

Council

Thursday 24 September 2015

INDEX OF TABLED DOCUMENTS/INFORMATION

Item on Summons	Document/Subject	Document Pages
21.	QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE There are fourteen Councillor questions attached	3 - 16
22.	MOTIONS There are two amendments from the Conservative Group and an Urgent Motion, together with reasons for urgency, from the Labour Group attached	17 - 24

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LONDON BOROUGH OF HARROW

COUNCIL MEETING -

24 SEPTEMBER 2015

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 Chairman of any Committee.

Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Glen Hearnden (Portfolio Holder for Housing)

Question 1:

“How many in-fill developments has the Council built in Harrow in the last year?”

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COUNCIL MEETING -

24 SEPTEMBER 2015

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Glen Hearnden (Portfolio Holder for Housing)

Question 2:

“What are you doing to inform Council tenants about the opportunities for home ownership and their qualification for Right to Buy?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Glen Hearnden (Portfolio Holder for Housing)

Question 3:

“How many families has the Council re-housed outside the borough in the last year?”

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24 SEPTEMBER 2015

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Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question 4:

“ Have any estimates for the in-year replacement of damaged food waste bins been included in the business case for the separate collection system?”

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Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Simon Brown (Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People)

Question 5:

“Can you outline how the Youth Justice Plan will work alongside the Domestic Violence Strategy, given the recognised links between the two areas of crime?”

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Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

Asked of: Councillor Kiran Ramchandani (Portfolio Holder for Performance, Corporate Resources and Policy Development)

Question 6:

“Following the recent report on consultation standards which went to Cabinet, in which areas do you think the Council can improve when it comes to consultations?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question 7:

“What provisions are the Council making for the expected reduction in the benefit cap to £23,000 from next April?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question 8:

“What is the Council doing to promote public awareness of the expected benefit cap reduction from £26,000 to £23,000 from next April?”

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Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question 9:

“The literature on the changes to garden and food waste collections mentions ‘flexible collection options’, and you provided some information on these at Cabinet. Could you provide more detail on which options will be available to residents, and how these will be communicated?”

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Questioner: Councillor Susan Hall

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

Question 10:

“Could you also confirm whether these flexible collection options were taken into account in the business case and, if so, what impact any take-up of these options could have on savings projections?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

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

Question 11:

“Do you think that the proposed 51 College Road development qualifies as an example of “world class” architecture?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Simon Brown (Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People)

Question 12:

“Could you give an explanation for the various delays and slippages reported in the School Expansion Programme, according to the latest Capital monitoring information?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Simon Brown (Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People)

Question 13:

“What provision has the Council made to accommodate pupils in the event of delays and slippages causing construction work to run over the start of the next school year?”

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Questioner: Councillor Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Asked of: Councillor Simon Brown (Portfolio Holder for Children, Schools and Young People)

Question 14:

“Can you confirm that no pupil will be accommodated in temporary classrooms as a result of these delays and slippages?”

Council notes that:

· In George Osborne's emergency Budget, £12bn of cuts to the UK's vital safety net for people who have hit on hard times were laid out, with a further £19bn to be cut from non-protected government departments, including the Department for Communities & Local Government, which- was necessary to deal with the economic mess left by the last Labour Government.

· In the budget, many of the welfare cuts will-may detrimentally affect Harrow's residents, including:

- 18 – 21 year olds in Harrow will no longer be automatically eligible for housing benefit.

- Employment & Support Allowance, which helps people with severe medical conditions will be cut (i.e. Working age benefits will be cut in real terms each and every year for four years).

- Cutting the benefit cap to below the level needed by a family with two children living in the private rented sector. Tax credit, housing benefit and universal credit will be limited to two children from April 2017.

—A new national 'living wage' to be introduced for over 25s, which is set almost £2 an hour lower than the London living wage set by Boris Johnson.

- In Harrow, -the number of residents claiming Job Seekers' Allowance has more than halved between July 2012 and July 2015; from 4,080 to 2,030, and that our unemployment rate has fallen by a third since 2010.

Council believes that:

· Making 18 – 21 year olds exempt from housing benefit will be a further hit to a generation of young people both in Harrow and across the UK who are struggling to get on the housing ladder but will encourage employers to give jobs to 18-21 year olds.-

· The cut to Employment & Support Allowance is unjustified and will penalise people with disabilities through no fault of their own; people with severe medical conditions may no longer be able to afford to eat or heat their homes, leading to their condition deteriorating.

· The effects of these cuts will push more and more people in to severe poverty, rent arrears and homelessness.work

· Setting the benefit cap at £23,000 will force families out of Harrow and London, forcing children to move schools and putting more pressure on families help ensure that work pays.

· Limiting certain benefits to families with a maximum of two children has put families in a terrible place by making no allowance for women who have become pregnant with a third child after being a victim of a traumatic sexual crime.

· The new national 'living wage' is solely a massive increase to the minimum wage, significantly above anything Labour pledged in their recent Election Manifesto, and-but does falls below the actual living wage, which in London is-was set Boris Johnson at £9.15.-

Council resolves that:

- The Council will monitor the impacts of these welfare cuts on our residents.

• The Council is committed to supporting the most vulnerable, and ~~is prohibited in doing this within the financial constraints placed on it by the Conservative Government~~ therefore pledges to scrap Sachin Shah's Council Tax Support scheme, which has been heavily criticised in two independent reports from the Child Poverty Action Group and Zacchaeus 2K, and adopt all the recommendations of the cross-party Scrutiny review into the CTS scheme. Harrow's scheme has been described as 'the harshest in the country' and forces Harrow residents in receipt of council tax benefit to pay, on average, £300 more than if they lived elsewhere in London. Harrow's scheme also has the most severe taper rate – making it a disincentive to work, with those who attempt to work (often in low-paid jobs) effectively taxed at 97p in the pound.

• The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive jointly writes to Harrow's three MPs and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to express our concern about these changes on Harrow's residents.

• The Council, having set an example by modifying its own Council Tax Support Scheme, will lobby national government to reverse some cuts if they are found to impoverish or have a significant and damaging impact on the lives of our residents.

Proposed by Cllr. Paul Osborn
Seconded by Cllr. Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Amendment for Motion (2) – National City Park

Council notes that:

- There is a campaign by the Greater London National Park City to make London the world's first National Park City.
- The proposed organisation would bring together public, private and third sector organisations to enhance our natural and cultural heritage, encourage a better understanding and enjoyment of the city, foster wellbeing and inspire others to share these purposes.
- Air pollution in London is a real problem and is linked to 1 in 12 deaths in London; taking measures to improve London's green spaces and parks will help reduce levels of air pollution, and be of benefit to all our residents health & well-being.
- Living in a green city with easy access to local parks, nature and wildlife improves the well-being of local residents.
- The London Assembly have passed a motion approving the plans to turn London into a National Park City.
- ~~That under the guidance of the Labour administration,~~ the Council has set a target to be the best Borough in London for recycling, as a part of its campaign to make the Borough cleaner and more green.
- The Borough of Harrow has over 100,000 trees, with a third of the Borough categorised as green space – including five parks that have been awarded green flag status.
- Good quality green spaces are an essential component of the urban fabric of Harrow and, with over 1,300 hectares of open space within the borough, this make a profound contribution to the quality of life of local communities.
- The Council has set up Park User Group Forums to allow local people to have a greater say in how their parks are maintained, and to encourage community use of our parks.
- The Council has a fully developed open spaces strategy to preserve our parks and green spaces.

Council believes that:

~~That the £83m of cuts imposed by the Conservative Government on Harrow Council and our residents, has put severe pressure on our ability to maintain our parks and open spaces to the highest possible standard.~~

- As a Council we should work with all organisations to improve our parks and green spaces, as well as reduce air pollution and help support our residents to access and enjoy our many parks.
- We should welcome and fully support the excellent campaign to make London the world's first National Park City.
- The Greater London National Park City initiative would bring together public, private and third sector organisations to enhance our natural and cultural heritage, encourage a better understanding and enjoyment of the city, foster wellbeing and inspire others to share these purposes.

Council resolves that:

- The Portfolio Holder for Business, Planning & Regeneration should meet with Greater London National Park City to explore how the plans to make a London a National Park City can fit in with the ~~Labour~~ administration's ~~ambitious~~ regeneration plans for the Borough.

- All Harrow Councillors should sign to declare their Wards support on the http://www.nationalparkcity.london/ward_support website.

- The Council should support the organisation in developing its vision, in particular by setting out how Harrow Council and its local partners could contribute towards its aims.

Proposed by Cllr. Susan Hall

Seconded by Cllr. Barry Macleod-Cullinane

Hugh Peart
Monitoring Officer – Harrow Council



Cllr Graham Henson
Roxbourne Ward
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- *Delivered by Hand*

Thursday 24th September

Dear Hugh

RE: Reasons for moving Urgent Motion

I am writing to you to provide the reasons for moving the 'urgent Motion to Stop the Mayor of London putting our residents at risk' that the Labour Group has tabled today ahead of the meeting of Full Council.

On the 29th September the Metropolitan Police's Management Board will consider proposals to scrap neighbourhood PCSOs altogether, resulting in a loss of over 1,000 officers if approved. The reason for raising this urgent motion is to put pressure on the Metropolitan Police to not make these cuts, therefore the motion has to be tabled at the Full Council meeting, before the decision has been made.

The reason that this motion has to be tabled as urgent is that the full details of what will be discussed at the Metropolitan Police's Management Board have only come to light at the end of last week, after the deadline for submitting motions have passed.

This decision by the Metropolitan Police is also being undertaken without formal consultation or engagement with the communities of London; changes which will mean that the public's day to day access to policing services will be greatly reduced. An urgent motion is needed to ensure that there is at least some public debate on this important issue that is critical to the safety of our residents.

Given the seriousness of the cuts being proposed by the Metropolitan Police, the risk this poses to the safety of our residents, the lack of consultation so far, the limited time available since this proposal has been made public, and the fact that a decision on this important issue is imminent, I therefore ask that the Mayor accept this urgent motion to be tabled at the meeting of Full Council tonight.

Yours sincerely

Cllr Graham Henson
Roxbourne Ward

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Urgent Motion to Stop the Mayor of London putting our residents at risk

– To be tabled on the day of Full Council

This Council notes:

- Harrow is currently the safest Borough in London.
- Since May 2010, as a result of the Conservative Government cuts, London has lost 3,170 dedicated neighbourhood Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) – this is a cut of over 70%.
- In Harrow the number of PCSOs on our streets have been reduced from 114 in April 2010 to 28 in August 2015.
- As a result of the Government's Spending Review in 2010 the Metropolitan Police have faced cuts of almost £600m. This 20% cut to its budget has devastated the police service in the capital, despite promises from the Mayor of London and Home Secretary that the cuts would not affect police numbers.
- At the upcoming Government's Spending Review this November it is widely expected that the Metropolitan Police will face a minimum of another £800m in cuts, with reports that the budget could be cut by as much as 43%.
- The 'Safer Neighbourhood Team' (SNT) model introduced by the Labour Government was widely welcomed by communities and saw each ward allocated a dedicated team of six officers (1 Sergeant, 2 PCs and 3 PCSOs).
- In Harrow PCSOs are an invaluable part of making our communities and neighbourhoods safe.
- In Harrow fear of crime is a real concern amongst residents; cutting neighbourhood policing teams and PCSOs will reduce the presence of police on our streets and only add to the fear of crime locally.
- The introduction of Boris Johnson's Local Policing Model dismantled SNTs reducing them to just a single dedicated PC and PCSO per ward.
- On the 29th September the Metropolitan Police's Management Board will consider proposals to scrap neighbourhood PCSOs altogether, resulting in a loss of over 1,000 officers if approved.

This Council believes:

- That the introduction of neighbourhood policing teams transformed local policing, increased public confidence and provided an integral link between communities and the police.
- That whilst PCSOs have been informed of the Metropolitan Police's intention to make this decision there has been no meaningful consultation with Council's, the public or PCSOs about the impact of scrapping PCSOs.
- The Mayor is trying to force through measures that put our residents at risk, whilst hoping nobody realises; this lack of transparency shows that the Mayor of London is aware of how damaging these cuts will be to our communities.

- Scrapping neighbourhood PCSOs would be the final nail in the coffin for neighbourhood policing as SNTs would be reduced to just a single dedicated PC. This would make residents feel more unsafe in their neighbourhoods.

- A further cut of £800m to the Metropolitan Police would devastate local policing and make our communities and residents in Harrow less safe, whilst putting at risk all of the excellent work the Police, Harrow Council and community stakeholders have achieved in making Harrow a safe place to live and work.

This Council resolves:

- To write to the Home Secretary, the Mayor of London, the Mayor of London candidates, local MPs and Assembly member in opposition to further cuts to our Safer Neighbourhood teams and police numbers in Harrow.

- To condemn attempts to reshape London's police force by stealth and call on the Mayor and Metropolitan Police to set out the true impact of Government cuts and engage in a meaningful consultation with Londoners about the future of policing in the capital.

- To locally campaign to save our local police services to keep our residents safe.

Proposer: Cllr Graham Henson

Seconder: Cllr David Perry