

CABINET – 8 DECEMBER 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: Simon Braidman

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: “The users of Warren Lane Car Park would like to see more vigorous joint police and council action against anti-social behaviour including prostitution as has been done in the past against the illegal raves that took place on Stanmore Common Local Nature Reserve a few years ago. What progress has been made on this issue?”

2.

Questioner: Nigel Long, HAD CEO

Asked of: Councillor Sachin Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Devolution

Question: Disabled people and Council cuts proposals

“Given that disabled people have felt the brunt of Government austerity cuts since 2010. Can the Council Leader please explain how cutting £76,000 from the HAD budget and pushing up the service charge levied by the Council on its restaurant training facility for disabled people to £40,000 per year will help disabled people and tackle poverty and inequality in Harrow?”

3.

Questioner: Adam Gabsi

Asked of: Councillor Adam Swersky, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Commercialisation

Question: HAD Welfare Benefits service

“Is the Cabinet aware of the high standing of the HAD Welfare Benefits service and that fact that it helped 1200 people in 2015-16 bringing in £1.1 million to some of the poorest and most vulnerable residents of Harrow and can the Cabinet member for Finance and Commercialism explain how cutting this service will

benefit some of the most vulnerable residents of Harrow?”

4.

Questioner: Bill Phillips, HAD Chairperson

Asked of: Councillor Sachin Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Devolution

Question: The need for radical change

“Does the Council Leader agree that the review of the Voluntary and Community Sector was a lost opportunity and that radical options for protecting the boroughs disabled and vulnerable residents need to be adopted, fundamentally changing how the Council operates and will he support a broader more radical independent review?”

5.

Questioner: Kanti B Patel

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: “I refer to my question to the October 2016 Cabinet meeting about the condition of trees in Harrow Weald Recreation Ground. These were subsequently trimmed a month ago. However, I am not happy with the work done as tree branches have been left on my roof and the work has not been finished properly. I have tried to contact the Portfolio Holder. When will the work be completed properly?”

6.

Questioner: Benjamin Mire

Asked of: Councillor Sachin Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Devolution

Question: “Is the Leader and Chief Executive aware that Council Officers are not keeping records or notes of policy decision making?”

7.

Questioner: Simone Ann Mire

Asked of: Councillor Sachin Shah, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Devolution

Question: Will the Leader and Chief Executive undertake to investigate the facts surrounding the lack of records disclosed in the case of Freedom of Information Request 2779096?

8.

Questioner: Cheryl Gould

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

Question: “As a long established professional Artist, teacher and user of the Harrow Arts Centre, I and many others applaud *Cultura London’s* vision to enable and ensure the Arts Centre not only remains open but is enhanced as a 'Community Asset' for cultural activities aimed at all sections of the community.
It is especially important at this time to encourage the rich sources of cultural and creative activity within the Borough in view of increased housing.

Whilst we can see from your report that the Council have assisted *Cultura London* with much needed capital funding, this comes after years of neglect by the Council. There seems at present to be little recognition of the benefits that this cultural regeneration will bring to the people of Harrow, economically and socially.

In fact the mere suggestion of a break clause in the lease calls into question a long term commitment by the Council.

Will Harrow Council publicly state that they share the vision as set down by *Cultura London*, and will not at the first opportunity enforce a break in the lease to allow for housing development on the Harrow Arts Centre site?”

9.

Questioner: Jonathan Morris

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: “We are an estate of 48 maisonettes in Stanmore using shared domestic type waste facilities where for the last 3 or 4 years we have experienced continued and regular missed waste collections of both general and recycled waste. We have had meetings with the waste team and several emails have been exchanged to try to redress our concerns but with little effect. The waste team refuse to agree to any of our sensible proposals and more often than not fail to even respond to our emails. The Harrow missed collection web platform is also erratic and often does not reflect the correct information.

Can the Council please advise why the residents of our estate have to continually put up with such a poor service and why operatives within the waste team regularly fail to respond to our

emails and genuine concerns?"

10.

Questioner: Anne Gerrard, Friends of HAC

Asked of: Councillor Sue Anderson, Portfolio Holder for Community, Culture and Resident Engagement
Councillor Keith Ferry, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Business Planning and Regeneration

Question: "There was a statement in September 2016 in the press that negotiations between Culturalondon and the Council, reference future running and funding of Harrow Arts Centre had stalled. This has caused great uncertainty for the large numbers of users and supporters of Harrow Arts Centre.

Can you confirm after the recent hiatus, that both parties are now in a position to move forward and secure the future of Harrow Arts Centre with the required funding and lease agreements?"

11.

Questioner: Rob Sale

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

Question: "As someone who gave up smoking 20 years ago but struggled probably needlessly on my own for many years before, I am really concerned at this proposal in the budget. I fully understand the crisis faced by our Councillors who are not responsible for the 'I Daniel Blake' scenarios faced by increasing numbers in our community but that must not prevent us speaking up.

I was amazed when I saw the lack of information in the consultation documents about the service and its impact. Apart from a factual summary of what of what the service does (impressive in itself) the document is silent on the cost effectiveness of the project.

A quick survey on line on ASH and NICE websites makes this omission even more staggering. Smoking Cessation Services are recognised by NICE as one of the most cost effective health interventions.

A look at the ASH website 'toolkit' shows that the cost to society in Harrow of smoking is £40.2m. On that basis alone the case for cutting collapses, and yet the Consultation documents as published are silent on these matters.

The Harrow Service is one of only three in London that has been

accredited by the National Centre for Smoking Cessation

Please give details of the risk assessment, Equalities Impact Assessment, etc., carried out, including all documents considered in these processes when making the decision that this service, benefiting some of the most vulnerable groups in Harrow, could be cut? And the amount saved is 33,000 less than what the Council proposes to spend on new litter bins, a no brainer I would have thought!"