

Crawley Borough Council – State of the Borough debate – Tuesday 26th January 2010

The following transcript was recorded during the question and answer session at the State of the Borough Debate.

Key

BL = Cllr Bob Lanzer – Leader of the Council	DC = Cllr Duncan Crow – Deputy Leader of the Council	BS = Cllr Brenda Smith – Leader of the Labour Group
SC = Chief Inspector Steve Curry Sussex Police	SB = Sue Braysher – Director West Sussex NHS	• = comment made by a member of the audience
WL = Warren Lee (Facilitator)		

• My name is Gordon Robson and I'm a citizen of Crawley and my questions are to Sue Braysher. I don't want to get involved in the Crawley Hospital we've had enough reports that says that's not going to happen in the near future. I am concerned though at the slow movement on the North East Review. Now that review very clearly shows that East Surrey Hospital cannot deal with maternity. It does not have the facilities to do it. It also shows that we should have had in this area far better chemotherapy and cancer treatment units. Nothing has happened in any way that I'm aware of since that report was published. Why?

SB - In terms of the work that's ongoing at the moment we are working through the Crawley GPs with a programme board of people made up from all providers including Surrey and Sussex Trust. These are some of the issues that they will be looking at. We've just literally reformed the programme boards to take the North East Review forward so they haven't been forgotten. These are three of the issues on the programme boards and we're looking at having solutions and actually moving forward with some of those solutions in a shorter time period than you might imagine so please be assured there is an up and running programme with those things on its agenda in terms of training to get clinical solutions to those issues.

• Are you going to tell us the timetable or do we just go on suffering?

SB - The programme board met before Christmas with initial terms of reference. Its second meeting is tomorrow morning and there's a schedule of meetings over the next couple of months to shape the projects, set the work streams up and then I'm sure we can release some detail of whose working on what to what timescales. I think that would be helpful.

• Are you consulting us your patients?

SB - There will be patient participation groups. I think what we learnt between the Fit for the Future progress and then moving into the North East Review process was that the level of conversation in the North East Review was much much better so what we're doing is using that method of participation as the method that we'll integrate into the programme board working. The other thing that I should say is that it's not just West Sussex. We are working with Surrey and Sussex Trust and all of the providers. We're actually looking across the whole of the catchments so there's two practice based commissioning groups in Surrey and two from West Sussex one of which is Crawley and the other one is Horsham so it's a very very joined up piece of work.

WL – Can I also bring in Bob here from the Council? What kind of pressure can the local authority also put onto the PCT if anything.

BL - Thank you I wouldn't necessarily call it pressure so much as influence. I mean we try to work constructively with the PCT. There were some good outcomes for Crawley in the West Sussex Health Review and I know they are being brought forward and implemented so I'm happy that progress is being made but we will bring influence to bear if we think it isn't.

WL - I mean the whole issue around the hospital obviously raises a lot of concerns from everybody. If I can also just highlight the fact that Councillor Henry Smith is also here in the audience, the Leader of West Sussex Council, I don't know Henry if you want to say something on this.

- Good Evening Henry Smith I'm the Leader of West Sussex County Council also a Crawley resident. I think health care has been the number one issue for most Crawley residents now for a decade. My personal view and the view of West Sussex County Council is that we need a new area hospital for Crawley. We are the physical centre of the acute trust catchment area and we think that it's regrettable that services such as accidents and emergency and maternity went up to East Surrey Hospital. East Surrey Hospital now treats more people from West Sussex than it does from East Surrey and we feel that as East Surrey Hospital covers an area that stretches as far south as places like Billingshurst then really a new hospital centred on Crawley is the best way forward. Along with Crawley Borough Council and Horsham District Council, West Sussex County Council have just put some funding in to a feasibility study to look into the possibility of a new hospital and science park which Bob referred to in his opening remarks. That will be publicly available after that feasibility study has been undertaken and I personally believe that there will be a case for a new Crawley hospital but of course the public finances are not very good but I think it is the number one issue that is of concern for people in Crawley. We've got an ageing population, a growing population, major transportation links and that's why I think it will continue to be an issue until we can centre health services, acute health services back here. Thank you.

WL - Talking about National Health.

- Henry Smith - Absolutely National Health hospital. It is very important that hospital care is available universally to all regardless of the ability to pay and I think health care is one of those great levellers. It doesn't matter how wealthy you are or how poorly you are, if you have a heart attack or involved in a road traffic accident then we're all equally adversely affected by not having any close by.

- What about the shuttle bus?

- Henry Smith - Thank you very much for raising that one. In terms of the shuttle bus, we were promised a shuttle bus when services transferred from Crawley to East Sussex Hospital and indeed a shuttle bus was provided for a limited period of time and then it was stopped and I think that was regrettable. It was convenient for patients, patients relatives and also for staff. I just had a meeting with NHS West Sussex, the new name for PCT Surrey County Council, Horsham District Council and Crawley Borough Council were involved in that and a new bus has been reinstated unfortunately at the moment the bus charges I think it's £5.50.

- No it's not.

- No it's not a replacement for the bus but it is a start. I think it's regrettable that the NHS removed the shuttle bus between Crawley and East Surrey Hospital and technically Horsham Hospital as well and I think it's a start that that has come back but I think until we have a new area hospital there does need to be a better service because it is significantly inconvenient at best for many patients and their relatives having to travel to East Surrey so it's a start but I think it needs to go a lot further.

WL - Can I bring in Brenda who I know would like to say something?

BS - I think we should centre on the questions that were asked which was about the North East Review and I didn't know that this was going to turn into a party political broadcast but I would like to just say that of course the Labour Group at Crawley Borough Council also support the provision of adequate acute services here for the town and for the surrounding neighbourhood and that's not in dispute whatsoever but we are adamant of course it must be a National Health hospital. We do not want anything other than simple national health service facilities of the best quality here in the town to give our residents what they need and I will also support the need as well always to maintain the centres of excellence which so many residents and probably people sitting in this room have benefited from with the links that Crawley Hospital has established over the years and maintains with the London heart hospitals and at Guildford Hospital. The question related of course to the services in the North East Review and I agree with the gentleman who asked the questions we do want to know what's going on. The West Sussex Health and Overview Committee, the Health Service Scrutiny Committee which is managed by West Sussex County Council of course also holds this in their remit and some members of the County Council I'm sure from both sides, but certainly from my side, will look to ensure that's done through that facility as well and we support Sue with the work that they're putting in place now.

SB - Warren it might be as well to add in terms of the moving forward with recommendations of the North East Review, we've done a lot work on supporting improving increasing nursing service and we're working at improving access to therapies as well so there's a lot of active work that is ongoing and will be built into contracts from the 1 April. Things like waiting times for therapy services. We know we've had a problem with this, we will implement six week waiting time for therapy services from the 1 April 2011 so there is an awful lot of progress and I think just to go back to the presentation we have made a lot of investment in primary care premises in Crawley. There are five either new builds or rebuilds ongoing. We've got one extension already agreed to another practice and we've got another four extensions that we're considering so in terms of improving that general NHS infrastructure throughout the area and trying to make local access easier to better services then that's exactly what we're going.

WL - The gentleman here with the black shirt.

- I'm here tonight for the older person's forum but I would just like to make one comment about the bus service to East Surrey. It is a community transport bus. It is not a replacement for the shuttle and the price of it is set because it is a charity and they have to charge. If a shuttle comes back it will be a good thing but at the moment they're doing this on a basis of a transport bus and they're trying to get it up so that people can go there for their appointments and they're going up in the afternoon for people who will visit but it is not a replacement for that shuttle and we want that shuttle back please.

WL - We'll have one more question as I'm conscious that we need to get to some other points.

Hello my name is Geraint Thomas I am actually a Borough Councillor now but I was a member of the Surrey and Sussex Health Care Trust Patients Council until I was elected and I felt I had to step down at that stage. Could I just say that as Henry has so kindly pointed out half of the business of East Surrey Hospital actually comes from West Sussex and most of those people actually come from the Crawley area and I would implore people if you are actually seriously interested in improving the quality of health care in Crawley there are one or two active things that you could do. One of them is actually to apply to join the Patients Council at Surrey and Sussex Healthcare Trust and I would be very very happy to pass on your details to the people there. I can tell you there are not enough Crawley people represented on that and I can tell you it is very very difficult to argue a West Sussex case in that context so please I would urge you to do that. There is also within what's now called NHS West Sussex a membership scheme and again if you would like to make a constructive contribution to improving healthcare in West Sussex you can join online.

WL – Thank you for that. Sue I'm sure will come back to health issues again before the end.

- My name Peter Brent by the way I live in Langley Green and I'm a Crawley resident also. In response to the last comment applying to join the Patient Council is fine but as far as the comment that goes it's not easy to argue West Sussex's case, if it's an NHS facility we're all entitled to it. Whether East Surrey is represented on the Patient Council is neither here nor there. The NHS has a responsibility to treat both of us the same and to favour East Surrey or to comment that East Surrey has bias if you like on the Patient Council is really not tenable,

WL - Can we ask another question now for another issue as I'm sure we come back to health issues before the end if there is indeed time.

- My name is Stan Waldon-Howard. I'm Chairman of the Crawley Pensioners' Action Group and one of our concerns is obviously the current financial position of the country and how it affects our councils. A number of things have happened that worries us because how much of it are pensioners going to pay in council tax. I read today I think that the council pension schemes are in a black hole and that a number of councils are looking to use their council tax to pay for that so how does that apply to Crawley?

BL - Thanks Mr Waldon-Howard for your question. A lot of pension funds do need a bit of topping up that's true and it's no exception for the councils in West Sussex but for our part in Crawley I can assure you that we budgeted for that and even after budgeting for that we will be able to set a very competitive rate of council tax this year that will be well below the rate of inflation if that helps.

DC - I recognise that the state of pensions are a national issue. There's many organisations and local authorities across the country that have affectively a ticking time bomb as far as pensions are concerned but the situation in Crawley I believe is certainly no worse it's probably much better than in other areas. The gentleman mentioned council tax and I am of the opinion that the level of council tax that members of the public are asked to pay is pretty much reaching its upper limits financially and perhaps eventually we are going to have to find a new way of financing local government in its entirety because the onus is falling too much directly on local residents as to what they pay for council tax. Local government funding is

an extremely complex subject. I have a limited understanding myself as to someone who it gives you an understanding of how complex it is. About 75-80% of our revenues of local councils have actually come from central government by grants council tax only represents actually a relatively small proportion of the amount that local councils spend but the amounts that residents are having to pay is probably at that upper end of what is affordable for most people and I think eventually we're going to have to find a new system because well we can't go on like this.

My name is Chris Oxlade I'm a County Councillor for Bewbush and Ifield West but also Chairman of the Three Bridges Forum and it's a Three Bridges question which affects the rest of the town about planning. There's a lot of land that's been released by Crawley Borough Council and its partners in Three Bridges with little or no restrictions on to what developers can actually build on that land. Most residents in Three Bridges don't want new development and if it has to go through it needs to fit in with the local community. You mention in the slides earlier about increasing and developing the environment in a positive manner for areas but it's not happening in Three Bridges. Is there any way that the Council can actually put in restrictions on what is built. The forum successfully fought against two different developments. Gales Place and North Road but there's more and more coming in all the time. People having their gardens taken away after 50 year licences.

BL - Thank you for your question. There are restrictions, as you put it, that the borough council can put on new development. We have something called the Local Development Framework which describes the kind of development that can be permitted and the kind of development that should be refused. Can I just make the point the Council has had to identify a significant number of sites because we need to provide new social housing, new affordable housing for Crawley people and that's a very challenging thing to do because we've had housing requirements imposed on us by central government. We're only a small urban area. We already live quite closely together so we've had to be creative and find new areas in which to potentially build but the sites we've identified including those in Three Bridges are subject to the planning process. Nothing here is a done deal You mentioned yourself that a scheme for North Road was withdrawn and that's just the planning process in operation so when the Council talks about identifying sites to release for potential building that doesn't automatically mean that they get built up because the planning process is totally separate from the disposal of any land. I'm hoping that the pressures on our land might reduce if we are able to build more in the North East Sector of Crawley. It would then be possible to build at lower densities right across the town and be more protective of the environment but we do need to make an effort to house people through council resources. People who would otherwise potentially have nowhere to live.

BS - Of course some of the sites identified, not just Three Bridges, in my own ward of Langley Green and across quite a lot of the town there's been sites identified. I think one of the key issues is in fact to do what you're doing, Chris, you've got a body of opinion coming to your neighbourhood forum which is what it's about and you're bringing that to the attention of the Council and the decision makers. We've been able to negotiate some of the land identified in Langley Green who residents are unhappy with and we're in a similar situation to you that the planning application at this time has been withdrawn. I think it is a moot point that the Council is listening to residents but there is always this huge demand for housing, most of us benefited from housing several years ago, some longer than others, and when the new town was built we all know we weren't wanted either, so we have to consider that when we look at future development, but we are a very small borough and we really are built up now to our borders so it's more creative the way we have to look at it but it's to

keep talking, and of course, to get your residents to talk to their councillors and ask their councillors to represent them directly to the Council.

WL – Does the County Council have a view on this?

- Henry Smith - The County Council's actually lost the ability to carry out strategic planning some years ago in the last planning act so we don't formally have a role in terms of strategic planning across West Sussex in terms of housing. However, that being said there are significant pressures, particularly on the south east of England for housing. That has been somewhat scaled back in the last couple of years because of the economic downturn, obviously the housing market has slowed right down but that won't last forever, the housing market will come back and of course Crawley is an ideal place to locate. People want to come to Crawley because of our geographical location, and because of what we have here in Crawley and surrounding Crawley so there are significant pressures on the area. I think what is best is to allow local communities to make decisions about what sort of development takes place in their areas and I think one of the problems that we've seen is when you have top down targets. It builds resentment in local communities because they feel very powerless. I think actually if you trust local people through the democratic process to plan for the future then we all know that we need affordable housing so that key workers can afford to live here and so our young people can afford to stay here, and yet we all know how to balance that with protecting our environment, so I think we need to trust local people in the planning process through the democratic process to make those decisions, but the pressure is on the south east and Crawley's a popular place and that's sometimes a bit of a double-edged sword.

- John Coburn, I'm a member of Three Bridges Neighbourhood Forum as well and I'm a tree warden and I'd like to come back on that sort of issue with another question. I think it's all very well to say that we should let the planning process prevail but I think we're just very conscious of the sort of collateral damage that we're suffering in the knowledge that the Council's selected development companies will still eventually grind out appeal after appeal. They will eventually just get permission after it's exhausted our capacity to comment further on it. And I mentioned the collateral damage and by this I mean things like pre-emptive clearance of sites where this has happened, and other issues where there's Council owned land with important trees on it, the Council won't put TPOs on their own trees for some reason, it's been marketed for sale and developers will then be able just to, well deal with this land as though there were no formal protection on trees.

DC - Well thank you for the observations. I am of the belief that although the planning process does work, I actually believe that it is far from ideal in terms of, you know, you mentioned how appeal after appeal can be exhausting and we even had quite a well-documented case in Crawley at Russell Way, not far away from here where an appeal was lost by a developer and then that was actually overturned by the Secretary of State. Although since then the situation has changed so the actual development hasn't taken place. As has already been mentioned the top down targets and the amount of actual influence that local councils have over the planning process is not what it was and I am of the mind that councils do need to be able to take more control over planning but that has to be set within the national framework and I'm of the opinion that the national framework is more in favour of the developers than people who object at the moment. Now I don't think there's a lot we can do about that, you mentioned about the Council and TPOs and I don't have an answer for that as to why the Council don't put TPO, Tree Preservation Orders, on its own trees and if any of the panel members do, but if not we'd have to endeavour to find that out afterwards.

- I've actually heard in the papers that that the economy has got better, even though the recession's got better in Crawley, unfortunately there's still a freeze in salaries because of the amount of big bonuses some people are getting. A lot of people are now out of work and a million 18-24 year olds who have finished school, who are students like me have are still yet to get our first job and some of those who were employed are being treated unfairly due to special needs, their ethical needs and special problems. It's like racist discrimination and I think it's unfair these people don't get a chance.

BS - I'm very sorry if that seems to be the case. I have absolutely no personal or even as a local councillor experience of such treatment within the town per se or in individual situations but I certainly would be most concerned if it was fact that there was any form of discrimination against any person of any age, young or middle-aged with special needs. I believe that under the Disabilities Discrimination Act that there is a duty on employers to always consider employment for people with special needs and that they have a right to expect an interview at which they can put their case over. I think that through the youth service I would think and maybe the Connexions office there would be a facility for you to discuss that situation with an officer there who would have proper knowledge of this and I think that may be the best place for me to suggest you go.

DC - I have every sympathy for young people who are out of work and it is a fact that actually young people have been disproportionately affected during this recession, you're quite right. You quoted a number of a million young people between 18 and 24 who are given the term, which is perhaps is not the best term, NEET, which is not in education, employment or training, and there's a million of young people in this country and it's a much higher percentage than older age groups. I'm very concerned that this generation of young people are missing out on opportunities that previous generations of young people have had, and I came to Crawley as an unemployed teenage and I know what it's like to be unemployed, and it's hard out there and even though technically we have come out of recession today, in reality the economic climate is going to be tough for the next year or two at the very least. I'm sure the whole panel here has sympathy for everyone who's unemployed and we're all sorry about the economic situation. All we can do is suggest where to go for advice and to get training and to learn skills and that's all we can recommend. We can try and do what we can locally to try and help the economy.

WL - Do the Council actually employ anyone with special needs?

DC - Yes we do.

WL - Do you know how many people?

DC - I don't have that number myself.

BL - Thank you, I don't have the exact figure but I want to assure you that what we do is track our numbers of staff by different categories and that includes people with special needs and we seek to ensure in our recruitment process that everyone gets an equal chance.

WL - We've had a few questions from the Youth Panel, I'm sure you noticed that some of them had to leave early so we'll get to that after this gentleman's question here.

- Thank you very much, Chris French, prospective parliamentary candidate for UKIP for Crawley. I'd like to follow up on Duncan's comments and also Henry Smith's comments with regards to the weakness of the planning system. I think Duncan described the County Council as weak in terms of planning and other matters and housing matters and I would like to suggest the reason for that is the regional bodies. There's been an increasing use of regional development agencies and authorities and we have obviously SEEDA and they have taken a heck of a lot of power away from you guys, as you well know, I'd be interested in your comments on that. And by the way, that's an unelected body obviously.

DC - Well I think you and I with regard to regional government are probably singing from the same hymn sheet. SEERA, which is the South Eastern England Regional Assembly, which nobody ever asked for, was an unelected body that was made up of elected members, but no-one was directly elected to that. That's been scrapped and most of those powers have passed to the SEEDA, which I don't know how many people here have actually heard of, it's quite a powerful body, the South East England Development Agency, I think you'll find that if there's a change of government SEEDA's days will be numbered.

WL - I've got this question that I'd like to – perhaps I could put to Steve Curry from Sussex Police, this is from one of young people here this evening: What is being done to prevent violent extremism in the young Muslim community and I don't know whether there has ever been or is perceived to be an issue, Steve, in the Crawley area, perhaps you can give us your comments on that.

SC - Thank you, well we certainly received money and Crawley Borough Council receives money under the Prevent agenda - preventing violent extremism. We previously have had a history in respect of violent extremism in Crawley. Some of you will remember the convictions that came out of the investigation for fertilizer bombs and then the intent towards violence there. I think this is certainly something that we all have a vested interest in irrespective of whatever faith, ethnicity we have. We all live in Crawley and a vested interest in making sure that our streets our communities remain safe places to live, work and visit. And I can see that Cath Falvey sitting in the front row, who's the Programme Manager for Crawley Borough Council for Prevent and we have the Crawley Together and Pathfinder programme which is setting out an action plan for how we can address this issue. It's not just in relation to the first thing that springs to mind in terms of dealing with the threat of terrorism but also the emergence of the far right. We only have to go back a few days to see some of the potential threat and risk that exists from the emergence of groups such as the English and Welsh Defence League and the impact that can have on community cohesion. There's a whole broad base of measures that have been implemented and continue to be implemented working with young people to actually try and address those threatened risks, which most recently this week included the raising of the terror threat by Government to severe. This clearly indicates that it is a risk that's very real to us.

WL - I'd be interested in seeing if we can have a show of hands if we think as an audience that the town kind of integrates pretty well with the Muslim community, old or young. How well, if you can raise your hands to say we do have this cohesion and we do integrate very well together.

WL - OK, that's not overwhelming, but certainly a majority by the looks of it.

- Good evening, my name's Chiara Spadea Khan; I'm a convert to Islam, I'm not here to represent the Muslim community of Crawley, but personally I have been actively

involved in youth programmes surrounding Muslim youth and getting them engaged, giving them prospects and helping them to join mainstream employment and perhaps take one of your jobs one day. I'd just like to say I recently came back from America and I came with this great initiative for young people. The first people that contacted me were the representatives of the Prevent agenda for Crawley and I have to say I felt more vetted than heard. The Prevent agenda's a double-edged sword, in some cases it's viewed as a tracking system to get information on people and in different communities and perhaps hard to reach communities. Privately I've worked to continue my initiative for funding and whatnot and I'm starting to understand why a great deal of the community does retract from coming out into the public and bringing their events into the public, not to say they don't. I have to really take my hat off to Crawley and say, you know, two mosques in such a small town is really commendable, but at the same time the Islamic community is the under pressure within themselves. They're finding it hard to vent out and get support from, for example, there are Shiites and there are Sunnis in this community they are arguing and there are serious issues around funeral arrangements, burials, prayers and special events that could potentially call for a third mosque to be built in Crawley, which I know would cause a lot of upheaval. So my point really is the Muslim community is not necessarily under-represented but sometimes we tend to retract due to fear of just continuously being looked at as a potential suspect for one thing or the other, and as far as the youth go, it's well known that the Bengali and the Pakistani communities are very low achieving communities at school,. They've been identified as the lowest achievers at school. So we need to really start at the school level. Muslim youth is just another tag for a Muslim, young and old, I think the parents need as much support in preventing extremism as the young people do but they also need to be given an opportunity to see that every door is really open for them and if they cannot pursue traditional routes of education that alternative routes do need to be put forward.

WL - Steve, your Officers in Crawley no doubt will probably come into contact with more Muslim young people perhaps than in other parts of the county. Are they aware of some of the issues and sensitivities, particularly in this part of the area?

SC - Very much so, I think, certainly in Crawley and elsewhere that this becomes an integral part of neighbourhood policing, it's about community engagement, it's about actually forging those relationships and there's a significant part of me that believes and it's a view I've expressed previously, that any long-term solution is actually about how we mainstream, it's about how we forge the relationships and the partnerships integrally with the community that it's actually going to bring about success in taking that forward. Prevent funding as we see it now will come and go, there is a time limit on that.

BL - Thanks for your comments. You mentioned a number of groups within the Muslim community and of course Islam embraces all nationalities and ethnicities and we do have a number of Muslim groups, we're aware of that, I'd add the Ahmaddiyan community as well within Crawley, who don't have a mosque and their nearest one, I think is in Morden, so as a council we're very pleased to try and facilitate the provision of sites for religious worship for all faiths recognising the diversity of our community and Islam is very broad and if you pardon me for paraphrasing another expression Islam is a broad mosque, I think that's what sums it up really and we need to recognise that. There are concerns about the nature of Prevent funding. I think it was right for the Government to try and make available Prevent funding because the consequences of not being successful and loosely putting it preventing radicalisation can be quite horrific. I think there is a case for Prevent funding to be broader in its application because if you accept that through the use of Prevent

funding you can head off radicalisation then you should also be able to accept that you can perhaps head off dangerous activity by extremist political groups of the far right as well by using central government funding to try and stop that from happening. While I accept that the danger they pose is not as great. But I wonder if we need to look more broadly as well because the problem with Prevent funding is that it is a little bit double-edged. While I can understand the rationale behind it, those community groups not receiving it ask why, those community groups receiving it ask why are we being singled out, the people who are not receiving it ask why we're not receiving it because we could do with some funding as well. It becomes quite complex quite quickly. Perhaps we need to look beyond our own shores as well about the way we integrate new community groups without that statement implying any loss of culture and maybe there is something to learn from the United States in the manner that they try and deliver community cohesion alongside the methods that we use in the United Kingdom.

- Hello, my name is Catherine Falvey and I'm the Crawley Together Prevent Partnership Manager. Firstly thanks very much for raising the questions, Chiara and making the points that you have. Notwithstanding what Councillor Lanzer has just said, we are looking, to take a fairly broad approach here in Crawley whilst we need to remain focused on what are the real issues and concerns. That is about building the capacity of the community to have the strength and the resilience to challenge any threats to our communities. You make a very valid point about the importance of education with young people and that's why we have officers based within the schools and we are developing that work with schools and working with school staff and with whole groups of pupils so as the programme's developed we recognise that it's not just a Muslim issue. Although terrorism often misuses the badge of Islam to carry out its attacks, it is actually a whole community problem because we are all threatened by that, we all face that same threat. We work very much with the Muslim community to try and build their capacity and we're working with the Imams and the Madrassa teachers, the Islamic schools to broaden their understanding of how they can support their young people. Where there are independent initiatives as the young lady raised, an initiative that was brought to the partnership and indeed I was one of those people who spoke to Chiara, we very much welcome initiatives that are community driven and if you'd like to come and speak to us again. Where we can support you we will but it's not about giving money to communities or to groups or to individuals, it's very much about building the capacity of communities and working with whole communities, so really it's a whole range of activities. We don't just work with young people, we work with the mosques, with the leadership, we work with individuals in the community who want to develop their own skills so that they can work with youth, and with others, we have a Muslim women's forum where we meet together to discuss issues of concern and look at how we can support women to take a more active role in their communities, and I could talk from a long time on this ...

BS - I just wanted to say simply this is something that we all can be involved in, it isn't just about a Prevent agenda or money from government or anything like that. The capacity building of any of the faith groups is dependant upon the whole of the community for us to work together with our neighbours and our colleagues. I am, as you know, a Langley Green councillor and we probably bore the heavier burden of the operation Crevice that Steve Curry spoke about, but in saying that I pay tribute to the whole of the community of Langley Green for the way in which they managed a difficult situation right across all the members of minority BME communities because everybody was concerned and worried and frightened and I think we have to take a step back sometimes from looking at this as a huge problem. It's something we have to cope with and deal with and in many ways we're very good at doing this in Crawley particularly welcoming in new communities. The new communities that are coming in

now from eastern Europe of course are being welcomed in by our residents who have been here from 35 years who were welcomed in when they came perhaps from Uganda or other parts of the world. So Crawley's based on that type of community and I think we shouldn't lose track of that, that's the first important thing.

- Thank you, my name is Sally Blake and I really just wanted to sympathise with the young man who had to leave earlier because he said about young people who had special needs, unable to get jobs in Crawley because of the discrimination. I just wanted to say that I have a son that's in his 40s, he's special needs, he's been unemployed for two years now and because he is also discriminated against we don't get replies to letters or anything that he applies for, and he tries so hard and he desperately wants to work. So it's not just the young, although I do sympathise with them because they are in a minority, but it does also fold over into the older generation as well.

- It's a change of subject, my name's Frank Halliday, resident of Three Bridges and a member of the Three Bridges Forum. I am very pleased that Crawley won the award for the flowers and improving the environment and the support that the Council gave to the bulb planting organised by one of my neighbours for planting bulbs all round Crawley. Now, unfortunately these good works to improve the environment are undone by irresponsible people parking on the grass verges, churning them up, ruining the bulbs that have been planted. So what my question is, having regard to the fact that we've got representatives from the County Council, the Borough Council and the Police, what can you do to prevent this irresponsible parking and, more importantly, what will you do?

SC - Yes, it is the bane of people's lives and it's certainly something that gets flagged up right across all neighbourhoods, not just in Crawley, in other areas as well. And obviously we have our traffic wardens that patrol the areas and will deal with unlawful obstruction and infringements of parking. So it is something that we deal with. Would we like to do more of it in terms of capacity? Yes, but I actually do think that there is a responsibility on each and every one of us to actually respect the environment. I think the classic example is outside the school gates really, where it's not just actually about destroying the environment, actually it's about endangering children's welfare and safety and, no, I agree with you.

DC - This subject is certainly an old chestnut that comes up year after year and for me there are two types of people who park on grass verges. There are those who literally have nowhere else to park, partly because parts of Crawley were designed, in my opinion, quite poorly all those years ago with no imagination as to how many cars there would be in the future. They imagined that there would be one car per ten houses or something ridiculous like that and clearly that is not the case nowadays. Then there are those people who are, quite frankly, lazy and arrogant and they just park wherever they want, regardless of the concerns of anybody else or indeed the environment. As Steve Curry said, it's personal behaviour. I think in reality it's perhaps not a priority for the traffic wardens if they're not causing an obstruction, but certainly I would like to discourage people from parking on the grass verges. They do a lot of damage, especially at this time of year when the verges are wet. Across the town the Council have in some areas, where there has been a particular shortage of parking provision, taken out some grass verges and have put in extra car parking spaces to help alleviate the situation. But that is quite expensive to do, it can cost sometimes up to £8,000 per parking space created. Sometimes the space created is worth more than the value of the car that parks in it.

- But we don't want to lose the grass verges.

DC - Well in some places we may need to, and in other places we don't, but whenever we do a residential environmental improvement scheme we do consult with local residents.

WL - What particularly would you like to see in some of the more crowded areas, what improvements would you like to see?

- I would like to see the cars removed.

WL - It's not going to happen though is it?

- Well, that's why I'm asking the representatives of the County Council, the Borough Council and the Police. What you're really saying to me, there's nothing you can do about it, so be open and say that.

BS - Well, I'll be open and say that much of the verge is owned by the County Council and there is absolutely nothing that the Police can do without a Traffic Regulation Order that empowers them to do so. In Crawley many of our roads, the highway stretches from front gate to front gate and therefore there is no legislation to stop people parking on the verges. Please don't anybody go out of this room and say this but that's a fact. And unless the county council can find a way to legislate to stop parking on the verges and yet allow it to park on the highway, then we're going to go on for ever more in the situation we are in now. The only place you can't park on is a verge if it's owned by the borough council and not by the county council. There are different regulations there, but the majority belong to county council those that are lined with a yellow line, and the yellow line applies equally to both sides of that line to the highway and to the verge. And that's the problem we have.

- Henry Smith - There are two and a half thousand roads across West Sussex and it is a huge problem here particularly I think for historical reasons when Crawley was designed. As Duncan said, some of the early neighbourhoods were designed with the idea that there would only be one car for every ten households, which clearly doesn't match the state we're in now. There is hope on the horizon and that horizon is only midway through this year, 2010. At the moment parking enforcement is the responsibility of Sussex Police. Sussex Police's resources are quite limited and they naturally put a lot of their resources into more serious crime fighting and therefore the amount of traffic wardens that Sussex Police have patrolling the streets of Crawley are relatively low. What is happening, from midway through this year, is something called civil parking enforcement. This is being introduced into Crawley and that's where both the county and the borough council will take over responsibility for parking enforcement from the Police. So what difference will that make? At the moment when a ticket is issued the fine that is paid ultimately goes up to the Treasury in London and very little of that comes back down here to Crawley. What will happen with civil parking enforcement is that the fine paid will stay here in Crawley and that fine will be ring fenced to go back into further parking enforcement. More wardens will be able to be employed to enforce more of the traffic regulation orders. As part of civil parking enforcement traffic regulations will also be reviewed as well. Brenda's right, in many parts of Crawley the highway goes right up to the property, it doesn't go up to the edge of the kerb. So I'm not suggesting this is going to be a panacea, something that will completely solve the problem, but I think from the middle of this year the problem will start to get a lot better. Consultation with residents in Three Bridges has started to introduce a permit system for residents to park outside their houses and prevent other people from parking there if they don't

have a permit. So it's a solution that I think will go some way to solving the problems but ultimately with limited space and more cars there will always be pressure.

- I'd just like to say that I had a problem where I live in Bewbush with parking. There was no emergency access at all. We couldn't get ambulances in, we couldn't get fire engines in, but the PCSO sorted it out for us, thank you very much. They were very very good, and I can get an ambulance to me now. Thank you very much.

- Thank you very much. My name is Dr Mohindar Galowalia. I am the Chairman of the Crawley Interfaith Network and I am responding to the question which earlier on was raised that we are committed to develop community cohesion very very strongly since I took over and we work on something positively rather than negatively, and that is developing the faith values to create community cohesion. It is very difficult to create community cohesion, it can be negative as we said a double-edged sword. And in this regard I think we have got a big task ahead of us but also at the same time I have a question and that is thank you very much to the Council for providing us with a development worker but just to provide a worker does not provide us with the facilities which we need. Every time we have to have a meeting we have to hire a community hall or elsewhere or meet in someone's house and that is not very satisfactory for the very important role which we consider we are playing for the community of the whole of Crawley.

BL - Thank you for your question and thank you for the good work that you're doing, I mean we've spoken before and I know it's part of your aim to identify common and core values across the faiths, and I would also add, across those people with no professed faith, which is the second largest group of the British population. Thanks for raising the point, I mean we can discuss offline perhaps any additional needs and I expect and assume that one of those additional needs might be accommodation so very happy to discuss that with you, Okay, thank you.

- I'm here with some of these young people and it's back to what the young gentleman at the front was saying earlier about employment, etc. with young people. Whilst I appreciate the gentleman, I don't know his name, made the comment that we can show them where to go I don't think you realise the importance of having these young people in employment even when they are in education. It's a right of passage for one that when you are going through the education system you get to a certain age, you get a part-time job, you learn how to maintain that while you're still in the environment of being educated, etc., that's one thing. The other thing is what are they doing with their spare time now they're not working? They don't have the extra income so that's a whole disposable income that is not being placed back into the community so it might not have an affect now but it will have a long term effect with these youngsters aren't buying their CDs, they aren't buying those bits and pieces because they haven't got the money. I mean I'm wondering is it because at some stage at the moment they're not voting so it doesn't matter to you. Is it because it is not a target that has to be met or it's not actually even monitored as I'm aware. How many children are unemployed at school level. It might not matter to you but to these young people it is a vital thing for them at this age.

DC - I do want to well rebuke that comment that it does matter to us. We all take it very seriously, as I said earlier, I came to Crawley as an unemployed teenager. I know what it's like to be unemployed and this recession has hit young people disproportionately harder than everybody else, you heard what the young man said there's a million people between 18 and 24 without work, education or training. But what I would say is that there are a lot of things on offer for young people and there's

a lot of places for young people to get advice, such as Connexions in the town centre that's specifically there for young people. Do you want to come back in on that?

- I want to come back on that, yes. I've helped a young boy go to Connexions. The poor woman there, her grammar was absolutely atrocious. Having been an employer myself in the past she wrote out a CV for him, spelling mistakes. Now if that CV had come to me as an employer, I would have just thrown it in the bin, I wouldn't even have given him the interview, and that's not even his fault, that's advice from one of your representatives, you know, doing it for him. Does that make sense? It's as if they just – you know, we'll just give them lip-service, yeah, yeah, go to Connexions and do what have you.

DC - I don't agree with that but I regret that one bad experience has given a poor impression of the Connexions service and that's certainly not the impression that we would want to give. And, you know, is that level of service representative? Personally I don't know but I would certainly hope not. But as I said earlier, we are concerned about young people because not only did you mention about the economic realities of it but also there's the potential for young people to go wayward if they're not doing something meaningful and constructive with their time and we talked earlier on about extremism, the potential for young Muslim men but actually there's a whole wider issue about young men becoming disengaged from society and that can manifest itself in all sorts of ways. Whether it's through not working or turning to crime and there is a real issue there, but what I would say is that all agencies from the Government downwards are concerned about this and are trying to do something about it.

- Well, I think the thing is a lot of young people don't put in the effort to go and find the jobs that are out there and I know there are jobs out there, I've seen jobs advertised. I mean I can't work properly because I'm not old enough, but I've got a paper round and I know that the paper shop I work for needs people to come in and cover on Saturdays, they need people to work during the weekends part-time. If young people put in the effort to go and find these jobs, they are out there and I think it's unfortunate that a lot of young people aren't putting the effort in that they need to, to find the jobs that can get them off the streets.

- Sorry, I resent that comment. My name's Crystal, I'm here on behalf of all the youth wings in Crawley. I've been searching for a job for the past two years, went to Connexions, did they give me anything? Yeah. But was it out of date? It was. There was nothing there for me and I've only just found myself a job and it is not the job I want to do because the training isn't there. Young people want to get involved and they want to do things but the help is not there and the publicity for youths to help us is not there at all.

BS - As I said earlier on to the first person who asked a question on this, I don't have any actual experience of today in this sort of market, but where is he, what a lovely young man. I know that my paper shop also needs newspaper delivery people. And I did it when I was a kid, you know, these are things that we have traditionally done and I think that aspirations we must always aspire to the greatest things but you know there are some stepping stones along the way that do help us, especially when, if we're talking about young children and youngsters still at school. There are ways to get involved. I do think it's a tragedy for any young person who can't get a job and especially in the field they want to, but you do have to keep at it and I'm really sad to hear that Connexions hasn't come up to the mark, but Henry's here and I'm sure between Henry and Bob and the authorities I think the message there is that you do have to go and market yourself.

- Henry Smith- Connexions is a partnership between Crawley Borough Council, the further education colleges, so essentially for this neck of the woods Central Sussex College, old Crawley College, the Government through the JobCentre Plus and also us at the County Council being essentially the education authority. I'm sorry to hear about those examples of a poor service from Connexions and I certainly will take a look at that. Broadly I think Connexions has provided a good service but inevitably there will always be situations where perhaps it has failed, they did just recently open up another outlet, an opticians that went bust in County Mall, so they're in there as well to be a little bit more accessible. I'll take a look at that individual issue but broadly I think the idea of different agencies, JobCentre Plus, the County Council, Crawley Borough Council, the Central Sussex College coming together to try and find solutions to get young people into employment is very important and I just reiterate the point that employment opportunities should be available to all regardless of their circumstances. It's always a bit nerve-wracking as a public representative standing up here but I've got to give credit to the young people and the questions they've asked this evening, very pertinent questions. With regard to the Youth Service, just very quickly, we do need to provide more youth provision I believe in Crawley. There is a major review of the youth service across West Sussex that's about to be started and I think what we need to do is have much more sophisticated links with voluntary organisations with other providers so that there is a more holistic service. At the moment it tends to be a little bit patchy, youth provision around Crawley and I think young people suffer as a result of that and when young people are bored then they hang out on the neighbourhood parades and then there can be trouble for the whole community so it's an issue that needs particular focus.

- What more is being done on a weekend so that young people between 13 and 25 have more to do, especially in Tilgate, Broadfield and Furnace Green?

DC - Thank you, well the young man in the audience who asked about youth provision in the evenings, especially around Tilgate, Furnace Green, Broadfield, well, some three years ago I went to the official opening of the Thomas Bennett youth wing, which was opened by Henry Smith and that serves Tilgate, Furnace Green and Broadfield, and late last year we had the opening of the new youth café at the Crawley Library, just near the town centre, I think it's between 6 and 8 I think they are the times. That's going well I believe. I just want to come back very quickly to the two differences of opinion that two different young people mentioned about young people, education and training. Before the recession actually hit and when the economy was doing well, there was still a significantly high number of young people who were what they call NEETs, who were not in education, employment or training, when the economy was doing well, and so clearly there is an underlying issue there about whether some young people have not either felt the need to or had the actual need to actually be made to work or do some training, maybe they've got soft parents. However, since the recession has started, there's come on stream if you like a whole new grouping of young people who are desperately keen to be doing something constructive and who are finding themselves that they're not able, so I think both comments are actually valid because I think out of the many young people who are not in education or training, or work there are varying reasons as to why that's the case.

BS - Can I come back with Connexions. I was just going to say there is a bad service going on with Connexions and maybe we need to put test people in there and see what service they get and if it is a bad service then we need to train them, and more money needs to be put into Connexions to improve the service.

- Dave Hathaway, Crawley Neighbourhood Watch and one of those streetcare champions. Bob Lanzer gave a very good presentation and I want to ask a question about environmental services because I think the Council has a superb and enviable record in providing good environmental services in Crawley and good intentions. They've signed up to 1010 and in two nights' time you're going to be sponsoring the showing of the film The Age of Stupid. Many of us are concerned not just to save the trees, preserve our green areas, but we're concerned about whether global warming is an issue or not, but the belief that we have come out of a recession and we carry on rushing away to unbridled growth again, it's not necessarily good for the planet. And so whether there is an issue there about climate change it's intelligent, it's the age of sensible to actually have efficient services and I'm very much encouraged by what the Council's doing but can you tell me which of the 10 targets you're aiming to improve and cut 10 per cent in 2010, which are the ones that you are the toughest for you to achieve and that'd like the public us residents to be helping you to achieve.

BL - Thank you for your comments and your support for our signing up to the 1010 pledge. I think one of the toughest from the point of view of breaking habits is to use our cars less and I have to say as per the central government initiative, using our cars five miles less per week actually does make a material difference. There is something else we need to do it's about belief because part of our community consultation shows us that a large proportion of us do not believe that we individually can make a difference on climate change. We need to alter that belief because if we believe we can do nothing then nothing will change. I mean it goes back to the old example of if you get one billion Chinese people to do something at the same time you make quite an impact. It might be just squashing a fly or something but we will not make an impact unless we can suspend this disbelief about climate change and unless we believe that as individuals in our daily lives. I'm thinking power consumption, I'm thinking of driving, is your journey really necessary etc., etc. Unless we believe we can make that difference the future isn't that good.

WL - I will come to a few points on that. Just interestingly from perhaps the area's largest employer the NHS and the PCT perhaps Sue you might like to come in here and what kind of efforts does the Health Service make on cutting carbon emissions.

SB - I think actually to be fair it's the County Council that have done a lot more work than health and we're beginning to work with the County Council in some of their thinking and trying to catch up a bit quicker so I think actually health is probably a bit behind the curve and we need to pull our socks up.

- Do you think that taxis should be allowed in bus lanes in Crawley?

BL - I support the trial of that proposal it's something that's been requested.

- And the money that's being spent on the trial.

BL - Yes I do. I support the trial. I support therefore the money that's being spent on the trial. If you don't experiment you don't learn anything and I'll make the point to you that in other parts of the world including Brighton the use of taxis in bus lanes and indeed London is very effective and after all it is a form of public transport. You know its right to try new things to see how they work.

- Yes my name is Trevor Jones. I'm a resident of Langley Green. I'm also a waste prevention advisor apart from other things. I noticed that you're saying that our recycling is pretty good but a couple of months ago in the Crawley News there was

an article saying how bad it was. It was by Bob Lanzer or they reported Bob Lanzer as saying this. So what is it? I can see in Langley Green when I go and get a paper in the morning all the recycling out and the amount of rubbish that is in there so what are you doing about this. Are you using us waste prevention advisors or not.

BL - Thanks for your observation from the Crawley News and from time to time I have the good luck to be reported accurately. I'm not commenting about this particular occasion. Our recycling rate overall is something like 30 percent and I'll just mention measures that we've recently taken to extend that. I mean one of them of course is allowing new materials to go in the red top bins including glass. What is happening is that the technology used to separate recycled materials is advancing all the time and so rather than have multiple bins outside your house where you separate them it's better to exploit that new technology and have the technology separate the recyclables when you deliver it. We have also introduced green waste collection as well as with 4,000 bins in issue. I would say to you that our overall recycling rate should be better that is true. It's good but it should be better. It's around 30 percent I'd like to see it a few percentage points higher than that and growing.

- Brenda Burgess here, Three Bridges Ward Member and although I haven't got the hat on tonight I'm also Mayor but I haven't got that hat on tonight. I'm sorry I'm going to have my say about that we in Crawley do need a more cohesive youth programme across the town. Our areas all need to be able to work together to serve our youth on all sides of town and I do know that there is a need for new youth clubs to come on line. All the information needs to go out electronically or to youth groups at schools, as soon as we get our lease signed for Northgate and Three Bridges I'm sure we'll have a super new youth area on our side of town to serve the youth.

- Thank you very much my name is Richard Nixon and I live in Ifield and my question to Bob and to Brenda concerning transparency of section 106 infrastructure money that comes into the Council's coffers as a result of new developments. I moved onto a new housing estate called The Orchard and in 2007 the developer paid £200,000 and so far I can only perceive that that money has been spent as a contribution towards the new library and towards the new children's play area in Ifield yet the transport infrastructure money has not been spent yet and a second area that was the case last year of infrastructure money in Three Bridges that was spent in a different ward and that caused a lot of problems. I'd like possible answers from the Borough and the County as to what they're doing in terms of spending this money because it's been sitting in the accounts for two years.

WL - Bob first if you could explain very briefly and rapidly what section 106 is.

BL - Section 106 this is money handed over by developers to support infrastructure improvements such as roads, new libraries which the development might increase the need for. Now in terms of The Orchard development, yes a proportion of the money hasn't been spent yet but we are working to spend it and it's a little more complex than it sounds at first sight. It's necessary to first of all find a location for a bus stop which is suitable and we're working on that and it's not that straightforward. It's not possible to put a viable bus stop within that actual development itself. We're also working with the bus company and of course this has not been an ideal time for a bus company to divert its routes or introduce new ones. Indeed some bus companies need a bit of financial support with their existing routes. We went beyond the bus company that serves most of Crawley to even look at the possibility of the Charlwood bus I think the 526 or 527 routing itself by The Orchard. We are making progress and we hope to report good news soon about that but there's no time limit

in which we can spend the section 106 money. Regarding the use of Three Bridges S106 money for works in Pound Hill that was transparent in the sense that you know about it, if it wasn't transparent you wouldn't even know about it. If that's not too convoluted but clearly we are empowered to mix and match to some degree and so what matters is the way overall s106 is spent so for example if developments in Pound Hill could demonstrate a need for enhanced infrastructure in Three Bridges then we can reallocate in the reverse direction.

BS - Mr Nixon is quite right. There is a substantial sum of section 106 money that was gained through the development there and certainly some of the money I think as you know was spent on the provision of enhanced facilities for children and play areas on lfield Green. I find that quite a shame. It was in the agreement with the developers so it's written in tablets of stone and it's held I think within the agreement of all the lease and owner occupiers on The Orchard site so again it is quite transparent. I tried to discuss the issue about on-site provision. Many of the parents on that development and I'm quite surprised that many of the parents were actually against having a play facility close to their properties in The Orchard so it's very difficult to get a consensus. You're nodding so you know that that's a fact and that's difficult isn't it. As far as the bus company is concerned I would appreciate some transparency. I'll be very open here. I have been working exceedingly hard as the member who represents that neighbourhood to bring about a bus for that neighbourhood not just for The Orchard but also for the top end of Langley Green because people who live in Rushetts Road, Stafford Road, Burlands, Langley Lane are increasing in years and needing a bus facility nearer than the bus stop that they have now which is at the bottom of Warren Drive also want a bus to run out there. I have spoken to the officers of the Borough Council and I have spoken to Metrobus and Metrobus have been very difficult about extending their services in the financial climate as Councillor Bob Lanzer has said, nevertheless that doesn't mean I will give up. I will never give up and I think that we should be doing something more for the residents certainly in my patch but the transparency that I have been lacking is that having raised it through the proper channels of the Council I have not been properly informed as to the outcomes of those discussions and that grieves me. I have taken that matter up with the Chief Executive and I now hope that I will be given the proper information to allow me to do my job as the properly elected councillor for that ward irrespective of politics.

- Chris Roach, prospective parliamentary candidate for UKIP. What are your thoughts on the idea of locally elected chief constables for the area. People would have a say your mandate in terms of your priorities what the local people feel are the important issues that you should be addressing and prioritising.

SC - Without sacking Chief Constable Martin Richards I'll cover that question from a slightly different way. I think we do a good job in some of the headline figures in terms of crime and crime reduction and detection but one of the things that I am passionate about and I'm a neighbourhood police officer from my heart that's been my business over the last 16 years is actually about doing more than that it's about actually engaging with the public, understanding what the needs are of individuals and communities and actually delivering against that so the more accountable that we can be to local people. I'm all for that and one of the things if I can get a quick opportunity to say is I would encourage you all when you have a free five minutes and you have access to the internet to look on the Sussex Police website click on the Crawley district and actually look and see who your neighbourhood police officers are. Engage with them, find out how you can have access and be able to influence the setting of local priorities in conjunction with our partners to actually make a difference because I think it's really important that when I'm at home in Brighton I

don't want to be burgled, I don't want to have my car stolen or broken into but more than that actually I'd like to have a say about those key things that wind me up on a Friday or Saturday night and actually know what's happening about it and actually get some feedback and so if I can say the point that I'm in agreement with actually local accountability it certainly works for me.

END OF QUESTION TIME