

COUNCIL MEETING

15th February 2010

WRITTEN QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (*Revised*)

1. From Councillor Willetts of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

With regard to Kier, having made two attempts (the last swept to a good standard) in LBB car park in Longbury Close on Friday morning 29/1/2010, i) can you tell me why it has taken from the 20/12/09 to 29/1/2010 to remove items of fly tipped rubbish & removal of heavy insitu rotting leaf debris reported on 9 separate occasions to CSC(CC Chief Executive & Director of Environment) ?, ii) can you tell me why dumped suitcase on amenity green adj 59 Broomwood Road is still insitu despite reporting this on 6 separate occasions to CSC(cc Chief Executive & Director of Environment) 12/1/- 4/2/2010, iii) can you tell me why (reported) dumped wooden pallets on amenity green outside 39 Longbury Drive insitu since 14/1/2010 have not been removed?, iv) can you tell me why (reported) fly tipped wood obstructing highway (unconed) Farrington Avenue opposite entrance to Hawkinge Walk insitu since the 1/2/2010 has not been removed as of the 8/2/2010?, v) following a complaint from Mr Mannering of Batchwood Green, can you tell me why rotting slimy leaf debris covering alley steps Batchwood Green through to Leasons Hill has been insitu for 8 weeks?

Reply:

Members will be aware of the significant disruption to services caused by the extended period of snow during December and January.

All backlogs of work accumulated during this period should now have been resolved, including all the issues raised by Councillor Willetts.

There are one or two aspects of this particular complaint that I have not received a completely satisfactory explanation to at this stage which I need further time to complete my investigations on.

As soon as I have, I will append them to this answer.

(Councillor Willetts asked at the meeting when he could expect to receive the answers to his questions as indicated above. The Portfolio Holder advised that it should take only a few days and certainly by Monday the following week.)

Following discussions after the meeting it was agreed to add the information set out below:

- i) *There are 16 reports from Councillor Willetts forwarded from the CSC Agent to the EAL Special email box regarding this matter. The 1st email from Councillor Willetts was on 20/12, then 25/12, 28/12, 29/12, 2/1, 5/1, 8/1, 12/1, 15/1, 17/1, 19/1, 20/1, 21/1, 22/1, 25/1 & 29/1 relating to various issues (fly tipped water pump, leaves, fly tipped fridge freezer, freezer drawers) in the 1st car parking area. Between the 15/12 & 18/1 no action was taken due to regular cleansing duties being suspended due to the pre-salting of footways ahead of the snow event on the 17th December, the Christmas and New Year period and further snow events in the first week of 2010. With full scheduled cleansing duties resuming on Monday 18th January the 1st scheduled clean of Longbury Close was not due until 29/1. The parking area was inspected by the area inspector and a photograph taken of the fly tip on 26/1 and the area manager agreed that this should be cleared on the next scheduled cleanse (29/1) due to the backlog of work and other higher priorities.*
- ii) *There are 6 reports from Councillor Willetts forwarded from the CSC Agent to the EAL Special email box regarding this matter. The 1st email from Cllr Willetts was on 12/1, then 15/1, 17/1, 23/1, 31/1 & 4/2. Between the 15/12 & 18/1 no action was taken due to regular cleansing duties being suspended due to the pre-salting of footways ahead of the snow event on the 17th December, the Christmas and New Year period and further snow events in the first week of 2010. With full scheduled cleansing duties resuming on Monday 18th January the first scheduled clean of Broomwood Road was due on 20/1. The omission of removal on the scheduled day of cleaning will be raised with the contractor.*
- iii) *There is 1 report from Councillor Willetts forwarded from the CSC Agent to the EAL Special email box regarding this matter. The email from Cllr Willetts was on 4/2 stating that the pallets had been insitu for the last 3 weeks however Kier stated that fly tipped pallets have been removed on a number of occasions from this location. Pallets were last removed on 11/2/10.*
- iv) *There is 1 report from Councillor Willetts forwarded from the CSC Agent to the EAL Special email box regarding this matter. The email from the Councillor was on 4/2 and the scheduled cleanse of Farrington Avenue was due on 3/2 and again on 10/2 (weekly Wednesday's) when the wood was removed by the scheduled crew. The alleged failure to remove the material on the scheduled date (03/2) of cleansing will be raised with the contractor.*
- v) *There is 1 report from Councillor Willetts in the EAL Special inbox which was sent to the area inspector on 7/2 for action. The*

following scheduled cleanse for Batchwood Green was due on 12/2 however following a request from the area manager Kier's supervisor carried out an inspection on 11/2/10 and found that leaf debris was still evident and the scheduled crew had not cleaned to the required standards. This was brought to the required standard on 12/2.

2. From Councillor Willetts of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Why do the following grit bins remain empty i) Rushet Rd jcn Cotmandene Crescent shops (not numbered) & ii) outside Taniqs tanning salon (marked nos135) Cotmandene Crescent having reported these on 6 occasions from the 6/1/2010 to 9/2/2010 to the Communications Advisor Strategy & Service Division, Director of Environmental Services & the Chief Executive?

Reply:

According to Council records all of the grit bins in Cotmandene Crescent were filled between 13th and 23rd January. The un-numbered grit bin in Rushet Rd has only recently been added to the inventory, and was filled on 5th February.

Many bins across the Borough were being emptied within hours of being filled during the recent cold snaps, and it is likely that this happened here given the busy nature of this location. There is also some evidence to suggest that salt bins were/are being systematically stolen from (Bexley ceased refilling their bins such were the extent of their concerns on this point).

Routine restocking of these bins with salt has now ceased given the need to manage dwindling stocks in line with the Government's advice but will be filled pro-actively with grit immediately upon receipt of a weather forecast, were same to be received, of an impending heavy snow event.

3. From Councillor Willetts of the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People Services

Could the Portfolio Holder furnish me with the report following the inspection of St Vincent's after school club (Bromley Mytime) made by Catherine Price, Childcare Development Officer on the 21/1/2010?

Reply:

The role of the CYP Department Childcare Development Officer is to ensure that the Borough's schools and early years settings provide sufficient, accessible and sustainable out of school provision and childcare within each community area. A wide variety of schools, early years providers and private and voluntary enterprises deliver this provision within the London Borough of Bromley. The Childcare Development Officer

regularly liaises with and visits providers in order to offer support and advice related to business development and sustainability, service quality requirements and staff training.

In line with her routine support and monitoring visits to settings, the Childcare Development Officer visited St Vincent's After School Club (provided to the school by Bromley Mytime) on the 21 January 2010. These visits focus upon advice and guidance, and do not lead to formal reports.

Following the visit, the Childcare Development Officer provided a verbal report to the relevant Head Teacher.

4. From Councillor Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

What is the policy on replacing pedestrian facilities when traffic lights are temporarily out of action?

Reply:

This will vary from location to location dependent on the site specific circumstances. Could I ask that if Cllr Fookes has a specific location in mind he will please let me know.

(The Portfolio Holder reported at the meeting that he had further text to add to the response as he understood the member was referring to a specific set of traffic lights in Penge.)

Following discussions after the meeting it was agreed to add the information set out below:

'When road works are programmed, be they undertaken by statutory undertakers or by LB Bromley, a plan to manage vehicle and pedestrian traffic is put in place. If traffic lights are used to manage vehicles through the road works, then any nearby crossing may need to be closed, as if it is left in operation considerable congestion and confusion may arise.

Good practice guidance suggests that any alternative crossing place left in operation should be at least 120m from the site of the road works, if it is not to interfere with the traffic lights at the road works. Also to be considered is that if pedestrians are guided to cross very far from their desired line, they will not normally do so.

In the case of the ongoing gas-related road works in Penge High Street, the Council was informed in March 2009 of the timescale and magnitude of the project. In October more detail of the project was decided, and it was agreed that the pelican crossing near Oakfield Road would need to be closed when the nearby section of the High Street was being excavated. The refuge to the north of this crossing is about 170m away. To the south there is a zebra crossing on Penge High Street, some 250m from the

closed crossing. The road works will be moving southward on Penge High Street and are expected to be completed in late May 2010.

There is currently no automated crossing that can be installed on a temporary basis. If a temporary school crossing patrol was deemed to be helpful where road works are in operation, there would be issues with finding and risk assessing a suitable site. Although a detailed assessment has not been made, officers advise me that there does not appear to be a suitable site in Penge High Street between the closed crossing and the zebra crossing for such a patrol.'

5. From Councillor Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

What is the latest position with regard to bringing the Lodge at Penge Recreation Ground back into use?

Reply:

The above property was sold by the Council some years ago and has been empty for quite a while. The property was inspected by one of the Council's Environmental Health Officers in September last year accompanied by the current owner. Whilst from the outside the property appears to look as if it has been abandoned this is not the case. Behind the boarding a considerable amount of refurbishment work has been done to the inside of the premises. The owner is refurbishing this property for his son and the quality of the works undertaken so far reflects his commitment to achieving a high quality end project.

The boards will remain in place until the project is complete. Officers are arranging another viewing date to see the extent of the additional works that have taken place. The officers are satisfied that the owner intends to complete this project and that it will be occupied in the not too distant future.'

6. From Councillor Fookes of the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

What action is being taken against those small number of persistent offenders who abuse the planning system?

Reply:

Breaches of planning control are recommended for action when it is expedient that remedial action is taken. That is the authority a local planning authority is given by planning legislation. Therefore the emphasis is on the significance of the breach rather than the identity of those responsible.

Members are actively involved both at Committee and as Ward Members in bringing breaches of planning control to the Council's attention.

7. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

If he will list the total expenditure, excluding that for clients and service users, in table format for each department the following information for the past three financial years including for the year to date;

- i. The amount spent on taxi and car hire ;
- ii. The amount spent on car loans;
- iii. The amount spent on reimbursing use of cars;
- iv. The amount spent on car loans;
- v. The cost of pool cars and the recharge to each department;
- vi. The cost of reimbursing public transport fares;
- vii. Loans for season tickets?

Reply:

[See attached spread sheets.](#)

8. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

What is the cost of purchasing and installing a 7 foot 6 inch cylindrical column of the sort used to display waiting times?

Reply:

[£121.00](#)

9. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP of the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

If he will list, in table format, the road engineering schemes undertaken in each of the past three years including the year to date including the following information;

- i. cost
- ii. purpose
- iii. whether TfL or LBB expenditure?

Reply:

[A partial response is given in the attached spread sheet – full details will be supplied after the meeting.](#)

(The Portfolio Holder reported at the meeting in respect of the above question relating to costs for the past 3 years that there had been a recent Freedom of Information request on a related matter. This had resulted in information on costs being available for 2008/9 only but had taken considerable Officer time over several weeks to produce

and he would ask the Officers to obtain the figures for 2007/8 and 2008/9 to give to the Councillor Bennett after the meeting. Councillor Bennett indicated he was happy with that response.)

10. From Councillor Fawthrop of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee (to be asked at each subsequent 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:

There have been 42 pre-application meetings between 15th December 2009 and 10th February 2010. 27 of those concerned residential proposals for either new units or extensions and alterations to existing properties. The remainder concerned development for non-residential proposals for various types of commercial or public facilities. Details of the individual applicants and sites at present is exempt information and not disclosable in response to a council question.

11. From Councillor Grainger of the Leader of the Council (to be asked at each subsequent Council Meeting)

In respect of each of the oral and written questions submitted to this Council Meeting, please can the Leader state:

- a) when each question was received by the responding officer? *(to the approx. 1/2 hour)*
- b) How long did it take the responding officer to gather the information for the answer *(approx. working hours)*
- c) How long did it take for the responding officer to complete his draft for the responding Member *(to the approx. 1/4 hour)*

Reply:

Within the time available it has not been possible to collate the replies. This information will be circulated after the meeting.

Response to Question 7 – from Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP

Financial Year 2007/08

Department spend is as per the current departmental hierarchy and does not take into account restructures

			ACS	CYP	Corporate	ES	R&R	Various schemes across all depts LPSA	Member Usage	Total
	Sub Code	Expenditure	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
(i)	0242	* Travel & Subsistence	70	753	2,084	4,838	4,722	0	0	12,466
(vi)	1321	* Public Transport (Staff Travel)	21,252	62,297	11,900	8,613	12,027	2,309	0	118,398
(iii)	1331	Car Allowances (relates to essential users only)	364,568	298,341	70,208	236,892	67,564	6,610	0	1,044,184
		Sub total	385,890	361,391	84,192	250,343	84,313	8,919	0	1,175,048
(v)		Pooled Cars	533	0	144	2,000	0	0	0	2,677
(ii) & (iv) (vii)		Car Loans (net cost to council)								6,839
		Season Ticket Loans (net cost to council)								3,795
										10,634
		Total Travel Expenditure 2007/08	386,423	361,391	84,336	252,343	84,313	8,919	0	1,188,359

(i) * (taxi and car hire cannot be identified separately but would be of minimal cost as this type of travel is not usually authorised)

Financial Year 2008/09

Department spend is as per the current departmental hierarchy and does not take into account restructures

			ACS	CYP	Corporate	ES	R&R	Various schemes across all depts	Member Usage	Total
	Sub Code	Expenditure	£	£	£	£	£	LPSA	£	£
(i)	0242	* Travel & Subsistence	354	102	2,026	4,876	1,589	0	0	8,948
(vi)	1321	* Public Transport (Staff Travel)	26,293	70,566	15,023	9,652	5,665	2,450	0	129,648
(iii)	1331	Car Allowances (relates to essential users only)	377,259	306,229	75,326	236,386	54,891	5,173	0	1,055,264
Sub total			403,906	376,898	92,374	250,915	62,145	7,623	0	1,193,860
(v)		Pooled Cars	1,119	0	303	4,166	0	0	34	5,622
(ii) & (iv)		Car Loans (net cost to council)								-20,647
(vii)		Season Ticket Loans (net cost to council)								4,172
										-16,474
Total Travel Expenditure 2008/09			405,025	376,898	92,677	255,081	62,145	7,623	34	1,183,008

(i) * (taxi and car hire cannot be identified separately but would be of minimal cost as this type of travel is not usually authorised)

Financial Year 2009/10 year to date

Department spend is as per the current departmental hierarchy and does not take into account restructures

			ACS	CYP	Corporate	ES	R&R	Various schemes across all depts	Member Usage	Total
	Sub Code	Expenditure	£	£	£	£	£	LPSA	£	£
(i)	0242	* Travel & Subsistence	398	8	1,141	5,803	602	0	0	7,952
(vi)	1321	* Public Transport (Staff Travel)	16,784	46,890	9,014	6,200	4,200	29	0	83,117
(iii)	1331	Car Allowances (relates to essential users only)	294,368	250,579	52,386	190,367	38,706	2,254	0	828,659
Sub total			311,551	297,476	62,542	202,369	43,508	2,283	0	919,729
(v)		Pooled Cars	888	0	621	3,198	0	0	338	5,045
(ii) & (iv)		Car Loans (net cost to council)								-529
(vii)		Season Ticket Loans (net cost to council)								-10,043
										(Cr £13k relates to advances from previous years)
Total Travel Expenditure 2009/10			312,439	297,476	63,163	205,567	43,508	2,283	338	914,202

(i) * (taxi and car hire cannot be identified separately but would be of minimal cost as this type of travel is not usually authorised)

Response to Question 9 from Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP - Road Engineering Schemes in LB Bromley

Scheme	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10 to date		
Local Safety Schemes	690,000	725,000	604,000	A range of small and large schemes involving changes to the design of roads in order to reduce injury accidents at identified cluster sites, where cost effective solutions have been found.	TfL
Cycling on Greenways	-	47,000	61,000	Developing appealing routes for cycling and walking, largely off-highway, for commuting, play and leisure.	TfL
Bus Stop Accessibility	54,325	88,560	65,000	Improving access for users to bus stops, particularly the elderly and disabled.	TfL
20 mph Zones	-	395,000	400,000	Area-wide safety schemes, to reduce numbers of casualties and improve quality of life for residents.	TfL
Walking	42,130	118,000	98,000	To improve footway provision.	TfL
Local Area Accessibility		-	20,000	Improvements to parking for people with disability.	TfL
Parallel Initiatives	50,000	-	50,000	Schemes to reduce traffic congestion.	TfL
Controlled Parking Zones	-	60,000	50,000	Large parking schemes.	TfL
Principal Roads Maintenance	1,380,490	830,500	660,000	Principal roads maintenance.	TfL
London Bus Priority Network	1,195,370	1,169,625	683,000	Improving bus routes to reduce journey time for buses and, where possible, for all traffic.	TfL
London Cycle Network	452,760	624,550	495,000	To link cycle routes through the Borough to other routes in surrounding areas.	TfL
Bridge Strengthening	155,000	296,000	263,000	An ongoing programme of bridge maintenance and improvement.	TfL
Minor Traffic Schemes	59,127.45	91,443.78	72,442.22	A plethora of minor works, including small parking schemes, disabled bays and general signage. Of which £65k was funded from Section 106 and other contributions in 2008/9 and £49k in 2009/10.	LBB
Planned carriageway maintenance	1,467,530	1,504,680	1,535,560	Resurfacing and reconstruction of non-principal roads	LBB
Planned footway maintenance	2,344,890	2,395,210	2,408,400	Resurfacing and reconstruction of footways	LBB
Environmental fund	0	500,000	800,000	Environmental improvement schemes to improve footway areas	LBB

	Cllr	Issue (Question headline)	Passed To	Date Passed DD:MM:YYY Y	Time Passed to DeptHH:MM (24Hr)	Time to gather info HH:MM:S S	Time to draft response HH:MM:S S	Total Time for response HH:MM:S S
Oral								
1	Cllr Colin Willetts	Longbury Drive	Env Services	09/02/2010	17:33	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
2	Cllr Peter Fookes	Number of Police Officers	PP&S PH	09/02/2010	16:10	0:30:00	0:30:00	1:00:00
3	Cllr Nicholas Bennett	Continental style dog waste bins	Env Services	09/02/2010	16:38	0:15:00	0:15:00	0:30:00
4	Cllr Colin Willetts	Affinity Sutton - rubbish clearance	Env Services	09/02/2010	17:47	0:15:00	0:15:00	0:30:00
5	Cllr Peter Fookes	Ward statistics - street cleanliness	Env Services	09/02/2010	16:13	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
6	Cllr Nicholas Bennett	Rays Road, West Wickham Ladies toilet - adjacent Sainsburys,	Env Services	09/02/2010	16:38	0:15:00	0:15:00	0:30:00
7	Cllr Colin Willetts	Orpington	Env Services	09/02/2010	17:33	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
8	Cllr Peter Fookes	Town Centre Managers	R&R	09/02/2010	16:16	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
9	Cllr Nicholas Bennett	Foreign languages spoken in schools	Env CYP	09/02/2010	16:42	1:45:00	0:30:00	2:15:00
Totals								
HH:MM						3:40:00	2:05:00	5:45:00

	Cllr	Issue (Question headline)	Passed To	Date Passed DD:MM:YY	Time Passed to Dept HH:MM (24Hr)	Time to gather info HH:M M:SS	Time to draft response HH:MM: SS	Total Time for response HH:MM: SS
Written								
1	Cllr Colin Willetts	Sweeping away of leaves/cleaning of rubbish	Env Services	09/02/2010	17:47	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
2	Cllr Colin Willetts	Refilling of grit bins- Cotmandene Crescent	Env Services	09/02/2010	17:47	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
3	Cllr Colin Willetts	St Vincent's After School Club	CYP	09/02/2010	17:38	0:30:00	0:30:00	1:00:00
4	Cllr Peter Fookes	Traffic lights	Env Services	09/02/2010	14:56	0:15:00	0:15:00	0:30:00
5	Cllr Peter Fookes	Lodge at Penge Recreation Ground	Resources	09/02/2010	15:15	0:25:00	0:05:00	0:30:00
6	Cllr Peter Fookes	Abuse of planning system	R&R	09/02/2010	15:20	0:25:00	0:05:00	0:30:00
7	Cllr Nicholas Bennett	Cost of taxi/car hire/car loans/season tickets	Resources	09/02/2010	16:52	1:30:00	0:30:00	2:00:00
8	Cllr Nicholas Bennett	Cost of installing column	Env Services	09/02/2010	16:59	0:10:00	0:05:00	0:15:00
9	Cllr Simon Bennett	Cost of road engineering schemes	Env Services	09/02/2010	16:59	0:30:00	0:30:00	1:00:00
10	Fawthrop	Pre-application meetings	R&R	10/02/2010	10:06	1:00:00	0:30:00	1:30:00
11	Cllr Julian Grainger	Time taken for response to questions	LD&C Services	10/02/2010	17:00	4:00:00	1:00:00	5:00:00
Totals HH:MM						5:05:00	2:40:00	12:45:00