

COUNCIL
22 March 2016

MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 12

1. Councillor Farley

Can the Leader comment on the work of Keighley United in bringing the people of Keighley together to condemn and tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE) and can he also update us on the efforts of the Council, working with others, to prevent and detect CSE, support victims and bring offenders to justice?

Answer

United Keighley is a community-led campaign which has been initiated by compassionate residents and community leaders and aims to unite the whole town against grooming and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and to “protect all our children”. See <http://www.unitedkeighley.org/> for more info. The campaign is supported by Keighley Area Co-ordinator’s Office and Amria Khatun, Business Transformation Officer.

The campaign demonstrates the strength of feeling in the town across all communities about CSE and the determination of local people to do all they can to prevent, disrupt and detect CSE, support victims, prosecute offenders and keep children safe.

A group of local people and professionals from a wide variety of agencies have been meeting regularly for a number of months to share and plan work aimed at raising awareness about CSE and taking steps to address the issues caused by it in Keighley communities.

The Keighley-wide Week of Action against CSE takes place from 14–18 March and aims to raise awareness around CSE and to promote the services that are available to offer support and help to victims, parents and communities affected by this appalling crime. The final day of the week, Friday 18th March is National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day. On this day there will be events in the centre of Bradford as well as in Keighley. It also aims to demonstrate that all of Keighley’s communities are working together to tackle this issue.

Activities taking place during the week include: awareness-raising sessions in school assemblies and community settings, art installations, pledge signings and public awareness-raising in and around the Airedale Shopping Centre, a performance of the production ‘On the Line’ at Keighley College commissioned by Bradford Safeguarding Children’s Board, a session for professionals and those working with young people highlighting the issues around the sexual exploitation of boys, special sermons and prayers in mosques and churches. A teal coloured ribbon is being used as the symbol for the week and as well as encouraging people to wear these, the Town Centre will also be decorated with ribbon.

The Barnardo's Turnaround Service is located in the CSE Hub and works with girls and boys to provide inputs and work directly with children, alongside partner services. Barnardo’s has also been commissioned to expand its work to support more boys and young men, and to develop a new resource pack for work with families to raise

awareness of CSE. Therapeutic group work, through six week projects based in the local community, aim to empower victims of CSE and build their resilience. The Hand in Hand project provides preventative group work for young people and also train peer mentors.

There are a range of school-based preventative resources that are being used across all phases of education in Bradford. BSCB commissioned the tour of "Somebody's Sister, Somebody's Daughter". This has toured Bradford Secondary Schools and some community settings. In addition a play for primary school children in transition to secondary schools has recently been written and is being trialled in several Bradford Primary Schools.

The Children's Society is delivering a programme of school based work with both staff and students in schools that are identified through professional and community information as likely to benefit from a further targeted CSE intervention. This is currently taking place in five Bradford secondary schools. Following evaluation, consideration will be given to funding further such interventions in other Bradford schools.

A programme of awareness raising, regulatory and enforcement action on risk issues linked to CSE delivered by the Council Licensing Team and West Yorkshire Police has developed and supported by a nationally funded "Night Time Economy Worker " based with Barnardo's. Private hire operators and drivers have received training regarding CSE and other child safeguarding issues. West Yorkshire Police, the Council Licensing Team and the Night Time Economy worker work together to deliver a pro-active operation to disrupt CSE perpetrators and locations across the Bradford District. BSCB has developed an on-line CSE training programme which is suitable for all professionals and leaders. A programme of additional multi-agency training is being developed which is targeted at specific roles.

Work has been underway with the City Solicitor, Licensing, and Environmental Health colleagues to ensure that the full range of regulatory powers are utilised by the Council to ensure that CBMDC is a "hostile environment" for those considering abusing our children in this way. CSE training is being provided for staff in these services.

Focused work is underway to engage with communities and leaders to raise awareness of CSE. Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) and West Yorkshire Police have developed the "Know the Signs" campaign which provides clear messages about CSE in the form of posters for public spaces, schools and other settings, small information cards for children, parents, professionals and a range of internet-based awareness raising tools. A CSE Awareness Day is taking place on Friday 18th March when all partner agencies will be in Bradford and Keighley city centres to raise awareness of CSE.

Recently there have been high profile convictions and sentences for perpetrators of CSE in Bradford. The recent case concluded in Bradford Crown Court resulted in the sentencing of 12 men to a total of 143 years in prison. The police are managing to increase disruption work through the intelligence that comes through the CSE hub. The police were successful this year in being able to close down a premises that had been highlighted with significant concern. Bradford police were the first in Country to obtain legal order to shut down these premises. A police detective inspector, and six detectives and two police constables are located in the CSE Hub. These colleagues are responsible for criminal investigations of alleged CSE and work to build cases for prosecution.

Bradford Council and West Yorkshire Police have set up a joint historic CSE investigative team. This team manages allegations of historic sexual nature.

2. Councillor Whiteley

Would the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care, confirm what arrangements are being made to maintain adequate provision of quality Day Care, Nursing Care and Residential Care, when the National Living Wage come into effect in April?

Answer

The Government has shifted responsibility for meeting the social care funding crisis on to local authorities and local tax payers through its expectation that Councils will put a 2% Social Care precept on Council tax bills with the money raised solely to be used for adult social care.

The Council has agreed to raise the Social Care Precept in setting the level of Council Tax for 2016/17 although this will not provide sufficient funding to meet local pressures.

The debate at Full Council to agree the budget included details of the fact that the level of funding raised by the precept will partially meet the impact of the revised national minimum wage. Council Officers are at present writing to all providers of social care, that is day, domiciliary, residential and nursing care with a revised fee structure for 2016/17 to reflect the additional income raised through the precept.

In addition to the matter of the living wage Council officers are working with providers to address issues of access, quality, recruitment and retention of staff in order that there is sufficient capacity within the district to meet people's assessed eligible needs.

The Council's budget also made substantial provision once again to meet the costs of increasing demand for social care as a result of demographic pressures. Since 2010 the Council has invested over £30m extra to meet demand and other pressures on adult social care.

Supplementary Question

With reference to UNISON's ethical care charter which this Council recently adopted I would like to ask the Portfolio Holder if he is satisfied that we are applying the aims of the charter equally between Council employees and those in the private sector who we have no direct control over and, if he isn't satisfied, what specific measures he intends to use to ensure that these aims are achieved for all care workers?

Councillor Berry

That was two questions. That is good. I have met the UNISON convenor just the day before yesterday on this very issue. You can use your procurement and your frameworks of procurement to promote that sort of ethical approach and that is exactly the point. I think you are somewhat over-estimating the proportion of care that is provided by the Council sector. The vast majority of this is in the private sector. That is the approach we will be taking. Many organisations are saying that they will be able to do that. Many of the people have attended the market shaping events are expecting to be able to bid on the basis that they will meet those requirements. That is my expectation. That is the right thing to do.

3. Councillor J Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability

For each of the proposed new swimming pools in the District please can you give the timetable for development included the anticipated date of opening?

Answer

The Council has recently appointed a design team to develop plans for the proposed facilities in phase 1 (City Centre - Nelson Street, South Bradford - Sedbergh Playing Fields) of the Sports Facilities Investment Plan. They are in the process of developing detailed timelines for the Council that will inform the programme as it moves forward. We expect approximately a 9-12 month design period, followed by a 15 – 18 month construction period subsequent to that.

Preparation of the City Centre site has commenced recently, with the demolition of Britannia Mills underway.

No definitive timeline has been developed as yet for the progression of the phase 2 facilities (North Bradford - Squire Lane, Southwest Bradford - Asa Briggs Recreation Ground).

4. Councillor Shaheen

What are the potential implications for Bradford District of the Government's proposed funding formula for schools?

Answer

The Department for Education published a 1st stage consultation on National Funding Formula (NFF) on 7 March. This consultation document is being considered by the Schools Forum on 16 March and a briefing note accompanies this meeting and has been published online.

This is the 1st of 2 stages of consultation. The 1st stage is a consultation only on principles and 'building blocks'. It is not possible yet to calculate the impact of a National Funding Formula (NFF); to confirm any change in the totality of funding for the Bradford District or in the distribution of funding between phases or types of schools and academies. The DfE indicates that the 2nd stage consultation, expected later in the summer term, will give sufficient data on which to see impact.

However, it is clear that if the changes are implemented in their proposed form then Bradford stands to lose out as a result of the reduction in the importance attached to additional needs funding and the lack of any measure reflecting high levels of in year pupil mobility and new arrivals. We are also concerned about the potential confusion arising from the fact that Bradford has high numbers of SEND children funded to attend mainstream schools which could give the false impression that those schools are "unfairly" funded per pupil when compared to other authorities.

The consultation document however, is very clear about the reduced role of local decision making and the Local Authority going forward, not just in managing school funding arrangements for primary and secondary schools and academies, but more widely in a reduction of its statutory functions, with further reduced levels of funding in response to this from April 2017.

5. Councillor Khadim Hussain

Can the Leader confirm that he will build on the successful economic summit held in Keighley and will continue to address the issue of the town's strategic transport links and connectivity?

Answer

The successful event on Jan 21st that attracted a cross section of Keighley businesses was followed by the issuing of a questionnaire to further check business perceptions and ambitions.

The responses and observations made at the event will be analysed in mid-March with a view to reporting back on next steps through a follow on event which will take place in late Spring/Early Summer.

The town centre transportation issues have been addressed through a report to Executive on 8th March exploring the options that would address the congestion with a view to delivery of short and medium term actions.

The Council will continue to look at wider issues of connectivity to the strategic road and rail networks and lobby to secure the resources and opportunities that Keighley needs to deliver economic growth and a connected economy.

6. Councillor Pennington

Would the Leader of the Council outline the criteria used in the granting of City Centre Growth Grants generally and can he confirm the return, in the terms of job creation and economic regeneration that the Council should expect from the £200,000 spent on new signposts?

Answer

The City Centre Growth Scheme currently provides grant incentives to businesses to relocate into or expand within the Growth Zone. Business Rate rebates are available across the zone for businesses that -

- Move into/or are based inside the city centre growth zone boundary.
- Create new (additional) full time equivalent jobs inside the zone.
- Demonstrate real market potential and a sound business model
- Contribute to the economic and commercial diversity of the city centre.
- Work with the Council and partners to maximise local impact
- Contribute to local distinctiveness

In addition, the Priority Streets Scheme offers a package of capital grant and rate rebate to businesses bringing vacant units within targeted streets within the retail core back into use. Due to the capital investment involved, decisions are also based on physical improvements to the Growth zone.

Guidance on grant criteria and the application process is provided by Invest in Bradford Business Advisors. Documents including the detailed criteria for the schemes are available on the Invest in Bradford Website.

The investment in City Centre Signage was also funded through the City Centre Growth Scheme as part of a programme of public realm improvements. These works were funded jointly by the Council and the Regional Growth Fund.

We have had frequent complaints in the past, including from Conservative Councillors about the quality of signage in the City centre and it has always been made clear that as part of the Growth Zone new visitor signage would be introduced following the opening of the Broadway.

Physical improvements to the public realm are a key element of the scheme, making the City Centre a more attractive place to invest, work, visit and live. Rationalising, updating and enhancing signage was an important part of these improvement works. We have a new look City Centre which we need to showcase and ensure that visitors can easily navigate around.

Although it is not possible at this stage to accurately quantify the economic return on the investment in the wayfinding system, the benefits are numerous. The aim is to enhance the visitor experience, increase visitors' satisfaction levels and ultimately for them to do more and therefore spend more during their visit. They are then more likely to stay longer, come back more often and recommend the destination to others.

The new signage lets visitors know they are welcome and that the City intends to look after them, giving them the guidance they seek to make the most of their visit. It provides visitors with a much clearer understanding of all that is available across the city centre and how to get there. It encourages exploration, spreads footfall and economic benefits.

The wayfinding system also helps to encourage walking as it assists visitors assess and realise whether something is easily reached on foot. This has benefits in terms of health but also in terms of traffic congestion,

The full benefits will be assessed over time through the monitoring of footfall data, feedback from businesses and visitor surveys.

Supplementary Question

I just want to apologise for the wording on this one because I did not see it before the final draft before submission. I know it is difficult to be able to quantify what benefit you get from signposts but in this answer here somebody has managed to give me six paragraphs on it which is amazing but there we go. The question is on this City Centre Growth Zone. Have we any time limits or have we any safeguards on these businesses continuing to trade and if they fail have we any recompense to get some of the investment back?

Councillor Green

As we spent a long time being attacked by the party over there for the lack of decent signing in Bradford City Centre I am delighted that they have moved their question. I am delighted that they have moved their question from what they were actually supporting two years ago to something else but there you go. I think it is a legitimate question. I will send you the full details but my understanding the way the City Centre Growth Zone Scheme works is that apart from things like the capital grants which are clearly paid up

front in terms of some of the business rates it is support that does not come 100% up front so if a business fails within that period we have not necessarily paid it. And clearly if there has been a grant that has been paid onerously or the business is not fulfilling its part of the bargain, they only get paid when they complete. What I will do is I will make sure that you get sent the full details including any information we have about where that situation has arisen.

7. Councillor Swallow

Would the Portfolio Holder agree that Operation Steerside conducted by West Yorkshire Police has been a successful start to dealing with appalling driver behaviour and ensure that she puts all necessary pressure on West Yorkshire Police to continue this operation and embed it in business as usual, so that law abiding road users can start to see and feel the benefits of improved safety on our Districts roads? Furthermore, could she insist on a similar operation around our schools where children, parents and carers have to continually dice with danger just to access school?

Answer

Discussions are ongoing at a high level with the West Yorkshire Police about the current nature of Roads Policing and other types of enforcement activity in the district such as ANPR cameras. WYP will play a more pivotal and integrated role in the districts road safety activities bringing on board their expertise and resource to support the districts road safety capital Programme and its education, training and publicity delivery. It is however interesting that Bradford is the only district in West Yorkshire that is on target this year for Killed and Serious Injuries.

8. Councillor Farley

What representations has the Council made to Airedale and Wharfedale CCG in the light of their decision to cut contribution to social care funding, what is the outcome of those representations and what are the implications for vulnerable people in Keighley and across Airedale and Wharfedale?

Answer

The Council has made direct representations to the Chief Operating Officer of the Clinical Commissioning Group which resulted in a reduction in the amount being withdrawn. Officers have prepared details of where the reductions are likely to impact and will be in discussions with the various NHS organisations as to how the cuts will be implemented seeking to minimise the impact where possible on residents in Airedale and Wharfedale.

9. Councillor Rickard

Given the intent to build 40000 homes across the District, can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport, provide an update on how the council will do its bit, to close the local construction industry skills gap?

Answer

The Centre of Excellence for the Built Environment has been set up in response to the skills shortage within the Construction and Built Environment sectors. Both Local and National Construction employers such as Wates, Keepmoat, Laing O'Rourke and Arnold Laver have been instrumental in helping to bring the workplace closer to students' learning, working alongside a number of school and colleges in the Bradford District.

Using their knowledge and skills of the industry they are supporting the creation of career pathways within the built environment, developing a talent pipeline for future jobs within the industry,

In having businesses involved in both designing and supporting the delivery of the curriculum makes learning much more real for young people. They can see the practical application of what they are doing in the classroom and at the same time businesses can ensure that what is being taught is directly relevant to the skills they need now in their businesses to grow.

Successes so far include the development of an on-going House Refurbishment programme with Incommunities bringing the classroom learning into a work environment working alongside craftsmen to demonstrate their technical ability through practical application in the real world. In collaboration with over 30 businesses has enabled all 204 students currently on programme to optimise their learner experience outside of the classroom through site visits to housing developments, onto off-site manufacturing plants, through to master classes on health/safety. Apprenticeship opportunities have increased with 2nd year CEBE students successfully completing an employability programme run by employers enabling those students nearer to the labour market exposure to jobs. A range of work placement opportunities from bricklayer to quantity surveyor have also been made available by the associate employers involved.

Supplementary Question

An update on the Centre of Excellence and a jolly good idea. This is really a drop in the ocean. There are 3,000 construction jobs predicted per year for the next ten years and traditionally only a third of those actually get filled. So we have got an enormous skills deficit? So I was expecting an answer that contains some more strategic initiatives as to how we are going to do this. So perhaps I can ask for these to be delivered now. If there are no more strategic initiatives perhaps we will get to the point where we will admit that the delivery of 40,000 homes by 2025 is just not feasible.

Councillor Val Slater

Thank you Councillor Rickard. My answer to you is that this is one of those fundamental parts of the Leeds City Region, the LEP, and the skills strategy and as you asked this question to me at Scrutiny the other week as I pointed out as part of the integrated transport fund we have recognised that this is an issue where we are working there with partners on Highways England and with Network Rail who have the same issue that you have identified for specialist engineers etc and, surprisingly, archaeologists. That is something that we are all trying to work through together and just I know it is only a small pebble in the pond but last week I went with my work experience student Poppy to visit Youth Build up in Bowling and Barkerend and there we met two young men who were part of the apprenticeship programme learning construction skills and the reason they were able to do that, that was part of our Empty Homes Property where we bought four empty homes. We have now got a partnership with Youth Build who are training these two young men on the trades to bring them back into use and shortly they will be rented out to families. A small pebble but I think everyone counts.

10. Councillor Swallow

The recruitment and retention of good and outstanding teachers is a national issue that has been identified by Sir Michael Wilshaw as one of the most significant challenges in improving educational standards. Could the Portfolio Holder give an update on the

Council's plan to work with the District's schools to ensure that they are able to recruit, retain and develop high quality teachers?

Answer

The Recruitment and Retention Strategy Manager has developed or put in place the following this year:

- Taken 300 final year trainee teachers on the recruitment bus tour of Bradford schools. Following each tour, the trainees undertake a workshop 'Journey to your first teaching'. They then have the opportunity to 'apply' to the new Bradford Talent Bank, whereby they are interviewed by Bradford headteachers and 'pre vetted'. Their details are securely saved on a database with the type of school, area of district they wish to work in and Key stage specialism. As schools place adverts for posts on Prospects, those candidates who 'match' the needs of the school are emailed and directed towards the advertised post and encouraged to make a visit. There will be around 100 NQTs on the Talent Bank. The talent bank will expand to include all career stages and phases throughout the next year with suggested plan of national and local advertising.
- NQT deal of locality based enrichment and development training in place for all nursery and primary NQTs throughout the district.
- Emerging middle leader and Enhanced middle leader training with 0-19 and Exceed TSAs (nursery/ primary/ special).
- Training for System Leader/ Executive Headteacher training through TSAs (All phases).
- Development programme for Maths leaders in secondary.
- Bespoke programme for developing future leaders within the Special sector.
- New Headteacher/ Head of school induction programme.
- Commissioned an IT package to collect retention data from every school in District (goes live after Easter 16). Next steps will be to analyse data and produce a strategic plan to address findings.

11. Councillor Stelling

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability

Can the Portfolio Holder advise what plans are in place to protect residents whose bins are stored near the public highway from being regularly contaminated by people seeking to dispose of additional or unsuitable waste? I have been contacted by several residents who would like to know what is the process if their bins are contaminated by others. Has an allowance been made for residents who are on assisted collection and would not be able to empty their bins should collection be refused?

Answer

The Council will monitor instances where bins that have to be left on a public highway or at a collection point for emptying are found to be overflowing or with excess waste at the side. Given where such bins are placed, the issue of people other than the householder using the bins, overfilling them or leaving side waste is acknowledged to be a potential problem. If there is a persistent problem at any such location identified either by complaints from residents or from information provided by refuse collection crews, we will be sensitive to the difficulties that this poses to local residents and investigate the circumstances to try to determine those who may be responsible for this antisocial activity, in particular to see if there is any evidence within the waste to point to the culprits. We will also make arrangements for our recycling advisors to visit all residents in that

particular area to ensure that residents are making full use and know about the recycling options available to them. If residents identify other options for us to explore we will of course consider them and help where we can.

We will also be particularly mindful of where residents are on assisted bin lifts and work with those individuals to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in any way by the antisocial behaviour of others.

12. Councillor Bacon

How will the development of a new public sector hub at the former Keighley College site benefit the people of Keighley?

Answer

The Hub would result in a concentration of staff from various organisations working on the edge of the retail heart of Keighley. It is proposed to provide a range of frontline services, which are currently dispersed across the Town, from one central location. This would be easily accessible to all, in close proximity to local transport and public car parking. The facility would be purpose built to best meet the needs of the users and ultimately deliver a much improved environment.

It would lead to a boost to the retail performance of the town as staff access town centre facilities at either end of the day and lunch times. This should benefit local business owners and workers within those outlets. Retail is changing owing to the impact of on-line sales. Additional jobs being close to retail centres promotes and anchors local shopping.

The North Street site would be re-used and bring back to life an important location in Keighley Town centre. The existing building has not been found desirable for an appropriate re-use by the private sector despite extensive marketing.

The release of sites, across the town, vacated as services relocate to the Hub, will provide opportunities for housing development and business expansion which will positively benefit the people of the town and the local economy.

13. Councillor Walls

Could the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport confirm the cost of installing Double Yellow Lines on Beacon Hill Road, and clarify why this was done, as there are already Double White Lines in the road, which make it unlawful to park there 24 hours a day, punishable by automatic endorsement and fine?

Answer

The double yellow lines on Beacon Road formed part of an area-wide Traffic Regulation Order covering 14 sites across the Bradford South constituency. The share of the legal cost for this particular site therefore equated to around £640; the lining work cost £176.

This scheme was promoted following discussions with the Police. Whilst it was acknowledged that the existing white lining system did present an opportunity for Police enforcement, it was considered that the wardens would be more readily available to carry out more regular action here. This necessitated a Traffic Regulation Order to enable de-criminalised enforcement.

The proposals were approved by the Bradford South Area Committee on 27 March 2014. Ward members were consulted on the proposal and no adverse comments were received.

14. Councillor Shaheen

The system for online school admission applications is not always working effectively – is there a timescale for its review?

Answer

The online admissions system is currently being reviewed with a view to updating to a newer version before September.

.

15. Councillor Swallow

Could the Portfolio Holder please assist to ensure that the safety of users of Pasture Lane in Clayton is not affected by delays in dealing with the damaged section of wall and indicate when the necessary repairs will be carried out?

Answer

Our Highway Structures Asset register suggest that the walls in the area we were told (near 200 Pasture Lane BD7 2SQ) are not the authority's responsibility to maintain.

I have however instructed our inspector to go to Pasture Lane and report on any walls of concern.

We will address any immediate safety issues. We will also deal with any structure we assess is in need of repairs.

Where responsibility lies with a third party, we shall make them aware of any risk and work with them to obviate the danger with minimum disruption to road users.

16. Councillor Martin Smith

Bearing in mind the consultation regarding an airport link road, would the Leader of the Council confirm that the Council's representatives on West Yorkshire Combined Authority, will make a strong case for improved heavy or light rail connectivity to the airport, for Bradford as well as Leeds?

Answer

The Council is represented by the Assistant Director for Planning, Transportation and Highways on the Leeds Bradford International Airport (LBIA) senior officer steering group and by the Council's Deputy Leader on the LBIA public transport working group. The recent Draft Master plan produced by LBIA emphasises the need for a fixed rail or tram-train link from both Leeds and Bradford which the Council supports. It would be challenging to construct such a link due to the topography surrounding the airport and the Council understands a number of options are being considered.

Supplementary Question

We hear that West Yorkshire Combined Authority are concerned that we have seven hills around Bradford so therefore it's going to be expensive to get to the Airport. However perhaps we might advise them that there are tram train rack and pinion services to

Llandudno, the Isle of Man and Mount Pilatus in Switzerland so it is not new technology. So can you please pursue that for the betterment of Bradford's connection to the airport?

Councillor Green

To my knowledge we have not got those links from Bradford City Centre but we can always work on them but yes is the answer to that. We are pushing extremely hard to make sure that we get either light rail or heavy rail as possible links to the airport from Leeds and Bradford city centre. That has always been our priority and will remain so.

17. Councillor Farley

Can the Portfolio Holder update us on the steps that the Council is taking to help people and businesses that were adversely affected by the December floods?

Answer

The Council is administering the Communities and Business Recovery Scheme on behalf of DCLG, which consists of a number of elements that provide financial support for residents and businesses that were flooded.

So far, 742 households have received a £500 Community Grant to help towards their short-term costs such as temporary accommodation, hire of de-humidifiers, cleaning equipment etc. In addition, these households have also been awarded a three month Council Tax discount. For those that moved out of their property, the discount will also be applied to their temporary accommodation. The Council Tax discount can be further extended for those unable to return to their own property.

Similarly, 51 businesses have received grants of up to £2500 each to help them recover from the impact of the floods; and 102 businesses have been given a three month Business Rate discount.

In addition, businesses and households that were flooded can apply for a Property Level Resilience Grant of up to £5000, to help towards the cost of installing measures which improve the property's resilience or resistance to damage from flooding.

To date over 50 applications from residential properties and 7 applications from Commercial properties have been received. Applicants are being supported through the process by officers from Housing and Economic Development, with technical expertise being provided by Building Control.

Resilience grants are being promoted via the council's website, via social, media, in the media and at community meetings. In addition, the Council have worked with the Flood Advisory Service to deliver road shows to promote the Property Resilience Fund. These were planned to take place in Keighley on the 15th March and Shipley on the 16th March. Officers from across the Council were attending to offer support and information and to guide applicants through the application process.

Customised training for council staff and local contractors with the Flood Professionals' network is being explored in order to raise knowledge levels for staff on resistance measures, and also to improve expertise in local contractors so they can install these measures

Neighbourhood wardens have been trained and are calling door to door to promote the scheme and also to assess additional needs of vulnerable residents.

The Chief Executive has written to all affected households to raise awareness of other help that might be available to help financially vulnerable residents with their recovery costs, and about the new national flood insurance scheme, called FloodRe, which will be launched in April. This new scheme is intended to make flood insurance more affordable for households at highest risk of flooding.

The Council liaised with the BDCF and a Flood Appeal was established that is now dispensing grants to individuals, families, community groups, sports clubs, charities and social enterprises affected by the flooding. Support is provided for clearance, emergency repairs, clothing, heating, furniture replacement and information, advice and counselling. A Community workshop is set for Sunday 20th March, The Kirkgate Centre, Shipley from 2:30pm.

Before the flooding in December the Council were working with Parish Councils on producing local resilience and flood plans, this work will continue.

Work continues in prioritising the repair of highways, footbridges and retaining walls from the damage. A funding request has been submitted to Government to assist with meeting the cost of these works.

Unfortunately the Boxing Day floods resulted in extensive damage to the Council's site at Esholt and the private site at Beckfoot at Bingley. The Esholt Site, 10 plots, in particular were affected and the Service supported tenants in arranging removal of caravans, rebuilding of walls, providing replacement topsoil and advice on contamination. It has been advised that it will not be possible to grow food on the affected land during this growing season, as a consequence no charges are to be made to tenants for the year 2016/17 on that site. The Beckfoot site is essentially self managed, but Officers are in communication and providing support as needed.

Supplementary Question

Can I thank the Deputy Leader of Council for her comprehensive answer. For the sake of completeness I would like to ask the Deputy Leader if there is any substance in the allegation that you have cost the District Council money by not having a flood management strategy as recently reported in the media?

Councillor Val Slater

Thank your Councillor Farley. That was an absolute nonsense story. I think maybe there might be an election pending do you think? The reality is I just received this letter from the Department of Transport letting us know we have got £2.5m to do the infrastructure that was damaged in the floods. Our colleagues in Leeds have got £4.5m and in Calderdale £19.7m. Now for Leeds and Calderdale that is in addition to what the Chancellor announced in his budget about money they will get for flood barriers etc. So as I said it is a nonsense story. We do actually have a flood strategy which will be on our website by the end of this month. Six weeks consultation and then it will be coming back to Council July maybe September but actually what happened with the flooding it was about action. It was not about having the right piece of paper and this flood strategy when we publish it will not meet Councillor Rickard's requirements because there is no real action plan in here and we are working on that on the proper action plan because that is what it is about. It is about action not having the right pieces of paper.

18. Councillor Warburton

What criteria is the Government using to determine whether or not a school is coasting given the provisions of the Education and Adoptions Bill and does the Portfolio Holder believe that there is sufficient capacity to deliver the Government's ongoing insistence on the academisation of schools that are not good or outstanding?

Answer

The regulations for 'coasting schools' will apply for the first time in 2016. At this point, a school will be coasting if it has fallen under the coasting criteria for all of the three years 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Primary Schools. For 2014 and 2015, a school will fall below the coasting level if fewer than 85 per cent of its pupils achieve Level 4 or above in reading, writing and mathematics combined and below the median percentage of pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and maths.

The government is proposing a school will fall below the coasting standard in 2016 where fewer than 85 per cent of pupils achieve the expected standard across reading, writing and mathematics combined and pupils do not make sufficient progress. A higher progress bar will be set for the coasting criteria in 2016. The government will announce the exact levels of progress for the coasting criteria once tests have been taken in 2016.

Secondary Schools. For 2014 and 2015 the regulations propose that a school will fall within the coasting criteria if fewer than 60 per cent of a school's pupils achieve 5 A*- C grades including English and maths and the school has a below median score for the percentage of pupils making expected progress in English and in maths. Once 2016 results are available, the government intends to announce the coasting level in that year. A school will be defined as coasting, and become eligible for intervention if it falls below the standard in 2016, and has already failed to meet the coasting standards specified above in 2014 and 2015.

Action for coasting schools. Schools will be notified that they fall within the definition. Regional Schools Commissioners (RSCs) will look in more detail at the circumstances of any coasting school and any coasting school will be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they have the capacity to make sufficient improvement. The government plan is not automatically to seek academy solutions for all schools that fall within the definition of coasting. They indicate that they want to challenge and support these schools to improve sufficiently and it is only where the capacity or plan for sufficient improvement is not evident that intervention will follow.

There is clearly a question mark over whether there is sufficient capacity in the provision of sponsors and multi-academy trusts (MATs) to meet the Government's aspiration for all schools to become academies by 2020. The RSC, who leads on all academy decisions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE), no longer supports single academy conversions. Therefore all schools that are currently judged as 'inadequate' or 'requiring improvement' are required to join a MAT that has been authorised to sponsor poorly performing schools, and schools currently judged 'good' or 'outstanding' are being encouraged to join MATs or to set up their own new MAT with a group of successful schools. It is clear that the RSC will require MATs and new MATs to prove that they have the capacity and commitment to support all members to improve. It seems likely that this 'test' will limit the availability of MATs and could slow the academisation policy.

Supplementary Question

Since the budget announcements that all schools will become academies what impact will this have on Bradford Council resources and budgets in the future?

Councillor Green

The answer is if they keep the same rules it will have a disastrous potential impact on our finances depending on contracts, PFIs, utility agreements etc that have been made. Because I am not sure if all Members are aware but when a school goes for academy status if they are in deficit that deficit remains with the Council. If they are in surplus they take it but also we are liable if they have to novate any contracts or anything else. Now that is a big enough challenge where we have got a few schools going for academisation be that forced academisation or voluntary academisation. If these rules stick with forced academisation of every school in the Bradford district our concern is that there are going to be some serious financial implications which Governance and Audit (Committee) have already highlighted in their discussions and I will be meeting with the Chair of Governance and Audit (Committee) and the Director of Finance to try and start plotting what this could mean. What we will do is report back both through the Executive and Financial Reporting but also my guess, far be it for me to tell them what to do, but through the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also want to have a look at those implications. So it could be incredibly bad news, not just for some of the schools who want to stay with local authorities but being forced out, but also for the finances of this local authority and the services we provide.

19. Councillor Reid

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture

Following the decision of the Children's Society to cease delivering children's centre services in Ravenscliffe and Bradford Moor, when did the Council advertise for a new provider and has there been sufficient interest shown to ensure that the centres continue to provide quality family support and advice in these areas?

Answer

Children's Society will continue to deliver children's centre services up to the end of July. A procurement exercise to secure high quality lead organisations to manage the final three children's centre clusters was launched in February. The deadline for bids is the 23 March, and following on from the shortlisting exercise and the meeting of the multi-disciplinary procurement panel we anticipate being able to announce successful bidders in May, in time to allow a smooth handover of services in Ravenscliffe and Bradford Moor.

20. Councillor Mallinson

Would the Leader of the Council provide an update regarding progression of the sale of Wesley Place and the Old Library at Silsden?

Answer

Officers are working towards taking the properties to auction in April and have been gathering premises information for the auction pack as well as carrying out remedial works to Wesley Place following vandalism.

In accordance with the provisions of the Disposal Policy the method and timing of the sale will be confirmed to ward members once preparatory work has been completed.

Supplementary Question

It is rather strange that you read the first paragraph and that gives you the answer then paragraph B tells you that you have to give me the answer anyway. So that is the policy for you. Could the Leader or the Deputy Leader please assure Ward Members that if the sale does not go through in April that we are given the reasons why especially if it is the intervention of a tin pot Council?

Councillor Val Slater

Yes Councillor Mallinson I can give you that assurance. This has dragged on for far too long. It has dragged on for three years. I do not want to get pulled into the little war that I know that has happened in Craven ward but I will certainly keep you informed.

21. Councillor Khadim Hussain

Can the leader comment on the recent meeting between Council representatives and Sir Michael Wilshaw?

Answer

Sir Michael Wilshaw has been visiting a few cities around the country regarding standards and safeguarding around different education settings. Bradford was the third of these visits. This was a private visit which was requested by Sir Michael Wilshaw and he invited MPs.

The meeting had two key items for the agenda; firstly around safeguarding and unregistered provision and secondly, education standards. This meeting was attended by the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Education, Skills and Culture and also the Lead Member for Health and Social Care, Commander Simon Atkins, the Chief Executive, myself and some other colleagues from Children's Services. Sir Michael Wilshaw chaired the meeting and colleagues from Ofsted were also in attendance Louise Casey, Director General, who is leading a review into improving the integration of Britain's minorities as part of a broader effort to tackle extremism also attended the meeting.

The meeting, as you would expect, was a robust discussion and challenge in terms of our approaches in those two areas. The approach being taken to raising standards in the District has already been endorsed by Ofsted through the inspection of the local authority and through follow up visits.

With regard to the safeguarding and unregistered part of the agenda we know we have many strengths and equally areas in which we need to improve. However there are also many issues which need addressing at a national policy level to ensure that the system is safe and secure across the country and a fragmented system does not develop. We are continuing to meet with Ofsted and all key agencies and welcome their challenge as part of our commitment to drive up education standards and strengthen safeguarding to ensure that children are safe in every setting irrespective of their faith or culture.

22. Councillor Swallow

On behalf of the residents of Fairweather Green, could I please thank the portfolio holder for her assistance in helping me to finally get the derelict properties at Four Lane Ends on Thornton Road, demolished?

Answer

We will make the Demolition and Works staff aware.

23. Councillor Davies

Can the Portfolio Holder for Children's' Services confirm that all schools providing Halal meat also provide a non-Halal meat alternative?

Answer

In schools where the Council's in house provider for school meals are the caterer a non halal meat alternative is always provided. Where schools contract with an alternative provider or provide the catering direct themselves the Council does not hold this information

Supplementary Question

How many schools use the in-house provider?

Councillor Val Slater

I do not have that information to hand but I can provide it for you Councillor Davies.

24. Councillor Rickard

Can the total costs to the public for the installation and later removal of the so called Silsden "Flood Barrier" be clarified?

Answer

The local planning authority had no involvement in the construction of the unauthorised barrier. In relation to the cost, further inquiries with Ward Councillors and the Town Council may be able to shed more light on this aspect of the construction costs.

However what the Planning Department can confirm is that the cost of removing the unauthorised structure and making good the land on which the barrier was constructed, was £2,845.25p

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the cost. Can you just confirm that £2,845 is going to be recouped from the perpetrators of this?

Councillor Val Slater

We will try and get it back Councillor Rickard. I have tried to get to the bottom of where the money came from in the first place, who exactly was involved in putting this, what I consider a monstrosity, in place without planning permission in a conservation area that was totally inappropriate. Because it did not have planning permission I was able therefore to take the decision to have it removed with the consequent expense and yes I would like it back in my budget if we can get it back from whoever so I will be trying my damndest.

25. Councillor R Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability

The new bin policy seeks to increase and encourage household recycling. Can the Portfolio Holder advise if there will be a similar push to increase and encourage recycling within the Council's trade waste customers?

Answer

The new Domestic Waste and Recycling Policy (aka the bin policy) does not apply to trade waste customers. These customers on commercial contracts, are free to set the level of residual waste capacity that is needed for their respective business, the only limiting factor is cost, the greater the capacity the greater the cost, therefore adopting the same approach to householders is not possible.

The trade service operates within a very competitive market, with many service providers. Bradford Council trade waste customers are encouraged to minimise waste and to seek recycling alternatives whenever possible.

The service offers a competitively priced Paper & Cardboard recycling collection to business customers, additionally businesses in the district can take dry recyclable materials by agreement to the Council's Waste Transfer sites.

However the service is currently looking at how to expand the recycling offer to business customers, as part of a service improvement plan, which is scheduled to report back to the Environment and Waste Overview and Scrutiny Committee later in the year.

26. Councillor Mallinson

Would the Leader of the Council provide an update regarding progression in the provision of a site for the new school in Silsden?

Answer

Following the agreement by Executive to the merger of Aireview Infants School and Hothfield Junior School which are currently operating on a split site, officers have been engaged in negotiations about the acquisition of a new site for the new single entity primary school in Silsden. The negotiations are still underway but I am hopeful will be concluded soon.

Supplementary Question

Obviously this is a significant stage for Silsden for its future development. What I would like to share first of all is my disappointment as a Ward Councillor that I have not been kept in the loop as this has progressed and I know you are going to say there is commercial confidentiality but this is a significant stage in the future development of Silsden. So once again I would like to be kept further in the loop as to how this progresses and certainly from the point of view of the certain tin pot Silsden Town Council – I will get the name in this time – that they do not interfere with the proceedings for this because like I say it is a very important stage for Silsden.

Councillor Hinchcliffe

Trouble at mill. I will not comment on that. We are nearing as it says in the answer the completion of those negotiations. We have met before Councillor Mallinson on this particular issue. Obviously things have progressed since then. I met with officers yesterday and asked to make sure that all Ward Councillors were properly briefed so yourselves and the other two Ward Councillors should be receiving a briefing soon if you have not done so already.

27. Councillor Whiteley

Would the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care inform members of how the Council intends to allocate the money raised by the 2% Social Care levy?

Answer

The 2% Council Tax rise for Adult social care (£3.076m in 2016/17) will be used directly to fund the Adult Services budget. It will not be applied specifically to any one service, cost type, or type of supplier. Rather, it forms part of the total supply of money that comprises the Adult Services budget for 2016/17.

This additional £3.076m should be seen in the context of continuing demographic and financial pressures on Adult Services and on-going Government cuts to Council funding the scale of which means that services will still have to deliver targeted cost reductions in Adult Services. These are £4.3m in 16/17 on top of £8.5m in 2015-16, £6.8m in 2014-15 and £7.3m in 2013-14. These reductions affect a wide range of Adults services including older people's residential care, housing related support, direct payments to service users, supporting people, commissioning, operational services, the mental health contract, internal staffing levels, and higher charges to clients.

The 2% Social Care Levy is a contribution to the Adult Social Care Budget to meet the assessed needs of residents, and will be deployed as necessary across the range of services provided. In question 2 above it is indicated that providers of day, domiciliary, residential and nursing care would benefit from the levy by way of an increased fee offer.

Supplementary Question

I understand that this Council has advised residential care providers that it is using the United Kingdom Home Care Association costing model. This model is designed to indicate a fair price for social care services. Can the Portfolio Holder confirm that we are using the model in its entirety or are we using some headings and ignoring others?

Councillor Berry

We are using elements of that model. That's been perfectly clear all the way through and we should be in a position to get back to them fairly soon with passporting at least 2% but of course I would remind you that the 2% is nowhere near the index of inflation and the rising costs as everybody in that sector knows. I am sat there looking at the bill for my father's care has gone up by 7½% so anybody thinks 2% is going to solve everybody's problem is living in a somewhat parallel universe.

28. Councillor J Sunderland

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Education, Skills and Culture

How many reports of potential unregistered schools have been made in District in each of the last five years, how many were found to be unregistered schools and what action was taken as a result?

Answer

One report in 2014 and one in 2015, two in total. Neither was found to be an unregistered school. Both concerns related to residential properties and both were forwarded to Bradford Council's Planning and Building Control department after it was observed that a small number of children were entering the property on some evenings.

Case 1 - the police, planning and highways had no concerns about the property. The owner of the property was visited, and stated she was teaching very small numbers of children (less than 6). She was advised to apply for planning/building permission in order to continue to do so. She agreed she would. As a result of this, Planning/Building control expressed they had no concerns and no permissions were required, as the number of children attending was so small.

Case 2 – concerns were raised about children attending a property in a similar way to the previous case. It was reported that the residents had undergone a huge garage conversion. Checks were made with Planning and Buildings control, and the residents had planning permission in place for their garage conversion. No further complaints have been made by local residents.

29. Councillor Martin Smith

Would the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport confirm when the Brownfield land register will be available, as some five or six months have passed since we enquired?

Answer

The new legal duty to produce registers (as prescribed by the Secretary of State) is contained within the Housing and Planning Bill which is currently going through parliament. It is presently at Committee stage in the House of Lords, which is considering amendments.

The government has recently published the 'Implementation of planning changes: technical consultation' which is seeking views on the proposed approach to the implementation of measures contained in the Housing and Planning Bill, including Brownfield Registers and other planning measures. Comments are invited by 15 April. Responses to the consultation will inform the detail of the secondary legislation which will be prepared once the Housing and Planning Bill gains Royal Assent.

Through brownfield registers, the government is seeking a standard set of information which will be kept up-to date and made publicly available to help provide certainty for developers and communities and encourage investment in local areas.

The consultation seeks views on proposals for preparing brownfield registers and keeping them up to date including how to identify suitable sites (suitable – deliverable/developable, 5 dwellings/0.25ha, and available), publicity and consultation, the proposed content of the registers and the intended requirements for publishing and updating the data.

Existing evidence within an up to date Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment should be the starting point for identifying suitable sites for local brownfield registers. It is proposed that potential sites will need to be assessed against specific criteria that the government will set out in regulations (yet to be published) to ensure that they are suitable for housing.

The Council has an up to date SHLAA which will form a good basis for the work to put in place a register once the outcomes of the technical consultation and also the related secondary legislation and Regulations are put in place.

Supplementary Question

It is clear that Councils were asked to prepare the schedules ahead of the Bill receiving the Royal Assent. This would have speeded up the process to using our brownfield sites first.

Councillor Val Slater

There is a lot involved in preparing a bill to go through Parliament. I draw attention to the very fact that the House of Lords has been doing a scrutiny of house building and which Leeds City Region have committed comments to. There have been changes as you are well aware Councillor Smith. You have been around long enough to know that what starts off in a bill isn't necessarily what is there at the end. We do have some of the background information and we are looking at some of it within Bradford as part of what we have got to do under our core strategy and under the SHLAA. Similar work has been done throughout the Leeds City Region but until we know exactly what the requirements are that will come through the Bill we are not going to waste work that we might have to change later so preparatory work is being done that can be finalised very quickly. But we await the requirements that the Government will tell us they need and I do not think that is unreasonable.

30. Councillor Davies

Could the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability advise colleagues of the current charges for hiring Ian Clough Hall and how do these compare with 5 years ago?

Answer

There is more than one charge for the use of Ian Clough Hall depending on the hirer requirements and the type of organisation hiring the facility. As an example the concessionary rate for the main hall on a week day in 2016 will be £22.50. The charges have been increased each year by a Council agreed inflation rate. The charge for the main hall as a comparison in 2012 was £20.

31. Councillor Reid

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport

While the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is employing consultants to look at new ways of developing a "metro-style" integrated transport system, has the proposal for a Quality Bus Contract, which all parties signed up to, now disappeared?

Answer

At present the Department for Transport is producing a new Buses Bill which will:

- Provide an easier route to franchising providing powers which are clearer and simpler to use than the current Quality Contract Scheme process.
- Embed stronger arrangements to allow local government to work in partnership with bus operators and local stakeholders.

This new legislation will supersede the existing legislation for Quality Contracts.

WYCA are the Local Transport Authority for West Yorkshire and through detailed consultation with districts is developing a refreshed West Yorkshire Single Transport Plan (STP) to update the Local Transport Plan (LTP). A key element of the STP is the Bus

Strategy for West Yorkshire which will set out what we want to achieve from the bus system over the next 10 to 15 years based on 'the outcomes/outputs we want to achieve'. It is essential that the vision and strategy developed in the Bus Plan is approved and adopted before any decisions are taken regarding how the strategy is delivered, including continuing to develop the Quality Contract scheme. Therefore WYCA have suspended further development of the Quality Bus contracts proposal until:

- The Bus Plan strategy document within the STP has been adopted by WYCA;
- The specification of the Buses Bill is known; and
- There is clarity regarding whether there will be a Devolution Deal for this region which includes the ability to access the Buses Bill.

At present it is not anticipated that these pre-conditions will not be satisfied until early 2017.

Supplementary Question

I appreciate the logic of putting quality bus contracts on ice even after years and years of discussion of them. I assume that part of the task of the consultants is to help the Combined Authority to decide which of the two mechanisms provided by the Buses Bill would be most helpful in achieving the Metro style integrated transport system. However not least in the light of the answer to question 28 is there much that these consultants can do before the Buses Bill gets towards the end of the legislative process?

Councillor Val Slater

I think my answer to that question is similar to the one that I said to Councillor Smith. Things change as things go through Parliament. I think there was a workshop prior to this Council meeting about the Bus Bill. Some of you may have attended it and it will form part of the single transport fund sort of plan that the Combined Authority will be putting together and there will be further consultation on that in the summer. It is a difficult situation. The Transport Committee of the Combined Authority have been committed to the previous contract system but the scenario is changing and we have got to wait and see what comes of it. It is also very much tied in with whether or not we get devolution. If we get devolution we can move on this.

32. Councillor Pennington

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport, provide details of any Planning Applications submitted for the Drummonds Mill site, along with the number and dates of any pre-application discussions with Planning Officers, which have taken place during the last eight years?

Answer

09/03157/FUL – Re-modelling of front facade - new ramp/access/canopy. New parking/landscaping. Internal fit-out to form new football academy and gym – Granted 04/09/2009

09/03158/LBC – Re-modelling of front facade - new ramp/access/canopy. New parking/landscaping Internal fit-out to form new football academy and gym – Granted 01/09/2009

09/04452/PMJ – Retail development with residential units above

09/05538/FUL – Change of use of ground floor to retail units and associated parking - amendments to approved application ref: 04/01650/FUL dated 25th May 2006 – Withdrawn 21/07/2010

09/05539/LBC – Amendments to ground floor units and associated parking from application ref: 04/01650/FUL dated 25th May 2006 to provide retail units – Withdrawn 02/08/2010

11/01034/MAF – Renewal of permission 04/01650/FUL: Conversion and redevelopment of redundant mill to create residential and business space, restaurants and health club and construction of new live-work units and dwellings – Deemed withdrawn 23/09/2013

11/03478/PMJ – Internal alterations to Listed Building with external signage, disabled access areas and car parks

11/04585/LBC – Renewal of permission (04/01650/FUL), conversion of redundant mill to create residential business and retail space – Granted 27/04/2012

11/04647/FUL – Change of use application for part of ground floor from manufacturing (B1) to Retail (A1) at vacant listed mill building – Withdrawn 18/05/2012

11/04648/LBC - Change of use application for part of the ground floor from manufacturing (B1) to retail (A1) at vacant listed mill building – Withdrawn 18/05/2012

12/02283/LBC – Demolition of gatehouse – Withdrawn 25/07/2012

Supplementary Question

Just on Drummonds Mill here. Thank you for the answer. We have got a new Football Academy. We have got a gym. We have got retail units. We have got restaurants. We have got a health club. We have got residential and businesses and retail space. Why was I informed by officers there had not been any applications?

Councillor Val Slater

No idea Councillor Pennington.

33. Councillor Martin Smith

Could the Deputy Leader of the Council, confirm when, where and how elected members will have access to suitable information on West Yorkshire Combined Authority programmes and activities?

Answer

Members, partners and the general public have access to West Yorkshire Combined Authority public papers electronically and through direct contact with WYCA itself, in writing or by telephone.

WYCA has a clear policy on openness and transparency as a local authority body and uses its website as the main route for this – www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Papers, reports and minutes for key committees are available via:

- [West Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [WY & Y Investment Committee](#)
- [WY Transport Committee](#)

- [WY&Y Overview and Scrutiny Committee](#)
- [WYCA Governance and Audit Committee](#)
- [WYCA Leeds City Region Partnership Committee](#)

Over-and-above the Leader being co-opted onto WYCA and involved directly in WY&Y Investment Committee, working groups and the LEP, the Council has a number of members directly involved in the Transport Committee, WYCA's own Governance & Audit Committee and WYCA own O&S. Appointments and Nominations addressed through Full Council.

In addition, Cllr Cooke receives WYCA information as a Conservative Substitute member. Cllr Sunderland is on WYCA as a Liberal Democrat Member.

On Transport operations, developments and schemes, especially in regard to passenger services there is a dedicated [Bradford District Consultation Sub-Committee](#). Details on the sub-committees for Leeds, Wakefield, Calderdale and Kirklees are also published. Group leaders and members are updated through their regular briefings on matters of concern or significance, including investment, development and performance. Information at key stages of strategy development (e.g. Strategic Economic Plan, Single Transport Plan, Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan etc), scheme and investment planning, delivery and reporting involve front-line members in conjunction with CBMDC management and officers.

Reports have been taken on WYCA (and Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership LEP) to CBMDC Executive, Governance & Audit Committee (with a focus on accountability, reporting and governance issues), Corporate Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee, Regeneration and Economy O&S Committee (with a focus on economy and business) and Environment & Waste O&S Committee (with a focus on transport investment, schemes and operations)

A report is to be taken to the CBMDC Governance and Audit Committee 15 April 2016 and matters of involvement, reporting and governance will be presented and discussed in that arena, allowing member views and proposals to be addressed through that arena.

Supplementary Question

Thank you for the clarity or partial clarity that your reply answer has given us especially for all Councillors who are not involved in the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. I am sure that in the new structure of the Council you might consider having a referral committee so that we can all know what is going on at the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and not just having to pick up on webpage information.

Councillor Green

I am not quite sure what a referral committee is but what I would say is that the West Yorkshire Combined Authority provides information in exactly the same way as Bradford Council does to Elected Members who do not sit on those committees which is you go on the website and you read the agendas. I do think that there is an argument that we should advertise more widely when those meetings and when that information is up on site so that people can go to it should they so wish. It is still a work in progress to be blunt is Combined Authority but I think I will ask the Chief Executive in her spare time to look at ways that we can make sure that we circulate the fact that there is an agenda link for when those meetings are being held.

34. Councillor Fear

To ask the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport

I understand that following legal advice, the decision was made to serve notice on the land owner at Thackley Corner following an assessment by the highways structure unit which would provide an estimate of cost. What progress has been made in obtaining this assessment and is this the only barrier to notice being issued?

Answer

Legal advice to Highway Structures Unit regarding the collapsed private wall at Thackley corner is that we should prepare a fully costed preliminary design and drawings. These are required to demonstrate the practicalities and justify the costs involved in replacing the wall.

Thackley Corner is a difficult site with complex topographical, geological and statutory undertakers problems to resolve. We also need to devise a design solution that will allow the road to remain open for the duration of the works. Geological issues have already ruled out a bored pile structural solution.

Highway Structures Unit has completed a geotechnical site investigation and a topographical survey of the site. We have also located the statutory undertakers' apparatus. We are currently waiting for a Senior Engineer to become available to progress the design analysis.

Highway Structures Unit are currently very busy repairing flood damage but hope to make a suitable resource available early in the new financial year. We are not aware of any other barriers to the issuing of a legal notice.

35. Councillor Whiteley

Would the Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care advise colleagues of the planned date for completion of the installation of a District Wide Electronic Call Monitoring System?

Answer

The Electronic Call Monitoring System will be deployed across the district in line with the mobilisation of domiciliary care contracts. It is anticipated the system will be fully operational towards the end of the 2016/17 financial year

36. Councillor Mike Pollard

Could the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning and Transport please provide detailed justification for the Council to forego monies from a planned housing development in Baildon, totalling in excess of £800,000, in order to secure just 6 additional 'affordable' units over and above the desired 20% 'quota' and explain how the 'viability' criteria in the NPPF are being met in respect of this scheme?

Answer

The Cliffe Road West scheme at Baildon forms Phase 1 of a Council scheme to develop affordable housing for rent and sale. Phase 1 of the scheme involves the development of 12 affordable homes to rent along with 23 homes for sale. The development of 12 affordable homes for rent along with extensive attenuation works to manage drainage and

water management for the whole site represent the contribution that the Council has made in lieu of a section 106 contribution and is, as the member states, well in excess of the desired 20% quota.

This scheme is one of 7 housing schemes that together form the Council's affordable housing programme 2015/18. The Council has not foregone the monies from the sale of the site as it will retain ownership of the affordable homes and will use the rental income from these, along with the capital receipts from the sold homes to fund the programme. The programme has also attracted £3.475m of grant from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) into the district.

Supplementary Question

Thank you to the Portfolio Holder for her answer and indeed for her answer to the public question asked earlier which was on the same lines. As there was considerable doubt apparent in the original planning application for this particular site about the viability of this project could the Portfolio Holder outline the share of the HCA grant attaching specifically to the Ferniehurst scheme and the timescale for the project to demonstrate a competitive return in compliance with Section 173 of the National Planning Policy Framework?

Councillor Val Slater

Okay I cannot answer the latter part of that but I will get the information to you. The money that we have got from the Homes and Community Agency was a package to cover, I think it was, about 16 sites. Within that package there has been some changes because when we have looked into it further some of them cannot be realised but with the agreement of the Homes and Community Agency we have done some juggling around. That site that you are referring to, there were four phases originally because I remember having a meeting with Estates and yourselves in the early days talking about the different phases of this project. So the second phase will be brought forward. The Leader answered many of the questions in the question from the member of public but what I would like to say we are actually doing what we have been required to do by the Government which is about putting public land in so that we can deliver affordable homes but really the focus is changing towards their obsession for starter homes and I had a letter from Brandon Lewis (MP) last week asking us to progress and quicken this process so we are doing what your Government is asking us to do.

37. Councillor Pennington

Would the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Sport and Sustainability confirm the number of unallocated Burial Plots at Bingley Cemetery?

Answer

There are currently 302 adult burial plots, 20 cremated remains plots and 107 baby graves unallocated at Bingley Cemetery.

38. Councillor Martin Smith

Can the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Planning & Transport inform members of when we can expect the council to update its Housing Policy and will this be conducted in house, or developed by external advisors?

Answer

- The Housing & Homelessness Strategy, “A Place to Call Home, 2014-2019 Housing & Homelessness Strategy” was approved by the full Council on 25 March 2014. There are discussions taking place through the Council’s New Deal both within the Council and with partners about the future direction of travel for housing and this may lead to an early review of the strategy, although no decision has yet been taken. The development of any new strategy will be carried out by officers of the Council and the Housing Partnership will be part of the review process and expected to endorse the draft strategy prior to the council approving it.
- The District Housing Allocations Policy was fundamentally reviewed in 2013 and a new policy was adopted by the Council’s Executive for 2014-2017, at its meeting on 14/01/2014. This is a 3 year policy ending in 2017 at which point a new policy will need to be adopted to meet legislative requirements. A review will be taking place this year to replace the current policy which ends in 2017. This policy was reviewed and produced by Council officers and any further reviews will be also be carried out by Council officers. Partners will be consulted as appropriate

39. Councillor Davies

Could the Leader of the Council confirm how much is owed in unpaid Council Tax, on an average day?

Answer

It is not possible to say how much Council Tax is unpaid on an average day. Council Tax is an annual debt, but that debt changes on a daily basis as adjustments are applied, payments made, or recovery action is taken.

Council Tax becomes “unpaid” at the point when the taxpayer loses the right to pay by instalments and this takes place 14 days after the issue of a reminder or final notice - this will differ dependant on the circumstance of the individual accounts.

Shortly after the debt becomes “unpaid”, the Council would ask the Magistrates Court to issue a Liability Order for non payment.

What I can say is that of the £184.9m billed this year, £20.5m was still outstanding at the end of February and efforts have and will continue to maximise collection in the reminder of this year and in subsequent years.

In the last three full financial years the Council has collected 94.2% (2014/15), 94.3% (2013/14) and 95.3% (2012/13) of the debt that was raised within that year.

As regards last year, Bradford collected 94.2% of the Council Tax raised for the year. As comparators, Wakefield collected 94.4% and Kirklees 95.2%, whilst Hull collected 93.6% and Manchester, 91.8%.

Since then, a further 2% of this amount has been collected.

Supplementary Question

I just wondered which wards are the worse affected for unpaid Council Tax.

Councillor Green

I would suggest that if you wanted to seriously know the answer to that question you would have included it in your written question and then we could have let you have it. But we will let you have it. I would refer you though that also whilst this feels like part of

an ongoing campaign that we seem to have been dealing with for the last year or so I would also refer you to the previous answer when someone asked us which wards collect the most business rates. So when you are doing your comparison and writing your election leaflet Councillor Davies please make sure that you make it very well aware to the people of Baildon that the good businesses of City Ward and Keighley Central raised a significant amount of money for this district which gets spent in Baildon. So do have fun.