

CABINET

THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2015

**PUBLIC AND COUNCILLOR
QUESTIONS ACCEPTED**

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CABINET – 19 FEBRUARY 2015

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: Edward Fuller

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

Question: “The West Drive Conservation Area Appraisal document before you tonight states in paragraph 1.3 that a CA is defined as "an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" and also that LA's should "pay due regard to the views of the residents and public in the formulation of guidance and proposals". If the proposed consultation reveals overwhelming support for the retention of West Drive, West Drive Gardens and Bellfield Avenue in the West Drive Conservation Area, will you pay due regard to the views of the residents and support the retention?”

2.

Questioner: Gerry Davine

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: “Given that Harrow's cemeteries were not mentioned in the Take Part consultation on Environment savings options, residents must assume that they will continue to be locked. If so, why cannot the locking arrangements be extended to include certain key parks such as Harrow Recreation Ground?”

3.

Questioner: Mrs Jane Galbraith (Harrow Recreation Ground Steering Group)

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety
and
Councillor Sachin Shah, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Major Contracts.

Question: "Park users and local residents are worried by the proposal to stop locking park gates at night and particularly by the threat of the cars being able to drive in and out at night.

This is a false economy as it is likely to lead to increased anti-social and criminal behaviour such as vandalism, noise, prostitution, drug and alcohol use, drug dealing, and burglary. The Bowls Club and St Mary's Sports Club as well as residents whose gardens back onto the park will be at risk of having larger items stolen due to the ease of taking them away. In 2013 the Council wisely decided to continue to lock park gates. The petition presented on 12th September 2013 with 1180 signatures should still be respected.

If, in spite of this, the Council does decide to cease locking park gates including the Harrow Recreation Ground car park gate at night will you guarantee to undertake a thorough review after six months taking into account costs to residents and the police, as well as to the Council?"

4.

Questioner: James Keeler

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

Question: "Can I thank Cllr Anderson for her article in the latest edition of HADs Access magazine.

However, can she set out the Cabinet's vision for the voluntary sector in Harrow and in particular the vision for all disabled people, services and organisations?"

5.

Questioner: Nigel Long (Director, Harrow Association of Disabled People (HAD))

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

Question: “Can Cllr Shah please set out the Cabinet’s strategy for the long term funding of the voluntary sector in Harrow and in particular for all disabled people, services and organisations and does he share my view that it has been really frustrating for the voluntary sector to not know the proposed funding for each individual organisation?”

6.

Questioner: Jacqueline Hooper

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: “You are disproportionately cutting services for vulnerable people in the voluntary sector, yet you are awarding yourselves a 2.2% increase in your member allowances, can you explain how you think this is fair?”

7.

Questioner: Raksha Pandya (Mind in Harrow)

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: “If you are satisfied with your Take Part consultations, why have you proposed to increase your budget for litigation to £2,6 million this year?”

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CABINET - 19 FEBRUARY 2015

AGENDA PART I

COUNCILLOR QUESTIONS (ITEM 5)

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 Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: "The Budget includes an assumption that 40% of households will take up the £75 brown bin charge. Can you clarify how you reached that figure?"

2.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: "Are you happy with the standard of the consultations you conducted regarding the proposed Budget cuts to Environment services?"

3.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: "Against the backdrop of thousands of residents signing petitions protesting your administration's plans to close libraries in Edgware, Hatch End, North Harrow and Rayners Lane, as well as children's centres and Harrow Arts Centre, are you satisfied that the recreation of the Chief Executive role, which we axed to save money, represents good value for money and is the right way forward for Harrow?"

4.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: "How was the Chief Executive's starting salary agreed?"

5.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question: "Your consultation on the Budget's proposed cuts to voluntary sector funding stated that "analysis" has been conducted which showed a "number of organisations deliver the same or similar services for the same or similar demographics", and also asked respondents to detail any service "overlap" they were aware of. Could you provide me with this aforementioned analysis in full, as well as any supporting documentation or statistical data which evidences said overlap?"

6.

Questioner: Councillor James Bond

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: "Has your department appointed a project leader/manager for the planned charge you intend to implement for organic waste collections?"

7.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: "What performance targets are contained in the Chief Executive's contract, and how will they be monitored, particularly during his probationary period?"

8.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question: “Can you clarify why the trade union facilities time reduction saving has been deleted from the Budget?”

9.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: “The business case I have seen for the brown bin changes suggests three methods are being considered for collecting of the separate food caddies. When will a decision on this be made, and how is it that these seemingly very different ways of collecting the caddies can have the same cost implications?”

10.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Crime and Community Safety

Question: Are you confident that the brown bin savings will be achieved?

11.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question: “What contingency provisions – both financial and otherwise – are being made to help support the many voluntary organisations affected by the sizeable reduction in their funding?”

12.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question: Can you clarify what is happening to the community festivals funding, as paragraph 1.20 states there is a £10,000 reduction in the total budget from £40,000 to £30,000 – but the MTFs tables suggest a £30,000 reduction to a total budget of £10,000?

13.

Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question: “Would you agree with me that Harrow’s voluntary sector do fantastic work supporting some of our most vulnerable residents?”

14.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: “The recent re-hiring of Harrow Council’s former Chief Executive lends credibility to the public’s perception that a “revolving door” exists when it comes to the council’s senior managers; what steps are you taking to dispel such a view?”

15.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor David Perry, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships and Corporate Leadership

Question: “Do you agree with Oxfordshire County Council’s assessment that “the days of a traditional management hierarchy have gone”?”

16.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question: “Could you provide a by-quarter breakdown of how many residents have been helped financially by the Welfare Reform Contingency since its inception?”

17.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question: “Could you clarify the reasoning behind your proposals to change the Members’ Allowances Scheme?”

18.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question: “Are you satisfied with the inflation predictions in the Budget, given inflation rates are currently at the lowest on record?”

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