



LIST OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Public questions and answers for the Council Meeting of the London Borough of Lewisham to be held on Wednesday 22 November 2023.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.1
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Alex Raha

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

The Waterlink Way, National cycle route 21, which passes through Brookmill park has been closed for more than two years and currently shows no sign of reopening.

Lewisham currently sits next to bottom of the Mayor of London Healthy Streets scorecard for strategic cycle routes compared to other inner London boroughs.

Can council confirm it's in contact with Thames water and Friends of Brookmill park to establish a time line for when the path will reopen? Can council officers confirm have are following the TfL traffic management handbook in monitoring work site as per existing traffic orders?

Reply

The works in Brookmill Park are part of a major Thames Water project to improve the water quality within Lewisham and the wider Southeast London area, called the Millennium Mains Project and involves relining pipework around London. To carry out the works in the park, Thames Water have dug a deep shaft to provide access to the mains network and for public safety reasons the cycle path has been closed and temporarily diverted.

The Council remains in regular contact with Thames Water to ensure the works are carried out as quickly as is reasonably possible and the cycle route is not closed any longer than is necessary. Thames Water informed us that the project was initially delayed due to technical challenges, which resulted in a need to redesign some aspects of the scheme which is now due for completion in January 2025.

The site has been visited several times by council officers during the duration of the works to ensure they are being carried out safely and in compliance with relevant legislation and guidance, and officers have confirmed that all permits and permissions are in place. We will continue to reinforce the importance of this matter to Thames Water, including the best practice guidance from Transport for London referred to. Site visits by officers will continue until the works are completed and any areas of concern or non-compliance will be identified and brought to Thames Water's attention to be resolved.

More widely, the Council will continue to work with the funds we have available to increase active travel levels in Lewisham and help people travel safely across our borough.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.2
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Annie Kirby

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

How many PCNs, in total, were issued across the Lee Green LTN on July 17th?

Reply

Following the incident in Lee High Road on 17th July 2023 the Council instructed the parking contractor to cease camera enforcement in the Lee Green LTN on that day to allow vehicle access and to prevent unnecessary build-up of traffic.

On investigation, the Council learnt that the parking contractor did not cancel all PCNs issued for Lee Green LTN on that day, as instructed, due to an administration error by the parking contractor. As a result, 127 PCNs were issued in error for which the Council would like to apologise.

All PCNs issued in error on the date have been cancelled, of which, all people who paid their PCN have been given a full refund.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.3
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Annie Kirby

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

How many school street PCNs have been issued on Taunton Rd, Effingham Rd and Wantage Rd school streets for the week commencing 17th July?

Reply

For week commencing 17th July 2023 the following number of PCNs were issued:

- Taunton Road junction with Manor Lane - 0 PCNs issued.
- Effingham Road junction of Burnt Ash Road - 48 PCNs issued.
- Effingham Road junction with Manor Lane - 18 PCNs issued.
- Wantage Road junction of Handen Road - 0 PCNs issued.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.4
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Jane Alaszewski

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Your LTN monitoring report states that the LTN has not negatively affected air quality yet your data shows asthma rates have increased across the borough since it has been implemented. Which is true?

Reply

Asthma rates cannot be linked to one single intervention or cause. Having said that, the latest data available published by the Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities (OHID) in December 2022, indicates that asthma rates across the borough have not in fact increased but remained the same at 5.4% of the measured population aged 6 and above. This compares to a slight increase across England as a whole from 6.4% in 2020/21 to 6.5% in 2021/22.

Only two data points are currently available (for 2020/21 and 2021/22) as previously the indicator looked at All Age Asthma prevalence. Therefore, the data published in 2019/20 and earlier is not comparable to the most recent publications. The next set of data for 2022/23 is due to be published by OHID in December and we await the findings with interest. Further details are contained on the OHID website through the following link: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles>

The latest air quality monitoring report for the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN indicates that the scheme has not negatively impacted on air quality in and around the LTN area. The data suggests that NO₂ levels have continued to fall, with an average decrease of 9% compared to data from 2021. Significantly, air quality monitoring carried out on the South Circular has shown improvements in air quality and is now better than pre-Covid and pre-LTN levels. The recent expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone beyond the South Circular is also expected to contribute to further improvements in air quality in the area.

The Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027, outlining the steps we are taking to improve air quality across the borough, is available through the following link on our website: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/air-pollution/read-our-air-quality-action-plan-and-other-reports>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.5
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Jane Alaszewski

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Will you change your bike hanger policy to prioritize bike storage for flats.

Reply

The Council receives a high number of requests for cycle hangars and, with limited funding for this measure, installation is prioritised where there is greatest demand. There is no policy which states that any particular household should be prioritised. More information about cycle hangar delivery for 2023/24 can be found on the Council's website here: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/cycling/cycle-storage-for-hire>

These locations will serve many of the requests made from residents in flats and on estates.

There are also cycle storage facilities being delivered directly by Housing services for estates.

All new social homes delivered by the Council have an obligation to meet GLA requirements for cycle storage.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.6
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Paul Howarth

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor James-J Walsh

Question

The Hither Green West Campaign is a resident-led campaign set up to help make Hither Green (west of the railway line) the best place it can be. Whilst not in our Council Ward, Mountsfield Park is one of our nearest parks. Unfortunately the tennis courts are decrepit and in a state of disrepair. Lewisham Council has been working with the Lawn Tennis Association to refurbish the Borough's tennis courts.

See: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/articles/news/four-more-tennis-courts-in-lewisham-set-for-renovation>

Please can you confirm where on the priority list for refurbishment Mountsfield Park tennis courts sit and

when the refurbishment of the tennis courts will take place?

Reply

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the Tennis Courts at Mountsfield Park. The Council has indeed been working alongside the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to upgrade a number of our parks tennis courts, utilising funding from the LTA, DCMS to improve the playing surfaces, fences and to install a keypad operated gate which enables use of a fair and equitable booking platform.

The tennis courts at Mountsfield Park were considered for inclusion in the most recent round of court upgrades (Spring 2023) however, had to be removed from this round of consideration after feasibility works were conducted. Contractors highlighted that both of the tennis courts at Mounstfield park were subject to tree roots impacting and damaging the playing surfaces and therefore wouldn't fit the scope of the current round of investment. This however does not prevent the courts being considered for improvement works at a later date where more funds may be available; contingent on finding a solution to the tree root ingress that does not put the health of the tree in jeopardy.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.7
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Joe O'Donnell

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

When will the arrangement with Skansia result in heritage street lights for all conservation areas as I understand was agreed in 2011?

Reply

The street lighting across Lewisham is managed and maintained under a twenty-five-year PFI contract effective from 2011 with most of the street lighting replaced in the first few years of this contract.

As part of the replacement programme funds were made available to provide heritage style lighting within conservation areas. These funds were limited and did not cover the costs of heritage style lighting throughout all of Lewisham's conservation areas. To allocate the funding the Council commissioned an independent study of the Borough's conservation areas. The study considered criteria such as intrinsic townscape merit, degree of preservation, scale and other moderating factors. The report provided an objective, impartial and independent assessment to help identify those streets where special lighting was needed most. Using the study, heritage lighting was installed in conservation areas up to the allocated funding available. There is currently no additional funding available for further installations of heritage lighting during the lifetime of the PFI Contract.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.8
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Joe O'Donnell

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Will the Council work with the Victorian Society to ensure that Mr Pink's house does not fall further into dereliction and explore how it might be used to tell the story of Lewisham and the Windrush generation?

Reply

Whilst the building is not statutory or locally listed it is within the St John's Conservation Area, in a prominent position on the corner of Somerset Gardens, has strong historic connections to the Windrush generation and is considered a non-designated heritage asset.

The Council is aware of the poor condition of the privately owned building and the planning's conservation and enforcement team are actively working on finding a solution.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.9
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Dan Kirby

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

How many PCNs have been issued at the school street filter on Newstead Road between September 1st 2023 and the current day, and how much has been paid by recipients as a direct result?

Reply

With regard to the school street on Newstead Road, 65 PCNs have been issued to date since 17th October 2023. No PCNs were issued in September.

During the above period, 8 PCNs have currently been paid, which equates to £520.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.10
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Dan Kirby

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

How many Blue Badges are currently registered in the Borough of Lewisham and how many Blue Badge exemptions for the LEE GREEN LTN are there?

Reply

To make travel easier for Blue Badge holders, the Council allows Lewisham residents that have a Blue Badge issued by the Council to apply for a vehicle exemption to drive through the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN. The exemption permit only allows the holder to drive through the LTN road closures and modal filters and does not provide exemption for other restrictions, including school streets. The total number of active Blue Badges registered in Lewisham is 7292. Of these, 338 blue badge holders have applied for and been granted exemption to drive through the LTN.

Further details of the Blue Badge exemption scheme, including how to apply for an exemption permit are contained on the Council's website. A link to the relevant page is as follows: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/parking/blue-badge-ltn-exemption-permit>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.11
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Zak Balcombe

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Does the major and cabinet agree that consultation cost of £553,00.00 for the sustainable streets programme is an acceptable amount of tax payer's money when they themselves are struggling to put food on the table for their children?

Reply

The proposed figure of £553,600 is for the Sustainable Streets programme across the whole borough, not just the latest consultation in Evelyn area. The figure covers the costs for the consultation and engagement exercises and also designing the kerbside management restrictions for the whole programme, which includes three phases and reviews of existing CPZ areas; therefore, the costs are considered proportionate for the level and complexity of work involved.

Further details are contained in the report to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in December 2022. A link to the report is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s105243/Sustainable%20Transport%20and%20Parking%20Improvements%20report.pdf>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.12
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Zak Snelgrove

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Can the cabinet explain the difference to the climate, if I was to pay to park outside my house as opposed to not paying to park outside my house?

Reply

The Sustainable Streets programme is designed to introduce a range of sustainable transport measures including parking controls, cycle hangars, EV charging points, more trees and greening, car clubs, and safer junctions and crossing points. By introducing parking controls into an area, we can prioritise parking for residents and deter vehicles from driving to the borough to park so encouraging more use of sustainable modes of travel leading to positive benefits for air quality and the ongoing climate emergency.

More information about the benefits of parking controls can be found on the Healthy Streets Scorecard website through the following link:

https://www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/indicators_explained/.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.13
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Joan Arkley

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Can you please explain why you think paid parking is now planned in the area where it everything works well?

Reply

The Sustainable Streets programme is designed to introduce a range of sustainable transport measures including parking controls, cycle hangars, EV charging points, more trees and greening, car clubs, and safer junctions and crossing points. By introducing parking controls into an area, we can prioritise parking for residents and deter vehicles from driving to the borough to park so encouraging more use of sustainable modes of travel leading to positive benefits for air quality and the ongoing climate emergency.

More information about the benefits of parking controls can be found on the Healthy Streets Scorecard website through the following link:

https://www.healthystreetscorecard.london/indicators_explained/.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.14
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Ade Ogiesoba

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

I've been informed lewisham are now going to start making residents pay for a permit? In deptford, is this true? how about if i have a driveway at the front of my flat? am i going to need a permit to park there ?

Reply

A consultation was carried out with residents from January to March of this year across the Deptford area on a package of proposed measures under the Council's Sustainable Streets programme. The proposed measures included new cycle hangars, street trees, electric vehicle charging points, safer junctions, car club bays and permit parking. The consultation included a leaflet to all properties within the area as well as posters at various locations, drop-in sessions with residents, business site visits, door knocking in areas of lower response rates and publicity on the Council's website and various social media platforms.

The results of the consultation were reported to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet on the 19th of July 2023 in which the decision to proceed to publicise the traffic management orders was taken. These are the legal documents that enable the Council as the highway authority to regulate movement and parking on the highway. The traffic management orders have recently been publicised and the comments received during this process are currently being considered before a decision is made. If the decision is to proceed with the introduction of the measures, including permit parking, then this will cover the public highway only. Off-street parking areas, including private driveways, will not be affected and so would not require a permit to park in those particular locations.

A link to the Mayor and Cabinet report from July 2023 is contained here:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=8054&Ver=4>

For further details on the Sustainable Streets programme please also see the following link on the Council website:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/sustainable-streets-programme>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.15
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Marcus Mayers

Relevant Directorate: Housing

Member to reply: Councillor Will Cooper

Question

In response to Q35 of 27.09.23 the Council referred to costs that were “already part of the Lewisham Homes improvement”. The Council asserts that those costs were merely brought forward because of the Council’s plans to bring Lewisham Homes in house. Before the Council announced its plans to bring Lewisham Homes in house, over what timescale had Lewisham Homes planned to implement the changes referred to and at what cost?

Reply

Lewisham Homes had an overall 3-5 year rolling improvement programme in place which included getting closer to the Council’s systems and infrastructure. Some of this work had already been executed, including the move to Shared Technology Services; work had also started on their data centre plans when Covid delayed actions and changed project focus.

Other projects within the improvement plan included the Housing Management System platform and the telephony transition.

Each of these projects would have had their own budget which will have shifted as the overall programme continued its’ journey and priorities changed. That budget was not part of the housing services move at that time and therefore not possible to identify the original cost intended for the improvements.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.16
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Marcus Mayers

Relevant Directorate: Housing

Member to reply: Councillor Will Cooper

Question

The Council has said that the increased costs of bringing Lewisham Homes in house (from £600,000 to £3.9m) will be met by an advance from reserves that will re-paid by leaseholders and tenants. Does the Council envisage recovering the money by increasing rents /service charges or reducing services?

Reply

No, the cost of transition will be met by efficiency savings made over a period of years to be made within the new Housing Directorate. Any increase to rents/ service charges incurred during this financial year will be inflationary and not due to the transition of Lewisham Homes being brought in house.

A full explanation was provided in the Mayor and Cabinet report June 2023 as follows:

The estimated costs related to the transition of services from Lewisham Homes to the Council are between £3.3m and £3.9m, with existing agreed revenue budgets utilised where available and reasonable to do so for non-transition / business as usual work.

This level of one-off costs for the transition represents c3% of the annual turnover of the Lewisham Homes company of £100m. Within this is a significant element of technology investment which was already part of the Lewisham Homes improvement journey which included getting closer to the Council's systems and infrastructure. However, these actions were delayed with the focus on Covid and new compliance priorities and the resources diverted. They are therefore now falling into the transition activities as these have to be done to enable the Lewisham Homes staff to transfer to the Council.

At this funding has been identified including utilisation of HRA and potentially General Fund reserves. Both will need to be replenished in forthcoming financial years. This will require savings and efficiency programmes within the HRA business as usual activities to ensure it is managed within the available resources going forward.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.17
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Margaret Clarke

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

In March the London Tree Officers Association launched an updated CAVAT (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees) Full Method. Have Lewisham officers attended the training and are they using the methodology?

Reply

Lewisham's Senior Planning Tree and Landscape Officer has attended this training and it has been used in planning for many years to enable sufficient tree replacement when trees are removed as part of development.

It has also been used to assess loss of benefits to local community when unauthorised tree felling occurs.

Lewisham Highways Tree Officers have not attended the training and do not use the CAVAT methodology.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.18
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Margaret Clarke

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

An increasing number of London authorities require an Embodied Carbon Assessment for all major developments. When will Lewisham include Embodied Carbon Assessments in its planning application process for all large developments?

Reply

The Council's new local plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 3 November 2023. Policy SD3 'minimising greenhouse gas emissions' states that 'major development proposals are encouraged to assess embodied carbon emissions and maximise opportunities to reduce these emissions'. We are expecting the Local Plan to be adopted late 2024 early 2025 subject to the duration of the examination period.

The London Plan (2021) also has a requirement for a 'whole life-cycle approach' which requires applicants to assess embodied carbon emissions. This policy is active now and applies to applications referable to the Mayor of London, i.e. development that include the provision of more than 150 homes, tall buildings etc. Officers are currently using this data to assess the embodied carbon of all qualifying applications and has become an important consideration in the assessment of planning applications.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.19
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Richard Elliott

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

The Council has stated that it will only spend money on items like street trees, bike shelters and EV charging points etc. in CPZ areas. Is it the Council's policy to use funding obtained from other sources specifically for such improvements (i.e. not money raised through parking fee etc.) only in streets that are in a CPZ to the exclusion of non-CPZ areas?

Reply

The Sustainable Streets programme is a key initiative designed to implement a range of sustainable transport measures including parking permits, cycle hangars, EV charging points, street trees and greening, car clubs, and safer junctions and crossing points.

In addition to Sustainable Streets, the Council continues to introduce sustainable transport measures in many areas across the borough and not just in CPZ areas, for example, the Cycle Hangar programme. More information on this can be found on the Council website through the following link:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myserVICES/roads-and-transport/cycling/cycle-storage-for-hire>.

All funds raised from traffic and parking restrictions are ring-fenced by law for local transport and highways improvements, including active travel initiatives and discounts on travel, such as Freedom Passes for older and disabled residents who travel via public transport.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.20
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Janet Hurst

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: The Mayor, Damien Egan

Question

With regard to Q21 of July 2023 what answer did the Council receive to its Freedom of Information request to the Met about the number of police officers accused of domestic abuse that are still working in Lewisham?

Reply

Please see attached.



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

Information Rights Unit
PO Box 313
Sidcup
DA15 0HH

Email: foi@met.police.uk

www.met.police.uk

Your ref: FOI-11642-23-0100-000
Our ref: 01/FOI/23/031333

Dear J. Lee,

Freedom of Information Request Reference No: 01/FOI/23/031333

I write in connection with your request for information which was received by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) on 04/07/2023. I note you seek access to the following:

"<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/article/report-on-the-centre-for-womens-justices-super-complaint-on-police-perpetrated-domestic-abuse/> According to the super complaint against the police (see above link) less than 3% of police officers and staff reported for domestic abuse in the last four years have been dismissed. Only 9% of those reported were professionally disciplined.

Can you please confirm how many officers currently working in the London Borough of Lewisham have open DA complaints against them?"

SEARCHES TO LOCATE INFORMATION

To locate the information relevant to your request searches were conducted by Strategy and Governance and the Directorate of Professional Standards. The searches located some information relevant to your request.

DECISION

I have today decided to disclose some information to you.

However, in relation to information specific to officers and staff working in the borough of Lewisham, the Metropolitan Police Service can neither confirm nor deny

whether it holds the information that you requested as the duty in Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) does not apply by virtue of the following exemptions:

Section 40(5B)(a)(i) – Personal Information
Section 31(3) – Law Enforcement

Please see the legal annex for further information on the exemptions applied in respect of your request.

REASONS FOR DECISION

Lewisham falls within the South East Area BCU. The data for this area can today be provided, as the risk of identifying those individuals involved is somewhat mitigated by providing the wider area. However, the MPS cannot provide current data about Lewisham specifically. This is because a Freedom of Information Act request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself, and any information disclosed, are considered suitable for open publication. This is because, under Freedom of Information, any information disclosed is released into the wider public domain, effectively to the world and not just to one individual. This is best demonstrated by the fact that all disclosures made under the Act are published on our Disclosure Log on the MPS website.

Your request relates to ongoing complaints about officers and staff based in a specific borough. The MPS do not routinely make comment on current complaints relating to staff working in specific areas or topics of complaint. Therefore, in relation to whether or not we hold information with regards to this, the MPS can neither confirm nor deny.

Unless otherwise made public by the MPS via an official route, we would always seek to neither confirm nor deny whether identifiable individuals were subject to complaints or misconduct proceedings. Not doing so would inadvertently reveal personal information about those individuals – essentially, whether misconduct proceedings had been undertaken against them, thereby breaching the data protection principle of lawful and fair processing. Although in this instance no one is named, providing current figures relating to specific complaint types and the location of where the individual is based means identifying (or misidentifying) the individuals involved is much more likely. In addition, disclosing ‘current’ complaints would enable a picture to be built up over time, which would increase the likelihood of identifying the subjects of the complaints, especially for those with some knowledge of who may or may not be working in that location during that period.

Furthermore, confirming or denying whether or not the MPS have conducted misconduct proceedings into any identifiable individual, if not otherwise made public, would have a negative impact upon the police’s ability to conduct our law enforcement functions. Confirming or denying whether or not we hold specific information relating to any misconduct proceedings would weaken and undermine the operational effectiveness of those enquiries, which by default, would affect our ability to conduct these types of investigations without prejudice. We would be less able to investigate allegations now and in the future, as issuing definitive responses

under the Act about what information we held would reveal our intelligence and whether or not investigations are ongoing. This may compromise such investigations, and hinder our ability to ascertain whether a person was or was not responsible for conduct that was improper.

Considering this, the MPS cannot confirm or deny whether the specific requested information is held as to do so would be grossly unfair to any identifiable individuals and would negatively impact upon our ability to conduct investigations into allegations. Any confirmation or denial statement would be likely to result in potential speculation, may encourage false reporting, pre-judgment and/or speculation, and give rise to media attention/coverage. This could in turn unfairly prejudice any proceedings, and undermine an individual's right to a fair hearing, should this ever occur.

This stance should not be taken as an indication as to whether or not the information exists. This stance is taken consistently in cases where formal confirmation has not taken place in order to protect both the rights of individuals and policing interests now and in the future.

Please see the Legal Annex at the end of this response for some more detailed arguments regarding the application and maintenance of these cited exemptions.

DISCLOSURE

There are 15 employees currently working in the South East BCU that have a live DA complaint against them.

Please note, these relate to allegations and not proven cases.

Maintaining Public Trust in the MPS

Securing and maintaining the trust of the community is integral to the principle of policing by consent and to continue to do so, the MPS recognises that its staff must act with professionalism and integrity. The MPS treats each occasion when an allegation is made about the conduct of its staff extremely seriously and will fully investigate each incident to determine whether the conduct of that member of staff has breached the standards of professional behaviour. Where the conduct of staff is proven to have fallen below the standards of behaviour expected, the MPS will take robust action to ensure that its staff are held to account and that lessons are learnt from each case. Any instance where the conduct of our staff is alleged to have fallen below the standards of behaviour expected is treated extremely seriously by the MPS.

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter, please contact me using the email address at the top of this document, quoting the reference number for this request.

Yours sincerely,

**Shannon Stroud
Information Rights**

LEGAL ANNEX

Section 17(1) of the Act provides:

(1) A public authority which, in relation to any request for information, is to any extent relying on a claim that any provision in part II relating to the duty to confirm or deny is relevant to the request or on a claim that information is exempt information must, within the time for complying with section 1(1), give the applicant a notice which-

- (a) states the fact,
- (b) specifies the exemption in question, and
- (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

Section 40(5B)(a)(i) of the Act provides:

(5B) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise in relation to other information if or to the extent that any of the following applies—

- (a) giving a member of the public the confirmation or denial that would have to be given to comply with section 1(1)(a)—
 - (i) would (apart from this Act) contravene any of the data protection principles

At the core of your request is the personal data of the individual officers and staff identifiable. Confirming or denying whether the information requested is held will in turn confirm or deny whether information is held relating to any potential proceedings.

In most cases, personal data is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act as I will explain below.

Where an individual is requesting third party personal data, such as in this case, the MPS must ensure that any action taken adheres to the principles of the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). To clarify, the Freedom of Information Act only allows for the disclosure of personal data if that disclosure would be compliant with the principles for processing personal data. These principles are outlined under section 34 of the DPA 2018 and under Article 5 of the GDPR.

Essentially you have requested whether individuals currently working within a specific location have been subject to complaints in relation to domestic abuse. There are a number of ways in which the MPS could respond to this:

- 1) We could confirm we hold the information and disclose it.
- 2) We could confirm we hold the information but exempt it.

- 3) We could confirm this information is not held.
- 4) We could neither confirm nor deny whether this information is held.

Responding in any way other than that proposed at number 4 would publicly reveal information about the individuals identifiable, thereby breaching their right to privacy as afforded to persons under the DPA and the GDPR.

Just by confirming that we did, or did not, hold the information, even if we did not disclose any further information that may be held, we would be publicly confirming whether or not these individuals were subject to such allegations. The ICO themselves have previously advised that a public authority should not restrict the use of this exemption to cases where it holds the requested information - it is also appropriate for the public authority to use it where it does not hold the information, if to disclose that fact would contravene one or more of the data protection principles.

As explained above, there are six Data Protection principles specified within Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

In this instance, the disclosure of the Personal Data (which would happen if we responded in any way other than by neither confirming nor denying) would be incompatible with the first Data Protection principle which requires that personal data shall be:

'processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject ('lawfulness, fairness and transparency');

Under the Data Protection Act 2018, the processing (in this case, the confirmation or denial) of personal data is considered to be lawful if:

- a. There is a legitimate interest in the disclosure of that personal data.
- b. The disclosure of the personal data is necessary to meet that legitimate interest.
- c. The disclosure would not cause unwarranted harm to the data subject.

Here, we need to balance the rights and freedoms of the individuals involved with any legitimate public interest in confirming or denying whether the information is held.

The MPS accepts there is an interest in officer and staff misconduct, which we understand. This is why the MPS regularly releases statistics on this matter, and publicises gross misconduct on our website, even opening the hearings to members of the public prior to the pandemic:

<https://www.met.police.uk/foi-ai/metropolitan-police/d/march-2022/misconduct-gross-misconduct-proceedings-2019-2020-2021/>

<https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/mis/misconduct-hearings/>

However, confirming or denying whether staff or officers based in specific locations are currently subject to complaints or general misconduct proceedings would amount to an infringement into the privacy of those individuals that has the potential to cause

unwarranted damage and distress, especially to the extent that there would not have been a reasonable expectation of such disclosure.

Police employees, including police officers, have a reasonable expectation of confidentiality in relation to information pertaining to their employment with the MPS or other law enforcement organisations. The purposes for which the MPS uses personal data are stated within the MPS Privacy Notices, which indicate that personal data is collected and used for policing purposes and will not be further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes.

<https://www.met.police.uk/privacy-notice/>

<https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/foi-media/metropolitan-police/policies/special-category-and-criminal-convictions-personal-data-policy.pdf>

Therefore, it would be reasonable for an employee to expect that information that the MPS holds in relation to them would only be used to support a policing purpose and not be unlawfully disclosed to third parties.

The ICO has stated in the past that there is a distinction between employees' private and professional lives which needs to be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not information can be processed about them in relation to FOI requests. I am mindful of ICO decision notice FS50470517, which states the following and is of relevance here:

'As stated in the Commissioner's guidance on 'Requests for personal data about public authority employees, information about an employee's actions or decisions in carrying out their job is still personal data about that employee, but given the need for accountability and transparency about public authorities, there must be some expectation of disclosure. On the other hand, information that may be held in a personnel file about their health or disciplinary record or payroll information about their tax code all relate to them as individuals and to their personal circumstances and there is a greater expectation that a public authority would not disclose such information. In this case, the Commissioner considers that the employment history (posts held) of individuals is information held within a personnel file and therefore carries that greater expectation of privacy.'

Similarly, ICO decision notice FS50515182 states:

"17. The Commissioner recognises that people have an instinctive expectation that a public authority, in its role as a responsible employer and data controller, will not disclose certain information. He considers that information relating to an individuals' employment history will attract a strong general expectation of privacy.

18. The same strong expectation of privacy also applies to information that relates to disciplinary matters or grievances. Indeed, the expectation of confidence in relation to that sort of information is generally even stronger.

With this in mind, any individuals that would potentially be identified would have an expectation that this type of personal data, if held, would not be used for non-policing

purposes. To process personal data in this way would be disproportionate to meet any legitimate public interests, and so would be greatly distressing and likely have a lasting upon those data subjects.

Consequently, responding in any way other than neither confirming nor denying would be unlawful and would therefore contravene the first data protection principle.

Various ICO Decision Notices on this topic further indicate that it would not be appropriate to confirm or deny whether information is held in relation to requests regarding the discipline history of police officers. ICO decision notice FS50435641 states:

'37. When assessing whether it would be fair to process personal data, it is important to consider the data subject's expectation of disclosure. The Information Commissioner would consider it reasonable that an officer would have an expectation that information which reveals whether or not they have been the subject of any complaints should not be disclosed widely under the FOIA.

38. The Commissioner's conclusion is that confirming or denying whether the requested information is held would constitute an unfair disclosure of personal data. Therefore, the exclusion from the duty to confirm or deny provided by section 40(5)(b)(i) is engaged.'

ICO decision notice FS50233972 states:

'16. It is important to consider what expectation of disclosure the individual would hold. The Commissioner would consider it reasonable that employees of the public authority would have an expectation that information about complaints made against them individually, including whether or not any complaints have been made, would not be disclosed, even without any specific notification of this.

17. The potential for detriment to the named individual through disclosure of information relating to complaints made against them is a significant issue here. The Commissioner's previous Decision Notice FS50086498 includes this argument about the issue of detriment:

"To release the fact that a complaint has been made against an employee may lead to assumptions being made about that employee's competence. However, the complaint may be unsubstantiated or malicious, or certain employees may be involved more frequently with difficult decisions that are more likely to result in dissatisfaction. Therefore, releasing this information does not aid transparency or accountability but could be misleading and unfair to particular employees."

'20. However, the Commissioner has also previously concluded that disclosure of information about complaints made against individual employees would be unfair, as the employees would have a reasonable expectation that such information would not be disclosed, and because of the potential detriment that could result from disclosure of information of this kind. It is also of significance that the public authority has demonstrated transparency on its website through publishing details about complaints and discipline.'

Finally, ICO decision notice FS50170141 also states:

'35. The public authority argued that the disclosure of whether or not a particular officer had been subject to a disciplinary hearing would be unfair. It informed the Commissioner that this was its general policy and it would never routinely confirm or deny whether an officer was subject to a disciplinary hearing, as to do so would be contrary to that individual's expectations that such information would remain private.

36. The Commissioner finds this argument persuasive. He believes that generally an employee would expect that their disciplinary record would remain private between them and their employer. In addition he notes that the officer in question in this case does not hold a very senior grade. Therefore he believes that the individual would be less likely than a more senior officer to have any expectation that the public would be told whether or not they had been the subject of disciplinary action. ...the Commissioner has considered whether police officers should, irrespective of their seniority, reasonably expect that information about disciplinary records will be made available to others. However, any disclosure under the above Regulations is likely to be to parties who are already aware that disciplinary action is being considered. The Commissioner does not consider that the possibility of disclosures to certain limited parties in that context means that officers should reasonably expect that the public will be informed about whether or not they have been the subject of any action. The Commissioner considers that the expectations of the data subject would be that this sort of information would only be released through the correct process and to release it outside of this process would be unfair.

42. While the Commissioner accepts that there may be a legitimate interest in the general public knowing whether officers who are unfit to police are disciplined appropriately. He considers that the provisions of the Police Reform Act satisfy this interest and that disclosure under the Act is not appropriate in this case.

43. The complainant has argued to the Commissioner that as the named officer is performing a public role this information should be disclosed. However, after considering the circumstances of this case, and particularly in view of the ranking of the named officer, the Commissioner does not consider that this would make confirming or denying the existence of this information fair.

44. The Commissioner has also considered conversely whether to confirm that a particular officer was not the subject of a disciplinary hearing would also be unfair. In this case the Commissioner believes that the approach needs to be uniform for any other approach would indirectly expose those that had been subject to a disciplinary hearing. The Commissioner therefore feels that to confirm or deny whether there was not a disciplinary hearing would also be unfair.'

After considering all the points raised above, I have therefore applied the exemption provided under Section 40(5A)(5B)(a)(i) of the Freedom of Information Act to this request.

Again, please note this should not be taken to as an indication of whether or not the requested information is held.

Section 31(3) (Law Enforcement) of the Act provides;

(3) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, compliance with section 1(1)(a) would, or would be likely to, prejudice any of the matters mentioned in subsection (1).

If this information were held, it would be held for the following purpose:

(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

(g) the exercise by any public authority of its functions for any of the purposes specified in subsection (2),

(2) The purposes referred to in subsection (1)(g) to (i) are—

(a) the purpose of ascertaining whether any person has failed to comply with the law,
(b) the purpose of ascertaining whether any person is responsible for any conduct which is improper.

Therefore, section 31 is engaged.

As section 31 is a prejudice based, qualified exemption, it requires both a harm and public interest test. These can be found below.

Prejudice Test

Confirming or denying whether information is held in relation to complaints or disciplinary proceedings against individuals currently working in a specified location, where not already made public via an official source, would be likely to hinder our ability to effectively conduct investigations into potentially improper conduct.

If the MPS were to routinely confirm whether or not we were investigating identifiable individuals, this would leave us unable to successfully apply the neither confirm stance when required, for example, when the investigation was unknown to either the suspect or others for example. Therefore, we could be forced to disclose whether or not specific individuals were the subject of investigations before we wanted to, for example, which would greatly impact upon our ability to conduct investigations freely and without interference.

In addition, if the MPS were to routinely confirm or deny who was the subject of complaints and investigations, this would be likely to have an impact upon who may assist us with such investigations in future, as disclosure of such information may erode their trust in us to protect such confidential information. This would negatively impact upon our ability to carry out these disciplinary investigations.

Furthermore, irrespective of what information may or may not be held, to confirm or deny whether information is held relating to any identifiable individual or any possible disciplinary action as suggested by the request, would undermine the first data

protection principle, as explained above, and also have a negative impact upon the individual in question, who may later be found to have no case to answer.

Public Interest Test

Considerations favouring confirming the information is held

Disclosure of this information, if it exists, would enlighten members of the public as to the action taken by the MPS if there is any suggestion of improper conduct or wrongdoing. This may go some way to promoting awareness and accountability and would reinforce the MPS's commitment to openness and transparency.

Confirming or denying whether the information is held would improve accountability by allowing police action which may or may not have occurred to be scrutinised.

Confirming or not whether information is held would also be likely to provide assurance to the public that any allegations of any possible improper behaviour by MPS officers are thoroughly investigated and robustly responded to.

Considerations favouring neither confirming nor denying whether information is held

The MPS does not generally disclose information from investigations except through our Directorate of Media and Communications to the media. This is so potential witnesses are not discouraged to come forward and provide statements in relation to investigations or any type, internal or otherwise.

With regard to all investigations, it is of paramount importance that the response to a FOIA request does not disrupt or have any negative impact upon it. Any such possible disruption to any investigation (whether related to the matter referred to in this request or not) due to an adverse FOIA disclosure would not be in the best interests of the public.

Irrespective of what information may or may not be held in this case, to confirm or deny whether information is held relating to identifiable employees would undermine our law enforcement capabilities and the ability for the police to conduct its role to the best of its ability.

Balance Test

When balancing the Public Interest Test we have to consider whether the information should be released into the public domain, or even whether or not we can confirm or deny the existence of such information. Arguments need to be weighed against each other.

To confirm whether or not the requested information is held in this case would lead to greater public awareness in relation to internal disciplinary proceedings and would show that the MPS is transparent and open with regards to the work that it conducts in this area.

However, the integrity of any investigation is of paramount importance to the policing purpose and as much as there is public interest in knowing that policing activity is appropriate and balanced, this will only be overridden in exceptional circumstances.

Confirming or denying whether individuals currently working in specific locations are subject to complaint or investigation not only has ramifications with regards to their personal data, but also has the ability to hinder our ability to effectively and efficiently carry out such investigations now and in the future. The MPS is committed to ensuring our officers carry out their work with the utmost integrity and carry themselves professionally. Any officer believed to fall short of these standards will be dealt with robustly. Any FOI disclosure which may impact upon our ability to do so cannot be seen to be in the public interest.

Therefore, after weighing up the competing interests I have determined that issuing a confirmation or denial relating to your request would not be in the public interest. To confirm or deny that information is held relevant to this request could be detrimental to internal misconduct investigations, and would be likely to have a negative impact upon any individuals who may be involved, thereby contravening the Data Protection Act.

Again, this response should not be taken as necessarily indicating that any information that would meet your request exists or does not exist.

COMPLAINT RIGHTS

Are you unhappy with how your request has been handled or do you think the decision is incorrect?

You have the right to require the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to review their decision.

Prior to lodging a formal complaint you are welcome to discuss the response with the case officer who dealt with your request.

Complaint

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of the MPS made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information you can lodge a complaint with the MPS to have the decision reviewed.

Complaints should be made in writing, within forty (40) working days from the date of the refusal notice, and addressed to:

FOI Complaint
Information Rights Unit
PO Box 313
Sidcup
DA15 0HH
foi@met.police.uk

In all possible circumstances the MPS will aim to respond to your complaint within 20 working days.

The Information Commissioner

After lodging a complaint with the MPS if you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at www.ico.org.uk. Alternatively, write to or phone:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Phone: 0303 123 1113

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.21
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Janet Hurst

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Now that Guildmore's plans for the Ladywell Playtower have been put on hold what will happen to the £266,000 the Council allocated to the scheme from the Community Infrastructure Fund?

Reply

Guildmore the developer with whom the Council has agreed the principle of a long lease for the restoration of the Playtower, remains committed to the scheme and wants to work with the Council to identify new funding or a different funding model, that enables the restoration of the building, without changing the fundamentals of the consented scheme.

At this stage, it is expected that the recently agreed Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding contribution of £266k towards the scheme will remain a key part of any funding package agreed with the developer.

If the scheme were not to progress in line with the existing planning consented scheme, then the CIL contribution will return to the Council's strategic CIL fund.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.22
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Despite Team Catford making the statement in July 2021 that a new a new pedestrianised approach to Catford Bridge Station could be in place by December 2022 I was informed in answer to public question 66 on the 23rd November 2022 that the project had been delayed with design work anticipated to be finalised in the New Year, but that procurement will be prioritised as early as is feasible in 2023-24 and construction to begin on site soon after. Please provide a new update on progress of this project, including details when construction will finally start and be completed.

Reply

The project has made good progress and design work to RIBA stage 3 is now complete. Delivery of the project is largely subject to further consultation with external stakeholders including Network Rail and partners, TfL, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and the neighbouring Catford Green Development. With complex land ownerships within the project area, agreement process with the external stakeholders on specific design decisions have taken much longer than anticipated. We are continuing to progress these conversations steadily before we can start contractor procurement. Indicative timescale for procurement and delivery of the project to be 2024-2025.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.23
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

Please state what would be the full cost for Lewisham Council of undertaking a Mayoral by-election with information covering (a), a stand alone election and (b) an election coinciding with the GLA elections and/or a General Election, with the full costs covering printing of ballot papers, the printing and delivery of the booklet for Mayoral candidates, processing of postal ballot papers, running of polling stations, booking fees for a count venue, running the count (including refreshments and transport costs) and staff tasks undertaking these and other related tasks.

Reply

It is difficult to provide accurate estimates for many election costs due to the reasons listed below.

- The number of electors and postal voters can change considerably in a Parliamentary election year
- Many costs for combined elections will increase due to the complexity. This includes most printed products
- The mayoral booklet cannot be enclosed with any other item, so is a fixed cost regardless of any combination
- Recent law changes to allow online postal vote applications will likely increase the number of postal voters, especially in the event of a combination with a Parliamentary election
- The Department of Levelling Up, Communities and Housing, are planning to introduce new election staff fees and expenses guidance. The exact details are yet to be confirmed
- Staff payments for combined elections are subject to a 20% uplift due to the complexity, but are shared equally between the elections
- Postage costs have increased since our last election and are set to increase further, but the precise figures are not yet known
- The count venue for a GLA election will be different to a standalone Mayoral election, or a Parliamentary election

The table of costs below shows an estimate cost for each element of the election, using the most recent information we have at this time, for the 3 different scenarios referenced in the question. Actual costs are subject to the conditions listed above, and many more variables, many of which are outside of our control.

Type of election	Item	Approximate cost
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Standalone mayoral by-election	Poll card printing and posting	£111,000.00
	Booklet printing and posting	£140,000.00
	Polling stations	£60,000.00
	Polling staff	£127,000.00
	Printing and posting postal votes	£75,000.00
	Processing postal votes	£21,000.00
	Count venue	£20,000.00
	Count costs	£56,500.00
	Other costs	£25,000.00
	Total cost for this election scenario	£635,500.00
Combined with GLA election	Poll card printing and posting	£55,500.00
	Booklet printing and posting	£140,000.00
	Polling stations	£30,000.00
	Polling staff	£92,400.00
	Printing and posting postal votes	£47,000.00
	Processing postal votes	£13,000.00
	Count venue	£40,000.00
	Count costs	£65,000.00
	Other costs	£23,000.00
	Total cost for this election scenario	£505,900.00
Combined with Parliamentary election	Poll card printing and posting	£55,500.00
	Booklet printing and posting	£140,000.00
	Polling stations	£30,000.00
	Polling staff	£77,200.00
	Printing and posting postal votes	£52,500.00
	Processing postal votes	£14,500.00
	Count venue	£25,000.00
	Count costs	£56,500.00
	Other costs	£24,250.00
	Total cost for this election scenario	£475,450.00

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.24
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Parliamentary legislation required that the creation of Neighbourhood Forums, in the context of the Local Government Act should have the status of statutory bodies. Can the council confirm that it has adopted this status for its Neighbourhood Forums, including Lee Neighbourhood Forum

Reply

The Council can confirm that once formally designated, Neighbourhood Forums are considered statutory bodies in accordance with current government legislation. This includes the Lee Neighbourhood Forum.

The statutory status is for consultation purposes for development proposals within the Neighbourhood Development Plan area only.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.25
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

Should Mayor Egan be elected to Parliament in the expected General Election 2024 what are the council's and Mayor Egan's plans for the future of the elected office of Mayor in the London Borough of Lewisham?"

Reply

The current Mayor of Lewisham is elected for a term of office up until May 2026. If the Mayor resigns from his position for whatever reason in advance of that date, the Council will be required to hold a Mayoral by-election in accordance with a statutory timetable.

The Mayor and any councillor resigns by sending notification in writing to the Council's Director of Law & Corporate Governance.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.26
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Zoe Balcombe

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Can the the Councillors give the exact figure to how many people responded to the online Sustainable Streets survey that closed on the 24th September and please provide the evidence from this survey?

Reply

A total of 554 survey responses were received. The results and evidence collected from the surveys is currently being analysed and will be reported to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet for a decision. The consultation findings will be made publicly available when the report is issued.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.27
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: The Mayor, Damien Egan

Question

Does the Mayor think that scrutiny improves decision making?

Reply

Yes.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.28
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

How many of the 1200 social homes the Council claimed in March 2022 had been delivered since 2018, have yet to be built or occupied by a tenant?

Reply

Over 1,200 social homes were completed or began construction in the period 2018-22.

626 social homes were completed in the borough between 2018/19 and 2020/21, as per the Council's authority monitoring reports for planning completions.

Construction had begun on an additional 621 homes through the Council's Building for Lewisham programme by March 2022.

Of these 621 homes, 166 of these have been completed. Of the 455 remaining, 66 make up schemes which are currently on hold as a result of financial pressures and current challenges in the construction industry, with a further 389 homes still under construction.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.29
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Stephen Locke

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

I understand the borough is still twinned with Matagalpa in Nicaragua. How much does this link cost, and what benefits has the link provided?

Reply

There is no financial cost to this historical link.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.30
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Stephen Locke

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

What efforts has the Council made to disassociate itself from the Ortega-Murillo regime, in the light of the gross oppression and violations of human rights highlighted by Amnesty International as recently as April 2023?

Reply

The council has no links with the Government of Nicaragua.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.31
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Joan Sakkas

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

What are the councils plans for traffic management when Leegate demolition starts (including lorry routes to and from site). If no plans are in place, when will they be?

Reply

The report to Strategic Planning Committee in July 2023 set out the use of planning conditions to manage construction traffic during demolition and construction. These are Conditions 4 (Construction Environment Management Plan) and Condition 5 (Construction Logistics Plan) which are required to be submitted to the Council and approved before any works commence on site.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.32
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

Please may I have a list of names and term dates of each postorder, permanent or interim, in each executive and director post since May 2018?

Please may I also have anonymised data of the costs, per financial year, of the related

- a. recruitment process,
- b. exit packages, and
- c. numbers of NDA agreements signed

Reply

Below is a list of Directors and Executive Directors including interims.

There are no direct costs for the recruitment of interims as the agency fees are not payable for the recruitment process, but form part of the hourly/daily charge of our interims.

Any information in relation to exit packages and settlements are published on our website as part of the statement of accounts.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/aboutthecouncil/finances/statement-of-accounts>

Post Title	Date From	Date To	Assignment Category
Acting Executive Director Corporate Resources	01/07/2023	-	Permanent
Executive Director Corporate Resources	14/09/2020	31/07/2023	Permanent
Executive Director Community Services	10/06/2019	-	Permanent
Executive Director Children and Young People	01/06/2020	-	Permanent
Executive Director Place	13/03/2023	-	Interim
Executive Director Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm	18/10/2021	04/03/2023	Permanent
Executive Director Housing	11/09/2023	-	Permanent
Executive Director Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm	05/11/2019	15/08/2021	Permanent
Executive Director Customer Services	31/10/2011	04/11/2019	Permanent
Director of Housing Strategy	01/05/2013	14/06/2020	Permanent
Director of Inclusive Regeneration	26/09/1988	27/10/2019	Permanent
Director of Resident and Business Services	31/10/1983	31/07/2021	Permanent
Director of Inclusive Regeneration	26/11/2019	28/02/2023	Interim
Director of Financial Services	08/09/1997	08/10/2021	Permanent
Director of Planning	23/08/2004	08/08/2023	Permanent
Director of Planning	26/06/2023	-	Interim
Director of Culture Learning and Libraries	13/06/2005	08/07/2022	Permanent
Director of Adults Integrated Commissioning	01/04/2011	15/04/2022	Interim
Director of Culture & Community Development	09/12/2013	31/12/2015	Interim
Executive Director Children Young People	01/09/2015	31/12/2019	Permanent
Director of IT & Digital Services	20/03/2017	31/08/2018	Permanent
Director of Planning	29/05/2018	05/07/2020	Permanent
Director of Culture Learning and Libraries	04/01/2022	16/12/2022	Interim
Director of Public Health	01/04/2013	15/03/2019	Permanent
Executive Director Place	13/02/1995	30/10/2011	Permanent
Executive Director Community Services	10/03/1997	10/05/2019	Permanent
Director of Families, Quality & Commissioning	03/06/2019	31/07/2020	Interim
Director of Children's Social Care	02/11/2015	03/07/2018	Permanent
Director of Children's Social Care	01/07/2018	17/09/2018	Interim
Director of IT & Digital Services	20/05/2019	01/03/2022	Permanent
Director of Law	01/06/2011	16/07/2020	Permanent
Director of Inclusive Regeneration	05/10/2015	05/01/2020	Permanent
Director of People and Organisation Development	29/08/2017	17/02/2020	Permanent
Director of Systems Development, Health and Social Care	01/06/2006	30/09/2023	Permanent
Director of Law and Corporate Governance	13/07/2020	31/07/2021	Permanent
Director of Law and Corporate Governance	02/08/2021	16/11/2021	Interim
Director of Corporate Policy & Governance	05/03/2001	10/04/2020	Permanent
Director of Public Protection and Safety	24/09/2007	09/01/2020	Permanent
Director of Public Protection and Safety	19/09/2008	24/01/2021	Permanent

Director of Housing Strategy	29/09/2008	19/10/2018	Permanent
Director of Families, Quality & Commissioning	22/10/2007	20/05/2018	Permanent
Director of Education Services	17/09/2015	17/06/2018	Permanent
Director of Communications and Engagement	01/06/2017	15/06/2018	Interim
Director of Communications and Engagement	04/06/2018	29/03/2019	Interim
Director of Strategy & Communications	28/01/2019	14/08/2020	Permanent
Director of Communications and Engagement	04/06/2019	01/04/2020	Permanent
Director of Public Realm	01/04/2016	30/09/2020	Permanent
Director of Public Realm	19/10/2020	05/02/2023	Permanent
Director of IT & Digital Services	29/10/2018	31/07/2019	Interim
Director of Law and Corporate Governance	17/11/2021	-	Permanent
Director of Children's Social Care	17/09/2018	-	Permanent
Director of Adult Social Care	06/07/2015	-	Permanent
Director of Integrated Care and Commissioning	01/04/2020	-	Interim
Director of Finance	21/01/2015	-	Permanent
Director of Inclusive Regeneration	07/06/2021	-	Permanent
Director of Public Realm	11/08/2021	-	Permanent
Director of Communications and Engagement	09/12/2020	-	Permanent
Director of People and Organisation Development	06/09/2016	-	Permanent
Director of Education Services	01/11/2018	-	Permanent
Director of Families, Quality & Commissioning	01/09/2021	-	Permanent
Director of Communities, Partnership and Leisure	01/01/2016	-	Permanent
Director of Public Health	12/06/2017	-	Permanent
Director of IT & Digital Services	01/07/2022	-	Permanent
Director of Resident and Business Services	17/01/2022	-	Permanent
Director of Housing Quality and Investment	11/09/2023	-	Interim
Director of Housing Resident Engagement and Services	20/09/2023	-	Interim
Director of Housing Strategy	23/11/2000	-	Permanent

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.33
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Kate Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing

Member to reply: Councillor Will Cooper

Question

The latest Housing Ombudsman report on Inner London Councils states that between April 2022 and March 2023 Inner London councils were ordered to pay £180,676 in compensation payments, an increase of 147%. The council with the largest increase was Lewisham with compensation payments going from £1,250 to £31,658 an increase of over 2,400%. Maladministration Rates went up from 57% to 67%.

Lewisham Homes is now in house. What guarantee can the council give that Tenants will see a significant improvement of service and how will this be achieved?

Reply

The Housing Service was brought back in house on 1st October. A new Executive Director of Housing is in post and Directors of Quality and Investment, and Resident Engagement and Services have been appointed and will take up their new posts soon. In the meantime, two experienced Interim Directors are in post and are focussing on improving front line services to residents. We have already seen a new direction and improvement in the delivery of the Capital programme, dealing with complaints and communication with leaseholders. The overarching priority to improve front line services will continue throughout 2024.

We shall shortly be communicating timescales for the remainder of this year's Capital programme and by 31st December will have a draft capital programme for 2024/25 to discuss with residents.

We recognise the Repairs service needs urgent improvement and are about to start a full transformational review of every aspect of the service. In the meantime, we are recruiting additional resources to improve the service. This review will involve residents, colleagues, and contractors.

A new Housing governance structure has been agreed with a Housing Board, a Service and Improvement Panel, Resident Scrutiny Panel, a Building Safety Resident Panel and the Tenants and Residents Associations Chairs meetings which are continuing. The Service and Improvement Panel will look at overall performance measures to highlight improvements or deterioration in service at an early stage to ensure focus on improvement is the priority.

There is a great deal of change happening and to come for colleagues who have transferred back into LBL, but these changes will prioritise improved service for residents at every stage.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.34
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Bijan Mohjer

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Lewisham council spent £553,000.00 on consultation fees for CPZs in Evelyn Ward, but I wasn't consulted, please provide where tax payers money was spent in this scenario with a breakdown.

Reply

As part of the recent Sustainable Streets consultation in the Evelyn area, over 8,000 leaflets were delivered to residents in the area containing key information about the proposals, customised maps of proposals on each street and information about how to participate in the consultation.

In addition, the consultation campaign was supported by stakeholder briefings, business site visits, door knocking in streets with lower response rates, a pop-up session, posters on lampposts, QR codes linking directly to the consultation webpage, social media promotion, an article in Lewisham Life and a dedicated phone line and email address for people to get in touch with their comments. The consultation has now closed and the responses are in the process of being analysed before being reported to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in the near future for a decision on how to proceed.

In terms of the proposed figure of £553,600, this is for the Sustainable Streets programme across the whole borough, not just in the Evelyn area. The figure covers the costs for the consultation and engagement exercises and designing the kerbside management restrictions for the whole programme, which includes three phases and reviews of existing CPZ areas. The Evelyn area is included in phase 2.

A breakdown of the costs per phase is provided below:

PHASE	COST
Project management	£30,000
Phase 1	
Consultation	£50,000
Inventory survey and design	£91,300
Phase 2	
Consultation	£70,000
Inventory survey and design	£97,500

Phase 3

Consultation £68,000

Inventory survey and design £95,800

Reviews

Consultations of existing areas £51,000

Total £553,600

Further details are contained in the report to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in December 2022. A link to the report is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s105243/Sustainable%20Transport%20and%20Parking%20Improvements%20report.pdf>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.35
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Bijan Mohjer

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

If Lewisham council wants to change the Evelyn Area due to carbon emissions, please tell me how much carbon dioxide is in the atmosphere and provide the statistics and data surrounding this. If it's the case that the co2 emissions are so high why has it only come up now and why is there such a push to introduce it so soon without further reporting?

Reply

The Sustainable Streets programme is consistent with the Council's policy framework including the Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020), Air Quality Action Plan (2022 – 2027) and Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan (2019 – 2041). As more than 25% of carbon emissions in the borough come from transport, Sustainable Streets will help the Council achieve its ambition of becoming a carbon neutral borough.

To help improve air quality, including measures to address health inequalities in relation to poor air, the Council has an extensive network of air quality monitoring stations with over 120 sites covering the whole borough, the data from which helps inform decisions about where further preventative measures are required. The Sustainable Streets programme is one such measure that will support these ambitions.

Details on levels of carbon emissions in Lewisham are available on the Council's website, including information on where and how air quality monitoring is carried out. A link to the Council's air quality webpage is as follows:

www.lewisham.gov.uk/airquality

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.36
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Helen Delaney

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

How many children are currently on the waiting list for initial speech and language assessments in Lewisham?

Reply

Currently as of September 2023 there are 668 young people waiting for initial speech and language assessments in Lewisham.

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, who provide Speech and Language therapy for Lewisham children and young people are working on improving the allocation of staff within the SLT team to help improve the number of young people they can see and reduce the waiting times. The service is reviewing the current pathway to implement early screening and triage of cases to the correct clinics at an earlier stage of the referral process to help reduce delays. This will include quick response screening for children and young people who have been waiting the longest for an assessment and those who have been identified as high priority cases through triage.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.37
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Helen Delaney

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What are Lewisham Council's KPIs under the Delivering Better Value Programme?

Reply

The Council and our education settings are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential. We are committed to promoting inclusion to meet special educational needs of our children and young people in mainstream education where possible, backed up with more specialist places for children with more complex and profound needs within the borough. To that end, we are increasing provision locally for our children and young people who have complex needs, through a programme of place expansion in our special schools and resource provision in mainstream schools.

Like most local authorities in England, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support in the face of rising need and demand. The Government's Delivering Better Value programme is intended to offer technical support and funding to help meet those challenges, and it is in that spirit that the Council is taking part. The Council has not been set any KPI's under the DBV programme.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.38
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Coralie Stephney

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

Given that the aim of the "Delivering Better Value Scheme" is to meet the needs of more children and young people in mainstream settings; see (RM6187) FRAMEWORK SCHEDULE PARAGRAPH 1.3), What efforts are being made by Lewisham Council to ensure that mainstream schools will be ready to support their needs

Reply

The Council and our schools are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential. We are committed to promoting inclusion to meet special educational needs in mainstream education where possible, backed up with more specialist places to meet children's needs within the borough. To that end, we are increasing provision locally for our children and young people who have complex needs, through a programme of place expansion in our special schools and resource provision in mainstream schools.

Like most local authorities in England, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support in the face of rising need and demand. The Government's Delivering Better Value programme is intended to offer technical support and funding to help meet those challenges, and it is in that spirit that the Council is taking part. Lewisham is currently working with the DBV delivery partner. No final decisions on workstreams and priorities have been made at this point.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.39
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Coralie Stephney

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

Given that the original EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) was to support all SEN children and young people from nought to twenty five, why are many colleges ceasing the EHCPS EARLY, like AT 21 or 23 stating that if the young person is not able to be travel trained, or not able to access the available limited courses. They are then dropped before reaching full potential.

SEN comes in varying shades, shapes and sizes and the original person centred aims of the EHCP are not being met. How will you rectify this?

Reply

We are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential.

Legislation introduced in Sept 2014 highlighted that EHCPs may be maintained for learners up to the age of 25 if the learner still has education or training outcomes to achieve.

The local authority looks at this when considering whether a young person still requires the support of an EHCP. This is done on an individual basis and all key factors relevant to this statutory decision making are taken into consideration

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.40
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

On the Council's website there is a statement that "In December 2017, the Poverty Commission will present a report with recommendations". Has the Council carried out an assessment of the effect of the recommendations in the report that the Council has implemented?

Reply

The final report of the Poverty Commission was presented to Mayor & Cabinet in March 2018 with an update provided on the impact of the implemented recommendations in October 2018. The Mayor noted "the strong progress made in delivering the Commission's recommendations".

Since 2018 the Council has continued to focus on alleviating poverty, most recently with its cost of living programme. Activity undertaken as part of this programme has included:

- Investing in community energy partners so that they can provide practical support to thousands of Lewisham residents facing fuel poverty. Support includes installation of energy-saving devices, help with funding applications, energy vouchers, financial support towards fuel debt, warm packs, and energy-saving advice.
- A targeted campaign to increase the uptake of Pension Credit, leading to over 400 new households claiming thousands of pounds annually, and receiving associated entitlements such as cost-of-living payments.
- Utilising the Household Support Fund for cash payments to households most affected by the cost-of-living crisis, but who are not eligible for central government cost-of-living payments.
- Supporting residents facing in-work poverty through our Better Work Lewisham programme.
- Funding our advice partners at Citizens Advice Lewisham to increase capacity to support residents facing crisis. We've also worked with them to launch drop-ins in locations across the borough so that more residents can receive advice and support.
- Investing in community grants programmes, to enable our voluntary community sector partners to increase support to their service users. This includes the Essential Goods grants programme to help residents purchase essential items or services that can make a real difference in their lives, but where they don't have the means to purchase themselves. There's also the Warm Welcomes grants programme, which we funded last winter and have just re-launched for this winter, to allow warm, welcoming spaces to open up to residents over the winter months.

- Funding local food projects to help them manage increasing demand, decreasing donations and increasing food prices.
- Using the Household Support Fund to help Lewisham schools address term-time hunger. There's also the Department for Education-funded holiday food and fun programme to support families in receipt of Free School Meals during the school holidays.
- Launching our Food Justice Action Plan earlier this year, aimed at combatting food insecurity in Lewisham.
- Utilising data to better target support at households most in need.
- Collating key resources for residents on our cost-of-living webpage (lewisham.gov.uk/support).

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.41
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Housing

Member to reply: Councillor Will Cooper

Question

In response to Question 55 of Sept 2023, the Council referred to partnership working meetings with housing associations. What is on the agenda for the next such meeting and when is it scheduled?

Reply

The next partnership meeting with Registered Providers is scheduled for Tuesday 19th December. The agenda will cover the new Consumer Standards and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, preparations for Regulator of Social Housing inspections, tackling under-occupation in social housing and cross landlord working.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.42
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Robert Arkley

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

I have only just found out about the Evelyn Area Parking Zone, why was I not consulted?

Reply

The Evelyn area consultation covered the northern part of the Evelyn ward and part of New Cross ward. Over 8,000 leaflets were delivered to addresses within the consultation area, which in Evelyn extended south to the vicinity of Surrey Canal Road and Grinstead Road. The consultation was open for six weeks between 11 August until 24 September. The six-page leaflet delivered to residents contained key information about the proposals, customised maps of proposals on their streets and information about how to participate in the consultation.

In addition to the resident leaflets the consultation campaign was supported by stakeholder briefings, business site visits, door knocking in streets with lower response rates, a pop-up session at Grand Canal Avenue, posters on lampposts, QR codes linking directly to the consultation webpage, social media promotion, an article in Lewisham Life and a dedicated phone line and email address for people to get in touch throughout the consultation.

The consultation has now closed and the responses are in the process of being analysed before being reported to the Council's Mayor and Cabinet in the near future for a decision on how to proceed.

For further details on the Sustainable Streets programme in Evelyn please see the following link on the Council website:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/sustainable-streets-programme>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.43
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Sian Hill

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

At the 1 November Mayor and Cabinet meeting, Councillor Krupski reported in relation to the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN that “overall traffic levels and speeds are continuing to fall on roads within and surrounding the LTN”.

The published monitoring reports include traffic volume data for roads within the LTN but not for surrounding or other nearby roads. Please could the Council publish their traffic volume data for the roads near the LTN, specifically Lee High Road, Burnt Ash Road and Lee Road, for 2019 through to 2023? If this data is not available, please can the Council explain why?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green LTN monitoring report includes data for Lee High Road and Burnt Ash Hill in the monitoring of bus journey times, which indicates traffic flow. The data shows little to no change in bus journey times on these routes. Further details of the LTN monitoring strategy, including data collected from 2019 through to 2023 is contained in the series of monitoring reports approved by the Council’s Mayor and Cabinet.

A link to the reports is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=8056&Ver=4>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.44
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark De-Laurey

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

According to the Department for Transport's data on average annual daily flows (vehicle counts), traffic on Lee Rd is up on rates seen in 2019 by 5.9%. Why was Lee Rd not included within the LTN Monitoring report published in September 2023, when the Mayor Damien Egan promised counts would be taken and we would form part of future reports? and how does the council intend to deal with the increase in the volume of traffic now seen on Lee Rd?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green LTN monitoring report includes data from a number of boundary roads surrounding the LTN up to and including the A205 South Circular and A20 Lee High Road / Eltham Road. Lee Road is outside of this area and is therefore not included in the monitoring report.

Further details of the LTN monitoring strategy, including data collected from 2019 through to 2023 is contained in the series of monitoring reports approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet. A link to the reports is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=139&MIId=8056&Ver=4>

The Council will assess what traffic flow data is available for Lee Road, including the vehicle counts from the Department for Transport, and will be happy to discuss this aspect further.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.45
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Mark De-Laurey

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Cllrs Krupski has referred to Lee Rd as being a non-residential Rd on several occasions due to its road classification status. However, there is no such connection made by DfT. Simply because a Rd is classified by DfT as a B road does not mean it is residential or non-residential. We as residents of Lee Rd find the Cllrs classification of our residential status offensive, and it speaks volumes to why the Cllrs has failed to engage at any level with residents. Can the Cllrs firstly apologise to residents for her remarks, and secondly commit to engagement going forward?

Reply

The Council disagree with the interpretation made in the question. Previous references to Lee Road were in connection to its road classification only and not the nature of the frontage development along the road.

The system of roads classification is set by the Department for Transport and is intended to direct motorists towards the most suitable routes for reaching their destination. It does this by identifying roads that are best suited for traffic. In line with the national guidance, Lee Road is classified as a B road (B212) as it is designed to feed traffic from the A road network, namely the A20 Lee High Road / Eltham Road, to other local destinations on the road network.

For more information, a register of all adopted roads across the borough, including their road classification, is available on the Council website. A link to the register is as follows: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/roads-and-pavements/highway-register>

The Council is always willing to engage in a constructive manner to support the best interests of residents across the borough. And as Cabinet Member, I have previously attended a Ward Assembly meeting in Blackheath with officers and we answered questions about the LTN and traffic in and around the Blackheath area. I also took the time to speak to the gentleman personally after the meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.46
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Peter Stanton

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Please provide me with an explanation to why was the leaflet I received from Lewisham council asking questions irrelevant to Controlled Parking Zone and not directly asking if I wanted CPZ in my area(Pepys Park) ? Is this some kind of exercise to yet again try to control how we live our lives.

Absolutely disgusted with what is trying to be done.

Reply

The Council aims to reduce the need for car dependency in Lewisham and encourage a mode shift to sustainable travel by improving the public realm and implementing measures that support walking, cycling and public transport. The Sustainable Streets programme will meet these aims by delivering a package of measures including parking controls, cycle hangars, EV charging points, street trees, car clubs, and safer junctions and crossings.

The six-page leaflet delivered to over 8000 households in the Evelyn and New Cross Gate consultation area contained key information about the full range of proposed measures including parking permits, customised maps of proposals on individual streets and information about how to participate in the consultation.

More information about the Sustainable Streets programme can be found at www.lewisham.gov.uk/SustainableStreets

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.47
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Sian Hill

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

The Council's monitoring reports for the Lee Green LTN for June 2021, November 2021, September 2022 and September 2023 do not include any traffic volumes for the boundary roads (A20, A205 and Burnt Ash Road) or other nearby roads (e.g., Lee Road) for periods after the implementation of the LTN. The Mayor said in the Blackheath Ward Meeting on 3 February 2022 that the traffic volumes on the roads surrounding the LTN would be monitored, so why have the traffic volumes for the boundary and sacrificial roads not been included in the reports?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green LTN monitoring report does include data from a number of boundary roads in the findings either through automatic traffic counts on from bus journey times, which is an indication of traffic flow. The report includes bus journey time data for Brownhill Road, Lee High Road and Burnt Ash Hill and indicates little or no change in bus journey times on these routes.

Further details of the LTN monitoring strategy, including data collected from 2019 through to 2023 is contained in the series of monitoring reports approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet. A link to the reports is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=8056&Ver=4>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.48
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Chris Maines

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Can the Mayor report on the progress of the Lewisham Gateway development, in particular when the Cinema will be ready for use, how many screens it will have and which company will operate the Cinema ?

Reply

The cinema as consented, has 9 screens with a total seated capacity of 900 people. The cinema is leased to Empire, and administrators 'BDO' are currently selling the operational assets (cinemas that are built) of Empire and the sale is likely to be concluded by the end of the year / January 2024. This sale excludes any new build agreements for lease that Empire have, which includes Lewisham, as these are outside of the control of the administrator.

The developer Muse have continued to engage with the management team at Empire to keep them updated on when the space will be ready for occupation. Given the administration position of the Empire operating business, high level engagement has occurred with other cinema operators who have approached Muse and Get Living to see if the space when built will become available. These discussions are high level and do not prejudice the contractual position that exists with Empire.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.49
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Chris Maines

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

As the Lewisham Gateway development nears completion what will be the final number of residential units the development delivers and how many of those will be classed as affordable, as defined in the Council's planning guidelines?

Reply

Phase 2 of Lewisham Gateway Comprises 530 residential units with an additional 119 co-living units.

The 530 residential units include 106 affordable homes at London Living Rent levels which is defined as affordable housing tenure in the London Plan (2021).

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.50
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Bob Ashdown

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Contrary to Lewisham and Lee Green Monitoring Update 1/11/2023 since the introduction of the LTN there has been a massive increase in the volume of traffic, rat running and pollution in Ashdale, Exford, Guibal, Horncastle, Kingshurst, Senlac, Winn, Woodyates (southside of A205) roads and Jevington Way.

750+ of the residents in these roads who are angry, frightened, depressed and feel neglected have signed a petition calling for LBL to reduce the volume of traffic on their roads.

Will the council listen to the residents and do this?

Reply

The Council has been actively engaging with residents on Winn Road to address their concerns around road safety in the area. Following a meeting with residents this summer, a number of road safety improvements have been made in the wider area, including a new bollard to prevent vehicles cutting corners, the repair and relocation of a traffic island and the repainting of road markings.

We are also currently developing a borough-wide programme of new road safety and traffic calming measures and the concerns raised by residents on Winn Road and surrounding roads will be fed into this process. Given the limited funding available to the Council, we will be using a data-led approach to prioritise areas that are most seriously impacted by road safety issues.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.51
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Bob Ashdown

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

A number of RBoG residents live in Winn and Guibal roads, LBL are responsible for these roads, being RBoG they cannot contact LBL about their roads.

Since the introduction of the LTN these roads and other neighbouring LBL roads have seen a massive increase in volume of traffic and rat running, both LBL and RBoG residents are concerned there will be a death.

<https://tinyurl.com/mry35pap>

RBoG residents have petitioned their council to liaise with LBL to agree a traffic management plan for Winn and surrounding roads.

Will LBL work with RBoG to reduce the dangerous volumes of traffic in this area?

Reply

The Council works in collaboration with its neighbouring boroughs including the Royal Borough of Greenwich to align its strategic priorities and programmes. Officers have recently met counterparts at Greenwich to discuss cross-borough collaboration, including issues relating to traffic in the Winn Road area. A further meeting is planned in the near future when further discussions on this matter will take place. We are also currently developing a borough-wide programme of new road safety and traffic calming measures and the concerns raised by residents on Winn Road and surrounding roads will be fed into this process. Given the limited funding available to the Council, we will be using a data-led approach to prioritise areas that are most seriously impacted by road safety issues.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.52
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Kimberly Horton

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What mitigation measures have been identified with regard to the Delivering Better Value Scheme?

Reply

The Council and our schools are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential. We are committed to promoting inclusion to meet special educational needs in mainstream education where possible, backed up with more specialist places to meet children's needs within the borough. To that end, we are increasing provision locally for our children and young people who have complex needs, through a programme of place expansion in our special schools and resource provision in mainstream schools.

Like most local authorities in England, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support in the face of rising need. The Government's Delivering Better Value programme is intended to offer technical support and funding to help meet those challenges, and it is in that spirit that the Council is taking part. Lewisham is currently working with the DBV delivery partner. No final decisions on workstreams and priorities have been made at this point.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.53
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Kimberly Horton

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

I have found no reference to the DBV scheme in any published meeting papers from the Children and Young People Select Committee. Why is this?

Reply

The Council and our schools are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential. We are committed to promoting inclusion to meet special educational needs in mainstream education where possible, backed up with more specialist places to meet children's needs within the borough. To that end, we are increasing provision locally for our children and young people who have complex needs, through a programme of place expansion in our special schools and resource provision in mainstream schools.

Like most local authorities in England, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support in the face of rising need. The Government's Delivering Better Value programme is intended to offer technical support and funding to help meet those challenges, and it is in that spirit that the Council is taking part.

The Children and Young People Committee is a scrutiny committee. Accordingly, the content of its meetings is not for me to decide. However, the DBV programme tranche 3 commenced in late June 2023, with a range of exercises taking place to understand the local area, local pressure points etc. At this point there is little formal to report to the CYP Select Committee. I imagine there will be more to report if and when the Council is successful in bid for financial support. The decision on this is not expected until March 2024.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.54
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Jessica Carlisle

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What is the current Dedicated Schools Grant budget deficit in Lewisham?

Reply

The Dedicated Schools Grant is a ring-fenced specific grant that supports local authorities' Schools budget. Funding is allocated through four funding blocks: the Schools Block, the High Needs Block, the Early Years Block, and the Central Schools Services Block.

In common with most local authorities, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, in the face of rising need. The full deficit in our DSG accordingly relates to the High Needs Block. As at 2022/23 we had carried forward a £13m deficit, with a potential addition of £3-4m this year. That is in the context of an estimate last year by the County Councils Network and the Society of County Treasurers that overall local authority deficits in SEN totalled over £2.4bn.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.55
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Jessica Carlisle

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What amount of this Dedicated Schools Grant budget deficit relates to the High Needs Block?

Reply

The Dedicated Schools Grant is a ring-fenced specific grant that supports local authorities' Schools budget. Funding is allocated through four funding blocks: the Schools Block, the High Needs Block, the Early Years Block, and the Central Schools Services Block.

In common with most local authorities, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, in the face of rising need. The full deficit in our DSG accordingly relates to the High Needs Block. As at 2022/23 we had carried forward a £13m deficit, with a potential addition of £3-4m this year. That is in the context of an estimate last year by the County Councils Network and the Society of County Treasurers that overall local authority deficits in SEN totalled over £2.4bn.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.56
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Candida Burrows

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

Will the Council hold a public meeting to inform Lewisham residents about the Delivering Better Value scheme, its aims and how it will ensure children in Lewisham currently struggling to secure appropriate education placements are in a better position as a result of the scheme?

Reply

The Council and our schools are committed to supporting all our children and young people to reach their potential. We are committed to promoting inclusion to meet special educational needs in mainstream education where possible, backed up with more specialist places to meet children's needs within the borough. To that end, we are increasing provision locally for our children and young people who have complex needs, through a programme of place expansion in our special schools and resource provision in mainstream schools. We have added over 250 specialist places since 2018, with nearly 100 in the past eighteen months.

Nevertheless, like most local authorities in England, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support in the face of rising need. The Government's Delivering Better Value programme is intended to offer technical support and funding to help meet those challenges, and it is in that spirit that the Council is taking part. Lewisham is currently working with the DBV delivery partner. No final decisions on workstreams and priorities have been made at this point. The different phases of the DBV programme continue to engage all stakeholders, including parents and carers, in the ongoing work.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.57
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Candida Burrows

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What risks identified with the Delivering Better Value programme has Lewisham Council identified?

Reply

The programme is far from completed; a view on risks has therefore not been concluded.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.58
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Savvas Sakkas

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Councillor Krupski announced only last week that the latest statistics which showed an improvement in air quality and traffic volume within the LTN and on some outside roads. This is good news and wondering when the LTN will be expanded to include some of the new rat runs and more polluted roads. I understand that LBL are keen to introduce clean air and healthy travel habits to all its residents? Do we have dates for the roll out in view of its success within the LTN area.

Reply

The latest monitoring report approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet on 1st November 2023 shows that the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood is continuing to meet its core aims of encouraging people to walk and cycle more, improving air quality and road safety, reducing traffic and protecting public health.

The Council is also delivering numerous other schemes across the borough to encourage more residents to make journeys by walking, cycling and public transport. These include the Sustainable Streets programme, School Streets, cycle hangar programme, walking and cycling improvements, road safety interventions and bus priority schemes.

Subject to funding being approved by Transport for London, the Council is also updating its Healthy Neighbourhoods strategy with a view to beginning feasibility work on a new Healthy Neighbourhood area next year.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.59
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Jacqueline Ashdown

Relevant Directorate: Corporate Resources

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

What protocol is in place when residents email councillors and other members of the council with a question and even when they send some polite reminders they still do not receive an answer?

I know people are busy but it's not professional and it doesn't show the council in a good light.

Reply

Councillors are expected to log all queries onto the Council's casework system via the Members portal. Officers are expected to log all enquiries and complaints onto the casework system directly, with the majority received via the customer contact centre.

The Corporate Complaints Team then pick up the enquiry and pass it onto the relevant service for them to acknowledge within 48 hours and respond to the Councillor or constituent directly within 10 days. Once responded to the case is closed.

As a reminder to respond to any outstanding queries, daily reports are generated by the corporate team and sent to each Directorate informing them of any outstanding enquiries that are due/overdue. In addition, for monitoring purposes, monthly performance reports are also produced.

If a resident or customer is not satisfied with or has not received a response from the Council they can escalate their concerns with the Local Government Ombudsman - <http://www.lgo.org.uk>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.60
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Kate Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Problems with Planning Applications

There is a rise in developers buying properties to convert into HMOs. Some require planning applications as the extension required is more than PD permits. The work continues without permission. Planning passes it to Enforcement who won't take action until the application is determined. If refused the applicant then appeals against the refusal.

Will the council adopt a policy that when refusing an application, have authorisation for enforcement action in place, enabling them to issue both the refusal and enforcement notice simultaneously, thus cutting down on time and money and prevent cynical developers exploiting a loophole.

Reply

Works undertaken to a property without planning permission are at the developer/ owners own risk. Where the Council is made aware of unauthorised activity, we may seek for the submission of a planning application. Enforcement action cannot be taken whilst there is an outstanding planning application or appeal against a decision.

If planning permission is refused and an appeal unsuccessful, then the Council can take enforcement action and will always seek to do so in an expedient manner. The Government advises that all planning enforcement action is taken in the public interest and that Councils are proportionate in their actions.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.61
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

A very recent Parliamentary Report by MPs on LTNs and other traffic measures to encourage cycling, walking and a healthier lifestyle, costing £2.3billion of public money, had failed.

Has Lewisham Council monitored its own adoption and imposition of such policies, over the last 3 years, to contradict this finding by MPs and where may these results be consulted?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green LTN was introduced with the aim of encouraging people to walk and cycle more, improve air quality and road safety, reduce traffic and protect public health.

The scheme was originally introduced in July 2020 and subsequently revised in September 2020 in response to resident feedback. Extensive monitoring has been carried out since 2020 to evaluate the impact of the LTN and assess how it is meeting its key objectives.

Since the implementation of the LTN we have also put in various complimentary measures which have been welcomed by residents, such as more street trees, cycle hangars, EV charging and benches for people to rest when walking. The introduction of the school streets in the area has also reduced car journeys and enabled more children to walk and cycle to school.

The latest monitoring report has used data collected on traffic levels and speeds, air quality, bus journey times and road traffic collisions and indicates that the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN continues to meet its overall aims, in line with the Council's corporate policies and objectives.

The latest monitoring report approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet on 1st November 2023 and can be found through the following link:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=8056>

The Council has also sent copies of the three monitoring reports we have compiled to the Department for Transport as part of the government's wider review into LTNs.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.62
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor James-J Walsh

Question

The Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee meets 7/11/2023 with the full Library Report on its agenda.

Issues/visits figures for 2021/22 and 2022/23 are included. Statistically both sets of figures seem to have anomalies. How do you ensure that visits' figures for multi-use buildings, such as Blackheath Village, Manor House, Forest Hill, Downham, only record library visits by placing the library counter in appropriate places?

Reply

The issue figures come from the Library Management System. The visitors count come from people's counters placed at the main door into the library/building, except in the case of complex buildings such as Manor House or Downham Library. The council understands a public library as a public space. As such any visit to the space is counted as a legitimate visit for library purposes.

For example, our libraries operated as "warm spaces" last winter. Residents came over to the library or spent more time than they would normally in our buildings to keep warm. There might be a debate about whether such visit should be counted as a visit for library purposes. Lewisham chooses to count this as a legitimate visit. Our libraries support the Come Correct initiative. Again, Lewisham chooses to count any such visit to the library by young people as a legitimate visit.

We choose not to limit or question access, as that could exclude members of the public from enjoying our public libraries.

Each community library provides a plethora of critical services to residents, from reminiscence initiatives to cafés, from artists' studios to children's activities. All these are legitimate uses of library spaces or uses that the public library presence supports, and that the council values. As such those visits are counted.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.63
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Diana Cashin

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

It would appear that there are less pavement rubbish bins in Lewisham at a time of rising litter.

Could the council state if the number has declined and what their policy is on pavement rubbish bins?

Reply

The type of litter bin on Lewisham pavements, around 700 of them in total, is no longer considered suitable due to it being open topped, which allows litter to blow out and animals to scavenge from them. It is being phased out beginning next year once a new design and funding has been agreed. The new design, which will have Lewisham branding, will be closed topped and will be rolled out as part of a phased programme across the borough.

The current policy on pavement litter bins ensures they are normally placed in town centres, next to bus stops, in local shopping areas and other locations identified as heavily littered areas. Until the new bin design is rolled out, we will look to replace any existing bins that are damaged, within the budgets that are available, so the overall number of bins across the borough remains relatively constant.

As a Council we are committed to continuing to tackle littering and fly-tipping in the borough through our award-winning Cleaner Lewisham campaign, discouraging people from littering and dumping rubbish illegally, as well as handing out more fines for littering and fly-tipping.

We also encourage all residents to use the Love Clean Streets app to report any areas of litter and welcome any feedback. Once a report is received the Council's Street Cleansing team will respond and ensure all litter is cleared. Love Clean Streets can also be used to report missing or damaged litter bins along with any specific information from residents as to where they perceive a build-up of litter is taking place if a bin has been removed and we will assess the need to replace it. Further information about Love Clean Streets is available through the following link on the Council website: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/street-cleaning/report-a-problem-with-a-street>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.64
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Gabrielle Nwaordu

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

How many children are currently on the waiting list for autism assessments (initial assessment and diagnostic appointment)?

Reply

As of September 2023 there are 1383 young people awaiting an initial assessment for Community Paediatrics, which will include the initial assessment for autism. 383 young people are awaiting an appointment at the communication clinic for a diagnostic appointment. In response to this Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust are reviewing how they carry out initial assessments to increase the number of clinics available to undertake them. Young people with the longest waiting will have a clinical review to identify those with the highest needs and fast-track their assessment.

In order to free up paediatrician capacity a review has been undertaken of the referral pathway across Community Paediatrics which aims to streamline referrals to the clinics within Community Services earlier. This will reduce the pressure on paediatricians to review cases and free up capacity to undertake assessments.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.65
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Gabrielle Nwaordu

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What are the current waiting times for initial speech and language assessments in Lewisham?

Reply

The current waiting times for SLT assessments are between 1 and 52 weeks; with the average waiting time being 15 weeks for an appointment.

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust, who provide Speech and Language therapy for Lewisham children and young people are working on improving the allocation of staff within the SLT team to help improve the number of young people they can see and reduce these waiting times.

The service is also reviewing the current pathway to implement early screening and triage of cases to the correct clinics at an earlier stage of the referral process to help reduce delays. This will include quick response screening for children and young people who have been waiting the longest for an assessment and those who have been identified as high priority cases through triage.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.66
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Tal Jakubowiczova,

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What is the projected Dedicated Schools Grant budget deficit in Lewisham without “Delivering Better Value” help over the next 5 years?

Reply

The Dedicated Schools Grant is a ring-fenced specific grant that supports local authorities' Schools budget. Funding is allocated through four funding blocks: the Schools Block, the High Needs Block, the Early Years Block, and the Central Schools Services Block.

In common with most local authorities, Lewisham faces challenges in delivering the best possible support for children with special educational needs and disabilities, in the face of rising need. The full deficit in our DSG accordingly relates to the High Needs Block. As at 2022/23 we had carried forward a £13m deficit, with a potential addition of £3-4m this year.

That is in the context of an estimate last year by the County Councils Network and the Society of County Treasurers that overall local authority deficits in SEN totalled over £2.4bn. The DSG budget overspend is expected to increase by circa £3m. Lewisham has of course been working on mitigation of this financial pressure for several years. The main stabilisation is likely to result from this mitigation plan, although we hope that the DBV work will helpfully complement that.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.67
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Tal Jakubowiczova,

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

What is the projected Dedicated Schools Grant budget deficit in Lewisham with “Delivering Better Value” help over the next 5 years?

Reply

On current trends, we might expect an additional pressure of around £3m to £4m a year each year for the next few years. We are working to bring this to zero as part of the ongoing Lewisham mitigation plan . The funding we aim to secure via the DBV bid will aim to support sustainable change across the system.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.68
22 November 2023

Question asked by: Tomas Sloan

Relevant Directorate: Chief Executive

Member to reply: The Mayor, Damien Egan

Question

I read the mayors statement on the Middle East conflict that he wrote on 10th October.

He did not mention at the time anything regarding the Palestinian lives that had been lost. Why is that?

Does he want a ceasefire and an end to the deaths of more Palestinians?

Reply

The Mayor made a statement regarding the terrorist attack and pogrom conducted by Hamas in Israel on the 7th October, the statement specifically talks about the impact the conflict has had on families in the region – the region is made up of people of many faiths and none.

In Lewisham through our faith groups we have offered support to those in the local community who have been affected by the conflict in the Middle East. We have people in our borough who are very concerned about their family and friends across the region. It is our role to help bring our communities together and offer them support. We have also engaged with individuals who have expressed their concerns about theirs and their families safety here in Lewisham as a result of a spike in antisemitic incidents. The Community Safety Trust, Tell Mama and the police have reported increases in antisemitism and Islamophobia across London.

The Mayor supports the continued humanitarian pauses in Gaza and welcomes the increases in aid to help address the humanitarian situation.

All life is precious and the Mayor hopes that an end to the conflict and a peaceful resolution can be achieved as quickly as possible, including the return of all hostages and a Gaza free from the terrorism of Hamas.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.69
22 November 2023

Question asked by: David O'Malley

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Who is/are the authors of the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN report September 2023 and what positions do they hold within the Council and can you confirm that Joe Turner has agreed with this report and signed off all the tables and statistics as being accurate.

Reply

The report referred to is Appendix D of the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN Monitoring Report agreed by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet on 1st November 2023.

The latest monitoring information has used data collected on traffic levels and speeds, air quality, bus journey times and road traffic collisions and indicates that the LTN continues to meet its overall aims, in line with the Council's policies and objectives.

The data in Appendix D was collected, analysed and compiled by the Council's expert consultants commissioned to undertake the monitoring work on the Council's behalf. The officer named has no direct involvement in the report.

The latest monitoring report, approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet on 1st November 2023, can be found through the following link:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=8056>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO.70
22 November 2023

Question asked by: David O'Malley

Relevant Directorate: Place

Member to reply: Councillor Louise Krupski

Question

Horncastle Road and Woodyates Road (South of the South Circular) are just 20 meters from the Lee LTN. Why are they considered not to be boundary roads to the LTN?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green LTN monitoring report includes data from a number of boundary roads generally up to and including the A205 South Circular and A20 Lee High Road / Eltham Road. Horncastle Road and Woodyates Road are outside of this area and are therefore not considered boundary roads for the LTN monitoring report. Further details of the LTN monitoring strategy, including data collected from 2019 through to 2023 is contained in the series of monitoring reports approved by the Council's Mayor and Cabinet. A link to the reports is as follows:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=139&MIId=8056&Ver=4>