

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 1.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Ken Wakeman

Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

Question

There was a serious fire in Wild Goose Drive, where the fire tender was unable to turn from Dennett's Road into Wild Goose Drive. He had to reverse out and drive all the way around to access the fire. This delay could have caused lives and serious injury. Do you agree this needs immediate action so this can never happen again?

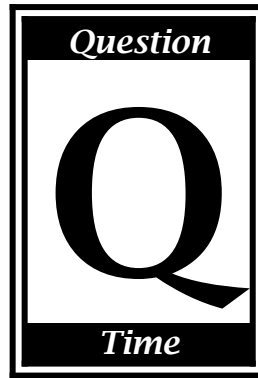
With all the new proposed housing on our estate and all the new cars and vans, do you appreciate the concerns of the tenants and residents, when even a fire tender cannot gain access to a fire?

Reply

In relation to the recent difficulties with access for the London Fire Brigade, works were undertaken earlier this year to address estate road signage and road markings to prevent and deter obstructive parking in the area. This included the addition of double yellow lines on that particular junction.

In relation to the Council's plans for new housing, the Council is required to consider parking needs and arrangements as part of any planning application. Lewisham

Homes will soon be starting a consultation exercise with local residents, including the community centre. Detailed professional advice will be taken about the traffic and parking implications of any new homes and how these impacts can be best managed and mitigated through the design of the redevelopment plans. This will give tenants and residents the chance to give their views which will then be taken into account during the design and planning process.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 2.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Jan Fowler

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

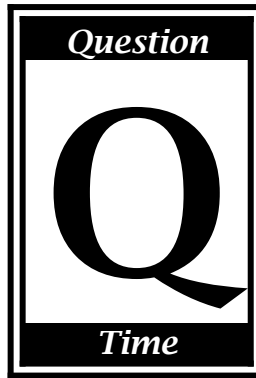
Question

What is the formal agreement regarding the housing stock transfer between LBL (London Borough Lewisham) and L&Q Group (London & Quadrant)?

Reply

As part of its strategy to achieve Decent Homes, the Council entered into three stock transfers with L&Q. Each of these was subject to a separate transfer agreement. All of these stock transfers were approved by residents, and together have brought in significant investment in residents' homes since the transfers took place.

For example the Grove Park stock transfer was approved by Mayor and Cabinet on 30 April 2008, and subsequently ratified by Full Council on 30 June 2008. As a result, L&Q invested £20million over 5yrs to bring the transferred homes up to Decent Homes Standard. They also committed to investment totalling £60 million over the first 30 years.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 3.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Matthew Clinch

Member to reply: Councillor Maslin

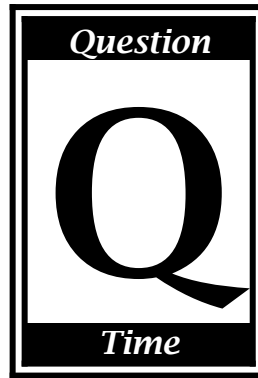
Question

What is the plan is for the property being vacated by St Winifred's Infant School in Effingham Road SE12 this year, and will the Council consider purchasing the property on behalf of the excellent Brindishe Schools to help tackle the severe shortage of primary school places in this area of the borough.

Reply

St Winifred's Infant School is owned by the Archdiocese of Southwark and as such we cannot comment on their plans for any future use of the site. We would recommend that you contact them directly.

There are currently sufficient primary school places in Lewisham following school expansions and opening of new schools. Additional places will still be required in future years and we are reviewing our plans with a view to setting a new 5 year strategy in the autumn.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 4.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Mr McCorkindale

Member to reply: Councillor Onikosi

Question

Can you offer advice to me as a pensioner with small gardens at the back and front of my home? I was quite happy with the Green Bag service provided as the amount of garden refuse I generated never exceeded ten bags a year, cost £10. On one year only did that amount total more than fifteen bags, £15. Are you aware that the Council is now asking me to pay £45 (45 bags!) then £60 after the discount period? Will you acknowledge that there is no way I can begin to fill sixty bags worth of garden waste a year and will you acknowledge that this is just another way to wring more money from tax payers.

Reply

The Council resolved that a subscription garden waste service be introduced from June 2016 at an annual fee of £60 p.a. in February 2016.

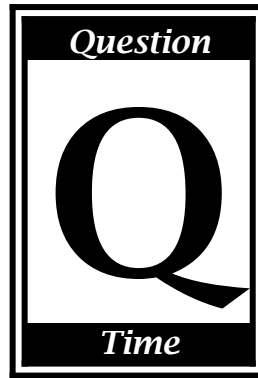
Garden waste is a service that can be charged for as not all citizens have a garden. The Council consulted on new waste and recycling services, which was the largest consultation that the Council has undertaken, with over 6,000 residents completing the survey.

In addition to this the Council also looked at what other local authorities were doing and believe that the costs of the new service are consistent with other local authorities. Of those that offer a wheelie bin garden waste service, eleven authorities charge, and the prices range from £30 - £78 per year, the majority are £60+ a year.

The decision was taken to run this service exclusively meaning that the bag service will cease. With the high volume of new customers, the health and safety of the operatives has to be taken into account, both from a manual handling perspective of collecting high volume of sacks on a daily basis as well as from handling high volumes of garden waste which increase the risk of exposure to bio aerosols, which can have health implications. The operatives have to empty the garden waste from the sacks which increases their exposure to these bio aerosols. Containing the garden waste in wheelie bins reduces this exposure.

For residents who don't want to subscribe for reasons such as the number of wheelie bins, the cost or who don't produce much garden waste, there are other ways that people can dispose of their garden waste. These include taking it to the Reuse & Recycling Centre, paying for a private waste contractor, using a mobile chipping company for branches or people could consider home composting the garden waste.

The Council will be reviewing all of the services that it is introducing following implementation and feedback from customers and where improvements can be made, these will certainly be investigated and implemented if possible.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 5.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: John Hamilton

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

The current proposal for the use of the Council owned land known as the Besson Street triangle, is to enter into an agreement with a developer to build 250 private rented sector housing units of which 35% will be a guaranteed affordable rents.

- Will the land remain in Council ownership?
- Who will own the homes?
- Who will decide whether prospective tenants can have a high or a low rent?
- Could you explain the purpose of the collaborative nature of the planned development?

Reply

Our proposal for Besson Street is to create a new type of landlord and a new type of development, first and foremost to improve conditions in the private rented sector. We want to help shape the standards against which others are judged on crucial things like tenancy length, standards of repairs and management, and lettings fees. We also want to provide an offer to lower income local people who simply have no alternative to renting privately, other than moving away from London.

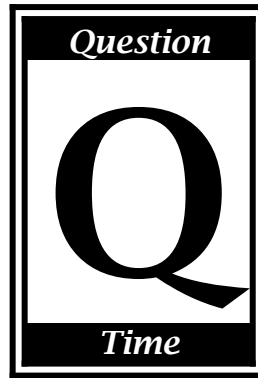
The development will be part of a wide range of measures aimed at tackling the housing crisis in Lewisham, and will be in addition to the existing programme of Council house building and the wider support provided by the Council to partners in order to deliver 2,000 new affordable homes by 2018.

In this instance, the Council is proposing to enter into a partnership with a developer to bring in the finance and skills needed to provide high quality new homes for rent as well as creating a new place with community facilities and a GP surgery.

This partnership will be able to attract patient, long-term capital funding from pension funds, and therefore be able to deliver a much higher quality rented offer for some of Lewisham's private renters, who amount to one in four of Lewisham's population and growing. It will be a pragmatic collaboration between the Council, which is seeking to deliver its housing strategy and improve standards for renters and development and/or funding partners who will bring expertise and the level of investment required to make the development happen.

Under the proposal the new development, including the land and the new homes, will be owned jointly by the Council and the partner through a new investment partnership company that the Council will create specifically for that purpose.

The Council will set the terms of the partnership before it is created, thereby ensuring that it is able to deliver enhanced security of tenure and the new model of discounted rents for local low income workers. The partnership itself will allocate the discounted rental properties according to pre-agreed criteria, which will include a local connection criteria and that the low-rent properties are rented to people who earn a salary below a pre-agreed level.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 6.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Jacob Stringer

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

With reference to the Council's proposed Besson Street scheme, while we all understand the Council is looking for new income streams at present, could it not be considered opportunistic, even unethical, to use public land to create income streams from renters in a time of housing crisis?

Reply

There is a housing crisis across all tenures, and it is not simply limited to cost. One in four Lewisham residents lives in an almost entirely unregulated private rented sector, in which security of tenure is very poor, standards are variable, fees are high and the vast majority of landlords – including very many good landlords – are amateurs who only own one property.

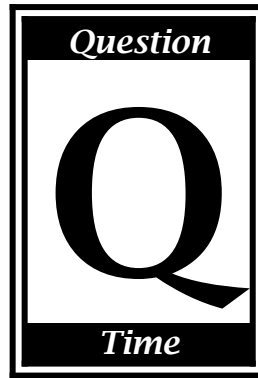
This Council has committed to finding ways to improve conditions for private renters, an increasing number of whom have young families, and a large proportion of whom have always received low incomes but never had any realistic prospect of accessing social housing or home ownership. The private rented sector simply does not work well for a great many of our residents and we are committed to doing something about it.

Our proposal for Besson Street is to create a new type of landlord and a new type of development, first and foremost to improve conditions in the private rented sector. We want to help shape the standards against which others are judged on crucial things like tenancy length, standards of repairs and management, and lettings fees. We also want to provide an offer to lower income local people who simply have no alternative to renting privately, other than moving away from London.

We will do this by creating a partnership with an experienced and credible private sector investment partner, who will bring the tens of millions of pounds of investment required to make this happen, but will do so from patient and long term sources like pension funds. We will do this by ensuring that a third of the homes in the development are affordable, where rents are set according to local incomes and not an ever inflating property market, and where there is absolutely no differential in property or service according to the rents that are paid. No poor doors, and access to all areas and all services for all tenants regardless of rent.

The development needs to be able to repay the money invested in it, otherwise the land will lay vacant and we won't build these 230 much needed homes. So, the two thirds of renters who pay a market rent will be helping to pay back the investment made by the Council and its partners. But these will be people who already rent privately, who are perfectly free to choose to rent somewhere else, and who we hope will choose to rent with us because the rented offer we will provide will be so much better than the standards out on the market. And any surplus that is made after repaying the investment will be shared, and the Council's share can be used to pay for vital services despite on-going and ever worsening funding cuts.

So no, I don't think there is anything unethical in providing better services, better standards, security of tenure for renters, a new offer for residents who could otherwise be excluded from living locally, new homes, a new GP surgery and the potential to fund vital services despite Government funding cuts.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 7.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Member to reply: Chair designate Elections Committee

Question

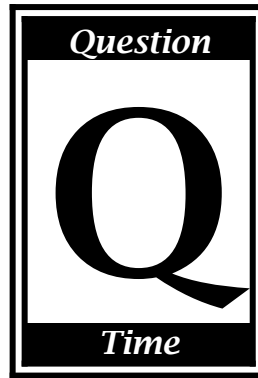
Now that postal returns for election balloting are increasing, would the Council explain how the system works once the postal ballot has been returned to its destination.

- Up to what date/time are postal ballot returns accepted?
- If these are returned on the day of the count how does Lewisham ensure such postal ballots are included?
- As postal ballots are returned over a period of time, where are they stored until they are required for the count?
- At what stage in the proceedings are postal ballots removed from their envelopes ready for the count?
- What is the total number of electors registered in the London Borough of Lewisham? What proportion of this is the over 18 years old population in Lewisham?
- How many of those registered to vote register for a postal ballot?

Reply

- Postal ballot returns are accepted until the close of poll at 10 p.m. on election day.
- Lewisham has a dedicated team which processes postal votes daily in the run up to election day. To be admitted to the count, postal votes must be accompanied by a postal vote statement bearing the elector's signature and date of birth. Only where both of these are supplied and both match those appearing on the postal vote application may the postal vote be admitted to the count. On election day Visiting Officers appointed by the Returning Officer make two visits to the polling stations to collect postal votes in sealed plastic wallets. They are delivered to the postal processing team at lunch time and in the early evening. Presiding Officers return any postal votes they receive after the final collection by the Visiting Officer by delivering them to the final postal processing session. That session starts only after the poll closes at 10 p.m. Once that final session is complete, the postal votes are delivered to the count venue.
- At the close of each daily postal processing session, the postal votes are placed in a ballot box which is sealed in the presence of any agents attending, who may take a note of the seal number should they wish to do so. The sealed ballot boxes are stored in a locked room in the Civic Suite. The room is only opened in the presence of a Deputy Returning Officer, and when it is open there is a Deputy Returning Officer present at all times.
- The external envelope addressed to the Returning Officer is opened first at each postal processing session. This exposes a sealed ballot paper envelope and the postal vote statement. Once it is established that the signature and date of birth on the statement match, the sealed ballot paper envelope is opened and the ballot paper removed. Ballot papers are kept face down at all times in the process. The papers are then counted, a postal vote ballot paper account for that session is drawn up, and the ballot papers are sealed in a ballot box.
- The local electorate at the 1 July 2016 is 197352, all of whom are over 18 save for 1750.

The number of postal voters at 1 July 2016 is 24,700



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 8.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Trina Lynskey

Member to reply: Councillor Onikosi

Question

Do you agree that flytipping is a persistent problem in the Evelyn Ward. Lewisham Council recommends residents use smartphone apps and the online reporting tool to report various environmental problems in their area including Fly-Tipping. Does this mean the Council does not undertake routine inspections of all streets in the ward on an ongoing basis?

How many instances of flytipping were reported in the Evelyn Ward using all available reporting methods (apps/online/email/letter etc) for the period April 2015 - March 2016?

How much did it cost to remove all instances of flytipping using Council employees and the Council appointed private contractor in the Evelyn Ward April 2015 - March 2016?

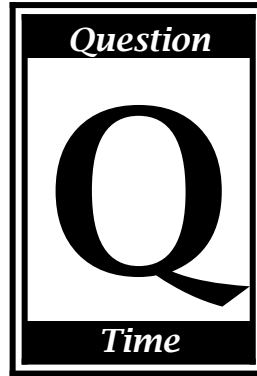
How many prosecutions were made as a result of enforcement with regard to Flytipping in the Evelyn Ward April 2015 - March 2016?

Reply

Fly-tipping is a problem borough wide within Lewisham and within most other inner city boroughs. Residents are encouraged to report fly-tipping in part because often incidents of fly-tipping have been witnessed by the resident and this can be key to enforcement action being able to be taken. However, the council's Clean Streets Enforcement Team does carry out proactive enforcement work within the borough. Although it must be remembered that the Clean Streets Enforcement Team is not a large team and therefore all proactive work has to be focused on the most serious and higher risk offending borough wide. Cleansing staff regularly inspect all borough roads and Cleansing Managers report issues to enforcement.

Unfortunately the council doesn't collect the requested information on a ward basis. A total of 6000 tonnes of fly-tipping was collected from Lewisham streets and estates in 2015/16, which amounted to just under £0.5m in disposal costs.

There was 19 Fixed Penalty Notices issued for waste offences in Evelyn ward. There was a total of 448 Fixed Penalty Notices issued borough wide for waste offences.



ED Cust Servs
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 9.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Mr Ross

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Section 8.2 of a report to Mayor and Cabinet dated 30 April 2008 states:

The Council will transfer the freehold of the W G Grace community centre to L&Q at nil value. L&Q have committed to spend up to £800,000 on improving community facilities and services within Grove Park and the centre will benefit directly from a proportion of this investment.

Will the Mayor please itemise with an accurate breakdown where the '£800,000 on improving community facilities and services within Grove Park' has been spent, including the amount of interest accruing on monies unspent.

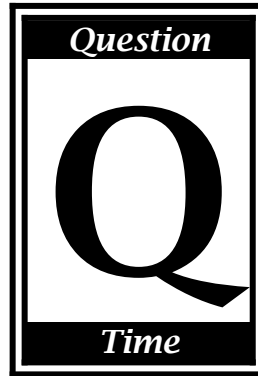
Reply

In 2008, following a tenant ballot, 1093 tenanted properties and 354 leasehold properties in Grove Park were transferred to L&Q. In return, L&Q committed to

spending £20million over 5yrs to bring the transferred homes up to Decent Homes Standard. They also committed to investment totalling £60 million over the first 30 years, including investing £0.8m into improvements to the W G Grace Community Centre.

All of these obligations have been met, with the exception of the investment into the W G Grace, where approximately £0.3m has been spent on essential repairs and improvements including creating a separate entrance and facilities for the pre-school.

The remaining £0.5m investment has been postponed, at the request of Council officers, while L&Q and the Council jointly explore options to invest in new community facilities in the Grove Park area. This process is ongoing and L&Q and the Council remain committed to ensuring that the remaining £0.5m is invested in local community facilities as soon as possible.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 10.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Martin Allen

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

Is it true that while the Council is cutting libraries and librarians, it is hiring agency staff in libraries? Were these agency staff used to undermine the legitimate withdrawal of labour on 5 July?

Please advise how many agency staff are in post in libraries and how much this has cost since the start of this financial year.

Do you agree that access to knowledge and information is surely a cornerstone of any socialist aspiration? Respecting workers' rights to withdraw their labour similarly. Has Lewisham Council formally distanced itself from these values?

Reply

The Library and Information Service has relied on agency staff for short term cover for many years. The presence of agency staff on 5th July was not linked to the industrial action.

The Library and Information Service is currently undergoing a full reorganisation. Only council staff can apply for the available jobs during the staff selection in a reorganisation.

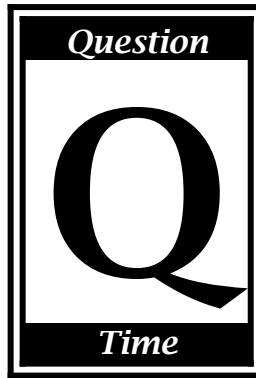
However, while the recruitment is ongoing, the Service cannot recruit to posts that it may not be able to fill internally. Therefore, agency staff offer the only, temporary alternative to closing libraries or curtailing services due to staff shortages.

In all cases, the recruitment of agency staff always follows the practice of first asking council staff who can work additional hours.

Since April 2016, the Service spent £35,131 on 8 agency staff.

The Mayoral Commission on the Future of the Library and Information Service and Adult Learning in Lewisham confirmed the fundamental principle that public libraries exist to offer “unbiased access to information, learning, and the works of the creative imagination”.

Ana Lewisham upholds the workers’ right to withdraw their labour.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 11.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Marianna Femia

Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

Question

Are you aware that the surface of Trundleys Road is in a state of disrepair? With the exception of the newly build pedestrian crossing on Grinstead Road end, there are currently no other safe crossings on the whole length of Trundleys Road including Bestwood's Street end. Do you agree that safe crossings are desperately needed at both 'Kezia Street' and 'Alloa Road' junctions?

In addition to the current level of pedestrian traffic, the new Lidl on Trundleys/Bestwood Street end, will attract even more people with nowhere safe to cross. This is one of the main routes to Surrey Quays and Canada Water station for all residents as well as the route to school for many kids in the area.

When will the poor state of Trundleys Road be addressed (and the road resurfaced) as well as the lack of safe crossings rectified?

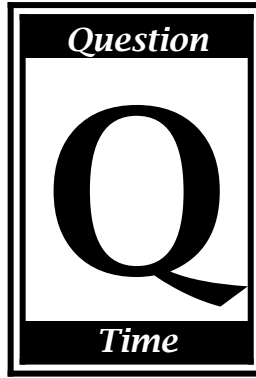
Reply

Trundleys Road is on our current carriageway resurfacing programme and subject to finance some resurfacing works are planned for 2017. There are also some

proposed footway improvements to the entrance at the new Lidl store which should be in place before opening.

The Council is in the process of implementing 20mph limits on all borough roads, and as such has a programme for considering and prioritising speed and/or safety issues across the borough. Roads which already have 20mph limits in place will also be considered if safety issues are identified, but funding will be prioritised based on need. Trundleys Road will be added to the list of roads to be assessed and considered for any measures that may be required as part of this programme.

From an initial assessment it is likely that the junctions with Kezia Street and Alloa Road are too narrow for pedestrian refuges and any crossing points here will require the removal of parking to leave a clear area on the approaches for pedestrians to cross safely. Such crossing points could involve the introduction of a raised surface along with redesign of the existing traffic calming. Please note that this is a B road an emergency service priority route where the type of traffic calming measures are limited. Such issues would also need to be considered through consultation, following an assessment of the technical feasibility.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 12.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

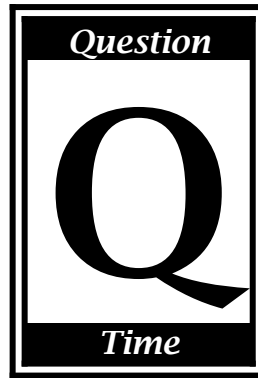
Question

In view of the current facility of performing marriage ceremonies at The Manor House, Lee, can the Council confirm how many marriage ceremonies have taken place at the Manor House, since 1st April 2015 until 1st July 2016?

What has been the income from this facility and is this facility likely to continue once the building has been transferred to a potential host/management organisation once a suitable partner has been found?

Reply

Between 1/4/2015 and 1/7/2016, 18 marriage ceremonies took place at Manor House. These resulted in £5,800 income. Any partner organisation taking on responsibility for Manor House would be able to decide whether or not to continue to offer marriage ceremonies. It is likely that this service would continue as it has the potential to general income.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 13.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: William Miles

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

Are Councillors content knowing their political reputations are at stake with regard to the problematic library restructuring of Forest Hill, Torridon, Catford and Manor House Libraries when the staff, the public and councillors have not been consulted on the latest tenders, and considering that all the bidders require proper review as all have serious cause for concern - for instance the Corbett society bidder has not even been constituted as a company yet?

Reply

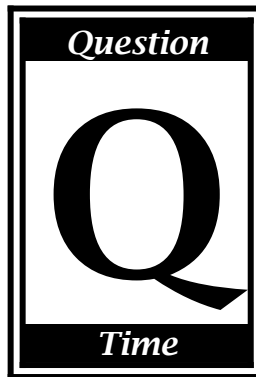
A report was presented to the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee on 4th July, 2016 which provides information about the process that has been undertaken to identify suitable partner organisations for the three new community libraries. This report will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet on 13th July. The report provides recommendations for the next steps for each building. In relation to Forest Hill this is to negotiate a lease with the V22 Foundation, the lead partner in a consortium

proposal that also involves the Forest Hill Society, Forest Hill Traders and the Friends of Forest Hill Library. This proposal fully met the tender criteria.

In relation to Torricon the recommendation is to negotiate a premises management agreement in the first instance with the Archibald Corbett Society and the Corbett Residents Association, both of whom are constituted. Their proposal in relation to the Torricon Road building needs further development before a lease can be entered into. This may also include the constitution of a new community organisation with the expressed objective of managing the building for the interest of the local community.

In relation to Manor House Library the report recommends that a further tender exercise is undertaken as a suitable proposal for the building was not found during the first process. It also recommends that interim arrangements are put in place to ensure that the building remains open to the public once the library staff reorganisation is implemented in September 2016.

The same report describes the public consultation and local stakeholder involvement throughout the procurement process.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 14.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Matt Ford

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

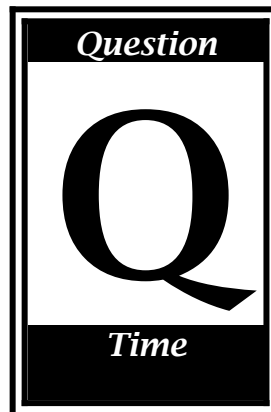
Are councillors confident that their political reputations have not been affected by the fact that the programme of savings for libraries in Lewisham is now different to the programme voted on at the end of 2015, due to a bodged implementation by unelected council officers, and that the public were not consulted on these changes?

Reply

The programme of savings has not changed from what Mayor and Cabinet agreed on 9 December 2015, (Revenue Budget Savings Report <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s40314/Appendix%20i%20-%20SSSC%20libraries%20consultation%20outcome.pdf>), specifically:

(2) For saving L6 – Libraries and Information Services the recommendations set out in the separate full report and appendices at Appendix 1 be approved; namely:

- the results of the consultation set out in sections 6 and 7 of the report and in appendix 1 be noted;
- the proposed saving of £1million from the Library and Information Service budget be approved;
- the retention of three hub libraries at Deptford Lounge, Lewisham and Downham Health and Leisure Centre as set out at paragraph 5.1 be approved;
- the Lewisham Community Library model as described in paragraph 5.1 be extended to Forest Hill, Torridon and Manor House libraries and for a formal tender process to be undertaken to identify partner organisations to work with the council to deliver this. The council will work with local stakeholders as part of this process;
- the development of detailed plans for the reconfiguration of the library and public reception area at the ground floor of Laurence House in Catford as set out at para 5.1 and 6.10 be approved.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO.15

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Jan Fowler

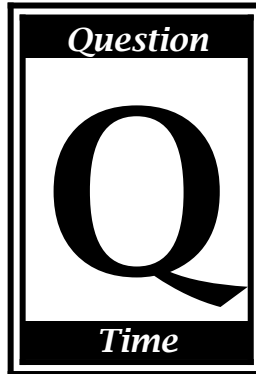
Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

Question

What is the exact breakdown of the £2 million "community chest fund" and how this has been spent in Grove Park to date?

Reply

As part of the Grove Park stock transfer, a community benefit fund was established for the benefit of the community at large in the area of Grove Park and in the Borough of Lewisham. Just under £1m is being spent on improvements to the streets and roads in Grove Park to promote the use of local shops and facilities. The remainder of the fund is being spent on crucial flood alleviation works which will protect homes and businesses in the borough from the risk of flooding.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO.16

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: John Hamilton

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Are you aware that the Shadow Housing minister John Healey has produced a document entitled, "High aspirations, sound foundations: a discussion report on the centre-ground case for building 100,000 new public homes" It shows how building council housing and letting it out at reasonable rents is financially sound if carried out over a long term cycle.

Will you consider traditional council house building on this important site which could deliver half of your promised 500 council homes by 2018?

Reply

The publication by the former Shadow Housing Minister, John Healey, is an important contribution to the debate about how we can address the Housing Crisis. It includes some very clear and specific proposals to facilitate the building of new homes by councils. These include:-

- Give councils the freedom to borrow against their assets, just as businesses are able to do
- Tighten the obligations of commercial developers to fund more new social homes through the planning system, reconfiguring the 'viability review' policy
- Reform right-to-buy to actually deliver one-for-one replacements
- Use the power of the government balance sheet to bring down the cost of finance for housing associations by extending the guarantee scheme
- Fund a significant HCA grant programme to allow councils and housing associations to build at scale, and lever in private finance

If Mr Hamilton has studied the report carefully he will know that these are all directed at action which needs to be taken by Central Government to enable Councils to deliver greater numbers. I have raised these and other issues directly with ministers in the past on behalf of all the London Boroughs and look forward to doing so again with the new team of ministers which were appointed last week.

However in the absence of action by Central Government Councils will need to pursue the sort of approach which Lewisham is undertaking. Last year this Council approved our housing strategy, "Homes for Lewisham", which committed us to driving up the supply of new homes of all tenures, with a particular focus on providing genuinely affordable rented homes. We agree that delivering new Council homes at social rents is crucial in helping us to achieve our ambitions for Lewisham, and that is why we have committed to delivering 500 new Council homes by 2018.

However, while building new homes ourselves is one crucial element of our strategy, a number of other elements combine with it to create a much broader approach to delivering the new homes we desperately need. Our housing strategy has committed us to enabling affordable housing supply more widely, with a target of supporting our partners to deliver 2,000 new affordable homes in our borough by 2018, a target that I am confident we will achieve.

Beyond that still our Local Plan and our work with developers commits us to delivering more than 1,200 homes of all tenures every year, and of ensuring that within that developers contribute their share of new affordable homes too.

The problems with London's housing economy are well known, and Lewisham is not immune from those. This is why I am so proud that we have been able to continue to deliver the number and types of homes that our residents need, most recently evidenced by a BBC investigation that found that Lewisham was the only one of the 33 London boroughs to hit its affordable housing delivery target last year.

We should also recognise that the problems in London housing economy are not confined solely to the level of new supply. There are issues of quality and security as well, particularly in the private rented sector.

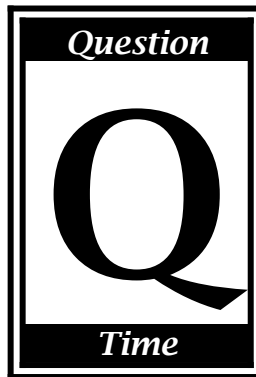
This is the context for our proposals at Besson Street: our own track record of delivering new affordable homes in a difficult financial and delivery climate; existing commitments to deliver 500 Council and 2,000 affordable homes, which we will

meet; and a private rented sector that does not work well for tenants and does not provide the quality and security our residents should expect.

Therefore our proposal for Besson Street is to create a new type of landlord and a new type of development, first and foremost to improve conditions in the private rented sector. We want to help shape the standards against which others are judged on crucial things like tenancy length, standards of repairs and management, and lettings fees. We also want to provide an offer to lower income local people who simply have no alternative to renting privately, other than moving away from London.

So this Council will still deliver the 500 Council homes it promised, but it will also seek new ways to attract finance and deliver much needed housing of all tenures, including a new type of rented home made available to local low-income workers.

At Besson Street we will therefore deliver another 230 homes in addition to the 500 Council homes, we will create a new type of tenure for people who would otherwise be unable to access any form of affordable housing locally, and at the same time we will be able to attract long term and sustainable investment into Lewisham.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO.17

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

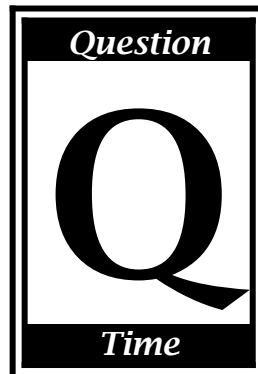
Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

We have been told that certain bookings of the upper floor (Room 4) of the Manor House have been unable to go ahead due to the inability to access WiFi on that floor. The explanation was that the thickness of the walls interfered with access. However, we have also been told that WiFi access is possible if certain equipment is used. In view of conflicting explanations will the Council explain what the situation is and if there is a problem and whether it can be overcome?

Reply

It is indeed true that the static WiFi access is not available in Room 4. However, room hirers can additionally hire a device which is a mobile and that can be used in that room.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO.18

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Trina Lynskey

Member to reply: Councillor Onikosi

Question

On 18 May 2016, Lewisham Council published that the authority is "introducing new on-the-spot fines to reduce fly-tipping offences in the borough". What measures have been put in place to enact this new policy and reduce fly-tipping?

What effect do you expect this new policy to have on the unacceptable level of fly-tipping and what change can residents expect to see with regard to fly-tipping in the Evelyn Ward as a result of the recently announced policy?

How will the London Borough Lewisham measure the success of this new policy?

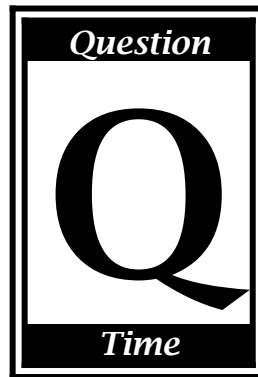
Reply

All officers within the Clean Streets Enforcement Team have now received training in this new power. The power is actually for the issuing of on the spot Fixed Penalty Notices. The new Fixed Penalty Notices have been produced and are available to

officers to issue. Proactive waste operations both inside and outside normal working hours have re-commenced with a view to issuing these new penalties to offenders caught during the operations.

It is expected that this new power will have a very positive effect on reducing fly-tipping in the borough. Borough wide residents can be confident that this new power will be effective in preventing fly-tipping and deterring further offending. By the end of June 2016 the team had already issued 12 of the new penalties

Success with regards to these new penalties will be measured through the number of penalties issued, by monitoring locations where penalties have been issued and through the number of commercial contracts obtained/upgraded by offenders after receiving a penalty. Of course overall success will be measured by a general reduction in fly-tipping and a cleaner borough.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 19
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Mr Ross

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

In the report to Mayor and Cabinet "Grove Park- Decent homes through stock transfer" dated 30th April 2008, Section 9.1. states:

L&Q have made several promises to residents which will be legally binding as the contract being negotiated contains provisions requiring L&Q to comply with promises it made to tenants and leaseholders, some of the key promises include:

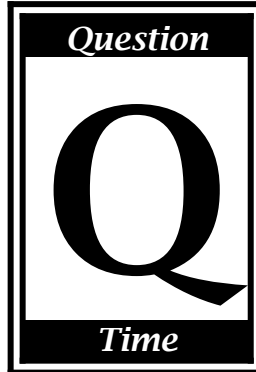
a £60 million repair and improvement programme to bring all tenanted homes in Grove Park to the standard of Decent Homes Plus over thirty years; (£20 million will be spent in the first five years) including improvements to the local environment;"

Will the Mayor please itemise, with an accurate breakdown on where these funds have been spent, including improvements to the local environment, including the amount of interest accruing on monies unspent?

Reply

As part of the stock transfer in Grove Park, L&Q committed to spending £20million over 5yrs to bring the transferred homes up to Decent Homes Standard. They also committed to investment totalling £60 million over the first 30 years.

Further detail on how L&Q managed this investment in their properties can be obtained from L&Q, however I'm pleased to confirm that the important repairs and refurbishments means that all the homes which formed part of the stock transfer now meet the Decent Homes standard. The Council continues to work closely with L&Q to coordinate further investment and improvements in Grove Park.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 20

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Martin Allen

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

Besson Street development is a huge area of land. I understand that local people have imaginative proposals, under development, for a 'mixed' tenure use of the land, perhaps combining co-operative schemes with Council housing, perhaps even with the Council's preferred scheme of private rent with capped rents affordable to people in housing need who have limited means; low or no income.

Can you assure Lewisham residents that the Council will consider such ideas with an open mind?

Reply

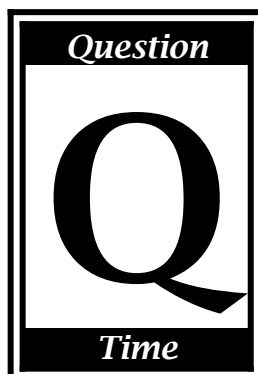
Our proposal for Besson Street is to create a new type of landlord and a new type of development, first and foremost to improve conditions in the private rented sector.

We want to help shape the standards against which others are judged on crucial things like tenancy length, standards of repairs and management, and lettings fees. We also want to provide an offer to lower income local people who simply have no alternative to renting privately, other than moving away from London.

The Council is very open to innovative approaches to development, with Council sponsored community-led developments at Church Grove in Ladywell and Brasted Close in Sydenham being two very good examples. Similarly the PLACE/Ladywell development for homeless people is an award-winning innovation led by the Council.

It is right to say that the Besson Street site covers a huge amount of land. A site of this size, with the capacity for around 230 homes as well as a much needed new local GP surgery, requires significant investment and expertise, which necessarily shapes the types of partners required to develop it. In this case, all options have been considered with the conclusion that, in this instance a community-led scheme will not be viable. In the future the community-led development model may have matured to the point at which it could sustain a development of this scale, but at present it is infeasible for a community organisation to attract and manage expenditure of this scale.

The Council carried out a large amount of consultation with the public regarding the proposals for Besson Street, and will continue to consult with residents throughout the process.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 21

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

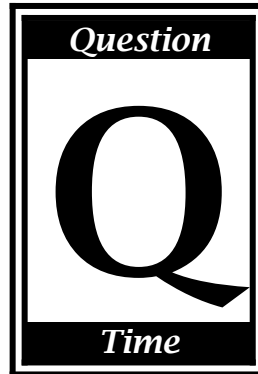
Question

On Monday 4 July, at the Safer Stronger Select Committee meeting, it was divulged that within the terms of the recommended transfer of Forest Hill library to the preferred host organisation V22 London CIC, the computer terminals in that library were not to remain within the building. How does that conform to the much vaunted 'Digital Age' programme of Lewisham's Library and Information Service? Where will 'customers' of this particular Community Library be able to access a free internet service once those terminals have been removed?

Reply

It has always been the intention for free computer access to remain in the community library. V22 wish to take over the current terminals. Officers have, however, to find a way to enable that to happen which prevents access to any other council data. It is

our intention, however, that free internet access will be available in all the community libraries.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 22

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

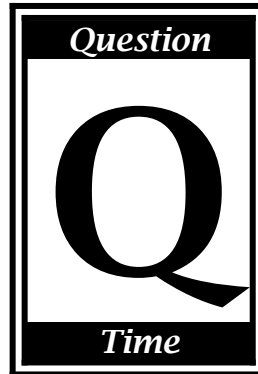
Question

Lewisham Life (Summer edition) page 5 states that Lewisham Homes has bought 50 properties to house families in need, which is a joint programme with the Council. How much has this project cost? How much was input by Lewisham Homes, and how is Lewisham Homes funded? How much has the Council contributed to support this housing effort?

Reply

The Council has made a loan of up to £20m to Lewisham Homes to fund this programme. The homes acquired will reduce the need for expensive bed and

breakfast type accommodation, as well as providing higher quality temporary accommodation for homeless families.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 23

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

Are you aware that the Safer Stronger Select Committee on the 4th July 2016 it was made clear that no bid other than GLL Libraries Division had come forward with a proposal to take on the management of Manor House and this was refused because GLL's request for a Day Nursery in the lower floor as an income stream was impractical.

The Council is to engage a 'head-hunter' to aid the search for a host and inevitably extend the period to eventually accept a suitable bidder.

Are you further aware, that in the meantime, the Council will keep the library and building open with the library being unstaffed - its Service being operated by Self Issue Self return machines at reduced hours, supplemented by occasional peripatetic staff members to manage the bookstock and etc on very limited visits.

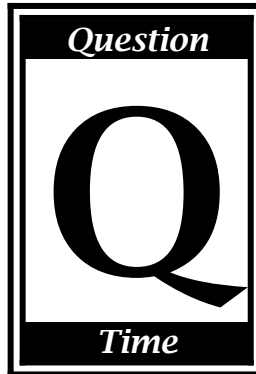
The building would remain open, but apparently without anyone being there. Can this be realistic? Is there a Plan B if a host is not found before the SSSC meets again in September 2016?

Reply

In relation to Manor House, the report to Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee suggests that “the search for a new partner will re-commence and an update on progress will be provided to Safer Stronger Select Committee in September 2016. The timetable for the service wide staff reorganisation will remain unchanged. Implementation will take effect in mid-September and from that time the library service will no longer be responsible for the day to day management of the building. The council, however, will retain this responsibility and will put in place alternative building management resource. The building will continue to open to the public on a reduced number of hours. Library services will be available on a self-service basis, supported by visits from the peripatetic library team that supports the community libraries and there will be the possibility of accommodating community uses. Further details of these interim management arrangements will be reported to Safer Stronger in September and the period for the interim arrangements will be kept as short as possible”.

The report is not suggesting that a host will be found before the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee meeting in September 2016. It suggests that an update on the progress of the search will be provided to the Committee in September.

The report does also make it clear that the Council is not intending to open the building with nobody in it. There will be a short term alternative management arrangement.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 24

Priority 4

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

20 JULY 2016

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

In the past the community libraries in Lewisham have not necessarily been able to deal with payments of public money into the library service e.g. for fines, cost of lost books, reservations. Has this problem now been solved? If so how has this been done? If the technology is now available will it be implemented for the new tranche of community libraries? In addition how does the Council deal with data protection for members of the public in connection with the running of Community libraries?

Reply

The Library and Information Service is working to roll out the pay facility to all self-service terminals in Hub and Community Libraries. It is hoped that this facility will be in place for the implementation of the community library model at Forest Hill, Manor House and Torrindon Road.

The Library Management System accessed through the Community Libraries is the council's and, as such, it complies with the data protection requirements that the local authority applies to all its IT systems. Furthermore, all partner organisations sign a Data Protection Agreement and all volunteers and staff employed by the partner organisation receive Data Protection training.