

COUNCIL MEETING**26TH SEPTEMBER 2016****QUESTIONS FOR ORAL REPLY FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL****1. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Leader of the Council**

How, and by whom, are decisions taken about which committee reports and papers are considered under “Part Two” (ie. not available to the public)?

2. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Leader of the Council

What are the consequences for the Council of our External Auditor qualifying their conclusion on the Value for Money we provide with the following words:-

‘We have qualified our conclusion, noting that the Authority has made proper arrangements to work effectively with partners and third parties and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people except for in the areas relating to children’s services and Youth Offending Teams, where the Authority received negative reports from external inspection agencies relating to current performance in these areas, on which basis our opinion is qualified.’

and

Given one of the Authority’s core services has been rated as inadequate, it is evident that resources have not been deployed in a sustainable fashion in these areas within the Council. The way resources are currently being deployed is deemed by Ofsted to be putting children at a greater risk, which is not sustainable in the longer term.

3. From Cllr Kathy Bance to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

We are seeing an increase in casework around protracted Liberata Housing Benefit claims where the resident has either been issued an eviction notice or is under threat of eviction due to rent arrears. Although all requests from Liberata for documentation are in their files the cases sit Pending Review. We Cllrs are asked to intervene by residents and suddenly the cases move to conclusion.

What is LBB doing to ensure that Liberata are fulfilling their duty to our residents and closing out queries as early as possible and so reducing the stress to our residents?

4. From Cllr Vanessa Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal & Recreation

The R&R Portfolio Plan 2016/17 sets out its strategy for the year with various issues for development including for example attracting major private sector investment, attracting external funding, and securing the future of cultural assets, previously part of Marc Hume's remit. Is the Portfolio Holder aware that at last week's E&R PDS it was suggested that he - the Portfolio Holder - should become more involved with the work now that we have no director of Regeneration and Transformation? What are his plans?

5. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Does the Portfolio Holder think that there is a problem with speeding in the north of the borough?

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

When is he going to do something about the disgusting state of the carriageway under the Birkbeck Station bridge?

7. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Leader of the Council

Do you agree with me on the following points:

- That for the three senior figures in this council to all express "surprise" at the recent OFSTED report on Children's Services merely reflects their poor understanding and lack of knowledge about the quality of services being delivered by this council to our vulnerable children?
- That if such a damning indictment of management competence were to have happened in the private sector, "heads would have rolled"?
- That it is time that the quality of all services provided by this council, along with the effective monitoring and scrutiny of them, are given greater priority.

8. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

The OFSTED report states that the Assistant Director for Children has limited authority corporately to lead, share or drive forward change and has absorbed extensive additional responsibilities as part of the council's financial pressures. How can you assure Members and the residents of Bromley that the new Director will have sufficient authority to make the necessary improvements and will not be subject to excessive financial pressures?

9. From Cllr Kathy Bance to the Portfolio Holder for Education:

When will you be in a position to present the options for alternative arrangements for School nurses and will these arrangements have taken into consideration the rise in the number of children self-harming or with some form of emotional or mental illness so that we can ensure there is early detection and intervention for every child.

10. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

What assurances can the Portfolio Holder provide that any future audits and inspections across all of Bromley Care Services will not highlight other deficiencies in the department.

11. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

How many people in Bromley were refused access to the housing register last year?

11. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Whilst being pleased that the long-running troubles at the former Waste 4 Fuel site appear to have been resolved and clear-up work can now begin, can he please update the council on the uncertainty discussed at the Executive on 2nd September regarding the Environment Agency's stated position that any "unforeseen" clear-up costs would have to be borne by Bromley Council?

12. From Cllr Kathy Bance to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

LBB recently introduced a charge for Remembrance Day Parade Services apparently brought about by the police's demand for formal road closures - The cost to be borne by the organiser. The organisers are our communities, uniformed cadets, Ministers, local councillors and residents all who made a promise "not to forget" past sacrifices. Will LBB agree to budget for these services or write to Central Government and strongly advise them that present day cost cutting and budget constraints should not jeopardise this service of gratitude to those who gave their lives for our country and so ensure that future generations can continue to honour them in this formal and public display of gratitude and remembrance.

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

Given that we are always being told about the parlous state of the finances of Bromley Council, when are we going to see an income generation strategy being produced?