

PUBLIC QUESTION NO 1.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Woolford

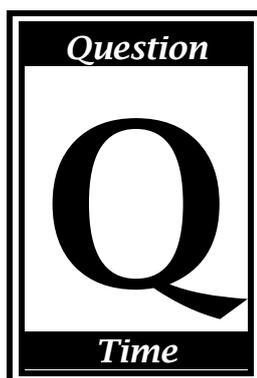
Member to reply: Councillor Smith

Question

Will the Council support Lewisham People Before Profit campaign to install clear road signage signs around the 6 primary schools in Evelyn Ward which is the only area in London in which lorries and trucks entering the residential area are NOT aware of parents & children crossing the roads to school, as Lewisham Council has failed to install a single School safety sign?

Reply

The Council is fully committed to improving road safety across the whole borough. Officers will review the primary schools in the Evelyn Ward, in liaison with the schools and with reference to any issues identified in their school travel plans, and will advise on new signs or markings which may be appropriate to improve safety in the vicinity of the schools.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 2.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Richardson

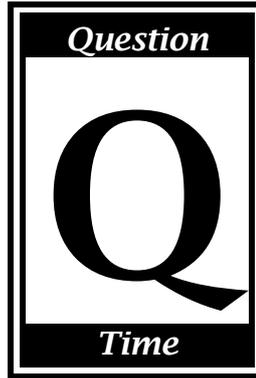
Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

We were led to understand in documentation that the Manor House, Lee, would no longer be the responsibility of the Library and Information Service. In view of the badly littered library garden, children locked in the lift, cars locked in the library garden, due to poor signage and information, and any other situation which may arise, would you please say who is responsible for the building, and which department should be contacted at the Council, if necessary?

Reply

The Manor House in Lee was and continues to be the responsibility of the Council and we appreciate residents bringing issues to our attention. Please write to libraries@lewisham.gov.uk or by ringing 020 8314 8024.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 3.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

Do you agree the implementation of the reduced library opening hours at the Manor House library building has proved to be most disruptive to library users, despite the best efforts of CIS Security staff to minimise the consequences of practically no forward planning prior to the establishment of the Interim Management Scheme? Do you recall the Users & Friends of Manor House Library advised that it was in the Council's own interest to get the transition right?

Can the Council explain why the Library and Information Service allowed the transition from normal management to the IMS without implementing a simple Pilot Session of say, even two weeks, with members of the Community Engagement Team being tasked on site for the full 24 hours the library is open per week?

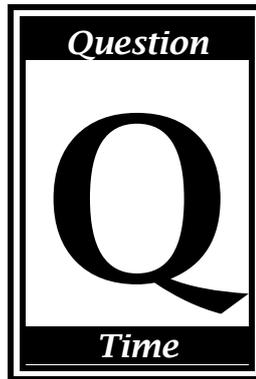
Reply

The interim arrangement for the library provision at Manor House is substantially reduced and does not of course offer what residents will want to see in the future. As you are aware, it was unfortunately not possible to identify a suitable partners for the future management of the building as the reorganisation of the library staff came to an end. The Council completely agrees with the Users and Friends of Manor

House that there needs to be a smooth transition period to hand over to the new partner. This transition however will not take effect until early next year.

We did agree thought that in the meantime we would maintain a minimum skeleton service. It was not possible with the resources that we have available to pilot this in any way but we will do your best to respond to the particular concerns that are raised with us during this period. This still feels a better option than to have closed the building to the public.

We very much look forward to working with the users group and local community once the new partner has been identified.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 4.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Corin Ashwell

Member to reply: Councillor Deputy Mayor

Question

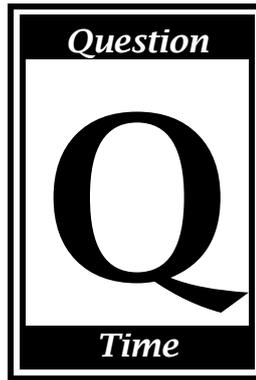
London as a whole and Lewisham in particular is highly vulnerable to the risk of flooding from sea level rises as well as disruption from extreme weather events, as a result of global warming. In light of this, will Lewisham join with other London councils in condemning the recent announcement by the government that they are to press ahead with the expansion of airport capacity in the south-east by building a new runway at Heathrow, given that aviation is the most rapidly expanding sector responsible for greenhouse gas emissions, even now accounting for up to 15% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions?

Reply

The Council does have concerns regarding the effect an expansion of Heathrow will have on air quality and the environment. The Council does not have an official stance regarding the proposed expansions, however the Mayor has previously

supported groups who have presented opposition including 2M, led by Wandsworth Council.

The Council would need to fully understand and assess the ramifications of any expansion of Heathrow, particularly in respect of the effects on the environment and air quality in the borough of Lewisham and London as a whole. The Council welcomes improvements and investment into London's transport infrastructure, but is concerned that any decisions are taken only after a full and detailed evaluation of the positive and negative effects that any changes will bring, and are not taken for purely economic reasons.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 5.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Jacquie Utley

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

Lewisham Council is proposing to redevelop the Achilles Street area and in doing so it intends to demolish all the homes, businesses and community organisations in the area. At the consultations held to date, no options other than demolition have been put forward, why hasn't the Council provided residents with a genuine range of options to improve the area including refurbishment and infill?

Reply

It is important to be clear that no decision to redevelop the area around Achilles Street has been made.

What is happening at present is that Council officers and partners are exploring ways for development in the area to enable new Council houses to be built, whilst enabling existing residents to remain. The objective is to invest in the area with the existing community at the heart of any plan.

This process started in 2014, with consultation on proposals for limited “infill” development, of 22 homes on the site of the current garage block next to Azalea House.

However during this feasibility work it became apparent that there was wider potential to build significantly more new homes in the area, as a large amount of land in the area is given over to surface level car parking, and that therefore a limited development may not be the optimum solution.

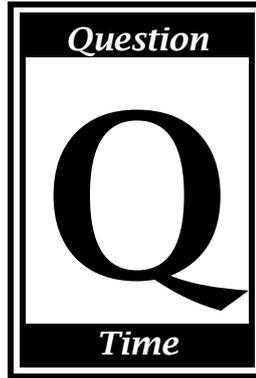
Since then, officers have been considering high level proposals for a more comprehensive redevelopment of the area. The Council first got in contact with residents in the area around Achilles in January 2016 and consultation on the proposals is still on-going; three consultation events have been held so far where the proposals have been discussed. The proposals have been shaped by resident feedback and will continue to develop before any decision to proceed with redevelopment is taken.

In the course of consultation work carried out in the blocks surrounding Achilles Street, Council officers were made aware of persistent issues with damp and vermin by residents. Many of these issues relate to the original design and age of the blocks and could never be completely resolved through refurbishment. If the current blocks are demolished and replaced with new homes, these will be built to much higher modern standards, be far more energy efficient and will be better designed to avoid these problems.

The proposals currently being developed for the Achilles Street area will deliver two important strategic aims; to provide much needed new homes and to improve the homes of the existing residents. To ensure this is the case the Council commits that no redevelopment on Achilles Street will take place unless the following conditions can be met:

1. All current Council tenants who wish to stay in the new development will be able to do so with the same rent levels and tenancy conditions that they have today;
2. Any resident leaseholder who wishes to will be able to remain in home ownership on the new development;
3. The number of Council homes will be maintained in any new development, and we will increase the number as far as is possible within financial constraints;
4. In addition to new Council homes, more affordable homes of other types, such as shared ownership, will also be provided when any additional homes are built.

No decision to go ahead with the redevelopment of Achilles Street has been taken, and Council officers are working to present the proposals to Lewisham’s Mayor and Cabinet to decide whether or not to take them forward in spring 2017. The proposals aim to provide high quality homes for the current residents of the Achilles Street area and to build much-needed new homes for the borough.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 6.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Bryce

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

Question

In a letter to residents of Achilles Street area dated 19 October 2016, Lewisham Council said "I want to make it clear that no demolition and redevelopment will proceed unless the following conditions can be met" All current council tenants who wish to stay in the new development will be able to do so at the same rent levels and tenancy conditions as they have today. Any resident leaseholder who wishes to remain in home ownership on the new development will be able to do so. Are these guarantees made by Lewisham Council legally binding?

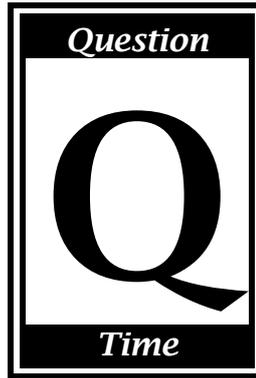
Reply

No decision on whether or not to redevelop the area around Achilles Street has yet been made.

Council officers are currently working on proposals that will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in Spring 2017. The Council wants to invest in the area with the existing community at the heart of any plan, and to ensure this happens we have committed that the proposals for redevelopment will not go ahead unless the following four conditions are met:

1. All current Council tenants who wish to stay in the new development will be able to do so with the same rent levels and tenancy conditions that they have today;
2. Any resident leaseholder who wishes to will be able to remain in home ownership on the new development;
3. The number of Council homes will be maintained in any new development, and we will increase the number as far as is possible within financial constraints;
4. In addition to new Council homes, more affordable homes of other types, such as shared ownership, will also be provided when any additional homes are built.

These conditions will form part of the proposals that will be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in Spring 2017. Whilst they are not legally binding, if Mayor and Cabinet decides to proceed with the proposals it will publically commit that no redevelopment on Achilles Street will take place unless these conditions are met. The proposals aim to provide high quality homes for the current residents of the Achilles Street area and to build much-needed new homes for the borough.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 7.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Ken Maxton

Member to reply: Councillor Smith

Question

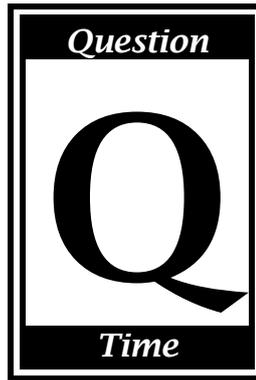
As the New Year seems likely to present the re-starting and re-shaping of regeneration plans for Catford will the Council ensure that the difficulties of the Pertersham / Tesco negotiations are explained as far as is lawfully permissible to in any public consultation document or spoken of knowingly in any address by a planning officer or other council officer and will the Council say whether or not it will , if necessary, close down car parking and secondary shops and allow this supermarket to pursue its own path to prosperity should it continue to obstruct wider regeneration plans ?

Reply

Mayor and Cabinet recently agreed that officers develop a masterplan encompassing key sites in the Town Centre. The creation of the masterplan will involve consultation and engagement with key stakeholders including land or property owners within the masterplan area and the wider community. Active engagement and communication are essential to developing a deliverable masterplan and to that end, officers are in the process of developing a stakeholder communication and engagement strategy

which will form the basis of how stakeholders such as Tesco/Petersham Land, are engaged in the regeneration of the Town Centre.

It will be noted, that neither Tesco nor Petersham Land are currently obstructing the Council's regeneration plans. The Council will seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable arrangement with Petersham Land and Tesco.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 8.

Priority 1

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Enamul Khan

Member to reply: Councillor Egan

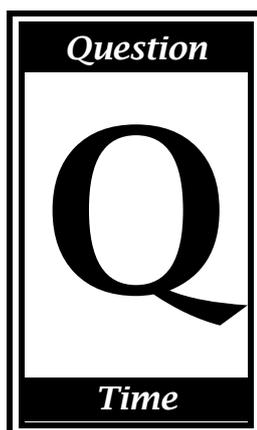
Question

Will the Council guarantee a place for the Islamic centre within the Achilles Street new development with the same levels of rights and privileges it currently has as a freeholder? Will the Council guarantee that there will be no disruptions to the services that the Islamic centre provides on a daily basis to the community and that a suitable temporary place will be provided in the same area for its users during the phasing stages of the redevelopment?

Reply

No decision on whether or not to redevelop the area around Achilles Street has been made. At present Council officers and partners are exploring ways for development in the area to enable new Council houses to be built, whilst enabling existing residents to remain.

The Council is very committed to working with the Islamic Centre and maintaining their key place in the local community. At present it is too early to guarantee what the scheme will provide, but over the next few months as the proposals are developed further, the Council will engage in more detailed dialogue with the Islamic Centre to achieve the best outcomes for the Centre and the area.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 9.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Woolford

Member to reply: Cllr Onikosi

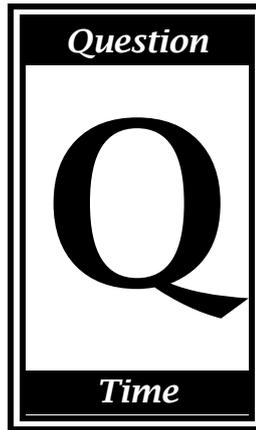
Question

With the work started on clearing the site at Convoy Wharf Deptford, can the Council confirm how often and who is responsible for the safety aspects of the site and the removal of Toxic waste?

Reply

The health and safety regulatory and enforcement responsibilities for all construction sites lies with the Health and Safety Executive. Also all waste transfer and carriers from the site are controlled and regulated by the Environment Agency.

The Council does have controls through Planning in relation to the impact of both demolition and construction on neighbouring sites. The Environmental Protection Team has visited the site and will continue to do so as the construction process continues.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 10 .

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mrs Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

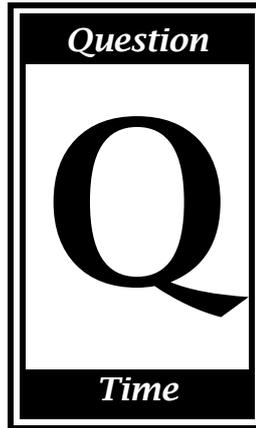
Lewisham Council invested a considerable amount of money in the Manor House, Lee, including a loan which is covered by an annual payment of around £122,000 pa until 2049. The mainstay of the building, the library service, is now only available for 24 hours per week, mostly supervised by security staff and with a lower level of service. How will the Council ensure that any lost users, due to the lower level of service and expectation of what a library offers, will be attracted back once its plans are fulfilled? How will this impact on the CIPFA figures and the overall success, or not, of Lewisham's library service?

Reply

The examples of Forest Hill and Torridon Road lead the Council to believe that with the much appreciated support of local residents and the work of the Library and Information Service, the library offer at Manor House should resume following the identification of a new motivated partner for the building.

It is not unusual for the performance of a service to reduce temporarily following the implementation of large scale change.

The Council would expect performance to improve in the next financial year.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 11.

Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

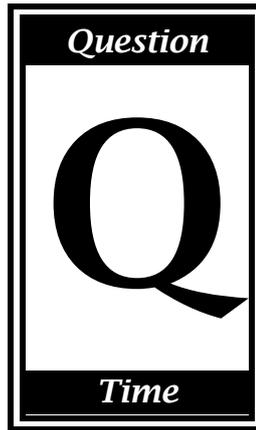
Are you aware that there have been various incidents of public concern (children trapped in the lift, cars locked in the library drive, users unaware of the changes etc) due to the poor notification of the interim management process. Other issues concern library services, e.g. reservations, using equipment, printing which is not properly explained and could result in affecting full use of the library service.

What plans does the library service have to mitigate against the continuation of such problems until a proper partner is in place?

There is also the matter of the unkempt appearance of the public realm (library entrance garden) and the care and control of the public space within the building. Will this be monitored and will complaints be logged?

Reply

The Library and Information Service values the comments of local residents and will work to resolve the issues that have been brought to our attention.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 12.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Woolford

Member to reply: Deputy Mayor

Question

How much money has the Council secured from developers in SE8 for the benefit of local Deptford residents ?

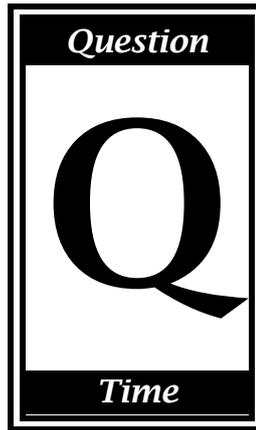
Reply

Since 2010, the Council has received £4.25m from development in SE8 via the use of Section 106 agreements. Over the same period, the Council entered into a further £16m worth of agreements (half of which is to go to TfL) which will begin to be collected if and when the sites commence. This is in addition to agreements where the development will directly supply infrastructure, such as the proposed new primary school at Convoys wharf.

The current balance of S106 amounts held by the Council from sites in SE8 is around £2.5m – these residual amounts must be utilised for the purpose for which it was collected for in the legal agreements which would have been subject to legal tests that; namely that the sums must be necessary to make a development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and

reasonably related in scale and kind.. The Council continues to work with the ward assembly to identify projects that can be funded through 'community' s106 amounts that are not as prescriptive in their permissible expenditure.

The Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015. So far, £1.375m has been received from development in the SE8 area and 15% of these receipts would form the 'neighbourhood portion' (approx. £200k) which would be spent locally following engagement with the community. In early 2017, the Council will confirm the process for allocating the neighbourhood proportion of CIL.



PUBLIC QUESTION NO 13.

Priority 3

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

23 NOVEMBER 2016

Question asked by: Mr Richardson

Member to reply: Councillor Best

Question

Now that the necessary staff reductions have been made and the ensuing restructuring of staff which followed in order to effect the means of cutting the Library and Information Service budget by £1m (2016-17); what is the total number of staff now remaining in this department?

Since 17th October 2016 has the Council found it necessary to engage agency staff to support its Library and Information Service? If so, how many and for how many hours and what did it cost?

Is it anticipated or likely that further savings may be required from this department's budget for the year 2017-18?

Reply

The Library and Information Service recruitment is not complete. Figures related to the total number of staff will be available when the process is finished. Last month, the Service had employed 14 agency staff for a total of 11FTEs for a total cost of ca. £34,000. The number and costs of agency staff is changing daily and subject to

decrease as the Service fills the available vacancies. There are no planned savings for the budget in 2017-18.