



BROMLEY CIVIC CENTRE, STOCKWELL CLOSE, BROMLEY BRI 3UH

TELEPHONE: 020 8464 3333

CONTACT: Lynn Hill
lynn.hill@bromley.gov.uk

DIRECT LINE: 020 8461 7700

FAX: 020 8290 0608

DATE: 04 April 2012

COUNCIL

Meeting held on Monday 26 March 2012

Attached are the written and oral questions and answers from the above Council Meeting.

- 4 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 3 - 4)
- 6 QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS (Pages 5 - 20)

Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
www.bromley.gov.uk/meetings

This page is left intentionally blank

COUNCIL MEETING

26th MARCH 2012

ORAL QUESTION BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

From Mr Ron Condon a resident of Beckenham of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee

Does the Council consider that Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land and other designated spaces will receive adequate protection under the National Planning Policy Framework?"

Reply:

Councillor Dean responded that unfortunately with the National Planning Policy Framework not yet published, although it was expected tomorrow, the Council could not comment on the adequacy of any protection of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land or Urban Open Space under the document. However, the Council would hope that the Government had taken into account its comments and those of other authorities.

The Council in its response to the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in the early autumn, referred to "frustrations and disappointment about the detrimental impact on the Green Belt in Bromley, and many residents will feel betrayed if the balance is not corrected to enable local protection of the Green Belt to be guaranteed". In addition the Council stated that "bearing in mind the emphasis on ensuring economic growth in the NPPF it will be of concern that lesser weight could be given to local plans and considerations". The Council queried how clauses in the draft NPPF would work in designated open spaces such as Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Space and Urban Open Space with the functions they were afforded and whether they would override those protective policies, despite the existence of a Local Plan and the London Plan.

Supplementary Question:

Mr Condon referred to the recent approval to the building of 48 houses on Metropolitan Open Land in Beckenham to help finance a sports complex with conference and banking facilities, much of which were indoor facilities and the loss of up to 6 outdoor football pitches. He asked how consistent was that with the Council's own policy and how committed was Councillor Dean to supporting the Council's policy?

Reply:

The Chairman replied that the Council's policy in relation to Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land had not changed given the decision in the KCCC

proposal. The Council was committed to protecting Metropolitan Open Land and the Green Belt within the confines of Section G1. The application referred to was approved on the basis that there were very special circumstances for allowing that development to go ahead. This had also been supported by the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State who had decided not to call in this application. Therefore he felt that we were consistent with the policies of G1.

MEETING

26th MARCH 2012

ORAL QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Community Services

Why are Bromley residents allowed to register to go on the housing list in Sevenoaks but not in Bromley?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder advised that the current Sevenoaks allocations scheme was introduced in 2008 prior to the latest guidance on housing allocations. Whilst Sevenoaks operated an open allocation scheme preference for rehousing was given to those applicants with a proven local connection to the area. In addition the Scheme clearly stated that some specific properties would only be allocated to those with a local connection effectively excluding out of Borough applicants from certain properties and local lettings criteria. This meant that whilst applicants from other local authority areas such as Bromley might be able to register on the Sevenoaks list in reality they probably had very little chance of receiving an offer of accommodation essentially giving a false hope of rehousing.

Councillor Evans emphasised that the demand for social housing in Bromley far outstripped the supply and it was therefore essential to manage expectations by focussing on those applicants that had a realistic chance of receiving an offer of accommodation from the housing register rather than giving false hope by registering applicants who were unlikely to resolve their housing need through this route. This meant that for out of borough applicants we would only consider those with a very high level of housing need and proven necessity to live within the Borough. Applicants with lower levels of housing need or where there were alternative options to resolve their housing situation would be supported to pursue a range of housing options to resolve the difficulties they may be facing. The aim was to offer a more comprehensive service which better informed applicants of the options that may be available to them to offer a realistic and achievable resolution to their housing problem.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Fookes asked the Portfolio Holder to say how many people had been registered by the Council as a result of the 'cull' taken last year?

Reply:

Councillor Evans responded that before the new register was established there were 8000 households listed. This was an inordinate number given the current situation and many of those 8000 would realistically have no chance at all of being offered accommodation. One figure that had been quoted to the Portfolio Holder was that in terms of the wait for a three bedroom house for everyone on the list who wanted that size accommodation, and with no further additions to the register, it would take 25 years to get to the bottom of the list. Currently there were about 1700 applications that had now been made to the register some of which were still being processed because more information was required. Out of that 1700 625 had not been accepted. However there were now 654 in the top 3 bands with a realistic chance of being offered accommodation.

2. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

- i) What is the estimated frequency of repair and the cost of each repair where asphalt is used to patch a concrete road surface;
- ii) What is the estimated frequency of repair and the cost of each repair where concrete is used to patch a concrete road?

Reply:

The Executive Assistant explained that:

- i) Asphalt was not ordinarily used to patch a concrete road surface and therefore was not frequently carried out. Where there were multiple defects and whole carriageway widths needed to be done these would be surfaced in asphalt materials. An average cost of this would be estimated as £10 per square metre.
- ii) Ordinarily we would not carry out a concrete patch repair. If the road required a full depth reconstruction in concrete this was estimated at £45 per square metre.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Bennett said that he had not received an answer about the frequency as it was his experience that the frequency increased from looking at roads in his Ward (Surrey Road, Kent Road and Sussex Road) which were concrete and where asphalt was used to patch part of them. The frequency when this had to be done was fairly often because asphalt on concrete was not a good mix and was also not aesthetic. He requested that Councillor Fortune look again at the questions he had asked and come back with an answer given the real frequency of repair.

Reply:

Councillor Fortune responded that speaking to officers he had been informed that concrete roads did not fail that often and when work was done on the roads it was usually because of utility companies who were tasked to return the road to its original state. However, if there were specific roads causing concern then he was happy to take the details back to the Department to investigate further.

3. From Councillor Tony Owen of the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

Have you visited Orpington High Street during or immediately after heavy rain?'

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder commented that whenever he went to Orpington it was never raining.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Owen responded that if Councillor Morgan did visit Orpington High Street after heavy rain he would observe the subsidence that had occurred since the refurbishment. He asked when remedial action could be expected.

Reply:

Councillor Morgan replied that the project was still under guarantee and would not cost Council tax payers anything. The contractor was currently investigating the cause of any defects and the repairs would be organised during the school /college holiday period to cause minimum disruption.

4. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment – *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What was the arrangement for the recent hand delivery of Environment Matters? Why were election leaflets for Boris Johnson included in the same delivery? Were any special arrangements involved?

Reply:

The Executive Assistant advised on the situation which was not the fault of the Council:

There was an 'arrangement' with an external company that was used to deliver service information to residents across the Borough. The company took it upon themselves to deliver both our information and information from another job. This was their decision and had nothing to do with the Council.

After realising their mistake they are going to make a contribution to the Mayor's fund which he thought all would support.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Getgood responded that he had had many emails about this situation which had caused considerable consternation. Many residents were shocked to find the two leaflets in the same mailing and questioned the connection between operational matters in the Council and political campaigning. He accepted the answer that had been given but felt damage had been done to the Council's reputation. He considered that a public statement distancing the Council from the false impression given should be made and asked if the Executive Assistant could arrange for that to happen.

Reply:

Councillor Fortune replied that he was glad the situation had been clarified and that it was completely the fault of an external company. He was surprised to hear it had caused such complaints and alluded to the previous Mayor who had funded the Londoner newspaper delivered across London with no regard for whether or not it was wanted by residents.

5. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What is the policy of his party towards the Freedom Pass?

Reply:

The Executive Assistant stated that Council had always and was fully in support of the Freedom Pass as it currently stood.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Fookes commented that he recalled at the public meetings held last year looking at the Council finances for this year and beyond, the Portfolio Holder for the Environment was looking at the idea of charging residents £25 for Freedom Passes.

The Mayor commented that this was not a question but more of a statement and that Councillor Fortune did not need to respond. He also reminded Members to ensure their supplementary questions were just that and not lengthy statements.

Reply:

Councillor Fortune said he was happy to respond as he was aware of the public consultation and that there was a vote and many residents supported contributing to a very worthwhile cause. He reemphasised that Bromley remained committed to the Freedom Pass.

6. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Chairman of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee

- i) How many members of staff are given time off for trades union and related activities (including Staff Side representation);
- ii) What is the cost of the salary (including National Insurance and pension contributions) of each member of staff for that proportion of time spent on union activity;
- ii) What is the cost of benefits in kind including office facilities, equipment, stationery etc provided to the union representatives?

Reply:

The Chairman replied as follows:

- i) 2
- ii) In response to the first part of the question he did not consider it appropriate to give individual salaries but he could advise that including on costs the total costs came to £57,500; and in respect of the second part of this question including central recharges £6,600.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Bennett asked why the taxpayer was paying over £63,000 for union representatives and asked rather should it not be the Unions paying for this.

Reply:

Councillor Owen said that it was a matter that could be considered. He had read the tax payers alliance on this matter and certainly agreements were in place that would need to be looked at. However, any expenditure by the Council was open to scrutiny,

7. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People Services

How many full time staff are employed on School Improvement. How many were employed two years ago?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder replied that the CYP School Improvement Service had been the subject of restructuring and downsizing over the past 2 years or so. The first reason was as a consequence of the withdrawal of an area based grant from the DfE in 2010/11, totalling £1.4m of which £580k was attributable to School Improvement Services. Secondly as a part of the Council's own Budget Reductions to reduce service costs as part of the Council's financial

strategy 2011/12 – 2014/15 a further £410k savings to the school improvement services were currently being made.

The original school improvement service in 2010/11 had a staffing compliment of 59.2 Full Time Equivalent (FTEs) and this had been reduced to 33.5 FTEs as of April 2011. This level would reduce still further to 18 FTEs in 2012/13, subject to the ongoing staff and user consultations to restructure this service.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Getgood asked the Portfolio Holder to pass on to the remaining members of the school improvement team grateful thanks for the highly regarded work they did in helping schools, especially those that had fallen into special measures. He asked whether the Portfolio Holder shared his concern that with the new tougher Ofsted regime more schools would be harshly judged by Ofsted and that these schools were likely to be those already teaching in the most challenging circumstances. He asked if the Portfolio Holder also shared his concern that the school improvement team had been left weakened numerically and did not have the resources to work on the preventative measures needed to stop these schools becoming the focus of Ofsted attention. Was there anything that the Portfolio Holder could do about that before the Council was identified as having an increasing number of schools causing concern.

Reply:

Councillor Noad responded that he would pass on the good wishes to the school improvement team. Concerning Councillor Getgood's other questions the Portfolio Holder commented that the member would be well aware from the CYP PDS Committee agenda over the past two years that the service had been subject to great change much of it very complex. It was an ongoing journey probably for the next 2 – 4 years. At this stage it was not known the extent of the Academy proposals that schools would embark on in the future. He thought Bromley had the highest number of Academies probably than anywhere in London and likely anywhere in England. As the member was aware Academies were independent schools not controlled by the local education authority. However, the Portfolio Holder accepted that there were still a number of schools that would remain under local authority control at the moment as was the case particularly in the primary sector. He was concerned about the level of the school improvement teams but the situation was in a period of flux and reorganisation. Councillor Noad was monitoring the situation and in touch with officers to ensure that Bromley could deliver a satisfactory service to the remaining schools under the control of this Council.

8. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment – *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What is the backlog of trees needing pruning in the borough?

Reply:

The Executive Assistant advised that all tree pruning was done based on a cyclical annual survey. All Tree work relating to health and safety from the 2011/12 Annual Survey would be completed within the next 2 weeks. Tree pruning was an ongoing cyclical undertaking with orders continually being raised, works undertaken and more orders coming in.

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Fookes said that the situation as he understood it was that 2 years ago half the trees in the Borough still needed pruning and he suspected the situation had got far worse. He asked what plans there were for further pruning in 2012/13.

Reply:

Councillor Fortune responded that as he had already stated pruning was carried out on a cyclical basis of surveying certain sections of the Borough and then regulating them into an order of priority. He asked that if there were any particular trees that the Councillor wished looked at he would take that back to the Department and if he wanted a fuller answer he could provide that as well.

9. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Leader of the Council

- i) What was the Mayoral precept and percentage rise in each year since 2000;
- ii) What was the cumulative increase in the precept and percentage rise in the following periods;
 - 2000-2004
 - 2004-2008
 - 2000-2008
 - 2008-2012?

Reply:

The Leader of the Council explained he had a list of figures and he would give Councillor Bennett a copy immediately after the meeting. Councillor Carr only read out the Annual increase for each of the years requested but had the full details in response to the question below:

i)

Mayoral Precept			
Financial Year	Band 'D' Equivalent £	Annual Increase £	Annual Increase %
2000/01	122.98	17.97	17.11
2001/02	150.88	27.90	22.69
2002/03	173.88	23.00	15.24
2003/04	224.40	50.52	29.05
2004/05	241.33	16.93	7.54
2005/06	254.62	13.29	5.51
2006/07	288.61	33.99	13.35
2007/08	303.88	15.27	5.29
2008/09	309.82	5.94	1.95
2009/10	309.82	0.00	0.00
2010/11	309.82	0.00	0.00
2011/12	309.82	0.00	0.00
2012/13	306.72	-3.10	-1.00

ii)

	Cumulative Increase £	Cumulative Increase %
2000/01 - 2003/04	£119.39	113.69%
2004/05 - 2007/08	£79.48	35.42%
2008/09 - 2012/13	£2.84	0.93%

Supplementary Question:

Councillor Bennett asked if the Leader could give the figure for 2000-2008 cumulatively and what conclusions he would draw from these figures?

Reply:

Councillor Carr replied that in money terms the increase was £198.87p which was a cumulative increase of 139.11%. What he thought this demonstrated was that since 2008 the taxpayers of the Greater London area had had a considerable better deal than they had previously.

COUNCIL MEETING

26th MARCH 2012

WRITTEN QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Russell Mellor of the Leader of the Council

Can the leader advise me as to the outcome of the appeals detailed in response to my question placed before the Council on the 24th October 2011? The outstanding appeals and decision pending appeals were Children and Young People (1), Adult and Community Services (3).

Have the appeals been resolved, and if so, the cost to the Council; in the event of the appeals still being outstanding can you provide the reasons for the delay? “

Reply:

All job evaluation appeals have been heard. The outcome of one appeal is still pending and subject to further discussions with the trade unions. The delay is due to a technical matter which requires consideration and agreement by all three trade unions who are parties to the Single Status Agreement; as yet this has not been forthcoming from one of the trade unions concerned. Against this background arrangements are now in place to reconvene the appeal.

Department	Number of appeals*	Number that resulted in a grade change	Decision Pending
Children and Young People	3	0	0
Adult and Community Services	5	0	1
Renewal & Recreation	1	0	0
Environmental Services	3	1	0
Resources	1	0	0
Chief Executives	1	1	0

The cost of the 2 successful appeals is £23,206 one off costs and £6,555 going forward costs.

*Please note this figure relates to the number of posts not post holders.

2. From Councillor Russell Mellor of the Leader of the Council

In view of the failure of our bid to secure funding for Beckenham and Penge from the Mayor's Outer London Fund and the TfL Capital of London Area based funding scheme is the Council in a position to enhance the

Beckenham Town Centre Management Team with a view to achieve success for future bids to the TfL scheme?

Reply:

Maintaining and enhancing the vitality of all of the Borough's town centres, including Beckenham, is a key Council priority. The Council, along with our Partners have a clear strategy for promoting improvements to Beckenham Town Centre. One of the agenda items before Council tonight is a report on Special One-Off Initiatives. This includes a proposal to allocate the sum of £250k to support immediate improvements to Beckenham High Street. Part of this funding will also be used to support design work to enhance a bid to Transport for London for traffic and public realm improvements under their Area Based Schemes, which is a competitive process. I would urge Members to support this item.

The process of developing a successful TfL bid and scoping more immediate improvements is being guided by the Beckenham and West Wickham Working Group – which was commissioned by the R&R PDS Committee. The Town Centre Management Team is playing an active role in attending and supporting this group in its deliberations. Notwithstanding some sickness issues within the team, which are being dealt with through the proper process, Town Centre Managers will also be working with colleagues in other Council Divisions to roll out many of the shorter term projects, and will assist with consultation on proposed future public realm changes.

With regards to the future of Town Centre Management, we are exploring the option of introducing Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to the main town centres which may unlock additional resources and give more control to local businesses and other key occupiers. This approach, which has been successful in other town centres across the UK, is being piloted in Orpington town centre – and if successful we would be looking to gauge the feasibility of the BID model for other towns, including Beckenham.

3. From Councillor Russell Mellor of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond.*

I would be obliged if the Portfolio Holder can advise me of the financial savings to the Council by the expenditure of £7.942 million from the Invest to Save fund for the replacement of lighting columns in the Borough, the reply to be expressed in terms of a revenue stream.

Reply:

As set out in 5.4 of the report that went to the 7th March 2012 Executive meeting, the total revenue saving over 11 years is expected to be: -

New Installation & Maintenance	£8.532m
Energy savings	£0.897m
Staff savings	<u>£0.342m</u>

Direct Revenue Savings	£9.771m	
Savings from Carbon Allowances	£0.114m	
Inflation savings	<u>£1.797m</u>	
Total Savings (inc future growth)	£11.682m	
Repayment of invest to save monies (scheme)	£7.942m	(estimated cost of scheme)
Interest on borrowing 3.5%	£1.849m	
Net Saving from Invest to Save	<u>£1.891m</u>	

Any final release of monies will be dependent on the outcome of tendering for the works early in 2013.

The estimated net savings of £1.891m is after repayment of the 'Spend to Save' plus interest of 3.5%.

There will not only be enhanced asset values at the end of the investment period compared with the existing budget provision, but there will be further benefits relating to the use of latest technology, which could include LED's, to provide environmental benefits and improved lighting levels for pedestrians and drivers.

The investment is targeted at the concrete and older steel lamp columns which are at risk of structural failure.

A copy of the report together with the detailed papers providing further breakdown of the financial impact are available in the Members room.

4. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

When will trees be replaced in St John's Rd, Penge as the tree pits are becoming a trip hazard?

Reply:

There are currently no plans to plant trees in this road at present. Streetscene officers are arranging to have the tree pits tarmaced over. If requests are received from the public, staff will of course consider planting at these vacant locations, subject to suitable resources and priorities.

5. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What plans are there to plant trees in Hawthorn Grove in Penge?

Reply:

There are no plans to plant in Hawthorn Grove. If Ward Members would like to suggest anything then the potential will, of course, be investigated.

6. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

What progress is being made in the redevelopment of the Studio in Beckenham?

Reply:

The Agreement to Lease 28 Beckenham Road Beckenham (previously known as "The Studio") was entered into with Citygate Church on 3rd November 2011. Citygate's contractor took possession of the property soon after to commence the repair and refurbishment work. Under the Agreement, Citygate has 1 year in which to complete "Phase 1" of the "Works" and serve notice on the Council to complete the Lease. "Phase 1" includes: external works, renewal of services (electrical, heating including boiler replacement, alarms, water and media), installation of steelwork and other alterations, asbestos removal, plaster renewals and redecoration to some ground floor rooms and one first floor room to enable the building to partially reopen. The main works undertaken to date include: renewal of flat roof, eradication of rot and renewal of some roof timbers, installation of steel beams and removal of masonry walls, new partitioning and ceilings, some electrical work, boiler strip out, some window renovation and other external work. The contractor is programming to complete all work by the end of the summer with the exception of the internal decoration. It is understood this will be undertaken by the church members.

7. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

What proposals he has for establishing sold services to schools?

Reply:

The London Borough of Bromley has successfully provided Sold Services to schools since the 1990's, offering schools a range of support packages especially in the areas of School Improvement, Governor Training & Support, Finance, Human Resources and Property. With the introduction of the Academies Act in 2010, and the direct funding of academies for many services previously provided by the Local Authority, the Bromley Sold Services offer has been reviewed and expanded to meet this changing agenda. Following the endorsement given by Executive to focus on a One-Council during 2011/12, Children and Young People Services have co-ordinated the management and delivery of Sold Services across the Council. The take up of Sold Services from schools, including academies, remains high and many new services now provided to academies on a Sold Service basis only have seen high levels of buy back.

In parallel, a detailed analysis has been undertaken to establish the Full Cost Recovery position of each Sold Service. In January, Cabinet received a detailed report which presented the outcomes from this work including: the income profile, an evaluation of the potential for sold services on a Full Cost Recovery basis and options for the Council for the future direction of support and sold services to schools 2012/13 – 2014/15. This information will be reported to Executive in the spring.

For 2012/2013, the Sold Services offer will continue to be marketed to Bromley schools and, increasingly, out of borough customers. All Sold Services will be expected to meet income targets based on a Full Cost Recovery position and put in place appropriate action where needed, such as price reviews, to ensure that targets are met, supported by regular budget monitoring. Action will be taken in-year to remove a Sold Service offer where the level of market interest makes it unviable.

8. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Leader of the Council

If he will set out the organisational arrangements following the merger of the ACS and CYP Departments from 1st April and any proposals to amend the Portfolio and PDS functions as a result of this merger?

Reply:

Since the start of January 2012, a single Management Team for Education and Care Services Department has been led and chaired by the Chief Executive, meeting weekly. This is in addition to ongoing respective ACS and CYP management meetings.

The Education and Care Services Management Team consists of the three Assistant Directors with responsibilities for front-line service divisions, namely Kay Weiss for Children's Social Care, David Roberts for Adults' Social Care, and Bob Garnett for Education. They are assisted by the Strategic and Business Support division under Anne Watts, the Commissioning division under Lorna Blackwood and Finance support from Lesley Moore. Also supporting this transition are Charles Obazuaye, Gillian Pearson, Terri Walters and Susie Clark.

In these months work has begun in identifying natural synergies and opportunities for smarter working across all component parts. The Management Team has also engaged with staff about the changes.

From 1st April, the Chief Executive will continue to lead the work of the Management Team as set out above, excepting a change following the retirement of Gillian Pearson and the addition of Sara Bowrey to assist with consideration of Operational Housing matters.

The weekly meetings of the Management Team will address significant issues arising, matters of shared interest across all components of the department, and the overarching strategic framework.

ACS Departmental Management Team and CYP Senior Management Team meetings will be maintained alongside the ECS Management Team until the new civic year to ensure adequate consideration of portfolio-specific issues.

The recruitment process for the post of Assistant Director for Education is underway and it is hoped that an appointment will be made in due course. The recruitment process for the post of Director of Education and Care Services will be started again after Easter.

With regard to the Portfolio and PDS functions both myself and colleagues are currently assessing the best way forward that may well precipitate an evolved change to both the Portfolio and PDS function.

9. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What criteria does he intend to use in deciding the priorities for the Council's Public transport policy?

Reply:

The following factors would be taken into account in assessing priority. They are listed in no particular order.

- Whether the project falls within existing Council policy or aspirations as expressed through the Corporate Plan, the LDF/UDP, LIP and other key documents.
- The number of users likely to benefit from the proposal.
- Whether a proposal provides the level of service necessary to meet an identified current or forecast need for access to jobs or services.
- The likely timescale for implementation of the project.
- The likelihood of the project receiving funding.
- Overall value for money.
- Any costs likely to fall on the Council.
- Engineering feasibility.

- The environmental impact of the project through operation or construction.
- Whether the proposal promotes real choice of travel mode.

The views of the public and stakeholders expressed through consultation

10. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What will be the first opportunity to remove the street clutter of the free-standing advertising hoarding on the pavement outside Empire Square, Penge?

Reply:

There are no plans to remove the free-standing advertising hoarding; it was only installed after the planning permission had been granted to ClearChannel.

11. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment - *In the absence of the Portfolio Holder the Executive Assistant for the Environment will respond*

What progress is he making in persuading BT that the placing of their green box on the edge of Empire Square, Penge disfigures the public realm and that they should move it.

Reply:

The Streetworks Team have asked for the BT cabinet to be moved and are awaiting their response. A Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued to BT as they did not have a valid permit to work in this location, although as a utility company they do have powers to install cabinets and other equipment on the highway.

12. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment – *(In agreement with the Portfolio Holder this has been redirected to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation)*

Will he please convey to all those staff involved, the thanks of people living and working in Penge for their support of and contribution to the Penge Town Sign project.

Reply:

Yes I will ensure your thanks are passed on.

13. From Councillor Fawthrop of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee (to be asked at every Council Meeting)

What pre-application meetings have taken place since the last full Council Meeting between Council Officers and potential planning applicants? Can these be listed as follows:-

The name of the potential applicant, the site address being considered.

Reply:

From 15th February to 19th March, 2012, there were 20 non-householder pre-application meetings and no householder meetings. At present, the details of individual applicants constitute exempt information and cannot be disclosed in response to a Council question.