

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 1.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Thom Townsend

Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

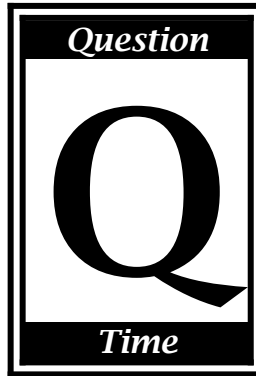
Question

The flight path below 3000ft for landing at London City Airport runway 09 sits right across the Borough and is particularly concentrated around Catford. What is the Council's view of the likely impact of the recently agreed expansion of City airport on aircraft noise and disturbance on the Borough?

Reply

In reviewing the London City Airports Noise Action Plan, Lewisham is well outside the stated modelled noise contour for 57dB LAeq, 16 hrs (which is an analysis that takes an average noise level over a period of 16 hours and maps the contours with the Decibel levels noted). Therefore the Council wouldn't be in a position to make representation about this.

Environmental Health do not have any powers that it can take in relation to aircraft noise and can only refer concerned residents to the Civil Aviation Authority to raise complaints with them or to go directly to London City Airport as individuals.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 2.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Andrea Carey Fuller

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

Does Lewisham Council plan to set up its own Housing Company in order to borrow money to build more social housing? (<http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/fifty-councils-look-to-housing-companies/7011130.article>)

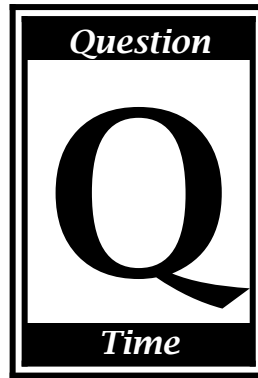
Reply

The Council has returned to the direct provision of new Council homes, in partnership with Lewisham Homes, which is a company and is wholly owned by the Council. This programme will start at least 500 new Council homes by 2018. In addition it has committed to working in partnership with Housing Associations and developers to deliver a further 1,500 additional affordable homes in the borough by 2018.

Beyond this programme the Council continues to consider a wide range of options to increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough. For example, the Council is currently looking at entering into a joint venture investment company to deliver a new type of development on a site in Besson Street, New Cross. The aim of this proposal is to improve conditions in and to help shape the standards of the private rented sector,

which now houses one in four Lewisham residents, sometimes in poor and insecure conditions.

All of these different approaches to delivering the new homes Lewisham needs are funded in different ways, and demonstrate the Council's willingness to use companies to enable new housing supply. The Council keeps all potential options for funding additional new homes, beyond those above, under review.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 3.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Smith

Question

I note the Sustainable Development Select Committee referral to street lighting policy, Agenda item 1/6/2016 and Decision 2/6/2016 and the pilot governing the dimming of street lighting.

Where was this carried out? Was any member of the public made aware of this pilot programme? Were any members of the council made aware of this pilot? It seems nobody was to be influenced by knowing about this pilot so why was it done? Just to test whether money could be saved?

In addition it seems as if TFL has plans to introduce solar powered lighting across the capital. If this is adopted how will the PFI with Skanska, in conjunction with the LB of Croydon, continue to operate? How will the long term contract and the money committed to it be affected?

Reply

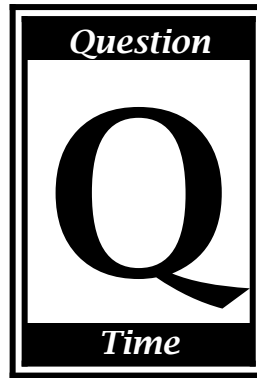
Following discussions at the Sustainable Development Select Committee officers set up a trial of dimming street lights in three streets per ward starting in November 2015. The list of streets included in the trial was provided to the chair of the Committee and included as an annex to a report to the Committee in May 2016

http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s43494/3_SDSC_Streetlighting_12052016.pdf

The exercise was run as a trial of the dimming technology and was also an opportunity to identify any reaction to the lights being dimmed.

Any changes to the Transport for London street lighting stock will have no effect on the Lewisham and Croydon PFI Contract with Skanska. Lighting on Transport for London managed roads is independent from local authority lighting stock.

Lewisham and Croydon are currently in the final year of a five year implementation phase with new street lighting stock being installed across both boroughs. Following the end of the stock replacement phase Lewisham, Croydon and Skanska will be looking for opportunities to use improved technology and gain from the benefits this will bring. Changes to the payment model would be taken into account as part of any assessment of these new technologies.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 4.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Ambrose

Member to reply: Councillor Smith

Question

Whose decision was it to install street lights that are 50% higher and 50% brighter than the ones that they replaced, that light up the bedrooms as per a continuous full Moon and if you had four of these together you could probably play floodlight 5 a side football, and why are the lights opposite the Manor House Library 50% smaller and 50% less brighter?

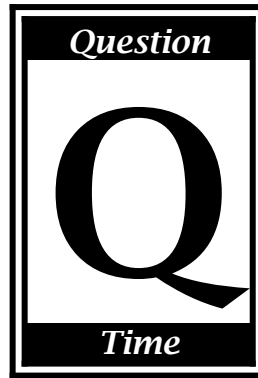
Reply

Lewisham entered into a 25 year PFI Contract with Skanska in 2011. During the first five years of this Contract the borough's street lighting stock has almost been completely replaced and undergone a street lighting re-design to ensure that the new lighting meets the specified British Standard.

The street lighting design for Old Road has gone through various stages of design with the Skanska Design Team and Council representatives in order to ensure the correct column positions and the required lighting levels are achieved.

Our designers look at each street individually and design the column positions to provide consistent lighting levels throughout the street. The original lighting in Old

Road consisted of 13 x 6 metre columns, that were replaced by 12 x 6 metre columns, with 90W lanterns. The old lighting outside the library were 55W lanterns so there will be a slight increase in lighting in this area which was necessary to meet the required British Standard.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 5.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Cynthia Bailey

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

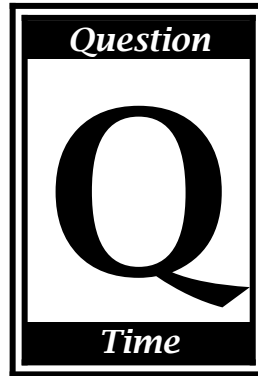
Question

What type of housing does the Council envisage for the Milford Towers site over the next five years and how much of it will be reserved for 'social/affordable' housing and what opportunities are the Council planning to give to people currently on Milford to be able to live there?

Reply

The Council expects that any future plans for the regeneration of Catford will provide housing of a range of tenures to meet a range of needs in line with the Council's planning, regeneration and affordable housing policies.

The Council has previously advised secure tenants and leaseholders that there will not be a direct offer of a property in any development. Officers have been actively rehousing secure tenants from Milford Towers and are working with the remaining secure tenants to find them new homes. The Council has also commenced the voluntary buy back of leasehold properties and officers are available to assist resident leaseholders with advice on affordable home ownership options available in the Borough.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 6.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Maxton

Member to reply: Councillor Bonavia

Question

Laurence House has no noticeable letter- box and the Old Town Hall has now only an obscure one in The Broadway, the one at the building's main entrance now being sealed. Is the Council concerned with the arrangements for the hand delivery of letters and documents by local citizens at what are still its principle offices at Old Town Hall/Lawrence House or will it consider any of the following?

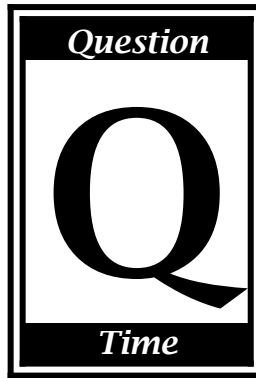
- a) creating a letter-box for Laurence House;
- b) establishing a stand-alone letter-box near to the Old Town Hall or;
- c) placing notices at these two buildings drawing attention to the letter-box that does exist

Reply

The occupation and use of both Laurence House and Old Town Hall are continuing to evolve as Council services transform and their locations change within current operational buildings in the Catford Complex. The Council is increasingly promoting

the use of online services but items delivered during normal opening hours, are passed through to the post room by security to be processed.

With the changes in service delivery already introduced and still planned in and around the Catford Complex, including the 'restacking' of Laurence House, this is an appropriate time to consider what, if any, letter box provision should be made to fully enable service provision and provide the public postal access out of normal working hours. Consideration will, therefore, be given to suggestions a, b and c above, with others if appropriate, and a full response provided to the Council as soon as all the options have been fully assessed in terms of viability, accessibility, security and cost etc.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 7.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Kassim Hussain

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

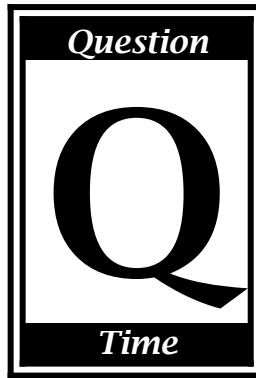
Does the Council plan for all leaseholders on Milford Estate, to be visited by Strut and Parker? Why have some not been contacted?

Reply

The Council is offering all leaseholders in Milford Towers the opportunity to sell their property back to the Council in preparation for the potential regeneration of Catford.

As part of this, the Council wrote to all leaseholders in November 2015 offering them the opportunity to have a valuation carried out on behalf of the Council by Strutt & Parker. Contact details and a brief description of the process were provided. All attempts at contact have been made using the information that is held on record. Where there has been no correspondence address for non-resident leaseholders, contact has been sent to the leasehold address.

If Mr Hussain or any other Milford Towers leaseholder would like to have a valuation carried out by Strutt & Parker, they can contact James Ringwood, Housing Delivery Manager on 020 8314 7944 or james.ringwood@lewisham.gov.uk who will assist with making the arrangements.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 8.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

It is understood that on October 17th 2016 Lewisham Library Service will cease to be responsible for Manor House Library building pending the fruition of a continued search for a potential host aided by a 'Head Hunter'.

This will mean the building will remain open, but on reduced hours, visited by peripatetic Library Staff with respect to the operation of the library service, whilst customers will be obliged to lend and return media items from the shelves by means of Self Issue Self Return machinery within the library spaces. Computer terminals may also be booked via these machines. Payment of fines for the return of overdue media items may also be performed via these machines and customers' debit cards. However, as the peripatetic staff visits are by definition intermittent, what arrangements are planned for the continuation of reading groups, children's activity sessions, literature-associated activities such as author visits et and the security of the computer terminals within the library spaces?

Furthermore, what arrangements are foreseen for the ability of the Community to continue to rent rooms within the building during this anticipated period, including its associated demand on personal liability insurance? Can the public be assured that the public space will be managed, secure and safe? Will equipment, stock and the building itself be secure and protected?

What plans does the Council have to maintain the confidence of the public?

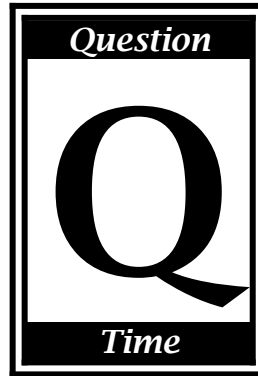
Reply

The building will be managed by security staff who will be responsible for the safety and security of visitors as well as the library stock and equipment. It is likely that the same security firm will be used that supports library buildings elsewhere because they are familiar with the building and understand both business and operations in the library.

While the core opening hours during the interim period will be 24 hours per week, it is possible for this total to be extended to support additional hiring where the hirer is generating income for the Service. Existing room bookings will be honoured.

The Library Service will support library operations in the building through the community engagement team. The recent reorganisation substantially increased the size of the Community Engagement Team that supports the current and future community library provision, growing from the current 2.5FTE to 21FTE. Members of this team will be working closely with the security staff at Manor House during the interim period.

The Council has recommenced its search for a partner organisation for Manor House library. It is hoped to bring a report to Mayor and Cabinet in January 2017 with a recommended partner identified. The Council has been in contact with local groups, updating residents and elected members throughout the process. The Community Library Model is a very well established model. The partners for the new community libraries in Forest Hill and Torridon Road are developing very encouraging plans for the buildings they are about to take over. Lee residents have every reason to be confident about the intentions and actions of the Council in relation to the Manor House building, and are invited to participate actively with ideas and constructive proposals during the interim phase, ahead of the appointment of a new partner.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO . 9

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Andrea Carey Fuller

Member to reply: Councillor Smith

Question

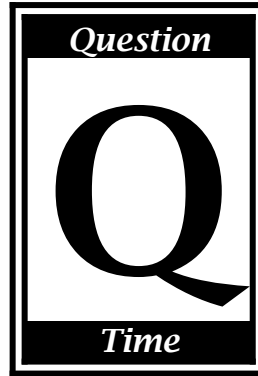
Do you agree that it is time to change the Planning rules in order to stop new properties being bought by investors and left empty simply to accumulate profit?

Has Lewisham looked into Islington's Planning Policy to stop flats being left empty? If so, when and what was the outcome?

Reply

The provision of housing is a key priority. The Planning Service is in the process of reviewing Lewisham's planning policies, including housing policies, to ensure that the new Local Plan responds to increases in local housing need and population growth.

As part of this review, a range of housing policy issues and approaches will be reviewed, including Islington's approach to "Preventing Wasted Housing Supply", as set out in their Supplementary Planning Document (2015).



PUBLIC QUESTION NO . 10
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Maxton

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

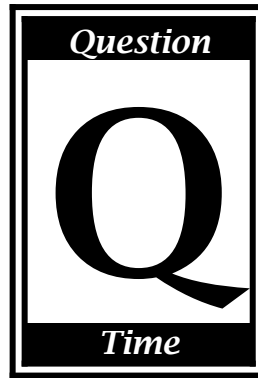
How many of the, just under, two dozen Milford Towers leaseholders live away from their properties, and what measures are the Council taking to ensure that the private tenants of such leaseholders are being kept entirely informed of the precariousness of their position as the estate is made ready for the dehousing or rehousing of its occupants?

Reply

The Council believes that just over half the leaseholders remaining on Milford Towers are non-resident leaseholders, which means that they are likely to have let the property on to a private tenant. At present there is no agreed plan to redevelop the Milford Towers estate, which means that there is no certainty over if and when these tenants are likely to need to move to alternative private accommodation.

As such it would be inappropriate at this stage to issue any information to, or to raise any concerns with these private tenants. The Council is however in contact with their landlords, with whom it does have a relationship.

If the redevelopment does become more certain, and once a likely date on which Milford Towers will need to be empty is agreed, the Council will of course take steps at that point to ensure that households living on the estate can start planning to make alternative living arrangements.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO . 11

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Kassim Hussain

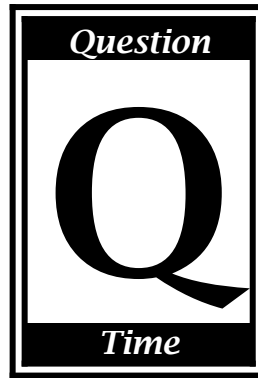
Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

Question

What is the latest news on finding a developer for Catford Centre?

Reply

The Council are working to provide clarity on a number of key requirements prior to engaging the development market. This includes updated work on the vision, office requirements and transport arrangements. A new programme for progressing the redevelopment of Catford town centre will be considered by Mayor and Cabinet in November.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO .12

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

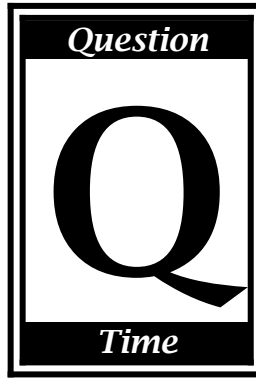
Question

The Department for Culture Media and Sport is working on a definitive list of libraries as there is no agreed list of libraries in the public domain. A definitive basic data set will then be published.

Will the Council make sure that this is fully complied with, in view of the different offers available in different areas of the borough with different provision and possibly different outcomes, depending on the scope and scale of information required?

Reply

The Library and Information Service provided the required information in July 2016 and has historically fully complied with the CIPFA requirements that include the full list of libraries in the borough.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO . 13

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Richardson

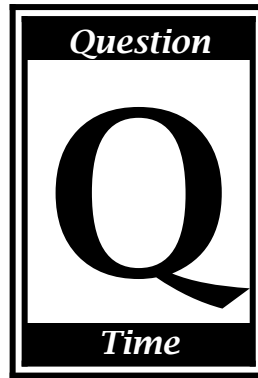
Member to reply: Councillor Onikosi

Question

In 2015 one of the three ornamental street trees in Manor Lane Terrace, purchased and planted with the aid of funds from Lee Green Local Assembly money, was destroyed by a scaffolding company. Was the Council reimbursed for the loss of this tree.

Reply

The Scaffolding Company concerned agreed to reimburse the Council for the £250 cost of replacing the damaged tree and were invoiced accordingly.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 14

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Andrea Carey Fuller

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

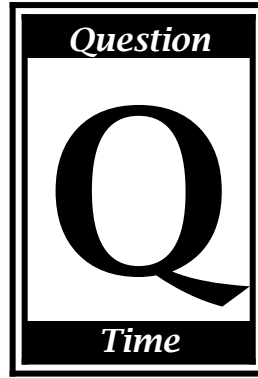
Has anyone done a survey of all the recent developments throughout Lewisham to establish how many of the new builds in blocks of 20 or more flats/apartments are still empty?

In addition to fining Landlords for keeping these type of properties empty, has the Council considered negotiating a contract with all developers that empty properties can be rented as social housing for an initial period of 6 months, renewable, if they remain empty after the first six months of going on sale, and then continue to remain unsold?

Reply

The Planning Service is in the process of reviewing Lewisham's planning policies, including housing policies, and as part of this will review whether vacant new build units or 'buy to leave' properties are a significant issue in the borough.

If evidence shows that 'buy to leave' properties are a significant issue, the Council will investigate what methods may be appropriate to address it.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 15

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Maxton

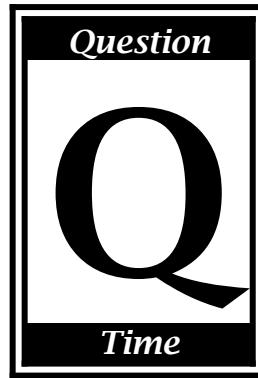
Member to reply: Councillor Dromey

Question

Will the Council ensure that as the novelty of websites begin to pall, all websites are both given a date as they are written and kept up to date and that 'undateable' abverbs and adverbial clauses- where there is no 'anchor' date are discouraged (eg currently, recently. next year) as epitomised in the anachronism in the Mayor's otherwise excellent biography whereby he was elected to the Council four years before arriving in London ?

Reply

The council website lewisham.gov.uk is an important front door for residents wanting to access council services. It also serves as a useful tool for communicating with the people of Lewisham. Sections of the website are managed by the communications team to ensure its content is clearly set out, consistent in its content and useful for site visitors. The volume of material that is published online does mean that small errors can occur, and I thank you for highlighting this particular one. We will continue to work to ensure that the website best meets the needs of our residents.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 16

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

21 SEPTEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

In view of the restructuring of the London Borough of Lewisham Library staff (front line and back office) how many fewer staff will there be after 17th October 2016? How many of these will be full time staff, front line and back office? How many will be part time, front line and back office? How many staff have taken retirement to comply with the restructuring? How many have opted for redundancy? How many have had to take redundancy? Were any staff reduced in ranking to stay with the library service, if so, how many? Were any staff transferred to another council department, if so, how many?

Reply

The reorganisation of the Library and Information Service is not complete and definitive figures will only be available once the process is concluded. No staff have been demoted as part of the process. A number of staff have in fact been employed on a higher grade as part of the restructuring.