Welcome to a meeting of Croydon Council. Attached are the questions from the public and the replies which will be taken at this meeting.

IF YOU HAVE ASKED A QUESTION, PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN TO THE MEMBER OF STAFF WHO IS PRESENT IN THE PUBLIC GALLERY, THEN READ THE REPLY TO YOUR QUESTION AND INDICATE WHETHER YOU INTEND TO ASK A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION - a roving microphone will be available for that purpose.

Public Question time is usually towards the beginning on the meeting and the process for this item is as follows:

♦ The questions will be taken in the order in which they were received by the Council;

♦ The question and the reply will be taken as read;

♦ The person who asked the question, if present, will then be invited to ask a supplementary question, (if they wish) to clarify a point related to the reply they have been given in the written answer. The length and detail of such a question should be brief and at the discretion of the Mayor, allowing for the time available and the number of other questions which need to be dealt with;

♦ Public question time is limited strictly to 15 minutes - if all the questions and answers have not been reached at the end of that time, the other replies will be taken as read and there will be no further opportunity for asking supplementary questions at that meeting; and

♦ Questions will not be carried over to the following meeting, but it is of course in order for questioners to ask another question on the same or another topic before the next meeting.

After the public question time you are very welcome to stay for the rest of the meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Question to Cabinet Member</th>
<th>Question From</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PQ060</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Whitehead</td>
<td>Upper Norwood Joint Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ061</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Mr Buttigieg</td>
<td>Royal Mansion- London Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ062</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Mr Cooper</td>
<td>New developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ063</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Mr Collier</td>
<td>Raising funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ064</td>
<td>D Mead</td>
<td>Mr Felberg</td>
<td>Council Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Designation</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ065</td>
<td>O'Connell</td>
<td>Mr Cartwright</td>
<td>Council Tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ066</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Alcazar</td>
<td>Special needs school-Hermitage Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ067</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Pujol</td>
<td>Special needs school-Hermitage Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ068</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Richardson</td>
<td>Upper Norwood Joint Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ069</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Dr Richardson</td>
<td>Special needs school-Hermitage Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ070</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Banks</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ071</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Mr Hudson</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ072</td>
<td>Pollard</td>
<td>Ms Leighton</td>
<td>Heshima Children's centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PQ073</td>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Miss Sidney</td>
<td>Cinema for Crystal Palace</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attached replies are subject to oral amendment by the Cabinet Member or Committee Chair.
From Mr Russell Whitehead

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning

Question No.

PQ060 - 12

Following the evaluation phase of the Upper Norwood Joint Library consultation, will the Council host a public meeting in Upper Norwood to present the conclusions and recommendations, and to receive residents' views on the recommended action?

Reply

Thank you for your question and your interest in the future of the Upper Norwood Joint Library.

No decision has yet been made on whether a public meeting, of the kind you describe, will be arranged.

We are currently analysing the responses to the consultation and expect to present a report on the consultation, and proposals for the way forward, to the Cabinet meeting on 17 September 2012.
From Mr Barry Buttigieg

Councillor Jason Perry

Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Question No.

PQ061 - 12

I am writing concerning the site: 256-262 London Road, Croydon.

Your sign says “We are Croydon, on site, on our way”. I’d like to say “When will the builders actually be on site”. Until the builders arrive, we are not on our way. What news can you give me?

Reply

The site of London Road 256-272 (even) suffered greatly as a result of arson attack(s) on the night of 08 August 2011 when eight of the nine buildings that once stood on the site and formed part of an historic terrace were destroyed beyond repair.

The council in its capacity as Local Planning Authority actively responded in preparing a planning brief for the site in consultation with the owners. The brief was produced in late 2011 and following a period of consultation was adopted at the Council’s Cabinet meeting of 23 January 2012. The purpose of the planning brief is to outline the planning policy context and expectations for the site for the landowners of the site to help them understand the options for its redevelopment. It interprets national, London Plan and local planning policy that is relevant to the future redevelopment of site and can be found at the web link below:

http://www.croydon.gov.uk/contents/departments/planningandregeneration/pdf/planningbrieflondonroad

It is necessary that the respective landowners use the information contained within the planning brief to inform any proposals for development of the site that they wish to bring forward. The Local Planning Authority has also offered pre-planning application advice to the landowners free of charge, to assist and enable them to bring forward planning applications that are complete and conform to the requirements of the brief.

The timing of the development of specific proposals, submission of planning applications and commencement of building works on site are actions that are in the hands of the individual landowners. Whilst it is not possible to predict when these operations will take place, to date the council has received planning applications for 256 & 266 London Road and pre-application discussions are also underway on a number of the other plots contained within the site.
By way of additional information the Council is also working closely with the newly formed West Croydon Community Forum to define proposals for improvements to the public realm in the London Rd. These are to be funded directly from The Mayor’s Regeneration Fund. Assuming that these proposals are agreed towards the end of the summer once finalised and the funding secured, the proposals are set to be delivered during the course of 2013.
From Mr Jorn Cooper

Councillor Jason Perry

Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Question No.

PQ062 - 12

What support apart from moral support can the Council give to a developer who wishes to replace an estate in central Croydon currently generating only 80 council tax returns with that of upwards of 520 plus rateable dwellings and the benefit that accrues to the borough.

Reply

The Council offers a range of pre-application services to developers. Details of these are available from our website at http://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration/make-application/preappadvice. The service can be tailored to suit the nature of the proposed development. The aim of the service is to assist developers to produce development proposals that have the best chance of success in the formal planning process.

The Council has also developed an investor toolkit which provides a range of information about the borough at http://www.croydonbrandtoolkit.co.uk

From Mr Peter Collier

Councillor Phil Thomas

Cabinet Member for Highways & Environment

Question No.

PQ063 – 12

With various Councils I understand going into the Rag and Bone business to raise funds for good causes, is Croydon Council going down that path, or has it already, if so how much has it raised and where has the money gone.

Reply

We have no knowledge of any form of ‘rag and bone’ business being conducted by the Council.

We do contract with Veolia to collect any unwanted textiles as part of the weekly recycling kerbside collection service. However the recycling banks located throughout the borough are provided free of charge by private charities or companies.
From Mr Malcolm Felberg

Councillor Dudley Mead

Cabinet Member for Housing.

Question No.

PQ064 – 12

While I understand the Council’s Housing problem, and is trying to solve it by building suitable housing where possible, has the Council given thought to manufacturing and building Prefabs similar to the one's built after the last war, to help it solve its housing problem?

Reply

We have an established programme of building permanent decent homes of high quality and do not consider it is appropriate to provide prefabs.
From Mr John Cartwright

Councillor Steve O’Connell

Cabinet Member for Finance & Performance Management

Question No.

PQ065 – 12

The Conservative Party won the 2006 election mainly because the Labour Council put up Council tax by 27%. When will the Council reduce Council tax by the same amount? In one swell foop, or one pound at a time every year for the next three hundred years?

Reply

During the period 2003/2007 a Labour administration controlled the Council and increased the Council’s element of the Council tax by 43.47%. In addition, the Labour controlled GLA increased their element by 55.40%. This resulted in an overall Council tax increase of 46%, well above the London and England averages during this period.

In 2006 this Conservative administration inherited a precarious financial situation with balances and reserves well below the minimum required, poor financial control and poorly performing priority services in relation to key areas such as Education. The whole focus of the Conservative administration has been to return the Council to financial stability, provide value for money services to Croydon residents and ensure that Council tax increases are minimal and any additional revenue raised by increases are spent on the priorities residents have told us are most important to them. I am pleased to say that we have been successful in delivering this.

Set out below are the Council tax increases since 2007/08. This clearly shows that Conservative administration approach to financial management delivers for our residents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Croydon Element</strong></td>
<td>3.99%</td>
<td>3.99%</td>
<td>3.84%</td>
<td>1.07%</td>
<td>+12.89%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GLA Element</strong></td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>+7.30%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>(1.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Council Tax</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.3%</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.8%</strong></td>
<td><strong>+11.64%</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>(0.2%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have regained our financial health with a minimum level of general fund balance of £11.597m. The achievement and maintenance of a prudent level of general balances provides assurance against the potential risks from the external environment and the significant challenges facing the public sector. It has also enabled the Council to manage the recent upheaval in the national economy from a position of relative financial strength. Our achievements in education attainment, highways,
housing, recycling and waste speak for themselves. Revenue raised from Council tax has been invested in the key things that matter to residents.
From Mrs Mireia Alcazar

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning

Question No.

PQ66 – 12

In the Borough of Croydon no special needs school is higher than 2 storeys, why building a 3 storey for Severely Learning Disabilities, some of them with physical disabilities, when official guidance is for Special Educational Needs Schools to be only single storey for means of access and escape?

Reply

Due to the size of the site and the need to accommodate 132 pupils, the school needs to be spread over 3 floors. We could reduce this to two floors but it would mean increasing the footprint of the building which would then encroach onto the woodland to the rear of the site.

The need to have a 132 place school in the borough is determined by the level of demand for this type of provision and the ambition driving the Council’s capital strategy to educate as many young people as possible with special educational needs locally. This enables young people to be more connected to the community, reduces the need to make lengthy daily journeys outside the borough and delivers greater value for money, enabling savings to be reinvested across all schools in the borough.

The ‘official’ guidance for building secondary schools is Building Bulletin 102. This guidance does not state the SEN Schools need to be on only one storey and in fact there are dedicated pages for dealing with vertical circulation, i.e. stairs and lifts. This is covered in three different sections including the technical section on fire evacuation.

There are a number of instances across the country and in London whereby SEN Schools are more than one storey, these are listed as follows:

2 storeys

Bay Tree School, The Campus, Weston-super-Mare (SLD)
Bredinghurst School, Southwark (BESD)
Greenvale School, Lewisham (SLD)
Horizon School, Hackney (SLD)
Jack Tizard School, Hammersmith & Fulham
John Chilton School, West London Academy, Ealing (PD)
Kingsley High School, Harrow (ASD, SLD & PMLD)
Michael Tippett School, Lambeth (SLD)
Osborne School, Winchester, Hants (SLD)
Spa School, Southwark (ASD)
Treehouse School, Muswell Hill, Haringey (ASD)
Victoria School, Poole (PD)

3+ storeys

**The Bridge School** (Secondary Dept), Islington (ASD, SLD & PMLD)
[http://www.thebridgelondon.co.uk/](http://www.thebridgelondon.co.uk/)

**Whitefields School**, Waltham Forest (SLD & PMLD)
[http://www.whitefield.org.uk/page/](http://www.whitefield.org.uk/page/)

**Melland High School**, Gorton Education Village, Manchester (PMLD)
[http://www.melland.manchester.sch.uk/](http://www.melland.manchester.sch.uk/)

(this is a co-located special needs school with a mainstream secondary – whilst the special needs accommodation is generally 2 stories these pupils also access parts of the building that are up to 4 stories in height)

**Nash College**, Bromley (SLD & PMLD)
From Mrs Javier Pujol

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ67 – 12

Why building a 3 storey special needs school in Hermitage Road and destroying ancient woodland where there are other brown fields in the Borough of Croydon more suitable to cover the needs of Severely learning Difficulties with better and safer space for playgrounds?

Reply

First of all, it should be clarified that we are not destroying any woodland on the site. We are removing 16 trees in the middle or the edge of the site and not in the woodland. These trees can be replaced where necessary and they are either grade B (4) or grade C (12) trees. Grade B trees are those with moderate quality and value and grade C trees are those of low quality and value. No grade A trees are going to be removed as part of this development.

In order to preserve the woodland the building needs to be three stories. In order to reduce the height of the building, the footprint would need to be increased which would mean disturbing the woodland. This is not acceptable for a number of reasons so it is necessary to keep the building at 3 stories.

There has been investigation into other potential sites that schools could be built upon. The problem with most of the sites is that they are not big enough or unsuitable for an education site or they are not owned by the council and only in exceptional circumstances can the council agree to the purchase of these sites, as in the Croydon General Hospital Site.

The Hermitage Road site is owned by the council and is in use as an educational facility. It is therefore suitable for continued use as an educational facility for the Priory School.
From Mr Callum Richardson

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ68 – 12

I am a dyslexic 11 year old who benefits very much from Upper Norwood library. My question is why can’t you get together with Lambeth and sort out the funding of Upper Norwood library.

Reply

Thank you for your question and your interest in the future of the Upper Norwood library.

The Agreement between Croydon and Lambeth to run the Upper Norwood Library has been terminated following a fundamental breach of the Agreement by Lambeth.

This means that the Joint Committee – which ran the library – no longer exists. We are working with community representatives and with Lambeth to explore future options.

As you probably know, Croydon ran a public consultation on future of library services in Upper Norwood between 16 March and 21 May 2012.

We are currently analysing the results of the public consultation and expect to present a report on the consultation, and proposals for the way forward, to the Cabinet meeting on 17 September 2012.

Lambeth has recently run a public consultation on the future of its own library services and we understand that a report on ‘Co-operative Libraries’ will be considered by their Cabinet on 9 July 2012.

Following Lambeth’s Cabinet meeting, Croydon will seek to work with them on the future of library services for Upper Norwood.
From Dr Christina Richardson

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ69 – 12

How do the proposals for the Priory School for children with special needs on Hermitage Road fit with international agreements on inclusive education (eg. The Salamanca Statement)?

Reply

The Salamanca statement was published by UNESCO in 1994 following a world conference on special needs education. It affirmed a commitment to education for all, ‘recognising the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, young people and adults within the regular education system’. The following extract from the declaration is pertinent to this question:

‘Educational policies at all levels, from the national to the local, should stipulate that a child with a disability should attend the neighbourhood school that is the school that would be attended if the child did not have a disability. Exceptions to this rule should be considered on a case by case basis where only education in a special school or establishment can be shown to meet the needs of the individual child.’

In the UK the SEN Code of Practice 2001, to which all schools, Local Authorities and health services must have regard, requires the Local Authority to ensure that ‘the needs of children with SEN are identified and assessed quickly and matched by appropriate provision’. The Local Authority therefore maintains a continuum of provision to meet a range of needs. In Croydon, as elsewhere in the UK, this includes education in a mainstream school for all children with SEN whose parents express a preference for this with varying levels of specialist support provided and special schools educating pupils with the most complex needs. Just under half the pupils in Croydon with statements of SEN are educated in mainstream schools and this figure will increase significantly over the next 3 years with the expansion in enhanced learning provision in mainstream schools (additional 130 places).
From Mr Andrew Banks

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ70 – 12

Do you accept that the need for good public library facilities is higher in areas where there is a greater proportion of children, teenagers doing homework, people looking for work, and people on low incomes?

Reply

A key underlying principle behind the provision of a public library service is its universality and availability.

The Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964 stipulates

“It shall be the duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”

All services, including libraries need to be designed around the needs of the local population. In some places this will mean that children and families are a priority for library services in others it might be the unemployed or older people or another group.
From Mr Paul Hudson

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ71 – 12

When will it be possible for local residents to assess whether the proposed contracting out of the Croydon library service represents true value for money?

Reply

The contract for the running of Croydon Library Service is expected to be let in November 2012 with the service starting in April 2013.

The library service specification ensures that the new service will deliver the current range of services and has built in the requirement for service improvement over the lifetime of the contract. The contract will deliver savings and reduce the cost of running the library service and by so doing will demonstrate value for money.
From Ms Sophie Leighton

Councillor Tim Pollard

Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Learning.

Question No.

PQ72 – 12

Why are you closing Heshima Children's centre when it is much loved, always full, provides a vital service for learning - and health thanks to the baby clinic - without which hundreds of parents will have to travel elsewhere for baby clinic and sorely miss the playgroup. Can't you work with Barnados and save it?

Reply

Children’s Centre Services in Croydon are currently going through a re-design process that will ensure that across the borough sustainable provision is in place to support families with children under 5. This process has been driven by the changes to the range of services that children’s centres are required to provide nationally and also by a local reduction in funding of £ 1.1 million pounds. Despite this reduction, as a Borough we are still investing £ 3.5 million pounds in delivering these services.

As part of the re-design process a range of delivery models were considered across the borough through the seven collaborations, formed from twenty six centres. The fact that all providers but one have felt able to continue to work with us on this challenging agenda is a tribute to the commitment to improving outcomes for local children and their families.

Whilst recognising the difficult financial situation facing local authorities across the country, and that service delivery may need to be changed, Barnardo’s felt unable to join the collaboration on the funding available. The decision to close the Upper Norwood Children’s Centre was made by Barnardo’s based on these changes as well as a loss of funding from other sources.

As a Council we appreciate that the centre closing will be a loss to the community. We are confident that children’s centre services will still be available to those seeking to access them, through local access points. The new service delivery is currently being agreed through an extended offer led by South Norwood Hill Children’s Centre and we hope to be in a position to share these more widely in the coming months.
From Miss Annabel Sidney

Councillor Jason Perry

Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration & Transport

Question No.

PQ73 – 12

Residents and traders want Crystal Palace to be a thriving and sustainable place with a mix of planning uses which meet our needs. Does Croydon support a “Cinema for Crystal Palace” as an ideal inclusive D2 Entertainment use to drive forward the social, cultural and economic regeneration of the area?

Reply

The principle of an appropriate scale cinema in Crystal Palace District Centre is supported by the Council’s planning policy. It would be an excellent addition to the area’s facilities and is a use that accords with the Council’s Core Strategy vision for Crystal Palace – “The vibrant historic centre, sitting at the apex of four London boroughs, will offer a mixture of homes, community, cultural and leisure facilities; a range of retailing including many independent shops; an employment hub with a thriving arts and creative scene centred on a new Enterprise Centre. The good transport links, a unique creative atmosphere, its heritage and its links to Crystal Palace Park, will continue to attract many visitors”.

Matters of detail regarding any potential proposal for a cinema in Crystal Palace District Centre will be addressed as part of the planning application process.