

Members Questions submitted (on Notice) to Cabinet Members for the Ordinary Meeting of the Council – Thursday, 26 March 2026

Question No.	Question received from	Respondent	Question
1.	Councillor Walker	Councillor Garner	Given the ongoing challenges faced by residents from anti-social behaviour on the Red Hall Estate, what plans does the Council have to expand the CCTV network there to ensure that those responsible for Anti-Social Behaviour are held accountable for their actions?
2.	Councillor Walker	Councillor McEwan	Shortly after the Labour Party took control of the council, the Northern Echo, quite prophetically, declared “The Decline of our Town”. They were not to know that a Labour government would scrap the winter fuel allowance which resulted in many elderly shoppers having less disposable income, they weren’t to know that the Labour government would implement a “tax on jobs” by raising National Insurance contributions, and they weren’t to know that the Labour government would oversee massive inflation, huge increases in fuel bills or due to the incompetence of the Labour police and crime commissioner, that anti-social behaviour in the town centre would increase which puts people off coming into town. But the Northern Echo did know that Labour would oversee a decline of our town. With the loss of Binns and a shrinking high street, when will you produce a credible recovery plan for our town centre, one that takes into account the closure of large units such as Binns?
3.	Councillor Walker	Councillor Harker	The Council’s Constitution explicitly requires all Councillors to undergo a basic Disclosure and Barring (DBS) check, with Enhanced checks mandated for those serving on sensitive committees, such as Children and Young Persons Scrutiny Committee, Adults Scrutiny Committee, and the Corporate Parenting Panel. A recent Freedom of Information request has revealed that as of 22nd January 2026 — just over six months after Members were initially invited to submit a DBS Application — at least one Member, specifically Councillor Robinson, has failed to complete this mandatory check, and not submitted a DBS Application. What process does the council take for a Member who fails to complete a DBS check?
4	Councillor Walker	Councillor Harker	In response to a previous question in which I drew attention to your promise to cut the cost of living, I asked you how much your Labour-run council has reduced residents’ cost of living, you described the question as ‘ludicrous’, saying that individual circumstances vary. I would have thought that if you had cut somebody’s cost

			of living you would be eager to talk about it. Your inability to answer made me think that you haven't reduced the cost of food, fuel, shelter or other essentials, which you promised to do three years ago. A resident contacted me and gave me permission to use him as an example, please could you tell me how much you have cut his cost of living by? He lives in a Band A property, which has recently seen an increase in the amount of council tax he pays, he works full-time and does not claim benefits or receive any council support, he has no children. Based on his circumstances, can you tell me by how much you have reduced his cost of living since taking control? For clarity, I define 'cost of living' as spending on food, fuel, accommodation, council tax, and other everyday essentials.
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