

CABINET – 20 JANUARY 2016

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: Jonathan Hutchins

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

Question: “This is a very positive plan proposed for Harrow Arts Centre; which if successful could to meet many of cultural, educational and social needs of the people of North-West London now and for far in the future.

If it does succeed it would make the centre, independently self-financing, and no longer a drain on the public purse.

However, the plan calls for the authorising of a large initial loan of up to £1million and therefore requires very industrious fundraising, immediately, to be able to repay the considerable interest on that initial loan. Perhaps as early as July 2016 the fundraising targets will have to have been met; *before the Council agrees to continue.*

Would not a generous initial grant from the Council show that the Council is more fully committed to this enterprise and thus ensure the necessary public backing to secure a lasting successful future for Harrow Arts Centre?”

2.

Questioner: Raksha Pandya, Mind in Harrow

Asked of: Councillor Sachin Shah, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Major Contracts

Question: “You have presented a balanced budget for 2016/2017 and the next 3 years without further cuts proposed to the voluntary sector budget, which we welcome. As the Adults and Outcome-Based Grants voluntary sector budget is not in the savings plan, are we correct in our understanding that this budget will not be cut in the next 3 years and as I understand that Harrow Council is undertaking a review of the voluntary sector funding at this time, can you explain what this will mean for mental health, which is a

Harrow Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016-20 current top priority?"

3.

Questioner: Jaqueline Hooper

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Equality and Wellbeing

Question: "In the Council's savings plan for the next 3 years presented at 10 December 2015 Cabinet meeting, there are cuts proposed 2016-17 to the entire Exercise on Referral and Health Trainers Services under consultation, which Mind in Harrow promotes to support the mental health and wellbeing of our service users. Mental Health promotion across all Council commissioned and delivered services and departments is a Harrow Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016-20 current top priority. We cannot see any link between this Strategy and the Council's 3 year budget in relation to mental health. Despite the Council's financial challenges, the Administration can still make choices.

Why have you chosen to propose to cut the entire Exercise on Referral and Health Trainers Services costing £76K, a tiny fraction of £9M Public Health budget in the first year of the three year budget plan, and should you not be aiming to avoid cutting this frontline service while proposing to continue the vast majority of the budget spend on public health consultants and internal staffing?"