

Written questions - Council 11 September 2008

1. From Councillor Newbold to the Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services

In each of the last ten years:

- a) How many instances of fly tipping have there been reported and what were the costs per incident?
- b) How does this compare with similar urban authorities?
- c) How many staff are dedicated to combating flytipping?
- d) How many enforcement actions have been taken?
- e) How many successful prosecutions resulted?
- f) What proportion of the above involved the use of CCTV surveillance, currently included as part of the Environmental Services budget?
- g) How much CCTV surveillance work did Environmental Services undertake?

And,

- h) Over the same period, how many tickets have been issued for littering?
- i) How does this compare with similar urban authorities?

Answer from Councillor Rosenstiel, Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services

In each of the last ten years:

The data for fly tipping is available from 2004.

Question a: How many instances of fly tipping have there been reported and what were the costs per incident?

- The incidents recorded are as follows:

Financial Year	Number of incidents	Average cost of collection.
2004-05	997	N/a
2005-06	1321	£ 9.67
2006-07	1369	£ 6.69
2007-08	1954	£ 10.34
2008-09	802 (to July 2008)	£ 8.58

- The average cost reflect the changing nature of items fly tipped

Question b: How does this compare with similar urban authorities?

- Comparison with similar authorities show that the average number of incidents in the period 2004 to date is 1627 per year and this compares with Cambridge City at 1289 per year for the same period.

- The Audit Commission shows that nationally Cambridge is in the top quartile for the percentage of land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly tipping are visible, this is currently 1% with the mean value being 2.46%.
- The service outcome is based upon targets set within the Street Services Service Plan. This is targeted at removal of fly tip within one day to deter anti social behaviour. Current performance is within target at less than one day per incident.

Question c: How many staff are dedicated to combating fly tipping?

- There are no dedicated staff involved with combating fly tipping but our estimate of the involvement of staff is expressed as full time equivalent, as follows: -
 - 0.2 City Services Enforcement Officer.
 - 1.0 Streetscene Staff
 - 0.3 City Ranger
 - 0.5 Environmental Health Staff

Question d: How many enforcement actions have been taken?

Financial Year	Number Enforcement Actions
2004-05	221
2005-06	372
2006-07	1524
2007-08	1584
2008-09	485 (to July 2008)
Note: The number of enforcement actions exceeds the number of incidents in any year as more than one offender may be identified per fly tip.	

Question e: How many successful prosecutions resulted?

- One in 2007-08

Question f: What proportion of the above involved the use of CCTV surveillance, currently included as part of the Environmental Services budget?

- The Public Realm Enforcement Team has carried out three covert surveillance operations.

Question g: How much CCTV surveillance work did Environmental Services undertake?

- The Public Realm Enforcement Team at City Services has made three RIPA requests to carry out covert surveillance.

Question h: Over the same period, how many tickets have been issued for littering?

- 45 have been issued for littering since November 2006 when Council introduced the use of Fixed Penalty Notices.

Question i: How does this compare with similar urban authorities?

- The policy within the City Council has been to educate and then enforce via Fixed Penalty Notices, but other authorities follow different policies, which makes a direct comparison difficult.

2. From Councillor Newbold to Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

In each of the last ten years:

- How many instances of enforcement action have been taken by the Planning Department?
- How does this compare with similar authorities?
- What proportion of the enforcement actions were successful?
- How many staff are engaged in planning enforcement?
- What are the service costs, including the cost of the service per incident investigated?

Answer from Councillor Reid, Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

- Since 1 April 2000, the total number of notices issued by Cambridge City Council was 116.
- A comparison has been made between eleven similar authorities that included Oxford, Bath, Chester, Plymouth, Brighton, Lincoln, Norwich and Ipswich.

From DEFRA statistics for the years from 2000 to 2008, from those eleven authorities, Cambridge City Council was the seventh highest to take formal enforcement action.

During the period 2000 to 2008, the following notices were issued:

<u>Total s (12 Authorities):</u>		<u>Cambridge City Council:</u>	
1187	Enforcement Notices	28	Enforcement Notices
41	Stop Notices	1	Stop Notice
33	Temporary Stop Notices	1	Temporary Stop Notice
189	Breach of Condition Notices		32 Breach of Condition Notices
1021	Planning Contravention Notices	54	Planning Contravention Notices
9	Injunctions	0	Injunctions

(Important to bear in mind that number of formal notices issued is not necessarily a good measure of performance – prevention/resolution is more important)

- Only one enforcement notice was dismissed on appeal. Steps required to comply with all other notices were complied with.
- During the past 12 months only two officers were engaged in planning enforcement including S106 Obligation processing and monitoring. A recent

appointment of a Planning Obligations Monitoring and Implementation Officer has been made.

Restructuring of the Planning Investigation Service now has in post a Planning Investigations and Obligations Manager, a Senior Planning Investigation Officer, a Planning Obligations Monitoring and Implementation Officer with the vacant post of Planning Investigation Officer currently being advertised.

- e) The gross cost (including all corporate overheads and excluding any contribution from dc fee income) of the enforcement service in 2007/08 was £151,152. The average gross cost per enquiry about an alleged incident of breach of planning control for that year was £752.

(Important to note that no comparative information available, but that any comparative information would need to be on a like for like basis. Also cost per incident is likely to be higher for those authorities with higher number of incidents, which is not necessarily a good measure for the success of an enforcement service)

*Note – an independent review of the enforcement service was carried out earlier this year by consultants. The results of this are currently being evaluated, with a view to a report to Planning Committee in the autumn on their recommendations.

3. From Councillor Herbert to Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

How much housing and planning delivery grant will be received by the Council for 2008/09, what will it be spent on, and how does this income compare to 2007/08?

Answer from Councillor Reid, Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

The total grant in 2007/08 was £453,346 - allocated revenue £340,010 (75%) capital £113,336 (25%). The total provisional grant for 2008/09 is £1,003,721 - allocated revenue £672,493 (67%) capital £331,228 (33%). The date of grant payment is uncertain but is expected before Christmas once the Government have dealt with queries raised by authorities from across the Country. The attached document details agreed spending plans. The two main spends planned for this year are as detailed in the Medium Term Strategy on pages 110 and 111. From revenue we plan to meet the cost of growth posts for one year from the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG) at a cost of £216,400. Existing revenue commitments total £482,820. Subject to small scale spends during the remainder of the year a balance of about £117,000 should be carried forward into 2009/10.

From capital we plan to make a contribution to the cost of the corporate document management (DIP and EDRMS) project of £215,160.

I will be examining proposals for further capital spends in the coming months as part of the budget and service planning process. Subject to the levels of future grant in coming years we can anticipate an increasing level of capital grant available to spend in the next three years.

Total grant 2007/08 £453,346 - allocated revenue £340,010 (75%) capital £113,336 (25%)

Total provisional grant 2008/09 £1,003,721 - allocated revenue £672,493 (67%) capital £331,228 (33%)

Housing and Planning Delivery (HPDG) - Revenue

	2005/06			2008/09	Funding			
	Final							
	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	PDG	Horizons	Sust/City	Urban Design
Existing commitments								
Policy Staff	35,000	21,587	(13,413)	19,320	100%			
Landscape Architect	0	15,000	15,000	16,940	50%			50%
DC Routine	30,000	31,500	1,500	34,850	100%			
Urban Designers x 2	60,000	56,948	(3,052)	77,000	100%			
Project Manager	40,000	1,182	(38,818)	37,580	100%			
Sustainable Construction Coordinator	17,500	3,492	(14,008)	20,000	50%		50%	
DC Planner x 2	0	3,151	3,151	44,730	50%	50%		
Policy Planner	0	0	0	13,040	50%	50%		
Admin Support	0	0	0	12,620	50%	50%		
Planning Obligation Administrative Support				20,680	100%			
DC Contract	35,000	29,250	(5,750)	35,000	100%			
Tomorrow's Planner' post - salary (see D Roberts e-mail)				21,240	100%			
Total Staff Costs				353,000				
Training	13,190	7,722	(5,468)	13,000				
Professional Training - Policy & Projects				10,000				
Staff Recruitment Costs	0	3,585	3,585	5,000				
Other IT Supplies	25,000	8,225	(16,775)	11,820				
Consultants/professional fees	65,000	53,212	(11,788)	90,000				
Total Existing Commitments	320,690	234,854	(85,836)	482,820				
Approved as part of the 2008/09 Budget Process								
Growth Web Site				15,000				
GIS Partnership information/system development				19,400				
Member Training				15,000				

Proposed Bid*

Fund growth posts for one year from HPDG revenue grant

216,400

All Commitments

Note: Bal b/f from 2007/08 used to supplement
748,620 2008/09 revenue allocation

* as per MTS 2008/09 - 2012/13 Table 19 page 110

Housing and Planning Delivery (HPDG) - Capital**2005/06****2008/09****Existing commitments**

GIS Phase 1

7,528

GIS Phase 2

38,070

Total Existing Commitments**45,598****Approved as part of the 2008/09 Budget Process**

Time Recording System upgrade

10,000

Proposed Bid*

Contribution to Corporate Document Management *DIP & EDRMS) project

215,160

All Commitments**270,758**

* as per MTS 2008/09 - 2012/13 Table 19 page 110

4. From Councillor Herbert to Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation

- a) What were the agreed noise limit levels for the Pink Festival, what were the peak noise recordings and when did they occur?
- b) Given that one of the main times local Coleridge ward residents tried to ring the Council (and Councillors) was between 5pm and 7pm, what are the council's arrangements for dealing with calls at that time on a Saturday?
- c) While recognising the value of the festival, what is planned to either review the location or limit the problems to neighbours next year from
- noise?
 - and
 - anti-social parking that blocked Walpole Road and caused serious disruption to the No 2 bus service?
- problems far worse than those exact same residents experienced a month earlier with the Folk Festival.

Answer from Councillor Smith, Executive Councillor for Arts & Recreation

a) The conditions for events held at Cherry Hinton Hall are set out in the Licence for the premises. The levels set out to be complied with are 55 decibels on the A weighted scale over any 15 minute period measured as an Leq (that is the single equivalent noise level which can be regarded in simple terms as a kind of average). The maximum level that should not be exceeded is 60 decibels. Environmental Services have been supplied with some noise monitoring data from the event. The levels recorded to demonstrate compliance by the organisers, do not set out the parameters measured that is as either 15 minute Leq or maximum level or indeed any other parameter. It is therefore not possible to say with any confidence whether the event complied with its licence conditions or not at this stage. Officers are working to try and establish the validity of the levels recorded. A copy of the full licence is attached.

b) Environmental Services operates an out of hours noise service which is provided 365 days per year between 7pm and 7am. Additionally on non working days a service is provided between 9 am and 5pm. There are therefore 4 hours a day when a service is not provided. At these times it is normal practice for City Services staff to take the call and contact the duty officer once they are on duty. In an absolute emergency situation City Services would contact an ES manager at home. City Services are also able to direct members of the public to event organisers' complaint phone lines when they are provided to them. This method of contact is supported as it gives direct feedback to organisers so that they can take immediate action to resolve issues direct and save time.

For the event, a mobile telephone number was provided to City Services Helpdesk by the organisers and it was subsequently found that the telephone number had a digit missing. The organiser has been advised of this and methods of ensuring this error does not take place in the future have been discussed.

c) Officers from Environmental Services and Community Services have met to discuss issues raised by the event this year and will work together to ensure as far as practical

the event is managed and controlled so that the licence conditions are fully met next year and local residents not subjected to unreasonable disturbance.

d) County Council Officers have advised the Safety Advisory Group at the debrief of the event that the vehicle in question which caused an obstruction had no involvement with the Festival and was an individual visiting in the area.

5. From Councillor Hipkin to Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

What progress has been made to date on the achievement of 'growth agenda' housing targets for the city? Is the Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Growth confident that those targets will be achieved by 2021?

Answer from Councillor Reid, Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) growth targets for the City are for 19,000 new dwellings to be provided between 2001 and 2021. Members will recall that the City Council strenuously opposed the increase in the growth targets from those originally proposed in the draft RSS (14,700) to the 19,000 target because the Council did not think they were deliverable.

As to progress, 3,550 dwellings were built in Cambridge to 2007/2008 (an annual rate 507 dwellings) leaving 15,450 to be built to 2021 which would require a major increase in build rates to 1,103 pa. Build rates did indeed increase rapidly throughout this decade but are now falling back (County / EERA figures 715 in 05/06, 673 in 06/07 and 577 in 07/08, note 07/08 figure not yet confirmed). The impact of the credit crunch on the financial and building sectors has been severe and rapid and there is also a lack of growth in the economy generally. The extent and length of this impact on the local growth agenda cannot be estimated; it is in effect out of our control.

Where we do have control however we are making significant progress. Quality schemes are being given planning permission subject to s106 for the urban extensions around the City and public consultation on a Masterplan for Cambridge East is planned by Marshall for later this year.