

**COUNCIL
25 March 2014**

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

1. Councillor Thirkill

Can the Portfolio Holder outline the progress of the Industrial Centres of Excellence Programme?

Answer

The Centre of Excellence for Business was the first Centre to fully open in September 2013, significantly exceeding its opening target of 80 students; achieving over 100 students in the first year. Their main learning resource is a state of the art office simulator at Shipley College.

The ICEs for Environmental Technologies; Construction; Digital, Advanced Manufacturing and Engineer will fully open in September 2014. They are currently developing the curriculum in these areas between local businesses and the learning providers.

Each ICE has a Board for governance purposes, led by a lead business partner. Currently there are 87 businesses engaged with the programme as lead or associate partners alongside 13 educational partners. Each Centre of Excellence focuses on a sector skill area so that young people and their families can identify the range of career pathways available to them.

2. Councillor L'Amie

What action is proposed to allow a higher proportion of the district's parents to obtain their first choice of school for their child?

Answer

Parents can express a preference for a school but do not have a choice. For a number of schools within Bradford District there are more parents expressing a preference for a particular school than there are places available. In such circumstances there will be a number of parents who are not allocated their first preference. The only way to resolve this would be to expand these schools and admit more children.

There are currently sufficient year 7 places across the District to meet demand and therefore the Council cannot demonstrate to the Government a 'Basic Need' (the need for more places) and could not attract capital funding from DfE to build more places. An additional issue is that most of the secondary school sites would not support further expansion. The Council continues to offer support to schools and families when making an application for a school place in order to ensure realistic preferences are expressed.

Supplementary Question

I do not have an Oxford English Dictionary with me but I would rather think that one definition of preference is choice. My Supplementary Question is does the Portfolio Holder feel that there would be a more even display of preference if there was a more even provision of standard.

Councillor Berry

Firstly the law is very clear since the Greenwich Judgement. It is not choice, it is the ability to express a preference and the more we get that across to people, the better it would be. Yes you are right, if we had a more even distribution of standards which perceptions often shape decisions and I would really like anybody who is involved to try and help any of us get across that issue that leads 70 people, I think it is over 70 people, to just put one preference on their form. Because it is very difficult for us to deal with that and if you have got a word with your friend Mr Gove we could do with that funding agreement for the new Dixon City School because there are 115 kids we can allocate to that school the moment we get the funding agreement. If you add that 115 to the 70 then we would have been making progress this year.

3. Councillor Sunderland

Does the Leader of Council agree that since the private rented sector provides homes to almost a fifth of households in Bradford MDC that the time has come to introduce a formal scheme to register and quality assure the District's Private Sector Landlords?

Answer

Licensing all privately rented properties is only one tool that can be used to improve or maintain standards. The Council already delivers a number of services aimed at improving conditions in the private rented sector and information suggests that district wide licensing is not necessary at this time.

Supplementary Question

Does the Leader agree with me that given the number of Councillors that declare to be private sector landlords that we must be seen to operate with absolute transparency in this area when determining policy.

Councillor Green

I think that is less a question about housing and more a question about the honesty of elected Members. My personal view is that the fact that every member of Council who is a private landlord declared that I think demonstrates that most or all members of this body understand the position they are in and declare and are open about their declarations of interest. I do not think that that is relevant to the question that Councillor Sunderland asked and clearly the crux of that has been answered in the answer that has been given to her question.

4. Councillor Karmani

Will the Education Portfolio Holder explore the need to build a new three form primary school in the BD5 area given the increased need for school places in the next 10 years and what are the plans to increase school places in the city area?

Answer

The Council monitors the need for school places on an ongoing basis and expansions of schools go through a process of consultation and decision making. The Department of Education (DfE) through the Education Funding Agency grants capital monies to the local authority to enable it to expand schools or build additional ones where needed in response to the growing population. Currently the Council has been allocated money for 2014/15 and 2015/16. We do not know what future allocations will be. This makes planning beyond the next two years very difficult, although we continue to put things in place ready for the announcement of future funding beyond 2015/16.

Two new Primary Schools have recently opened in the BD5 area, the Dixons Music School has opened and the Rainbow Primary School has recently moved from BD8 to BD5.

We have recently completed (in the last 12 months) expansions at All Saints C of E (BD5/City); Bradford Academy (now an all age through school for ages 3 -19) (BD4); Carwood (BD4); Horton Park (BD5); Knowleswood (BD4); Lower Fields (BD4); St Stephens C of E (BD5) and Copthorne (BD7/City)

We consider that there are now sufficient school places in the area you refer to up to 2016/18. However we continue to calculate and research potential future needs beyond this date.

5. Councillor Engel

Does the Leader support the Local Government Association's calls for the Government to re-think its proposal to cut Local Welfare funding from 2015?

Answer

I do support the call for the Government to re-think its decision to cut Local Welfare Spending from 2015. I have already written to the Secretary of State to express my concern about the impact that such a shortsighted measure will have, particularly in an area of high need like Bradford, but also in light of the continuing reductions in benefits and problems with the assessment process for the disabled in our district.

6. Councillor Jabar

How is the Council intending to deal with concerns from parents who have not been allocated any of the schools for which they expressed a preference?

Answer

311 out of 7,081 applicants for a secondary school place for September 2014 have not been allocated any of the schools for which their parents expressed a preference. Of these 311, 77 only expressed one preference on the application form and a further 43 only expressed 2 preferences. The Council continues to offer support to schools and families when making an application for a school place in order to ensure realistic preferences are expressed.

Changes to secondary provision, including the addition of Free Schools, whilst providing additional places has impacted on admission arrangements. The Council is working with all Secondary schools to review the current admission arrangements to ensure all parents

have a realistic opportunity to gain a place in a school for which they express a preference.

For over 90% of Secondary schools in Bradford District the Local Authority is not the admission authority. These schools are Academies, Trust, Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools and are their own admission authorities who determine their own admission arrangements.

7. Councillor Ellis

Given that the Waste (England & Wales) Regulations 2011, as amended by the Waste (England & Wales) (Amendment) Regulations of 2012 and commonly known as TEEP, takes effect from 1 January 2015, can the Leader of the Council inform us of what steps are being taken by this council to fulfil its legal obligations?

Answer

The revised EU Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC) was transposed into English law through the Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) regulations 2012 and becomes effective on 1st January 2015. The aim is to provide the collection of high quality recyclates, and will require councils to collect at least paper, metals, glass and plastics at the kerbside by way of separate collection, unless there are valid reasons why it is Technically, Environmentally, and Economically Practicable to do otherwise (the TEEP test).

Unfortunately the much needed TEEP guidance proposed by Government (DEFRA) was cancelled in January, leaving the waste industry in the difficult position of establishing what TEEP means, and how it avoids any legal challenges.

Currently this Council collects high quality recyclates, with separate containment for paper and co-mingled glass, cans and plastics where practicable, and is thus in a good position to demonstrate that we satisfy our legal requirements.

A working group involving local authorities and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is due to publish further information on TEEP in April/May, and this will be reviewed in detail before considering further our position on satisfying the requirements of this Directive.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for your answer. The last paragraph in actual fact gives me some concern in that we appear to be awaiting the WRAP recommendations when quite clearly DEFRA have said that Councils should consult their own legal Counsel to ensure that they have interpreted the law and of course the concern is that there could be a legal challenge. Can we be a bit more precise? Have we consulted our legal people in the knowledge that there could be a legal challenge?

Councillor Andrew Thornton

I think the statement that you are referring to about consulting our own legal challenge stems from DEFRA who have proved themselves to be about as much use as a chocolate teapot in this particular issue. Having translated the relevant Waste Framework Directive into UK law they have now abdicated any responsibility whatsoever for trying to give guidance to Councils about how and where they should seek to comply with it particularly given the fact that they were involved in the judicial review of their translation

into UK law in the first place. We have not consulted legal Counsel but what we do intend to do is look at the best advice that comes forward in relation to the work of WRAP and then we can perhaps see whether or not we need to actually do that but I think it is a bit of a red herring on the part of DEFRA to suggest that we should all look to our own legal Counsel on this.

8. Councillor Swallow

Can the Portfolio Holder outline what steps will be taken to share the practice identified in recent Children's Centre Ofsted Reports?

Answer

Children's centre managers have regular district wide network meeting which provide a forum for updating on district and national issues and for sharing of good practice. Topics have included the new inspection framework, producing a self evaluation framework

Children's Centre managers also have local cluster meetings to support local co-ordination and planning of services and sharing of information and intelligence.

Family Support cluster meetings provide a conduit for sharing emerging issues from inspection and serious case reviews.

Children's Centre Improvement Officers have quarterly contact with centres and would highlight any relevant key points from inspection reports be these good practice or areas of practice that have arisen in more than one report.

Training for Advisory Chairs and members has been scoped and will be rolled out during 2014/15.

9. Councillor Lynne Smith

Can the Portfolio Holder for Social Care and Health tell us how much the Council has set aside in its budgets since 2010 to meet the costs associated with the increasing demand for social care arising from the increasing numbers of older and disabled people. Can he also indicate whether he has any concerns about the potential financial implications for the Council of the forthcoming Care Bill?

Answer

2010/11	£2.5m
2011/12	£3.25m
2012/13	£5.0m
2013/14	£2.54m
2014/15	£1.139m

A further £2.4m has been set aside to meet other financial pressures in social care bringing the total to £16.9m.

There are concerns about the future financial implications of the Care Bill. The Bill is still going through the parliamentary process, so there are details that are still unknown.

The Government has calculated the implementation costs for local authorities and included this in the overall allocations of the Better Care Fund. For Bradford the total

Better Care (pooled) Fund is £37,260,000 of which the Government has calculated £1.8m should be for implementing the Care Bill.

There is work being undertaken at national, regional and local levels, led by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) to develop modelling tools that will calculate the expected costs associated with implementation to ensure that local authorities receive sufficient funds to implement the so called “new burdens” associated with the new legislation.

Supplementary Question

I am just looking at these figures. It seems to me based on what we know of the demography of Bradford that I would like to ask the Leader whether he has any concerns that £1.8m is any more than a drop in the ocean.

Councillor Green

I think that you are right that we are doing best guesses and also looking at the resources that are actually available to the Council to meet what we know is going to be an increase in demand. What is clear from all the forward projections that have been done by local authorities up and down the country is that there will come a point where almost the whole of the Council budget or spare budget is likely to have to be committed to Adult and Social Care given the growing demands that we are seeing historically in the future and somebody desperately needs to identify both the funding at a national level and look at the way that the provision for the Care Bill and the demographic changes that the whole country is facing are going to impact on local services because if we have the duty and we are proud to have the duty of looking after the older and more vulnerable communities in our district then the current financial situation is not going to be sustainable be that in Bradford or any other local authority in the country as I think all the forward projections have shown in whichever local authority you are talking about.

10. Councillor Whiteley

As the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Planning, Nick Boles MP has announced that local authorities must consider the aging population when granting planning permissions and that every local authority must ensure sufficient bungalows, flats and sheltered accommodation to meet the growing demand for homes for older people, can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport advise how Bradford is going to encourage this to happen?

Answer

Addressing the requirements of a growing and ageing population and responding to their needs effectively is identified as a strategic challenge in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment and the Council’s Housing Strategy for the Over 50s ‘Great Places to Grow Old’. This strategy seeks to ensure that new housing is built to meet the needs of an ageing population. The challenge of ensuring appropriate housing provision for older people needs to be addressed in two ways. Firstly by provision of a broad range of specialist forms of accommodation, such as sheltered and extra care housing, and secondly by ensuring that the design of general market housing allows for people to remain in their homes for as long as they wish to and are able to.

The Local Plan Core Strategy approved by Council in December for submission to government for examination seeks to address the housing needs of older people, through policies on housing mix and housing quality. Policy HO8 Housing Mix

identifies the strategic housing priorities required to help address particular housing pressures and the requirements of specific groups in the District. Residential schemes which support the strategic housing priorities identified in Policy HO8 will be encouraged. Supporting specialist older people's accommodation in suitable locations and in areas of greatest demand is identified as a Strategic Priority. A further strategic priority is to increase the supply of accessible housing which is able to meet people's needs throughout their lives.

Policy HO9 Housing Quality requires new homes to be designed to be accessible and easily adaptable to support the changing needs of individuals over their lifetime, including people with disabilities. The Council will encourage new housing to achieve the Lifetime Homes Standard (or any subsequent revised national standard). Larger sites of 10 dwellings or more will be expected to include a proportion of accessible homes as part of the overall housing mix and consider the provision of specialist housing for older people and people with disabilities. This will be assessed through evidence provided by the applicant that housing achieves Lifetime Homes standards, the British Standards for Accessible Housing or any subsequent revised national accessible housing standard

The provision of housing for the elderly is identified as a priority in the Council's Local Investment Plan. Should bids be made by Registered Providers for grant to support elderly persons accommodation in the 2015-2018 affordable housing bid round these bids will be supported by the Council. The Council is currently building 33 two bed flats for those over 55 years of age Gilstead Bingley

11. Councillor Jabar

When did the Council become aware of the dumping of building waste at the former Rentokil site on Northfield Road, what action has it taken about it and what steps can now be taken to rectify the situation?

Answer

A complaint about 'mud on the road' was made to the planning service by e-mail on 18th September 2013. The planning history of the site was checked immediately and the site visited without delay on 19th September 2013. Photographs were taken to assist further investigation and a report was made to the Environment Agency. The operator was interviewed and told to cease. The Environment Agency, relying on the support of the planning service then issued a formal notice on the site operator requiring removal of waste. The Environment Agency have received an appeal in relation to their notice and the Planning Service are currently assisting the Agency in relation to their appeal. The Environment Agency also have a process in place which may result in further legal proceedings once their solicitors have considered the matters in hand. In summary, the appropriate steps are being taken through partnership working, and once the outcome of the EA investigations are known then the planning service will consider if further action is required.

12. Councillor Middleton

Question to Cllr V Slater Portfolio Holder for Transport

Why is it now taking Bradford Council over four weeks to fix broken Street Lights reported to it through Council Contact?

Answer

Since October we have received unprecedented volumes of street lighting faults which have created a backlog, at its worst this was around 900 outstanding repairs. Despite working weekends it has taken a long time to get the work back on track. I am investigating whether there is an underlying reason for the high number of faults such as premature lamp failures. Currently we are working on faults reported around 8 to 10 days ago and by Easter we will be back to the normal repair times.

Supplementary Question

Just referring to the third line of Oleksa I am wondering when we will know in terms of the investigation whether there is an underlying reason for why a number of lights have stopped because a number of them that I personally reported appear to be brand new lights that have sometimes only been in for a couple of months. So I wondered whether we would know when the answer to that question would be coming back.

Councillor Val Slater

Thank you for that bit of information Councillor Middleton. That does sound concerning. It is something I will follow up. I do not have a direct answer to your question as to how long it will take but I will get on to it. I will hurry them along with the answer and I will send you the answer in writing.

13. Councillor Greenwood

How is the Council dealing with the new rules enabling Councils to increase the recovery costs for Council Tax arrears?

Answer

The Government have increased the costs the Council must charge for taking enforcement action against those that fail to pay their council tax or business rates. As a last resort bailiff action is required, the fees have gone from £24.50 for a first visit, then £18.00 for subsequent ones, to a flat fee of £235 regardless of the activity undertaken by the bailiff, this is in order to counter excessive costs being applied by rogue bailiffs. Prior to the case being passed to the bailiff team we attempt other forms of recovery, if we are unable to apply deduction from wages or benefits and the tax payer has failed to engage with the council tax team we apply a government set fee of £75 which we refer to as a compliance charge.

Prior to the above recovery action taking place a summons is issued to the tax payer, previously we have charged £85 for council tax and £100 for business rates, as the subsequent costs referred to above have been increased by government we have been able to reduce these initial summons costs to £40 for council tax and £50 for business rates.

This change in summons costs is timely as we come to the end of the first year of the new council tax reductions, which has seen many low income families failing to pay the charge and facing a significant increase in debt because of the addition of court costs. This change will bring some relief to this group, as many of them have payments deducted from their benefit and will therefore be subject to lower summons costs and the compliance charge rather than spiralling bailiff costs.

14. Councillor Heseltine

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sport advise colleagues, in the Scores on the Doors Food Hygiene scheme, of the 27 zero rated (urgent improvement needed) and the 271 one rated (major improvement needed) establishments as of 10 March 2014, how long has each establishment languished at this rating?

Answer

The rating awarded to premises under the Food Standard Agency (FSA) Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) is arrived at via an external scoring matrix and is not recorded on Environmental Health Service's (EHS) database in the format requested.

EHS inspections score premises against eight categories. The outcome of the most recent inspection/visit is reported on EHS's database. The FHRS uses the score from three of these categories (food hygiene, structure conditions, confidence in management) to calculate its rating.

The FHRS rating awarded to a premises is retained until the next full inspection.

The frequency of inspection by EHS is determined by 'risk rating' each premises, with high risk premises visited every six (6) months. This 'risk rating' is generated by what the premises score in the eight categories checked at inspection.

Where a visit identifies an imminent risk to health then EHS officers would close the business either by agreement or through formal action in the courts.

Where an EHS inspection identifies problems requiring urgent or major improvement (leading to a low FHRS rating), these are often resolved on the day of inspection. In addition, improvement notices may also be served and officers from EHS will make return visits to the premises to check that the business has put right the problems identified during the inspection. These revisits are not a re-rating inspection and do not change the rating awarded, so even where a business has corrected the problem its rating will not change. Businesses can make an application to have a full re-rating inspection which will take place between three (3) and six (6) months after the original rating inspection.

The FHRS for each business is derived from the inspection scores for food hygiene, structure conditions, and confidence in management. Additional factors also apply, so for example a business can score well in the food hygiene and structure conditions categories but if they do not have a documented food safety management system then the highest FHRS rating that they can achieve is one (1). This is the case for a significant number of the premises in Bradford with a current FHRS rating of one (1).

Of the current premises with a FHRS of zero (0) EHS is preparing prosecutions against four (4) businesses, has served Improvement Notices on eleven (11) businesses and one (1) business has voluntarily closed.

Thus far in 2013/14 thirteen (13) businesses have been prosecuted for food hygiene matters.

Supplementary Question

Thank you Portfolio Holder for the answer. Would you not agree that it would be sensible to know how long an establishment has had zero rating as my research shows that 19 have had it for two months.

Councillor Andrew Thornton

I think the original answer made clear that once an establishment is inspected for the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme the rating that it gets, it keeps that until it gets another full inspection so it can have a zero and be told to put things right. The act of putting those things right and Environmental Health Officers go back and check that those things are done, that does not in itself make or alter the rating that they were given. Businesses have the opportunity to apply to be re-rated or to appeal the rating that they have been given. If they do that then they get a full re-inspection. If they are asking or applying for a re-inspection because they have done the work and they want to change the rating they were given originally, then they have a waiting period of three months before they can be re-inspected so unfortunately if you get it wrong and if you are not up to scratch and you get a zero rating, you are going to be stuck with that so I think that is probably a good thing that it provides an incentive not to get it wrong in the first place.

15. Councillor Dodds

Can the Portfolio Holder advise on steps being taken to promote apprenticeships and ensure young people are given the advice they need to make decisions?

Answer

A co-ordinated approach between Bradford Council, the National Apprenticeship Service, schools, colleges, Connexions, Apprenticeship Providers, and Bradford Chamber of Commerce has been developed to promote apprenticeships to young people and businesses and ensure young people are given the advice they need to make decisions.

Bradford Apprenticeship Group

This co-ordinated work is both overseen and delivered through the Bradford Apprenticeship Group. The Bradford Apprenticeship Group was established in April 2013 and is a business-led group. The Chairperson is Russell McGrath Managing Director of Tandem Marketing. The other employers are: Incommunities, Omega Security, UKAR, and Age UK. Other members of the group include representatives from Schools, Colleges, Connexions, and Learning Providers.

The Bradford Apprenticeship Group works to promote apprenticeships to young people and their parents/guardians, schools, and businesses. Key initiatives undertaken or planned in the 2013/14 academic year:

- Apprenticeship Clinics.
- Bradford Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony.
- 150 in 100 Campaign.
- Bradford Skills Match.
- School Engagement.
- Briefings for Connexions Personal Advisers.
- Targeting Young People who express an interest in Apprenticeships

Bradford Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) and Apprenticeship Hub

As a response to the allocation of £4.6 million funding awarded to the Leeds City Region (LCR) as part of the Cities Deal "Skills Ask", the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) approved the proposal to establish an ATA and Apprenticeship Hub within Bradford.

The Council and Bradford College formally established a jointly owned company to run the ATA and it was launched in May 2013.

The Apprenticeship Training Agency acts as a recruitment agency and seeks out organisations to employ apprentices on an agency basis, thereby helping them to minimise the risk associated with employing staff more permanently. The ATA actively targets micro-businesses who have not previously taken on an apprentice. The model provides the opportunity to grow apprenticeships in businesses to help develop their workforce and also to reduce youth unemployment at a faster pace than planned.

The main aim of the Apprenticeship Hub is to raise the profile of apprenticeships and increase take up of Apprenticeship provision across the District. It acts as a single point of contact for businesses requiring information on Apprenticeships within the District. The main objectives are to:

- Lead on apprenticeship promotion campaigns to schools, young people and parents
- Lead on apprenticeship marketing campaigns to employers
- Co-ordinate the Apprenticeship offer for Bradford
- Provide independent advice on appropriate apprenticeships
- Match employers to appropriate providers
- Liaise with National Apprenticeship Service and providers to co-ordinate attendance at events and promotion activity
- Providing secretariat to the Bradford Apprenticeship Group and co-ordinating the delivery plan

The ATA and Apprenticeship Hub working with other learning providers across the district are required to create 537 new apprenticeship places in the District by September 2015.

16. Councillor Collector

Will the Leader commit and set a deadline for developing a proper strategy to deal with the growing night time economy on Great Horton Road?

Answer

The Neighbourhood Service is aware of the issues associated with the night time economy in Great Horton Road and has worked together with the Police and Council departments on a range of issues to start to address some of the anti social behaviour problems in the area.

A single issue Neighbourhood Forum took place in October 2013 and additional meetings have been held with residents to discuss concerns regarding Great Horton Road. These are planned to continue and will review the effectiveness of action taken and to plan responses to emerging new issues. Information from these discussions is contained within a plan, which is reviewed by the Ward Officer.

A separate meeting has been held with the Assistant Director Planning, Transportation and Highways to discuss a co-ordinated approach between a variety of Council officers with regards development in the area. A commitment has been provided to give careful consideration of developments at Bradford University, specifically to car parking and potential re-location of demand. Officers are also working up a supplementary planning document to assist in the consideration of planning applications for food outlets.

Supplementary Question

I just wanted to ask are the issues on Great Horton Road serious enough to warrant a strategy. Yes or a no answer.

Councillor Green

It is a local issue which is being dealt with by Bradford West Area Committee and the local Councillors. You tell me. That is your job and what I am being told is that a strategy is being developed. It is an issue that is being driven by local Councillors, through Bradford West Area Committee in line with the devolution agenda being pursued by this Council. If that strategy involved any strategic changes in what the Council is doing then clearly we will look at it and make sure that it gets delivered.

17. Councillor Smithies

Can the Leader comment on the news that Leeds General Infirmary will continue to be a centre for Children's Heart Surgery?

Answer

The report highlights that Leeds General Infirmary remains open and that the review is continuing.

The report highlighted that the review had found that Clinical services are safe and in line with others nationally.

The Family Experience Report makes difficult reading. The issues raised include counselling and support, cultural support and awareness, coordination of care, and patient choice regarding referrals to other centres. Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust has indicated it will be implementing report recommendations to address these issues. The Chief Executive of the trust was interviewed on Look North following the publication, he stated he was "Deeply sorry" and has committed to implementing the recommendations of the report.

Paediatric cardiac surgery will continue at Leeds. A national review of both paediatric and adult heart congenital surgery is ongoing and due for public consultation this summer which will make recommendations on future service standards. Patients and families input will be central to this.

Obviously this continues to be an important issue for Bradford, given the higher incidence of congenital heart defects and the comments received during the initial review on the cultural and religious perspective of Muslim patients and families.

Supplementary Question

Thanks for the answer. Yes I note there is going to be another public consultation and I just ask could we support that as much as possible and encourage it to reach as far and widely as possible to our different communities.

Councillor Green

The simple answer to that is yes. We will continue to work with all the other authorities both the Government and Health Authorities to make sure that there is the information out there so that people can get involved themselves but also that we ensure that the region has the best possible provision of this sort of care hopefully at Leeds Hospital.

18. Councillor Miller

Can the Leader of the Council advise members of when a dedicated council senior officer team, tasked with preparing and being responsible for the visit of the Tour De France was formed and how advanced it is with the necessary preparations?

Answer

The announcement of the Grand Depart of the Tour de France 2014 was released in October 2013 by ASO. At that point the Chief Executive asked that a team be established to deliver the event. Since October 2013 Bradford has played its part in all the relevant discussions and is on track with other partners to deliver a very successful event in July 2014. The level of work, complexity and intensity has increased over time and significantly since the start of 2014. A cross departmental team has been put together with a dedicated Project Management and Admin support and in recent weeks extra staff have been added to the core team in order that the many detailed issues can be addressed in the coming months.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for your answer Leader. Supplementary would be do you think it is pertinent now that this organisation, this group of officers is there, that you should let Councillors know and maybe even those that it is going through their area so that we can feed back the concerns of residents as we are getting them.

Councillor Green

My understanding is that there have been briefings provided for Councillors who the Tour goes through but I have also asked for a briefing to be set up for all elected Members because the effects of the Tour De France are clearly going to be felt wider than the particular route that they are taking because of road closures and everything else. So I have asked that there is a briefing for all elected Members who want to come along to explain exactly what is going to happen and look at the wider implications of the Tour.

19. Councillor Ferriby

Can the Portfolio holder advise what progress has been made to address the concerns about cuts to FE and 6th form funding for 18-19 year olds?

Answer

On 13 March the Minister for Innovation and Skills (Matthew Hancock MP) wrote to all MPs to advise that the Education Funding Agency will cap any losses resulting from the change to the funding for academic age 18 year olds at 2% of a school or college's programme funding. This is clearly a welcome development; however the letter makes no reference to the possibility of any future mitigation, so the full effect of this policy change will be felt in academic year 2015/16.

Obviously then this remains a serious concern; at the end of February there were just short of 2,100 academic age 18 year olds in Schools and FE Colleges with a further 353 NEET young people of this age, which in future years would mean there would be almost 2,500 actual and potential students, out of a total cohort of 18,249 16-18 year olds, across the District who would attract less funding.

The announcement on the 13 March clearly reduces the impact for 2014/15 and gives partners twelve months to plan for the full reduction. Officers have firstly ensured that all partners are aware of the policy change and then the update from the Minister, and have started discussions to try to identify how the Local Authority, schools and colleges can work together to ensure 18 year olds have the same learning experience as 16 and 17 year olds.

One early stream of work arising from these discussions is to undertake a more detailed exploration of the Traineeship programme and whether better promotion of, and expansion of, the local Traineeship offer will provide a solution that both builds upon current progression opportunities for young people (as the Traineeship programme is focussed on being a pathway into Apprenticeships) and that is more cost-effective to deliver.

20. Councillor Arshad Hussain

How much does the Council spend on Traffic Regulation Orders every year and what proportion of that goes on advertising? Would it be possible to save money by using alternative methods of communication for example, via the Council’s web site?

Answer

It is difficult to quantify an annual yearly expenditure on Traffic Regulation Order advertisements as the number of orders which are been prepared each year varies depending upon the volume of requests which are received and approved by each Area Committee for implementation. Typically each order, excluding consultation costs which can vary significantly scheme-to-scheme, costs between £5k - £7k including lining and signing costs. Advertisement costs are typically £1,500 per order (30%) spent on two advertisements as required under legislation.

Approximate costs for the last three years are shown below.

Financial Year	TRO Schemes Consulted On	TROs Implemented (i.e. no consultation comments / objections over-ruled)	Approximate Cost including Capital Works (figure in brackets is advertising cost)
2011/12	71	67	£355,000
2012/13	81	57	£405,000
2013/14	65	72	£325,000

Supplementary Question

Just very quickly. Thank you for your answer here but the second part has not been answered. Would it be possible for the Council to look at alternate methods of advertising TRO’s or even for instance planning applications that are advertised? I am sure when these legislations were made we did not have websites in those days and so on and the social media. Can we look at other options or are we in a position. I totally understand that it is a legal requirement but can we look at other ways of advertising.

Councillor Val Slater

Simple answer is yes. In the current economic climate that we are in and the fact that we are to lose a further very large sum of money from the budget of this Council, we have obviously got to save money where absolutely everywhere we can. We have been trying to save money on this area by taking traffic regulation orders in bulk. I mean there is a downside to that is sometimes you have to wait a bit like the bus, you have to wait until several come along at once or else you do not get the saving. Yes we will explore it further. I am always on the lookout for ways to save money.

21. Councillor Sunderland

How many of the 26,000 low income residents paying Council Tax for the first time in Bradford MDC have been sent: a) a first reminder notice, b) a second reminder notice, c) a summons from the Magistrates Court and d) a liability order?

Answer

Our systems do not differentiate between the 26,000 residents that have to pay Council Tax for the first time, because previously they received 100% council tax benefits, and the 8,000 residents who also receive benefits, but always had an amount to pay because their entitlement was less than 100%. The figures provided below are for all 34,000 residents.

Also, the figures show the number of documents issued, and not the number of residents affected. Many residents in this group experienced several changes to their circumstance during the year, for instance a change in income or a change of their address. When this happens the recovery activity is cancelled and must be started again with a first reminder. This is why the number of first reminders appears higher than the number of residents in this group

1 st reminders	36,648
2 nd reminders	10,320
Final Notice	2,318
Summonses	21,991

Supplementary Question

To the Leader please. Given what seems to be a very high level of action taken by the Council for late or non-payment of debt can he please advise us of the action being taken to recover money owed to the Council by companies and/or people associated with the Bradford Bulls?

Councillor Green

I will try and address that in general terms. Any outstanding debts to the Council, our preference is for a negotiated settlement. If a negotiated settlement is not achievable we pursue the matter in line with the best legal and financial advice we get which includes court action to the point we never write a debt off which is one of the reasons why it has been pointed out that some of the Council Tax collection rates do not compare favourably with some other local authorities who write debts off at the time. I can assure this Council that if there is a commercial debt it will not be written off whoever owns it and we are pursuing all commercial debts that this Council has at the moment.

22. Councillor L'Amie

What level of support is being given to schools to allow them to retrain or if necessary dismiss under performing teachers and support staff?

Answer

The school teachers pay and conditions document has introduced a form of performance related pay and from September 2014 a teacher should only receive an increment if they have demonstrated that they have met their targets and objectives set out in their appraisal.

Each teacher should have an appraisal meeting at the beginning of the year and this should be reviewed during the year.

The appraisal and capability procedures have been revised to take this into account and a clear process is in place for performance management, including where action should be taken if under performance is identified.

Bradford and District's HR service has provided a briefing for school leaders on the revised approach.

A model policy has been provided for schools to adopt.

Support is provided in meetings and advice given on moving through the stages. The model procedure clearly identifies the stages and schools have the ability to move staff through the stages rapidly.

The school is required to provide support and training to give employees the opportunity to operate at the required level of performance. Mentoring and support can also be provided. Schools can dismiss staff on capability grounds

This above support applies to schools that purchase Bradford's HR services.

Supplementary Question

Being a retired teacher I do have a great deal of respect for teachers and feel that no doubt 95% of Bradford teachers are doing a damn good job. I would just be curious to know though how many schools have taken up the model referred to in the answer Portfolio Holder.

Councillor Berry

I will undertake to get that information to you Councillor L'Amie. I just make the point that we did not even have to do this. We do this because we have a good relationship with schools. Technically we could just say it is your business but as we know in many of the situations where schools need turning around and support, an issue of HR or competence or capability that has not been handled properly can be the cause of a number of problems in the schools therefore it is very important that schools of whatever character, staff are treated fairly, that the process of assessment is rigorous and fair and that Governors and Management conduct themselves with appropriate behaviour and manage these processes by the rules of natural justice.

23. Councillor Jabar

Could the Portfolio Holder please update us on what the Council is doing to tackle the problem of dog fouling and what action has been taken against people for failing to clean up after their pets this year? In particular, how many penalty notices were issued this year in Great Horton Ward compared to the previous year?

Answer

Notifications about dog fouling are made to the Council through the Contact Centre. If the caller is reporting dog faeces that require clearing from footpaths or Council-owned land, this is passed to Street Cleansing. All other notifications are passed to the Environmental Enforcement Team who write to the person who has contacted the Council asking them for further information. Where there is a witness to the offence and the witness is prepared to give a statement and if necessary attend court, the Environmental Enforcement Team will issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. Where some information is obtained from the initial call or the follow-up letter, or there are a number of reports from the same location or it is a particularly sensitive issue or site, it is passed to the Council Warden to investigate further.

This approach would typically involve the Council Warden undertaking increased patrols in the area and trying to obtain more information. Discussion would take place with residents living in the affected streets, letter and leaflets and work with local school children and community groups. When the Council Wardens witness a dog fouling they issue a Fixed Penalty Notice.

The Environmental Enforcement Team also produces a dog fouling hotspot report for each ward based on the notifications of dog fouling made through Council Contact. This is used by Warden Managers, in conjunction with the information referred to above and reports about dog fouling from councillors and community groups and events, to prioritise where Council Wardens are deployed to tackle dog fouling.

Council Wardens have been starting at 7.00am some weeks in most of the areas targeting specific neighbourhoods, parks and open spaces based on the hotspot information.

From January to December 2012 there were 67 reports of dog fouling to the Contact Centre for the Great Horton Ward and 78 reports in 2013. In 2012, 21 of these were passed to the Environmental Enforcement Team and the Warden Service for follow-up and 32 in 2013. None of these resulted in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

24. Councillor Wainwright

What impact will the decision to cease funding for GCSE retake courses [other than for English and Maths] have on Bradford Learners?

Answer

According to data supplied by the Education Funding Agency (EFA), on which they based the 16-18 funding allocations, they had 812 entries on GCSE retake courses recorded in 2012/13 for Bradford young people. This should be seen in the context of over 45,000 course entries recorded for the whole 16-18 cohort.

The distinction made in the question is critical; as members will be aware, from September any young person who does not have grade A* to C at GCSE in English or

Maths must now continue to study these subjects post-16 and retake of this continues to be fundable. Of the 812 entries onto GCSE, 320 were in Maths and so would still be funded. The data from the EFA supplied to the Council unfortunately does not split English Language and English Literature however, 326 of the GCSE retakes were in this area.

Firstly then, it is clear that the majority of GCSE retakes being undertaken in the District are in English and Maths and will continue to be funded. Secondly in the minority of cases where the GCSE retake is non-fundable, if the young person is on a programme of study of more than 540 hours they will still draw down full-time funding and could retake the GCSE alongside this. Finally, where a subject is new to an individual post-16, then they can still be funded to undertake a GCSE in that area (i.e. where a college offers a minority subject at GCSE that was not available in school).

We do not, therefore, anticipate that this policy change will have a significant impact on either the funding for, or the experience of, our young people.

25. Councillor Whiteley

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport inform colleagues of what actions the council is taking or planning to take, to access the government grants available to help the council fund smaller accommodation for people who currently under occupy social housing units in the district?

Answer

There are no specific grants provided by the Government to fund smaller housing units. Government promotes the provision of new social housing through the Affordable Housing Programme. The current Programme finishes in March 2015 and a new programme will run from April 2015 to March 2018.

The Affordable Housing Programme is not specifically designed to fund smaller housing units to assist people who are under occupying however Registered Providers may take this in to account when bidding in to the programme. The Council will support these bids if it can be demonstrated that there is a need for these units.

26. Councillor Jabar

Could the Portfolio Holder for CYPS please update us on the Kings Science Academy and the role of the local authority has compared to previously?

Answer

The Local Authority has a responsibility for the health and wellbeing for all Bradford's children and young people.

Local Authority officers have been working closely with the academy's chair of governors and staff, as well as Ofsted HMIs and the Bradford Partnership (of secondary school headteachers) to ensure improvements in the quality of provision and leadership and management of the academy are delivered.

Kings Science Academy is a member of the Bradford Partnership, as are all other Bradford secondary schools, and mechanisms have been brokered from across the partnership to support the school.

Bradford LA now provides traded HR services and governing body clerking services to the academy.

27. Councillor Heseltine

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sport advise colleagues what is the subsidy cost per person per visit at all of our leisure, recreation and sporting facilities, by facility?

Answer

The cost per head subsidy at each of our leisure and recreation facilities is as follows:

FACILITY		Per Head
Richard Dunn S.C.	£320,372	£1.51
Keighley L.C. (Inc Vic Hall)	£243,612	£2.11
ShIPLEY Pool	£219,858	£1.86
Eccleshill Pool	£167,809	£5.27
Bingley Pool	£94,008	£1.17
Baildon Rec. Centre	£18,216	£4.23
Ilkley Pool/Lido	£123,917	£2.40
Marley A.A.C.	£114,445	-£0.05
Manningham S.C.	£50,928	£3.86
Queensbury Pool	£89,723	£5.12
Horsfall Ath.Track	£24,517	£1.52
Nabwood Sports Centre	£59,271	£0.30
Bowling Pool	£92,463	£1.24
Thornton Recreation Centre	£95,964	£1.39
Tong Recreation Centre	£84,261	£0.53
Doe Park	£5,222	£12.60
Total	£1,804,586	£2.13

Note: Central recharges, asset rent and depreciation not included.

Supplementary Question

Thank you Portfolio Holder. What are the projective visitor numbers and subsidy per visitor for each of the proposed community and central pools?

Councillor Andrew Thornton

That is a very complex question. I would have to say that at the moment those numbers are not available. I certainly do not have them readily to hand but as we work through the business case for the investment in sports facilities those numbers will become clear and evident about how we intend to ensure that the facilities are operated on an economic and sustainable basis so when those figures are available they will be available to Members.

28. Councillor Middleton

Question to Cllr Berry, Portfolio Holder Children & Young People's Services
What has happened to the School Crossing Patrol that used to assist people at the junction of, Dudley Hill Road and Wellington Road?

Answer

The patrol retired in August 2013. A decision was taken in 2013 to review all school crossing sites to ensure the limited resources available were being used to best effect and that any decisions to fill vacant posts would be put on hold until the surveys were completed. Sites had not been reviewed for a considerable period of time. The surveys have been completed and the analysis of the data is nearing completion. A decision on the continuation of vacant sites is expected in the very near future

Supplementary Question

With regard to the answer it seems very similar to the answer that my colleague Councillor Leeming received when she asked a similar question in January two months ago. At that point it was said that the decision was likely to be taken around February. I wonder whether there is any idea when this decision will be taken about obviously all the crossings and vacancies and other things that are outstanding at this point.

Councillor Berry

I will undertake to get that as soon as possible. The work is ongoing but the other problem we do have is the lack of people coming forward to do these jobs so if anybody else has got a friend who knows somebody who wants to be a school crossing patrol worker we are interested because the hours are short, the pay is not terribly great but the rewards are probably greater in other ways.

29. Councillor Collector

What follow up action has been done on the Islamophobia motion passed at Full Council last year?

Answer

The extensive work carried out by Bradford Council and our partners outlined in the original Islamophobia motion 16 October 2012 continues to be delivered. The following are examples of ongoing work:

With Bradford Council support, the Community Safety Partnership launched a new Hate Crime Strategy in November 2013. This aims to increase the reporting of hate crime and the numbers of successful prosecutions. This will provide enable improved intelligence on the incidence of religious hate crimes and related activity. The associated action plan will include a focus on work centred on the District's transport hubs. Within this the Council proactively monitors religiously motivated hate crime.

The Bradford District Hate Crime Strategic Management Group (HCSMG) coordinates the delivery of work on hate crime in the District; this is a partnership between the council, police and other agencies, and reports to the Neighbourhoods and Communities Strategy Group.

The HCSMG is supported by Bradford Hate Crime Alliance (BHCA) whose membership includes representatives from Bradford Council, Victim Support, Strategic Disability

Partnership, InCommunities, Local Education Authority, WYP, Probation and Children's Services.

To increase transparency and accountability a Hate Crime Scrutiny Panel has been developed where members of the public are able to scrutinise how cases have been investigated. The Aims of the Hate Crime Panel are:

- To ensure service provided to complainants is of a high quality.
- To provide reassurance that the Police are giving open access to the records of their actions.
- To ensure officers deal with incidents sensitively, speedily and properly in the knowledge their divisional commander and lay panel oversee their work.
- To provide feedback where appropriate.

A network of 'Hate Crime Reporting Centres' is in place across the District. To date there are 27 reporting centres where staff have received training to respond to and take reports from victims of hate crime. To support this process a Hate Incident Reporting Centres (HIRC's) Working Group meets to meet to share good practice and discuss issues relating to third party reporting. This group comprises all West Yorkshire local authority areas: Bradford

Bradford Council's Human Resources have delivered a variety of training and development offerings for employees to address equality and diversity and broadening understanding of the needs of different communities of interest. Thus incorporate the removal and/or minimisation of discrimination, meeting community needs and fostering good community relations. Training about Hate Crime is also available and Youth Service training addresses respect and understanding of different cultures.

A new e-learning package to raise general awareness about equality issues was introduced in November 2013. Over 300 people have already undertaken the training.

Recently, an e-learning format equality impact tutorial has been introduced to assist the Council in conducting its equality impact assessment processes.

The work that Children's Services have undertaken to address this and other equality and diversity issues continue to happen regularly and is ongoing. The Diversity and Cohesion Service offers a wide range of programmes for Schools, for example:

The Interfaith Education Centre (IEC) has been running since 1988 it's major impetus has been one to promote religious education in terms of religious and cultural diversity in all our schools. SACRE (The Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) is made up of faith leaders from across the District and have a responsibility for the Agreed RE Syllabus for the Districts schools on the six major faiths i.e. Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

The IEC offers advice, guidance and support to schools based on how to deliver the RE Agreed Syllabus, visits to places of worship and collective faith worship in schools. Over 8,000 children benefit from visits to places of worship every year and 8000 children benefit from collective faith worship that we deliver on a weekly basis as part of their Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development needs and to address issues of respect and tolerance.

We offer projects such as organising and leading on the 'Believe in Bradford' an RE Conference for schools which is hosted by a secondary school inviting local schools to participate. One was held at Grange High School last year with almost 100 children from 11 local schools attending. Another similar event is being held at Oasis Lister Academy this Thursday 27 March with a similar following. This is aimed at promoting religious harmony among children from different religious and cultural backgrounds and involves activities that bring children together to talk about their faith in order to explore commonalities.

We now have a SUSOMAD 2014 which involves 10 secondary schools in our peer education programme. This is a year long peer education programme and addresses all forms of religious and far right hatred including Islamophobia. Students are trained as peer educators and cascade their learning to children within their school and other local schools.

The Anne Frank and You exhibition was launched last Wednesday 140 people attended: parents, teachers, governors and young people as well as the Lord Mayor, Leader of Council and Lead Executive Member for Education. This year a Syrian refugee working on a Humanitarian Campaign for medical supplies for young people addressed the launch alongside presentation by young people.

120 schools students have been trained as Anne Frank Ambassadors who will guide other schools students around the exhibition over a 4 week period. This will reach at least 1000 children from across the District that will be involved in workshops as well as being guided around the exhibition.

Through our support to supplementary schools we develop partnerships between local schools and Madrassahs e.g. the BD3 Schools and Madrassah Steering Group. A number of activities have been arranged to develop stronger relationships between schools and Madrassahs e.g. an event to celebrate and acknowledge the contribution that Madrassahs make towards children's learning where 120 parents alongside local schools and children attended in September 2013. A similar 'Faith in our Schools' event is to be organised at Lapage in June of this year ahead of Ramadan.

There have also been further learning programmes of work designed to tackle violent extremism including:

- Rewind which focuses on far right extremism.

- Choices using WW1 to look at learning the lessons from previous conflict and how these may be relevant today.

- Resilience – encouraging students to stand up against prejudice and discrimination.

- Wrap training – Staff trained to recognise and understand the far right extremist narrative and to seek support for those who are vulnerable to it.

The Council and partners continue to be vigilant and through the Community Safety Partnership monitor closely incidents that could lead to community relations issues.

30. **Councillor Cooke**

Can the Leader of the Council inform colleagues of when the Jacob's Well Car Park will actually have an access control system for Jacob's Well Car Park that actually works?

Answer

A new swipe card system was introduced at Jacob's Well Car Park on the 2 December 2013.

There has been a problem with the barrier system since the introduction of new access control hardware and software. Engineers from the supplier are seeking to resolve problems with the system as they arise as quickly as possible.

Supplementary Question

I appreciate that this is a matter of monumental unimportance to the.....but funnily enough it is not working and it has been consistently not working now for some long while. It just seems to me that it is something we ought to get sorted if we can and I am not entirely sure the question here says anything other than we are seeking to resolve problems with.....as they arise. In other words when it breaks down the man comes out and fixes it. It seems to me that we need to fix it so we do not have to keep doing that every verse end. It has been broken for the last two days. It was broken three days last week. When are we going to get it sorted out?

Councillor Andrew Thornton

You are right of course. It would be great to be able to fix it and make sure that it stays fixed. The problem with many systems is you can fix them and you do not necessarily know that they are going to stay fixed. The faults that have occurred on the barrier have been intermittent so it is difficult to establish what the problem is however the suppliers have been out and new hardware for the system has been ordered and will be fitted in the next couple of days. Hopefully that will resolve the problem. If it doesn't then clearly we will have to look again at what the problem is.

31. Councillor Whiteley

In light of the findings of the latest SOCITM Better Connected review, which looks at how easy it is to find information and perform tasks on the Council's website, can the Leader of the Council advise why the Council does not leave its annual accounts permanently on the website, to provide continuous transparency, allowing the ready access to and scrutiny of these?

Answer

I am happy to confirm that the Council's Audited Accounting Statements back to 2003-4 are held permanently on the Council's website and can be accessed at any time.

A comprehensive range of financial information including the 2014-16 budget papers and related consultation documents, the 2013-14 budget and capital programme, annual accounts, financial monitors, spending on consultants, councillor expenses, spending over £500, and pay policy can be accessed through one place on the Council's web site - this provides an unprecedented level of access to financial information under a Labour leadership that has demonstrated greater commitment to financial transparency than any of the Council's leaderships that have gone before.

http://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/government_politics_and_public_administration/council_budgets_and_spending

This information can be accessed by following the Council Budgets link on the web site home page and then the link to Council Budgets and Spending. We are looking make the link more explicit and direct in future.

32. Councillor Middleton

Question to Cllr A Thornton, Portfolio Holder Environment & Sustainability

Does Bradford MDC have any plans to follow other West Yorkshire Councils and stop the kerbside collection in domestic re-cycling bins of glass jars and bottles?

Answer

Bradford MDC currently has no plans to stop the kerbside collection on glass, jars and bottles.

Supplementary Question

With regard to the answer I am pleased to hear that Bradford Council has no plans but I was re-reading the third quarter financial position statement which obviously clearly I need to get out more, on page 7 I did read that right at the bottom of the page that the glass and cans contract did run into difficulty last year and we had to re-contract it to another bidder and the financial returns for anybody on that margin, the margins further returns on that are very low. Would that put the longer term situation with regard to kerbside recycling of glass bottles and jars in jeopardy?

Councillor Andrew Thornton

We would hope that is not going to be the case but clearly we will have to look at what the market is. There is also the question of what would be the implication of not doing it and clearly we are also in a position where we do not have the option of not doing the recycling so there is going to be a cost involved, it is just a question of what we can actually get for the recycling.

33. Councillor Collector

Has there been an increase in fly tipping following the introduction of the charge to collect bulky items? Also, has the system of identification/pass at waste disposal sites reduced those from other districts coming to Bradford?

Answer

There is no evidence to suggest fly-tipping has increased following the introduction of a charge for the collection of bulky items.

For the period July 1, 2013, to January 31, 2013, the amount (tonnes) of material passing through the HWRCs decreased by 13% on average compared to the same period of the previous year. The largest reductions in throughput have been seen at those sites closest to the border with neighbouring authorities.

34. Councillor Faisal Khan

What support mechanisms does the LEA provide for schools who are identified as priority one and specifically what support is provided to governing bodies?

Answer

The LA acknowledges that all school governing bodies have a responsibility to recognise their own development needs and take appropriate action to address them. In the case of Priority 1 schools, the performance and development needs of all aspects of the school operation are discussed at the School Specific Monitoring Group (SSMG) meetings which are attended by the Chair of Governors, or their nominated representative. All meetings receive feedback from the Chair of Governors on the work and impact of the governing body. Specific support for governing bodies is agreed at the SSMG and often takes the form of:

- changes to the clerking arrangements for governor meetings to ensure that the governing body is receiving appropriate support and guidance;
- the school's Achievement Officer can attend governing body meetings to report back on their work in the school, their judgement on the progress being made and also to support the operation of the governing body;
- a recommendation for governors to attend specific training events organised by Bradford's Governor Support Service;
- bespoke training for the governing body.

Supplementary Question

I can confirm that school achievement officers do attend governing body meetings but they do not support the operation of a governing body nor any recommendations or any bespoke training. I can also confirm the SSMG are confidential to governing bodies so my question is really can you tell me what monitoring and evaluation we have in place for SSMGs and their effectiveness if none of this work is actually being done.

Councillor Berry

I will get a detailed response to you in due course but the whole process has been assessed and has been praised by a number of external agencies but we have a meeting of the appropriate body at the beginning of next week and we will have a look at the question at the Education Improvement Board. It is not appropriate to comment any further at this point.