



LIST OF MEMBER QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Member questions and answers for the
Council Meeting of the London Borough of
Lewisham to be held on Wednesday 1
March 2023

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 1

Question asked by: Councillor Joan Millbank

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor James-J Walsh

Question

What plans are in place within Lewisham to mark International Women's Day on March 2023?

Reply

The Council will be marking the day with the lighting up of Laurence House and a photo of support before the Full Council as well as social media and wider communications support.

In addition a range of Council services will be marking the day such as Adult Learning Lewisham who will be running a usual range of tasters and linking with the Library Service for their Women in Business event at Catford Library.

The Council will also be supporting a range of partners in their events for the day such the Feminist Art Collage workshop run by Sydenham Arts and the community event at the Waldron Health Centre.

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 2

Question asked by: Councillor Coral Howard

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

How is Lewisham Council meeting its stated intention in the Report of 21.9.22, to identify support for decision making, evidence and models for prioritisation, from an equalities perspective, to ensure that support is being provided in an equitable way to vulnerable Lewisham residents, particularly in relation to actually responding to the Cost of Living Crisis, via access to the Household Support Fund, and by providing open application on the Council website as recommended by Government Guidance?

Reply

For the latest iteration of the Household Fund, the Council were guided to distribute funds to those most in need including households who had not received other cost of living support from central government. As with other iterations, support was provided to children receiving free school meals during school holidays, covering the October and February half-terms and the Christmas school holidays, alongside £1.1m awarded to disabled residents. Around 80% of the remaining funding was used to support school children, leaving the remainder available for applications through incoming referrals from external organisations including Age.UK, CAB and local foodbanks, who will refer clients they identify as having exceptional financial needs.

Reviewing those being targeted for support for iteration 3 of the Household Fund has been considered with external partners with recommendation being made and agreed before the funds are distributed. It is likely there will be a further iteration of the Household Fund starting in April 2023. Once we know what elements of the funding can be used on a discretionary basis, we will again engage with external partners, including Jobcentre+, to agree the best way of doing so fairly and equitably.

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 3

Question asked by: Councillor Jack Lavery

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

Recently, members of the Children and Young People Select Committee had the privilege of visiting Lewisham Young Leaders Academy (LYLA). It was excellent to see first-hand the positive impact this organisation is having on young people in our borough. Can you confirm the council is committed to supporting LYLA into the future?

Reply

Yes

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 4

Question asked by: Councillor Jack Lavery

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Kim Powell

Question

I have been impressed with the support Lewisham Works is offering our residents. Could you update on Lewisham Works' plans for the future?

Reply

Lewisham Works began in 2022 and is our new service to support residents into good jobs. One year on, we have already worked with over 600 Lewisham residents. Each Lewisham Works participant works 1-1 with an Employment and Training Advisor to identify their goals and how to achieve them. This includes working with our training partners and employers to gain skills and get into good quality work. The service is run from multiple locations across Lewisham including Lewisham Shopping Centre, The Green Man, multiple libraries and Lewisham College.

Residents can also attend fortnightly workshops at one of our community locations. Topics for the workshops include 'Interview skills', 'Confidence building' and 'Understanding welfare benefits'.

To the end of January 2023 Lewisham Works has had over 600 residents registered. Of these over 300 residents have been supported financially by receiving funding to cover childcare, transport or work clothing. Additionally 140 residents have been upskilled through education and training. This has resulted in almost 190 job starts. Support from Lewisham Works continues for up to six months once someone has started work, to ensure people are able to sustain their employment.

Lewisham Works will continue to support unemployed residents. Future plans include the addition of targeted programmes for Care Leavers and residents with learning disabilities. Additionally a specialist partner, St Giles Trust, will be delivering an 'In-Work Progression' programme for those in employment, but earning under the London Living Wage. This is part of our wider Cost of Living Support programme. Any Lewisham resident can be signposted to Lewisham Works for advice and support by emailing JobsandSkills@lewisham.gov.uk

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 5

Question asked by: Councillor Liam Curran

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

The Council's decarbonisation programme of buildings is to be welcomed. Can you list those buildings that have been successfully included in the programme so far and will you consider including Sydenham Community Library in future decarbonisation programmes?

Reply

Decarbonising the Council's corporate buildings and schools is a huge challenge given the call on resources to do so. The Council's approach therefore has been to access external funding, and to prioritise those interventions that offer the best value for money in terms of carbon reduction, extending the life and use of our buildings and future-proofing repairs and replacement work to avoid future costs.

The main sources of funding for public sector organisations to decarbonise their buildings are the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF), which funds consultancy support to specify and cost building-specific solutions, and the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) which funds heat decarbonisation works.

43 buildings have had studies undertaken to identify the decarbonisation solutions required, preparing the Council to bid for future funding in the future, as it is available.

As requested, the following sets out the Lewisham-owned buildings that have been included in the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) to date.

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 1 2021/22; Corporate; value £2.693m

Buildings	Measures installed	Annual carbon saving
Brockley Rise Adult Learning Centre, Grove Park Adult Learning Centre, Granville Adult Learning Centre, Leemore Centre, Sydenham Centre	Air source heat pumps, Ground source heat pumps, LED lighting, solar PV, insulation, glazing, upgrades to building management systems	472.77 tonnes p/a

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 1 2021/22; Schools; value £0.794m

Buildings	Measures installed	Annual carbon saving
Dalmain School, DOWNDERRY School, Myatt Garden School	Air source heat pumps, Ground source heat pumps, LED lighting, solar PV, insulation, glazing, upgrades to building management systems	515.97 tonnes p/a

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3b 2023/24

An application for funding under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund Phase 3b has been submitted including the following sites: DOWNDERRY School, the Moonshot Centre, Riverside Youth Centre, Rockbourne Youth Centre, Honor Oak Community and Youth Centre.

Funding from the LCSF and PSDS is aimed at buildings owned by public sector bodies who have responsibility for maintenance and repair. PSDS also requires budget to match fund the grant. If sufficient resources to deliver the relevant works are available for Sydenham Community Library the Council will include the site in its future decarbonisation plans.

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 6

Question asked by: Councillor Liam Curran

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Can you update on progress of consultation on the local plan and clarify the status of the Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum in relation to the consultation?

Reply

Following approval by Mayor & Cabinet in December 2022 and Council in January 2023 the Local Plan will be subject to a Regulation 19 consultation, due to commence on the 1st March 2023 for an 8 week period. The consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

With regard to the Bell Green Neighbourhood Forum we are aware of the community group within this area seeking to establish a forum. As with all our community groups within the borough we will invite the group to make comments in accordance with the Regulation 19 legislation and our Statement of Community Involvement.

It should be noted however, that as of yet the Council has not received a valid application from the group relating to the Neighbourhood Area approved by the Council last year. If the group wishes to form a Neighbourhood Forum we would invite them to submit an application which can then be consulted on.

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 7

Question asked by: Councillor Yemisi Anifowose

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor James-J Walsh

Question

How are the Council investing in Lewisham's library services to ensure library services are accessible to all

Reply

The very recent announcement of the allocation of £19M to Lewisham as part of our Levelling Up Fund bid is a welcome addition of resources to revitalise the High Street, Market, and Lewisham Library building.

The bid in addition the bid had a sizeable £5M component of match funding that the council is glad to allocate to the programme, creating a £24M circa envelope. Around £8M to be allocated to the redevelopment of Lewisham town centres Library.

The refurbished Lewisham Library building, to be realised by 2025, substantially improves the Library Service as a whole, bringing flexibility and innovation across many sectors including the cultural, economic, societal, educational.

The council has recently opened a very successful library within the Catford Shopping Centre, and has recently approved an injection of funds to improve the ICT infrastructure across the Hub Libraries (particularly Deptford and Downham in the short term, and Lewisham when the refurbishment completes.

Given the current economic pressures, the council demonstrates a consistent approach to inward investment where the resources are most likely to positively impact our residents.

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 8

Question asked by: Councillor Ese Erheriene

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

Across the country school hunger is a serious problem that has been exasperated by the cost-of-living crisis. Are the Council taking any steps to address child hunger within the borough?

Reply

Sadly, we often hear from teachers how concerned they are about the number of children going hungry at school. Making sure all children have access to healthy food is an absolute priority for the Council, so we are proud that we were able to recently announce a £400,000 fund to ensure no child goes hungry at school.

This money is being distributed to schools directly for them to decide how best to spend it. This could include free breakfasts; provision of break-time snacks; top-ups to packed lunches, food parcels and meals for children not currently eligible for free school meals.

All schools in the borough will receive the funding, with allocation of amounts dependent on the levels of need among the children that attend the school.

This also supports our pledge to fund free school meals during the school holidays. More broadly, the Council is due to launch the Lewisham Food Justice Action Plan in the coming weeks. This plan is a call to action for individuals, communities, statutory and voluntary organisations across Lewisham to come together to make sustainable progress in achieving food justice for everyone in Lewisham. One of the four priorities within the action plan is to: Ensure babies, children and young people have access to nutritious, sustainable and culturally appropriate sources of food throughout the year.

The Council will fund the appointment of a Food Justice Programme Manager to co-ordinate the implementation of the action plan and a Lewisham Food Justice Alliance will be established, bringing together strategic stakeholders to provide oversight and governance for the programme.

The council will also work with the GLA to ensure the successful implementation of the Mayor of London's recent proposal on the provision of free school meals to primary school children. You can read more about the announcement here <https://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-announces-every-london-primary-schoolchild-receive-free-school-meals>

COUNCIL MEETING 01/03/23
MEMBER QUESTION NO. 9

Question asked by: Councillor Chris Barnham

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

All three Crofton Park councillors – Tauseef Anwar, Chris Barnham and Carol Webley-Brown agree with residents who are rightly concerned about the lack of a safe road crossing of Manwood Road near the entrance of Prendergast Ladywell Primary School. Many local children have to cross a busy road, which unfortunately is often used as a rat run to avoid the main Lewisham-Catford road. The problems have become worse in recent years as the number of younger children attending this excellent local school has grown. The introduction of a school street in Ewhurst Road is very welcome, but seems to have had a perverse consequence of people parking selfishly and dangerously on nearby corners and side roads, making it trickier to cross Manwood Road safely at school start and finish times. Councillors and residents are extremely concerned about safety here.

Please can the Cabinet Member tell us what might be done to ensure children are safe in this location?"

Reply

I am aware that this location on Manwood Road previously had a school crossing patrol although the site has been vacant for some time. To provide a long-term solution to address the safety concerns I have asked officers to investigate options for improving the crossing facilities at this location to complement the adjacent school street. Officers will liaise with Crofton Park councillors, the school and residents to consult them to get feedback on the scheme design to ensure that the permanent scheme meets the needs of local people.