

CABINET – 19 MARCH 2015

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 4)

Under Rule 16 of the Executive Procedure Rules, members of the public may question the Executive and Portfolio Holders at meetings. There is a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

1.

Questioner: Farah Sadiq, Bob Lawrence Library Campaigner

Asked of: Councillor Sue Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Resident Engagement

Question: “Over 15000 people across the borough signed petitions to keep the 4 libraries under threat of closure open. Over 71% of the respondents of the take part consultation stated that they wanted library services retained. Please do not quote budgets cuts as your excuse for closing these libraries. Why, in spite of the feedback, petitions and proposals provided by residents, community leaders, campaigners and community members has the harrow labour council decided to close the libraries?”

2.

Questioner: Julian Maw, Co-Chair, Hatch End Association

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: “The Hatch End Library forms a crucial part of the written arts environment of the Harrow Arts Centre. The original proposal to close the Arts centre has been postponed while alternative facilities / management is researched and proposed; I believe a strategic business case will come before you next month.

Despite the Association’s representations this unique library opportunity to be an arts resource centre for Harrow and surround regions is not mentioned in the report by the Corporate Director of Community, Health and Wellbeing, the Library Closure Equalities Assessment or the Libraries Strategy all in the papers for your consideration tonight.

The Hatch End Library should be part of a future Centre of Excellence for the written, visual and performing arts. Is it not

therefore inadvisable to now close the Hatch End Library endangering the planned Arts Centre cost savings?"

3.

Questioner: Nana Asante

Asked of: Councillor Sue Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Resident Engagement

Question: "The Library Campaigners speak very highly of your willingness to engage and listen. Will you now go the extra mile and show good faith in the Community by giving the Community a real opportunity of using Community Right to Bid by not accepting the recommendations to terminate leases and dispose of assets until the Community Options proposed in the Bob Lawrence Library Proposal have been fully explored?"

4.

Questioner: Mr J Welby

Asked of: Councillor Keith Ferry, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business, Planning and Regeneration

Question: "Can Bob Lawrence Library be saved? I have recently been told that I would receive figures from the Council. I have still not been provided with up to date accurate figures as told in a recent letter.

As Gayton Road Library will be vacated to the library on the Old Post Office site fund would be available to cover the running cost costs for proposed library closures for at least one year. The sole value of Gayton Road Library would be in excess of £1.5 million pounds. Also the costs for the new library would be covered by the development."