

Cabinet

Councillor Questions

Date: **Thursday 8 December 2022**

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CABINET THURSDAY - 8 DECEMBER 2022

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 Graham Henson

Asked of: Councillor Marilyn Ashton, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration

Question: “The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a power which enables the Council to raise funds for infrastructure from new development.

Harrow Council adopted its Community Infrastructure Levy in 2013 and have used the levy to deliver a wide range of infrastructure since then in line with its commitment to using CIL revenues and other funding sources to help deliver social, economic and environmental infrastructure to support and meet the demands arising from development. In particular; supporting the art centre, parks, libraries, flood alleviation, planting and trees.

Harrow Council ringfences 15% of all CIL receipts to be spent within the ward that the development is located which is known as the neighbourhood portion or - NCIL. Over the years a number of projects have been implemented within wards that have significantly improved the local areas.

In December 2021 within the Council’s draft budget reports it was proposed that a review of the NCIL allocation and administration process be undertaken during 2022/23, alongside allocation of NCIL receipts to new ward boundaries (coming into effect in May 2022) with the new structures to be in place from April 2023. This was agreed within the Council’s budget in February 2022, with no objections raised around this timetable.

Why have officers been instructed to refuse all applications to use NCIL within wards where developments have been built and residents have been impacted. “

2.

Questioner: Councillor Natasha Proctor

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

Question: “What steps have you taken since May 2022 to control expenditure?”

3.

Questioner: Councillor Natasha Proctor

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

Question: “This is a very draft Capital programme in terms of future figures - where do you anticipate finding the money to fund half of the proposals that aren’t met by grants?”

4.

Questioner: Councillor Natasha Proctor

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

Question: “Financial pressures faced by local councils over the past 12 years have been well documented through the cross-party Local Government Association and the national press. You are also very aware from public reports and audited accounts that Harrow Council has seen its revenue support grant from Government cut from £50.5 million to £1.6m. This means 80% of Harrow council’s core budget is funded from council tax collection.

You've had 6 months to plan for this draft budget and address the budget gap - what have you been doing?”

5.

Questioner: Councillor Peymana Assad

Asked of: Councillor Anjana Patel, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Safety

Question: “Following your feasibility report to Cabinet in July, has the Council worked out yet how much it costs to fill in a pothole?”

6.

Questioner: Councillor Eden Kulig

Asked of: Councillor Stephen Greek, Portfolio Holder for Performance, Communications & Customer Experience

Question: “Can the Council commit to the expectation that all enquiries by MPs and councillors should receive a response within 5 days?”

7.

Questioner: Councillor Peymana Assad

Asked of: Councillor Jean Lammiman, Portfolio Holder for Community and Culture

Question: “The Council is proposing to no longer take part in the national Afghan Resettlement scheme of moving families from hotels into the borough and instead wants to help support those already here. That doesn’t mean Afghan families will stop arriving. How does that Council propose to deal with this challenge?”

8.

Questioner: Councillor Peymana Assad

Asked of: Councillor Jean Lammiman, Portfolio Holder for Community and Culture

Question: “The report (on Afghan Resettlement Schemes) is not proposing to hire the suggested two Housing Officers at the current moment – only should the need arise. It is quite clear there is a need for long term housing for Afghan families. When does the Council believe the need for the Housing Staff will be required?”

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