

COUNCIL
8 December 2015

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

1. Councillor Swallow

Is the Government's much anticipated Fairer Funding Formula for Schools going to be fair for Bradford children?

Answer

From everything I have heard and read so far it would appear that the so-called Fairer Funding Formula is anything but fair to places like Bradford District which have a high proportion of children with additional needs.

Having followed recent 'informal' announcements, articles in the national press, and also from analysing the modelling that has been carried by the F40 Group (the 40 lowest funded local authorities, who have developed their own funding model for schools and who appear to have had significant recent access to the DfE), we are very concerned that the result of the National Funding Formula will be a significant reduction in overall budget for education and all schools and academies in Bradford.

The gist of 'informal' announcements is that, in consulting on the National Funding Formula, the DfE is likely to propose to reduce the proportion of the total national schools' budget that is allocated in support of children from more deprived backgrounds and / or with additional educational needs. The National Funding Formula is a priority item for both the Schools Forum and the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee. The Department for Education has yet to publish its consultation on the proposed National Funding Formula. Following the Chancellor's announcement on 25 November, we expect this to be published early in spring 2016. As a result, we do not yet have any detail on which to judge with certainty whether the changes will be fair for Bradford District. Once the detail of formula changes are announced, we will respond quickly to assess impact. I would encourage all members from whatever political party they are from to lobby their own MP on the changes to make sure schools in their ward continue to get the funding they need.

Supplementary Question

I appreciate the answer that Councillor Hinchcliffe has given. I am astounded at the gist of the informal announcements that the Fairer Funding Formula could be anything but fair. The more we are trying to work hard to improve education and outcomes for our children and young people from all backgrounds and with a range of needs, the more we seem to get bashed. Whatever it is whether it is by the Government with their warped understanding of fairness or even the Ofsted Chief Executive's comments which the Leader has already commented on this evening there are many teachers, governors, support workers working hard to improve the outcomes of our children. So the question, will the portfolio holder ensure that she keeps on top of this worrying situation and keep Members informed of the potential impact on our district's children as she becomes aware of more details and announcements as they appear to be being dripped fed through?

Councillor Hinchcliffe

Yes it is something that has come to my attention the last few months. I know Children's Scrutiny have had a look at it as has the Schools Forum. Thank you Children's Scrutiny for sending a letter to MPs on the issue. It is something that we need to all be aware of and have a say in now before the consultation comes in May/spring time so please do write to your MPs, get involved and shout about it before it is too late.

2. Councillor Mike Pollard

It is appreciated that the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts must be prudently cautious, but could the Portfolio holder for Housing, Planning and Transport explain why, in the context of a 'Core Strategy' looking at providing 42,000 new homes in the District by 2030, the projected residential Council Tax base for 2021/2, i.e. nearly half way through the 'Core Strategy' timeframe, only assumes that 3,750 of those 42,000 will be completed?

Answer

The answer lies in the fact that the 'Core Strategy' involves the forecasting of housing completions that are hypothetically needed by the district based on a number of factors such as population changes and land availability subject to validation by the Planning Inspectorate. The forecast includes a backlog of unmet need. The Medium Term Financial Strategy forecasts the number of dwellings upon which the Council Tax base can be calculated, completions run at a lower rate than the Core Strategy trajectory, this is due to the key brake in delivery which is the availability of land for release to housing development. Where it can, the Council aims to work with developers to support the development of infrastructure and the conditions for a significant shift in delivery in housing completions but this is subject to a range of market factors not always within the Council's control

Supplementary Question

The residents of the district are currently embroiled in very real planning effects of the Council not being able to demonstrate the appropriate supply of housing land will be interested to learn that the Core Strategy for housing is apparently purely hypothetical. As I said in my original question I appreciate that the Director of Finance has to exercise guidance erring on the side of caution but I put it to the portfolio holder that the projections for new residential completions are so low that there are only two realistic conclusions to be drawn. Either the Core Strategy proposals for 42,000 new homes by 2030 are so unrealistic as to render the Strategy fatally flawed or the controlling group is indulging in just a little budgetary shroud waving - which is it?

Councillor Val Slater

I would not personally have used the word hypothetical. We have discussed the Core Strategy here many times. You perhaps were not present when we did. The figure of 42,500 has to be evidenced on the projected need of population growth and people coming in for employment basis. The Core Strategy was examined in public by the Planning Inspector and he broadly accepted that figure. He did question some of the distribution but that was for other reasons and we are now moving on with the Core Strategy. What is called the modifications are now out for a further look out and once they have been considered and people have responded we will be moving forward on that. The Government Planning Inspector has accepted those figures. The other thing he looks at in the Core Strategy is the realisticness of us delivering those houses. We will be talking later in motions debate about the housing and planning build and how realistic and what help we are getting or not getting from the Government to get those houses built.

There is a difference between assessed need and getting them delivered on the ground and the delivery on the ground is sometimes out of the control of the local authority but the assessing of the need is a Government requirement by this local authority. So that is the difference.

3. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture - How many unauthorised absences from school have been recorded, per year group, monthly since January 2014 to November 2015?

Answer

Period	Sessions of Absence (half days)		Primary Unauthorised Absence %	Secondary Unauthorised Absence %
	Primary	Secondary		
Autumn Term 2013	66129	91510	1.1	2.2
Spring Term 2014	52331	86058		
Autumn Spring Cumulative	118460	177568	1.0	2.2
Summer Term 2014	63681	85090		
Autumn Spring Summer Cumulative	182141	262658	1.1	2.5

Attendance figures for the academic years are published in the autumn term; autumn and spring terms cumulative; and autumn, spring and summer terms cumulative. Figures for the Summer Term 2015 will be published in the Statistical First Release in March 2016

4. Councillor Love

Can the Leader of Council confirm if he was one of the 50 Labour Council Leaders to sign a commitment to run their authority on carbon-neutral energy by 2050? If so, does he think this is ambitious enough and does he have a plan to achieve it?

Answer

Bradford Council has signed the Labour led "zero carbon cities by 2050" pledge. As part of its progress to achieving this the Council remains committed to achieving its ambitious 2020 carbon reduction and renewable energy targets and has for example recently approved the continuing business case development for the Civic Quarter District Heat Network and its associated contribution to reduction CO2 emissions.

5. Councillor Naylor

Could the Leader provide details of the stock levels of salt held by Bradford over the last five years by depot or reserve including this year's current stock levels and the details of any proposed reduction in gritting routes?

Answer

Our current stock level is 26,000 tonnes in reserve at the start of the season. There are no planned reductions in gritting routes for 2015/16.

Supplementary Question

Thank you Leader for the partial answer to the question. I would be grateful if you could answer the other half of it or get somebody to do that on your behalf. I am sure it will have to be in writing otherwise it would have been included already.

Councillor Val Slater

Perhaps you would like to communicate with me outside this meeting but I think we have told you about the level of stock which is 26,000 tonnes which is about right that we have had based on previous consumption. How fast we use it does depend on the type of winter we get. We are in partnership across West Yorkshire and we can pull from them. You ask details about any proposed reduction in gritting routes and there are no proposed reduction in gritting routes for 2015/16 for this coming winter. There was nothing else in your question so I am a bit bemused but perhaps we will talk about it later but I will repeat - there are no proposed reductions in the gritting routes for 2015/16. It clearly says that in writing.

6. Councillor Robinson

Can the Leader provide an update on the progress being made on the Council receiving repayment of the loan made to the Bradford Bulls which had a personal guarantee from Omar Khan?

Answer

As previously reported to this Council the matter is in the hands of the Council's solicitors and proceedings will be issued to recover the outstanding money if a satisfactory agreement about continued payments of instalments cannot be reached. Regular payments have been received in respect of the loan. The details of the payments and outstanding amounts remain subject to a confidentiality agreement at this time.

Supplementary Question

I am confused. Initially when I requested information from the City Solicitor he gave me information that Omar Khan was making erratic payments and not keeping to the legal agreement. The question I now want to know, this is public money, £250,000 was lent, public money lent to a private company by our, and I was part of it, Labour led Council. Can this information be received under the Freedom of Information enquiry?

Councillor Green

Not being a legal expert I would not give a definitive answer but my gut feeling would be no. Simply because it is under commercial confidentiality but if you wanted to make that application then the powers that be will, and in the case of FOI's that isn't politicians, because there have been too many politicians who have had their fingers burnt interfering with FOIs. Put in the application and it will be considered by the Legal Department.

7. Councillor Morris

With the knowledge that 130 people have been slaughtered by Muslim extremists in Paris, one of which was known to have entered the EU posing as a refugee in October, will the Council change its open door policy to refugees until a way can be found to protect the residents of the district?

Answer

The Council doesn't have an 'open door' policy to refugees.

The refugees resettled in Bradford have been through the managed migration programmes such as Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme and Gateway Protection Programme. These programmes are led by the Home Office working in conjunction with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme supports individual cases where evacuation from the region is the only option and prioritises help for survivors of torture, and women and children in need of medical care. Prior to their arrival in the UK the UNHCR vets all the refugees and the whole resettlement process is carefully managed, supported and controlled. In Bradford, the Prevent Coordinator is a member of the Refugee Resettlement Steering group and has undertaken Prevent Safeguarding training for all staff working with refugees.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for your answer Councillor Green. A supplementary then. Are the refugees being given priority over housing in the district over residents born and bred within the district?

Councillor Green

Let's just kill this off. Well let's try and kill it off once and for all. We have said it in the press. We have said it in motions to Council. We have said it in reports to Executive. I have said it on the television. The Minister has said it. The situation is that we are only taking refugees where our resources allow us both to give them the life that they need but also to make sure that Bradfordians and Keighleyians and Shipleyians are not prevented from accessing services. We work in partnership with housing providers, private landlords, the schools, the Home Office and everybody else. And actually we should be damn proud of the district, damn proud about what we are doing and what we should not allow to happen is people to try and use the tragedy in France or the tragedy that is going on in the Middle East to create division and hatred. These are people who have been living in refugee camps for years, with no proper education, not allowed to work, no access to proper food and medical care despite the best wishes and hopes of the refugees. And yes Bradford does offer them refuge like we have offered refuge to people escaping violence for hundreds of years. We should be proud, you should be welcoming it, you should be working with us to make sure it happens. Let us not let a few people try and spread hatred and division be it in motions or questions or anything else. Because what we are doing is the right thing. It is a humanitarian thing and it is a realistic thing for the people of this district.

8. Councillor Jabar

Can the Leader update us on the implications for Bradford District of the Chancellor's Comprehensive Spending Review? Would he share the view that the recent spending review and Autumn statement is a direct attack on Local Authorities like Bradford and some of our most disadvantaged, marginalised and vulnerable individuals and families?

Answer

The Spending Review leaves lots of questions unanswered. The key one being the amount of funding Bradford will receive in the both the short and medium term. There were numerous announcements that are subject to consultation in 2016 so the actual effect is as yet unknown. It is however clear that the direction of travel is further cuts to funding for Bradford.

Because people in most need are most reliant on public services the cumulative impact of further cuts, on top of the £172.6m reductions in Council spending that have already taken place since 2011, will be most keenly felt among people who are already vulnerable, marginalised or disadvantaged.

The Government's policies on local government funding continue to shift resources away from Districts like Bradford while favouring the wealthiest parts of the country.

Moving from a national system of the re-distribution of business rates to allowing local authorities to retain all their local business rates inevitably delivers the greatest benefits to those places which already have the strongest local economies.

The Spending Review allowed for Councils to raise Council Tax by 2% ostensibly to help meet the rising costs of social care, ironically this comes after years of being pressured into keeping council tax bills low. The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services (ADASS) both state that this new power falls far short of the true costs of social care. Bradford, with its low Council Tax rate and relatively low property values, will be able to raise less than other more affluent areas that have higher council Tax income and more expensive properties but potentially fewer needs. Independent analysis has demonstrated that the local authority set to see the maximum benefit from the measure is Wokingham, the wealthiest District in the country.

The chances of a postcode lottery in social care developing are high.

The Public Health Grant will be cut and potentially will have to be funded from business rates. If the Government adopts the same approach to cutting this budget as it has to the recent £2.6m cut in this financial year then Bradford District will again see funding cut disproportionately compared to the most affluent parts of the country.

The Spending Review also confirmed that a consultation will take place on a new school funding formula which could see Bradford District lose £175 in funding per pupil.

It was also announced that the Education Services Grant will be cut by up to 75% and funding for education via the Dedicated Schools Grant and Pupil Premium will be eroded by inflation over the rest of the current parliament despite facing additional costs arising from higher National Insurance bills.

In exchange for losing grant funding, reductions in business rates income and potentially raising local taxes the Spending Review indicated that it would expect Bradford, like all upper tier authorities, to take on additional responsibilities, further eroding our ability to meet the District's needs.

Additional Discretionary Housing Payment funding will be made available to local authorities to protect the most vulnerable, including those in supported accommodation. It is likely that this is simply to compensate for Council's no longer receiving grant to cover the extra cost of housing residents in supported accommodation.

Universal Infant Free School meals will continue and potentially the national Disabled Facilities Grant is to be doubled that provides assistance for home adaptations.

Overall, the Spending Review leaves us unable to draw any conclusions other than the Government is, at best, ambivalent about the impact of its cuts on the poorest and most vulnerable people, is happy to cut local authorities with the highest levels of need and

lowest income bases adrift and content to oversee a postcode lottery in the scale and quality of services that people are able to access in different parts of the country.

9. Councillor Greenwood

Can the Leader tell us what effect the Government's £2.6m cut to Public Health budgets will have on local services?

Answer

In July, the Treasury announced that the Department of Health (DoH) is required to deliver savings of £200m in 2015/16 through reductions to the Public Health Grant to local authorities, confirmation was received in November that DoH would proceed with the savings by reducing each LA grant by an equal percentage of 6.2%, this being £2.571m for Bradford. This is despite Bradford having allocated its entire budget for the year while other local authorities had failed to do so.

Detailed examination of all expenditure in public health was conducted in order to manage the reduction in funding. Negotiations with NHS England resulted in a transfer of non-recurrent funding of £0.6m. In addition, further negotiations regarding dental and HIV costs concluded that public health would retain funding of £0.3m. This transfer of funding provided some support in-year for 15.16 however, in order to remain in budget, planned procurement for health improvement services and sexual health support services was discontinued and procurement of family weight management provision was delayed; additional savings through staff vacancies and underspend through inter-departmental agreements was utilised.

As the majority of public health funding is spent on commissioned services, reductions in funding will have a direct impact on contractual arrangements and front line delivery, this is unavoidable. The public health team will work with affected service providers to redesign services and minimise impact to the both the service and the end user.

The cut has had a disproportionate impact on Bradford which lost the equivalent of £4.87 per person while Wokingham, the wealthiest local authority district in the country, saw budgets reduced by the equivalent of £2.02 per person.

10. Councillor Cooke

Does the Leader of the Council think that it would be beneficial for the Trustees of Robert Park, to meet with the Friends of Robert Park?

Answer

The Council's Constitution gives the Regulatory and Appeals Committee the power to discharge the functions of the Council under legislation relating to charities and to make decisions in relation to charities of which the Council is Trustee.

The Council officer representative for this Charity met with the Friends of Roberts Park on 2nd December 2015.

Following the meeting on 2nd December there is no indication at this time from either the officer or the Friends Group that it would be beneficial to seek a further meeting with the Chair of the Committee or to bring forward any report for consideration by the Committee.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer. I do however think, and perhaps the Leader might want to reconsider it, that it would be appropriate would it not for the Chairman of the Regulatory and Appeals Committee to at least take up the olive branch from the Friends of Roberts Park following the debarment over the turbine in order to have a conversation with them about how matters can be progressed. Because I do think the way in which the Council is conducting itself as a trustee in some cases is less than satisfactory. I think it would probably help if we improved this.

Councillor Green

I hear what you are saying but I am not going to go round and insist that any individual on this Council or any elected Member goes and meets with any other person. There is a legal obligation on the trustees. I think that particular relationship has been interesting. I do hope that we can build those bridges as you have already seen. There has been a meeting between officers and Friends and I hope that that early bit of diplomacy will lead us forward.

11. Councillor Wainwright

Can the Leader of Council tell us whether or not he has been approached by the Prime Minister to raise his concerns about Local Government funding cuts or does he believe that it is the case that Mr Cameron only cares about the impact of his own cuts when it happens in his own backyard in Oxfordshire?

Answer

No, the Prime Minister has not contacted me to raise his concerns about the effect of his Government's unfair and disproportionate cuts on Bradford and towns like Keighley, Shipley, Bingley and Ilkley. Clearly, Mr Cameron is utterly unaware of the efforts that Councils have already gone to in order to protect services and of the cumulative impact of his policies. Given that he is so clearly out of touch with issues affecting his own constituency it is hardly surprising that he shows no understanding of our District's communities or their needs.

12. Councillor Dunbar

Would the Leader of Council explain how the Priority Streets Scheme will aim to attract businesses to the top end of the City Centre following the successful launch of the Broadway Shopping Centre?

Answer

The Priority Streets scheme is an element of the City Centre Growth Scheme. It is focusing resources in to the area in the central retail core with highest vacancy rates and particularly those streets most affected by businesses relocating to the Broadway. The target streets are - Darley Street, Kirkgate, Rawson Square, Rawson Place and Ivegate.

The scheme is providing financial incentives to businesses reoccupying vacant premises. This comprises a capital grant for property improvements and equipment purchases along with a business rate rebate. The maximum funding available to any business is approximately £140k (State Aid limit). The scheme will support businesses that add to the offer and distinctiveness of the City Centre.

In addition to this, the area is being promoted to major national retailers who have not taken space in the Broadway to see what interest there may be. Also, where appropriate,

meanwhile uses such as pop-up shops are being explored with landlords, leaseholders and agents.

13. Councillor Davies

Could the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture inform Members of how many members of the public (i.e. not Council employees, councillors, teachers or anybody else attending in a professional capacity) attended the Public Forum for Education event on 6th October?

Answer

77 attendees registered before the event, with an additional 15 approximately attending on the evening. Of those pre-registering, 10 did not state their area of work or interest. Of the 67 pre-registered who stated their job description/reason for attendance, the following could be classed as coming from a non-professional/non-Council/non-school background.

The following is based solely on the capacity stated by attendees:

Students	3
Voluntary sector, including faith groups	5
Social care related interest	5
Museums, arts related backgrounds	3
Others outside the categories in the question	5

The reliability and validity of the figures is low given attendees often attend as, for example, a parent, governor and professional. Attendees will often register as a professional but contribute to discussions and debate from a parent's perspective. Of the fifteen attending but not stating their attendance capacity, it is suspected, based on views expressed, they attend mainly as Governors, community leaders and members of the public.

14. Councillor Greenwood

Are the measures outlined in the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review sufficient to tackle the financial and demand pressures facing the District's social care services?

Answer

No.

A 2% precept was announced to fund social care (Adult Social Care). This precept is on top of the current council tax referendum limit. So, potentially council tax could be increased by 3.99% without holding a referendum. There was no specific allocation to address pressure on Children Social Care.

A 2% precept for social care is woefully inadequate to deal with increasing demand for and costs of social care in the District and is not enough to prevent savings having to be made by social care services. For example, the precept would raise around £6m over the next two years while the estimated costs of paying the National Living Wage to care workers are £13m. The measure has been described by the Association of Directors of Social Services as "too little, too late".

15. **Councillor Stelling**

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport - Winter is now here. Can the Portfolio Holder please confirm how many snow wardens in the District have received the resources and support mentioned in your last response? How many of these are from within Bolton & Undercliffe?

Answer

We have 81 snow teams/snow wardens on our records for 2015. We have no volunteers from the Bolton and Undercliffe ward.

16. **Councillor Dunbar**

Would the Portfolio Holder please give an update on the progress of the Get Bradford Working scheme and its different components?

Answer

Get Bradford Working is an Employment Investment Programme for the Bradford District. It draws together key initiatives which tackle the issues and barriers facing Bradford's residents in the labour market.

As at the end of October 2015 Get Bradford Working programmes have supported 1,900 individuals into employment.

Progress on the seven strands of Get Bradford Working (GBW) has exceeded expectations across the board and the programme has won numerous prestigious national awards for its innovative approach. The GBW has at the heart of the approach collaboration and partnership working and has received significant levels of external partnership investment that has contributed to both the ethos and real success that has been achieved to date.

1 **SkillsHouse**

Although SkillsHouse was only launched on 1st June 2015 it has already had a huge impact by supporting over 260 into work. The current priority is to support unemployed people gain employment in the Broadway shopping centre. SkillsHouse operates as a 'finishing school', upskilling individuals to ensure they are ready to meet the specific needs of employers within the retail, hospitality and visitor economy sectors.

Over 30 organisations work in partnership with SkillsHouse to provide a unique and innovative approach to support both our local businesses and help unemployed people into work.

2 **Industrial Centres of Excellence**

Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE) are discrete Centres within existing schools or colleges. Currently, there are four Centres for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Business, Environmental Technologies, and the Built Environment.

The Centres have their own management Board which has responsibility for matters such as curriculum, quality assurance and finance of the Centre delegated from school governing bodies or college corporations. Collectively they are driven by 14 education partners and 22 business partners.

There are over 600 students on an ICE programme. The results of the first cohort of learners completing a full 2 year ICE programme have been excellent, with 89% success rates at the CE for Business (compared to 73% before the ICE programme started); and attainment of A*-C in GCSE Engineering was 59% compared to the national average of 40% at the CE for Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering.

3 **The Employment Opportunities Fund**

The Employment Opportunities Fund (EOF) is a partnership between CBMDC, Incommunities, Jobcentre Plus and associated partners. The fund specifically targets Bradford residents who are unemployed, claiming active benefits and have been out of work for at least six months. The main aim of the fund is to provide a bridge into work for these individuals and to support them towards sustainable employment

To date 771 jobs have been created and filled within the EOF. The roles are within a range of sectors including horticulture, catering, ICT, community development and childcare.

4 **Routes into Work**

Routes into Work (RIW) fund is a commissioned fund that seeks to meet the gaps in the Employment and Skills provision in the District that were identified in the Employment and Skills Strategy and offer additionality to National and Regional Programmes. RIW contracts target those furthest away from the labour market such as individuals with a disability, mental ill-health and drug and alcohol dependency.

To date 450 individuals have been supported into employment through RIW programmes.

5 **Bradford Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) & Apprenticeship Hub**

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 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.

To date the ATA and Hub have engaged 380 SME employers and have supported 427 apprenticeships into vacancies.

6 **Advanced Skills Fund**

The Advanced Skills Fund provides support to businesses in key growth sectors to enable them to recruit skilled staff. It works to strengthen Bradford's economy by providing the advanced skills Bradford's businesses need, opening up employment opportunities for Bradford's residents.

7 **Step up to Business**

The Step up to Business project seeks to engage with 16-24 year olds who currently work in the shadow economy in order to support them to establish legitimate business enterprises. The programme commenced in November 2013 and ended in March 2015.

17. **Councillor Barker**

Could the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport inform colleagues of how much money has been raised through Section 106 agreements within Wharfedale Ward over the past 10 years and from which projects and in what amounts?

Answer

Records are only held dating back to January 2009. Since this time, Wharfedale has received a total of £210,921.52 in Section 106 monies. This is comprised of:

- £13,869.27 – education contribution – club and premises, Farnley Road, Menston
- £150,094.94 - education contribution – former Moor Lane Centre development
- £23,706.17 – habitat mitigation contribution – former Moor Lane Centre development
- £17,264.94 – metro contribution – former Moor Lane Centre development
- £5,986.20 – metro contribution – Menston Hall development

All developments are checked on a regular basis and once trigger points for payment of monies are met an invoice is raised.

A bi annual Section 106 monitoring report is also presented at the Regulatory and Appeals Committee. This report details the number of Agreements signed, the contributions secured in those Agreements and the total amount of monies received since January 2009. All Councillors are also encouraged to contact Michala Bartle, Planning Obligations Monitoring Officer, to determine the amount of money available for their Ward and what projects this money may be used towards. Regular meetings with the Planning Obligations Monitoring Officer and ward Councillors are encouraged to ensure the money secured is used in the best possible way to meet both the terms of the Agreements and also to take into account community requests.

Supplementary Question

Can I thank the portfolio holder for a very detailed response. It was interesting to see that we have acquired £200,000 plus from projects within Wharfedale Ward. I would like to ask a further question if you could identify what the money has been spent on if it hasn't been spent, has it been identified for anything else?

Councillor Val Slater

I can assure you I have not spent it on a holiday! I obviously haven't got the information at my fingertips but if you want to speak to Michala Bartle whose job it is to liaise with ward Councillors and also the relevant Council departments she will be able to tell you what it has been spent on. I would recommend to all Members to keep regularly in touch with Michala because by virtue of the way 106 is triggered things come in at various points on development and sometimes you can if you are not on the ball you can miss out and not be as quick as you might want to in spending the money. Ward Councillors should be involved in discussing. Certainly for things like parks and open spaces etc. So I would suggest you have a word with her.

18. Councillor Dunbar

Would the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care please report on the fantastic outcomes achieved by the young people involved in the recent Takeover Day from the Children in Care Council and thank the staff involved for all their hard work and dedication?

Answer

Take over day was well supported by the senior leadership team. They supported a wider opportunity of jobs across Bradford Metropolitan District Council. This came out of a request last year from CICC that young people did not always want to "take over" senior, decision making jobs. CICC fed back to senior management team that young people wanted to "take over" jobs that they may choose as a career. As a result the jobs taken over ranged from the Chief Executive of the Council, both Director and Assistant Director, Senior Managers, Social Workers to cooking the food for the evening celebration. Young people also took over various Independent Review Officer roles by chairing their own Statutory Reviews. This gave young people the opportunity to understand the process of reviewing their care plans, this also gave young people some control over this decision making process that involves their lives.

At the evening celebration two Young People from CICC introduced the Strategic Director - this is a fantastic achievement for both of them who struggle to speak in a public environment. A number also were interviewed on film about their experiences. This has built their confidence no end and they are both looking forward to continuing to work with CICC. The young people that cooked for the event with Ministry of Food took part in a 4 week course, preparing for the event. This included sticking to a budget, ensuring catering was for all dietary requirements, timings, food hygiene and displaying the food. This has given a valuable life skill to all of the young people involved - to see so many people witness all their hard work come to fruition was hugely uplifting.

Feedback that has been received at this early stage has been extremely positive from both Young People and the post holders they replaced. Young People have reported an increase in confidence and self belief that they are able to achieve their goals. The young lady that took over the Assistant Director's role was able to discuss changes to how contacts for families took place, this change has been agreed.

Supplementary Question

Thank you portfolio holder for the answer. I just want to ask as I took part in this Takeover Day myself and was kept in check by a very astute eleven year old. Hearing about some of the really positive outcomes at the celebration event that the young people experienced would there be scope to extend this scheme beyond the one day per year?

Councillor Berry

It would be really good to find all sorts of ways to extend young people's involvement in looking at things they may wish to do in the future, opportunities and ambitions. I certainly would be prepared to look at that. I propose to start with perhaps discussing it with our Looked After Children Council, that may be the best place to start.

19. Councillor Rickard

Can the Leader of the Council confirm the Council's approach to ensuring that the District can take full advantage of the Chancellor's Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund announced in the Autumn Statement?

Answer

As part of the Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced a £400m Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund, which combines EU regional money with support from Government through the British Business Bank. Operating from 2016-20 the fund will invest in small businesses in the North, including Bradford, to assist their growth and development.

While we wait for additional detail on the fund it's important to note that there is a strong existing offer to business, with district provision (Invest In Bradford) complementing the work of the city region's business growth hub.

Going forward we would expect the Investment Fund to form part of our overall offer to business. Officers will work with key partners such as the Chamber of Commerce to make Bradford businesses aware of this and other support and assist them in accessing investment.

Ensuring that the District accesses its fair share of any available funding will be increasingly important as the capacity of the Council to use its own resources to support investment activity is severely limited as a result of the Chancellor's ongoing programme of disproportionate cuts to local budgets.

20. Councillor Leeming

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport - As of the 1st October 2015 smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide alarms must, by law, be fitted in all private rented properties. Can you advise how you will ensure that this new regulation is going to be adhered to without a comprehensive register of private landlords?

Answer

This is a legal requirement and every landlord should ensure that they are aware of all of their legal responsibilities when they decide to rent out their properties.

Prior to the introduction of the new legal duty the requirement was publicised by the government and various landlords' associations. In addition the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service wrote to all letting agents advising them of the requirement and offering free smoke detectors to landlords.

The Council is the enforcing authority for this legislation. Information was provided to landlords at a recent Landlords Forum and will be placed on the Council's website. However, due to limited capacity within the Housing Standards team the new legislation will be enforced through direct dealings with landlords as part of normal business rather than as a targeted proactive approach.

21. Councillor Cooke

Given the size and cost of agendas for the last two full council meetings, can the Leader of the Council confirm what steps are planned to develop paperless systems for meetings of Council and council committees so as to reduce costs and improve the efficiency of councillors?

Answer

The recent introduction of the modern.gov management system for Council and committee agendas, reports, decision records and minutes provides the opportunity to access this information via an application on a tablet or smartphone. The app allows documents to be read, bookmarked and annotated on screen. There are also options for accessing exempt reports. Officers will be working with members to experiment with the use of this technology. The law allows members to agree to receiving papers for meetings of Council in electronic rather than paper form.

Supplementary Question

Perhaps I should have tweeted it. I do note that we have made some progress in terms of the backend technology as far as moving to paperless. However can I urge that we try and accelerate the process because certainly at the last two Council meetings agendas have been enormous and you are on the Executive and your last three Executive agendas have been like this. Producing in paper form really is a bit 19th century these days. Can I have assurances that every effort will be got to try and get us to the situation and saying that you can access it on a smart phone might be true but we do need something a little bit better than that?

Councillor Green

I have a great deal of sympathy with you and I would like to pretend I understand the answer that somebody wrote for me. We are going to work towards it and hopefully the days of chopping down trees will soon be behind us.

22. Councillor Gibbons

Can the Leader of the Council confirm that the Council will do something, hopefully that local people can take part in, to mark the Queen's 90th birthday?

Answer

It is expected that communities from across the District are likely to celebrate in a number of local events and activities. Where these relate to Council land and buildings, officers will be on hand to provide guidance and support, based on the nature of the event that is proposed.

Discussions are due to be held with the 'Older People's Focus Group' to explore the likely interest in looking at whether people that from across the district that will be 90 in the same year wish to come together in some form of event to celebrate, reminisce and share experiences.

The Council will also be supporting the Clean for the Queen initiative, as part of the People Can Make a Difference New Deal campaign. Local people will be invited to participate in a campaign in the run up to the Queen's 90th birthday. This will be a great opportunity to both celebrate the Queen's birthday and to make some environmental improvements at the same time.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer Leader. This is a celebration that I think a lot of people are looking forward to and will enjoy as they have done in many decades previously. We are certainly in Ilkley looking forward to a street party and concerts and various other things. You did at a recent meeting say that you would look favourably upon road closures. Now does that mean that you will look favourably financially? I know you cannot offer unbounded munificence in this area ie throw money away. It is an expense for people who want to close their roads and so on. These road closures will obviously have to take

place with all the caveat for emergency vehicle access, etc etc. But it is a cost and a difficulty for some people who are not used to these things. Can you offer any assistance there?

Councillor Green

If you would like to contact Mr Osborne and suggest that he might want to plug a hole in a £170m budget I will certainly consider using some of that to help support road closures and that is only half joking because seriously you will have seen the draft budget, you will have seen the challenges that we face ahead and we are going to have to pick and choose. Never say never but currently it would be difficult to make that promise to anybody. In terms of getting through the bureaucracy Councillor Gibbons that is what you and I are there for. Our job is to guide our constituents through the elephantine world of road closures.

23. Councillor Rickard

Can the Leader of the Council advise colleagues of the current position of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with regard to the attainment of its Strategic Economic Priorities?

Answer

The LEP is making significant progress in delivering its strategic economic priorities, with £76.5m of £115m Growth Deal funding already committed to schemes and projects across the city region.

These priorities include local schemes with support secured for One City Park and Shipley College capital improvements. Additional priorities supported by the transport fund include the new stations at Low Moor and Apperley Bridge and station upgrades to Forster Square and the Interchange and delivery of the West Yorkshire+ Transport Fund schemes of Harrogate Road / New line Junction and Hard Ings Road by 2021.

The LEP is about to undertake an exercise to review progress on delivery to date and ensure the previously identified priorities remain relevant. We will continue to work with partners to ensure Bradford is reflected as a priority for the LEP and benefits from Local Growth Funding.

24. Councillor Reid

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport - As Bradford Highways staff are now providing services to neighbouring authorities, can the Portfolio Holder indicate the extent to which staff from neighbouring authorities are currently working in Bradford?

Answer

Bradford Council has in the recent past been in the fortunate situation where it has been able to assist District partners in delivery of capital projects particularly in relation to Street Lighting and Urban Traffic Control (traffic signals) schemes. This is not the case in the current financial year as all our staff are fully engaged on delivering Bradford's capital programmes.

I can also confirm that we currently don't have any staff from neighbouring authorities working in Bradford or on Bradford schemes.

25. Councillor Love

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport tell us what the current lead time is for fixing street lights once they have been reported?

Answer

Lead in times for completing light repairs is currently 20 days mainly due to the volume and continued impact of bad weather events. However, the service is very aware of the need to decrease lead in times and is actively putting in place a range of measures to improve the timescales.

26. Councillor Davies

As last Autumn it was stated that the Council aimed to close the gap between Bradford and the national average of children getting five A*-C GCSE grades, this year from six per cent to three per cent, could the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture advise Members of whether this was achieved?

Answer

As last Autumn it was stated that the Council aimed to close the gap between Bradford and the national average of children getting five A*-C GCSE grades, this year from six per cent to three per cent, could the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture advise Members of whether this was achieved?

Final validated results for KS4 (16 year olds) from summer 2015 are due to be published during January 2016. The Department for Education (DfE) hasn't yet given us an exact date – the 2014 results were published on 29 January 2015.

We currently have unvalidated results which don't include the outcomes of remarked examination papers or the discounting on pupils who have only recently arrived in England. The unvalidated 5+ A*-C GCSE result including GCSEs in English and maths for Bradford in 2015 is 44.6% compared to the unvalidated national average of 52.8% - a gap of 8.2% points. In 2014, 44.0% of Bradford's students achieved 5+ A*-C GCSE result including GCSEs in English and maths, compared to a 2014 national average of 53.4% - a gap of 9.4% points.

2014 saw a recalibration of GCSE results with some significant changes in the standards and allowed qualifications. And whilst Bradford's expectations have not been met in 2015, the gap between Bradford's result and the national average has reduced. That said, we all recognise that educational outcomes for our children need to improve faster and everyone in Bradford needs to be focussed on implementing the Ofsted approved action plan to achieve this.

Supplementary Question

Is there a target for next year and if so what is it?

Councillor Hinchcliffe

There are a number of targets across the board. We will make sure you have got the education improvement strategy plan that was circulated at the Education Improvement Strategic Board so we will send that to you.

27. Councillor Ellis

Can the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability confirm what actions the Council plans to take to ensure that it adheres to the latest recommendations of the National Fly Tipping Advisory Group?

Answer

The National Fly Tipping Prevention Group published a paper in April 2014 which gave guidance on a national framework for England on tackling fly-tipping through local partnerships. They produced an options checklist template in this guidance centred around a 4 pronged strategy of Prevention, Reporting, Investigation and Clearance.

The Environmental Enforcement team already adopt this approach to dealing with fly tipping. The team carry out duty of care inspections of business and inspections of waste carriers in order to prevent waste entering the illegal waste stream. The team investigate fly tips on public and private land, all of which are reported to the fly tipping data reporting database "Waste dataflow." The council Contact Centre is used as a single point of contact to receive notifications about fly tips and Enforcement Officers follow up those incidents where there is evidence. Landowners and potential witnesses are provided with guidance on evidential requirements and where appropriate landowners are required to clear land of any fly tips. The Council clears its own land, and Council Wardens and cleansing crews are alert to the need to obtain and protect any evidence that they encounter. In addition the team also deal with waste accumulations in gardens, including providing advice to householders about their duty of care.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the reply but I am just a little bit befuddled with it really. What it says is that "the team investigates fly tips on public and private land all of which are reported to the fly tipping data reporting database". Further on it goes "landowners and potential witnesses are provided with guidance on evidence requirements and where appropriate landowners are required to clear land of any fly tips". My understanding of the guidance from the advisory group is that it is reported to the Council so that Council officers who have the experience to look for evidence and for prosecution is what is advised and yet the reply suggests that yes we may take data for forward transmission to the waste dataflow but that landowners are potential witnesses are then given guidance. Do officers actually attend or is some sort of guidance given over by telephone.

Councillor Imran Khan

Thank you for that question. Officers do attend when reports come in about fly tipping. They do go out and have a look at what is going on there. The public out there and landowners who have rubbish dumped on their land also have a responsibility but can also help us identify people that are dumping rubbish on their land. So it is about getting everybody together, working together to identify those people that are fly tipping and taking the adequate enforcement action that we need to take.

28. Councillor Davies

Does the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability think that more people would use public libraries if popular titles were more readily available? I appreciate that there are limited resources but libraries primarily exist to provide books and I recently went into request a copy of 'The Girl on the Train' and was told there were 66 reservations before mine?

Answer

This is a popular title and we have 7 copies in stock across the district – more than would normally be purchased in hardback - due to the demand for this title. Past experience and a bigger materials fund in the past showed that buying lots of copies to satisfy a high percentage of requests leads to 'dead' stock on the shelves when the demand stops.

66 requests on 7 copies is not unusual. We would anticipate buying more copies of the title when it is available in paperback.

29. Councillor Fear

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport for an update on progress that has been made on fixing Thackley Corner and whether an assessment has been made as to the impact of the delay in getting it fixed has had on highway safety?

Answer

The collapsed retaining wall at Thackley Corner is not a Council structure. The wall was built as part of the railway and sold by British Railways Board to Wardour Properties. Responsibility for maintaining the wall rests with either Wardour Properties or Department of Transport.

The Council's legal section are advising that a notice be served upon the owners which would require them to make the wall safe. Prior to issuing the order, Legal Section have asked for a preliminary design and accurate cost estimate for wall reconstruction to be prepared.

Highway Structures Unit has commissioned a topographic survey and ground investigation reports. We are currently waiting for a resource to become available to complete the design and cost estimate.

The provision of a highway that is safe for users and fit for purpose is inherent in all that we do; but we must work within the available resources. We consider the effects on highway safety in all of our works. We have modified the current traffic management arrangements at Thackley Corner on several occasions to improve traffic safety and in response to feedback from highway users.

30. Councillor Cooke

Can the Leader of the Council confirm that the Council has a policy which specifies the number of days within which invoices should be paid and if so can he confirm the percentage of invoices to the Planning Department that are not paid within this time and why?

Answer

Our standard terms oblige the Council to pay suppliers within 30 days of the receipt of a valid invoice which is in line with current legislation. From April to October 2015, 16% of invoices for the Planning, Transportation & Highways service were paid late. Delays to payments usually arise when the invoice is sent to the Department ordering the goods or services rather than direct to Accounts Payable or where no purchase order is quoted on the invoice. Additionally, in the early part of the year, Accounts Payable had insufficient resources and consequently processing was taking longer which generated a higher number of supplier calls further reducing processing time. We are part way through implementing an improvement plan which will reduce the volume of invoices, make better

use of technology and increase compliance with good practice. This is reflected in the performance for the period from Aug-Oct for Planning when 5% of invoices were paid late.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer. It kind of begins to explain something of a puzzle which is I am going to try to solve. The puzzling question has been solved by knitting together a solution which is not entirely a perfect process but this relates to schemes that are funded through section 106 and can we get to the situation where there is a smoother process than the current, certainly the experience of Cullingworth village hall has been less than smooth, shall we say in terms of dealing with the process. So it is really just to say that we need to try and get a process in place that is a bit more responsive. Basically we've had to knit one together.

Councillor Green

After that clear and concise question I think the answer is yes if I understood the question right. But if there are particular details around the whole thing which clearly I am not aware of. If you will let us know we will learn the lessons from it as we always try to do.

31. Councillor Sykes

Could the Portfolio holder for Education, Skills and Culture inform Members of the route that bus tours for trainee teachers take around the District as a way to encourage them to teach in Bradford?

Answer

The buses are purely used as a means of transport to enable trainee teachers to visit schools in the district to ensure that all trainee teachers can experience and see the wide variety of diverse schools and areas we have. As members will be aware the District is divided into 5 areas: Bradford West, East, South, Shipley and Keighley/Ilkley. Therefore the tours are arranged with visits to 4 schools in a day, in four of the five districts. Schools chosen to visit are representative of all types of school such as community schools, church schools as well as academies. To date this has been with primary, nursery and special schools. Secondary tours are planned for early Spring.

Each bus has a maximum of 25-30 trainee teachers, a volunteer lead headteacher and often a representative Governor. The routes are planned to incorporate a school from each of the districts in such a way as to maximise time at each school from the college/university starting point. Each school visit is about 1 hour.

At each school the senior leadership divide the group up to incorporate a tour of the school, time to talk with senior leaders re employment within a Bradford school, including the Newly Qualified teacher (NQT) training they will receive as well as often having the opportunity to talk to NQTs or Recently Qualified teachers (RQTs) about their experience.

32. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture - How many parents or guardians have been fined for failing to ensure their child attended school from January 2014 to November 2015?

Answer

Penalty Notice fines are issued per parent per child – two parents with two children would receive 4 penalty notice fines.

The table below shows the number of fines that were paid during 2013/14 and 2014/15.

	2013/14	2014/15
Total Number of Fines Paid	1513	2827

The table below shows details of fines issued since the start of the current academic year

01.09.15 to 30.11.15	No of Fines
Total issued	1319

33. Question withdrawn

34. Councillor Davies

Can the Leader of the Council advise colleagues whether Council owned shops and offices which have been vacant for some time, is the rent reduced in order to attract a new tenant?

Answer

In such circumstances the Council may consider reducing the asking rent or accepting an offer of a lower rent from a prospective tenant. When assessing the acceptable level of rent regard is had to market evidence of recent similar lettings and to the level of rent paid by the Council's tenants in nearby premises. In line with accepted market practice the council may consider granting an initial rent free period to a tenant rather than reducing the headline rent payable.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer which seems to make sense. Given that you have to consider the level of the rent paid by Council tenants in nearby premises how does that fit with the schemes that are offered grants up to £1½m for new retailers coming in. What consideration is there given to existing tenants with that scheme?

Councillor Green

The scheme that you refer to is for either bringing empty units back into use or allowing businesses to expand so in terms of existing tenants if they are expanding their business, taking on new employees, willing to take additional space in the building they can benefit from that. So I hope that answers your question.

35. Councillor Love

Can the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care give an update on the current situation regarding the redevelopment of the former Neville Grange residential home in Saltaire?

Answer

Following the decision to not proceed with the joint development of the site with Incommunities a feasibility study is being undertaken which will be used to inform the decision making process about the future of this site.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the answer Councillor Berry. Can I just ask that to impress on officers the need to keep Ward Members updated on the progress on this because of late we have had more updates from Incommunities officers than we have had from our own people.

Councillor Berry

No problem but we are in the process of making sure we secure sufficient accommodation for this area's needs so there will be developments taking place in Keighley as well. I would say that I have some understanding of the situation Incommunities is faced with since we moved into this era. There have been major attacks on the role of housing associations and I suspect some of the decisions they are having to make are as a result of a very seriously challenging framework that they are now operating in.

36. Councillor Townend

Could the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability confirm the footfall for each library?

Answer

The footfall for the library service by facility in 2014/15 is as follows:

Library	Visits
Baildon	56,322
Bingley	102,182
Bolling Hall	4,146
Burley	26,131
City (inc Local Studies)	218,530
Clayton	20,107
Eccleshill	5,7542
Girlington *	8,355
Great Horton	25,845
Haworth Road	5,617
Holme Wood	19,063
Idle **	12,108
Ilkley	175,949
Keighley	198,430
Laisterdyke	70,341
Manningham	126,322
Queensbury	4,390
St Augustine's	6,939
Shipley	201,625
Silsden	12,110
Thornbury	14,651
Thornton	10,843
Wibsey	34,076
Wyke	54,569
Total	1,485,099

* Girlington currently closed – alternative venues being explored

** Idle relocating into Wright Watson Enterprise Centre shortly.

Visitor figures for the 5 community/venue managed libraries are not available.

37. Councillor Jeanette Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture - What was the total of the amount parents or guardians were fined for failing to ensure their child/children attended school from January 2014 to November 2015?

Answer

	2013/14	2014/15	2015 to date
Total Amount received from fines	£90,780	£171,720	£52,260

38. Councillor Miller

Can the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills & Culture confirm whether any consultation took place regarding the closure of Visitor Information Centres and if so, how many residents were consulted (particularly in Main Street, Haworth), how many Elected Members were consulted and why were Elected Members not provided with feedback, when it had been specifically requested?

Answer

No decision has been made on which Visitor Information Centres to close, hence why no consultation has taken place. As a result of the agreed budget cut of £122,000 in 2017/18, a tourism review was commissioned to identify the future of frontline Visitor Information Centres. The review will consider closure of some of the district Visitor Information Centres and will be published during this financial year. On publication of the review, the consultation process will commence.

Supplementary Question

Leader thank you for the answer. I have spoken with the portfolio holder. There was a slight misunderstanding of what was exchanged in the corridor and I have been offered a full briefing so I am more than happy with the answer. I thought you would be.

39. Councillor Morris

The Council has a duty to put the ratepayers of the District first, so why won't the Council put the reserves it intends spending on housing and supporting refugees into keeping services paid for by ratepayers, surely that should be the priority of the Council in times of austerity?

Answer

The Council is not using reserves to support the refugee programme.

The Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (VPRS) and Gateway Protection Programme (GPP) are fully funded for the first year from central Government. The Council and its partners are currently working with the Home Office to secure funding beyond the first year for the VPRS - Syrian refugee programme to ensure that the local authority can support the refugees gaining a level of independence and confidence to allow them to make a positive contribution to our society.

Cllr Morris knows, because he was there, that at its last meeting in October the Council rejected a call to use its reserves to fund the settlement of Syrian refugees. Given that Cllr Morris knows this to be the case it is disappointing that he is evidently seeking to create the opposite impression.