

COUNCIL MEETING

23rd FEBRUARY 2015

QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. Question withdrawn.

2. From Cllr David Jefferys to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Will the Portfolio Holder list the income received in the last two financial years and the projected income for 2025/16 for the collected

- (a) metal cans,
- (b) plastics,
- (c) waste paper,
- (d) glass,
- (e) textiles,

And for cans and plastic, how much is earned per item (or per ten items) collected.

Reply:

Paper income -

2013/14 £958k

2014/15 £847k

2015/16 (projected to be in the region of £3/4m)

Textile income -

2013/14 £107k

2014/15 (projected) £87k

2015/16 (projected) £85k

Glass income (Bring Banks only) -

2013/14 £3k

2014/15 (projected) £4k

2015/16 (projected) £4k

In addition, we have saved £1.4m in terms of avoided landfill tax charges through recycling paper, and £1.06m from green box materials by landfill avoidance. We do not earn anything physically for green box materials per se. The green box value that is released in addition to the landfill tax saving is written into the contract and that pays for the gate fee and the splitting out exercise. It is important to watch this as some of the certain plastics are valuable (up to £300 per ton) but some of the lower grade plastics are borderline useless – it is heresy to say so in some ears, but perhaps the best thing you can do with them is to burn them to produce heat.

Those are the raw numbers, if anyone wants to see more around recycling please let me know. One thing we have to watch very closely as a Council is that the value of collecting green box materials is borderline in pure financial terms. It pays at the moment and we want to continue, but it is fundamentally to reduce the amount we send to landfill.

Supplementary question:

We have an excellent record on recycling in Bromley, but what plans are there to refresh the message about recycling particularly around waste paper. We do need to

go down to fortnightly collection, but we also need to get the message across and drive up collection rates.

Reply:

There are plans for a campaign to boost our collection rates even higher, which are marginally under 50% at present. I anticipate that as Bexley ends its free collection of green garden waste we could be by a small margin the highest recyclers in London by this time next year. A fledgling campaign is already on the drawing board.

3. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Leader of the Council

Which organisations have lost funding from Bromley Council this year?

Reply:

I am assuming that he is referring to the forthcoming year, and I will respond accordingly.

- Bromley MENCAP
- Kids and Crew
- Bromley Gypsy Community Traveller Project
- Mytime
- Somali Well Woman Project
- Somali Community Association
- Bromley Asian Community Association
- Pineapple Club
- Keyring
- Burgess Autistic Trust
- Bromley Shelter
- St Christopher's Fellowship
- CAB
- Bromley Youth Music Trust

Supplementary Question:

Why has it taken until tonight for Members to be informed of those organisations that are going to be losing money from April. The lack of transparency has been appalling this year – goodness knows what it would be like if this Council was on a knife-edge in terms of political control. I really want to see far more transparency.

Reply:

Fortunately I think it will be a long time before this Council is on a political knife edge. I just turn to your comments earlier about the numbers from BYMT that are here. Clearly organisations knew, other people knew what we are proposing, they have been discussed at previous meetings and I am slightly confused by Councillor Fookes' comments.

4. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Leader of the Council

What estimate he has of the cost of new legislation and judicial decisions on the council's budget in each of the past three years?

Reply:

(See appendix 1 - information already circulated.)

A total of £7.4m per annum by the end of this financial year.

Supplementary Question:

Does the Leader agree that, given the number of in-year burdens put on this Council, we need in our budget-setting tonight a reserve which can be used as a contingency for items like this which appear out of the blue from the government or from judicial decisions.

Reply:

We can demonstrate over the last two or three years the prudent approach we have taken in setting our budgets and Councillor Bennett is absolutely right. When we consider our budget later this evening I'm sure that we will be exploring ways to address this in the future.

5. From Cllr Ruth Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Education

What information he has as to the number of children who will be eligible for school in the Borough at the age of 5 in each year until 2020 on the basis of live births and recent inward migration to the borough?

Reply:

The projections we use in Bromley are based on GLA projection figures, together with information on the numbers of live births, the registration of children at GP surgeries, projections in regard to the numbers of children likely to be yielded from major housing developments and information from pre-school providers.

The figures across the borough - there are hotspots in particular locations where there are particular issues - are as follows -

2015/16 - 4,226
2016/17 - 4,209
2017/18 - 4,225
2018/19 - 4,282
2019/20 - 4,317
2020/21 - 4,361

This borough is experiencing considerable inward migration from inner London in terms of families with young children, from immigration from outside the UK and from live births within the borough.

Supplementary Question:

The position is very worrying – how many extra classes will we need to have in place by 2020 and presumably, five years later, secondary classes?

Reply:

The figures that we are currently working on suggest that we will need to have a minimum of seven forms of entry which in most cases represents two primary schools in addition to those already planned and expansions already under way across the borough.

In terms of secondary schools, we would expect to need around twenty seven to thirty new classes across the borough. If there are typically six forms of entry per school this would mean around five new secondary schools.

Additional Supplementary Question:

Councillor Tony Owen asked what the methodology was – he was suspicious of long estimates not ending in zero or five, which suggested that arbitrary percentages were being applied.

Reply:

A 3% margin of error is applied to the figures, plus or minus. This is not a science, but more of an art. The projections for live births will vary for after 2019 in that the children are not yet born. The development level yield is based on the number of bedrooms and the number of dwellings that we are likely to be looking at. The figure of 6,421 used for projections beyond the next three years is based on GLA figures. The methods by which we gather information from pre-school providers are more useful but do not work beyond 2019 as the children are not yet born.

This is a projection, not absolute figures, but it is clear that there is a worrying upwards trend which we have seen for at least four years and the rise so far is consistent with our projections.

6. From Cllr Tony Owen to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection

From April onwards, how will the borough deal with shootings and inter racial incidents, such as the recent McDonalds case?

Reply:

I am reliably informed by Bromley Police that they will continue to take incidents of shootings and inter-racial incidents very seriously, and they will deploy the correct response as it is required.

7. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

What progress has been made in making sure that the Council can enforce parking restrictions thus retaining £1 Million a year to the borough's coffers?

Reply:

Depressingly little. Despite lobbying, press interviews, work at London Councils where there is a cross-borough consensus at the borderline insanity of some of these proposals, despite debates in the House of Commons and House of Lords, where I should single out and praise the Liberal Democrat peer Lord Graham Tope, who described some of the ideas emerging from the DCLG as having been made up in the pub on Friday night, which is where they should remain. We are now in a position, despite the helpful exclusion of school crossing patrols, if boroughs can still afford to run their fleets to police them, it is now going back to the House of Lords on 4th March where I hope they will take the last opportunity to throw out the banning of CCTV vehicles. The downside if they don't will be that we will have reduced road safety capability in the borough and people will park dangerously and we will not be able stop them. The bottom line is that everything comes at a price and the price here will be that good car drivers, non-car users and users of public transport will in effect be cross subsidising irresponsible car drivers who disobey the rules and violate social norms. It is fundamentally not right. I would ask all Members to contact your MPs and ask them one last time to prevent this aspect of the legislation becoming part of the Act.

Supplementary Question:

Could the Portfolio Holder say what response he has had from MPs on this matter.

Reply:

To date I have heard from Jim Dowd MP (Lewisham West and Penge) who has said that he will look at it.

8. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Education

If he will give the location of each youth club run by the Council, the hours of operation, the annual running costs of the accommodation (including recharges), the estimated value of the premises, the annual staff costs (including recharges) and the number of different young people using each club each week?

Reply:

The location and hours of operation for each youth club are included in the Bromley Youth Support Programme, Delivery Schedule and Contracts which are available on the Bromley Council website, a copy of which has been put in the Members Room along with the attendance figures.

9. From Cllr Ruth Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

What representations have been made to Affinity Sutton to encourage them to regenerate their estates within the borough?

Reply:

Whilst LBB does not have statutory powers to direct Affinity Sutton to regenerate estates, there are liaison arrangements in place with Affinity Sutton at both officer and Member level, including twice yearly meetings between the respective Chief Executives, Portfolio Holder and Leader of the Council. The meetings offer the opportunity to discuss and feed in at both operational and strategic level on issues such as regeneration and management of existing estates and plans for future developments. Where concerns or particular issues have been brought to officer and/or Member attention these will be raised at the meetings for agreed resolution.

10. From Cllr Tony Owen to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

From April onwards, how will the Female Genital Mutilation task and finish group maintain trusted contact with relevant groups?

Reply:

The Bromley FGM Task and Finish group was set up by the Bromley Safeguarding Children's Board (BSCB). It has met 4 times and has completed its brief. The Head of Nursing and Safeguarding for Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group represents the BSCB on the pan London FGM Steering Group and provides a link between London-wide and local activity. Officers from the Council and Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group have long established links with local BME groups which provide a conduit to local communities.

A report on FGM will be considered by the BSCB on 3rd March and the joint Care Services PDS meeting on 26th February will receive a briefing from the CCG's Director of Quality, Governance and Patient Safety.

Supplementary Question:

It seems to me that the links have been withdrawn, and I am not sure how we re-establish these links given that the existing link is going. Most of the things mentioned sounded like pan-London talking shops.

Reply:

Councillor Owen is under the misapprehension that there is one single link person – it is my information that there are several people who make contact with the local BME population, not just one.

11. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Leader of the Council

What efforts have been made to share resources with other public or private sector organisations in the borough?

Reply:

In face of ongoing financial constraints, the Council is committed to working with partners in the public, private and voluntary sector, to ensure that Council services remain effective and efficient. This includes developing shared services with Bexley, Lewisham and Greenwich Councils, and identifying opportunities to commission services from other organisations, where standards of services can be shared and efficiency savings generated.

Officers are also in regular discussions with public sector partners, the police, fire service and health sector, to consider the scope for sharing facilities and reducing costs.

12. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Education

What estimate does he have of the cost of providing alternative school places following the decision last year to refuse planning permission for the temporary buildings at Harris Beckenham site for a primary free school?

Reply:

The estimated final cost of the temporary class, fencing and car parking at the Unicorn school resulting from the decision to provide a bulge class there to take pupils from Harris Beckenham was £353k. This does not include officer time which was very considerable and unplanned for.

Following the loss of the appeal, the Planning Inspector added additional requirements on the local authority which will add further as yet unspecified costs to the overall programme. However, we do have an estimate that this could be £130k over the next six years. All of these costs, both capital and revenue, would have to be met through Revenue Support Grant.

The figure above does not include the cost of expanding the planned works at Unicorn School to take the bulge once the temporary class is removed, and the concomitant risks that will arise from having to take these through planning once again. The overall figure may well therefore be nearer to £500,000 once these costs are taken into account.

Appendix1: Question 4

<u>Description</u>	<u>Net cost to Council after grants</u>		
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<u>Finance</u>	<u>£000</u>	<u>£000</u>	<u>£000</u>
1 Council Tax Support New Burdens			
Impact on grant funding	0	811	-25
Council Tax Support New Burdens - funding	-84	-142	-134
	-84	669	-159
2 Changes to Housing Benefit Subsidy			
LHA Changes	-8	0	0
Welfare Reform Fund	-50	0	0
Recession Funding	0	-84	0
HB Reform Transitional funding	-59	0	0
Local welfare Provision set-up costs	-8	0	0
Local Welfare Provision admin funding	0	-173	-159
Payment to Liberata for implementation	50	250	143
Early Adopter of Benefit Cap	0	-280	0
	-75	-287	-16
3 Local Welfare Provision			
Government Funding	0	-819	-819
Northgate Costs	57	75	71
Welfare Fund Programme Costs	0	442	442
	57	-302	-306
4 LGPS	0	37	26
5 Auto Enrolment	0	0	200

Chief Executives

1 Localism Act 2011			
Additional burden being met within existing resources	0	0	0
2 Immigration Act 2014			
Additional burden being met within existing resources	0	0	0
3 Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013			
Implementation of Individual Electoral Registration System	0	25	130
Grant funding	0	-25	-130
	0	0	0

ECS

1 Changes in the disposal requirements for detritus	35	135	145
2 Implementation of Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004			
This means that local authorities are expected to undertake a multi-agency review, following a domestic homicide, to assist all those involved in the review process, in identifying the lessons that can be learned with a view to preventing future homicides and violence. (So far we have had only one which has cost £8,000 for the management and conducting of the review plus associated officer time in Public Protection £4,000.	0	12	0
3 Scrap metal dealers – although the fees are supposed to recover the costs	0	0	0
4 Trading standards based legislations which will give additional enforcement responsibilities	0	0	0

T & R

1 **Planning Regulations**

There is a loss of income arising from the changes to Planning regulations where some applications for house extensions now have permitted development rights linked with a Prior Notification Process. This means that in selected cases, much of the work will have to be done but no fee is received. The Council receive on average 100 such cases a year which means a loss of income of £8,600.	0	9	9
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ECHS

1 **Reforms to the Family Justice System - requires LAs to complete Care Proceedings within 26 weeks.**

1.0 Court Pilot coordinator, 2.0 FTE to undertake connected person assessments within timescales and Increases to Family Group Conferences	9	124	174
Grant received vis SWIF/Monroe and Adoption Grant	-9	-124	-174
Net Expenditure	0	0	0

2 **Changes to the Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood - known as Staying Put policy.**

Gross Expenditure	0	0	160
Grant received	0	0	-36
Net Expenditure	0	0	124

3 **Children and Family Bill 2013 Makes changes to fostering and adoption requirements.**

Gross Expenditure	49	171	346
Grant received (2012-13 Adoption Improvement grant £49,197, 2013-14 Adoption reform grant total £697,592 and 2014-15 Adoption Reform Grant £273,154.	-49	-171	-346
Net Expenditure	0	0	0

4 Academies Act 2010			
LACSEG top-sliced from RSG		6,582	6,582
Grant received (Education Services Grant)	0	-2,957	-2,372
Net Reduction in funding	0	3,625	4,210
5 Care Act			
Gross Expenditure (Estimated cost in 2015/16 £2,876k, grant of £2,598k, net position of £278k)	0	0	125
Grant received	0	0	-125
Net Expenditure	0	0	0
6 Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act. (LASPO). Transfers the central bed costs for secure remand to the LA and also requires LA to consider all remanded young people as LAC. Costs;			
Gross Expenditure	4	269	272
Grant received	-4	-74	-61
Net Expenditure	0	195	211
7 Tower Hamlets Judgement - In respect of Connected Persons payments.			
Gross Expenditure	0	0	60
Grant received	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	0	0	60
8 No Recourse to Public Funds – comes under existing legislation however, case law and how immigration claims are processed and the application of the benefits system means the costs of supporting children and families has been passed to the LA.			
Gross Expenditure	148	539	619
Grant received	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	148	539	619

9 Southwark judgement			
Gross Expenditure	100	100	100
Grant received	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	100	100	100
10 Children and Families Act 2014 - SEN Reforms			
Gross Expenditure	0	0	334
Grant received (2014-15 SEN Reform Grant £382k, 2014-15 SEND Implementation (New Burdens) Grant £152k with 2014-15 SEND Implementation (New Burdens) Grant £107k remaining in contingency)	0	0	-534
Net Expenditure	0	0	-200
11 DOLS			
Gross Expenditure (£628k budgeted for 2015/16. No additional grant funding to cover costs)	0	0	163
Grant received	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	0	0	163
12 Welfare Reform (Homelessness)			
Gross Expenditure	0	1,000	2,200
Grant received	0	0	0
Net Expenditure	0	1,000	2,200