

CABINET

THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2013

**PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR
QUESTIONS ACCEPTED**

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CABINET – 17 OCTOBER 2013

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 5)

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: Raksha Pandya, Mind in Harrow

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: We want to ask about the developments at the Bridge Mental Health Day Centre, what is being done by Rethink Mental Illness, the new provider, to address the concerns raised by Mental Health Service Users, such as lack of staffing, particularly for 1:1 support, the sudden loss of personal budget funded groups, the lack publicity for the service particularly for people who lost their service at Marlborough Hill and marginalised groups such as BMER communities?

2.

Questioner: Manisha Ahya

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: For the Council commissioned Transforming Mental Health Personalisation contract being delivered by NDTI, how may Mental Health Service Users have been involved to feedback their experiences of mental health personal budgets in Harrow and how many organisations in relation to their contracted target?

3.

Questioner: Carol Martin

Asked of: Councillor Tony Ferrari, Portfolio Holder for Finance

Question: In the Harrow Observer dated 10th October you stated that the last Conservative administration had rejected the idea of not locking the parks in Harrow because of the impact it could have on residents who live nearby and enjoy using them. You went on to say that the Conservative Group will ensure parks are kept locked for as long as the Conservative Group are in control of the Council.

The Council Leader, Councillor Susan Hall, has stated that the Conservative priorities will be to make Harrow cleaner, safer and fairer.

In order to ensure fairness across the whole of Harrow, will Cllr Ferrari please advise when the gates on the parks in Roxbourne, which were removed under a previous conservative administration, will be reinstated and when they will be locked?

4.

Questioner: Adolphus Pais

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: The previous administration proposed the development of Whitchurch Playing Fields which was flawed in so many aspects and was opposed by the majority of residents in the area and by all the Councillors of Belmont Ward and good many other Councillors of the current administration. Now that there has been a change of administration and the current administration is not compelled to pursue the flawed development for which there is no support among the residents, why does the current administration not withdraw the Council's objection to the Village Green Application and register this land as a Village Green notwithstanding the outcome of the enquiry?

AGENDA PART I

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS (ITEM 6)

Fifteen minutes will be allowed for Members of the Council to ask a Portfolio Holder a question on any matter in relation to which the Executive has powers or duties.

1.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Stephen Wright, Portfolio Holder for Property and Major Contracts

Question: "Please clarify your Group's position with respect to Whitchurch Playing Fields."

2.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Stephen Greek, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Regeneration

Question: "Now that the Council have exchanged contract on Anmer Lodger, could you explain your administration's position with respect to Anmer Lodge?"

3.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Stephen Greek, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development and Regeneration

Question: "Could you please state your administration's plans for the old Gayton Road Library site?"

4.

Questioner: Councillor Nizam Ismail

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: "Independent Labour Group administration pledged to work on building additional 1000 new houses – over and above what was

in the Local Development Framework and already agreed by the Council/Cabinet - to boost the Harrow's housing stock which needs an urgent investment. What and how will your administration undertake to push forward our administration's idea to build further additional new houses in Harrow, over and above what is already in the pipeline already?"

5.

Questioner: Councillor Krishna James

Asked of: Councillor Susan Hall, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment

Question: "You were quoted in the Harrow Observer on 19 September, stating that "we must look after the disabled in the borough" – how does your administration intend to put this idea into practice, and have you got any timeframe for your ideas?"

6.

Questioner: Councillor Asad Omar

Asked of: Councillor Susan Hall, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment

Question: "What is your new idea to reinvigorate the Neighbourhood Champions Scheme?"

7.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Susan Hall, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment

Question: "When Councillor Thaya Idaikkadar was the Leader, he gave clear instructions to the Corporate Director for Finance, which he can confirm, **to commence** budget preparation process with a view to achieving zero or 0.5% reduction in the Council Tax for the next financial year. Given that you have also indicated this to the press, re-confirming the Independent Labour Group's instructions to the officers, to either work on the basis to freeze or decrease the Council Tax for next year, can you please confirm whether you will now be freezing or decreasing the Council Tax next year?"

8.

Questioner: Councillor Margaret Davine

Asked of: Councillor Susan Hall, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Environment

Question: “Do you fully support the Cabinet Member for Adults and Housing, Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, who recently publicly stated that he was supportive of the Housing compensation scheme whereby tenants will be offered £38,000 to move out of the Borough?”

9.

Questioner: Councillor Sachin Shah

Asked of: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing

Question: “The Council is facing significant financial challenges to its budget with the Council having to find £75 million so far and recent announcements that further savings of £60 million will need to be made over the next few years.

Sir Merrick Cockell, Chair of the Local Government Association, has stated that: A shortage of funding and increasing demand is making it impossible to maintain adult social care services at current levels let alone trying to raise standards.

The new Leader of the Council recently announced that she will increase spending within Public Realm by £500,000 to clean up the streets, which most notably comes at a time when many local people are struggling to provide for their families and having to rely on food banks.

In the forthcoming debates around setting the Council’s future budget to cover this massive half a million pound black hole in council finances what are your plans as the Portfolio Holder for ensuring that the Council meets the needs for the vulnerable and destitute people in Harrow to prevent their needs from becoming critical?”

10.

Questioner: Councillor Bill Phillips

Asked of: Councillor Janet Mote, Portfolio Holder for Children and Schools

Question: “The Council is facing significant financial challenges to its budget with the Council having to find £75 million so far and

recent announcements that further savings of £60 million will need to be made over the next few years.

In the forthcoming debates around setting the Council's future budget to cover the massive half a million pound black hole in Council finances caused by the new Leader of the Council coupled with the policies of the coalition government who have shifted the burden from them to local government without resourcing them to provide. As the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, what are your plans to manage cuts in areas where inspection regimes are being tightened and demands on services being increased?"

11.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Paul Osborn, Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources

Question: "How much has the Council spent on Legal Advice this financial year, in particular, how much was spent overall on legal related work pertaining to the meeting of 16 September and was all the advice obtained from Bevan Brittan?"

12.

Questioner: Councillor William Stoodley

Asked of: Councillor Paul Osborn, Portfolio Holder for Communications, Performance and Resources

Question: "How much work has Bevan Brittan received from this Council over past five years and do you not think this takes away any 'independence' they may have when they give advice?"