

## COUNCIL

7 October 2008

### MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 19

---

1. **Councillor Berry**

What number and proportion of children have been allocated school places this year against parental preference?

**Answer**

Number of children allocated school places **against** parental preference for intake September 2008:

- Primary schools - 155 = 2.21%
- Secondary schools - 217 = 3.2%

2. **Councillor Walls**

Can the Leader provide a progress update on the Council's scheme to provide home insulation for elderly residents?

**Answer**

The Community Warmth Scheme was launched on 19 August and has been well received. 170,000 private and privately rented homes will be visited at least 3 times to ensure engagement with the household. The Scheme has now been valued at just less than £27M with minimal cost to the Council.

Community Warmth has received financial support from the Council which has enabled all over 60s to receive free cavity wall and loft insulation. Further support has also ensured that all A & B band properties can receive free cavity wall insulation, with further finance sought to enable all properties in the district to benefit.

**Supplementary Question**

Can the Leader tell us a bit more about the other aspects of the Community Warmth Scheme other than the insulation?

### **Councillor Naylor**

The Community Warmth Scheme should have been circulated to all members of the Council but for clarification the areas that exist beyond dealing with insulation are that it provides a signposting opportunity to local business start ups, fire safety, energy efficiency, renewables and provides advice with regard to green issues in terms of micro regeneration. The scheme has links with West Yorkshire Energy Efficiency and is aimed at providing affordable warmth in hard to treat areas. The Council share of this regional housing money is approximately £500,000. In the current climate I would recommend all members if they don't know about it to contact me.

### **3. Councillor Berry**

Can the Leader of Council outline what procurement policy decisions have been reached on school ICT software and compatibility [for example with SIMS] and licences and whether these designs were reached with the consent and support of schools?

#### **Answer**

The BSF procurement process, in which schools played a full part, identified a preferred BSF ICT Provider whose proposed solution included a number of elements. These included the provision of a Managed Learning Environment and associated modules of software to support learning and teaching, the provision of core applications (which included Star Office and other Sun Microsystems software platforms) and the installation and delivery of agreed school licensed curriculum and administrative software. Schools have been integral to the design development process which has taken place since financial close on Phase 1 providing the Chair and the majority of members of the Strategic Group that has worked in partnership with the BSF ICT provider to define the specific content and configuration of the final installation.

An essential part of the design development process was to explore compatibility and to seek assurances from software suppliers that their product would work seamlessly with other components of the ICT Managed Service. However, in the specific case of the Management Information System, schools chose to maintain a direct support relationship with the vendor of the software.

### **4. Councillor Miller**

Would the Leader comment on the Council's new 'Don't let the cheats benefit' campaign aimed at encouraging people to report housing benefit and council tax benefit cheats?

## **Answer**

I fully support the 'Don't let the cheats' benefit' campaign and would urge all members of Council to do the same.

In this time of difficult economic conditions it is important that scarce public resources are directed to the vulnerable in the District and not stolen by benefit cheats to line their own pockets.

In the last twelve months the Revenues and Benefits Service Counter Fraud team has undertaken over 3,000 investigations into potentially fraudulent claims to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit. These investigations have uncovered in excess of £1.2million in overpaid Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit and £0.5million in other overpaid welfare benefits such as Income support, Job Seekers Allowance and Incapacity Benefit. In addition 38 fraudsters were convicted by the Criminal Courts and a further 184 received either a caution or a fine.

This campaign will mean we can continue this good work and see even more cheats brought to account. Tip offs from members of the public are vital in the Council's fight against benefit cheats and in the last 12 months there have been over 700 calls made to the Hotline, helping the Council to uncover a variety of benefit frauds. The confidential free phone benefit fraud hotline is shared with Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield Councils.

## **Supplementary Question**

Can the Leader assure this Council that this campaign will not mean those in genuine need will be excluded from claiming their entitlement?

## **Councillor Masood**

Yes I can assure that those in genuine need will not in any way be adversely affected but also I would like first to commend members of this who have done such an excellent job on this campaign. The Revenues and Benefits Service aims to ensure the benefit system is secure by preventing, deterring, detecting and acting against fraud and error whilst always maximising the legitimate take up of housing benefit and Council Tax benefit to support vulnerable people and tackle social and economic exclusion including bad housing, homelessness, barriers to work, poverty, crime and poor health. For the third year running one-off funding for benefits take-up work was included in the Council Budget, giving the Revenues and Benefits Service £50,000 to maximise entitlement to housing benefit and Council Tax benefit. We know that last years take-up work resulted in nearly £500,000 in extra housing benefit and/or Council Tax benefit being awarded and so far this year an extra £100,000 has already been awarded.

**5. Councillor David Green**

Can the Leader provide details of how much money has been saved by the most recent restructure of top management?

**Answer**

The current annual saving in respect of the Head of Service / Assistant Director restructure is £360k per annum which will rise to £760k per annum after 5 years after any funding associated early retirement and redundancy costs.

**Supplementary Question**

Could the Leader of Council please provide me with a detailed breakdown of how the current projected savings were arrived at?

**Councillor Hopkins**

I am sure we can arrange that.

**6. Councillor Kelly**

Can the Leader confirm that a Bradford Adult Services initiative has been shortlisted for a prestigious national computing award?

**Answer**

Yes the Council in conjunction with ADL Smartcare has been short listed for the Community Project of the Year Award in the Computing 2008 Awards for its innovative SMART ASSIST scheme.

SMART ASSIST provides a web based solution focussed approach to enabling anyone to identify community equipment which will help them with their daily living needs irrespective of whether they are known to Adult Social Services or not. The system was jointly developed with a private sector partner ADL Smartcare and was launched in July 2007. Since when the system has had 1185 visits. People visiting the site can access catalogues, undertake a partial self assessment or indeed a full self assessment that will consider all their daily living equipment needs. To date 80 full assessments have been completed. The system works by way of clinical reasoning and the 'pointed to' solutions have all been clinically validated by OT's working for Bradford Adult Services. This means that users can fully trust the outcomes of any assessment they undertake on the system. It also means that many people can now access the right equipment independent of having to be assessed by Council staff. The Computer Awards ceremony will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at a gala evening in London.

### Supplementary Question

Can I ask whether there are any other developments in supporting people?

### Councillor Dale Smith

You read the question that was asked and look at the answer and wonder about the supplementary but it is all about communication. What I wanted to do was to do two things. To remind everybody about the supporting people week that has been promulgated for next week. It is an important event because we have got an inspection in January of next year and we are wanting provider service users and Councillors to come to Olicana House during the week and learn about supporting people. To conclude I would just like to congratulate Councillor Michael Kelly on his appointment as Education Portfolio Holder because I am quite sure that every colleague across the Council will wish him well in an important and challenging role.

### 7. Councillor Qasim Khan

Can the Leader tell me the allocation of money for Manningham Ward, City Ward and Toller Ward from the Group Repair Scheme and Facelift programme for the last three years and the number of properties repaired in that same period?

### Answer

The table below shows the number of properties benefiting from Group Repair and Facelift programmes in the Manningham/City/Toller wards during 2006/9.

	<b>2006/7</b>	<b>2007/8</b>	<b>2008/9</b>
Facelift	£388	£1,862,091 (38 properties)	Planned programme £3.4million (148 properties)
Group Repair	£961,182 (36 properties)	£462,547 (44 properties)	0
<b>Total</b>	£961,570	£2,324,638	£2.5million

### Supplementary Question

I don't have a supplementary question however I think my question was misunderstood. My question now is can I have the correct answer to my question. I wanted a breakdown of the three wards which I didn't get.

## **Councillor Hopkins**

Can we make sure that Councillor Naylor talks to Councillor Qasim Khan and he gets the information required.

## **8. Councillor Andrew Thornton**

Can the leader of Council tell me the budget allocation and spending of the Dept. of Strategy & Performance for each of the last three years (2006/7, 2007/8, 2008/9) and the amount of this which was allocated to support the work of the Improvement Committees' in carrying out the scrutiny function?

### **Answer**

Strategy and Performance is a new budget area, under the Deputy Chief Executive's Department and includes support to Improvement Committees. Previously in 2006/7 and 2007/8, the budget was under the pre-restructure Department of Policy and Performance, but the relevant figures have been extracted. Budget figures are provided below:-

### **Strategy & Performance**

Financial Year	Budget (£s)	Actual expenditure (£s)
2006/7	2,438,500	2,310,950
2007/8	2,379,340	2,353,126
2008/9	1,905,000	1,495,748*

(\* year to date, as at 29 September 2008)

### **Service Improvement**

Financial Year	Budget (£s)	Actual expenditure (£s)
2006/7	1,011,800	912,327
2007/8	1,059,000	1,044,791
2008/9	789,000	576,828*

## **9. Councillor Greaves**

Can the Leader of Council say how many new houses have been built in Bradford district since 1997?

### **Answer**

<b>Network Housing Completions</b>	
1997-1998	1100
1998-1999	1018
1999-2000	1200
2000-2001	1038
2001-2002	1257
2002-2003	1234
2003-2004	1254
2004-2005	1361
2005-2006	1369
2006-2007	1578
2007-2008	2156
<b>Total</b>	<b>14565</b>

Data compiled from inspections carried out by the Council's Building Control Service and returns supplied to them by the national House Building Council.

### **Supplementary Question**

I would thank the Leader for the long list of numbers and I note that none have hit the magic 2,700. Given the changed financial circumstances does the Leader think the Government has been completely unrealistic in its expectations for how many new houses can be built in the short/medium term?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

I think they have been over-ambitious. The reality is in the current climate we will be lucky if we can actually achieve the 1997/98 housing completions. I think this is a debate that will take place later in the Council meeting.

### **10. Councillor Sajawal Hussain**

In answer to my question at the July meeting of Council it was stated that, in the last three years, 12 planning applications in City Ward had included Section 106 Agreements securing contributions. Can the Leader tell me how much money has been received as a result of those agreements, how much is outstanding and, where money has been received, where it has been spent?

### **Answer**

The records relating to Section 106 contributions are presently not kept in a manner that shows details of the receipt of monies and outstanding balances based on individual wards. However it is understood that the majority of the development schemes approved in the City Centre ward in the last 3 years that have a Section 106 contribution have not yet commenced and therefore the monies are not due for submission. An officer is due to be

appointed soon to take up the post of Planning Obligations Monitoring Officer within the Planning Service and thereafter records will be collated of all monies due, received and where spent on a Ward basis and a report to the appropriate Planning Panels and Committees will be submitted on a regular basis to inform members accordingly.

### **Supplementary Question**

I thank the Leader for providing half of the answer to my question. Can I ask for further clarification from the Leader? It seems a bit odd when a planning condition of the planning approval is three years. It seems really odd to believe that none of the majority of the developments have not started or commenced so can I have the breakdown of all the developments that have not started so far and the reasons why and what has happened to the other condition to make a start within three years. Soon there will be a monitoring officer so can I also ask the Leader to confirm that they will ensure that ward members are the first contact point and they are fully consulted in all the 106 negotiations that have taken place with the office.

### **Councillor Kris Hopkins**

With respect to what Councillor Sajawal was saying, I did not follow all that to be quite honest. Would you like to put that in writing to us and we will see if we can get the appropriate answers for you. E-mail my office.

### **11. Councillor Shah**

Will the Leader comment on the pilot scheme being launched by Bradford Council to increase the take-up of school meals?

### **Answer**

Local Authorities receive a Central Government Funding Grant to support the transformation of school meals for three years from 2008-2011. Bradford received £923k for year 2008/09.

The Government has specific criteria on how this is spent including the increased cost of fresh ingredients and the associated labour cost of preparing these and initiatives to drive up meal uptake-critical to reducing the future cost of the school meals service to the Authority beyond the period of the grant funding. The initiative offers free school meals to all reception children for four weeks and uses £134k of the central grant funding. The promotion was offered across all of the districts primary schools and 95% of schools have taken the offer up.

### **Supplementary Question**

Can I ask what the over-riding objective of the scheme is and when its outcomes will be assessed?

## **Councillor Naylor**

The objectives of the scheme were two-fold. First of all to provide a nutritional meal for the children but also to provide an opportunity for them to socialise. I think there are two key objectives here which is to try and develop social skills and give the children a meal that will keep them going during the rest of the school day and it may be the only opportunity that some of them do get to get a hot meal. In regard to when the scheme is going to be assessed it will be at the end of October.

## **12. Councillor Beardmore**

Can the Leader of Council please advise why was the “Compact” (2004-2009) never signed up to by the Council?

### **Answer**

The Compact (2004 -2009) was produced and approved by Bradford Vision, the District's former Local Strategic Partnership.

The leader of the Council signed up to the Compact as the chair of the LSP.

Since 2004 when the Compact was endorsed by the LSP the Council has worked closely with the Voluntary and Community Sector throughout this period to update the LSP Compact and produce a document to formalise the working relationship between the Council and the VCS.

This work was advancing until it was overtaken first by the establishment of the new LSP and latterly by the Third Sector Review.

The Third Sector Review is now producing a Compact which when completed will provide principles and practices that will strengthen further the working relationship between not only the Council but many public agencies in future.

## **13. Councillor Dodds**

For each of the following areas – Bradford, Keighley and Shipley:

1) What is the current backlog of outstanding planning enforcement enquiries?

and

2) what is the estimated response time for enquiries relating to planning enforcement matters that do not have a serious impact on health and safety?

### **Answer**

1) The total number of enforcement cases in

<b>Bradford</b>	<b>2204</b>
<b>Keighley</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>Shipley and Ilkley</b>	<b>692</b>

2) The aspirational target for responding to these cases is 10 days, however because of the current workload; it is taking far longer than the Local Planning Authority would desire to respond.

Non -priority cases are dealt with between 4–24 weeks, depending on the complexity of current priority cases.

### **Supplementary Question**

When will the Council employ more enforcement staff as previously promised?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

The last time there was reference made to law enforcement there was a reference also made to a budget requirement. However at the current time the planning authority is actually conducting a re-organisation process which hopefully will bring forward more enforcement officers.

### **14. Councillor McCabe**

Does the Leader agree that the Government's description of its own proposal to provide "free swimming for the over 60s" is misleading?

### **Answer**

Yes, as is evidenced by the significant number of councils that have rejected the Government's plans because of the additional funding the local authorities themselves would be forced to provide to implement the scheme.

### **Supplementary Question**

Is the Government so-called "free swimming for the over 60s" an initiative not simply another example of the so-called Labour spin?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

Quite obviously that is the case. It is something like promising goodies and presents to people without actually having the money to pay and it is expecting the Councils to eventually pick up the tabs. I think a similar proposal has been around with theatres though not directly at Council theatres. There is a lot of, shall I say with tongue in cheek, attempts to buy votes I think.

**15. Councillor Haigh**

Given the ongoing deterioration in the former Bronte School building, can the leader reaffirm the Council's commitment to providing a community building on the site and provide a clear timetable for progress in delivering this objective?

**Answer**

Given the on-going deterioration of the former school it is intended that the property be demolished pending redevelopment of the site for housing.

The Council has indicated a commitment to provide a community building subject to capital funding being approved in the 2009/10 budget planning process. Some preliminary feasibility work has been completed. We are now looking to take this further with a design in more detail, further cost estimates and a clear timetable for completing development

**16. Councillor Palmer**

Can the Leader offer his assessment of the impact the looming economic recession is likely to have on Bradford district?

**Answer**

The impact of the current economic climate in Bradford District is still a mixture of positive and negative. The current uncertainty with regard to global economic prospects make predictions about impacts on Bradford District difficult to assess, However latest available data shows that Bradford's economy is holding up which gives some confidence that the District is as well placed as any to cope with a downturn and benefit when the economy picks up.

**Facts and Figures**

- Unemployment is rising, but so is the number of people in employment. (The latest 4.6% monthly increase in JSA claimant rate was the lowest in West Yorkshire and much lower than the national rise of 6.0%. Overall employment is still rising – 11,000 more people in employment over the last 4 years.)
- VAT registered businesses are on an upward trend and the District is still predicted to be the fastest growing economy in West Yorkshire over the next 10 years. (Yorkshire Forward Regional Econometric Model Growth scenario forecasts economic growth of 64% to 2016)
- House prices are holding up with the most recent Land Registry data showing the average house price increased by 0.9% over the year to July 2008 compared to fall of 4.6% across England and Wales.

- Some local companies such as Morrison's are doing well in the current climate. Provident Financial and Thomas Cook are also set to increase local staff numbers.
- Arndale shopping centre has reported increased footfall figures over the year to July 2008 and footfall is holding up month on month.

### **Supplementary Question**

Would the Leader agree with me that there continues to be much good news about Bradford District's economy to celebrate and that should help us to weather the economic storm better than many other areas?

### **Councillor Naylor**

I think the answer is yes. Bradford has a diverse economy and it is providing some good basis for hope. We look at the Prologics development which has up to 350,000 jobs which will hopefully be coming on stream fairly shortly. New Victoria Place – I hope many of you actually attended the exhibition. That not only will provide us with an iconic building but it will provide us with 750 jobs and that is one of the important points at this point in time. With regard to other areas of the District and it is crucial that we do that for Bradford District. We have a £35M development in Park Lane College which will provide not only employment but educational opportunities and hopefully through that job opportunities for the graduates of that institution. Obviously we also have in Bradford itself £120M development at Bradford College.

### **17. Councillor Love**

Can the Leader of Council tell us the tonnages of paper, glass, steel cans, aluminium cans, and green waste collected at the council's Household Waste and Recycling Centres and at kerbside over the last year?

#### **Answer**

In the period April 2007 to March 2008 the Council recycled 11,573 tonnes of paper; 7,678 tonnes of mixed glass and cans; and 18,877 tonnes of green waste from kerbside collections and Household Waste Recycling Centres.

### **18. Councillor Ian Greenwood**

At the last Council meeting we were told that a report on the Review of Arts Facilities would be published by the end of July, why has this not happened and when will the report become available?

#### **Answer**

A draft report was received by the Assistant Director (Cultural Services) at the end of July but required corrections, additional information and more robust

analysis. The Assistant Director has met with the consultant and asked for the final, robust report to be with him by the end of October.

### **Supplementary Question**

Can I have a copy of the draft report received by the Assistant Director in July please?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

Councillor Greenwood appears to know more about this art strategy than I do. I haven't actually seen the report yet. As far as I am aware it has been sent back because the – and I won't say quite – it has not been completed according to satisfaction and really how you know so much about it I think is perhaps questionable.

### **Lord Mayor**

Can I take it Councillor Hawkesworth that when this strategy is completed it will be forwarded to Councillor Greenwood.

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

Of course.

### **19. Councillor Ellis**

Could the Leader comment on EU Interreg project Flood Resilient City outlining the objectives?

### **Answer**

The project focuses on key issues we as politicians, our officers and members of the public will have to face with changing weather patterns; the four pillars of the project are Awareness, Avoidance, Alleviation and Assistance.

### **Supplementary Question**

How do the objectives of the project relate geographically to the Bradford District?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

The project will be directed at areas where there have been historical flooding. It should alleviate and explain some of the problems so that in the future it will not be repeated but obviously just finding out what the problem is will give the money to relieve the problem.

**20. Councillor Ian Greenwood**

Can the Leader tell us if financial closure on Phase 2 of the Building Schools for the Future programme has been achieved?

**Answer**

Bradford Councils BSF Phase 2 Project is in two stages. The first stage is the provision of three new Special Educational Needs primary schools - Delius Primary in the Bradford Moor area, Chellow Primary at Heaton and Phoenix/Guardhouse at Keighley. It is targeted that the contractual process should be concluded during October.

The second stage of the project is the provision of four new mainstream secondary schools with co-located special educational needs secondary schools under a PFI contract - at sites at Beckfoot, Grange, Greenhead and Hanson. This is currently targeted to reach financial close at the end of November.

**21. Councillor Byrom**

Is the Supporting People Programme improving?

**Answer**

Yes. The Supporting People Programme has a new leadership team and a new 5 year strategy has been approved by Executive. The Council and PCT put in place a retraction plan which has resulted in new monies becoming available for the first time since the programme started five years ago and new services, particularly 'floating support' services are currently out to tender, with a full three year commissioning plan in place to increase provision across a range of service user groups.

**Supplementary Question**

I would like to thank the Leader for the reply which is quite different to the one I expected and to fulfil the answer I would now like to ask what has changed in relation to the programme over the last few months?

**Councillor Dale Smith**

I think the Scrutiny and the Link members will be well aware and I would like to thank them for their involvement in the Supporting People monitoring. I think the most significant change has been the appointment of the Lead Officer and the recognition corporately that it's got to be done. The service users themselves are now far more involved and integrated into the process that they are more able to speak their mind and they get a straight answer. They sit on the Commission Body now and the strategic core group and they

review the specification of new services and as the previous answer says for the first time we now have new money going into the services being re-directed. The Government's arrangements have also been strengthened and the Commissioning Bodies chaired by the Strategic Director of Adult Services and core group is chaired by the Assistant Director of Housing. That is a very important role that David Shephard is taking and certainly the Adult Services Director. I do thank him for that because it is stamping on the corporate approach. I think overall relationships have much improved with the providers and are positive by the renewed energy and the leadership and the direction of travel and all the reports so far from the Audit Commission are that we are on track for the inspection which is in January. We are certainly confident it will be a great improvement upon the previous two.

## **22. Councillor Sunderland**

How many planning applications in the year 2007-08 and in 2008-09 to date; have been withdrawn before the expiry of the relevant time period as set out in BV 109a, BV 109b and BV 109c?

### **Answer**

Withdrawn applications do not contribute towards performance against national planning performance indicators for major minor and other planning applications. Instead there is a specific category in the returns for the number of applications withdrawn within any given quarter, regardless of their age.

The total number of applications withdrawn for the financial year 2007/08 was 198. Of these 83 were withdrawn during the period prior to the target decision date.

The total number of applications withdrawn for the financial year 2008/09 to date is 120. 30 of these were withdrawn during the period prior to the target decision date.

### **Supplementary Question**

The number of questions about planning on the agenda lead us to conclude that perhaps not all is well within the Planning Service. Could the portfolio holder allow the services to be scrutinised by the appropriate Scrutiny Panel?

### **Councillor Hawkesworth**

I am not sure whether that is a possibility. I just do not know. The reality is there is something of a split between my role as portfolio holder and the regulatory side of planning, that sort of curtain, a glass between is recommended by Legal Services. I do not know. I will find out.

**23. Councillor Flowers**

Would the Leader please tell us what progress has been made, since the issue was originally raised over two years ago, to give away the many surplus tickets and provide free - or heavily subsidised - access to the Orchestral Concert series at St George's Hall for school children and students - thus ensuring that the concerts encourage younger people to enjoy classical music?

**Answer**

I am pleased to report that substantial progress has been made on this issue.

For the last two years, school parties have been given a concessionary price of £3 for each student in the stalls (plus one teacher free with every ten students). This has recently been extended to the best seats in the auditorium to encourage sales of these tickets.

For the 2008-09 orchestral season, the Council has introduced a £5 ticket for Under 25s and a new cut price Family Ticket for two adults and two children.

In addition to the normal theatre marketing channels, these concessions are marketed through direct mail to schools in the district, email bulletins and offers to Leeds College of Music and direct mail offers to members of Theatre Vision (which is a theatre club for under-25s).

**24. Councillor Hill**

Will the Leader of Council comment on Nell Bank Outdoor Centre winning the National Lottery Award for Best Environment Project?

**Answer**

We were, of course, delighted to see BBC prime time Saturday evening television announce that Bradford was the best in the country. Over 15,000 children per year have visited the centre and it is now regarded as a national centre of excellence for promoting cohesion, inclusion and sustainability.

**25. Councillor Warburton**

When will the review of library provision take place and when will we see its results?

**Answer**

Various scenarios for library provision across the district are being explored in the context of national, regional and local need and possible investment

opportunities with potential partners. The Executive will consider this matter once the relevant service delivery options have been fully explored.

**26. Councillor Binney**

Will the Leader comment on the success of Bradford's Summer Festival 2008?

**Answer**

Bradford's Summer Festival was made up of a number of events, exhibitions and performances which ran from June to September 2008. They were enjoyed by large numbers of residents and visitors to the District and they attracted very positive and extensive press coverage.

**27. Councillor Beardmore**

How much has this Council spent to date on consultancy in relation to the Special Schools Re-organisation as part of the BSF Programme, who were the consultants and what was the outcome?

**Answer**

On Phase 2 of the BSF Programme the Council has procured a range of advisors who have provided technical, legal and financial specialist advice. These advisors have worked in equal measure across the mainstream and SEN element of the project. With outcomes focussed on providing advice on design issues and specialist financial and technical advice. It is not possible to breakdown the figures to show the work done on SEN and main stream separately. The total expenditure to date on Phase 2 is as follows

Financial	£19,312
Technical	£433,549
Legal	£147,345
Education Consultants	£180,517
Other	£24,526
<b>Total</b>	<b>£805,249</b>

This represents less than 1% of total estimated contract values and is well within national benchmarks.

**28. Councillor Ian Greenwood**

Will the Council be closing any of its cash offices and if so, which ones and when?

**Answer**

The work undertaken by the Council's Cash Offices is currently being evaluated in terms of value for money. Several options are under consideration to achieve efficiencies within the service for 2009/10 with a view to improving the current levels of service available to residents. However a final decision has not yet been made.

**29. Councillor Payne**

Will the Leader give the Council an update on the Ward Investment Fund?

**Answer**

Currently 93 proposals have been submitted to the £3m Ward Investment Fund totalling £1,443,502.00. Of these 16 have contracts to cover the works and are underway, a further 17 have been approved and contracts are being developed to cover them and the other 60 are at various stages in the process towards getting approval.

All proposals received so far either support Council Corporate, Area Committee Action Plan, or other local action plan priorities, and often address issues raised at Neighbourhood Forums.

**30. Councillor Ian Greenwood**

What progress has the Council made in identifying an appropriate City Centre site for an older peoples' centre?

**Answer**

A small steering group is working on the development of a Business Plan to deliver such a centre in Bradford and whether it could be part of any proposed development and within such a plan financial modelling considering the options of using the money obtained by Bradford Senior Power.

**31. Councillor Warnes**

How many council staff work at City Hall; and what cycle facilities are provided for them in terms of (a) secure cycle parking, (b) staff lockers for storing clothing and (c) showers and changing rooms?

**Answer**

City Hall has 309 Council employees and 90 Members.

[a] Secure, sheltered cycle parking is available in the central courtyard approached from the west entrance of the building.

[b] staff lockers and clothing stores are not provided [However, cyclists themselves have not made any requests for them]  
[c] Shower and changing facilities are available on request. A tumble drier is also available.

**32. Councillor Andrew Thornton**

Can the Leader tell us how many new secondary schools have been built in Bradford over the last 30 years and the year in which they opened?

**Answer**

There are nine in total:-

Titus Salt – 2008  
Tong - 2008  
Buttershaw – 2008  
Bradford Academy – 2007  
Feversham – 2003  
Challenge – 2002  
Parkside - 2002  
Immanuel – 2000  
Laisterdyke – 1991

Dixons CTC was also opened but this is not a Local Authority school.

**33. Councillor Flowers**

Would the Leader please give me a complete breakdown of all costs and expenses associated with the very welcome Garden Magic event in Centenary Square in August?

**Answer**

The costs were (excluding staff time):-

Infrastructure	£11414
Garden Features	£18717
Water Feature	£10705
Entertainment on site	£8487
Room hire	£682
Security	£6524
Marketing	£6344
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£62873</b>

Plants and garden equipment were recovered from the garden at the conclusion of the event and that material is now being re-used in the district's parks, woodlands and open spaces.

34. **Councillor Berry**

How many primary school appeals are currently outstanding and how many children are not in school as a result of the appeals process?

**Answer**

All primary appeals for reception entry into academic year 2008/09 that were submitted by the appropriate deadline have been heard.

Appeals are ongoing throughout the whole year and we currently have 102 appeals outstanding that have been scheduled or waiting to be scheduled within the "30 school days of the appeal being lodged" timescale given in the School Admission Appeals Code of Practice.

No children should be out of school as a result of the appeals process because if a child is refused admission to a school, Education Bradford discusses with the parent what alternative admission to school arrangements are available.

35. **Councillor Andrew Thornton**

What does the Leader believe to be the underlying reasons for the rapid increase in school appeals over recent years and what action is the Council taking to address them?

**Answer**

The rapid increase in school appeals is caused by:

- Parents becoming more aware of options, this is a national situation and not just peculiar to Bradford.
- Rising population and newcomers to the District particularly economic migrants. Shortfall in places at schools where previously we had surplus places.
- Removal of surplus places in some areas as directed by rules from DCSF.
- Large amount of mobility.
- Popularity and perception of schools whether good or felt not be good.
- Number of housing developments.
- Unrealistic expectations of some parents requiring schools that are not necessary local to where they live, e.g. parents in Tong applying for Ilkley Grammar.

The Council is taking the following action:

- Continuous monitoring of pupil forecast.
- Increasing some schools to meet demand.
- Short term - bulge classes.

- Consultation on increasing schools and possibly establishing new schools.
- Support of schools by improvement officers etc.

**36. Councillor Wallace**

How many complaints has Bradford Council received this year about grass cuttings on the pavements and the roads?

**Answer**

The Council has received approximately 150 complaints linked to grass cuttings on pavements and streets during the current cutting season.

**37. Councillor Wallace**

When will Eccleshill Library be refurbished?

**Answer**

There are no immediate plans to refurbish Eccleshill Library. As indicated in Question 25, various scenarios for library provision across the district are being explored in the context of national, regional and local need and possible investment opportunities with potential partners. Eccleshill Library will form part of that work.

**38. Councillor Cole**

Can the Leader confirm that the Council has purchased a property, number 1A Dock Lane, Shipley BD18, in anticipation of the regeneration of the Bradford Canal and that the said property (which is fully furnished to a high standard) has been boarded up and left with the furniture and fittings in situ whilst no attempt has been made to recoup some of the putative £300,000 outlay by either leasing the property short term to gain rental income or disposing of the fixtures and fittings for cash?

**Answer**

I can confirm that the Council acquired this property for the anticipated regeneration of Bradford Canal. The garden of the property contains one of the original canal locks; it is therefore a strategic acquisition in context of the proposed scheme. The property, which is not furnished, has been boarded up for security reasons. Officers recommend against letting the house as a residence because it would in effect become a 'Council House' and any tenant may acquire a right to buy

**39. Councillor Beardmore**

What progress has been made under the 'Every Disabled Child Matters' Children's Charter which the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services agreed to sign up to at the Aiming High for Disabled Children consultation event on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008?

**Answer**

The Charter to invites Councils to sign up to intent to improve services for disabled children and young people. The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services signed the LA charter alongside the Bradford & Airedale tPCT signing the sister charter - thus demonstrating our strong commitment within the Bradford District to work closely with our partners to ensure that we provide excellent services to disabled children and their families.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership has emphasised the importance of ensuring that the needs of disabled children are incorporated within mainstream services and therefore agreed that the Vision For Disabled Children and Young People should be firmly in line with the Vision for all children and young within the District people:-

1. Every disabled child and young person will enjoy living in the District and will achieve as much as they can as they grow up and develop.
2. We will work together to make the District a place where disabled children and young people from all communities and backgrounds have opportunities to improve their lives.

In order to ensure real and sustainable change, The Council is working closely with its Partners to ensure that we have robust systems in place to ensure we plan, commission and deliver services in a joined up manner which embeds the ethos of the Charter. All Councils will be required to develop a Core Offer for Disabled Children, their parents and carers and the fact that Bradford is a Pathfinder Authority for Short Breaks for Disabled Children puts us in an excellent position for taking this work forward. The Council was also selected to be a Pilot Authority for Childcare for Disabled Children and we are proud of the fact that we are one of only two Councils within the country to have a lead on both initiatives.

The Council has established a Commissioning Board for Aiming High for Disabled Children to ensure robust and accountable processes are in place and the work of this Board is closely informed by the Disabled Children and Young People Strategy Group. I am pleased to be able to report that the Council has also recently created a new post – a Commissioner for Disabled Children. A further event for over 90 stakeholders was held on 29 September to ensure that the work can be taken to the next stage of ensuring that the wishes of parents and children are transformed into reality.

Within all that is being done, we are also working hard to ensure that the excellent practice that exists within the District in communicating with and listening to disabled children and young people, parents and carers is further strategically embedded. The Council firmly supports the view that it is by so doing that the highest quality services will be developed for the benefit of Disabled Children within our District.

**40. Councillor Warnes**

Can the leader act to ensure that all street cleansing and refuse vehicles only operate in quiet residential areas in Shipley after 7am in order to ensure that householders enjoy the peaceful amenity of their homes to which they are entitled?

**Answer**

Some refuse rounds start work before 7.00 a.m. to allow them to travel to site and avoid traffic problems. Rounds should not normally be working in quiet residential areas before 7.00 a.m. Similarly street cleansing services do start work before 7.00 a.m. but are instructed to focus on gateway routes and pedestrian areas in preparation for the morning peak flows and should not be causing problems in residential areas.

**41. Councillor Wallace**

When will Eccleshill Library get its lift?

**Answer**

There is full disabled access to the ground floor which houses the library. The first floor has male and female public toilets and a meeting room.

In 2006, the Council's Disability Discrimination Act Task Team, which had the remit to improve access to Council led services, undertook a feasibility study at Eccleshill Library and concluded that a lift and disabled toilet were needed in order to be fully compliant but that the first floor does not have the necessary space to incorporate those facilities.

There are, therefore, no current plans to install either a lift or disabled toilet.

**42. Councillor Beardmore**

What is the Council policy on enforcement and the procedure followed in relation to horses tethered or loose and the use of horse and carts in residential areas and public spaces across the District and who is responsible for such enforcement?

## **Answer**

For some time it has been the practice of irresponsible horse owners within the District to keep their horses on Council or Incommunities owned land without permission or legal standing – in short they trespass. These horses have caused problems to local people and communities and have resulted in complaints both to the Council and to the Police.

The Council does not employ staff who can impound horses, nor does it have a horse pound. Instead it retains a company who act as the Council's agent to monitor and manage the situation and impound horses.

In view of the sensitive nature of this work, a personal briefing can be provided to the member if required.

This horse contract has operated successfully for many years, but recently the horse situation has worsened. As a result the Council is re-evaluating the contract with a view to retendering it so as to ensure that the Council is employing the best service available to deal with this longstanding issue.

The Council's contractor cannot deal with horses that are being tethered or grazed on private land, This is the responsibility of the landowner. Neither can they deal with horses that are loose on the highway or being used to pull carts on the highway. These matters are the responsibility of the Police.

### **43. Councillor Warnes**

How many council staff work at Keighley Town Hall; and what cycle facilities are provided for them in terms of (a) secure cycle parking, (b) staff lockers for storing clothing and (c) showers and changing rooms?

## **Answer**

Keighley Town Hall has 135 Council employees.

[a] no cycle parking

[b] no lockers or clothing store

[c] no showers or changing rooms

### **44. Councillor Sunderland**

How many phone calls have been received by each planning office in this calendar year; how many and what percentage have been unanswered; how many and what percentage of queries have been resolved at the first call; how many calls and what percentage have been returned within 24 hours?

## **Answer**

1. Figures are only available for that part of the Planning Service that previously constituted Development Control, as the Strategy, Design and Countryside and Building Control sections do not currently use the Council's Call Centre.

It is not possible to break the figures down to relate to each planning office, but the total figures (from 1st January 2008 to 31 August 2008) are as follows:

If we include engaged calls:

Calls offered: 54,394.

Calls answered: 43,304. (79.6% answered, 20.4% unanswered)

Excluding engaged calls:

Calls offered: 49,768

Calls answered: 43,304. (87.0%, 13.0% unanswered)

Performance is subject to ongoing review which has led to a number of improvements (see below).

2. With regard to calls resolved at the first point of contact, we are unable to extract this data. Although theoretically possible, it requires development work on the system that isn't feasible at present.
3. We do not hold information on the number and percentage of calls that are returned within 24 hours. However, this is an area that is currently being investigated because we need to be able to identify where customers have had to make a repeat call as a result of their first call not being actioned.
4. Prior to the Planning Service using the call centre, more than 50% of calls to Planning went unanswered.
5. The most recent customer satisfaction survey showed a significant increase in customers' overall satisfaction with the service offered by the call centre in relation to planning enquiries.

Recent improvements include:

- The extension of opening hours.
- The increase in the number of lines routed into the Contact Centre to eliminate the possibility of a caller receiving the engaged tone. The possibility of receiving an engaged tone has all but been eliminated meaning that our actual calls answered is now over 85% every month.
- The cross training of advisors so that staff from other areas are able to be used to smooth out peaks in demand.
- The use of generic login codes so that calls are automatically routed to available cross trained advisors eliminating the need for management intervention.

- The purchase of additional CAPS Uniform licences to allow Contact Centre advisors full view of the back-office system, thus eliminating the need for call transfers. This has increased resolution at first point of contact.
- The adoption of generic processes between Contact Centre and Reception points.
- Exchange visits of staff from these different areas to ensure consistent service.

The next development is a 'divert to the Contact centre when busy' to be placed on extension 1973 to ensure that all the priority callers to that number receive an answer rather than an engaged tone.

#### 45. **Councillor Beardmore**

Can the Leader of Council please explain why we had to wait to read about accusations of maladministration regarding the previous round of the Youth Opportunity Fund monies in "Children & Young People Now", a national magazine, and can he confirm how this was resolved?

#### **Answer**

A complaint relating to the administration processes of the Youth Capital Fund was lodged by an unsuccessful applicant. The Authority investigated the complaint following Council procedures and have implemented recommendations to address the concerns raised. The complainant was not happy with the outcome and the matter is now with the Ombudsman and we expect an outcome in the next few weeks. The complainant also made allegations public via Children and Young People Now.

The Service has been scrutinised by the DCFS and Government Office and they are not pursuing this further.

#### 46. **Councillor Warnes**

Can the Leader of Council outline the on-site renewable energy generation technology (such as solar hot water heating, solar panels, wind turbines, or ground-sourced heat pumps) that is being incorporated into all the new buildings that are under construction as part of Phases 1 and 2 of Building Schools for the Future, bearing in mind the council's stated goal of cutting carbon emissions in Bradford District?

#### **Answer**

The designs on Phase 1 and 2 schools are built to meet exacting environmental criteria but in general do not include on-site renewable energy technology. At Grange Technology College however a wind turbine is proposed as part of the development.

**47. Councillor Warnes**

How much of the money raised by the sale of Leeds-Bradford airport will be invested by the council in new renewable energy generating capacity in order to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions?

**Answer**

None of the funding stemming from the sale of the Airport has been used for this purpose. The decisions on this spend have been made at Council Executive and full Council meetings.

**48. Councillor Warnes**

Can the Leader of Council outline the on-site renewable energy generation technology (such as solar hot water heating, solar panels, wind turbines, or ground-sourced heat pumps) that is being incorporated into the new buildings at Titus Salt School, bearing in mind the council's stated goal of cutting carbon emissions in Bradford District?

**Answer**

The Titus Salt school is designed and construction to exacting environmental criteria but does not include on-site renewable energy technology. The building design achieved a BREEAM rating of very good.

**49. Councillor Warnes**

Can the Leader of Council confirm that half of all the financial savings accruing from investments made with the £700K Carbon Management Fund agreed in the last budget will be returned to the fund for further investment in low carbon initiatives?

**Answer**

Although the projects to be supported have been agreed, the fine details of how this funding will be used to best advantage are still to be finally resolved. However, the Council already has a revolving energy conservation budget which has been used to draw down additional Carbon Trust match funding through the Salix programme.

**50. Councillor Warnes**

What will the carbon footprint be of Titus Salt School once its new build is completed, and how will this figure compare to its current operation?

## **Answer**

The architectural concept and environmental design was developed together from the outset. The building was designed, as far as possible within the site constraints, to act passively to reduce energy expenditure and to minimise solar heat gain. The site configuration optimises the orientation of the building and its immediate external environment to use the solar gain and natural ventilation. Natural lighting and ventilation is provided wherever possible in teaching areas. This solution works very successfully with the 'thin client' ICT solution which will minimise the need for mechanical cooling. This minimised internal temperatures, and reduced internal carbon dioxide levels, provides an environment conducive to learning. The lighting system uses efficient lamps to reduce the electrical consumption. The switching allows the lights to be operated in banks and day-lighting sensing allows lights to be dimmed or switched off according to the amount of daylight available in the classrooms.

High levels of insulation combined with active energy management systems conserves energy and reduces recurrent running costs. The building is designed to be split into zones that can be independently heated and serviced by an energy management system. The design allows areas of the building, such as community areas, to be in use without the remainder of the building services being operated. A building energy management system (BEMS) is used to maximise the efficient use of energy consumption, this optimises and predicts the start up times and energy requirements for each working day. This school is designed to achieve an energy / carbon performance target compliant with the requirements of DFES Building Bulletin 87, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Version 1 (May 2003) and Approved Document L2 2005. This required an integrated approach between building envelope, operating strategy and building systems. The design also implemented Sedum Roofs throughout allowing good water retention. The design also uses non-volatile organic compounds in the furniture and fittings providing a healthier environment for the occupants. The building design achieved a BREEAM rating of **'Very Good'**.

As part of the overall design strategy, a Building Energy Management System (BEMS) was designed, installed, and configured to control, monitor and log the energy consumption for this school. The information will assist in monitoring, targeting and controlling utility usage, and form the basis of an energy and environmental performance reporting system.

### **51. Councillor Warnes**

How many car parking spaces are provided for staff and visitors working at Jacob's Well, the City Exchange Building, City Hall, Shipley Town Hall and Keighley Town Hall?

## **Answer**

### **Jacobs Well**

Staff - 120 spaces,

Visitors 30 spaces

### **City Exchange**

Staff approx 15 under building  
(Agreed under individual floor lease)

No visitor parking

### **City Hall**

No staff or visitor parking on site

### **City Centre General**

Edward Street, 25 staff permit spaces

NCP 57 spaces purchased

Thornton Road, 400 spaces accessible to general public

**ShIPLEY Town Hall** – 16 staff, no visitors (Less if formalised)

**Keighley Town Hall** – No staff or visitors on site

Carr Street car park, 23 staff permit spaces

Other spaces may be procured or purchased by individual departments.

## **52. Councillor Warnes**

How many council staff work at Jacob's Well and the City Exchange building; and what cycle facilities are provided for them in terms of (a) secure cycle parking, (b) staff clothing lockers and (c) showers and changing rooms?

### **Answer**

City Exchange has 163 Council employees. It doesn't have its own cycling facilities. However, the building is close enough to Jacobs Well to use the facilities there.

Jacob's Well has 686 Council employees.

[a] Jacobs Well is equipped with a covered and secure cycle parking compound.

[b] No lockers or clothing store

[c] A shower is available

## **53. Councillor Love**

Can the Leader of Council tell us the current price per tonne that the Council receives from merchants for the paper, glass, steel cans, and aluminium cans it collects at the council's Household Waste and Recycling Centres and at kerbside?

**Answer**

The Council has a number of short and long term contracts in place for the sale of collected recyclates. The market rates for these materials is part of a commercial agreement between the Council and the companies in question and is commercially sensitive.

**54. Councillor Warnes**

Does the Leader of Council agree that shooting birds for sport is morally questionable?

**Answer**

I would acknowledge that some individuals have moral concerns with regard to game shooting, as is their right.

**55. Councillor Warnes**

Is the Leader of Council assured that the provision of ICT at the new Titus Salt School, including the Star Office software being purchased rather than the much more widely used Microsoft Office, will provide the staff and pupils there with the best possible teaching and learning experience, bearing in mind the importance of inter-operability and the fact that the school is presenting itself to our district as a 'specialist in mathematics and computing'?

**Answer**

The ICT provision at Titus Salt School is an ultra thin client solution and applications are hosted centrally and run locally, devices are affordable, more sustainable and more sensitive to negative impact on the environment. A fundamental operating principle of the solution is that it adheres to Open Standards and avoids the proprietary closed systems of certain manufacturers thereby maximising the potential for true system and application inter-operability.

Learners are best served when they have a choice of applications from which they can make and justify their choice of the best tool for a particular task or activity. Star Office is Open Source as well as Open Standard and schools can still choose to add further "authority licensed" software and indeed have, choosing to licence Microsoft Access when the design development process identified this as a need in delivering a particular aspect of the curriculum.

The combination of the applications provided under the procured managed service and those which are agreed as licensed by the schools and installed and delivered through the managed service platform provides schools with the

best opportunity to develop their own preferred application suite that effectively meets their particular curriculum ambitions and the needs of their learners and administrators. The Bradford BSF solution as it has been developed offers the best compromise of flexibility, affordability and fitness for purpose. The installation at Titus Salt offers the school the opportunity to lead the rest of Bradford in developing and making a success of these exciting and innovative ICT systems an ambition entirely in keeping with its status as a specialist provider of learning in maths and computing.

**56. Councillor Warnes**

Can the Leader of Council assure us that the council will ensure that the Forest of Bradford remains viable and continues its essential work throughout the remainder of this financial year?

**Answer**

The Council alone cannot ensure the viability of the Forest of Bradford project. In the past corporate priority funding has been allocated to the project and it is currently in receipt of £10,400 grant from the Community Funding Unit, with a further extension being considered. Various Council departments also support the Forest of Bradford by working with them on tree planting schemes and assisting with funding bids, in furtherance of the Council's Woodlands Strategy. The Council recognises the value of the Forest of Bradford as one of its key environmental partners and we will do what we can to assist in its continued activity.

**57. Councillor Love**

Can the Leader of Council update us on the progress of the medium-term waste management project?

**Answer**

The Council is still in dialogue with the company in question and we are working towards financial close.

**58. Councillor Warnes**

Can the Leader of Council explain how Bradford Council is going to reverse the recent increase in its carbon emissions?

**Answer**

The Carbon Management Programme includes the following; energy in buildings, fleet and business mileage and street lighting. Whilst the transport related emission remained constant, the reductions made in buildings use

were nullified by increases in street lighting. The Council is currently trialling the use of dimming technology in the Flockton Road area and further pilots are being planned.

This information has only recently come to light and the officers concerned are still reviewing the options. However, as a general approach it appears prudent to take a broad view of carbon management and make decisions which will result in optimal emissions savings for investment made. In this way, unavoidable increases in street lighting emissions might be more than compensated for by other initiatives such as home/flexible working etc.

**59. Councillor Warnes**

How many council staff work at Shipley Town Hall; and what cycle facilities are provided for them in terms of (a) secure cycle parking, (b) staff lockers for storing clothing and (c) showers and changing rooms?

**Answer**

Shipley Town Hall has 63 Council employees.

[a] Two Sheffield stands are provided in the staff car park but there is no covered provision.

[b] No lockers or clothing store

[c] No showering or changing facilities are provided