

**Responses to comments and enquiries made at the
North Chingford Community Council on
Monday 6th July 2009**



Query 1:

J Wood (Dale View Avenue) raised his concerns regarding the Chingford Assembly Hall car park which he claimed to be always empty because the hall was too expensive for groups to hire.

He also mentioned his displeasure on hearing about the closure of the public house in Hatch Lane.

Finally, he asked information regarding the 20 mph area in Highams Park. He wanted to know if speed bumps would be introduced and how long would it take to set up.

Response: Eamonn O'Machail, Head of Arts and Events

The Chingford Assembly Hall is not staffed at all times and thus the car park could not be opened and closed for the general public use.

Response: David King, Licensing Manager

I can confirm that the premises licence (Alcohol, Entertainment etc) in respect of the Prince of Wales, Hatch Lane E4, was surrendered by the Licence holder on 26th November 2008. This closure was not enforced by either the Police or the Council it was the personal choice of the licence holder.

Response: Alan Campbell Manager Traffic & Project Development clarified that the 20mph zone would be a temporary measure for work to be carried out and it would last 18 months.

Query 2:

M Carvell (Endlebury Road) asked how much it would cost to introduce more street cleaners.

KWL suggested that a representative of the Enforcement Unit should come to the meeting to give a presentation.

Response: Andy Lyons, Environment Manager

The Street Cleaning Contract is based on a performance style specification. This means that the specification does not define required methods of work or necessary resources. These would be described as inputs. Instead, our specification describes the standards that are required. This is an output based approach.

Whilst there is a minimum sweeping frequency that the contractor is required to provide for each road, which varies from road to road according to the intensity of use, the specification requires that the contractor achieves an overall standard that equates to "predominantly free of litter and detritus". In most cases, the contractor uses a mix of mechanical and manual activities in order to

achieve the standard.

Where we are to ask the contractor to provide us with prices for additional cleaning, it would generally be associated with increased minimum sweeping frequencies and improved response times rather than based on additional numbers of cleaners.

The contract cost is £3.5 million per year for street cleansing and fly-tip collections.

An officer will be available to take street cleaning questions at the next meeting.

Query 3:

J Lackmacker (Kings Head Hill) raised concerns regarding the new housing development. He asked if the plans have changed since he has not heard anything about it.

Cllr Davis replied that there was not a change of policy – the Council had failed to deliver letters to residents. However, he assured residents that the development was still at a speculative stage and he was looking into the issue.

Response: Fred Doody, Planning Officer - Development Management Environment and Regeneration

Relating to 154 - 160 Kings Head Hill (2009/0701). The application is on the agenda for consideration by the Planning Committee meeting on 3 November 2009. Residents in the area were consulted about the application, which was also advertised in the Waltham Forest Magazine and by means of site notices. All those people who have written/emailed about the application will be informed of its progress, including the date of Planning Committee.

Query 4:

T Calver asked how local schools were coping with the influx of new people taking up residence in the area. He also asked why so many supply teachers were used. Finally, he asked what the figures were of school leavers unable to read and write.

M Bishop replied that the main mechanism was to monitor planning applications for housing development and make sure that surrounding schools were capable to absorb the influx of residents moving in the area. The Team would also work closely with schools' admission sections. She assured that the Team has been very accurate so far. In reference to the figures of school leavers unable to read and write, she would have to find out the answer.

Further response: Bill Lyttle, Chief Adviser - VT Group Supply Teachers

We are unable to comment on this question as we are unsure which school/s are being identified as having employed a high level of supply teachers and feel that this would need to be levelled to the head teacher of each school itself to answer.

School Leavers unable to read or write

The Borough has a high one GCSE A*-G pass rate and a very low rate of school leavers not in education or employment (NEET) which would indicate that most school leavers are able to read and write. It is our understanding that CLASS hold adult literacy rates.

Query 5:

R Tonkin (Dale View Avenue) raised concerns regarding the repairing works on Endlebury Road.

Response: Sarath Ranasinghe, Highways Maintenance Manager

Road repairs and resurfacing work in Endlebury Road were completed during the last two weeks of July 09.

Query 6:

A **resident** asked if Gunners Road was included in the scheduled works as that for Endlebury Road.

Cllr Davis replied that Gunners Road was not in the same planning schedule.

Response: Sarath Ranasinghe, Highways Maintenance Manager

Gunners Grove was not included in the scheduled works for Endlebury Road.

Gunners Grove will be inspected routinely by a Council's Highway Supervisor and repairs will be carried out if required to keep it in a safe condition.

Query 7:

T Calver pointed out that WF Magazine and website stated that millions of pounds have been given to secondary school in the Borough. He wanted to know to how much time teachers spent with pupils whose English was not their first language to the detriment of others. He also asked information regarding the phone mast on Chingford Foundation School.

M Bishop replied that the Council would have limited choice on how to spend the funds received from the Government if these were earmarked for specific projects.

Finally, she asked the residents to submit his final question to Chingford Foundation School.

**Further response: Response: Bill Lyttle, Chief Adviser, VT Group
WF Magazine Article**

It is unclear which article of WF Magazine the query is referring to. It may be that the questioner is referring to funding to schools under the Building Schools for the Future initiative to make improvements to the infra-structure, which would need to be directed specifically to this purpose as a condition of the funding. Much funding directed to schools from central government is for a specific purpose only and cannot be used in other ways.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL)

All schools have staff trained to support pupils for whom English is an additional language. Good EAL teaching is good teaching and therefore will not be to the detriment of other pupils. The time spent on children with EAL would vary from school to school, as appropriate for the number of pupils in the school needing support.

Query 8:

R Zalicks (Manor Farm Drive) informed residents that coffee mornings were hosted at the Chingford Assembly Hall and were organised by a local charitable group. However, now that the hire charge was too high the coffee mornings have stopped. She suggested introducing a “charity rate” so that the organisation would be able to afford reinstating coffee mornings.

D Sinclair agreed that the price of the Chingford Assembly Hall should be reduced. She urged resident to make their voices heard by the Council.

Response: Clive Morton, Head of Cultural Services

The Halls service has historically been required to return a balanced budget but in the past struggled to achieve this.

The Halls Service, then under the management of Corporate Services and with Cabinet approval, implemented increased charges for hall hire and the removal of the concessionary B rate for local charity and community use.

Subsequently the management of the Halls Service passed to Culture and Leisure Services and since October 2007 we have been reviewing the service performance and the pricing policy.

Cabinet approval was subsequently obtained for the introduction of an ‘application for reduction’ scheme focused on community arts use. The introduction of reduced rates for community arts purposes in 2008/09 has assisted community arts groups in hiring both Chingford and Walthamstow Halls and has seen a significant return to use of Chingford Assembly Hall.

In May 2009 Cabinet considered a further report on Halls pricing and gave approval for officers to introduce further flexibility on pricing required to maximise income and usage of the venues. The new pricing structure will offer further reductions for multiple bookings for off peak use.

Officers have considered a return to full concessionary price structure for charity and community groups. However this option would risk the income improvements already achieved. In particular it is essential if the Halls budget is to be balanced that the whole complex is available for hire on the peak use days

of Saturday and Sunday.

Should an organisation wish to establish an off peak coffee morning activity at CAH, officers would be happy to discuss this under the new changes to the reduced price multiple booking scheme.

Query 9:

A **resident** said to have reported tree problems on Buxton Road but no action has been taken, therefore there was clutter on the pavement. He also asked information regarding the replanting on Station Road.

Response: Colin Lawrence, Arboriculture Manager - Greenspace

I have been looking for the original complaint but without success. More information is needed to find out what the resident is concerned about.

We have two replacement trees to be replaced in Station Road on our list. If there are any more replacement trees needed I will add them to our list and replace this coming planting season if funds allow.

Query 10:

A **resident** asked what was the cost of running the Chingford Assembly Hall when was not in use and what was the profit the Hall made when hiring.

Response: Clive Morton, Head of Cultural Services

As there are a wide range of booking options and costs, and charges differ for different events it is not possible to provide a standard 'profit' figure for each event held in the hall. The Council aims to balance its halls budget through a combination of cost controls and increased lettings. In 2008/9 the Halls budget (for both Walthamstow and Chingford) was £12,000 overspent against the planned spend. Whilst this is a positive improvement over previous years there is still some distance to go in moving the halls towards a "breakeven" position.

The pricing of Chingford Assembly Hall means that between £640 and £1600 is secured for an 8 hour booking. The attribution of costs across the two venues means that we are unable to provide a useful indication of costs when the halls are "not in use".