

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

5.1 QUESTION FROM RAY SMITH TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING - COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE

“What steps are the Council Taking to address the 225% increase in residential burglaries [and an increase in motor vehicle theft] that is in the main attributed to the unsupported placement of serious prolific offenders into properties in Barnhill Ward by a neighbouring local authority”

5.2 QUESTION FROM TREVOR BEGG TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, HEALTH AND HOUSING - COUNCILLOR CORTHORNE

“The current Southern Cross healthcare residential care block contract expires next year. The councils policy as per national government guidelines is to move to a spot purchase system under the self directed support agenda, this would ordinarily involve an increase in the cost per bed compared to current arrangement, the thinking is to offset this by involving up to seven other boroughs in a new joint commissioning arrangement. The potential complexities of this process cause many concerns. Please can the council confirm that the safety, dignity and level of care for existing residents under the current contract will be maintained and future customers of the new service, by comparison, will not be disadvantaged in any way due to cost implications or a change in expected service levels?”

5.3 QUESTION FROM PETER SILVERMAN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - COUNCILLOR JENKINS

“In January 2004 the LBH Cabinet approved proposals to introduce “On The Spot Fines” for littering which promised “A tough and energetic enforcement regime” and “A no tolerance approach to littering..”

Subsequently I understand that only 2 people were fined for littering in the whole of 2004. I have asked for the numbers of on the spot litter fines levied in the period since 2004 but have not received any response from the Council.

In the LBH 2006 residents' survey, cleaner streets were flagged up as one of the most important concerns amongst residents.

The May 2008 ENCAMS Capital Standards Report (litter and associated environmental issues) stated: “The London Borough of Hillingdon appears to be performing below both National and Capital Standards benchmarks”. The report's Matrix showed that for All Areas, i.e. the overall picture, LBH was rated as Unsatisfactory for Cleansing Standards/Litter

In September 2008 the Council commissioned MORI to carry out a wide ranging opinion survey. Hillingdon residents were asked about their degree of satisfaction with a wide range of services. However they were not asked to give a satisfaction rating for street cleansing! In spite of this the Council's follow up press release <<http://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=16727>> reporting on the survey,

said under main findings: “A clean and attractive borough - very high levels of satisfaction”.

In a letter to the Ruislip & Northwood Gazette in August this year Kathy Sparks, the Council’s Deputy Director of Environment, stated that:

“The Council has recently carried out a survey about litter and 92% of people were in favour of us taking tougher action against those who drop litter. In response to this in the coming months the Council will be launching a litter campaign to prosecute and fine those caught throwing rubbish out of their cars and dropping litter in the streets”

I e-mailed the LBH Chief Executive Hugh Dunnachie on 7th August referring him to this letter and asking him what additional resources will be allocated to this program and how many prosecutions and fines the Council will be targeting per annum.

In his reply of 18th August he said: “Publicity materials for the “Litter Campaign” are currently being produced for a launch in early September 2009. It will target those throwing litter out of their cars windows in line with the “Tidy Britain Campaign” and also litter in town centre areas rather than numbers of prosecutions”

Details of the above matters can be seen at www.hillingdon-watch.org.uk
<<http://www.hillingdon-watch.org.uk>>

Could the Lead Member please tell me if the new campaign is to be primarily an advertising / publicity event - in other words a rerun of 2004, or will it have real teeth, in which case what additional manpower will be allocated to levying on the spot litter fines and what number of fines are you targeting or estimating per annum?”

5.4 QUESTION FROM JOHN MORGAN TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES – COUNCILLOR SIMMONDS

“It has been claimed in a recent newsletter circulated in Northwood Hills that our schools have been 'robbed' of funds. Therefore can the Cabinet Member of for Education clarify what investment the Council has made in Education directly on the schools in Northwood Hills?”