

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Krupski
of Councillor McGeevor

Question

Following the recent report on our baseline carbon emissions and the huge task we face to become carbon neutral by 2030, I would like to understand the role of heat networks in the borough and our plans to implement these as soon as possible.

Reply

Domestic gas accounts for a third of the borough's measurable CO² emissions and decarbonising heat through heat networks is integral to the Council's response to the climate emergency and the ambition for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Officers have commissioned consultants to deliver an energy masterplan that will identify priority areas across the borough where clusters of demand for heat make networks viable. The results of this work are expected to be available shortly. The Council has strengthened development management policies in the new draft Lewisham Local Plan and, combined with the evidence base from the energy masterplanning, this is expected to drive delivery of heat networks.

The South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP) energy from waste plant is a major strategic opportunity in relation to heat networks, processing 420,000 tonnes of waste annually with the potential to heat up to 50,000 homes.

In 2018 the Council and Veolia signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work in partnership to develop opportunities for heat networks in Lewisham, and Veolia were recently awarded £5.5m central government funding to build a heat network to connect waste heat from SELCHP to 3,500 homes in the north of the borough. Officers are working with Veolia to support delivery of the project and with Lewisham Homes to identify and deliver potential opportunities for residents to benefit.

Further support is needed by Government to accelerate decarbonisation of heat and support implementation of heat networks. The Climate Emergency Action Plan due to be reviewed by Mayor and Cabinet before the end of the financial year is an opportunity to lobby government to take action on heat networks, including to

- Set out a road map for how the Government is planning to decarbonise heat;
- Provide clarity on achieving decarbonisation while supporting fuel poor households particularly in this transition period;
- Make further commitments to supporting heat networks particularly using energy from waste;
- To require annual reporting of network performance in a publically accessible format to the local planning authority;

The performance of heat networks and communal heating systems have improved in recent years with the Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations and industry-based Heat Trust standard helping to raise standards. In line with the recommendations of the Council's Housing Select Committee 2014/15 scrutiny review into communal heating, the Climate Emergency Action Plan is also an opportunity to call for Government to provide the same level of statutory protection for customers of communal heating systems as exists in the rest of the energy supply industry to ensure the most vulnerable are not bearing the brunt of poorly performing systems.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Hall
of Councillor Slater

Question

The Bellingham Green under 5s play area building was transferred to Eco Community some time ago and it is still not in use. Please can the cabinet member clarify the current ownership and responsibilities for this site?

Reply

The play area building was handed back to the Council's property team late last year. The building has been secured, made safe and is being cleared. Officers are working together to secure a positive future use for the building.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Curran
of The Mayor

Question

Given the marvellous news that Lewisham has been selected as next year's Borough of Culture will the Cabinet member outline what steps the Mayor and Cabinet will take to safeguard Lewisham's remaining pubs?

Reply

I am proud that Lewisham will be London Borough of Culture 2021. This is an incredible opportunity to harness Lewisham's passion and creativity and showcase what we have to offer to London and beyond. As valued community spaces and cultural venues, Lewisham's pubs have an important role to play in our Borough of Culture programme.

The Council adopted a planning policy in 2014 to protect pubs, in response to local issues surrounding their loss through changes such as conversions and redevelopment. It is now in the process of updating its Local Plan to ensure it is aligned with new national and regional policies, and officers are amending the current policies to further strengthen proposed protections for pubs. I would like to thank the Sustainable Development Select Committee for their valued input in this important area of the Local Plan.

The draft Local Plan will go out to public consultation later this year and residents will be able to have their say on Lewisham's planning policies, including how we can best protect our pubs.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Ingleby
of Councillor McGeevor

Question

What has been the progress of rolling out cycle storage in the last year across the Borough? What steps is the Council taking, post- Santander bikes, to offering bicycle hire points at stations and other locations in the Borough?

Reply

LB Lewisham now has 88 bike hangars in place across the borough with a further 65 planned for installation from February through to April 2020 under the funding allocated from the Transport for Lewisham's cycle parking fund. New cycle parking will be installed at all stations to meet the demand as identified in TfL's cycle parking demand analysis for Lewisham.

Transport for London have no plans to extend the Santander bike scheme to Lewisham but borough officers will continue to make the case to TfL that there is sufficient need for a cycle hire scheme in Lewisham. However, borough officers are looking to launch a dockless e-bike trial in the summer and it is hoped that bikes will be available for hire at the busiest stations in Lewisham.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Clarke
of Councillor McGeevor

Question

Will the Cabinet member expedite the designation of Grove Park Nature Reserve as a Local Nature Reserve, ensuring it and the land surrounding it enjoy a vitally greater degree of protection?

Reply

I am very supportive of the community's aspirations for the Grove Park Nature Reserve to be designated as a 'Local Nature Reserve'.

We are currently recruiting to the Ecological Regeneration Manager (ERM) post in the Council. This officer will lead on this initiative when they arrive but we will start the process of designation using existing resources.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Anwar
of Councillor Barnham

Question

The government has claimed it is giving schools a record funding increase, and that all schools will get more. What is the impact on Lewisham schools?"

Reply

The Conservative Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, is on record as claiming that the government is providing "the biggest funding boost for schools in a decade which will give every school more money for every child".

Unfortunately, the reality is very different, and the position for Lewisham schools is very challenging. Our schools will receive an uplift of 1.84% next year in the pupil-led element of funding. Far from giving schools an increase, this is not even enough to cover the cost of pay increases, let alone other costs. Overall, we estimate that Lewisham schools could face a real terms reduction of around 3 per cent per pupil. Funding for the all-important early years and primary schools is particularly disappointing. Schools where there has been a reduction in pupil numbers are likely to find it even more challenging to meet the cost of teacher salaries.

Our schools and teachers are working hard to offer the best possible education to our children. Their job is not made easier by the impact on children and families, and our wider community, of the government's misguided austerity. And now their efforts are being undermined by the government's continued failure to fund our schools properly. There is no doubt that challenging budget pressures will affect staff and students, who urgently need action to reverse the cuts and end this funding crisis.

QUESTION No. 7
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Hall
of Councillor Bell

Question

How does the Council define “social housing”?

Reply

Our definition of social housing is housing which is available at rents between target rent and London Affordable rent. Social housing is provided by the Council, managed by Lewisham Homes and by registered providers.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Curran
of Councillor Bourne

Question

The awarding of the London Borough of Culture 2021 to Lewisham is a tremendous achievement for the Mayor, Cabinet and Council.

As the Broadway Theatre is one of the borough's most significant cultural buildings, what is the timetable now to remodel, renovate and restore the fabric of the building so it can open throughout the year and once again play a key part in the cultural life of Lewisham?

Reply

The majority of the works planned for the Broadway theatre are urgent health and safety requirements and have been programmed to start at the earliest possible opportunity, estimated to be summer/autumn 2020. The works are intrusive within the fabric of the building therefore it is not possible nor safe to keep the theatre open during these works. For example the full electric rewire will require all power to be shut off and temporary lighting and power to be provided whilst the works are underway. Before any works can commence a full asbestos survey must be undertaken and any remedial works completed – this will also require the theatre to be shut and access controlled. Where possible the less intrusive works such as decorations and access improvements will be programmed towards the end of the programme and consideration given to partially opening the theatre whilst these are underway if it is practically possible.

The estimated timetable of works is as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Mayor & Cabinet approval to procure a contractor | 11 March 2020 |
| Surveys, design, planning application | spring 2020 |
| Tender period | late spring 2020 |
| Mayor & Cabinet approval | summer 2020 |
| Works commence and theatre closes | summer / autumn 2020 |
| Works complete and theatre re-opens | summer / autumn 2021 |

The programme will be refined when we have a contractor appointed and have agreed a final scope and method of works. We all want to achieve this priority work to an important local asset as swiftly as we can.

QUESTION No. 9
Priority 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Ingleby
of the Mayor

Question

When will TfL be releasing its completed Outcome Definition Study for the A21 'Lewisham Spine', including its role in the Catford Masterplan Area, and what do we know so far?

Reply

The Catford Masterplan is an exciting opportunity for the area that would bring greener and safer streets, new social homes and jobs. The Outcome Definition Study for the A21 is a TfL-led scheme, which is currently at a very early design process, so any request for information relating to it must be made directly to TfL. TfL has not yet set a date for its completion and release. The Council is continuing to engage with TfL to establish a clearer timeline and way forward.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Hall
of Councillor Slater

Question

With the closure of Lewisham Disability Coalition in January 2019, what support is available to young people with disabilities and those of working age in Lewisham? What is the current Council budget available?

Reply

The Council has numerous budgets available to support a whole range of Disabled People, of all ages, in the Borough. These include those within Adult Social Care, Joint Commissioning, CYP Commissioning, Transport, Culture and Community Development amongst others. Indeed, the majority of Council departments work to support Disabled People in their service area and as such it is very difficult to give a fixed figure for the available budget to support Disabled People.

In addition to these varied budgets the Council has also recently established a Disabled People's Commission whose remit it is to examine every aspect of the lives of Disabled adults in the Borough and recommend how existing services, and budgets, can be refocused to ensure that any and all barriers are removed or diminished. The Commission will also make recommendations about areas in which the Council might lobby external bodies to improve facilities and services for Disabled People in the borough.

A small part of the work of the Commission will be making recommendations on how a £51,000 grant that has been set aside for representing Disabled People should be focused but, as mentioned above, this represents a tiny proportion of the overall Council expenditure in this area.

Adult Social Care spends approximately £7.5m supporting people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments and approximately £25m on adults with Learning Disabilities.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Curran
of Councillor McGeevor

Question

Will the Cabinet member take all steps possible to ensure that the vital role of the railway lands between Grove Park Station and the south circular in flood alleviation is protected?

Reply

Lewisham Council published its Strategic Flood Risk Management Strategy in 2015, and updated its Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment in 2018. The Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment is a requirement under the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and provides a high level summary of flood risk from surface water, groundwater, sewers and ordinary watercourses and any interaction these have with main rivers. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as required under the National Planning Policy Framework was completed in 2019 to support the development of Lewisham's new draft Local Plan.

Officers are currently reviewing the Flood Risk Strategy in the light of updates to these strategic documents and other policy and local developments since 2015, and are scheduled to provide an update on flood risk work to the Sustainable Development Select Committee on the 10 March.

In June 2019 following high levels of rainfall across the region and a burst of very heavy localised rainfall, flooding was recorded in Chinbrook Meadows affecting a small number of nearby properties. Chinbrook Meadows includes a flood storage area designed to hold flood water from the Quaggy River to minimise the impact of flooding events. Officers are working with the Environment Agency to assess the current condition of the storage area in Chinbrook Meadows with a view to identifying any modifications that could increase resilience.

Information about potential flooding risks is helpful in shaping the focus of the Council's role as a Lead Local Flood Authority and the work with other statutory organisations with responsibilities on flooding. Officers would welcome any more specific information about flood alleviation issues concerning the railway lands between Grove Park Station and the south circular.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

Question by Councillor Hall
of Councillor McGeevor

Question

Elm Lane is an un-adopted Road however, this could be a dedicated cycle path to the River Pool Linear Park and the waterlink way. Will the Cabinet Member explore funding options including borough wide NCIL to achieve this?

Reply

The Council has aspirations to improve walking and cycling in this area. However, Elm Lane is in poor condition and is not classed as a maintained highway. In order to deliver a cycle route in this location, the road would have to first be adopted. The cost of this work is estimated to be in the region of £1m and would include works such as drainage. The Council does not have funding in the existing highways capital budget to undertake this.

The strategy and allocation for NCIL was agreed by Mayor and Cabinet in July 2019. This set criteria for the allocation of Borough NCIL. Proposed projects must make a significant contribution to two or more wards and/or have significant borough wide value and must also make a significant contribution to issues of deprivation. It does not appear that this proposal meets that criteria. Leaving that aside, the level of available funding in the Borough NCIL pot would not cover the estimated cost of this work.

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

COUNCIL MEETING

26 FEBRUARY 2020

**Question by Councillor Openshaw
of the Mayor**

Question

Now that the Council has formally adopted a vision for the Surrey Canal Triangle area, please provide an update on discussions with Millwall FC and Renewal about bringing forward a development that provides much-needed social housing and that has the support of the community.

Reply

I am delighted the Council has formally adopted a Supplementary Planning Document for the Surrey Canal Triangle area, which paves the way for Millwall Football Club and the developer Renewal to bring forward planning applications. Both parties and the Council agree that any development in the area must have community support and deliver new social homes.

Renewal is currently out to pre-application public consultation on their proposals and I encourage the local community to have their say on them. Renewal proposes delivering at least 35 per cent affordable housing in their application, which is more than double the twelve per cent secured under the previous planning permission.

Millwall Football Club are continuing to work closely with officers and partners, including the GLA and TfL, so that they can progress to the formal pre-application discussions. The Club appear to be in a position to submit a planning application either towards the end of this year or early in 2021. They share our vision for the development to deliver new social homes and will be in a position to propose a number as they work to submit a planning application, which could be either late this year or in early 2021.