraying contract was not agreed until May which meant that that the first spray was months behind schedule making many of the roads in Havering look very poor for most of the summer?

Answer:

The weed control contract was included in the East London Solutions (ELS) programme of intended contracts. Officers from four of the boroughs had been meeting for many months prior to the intended tendering date to agree the specification and benefit from the economies of scale this process would deliver. As Havering had led on the Highways contract, the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham agreed to lead on the weed control contract. The contract specification was drawn up for the participating boroughs but unfortunately, Barking & Dagenham decided to withdraw their assistance and undertook their own tendering exercise.

This information was forwarded to us in late-2011, and we then began the process of tendering our own contract, with an adjusted start date of May 2012.

2 MOTHBALLED SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

To the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning (Councillor Paul Rochford)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

How many mothballed classrooms are there in primary and secondary schools in Havering and in which schools are they?

Answer:

The term 'mothballed' classrooms refers to accommodation which was taken out of general education use when pupil admission numbers previously reduced in some primary schools as a result of falling rolls. Whilst the reference to 'mothballing' may suggest that this space was locked up and placed out of use by the school concerned, in most cases the 'surplus' space has been used by individual schools to accommodate various educational uses such as IT suites, school libraries, art/resource rooms, SEN use etc.

With primary school pupil projections now rising once again, our strategic planning to accommodate this expansion has included discussions with headteachers to explore scope to re-commission this accommodation for general education use. As a first phase of

this programme, classrooms at Parsonage, Pinewood and Wykeham schools were successfully re-commissioned over the recent summer holidays and are already back in general education use. Our plans to accommodate increased rolls for September 2013 involve the use of other previously 'mothballed' space in the same manner.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to accommodate the projected increase over the next 4-5 years in this manner as schools need to accommodate an entire form of entry ranging from Reception to Year 6 (Primary - 7 classrooms), or Key Stage 1 (Infants - 3 classrooms)/Key Stage 2 cohort (Juniors - 4 classrooms), so that an expanded Reception class can subsequently progress through the same school. As a result, individual classrooms 'dotted' around the borough would not be practical and consequently net expansion to some schools is inevitable.

I am happy to provide/have provided to Councillor Darvill the list of those primary schools having rooms exceeding 54sq.m. that are not allocated to general education use i.e those referred to as 'mothballed'.

Our pupil projections do not identify any pressure on secondary spaces for some years to come and the majority of the secondary portfolio has now transferred to Academy status.

3 IMPACT OF WELFARE ALLOWANCES ON PROVISION OF COUNCIL SERVICES

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Along with other Group Leaders and Members, I recently received an e-mail urging me to write to the Prime Minister as refugees and immigrants to this country allegedly received a £250 weekly allowance, a £225 spouse allowance and a £100 additional weekly hardship allowance. The e-mail went on to state that this contrasted with an Old Age Pensioner who received only £106 weekly allowance, £25 spouse allowance and no weekly hardship allowance. If these claims are true, could the Cabinet Member advise what he feels will be the impact on future Council services?

Answer:

I do not believe these claims to be accurate, for example according to the UK Border Agency a weekly cash allowance for a single person aged over 18 is in fact £36.62.

As the Member is aware, this Council has no control over the welfare allowances he lists. This is the responsibility of central government. These allowances are therefore unrelated to the provision of Council Services.

4 LICENSING: EFFECT OF SATURATION POLICY

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoff Starns)

By Councillor John Mylod

In respect of licensing applications, would the Cabinet Member confirm that the Saturation Policy is fully considered when dealing with applications and are there any examples where this policy is overridden by other factors?

Answer:

Yes, the Sub-Committee fully consider the Saturation Policy when it is raised by anyone in a valid representation. The Saturation Policy does not mean that every application can be refused simply because the policy exists. Applications must be heard on their merits, but a cumulative impact policy in an area will mean that the burden is on the applicant to show that their application/premises will not add to cumulative impact upon any of the licensing objectives. Those objecting to the license are still required to provide evidence however of how the objectives are likely to be affected. Therefore the policy is not absolute, and indeed it cannot be. The term "overridden" is inappropriate. The other thing to consider is that by the Sub Committee granting licence applications but reducing hours and adding tighter conditions, are examples of the policy working (within its legislative/Guidance based constraints), and the fact that some applications in these areas are nonetheless approved does not mean the policy is not being considered, or even that it is ineffective.

5 LONG GRASS MEADOWS IN PARKS

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Denis O'Flynn

What is the average area left uncut as Long Grass Meadow in our parks?

Answer:

I am very grateful for Cllr. O'Flynn's question.

We have had a rolling programme for the development of meadow areas in parks in partnership with Friends of Parks groups and local nature conservation groups since 2007.

Our aim is the protection and enhancement of the flora and fauna of this borough, which have a significance that makes them important to nature conservation in general beyond the borders of our borough as well as within them. I am very glad that the importance of our work in this area was recognised with the Gold award from London in Bloom for Biodiversity in 2011 and unprecedentedly also this year.

We believe that a richer natural environment contributes to a visually interesting and stimulating environment. This is an important part of the particular character of this borough marking us out from others around us. It is important to health and wellbeing and the development of children and young people, and the particular significance of habitats in this borough mean that we have a particular part to play in tackling the decline in species of plant, insect, animal and bird life which has been evidenced and published over a number of years, including in the report published by the charity "Plantlife" last week.

The introduction of meadow areas does not just involve leaving areas of grass uncut. Areas are selected to enhance the particular ecology of each area, and to ensure that all in the borough have access to nature. Resources are then shifted to provide measures that ensure active conservation, such as increasing litter picks, as nature doesn't like rubbish either.

The grass areas are then cut on a two year cycle, with half of the grass on each site being cut and removed annually. This ensures that invertebrate habitat is not completely removed and allows the insects to relocate into the areas of the site that have not been cut, which helps to maintain a sustainable population.

The average area of park that is maintained like this in the borough is 6.53%.

Surveys by nature conservation groups and feedback from residents record an increase in species of butterfly such as Small Heath Butterfly, Small Skipper Butterfly and Six Spot Burnett Moth. In addition song birds have increased particularly Goldfinch and Greenfinch in the borough, along with an increase in the variety of habitat. We now have more Cuckoo Flower, which feeds the Orange Tip Butterfly, Birdsfoot Trefoil which is the food plant for the Common Blue Butterfly and White Clover which is a favourite plant of bees in the borough, which is very welcome.

6 USE OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Michael Deon Burton

Following an article in the media where it is stated a couple who wanted to build their own home were presented with a £44,000 charge for a Section 106 agreement by Rutland Council, are our hard pressed Havering residents in danger of the same insensitive demands of monies being made upon them in these economically challenging times?

Answer:

No they are not. Infrastructure charges relate to developers and the development of new properties not to ordinary residents who might want to build an extension.

From 1 April 2012, a tariff of £6,000, or £4,500 in Havering Riverside, per new additional dwelling has been applied through S106 agreements as part of planning permission. This represents a discounted charge for infrastructure provision considered necessary in relation to the impacts of new housing in the Borough.

The charge only applies to additional dwellings so someone building a replacement dwelling would not be subject to a charge. The discount was calculated with regard to viability and is considered to be reasonable in relation to the uplift value in land as a result of planning permission being granted. It is certainly a lot less than the example given by Councillor Burton.

The Planning obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was published for consultation purposed on 1 April with Cabinet approving its application for all planning applications received from that date. The SPD is due to be adopted shortly.

The overall infrastructure requirement relating to new housing was calculated to be £20,444 per dwelling. In most cases, residential development within Havering cannot currently support the full cost of the infrastructure requirement it generates and remain viable, so a discounted rate taking account of viability is applied.

7 REDUCTION IN CABINET POSITIONS

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Brian Eagling

The Leader is to be congratulated for recognising the need to reduce the number of Cabinet positions, as consistently suggested by the Residents' Association in their budget proposals. However would he agree to bring forward the plan to cut three Cabinet Posts as he would be saving the council tax payers of Havering some £150,000 in allowances over the remainder of this Administration?

Answer:

The Cabinet posts earmarked for deletion are required until 2014 due to the current projects and programmes that each of those Cabinet members is responsible for.

This Council has already been making savings approaching £40 million pounds and this has meant that we are one of the best placed authorities in terms of budget management and keeping our costs under control.

The party opposite has consistently come up with token savings, £10,000 here, £20,000 there – what they need to realise is that running the Council in economically difficult times is not about making politically easy decisions and saving a few thousands pounds, but is about making hard choices where savings can total millions of pounds.

8 RELAXATION OF PLANNING REGULATIONS

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Paul McGeary

Does the Leader of the Council welcome the recent Coalition Governments announcement relaxing the planning regulations to allow larger extensions to be built as permitted development?

Answer:

The Government has announced that full details of the relaxation of planning regulations in relation to house extensions will be published shortly. The Council will respond to the consultation if it considers that there are likely to be serious adverse implications for residents of this Borough who may adjoin large extensions.

Subject to suitable limitations, I support proposals that seek to lift the burden of obtaining planning permission for householders who wish to improve their property, that will generate economic activity especially for small businesses and that will enable Council Planning departments to concentrate on facilitating important and major development proposals.

9 EFFECT OF IMMIGRATION ON HAVERING

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor David Durant

Does the Council Leader agree with Government plans to reduce immigration to 'the 10s of thousands' and what consequences does he foresee for Havering if this Conservative election promise is not fulfilled?

Answer:

Yes I do agree.

However, I think it is very important to note that many people from overseas who have come to Britain have made a substantial contribution to our economy and our society.

The world as we know it is unlikely to end if this election promise is un-fulfilled, however immigration has been falling steadily since the Government took office. This has mainly been made up of falling numbers of overseas students.

The vast majority of people from overseas who move to Britain are hard working, tax paying, skilled individuals, who make a substantial contribution to our economy and way of life.

10 **REQUEST FOR AN UPMINSTER CONSERVATION AREA**

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Linda Hawthorn

In answer to my question at last Council requesting a Conservation Area around the St Laurence Church area of Upminster, the reply stated that 'while the five listed buildings are all very valuable, the quality of the remaining buildings is variable, and most of the infill buildings are not of architectural or historic interest.....and the designation of a conservation area would not provide any additional planning controls or benefits for the listed buildings'. Would the Cabinet Member explain:

- a) Which infill buildings are being referred to?
- b) The NPPF advises that every new build in Conservation Areas should be of sufficient quality to complement the area – why is this advice seemingly being ignored?

Answer:

a) In the previous response, it was the buildings in-between the heritage assets (the five listed buildings) that were referred to as 'infill' buildings, include the following:

- New Windmill Hall
- Old Windmill Hall
- Millfield House
- Upminster Junior School
- Lincoln House
- The new buildings on Gridiron Place

When a conservation area is designated, the usual process is to designate a length of streetscape that includes not only heritage assets, but all buildings within the area and the public realm. It's recognised that the listed buildings which Cllr Hawthorn has suggested should be captured within a conservation area make a strong and positive contribution to the streetscene. However the buildings in-between these highly important assets in the streetscape are not considered of historic or architectural interest. Therefore they do not provide a high quality streetscape with either a unique or uniform character so it is considered that they do not warrant the designation of a conservation area.

Whilst these buildings don't warrant inclusion within a conservation area, the designation of a conservation area would not provide any additional protection for the statutorily listed buildings.

b) In my opinion in recent years Havering's Regulatory Services Committee has ensured that new build in conservation areas is of excellent quality and does complement the particular and distinct character of our conservation areas by defining spaces, creating fine views and making thoughtful use of materials, massing, form and volume to enhance links between buildings and spaces in conservation areas. I would highlight the new library and flats in Rainham Village Conservation Area and the proposed development in Angel Way and in Romford Conservation Area as particularly fine examples of this.

There have been occasions where I feel that the National Planning Inspectorate has been less helpful than it could have been in relation to our conservation areas, and I would cite North Street in Romford and Dovers Corner as examples of this, but my experience of the work of our Regulatory Services Committee in recent years is that members do give due consideration to issues of design, setting and conservation when considering applications in conservation areas, and that we have results to be proud of.

The areas between listed buildings in Upminster which Cllr. Hawthorn is quite rightly concerned about all clearly form the settings of the listed buildings near them, which are so important to the visual interest of the environment of the town. In this light, anyone seeking to develop in the area should be employing an architect able to respond to the particular opportunities which these locations offer, paying particular regard to scale, materials and the relationship of buildings and spaces to one another to create visually pleasing ensembles if they are not to fall foul of the standards for conservation and enhancement of the historic environment contained in Havering's Local Development Framework and reinforced by the National Planning Policy Framework.

11 CHILDREN IN HOMELESS PERSONS HOSTELS

To the Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Pat Murray

How many children under the age of 16 years of age are currently resident with their parents in Havering Homeless Persons Hostels?

Answer:

The exact make up of hostel households fluctuates from time to time but as at 12th September 2012 there were 63 households with children in the hostels with a total of 102 children. The average stay for a household is around 12 weeks.

12 NEW RAINHAM LIBRARY: PROGRESS

To the Cabinet Member for Culture, Towns & Communities (Councillor Andrew Curtin)

By Councillor Jeffrey Tucker

Can the Council please advise on the latest development regarding the building of Rainham Library next door to the station and the bus interchange station with a timescale of how long it will be before completion.

Answer:

The Rainham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre is a central project within the Rainham Compass regeneration programme. It will provide a valuable community resource,

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additional residential units and support educational achievement within the Rainham area. Site works and construction to ground floor slab have already been completed but progression to the main construction stage has been interrupted by the dissolution of the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation and the transfer of its assets and funding to the GLA.

Contractors for the scheme, Roof, have already been selected via a competitive tender process. They are able to mobilise immediately upon signing of the funding agreement. The construction programme is expected to be of 66 weeks duration, including lead in / mobilisation periods, which would envisage completion early in 2014.

We expect outstanding documents to be exchanged in the next few weeks.

13 REDEVELOPMENT OF ST GEORGE'S HOSPITAL, HORNCHURCH

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member please confirm:

- a) The services that are currently been provided at St George's Hospital in Hornchurch and where these will be provided when the hospital is redeveloped?
- b) Any additional services that will be provided on site after the hospital has been redeveloped?

Answer:

a) The CCG will develop a proposal for the future services to be provided at St Georges, engaging closely with the local authority. All of the services (other than the beds) will continue to operate from St Georges in the short term.

b) The details will be developed as above but will include a primary care service.

14 PARK HOMES - PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL

To the Cabinet Member for Housing & Public Protection (Councillor Lesley Kelly)

By Councillor Keith Darvill

Will the Council support the change in the law proposed in the Park Homes Bill to be laid in Parliament by Peter Aldous MP and will it write to Havering Members of Parliament to urge them to support the Bill and attend sessions in Parliament to ensure that it becomes law?

Answer:

The Park Homes Bill is not in the public domain and, as such, its exact proposals are unclear. However, the Government published a consultation paper, *A Better Deal for Mobile Home Owners*, in April this year. If the provisions of the Bill are in accordance with the proposals in this paper, the Council will generally support the Bill, but must reserve its position until the precise provisions are known.

15 ON-STREET PARKING IN RAINHAM VILLAGE

To the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment (Councillor Robert Benham)

By Councillor David Durant

An important attraction of the Rainham one-way system was the increase in parking spaces this would facilitate by the local shops in Rainham Village.

The latest proposals involve 'pay and display' parking bays, but make other parking restrictions more severe, when they could be eased. For example, 8.30am - 6.30pm restrictions are being replaced with 'anytime', rather than one hour restrictions!

Ward councillors have had meetings with Officers about this, but can the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment review the proposals to ensure that more parking spaces are provided by the shops in Rainham Village?

Answer:

The Rainham Traffic Management System will create 14 new short stay parking bays and 4 loading bays directly outside the shops in the Village centre. At present parking is restricted throughout the Village shopping area by single and double yellow lines and there is no legal parking provision when these restrictions apply. This project will therefore support shopping in Rainham Village, which is why it received overwhelming support during the detailed consultation undertaken on the scheme.

Motorists often chose to park illegally outside shops and they contribute to the high levels of congestion in the Village. The Rainham Traffic Management System is seeking to alleviate this by making Upminster Road South a one way road which will allow for parking or loading on one side of the road where none currently exist and create a much safer and attractive environment for shoppers and pedestrians.

Where anytime parking restrictions are proposed these are generally opposite areas of parking where it is essential to keep one side of the road clear permanently to allow traffic including buses and emergency vehicles to flow freely and not block the road.

The Rainham Traffic Management System proposals were widely consulted upon with a specific meeting held with shopowners who approved of the scheme as is being built. In addition a recent consultation on the traffic management orders required to implement the new parking bays outside the shops is also underway.

During this consultation it has become apparent that shop keepers would like further additional parking bays and Officers are considering how this could be achieved without compromising the safe flow of traffic. The results of this work, together with the responses to the consultation, will be reported to the October HAC for consideration

16 DOG FOULING: FINES

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how many fines have been issued since the last Cabinet report dealing with dog fouling?

Answer:

Since the last Cabinet report three fixed penalties have been issued.

Because of the nature of the offence it is difficult to catch offenders in the act of not clearing up their dog's mess. Where it has not been possible to identify the dog owner letters have been distributed in the general area of the offence asking dog owners to be more considerate and to clear up after their dog. Signs have also been fixed to lamp posts in the area.

It is anticipated that the new Cleaner Havering campaign including a web based report form and publicity will enable officers to establish a regular time and place where owners fail to clear up after their dogs and will enable officers to target known hotspots where offences regularly take place.

17 RIVER INGREBOURNE FLOODING – DE-SILTING

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor David Durant

In response to an earlier question about flooding and the River Ingrebourne, I was informed that 'it would be beneficial to de-silt from Squadrons Approach to the new A13 to ensure maximum flow can be optimised which reflects what was noted during the 10th July inspection with the Environment Agency'. And 'as some of this run is within a Site of Scientific Special Interest, a sensitive approach needs to be undertaken to such works'.

What progress has been made regarding this matter?

Answer:

Further to an initial individual inspection by the Environment Agency on 10th July, a further joint inspection is to be undertaken on 19th September as a section of the River Ingrebourne appears severely constricted from the A1306 downstream to the Thames.

As this section of the river will be initially addressed by the Environment Agency, it may be that the works they undertake alleviate the flooding issues experienced from Squadrons Approach through the Site of Scientific Special Interest land. Officers will continue to work closely with the Environment Agency to ensure a remedy to this issue is forthcoming.

18 VISITORS' CENTRE AND PRODUCTION OF MAGAZINE

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Leader confirm why in times of reducing funds available to the council, money has been spent on a fully staffed Visitors Centre and the full cost of the 72-page glossy magazine?

Answer:

The Visitor Centre offers a vital service to the Borough's businesses and attractions in these difficult times and, as Cllr Morgon knows, the success and survival of local businesses will have a direct impact on Council funding in the future, as the Government moves to a model for funding local authorities that is based on a retention of the business rates. So we need to encourage people to come here and spend money in Havering.

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I would add that the running costs for the centre are being met using grant monies for two years – meaning there's no revenue costs to Council tax payers at all.

The Centre is highly valued and well-used, both by visitors to the Borough and by local people who want to learn more about what's happening in Havering. Over this incredible summer of celebration, it's been buzzing with activity, managing approximately 450 enquiries a week and 10,350 since it opened almost six months ago. The Centre has helped people from as far afield as China, Australia and Argentina, as well as a large number of visiting servicemen and women from the Hainault camp, who did such a fantastic job during the Olympics.

And the Discover Havering Guide has been a roaring success, given out not just at the centre, but at libraries, at events, at local hotels and at other visitor centres across the South East. We produced 13,000 copies and, after advertising income and external funding is factored in, it cost just over £2,000 – making it great value for money.

19 USE OF REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoff Starns)

By Councillor Clarence Barrett

Would the Cabinet Member state if powers available under Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) have been used in any surveillance operations on any residents in Havering over the past two years and, if so, how many and under what circumstances?

Answer:

Powers available under Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) have been used on the following occasions over the past two years:

- 3 occasions to investigate potential benefit fraud, and
- 2 occasions to investigate allegations of harassment by the same landlord, but involving different private rented properties

20 RENEWAL OF FOOTWAYS AND CARRIAGEWAYS

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor John Mylod

Would the Cabinet Member provide a list of roads (by ward) that have had their footway or carriageway completely renewed since 2006?

Answer:

There is limited information available covering this length of time, however I can provide the Member with details of the overall spend for renewals for each year since 2006, totalling in a spend of £14.25m.

21 OLYMPICS 2012: COUNCIL EXPENDITURE

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ron Ower

Would the Cabinet Member confirm how much each Directorate spent on events directly or indirectly connected with the 2012 Olympics?

Answer:

Culture and Community spent the following amounts on core Olympic related activities in 2012:

Events	Expenditure (£k)
Cultural Olympiad Programme	£25
Olympic Torch Relay (2012)	£49k
Paralympic Flame Celebration (2012)	£0.5k

The other directorates did not level expenditure on Olympic connected events.

22 CONTRACTS

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Cabinet Member provide a list of all contracts with in-house and external providers and the date the current contracts are due to expire?

Answer:

The production of a list of all contracts with in-house and external providers regardless of value would take a disproportionate amount of staff time. However I understand that the member is particularly interested in the contracts recorded on the Council's Contracts register. This can be found along with the contracts of other boroughs at:

www.londoncontractsregister.co.uk/public_crs/organisations/lb-havering/?search=&filter=all&page=3

23 CLOSURE OF WAITROSE STORE, HORNCHURCH

To the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment (Councillor Robert Benham)

By Councillor John Mylod

Given the decision by Waitrose to close their store in Hornchurch High Street, would the Cabinet Member set out what measures were pursued in order to support the ongoing viability of the business and whether the Council was aware that car parking charges of the adjacent car park increased from 20p to £1 on the day the store opened?

Answer:

The Leader met with Waitrose shortly after the announcement that they were closing their store in Hornchurch. Waitrose were very positive about Hornchurch as a trading location and remain interested in the borough as a place for their business.

Unfortunately the store format that they trialled in Hornchurch has not been successful for Waitrose and they are no longer opening stores of this size across the country. In addition, they did not provide any parking which could be controlled by Waitrose for the benefit of their customers and were reliant on the private car park next door. The Council does not control parking or charges on this privately owned and managed site and while private charges have increased the Council car parks continue to offer 2 hours for 20 pence.

Clearly Waitrose closure is disappointing for Hornchurch, but the Council is determined to support businesses in this important town centre and met with Waitrose to offer support to them when they moved into the town. During Waitrose time in the town centre, we have delivered an ongoing programme of support in Hornchurch including a shop local campaign that has seen competitions, community events and bespoke Hornchurch merchandise to entice shoppers to rediscover Hornchurch and its shopping offer.

We secured a £225k grant from the GLA in the latter half of 2011 and a large amount of this funding was utilised to advertise and promote the town centre, to produce merchandise and a directory for Hornchurch and provide advice and support to local businesses. We have set up a Facebook page and raised the profile of Hornchurch at the recent Havering Town Show. We continue to provide support for the Hornchurch Christmas Cracker event, which last year attracted an additional 2,500 people into the town.

We hold a wide range of events and festivals in Hornchurch that attract people from a wider area to the town, including the highly successful torch relay event, which attracted over 6,000 people to the town.

We are also part way through a £2.5m investment programme in the High Street funded by Transport for London that will bring improvements to the look of Hornchurch, improve accessibility and make it easier to shop and enjoy the town.

24 COMMUNITY BUDGET

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)

By Councillor Ray Morgon

Would the Leader confirm whether this Council is pressing for this Authority to operate a community budget?

Answer:

In many areas we already operate community budgets, for example the Council's work to support Troubled Families to improve their outcomes. The focus is on families in need of support who reside in Harold Hill and is a multi-agency partnership to align resources and services to get better outcomes for local families.

25 OUT OF COURT DISPOSALS

To the Cabinet Member for Community Safety (Councillor Geoff Starns)

By Councillor John Wood

Would the Cabinet Member confirm whether the local Police use what are known as 'Out of Court Disposals'?

Answer:

Yes, the Police use Out of Court Disposals.

The different types of disposal options used are:

- Penalty Notice Disposal (PND)
- Caution
- Conditional Caution
- Cannabis Warning
- Reprimand (Youth)
- Final Warning (Youth)

26 FUTURE OF NHS MEDICAL FACILITIES

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Nic Dodin

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what steps, if any, are being taken to retain medical facilities buildings under local control to avoid them being removed in April 2013 and vested in the NHS Property Services Company?

Answer:

The CCG will develop a proposal for the future services to be provided at St Georges, engaging closely with the local authority. All of the services (other than the beds) will continue to operate from St Georges in the short term.

27 PRUNING OF STREET TREES

To the Cabinet Member for Environment (Councillor Barry Tebbutt)

By Councillor Gillian Ford

Would the Cabinet Member confirm what additional sum would be required in the tree budget to ensure all street trees were pruned every 3 years?

Answer:

Although it would not be particularly good arboricultural practice to prune every highway tree every three years, it is anticipated that the increased pruning would cost an approximate additional £150,000 per annum.

28 COSTS OF SOCIAL CARE ASSESSMENTS

To the Cabinet Member for Individuals (Councillor Steven Kelly)

By Councillor Linda Van den Hende

Would the Cabinet Member confirm the average cost per social care assessment and review and how this compares with other London boroughs?

Answer:

An analysis of Council PSSEX1 returns for 2010-11 (the most recent data published) identifies that Havering Adult Social Care has the second lowest cost in Outer London of £810 per Assessment or Review. This cost compares to an average cost in Outer London of £1,300 and £1,400 approx in London overall.

29 EXTERNAL PERFORMANCE INSPECTIONS

To the Leader of the Council (Councillor Michael White)

By Councillor June Alexander

Would the Leader provide a list of external performance inspections carried out on the council over the past three years and indicate if any are scheduled for the future?

Answer:

The Council is no longer subject to as many mandatory performance inspections since the Conservative Government abolished the regulatory performance regime that used to be in place for councils including the mandatory National Indicator set and Comprehensive Area Assessment, which were abolished in May 2010.

Compulsory inspection is now really only carried out in Children's and Adults Social Care, which I'm sure you'll agree due to the nature of these services, is only right and proper.

We are also subject to various annual audits, including an audit of our Benefit Subsidy Grants claim by our external auditors and of course the annual audit of our accounts.

Over the last three years, we have been subject to the following inspections from Central Government:

2009

Homes in Havering ALMO re-inspection

CAA Organisational Assessment (although this was more of a desk based assessment rather than an inspection)

2010

Children's Social Care - Duty and Assessment (OFSTED)

2011

Children's Social Care - Harold Court Children's Centre (OFSTED)

Children's Social Care - Collier Row Children's Centre (OFSTED)

Children's Social Care - Duty and Assessment (OFSTED)

Children's Social Care - Youth Offending Service (HM Inspectorate of Probation)

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Children's Social Care - Fostering (OFSTED)
Children's Social Care - Safeguarding and Looked After Children (OFSTED)
Children's Social Care - Ingrebourne Children's Centre (OFSTED)

2012

Children's Social Care - Adoption (OFSTED)
Children's Social Care - Pyrgo Children's Centre (OFSTED)
Adult Social Care - Reablement and in-house homecare services (CQC)

Following on from the Audit Commission's regime of compulsory corporate inspection being abolished, the government have been keen to give local authorities the opportunity to develop their own approach to challenging performance, and the Local Government Association have responded by developing Peer Reviews,

With this in mind I can announce that Havering Council will undergo its Corporate Peer Review, during the week of 29th October 2012.

Following the abolition of the mandatory CPA and CAA inspections by the audit commission, the local government association has been working with councils to devise a 'critical friend' challenge programme to help councils learn from each other and share best practice. The peer reviews will be entirely voluntary and free to all LGA Member authorities every three years. They will focus on:

- Our understanding of the local context and priority setting
- Financial planning and viability
- Political and managerial leadership
- Governance and decision-making
- Organisational capacity.

And we've also asked them to specifically look at our transformation journey so far, in terms of establishing how well we achieved the savings we needed to and to act as a critical friend in testing how well prepared we are as a council for further difficult decisions that might lie ahead in transforming our services to deliver the best possible service for Havering residents.

As well as corporate peer reviews, the LGA are also offering more in depth service-specific reviews and the Council has invited a peer review of Childrens Services to take place in January 2013, to support our focus on continuous improvement and self evaluation in delivering the very best services for our children and young people.

30 CLAIMS AGAINST THE COUNCIL

To the Cabinet Member for Value (Councillor Roger Ramsey)
By Councillor John Wood

Would the Cabinet Member confirm for each of the past 6 years the number and value of claims that have been paid, via local authority or external insurers, for:

- a) Tripping injuries on the footway or carriageway?
- b) Damage to vehicles caused by defective carriageways?

c) Damages to property from highway trees?

Answer:

a) Tripping claims on footway or carriageway	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No of claims submitted	73	87	97	126	92	95	39
No of claims paid	13	15	16	12	7	0	0
Cost of paid claims £	260826.57	266557.45	215361.07	216946.70	184967.78	0	0

b) Damage to vehicles caused by defective carriageways	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No of claims submitted	43	50	36	80	191	129	27
No of claims paid	5	12	10	10	27	14	0
Cost of paid claims £	1517.66	2592.17	2289.31	2166.08	9149.19	7527.61	0

c) Damages to property from highway trees	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
No of claims submitted	61	47	46	34	54	28	18
No of claims paid	28	21	22	14	20	2	0
Cost of paid claims £	351683.40	199246.90	37582.50	48596.04	26206.84	6594	0