

COUNCIL
15 July 2014

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

1. Councillor Warburton

Can the Leader tell us what progress is being made in discussions with partners about the use of the Better Care Fund?

Answer

The local health and care economy is required to develop detailed plans for the utilisation of its Better Care Fund (BCF). The outline plan submitted to NHS England on the 4 April was signed off by the Health & Wellbeing Board and set out the local proposals for the use of the BCF pooled budget to support transformational change and integrated care. A fully worked up plan is due for submission to NHS England by September.

The local health and social care system has agreed a process for the evaluation of existing schemes and services underpinning the integration agenda. The evaluation process will also be applied to any new proposals targeted at delivering the stated priority areas of the BCF. A clear time frame has been set out which will deliver the detailed commissioning intentions for the BCF in September. The submission will in turn be reported to the Health and Well Being Board.

The fact is however, that we have no genuine clarity on the rules for BCF which have been subject to conflicting messages from the Department of Health and the Department of Communities and Local Government and have undergone recent changes. Without agreement and clarity from central Government Departments there will continue to be potential ongoing risks to the provision of health and social services in Bradford District.

Supplementary Question

Can the Leader comment on the potential effect the conflicting messages and lack of clarity will have on the Council's ability to reduce health inequalities across the district?

Councillor Green

Currently we are in a situation where, on a regular basis, we are getting changes in what the money can be spent on, whether it is health, whether it is social care, who is going to control it. At the LGA Conference where some of us attended the other week, we had still the Secretary of State for the DCLG telling us don't worry about your Adult Social Care because you have got the Better Care Fund. The day before we had the NHS England telling us we have got most of the Better Care Fund. The lack of clarity means that it is very difficult to go forward with bringing together health and social care in the district and tackling some of those fundamental problems that we all know that we have got. I would have hoped after 18 months somebody would have designed what the rules are. We are still waiting to find out but I am determined as soon as we do get that information that we will use it to deal with the health and inequality issues that this district faces.

2. Councillor Cooke

What steps has the Leader taken to ensure that ward councillors are informed, and where appropriate consulted, about significant actions by the council (such as legal proceedings to remove travellers from Council land)?

Answer

I have repeatedly made it clear to Senior Council Officers that Ward Members are entitled to be properly informed and, where appropriate, consulted about Council activity in their wards so that they can respond to constituents' questions, concerns and complaints about local issues. The Chief Executive has given senior management instructions on this issue and they have all been asked to make sure that officers in their teams inform and consult where appropriate with Ward Councillors about activity in their wards.

Given the importance that I have attached to the issue then it would be unacceptable for there to be regular instances of Officers failing to provide appropriate briefings and information to Elected Members or to seek their input.

I believe that there have been improvements but I can assure you that I and the Executive portfolio holders will continue to require officers to brief ward members appropriately and consistently about issues and activities in their wards and to account for their actions if they fail to ensure that this happens.

On the specific issue of travellers, when they move onto Council land, the site is visited as soon as possible by the Gypsy Liaison Service who advise them that they must leave. If they refuse, a welfare assessment is undertaken and proceedings initiated to gain possession of the land through the courts. At this point the Ward Councillors are contacted and advised of the illegal encampment and the procedure that will follow. They are provided with officer contact details if they require further information. They are also contacted again later to inform them of the date for the court hearing.

Supplementary Question

Thank you Leader for the answer and for setting out especially in the matter of dealing with the travellers issue as to how the system should work. Where they should, the bit that however they seem to have missed it, in the case of the recent encampment on Council land at Cottingley because the bit where it says "At this point Ward Councillors are contacted and advised of the illegal encampment and the procedure that will follow. They are provided with officer contact details if they require further information and then contacted again later to inform them of the date of the court hearing". We did know about it but we knew about it because residents contacted us and because the Telegraph & Argus contacted us. To date we have received no contact at all from officers in Gypsy Liaison regarding that particular issue. Can the Leader ensure that this does not happen again and perhaps we get an apology?

Councillor Val Slater

Yes, gypsies and travellers now come under my portfolio. I spoke to John Major (Assistant Director Environmental Health and Regulatory Services) about it the other day and I can apologise both on his behalf, on my behalf, that the system did not work. I know there is nothing more annoying for Members to be contacted either by the public or even worse to read about stuff in the T&A. We are having a review of how we deal with the whole issue of gypsies and travellers and I will try and ensure to the best of my ability that it does not happen again but I will speak to the officers concerned and please accept my apology.

3. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

Question to the Leader - How much New Homes Bonus has the Council received since this funding stream began and how much has been spent in building affordable homes?

Answer

The Council has received £19.866m in new homes bonus since April 2011 when receipt of this funding stream was introduced.

New Homes Bonus is not ring fenced for investment in Housing and this resource should be seen within the overall context of unprecedented and disproportionate Government cuts to Council funding which will have reached £215m by 2017.

New Homes Bonus represents one part of a rapidly diminishing pool of resources available to deliver local services and one that re-distributes resources from areas of greatest need to those with rapid housing growth. Recent work by the Special Interest Group of Metropolitan Authorities shows that had those resources been allocated according to need Bradford would have been £1.3m better off between 2011-12 and 2012-13, money which could potentially have been used to build additional affordable housing or protect services from Government cuts.

However I can advise that during the period 2011/12 to 2013/14 the Council has spent a total of £14.2m on affordable housing schemes, which includes Homes and Communities Agency grant of £4.2m, and has a further agreed programme of £8.76m for 2014/15.

4. Councillor Ahmed

The recent 'attacks' by Britain First members in a number of Mosques in Bradford including the ex Lord Mayor Cllr Khadim Hussain's family home have caused considerable unease and distress to the Muslim community. Will the leader join me in condemning these Islamophobic acts which were designed to stoke tensions, and reassure the Muslim community that such behaviour by fascists is not welcome in our city?

Answer

I condemn these acts in the strongest possible terms now just as I condemned them when they took place.

These were highly provocative attacks on places of worship, on religious belief and, in the former Lord Mayor's case, an invasion of family space and privacy. They were designed with the sole intention of inflaming opinion and provoking a reaction.

It is a huge credit to our community, especially its Muslim members and to the former Lord Mayor that, in the face of such flagrant Islamophobia and disrespect, they reacted with immense dignity and composure and did not allow the agitators to achieve the results that they so desperately sought.

These acts were perpetrated by extremist outsiders who have no stake or interest in this District's future and do not care what damage their actions may do. The vast majority of local people are repulsed by the nature of these unwarranted incursions into mosques and homes and it is notable that they drew universal condemnation from the people who actually live here.

I want to reassure people of all faiths and all communities that, as far as myself and this Council are concerned, there is no place in this District for extremists seeking to invade the sanctity of places of worship, foster division and promote religious hatred and along with our partners in the Police we will continue to do all that we can to monitor and prevent such behaviour in future.

Councillor Ahmed

I want to thank the Leader for his support he has shown to the Muslim community and his public condemnation of Britain First's attempt to ignite tensions and create animosity between the communities. Fortunately the people of Bradford rejected this despicable behaviour and came together. I agree that such attacks on a place of worship are totally unacceptable and the majority of people in this district were disgusted as were all the Members in this Chamber. It is reassuring to know that the leadership, this Council and the police will rigorously monitor and record Islamophobic/religious hatred crime as this is massively under-reported nationally including our district. Thank you.

5. Councillor Warnes

Would the Leader of Council please take this opportunity to (1) welcome the campaign by Friends of the Earth to 'Help Schools Go Solar', (2) agree that Bradford Council's Environment and Climate Change Unit is well placed to work closely with our schools to install solar energy technologies in approximately 40 Bradford schools by April 2016, and (3) undertake to write to Education Secretary Michael Gove asking that the government puts in place financial measures that will make it easier for our schools to 'go solar'?

Answer

I welcome the campaign by Friends of the Earth to help Schools go solar and am hopeful the scheme recently announced by the Council and funded through Schools Forum will encourage Schools to install solar panels. The Council's Energy Unit is working closely with the Education Buildings Team and Building & Technical Services on the Bradford School Solar Scheme and will provide free energy audits, information and advice. I will be happy to write to the Education Secretary asking for more proactive steps to be taken which make it easier for Schools to go solar.

Supplementary Question

Can I thank the Leader for this answer and can I just ask you, in particular thank you for agreeing to write to the new incoming Education Secretary. Can I ask you if you will also write to the outgoing Education Secretary to congratulate him on his promotion as Chief Whip?

Councillor A Thornton

We could all have a go at some of this in relation to it being about climate change, solar power in schools and whatever. I am not sure there is a great many words I would like to address to Mr Gove in principle but there we go.

6. Councillor Hawkesworth

In view of widespread concern about possible electoral abuse in the United Kingdom will the Leader please report to Council on the Elections held in the District on 22 May 2014 specifying if there are any causes for concern arising out of the elections, including the improper use of Council resources, and if so detail what action is being taken to address them?

Answer

Where issues arose on the approach to and on the Election Day these were referred to the Electoral Commission and/or the West Yorkshire Police as appropriate. As I understand it there are a number of issues that are the subject of ongoing investigations.

With regard to the specific issue relating to the potential use of Council resources I can confirm that the Chief Executive has instructed the City Solicitor to undertake a management investigation to establish the facts. I believe this will be concluded shortly and I have asked that the appropriate recommendations are reported to the Governance and Audit Committee and then to Full Council in due course.

(Note: Council voted to suspend Standing Order 12.1.1 to enable Councillor Naylor to ask a supplementary question given the absence of Councillor Hawkesworth.)

Councillor Naylor

Given the serious nature of this particular issue, and the fact that over a number of years that we have been seeking to rid Bradford of these sort of practices, could the Leader expand on his answer please?

Councillor Green

I am waiting for the due process of the Council investigation to be completed at which point the report I would imagine will go to Standards (Committee), Governance and Audit (Committee) and also to Full Council. What I would say is that I do not believe that ignorance is any defence when we all came onto Council. We were all made aware that there is a difference between our party political life and our political life as a Councillor and the barriers between those two were made very clear. I would reject any Member of this Council who is involved in politics on the rates but I think until we have seen that final investigation report we must hang judgement.

7. Councillor Shafiq

Can the Leader tell me what steps this Council is taking to improve educational attainment of children in primary and secondary schools, what challenges it faces in achieving improvements and what parents can do to help?

Answer

The steps the Council are taking:

- The Local Authority (LA) has a team of officers (Bradford Achievement Service) who carry out the LA's statutory responsibilities to monitor, challenge, support and, where necessary, intervene (MCSI) in Bradford schools. MCSI is delivered in inverse proportion to the success of each school.
- From September 2014 additional resources have been made available which will allow every school to be visited each year to discuss outcomes, improvement priorities and what is needed for every school to deliver improvements.
- Much work has been focused on supporting the implementation of school-to-school support partnerships. Virtually every Bradford school is involved in these headteacher-led partnerships. The Bradford Partnership of secondary schools has been acclaimed nationally. This approach to school improvement recognises that the expertise and resources to bring about system-wide improvement is located in our schools.
- There has been a much stronger link established between funding and school improvement through the LA's and headteachers' work with the Schools' Forum.

There is now a closer evaluation of where funding is allocated and the outcomes achieved.

What challenges do we face:

- Underperformance in some of our schools and for some groups of pupils. The evaluation of the use of Pupil Premium funding shows that it is well used in our schools and is having an impact.
- Recruitment is also presenting a challenge in some areas with actions being taken to support recruitment (e.g. appointment of a recruitment manager) and attract applications to Bradford schools
- A significant number of schools face high pupil mobility. For example, one school reports that children who spend 7 years receiving their primary education, actually only spend 2.7 years on average in that school. Linked to this, Bradford schools receive significant numbers of in-year admissions with children moving between schools as well as new children coming into the district (often from outside the UK)
- This in turn is putting pressure on school places in Bradford.

The Council's School Improvement Strategy is focussing on four key priorities:

- Secure high quality leadership in all schools
- Improve school readiness and end of Early Years outcomes
- Improve teaching and learning and raise levels of literacy across all phases
- Raise attainment of vulnerable groups and narrow the attainment gap

What parents can do to help?

- Bradford has been designated as one of only three National Literacy Hub LAs across England. One of the key strands of this is the work that will go on in communities and with parents.
- Parents have a crucial role to play in support of good attendance and good attitudes to learning for their children

Supplementary Question

I am pleased to note additional resources to be available from September this year but can the Council for once please ask parents about their views on how improvements in our education can be made for our children by working in partnership with parents?

Councillor Berry

It is absolutely essential that we do that. The key elements for success that we know of are a full partnership between the home, the school and the children and we need to make sure that parental engagement involvement is at the heart of every school in Bradford, in every part of the district, so I am happy to take that.

8. Councillor Lynne Smith

Can the Portfolio Holder for Culture comment on the recent announcement of Arts Council England funding for National Portfolio Organisations. Has this latest round of funding gone any way to redressing the north/south imbalance in arts funding?

Answer

In the Bradford area a total of £3,217,662 National portfolio funding over three years from April 2015 has been awarded to nine organisations which includes Impressions Gallery, Theatre in the Mill, Freedom Studios, Kala Sangam, Mind the Gap, Ilkley Literature Festival, Writing Squad, Artworks and Dance United which is good news for the district. Nationally Arts Council direction of travel is to redress the balance between London and

the rest of England and this has resulted in NPO spending outside the capital of 53% from April 2015 onwards up from 49%. Whilst this is a small step in the right direction, I would like to see much greater equality of distribution in the future and will continue to lobby for this outcome.

Supplementary Question

I would like to ask the portfolio holder how optimistic she is for the success of the continued lobbying?

Councillor Hinchcliffe

Yes I am. I never give up and of course we invited the Chair of the Arts Council, Peter Bazalgette, here a few months ago. He was very impressed by Bradford. We will continue that relationship and I will continue to lobby him. I saw him last week in Liverpool. He continued to keep saying how good Bradford is and he sees the talent here and needs to reward it. So we are looking to increase that relationship and put in a bid for Bradford later this year and I am hoping that will be successful but nothing is guaranteed in this financial climate.

9. Councillor Brown

Can the Leader advise colleagues whether the council will commit to supporting local employers and being seen to do so, by measures such as choosing a Jaguar / Landrover, or any other make and model which has components manufactured by local companies, when it is time to replace the Mayoral Car?

Answer

The Council has already made clear its commitment to supporting local employers and the economy which is a key Council priority. The Council now spends (2014-15) around £200m a year with third party suppliers in the Bradford District and has a clear policy position to increase its expenditure within the local economy as part of the Strategic Commissioning Framework.

On the issue of the mayoral car, I am delighted to say that our district is home to many component manufacturers who provide components to motor manufacturers all over the globe. We have worked with these companies to help support their expansion and growth and I am sure that whichever car is bought to replace the mayoral car will have components linked to a firm based in the district and the region.

10. Councillor Farley

Can the Leader comment on the progress being made in Keighley and the positive work carried out over the last 6 months to achieve Fair Trade status for the town?

Answer

I realise that Cllr Farley has himself made an active contribution in getting Keighley to this stage and I thank him for that.

On 23 October 2013 Keighley gained Fairtrade Town status from the Fairtrade Foundation. This year Yorkshire became the first Fairtrade Region. Keighley has attained Fairtrade Town status joining Haworth which was the first Fairtrade village - we have now completed the village and town double.

In Keighley we are looking at the initiatives and ideas identified as part of the accreditation to be ready for the renewal application in October 2014 to develop Fairtrade in Keighley over the next 3-years.

Progress includes:

1. Keighley Town Council has agreed to use fair trade products at its meetings as does Bradford Council.
2. Many links have been made with businesses and community groups. A business directory of fair trade users is well advanced.
3. Work with the many primary and secondary schools is underway through Cllr Farley and retired lecturer Chris Goddard.
4. An extensive archive of press stories and social media involvement has been compiled from the Keighley News, Worth Valley Mag. etc
5. The Action plan which includes the list of achievements and future plans for 2014-2015 is in development for submission in October
6. The steering group has filled out with more recruits and now includes: Chair Richard Dillon Co-op - group, Keighley Town Centre Association and Airedale Shopping Centre, Area co-ordinator's office, Keighley Town Council, 3 local businesses and volunteers.

The latest event was in June - a joint event with Keighley in Bloom in the Shopping centre. It provided opportunities for tasting, distribution of the most recent directory of suppliers and a bike that produced fruit-smoothies.

As the 573rd town in the UK to declare its support for trade justice, Keighley joins district neighbours in Baildon, Bingley, Bradford, Haworth, Ilkley, and Shipley to stand for a fairer deal for producers in the third world.

11. Councillor Akthar

Thousands of people enjoyed the Tour de France as it passed through the District. Can the Portfolio Holder comment on the legacy of the Tour de France and what benefits it is likely to bring to the District?

Answer

Tour de France (TdF) Grand Depart in Yorkshire was a massive success which showcased the district, and our communities. The event stimulated community spirit and pride and we anticipate it will have brought a huge boost to the local economy. It was estimated that £100 million would be coming into the region because of the event and Bradford district will have a fair share in that as the event went through the district on two consecutive days. We expect that the impact will continue to flow into the district in the future, as people come to visit, cycle the routes and attend future sports based events. More significantly the huge amount of international TV coverage promoted Bradford District and Yorkshire to be welcoming, creative and innovative and proves we can host world scale international events. A more detailed impact study is being undertaken by Welcome to Yorkshire and this will be available later in the year

Our staff put in incredible hard work along with other public services, to make the race a success and it also captured the commitment and enthusiasm of local communities with many people volunteering to help out and hold their own events. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all involved and of course, to the great Yorkshire public, in making it an unforgettable and safe event.

Bradford Council and British Cycling have had an extremely successful joint partnership in place over a 5 year period which has focused on getting more people cycling. The TdF has inspired thousands more people across the district to get on their bikes.

The cycling legacy of the TdF will evolve over a ten year period building on the platform that we have already established. It will focus on 4 key objectives (more coaches, leaders and volunteers; more and better places to cycle; building skills and confidence; and, more cycling events and activities) and link directly to the regional strategy and sub regional action plan including Bradford Cycling Strategy which was launched in early 2012.

Supplementary Question

First of all I would like to thank the portfolio holder for the very detailed reply to the question and I would also like to say that it is quite a positive thing that we are going to see a very lengthy cycling legacy come out of the TdF. The question that I have really is the fact that many people in the Keighley area have expressed their disappointment at the TV coverage being cut and going to a break as and when the cyclists entered Keighley. Can the portfolio holder assure us that the Council will keep working to ensure that the town reaps its fair share of benefits associated with the Tour de France in terms of its image and profile being raised?

Councillor Hinchcliffe

Yes I too was really disappointed to see that commercial break fall when it did. I know Keighley people, volunteers and officers had been out since the middle of the night preparing Keighley town centre so it looked absolutely at its best. It was such a disappointment for them to cut to a commercial break just at the crucial point. Keighley is a great place, it is a really good town centre, so you are right we need to work to make sure we increase the profile and other activities and events we have in the town centre. We will try and get us on TV. Thank you very much.

12. Councillor L'Amie

Can the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services advise members of the measures being taken, to increase the educational attainment levels of local children and young adults, in partnership with schools and adult education providers, to increase the capabilities of the local workforce, to attract inward investment from those employers providing high quality employment and subsequently increasing the life prospects of the local population?

Answer

The Council is taking a number of steps to raise the attainment levels of children that Cllr L'Amie will find outlined in the answer to Question 7.

The Get Bradford Working employment investment programme is delivering over £16m investment in collaboration with partners including schools, colleges, employers and job centre plus. Get Bradford Working is providing significant numbers of positive employment and skills outcomes by creating jobs, apprenticeship places, a transformational curriculum for 14-19 co-designed with employers, support for advanced manufacturing skills, help for young entrepreneurs and a range of support measures for those furthest from the labour market.

Alongside Get Bradford Working our work with employers through the E3 Partnership, led by the Chamber of Commerce, has engaged over 400 local businesses in our schools and colleges. We have strengthened the opportunities for schools to develop enterprise across their curriculums. This supports children or young people to develop work ready

skills and their early relationship with businesses does help them to realise the importance of learning and achievement towards a sector skill area when they leave school. This goes beyond the development of Industrial Centres for Excellence, although this is an importance part of our employer engagement network. A particular piece of good practice is the partnership working with the Bradford City of Film.

Our focus on educational attainment as discussed above is strong, the aspect I am talking about here is around translating this ambition practically so that we can develop a supply of skilled young people to the local workforce. That relationship enables our existing businesses to grow. Businesses in return are supporting us to develop and understand business needs. We are now looking at other intelligence across the region so that we can forecast for our communities the future skills required.

Supplementary Question

I would like to thank the portfolio holder for a comprehensive qualitative response. Given the amount of money and effort put into the Get Bradford Working Scheme could the portfolio holder indicate how many extra jobs and apprentices this is expected to generate?

Councillor Berry

I will get back to you with the precise figures but we reached our target of 100 within the first period, I believe that is very successful. I will get back to you as soon as I can with that. As far as I am aware we are ahead of target on that.

13. Councillor Wainwright

Does the Portfolio Holder agree that there seem to be inconsistencies in the views of the Housing Minister and MP for Keighley which suggest that, while he believes many more homes are required and that rural villages should have homes for local people, they should not be built in his constituency and the District's much needed new homes should be confined to the City of Bradford?

Answer

Yes I see inconsistencies. The Council agrees with the Government's stated policy, as set out in National Planning Policy Framework, that increasing the supply of new homes to meet the needs of an expanding population and to support economic growth is a major priority for the District and should be planned for positively in Local Plans.

Government guidance requires that all Councils in preparing their Local Plans, assess how much new housing will be required in the coming years based on expected change in the population and to then accommodate and distribute that development in the most sustainable way possible. This means assessing a range of factors - where the homes are most needed, where land is available for development, access to transport and services, and protecting the most valued green spaces.

The Council have done a huge amount of work to come up with the best possible strategy. The district is going to need at least 42,100 new homes to keep pace with housing need up to 2030. Contrary to the perception fostered by Mr Hopkins, It has indeed sought to concentrate the majority of development on the City of Bradford with much smaller amounts of development planned for smaller settlements. The facts, if Mr Hopkins wishes to have them, are that 28,650 or 68% is proposed for the City of Bradford compared to just 8,000 or 19% in the Keighley constituency

Despite when being questioned at the recent housing conference in Manchester, recognising the needs for homes for local people in rural areas and committing to provide this Mr Hopkins doesn't appear to think this applies in his constituency as he continues to state that the need in Bradford is purely in the inner city.

Within Bradford the Council's policies and initiatives in places such as the City Centre and the Shipley and Canal and Corridor are aimed at providing homes, stimulating regeneration and using up brown field land. But new homes, albeit at a much smaller scale, also have an important role in our more rural settlements – in supporting local services such as local shops and post offices, and most of all providing much needed affordable homes so that people can get onto the housing ladder and remain close to their families, friends and support networks. These are aims which we would have thought Mr Hopkins, as the Government's Housing Minister would be supporting.

14. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

Can the Leader advise me how much money (both internally and externally) the Council has spent to obtain legal opinion about the ownership of the wall at Thackley Corner?

Answer

The Council's legal officers have spent about £1000 worth of time on this matter and no money has been spent on external legal advice.

15. Councillor Greenwood

Some people have been asking about the road works on Canal Road and why they are being undertaken at certain locations. Can the Portfolio Holder take the opportunity to explain the situation?

Answer

The works that are currently taking place on Canal Road form part of the Canal Road/Stanley Road junction improvement scheme. The scheme will involve creating a short length of dual carriageway on Canal Road and introducing traffic signals at the Stanley Road junction to improve traffic flow on Canal Road and discourage rat running through Bolton Woods.

Some people have suggested that other areas of Canal Road should have been tackled first. However the £3.8M project, jointly funded by the Department of Transport and Bradford Council through the Pinch Point fund, had to comply with a number of conditions in order to get the funding. These included the ability to complete the project within tight timescales and then the need to restrict delay by concentrating projects on land already available rather than land which needed to be bought or compulsory purchased.

The scheme is designed to bring transport benefits to this strategic corridor while also opening up new development opportunities in Canal Road and Airedale, as well as assisting the delivery of the New Bolton Woods regeneration scheme in particular. This scheme is planned to be the first phase of a wider improvement of the Canal Road corridor that is likely to be funded from the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund which is currently being developed.

16. Councillor Cooke

Would the Leader consider that the strategy and process for deciding grants to voluntary and community sector organisations is a key decision?

Answer

A key decision is an Executive decision that has a full year effect of more than £250,000 or one that is likely to affect more than one ward however it does not include any decision taken as a consequence of implementing an earlier key decision.

The decision to review what the Council spends with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations and the associated processes was made clear in the Executive's Initial Budget Proposals agreed on 5 November 2013 and was confirmed when the Executive considered its response to extensive budget consultation on 18 February 2014 before ratification by Full Council.

Since that time the Council has worked both with the sector and on its internal systems in order to increase transparency, reduce duplication and ensure value for money from its VCS spend.

- As indicated in the Executive's budget recommendations aligning expenditure formerly allocated through the Community Funding Unit with Departmental budgets is enabling it to be more clearly targeted at achieving priority outcomes.
- We now have a comprehensive picture of Council spending with the sector with arrangements able to be identified in Departmental budgets enabling organisation wide information to be gathered for strategic oversight and operational awareness ensuring best use of resources.
- A mandatory contracts and grants register to be checked prior to spending will increase transparency and reduce duplication replacing the previous lack of clarity over duplication as a result of organisations receiving multiple payments from different Departments.
- Guidance on when to use grants and when to use contracts and on the principles of grants is helping to deliver greater consistency across the Council and improve efficiency in resource allocation. Grants of over £100,000 will be reported to the Leader to enhance public accountability.
- Training is being offered to local providers on how to work with the Council.

The Council continues to value the mature and constructive relationship it has developed with the sector in recent years and is committed to working with it in open and honest partnership as we face the challenges of rapidly reducing resources and increasing demand for services.

We are working with representatives of Infrastructure Support Organisations to review provision and have published proposals for consideration by the Executive to devolve responsibility for commissioning Community Development to Area Committees which will increase local transparency and accountability.

We will continue to work to improve transparency, value for money and maximise the impact of the reduced resources at our disposal on delivering the results the District needs.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer and thank you for telling us about the budget and about the governance process for grants. I still want to know however the point at which decisions

about the distribution of millions of pounds worth of money are made. In other words because I am struggling to understand where the £48m worth of money that is spent through grants and contracts with the voluntary sector, I am not trying to have a go at them, I am trying to make sure that the decisions we make are transparent, is that the point at which that is a decision that needs to be made either as a key decision or by a report to the Executive, and certainly in the case of the recent process around public health grants what we clearly got is some confusion out there, both as to the process and as to the way in which the Council should operate this system. If we want to continue the process of developing our relationship with the voluntary sector should we not try and improve that process and have it seen as a little bit more open and transparent?

Councillor Green

I am taking this because it is finance/ voluntary sector/ constitution. First I point out that the system that we have currently got is more open than the one that we have just got rid of which you introduced over there. I do not even know who made the decisions over the last ten years but I do think that there is a point which is that people need to know where the money is going and is it going on the politically agreed priorities of the Council and I have some sympathy with your point of view that currently we have not got that real transparency and maybe it is something that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the first instance could have a look at and possibly Corporate Governance look at the reporting mechanisms and at what point that happens. Large contracts already have to go through Overview and Scrutiny Committee before they go out but we also do not want Overview and Scrutiny Committee or this Council or any other organisation being bogged down with grants of £400, £500 or £1,000 but we have to get that balance right. I think it is something that we just need to work on and we will continue to do so.

17. Councillor Greenwood

Given Eric Pickles ban on Councils using CCTV cars to tackle illegal parking can the Portfolio Holder comment on the activity of Bradford's CCTV car in keeping our roads clear and safe and how Mr Pickles latest diktat from London will impact on that activity?

Answer

The Council's Camera car became operational on 8 November 2013.

The car provides a highly visible presence and is deployed in response to three issues only: vehicles stopped on a restricted bus stop/bus lane; vehicles stopped in a restricted area outside a school and vehicles stopped on pedestrian crossings.

Eric Pickles latest utterance does not change how we work in Bradford at all. In fact he makes it clear that the three areas outlined above are exceptions and he will not be banning the use of CCTV cars in these areas. Sadly this latest policy spinning its way out of DCLG seems designed to create headlines to divert attention from the issues that really matter to people like the funding crisis facing Council services, particularly social care, rather than deal with any important issues about pedestrian safety.

Local schools, and parents from across the district have generally welcomed use of the car in addressing vehicles stopped at inappropriate locations that have a direct impact upon the risk of injury to pupils. Several schools have reported improvements to behaviour following use of the CCTV car and one school has asked for a demonstration of the car for pupils.

18. Councillor Shabbir

Can the portfolio holder please explain the reasons for the IEB served on Belle Vue Boys School in 2011 and who authorised the IEB? Can he also further explain who is to be held accountable for the failure of a council appointed IEB to turn the school around. And would he agree that the policies of IEBs is inconsistent and highlights the poverty of aspiration that exists when parents and community representation is not the driving force behind the school?

Answer

The Council's number one priority is ensuring the provision of the best possible education to all children in Bradford District.

The Council strongly supports successful schools, teachers and governors. It takes swift action when an individual school is not meeting high standards.

Warning Notices and IEBs are a well established process in Bradford.

Since 2003, IEBs have been installed at 15 schools in different parts of the District with different demographic profiles.

At Belle Vue Boys the Governing Body was ineffective, which was reflected in the Ofsted inspection of January 2010. At this point the Local Authority applied to the Secretary of State to put in place an Interim Executive. Replacing a governing body with an IEB is never taken without consideration of alternatives.

The LA has been working with the school to bring about improvements. The LA and the IEB, with the support of the DfE, have been investigating, for over 18 months, a local solution for the school that will bring the fast improvement in performance that is required. An external review of governance has been instigated. It is worth noting that the latest Ofsted report does acknowledge that the Interim Executive Board which was established by the Council *does offer strong support, are astute in their views, and show a great determination and passion to drive improvements at a much faster rate* but the LA acknowledges that standards have not improved fast enough. The difficulties at the school have not been addressed through the IEB and a number of areas of improvement still need to be moved forward.

Work has started on this and does include the replacement of the majority of the building with a new build. This is being delivered through the Priority Schools Building Programme.

A further area of development is to partner the school with an 'outstanding' school in the District. The school has not improved quickly enough for the young people at this school. The review of governance taking place, which I referred to before, will enable us to look at further action to be taken for future interventions should they be required.

19. Councillor Hassan Khan

Can the Portfolio holder outline the role the Children's Services Department played in supporting the successful Better Start bid?

Answer

The Children's Services Department did indeed support the Better Start Bid. The Director of Children's Services chairs the Better Start Partnership Board and has provided

confidence and reassurance to partners about the importance of the additional resource for the three wards involved. Central to this was brokering an agreement for a “Better Start Bank”, so that local communities can have a greater say in locally offered services.

Colleagues in Early Childhood Services and Public Health helped research and finesse the bid. Children’s Services officers supported partners in the contributions they made to the process and maintained liaison with The Big Lottery and the Dartington Social Enterprise unit, who were central to Bid design.

As Councillor Hassan Khan will know the successful bid means that funding to a total of £49M will be coming into Bradford over the next ten years.

20. Councillor L’Amie

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport inform members of what actions the Council is taking to ensure that the units on the Buck Lane industrial estate in Baildon are used by genuine "Hi Tech" Companies?

Answer

The Airedale masterplan identified Buck Lane as being suitable for the development of a business park to satisfy the needs of expanding local companies engaged in hi technology, manufacturing and digital technology sectors.

Over the course of the development of the park this ambition has been maintained and there are a number of ways in which this is being achieved.

- The Council are owners of the site. This ensures any end users wishing to purchase land and relocate to the park are undertaking activities appropriate for the site.
- The planning permission has restrictions for specific uses.
- Under the development agreement with Pendle Russell Ltd the Council remains in control of the type of company that can relocate.

The companies which are committed to the site, namely:

- Produmax – a company manufacturing parts for the airline industry
- Anetic Aid – a manufacturer of medical devices including operating theatre equipment.

Both meet the criteria and they are both locating to the park because they wish to be located on a park with like minded businesses.

To demonstrate this commitment to ensure only hi tech, manufacturing and digital companies are on the site a number of potential end occupiers have been refused such as plant hire, food manufacturing and general warehousing.

Supplementary Question

Leaving aside the fact that a traveller encampment is hardly hi-tech, on a slightly more long term note Bradford University promotes itself as a leading technological university. How far has the University been involved not just in Buck Lane but in other sites in Bradford to try and encourage spin off businesses which clearly in America have been very valuable?

Councillor Green

That is one of the most tenuous supplementary questions that I have ever heard and I think you should be congratulated or promoted, one of the two. The University as you will have heard from the recent announcement of the university enterprise zone has been involved in a lot of support work and also development work throughout the district and is looking to build links with existing and new companies across the whole of Bradford to create that similarity between academia and the corporate world. I have spoken to the Vice-Chancellor on a number of occasions over the last few months as has Councillor Hinchcliffe and senior officers of this Council and he has a very clear vision which involves working much closer with industry and I think that we will begin to see the fruits of that effort over the coming months and years.

21. Councillor Shafiq

What is the Council doing to make sure that its workforce at all levels is representative of the population it serves and has the skills and experience to reach senior management positions? In particular, what efforts are being made to ensure that this is the case in Children's Services?

Answer

The Council is currently developing a Talent Management strategy which will determine the approach so we can ensure that we develop the skills to utilise staffs experiences in providing opportunities for our staff to reach Senior Management positions.

The developing Talent Management strategy will have two distinct but related areas which we will be focussing upon.

Firstly we will be implementing a targeted talent management approach which will be focussed upon how we can ensure that right across the Council, including in Senior Management positions, we have a workforce which is representative of the District and population we service and secondly, in a time of budget reductions where there is limited opportunity for external appointments we have a broad approach to ensure we recognise our best talent and promote this as part of a succession planning process.

It is proposed that the future talent management framework blends a targeted approach with special focus given to a particular core group or core groups of employees, together with a more general scheme for employees as a whole. The plan is to recognise people's strengths and individual talent, not only through qualifications, skills and experience, but also through knowledge, behaviour and attitude. The framework proposed provides managers with assessment criteria with which to map employee's current performance, development needs and motivation to work against their potential. This will then be used to inform any subsequent talent development.

While the Council's Talent Management programme relates to all Council Departments, including Children's Services that Department has also recently supported a mentoring programme for middle tier managers and, looking beyond the Council, there is a leadership programme for school leaders. The Department is also involved in a regional Children's Services Improvement Board which includes training for aspirant leaders. Alongside this there is a clear programme of support for learning within various professional areas such as social work, youth work and early years staff.

22. Councillor Engel

What is the Council doing to reduce homelessness and the costs of homelessness?

Answer

Homelessness has been rising over recent years as a result of welfare reform and the downturn in the economy. This is a national trend and Bradford is no exception. We have however managed to deal with the increase in client demand and achieve reductions in the budget at the same time.

Two years ago a £70,000 reduction was made to the Incommunities contract fee, this was followed by a £50,000 reduction in the current year post transfer. These were achieved by management reductions and reducing the use of B&B hotels. B&B use quadrupled nationally and locally due to welfare reform and the downturn in the economy.

Despite a significant increase in B&B use in the District we have managed to hugely reduce B&B costs and to sustain expenditure at the lower levels this year. In terms of reducing homelessness, our primary focus is on prevention and if this was not so the numbers of homeless within the District would be even higher.

Preventing homelessness through improving housing supply is a key priority within the housing and homelessness strategy adopted by the council in March this year. We are working closely with the HCA to secure funding both for the council and partners to improve affordable housing within the district. Our track record is exceptional and we hope to maximise our relationship with the HCA during the current bidding round. We also have an empty homes strategy and can proudly point out that in terms of bringing empty homes back in use we are one of the top quartile of local authorities. Generally however we are building alliances with good private landlords to not only work with them to bring empty homes back into use but also to use the private rented sector in general to place people into who are threatened with homelessness. Welfare Reform and the weak economy has impacted heavily on Bradford District and the government too has a role in managing these impacts.

We have also directed Council Capital funding toward proving 18 temporary housing units within Clergy House and the adjoining site. Work on this should commence shortly.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer. I suppose what I also really want to know is are we doing enough and are the measures we are taking going to be enough to meet with the projected possible increase in people at risk of homelessness in the district?

Councillor Val Slater

Thank you for that Councillor Engel. I do not have a crystal ball so it is very difficult to answer that question. It is very difficult to estimate what the demand will be. All I can say is that we will try and meet the demand in the best way that we can. We have got as outlined in the answer we have a number of initiatives. I am pretty happy and convinced that the extra facilities that we will be providing once Clergy House and the associated units are up and running will aid the situation but in the present economic climate I cannot give any guarantees. All I can say is we will do our utmost to meet that need.

23. Councillor Fear

Question to the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport - What is Bradford Council seeking to do to address the problems residents have with accessing details of planning applications that impact on them on the Bradford Council Planning website?

Answer

I think that we should make it clear that in nearly all (99%) of cases the Planning Public Access application does meet the needs of the Citizens of Bradford. It is only when the Council receives substantial representation from the Public that the PublicAccess application then begins to struggle. The PublicAccess application system is easy to use, very accessible and provides information in an open and transparent form. In a very few cases the system has problems with the high volume of information recorded on it which can affect the quality of the system that the public expects of it.

With a view to improvements to the situation, the Planning Department is currently in the middle of a major upgrade of its computer system, which includes the Planning PublicAccess application, to the latest versions of the software and to brand new servers (hardware infrastructure). This project is due to be complete by the end of September 2014.

The Planning Department is investigating with its ICT strategic partner for the provision of additional resources for the existing PublicAccess application.

Supplementary Question

I would like to thank the portfolio holder for the response. I represent a ward that has a planning application which is one of the few cases where the system does have problems with the high volume of information recorded on it which is affecting the quality of the system. What reassurances can you give that those who objected and raised their concerns to the Council will have those objections and concerns looked into and will receive a response?

Councillor Val Slater

Objections can obviously be submitted in many different ways. If there are problems with the IT system and perhaps I am not the best person to defend any IT system seeing as I have had real nightmares myself today. I recognise there are issues. We are working to try and resolve those issues. All I can say is we are doing the best we can. If objections are submitted in another form then obviously they will be taken into account.

24. Councillor Brown

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport confirm whether she considers it acceptable that there were delays in the receipt of lamp posts for Providence Lane, because they were in transit from Spain and will she commit to trying to increase the amount of council money spent with local firms?

Answer

The situation resulted from a decision by the Company with whom we have traded a number of years and who had previously manufactured these units in Britain to move the manufacture to Spain. This was a commercial decision by the manufacturer and we were unaware of this until we encountered the above problem.

After discussion with the manufacturer of the Lanterns (these were the parts that we were having problems with delivery, not the columns) they have reviewed their order process

which should prevent the same issue from becoming a problem. The street lighting unit do use local suppliers wherever possible and are due to go out to tender for lanterns soon – within which there is a quality score for local/UK production and also criteria to ensure prompt delivery.

25. Councillor Thirkill

Can the Portfolio holder outline the progress being made on the establishment of an Adoption Forum for the District?

Answer

The Council has a good track record of listening to the parents of children with additional needs – we have a forum for parents of disabled children and one for foster carers. We have new responsibilities to support adoptive parents with what can be a challenging task, caring for children who are unfortunately emotionally damaged before they come into care. I have met with and listened to local adopters need for support and have agreed that an Adoption Forum will be developed to give them give them tailored advice and information. I will attend every meeting to listen to what they have to say.

There will be four meetings a year, an independent chair has been identified who is the current independent chair of Bradford Adoption Panel and a trainer. We will organise regular speakers to discuss issues that affect adopters, and allow for helpful debate and consultation. The first meeting will be arranged for the Autumn and this will be led by our Headteacher for looked after children – advising on the pupil premium and support from schools.

26. Councillor Hassan Khan

What progress is being made on the City Connect cycle route?

Answer

The 23km CityConnect cycle route between Leeds and Bradford is one of the projects within the CityConnect Programme. Other CityConnect projects within the Bradford District are:-

- The Canal Towpath Improvements.
- 20mph Zones.
- Communications and Engagement.
- Best Foot Forwards.
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

The WYCA was awarded Government funding on behalf of Bradford and Leeds in August 2013. Draft proposals for the cycle route across Bradford were then drawn up (together with proposals for the route across Leeds). Residents and business were consulted upon the draft proposals.

Development of the project has continued to progress and included discussions with; the DfT in respect of highway standards and legislation, local user groups and other interested parties, and the other major Cities who were recipients of Cycle City Ambition Grant.

Detailed designs have been developed, taking into consideration all the input from consultations and information gathering. These will be presented to the portfolio holder for approval shortly.

Traffic Regulation Orders necessary to implement the project have been drawn up and will be advertised in the next few weeks.

Tenders for the works will be invited in late July.

It is anticipated that construction could commence on site in October/ November this year, with completion 9 months later, although the start date and construction durations are still subject to detailed programming of the whole 23km route.

27. Councillor Whiteley

David Laws the Minister for State for Schools has said that his department has secured £7.5 billion basic need funding for 2015/16 which will enable local authorities to create a further 500,000 school places. Can the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services advise colleagues of the actions that Bradford Council is taking to secure monies from the fund, to create more secondary school places for children in Wharfedale, because Ilkley Grammar School cannot meet current demand let alone the increased need associated with recent planning permissions in the area?

Answer

The Council has received indicative funding allocations for Basic Need for 2015/16 and 2016/17 of £9,223,124 and £9,684,281 respectively from the Department for Education (DfE). Basic Need funding allocations are made by the DfE using a standard formula based on the physical condition of the school and there is no bidding process for Councils except for one off initiatives which are periodically announced.

Ilkley Grammar School is an Academy School and outside of Council control however the Council aims to work closely with all Schools in the district and is currently reviewing future secondary provision in the Wharfe Valley. The Council has been exploring with the School and the Education Funding Agency issues around the demand for places at the School.

Supplementary Question

I was very pleased to hear that the Council is exploring the implications and demand for school places in Wharfedale. My supplementary question is I would like to ask the portfolio holder how does he intend to monitor the outcome of what he intends to do and what date will the results be implemented?

Councillor Berry

We need to make sure that when we get the analysis of projected pupil places and we deal with the basic needs allowance that we are getting there are some discussions going to be taking place over the coming period about places in the ward that you represent and I believe that once we have got those in place we will be able to work with the schools as we have done in recent months. It is worth reminding everybody that the pressure on school places in a place like Bradford is as a result of restrictions on capping. We are running at about 300 children over planned admission limit. Were it not for the co-operation of those school governing bodies and those Headteachers we would not be able to accommodate every child in a school in Bradford. I will get back with a more detailed answer to you at the appropriate time.

28. Councillor Sher Khan

How much has it cost the Council to prepare the former central library building to accommodate staff currently based at Futures House and when will those staff be relocated and the building brought back into use?

Answer

In May 2013 Executive approval was given to a report that set out the proposals for the utilisation of the City Centre freehold property. The programme is managed within the governance of the Property Programme and is based upon the principles of 'invest to save'. £15.8m capital investment was approved for the provision of the following outcomes:

1. A new City Library in the city centre located with the Impressions Gallery on City Park.
2. Vacation of Future House by 2017 saving approximately **£1.2m** gross per annum.
3. Major improvement/ renewal of the Central Library Building including backlog maintenance reductions of **£4.9m**
4. The vacation and disposal of Flockton House by 2014/15 resulting in a **£250K** per annum revenue saving, a one off capital receipt, and backlog maintenance reductions of approx **£810K**.
5. An additional 1300 employees based in the City Centre.
6. Acquisition of an additional asset (Mercury House).
7. Additional workforce improvements associated with Flexible and New Ways of Working.
8. Improvements to the Council's IT estate as flexible workers are provided with laptops and mobile devices.

Staff currently working from Flockton House, Mitre Court, Owlet Road Shipley, Aire Building Shipley and the Town Hall Shipley are all captured within the programme to relocate to Mercury House Bradford in October 2014.

Staff working from Future House will relocate to the former central library building.

29. Councillor Swallow

What steps are being taken to make best use of the recently announced looked after child premium?

Answer

The Pupil Premium has been available for Looked After Children aged 4 -16, since April 2011 and has increased from £400 in 2011, to £900 in 2013 and is now £1900. It has been increased to cover children who have been adopted from 2006 onwards and those who are on a Special Guardianship Order.

The money goes directly to the schools. Schools must use the pupil premium to improve the educational achievement of Looked After Children, to see that they make good progress and that the gap between looked after children and their peers is narrowed. Schools must put information on their website outlining the amount of pupil premium that has been allocated for 2013/14, how this was spent and what difference it has made to pupil outcomes. They are also required to include information on the pupil premium allocation for 2014/15 together with details of how they intend to spend this. OFSTED will also report on the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils who attract the pupil premium.

30. Councillor Cooke

Further to the Planning Minister's invitation for councils to become vanguards for the new "Right to Build" scheme, can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport advise colleagues of how the Council intends to respond to this invitation?

Answer

Officers are currently carrying out an assessment of whether the council is able to meet the criteria to become a vanguard authority including the deliverability of the milestones set out in government's Invitation for Expressions of Interest. The assessment includes a consideration of the affect on existing resources of becoming a vanguard authority and the likelihood of identifying suitable plots by the deadline set by government.

This assessment will be completed before the deadline for Expressions of Interest of 31st July.

31. Councillor Azam

What impact is the Film Literacy Project having with Bradford Schools?

Answer

The Bradford Film Literacy project is having a positive impact in Bradford Schools. Teachers involved attended an evaluation day a few weeks ago and submitted data on progress points that students have made in terms of reading and writing. These will be analysed in the coming weeks and form part of a report on the outcomes of the intervention this year. The scheme was successful in attracting funding from Cape UK this year along with ongoing support from the British Film Institute.

On 25 and 26 June 400 primary school children attended the National Media Museum to screen films they had made as part of the project.

We are now talking with national bodies such as 'Into Film' (funded by the British Film Institute) and the National Literacy Trust about how they might support the initiative in the future. The PhD study will be completed in 2015.

Bradford is of course the world's first UNESCO City of Film and the City of Film team have been closely involved in the project. They are looking at how we might extend the scheme into secondary schools in 2015.

32. Councillor Fear

Question to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport - What measures does Bradford Council have in place to complete and adopt roads as part of new housing developments where the developer has defaulted on work?

Answer

Housing developers who wish to have the internal roads of their new housing sites adopted by Bradford Council following completion of the development are required to enter into an agreement with the Council under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 prior to work on the highway commencing.

A key aspect of S38 agreements is that they provide financial underwriting to funding any highway works which will be adopted by the Council either in the form of a cash deposit or

surety (bank or insurance company) backed bond. The level of this bond is calculated by the Council based on the length of highway to be adopted.

Should, during the period of the works, the developer be declared insolvent, or be placed in receivership the Council can then call upon this bond to complete the highway works to an adoptable standard acceptable to the Council using its own resources and appointed contractor.

The level of the bond or cash deposit is normally reduced during the progression of the highway works based on the completion of the construction of the highway to a standard acceptable to the Council. The pertinent triggers are

- a) Following completion of the whole of the works the bond is reduced by 90% with 10% being retained by the Council for the 12 month maintenance period which the S38 Agreement requires.
- b) Upon the expiry of the 12 month maintenance period and following acceptance of the highway by the Council's inspector the remaining 10% is returned to the developer.

If the works are not completed to a standard acceptable to the Council the reduction in the bond does not take place and the developer is required to either undertake remedial works or reconstruct the highway works in accordance with the Council's specification. Should the works continue to be to an unadoptable standard the Council can again call upon the bond to appoint its own contractor to complete the works.

33. Councillor Faisal Khan

What is the 'BD3 problem' with regards to schools and what was done about it and who managed it and where was this discussed and is it minuted?

Answer

The question refers to the 'BD3 problem' with regard to schools. The Council does not regard there to be a BD3 'problem'. There are 13 schools in the BD3 area and the Local Authority has worked with a large proportion of them to provide challenge and support in order to ensure that children and young people get the very best quality of education.

There are 5 "good" schools and 1 "outstanding" school (as judged by Ofsted) in the BD3 area and many of them are working with other schools across Bradford to provide support and challenge. The Local Authority is keen to use the leadership expertise that is found in the BD3 area.

The Local Authority has recently put in place Interim Executive Boards (IEB) in what was formerly Bradford Moor School (now Dixons Marchbank Academy) and in Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College (LBEC) because of issues relating to Governance and the lack of focus on pupil progress.

Since the IEBs have been put in place, monitoring reports by HMI have reported positively about the work of the IEBs and the progress in the quality of teaching and learning.

The Council is working closely with leaders and Governing Bodies in schools in the BD3 area and are committed to raising the achievement of all children.

The Council will act decisively when there is evidence that the quality of education is not as it should be or when Governance is weak. Our aim, and the aim of Bradford Schools Partnerships is for all schools to be good schools, we are working hard to ensure that this is achieved.

Supplementary Question

Your answer dispels the notion that there is a BD3 problem however this term has been used and is it the case that there is one answer for the public masking the actuality that meetings are held behind closed doors?

Councillor Berry

Completely not the case and it is extremely unhelpful to say that you are against the term being used but you are the person that is using it. I know of no such meeting or strategy to discuss any specific issues to do with one postal be it BD6, BD18, BD4, BD12 or whatever - sorry BD12 is in Leeds, forgive me that one. We look at the information about every school in every community equally without fear or favour. As has been said in the answer there are some extremely good schools in Bradford 3. Indeed I would note that one of them has recently had an Ofsted report that commends its good governance, its leadership and confirms its outstanding status and works well with the other schools in the community. That would happen to be Feversham College.

34. Councillor Love

On 21 May 2014 in a report on dental health the Telegraph and Argus claimed '*A spokesman for Bradford Council said it had not taken a stance on fluoridation*'. Given that Full Council has voted against fluoridation on at least two occasions in the last 12 years, will the Leader of Council please ensure that spokespeople for the Council are fully briefed before commenting to the press?

Answer

On the 20 May, 2014 the Telegraph & Argus' Westminster reporter asked the Council to comment on statistics that 462 children under the age of five had been to hospital with 'tooth rot' over a three year period. He also asked what the council's position was over fluoridisation.

A statement was produced, working with partners Public Health England and the Bradford District Care Trust, to outline the positive action taken to prevent tooth decay in children in the district. It also stated that a fluoride varnish programme targets those at risk from possible tooth decay.

After receiving the statement the reporter phoned again and asked several times whether Bradford was going to add fluoride to the water. The agreed statement was repeated to him. It must be noted that journalists do not always record or publish comments or statements accurately and at no time was it suggested that Bradford Council had not taken a stance on fluoridisation.

35. Councillor Cooke

Can the Leader of the Council advise us what value and purpose is served by expecting local village fairs, fetes and galas to apply for a markets licence?

Answer

We've been regulating markets across the district since 1985 on the basis that this is in the best interests of the communities where they are located as not all markets are appropriately located and can cause nuisance to local residents. Without proper regulation in place we would not legally have the justification to clamp down on inappropriate markets which from time to time can spring up over the district.

Regulation also enables us to provide advice about other issues which may impact on public health like food hygiene, waste management. At a simple level it also enables us to advise of any date clashes which may impact on the success of an event. We do not make any money out of the licensing of such events, it is very much a self financing exercise.

Licensing only applies to events with five or more stalls however I do share concerns that the bureaucratic overheads and costs in officer time may often outweigh the benefits and any income generated so I am happy to ask Officers to develop options for a revised policy.

Supplementary Question

Can I thank you for the last paragraph and urge you to get to a situation. I have worked out there are nine assorted village galas and children's galas in Bingley Rural every year and until this year they have never had to complete this and they came to me and said do I have to fill this form in? I looked at it and I said it is a bit onerous isn't it. I said to them yes you have to fill the form in. It does seem a bit over the top and if we can have a look at this and start saying to these people no you don't but we would like you to tell us the dates and avail yourself of our expert advice should you need them. That is all they really need.

36. Councillor Cooke

What provision is in place in Bradford City Centre to a) reduce the impact of anti-social street drinking; and b) support street drinkers and drug users in addressing their problems?

Answer

Anti social street drinking is more prevalent in the summer months, and is no more of a problem in Bradford than in other major city centres across the country.

Bradford District Anti-Social Behaviour Strategic Partnership has established a working group to tackle the issue of street drinking in Bradford City Centre. Members of the group include City Neighbourhood Police Team Inspector, the City Centre Manager, City Centre Service Manager, ASB Officer, Public Health, Arch Initiative and the IOM (Integrated Offender Management) Team. The group is chaired by the Council's Safer Communities Delivery Co-ordinator and will meet monthly.

The group has devised an action plan which focuses on all aspects of the issue, including enforcement and the powers available to the police; Direction to Leave Notices and existing powers including Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and DPPOs (designated Public Protection Notices) and opportunities to extend boundaries and consider potential new powers within the forthcoming ASB Legislation; Public Space Protection Orders and ASB Injunctions. The plan includes provision for reassuring businesses and retailers and building public confidence with a strong communication strategy which demonstrates continued partnership commitment to tackle the issue.

Public Health funding is in place to extend IOM Alcohol Support provision currently delivered by Arch Initiatives. From 1 August this will include 2 (full time) workers to deliver street outreach work with street drinkers. The scheme will offer short and long term interventions including access to detoxification and support thereafter to sustain recovery. This additional support will run alongside a mentor scheme supporting ex drug and alcohol users in giving guidance and positive role modelling to others in recovery. This work will aim to prevent the problem moving to another area.

Access to treatment for alcohol and drug use (non-criminal justice route) is available in Bradford District through three rapid access hubs, Fresh Start services at Bridge Project and Project 6 and the assessment service at Lifeline Piccadilly. All services aim to see individuals within 3 days of referral and same day access is made available as needed. The services offer intensive assessment and intervention and referral on to community services for on-going treatment which is recovery focussed and intends to move individuals away from alcohol and drug use, and in to mainstream services.

In addition to the above, Horton Housing provide a daily drop-in service for alcohol users where they can receive practical help, advice and support and can be assessed and referred onto specialist services for treatment.

Supplementary Question

Thank you again for the comprehensive answer. Can I stress and I hope that the Council will take this on board, that we should put the thing in the right order here and rather than seeing this as an anti social behaviour problem which is the way it is reported, I see it as a problem which through our now welcome responsibility for public health is an area where we can keep definitive action to help these people and I know you have had various emails and I will not go into all the details so I hope that we can get that assurance and any help my group can give in pushing that forward then we are happy to do.

Councillor Green

Yes.

37. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

Question to the Leader - How much each year since 2010 has Bradford Council been offered by the Government to freeze the level of Council Tax?

Answer

Council tax freeze grant should be seen in the context of massive and disproportionate Government cuts that will have reduced Council resources by £215m by 2017 compared to 2011 at a time when demand for services is rising. The Grant re-distributes money from Councils with higher levels of need to those with large Council Tax bases and high numbers of expensive properties. Councils such as Bradford with high needs and low tax bases are at a disadvantage and the District lost over £5m to fund local services between 2011-12 and 2012-13 as a result of this change in Government policy.

2011-12 was the first year the Council was offered a grant in return for freezing Council Tax. In that year it received £4.074m, the equivalent of a 2.5% increase in Band D Council Tax. This grant continues to be paid to the Council but as part of its much reduced general Revenue Support Grant.

In 2012-13 the Council was paid a one off freeze grant of £4.080m, which again was equivalent to a 2.5% increase in Council Tax.

In 2013-14 and 2014-15 the Council increased Council tax and forewent freeze grants equivalent to a 1% increase in Council Tax estimated at £1.6m in 2013-14 and £1.7m in 2014-15.

The Government has consistently failed to provide Councils with clarity about the grant which, in the past, has only been paid for a short time forcing Councils to find the money from local services when the grant expires. Accepting the grant in 2014-15 would have meant further cuts to services of £1.8m.

Bradford continues to set the lowest Council tax in West Yorkshire and the 4th lowest of 36 Metropolitan Authorities.

38. Councillor Ahmed

Will the Leader of the Council provide details, by service, of budget reductions approved by the Council; of his assessment what impact these reductions have had on residents of Bradford; and of his assessment of which residents have suffered the most serious decrease in their quality of life as a result of these reductions?

Answer

I assume that the question refers to budget decisions taken since the Government's 2010 Spending Review announced unprecedented and punitive cuts to Local Government. Those cuts have had a disproportionate negative impact on Bradford District and have come at a time when services are already under pressure from increasing demand.

In order to balance the books, the Council has agreed measures designed to reduce costs and increase income totalling £160.6m since 2010-11 and up to and including 2015-16. The Council has also had to pass the Government's £5m cut in Council Tax support on to people receiving help with Council Tax.

A range of strategies have been adopted with improving efficiency and productivity, management restructuring, renegotiating contracts, increasing income, closer collaboration and reductions to back office and non-service spending accounting for almost 80% of savings to date. This has helped us to limit the impact on frontline services as far as is possible.

Analysis presented in the table below shows that over £56.6m has been saved by reducing spending on support services, non-service expenditure and cross-cutting measures. Of service Departments, Adult Services which takes up almost a third of the Council's net spend has contributed just over a quarter of budgeted savings proposals with the overwhelming majority of these – around 80% - designed to improve efficiency, renegotiate contracts and increase integration and collaboration. Recurring investment of £24m has been made in services over the same period with 73% of this allocated to Adult Services.

However the scope for further large scale efficiency and non-service savings is now diminishing and very difficult decisions lie ahead about the type and scale of Council services.

The cumulative impact of Council cuts on our communities is beginning to show. What is unquestionably the case is that unfairly distributed Government cuts mean that Districts like ours, with high levels of need, are hit hardest and inevitably this places the most deprived or vulnerable people and communities at greatest risk of deteriorations in quality of life.

	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		Total	
	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%	£000	%
Adults	9152	18.8	8580	30.1	8400	32.2	7523	23.6	7921	31.0	41576	25.9
Children	7360	15.1	6209	21.8	4963	19.0	6861	21.6	6223	24.3	31616	19.7
Environment	3635	7.5	2579	9.1	2393	9.2	2605	8.2	2359	9.2	13571	8.4
Regeneration	4607	9.5	4639	16.3	2241	8.6	2890	9.1	2832	11.1	17209	10.7
Other*	23937	49.2	6454	22.7	8108	31.1	11946	37.5	6226	24.4	56671	35.3
Total	48691		28461		26105		31825		25561		160643	

*Support services, cross-cutting and non-service savings

39. Councillor Cooke

How much in outstanding business rates is Bradford Council owned by Bradford Bulls and is any of this debt considered uncollectable because of liquidation and/or administration proceedings to which the Council was a party?

Answer

The monies outstanding for OK Bulls Ltd in respect of business rates up to the date the company went into Administration is £85,414.42.

Under the insolvency rules once a company goes down this road the debt is usually no longer collectable and the information from the Administrator indicates this will be the case.

Supplementary Question

I have a lot of questions on this one but having had a review of them I will write direct to the Leader.