

CABINET – 14 SEPTEMBER 2017

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: Dara Foody

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

Question: “The proposed Community Safety Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy states that, “prevention and early intervention is better than cure”. Why is it then that no overarching strategy for preventing gang crime is referred to in a strategy which, if approved by council, will become your administration's official policy for creating a safer Harrow?”

2.

Questioner: Pranvera Merkaj, Member of Harrow Youth Parliament

Asked of: Councillor Christine Robson, Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools

Question: “In order to reduce the levels of youth violence in Wealdstone, vulnerable young people who are on the periphery of crime must be provided with effective early intervention which helps to develop them as a person, a process which is effectively achieved through one to one mentoring. Can you identify what provisions have been made to deliver this mentoring programme at the Wealdstone Youth Centre in the Youth Offer and by extension the proposed Community Safety Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy?”

3.

Questioner: Matthew Goodwin-Freeman

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

Question: “How can the proposed Community Safety Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy effectively monitor efforts to reduce gang crime when it does not include a commitment to officially publish a report - or indeed conduct a review - which

scrutinises the measures taken to tackle gang crime, something which would allow the strategy to be amended to address any deficiencies?"

4.

Questioner: Nathan James Griffith

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

Question: "The proposed Community Safety Violence Vulnerability and Exploitation Strategy states that the Community Safety Team is "responsible for dealing with matters of Anti Social Behaviour arising in the borough" and therefore tackling that type of crime.

On what basis do they believe they can do this when their aims (as listed in the proposed strategy) do not include any focus on preventing these offences from occurring in the first place?"

5.

Questioner: Paul Ruck, Whitchurch Gardens Management Company Limited

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

Question: My question relates to 3 planning applications on the same property;

Application P/0341/16 submitted 10th February 2016 (refused 22nd March 2016)

Application P/4470/16 submitted 7th October 2016 (granted 30 November 2016)

Application P/1104/17 submitted 3rd April 2017 (refused 9th May 2017)

The subject property sits between 100 Whitchurch Gardens and Queens Mead the entrance to a small private roadway, which previously was 104 Whitchurch Gardens.

My question is;

"Why on all 3 occasions regarding these planning applications were none of the immediate neighbours written to, to advise them that a planning application had been received? - Some time after the first application had been made, we heard about it and complained bitterly that we knew nothing about it – we even attended the council offices to complain – no action was taken. When the 2nd and third applications were submitted, yet again we knew nothing about them until after the deadline to raise objections. To our amazement the development was to change

from a single storey bungalow to a 4 storey house with basement and roof space accommodation – about a 350% increase in space and totally out of character with the rest of the street. On at least 5 occasions we asked for a meeting to ask why and how, but we were totally ignored. Alarm bells should have rung after the first application and subsequent meeting. The planning department and all those associated with it, have just ignored council tax paying residents ... We do find it quite astonishing that we, who own the adjacent land, have been kept in the dark about applications received by the council, even after telling staff at the planning department.”

6.

Questioner: Samy Benaferi, Harrow Youth Parliament

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

Question: “Studies highlight that victim empathy and comprehensive awareness courses are effective in changing young people's mindsets and thus deterring them from becoming involved in crime. Therefore, in order to prevent young people in schools from becoming involved in anti social behaviour, isn't it only sensible that the proposed community safety violence vulnerability and exploitation strategy should include a commitment to engage young people on the periphery of crime in a long term awareness course on the effects of anti social behaviour, including meeting with victims of anti social behaviour?”

7.

Questioner: Radhey Patel, Harrow Youth Parliament Team

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

Question: “Several young people in the Wealdstone area have reported feeling unsafe and threatened due to increasing levels of youth violence and knife crime. A key way to prevent this (one of the major aims of the proposed community safety violence vulnerability and exploitation strategy) is to enhance vulnerable young people's prospects and in the process create opportunities for them. How can the strategy seriously hope to achieve this aim when sessions such as hair braiding and dance which taught key employability skills are now no longer delivered at the Wealdstone Youth Centre, a result of your service redesign?”

8.

Questioner: Ria Karia

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

Question: "The Problem Profile seeks to establish an "in depth understanding of the causes of gang membership", something which would be effectively achieved by speaking to young people at risk of participating in crime especially in wards where it is a prevalent issue. However how can this profile possibly give a comprehensive insight into this when it makes no plans to hold such consultations?"

9.

Questioner: J Welby

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Question: "In the Harrow Times there were advertisements for the resurfacing of Camrose Avenue from Tavistock Road to Burnt Oak Broadway in 3 sections 2 daytime 1 night time. The work was to be completed by 2nd September. After the 2nd of September I inspected the road surfaces as per the Advertisements in the Harrow Times and the work was not carried out. The only difference to the surfaces was cycle signs in the road. The yellow lines by the kerbs were no different than before the resurfacing took place.

How much money was saved by not resurfacing the road although sums of money was spent on Advertising. The Hive was sold for £2 million and only £50,000 would be needed to resurface the Road. When will this work be done."