



Questions from Members of the Public

Full Council – 22 January 2018

1. Question from Atiya Munir to Councillor Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills:

Are the Council able to confirm if there are any well-known and adequately funded job search and careers guidance support services for young people in Brent that are independent of the job centre and do not require the young person to be signing onto benefits in order to access them?

Response:

There are a number of employment support services accessible to young people in Brent that do not require them to be claiming benefits or signed on to the Job Centre. Some of these services are run directly by the council (e.g. Brent Works and The Living Room), while others are accessible by Brent residents (e.g. Prospects, the European Social Fund Families Programme and the Love London Working Programme).

Brent Works

Brent Works supports residents by giving them access to local employers who are recruiting for current vacancies. The main industries include Retail, Hospitality, Construction and Health and Social Care. The service aims to build residents' confidence via assessments, by giving them relevant feedback on telephone interviews, as well as their group and individual performances at Brent Works assessment days. The service also offers 1-2-1 support to residents by assisting them with their CVs and interview preparation. Young people do not need to be on benefits to access the service.

The Living Room

The Living Room Project is primarily aimed at supporting high levels of unemployment among residents in the St. Raphael's Estate (they are also able to take referrals from other parts of the borough as well). The service is currently funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and are able to work with anyone over the age of 19. A Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) advisor is also available to work with anyone that The Living Room cannot work with on the ESF Project, ensuring the service covers all age groups and support them with

seeking employment. Residents do not have to be on benefits to access the service.

Prospects

Prospects / Connexions is a national careers service that tracks every young person in the borough between the ages of 16 – 19 (and up to 25) to ensure that they have a place in employment, education or training. If the young person has been identified as not being in employment, education or training (NEET), or is 'at risk' of being in that category, the service provides Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) sessions to support that young person into employment, education or training. This service is provided to all young people, even if they are claiming benefits. The support involves careers advice, developing their employability skills and signposting to various support agencies. Prospects also deliver careers advice and guidance in around 13 institutions across the borough.

European Social Fund Families Programme

This is delivered by Metropolitan Housing on behalf of G4S. The programme is designed to provide employability support anyone over the age of 16 and is part of a troubled family. Referrals are taken through the Family Solutions Team at the council. Young people can access the service without being on benefits if they have eligible proof of documentation.

2. Question from Hiran Patel to Councillor Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Growth, Employment and Skills:

How were the proposals for development of the old HSBC bank and pub at 245-245 and 253 Ealing Road approved, even though in my view they appear to break a number of safety regulations?

Response:

Planning applications of this size raise a number of complex, and often competing issues; in this case, involving the redevelopment of the site to provide two buildings, 9 and 10 storeys, for 92 new flats, a pub and a community use, it raised many issues – the appearance and build of the new buildings, the amount of residential provided, the mix of units, parking arrangements, etc. Officers and Committee members balance all of the different issues, including the planning objections, and make their decision against national, regional and local policies. These issues are often finely balanced, and opinions will often differ as to the merits of a particular case.

Sometimes, one policy objective, (e.g. securing additional housing, or maintaining a public house on the site) might be given more weight than, for example, a reduced level of parking. In this case, the planning merits of the proposal were carefully considered. Officers made some pragmatic judgments around the proposal to achieve, on this allocated site in a housing zone, some 92 new units – a quarter of which are affordable – that works on the site. The committee report makes it clear that whilst some policies are not met, many are, and taking the scheme in its entirety, members felt that the benefits outweighed any harm.

The question does not mention what safety regulations are broken here. However, it is a long established – and correct – principle, that planning does not duplicate requirements set out in other regulations and laws; these will be assessed by other bodies at the appropriate time, whether that be under Building Regulations or Health and Safety rules