

FEBRUARY 2014

## Council tax freeze

On 24 February, 2014 the Council agreed to freeze Bromley's council tax. This followed the announcement made by the Chancellor before Christmas that the grant given to local authorities to freeze council tax would no longer be a one-off payment but part of the year-on-year government funding to councils. This means it can now be used to support the cost of front line services.



### Leader's comment



"This change of heart by the government is welcomed and is a result of this Council pressing home our concerns with local MPs and Ministers that

accepting the one-off payment was not financially sustainable. I am delighted to report to residents and Members our robust lobbying has also led to further good news that the Chancellor has also stepped back from a proposal to reduce Bromley's funding even further this year.

“ This change of heart by government is welcomed. It is a result of this council pressing home our concerns. ”

Having won the argument with government we have been able to freeze council tax this year and maintain front line services whilst minimising the financial burden we know many of our residents face in these difficult economic times. However, despite this success and the savings already identified, including £18 million from salaries over three years, ongoing significant cuts in government funding mean we face a further budget gap of more than £50 million over the next four years. Like every household we must take steps to balance our budgets. This includes looking hard at everything we do and how we do it and it means continuing to fight hard for a fairer funding deal for the people of Bromley."

**Cllr Stephen Carr**  
Leader, Bromley Council

### Ways to pay

There are lots of ways to pay your Council tax including by direct debit, on line, through your bank or post office or through our 24 hour automated telephone line on **0870 240 6449**.

Visit [www.bromley.gov.uk/paycounciltax](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/paycounciltax) or call **0845 1300 330** for more information about the most convenient way for you to pay your Council tax.

### Have your say on 22 May

Make sure you're registered to vote in the local and European elections being held across London on Thursday, 22 May. The 2013/14 register was published on 17 February based on information given by residents. If you think you might not be on the register or if you've moved house or changed your name since you last registered you have till 6 May to make sure you can have your say on 22 May.

Please contact [electoral@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:electoral@bromley.gov.uk) or call **0300 303 8665** for more information.



## Speaking out for a better Bromley

Last year we lobbied about the future of the fire service in Bromley. The decision has now been made to keep Biggin Hill Fire Station open along with Beckenham and Bromley. The Orpington fire station will be rebuilt. We are one of only two boroughs in London to get increased fire service cover.

Together with our Orpington MP, Jo Johnson, we've also successfully lobbied to secure the future of health services in Orpington with the announcement by Kings the hospital will no longer close.



## Speaking out for fairer funding

Government funding is our main source of income and when we met with you at our public meetings last autumn you asked us to keep publicising our low level of funding and to continue pressing for a fairer deal. Here are some of the facts and figures that speak for themselves:

- We have one of the lowest levels of funding per head of population in London at £264 in 2013/14 compared to the average in London of £571. The highest is £964
- Bromley has one of the lowest levels of other general government grants at £64 per head of population in 2013-14 compared with the highest of £201
- If we received the average level of grant funding for London, our income would increase by £110m
- Using Office for National Statistics classification of authorities, we have the lowest Council Tax in outer London. If our Council Tax was the average of the six other low grant funded authorities our income would increase by £26 million
- Bromley had to face the biggest reduction in Formula Grant of 14.3% in 2011-12, 10.4% in 2012/13 and a further 8.7% in 2013/14. This is expected to increase further over the next four years

## Planning for a better Bromley

Residents and interested groups are being asked for views on detailed planning policies and key priorities for the future development of the borough.

The consultation about the Local Plan includes suggestions for how issues

may be tackled through the Council's broad planning approach and takes into account responses from earlier consultation.

Please give your views through the Council's consultation portal at [www.bromley.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/localplan)



## Electrifying numbers - for new collection service

Over 75 tonnes of electrical waste has been collected during two months alone from residents in the free collection service. The convenient door to door electrical recycling collection service generated a staggering 36.5 tonnes of unwanted electrical items during December and a further 41 tonnes in January.

The additional service helps divert from landfill, which is a better financial disposal option. Last year 35,000 tonnes of borough waste was sent to landfill, costing Bromley taxpayers in excess of

£2.2 million in landfill tax costs alone. This will rise to over £2.5 million this year unless more is recycled or less is thrown away.

Residents with broken or unwanted items, large or small which need a plug or battery to work, can use this weekday collection service by calling the hotline **017954 34114** or email **bromley@sweeep.co.uk** giving their name, address, and contact numbers and a list of the items to be collected.

For more information on all the waste and recycling services available go to [www.bromley.gov.uk/wastenews](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/wastenews)

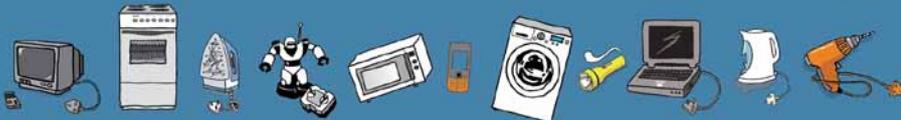
## A landmark development

In our last edition of **Update** we talked about the ambitious and exciting developments in our town centre to make it as attractive as possible to businesses, shoppers, residents and visitors. A landmark development for a 4\* boutique hotel at the Grade II listed former Bromley Town Hall is now being planned by a development partner. This includes high class wedding and conference facilities and restaurant and will restore many of the original features of the beautiful building.

“ The Town Hall site is a fantastic opportunity to provide the town with a high class facility. This is an exciting time for the town centre with the Bromley South Central cinema development and Bromley North Village improvements currently underway and more to come. ”

Councillor Stephen Carr,  
Council Leader

### Easy electrical collections from your home



[www.bromley.gov.uk/wastenews](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/wastenews)

Call 01795 434114



## New library for Penge

Great news for Penge - a brand new library for the town centre is set to be completed by the summer. We listened to Penge residents and the result will be an attractive 21st century library with lots of floor space, reading areas, more books, wifi, computers and a room for the community to use.

This will be the third new library provided for residents in the past few years.

“ We listened to what residents told us and the result will be an attractive 21st century library ”

The Biggin Hill dual use library and swimming pool opened in 2010 and the new Orpington library opened in July 2011, both with record

visitor numbers and increased book borrowing. For more information about libraries visit

[www.bromley.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/libraries)



# Crystal Palace - what's next

The third ZhongRong Group drop-in session about proposals to reconstruct the Crystal Palace will take place on **Saturday 1 March**. The event is organised by ARUP and is so people can comment on how the local

community should be engaged with over the coming months. Further details about ZhongRong's proposals, including park restoration and the times of the event, are available on [www.thelondoncrystalpalace.com](http://www.thelondoncrystalpalace.com)



## Beckenham set for multimillion pound scheme



Beckenham is set for a multimillion pound scheme of new lighting, street furniture, wider pavements and an emphasis on its 'village' identity.

*“ This scheme will support the future economic vibrancy of the town centre and enhance its historic heritage.”  
Councillor Peter Morgan,  
Executive Councillor for  
Renewal and Recreation. ”*

We worked hand and hand with residents' groups, business and others to submit a successful bid for Transport for London funding - we will part match fund the scheme. Detailed designs for the project will now be drawn up with work likely to start in 2016.

## Lest we forget

One way we are commemorating the 100th anniversary of WWI is restoring our war memorials around the borough. This is from a £1million fund set aside in the budget this year for one-off initiatives including repairing pot holes and funding local community initiatives.

