

COUNCIL MEETING

1ST MARCH 2017

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

What representations he has received about parking in Ravenswood Avenue and what has been his response?

Reply:

The only representation I recall receiving in recent times was copied in to you by email, along with my reply timed at Monday 22/08/2016 13:56.

2. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

If he will set out in table format for the each of the past three years the following:

- i. the number of people provided with accommodation as a result of being declared homeless;
- ii. the number of family units this represents;
- iii. the number who were or are Looked After Children ;
- iv. the principal reasons for them becoming homeless;
- v. the average length of time a person stayed in homeless accommodation
- vi. the average cost
- vii. the total cost?

Reply:

		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 Q1-3
i	No of people provided with accommodation	1933	1956	1474
ii	Number of family Units	814	813	611
iii	Former looked after/ reason for homelessness	0	3 Main Reasons: Loss of private rented accommodation Loss of accommodation with relatives/friends	1 Reason: Domestic Violence
iv	3 main causes of homelessness	Loss of private rented accommodation Loss of accommodation with relatives/friends Relationship Breakdown/domestic violence	Loss of private rented accommodation Loss of accommodation with relatives/friends Relationship Breakdown/domestic violence	Loss of private rented accommodation Loss of accommodation with relatives/friends Relationship Breakdown/domestic violence
v	Average length of in homeless accommodation	428 Days	398 Days	455 Days

vi & vii: The accommodation costs relate to Nightly Paid placements only:

Average Costs Nightly Paid Accommodation Types per Week

Year 2016/17 (Dec 16)

Bed Size	Landlord Charge	HB Subsidy	Personal Charge	Cost to LBB
Room	193.87	164.40	16.10	13.37
Rooms	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Studio	235.41	194.11	0.00	41.30
1 Bed	267.78	182.25	0.00	85.53
2 Bed	327.64	208.20	0.00	119.44
3 Bed	384.73	227.10	0.00	157.63
4 Bed	474.95	342.28	0.00	132.67

Year 2015/16 (Year End)

Bed Size	Landlord Charge	HB Subsidy	Personal Charge	Cost to LBB
Room	208.93	167.57	16.10	25.26
Rooms	569.33	155.75	30.80	382.78
Studio	233.80	191.67	0.00	42.13
1 Bed	283.61	184.85	0.00	98.76
2 Bed	345.65	211.95	0.00	133.69
3 Bed	404.19	234.45	0.00	169.74
4 Bed	472.33	323.37	0.00	148.96

Year 2014/15 (Year End)

	Average Annual Cost			
	Landlord Charge	HB Subsidy	Personal Charge	Cost to LBB
Room	218.06	168.39	16.10	33.57
Rooms	362.62	155.76	30.80	176.06
Studio	243.71	193.64	0.00	50.07
1 Bed	295.08	192.30	0.00	102.78
2 Bed	351.74	221.88	0.00	129.85
3 Bed	435.83	264.62	0.00	171.21
4 Bed	486.53	344.65	0.00	141.87

Year 2013/14 (Year End)

	Average Annual Cost			
	Landlord Charge	HB Subsidy	Personal Charge	Cost to LBB
Room	196.01	167.73	16.10	635.10
Rooms	350.02	190.34	30.80	6,719.65
Studio	261.07	204.68	0.00	2,940.32
1 Bed	294.98	194.27	0.00	5,251.17
2 Bed	349.55	227.64	0.00	6,356.48
3 Bed	447.15	274.11	0.00	9,022.44
4 Bed	490.03	310.05	0.00	9,384.15

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 to date
NPA	744006 3640	£6,789,464.03	£8,414,061.59	£10,662,181.00	£7,689,882.00
		-	-		
NPA	744006 9008	£4,607,703.78	£5,678,322.30	-£7,403,325.00	-£4,086,348.00
		<u>2,181,760</u>	<u>2,735,739</u>	<u>3,258,856</u>	<u>3,603,534</u>

3. From Councillor Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

In 2017-18 budget what is the percentage of Council revenue accounted for by:

- i. Council tax
- ii. Government grant
- iii. Income from charges and fees
- iv. Interest on investments?

Reply:

The 2017-18 Draft Revenue Budget includes the following:

	£m	£m	%
Council Tax		143.2	27.0
Business Rates Retention		36.5	6.9
Government Grants			
Housing Benefit	132.3		
Dedicated Schools Grant	80.4		
Other Specific Grants	33.1		
Revenue Support Grant	<u>10.9</u>	256.7	48.3
Fees and Charges		46.1	8.7
Interest and Investment Income			
Rental Income from Investment Properties	9.8		
Interest on Balances	<u>2.9</u>	12.7	2.4
Other Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions		35.6	6.7
Total Income		530.8	100.0

4. From Councillor Ian Dunn to the Chairman of Development Control Committee

On how many planning permissions for new residential units from calendar years 2014 and 2015 has work not yet started? Please break down the response by year and by number of bedrooms. Please also provide the number of residential planning permissions granted in these two years, broken down by number of bedrooms?

Reply:

This information is not available at present but similar information will be prepared and forwarded to Cllr Dunn.

5. From Councillor Ian Dunn to the Leader of the Council

Further to his mail dated 12 January 2017, can the Leader explain how the Council's Policy Development & Scrutiny arrangements will apply to the responsibilities for Children's Services which were transferred from the Care Services Portfolio to the Education Portfolio?

Reply:

As Leader, I can make changes to Portfolio responsibilities, but any changes to PDS Committees will require approval by full Council. For the moment, PDS arrangements remain unchanged, but the Constitution Improvement Working Group has been looking at this issue and I anticipate that whatever changes are considered to be necessary can be put in place at the annual meeting of the Council.

6. From Councillor Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

How many of Bromley's homeless are armed forces veterans and has LBB a policy in place which gives specific ongoing support to them as they make the transition from institutional living to independent living?

Reply:

The Allocations Scheme is framed with specific provision to comply with the covenant and legislation regarding members of the armed forces and their family. The wider policies around homelessness and housing advice also seek to ensure the ongoing support for all households presenting and requiring assistance from the Support and Resettlement service with specific reference to those leaving the armed forces. This work seeks to support assistance provided directly to those leaving the armed forces to ensure they are able to secure accommodation.

There have not been any applicants accepted as homeless having left the armed forces in the past 5 years. Housing Register: 5 applications where the applicant has identified themselves as a former armed services personnel or family member.

7. From Councillor Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

What is the Council doing to anticipate the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit on the number of people applying to join the Housing Register? Please provide information on the number of people on the Homeless Register at the end of each month from January 2016 to now?

Reply:

The Council has a dedicated Welfare Reform Team within the Housing Department. The team work closely with housing benefits, the DWP and a range of agencies to raise awareness regarding the changes arising from welfare reform and support households through these changes to reduce the risk of homelessness.

This work includes identifying those households affected, to target advice and assistance. This work has included assisting households with benefit, financial and

budgeting advice, access to training, education and employment and moving to more affordable homeless.

The framework for UC provides for managed payments of the housing element in certain circumstances. Extensive work has been done to ensure that this process operates smoothly for those more vulnerable clients to ensure the rental element continues to be paid directly to the landlord.

Work is currently underway to prepare for the universal credit digital roll out in Bromley and this includes, as with all tranches data analysis to inform the likely impact on levels of housing need.

The Number of Households on the Housing Register:

Jan16	Feb 16	Mar 16	Apr 16	May 16	Jun 16	Jul 16	Aug 16	Sept 16	Oct 16	Nov 16	Dec 16	Jan 17
2731	2743	2853	2859	2976	3061	3140	3199	3329	3301	3380	3431	3544

8. From Councillor Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection

Have we any cases of radicalisation in the past 3 years and if so, how many and what was the date of the last case?

Reply:

We do not report on the detail of cases received relating to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. This is exempt from information requests and Home Office guidance states that we should not disclose detail around referrals.

Within Bromley the Council has a robust process in place to deal with any concerns that are raised around radicalisation. This referral process is aligned with all other safeguarding pathways and ensures that, in partnership with the police, risks to the individual and the public are firmly managed.

9. From Councillor Richard Williams to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Network Rail have felled a large number of trees at Anerley station without consultation with local residents. This has created loss of privacy for many. What is the process for the felling and should Network Rail have consulted with Bromley Council and residents?

Reply:

I am advised that Network Rail felled the trees on their own land and that it is not a requirement for them to consult with local residents or the Council.

I emailed them for more details on your behalf upon receipt of your enquiry and mid-afternoon today received the following response:

“A letter drop was not carried out on this occasion which was an oversight on our part (Network Rail) and we would like to apologise for that and any inconvenience this caused. Any future works will involve a letter drop to local residents”

Albeit disappointing, I hope that is helpful information for local residents.

10. From Councillor Richard Williams to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Once a report has been made on Fix My Street what is the target time for investigating & resolving issues which are the Council's responsibility? How does the Council monitor its contractors' compliance with these targets? What percentage of issues were resolved within target during 2016?

Reply:

Timescales vary depending on the service and the issue. Our service standard aims are outlined at:

<http://www.bromley.gov.uk/fixservices>

A twice weekly report of all open FMS reports is then generated with a RAG assessment being applied against each item.

In 2016 95.17% of all reports (phone and FMS – we monitor all together and FMS only cannot be split out independently) were dealt with within the expected status service times

11. From Councillor Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

Please supply copies of the equalities impact assessments undertaken in relation to the changes made to the non- residential contributions policy agreed by the Executive on 10th January 2017.

Reply:

The completed equalities impact assessment will be presented to Care Services PDS on the 21st March and will be published online at the same time.

12. From Councillor Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

There is evidence of extremely poor administration of utility and other bills which should have been passed on to tenants in relation to both Anerley Town Hall and Crystal Palace Museum. As a consequence, the council has not received considerable sums it is owed.

Given that the council also failed to pass on rent increases to Liberata for space they occupy at the Civic Centre site, please provide details of all such similar uncollected debts from across the Borough.

Please also clarify whether these sums are to be included in the additional income generated by Amey (of which the council will receive only a percentage) under the terms of the recently implemented TFM contract.

Reply:

It is accepted that a number of issues have come to light with regard to the billing of telephone bills for Anerley Town Hall business units and work is on-going to quantify this position. The significant point here though is that now the Council has moved to appoint Amey and Cushman and Wakefield, a major review of leases and licences is being undertaken to ensure the Council receives all income it is due under the terms of the leases. A number of workshops have taken place with the both organisations in conjunction with finance and legal leads from the authority to ensure that as we move forwards leases are and remain fit for purpose, this exercise was always envisaged as part of the commissioning of the Total Facilities Management contract with Amey and Cushman and Wakefield bringing a significant commercial approach to property management that did not exist before.

The additional income committed by Cushman and Wakefield will not comprise any monies owed to the Council as a consequence of existing leases.

13. From Councillor Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for the Environment

What assurance can the Council give to residents thinking of becoming Street Friends that they are providing an additional service and not replacing council services?

Reply:

I am very happy to confirm that volunteer Street Friends serve their neighbourhoods and supplement the Council's Area Inspection function, either by taking direct action themselves between scheduled visits, and/or by reporting faults, ideally on Fix my Streets, the data from which assists line managers in their contract management function.

14. From Councillor Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Will he produce a car park strategy for Penge that ensures that motorists do not receive unfair parking tickets in the Blenheim Centre in Penge?

Reply:

The Council is in the final stages of completing a parking review across a large swathe of Penge as you are already aware.

It is not within the Council's gift to dictate the parking ticket strategy operating within privately run Blenheim Centre Car Park.

I believe that the Penge & Cator Ward Councillors have actually covered this ground previously on their own website:

<https://pengeandcatorcouncillors.wordpress.com/2015/11/10/iceland-car-park-unjust-parking-fines-information/>

15. From Councillor Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

What cuts to the smoking cessation and sexual health services in Bromley are going to take place in 2017/18?

Reply:

The Council will not commission any smoking cessation service from 1 April 2017.

Bromley is part of a pan London Smoking Cessation Transformation Project which will deliver a Proactive Telephone Counselling pilot between May and October 2017.

In relation to sexual health services, the Council is in the process of re-procuring the community sexual health services.

The re-procured sexual health service focuses on early invention and enablement as well as encouraging services to be more integrated. The new service continues to have current elements of sexual health except sex education in schools. While we have not continued with direct delivery of sex education in schools, the specification requires the new provider to support and enable schools to develop and incorporate their own programme into the wider PHSE curriculum, where schools have expressed a wish to do so.

16. From Councillor Peter Fookes to the Portfolio Holder for Care Services

What is the waiting time to see an occupational therapist and how many people are currently on that list?

Reply:

There are currently 145 people waiting to see an Occupational Therapist. Waiting time for non-urgent referrals is 3 months. These are people who need more than information, advice and guidance e.g. can access facilities to wash but cannot get in the bath or access their shower. The list is prioritised after an initial screening and those who need urgent support are seen within 5 working days. e.g. 1 day for safeguarding or those who cannot access the toilet?

We are addressing the waiting list by piloting mobile working, developing appointments at Lewis House. The Team Leaders are continually reviewing practice and systems to implement improvements to work flow which should reduce non urgent waiting times.