

CITY COUNCIL – 7 JULY 2015

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL FROM COUNCILLOR
ROGER HARMER**

**“Choose Location of District Committees Under New Governance
Arrangements?”**

Question:

**Could the Leader clarify whether under the new governance arrangements
District Committees will be able to choose the location of their meetings?**

Answer:

District Committee meetings will be held in the Council House or an appropriate city centre venue. This will enable effective support through Democratic Services that will not be possible if the meetings are held beyond the city centre, and attendance by public sector partners seeking to respond to a new neighbourhood challenge responsibility asked of District Committees.

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WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES FROM COUNCILLOR MATT BENNETT

"Major Dental Surgery Required"

Question

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee recently received the following written answer to a question asked by Cllr Barry Bowles at the last Committee Meeting.

"Question: How many statements of Special Educational Need have been converted and how many new Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans are in place?"

Answer: As of 16th June 2015, 361 EHC plans are in place including 229 statements of SEN converted (transferred) to an EHC plan and 132 new EHC Plans finalised since the 1st September 2014.

Context: the Local Authority is required to transfer all statements of SEN (n= approx. 7500) between 1st September 2014 and 31st March 2018. The Local Authority initially planned to transfer 2722 statements in year one as described in the Local Transition Plan that is available on the Local Offer. This target was not a requirement to deliver but a Local Authority decision based on early DfE guidance. As of June 2015 the Local Authority is below the end of year target having only received 51% of those expected from schools and colleges, N = 1502 and having finalised 229. Of those plans that have been finalised 58% have been delivered within the 16 week timeframe.

We are aware that nationally, many LAs are facing similar challenges to Birmingham with regards to the implementation of the SEN reforms. Whilst there is no comparison data relating to EHC transfer work, in terms of new assessments evidence exists to show that LAs face difficulty meeting statutory deadlines. Statistical first release data from the DfE (May 2015) reflects that in England 64.3% of new plans issued (between September and December 2014) were within the 20 week time limit. This is compared to 89% of statements of SEN issued during 2014. There does appear to be recognition also that new systems will take time to embed as within the same guidance it states 'It is important to realise that some new processes may take longer because they are unfamiliar.'

In having tested the new EHCP processes over the last 8 months, it is clear that the allocation of time to specific activities requires extension. Whilst amendments have been made to streamline various processes and procedures it has not been possible to deliver the requirements as laid out in the Code of Practice within the statutory time-frames. In part this is due to the expectation that the LA will co-produce EHCPs with children, young people and their families. Birmingham's EHC Assessment and Transfer Pathways have been reviewed by the DfE and are regarded as sound practice. To keep within the spirit of the reforms therefore, it is unclear what further amendments can be made to the Pathways without losing this ethos.

With regard to the demand on the service relating to EHCP Transfers, it was difficult to predict in the previous Business Case what impact this would have as it is an area of work not previously delivered. Over the last year we are now in a better position to understand the demands of this activity and recognise that additional capacity is required to strengthen the LA's strategy in this area of work. To this end a business case has been developed for additional capacity in SENAR and awaits final approval.

Furthermore amendments are planned to the Local Authority's transition plan for year 2 to ensure that EHCP transfer targets are manageable bearing in mind that there is a statutory duty to complete the transfer of all statements to EHCPs by 31st March 2018."

This means that you have achieved less than 10% of your target for the year. Whilst this is, to an extent a national issue Birmingham's performance is significantly worse than that of other authorities. Of course, any new system experiences teething problems but in Birmingham's case it appears that major dental surgery is required.

The government recognised the potential for some of these problems and therefore made the following additional grant funding available to the Council to deal with the programme of change and to deal with any new burdens and responsibilities:

Special Educational Needs Reform Grant (2014-15) - £1,770,934

**Special Educational Needs & Disability Implementation Grant
(New Burdens) (2014-15) - £991,910**

**Special Educational Needs & Disability Implementation Grant
(New Burdens) (2015-16) - £795,391**

In total the government has therefore provided £3,558,235 of additional resources to assist in the implementation of these changes. Could you please provide a detailed breakdown of how this funding has been allocated and spent in the previous financial year and in the current year to date?

Answer:

This funding has been protected in full to implement the reforms, nothing has been top sliced from the children for whom these grants are intended.

Last year delays in mobilisation led to a £2m underspend which has now been brought forward into this year. In addition, I've also agreed with the Deputy Leader to bring forward the plans for using the 2015/16 new burdens allocation for additional staff in the SENAR team and the process of recruitment has begun.

In total, the £3.55m grants will be spent as follows:

	£000
Staff dealing with assessments	1,780
Professional support and outside assessors	1,629
Communications with parents and children	80
IT support	69
Total	3,558

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

"Removal of Experienced LA Governors"

Question:

How does removing experienced local authority governors from governing bodies improve the quality of governance?

Answer:

The updated procedure for the recruitment, nomination and deployment of Local Authority governors supports the view of the National Governors' Association that in order to keep governing bodies refreshed and revitalised, all governors should be restricted to two terms of office (eight years) at the same school. Consequently we will not be nominating Local Authority representative governors who have served at a school for eight years or more to serve for a further term at that school. Instead we intend to retain the considerable experience and knowledge they have accumulated by offering them the opportunity to serve on another governing body, or, given their rare level of experience, as an Interim Executive Board Member at a school causing concern that needs targeted support.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT,
TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY FROM COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY
HUXTABLE**

“Lollipop, Lollipop”

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member confirm as detailed in written question B7 and its appendix at the City Council meeting on 3rd March 2015 when a school crossing patrol warden service will be restored to the zebra crossing outside St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, Selly Oak Road, Kings Norton (which is also extensively used by pupils at Kings Norton Girls School, Kings Norton).

Answer:

The crossing point referred to (B501) was last staffed in 2011. Since then a number of measures have been put in place to improve road safety in the area and, in addition to a zebra crossing, the site benefits from 20 mph speed limits and speed cushions.

All school crossing sites are subject to on-going review and the priority ranking of individual sites can change over time, as traffic and pedestrian flows alter; road layouts change; and other road safety measures are installed. My colleague the Cabinet Member for Inclusion & Community Safety has asked for a review of all sites to assess whether their classification is still appropriate and further information will be available when this review is complete. The sites referred to in this question are part of this review.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT,
TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY FROM COUNCILLOR ROB SEALEY**

“Is this the way to Lifford Lane”

Question:

At a recent Stirchley Neighbourhood Forum meeting, residents raised many concerns about access to Lifford Lane Waste Management Depot and the progress of traffic along Lifford Lane, Kings Norton.

Could the Cabinet Member update me with regard to what road traffic measures he will implement along Lifford Lane, Kings Norton.

- **To reduce vehicular queues entering Lifford Lane Waste Management Depot.**
- **To reduce road congestion along Lifford Lane.**
- **To reduce air pollutants/pollution in the locality.**
- **To prevent emergency vehicles being stuck in road congestion.**
- **To prevent through traffic being stuck in road congestion.**

Answer:

A number of enhancements have been made on the Lifford Lane Household Recycling Centre (HRC) to improve the throughput of traffic and to reduce potential congestion on Lifford Lane. The measures introduced have had a positive impact in reducing the amount, and extent, of queuing from that seen during the summer 2014 period. In summary, the following measures were introduced:

- Extra HRC site capacity into Lifford Lane (one of 3 'Super sites') for the summer season started in April 2015. This has included reconfiguring the site to increase the amount of traffic on site, and speed-up throughput
- An overspill 'green waste only' lane was introduced between 12:30-16:00 on Saturdays and between 08:00-16:00 on Sundays, which will continue at weekends throughout the summer period
- Recruitment and introduction of extra recycling operatives to speed up throughput

- Traffic counters installed to monitor the traffic throughput.

My colleague, the Cabinet Member for Sustainability, has asked for webcams to be introduced by the end of July so that the public can view the current status of the queues within the centre, in order to plan their visits.

The site operators, Veolia, wrote to the residents living around Lifford Lane and provided them with the details of the improvements and obtained feedback on whether or not the improvements have made a difference. The feedback was very positive. Residents had noticed that traffic had reduced, and that there had been a reduction in noise.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT,
TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT**

"Backlog of Dropped Kerbs"

Question:

In April the Cabinet Member said, in a written response to myself, he had been assured the backlog of delayed dropped kerbs would be cleared by the end of May. Was this achieved?

Answer:

In my response to your question in April 2015, I promised that all residents who had paid for their footway crossings that are part of this backlog would be contacted and given an indication of when the work will be carried out.

I am pleased to say that this has happened and, with a good deal of effort from the City Council and Amey Tree Officers, the backlog of tree assessment and subsequent removal work was carried out successfully within the timeframe promised.

There are four cases where specific site issues need to be resolved, and in each case the customer is aware of the situation. These are as follows:

- Two sites with nesting birds in the canopy, where weekly checks are being undertaken
- One where a neighbour's car was parked underneath the tree, while on holiday. This work is scheduled for next week, following their return.
- One where there has been some opposition to the tree being removed following appropriate consultation. I understand you are directly involved in this matter.

We continue to work with Amey to ensure that the flow of orders and delivery of work is regularised to prevent any further backlog.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR DEVELOPMENT,
TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY FROM COUNCILLOR SUE ANDERSON**

"Carers incurring Parking Tickets"

Question:

A number of carers are incurring parking tickets because they are unable to park near their clients' homes. Given the low wages paid to carers, would the Cabinet Member consider issuing "carer on call" passes to enable them to get access to their customers?

Answer:

In cases where carers wish to park near homes where parking and loading restrictions, such as double yellow or single yellow lines apply, those restrictions need to be adhered to, primarily for the purposes of road safety. In those cases it would not be appropriate to provide for a permit which allows for parking and long-term waiting on those restrictions.

However, as you should know, the provision of carers' permits is already an established part of residents' parking schemes, in order to enable residents with caring needs within those types of restricted areas to have the flexibility to provide parking for visiting carers. Such permits can be arranged through contacting the Council's Parking Services section.

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WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT

"Carers Parking"

Question:

A number of carers have incurred parking tickets through being unable to park near their clients' homes. Given the low wages paid to carers, would she discuss with the relevant Cabinet Member the prospect of issuing "carer on call" passes to enable them to get access to clients?

Answer:

Thank you for the question. I refer you to the answer provided by my colleague, the Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy, to your question under C4.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABILITY
FROM COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY HUXTABLE**

“Re-cycling Money”

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member detail how much funding was allocated by the Government to Birmingham City Council specifically for cycling (including the LSTF bid by Birmingham City Council for Bike North Birmingham) between

- a) May 2005 – May 2010; and**
- b) May 2010 – May 2015**

Answer:

Funding mechanisms for major transport projects have differed significantly between the time periods indicated. Pre May 2010, funding was provided via Regional Funding Allocations (RFA), which allowed local authorities to bid into a non-specific funding pot of circa £100m per annum across the region, but none of this for cycling.

Funding for major cycling infrastructure was not precluded from the RFA funding process. However, infrastructure was progressed on a smaller scale utilising Integrated Transport Block (ITB) resources between 2005 and 2010 (£5m allocated over this period).

Post May 2010, funding for transport has been focussed on specific funding streams, initially highway maintenance, integrated transport and the local sustainable transport fund (LSTF), followed by the introduction of the Local Growth Fund and the City Cycle Ambition Grant. In terms of resources secured by the Council, £4.123m was allocated by the Government from LSTF to support the Bike North Birmingham project in 2011.

With the development of the Birmingham Cycle Revolution, the scale of cycling ambition has been significantly increased in the city, with a total of £45.1m secured post May 2012 through nationally competitive processes (Cycle City Ambition Grant rounds 1 and 2 (£17m and £22.1m); Local Growth Fund via the GBSLEP Strategic Economic Plan (£6m)). The financial commitment of the Council in providing a £16m local contribution towards cycling has been instrumental in securing these resources and demonstrating our clear intention to become a sustainable cycle ambition city.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABILITY FROM
COUNCILLOR ROGER HARMER**

"How many bulky collections by month in last 2 years?"

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member indicate how many bulky collections have been requested by month over the last two years?

Answer:

Bulky Waste Collections - Total: 52,934

Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
5993	4443	4364	4322	3690	3078

Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14
3924	3638	3974	1024	943	980	1134	1042	999	1019	1030	581

Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15
909	1003	1169	1331	1145	1199

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WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABILITY FROM COUNCILLOR JON HUNT

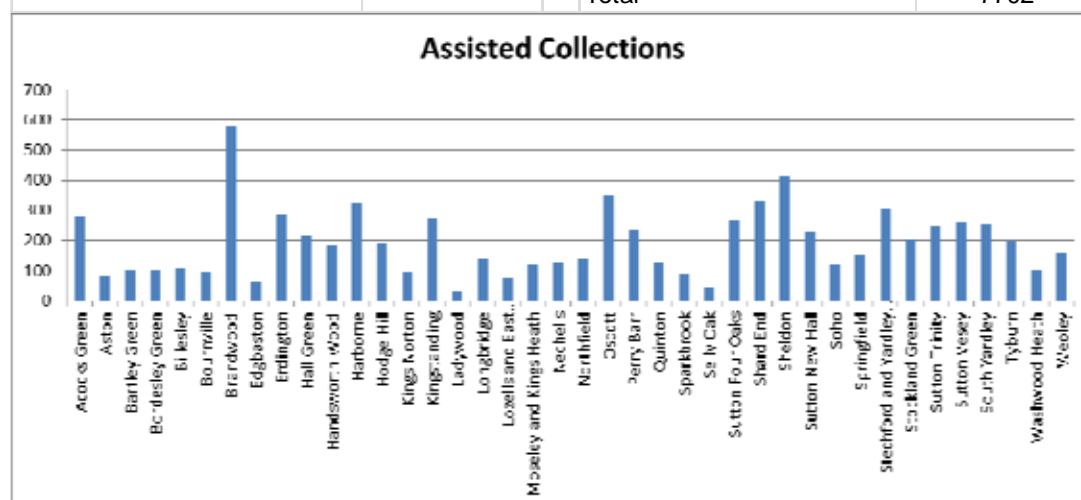
"How many receive assisted collections by Ward?"

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member list, by ward, how many households are receiving assisted collections with their refuse collection services?

Answer:

Ward	Assisted Colls	Ward	Assisted Colls
Acocks Green	277	Northfield	136
Aston	81	Oscott	352
Bartley Green	98	Perry Barr	233
Bordesley Green	100	Quinton	129
Billesley	108	Sparkbrook	88
Bournville	95	Selly Oak	47
Brandwood	580	Sutton Four Oaks	269
Edgbaston	64	Shard End	335
Erdington	288	Sheldon	413
Hall Green	217	Sutton New Hall	229
Handsworth Wood	184	Soho	119
Harborne	327	Springfield	153
Hodge Hill	194	Stechford and Yardley North	306
Kings Norton	93	Stockland Green	206
Kingstanding	275	Sutton Trinity	245
Ladywood	33	Sutton Vesey	259
Longbridge	136	South Yardley	250
Lozells and East Handsworth	80	Tyburn	199
Moseley and Kings Heath	120	Washwood Heath	100
Nechells	128	Weoley	156
		Total	7702



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WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABILITY FROM COUNCILLOR KAREN TRENCH

“Reports of Flytipping over last two years”

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member set out how many reports of flytipping the Council has received monthly, over the last two years?

Answer:

Reports of Fly Tipping - Total: 34,524

Jul-13	Aug-13	Sep-13	Oct-13	Nov-13	Dec-13
n/a	503	1258	972	1037	1053

Jan-14	Feb-14	Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14	Sep-14	Oct-14	Nov-14	Dec-14
1158	939	1279	1490	1650	2020	2211	1629	1539	1126	1074	1271

Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15
1667	1549	3510	2871	2718

It is worth noting, however, that even these figures mask inaccuracies caused by misreporting of missed collections which have been falsely recorded as fly tipping, such as instances where black bags have been presented by flats above retail properties following the roll out at Redfern Road for normal waste collection, and missed by the operatives as suspected fly tipped. An evaluation of the waste enforcement service will be brought forward to O&S for consideration in due course.

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**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABILITY FROM
COUNCILLOR JERRY EVANS**

"Success rate in clearing flytipping?"

Question:

Could the Cabinet Member indicate the current success rate in clearing flytipping that is reported?

Answer:

	Days taken to Collect			
	Within 3 days	Within 5 days	Within 10 Days	Over 10 days
Dumped Rubbish	74.13%	7.58%	6.86%	11.43%