

LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

COUNCIL MEETING -

30 NOVEMBER 2017

QUESTION WITH NOTICE

A period of up to 15 minutes is allowed for the asking of written questions by Members of Council or a Member of the Executive or the Chair of any Committee.

Questioner: Councillor Paul Osborn

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

Question 9:

“Please could you give an update on the *“Our Village Garden Triangle”* Crowdfund project in Rayners Lane which the Council pledged a total of £47,000 to?”

Answer:

Thank you for asking about this innovative project which has had over 50 backers and raised over £70,000 for improvements to the Rayners Lane area. There aren't many investments that the Council makes where for every £1 we put in, there is an additional 50% contribution from other sources, and as we have now received all the external funding committed to the project, we are progressing well.

We held a meeting on the 30th October with the Rayners Lane Community at which the designs were presented, discussed and agreed. The project was well received and has since incorporated further comments from the community.

The latest meeting on the project was held on 29th November with members of the design team and the design is currently being fully costed so that we ensure it comes within the budget envelope, before we start the build of the scheme. We have also submitted a planning application for the kiosk, the design of which was based on consultation with Young Harrow Foundation and local voluntary sector organisations working in Harrow, who will be the primary users of it. Young Harrow Foundation have also said that they will

take the lease of the kiosk for 5 years and will use it along with their other partners to support their activities with young people, which is another clear and positive benefit of the scheme for the local community.

The scheme is programmed to be completed by the end of March 2018.

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Glen Hearnden, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Employment

Question 10:

“Are you satisfied with this administration’s management of the Housing Revenue Account?”

Answer:

Yes, I am completely satisfied with the administration’s management of the HRA. I will be reporting to Cabinet on 7 December 2017 the Council’s draft budget proposals for the HRA along with the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to 2020-21. The report will set out the indicative income and expenditure for the HRA for this period and show how the income collected will be spent on the management and maintenance of the Council’s stock and in meeting its landlord obligations.

The budget and MTFS have been set within the framework set out in the HRA Business Plan update approved by Cabinet on 16 November 2017. Statutory rent reductions have removed any discretion the Council had in respect of rent setting and the Housing Department has therefore had to implement a systematic review of all HRA services with the aim of reducing costs and maximising income. In order to maintain a safe level of reserves revenue savings assumed in the Business Plan are now £1.90m, an increase of £750k over the £1.15m approved by Council in setting the 2017-18 budget and MTFS, and investment in HRA stock has been reduced to £5.45m, a reduction of £3.15m from £8.6m per annum. The report will seek authority from Cabinet to consult on the draft HRA Budget for 2018-19 (including the level of rents and charges) and MTFS for 2019-20 to 2020-21.