

QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES Councillor Alisa Flemming		
CQ087-17	Bird, M	Cotelands Nursery
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES, REGENERATION AND PLANNING Councillor Alison Butler		
PQ027-17	Carol Munns	New School Builds
CABINET MEMBER FINANCE AND TREASURY Councillor Alison Butler		
CQ095-17	Hale, L	Legal Services

CQ087-17 from Councillor Margaret Bird

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Since this administration was elected in 2014 no funding for Cotelands Nursery has been paid by this Council to fund the Nursery.

Cotelands Nursery, part of Saffron Valley Collegiate , a Council maintained PRU, sole purpose is too look after the babies and toddlers age 6 weeks to 3 yrs of teenage Mums so they can continue their Education.

There are currently 20 babies and toddlers at Cotelands.
Without funding the unit will not be sustainable beyond December. Girls will not be able to finish the courses they are enrolled on or finish their statutory education.

It is a disgrace they are being dumped.

Why are these teenage girls being set up to fail? They are already paying the price for a single mistake.

Reply

Until 2014 the LA authority received a grant from Care to Learn which was passed directly to Cotelands this was continued in 2015 through payment from DSG. This funding was not continued in 2016, however a one off amount of £60,000 was provided to support transition into a financially sustainable model.

The offer that is currently delivered in the nursery is for children from birth up to their 3rd birthday. Due to the adult to child ratio that is required within this age group, staffing levels are high and therefore a costly model to sustain. There is no funding to support children under 2 to access childcare other than a parent's entitlement to care to learn or tax credits. Two year old funding would be paid in respect of families who meet the eligibility criteria, payable in the term after the child's 2nd birthday.

The nursery is co-located with Cotelands PRU and it is registered separately under the Early Years Register and is not maintained by the Local Authority. We are aware that the Nursery, in common with all other Early Years providers in Croydon, including our own maintained nurseries, is finding it difficult to cope financially Under the new guidance for early years funding the LA is restricted to a maximum of 7% of the total budget allocated for central spend and in 2018 this is reduced to 5% which in 2019. Unfortunately all we are able to do, through the singe funding formula, is to passport the money received from central government to our early years providers.

We have worked with the leadership team at Cotelands, particularly over the last year, to better understand the various funding changes that have impacted on the sustainability of their provision and have encouraged them to pursue options, outside of DSG funding, in order to bridge their funding gap. We have implemented a shared

cost arrangement in respect of the specialist family support worker who now works both with Cotelands and more widely across Best Start. We have also worked with the leadership at the nursery to determine if the work in supporting the families is sufficient in individual cases to claim outcome payments under the Troubled Families criteria. The work to date has yielded 26 PBR claims in respect of which a one off incentive payment of £ 10,400 to Cotelands will be made.

There are real challenges in Croydon around Early Years funding received from the Department for Education through Early Years DSG. This disparity in the level of funding received by Croydon, when compared with neighbouring Boroughs, is significant. I welcome support from all members in highlighting this disparity. We have been working with our early years providers to examine ways of operating in the most cost efficient way. We have also held a number of consultation events over the last six months to discuss the challenges around the early years single funding formula and the delivery of the new 30 hrs early education offer. As part of exploring the sustainability of the nursery, the leadership team may need to consider options in respect of extending the age range of children in their care and the opportunities that the new funding offers may present.

From Carol Munns

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning

Question No. PQ027-17

I wish to raise the issue as to why Croydon Council are insisting on allowing new schools, particularly Primary Schools, to be built by the Harris Group in some of the most polluted areas in Croydon? What benefit health wise is this to the children?

Reply

Thank you for your question about new schools in Croydon. Croydon Council continues to undertake an ambitious school building programme delivering new school places both at existing and new schools. These new school places have been built to ensure every child in the borough has access to a local school place. Sites for new school places are identified in areas of projected demand. Once a site is identified and a design agreed, planning permission must be agreed before building can commence. As part of the planning process tests, including air quality monitoring, must be undertaken.

Harris Academy Primary Purley Way opened in September 2016, with the permanent building being ready for occupation from September 2017.

Whilst the air quality readings are within acceptable limits for pollutants, the design and layout of the school site has been very carefully planned and built to ensure minimal exposure to poor air quality from Purley Way.

The school building frontage has been set back from Purley Way with the remainder of the school building extending further away from Purley Way. The internal layout of the school ensures that the school hall and offices are located within the front proportion of the building on ground and first floor. These are areas where pupils would spend a limited amount of time during the school day.

Furthermore, to ensure an acceptable air quality environment within the hall and offices these spaces are mechanically ventilated. All teaching spaces are located within the rear proportion of the site and are therefore separated from the Purley Way. In addition, the outdoor learning and play space is located at to the rear of the building at the eastern end of the site and is therefore well away from the influence of the road.

CQ095-17 from Councillor Lynne Hale

Councillor Simon Hall

Please advise the costs to the Council of the following legal services on an annual basis from April 2013 to date:

- Debt recovery
- Prosecutions
- Routine property advice
- Standard conveyancing;
- Landlord and tenant work
- Right to buy
- Fixed Penalty Notices
- Non-school attendance prosecutions
- Education welfare
- SEN litigation
- Housing – in house and out-sourced
- Standard contracts and routine commercial – in house and out sourced
- Employment advice
- Employment litigation
- Academies

Reply

Our records only extend back to 3 years in the way it is categorised in your request, so we not able to supply information for years 13/14, please find attached information for years 14/15, 15/16 and 16/17.

Work area

	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Outsourced	Internal	Outsourced	Internal	Outsourced	Internal
Debt recovery	£ 39,262.38		£ 26,129.20		£ 11,673.00	
Prosecutions including Fixed Penalty Notices	£ 69,610.00		£ 130,984.00		£ 128,130.00	
Routine property advice, standard conveyancing, Landlord and Tenant work	£ 71,195.46		£ 81,104.34		£ 57,931.40	£ 58,139.00
Right to buy	£ 47,618.00		£ 56,240.00		£ 71,149.00	
Education welfare/Non-school attendance prosecutions		£11,855.90		£ 11,172.50		£ 9,479.00
SEN litigation	£ 56,740.00		£ 55,240.00	£ 6,710.50		£ 59,654.00
Housing – in house and out-sourced	£ 168,633.50	£ 482,061.00	£ 116,258.50	£ 369,144.00	£ 43,252.00	£ 410,475.00
Standard contracts and routine commercial – in house and out sourced	£ 864,089.72		£ 767,988.59		£ 645,517.75	
Employment advice & Litigation*	£ 238,247.90		£ 129,644.20		£ 148,301.34	
Academies	£ 26,308.50		£ 27,559.00		£ 22,632.00	