

CABINET Tuesday 19 December 2023

AGENDA PART I

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS (ITEM 5)

Fifteen minutes will be allowed for Members of the Council to ask a Portfolio Holder a question on any matter in relation to which the Executive has powers or duties.

1.

Questioner: Councillor Natasha Proctor (asked by Cllr Eden Kulig)

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Human Resources

Question: Please could you dispel the myth that your administration is claiming to invest in services to support our residents, when in actual fact national failures and bad decisions on the economy from the Conservative Government are leading to the council being reactionary with our budgets contributing to excessive pressure on public services and rising council taxes.

2.

Questioner: Councillor Natasha Proctor (asked by Cllr Eden Kulig)

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Human Resources

Question: The Ward Priority Fund, led by local residents and ward councillors, has seen significant improvements made in Harrow over the years. We were therefore shocked to see the Ward Priority Fund, worth £300k over three years, included in proposed cuts for future years. What consultation will be undertaken with local residents and ward councillors before you scrap this crucial funding for local projects?

3.

Questioner: Councillor Graham Henson

Asked of: Councillor David Ashton, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Human Resources

Question: We were pleased to see your proposal to scrap discretionary freedom passes has been dropped. We were extremely concerned that such a cruel cut was included in the first place and Labour Councillors received numerous messages from stressed and anxious residents. Do you understand what this proposed cut has done to the most vulnerable residents that rely on this service in Harrow.

4.

Questioner: Councillor Peymana Assad

Asked of: Councillor Anjana Patel, Portfolio Holder for Highways, Infrastructure and Community Safety

Question: Please could the portfolio holder explain in practice the rephrasing of the parking savings detailed in Budget line?

5.

Questioner: Councillor Stephen Hickman

Asked of: Councillor Hitesh Karia, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Question: The School Organisation Report suggests a rise in pupil movement in and out of Harrow schools. What would be the Council's understanding of why this is happening?

6.

Questioner: Councillor Stephen Hickman

Asked of: Councillor Hitesh Karia, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

Question: Harrow desperately needs more special needs provision. There are now greater numbers of children and young people with SEND and complex needs. By 2025, 180 additional places will be needed and by 2029, this rises to 330 places.

The Government chose not to approve our bid for a Special Free School (292 places) despite the clear evidence of need in the borough.

I note the increase in ARMS and temporary provision, but residents will be left wondering about long term plans.

I understand there have been discussions in recent weeks with the Dept of Education, could the Portfolio Holder update us on the outcome of these discussions and let us know when Harrow will get the special needs school it desperately needs?