

COUNCIL MEETING

12th DECEMBER 2016

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

If he will list in table format the following information for each of the past three years;

1. Each planning application which has gone to appeal;
2. whether the original application was recommended for approval or refusal;
3. whether the application was refused by committee or under delegated powers;
4. the outcome of the appeal;
5. if costs were awarded in full or in part;
6. the sum awarded?

Reply:

Question withdrawn – the information will be provided in a report to Renewal and Recreation PDS Committee on 26th January 2017.

2. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett JP to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

If he will make a statement of the progress made across the Council in commissioning services since 2014?

Reply:

A Commissioning Board has been set up to provide a management overview of all commissioning activity and the validation of information being provided to members. As part of this the Board have taken steps to develop their own and staffs knowledge of the basis of strategic commissioning across the authority. It is a forum for sharing information and intelligence and provides an important (much needed) role in scrutinising and co-ordinating service activities to provide a consolidated pipeline of commissioning across the Council.

The Board has taken steps to embed efficient business practices across the organisation requiring that different models of service delivery are considered and that commissioning decisions are evidenced based looking both at the need and demand for the service. This is now all captured in the outline Business Case Gate 1 Report which is reported to members for values above £500k.

A new contracts database has been commissioned (to be implemented early in the new year) which will further provide transparency and support the organisation to work in a more efficient and effective manner.

The team have also explored different commissioning models such as Joint Ventures, Shared Services, SPVs and Joint Contracting. It is an enabling and facilitating group to challenge and support strategic commissioners. It acts as a peer review.

A commissioning library has been developed which holds all commissioning information such as model specifications, structures for client units, approach around pension liabilities, best practice for contract management and contract monitoring. Best Practice guidance notes are held on the Managers Toolkit along with “Lessons Learnt” from previous commissioning activity for officers to access.

Stronger links with the central procurement team are in place to advise and support on procurement activity for complex commissioning, contracting models and their placement within the market, with the required inputs from legal, finance and procurement staff, particularly with regard to Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Regulations.

The Contracts Register is now ragged red or amber to highlight issues of concern around meeting contract deadlines, which is overviewed by the Director of Commissioning.

Training has been rolled out for members and officers on the commissioning & procurement cycle

Additionally the Director of Commissioning has consolidated management arrangements around the overview and support of service commissioning. A Programme & Project team has been created to ensure that service reviews are completed in a consistent and timely manner.

There is now improved clarity around the work programme of the various commissioning teams and the potential budget savings that might be realised over the next few years.

Examples of the savings delivered in the last two years are:-

				FYE		
				£'000		
Parking				453		
TFM				210	(plus £1m)	
Customer Service Centre				68		
Financial Assessment Team				121		
Parks & Green Spaces				279		
Transport				143		
Mears				4,200	(including gifting)	
Public Health				200		
Supported Living Schemes				628		
				6,302		

Further savings from commissioning that will be reported over the next few

months are likely to be around £500k p.a. relating to changes in how the Council provides its Library services, Extra Care Housing & Occupational Health

New work streams are currently being reviewed by the Commissioning Board, which includes testing of the foster carer recruitment service and block booking arrangements for children's residential placements, both of which should deliver further savings to the Council.

Setting up the Commissioning Board and putting in place clear governance arrangements have and will continue to embed confidence in processes, ensuring accountability and compliance, and ensure that Best Practice and Value for Money is part of normal working practice with key risks identified, quantified and managed.

3. From Cllr Michael Rutherford to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal and Recreation

What is the proposed timetable for compulsory purchase orders (if required) for opportunity site G and when will residents be informed of the process?

Reply:

The Council has shortlisted two bidders for the next phase of the redevelopment of Opportunity Site G and officers are currently evaluating these submissions. It is anticipated that an award of tender report will be considered by the Council's Executive in February 2016 following the completion of the tender evaluation process. This report will advise Members on the details of the bidder submissions, the results of the evaluation process and provide an Officer recommendation for the preferred bidder.

Following the Council's confirmation of the preferred development partner, the developer will be expected to enter into the development agreement within 3 months. The following indicative timetable has been updated to illustrate the estimated length of each stage in the process:

- Council decision to confirm preferred partner – February 17
- Development Agreement signed May/June 17
- Submit Planning Application and Prepare Compulsory Purchase Order documentation Autumn 2017
- Secure Planning Consent Spring 2018
- Compulsory Purchase Inquiry Autumn 2018
- Commence Development Autumn 2019
- Completion Spring 2022

Officers have recently written to update the owner/occupiers in the development site on the proposed timetable and provide them with further guidance on the compulsory purchase order process.

4. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

When a service is contracted out, why are e mails not automatically forwarded to the contractor?

Reply:

It is difficult to give a specific answer to such a general question but reasons can include the agreed responsibilities between client and contractor, the need for client filtering of matters, the fact that e-mails can include matters which may be relevant to a contractor and elements which aren't, the fact the writer may not want their e-mail forwarded and the fact that an e-mail forwarding system isn't able to intelligently judge what to automatically forward.

There are also concerns over forwarding e-mails to all users whether deliberate or accidental and the impact that can sometimes have.

Also if an e-mail is classed as junk mail and we forward it we could be blacklisted by their provider for sending junk mail.

5. From Cllr Peter Fookes to the Chairman of Development Control Committee

Given the vast number of planning enforcement cases outstanding, when will more resources be allocated to this service?

Reply:

Additional resources have been applied to the Planning Enforcement team and the number of outstanding cases has reduced, however, we will be monitoring this closely.

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

Given the increasing numbers of people across all parts of the borough presenting with problematic alcohol abuse, what support is available for the children of those affected?

Reply:

All patients presenting to the Bromley Drug and Alcohol Service for structured treatment (e.g. treatment of alcohol dependence) undergo an assessment which includes establishing whether any children have significant levels of contact with the individual. If there are children in contact, a safeguarding visit is undertaken and a referral made to LBB Safeguarding Services if there is any concern.

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

Can the Portfolio Holder provide the number of residential units for which planning permission was given in 2015/16 and for as much of 2016/17 as information is available, broken down by number of bedrooms? Can he also provide this information for affordable homes, also broken down by number of bedrooms?

Reply:

The attached table shows the total number of residential units for which planning permission was given in 2015/2016 broken down by the number of bedrooms. We do not have these details of the 2016/2017 period available or the sub division by tenure at present and the data is provisional.

Residential Unit Permissions Broken Down by Number of Bedrooms (FY2015)

No. of Bedrooms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(blank)	Grand Total
Grand Total	326	394	47	11	30	1	1	-41	769

8. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

In February 2016, the Council agreed a schedule of 64 savings options (cuts). Can the Portfolio Holder please provide the schedule of forecast savings (cuts), with the addition of the forecast outturn savings (cuts) for 2016/17 and the forecast outturn full year savings (cuts) for each line?

Reply:

The savings list and its progress are attached (appendix 1). It should be noted that whilst there are some timing issues on the delivery of the savings, the vast majority of savings are on track to be delivered and all will be delivered within the full year forecast outturn. It must be appreciated that certain projected figures are subject to verification and approval by Members as part of the Councils procedures.

9. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Can the Portfolio Holder please provide the number of mobile phone masts on Council Property and the annual income from these?

Reply:

According to our records there are four current lettings in respect of “mobile phone masts” on Council property.

West Wickham Leisure Centre, Station Rd, West Wickham BR4 0PY
Current rent £4,250.00 per annum
World of Golf, Sidcup By-Pass, A20, Chislehurst BR7 6RP
Letting 1 - Current rent £1,875.00 per annum
Letting 2 – Current rent £3,269.78 per annum

In addition the Council is finalising a renewal of the phone mast at the Central Depot which will provide for an additional £8,250pa.

Thus making a total of £17,644.78 pa.

10. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Can the Portfolio Holder please provide the number of working age claimants who received Council Tax Support, the percentage these residents were required to pay, the collection percentage for these residents and the general collection percentage for Council Tax for financial years 2013/14, 14/15, 15/16 and 16/17, with the figures for 2016/17 being for year to date? Please also provide the number of claimants who were charged for arrears in 2015/16 and the total amount they were charged?

Reply:

Please find provided in table format the information requested in the above question to the Council meeting of the 12 December 2016.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 (as at 7/12/16)
Number of working-age claimants receiving Council Tax Support (CTS)*	11,572	10,514	9,964	9,493
Minimum percentage working-age claimants were required to pay	8.5%	19%	19%	25%
Collection rate for working-age CTS claimants**	98.71%	98.63%	92.89%	67.55% ***
Collection rate for all CTS claimants**	97.07%	97.18%	92.63%	67.74% ***
Collection rate for non-CTS households	99.8%	99.68%	99.51%	85.69% ***
Collection rate as at the end of the relevant financial year (in-year)	97.6%	97.7%	97.8%	76.55%
Number of working-age claimants where court costs applied			2627	
Value of court costs applied to working-age claimants			£366,091	
Number of CTS claimants where court costs applied			3368	
Value of court costs applied to CTS claimants			£486,118	

*Number of working-age households receiving CTS anytime during the year

** % collected of outstanding sum after CTS applied

*** Please note when comparing current years collection rates, there is a marked difference between CTS households and non-CTS households in the number opting to pay by 12 monthly instalments. In respect of the current financial year the percentages are as follows:

	% paying by 12 monthly instalments
All accounts	9.13%
CTS claimants	29.33%
Working-age CTS claimants	45.5%
Non-CTS claimants	6.44%

11. From Cllr Richard Williams to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment.

There are problems across the Borough with the environment around supermarkets, for example wire cages being left on pavements for long periods of time. What pressure can the Council put on supermarket operators to ensure that these problems are minimised.

Reply:

If the obstruction is on the public highway then the Council can take enforcement action under the Highways Act.

The relevant Enforcement officer for that area will visit the offending shop / store, instruct them that what they are doing is an offence under the Act and issue an £80 fine for any subsequent infractions.

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

Please provide a ward breakdown of Fix My Street notifications, including the nature of the complaint and the time taken to resolve it for the last year.

Reply:

It should be noted and emphasised that Fix My Street is a mechanism for reporting street faults, rather than lodging complaints per se.

The appended table (appendix 2) identifies the number of Street Environment enquiries by type per ward for the last 12 months.

Whilst it is not possible to report on the time taken to resolve each individual report, the table does include the % of reports that have been managed within the relevant published Service Standards (across all channels of contact including FMS, CSC and emails/back office).

13. From Cllr Tony Owen to the Leader of the Council

A constituent of mine asked -

“I've seen some recent Biggin Hill Airport publicity that indicates that the Noise Monitoring and Track Keeping System will be signed off this autumn and introduced during the spring or summer of next year.”

Do you have any information where the equipment will be (or has been) located and to what extent LBB have been involved in its commissioning?

There were also quite specific promises that the data from the monitors would be accessible by residents and about what sort of data would be available. Will LBB be involved in testing this user interface and how will residents be made aware that they can use it? What will happen if it doesn't fulfil all the promises that were made? Will the interface be up and running before LBB gives the go-ahead for the extended hours?'

Who is currently the lead council officer for Biggin Hill matters?

Reply:

We are aware that the Airport have started the installation of their noise monitoring software and have already been sent calibration details of three monitors. We are presently seeking further information on the proposed locations for the fixed monitors and the mobile unit. In terms of signing off a suitable system, we would expect this to occur once the two fixed monitor locations are 'hard-wired' in place, and working correctly and giving the data required to ensure that all operations can be properly monitored and suitable checks made against the noise limits. It is for the Airport to properly commission their system and then to properly demonstrate their system to the Council's satisfaction. The agreement with the Council is quite clear and noise monitoring software does need to be installed to the Council's satisfaction before any change of operating hours can take place. If the Council is not satisfied, the change in operating hours will not be granted. We expect the Airport to make contact when they are ready for this formal process to start. The Council's Communications Executive is continuing to be the nominated co-ordinating lead for Biggin Hill Airport, with the support of appropriate colleagues depending on the exact nature of what is required.

Appendix 1 (Question 8)

PORTFOLIO SAVINGS LIST					Forecast Outturn Savings 2016/17 £'000	Forecast Outturn Full Years Savings 2019/20 £'000
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Education						
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Care Services						
Care Services - Adult Social Care						
1	LD Day Care/Supported Living/Short Breaks	-200	-200	-200	-200	-200
2	Contract awards and price negotiations	-430	-430	-430	-430	-430
3	Adult's Transport Service	-243	-243	-243	-243	-243
4	Closure of Lubbock House ECH unit	-70	-70	-70	-70	-70
5	Commissioning - Further contract savings	-280	-280	-280	-280	-280
6	Mental Health	-180	-180	-180	-180	-180
7	Supporting People	-120	-120	-120	-120	-120
8	Day Opportunities - continuation of invest to save	-100	-100	-100	-100	-100
9	In-house Extra Care Housing / Carelink	-40	-40	-40	-40	-40
10	Supported Living contracts	-100	-100	-100	-100	-100
11	Adult Learning Disabilities Services	-1,390	-1,900	-1,900	-1,900	-1,900
12	Review of Domiciliary Care packages for Older People (OP) and People with Physical disabilities (PD) *savings will be realised but there are emerging cost pressures in 2016/17 which means that it will not be achieved in 2016/17	-600	-600	-600	0	-600
13	Reablement - recruit to vacant facilitator posts / ensure all service users suitable for reablement are referred to the service *delay in savings, savings will be realised	-250	-250	-250	-57	-250
14	Review of respite provision (OP and PD)	-50	-100	-100	-50	-100
15	Focus on management of ECH voids re residential nursing placements	-334	-334	-334	-334	-334
16	Review all service users aged above 65 whose placements are above the ceiling rates *savings will be realised but there are emerging cost pressures in 2016/17 which means that it will not be achieved in 2016/17	-380	-380	-380	-23	-380
17	Review of service users needing Appointeeship & Deputyship	-60	-60	-60	-60	-60

PORTFOLIO SAVINGS LIST		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Forecast Outturn Savings 2016/17	Forecast Outturn Full Years Savings 2019/20
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
18	Increased income from Day Care and Transport	-200	-200	-200	-200	-200	-200
19	Additional recurring underspends - Commissioning	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20
20	Additional charging income generated by legislative changes * not achieved, covered by contingency in 2016/17 only. Will re realised in later years	-503	-503	-503	-503	0	-503
21	Better Care Fund Grant	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000
22	Invest to save - reablement *delay in savings, savings will be realised	-150	-150	-250	-250	0	-250
23	Supporting People - Increased efficiencies *delay in savings, savings will be realised	-250	-250	-250	-250	-174	-250
24	Further savings to be identified through efficiencies	-500	-1,000	-1,000	-1,000	-500	-1,000
25	Better Care Fund - increase in negotiated funding of social care	-631	-631	-631	-631	-631	-631
	Total Care Services - Adult Social Care	-8,081	-9,141	-9,241	-9,241	-6,105	-9,241
	Care Services - Children's Social Care						
26	Reduce overall net cost of Placements through efficiencies and obtaining health income. Currently 33 Residential and 345 Fostering placements *delay in savings, savings will be realised	-500	-500	-500	-500	0	-500
27	Savings from remand placements (LAPSO). Service has operated for two years (achievable)	-250	-250	-250	-250	-250	-250
28	Review of fostering arrangements	-119	-119	-119	-119	-119	-119
29	Management Savings/Restructure - Care & Resources	-160	-160	-160	-160	-160	-160
30	Children with Disabilities	-120	-120	-120	-120	-120	-120
31	Section 17 - Preventative Payments (Children's Act - Provision of services for children in need, their families and others)	-25	-25	-25	-25	-25	-25
32	Section 18 - Children's Act - Day care for pre-school and other children	-25	-25	-25	-25	-25	-25
33	Full year saving of 2 residential placements (currently 33 residential placements)	-250	-250	-250	-250	0	-250
34	Virtual School efficiencies	-75	-75	-75	-75	-75	-75
	Total Care Services - Children's Social Care	-1,524	-1,524	-1,524	-1,524	-774	-1,524
	Public Health						
35	Sexual Health	-104	-104	-104	-104	-104	-104
36	NHS Health Checks	-126	-126	-126	-126	-126	-126
37	Health Protection	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
38	Childhood Obesity Programme		-188	-188	-188	0	-188
39	Adult Obesity Programme	-59	-59	-59	-59	-59	-59
40	Physical Activity	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30	-30
41	Substance Misuse	-420	-420	-420	-420	-420	-420
42	Smoking and Tobacco	0	-726	-726	-726	0	-726
43	Miscellaneous Public Health Prog	-12	-202	-202	-202	-12	-202
44	School Nursing	-958	-958	-958	-958	-958	-958
45	Public Health Staff	-325	-325	-325	-325	-325	-325
46	Public Health Unallocable	-36	-36	-36	-36	-36	-36
	Total Public Health	-2,077	-3,181	-3,181	-3,181	-2,077	-3,181

PORTFOLIO SAVINGS LIST					Forecast Outturn Savings 2016/17 £'000	Forecast Outturn Full Years Savings 2019/20 £'000
	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	2019/20 £'000		
Public Protection and Safety	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment						
47 Additional parking Income - details to be confirmed	-350	-350	-350	-350	-150	-350
48 Reduce provision in graffiti and chewing gum removal contract (proposed that reduction in town centres to be undertaken by traders)	-60	-60	-60	-60	-60	-60
49 Deletion of outstanding balance for cleansing contract in central contingency (replace by one off Environment Fund, value to be determined)	-60	-60	-60	-60	-60	-60
50 Income generation - parks and greenspace	0	-50	-50	-50	0	-50
51 Overachievement of savings on change in collection frequencies in regards to residual waste and recyclable materials	-250	-250	-250	-250	-250	-250
52 Additional savings from closure of garden satellite sites (may be rephased to reflect a specific interim arrangement)	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20
53 Street Lighting - extend invest to save repayment period by 3 years	-353	-353	-353	-353	-353	-353
Total Environment	-1,093	-1,143	-1,143	-1,143	-893	-1,143
Renewal and Recreation						
Recreation						
54 Eliminate Churchill Theatre subsidy	-321	-321	-321	-321	-321	-321
55 Commissioning of Libraries (savings represent 10% of budget)	0	-446	-446	-446	0	-446
Total Recreation	-321	-767	-767	-767	-321	-767
Resources (including Chief Executive's)						
56 Operational Property	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20	-20
57 Facilities and Support	-116	-116	-116	-116	-116	-116
58 Property Investment (FYE of properties actually purchased & those in the process of being purchased, will meet savings target)	-685	-850	-850	-850	0	-850
59 Office accommodation - site reconfiguration	0	0	-600	-600	0	-600
Resources (including Chief Executive's)						
60 Chief Executive's	-319	-319	-319	-319	-314	-319
61 Retendering of IT contract (IT general £73k and Libraries £46k)	-119	-119	-119	-119	-119	-119
62 Continuation of Liberata contract for a further 2 years and investment of £200k to generate changes in debt management and customer portal		-448	-633	-726	0	-726
63 Interest on balances	-650	-650	-650	-650	-650	-650
64 Increase in minimum contribution for council tax support	-685	-685	-685	-685	-685	-685
Total Resources	-2,594	-3,207	-3,992	-4,085	-1,904	-4,085
Total Savings to date	-15,690	-18,963	-19,848	-19,941	-12,074	-19,941

Appendix2 (Question 12)

WARD	DRAINAGE CLEANS- ING	ENFORCE- MENT	GRAFFITI	HIGH- WAYS	PARKS & GREEN- SPACE	STREET CLEANSIN G	STREET LIGHTING	STREET- WORKS	TREES	Grand Total
BICKLEY	16	119	5	141	32	213	99		59	684
BIGGIN HILL	16	125	5	160	30	199	91		52	678
BROMLEY COMMON & K	24	134	29	174	165	762	148	2	56	1,494
BROMLEY TOWN	49	125	45	205	66	612	152	2	58	1,314
CHELSEFIELD & PB	25	177	16	182	65	310	89	4	73	941
CHISLEHURST	33	184	50	293	72	311	115	4	61	1,123
CLOCK HOUSE	19	136	38	117	30	693	54	2	64	1,153
COPERS COPE	19	145	29	102	30	337	64		46	772
CRAY VALLEY EAST	37	233	47	183	134	798	100	6	70	1,608
CRAY VALLEY WEST	11	144	37	174	50	459	122	5	40	1,042
CRYSTAL PALACE	20	116	235	68	126	697	46	2	28	1,338
DARWIN	7	66	3	137	67	184	47	3	30	544
FARNBOROUGH & CROF	25	112	14	193	73	190	119	1	94	821
HAYES & CONEY HALL	9	94	21	262	122	218	133	6	90	955
KELSEY & EDEN PARK	20	129	19	125	71	430	81	1	81	957
MOTTINGHAM & CN	16	90	14	66	33	199	31		30	479
ORPINGTON	20	104	19	126	67	285	104	5	55	785
PENGE & CATOR	20	189	114	125	70	956	91	1	68	1,634
PETTS WOOD & KNOLL	31	102	20	174	28	234	135	1	49	774
PLAISTOW & SUND	16	112	11	105	12	289	89		68	702
SHORTLANDS	12	48	8	127	18	246	61		37	557
WEST WICKHAM	18	96	13	156	31	174	68	2	95	653
Grand Total	463	2,780	792	3,385	1,392	8,796	2,039	47	1,304	21,008
% of enquiries within SLA*	98%	90%	99%	98%	99%	98%	87%	95%	99%	

*across all enquiries not just FMS