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DATE: 06 December 2013

COUNCIL

Meeting held on Monday 2 December 2013

The replies given to public, oral and written questions are attached.

- 5 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Pages 3 - 6)**
- 6 ORAL QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Pages 7 - 24)**
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Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
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COUNCIL MEETING

2nd DECEMBER 2013

ORAL QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) From Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

How many people in Bromley have been made homeless (or are subject to notice of eviction) as a result of the implementation of the “bedroom tax”, how many have been moved out of Borough and how much of the Discretionary Housing Payments budget has been spent on any household for whom it is inappropriate to move to smaller accommodation?

Reply:

As we are not a stock holding authority we would not have specific data on actions taken by housing associations in respect of their tenants affected by the bedroom size criteria. We do however have a number of joint working protocols around providing advice and assistance to those households affected by the bedroom size criteria aimed at preventing potential homelessness. In addition the majority of housing associations have dedicated officers supporting such households with a range of options including gaining employment and seeking smaller accommodation. In addition discretionary housing payments can also be arranged to assist whilst households are actively pursuing these options. To date, housing associations have reported that more than 60 households have already moved to smaller accommodation either through direct transfers, mutual exchanges or Bromley Homeseekers. There have not been any reported moves out of borough at this stage. As at 23rd November £159,616 has been awarded in discretionary housing payments to either assist those unable to move to smaller accommodation or assist in the period prior to the claimant moving – this sum has been made up of 315 awards.

Supplementary question:

Given that this DHP budget was more than tripled last year and given the hardships we are confident are happening as a consequence of the bedroom tax, what the Council is able to do to make sure that the housing associations are making tenants affected by this aware that they are eligible for this money.

Reply:

The vast amount of work that we do in terms of preventing homelessness in the first place is worth paying tribute to. We have housing officers who work closely with the housing associations. They make it very clear to their tenants and they have written to all their tenants in advance of the spare room subsidy coming in to advise them of how they may be implicated with that charge and what action they can take. By working closely in harmony, at the moment we are not aware of anybody that has been declared homeless as a result.

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) From Hazel Howes to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Why does the Council not clean the alleyway linking Jasmine Grove to Minden Road in Anerley?

Reply:

The alleyway in question is already being cleaned on an ad hoc basis.

In light of your expressed concern, inspections will be made over coming weeks to determine whether the regularity of these cleansings need to be increased.

(2) From Colin Willetts, Secretary, Longbury Residents Association, to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

Following the Cotmandene Centre report/recommendations 13/11/12 could the Portfolio Holder give us a further update to include any potential threats of closure for this most important & well used facility which is the hub of the local community in St Paul's Cray?

Reply:

The Cotmandene Community Resource Centre will continue to operate as normal for the foreseeable future, there are no plans to close the facility at the present time.

(3) From Colin Willetts, Secretary, Longbury Residents Association, to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

We have received several enquiries as to the lack of construction work on the new cinema over the past 3 months or so, (i) has this site ran into financial difficulties hence the delay in construction? (ii) if not when do you expect the date for its completion?

Reply:

The proposed cinema is being developed by a private company on land in its ownership. The Council's role in the scheme is in its capacity as Local Planning Authority in dealing with the planning application and as an adjoining land owner in agreeing to some details relating to land ownership. The Council has dealt with the developer's planning application and has granted planning permission for the scheme. We have also dealt with the land ownership details at the developer's request. The Council will now only be involved in dealing with any planning requirements to approve details under the planning permission as development proceeds. The developer has advised that discussions with potential retailers are on-going and they hope to

be able to provide an update on the Development Programme after Christmas.

(4) From Rebecca Rowland to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Safety

Will the council provide an update on the waste4fuel site in Cornwall Drive? What steps have been taken towards its immediate closure, in light of another fire at the site on Tuesday 26th November?

Reply:

On 11 November 2013 the EA attended the High Court and successfully gained a Final Order for an Injunction against Waste4Fuel Ltd and their Director, Bryan Hughes to remove all combustible waste from the site in Cornwall Drive by 1 May 2014.

The Order included the following conditions, to:

- See a reduction in the weekly tonnage (currently 200 tonnes) of waste input to 150 tonnes (from 25 November 2013) and then to 75 tonnes from 1 January 2014
- Ensure that the storage of any new waste is in a new segregated area
- That there are monthly site inspections, with photographic evidence
- That weekly reports are compiled, stating the tonnage of waste accepted and removed from the site during that week.
- That 24 hour site security is in place to reduce the risk of any further fires at the site

If any of these conditions are not met, the company or the Director can be held in contempt of court and may be liable to a fine or imprisonment.

The High Court did not implement any measures for the closure of the site and the Environment Agency (EA) have no plans at present to return to the High Court as a result of the fire on site on Tuesday 26th November .

However, should the Company and Director, Mr Hughes, fail to meet the requirements of the Court Order, then the EA may then return to Court.

(5) From Richard Williams to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

For many years the future of Anerley Town Hall (ATH) has been a constant source of concern for its local residents who fear the loss of our local library and community services. I am pleased that building work is currently taking place and money is being spent on the upkeep, however, what guarantee can the Council give that ATH will continue to facilitate our library and the community services that are vital to our area?

Reply:

Thank you for your question with regard to Anerley Town Hall. It was pleasing to note that you positively acknowledge that the Council is currently tackling a number of significant structural issues that have arisen. In doing so the Council has been working in conjunction with the tenant, the Crystal Palace Community Development Trust, to ensure that the works can be undertaken with the minimum of disruption to both users of the community areas as well as the business tenants who occupy the building.

In terms of the Library, it has been a long standing objective of this Council to create a new large library offer in the locality and I am pleased to inform you that work is progressing on the development proposals for a major new library at 46 Green Lane, Penge. Whilst, this will ultimately mean that the existing Anerley Library will cease to operate, probably from late May 2014, it is our intention to retain some form of library offer in Anerley Town Hall. It is likely that this offer will be electronic and based on the principle of self-serve. It will though be fully linked into the Council's broader library network.

Having visited the building on a number of occasions, I have always been impressed by the range of community activities on offer and we will be continuing to discuss with the Trust, options for taking the long term management of the building forward.

COUNCIL MEETING

2nd December 2013

ORAL QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Michael Tickner of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Given the long standing public confusion and complaints that parking charges apply in Council-run off-street car parks for longer hours than those that apply to adjacent on-street parking spaces, what plans does the Portfolio Holder have to standardise these hours and how soon will action be taken to rectify this annoying bureaucratic anomaly?

Reply:

I do not consider the current arrangements are either confusing, annoying, bureaucratic nor an anomaly.

There is a link provided that refers to the rationale for the parking arrangements locally via the relevant PDS report -

<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s2937/ENV%20PDS%20080610%20item%207e%20Parking%20Charge%20Times.pdf>

(Environment PDS Committee, 8th June 2010: "Parking Charge Times")

Other than that I am interested in and am investigating a related point raised by Cllr Tickner concerning residents having to purchase a minimum of one hour's time to park within the car park, if the on street parking bays are all taken after 18:30, despite arriving at any point between that time and 19:30. There are no plans other than this to further review the situation at this time.

Supplementary Question:

I assume the report is that of the 8th June 2010, over three years ago, when officers said almost £40,000 of income is generated in that last hour between 6.30pm and 7.30pm. My residents find this very frustrating. You have already said that you are looking into the problem with only being able to buy one hour in the off-street car parks whereas in on-street car parking you can buy in units of about eight minutes. It seems very unfair for someone parking in an off-street car park at 7.25pm to have to buy a whole hour, when they would only have gone there if they knew that the charges would have ceased at 6.30pm on-street.

Can the Portfolio Holder tell me whether this £40,000 of income is still the case today and have an updated report on this matter.

Reply:

I cannot immediately tell you the financial impact of changing the operation, but I can reaffirm the charges are applied where there is a demand for parking to

keep the turnover going. I am also aware that there is some pressure from the local church who have a concern that it is their parishioners who are having to pay what I agree is an unreasonable charge for a few minutes parking and I do undertake to look into that shortly.

Additional supplementary question:

Councillor Nicholas Bennett asked the Portfolio Holder if he was aware that in West Wickham Transport for London stop any restrictions on the High Street at 7pm and yet you have to pay in a car park off the High Street until 7.30pm. Would it not be sensible to align the times at 7pm?

Reply:

No, I think it would be sensible for TfL for once to align themselves with local priorities.

2. From Councillor Tom Papworth of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Residents in the north of the borough repeatedly complain that roads where responsibility for street cleaning has been handed over to the London Borough of Croydon are not being cleaned. In particular, Crystal Palace Park Parade, Church Road and Fox Hill are not being cleaned regularly or reliably. Officers have repeatedly tried to address this at an officer-officer level, but Croydon are not delivering. What further measures can the Portfolio Holder commit to that will ensure that our residents, living on the border with other boroughs, receive the street cleaning service that they deserve and for which they pay?

Reply:

I am advised that there is no such road as Crystal Palace Park Parade. Crystal Palace Parade borders mainly Southwark and not at all with Croydon. Southwark and Bromley each clean their own sides of this road.

Regarding Fox Hill, going back to March 2011 there have been 4 recorded complaints in respect of street sweeping each from the same resident. There have, rather ironically in both cases given the nature of the question and the name of the road, been two other complaints; one in respect of a street sweeping vehicle causing damage to private property, the other requesting the removal of a dead fox.

Regarding Church Road, going back to December 2010, there have been 2 recorded complaints in respect of street sweeping by separate and different individuals.

Should there be any not immediately apparent issues within these roads I can confirm that the Council's street scene team will be very pleased to press the question further with their opposite numbers in Croydon if you would be kind enough to provide them full details, copying me in.

Supplementary Question:

I am somewhat surprised because I have forwarded to the street scene team more complaints particularly about Church Road than the Portfolio Holder indicated so there is a source of some confusion there. In respect of Fox Hill I have been contacted by a resident who has seen the Croydon street sweeper travel down the Croydon side of the road.

Would the Portfolio Holder take this up with his opposite number because I know that street services have not had a huge amount of success and will he indicate just how bad the quality of street cleaning has to get in Fox Hill and Church Road before the Council decides to shoulder its responsibilities and clean the road itself.

Reply:

The logical evidence suggests that the premise of the question is incorrect because there haven't been any complaints.

3. From Councillor Russell Mellor of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Is the Portfolio Holder aware of the alleged illegal yellow lines which have been painted at the entrance to the L&Q site in Beckenham High Street obliterating one parking bay?

Reply:

I am aware of the location in question, and also of its recent history, but am advised and have forwarded all relevant correspondence to Cllr Mellor confirming that the linage in question is legal, as well as its genesis and the purpose for being laid.

Supplementary Question:

In view of the Portfolio Holder's remarks confirming that the lines are legal my question is nullified.

4. From Councillor David McBride of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

What is the process undertaken by the Council when Japanese Knotweed is reported?

Reply:

The Council's Parks and Greenspace section operate an eradication programme of this pernicious weed when and wherever it is discovered on public land.

Members of the Public reporting infestations on private property are provided with the contact details of both the Environment Agency, as well as our specialist contractor, to enable them easy access to a suitably qualified company to remove same.

Supplementary Question:

Can I ask that there are regular sweeps of Council owned land to eradicate Japanese Knotweed at the earliest possible opportunity. Can I also ask that officers press very hard the social landlords in the borough, as in several cases recently in my ward, one social landlord in particular was very reluctant to act which caused a huge problem in the case of selling properties. Through the Portfolio Holder can I ask that social landlords are reminded of their responsibilities and pressed to act immediately that they are notified.

Reply:

I am very glad to give that assurance. This is a growing problem. I would ask all colleagues if they see any infestation anywhere to let the department know. In addition to environment, this is a housing issue and I completely agree that partners on the accommodation front should be looking after their residents and protecting the environment better. I would be very happy to work with you if you have any examples in Cray Valley East.

5. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

If he will make a statement on plans to refurbish West Wickham Leisure Centre?

Reply:

The Council is currently exploring, in conjunction with Bromley Mytime, refurbishment plans for West Wickham Leisure Centre. Until Bromley Mytime have finalised their proposals, and landlord liabilities have been assessed, it is not possible at this point in time to comment on any refurbishment plans. Subject to Bromley Mytime providing further detail, it is expected that a report will be tabled at a forthcoming meeting of the Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee providing members with the detail they need.

Supplementary Question:

Is he aware that the Chief Executive has already assured me in an email that £1.4m has been set aside for refurbishing the leisure centre and if that is the case and it is likely to go ahead can he assure us that the swimming pool, which is not included in the refurbishment, which however needs some minor repairs, will be included so that we do not spoil the ship for a happ'orth of tar.

Reply:

I will indeed look at that question.

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

What steps is he taking to ensure that academy and free schools are accountable to the local community?

Reply:

In redesigning the education landscape a core intention of national government was to enable academies and free schools to drive their own improvement and as such be directly accountable to the parents and pupils of their school. This is achieved through strong governance and Ofsted inspection regimes.

As a Council, we currently see our role as acting as a broker of partnerships and relationships between individual and groups of academies, academy chains and free schools so that they can work together to drive improvement across the borough. We have a small number of maintained schools currently judged as satisfactory or 'requiring improvement' and we are working with headteachers designated as National Leaders of Education and Local Leaders of Education within the Borough to offer that school to school support.

Sir Michael Wilshaw has, since September, placed more emphasis on governors' contribution to the Ofsted judgements of a school's leadership and management. Governors are now expected to have a detailed knowledge of a school's performance and to be able to demonstrate how they are challenging the headteacher on all aspects of the school's performance, including for example the requirement to close the gap between the performance and outcomes of different groups of pupils.

Bromley Council is committed to recruiting and supporting through training a strong group of LA governors who will be able to offer the necessary support and challenge to all our schools, whether academies, free schools or maintained schools.

Supplementary Question:

Will he be informing ward members and local residents if a school was to open up in their particular ward, or is that down to Michael Gove?

Reply:

The intention is that the Department for Education through the Education Funding Agency seeks the location of any school in any borough across the country and under those circumstances we are not involved in the process of obtaining the land or premises for any school. We are informed usually by the sponsor or by the Education Funding Agency of where and when a school will be opened within the borough.

Additional supplementary question:

Councillor David McBride asked, the Portfolio Holder being aware that in terms of governance the local authority had been criticised in two recent monitoring reports by Ofsted for failing to support a school in terms of improving its governance, what plans he had to address those criticisms?

Reply:

We are aware that there are issues in relation to a number of schools particularly in the area of leadership and management of those schools which do need to be addressed. We are seeking to establish relationships between the schools in question and local and national leaders in school management and

improvement in such a way that local schools are able to support one another more effectively than was possible in the past using officers of this Council.

7. From Councillor Katherine Bance MBE of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

We are aware of 12 rough sleepers in Penge & Cator ward. What information do you have for the number of rough sleepers across the borough and what actions are you taking to provide and support emergency hostels for homeless people in Bromley?

Reply:

Each year all local authorities are asked to provide a count of rough sleepers in their area. This figure relates a snapshot of figures for those actually rough sleeping on any one night. The figure for 2012/13 for Bromley was 9. We are currently verifying the data supplied by agencies to determine the number of rough sleepers for 2013/4. However the latest report from Thamesreach, the agency funded to deal with rough sleepers in Bromley in conjunction with the London-wide No Second Night Out programme seeking to identify all new rough sleepers and engage with them) details 9 current identified rough sleepers in Bromley. Thamesreach provide an active outreach service designed to identify and work with rough sleepers to assist them to access appropriate support and secure accommodation in order move away from the street. They have an advice line and website through which any agency or member of the public can report any potential rough sleeping. Thamesreach will then investigate this to verify whether the person is actually rough sleeping with no accommodation.

Our housing advice and options service at Bromley will also provide housing advice to rough sleepers. In addition to assessing whether a rehousing duty may be owed to the person under the provisions of the homelessness legislation, they can also refer to a number of accommodation and support services including regionally funded short term hostels, assessment units, specialist supported units and two private rented sector schemes.

In addition, Bromley also supports a winter shelter which is run by Bromley United Reform Church and volunteers during the winter months – this is coming on-stream in the next week or so. The shelter is for local people who face rough sleeping during the cold weather period. A housing advice surgery is provided for all residents of the shelter to ensure that they receive advice and assistance to secure a move onto accommodation.

Supplementary Question:

Is the winter shelter called Project 5000, or does that no longer operate in Bromley?

Reply:

I am not sure if that was the previous name, but we strongly support this shelter and we hope that it does a good job.

8. From Councillor Tom Papworth of the Chairman of Development Control Committee

How Dylon International Ltd managed to negotiate a contribution to Affordable Housing as part of their Major Application of 149 units at Worsley Bridge Road, London SE26 5BE (13/01973/FULL1) that amounted to just c.£500/unit, and whether he is satisfied with this level of contribution?

Reply:

I was at the meeting of Development Control Committee that prompted this question. I was equally disappointed at the level of financial contribution, the lack of compassion and lack of interest in the entire community on the part of this developer. I am far from satisfied with the level of contribution, but I will give you the background explaining how that came about.

On 21st November we declined that application, one of the grounds being that inadequate evidence had been submitted to show that the development could not support affordable housing provision.

The previous application under reference 09/01664 for mixed use development comprising B1 office accommodation, class A1 retail, class A3 café/restaurant, class D1 crèche and 149 flats was subject to an appeal to the Secretary of State. As part of the appeal process the owner of the land offered a unilateral undertaking which the appeal Inspector found acceptable. That undertaking provided for a financial appraisal to be submitted to the Council to justify the need for grant funding support for the affordable housing units (specified to be 51 units). That appraisal indicated there was a need for grant funding which was not forthcoming.

Although the Council took its own expert advice and was prepared to take the matter to arbitration under the terms of the undertaking, during the preliminary stages of the arbitration, the expert advised that the offer of a commuted sum of £80,000 should be accepted. The arbitration was accordingly settled, particularly given the financial risk to the Council in terms of legal costs should it proceed. The correct process was followed.

The Council will continue to seek the maximum affordable housing contribution possible under national and local planning policy. It will be vigorous in so doing. Financial viability, however, is an important consideration that the Council is required to take account of.

Supplementary Question:

I share his frustration at the pathetic amount of provision for social housing. Can he indicate what the Council can do to avoid a repetition of this. This initially went to appeal because we did not decide the earlier application in time, and while these things do not generally go to appeal we are always open to risk if we do not settle them within thirteen weeks. Can he comment on what we can do to make sure that we do not risk getting into this situation again?

Reply:

We follow the planning process in respect of every application. All we can do is interpret the planning regulations as we see them, and act in Bromley's interest and the best interests of our residents. If it is not in the best interests of our residents we will potentially refuse the application on appropriate grounds if we have grounds to do so, and we do do that. However, the right of appeal still exists, and we have no control over the decision that the inspector will make. It is out of our hands once we have turned something down.

Additional supplementary question:

Councillor Simon Fawthrop asked whether the Chairman was aware that this was not the first occasion when companies and organisations had reneged on agreements to provide additional money for social housing, such as Lidl at Penge/Anerley, the Blue Circle site and the development at Elmers End. What they say is that the economic times are bad so therefore the circumstances have changed. Actually, the circumstances have changed back so will the Chairman write to them and ask for them to cough up some more money.

Reply:

I will check the legal position on that and if it is possible to do that I will arrange for it to be done.

9. From Councillor David McBride to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Safety

Can the Portfolio Holder assure me that, whilst every resident in the Borough should expect outstanding service by Council officers, only official Safer Neighbourhood Panels will have officers in attendance?

Reply:

I can assure you that only official Safer Neighbourhood Panels will be supported by Council officers. Our limited resources will mean that even official Safer Neighbourhood Panel meetings will now not be guaranteed to have one Safer Neighbourhood Officer at all their meetings. The officers will now be going to Safer Neighbourhood Panels as and when there are issues on the agenda which are relevant and warrant such officers to be there.

Supplementary Question:

Does he agree that divisive, renegade committees set up on the basis of animosity within or towards certain groups go far more to undermining local policing and undermining the real strength and success of local policing? What we do not want is good work from local police and local residents being undermined by rogue committees.

Reply:

I am aware of the situation in Cray Valley East and none of my officers and I hope no other officers will be going to that other committee. Safer Neighbourhood Panels need to understand that their job is very clear – it is about policing issues and not about anything else. It is not helpful when other people want to set up renegade committees. What life is about is supporting the

residents locally and we will do that through the correct Safer Neighbourhood Panel and nothing else.

10. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

If he will provide the following information about the 'Troubled Families' initiative: How much has been spent in each year since its inception;

- i. how much has been received by way of government grant;
- ii. how many staff are employed;
- iii. how many families (and individuals) have been involved in the initiative;
- iv. what are the criteria for measuring the success or failure of each intervention;
- v. what assessment has been made to date of the project;
- vi. how many reports have been made to the relevant Scrutiny committee on the outcomes?

Reply:

I will not quote every figure I have but I will give you the headlines.

- i. In 2012/13 it was £535,200, in 2013/14 it is £589,600. This was paid in two stages. It is a three year programme so we are expecting a slightly smaller amount in 2014/15.

Alongside that, in the first year, 2012/13, only £29,310 was actually spent because of the time spent in setting up the programme but the extra amounts were carried forward.

- ii There are currently 6 staff employed. Care Services PDS Committee gave approval for 4 extra Family Practitioners and a Data Analyst in October 2013. Therefore, the total number of staff will be 11.
- iii As at the end of October, we had attached 352 families. We have a 3 year target of 490.
- iv I can list the criteria for attachment for inclusion in the scheme, and our criteria for success is whether in the long term we turn things round. There are three national criteria -
 - (a) are involved in crime and anti social behaviour (ASB) - Household where a young person has a proven offence in the last 12 months and/or where one or more family member has been subject to ASB intervention in the last 12 months.
 - (b) have children not in school, training or employment - Household affected by truancy or exclusion from school where a young person has a history of school exclusions, is in a pupil referral unit or has 15 % unauthorised absences in the last 3 terms.

(c) Have an adult on out of work benefits - Once the above criteria have been identified, those who are out of work and claiming benefits.

There is a local criterion as well -

Cause high cost to the public purse - Local discretion to add families meeting any 2 of the above criteria and where there is a cause for concern. These may include families subject to child protection plans where there is a risk a child may be accommodated, families subject to frequent police call outs, families where there are health problems such as emotional and mental health problems, drug and alcohol misuse and health problems caused by domestic abuse.

- v Internal Audit have been integrated into the Troubled Family programme in Bromley from the outset. Consequently, an internal audit of the project was undertaken in July 2013. The audit report concluded that -

“The conclusion is that overall satisfactory progress has been made in identifying the initial 163 troubled families required in the first year. Substantial assurance can be placed that those identified meet the criteria based on the sample checking undertaken.”

The TTF Project has also been visited by the Tackling Troubled Families Unit of the DCLG in order to report back on progress. No issues or concerns were identified.

- vi The answer is four – two to the former CYP PDS on 20th March 2012 and 12th June 2012, and two to Care Services PDS on 18th June 2013 and on 29th October 2013. A further report is due to come to the Care Services PDS Committee in April 2014.

Supplementary Question:

We had no indication in that reply of whether any families had actually been turned round. When are we going to get some information about whether all the money is being spent is a success or not?

Reply:

There was not a question to ask how many people had been turned around. The number to date is that 53 families have been turned around and we will be receiving a bonus payment for those 53. There are quite a lot more that are in the process.

11. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Education

Where will the new Harris Free School in Shortlands be temporarily sited whilst the redevelopment of the former Kingswood House site goes ahead?

Reply:

The Harris Federation is still in negotiation with the Education Funding Agency over the best temporary site and as yet have no information as to where the academy will open is available.

Supplementary Question:

When will local residents have an opportunity to object to these particular proposals?

Reply:

The Education Funding Agency and the Department for Education deal with all issues regarding free schools. There is no mechanism by which any in this chamber are able to object as representatives of their community. The objections can come through in terms of planning issues, although that will be short-lived as I understand that the legislation is due to change on that.

12. From Councillor Katherine Bance MBE of the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

Will the Council ensure that WW1 Memorial in Penge & Cator Ward is repaired in time for the commemorations next year?

Reply:

The Council is committed to ensuring that war memorials within its ownership are well maintained, especially in advance of the centenary commemoration next year. Therefore the Conservation Officer, Robert Buckley, will visit all war memorials in order to inspect and advise on any necessary repairs and they will be carried out.

Supplementary Question:

The Penge War Memorial, probably more than most, is in urgent need of repair. We have been trying for two years to get replacement plaques for those that were stolen or damaged when people were looking for the metal to sell. It cannot be done quickly, so can it be inspected first?

Reply:

I will get Robert Buckley to inspect Penge first.

13. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

If he will list the roads in West Wickham which have received new lamp standards, the types installed and the measurement used to assess the area and intensity of impact on the street and pavement?

Reply:

See Appendix 1 & 2 attached.

Supplementary Question:

We welcome the new street lamps in West Wickham, but will he visit Oaklands Avenue, where the residents have been very concerned that the siting of the

new street lamps means that there are pools of darkness which are making it a worry for the elderly residents there. It could be that there needs to be an additional street lamp and also that we need a policy where we site the street lights at the back of the pavement not at the edge of the road, where the light does not fall onto the pavement.

Reply:

The policy is that wherever possible the street lamps are placed at the back of the pavement which should reduce damage to them and possible knock-downs. There are potential issues when lights have been replaced in terms of adjacent street trees possibly darkening areas. In every road that has the new lights there will be a tree survey to make sure that anything that does need pruning is pruned.

Additional supplementary question:

Councillor John Getgood asked whether the Portfolio Holder would consider reinstating the policy of using heritage lighting in sensitive areas such as conservation areas. I'm sure that our ward is not the only one where residents are disappointed that they have to go to special lengths to protect the frontages of their buildings because they are in a conservation area and then the Council puts in ugly, high level lighting which diminishes the effect of the conservation area.

Reply:

No – there is no money in the budget for such luxuries. Renewal and Recreation may be able to find a funding stream from somewhere, but there is no money for that in Environment.

14. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

How many families are currently being placed in temporary accommodation?

Reply:

853.

Supplementary Question:

What is he doing to address the housing crisis in this borough?

Reply:

The Housing Department is working very hard indeed on all sorts of initiatives to try to alleviate the problem. It is a national problem and a problem in Bromley and all we can do is to do all we can possibly do to alleviate the problem. As you attend most of the PDS meetings I am sure that you are fully aware of all of the plans that we have in mind.

Additional supplementary question:

Councillor Simon Fawthrop asked the Portfolio Holder whether he agreed that the problem was not a housing crisis but a population crisis caused by two things – mass immigration by the last Labour Government and the issue that it is people that cause the problem. If you go back to 1951, there were a million

more people living in London than there are today, so it seems that the problem is a population problem rather than a housing problem.

Reply:

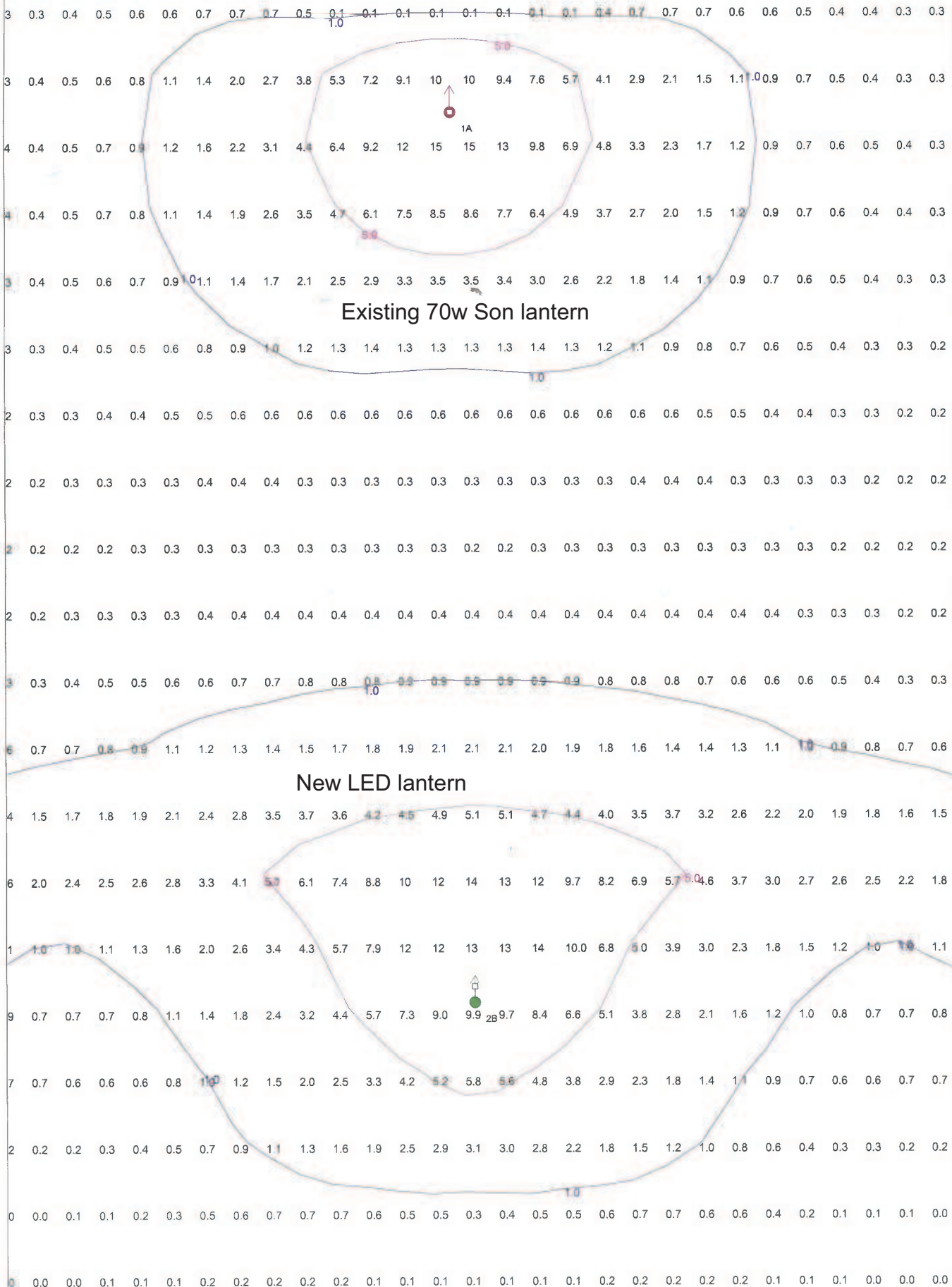
The Portfolio holder responded that he did not totally agree with that analysis, but that it had a place in the argument.

Appendix 1
(Question 13)

Location	Column and Lantern Installed
ABERDARE CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ACACIA GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ARRAGON GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ASH GROVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BARWOOD AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BIRCH TREE AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BLAKES GREEN	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BOLDERWOOD WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BOLEYN GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BRAEMAR GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BRAMBLEDOWN CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
BRAMLEY WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CAVENDISH WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHAMBERLAIN CRESCENT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHATSWORTH CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHERRY TREE WALK	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHESSINGTON WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHESTNUT AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CHURCH DRIVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
COLIN CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CONEY HILL ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
COPSE AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
COURTFIELD RISE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CROFT AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
CUNNINGHAM CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
DEER PARK WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
DIXON PLACE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
DUKES WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
FARM CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
GATES GREEN ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
GOODHART WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
GROSVENOR ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HARDCOURTS CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HARTFIELD CRESCENT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern

HARTFIELD ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HARVEST BANK ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HAWES LANE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HAWKHURST WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HAWTHORN DRIVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HAYES CHASE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HIGH MEAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HIGHBROOM CRESCENT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HIGHBURY CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
HIGHFIELD DRIVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
KENT ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
KESWICK ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LAWRENCE ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LAYHAMS ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LENNARD AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LENNARD CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LIME TREE WALK	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LINDEN LEAS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LINKS ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
LITTLE COURT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
MANOR PARK CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
MANOR ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
MARKWELL CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
MONARCH CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
MOUNT COURT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
NORTH ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
OAK GROVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
OAKLANDS AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
PARK AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
PHOENIX CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
PINE AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
PRINCES WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
QUEENSWAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
RAVENSWOOD AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ROBINS GROVE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
RODNEY GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ROSE WALK	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern

ROSSLYN CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SHERWOOD WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SILVER LANE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SOUTH WALK	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SOUTHCROFT AVENUE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SPRINGFIELD GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
ST DAVID'S CLOSE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SURREY ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SUSSEX ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
SYLVAN WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
THE ALDERS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
THE GLADE	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
THE MEAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
TUDOR GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
WEST WAY	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
WICKHAM CRESCENT	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
WILMAR GARDENS	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern
WINDERMERE ROAD	6 metre Fabrikat, 24 LED Urbis (Axia) lantern



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COUNCIL MEETING

2nd DECEMBER 2013

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Tom Papworth of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee

- (i) How many (and what proportion of) major applications were not decided within the 13 week statutory deadline in 2012/3?
- (ii) Of those that were not decided, how many (and what proportion of) were subsequently taken to appeal on the grounds that no decision had been taken?
- (iii) Of those that appealed, how many (and what proportion of) were successfully appealed (i.e. the appeal was upheld)?

Reply:

(i) 45% 58 major applications

(ii) One (76 High Street, Orpington 12/00304/FULL1)

(iii) One (100%) (76 High Street, Orpington 12/00304/FULL1)

2. From Councillor Tom Papworth of the Chairman of Development Control Committee

- (i) What proportion of major applications did not include provision for affordable housing on site in 2012/3?
- (ii) Of those, what was the average financial contribution to affordable housing per unit of housing that was given permission?
- (iii) What is the comparable figure for London as a whole?

Reply:

(i) 2 out of 58 applications (3%)

1 Plaistow Lane – This is a Major due to floorspace, only 9 units does not qualify for Affordable housing.

Maunsell House (58 units total) No affordable units – this application was a revision to the already implemented previous application.

(ii) None

(iii) This figure is not published, the data that is published usually shows the numbers of affordable dwellings.

3. From Councillor David McBride of the Chairman of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee

Will the Chairman join me in congratulating the Committee of Orpington Liberal Club, which is one of the four finalists in CAMRA's National "Club of the Year" competition?

Reply:

I am always pleased to see local success recognised in any field and am not at all surprised at Orpington Liberal Democrats' beer drinking expertise! A former councillor is a real ale expert with an extensive knowledge of micro breweries and their specialist products. Cllr Stranger and I visited the premises on one occasion to discuss a possible beer purchasing coalition with the Conservative club!

The Liberal Club committee has done a superb job with 'first UK tastings' of new ales and a constantly changing selection of real ales. This has been recognised by the local CAMRA branch and I am happy to join Cllr McBride in congratulating them on being one of the four finalists in the national club of the year competition. I suggest he invites all his fellow councillors for a celebratory drink!

4. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

When does he hope to carry out a public consultation at the West Wickham Library on the options for the Swan junction in West Wickham?

Reply:

Subject to obtaining TfL's sign off, it is planned that the consultation will take place early in the New Year.

5. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

When the Improvement and Efficiency Sub-Committee it might receive a report on the work of the Commissioning Board?

Reply:

I am happy to ensure that the Improvement and Efficiency Sub-Committee receives a general progress report on the Council's commissioning activities and will discuss with Cllr Bennett an appropriate time for such a report to be considered. I should add that PDS committees are the correct route for specific proposals to be considered, as has recently been the case, prior to Executive consideration as and when appropriate.

6. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett of the Leader of the Council

If he will list by department, the estimated cost in the budget 2014-15 of:

- (i) each new statutory responsibility imposed since May 2010;
- (ii) each new statutory responsibility created by transfer of central government services to local government;
- (iii) each new statutory responsibility created by decisions of the High Court?

Reply:

(During consideration of the Leader's statement at agenda item 8, Councillor Carr explained that he had advised Councillor Bennett before the meeting that it had not been possible to carry out the work to provide this answer in the time available before the meeting, but that it would be provided in due course.)

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

How many people who previously did not pay council tax are now the subject of court action for non payment?

Reply:

15,481 households were receiving full Council Tax Benefit at the end of the 2012/13 financial year; out of which 9,844 were claimants of working age. This year 1,677 summonses have been issued to those entitled to maximum Council Tax Support.

8. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Will the Council ban the use of snares on Council owned land?

Reply:

I am advised that it is illegal to use a snare in a public place under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Any which are discovered and I understand that number is minimal will of course be immediately removed.

9. From Councillor Peter Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Environment

What proposals are there for the Cycle Superhighway to come to Penge?

Reply:

The proposal is for CS6 to run from Penge to the City via Elephant and Castle.

10. From Councillor John Getgood of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

The DWP has advised Local Authorities that they are now legally bound by the Burnip judgment. As a result, in respect of housing allocation, LAs should allow an extra bedroom for children who are unable to share

because of their disabilities and any reduction in benefit applied as a result of the bedroom Tax, should be lifted and refunded.

What action has Bromley Council taken to implement this advice? How many families in Bromley are affected by this judgment? What are the implications for Bromley residents, financial and otherwise, of this decision?

Reply:

In terms of the Allocations Scheme, the current scheme already complies with this judgement. As in determining bedroom entitlement it takes into account where an extra room is required because two children are unable to share a room on grounds of disabilities, health and so on. This was not changed with the onset of the bedroom size criteria, although such households would obviously have been advised on the potential implications of the bedroom size and criteria and as such there would have been the options to opt for smaller accommodation. Thus all current applications would have been assessed in compliance with this judgement as it essentially mirrors this element of our allocations scheme. There would therefore not be any associated costs in relation to allocations.

I have checked our allocations during this time and there have not been any households unduly affected – such as moving to accommodation without the additional bedroom

In respect of Housing Benefit, all processing staff have been advised of the provision to allow an extra bedroom for children unable to share because of their disabilities. The Housing Benefit IT system has the capability to make this adjustment and to date has been used on 11 occasions. As the requirement for the extra room most commonly manifests itself when the claimants applies for a Discretionary Housing Payment, all applications for assistance under this scheme are first checked to see whether the claimant qualify for additional Housing Benefit under the Burnip judgement.

Increased Housing Benefit awarded to households as a result of the said judgement attracts full Housing Benefit subsidy and as such payment of the additional entitlement is fully reimbursed by the Department of Work and Pensions.

11. From Councillor Katherine Bance MBE of the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

How many food banks do we have supporting families in Bromley?

Reply:

There are 2 key food banks in Bromley which are part of the national network - one is based in Orpington and other at the United Reformed Church in Bromley. This one also has an on-line food request as well. Between the two they do cover the borough and are run through the network of churches. We do have direct referrals in to these and they also

monitor requests to check people really need help and also to identify repeat callers etc to then be able to refer to appropriate services for other advice and assistance. In addition within housing we have access to emergency food and 'essentials' packs for homeless households and can usually arrange for these to be delivered in a matter of hours.

12. From Councillor Katherine Bance MBE of the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

What plans does Bromley Council have for commemorations of the Centenary of WW1 and when will they be published?

Reply:

The Council is currently looking at a number of activities to commemorate the centenary of the commencement of World War 1 and it is with great pleasure I can advise members that we were successful with our bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, who have awarded us £56,000 to deliver our 'Caring for casualties of the First World War in Bromley' project. As a result of this, there will be an exhibition at the armed forces day on the 30th June 2014, with another Civic event at All Saints Church, Orpington, to mark the opening of the 'Canadian Corner'. In addition a number of commemorative panels will be installed at locations across the borough.

13. From Councillor Katherine Bance MBE of the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Safety

Would the Council consider a blanket alcohol ban on street drinking in the borough?

Reply:

Where a Local Authority is satisfied that an area is suffering from alcohol-related crime and disorder, then under section 13 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2001 they may instigate a Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs). This gives Police officers the powers to require a person to stop drinking and to confiscate alcohol or containers of alcohol in such designated public places.

These DPPOs are specifically to address alcohol-related crime and disorder in public places and a local authority may only identify such a public place if they are satisfied that nuisance or annoyance to members of the public or disorder has been associated with the consumption of alcohol in that specific place. Before it is declared, evidence must be presented that there is an alcohol related problem of nuisance or annoyance to the public and/or disorder within the proposed area.

This proposal was previously explored by the Community Safety Team several years ago and it was found that the majority of the Bromley Borough does not have this type of problem and as such we would not be able to initiate such a blanket order for the whole Borough.

14. From Councillor Simon 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:

Between 6th September and 22nd November 2013 the Major Developments Team have had 8 non-householder pre-application meetings.

Between 6th September and 22nd November 2013 the Non-Major Developments Team have had 29 householder pre-application meetings and 22 non-householder pre-application meetings.

Details of the individual applicants and sites at present is exempt information and not disclosable in respect to a Council Question.