

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

**London Borough of Sutton
Council: 18 January 2016
Questions from Councillors
Under Standing Order 8.6**

1. Question asked by Councillor Mary Burstow to Councillor Tony Shields, Chair of the Sutton South, Cheam and Belmont Local Committee

How much money has been invested in the Shanklin Estate, using Public Realm and Community Grants by Sutton South, Belmont and Cheam Area Committee, between May 2010 and December 2015? Please can I have a break down by year?

Reply by Councillor Tony Shields

Thank you for your question Councillor Burstow. We are very lucky to have an active resident association headed up by Mrs Angela Purdue and she is well aware of the route for funding via the local committee. However, should she be here tonight she would take you to task on the description of Shanklin Estate. It is Shanklin Village and it is a matter you've heard their chairman rectify mistakes on its description very, very promptly and very well.

I can tell you that the question you've asked has from year 15-16 (December 2015) the spend from the local Public Realm Capital is nothing, nothing was requested. There is however a £1,000 neighbourhood grant been agreed amongst all councillors of the local committee for new laptop computers for the residents association. 2014-15 is similarly nothing requested, neighbourhood grants started then so there isn't a thing for that. 2013-14, nothing, 2012-13 is Public Realm Capital of £2,000. 2011-2012 is £25,846 and 2010-11 is £56,402. This gives an average over the years if you wish of £14,413 for the Shanklin Village each year over the last five years. I hope that answers your question.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Mary Burstow

Thank you Councillor Shields for your answer, it was most helpful. I've got in front of me the locality needs profile 2014 for Sutton South, Cheam and Belmont Local Committee. On there, it clearly shows Shanklin Village as being an area of deprivation. So I would like to ask the Chair, what steps will the Chair and ward councillors take to inform the residents of the Public Realm Community grants, which are available, and how would he like to spend the money? So how are you going to inform the residents about this? Not just residents association, but other residents?

Reply by Councillor Shields

Well it is fair to clarify Councillor Burstow, it's not up to me or anybody, that's why a committee exists, so in fairness that is something of a misnomer. But I'm glad you mentioned it is an area, Shanklin Village, is an area of deprivation and I'm mortified

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

to actually have to say this, that Shanklin Village, when I look at your road, your road comfort, individual housing, bins collected etc. produces £88,000 in council tax, it's not an area of deprivation. Yet, Shanklin Village, I can tell you exactly, £513,000 a year, so the fair question is levelled back at you. You are taking, as an administration, half a million pounds out of a deprived area and put back nothing, yet you know the local committee has very limited funds and if you bothered to attend the last local committee you would have seen that three laptops were provided via Kingston's IT, cleaned, loaded with new Microsoft Windows etc, antivirus, at no cost to the residents and I'm pleased to say we have agreement amongst the councillors to provide another three to help people access the IT world who otherwise could not afford to do so. Be very careful about when you talk about social deprivation when you are dragging the financial guts out of these people.

**2. Question asked by Councillor Jane Pascoe to Councillor Wendy Mathys,
Chair of the Children, Family and Education Committee**

This administration spent £122k on a feasibility study to advise on the best site for the next secondary school, needed by 2018. They then ignored the findings and spent £8.8 million buying the wrong part of the hospital site.

Now the tax payers are being asked to take the almost unprecedented step of spending at least 950k more to predetermine planning permission for a Free School design, (which by its very nature is free of Local Authority control, to develop its own curriculum, building design, partnerships and admissions criteria etc.) which may never be built as there is no agreement with the Educational Funding Agency to develop the Hospital site.

What guarantees have this Political administration got that the EFA will refund all or indeed any of this money?

Reply by Councillor Wendy Mathys

Thank you Councillor Pascoe for your question. Officers have met with the Education Funding Authority (EFA) to discuss the idea of the Council preparing a planning application prior to a Free School being approved. In that meeting representatives of the EFA stated that in principle, should a Free School be approved in Sutton, and should the EFA and the successful free school provider agree with the plans developed by the Council, there is nothing that precludes this as a way forward. Indeed there are many examples of Local Authorities delivering Free School projects on behalf of the EFA in the past. One of the first free schools in West Sussex (Discovery New School) was delivered on behalf of the EFA and the Government's ambitious target to open 500 new free schools by 2020 means that the EFA is now very interested in Local Authorities starting to share this burden.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Working up plans for a school in advance of a provider is also not unprecedented. For example, Chobham Academy in Stratford was built before a provider to run the school was agreed.

Where Local Authorities have delivered Free School projects in the past, the EFA have provided a funding envelope passed to the Local Authority. This would include the costs of preparing a planning application. We would expect a similar arrangement should a Free School be approved in the next wave of applications, however it is not possible for the EFA to provide guarantees on funding arrangements until a Free School is approved and in the 'pre-opening' phase. It should be noted that this money will not be wasted because even if a Free School is not approved we would still have to undertake works to prepare a planning application in any case as the responsible body for providing school places.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Jane Pascoe

Thank you Mr Mayor. The truth is we don't actually know whether this site will ever be approved for a free school. You talk about possibilities, but there are no actual guarantees that the education funding agency will provide the money as there may be cheaper, more appropriate sites available elsewhere in the borough. And there's no guarantee that any of this money will ever get returned. This political administration has got themselves into a huge hole by directly causing a year's delay to the opening of a new school and I'd like to commend the officers who are valiantly coming up with ever more complex solutions to try to deliver what our children need: school places. But these strategies are not really necessary and invade the very simple fact that it's not the council's business to build a free school, which by their very nature are free of the local authority and free to the local authority. Why does this political administration want to spend our money on a school which this conservative government will give them for free?

Reply by Councillor Mathys

Well that was more of a speech than a question. I just find it very disappointing, Councillor Pascoe that you're so negative about this. We have five interested providers who are trying to build on this site. It's highly likely they will be approved. If they aren't, we have to provide the school places and we will go to an academy competition which is the alternative route for this. I really don't think there's any more to be said. I think it's very disappointing that you're just taking this view.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Arthur Hookway

Thank you Mr Mayor. As the need to find additional school places has been raised here, I'd like to ask the lead member what has been done to date to cater for this increase, and what is our record on meeting parental preferences in Sutton?

Reply by Councillor Mathys

Thank you Councillor Hookway. Well I'm very pleased to say this is a good news story, unlike many councils across the UK according to recent media reports over

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

the weekend, we did plan well ahead to cater for our increased demand in pupil places. We've expanded many schools, increasing our primary places by 4300 since 2008 and later this year we will have expanded ten secondary schools with an increase of 2600 places since 2008. Furthermore we have managed to continue to meet a high percentage of parental choice year on year. In September 2015 in primary schools 84% of parents received their first choice of school, over 94% a top three offer and a 97% a top six preference, all well above London averages. In secondary schools, 75% received first choice offer, 93% a top three offer, and again 97% a top six offer. Again, higher than the London average. This is down to excellent planning by our education officers and I would like to thank them for all they are doing for Sutton's pupils in these very challenging times. Thank you.

**3. Question asked by Councillor Tony Shields to Councillor Jayne McCoy,
Chair of the Housing, Economy and Business Committee**

When will the high street building site once destined to be T K Maxx be completed and will the member include a statement of which major chain will be occupying the site alongside the major success of getting a bigger "Pound shop" for the high street?

Reply by Councillor Jayne McCoy

Thank you Mr Mayor. Councillor Shields, once again you're demonstrating your innate inclination to turn a positive development into yet another opportunity to run down Sutton, you never let us down.

The site in question is the remodelling of the Times Square shopping centre. Now this is a major change the shopping centre's undertaking to improve its impact and standing on the high street and to make its floor space more attractive to a broader range of retailers. According to the developers, the developers are Wrenbridge, and the likely completion date will be mid April this year.

The developer has confirmed that they have assigned agreements with TK Maxx and Poundworld and are very close to completing a lease with a gym operator. And they are currently seeking to let the final large ground floor unit.

Now this work is complemented by the takeover of the St Nicholas Centre by a new ownership, AEW Europe, and we expect them to overhaul and to upgrade that shopping centre too. So those two things combined are going to be a significant change that's going to make a major boost for Sutton Town Centre. And it's all come about due to the positive marketing of Sutton through its Opportunity Sutton work and through its town centre master planning work. Thank you.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Tony Shields

I think what Councillor McCoy said is she's confirming that TK Maxx are going into the store, thank you very much for that. And that quashes a vicious rumour that the 99p Store was going to go into that premises and start a vicious price cutting war in Sutton High Street.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Graham Whitham

Thank you Mr Mayor. Bearing in mind that TK Maxx in fact is an outlet for past season branded goods, and therefore is a much higher profile and a much higher range type of an outlet, does the lead member agree with me that if there is a need for that sort of store, this could be attributed to government policies that in part have lead to an increase in food banks in this borough with many residents, and I know it's a laughing matter for some people, and many residents being held in rented accommodation with quite punitive rent to pay. And would she agree with me, that some of these outlets which seem to be denigrated at times in fact have become an economic necessity of life for many of our residents? Thank you Mr Mayor.

Reply by Councillor McCoy

Thank you Councillor Whitham, and I wasn't sure from Councillor Shields's response whether he was clear that both TK Maxx and a Poundworld are going in there. I think TK Maxx is already there and thanks to the work that's been undertaken they wanted to stay within Sutton which is positive. I think the Poundworld is a new store but I think the point quite rightly made for both of those shops that discount stores and pound shops are on the rise. And interestingly they are visited by a broad demographic of people. It's quite interesting, there's a lot of snobbery around, I don't think we can afford to be snobbish because, quite rightly as Councillor Whitham said, why are they suddenly in demand, because people don't have the spending power when I heard recently that in some places two thirds of peoples income is being spent on just keeping a roof over their heads. It's not acceptable. Thank you.

4. Question asked by Councillor Patrick McManus to Councillor Jill Whitehead, Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee

Given that this Borough has decided to build a large scale incinerator in a densely populated area and very close to several schools including a primary school, how are local air quality measurements going to be implemented to include PM2.5 (heavy metal) particulate readings rather than just the standard PM10s as well as readings for the infamous dioxins and furons, all of which have been linked to health problems? This would determine how well the incinerator filtration plant is doing its job long term.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead

This is about the air quality monitoring. Of Councillor McManus's question, I think the fact that the Council, the Environment Agency, the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, the Secretary of State at the time and the High Courts have all given their permission for this facility in a location that is densely populated and close to schools demonstrates how safe they believe this facility to be.

In the UK, the level of emissions monitoring for Energy Recovery Facilities is higher than that for Power Stations.

Now, the operator itself is only required to monitor the emissions at source. But Sutton will continue to monitor the ambient air quality within the borough including within the vicinity of the ERF and that data is used to check compliance with the National Air Quality Standards.

At most of the air quality monitoring stations PM₁₀'s and nitrogen dioxide are monitored but the Brookmead Road station also measures PM_{2.5}. and the 2.5 monitor has been operational since July 2014 so data has already been collected for monitoring future trends. And that sits is close to the tramlink station and downwind of the proposed facility. And the monitoring data and location of all Sutton's air quality monitoring stations are publicly available on the website <http://www.londonair.org.uk/>

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Patrick McManus

This morning I looked on the Beddington Lane air quality measuring station and you're still only measuring PM₁₀'s and nitrogen dioxide. Now that is based on car emissions only. So I totally reject Councillor McCoy's response there and I want an answer to the question, when are you actually going to actually measure incinerator related emissions and not multicar emissions on Beddington Lane please?

Reply by Councillor Whitehead

I don't think you can separate out the two. The ERF itself will have its own internal monitoring but the air quality stations at Sutton off its own back has undertaken is measuring those emissions that were specifically mentioned as part of the whole planning application. So we can't separate it out but actually the biggest contributor to the poor air quality comes from vehicles. It's a diesel output, and what we've also found and a good example of this is that actually Worcester Park and Wallington are the only areas that have breached the air quality targets in 2015, whereas Beddington Lane was within acceptable levels, and obviously we'll be keeping on track of that. But also, there are measures in place that if the air quality monitoring stations do see a breach of the quality in the area around the ERF then there's measures already in place to immediately deal with the problem. So I think we're doing as much as we can but you can't separate out the two because it's about the cumulative effect of these things

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey

Just a quick point of correction, you don't have internal measurement of an incinerator because there's no point of having it inside the building, you need it outside. In the Beddington Lane there will be 12 energy from waste plants and already there is a very high incidence of asthma with children who live in the area. And what I'd like to know is, is the council prepared to undertake a study to look at the incident of asthma and how, why it would appear from anecdotal information it appears to be much higher than anywhere else within the borough. Thank you.

Reply by Councillor Whitehead

Thank you. On the point of order when I talk about inside, as in not inside the ERF but inside the site it says the operator is required to monitor the emissions at source. I would also say that there will not be 12 ERF facilities in Beddington Lane, that is not correct at the moment and it's not going to be correct in the future. There is lots of work being undertaken in Beddington as part of the Opportunity Sutton area renewal programme which aims to improve the quality of the environment there. It has not got worse air quality than anywhere else according to our monitoring stations. As I said, Worcester Park and Wallington actually have worse because of the traffic congestion. But we are looking at the area because we are aware of the concerns of the residents in Beddington about the whole area generally, and there's lots and lots of work and investment being put into Beddington to improve the quality of the environment there, one of which is the recently awarded funds for highways improvement by TfL to the tune of about £2million. And also the fact that the ERF is going in there has generated an awful amount of money that is going to be invested for the benefit of the community, a lot of it dictated by the community. Thank you.

5. Question asked by Councillor David Hicks to Councillor Wendy Mathys, Chair of the Children, Family and Education Committee

Sutton Hospital is the political administration's preferred site for the first new secondary school in Sutton. What is the administration's preferred site for the second school and the probable third school?

Reply by Councillor Wendy Mathys

Thank you Councillor Hicks. Based on current projections on demand for school places it looks likely that a second secondary school site will be required in the future and in a very high growth scenario, possibly even a third – though this is considered less likely and were it necessary it would be required towards the end of the Local Plan period to 2031. And as Councillor McCoy has already indicated we will be looking at school sites very long term in the local plan.

The Local Authority will shortly be issuing an issues and options consultation, as I've already explained, on the options for future school sites as part of the refresh

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

of the Borough's Local Plan. Until we have embarked upon this consultation and reached 'a preferred option' which we plan to do within the next few months, we are not in a position to state what the preferred sites for further school provision will be in the Borough will be in the future. Thank you.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor David Hicks

I'd just like to thank Councillor Mathys for her reply. So within three months we should know where the second school is likely to be. Is that correct?

Reply by Councillor Mathys

Councillor Hicks, I didn't say the three months. I think the time we're likely to know is summer, at the end of the first few months of the consultation when all the local committees have had a chance to look at it. I think it's probably sometime mid-summer, July-August time. Thank you.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Neil Garratt

Thank you. In November 2014 Councillor Mathys announced that there were two preferred sites, the Belmont Hospital site and the Rosehill Park site. Are those two still preferred sites because it sounds as if that's no longer the case.

Reply by Councillor Mathys

Thank you Councillor Garratt. I think Councillor McCoy's already made it clear that the Rosehill site will be on the list of different sites to consider and obviously that we will be getting local input into that. But we may have to look more creatively at the type of building we use for schools in the future. Many areas now are using or converting office buildings and using other types of building and we want resident input into what is the best way to go ahead. As you know we don't want to build on Metropolitan open land at this stage if we can avoid it.

**6. Question asked by Councillor Richard Clifton to Councillor Jill Whitehead,
Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee**

What is the policy of the Council towards the naming of currently un-named roads in the borough after distinguished local residents, an appropriate time after their death, where local residents support this and the resident had during their lifetime a particular connection with the locality?

Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead

Yes, this council does have a policy of not naming roads and streets after living people but we will name them after appropriate persons who have passed on who are very important to the local area. In fact I would mention somebody in my own ward. We recently named a cul-de-sac in Rotherfield Road in Carshalton as Lakin

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Close. Our excellent archive section found that Charles Lakin was the occupier of the land in the 1848 Tithe map when the land was a garden and plantation. The ward councillors made other suggestions. We suggested naming the cul-de-sac after Reverend Lee Edwards who was the vicar for 43 years until 2001 as the site is situated next to All Saints School in Carshalton, but in fact we were advised that because there already was an Edwards Close in Worcester Park we couldn't actually name this close Edwards Close as well. And that's because the local fire brigade don't like having duplicate names which is understandable. We therefore decided on Lakin Close and in fact we do have other roads nearby that are named after other local vicars such as Cater Close, Cater Road which is named after two Caters, a Charles Cater and his nephew William and William Cater is known for his purchase of Stonecourt and Grove House. But certainly we are able to name roads after very special local people.

Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Richard Clifton

I'd like to thank the lead member for her clarification of policy and the fascinating example that she's just given us. I think perhaps residents will want to reflect on other deserving cases. Can I just ask one supplementary that enables me to mention a further particular case in my own ward that I think deserves wider attention. Last month the council named a previously unnamed road in my ward, a turning off Brighton Road, Berridge Close after Harold Berridge, an inventor and engineer who lived in a house on the site up to 1949. A man who had an extraordinary life working on the tunnels under the Hudson River in 1900, managing the port of Aden until 1924, before while living in Sutton and working for the London County Council. I will get to my point. This man was a remarkable man, and my question is, would the member, and indeed all councillors join me in celebrating about the life of a distinguished Sutton man Harold Berridge who's dates were 1872-1949 is now remembered in the name of a road in Sutton South ward.

At this point the time for member question time concluded. The following written responses were circulated to members following the meeting.

7. Question asked by Councillor Tim Crowley to Councillor Simon Wales, Lead for Finance and Voluntary Sector

How many compromise agreements have the council entered into with either employees or contractors/consultants over the last 24 months and what has been the total value if those agreements?

To avoid doubt these should include those agreements entered into by shared services run by other authorities on our behalf as well which appertain to services or employment in the borough.

Written reply by Councillor Simon Wales

By law "compromise agreements" were re-named "settlement agreements" in July 2013. The Council has entered into 9 such settlement agreements in the 24

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

month period in question. The value of settlement payments made under those agreements totals just under £304k, which is inclusive of £195k of redundancy payments paid by this means to prevent potential litigation. The Council only enters in such agreements having taken legal and HR advice that there is a clear commercial business case to do so. None of the agreements involved consultants or contractors.

8. Question asked by Councillor Nick Mattey to Councillor Jill Whitehead, Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee

The Lib Dems have claimed that the Viridor Incinerator will bring less traffic and pollution into Beddington and Hackbridge than landfill. They have also made it clear in its Focus leaflets that Landfill would only continue until 2023. This means that with incineration, continuing until 2043 an extra 6 million tonnes of waste will come into Beddington and 1.2 million tonnes of ash will be trucked out. How can the council tell residents that twenty extra years of incinerating rubbish will bring less traffic and pollution than a landfill that has been taken out of commission twenty years earlier?

Written reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead

The Transport Assessment confirms that there will be a reduction in traffic in comparison to the existing situation when the ERF is operational and the landfill closes.

Current activities at the site generate an average of 732 vehicle movements a day, when operational the facility will generate 666 vehicle movements a day. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that the ERF has no adverse impact on traffic until 2023, when the landfill site would have closed.

The traffic impact post 2023 was considered as part of the planning application as from this point landfill traffic would have ceased in the absence of the ERF proposal. As a result, it was decided that that there should be some mitigation post 2023 in the form of community funding to address concerns related to traffic by contributing to highways improvements or to some other environmental or community project.

The council has recently heard it will receive funding from Transport for London to improve Beddington Lane.

9. Question asked by Councillor Neil Garratt to Councillor Ruth Dombey, Chair Strategy and Resources Committee

At the December Strategy and Resources Committee meeting the Leader confirmed that there are no problems or issues with the secondary school build programme and that it is on track. Is that true?

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Written reply by Councillor Ruth Dombey

At the December Strategy and Resources Committee I confirmed that we are confident that we will continue to provide sufficient secondary school provision for the children of this borough. All secondary schools in Phase 1 and Phase 2 are on track to offer additional places as part of the phase 1 and phase 2 expansions. We expect these expansions to be sufficient to provide places for the projected need in 2016 and 2017 with a new school being needed in 2018. We are making progress on a planning application for the school and are confident that we will be able to meet the need for secondary school places in September 2018.

10. Question asked by Councillor Patrick McManus to Councillor Simon Wales, Lead for Finance and Voluntary Sector

When is the dangerous courtesy crossing outside Sutton Station going to be replaced with a proper traditional crossing?

Written reply by Councillor Simon Wales

The Sutton Station Gateway improvement works were subject to safety audits, at both the design stage and post works implementation stage. These audits made recommendations to ensure that the uncontrolled crossing is safe for pedestrians and the recommendations were implemented by the Council. Sutton Council, as the Highways Authority, are satisfied that the courtesy crossing is both safe and appropriate for this location. The uncontrolled crossing will be reviewed again during further safety audits, which will take place 12 and 36 months after the project implementation.

It is important to note that the Sutton Station Gateway works did not result in a net loss of controlled crossings in the Station area. The controlled crossing, previously outside the station's main entrance, was re-located to the South. This was to align with pedestrian 'desire lines' (where people want to cross the road), following the relocation of the northbound bus stop and opening of the Station side entrance. In addition to the above, there are further controlled crossings to the north of the uncontrolled crossing which provides users with an alternative crossing point.

11. Question asked by Councillor David Hicks to Councillor Wendy Mathys, Chair of the Children, Family and Education Committee

Considering the limited capacity of the Sutton Hospital site, when will the second school have to be completed and available to cater for the forecast demand for secondary school places?

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

Written reply by Councillor Wendy Mathys

We expect further secondary school provision to be needed in 2019 or 2020. There are reasons to be cautious here because we are aware that new secondary schools will be built in neighbouring Local Authorities in 2018 however the locations of these schools are not yet known. This could affect some of the cross border assumptions in our projections model.

12. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Ruth Dombey, Leader of the Council

In November 2014 the Lib Dem group made voting for the Hackbridge courtesy crossing a political issue and instructed its group to vote for courtesy crossings. In future when it comes to road safety, will Lib Dems be allowed to vote according to the wishes of residents and road safety experts or use their common sense?

Written reply by Councillor Ruth Dombey

On all matters of Council business I would expect councillors to listen carefully to the wishes of their residents and of experts, to weigh up the arguments and to use their common sense to vote on the basis of their conscience and best judgement.

13. Question asked by Councillor David Hicks to Councillor Wendy Mathys, Chair of the Children, Family and Education Committee

If two schools of the size proposed by Greenshaw Learning Trust for the Rosehill site were built, would a third school be required?

Written reply by Councillor Wendy Mathys

It is not possible to say with any certainty if a third site could be avoided in this instance. The issue of a third school site is based upon an assessment of a potential need should we face a very high growth scenario in the future (births continue to rise, housing targets are all met, high pupil yield from additional housing, high inward migration, continuing popularity of our secondary schools and so on). In reality, to 2031 any number of these factors could change over time and in a way that is not possible to predict. Should a third site be required it in this scenario it is unlikely to be required for some time - probably towards the end of the Local Plan period to 2031. However, the fact that it is possible means that it is prudent for the Local Plan process to consider how this need could be met and to safeguard a third site.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:
Councillors Questions
18 January 2016**

**14. Question asked by Councillor Nick Mattey to Councillor Jill Whitehead,
Chair, Environment and Neighbourhood Committee**

The Lib Dems have claimed that allowing Viridor exclusive rights to burn the councils rubbish will bring Sutton economic benefits. However, Viridor will be paid 300% to 400% more by Sutton Council for burning waste rather than burying it. The Council says it will save money because there will be no landfill tax to pay. However if the Lib Dems did get back into power nationally, they plan to introduce an Incineration Tax, meaning any savings gained from incinerating will be negated. Has the council considered this possibility? In addition, does it not seem paradoxical that voters should be urged not to vote Lib Dem if they want to avoid swingeing increases in the cost of disposing of Sutton's rubbish?

Written reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead

For the avoidance of doubt, we will not be paying more for our waste disposal once the ERF is operational. The residual waste treatment contract that will mean that Sutton's waste is sent to the Beddington Energy Recovery Facility will save Sutton £49 million over a 25 year period. It will save the SLWP £200m over 25 years. This is money that can be used to protect other vital front line services.

Incineration tax was not considered within these calculations because at the time of the procurement exercise and at this current time there is no requirement within European or UK legislation that states there will be a tax on the treatment of waste at energy recovery facilities.

This page is intentionally left blank