PUBLIC QUESTION NO 1.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Lauren Risch

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

A report to the 'Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel' on October 16th 2018, referenced a "Pilot of Section 106 Spending was subsequently trialled in Evelyn Ward". Where can Evelyn Ward residents access the report from this pilot and when is it supposed to have taken place?

Reply

Information on the Evelyn Ward Pilot is available on the Evelyn Ward Assembly webpage (https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/getinvolved/localassemblies/Evelyn-Assembly/Pages/default.aspx). Information on the initial roundtable, including background information, is publically accessible through the link on the assembly webpage to the meeting held on the 28 March 2017. Contact details for the support officer working with the assembly, as well as further information on the assembly, is available on the webpage. Work on the pilot has also been reported to Sustainable Development Select Committee, with relevant meetings held on the 29 November 2016 and the 11 December 2017. This information is publically accessible through the 'council meeting' section of the Lewisham webpage.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 2.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Keme Nzerem

Member to reply: Councillor Dacres

Question

Following LBLs recent decision to fund local football via Millwall Community Trust:

Could council confirm they have followed up with Millwall as Councillor Dacres promised she would during the council meeting of Nov 28th, to ensure Millwall disburse appropriate funds to support the Lewisham under 11 boys and girls district football teams over the 2018/2019 season?

Reply

I can confirm that follow up discussions have taken place with Millwall Community Trust about disbursement of funds for the remainder of the 2018/19 season.

The Lewisham under 11 boys and girls district football teams are part of an extensive network of Lewisham clubs and teams that provide access to football for children and young people as well as other priority groups. Officers will continue to work with Millwall Community Trust to ensure all teams are appropriately supported for the remainder of the 2018/19 season.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 3.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Shabnam Nasimi
Member to reply: Councillor Dacres

Question
Can the Council provide evidence that the alteration in the speed limit to 20mph is reducing road traffic accidents?

Reply
The effect of reduced speeds has been shown by previous studies to substantially reduce the numbers and severity of road traffic accidents. The most notable study was by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL report 215) on 72 20mph zone schemes and found that they reduced injury accidents by around 60% and that accident numbers reduced by around 6% for each 1mph reduction in speed.

In common with other signed only 20mph limits that have been introduced by a large number of highway authorities the actual speed reductions initially achieved in Lewisham have been fairly modest at around 1 mph.

In order to achieve further speed reductions we have embarked on a programme of works to further reduce speeds on around 30 priority roads where speeds were found to be unacceptably high. Design work has commenced and implementation will start in Spring 2019 and take around 12-15 months to complete.
With regards to assessing changes in road traffic accidents following any works it is generally accepted that a minimum of 3 years before and after data should be used. This will require “after” data from the introduction of the 20mph limit in September 2016 up to September 2019. Owing to the time lag in producing confirmed collision data this is not likely to be available until Spring 2020. Overall the introduction of a 20mph speed limit is part of a package of measures to help support the Mayor of London’s “vision zero” and other road danger reduction strategies.
Question asked by: James Clark

Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

**Question**

How much money has been spent by the council on recruiting costs for a new CEO?

**Reply**

No money has been spent to date on recruiting costs for a new CEO following the departure of the previous CEO in December 2018.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 5.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Chris Wilford
Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

How many recorded incidents of fly tipping have there been each year from 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018?

Reply

Figures of fly tipping is detailed below but is in financial years:

2014/15 – 5802
2015/16 – 5514
2016/17 – 3246
2017/18 – 3562
2018/19 (Apr-Sept) - 1834
Question

As cabinet member for Schools Performance, I thought that these questions are most relevant to you on Lewisham secondary schools. Do you or the council have figures on how many secondary school pupils are being sent out of the borough for their secondary education, both in real terms and as a % of the possible total? How have these numbers changed over the past three years?

Reply

Fantastic work goes on in our schools, and I am really pleased to see the progress that has been made in recent years, for example in GCSE results. Nevertheless, I recognise that the popularity of a minority of our secondary schools in Lewisham continues to be a challenge for the borough.
Because the Admissions Team works on a live database it is not possible to extract historical data, but it appears that over recent years the proportion going out-borough has risen from around a quarter to a third.

On National Offer Day (1 March 2018) 2047 (63%) of Lewisham’s Year 6 children (including late applicants) were expected to transfer to a Lewisham secondary school in September 2018 so 37% were expected to go out-borough. Mobility is very high in London generally, and children and parents are entitled to make choices that suit them, but this level of exports is too high in Lewisham, hence the focus on improving and promoting our schools.

We are determined to reverse this trend and our work seems to be bearing fruit. In 2018 we therefore worked with our secondary schools to ensure that parents were able to see the fantastic opportunities that they offer to children and young people. In applications for September 2019 we have seen an increase in the numbers choosing Lewisham schools - the number of first and second preferences for Lewisham secondary schools has risen by 275 (8% of the cohort).
Question asked by: Brian Chipps

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

**Question**

How many homes have been completed to a habitable standard and occupied each year from 2014 to 2018?

**Reply**

Whilst no longer a statutory requirement the Council continues to publishes its Annual Monitoring Review in Jan for the preceding year 1st April to 31st March. These can be found on Council’s website.

Net completions
2013/2014  928 homes
2014/2015  1776 homes
2015/2016  1702 homes
2016/2017  1781 homes

We have experienced delays in preparing the annual monitoring report for 2017–18 which is currently scheduled to be published by mid-February.
Question asked by: Jacqueline Bygrave
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

At the last council meeting on 28th November the new Corporate Strategy was mentioned in 6 responses - can we now have information as to what this 'strategy looks like and how it will positively impact on the lives of young people to ensure that you are ‘Giving them a better start in life’ according to your 2018 manifesto?

Reply

The Corporate Strategy will set out the Council’s future vision and direction, setting priorities for making Lewisham a borough where everyone can enjoy a good quality of life and reach their full potential, over the four year term of this administration.

The draft Corporate Strategy will be considered at Lewisham’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28th January and is available online here http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s62119/04CorporateStrategyAppendixA280119.docx.pdf
The draft Corporate Strategy will be presented to Mayor & Cabinet and then Full Council later this year, after which it will be published and publically available for residents to read. It will also be shared with all Council staff, so everyone is the Council shares in and feels proud of this vision.

We are already closely monitoring the implementation of commitments made in the draft Corporate Strategy. Since the local elections in May, I am pleased to confirm that we have already seen progress made in many areas, including:

- An improvement in Lewisham’s GCSE results, which has seen the borough move up London’s league tables;
- Increasing Special Education Needs (SEN) provision by approving the expansion of two SEN schools.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 9.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Nicky Dixon
Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

Question

For children with medical conditions that have to attend medical appointments either at a GP or hospital, yet attend school all other days, their efforts (and those of their parents) are not acknowledged or rewarded. Children feel strongly that this is unfair and they are being penalised for a medical condition, as do their parents. They are very aware they will never achieve the benchmark through no fault of their own. Parents should be trusted to know what is right for their children and their health.

Will the council encourage schools to show compassion towards these children and their families by acknowledging their medical condition and efforts for full attendance, rather than penalising and demoralising with lack of rewards for the children and letters to / chats with parents demanding 100% attendance?
Reply

I agree that, where children through no fault of their own, are prevented from attending school, or delayed, we should where possible ensure they are not penalised.

This is an issue which the Lewisham Attendance Team has been looking into and has addressed in schools on a case by case basis.

I understand that the standard policy is that if a pupil arrives to school substantially after the normal start time because of a medical appointment they are marked as missing which counts as a half-day absence.

Head teachers do have the discretion to look at each case individually, and I would hope that if a pupil, who has a recognised illness and has informed the school that they have an appointment arrives to school at some point in the morning period, they could be marked as L (with a note on the register stating they had an appointment). The L code does count as present.

It would probably not be right for this to become standard practice for every child who has any type of medical appointment but only for those who have a recurring medical condition that requires regular hospital, and/or GP visits and where parents and medical services are working closely with the school to minimise the impact this has on the child's education.

In cases where pupils miss whole sessions, or school days, schools must obviously mark them absent. This will mean that 100% attendance is not possible. But I would expect good schools to recognise, and acknowledge, where a pupil has done everything in their power to attend school when they are able.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 10.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Andrea Carey Fuller
Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

Since the duty to work with homeless people became law, through the Homelessness Reduction Act, on 3rd April 2018, how many requests for support/help under this Act have been made to Lewisham Council? And how many of these people have been assisted to find accommodation?

Reply

We have been approached by 2177 households since the 3rd April 2018. We have either had a duty to prevent homelessness by enabling households to remain at the address they have approached from, or alternatively a duty to support households to find somewhere else to live. In total we have successful resolved 331 households housing need.

The scale of housing need makes our housing programme of social housing delivery vital, along with homes for people and families who currently do not qualify for council or housing association rented properties. Central Government need to recognise the crisis and support Lewisham in the resources it needs.
However, we cannot wait for the Government to govern on behalf of all our people. That is why we are maximising using every piece of suitable and available land to build new homes. Without new supply, more homeless families will have no place to call home.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 11.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Janet Hurst
Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question
Please explain how Lewisham’s green (garden) waste, and Lewisham’s food waste, is processed for recycling. I cannot find this information on your web site. A single vehicle appears to collect the contents of grey food bins and brown garden waste bins.

Reply
Residual (grey wheelie bin Waste) and organic waste (food and garden waste) is collected separately (unless the organic waste has been contaminated).

Currently both the food waste and garden waste are collected in the same vehicle, this is because they are both sent to the same waste disposal facility, but that could change with a new disposal contract. We need the flexibility to secure the best disposal rate in the future. That might mean sending garden and food waste to different disposal facilities, but at the moment it's more efficient to collect these materials together.
Organic waste is delivered to a waste transfer station in Southwark and transported to an In-Vessel Compost Facility for composting to either Padworth, West Berkshire or to St Giles, Cambridgeshire.
Question asked by: Diane Johnson
Member to reply: Cllr Slater

Question

Can you confirm the names of the high quality mentoring programmes currently in Lewisham?

a) How are you going to promote them?
b) How are you going to support them, i.e. do you have funding available? If so, how much?

Reply

There are a range of formal and informal mentoring schemes in Lewisham that are promoted on Lewisham’s Family Information Service. These include:

- The Malachi Mentoring Project
- Hear Our Voice - Support for young people with a family member in prison
- New Direction Lewisham CGL (change, grow, live)
We have also worked with:

- Urban Synergy - an early intervention mentoring charity that helps young people aged 11-18 years to reach their full potential through outcome focused mentoring programmes
- The XLP project which matches an at-risk young person with a trained mentor and encourages them to make positive choices

In addition, there are numerous organisations that offer support, 1:1s, information and advice and counselling for young people.

These are promoted on a range of websites including www.lewisham.gov.uk/fis http://workitoutlewisham.co.uk/ http://www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk/#/ and http://www.kooth.com

Work is also underway with religious, community and voluntary groups to develop a universal high-quality mentoring programme to help our young people increase their resilience and open access to employment opportunities.

Once the programme has been finalised any funding requirements will be identified and the offer communicated directly to a range of stakeholders and promoted widely across council channels including digital and social media.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 13.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Richard Hebditch

Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

Question

What % of capital budget for schools and housing had been spent by financial mid-year for 2018/19?

Reply

The capital programme budget for 2018/19 was agreed by full Council on 21st February 2018. The total budget for 2018/19 was set at £135.9m and included £17.7m for Schools related projects, and £93.0m for Housing related schemes. As at 30 September 2018, the mid-point of the financial year, the relevant spend on Schools schemes was £2.4m (14%) and for Housing schemes was £18.9m (20%). The 2018/19 capital programme budgets have since been re-profiled as part of the regular monitoring process to reflect more of the planned capital expenditure falling in later financial years than envisaged at the start of the financial year.
Question

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 14.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Trina Lynskey
Member to reply: The Mayor

Are you aware that on legal advice, Lewisham Council (LBL) overturned the decision to grant permission to convert employment floor space at The Arches, Evelyn Ward (DC/17/103827) to residential (Feb 2018)? The applicant exercised their right to submit an appeal to The Planning Inspectorate (TPI) for “Non-Determination” (REF: 3203029 May 2018). Is it true that once a planning application has been submitted to TPI the Local Authority is no longer required to determine the outcome. Do you accept that LBL continued to pursue local authority determination for a further 6 months? This included an LBL funded public meeting (August 2018) and a three hour discussion by LBL Planning Committee C (November 2018) where the application was refused.

Since May 2018 I have challenged LBL’s decision to pursue this application once registered and validated with TPI. Do you accept that LBL should not have continued to commit resources (financial and time) to this application when it was not required to determine its outcome? Would you agree this action undermines the quasi-judicial process whereby TPI is obliged to objectively determine the application? Do you
agree LBL's action undermines public confidence in its ability to determine planning matters fairly and legally?

On what legal basis did Lewisham council officers pursue determination of the application to convert employment floor space at The Arches, Evelyn Ward (DC/17/103827) to residential in favour of development while an appeal was registered and validated by The Planning Inspectorate?

How can the public be confident that all information will be shared with The Planning Inspectorate when council officers have been perceived to undermine the quasi-judicial planning process?

Will my request for Overview & Scrutiny of the planning process be accepted if it is shown that LBL is failing to carry out its planning duties effectively and legally?

**Reply**

Once an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate is submitted, the Council is no longer the decision maker and therefore unable to determine the planning application. Councillors are entitled to be updated on an appeal and its status where applications have not been determined as in the case of The Arches, Evelyn Street. The undetermined planning application was reported to councillors, as an update of the appeal, and a local meeting was required to take place beforehand as set out in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement. Councillors are also able to advise officers whether they wish to contest the appeal and if so on what grounds. This does not undermine the Council’s position in handling the appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.
In Autumn last year Dr Mark Spencer F.L.S., a Forensic Botanist, Hon. Curator (Plants) Linnean Society of London, Scientific Associate Natural History Museum, London, London Natural History Society, Vascular Plant Recorder, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland, informed the Beckenham Place Park Project team that their tree felling and new planting policies ignored and systematically undervalued the extant biodiversity of the park. He asked whether a full Phase 2 Habitat Survey was to be carried out for the plantation style planting of new woodland in the park, which he considered increased the vulnerability of existing habitat. He pointed out that members of the British botanical community have raised concerns time and again about such planting undermining vulnerable habitats. Please confirm whether a Phase 2 Habitat Survey was carried out and by whom and how they were so qualified to do so before the subsequent planting of whips took place in December 2018.
Dr Mark Spencer did indeed raise some queries and concerns regarding the new tree planting in Beckenham Place Park in December 2018. His concerns were threefold:

a) He queried whether the dense planting of saplings was the best means to establish woodland successfully
b) He questioned the affect that planting new trees/woodland close to other trees that are not used to having to compete for resources would have.
c) He expressed concern that grasslands are not sufficiently valued, and that new woodland should not be planted on valuable grassland habitat.

The Beckenham Place Park team took care to consider all these concerns with regards to the 2000 whips planted in conjunction with Trees for Cities in December.

a) The project team learned that there are varied views on the best means to establish new woodland in urban areas. Trees for Cities responded directly to Dr Mark Spence explaining their rationale for dense planting:

In relation to one of your points below about density of whip planting in past projects, our planting specification is also to plant whips close to each other. This is based on many years of experience of what works best in the urban context. One reason is around protection – i.e. planting sites that are more open often experience significant damage from walkers, vandalism, mowers etc. Densely planted sites are more clearly defined, and hence tend to be respected more during their establishment phase. The main reason, however, is actually around creating the healthiest woodland for the future. Whips that are planted more closely together experience more natural competition and so the resulting woodland should be stronger and more resilient – effectively a small scale ‘survival of the fittest’. This is accepted woodland creation practice, although actually you tend to see less dense planting in rural areas as the targets have been skewed more towards area of land cover as opposed to tree numbers (detrimental as this might actually be ultimately to the health of the future woodlands). Therefore, as you rightly point out, these whips are planted knowing that many will not reach maturity. Over the longer period those that do reach maturity will have more chance of successfully propagating and so there should be higher levels of natural regeneration… so it is a virtuous circle in the longer term.

b) The vast majority of the new woodland that has been planted in Beckenham Place Park since 2016 has been planted on the fringe of existing woodland. The trees on the edge of the woodland, adjacent to the new planting are already used to competing with other neighbouring trees in a woodland setting. Additional competition from the new trees is unlikely to pose significant challenge to these existing trees on the woodland edge; indeed, in a process of natural succession new trees would be highly likely to establish themselves over time in the woodland fringe.
c) Together with Dr Spence’s concern re grasslands, came the Friends more specific concern that new woodland planting planned on Crab Hill did not sufficiently value the grassland habitat already established there.

Council officers considered this representation with Trees for Cities and decided to relocate the planned tree planting to avoid this well-established grassland habitat. The new woodland planting was moved to an area that was intensively mown as part of the golf course until recently, and in which the phase 1 habitat survey revealed no particular habitats of interest.

No phase 2 habitat survey was required before the Trees for Cities planting event took place in December. Whilst the suggestion was made, project officers felt that given the phase 1 habitat survey had revealed no particular habitats of note here, and that the area had been a golf course until recently, this depth of investigation was not necessary prior to planting the small new area of woodland.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 16.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Heather Gilmore

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

Do you accept the continued refrain justifying the Tidemill development (104 new social homes and 91 for private sale apparently by Peabody) is the obvious desperate need for social housing. 17 out of 110 units on Amersham Vale are due to be let at London Affordable Rent (63% higher than present council rents) and 2 sold for shared ownership. If Sherry Green Homes have nothing to do with the Tidemill development anymore as stated by Cllr Dromey more than once, why hasn’t work started on Amersham Vale? Why has Sherry Green Homes been cited as an interested party on recent legal documents regarding the Tidemill Development and are also cited in the Section 106 agreement for Tidemill?

Reply

The Tidemill development will provide:

- 117 social homes, including up to 13 homes reserved for the tenants at 2-30A Reginald Road.
• An additional 41 shared ownership homes, which will be aimed at first time buyers who cannot afford to buy a property on the open market.
• An additional 51 homes will be for private sale to help subsidise the development.

Amersham Vale will provide 120 new homes, 24 social homes, 15 homes for shared ownership and 81 for private sale, again, to help subsidise the overall scheme. Lewisham Council entered into a Development Agreement with Peabody (formerly Family Mosaic) and Sherrygreen Homes in September 2015 to develop both the Tidemill and Amersham Vale sites.

Although Sherrygreen are no longer included within the Tidemill site, they continue to be cited on the legal documents as the Development Agreement for the two sites are tied. For this reason, works are unable to begin on the Amersham Vale site until the outcome of the judicial review on the Tidemill site.

In relation to the rents for the new homes, as has already been stated, all secure tenants from 2-30A Reginald Road will be offered a home in the new development with a guarantee that their rent will be no more than they are paying now.

The rents for the properties that will go into Lewisham Homeseach for those households waiting for a new home have yet to be set, but will be set at a level that is genuinely affordable and allow the Council to build the maximum amount of new social homes that our Borough desperately needs.

Housing association rents are higher than council rents. This has been the case for a number of years. We are currently looking at the rent levels on the Deptford Southern sites. It is worth noting that a quick internet search for a two-bedroom third floor flat in a purpose-built block on Deptford Church Street in the private rented sector is £346.15 per week or £1,500 per calendar month plus £2,077 deposit and £250 per person tenant fee. This is the scale of the problem. Housing association rents are at least half that amount without deposits and tenant fees. That is why we are committed to giving our residents a chance of a decent, genuinely affordable home.

For more information, please see the Council’s website www.lewisham.gov.uk/tidemill. This site is updated with the latest information.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 17.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Ruby Radburn

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

How much has Lewisham Council already paid County Enforcement for guarding Tidemill Garden from 29th October 2018 (the day of the eviction) to date (8th January 2019), and how much do they still owe?

Reply

The Tidemill development will require an investment of at least £44,500,000 and will deliver 209 much needed new homes of which 117 will be social homes where all existing tenants at 2-30A Reginald Road will be guaranteed a new home. The development will also provide new green space and has already provided the 1.41 acre Charlottenburg Park as part of the wider scheme. The new homes will be advertised in Lewisham Homeseach and will be allocated to those with a housing need as set out in the annual lettings plan.
All vacant sites of this size require security arrangements. The cost of securing the Tidemill site has been higher than would normally be expected due to the need to remove unauthorised occupants from the site, legal challenges against the scheme and the need to prevent the site from being reoccupied illegally. The legal process is also taking longer than expected to resolve. To date there have been 8 recorded attempts by protestors to climb over the hoarding or other structures to breach the security.

It must be remembered that the legal challenge is on a small part of the planning decision taken in September 2017 by the Strategic Planning Committee. The Council was asked not to cut down trees or carry out any land clearance by protestors until the legal process is concluded. The Council could have cleared the site and moved a small security company into the garden, but we did not do that, out of respect for the request. We could also have moved the security inside the garden but that would have involved cutting back or removing trees, which we were asked not to do.

At present, there continues to be a high number of guards securing the garden. Because of the repeated attempts to breach the security to gain access back onto the site we have been unable to scale the numbers of guards back any further than was done before Christmas.

The total spend for securing the site from 29th October 2018 to the 8th January 2019 is £918,090. The cost of the eviction itself was £105,188.

It is unfortunate that this money had to be spent on securing the site and the eviction. £918,090 could be used to house more than 150 families in Temporary Accommodation for a year.

By obtaining vacant possession of the site through the eviction and continuing to keep the site secure, the Council has been able to allow Peabody and their contractors to undertake the various surveys and investigation works that are needed to stop further delays to housing 104 new social tenants. The housing crisis exists for thousands of our fellow residents and the Council has a duty to prevent homelessness.
Question

Over the past year, contradictory and inadequate answers have come from a range of council officials and in situ management of PRC to questions regarding the recent occupation by projects (including outside of borough ones), management, supervision and change of use of the Pepys Resource Centre the only public library facility in the ward and currently officially run by Eco Communities under agreement with Lewisham Libraries. Can the council please give a definitive, informed and legally supported answer to:
- is the ownership of PRC as a Hyde Housing property treated as a Lewisham council asset
- are the documents relating to this and usage of PRC are in fact still "missing"?(as a council officer relayed last year was Hyde Housing reply to the question put to her)
- if the handover of PRC to the responsibility of Co-Op Pepys by Lewisham council - has yet happened or if it is about to?
- if control of the PRC is still awaiting decision as relayed by Darren Taylor a year ago and again recently? (i.e.: how legally sound is the current arrangement of occupation at PRC)
- Is the expected transfer (past or future) because Co-Op Pepys have refused until recently to leave their premises in Daubenny Tower following the notice to quit?
- Is the identity of the current occupiers of Co-Op Pepys premises in Daubenny Tower actually known to Lewisham Homes or the council and are they now facing a separate notice to quit?

- what terms of PRC's present arrangement + from and to dates are in place e.g.: the structures of accountability, monitoring of ALL projects run from there and to which organisation and management department of either: the council Library Services, Hyde Housing, Eco Communities, or any other body?
- are the present terms (in answer to the above) under review, have recently, or are about to change?

**Reply**

The Pepys Resource Centre is a Hyde Housing owned property run under a lease by Eco Communities. The management arrangements are between these two parties.

A Community Library has been run from the building since 2008 although the exact set up of the library has varied over the years in terms of staff, volunteers, and organisations involved.

The Council’s library service has maintained the approach it has with all community libraries: the provision of a liaison member of staff, the purchase of the books, maintenance of the collections, staff training, bringing national and regional initiatives to the library, etc. This approach is detailed in a Service Level Agreement that describes the duties of the library service and those of the partner organisation. This document is reviewed on an annual basis, but only updated by exception.

The Council and Lewisham Homes are working with the Co-Op Pepys group to find them new premises so that the property at Daubeney Towers can be released for much needed housing.
Question

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Patricia Robertson

Member to reply: Councillor Slater

Question

Lewisham Council is going to conduct a feasibility study into the redevelopment of Lewisham Library, with social housing, in order to prevent further library budget cuts. As the building contains the Local History and Archive Department will due consideration be given to the protection and security of that considerable collection, as well as its continuing accessibility to the public? Does the council have in mind an alternative site it is considering?

Also, as social housing (or rented, council-owned homes - see report Lewisham Ledger, Dec 2018/Jan 2019) by its nature, provides for cheaper, affordable renting, will this generate enough income to save the library budget?

Reply

Due consideration will be given to the Local History and Archives provision as part of the feasibility study that will deliver a new library building for Lewisham. The
feasibility study is under way, so it is too early to describe the options considered at this stage.

The feasibility study will include affordability information including any income which may come from any housing provision in the development.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 20.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Sam Thurgood

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Please can you confirm how much is being spent on the communications department for Lewisham Council?

Reply

Communicating effectively with our residents is very important for the Council. Good communications informs and engages residents on all aspects of the council’s work.

In 2017/18 the total net spend of the communications department was £655,450. This is a decrease from £746,757 in 2013/14 and £667,669 in 2015/16.

The cost and size of Lewisham Council’s communications department is notably lower than the London average. It spent £150,564 on non-staffing items during 2017/18, compared to the London council average of £317,625.

Figures from the Local Government Association (LGA) show the average number of staff in communication departments in London during 2017/18 was 14.4. Lewisham is below this average, employing 10 staff, down from 15 during 2014/15.
The communication team’s time is spent mainly on sharing important information with the public, such as on school places. Other key activities include responding to media requests, running communications campaigns that save residents money, running the Council website and producing the quarterly residents’ magazine Lewisham Life.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 21.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Clare Phipps

Member to reply: Councillor Best

**Question**

There have been "air pollution alerts" in Lewisham for 7 days over the past month alone, as calculated by Cambridge Environmental Research Consultants (CERC) Ltd. How many excess adverse health outcomes does the council estimate occurred on these dates? What action did the council take on those specific days to reduce the adverse effect on citizen's health? And what plans are in place to minimise the impact of high pollution events in the future?

**Reply**

The Council works with the GLA who are issuing alerts to vulnerable groups when pollution levels are expected to be moderate of high. The alerts are automatically sent to all schools with care homes, and GPs surgeries to be included soon. These alerts offer advice on action that people should take to protect themselves during these periods.

A description of pollution episodes can be found on Kings London Air website: [https://www.londonair.org.uk/LondonAir/guide/Episodes.aspx](https://www.londonair.org.uk/LondonAir/guide/Episodes.aspx)
Also Cambridge Environmental Research Consultants (CERC) Ltd have been offering a service for many years where alerts (text, voicemail and e-mail) are offered to those that subscribed to the airText service. Lewisham have for many years financially supported this service which offers free alerts to residents and the Council has promoted this through GP surgeries.

Lewisham last year also launched Lewisham Air app which also provides alerts to all those requesting it.

The moderate pollution forecast was announced each day by airText between 26th – 28th December and 2nd-4th January.

Alongside a wide ranging programme of work to help improve air quality the main way to minimise the impact is to provide alerts with advice and also to continue to work to manage.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 22.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

A Free Newspaper For Lewisham entitled "The Lewisham Ledger" is currently being supplied to local 'Community Libraries'. Is this publication funded in any way by Lewisham Council and if so, which department is responsible and from which budget package of money is the funding drawn?

Reply

Lewisham Ledger is independent from the Council and we are not aware of any funding provided to the newspaper.

However, Adult Learning Lewisham has advertised twice in the publication. Funding for this would have come from the adult learning budget.

Lewisham Ledger is a popular publication with local residents and personally I’ve enjoyed their focus on local news and stories from around the borough.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 23.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Angelina Minto

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

There was much controversy because ex CEO Ian Thomas CBE and LBL parted ways unexpectedly. The reason given was because the Mayor was moving in a different direction. Ian Thomas left an outstanding impression on staff and residents, has an excellent track record and has since been awarded a CBE. Can the Mayor advise what exactly is the direction he intends to take this poor demographic borough and what exactly was his reason for terminating Ian’s contract?

Reply

I did not terminate Ian Thomas’ contract. As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any individual employment matters. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.
I was pleased to see that Ian has been awarded a CBE for services to local government and children’s services.

The Council’s future vision and direction is set out in our draft Corporate Strategy, which is available online here:
Question asked by: Anne Caron-Delion

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

On 7th December Cllr Bell said on twitter that LBL had terminated County Enforcement's contract to guard the Old Tidemill School development site. Why are they still there and what are the reasons for their dismissal? Please list other sites in Lewisham where the Council are employing County Enforcement.

Reply

County Enforcement have provided services across the Council including onsite security for over 30 years. They were appointed to carry out the eviction of the Tidemill garden following the possession order granted by the Court, after the group failed to return the site to the Council as previously agreed and it became illegally occupied. As County Enforcement had knowledge of the site and it was expected that any ongoing security would be very short-term, they remained on the site.
Unfortunately, following the legal challenges against the scheme and the numerous attempts to reoccupy the site, security has had to remain in place for longer than was anticipated. Regrettably this has been at great cost.

Due to the length of time that security has been in place as well as residents’ concerns, the Council has reviewed the arrangements with County Enforcement and decided that another security contractor should take over the site. Council Officers have been working hard to procure another contractor who can manage the site and have been carrying out due diligence on potential replacements. However, due to the complex nature of Tidemill, it has taken some time to ensure that a new company is capable of managing the risks on site. This, along with the two week Christmas period, has unfortunately taken some time.

We hope new security provisions will be in place in the coming weeks.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 25.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Eddie Harrington
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Why did the Mayor get rid of Ian Thomas?

Reply

I did not dismiss Ian Thomas. As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any individual employment matters. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.
Question

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 26.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Michael Clarke
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

I note that our former Chief Exec, Ian Thomas, has been made a Commander of the British Empire for services to Local Government and to Children’s Services.

I note also that his recognition was for improvements such as Rotherham Children’s Services from an Ofsted ranking in bottom 6% in the country to within the top 16 in just 3 years.

I further note that he has been quickly recruited by the Royal Borough of Kingston to be the Chief Exec there.

Rotherham has been failing its children and Ian Thomas was instrumental in achievements the town is now very proud of.

Our loss is Kingston’s gain, so what exact efforts did we make to keep Ian Thomas as our Chief Exec so Lewisham could be equally as proud as those in Rotherham whose children are no longer being failed and where Ofsted rankings have risen so
spectacularly? As a Lewisham resident my whole life, do we think we tried hard enough to get him to change his mind, to stay and help us in Lewisham?”

Reply

I was pleased to see that Ian has been awarded a CBE for services to local government and children’s services, and wish him well in his new role.

As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any individual employment matters. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 27.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Jacqueline Utley

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

Please provide the whole budget agreed at the closed part of the Mayor and Cabinet meeting on the 12th December 2018 to start buying freeholder and leaseholder property in the Achilles Street area.

Please also include any other budget / costs agreed at the closed part of the Meeting on 12 December 2018 relating to the Achilles Street area ‘redevelopment’ proposals.

Reply

The Achilles Street Mayor and Cabinet report that was agreed on 12th December 2018, was presented in two parts.

The Part One report contained:

- Information on the redevelopment proposals for the Achilles Street estate;
• The consultation and engagement work carried out with residents and other stakeholders to date;
• The strategic rationale for carrying out redevelopment to deliver an increased amount of Council homes on the estate;
• The commitments made to all residents to guarantee their right to a home on the estate;
• The commitment to carry out a Residents’ Ballot to decide if any redevelopment should take place.
• All information on the budgets and spend to date.

The Part Two report contained:

• Information on estimated land acquisition costs and how these impact on overall scheme viability
• Details of the Council’s approach to compensation for commercial properties and leases
• Proposed budgets for residential and commercial land assembly and resourcing requirements
• A business case for voluntary land assembly in relation to the Achilles redevelopment proposals
• The financial implications of these budgets for the Council.

The content of all of these items meant that the part two report was considered separately as it set out information that is considered commercially sensitive, and under paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

As detailed above the information included budgets set out for conducting entirely voluntary purchases of private land interests on the Achilles Street estate that includes both commercial and residential property. To make public these budgets puts the Council at a competitive disadvantage when it comes to purchasing these private interests, and therefore would result in achieving less value for public money. For this reason the Council is exempt from releasing the information contained in the Part Two report.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 28.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Miss A Nesbeth

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

I would like to know the exact reason as to why Mr Ian Thomas was sacked from Lewisham, why is it after uncovering such deception within the borough would you decided to get rid of him instead of working as a team to build a council beneficial and trustworthy to all?

Reply

Ian Thomas was not sacked from his role as Chief Executive.

There is no truth in the assertion that he uncovered any deception in the borough.

As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any individual employment matters. This
is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 29.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Anthony Crowther

Member to reply: Councillor Dacres


The Lewisham Council website states that the consultation report will be made available in November 2018:


As of 8th January 2019, this report doesn’t seem to be available on the Council’s website.

- When will it be published?
- How will the Council be keeping residents updated on its implementation?
The publication of the consultation report has been delayed due to the need to prioritise work on the development of the Council's overarching Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan. This document secures funding from Transport for London (TfL) for the delivery of a three year programme of transport projects, including electric vehicle charging points, and as such the tight deadlines for its submission are specified by TfL.

As this process is drawing to a close in mid February, it is anticipated that the final Low Emission Vehicle Charging Strategy and associated consultation report will be published in spring 2019. The timeline for this has now been updated on the Council's website, and progress in implementing the strategy will also be reported on this website.

In terms of charging point implementation, as site identification for each 7kw and rapid charge point takes place, residents and businesses in the vicinity of each point will be consulted on the proposed locations. They will also be kept informed of the outcome of the consultation and timescales for implementation, as appropriate.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 30.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Rosalind Huish

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

With regards to SEN in the borough please can you advise of the following 2008-18:

- How many parents have appealed to SENDIST each academic year?
- How many appeals have Lewisham settled before the hearing?
- How many have Lewisham lost after full hearing?
- Do Lewisham use in house lawyers or instruct external firms for the tribunal cases?
- How much do Lewisham spend on legal fees for tribunal cases?
- Which budget do the legal fees come out of?

**Reply**

The Council’s aim for children with a special educational need or disability – as with all our children – is that they should have the best possible start in life and the best possible opportunities to learn, develop and play. They should expect the best from
all who provide services that aim to improve their lives and life chances. Where agreement on the best approach is not easily reached, we work to resolve as many cases as possible throughout the appeals process and always aims to ensure that the most appropriate decisions are reached to ensure a child’s needs can be met.

Lewisham’s tribunal data is collected in the format that we have to report it to central government in the SEN 2 report. That data is detailed below and is on the number of cases where there has been a mediation meeting and the number of those cases that continue to a final SENDIST hearing. This data has only been collected since 2016. We do not have the 2018 data yet. This will be reported in the SEN 2 return at the end of January 2019.

### Mediations & Tribunal Appeals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015</th>
<th></th>
<th>2016</th>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Mediation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cases</td>
<td>cases which</td>
<td>cases</td>
<td>cases which</td>
<td>cases</td>
<td>cases which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>held</td>
<td>followed by</td>
<td>held</td>
<td>followed by</td>
<td>held</td>
<td>followed by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>tribunal 2015</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>appeals to</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>appeals to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>during 2015</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>tribunal during</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>tribunal during</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>1,886</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>1,997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONDON</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambeth</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwich</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waltham Forest</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Mediation & Tribunal Data – DfE SEN2 Publication 2018:
This table contains underpinning data and has been made available by the Department for Education’s SEN 2 plans England, 2018-24 May 2018 - National Statistics.*
How many parents have appealed to SENDIST each academic year?

We have the data for the number of appeals each year since the SEND reforms in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2017 we did carry out a pilot across the year to collect additional information in relation to Tribunals this included:

- No of appeals during the year – 35
- No of cases heard by SENDIST within the year - 23
- No of cases dismissed – 8
- No of cases conceded – 4
- No of cases withdrawn – 5
- No of cases which SENDIST agreed with the LA recommendations – 6
- No of cases pending at the end of the year - 12

We are currently developing a more detailed data collection which we will use in 2019.

Do Lewisham use in house lawyers or instruct external firms for the tribunal cases?

Lewisham has a Tribunal Officer who is part of the SEND team. The Tribunal Officer will seek advice from our internal legal team and very occasionally will use an external barrister to represent the LA at the hearing.”

How much do Lewisham spend on legal fees for tribunal cases?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Disbursements £</th>
<th>Time £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>3,540</td>
<td>2,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>1,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>6,612</td>
<td>4,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>1,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>1352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>5,750</td>
<td>1,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-2019 (to 15.01.2019)</td>
<td>19,005</td>
<td>3,922</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: All disbursements are Counsel fees.

**Which budget do the legal fees come out of?**

Any legal fees are met by the SEND Team Budget.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 31.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Moira Kerrane
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

In response to a previous question about ‘Team Catford’, it was claimed that development ‘delivered in Evelyn, whilst hugely significant, sits across a wider geographical and more disaggregated spread of sites, compared with Catford which is being delivered in a much more focused and specific area’.

I have looked at the map used by Team Catford and it covers a 1 mile radius around Laurence House. It is not true that sites in Evelyn are “disaggregated”. Convoys Wharf, for example, is across Grove Street from The Timberyard which between them account for 4,500-5000 homes. 10,000 in total for Evelyn Ward. There have been no efforts by the Council to integrate these developments with existing communities or use section 106 funding to benefit local communities resources.

It has been left to locally led volunteer and TRA groups to develop their own local masterplans to improve the area. It is unacceptable that “Team Catford” is funded to provide organised council sponsored community activities in Catford while the most deprived Evelyn ward has to fend for itself. I would like to know what steps the Council are going to take to resolve this inequality in Evelyn Ward.
Reply

The masterplan work currently being undertaken by the Council is focussed specifically on Council owned land in the town centre – the Laurence House and car park; Old Town Hall, Civic Suite and Broadway Theatre; and the Catford Centre and Milford Towers. It is also looking at privately owned land in the wider town centre area, near the train stations in Catford and on “Plassy Island”. The work that Team Catford do is primarily focussed on activities relating to Council owned land in the town centre and the further development of the masterplan. Whilst the masterplan is focussed on these areas, the wider area referred to in the question has also been considered both in terms of measuring what impact future development in the town centre will have to the wider Catford area, and from a consultation perspective to ensure the Council is engaging with residents beyond the immediate town centre.

The emerging new Local Plan for the Borough will provide a high level strategy for development and investment within the area.

It is fair to say that there has not been a comprehensive masterplan/framework to create a coherent development strategy for the ward. However this is not unusual. The Team Catford masterplan is not Ward based either.
Question

PRIORITY 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Ruel Ru

Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

At the previous meeting of the Council, the Mayor said that he would be willing to come and engage with the community personally, which date does he have in mind?

Does the Mayor see tackling youth violence as a high priority for the Council?

Reply

I share your concerns about youth violence in our communities and I am committed to doing everything we can to stop the violence. Tackling youth violence and ensuring our children and young people get the best start in life are top priorities for me and for the whole Council.
I am always happy to meet with residents and community leaders to discuss how we can work together to tackle youth violence and I have asked my office to contact you to arrange a meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 33.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Jacqui Gordon
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Why has there been no meaningful reliable information on the grounds for dismissal of Ian Thomas?

How does the Council propose to address the resultant reputation damage with the black community?

Reply

Ian Thomas was not dismissed. As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any
individual employment matters. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.

Lewisham’s diversity is one of our greatest strengths. The Council is proud of its record as a pioneer in equalities for all minority communities.

As with other London boroughs, we know there are fewer Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff at senior levels. That is why we are focussing on staff progression for our BAME staff. We have also launched internal leadership and mentoring training and we have other related training initiatives being arranged for all persons involved in recruitment. I also plan to appoint an external advisor at April's AGM, whose focus will be to challenge and track the progress we are making.

Through this long term strategy, we are committed to ensure confidence in the community.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 34.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: David Hamilton

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Question

A few years ago when the Mayor was cabinet member for housing, the previous Mayor decided to promise to build 500 council houses. He decided to knock down various community centres rather than use the empty site at Besson Street which could accommodate around 250 new homes and had been empty for a decade.

Why, since you claim to understand the need for more council housing (the only form of tenure which is truly affordable), have you decided to continue with Steve Bullock's proposal to build homes for private rental on the site?
You claimed at the last council meeting that your administration was "changing direction" (your reason for terminating Ian Thomas's contract). When is this change going to happen?

**Reply**

This Council’s plans to address the housing crisis are wide ranging and ambitious. It is absolutely the case that we are delivering a bold and ambitious programme of house building, the first of its kind in this borough for a generation.

This is a complex and expensive programme to deliver, to which we have already won £37.7m of grant funding from the Mayor of London and will combine that with more than £140m of Council resources to deliver the homes we need for lower income and vulnerable residents.

It is however also the case that, as well as providing homes for social rent to low income residents, this Council needs to consider what role it will play in improving conditions for our residents who rent privately. The private rented market is expensive and is largely un-regulated, with many lower income working residents living in the households.

More importantly, it is in large part the dysfunction in the private rented market that drives our homelessness crisis. One in two of the families this Council supports because they had become homeless, had previously rented in the private sector. For a lot of these families, a secure, affordable and safe private rented property in Lewisham will get them back on their feet and provide a better option than a long wait in temporary accommodation, outside of Lewisham.

We want to build a development at Besson Street that showcases what a good private landlord can deliver, and gives tenants a much better deal as is seen in the German-style renting model. Of the homes we will build there, 35% will be at the London Living Rent, aimed at current private rented tenants who will be paying far more for quite possibly a lower quality product. Rents will be controlled and we will offer all renters a 10 year contract, and no right to end the tenancy for the landlord other than for breach of contract. This is far more secure than anything on the market and will be leading in the country for tenant security.

The Besson Street development will be of houses owned by the state, not property developers and speculators.

Furthermore, while addressing the housing crisis is our key strategic priority, this Council needs to find ways to become financially sustainable. If it does not, it will need to cut more core services, on which our most vulnerable tenants disproportionately depend.

In doing this we will set the standard for others to follow, and create a supply of lower cost private rented properties for families displaced in Lewisham's private sector, or those at risk of homelessness. This supply will also support the lower income working
residents who, while priced out of home ownership, have no prospect of obtaining a social tenancy either.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 35.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Giancarlo Sesia

Member to reply: The Mayor

The Mayor was part of the selection committee which appointed Ian Thomas. The Mayor said he had to leave because of the change of direction which implies some disagreement on policy. Surely the job of chief executive is to carry out the wishes of the political leadership of the council - in this case, the Mayor! Why did the Mayor not ensure that the person appointed had an understanding of the policies he wished to pursue which were already formulated in the Labour manifesto?
Many people assume that the Council and Ian Thomas signed a non-disclosure agreement relating to the real reason for his departure. Is this the case? If so, did the council pay Ian Thomas a sum on top of his normal severance pay which would be forfeit in the event of him revealing the reasons? If the Council did pay for a non-disclosure agreement, how much did it pay and from which budget allocation?

Reply

Ian Thomas’ appointment predated the publication of the Lewisham Labour manifesto.

I have never said that the former Chief Executive ‘had to leave’. As with any member of the Council’s staff, from senior management to junior officers, the Council does not comment on any individual employment matters. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and is in line with a best practice employer approach.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 36.
Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: John Hamilton
Member to reply: The Mayor

Question

Could you please send me a list of all buildings with mobile phone masts or antennae operated by CTIL and where the site is owned by the council or Lewisham Homes or any other arms-length body on behalf of the Council?

Reply

The following is a list of all buildings owned by the Council with mobile phone masts or antennae operated by CTIL. These buildings are managed by Lewisham Homes.
Question asked by: Mariam Aslam

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

Given the stated ‘change in direction’ of Lewisham Council and the promise by The Mayor not to sell council land to private developers, can we be assured the 276 homes for social rent demolished in Milford Towers as part of the regeneration of Catford Town Centre, will be replaced?
As part of the emerging plans for the redevelopment of Catford Town Centre, it is intended that all affordable housing provision which is demolished will be replaced. We also anticipate that future proposals will deliver a significant increase in housing across all Council land in the town centre. The Council will be maximising the amount of genuinely affordable Council homes included within that. The regeneration of Catford Town Centre is likely to deliver a significant uplift in Council homes.

Detailed consultation will take place in the next few months to create a masterplan for Catford. The scheme will take some time to deliver, as the re-routing of the South Circular is key to the aspirations that the Council has for Catford. Mayor Damien Egan is leading on making Catford a new civic centre along with truly affordable housing. The excellent ward councillors Krupski, Muldoon and Walsh are part of this conversation and share our full council desire for more truly affordable social housing and community-led development.

On Milford Towers, it is worth noting that the majority of the housing on site is no longer social housing. 49 units are used for temporary housing, 191 units are leased to Notting Hill Genensis Housing Association to house residents on assured shorthold tenancies and 17 are leaseholders.
Question

With the departure of Ian Thomas, please can you advise your plan to continue with leading and developing effective partnerships with local community organisations to achieve better public services and improved results for local children and young people?

Reply
Lewisham Council has a long history of working in partnership with the voluntary/third sector and was the first London Borough to develop a Compact with the sector in 2001. The compact seeks to support a positive relationship between the sector and key statutory partners. It includes expectations around the management of grant aid as well as broader partnership working principles. The compact was further developed in 2010 with the addition of guidelines for commissioning with the third sector in recognition of the important contribution that the third sector should play in identifying needs as well as potentially delivering service solutions.

Within this framework the Council works with a huge range of voluntary sector groups that work specifically with children, young people and their families. These include XLP, Lewisham Youth Theatre, Youth First, The Midi Music Company and many more. Beyond this there is a commitment to supporting mentoring opportunities for young people and the council is working with a range of partners including the borough deans to establish a borough wide offer.
Question asked by: Cheryl Coyne

Member to reply: Councillor Bell

**Question**

I hope and trust that you are committed to providing genuine Council housing for our Borough, at genuinely affordable rents.
As you presumably know, Local authorities have access to low-interest loans through the government’s ‘Public Work and Loans Board’.

I understand there is no restriction on how these loans are used, but Council Housing would obviously be high on the list of the most pressing needs in the Borough.

What plans do you have to take advantage of this most cost effective way to meet the needs of Lewisham residents, whilst also creating a long term investment in council housing?

Reply

This Council is committed to building new Council Homes, with genuinely affordable rents and lifetime security of tenure, and aims to deliver 1,000 of these new homes by 2022.

We were delighted to win £37.5m of funding from the Mayor of London in October of last year, following a bid which was approved by Councillors. In framing our bid, and deciding to pursue such an ambitious and proactive approach, we noted that we would need to supplement external funding with at least £140m of Council investment, a large proportion of which would be drawn from Public Works Loan Board borrowing.

This is a significant and ambitious commitment, made by this Council, to use all available resources to counter the housing crisis caused by years of Government under investment in the basic human right to safe and secure housing.

Lewisham Council believes in council housing. We believe that a secure, truly affordable decent home is a right for everyone. We are working to maximise every opportunity to give someone their own front door.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 40.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Lauren Risch
Member to reply: Councillor Slater

Question
An independent review of the operational arrangements of the Evelyn Ward Assembly over the period 2014-2018 was carried out on the instruction of Acting Chief Executive, Janet Senior. Where can Evelyn Ward Residents view the outcome
of this review of their local assembly? What was the cost of conducting the review and were residents of the Evelyn Ward put at a disadvantage from 2014-2018 compared to functioning ward assemblies elsewhere in Lewisham.

Reply

There was no independent review as far as I am aware. There was a council review of some of the concerns raised and some subsequent changes were made to the Assemblies guidance. There was no additional cost incurred and the assembly was not put in any disadvantageous position.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 41.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Keme Nzerem

Member to reply: Councillor Dacres

Question

Could council detail the funds Millwall has already disbursed or has agreed to disburse to support the Lewisham under 11 boys and girls district football teams over the 2018/2019 season?
Funding is provided to Millwall Community Trust to facilitate the Lewisham Football Network and the Council does not specify the level of funding that goes to any of the individual football teams within the borough. The network was set up so that a strategic approach could be taken to football development in Lewisham and so that decisions about small amounts of funding to clubs and teams could be made in an independent and more responsive way. The network has proved to be an effective means of increasing participation, beyond the sport's traditional young male reach as well as providing important pathways for residents to train as coaches and referees.

During the 2017/18 season, £700 was provided to the Boys under 11 team and £500 to the Girls under 11 team, based on the number of matches and training sessions that each team was involved in. It is anticipated that a similar level of funding will be provided per match and training session will be provided for the remainder of this season.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 42.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Shabnam Nasimi
Member to reply: Councillor Dacres

Question

What steps are Lewisham Council are taking to ensure ‘Blue Badges’ are not fraudulently used?
The Council takes the issue of fraudulent use of Blue Badges seriously.

Successful applicants are required to collect the Badge themselves. There has been a number of fraudulent applications and people applying on behalf of someone else therefore making the successful applicant come and collect the Badge means we will only issue them to the correct person who the concession has been awarded to.

The Concessionary Awards Team have also undertaken proactive exercises to tackle Blue Badge misuse in conjunction with officers from the Anti Fraud and Corruption Team and Parking. We take appropriate action against those abusing the scheme including issuing warnings, issuing penalty charge notices, prosecution and where appropriate seizing badges. With the latter, the majority of fraud involves relatives or friends of the correct badge holder which means seizing the badge from the holder doesn’t actually penalise the person responsible for the abuse.

In the last year 3 cases have been prosecuted:

- Driver using his deceased mother’s badge - Fine £220 and costs of £363
- Driver using a stolen / lost badge - Fine £220 and costs of £240
- Garage owner using stolen / lost badge – Fine £293 & costs £240.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 43.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: James Clark
Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

Question

What recruitment company is being used to search for the CEO role?
Reply

No decision has yet been made on the approach to recruiting a new CEO. As such decisions about whether to use a recruitment company, or not, have not been made.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 44.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Andy Hughes

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham
Question

Is the report on Lewisham exclusion rates on track to be released in March 2019? Are there any preliminary conclusions you can share as to why Lewisham has the highest exclusion rate in London (as reported in the News Shopper Newspaper, 7th Sept 2018)

Reply

Permanent exclusion from school is a serious sanction, which should be used only as a last resort. Only the head teacher of a school can exclude a child and this must be on disciplinary grounds. The decision to permanently exclude a child should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others

The number of permanent exclusions in recent years has been a concern. That is why we pledged in our 2018 manifesto to work with parents and schools to reduce exclusions. I look forward to the conclusions of the current Children and Young People Select Committee Review on exclusions which focuses on the improvement of Lewisham performance, a deep dive into the causes of exclusion and the investigation of best practice around early intervention to support children at risk. The report is expected in March 2019, and we will want to take it into account as we take forward the continued work of the Lewisham Inclusion Strategy, and the fulfilment of our manifesto pledge.

I would not want prejudge that report by speculating on the reasons for the past numbers of exclusions locally (although I note the pressures that schools are under nationally, and the rising trend of exclusions elsewhere). I am however encouraged by the progress that our schools have been making in recent years. In 2015/16 we had 78 permanent exclusions, which was as the question notes, the highest in London. This number fell to 63 in 2016/17 and was down to 43 in 2017/18. That is a drop in permanent exclusions of 45 per cent. We anticipate a further decrease this academic year, following extensive efforts and progress to reduce exclusions.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 45.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Jacqueline Bygrave
Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

Question
In the 2018 manifesto the Lewisham Fair Workload Charter aims to 'attract and retain the best teachers'. Can you provide information as how many 'good' teachers have left the profession in Lewisham and why?

**Reply**

We have some fantastic teachers in our schools, and we are keen to support them in giving the best possible start in life to our young people. We know that central government policies and funding cuts are placing schools under increasing pressures.

Under Local Management of Schools legislation each school governing body is responsible for the recruitment of staff within their school and for identifying trends or reasons for any staff turnover. In terms of the 'quality' of teaching within schools, this information would be held by each individual school and not the Local Authority.

Individual schools carry out exit surveys with staff who leave and their governing boards use this information to develop workforce strategies. As a local authority we successfully help schools recruit and train newly qualified teachers.

The Local Authority does not collect nor hold information in relation to the quality of teachers leaving Lewisham.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 46.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Nicky Dixon

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

Question
Will the Council consider forming a working group with the education community, including parents, to assess whether schools PFI contracts are able to work better for Lewisham schools?

Reply

The Council works very closely with each school that is within one of the PFI contracts both separately and collectively. There are monthly meetings where the school, PFI contractor and Council review the performance of the contract. This mechanism allows both the council and schools to put forward views as to how the contract can best meet the needs of the schools.

Outside of this, we would be open to wider stakeholder engagement that can provide input and insight into those discussions, and would be happy to arrange an engagement meeting with community stakeholders to generate ideas to be discussed within those contractual meetings.
How many independent small businesses have closed following the business rate increases of the last 2 years April 2016-17 and 2017-18 & from April 2018 - date? & what assistance has/is the Council offering them?

Reply

The Council is unable to provide an accurate number of how many independent small businesses closed down as a result of business rates increases during this period. We do not formally ask businesses why they close, as in many cases the business will give notice to their landlord that they are closing the business. There can be a wide range of reasons for a business closing, such as rising rents, challenges with footfall or relocating elsewhere. We recognise that a rise in business rates can also be a factor.

The results of a small business survey undertaken in Lewisham last year (2018) cited the following issues as barriers for growth; overall economy (18.95%), obtaining finance (12.62%), Tax/PAYE/BR/NI (10.48%), Recruiting staff (9.8%), Competition (7.19%), Late Payments (5.23%), Premises (16.34%), other (9.15%), non-respondents (10.24%).

In terms of local support the Council offers information and guidance via the Economy & Partnership team who have a free business growth (and sustainability) programme and affordable co-working Officer. The Small Business Officer has also assisted retail businesses identify alternative low-cost premises options through introductions or, sharing information about available commercial premises, including that owned by the Council. They have also set up a Small Business Support Forum with local workspace providers, banks, trainers, Federation of Small Businesses and SE Chambers of Commerce, to help influence the support on offer to local businesses.

The team also offers support to new businesses by promoting them on the Council’s website, as well as the use of local news outlets and the Council magazine Lewisham Life. A key initiative for the Council is to increase the number of business accredited by the London Living Wage Foundation, who if accredited, receive a reduction in their rates for a limited period.

A range of statutory reliefs have been introduced to help business ratepayers following the revaluation:

**Small business rates relief**
Ratepayers who occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £50,999 (and who are not entitled to other mandatory relief or, are liable for unoccupied property rates) have their bills calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier, rather than the national non-domestic rating multiplier.

In addition, if the sole or main property appears on the rating list with a rateable value which does not exceed £15,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates up to a maximum of 100%. For a property with a rateable
value of not more than £12,000, the ratepayer will receive a 100% reduction in their rates bill.

The Government introduced further support to small businesses. Businesses that take on an additional property will now retain their entitlement to small business rates relief for a period of 12 months. The total Number of properties currently in receipt of Small Business Rates Relief 2380.

**Spring budget 2017 transitional relief scheme**

Ratepayers losing small business or rural rate relief as a result of the 2017 revaluation have their increases limited via a transitional scheme introduced by the Government. The scheme will remain in place until 31 March 2022 on a sliding scale.

**Support for pubs**

The Government provided funding for Councils to provide a £1,000 discount to pubs with a rateable value of below £100,000. This was initially available for 2017/18 however, the Government extended the scheme through to 2018/19.

**Relief for local newspapers**

The Government is providing funding to Councils to enable the award of a discount to the value £1,500 per annum for office space occupied by local newspapers. The scheme is in place for 2 years, from April 2017 to March 2019.

In addition to the above reliefs charities and registered community amateur sports clubs are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the charity or the club, and is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes, or the purposes of the club. The Council has discretion to award further relief on the remaining 20%. A Discretionary Rate Relief Policy is in place and available to charities registered with the Charities Commission.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 48.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Diane Johnson
Member to reply: Councillor Barnham
**Question**

Is there a plan to appoint more BME teachers to reflect the diversity in Lewisham? Your manifesto states that there is a plan to appoint more BME governors in Lewisham secondary schools.

a) What is the timeline for both of these actions?

b) Who are you working with to deliver this plan?

**Reply**

We have many excellent BAME teaching staff in Lewisham, including in leadership roles, however we are always keen to improve opportunities for progression especially into senior roles. With the Atlas Teaching Schools, we launched a BAME Leadership Programme in November 2018. The ‘Inclusive Leadership programme’ is a leadership development programme for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) educators, designed to examine how participants can overcome barriers, build networks and become the leaders they aspire to be.

As for school governors, it is important for governing bodies to reflect the community their schools serve. A Diversity in Governance Plan will be in place by summer 2019, as we want a strategic plan across the Local Authority and the community which is widely owned. We are already working with schools and governors to develop their work to increase diversity and recruit BAME governors to their governing boards. Part of this work will include working with key local stakeholders (including community and parent groups) and national groups such as the National Governors’ Association and the Black Governors Association.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 49.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Richard Hebditch
Member to reply: Councillor Bell
**Question**

What inspections have taken place of Eros House since 1 Dec 2018, and what assessment the council has made of actions to address damp, heating and security since then?

**Reply**

There have been a total 19 joint inspections undertaken by District Homes (DH) and Lewisham Council. On 26/11/2018, DH issued a letter to all 48 residents being housed in Eros House by Lewisham Council. The letter set out how residents could book an appointment to have their property inspected. DH received 10 responses out of the 48 letters that were issued. The inspections for the 10 residents were carried out on 05/12/2018, with a further 3 inspections carried out from cold calling the remaining 38 flats. On the same day DH issued a second letter to the remaining 35 residents, giving them an option to book an alternative appointment for a joint inspection. DH received a total of 6 responses out of the 35 letters issued. These inspections were carried out on 14/12/2018.

The Council is monitoring the progress of the work relating to security, heating and damp in Eros House. DH have been replacing inefficient and faulty heaters as identified. This programme will continue until all the heaters have been replaced. DH have confirmed that any residents that report that they are experiencing problems with their heaters will have them upgraded to newer more efficient models.

The Council has been working with DH and Landside (Facilities Management) to improve the security in Eros House. Since November 2018 Landside have contracted security personnel based at Eros House 24 hours a day, every day of the week to oversee all security matters of the building. Landside have also recently confirmed that works will be carried out on 28/01/2019 in order to reinstate the CCTV security cameras throughout the building. This will enable remote monitoring, which will be available to the Council and enforcement authorities.

Landside have recently carried out major works to the roof of the building. This involved a full roof overhaul using Glass Reinforced Polyester (GRP) material. This repair is a key factor in tackling leaks and issues of damp in the building. The Council is assessing the overall efforts being displayed by both District Homes and Landside, and will continue to closely monitor the progress and ensure that a satisfactory outcome is produced for all residents of Eros House.

Cllrs Krupski, Muldoon and Walsh have also worked hard to support residents. I will continue to monitor progress.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 50.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Trina Lynskey

Member to reply: Councillor Dromey
**Question**

It is great news that New Cross & Deptford has been designated a ‘Creative Employment Zone’ (CEZ) in the Mayor of London’s flagship scheme. If successful the CEZ will attract employment and training opportunities to the Evelyn Ward, Lewisham's most deprived area. The Mayor of London Draft Plan Policy HC5 states that "CEZs should seek to protect, develop and deliver new spaces the creative industries need".

Will the Council make an inventory of unused employment floorspace available in the area and work with businesses and the community to attract tenants to these units? Will the council ensure the CEZ is a material policy consideration for all planning applications in the area? Will the council use an ‘Article 4 Direction’ restricting permitted development rights in the CEZ to protect employment floorspace and promote the Mayor of London's policy ambition for CEZs?

**Reply**

The Council is in the process of preparing its evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. This includes a Local Economic Assessment, Town Centre Health Checks and an update to the Employment Land Review. Together these studies will provide details on current vacancies across the borough. The Council will continue to work with businesses and the community to attract tenants to the borough.

**Will the council ensure the CEZ is a material policy consideration for all planning applications in the area?**

**Answer**

As the Draft London Plan progresses through to adoption its policies will gain more weight as material considerations when considering applications within the CEZ area.

The council is also developing specific policies relating to the CEZ through the emerging Local Plan.

**Will the council use an ‘Article 4 Direction’ restricting permitted development rights in the CEZ to protect employment floor space and promote the Mayor of London's policy ambition for CEZs?**

**Answer**

The Council is committed to growing Lewisham’s economy and protecting its employment floor space where appropriate. The Council is currently testing the effectiveness of its employment policies through the New Local Plan process and will make amendments where necessary. At present there is no plans for the use of an Article 4 Direction but this option will be kept under review.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 51.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Ms M Taylor

Member to reply: Councillor Bonavia
**Question**

Given the long standing dearth of digital inclusion in Evelyn ward; central Governments current consultation on digital policy (closing date 10th Jan 2019); the Mayor of London's proposals for restructuring Funding for Adult Education Funding in 2019, and the soon expected further cuts to Lewisham Library Services- Can the council please explain:

- if they yet have a council policy in place to meet the much needed provision of digital inclusion for one of the most deprived populations in the borough – Evelyn Ward?
- how they plan to provide not just computer training (presently infrequent ad hoc limited provision of techy tea parties for the elderly - concentrating on newly built retirement home Conrad Court) but also free public access to WORKING, ACCESSIBLE computer suites for Evelyn ward residents

- Note: the only public library in the ward (PCR) has undergone a de facto change of usage and management in favour of a social centre and kitchen in recent times.

**Reply**

The Council has provided free access to computers and the internet in libraries with support from its staff since 1996. In addition all libraries offer basic digital skills training through the UK Online network.

Lewisham’s Go On co-coordinator, employed to help residents access Council web services, has been engaging with community groups in the Evelyn ward to ascertain training needs and identify locations where services could be delivered. An offer was sent out to community groups in October 2018 to meet and discuss any specific needs (following a communication from Deptford Working Histories). Following discussions a further offer was made to arrange for Wix (who help organisations get a presence on the web) to provide training for organisations in Deptford if there was enough interest. To date this has not been taken up.

Agreement was initially made with Pepys Resource Centre to try and further develop their existing volunteer led digital training sessions (Aug/Sept 2018). Lewisham Homes, Hyde housing and Catbytes were contacted to explore updating the computers and standardising the operating systems in order to run training sessions. However, the Council is currently reviewing how it engages with the Pepys Resource Centre.

On 21 November 2018, Mayor and Cabinet agreed that the proposed cut to Libraries be “withdrawn and officers asked to undertake a feasibility study of redeveloping Lewisham Library to be brought back to Mayor & Cabinet as part of the 2020-2021 budget”.

The relationship between the Council and Eco Communities that regulates the provision of library services within the Pepys building has not changed.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 52

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson
Question

As the Users and Friends of Manor House Library the committee has been notified by some of our users commenting on the poor state of the drive to the Manor House. Since renovation in 2009 it has been in use and is showing the results of the wear and tear over these years. Does the council monitor the infrastructure and make provision to help with improvements?

Library users also commented on the fact that over the Christmas/New Year holidays the reduced opening hours were not given enough early publicity. Was this the case? The front board did not have such notification.

A user who lives almost opposite the building on Old Road reported that both sets of gates were not always closed after opening hours. Was this the case or was the building being used at the time? In view of the fact that Manor House Gardens was used for fireworks on New Year’s Eve, after closing time, but no locked gates, will the council ensure that these issues are addressed?

Reply

The council is informed that the drive is on the tenant’s to-do list. However, they need two clear dry days on the weather forecast that happen to coincide with when the work can be delivered. The tenant is looking at repairing the worst holes rather than re-laying the driveway, for this year at least.

Christmas Library opening times were posted in the library and the foyer from October in the form of posters, and from the beginning of December cards were available that people could take with them that had the times on.

A notice was up in the noticeboard by the park with the Christmas opening hours on it. This was done before December 5th, when V22 confirmed they had the key to the noticeboard. V22 also informed the council on 31st October, so that the Christmas opening hours could be posted on the Lewisham website. Hours were also given on social media in the run up to Christmas.

Gates are rarely linked to library times and there is a notice on all gates to clarify this. Manor House Day Care starts at 7.30am and they, along with other tenants, might be in the building when the library is not open.

A tenant learning to play the cello never practices during opening hours. Similarly, the caretaker is often on site, with the gates open, when he is working. Over Christmas he completed certain jobs that require the building to be closed for a period of time. For example, the skylights above the Teen and Audiobook areas were cleaned during the downtime.

Also, the Manor House Midwives are on call all year round and are regularly in Manor House when no one else is at work.
Question asked by: Angelina Minto
We had a high profile murder of a young black male in Bellingham in November. This has highlighted that more investment and resources need to be invested in the youth. The borough has high youth unemployment record as well as poor reading and writing levels. Other than stop and search, what proposals does the Mayor have to tackle these issues as it appears it is not high up on his priority list? In addition, will you recognise that I was extremely disappointed that he never issued any communication to his residents in particularly those living in the area (as Lambeth did) during this difficult time?

Tackling serious violence is something that the Mayor and I, as the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities, see as one of our key priorities. The murder of anyone, but especially a young person, is a tragedy for our borough and the community.

Devastatingly, the rise in serious youth violence has been seen across the country and in London. We will continue to work with our partners in London, including the Mayor of London, and across the UK to tackle what is one of the most important issues facing our country.

We believe that serious violence is preventable. In our election manifesto we set out the need for a for a public health approach to violence to be adopted across the borough. A public health model uses local people, the wider community, local businesses, as well as experts from various areas such as education, economics, health and the police to work together to reduce and prevent serious youth violence.

This model was first used in Chicago and saw significant reductions in serious violence. This model has also been adopted in Glasgow and later across all of Scotland. Since the introduction of the public health model and the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit the number of homicides in Scotland has reduced from 137 in 2004-05 to 59 in 2017-18. We are making significant progress in Lewisham in adopting our own public health model.

The causes of crime are complex. They include poverty, social isolation, lack of opportunities and many other important factors. We as councillors are clear that the underlying socio-economic factors need to be addressed to tackle the root causes of crime. That is why we need to ensure that our wider services, including education, offer the best possible start in life for Lewisham children.

In our 2018 election manifesto we committed to working with schools to continue to improve children’s achievement, and to reduce permanent exclusions from schools.

We take tackling this issue with the utmost seriousness and have been running many programmes to tackle this issue. I have provided a few examples below:
Our reading and writing levels are well above national averages at age 11 and we have secured improvements, particularly in English and Maths, at secondary level although there is still a way to go. We are therefore working closely with our schools to deliver Lewisham Secondary Challenge, a programme to support secondary schools in their drive to improve standards. This is funded by £750k in central government grant, and forms a part of the wider Lewisham Learning partnership. This is a school-led school improvement partnership, supporting all Lewisham schools, which has begun its work over the last eighteen months, with a strong focus on English and Maths.

We are committed to working with our schools to help reduce the number of permanent exclusions from school. The number of permanent exclusions from our schools has fallen sharply in the past two years (from 78 in 2015/16 to 43 in 2017/18) and there were only two permanent exclusions last term at a time when the trend is upwards in other areas. We are supporting young people who are at risk of exclusion. The Children and Young People Select Committee is currently reviewing exclusions and will report to the Mayor on this work.

We continue to invest in our youth service offer and are proud of our youth clubs, adventure playgrounds, and wider youth work provision through Youth First, Lewisham’s youth service mutual, as well as specialist services that support health and wellbeing, mental health and other areas that affect our young people, despite financial constraints.

Universal Schools Safety Programme - Following a series of discussions with young people in 2016/2017 young people created the 5 key messages of things they were most concerned about which included: knife crime, bullying, drugs and alcohol, domestic abuse and social media dangers. These formed the basis of a universal schools programme which was co-created with young people, the Council and Youth First. The important aspects of the model was to be youth service led; embedding youth workers in schools delivering these sessions enabled follow on work and early identification of those who may need additional support. Also to signpost and refer to afterschool youth services would offer and enable improved positive activities. The programme was delivered alongside the provider for teenage health and wellbeing to Yr 7. There has been excellent feedback about this programme form young people and schools, however ongoing resources are at risk, and embedding this work in a personal, social and emotional learning space as part of the schools workforce would make this model more sustainable.

Safe havens continue to be delivered by For Jimmy as a clear support from the business community in enabling a safer streets ethos and adults playing a key role in keeping children safe. Working with schools and For Jimmy to understand safe spaced and places from the perspective of children and what could be done collectively.

Lewisham has also undertaken a number of analytical reports that has increased our understanding on domestic abuse, youth violence including peer on peer abuse, and county lines.

You can also find out about what the Mayor of London is doing across London here: https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/mayors-office-policing-and-crime-mopac/our-priorities/tackling-serious-violent-crime
Thank you for bringing to my attention that other councils have written directly to residents following deaths in their boroughs. I can see that this is reassuring during difficult times. I have asked officers to approach Lambeth Council to see what we can learn from their approach.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 54.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Michael Clarke
Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

England’s worst primary schools have been named in official documents from the Department of Education. These are mainstream primary schools which did not meet the government’s floor standard for performance.

We are failing our Lewisham children by having them experience being taught in under-performing primary schools. I was taught in a Lewisham primary school and a Lewisham secondary school. I do not like seeing Lewisham mention as underperforming in any way.

So what exactly are we doing to ensure that Grinling Gibbons Primary School and Lucas Vale Primary School improve and do not ever get named in such a list again? Who are we going to bring in to transform such schools for our children to thrive in, such that Lewisham has services for children and young people we can all be proud of?

**Reply**

Primary schools in Lewisham are among the best in the country with 61 out of 63 rated by Ofsted as good or Outstanding and 18 rated as Outstanding. Overall attainment at age 11 improved by twice the national improvement last year, with Lewisham well above the national average. Of course, some schools from time to time experience difficulties, and when they do it is important they receive urgent and effective support.

The Council and Lewisham Learning (our school-led school improvement partnership) are working with both Grinling Gibbons Primary School and Lucas Vale Primary School which are part of the GGLV Federation. The Executive Headteacher is working across both schools to drive improvement, and has put in new systems across all areas of the schools, most importantly in teaching and learning. Lucas Vale recruited a new Head of School in November 2018 and a new Chair of Governors for the federation took over last term. The schools are receiving a comprehensive support package from education experts, the Director of Lewisham Learning and the Local Authority. School leaders and the governing board are committed to ensuring that both schools make progress year on year and are following a plan to secure rapid improvement which is rigorously monitored.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 55.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Anthony Crowther

Member to reply: Councillor Bell
**Question**

Figures from the 28 November 2018 Council meeting put the cost of the eviction of protesters from the Old Tidemill Gardens site in Deptford at £105,188, but no ongoing security costs were able to be provided at that time. Is the Council able to yet provide updated figures on how much it has spent on ongoing security costs since this date?

**Reply**

The Tidemill development will require an investment of at least £44,500,000 and will deliver 209 much needed new homes of which 117 will be social homes where all existing tenants at 2-30A Reginald Road will be guaranteed a new home. The development will also provide new green space and has already provided the 1.41 acre Charlottenburg Park as part of the wider scheme. The new homes will be advertised in Lewisham Homesearch and will be allocated to those with a housing need as set out in the annual lettings plan.

All vacant sites of this size require security arrangements. The cost of securing the Tidemill site has been higher than would normally be expected due to the need to remove unauthorised occupants from the site, legal challenges against the scheme and the need to prevent the site from being reoccupied illegally. The legal process is also taking longer than expected to resolve. To date there have been 8 recorded attempts by protestors to climb over the hoarding or other structures to breach the security.

It must be remembered that the legal challenge is on a small part of the planning decision taken in September 2017 by the Strategic Planning Committee. The Council was asked not to cut down trees or carry out any land clearance by protestors until the legal process is concluded. The Council could have cleared the site and moved a small security company into the garden, but we did not do that, out of respect for the request. We could also have moved the security inside the garden but that would have involved cutting back or removing trees, which we were asked not to do.

At present, there continues to be a high number of guards securing the garden. Because of the repeated attempts to breach the security to gain access back onto the site we have been unable to scale the numbers of guards back any further than was done before Christmas.

The total spend for securing the site from 29th October 2018 to the 8th January 2019 is £918,090. The cost of the eviction itself was £105,188.

It is unfortunate that this money had to be spent on securing the site and the eviction. £918,090 could be used to house more than 150 families in Temporary Accommodation for a year.
By obtaining vacant possession of the site through the eviction and continuing to keep the site secure, the Council has been able to allow Peabody and their contractors to undertake the various surveys and investigation works that are needed to stop further delays to housing 104 new social tenants. The housing crisis exists for thousands of our fellow residents and the Council has a duty to prevent homelessness.
Question asked by: Rosalind Huish
Member to reply: Councillor Bell

**Question**

With the cancellation of the Hillcrest development where will another 22 social homes be built to achieve the long overdue 2014 target of 500 newly built social homes?

**Reply**

Safe, secure and affordable housing is a fundamental human right and this Council is committed to building as many new homes, with genuinely affordable rents and lifetime security of tenure, as it possibly can. We are committed to building the 500 Council homes approved by the previous administration, and to delivering 1,000 homes, by 2022.

The plans for 22 new Council homes on the Hillcrest estate were a part of our established plan for the 500 homes. However, on reviewing the scheme and listening closely to the community, we decided not to pursue the development further.

Officers are constantly identifying and reviewing potential sites for new development. The outcome of this work will be announced in the spring, when we set out the details of how we will achieve our ambitious, but vitally needed, plans for new homes for our residents.

I would also like to thank the community for constructively engaging in the process and putting forward their views and comments.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 57.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Moira Kerrane
Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

Question

The Council intends to use its reserves to meet the budget gap in 2018/19. Despite reductions to central government funding Lewisham Council have taken the decision to fund “Team Catford” £150k per annum from capital expenditure for the last two years.

In September 2018 Chief Executive Ian Thomas CBE commissioned an external financial review. It was agreed that The Capital Programme should be amended to invest more in projects that generate income for the Council. Under the Equality Act 2010 Public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities Lewisham Council must, when making decisions of a strategic nature about how to exercise its functions, have due regard to the desirability of exercising them in a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage.

Areas of this borough like Evelyn, with 43% child poverty, experience extreme socio-economic disadvantage and do not see equivalent “Team Catford” style capital investment in their communities.

If £150k per annum can be found for ‘Placemaking’ in Lewisham’s more prosperous neighbourhoods why can’t the same level of funding be found for the most environmentally and socio economically disadvantaged wards like Evelyn?

With reference to this significant, yet unequal capital funding allocation, how has Lewisham Council exercised its public sector duty to reduce the inequalities of outcome for the most deprived areas in the Borough?

What is the breakdown of expenditure to fund “Team Catford” and how much income has the endeavour generated to date?

Reply

The “Team Catford” initiative and the engagement programme it is set up to deliver forms part of the Council’s overall plans to improve Catford town centre. This responds to the need to make the regeneration of the Town Centre more than just physical improvements to the Town Centre but also seeking to improve the socio-economic capital of the local area and other areas it bounds.

Whilst Catford South may not be one of the most deprived wards in the borough, the area does not have the same transport links and reputation as New Cross and Deptford which results in locals socialising and shopping elsewhere. A key objective of the engagement approach with Team Catford is to attempt to decrease this leakage by creating events and projects to keep spend local, support existing businesses and encourage new business.
Team Catford has a budget of approximately £150k a year. Approximately two-thirds of this budget goes towards supporting staffing costs and one third on direct expenses for events and mini-projects. To date the project has generated approximately £86,000 which has all been ploughed back into supporting various project related activity.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 58.
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Peter Richardson
Member to reply: Chair of Council

**Question**

In view of what happened at that meeting in November when we had reached question 29 out of over 60, would the council consider taking a new direction and allow more time for public questions?

**Reply**

The opportunity for members of the public to ask questions to councillors is an important part of the democratic process. Every Public Question that is submitted to the Council receives a written response in advance of every Council meeting. The Public Question agenda item at Council meetings is an opportunity for members of the public to ask a supplementary question arising from the answer they have received. This segment is not intended to be an opportunity to ask the same question again, or make a speech. This applies to councillors asking questions as well as to members of the public. The time allocated to supplementary questions is set out in the Council’s constitution.

Unfortunately, at the previous Council meeting not all members of the public had the opportunity to ask their supplementary questions due to a minority of questioners abusing the question time process by making lengthy speeches and being disruptive.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 59.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Leila Thomas
Member to reply: Councillor Dromey

**Question**

Regarding access up to employment opportunities - Lewisham Council Graduate / Graduate management programme please can you advise if this programme diverse including BME students?

Please can you confirm the ethnicity breakdown of this programme including the BME representation over the last 3 years?

Please can you advise when the next intake is?

How will you be improving BME representation on the next intake and evidencing the changes?

**Reply**

The Council has participated in the National Graduate Development Programme, which is a two year graduate management development program, run by the Local Government Association (LGA). The LGA carry out an initial assessment of applicants, and successful candidates are then asked to shortlist 3 local authorities they are interested in working for. The Local Authority then interview and select from this group.

In the three years 2016/17 to 2018/19 there have been no BAME graduates on the programme due to none being submitted to Lewisham by the LGA.

We have been disappointed by the lack of diversity of candidates offered by the LGA national scheme over recent years. We have expressed this back to the LGA as we wish to have the opportunity to select from a broad diverse applicant group. On the last three recorded years BAME makeup of the LGA Graduate program nationally has only been 11%, 12% and 22% respectively.

As the LGA national scheme has not met our wish to give more opportunities to BAME staff and students, we are withdrawing from the NGDP programme, and as such there will be no further intake.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 60.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: John Hamilton
Member to reply: The Mayor

**Question**

Has the Mayor read John Healey's paper on The Overwhelming Need for New Public Housing?

He points out that councils should be building social housing and that this investment is paid back reasonable quickly by the rental income generated.

Will you consider, as part of your much-vaunted "new direction", abandoning the old, over-priced collaboration with developers where profit is creamed off at every stage, and instead embark on a radical new era of council house building in Lewisham to meet the needs of the homeless and overcrowded families who have suffered so long?

**Reply**

This Council is very clear in its direction for housing – it will be maximising its investment in Council owned and delivered new Council homes as part of a wide ranging and ambitious plan to address the housing crisis in its many forms. It is for this reason that we have committed to delivering 1,000 social homes. It is for this reason that we have successfully secured more than £37 million of funding from the Mayor of London and will be combining it with more than £140 million of Council investment to deliver the homes we need.

This is possible now that the Government has abandoned its arbitrary and unfair cap on Council borrowing to fund social housing. Immediately after it becoming possible, this Council will be borrowing and investing more than it has ever done directly before to provide the safe, secure and genuinely affordable homes that our borough so desperately needs after years of being unable to do so.

We are also bidding to secure funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA) to help us pay for more staff in our own social housing team.

In terms of ‘working’ with private developers on privately-owned sites, we are pushing for a better deal from developers. We are already seeing an uplift in terms of permissions given when it comes to genuinely affordable housing.

The Council as planning authority is required to seek maximum possible levels of affordable housing subject to viability as a result of policies in its own statutory planning documents, the London Plan and National Planning Policy.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 61.
Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: James Clark
Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk
Question
What was the mayor's budget for staff in the years 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018? And what were the amounts spent for each year. Or each tax year 2013/14, 14/15, 15/16, 16/17, 17/18?

Reply
The Mayor & Cabinet Office provides organisational and executive support to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Members to enable them to fulfil their leadership roles within the Council, across the community, and regionally and nationally in organisations like the Local Government Association and London Councils.

The staffing budget and actual spend for the Mayor & Cabinet Office was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial year</th>
<th>Staffing budget</th>
<th>Actual staffing spend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13/14</td>
<td>£306,889</td>
<td>£279,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14/15</td>
<td>£308,600</td>
<td>£281,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15/16</td>
<td>£313,700</td>
<td>£284,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16/17</td>
<td>£307,700</td>
<td>£290,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17/18</td>
<td>£310,800</td>
<td>£293,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 62.
Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Andy Hughes
Question

How much of the £9.3 million in funds from the community infrastructure levy will the council be channelling into local schools? (figures from News Shopper 17th Dec 2018)

Reply

The Council is currently developing an evidence base on infrastructure planning that underpins the production of the emerging new Local Plan. This Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) once developed will inform the prioritisation of infrastructure projects eligible for CIL funding. Investment in local schools has been identified on the Council’s Regulation 123 list as eligible for CIL funding, and allocations will be reviewed as part of the Council’s capital programme. In addition the Council has allocated significant amounts of S106 to schools over the last year, including £1,595,000 for New Woodlands School, £1,015,456 for Greenvale School, and £728,818 for Watergate School. The Council has recently granted planning permission for Ashmead School in addition to granting planning permission for a variety of temporary expansions at a number of other schools in Lewisham.
Member to reply:  Councillor Barnham

Question

Can we have some evidence as to what improvements have been seen from the Lewisham Secondary Challenge?

Reply

A good education is one of the most important things we can offer our young people. That is why we made clear in our 2018 manifesto our determination to continue working with our secondary schools so that they are all rated good or outstanding by Ofsted. Lewisham Secondary Challenge is the partnership approach through which our schools are working together, assisted by additional funding from central government to improve teaching and learning across all our schools.

There remains plenty to do, but I am pleased that since this programme began in 2016 we have seen an improvement in the Ofsted gradings of our secondary schools, improved school attendance and improvements in our GCSE attainment.

Lewisham data for Key Stage 4 outcomes in 2018 shows improvements in the majority of the reporting measures at GCSE, with the largest improvement in mathematics – the main target area for Secondary Challenge. The DfE will publish national data in February 2019 and we will then be able to confirm the picture in Lewisham and where Secondary Challenge has had particular impact.

Meanwhile, schools have indicated that the most useful elements of Secondary Challenge have been:

- The annual peer review programme between Lewisham secondary schools
- The role of Challenge Advisors in the school who are identified as needing more support
- The roles of consultants / subject directors in Maths, English and Science
- Key subject networks in particular Maths, English and Science
- The offer of places on the Improving Teacher and Outstanding Teacher Programmes for classroom practitioners
- Leadership programmes to support the development of Middle Leaders
- Access to the regular breakfast briefings for senior leaders
- Subscription to Fisher Family Trust data website (enabling detailed data comparisons and in-depth analysis)
- Coordination of data sharing at the start of the year with fuller data profiles shared once all data is available, including analysis at LA, school and subject level

One of the strengths of the challenge has been the ability to offer a bespoke and tailored programme drawn from the list above alongside other school improvement activity the school might be engaged in.
The Secondary Challenge Board have commissioned an external review of the current programme to identify what is working best in terms of impact on the quality of learning and teaching and pupil outcomes. This will be available during this spring term. The outcomes of this review will support the design of the programme of support and challenge to secondary schools going forward.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 64.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Andrea Carey Fuller
Member to reply: Councillor Bell

**Question**

Can the Council confirm that the Housing Department has read the report from the Children’s Rights Alliance for England entitled #homes4children Change it!

Can the Council confirm that all the Temporary Accommodation being used for homeless families is child-friendly, clean and safe and does not have shared facilities?

And can the Council confirm that it inspects all of its temporary accommodation - and if so how often and that it has a safeguarding policy for transferring families to Temporary Accommodation or B&B’s?

**Reply**

Council Officers are aware of the Children’s Rights Alliance for England report entitled “#homes4children: change it” and the key recommendations coming from this report.

Temporary accommodation is a term that covers a range of accommodation used to house families who present or are accepted as homeless including:

- B&B (shared & self-contained) for emergency accommodation;
- Self-contained Nightly Paid (all self-contained) for emergency accommodation and as a move on from shared B&B;
- Council owned hostel accommodation (shared & self-contained);
- Leased accommodation (all self-contained).

The Council does not accommodate families in shared B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks.

Every effort is made to ensure that all temporary accommodation provides safe and secure housing for our residents. All temporary accommodation is health & safety compliant in terms of gas & electrical installations. The Council also requires for all temporary accommodation to have an EPC (energy performance certificate) in place.

To ensure the required standards are met all shared B&B hotel accommodation is inspected on a monthly basis and a sample inspection of around 15% of self-contained nightly paid accommodation is undertaken quarterly by officers from the Private Sector Housing Agency (PSHA).

The Council also utilises its own hostel stock to provide temporary accommodation, of which approx. 65% is self-contained. Hostel accommodation is managed by Lewisham Homes on behalf of the Council and is inspected by both on site caretakers and tenancy officers on a bi-monthly basis. Private sector leased accommodation is inspected by Lewisham Homes tenancy officers on a risk basis.
according to the needs of the tenants and so the frequency can vary. However all leased accommodation is inspected on a quarterly basis as a minimum.

Lewisham Council does have an overarching safeguarding policy. Safeguarding training is available for all staff. All temporary accommodation is matched in accordance to the Council’s Location Priority Policy, which takes into account the circumstances of the household including any safeguarding issues or issues relating to local support networks and special education to try and match the needs of the family with the most suitable accommodation.
Question asked by: Michael Clarke

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

When Edris Elba first started acting in the popular series ‘Luther’ he sat down with a murder detective based in Lewisham.

Recently a young Black 15 year old, Jay Hughes, was murdered in our borough. He was known to social services, safeguarding agencies as well as the police. He was considered “at risk” so our serious youth violence and violence reduction services were notified.

Our council recently released a statement indicating the new administration had “reviewed its ways of working” and it had decided to “take a new direction”.

I am a Black, born in Lewisham, schooled in Lewisham, live and pay council tax in Lewisham, with children who were schooled in Lewisham, and I now have grandchildren being schooled in Lewisham. What is this “new direction” being taken by the new administration and what will the reviewed “ways of working” actually mean for the children and young people in our borough, a borough where one in four are aged under 19? How will the “new direction” change the view of Lewisham being a good place for famous celebrity Edris Elba to speak to its murder detectives?”

**Reply**

I cannot overemphasise how much importance we give to improving life chances for all Lewisham’s children and young people, from birth, throughout their school and education life, and into adulthood.

A draft new Corporate Strategy will be considered at Lewisham’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28th January 2019 and then subsequently by Mayor and Cabinet.

The strategy builds on our manifesto commitments to be ambitious about outcomes for all our children and young people in three key areas: keeping them safe and healthy; making sure they have access to a broad curriculum in high quality early years settings, primary and secondary schools; and promoting inclusion and reducing exclusion. The strategy will also reflect the high priority we give to preventing and tackling serious violence, and our commitment to a public health approach to violence.

I was not aware that Idris Elba visited our police service as part of his research. Nor can I say what he might think of our plans for the future. I am however confident that the police service in London and Lewisham is and remains one that we should be proud of, and I am sure the quality of its detectives will continue to be recognised.
LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019
Question asked by: Anthony Crowther

Member to reply: Councillor Best

**Question**

What plans does the Council have to put up anti-idling signs around the borough to remind motorists to turn their engines off whilst stationary, helping to combat localised air pollution?

**Reply**

The Council has placed a significant focus on Air Quality in the past few years with anti-idling being one of the many actions taken to help improve air quality.

The Council has put up anti-idling signs at schools around the borough. These areas were prioritised as idling is a particular issue around schools due to the number and high exposure from car exhaust emissions that children experience.

The Council have been working with www.idlingaction.london running anti idling action events and are planning a further 5 this academic year with 2 events having already been run this academic year.

There is also an Anti-Idling Banner Competition being held for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in schools across Lewisham over the next couple of months. They are being invited to design a poster with a view to the winning design being displayed in local car parks and areas where drivers tend to keep their engines running.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 67.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019
Question asked by: Rosalind Huish

Member to reply: Councillor Bonavia

**Question**

Why does the democracy review not have an independent chair similar to Kirklees?

**Reply**

The Council set up the Local Democracy Review in July 2018 with a working group of eight members of the Council which is carrying out the Review and will make recommendations to Full Council.

Fundamentally, the Council is a democratically elected body and so any decisions it makes are ultimately the responsibility of its elected members who have been chosen by the public to represent them. In the context of the Council’s reviewing its application of democratic principles, it is appropriate that it is carried out by its elected members rather than delegating to officers or third parties.

Since the Review began its work last autumn, the focus has been in gathering evidence from residents and other stakeholders across Lewisham through online consultation and over 40 meetings and events around the borough at which members of the working group have listened to our community.

In addition to this, the working group recognise the need to be informed by independent expertise and, as advised in response to your question to Council in November:

“The Working Group has been exploring how expertise in the field of democratic engagement can inform the work of the review and the development of effective recommendations for change. Initial discussions have taken place with a number of expert organisations including the Local Government Information Unit, Local Government Association, Centre for Public Scrutiny, Democratic Society, De Montfort University, the Kirklees Democracy Commission and National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA) and members are currently developing a schedule of requirements to set out how this advice and support will be provided.”

Since then discussions have continued and representatives of a number of these organisations have agreed to provide their expert input to the Review and practical support to the working group in the initial discussion of the responses received and to the development of the report and any recommendations. The working group feels that the review will be strengthened by the input of a wide range of experts in a range of roles particularly in supporting the development of recommendations.

The benefit of this approach is that the Council will be receiving recommendations from elected members who have had direct experience of our community’s views alongside their consideration of independent expertise.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 68.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019
Question asked by: Leila Thomas

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

Lewisham Secondary Challenge -
a) Please state what the English and Maths at grade 4 or above Targets are for the Lewisham Secondary Challenge?  
b) please can you share the evidence eg. a chronological chart showing the improved trend over the last 5 years also the predicted improvement targets for the remaining term of the programme?
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 69.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 JANUARY 2019
Lewisham' Library and Information Service has plans to re-develop Lewisham Central Library with a view of extending the building upwards to include several housing units on top of a ground floor Central Library Space. This is to avoid the massive Library Service budget cuts earlier deemed necessary, which would have caused a large cut in library staff members as part of a plan to produce a balanced budget for 2019. This would mean Lewisham would be without a statutory library and therefore contravene the 1964 Libraries and Public Museums Act unless an alternative site - manned by library staff - was found whilst the re-development takes place.

Where in the Borough would this be? Would the original plans for volunteer run library spaces at Downham and The Deptford Lounge be affected?

The concept of “statutory library” does not appear in the 1964 Public Libraries and Museum Act or any other legislative instrument. Therefore the council will not be in breach of any legislation by providing a temporary provision from another site, should this be an option resulting from the feasibility study.

Again, a location for such temporary provision – should this be adopted as an approach – has not been identified.

We are not aware of any plans “for volunteer run library spaces at Downham and Deptford Lounge” that have been put forward by anyone at any time.
PUBLIC QUESTION NO 70.

Priority 4

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Rosalind Huish

Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

Question

What is the timeline for recruitment and appointment of a new CEO for the borough?

Reply

No decision has yet been made on the approach to recruiting a new CEO.
Question asked by: James Clark

Member to reply: Councillor De Ryk

**Question**

What recruitment company is being used to search for the CEO role?

**Reply**

No decision has yet been made on the approach to recruiting a new CEO. As such decisions about whether to use a recruitment company, or not, have not been made.
Question asked by: Leila Thomas

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

What is Lewisham’s plan to have Gatsby in every Lewisham secondary school? October 2018 has seen the DfE update its statutory guidance on the provision of careers guidance and access for education and training providers. The Government’s careers strategy states that every school and academy providing secondary education should use the Gatsby Charitable Foundation’s Benchmarks to develop and improve their careers provision.

**Reply**

Good career guidance is critical if young people are to raise their aspirations and take full advantage of the opportunities available to them. Secondary schools have responsibility for careers guidance in schools. However the local authority works to deliver aspects of the careers guidance programme within secondary schools which includes following the Gatsby principles.

Lewisham, in partnership with Lambeth, are submitting a European Social Fund bid (2019-23) with the aim of working with a range of secondary schools and post-16 providers to improve the delivery of careers guidance. This bid will ensure the implementation of the Gatsby principles and lead to the Quality in Careers Standard Award for Lewisham schools.
23 JANUARY 2019

Question asked by: Leila Thomas

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

**Question**

In the Mayors manifesto it states:

*Giving children and young people the best start in life*

Work with parents and schools to reduce exclusions as they impact disproportionately on black pupils.

Regarding working with parents of black pupils to reduce exclusions in Lewisham - Please can you advise what are the support programmes available for parent and young people at risk of permanent exclusion?

**Reply**

Permanent exclusion from school is a serious sanction, which should be used only as a last resort. Only the headteacher of a school can exclude a child and this must be on disciplinary grounds. The decision to permanently exclude a child should only be taken:

- in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school’s behaviour policy; and
- where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others

The number of permanent exclusions in recent years has been a concern. I am however encouraged by the progress that our schools have been making in recent years. In 2015/16 we had 78 permanent exclusions. This number fell to 63 in 2016/17 and was down to 43 in 2017/18. That is a drop in permanent exclusions of 45 per cent. We anticipate a further decrease this academic year, following extensive efforts and progress to reduce exclusions.

This can be attributed to the collaborative approach now embedded in Lewisham, the efforts of Lewisham Secondary schools to avoid last resort approaches, the work of the Fair Access Panel, the Inclusion Board and the Reducing Exclusions group. This has been supported by a range of stakeholders across Lewisham.

Lowering exclusion figures in Lewisham continues to be the key priority, and whilst there have been many positive approaches over the past two years to reduce exclusions, the external factors that pupils face day to day and present in school will continue to be the challenges for headteachers and staff. The Council’s Children and Young People Select Committee is currently conducting a review on exclusions, including a deep dive into the causes of exclusion and the investigation of best practice around early intervention to support for children at risk. The report is
expected in March 2019, and I do not want to prejudge its conclusions. I am however sure we will want to take it fully into account as we take forward the continued work of the Lewisham Inclusion Strategy, and the fulfilment of our manifesto pledge.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 74.

Priority 6

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM
Question asked by: Leila Thomas

Member to reply: Chair of Council

Question

Does the Chair of Council intend to issue a public apology for her perceived rudeness at the last Full Council meeting to Lewisham residents and constituents?

Reply

I am sorry for any perceived rudeness arising at the last Council meeting. It was not my intention to cause offence to any member of the public.