

# COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2012

## PUBLIC QUESTIONS

**I. Question from Paul Webbewood, Lee, to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council.**

I understand that the Council purchased four tickets for the Olympic Games Opening Ceremony on 27th July at a cost of £150 each.

[http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/tickets\\_for\\_2012\\_olympics\\_12#incoming-230109](http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/tickets_for_2012_olympics_12#incoming-230109)

Who used these tickets?

**Reply -**

I can confirm that the Council did purchase 4 tickets for the Opening Ceremony and that these were purchased by Royal Borough Residents via the resident's ballot.

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2. **Question from Paul Webbewood, Lee to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council (in the absence of Councillor Peter Kotz, Cabinet Member for Cultural and Creative Industries)**

The Bob Hope exhibition which is currently having a three month run at the Borough Heritage Centre has received good reviews. However it seems a pity that the exhibition is being held in Woolwich and not in Bob Hope's birthplace of Eltham. Will Councillor Kotz act urgently to see whether the exhibition, or at least part of it, can have a short run in Eltham, either before or after the scheduled closing date of 28th October.

### **Reply -**

I thank Mr Webbewood for his question. I very much agree. Our original intention had been to host the exhibition in Eltham and we suggested several venues to the organisers.

However, having investigated these, it was the wish of the representatives from the Bob Hope Theatre who provide the ongoing link with the Hope family and the World Golf Hall of Fame (which owns the exhibition) that the Council's Heritage Centre be used.

The opening of the exhibition was attended by Bob's daughter, Linda Hope who was thrilled by the venue and that the first exhibition outside the USA should be in the borough in which her father was born.

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3. **Question from Malcolm Reid, Greenwich, to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council (in the absence of Councillor Peter Kotz, Cabinet Member for Cultural and Creative Industries)**

As a resident in the Peninsula Ward, I am looking forward to the events in the borough surrounding the Olympics. I was disappointed to learn that yet another event has been cancelled from the Peninsula Festival. Will council be seeking a rebate/refund for the £50,000 funding of the Peninsula Festival?

### Reply -

I thank Mr Reid for his question. I am sorry to hear of your disappointment that the Peninsula Festival did not proceed as planned and do hope you were able to enjoy some of the other events which the Royal Borough provided during the Olympic Games in the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich, General Gordon Square in Woolwich and the Tudor Barn in Eltham.

Peninsula Festivals was a private operation which was granted licensing permission to operate a festival site on Greenwich Peninsula during the Games.

The Council agreed to make a contribution of £50k to the operators to provide a Big Screen for free community access. Only £40k of this funding was released.

In the event, the operator operated the live site for an initial few days and experienced very low attendance. They decided to close the site with the exception of two large events which were successfully staged on 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

The Peninsula festival operators were unable to build a programme and sufficient footfall to sustain their business plan for the live site and were unable to continue to offer this.

When this became clear, the Council acted immediately to ensure that the Council received value for its contribution. We negotiated with their Big Screen contractor to provide a Big Screen at Well Hall Pleasance in Eltham in conjunction with the Tudor Barn. This venue was chosen as there were Big

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Screen Live Sites operating in Greenwich at the Old Royal Naval College and in General Gordon Square in Woolwich.

The screen enabled us to provide a live site for local residents in the south of the borough.

The Peninsula festival organisers had hoped that the staging of the 2 successful events would have avoided the organisation going into administration. However, this turned out not to be the case and in late August the company was placed in administration.

I am therefore pleased that the action the Council took to secure a Big Screen in Eltham was timely and effective in ensuring the Council received full value for its initial contribution.

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**4. Question from Malcolm Reid, Greenwich, to Councillor Denise Hyland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills**

I live extremely close to Greenwich Park. On receipt of my four visitor passes, I and other residents are concerned that these passes appear to be valid in all CPZ's. Residents in the Greenwich West CPZ have similar concerns. Can the Cabinet Member please clarify the current situation?

**Reply -**

I thank Mr Reid for his question.

It is regretted that LOCOG and their contractor made an error in the initial printing of the residents parking vouchers needed as part of the agreed plans to provide protection to those areas of the borough near to our 3 Olympic venues from being negatively affected by potential Olympic spectator parking.

As soon as this error was identified an action plan was established with LOCOG to correct, reprint and reprovide the correct permits.

I am pleased to report that no issues of unnecessary or unwelcome parking were found during the Games period, proving that the deterrent effect expected from the arrangements was successful, so that we could all focus on enjoying and benefiting from the wonderful spectacle that was the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2012.

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**5. Question from Toni Hale, to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council**

When will all road signs in the borough be changed from the standard 'Borough of Greenwich' to the 'Royal Borough of Greenwich'?

**Reply -**

I thank Ms Hale for her question.

There are in excess of 6,000 nameplates in the Borough and generally they are fairly robust. We have thus far sought to balance ensuring some recognition of our Royal status in high areas of footfall such as Town Centres with managing the cost of a wholesale replacement.

The plan has always been to replace name plates with the Royal Borough Brand as part of the renewal process rather than incur high initial costs but if there is a wish by local residents in a particular area we would look to accelerate the programme.

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**6. Question from Stewart Christie, Plumstead, to Councillor Denise Hyland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills**

Between December 2010 and May 2012 the Royal Borough of Greenwich made the following payments to Berkeley Homes, totalling over £27.25m:-

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Payment Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	21/12/2010	1656149.58
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	12/01/2011	2895.44
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	17/01/2011	1149323.90
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	26/01/2011	543304.80
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	03/03/2011	582.03
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	16/03/2011	1244904.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	29/03/2011	1913316.00
BERKELEY HOMES (CENTRAL LONDON) LTD	14/04/2011	600.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	25/05/2011	914304.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	27/05/2011	664542.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	27/05/2011	939999.60
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	12/07/2011	1541132.40
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	23/08/2011	1228236.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	30/09/2011	24000.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	17/10/2011	1770775.20
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	17/10/2011	1210663.20
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	28/10/2011	16851.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	08/11/2011	24000.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	30/11/2011	1137472.80
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	15/12/2011	6800.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	19/01/2012	1621628.40
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	27/01/2012	1965255.60
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	02/02/2012	10000.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	09/02/2012	1835468.40
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	29/02/2012	1513502.40
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	27/03/2012	1316622.00
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	10/05/2012	1095285.60
BERKELEY HOMES (EAST THAMES) LTD	28/05/2012	1904091.60
		<b>27251705.95</b>

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While Berkeley is an important strategic partner for the Council's regeneration projects it is also a private company making profits of £214.8m in the last financial year.

Could the Council confirm what these payments were for and the budgets they were from, and also the revenues received from Berkeley in the same period?

### Reply -

I thank Mr Christie for his question.

The Council made 28 transactions to Berkeley Homes.

Of the 28 payments listed, 20 relate to the Council's role in the administration of Government Funding for the Kidbrooke Village development. The Government Grant is passed via the GLA to fund major infrastructure on the site such as roads and utilities. The Council acts in an 'accountable body' role and verifies the work undertaken before releasing the grant.

The remaining 8 payments totalling £85,728.47p, relate to:

- Three payments totalling £58,000 - purchase of car parking spaces from Berkeley at Warren Lane. Costs are recouped from staff using the car park.
- £16,851 relates to part of the Council's contribution towards enabling the building of the Crossrail station box under construction at Woolwich, using S106 contributions.
- £6,800 is a refund paid to Berkeley Homes in regard to street works required to progress the redevelopment of Kidbrooke. £8,000 was deposited by Berkeley Homes and only £1,200 was required resulting in a refund of £6,800.



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- £2,895.44 relates to the development of the Council's Business Case for a Crossrail Station. Funds were used to produce a study which examined the capacity for 10 car trains to use the station at Woolwich.
- £600 relates to specialist construction industry training provided by Berkeley Homes to staff at the Council's Parks and Open Spaces department who had successfully tendered for tree work in the Kidbrooke Development Area.
- £582.03 relates to a participant on the GLLaB Future Jobs Fund Programme for a paid work placement with Berkeley Homes arranged through GLLaB and paid for by the Department of Work and Pensions.

Finally in regard to income that the Council has received from Berkeley Homes between December 2010 and May 2012 I can confirm that a total of £3,357,683 in S106 Developer Contributions was received during that period.

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**7. Question from Susan Proudfoot, Blackheath, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services**

In July last year, after seven years of deliberating, the Council decided that Hervey Road Sports Field would not be needed for the rebuild of Willow Dene School. Can you please confirm that this is still the case and can you confirm that there is no review of school places which might involve the use of Hervey Road Sports Field as a site for a new school?

**Reply -**

I thank Ms Proudfoot for her question.

The Council has determined that the Willowdene School be refurbished and remain on its current site.

However; there is a shortage of primary school places right across London and Greenwich is no exception. The recent census figures released in July show a 34.4% increase in children aged 0 - 4 in the last ten years, who will need school places in the future.

When our projections identify the need for additional places within an area, we look at all the options available. However, we do not at present have plans for a new primary school on the Hervey Road site.

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8. **Question from Annie Hart, Blackheath, to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council (in the absence of Councillor Peter Kotz, Cabinet Member for Cultural and Creative Industries)**

With your interest in the Borough's sports provision can you say where Hervey Road Sports Field sits within your official playing pitch strategy?

**Reply -**

I thank Ms Hart for her question.

Royal Borough of Greenwich does not have a playing pitch strategy.

However through the Olympic legacy strategy the Council has invested heavily in the Kidbrooke area, notably at the nearby Hornfair Park. Also nearby Samuel Montague and Long Lane have each seen significant legacy investment from LOCOG.

The Council is producing an Open Space Strategy that will form part of the Council's Development Plan.

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**9. Question from Richard Dinkeldein, Blackheath, to Councillor Chris Roberts, Leader of the Council**

We have just witnessed an amazing festival of sport in the 2012 London Olympics with a legacy aimed at “Inspiring a Generation”. Over a year ago an offer of £600,000 was made towards acquiring and restoring the Hervey Road Sports Field for sporting use for schools, clubs and the local community. This offer of funding runs out in December. Hervey Road Sports Field is a public asset and £600,000 (plus), is potentially a great deal of public money. What reason is there for Greenwich Council, an Olympic host borough, being so reluctant to respond to this offer and facilitate the regeneration of this 11 acre site for sporting use?

**Reply -**

I thank Mr Dinkeldein for his question.

The borough has undertaken direct investment and secured significant external funding over the last 2 years from a wide range of partners to improve football, rugby, cricket and tennis provision at 6 sites which are located within 1 mile of Hervey Road Playing Field. This has been in line with the Greenwich Strategy which commits to ensuring "that opportunities for improvement and upgrading of local amenities are maximised."

The Council is in dialogue with the Marathon Trust and we hope to meet with them again shortly.

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**10. Question from Darryl Chamberlain, Charlton, to Councillor Denise Hyland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills**

There's been two important consultations carried out by the council on transport issues. One was into general transport issues from the transport scrutiny panel, to gauge public feeling ahead of meetings with transport providers; and another was into road safety on Bugsbys Way in Greenwich, where there was recently a fatal accident.

Yet neither consultation was promoted on the council website front page, and nor were they mentioned in Greenwich Time. Why?

**Reply -**

I thank Mr Chamberlain for his question.

The Council places great value on the responses it receives to consultations, particularly on transport matters and we regularly consult residents, businesses and visitors.

The Scrutiny consultation on general transport issues was posted on the website before it had been through the proper checking processes. It was withdrawn due to weaknesses and errors and arrangements are being made to resume the consultation as soon as possible.

The consultation on the Bugsbys' Way improvements, whilst important, relates to a relatively small, local scheme.

Consultation on the proposals with local stakeholders has taken place and were also discussed at a recent meeting of the Highways Committee to which the public are welcome. To date proposals have received a positive response.

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**11. Question from Darryl Chamberlain, Charlton, to Councillor Denise Hyland, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Enterprise and Skills**

Some years ago Greenwich Council received £11.5m in government funds to refurbish the Greenwich and Woolwich foot tunnels in time for the Olympics. The Olympics have come and gone, and both tunnels are still in a state of disrepair. Has the money run out?

**Reply -**

I thank Mr Chamberlain for his question.

The Foot Tunnels are used by thousands of people each year. Although they are unique, historic, heritage structures; the Council is determined to ensure that they are kept in the best possible condition.

The Greenwich foot tunnel was opened with new lifts in time for the Olympic Games, and the Woolwich Tunnel remains open.

The recent project to improve them was affected by significant unforeseen difficulties associated with the complexity of the structures and contractual arrangements.

The budget is considered sufficient to complete the project, subject to the contractual issues being resolved with the contractors involved in the first phase of the works.