



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 21
July 2021

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 1

Priority 1

Question asked by: Margot Wilson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

It appears that food waste and the garden waste are still collected by the same vehicle. Has the Council made progress on processing food waste and garden waste separately? There is no information on the Council website as to what happens to the food waste and the garden waste.

Reply

The council currently collects food and garden waste in the same vehicle as both are sent to the same disposal facility for In vessel composting, where the organic waste is turned into compost and used mainly in the agricultural industry.

We are about to procure a new contract for the separate collection of food and garden waste. Food waste will be sent for anaerobic digestion and garden waste will be sent for composting. This is good news for Lewisham.

A request has been raised for the web page to be updated providing information on the disposal of organic waste.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 2

Priority 1

Question asked by: Tim Collingridge

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Can the Council confirm that funding for replacement of the Waterlink Way wooden bridge at Pool River Linear Park will be/has been requested in the 2021-22 LIP settlement, what the estimated cost will be (from the previous tendering exercise) and when the new bridge is scheduled to be installed?

Reply

Funding for the replacement of the Waterlink Way wooden bridge at Pool River Linear Park has been requested as part of the Council's submission to TfL for 2021/22 Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding. The timing of replacing this bridge will be dependent on funding being confirmed and what that funding allocation is. As a result of the pandemic, there have been delays to the process of replacing the bridge.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 3

Priority 1

Question asked by: Charles Reid

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Considering a number of other Councils have removed their LTN schemes and the number of seats lost to the Conservatives in Councils up and down the country, is the Mayor and Councillors prepared to push forward with the Lee LTN even if it costs them their positions at the election next year?

Reply

We have previously committed to reviewing the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) and the outcome of this review, which includes the responses to the public consultation which is currently being undertaken, will inform the future of the scheme. A decision will be taken by Mayor and Cabinet and is expected to be taken in due course.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 4

Priority 1

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Jonathan Slater

Question

Can you create a new standard or by-law making all shops wheelchair accessible? I think presently it's done by size of the shop's premises.

Reply

The Council recognises the importance of ensuring that commercial premises are accessible to all. Wheelchair accessibility within buildings is achieved via Building Regulations which are nationally set. It is therefore not possible for the Council to introduce local rules or bylaws that go beyond the national regulations.

The Council continues to work with and support local businesses and part of that is ensuring that they are supported to understand their obligations to be accessible. Officers will continue to support as part of the works they are undertaking with businesses.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 5

Priority 1

Question asked by: Carol Spurling

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

What are the Council's future plans for Pentland House since, because of the pandemic and restrictions, it cannot be used as a student hostel?

Reply

We do not have any plans for Pentland House, as it is not a Council owned asset.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 6

Priority 1

Question asked by: Jane Alaszewska

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Is there an EQiA for the Lee Green LTN?

If not, will one be done retrospectively?

If not, why not?

Reply

The equalities implications of the programmes implemented as part of Lewisham's Covid-19 emergency transport response, which included creating quieter and safer streets, were considered as part of that decision report. A full equalities impact assessment of the LTN will be included as part of the decision report on the future of the scheme.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 7

Priority 1

Question asked by: Cheryl McLeod

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

I have seen the media release by Damien Egan on the 22nd June 2021 concerning Catford, however I cannot see a link to the detailed document or plans on the Council website, where are they? In addition, can the Cabinet Member please detail where the plans have been agreed and by whom? Is there a formal decision? Where can local residents view the Council papers?

Reply

The link to the Catford Town Centre Framework document can be found at the bottom of the attached page on the Lewisham website.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/catford-regeneration/catford-town-centre-framework>

Since 2017, Team Catford has held 134 engagement events and held thousands of conversations with members of the local community. Over 3,000 comments from local residents have helped shape the Framework Plan. An extensive period of public consultation on the latest draft of the Framework Plan took place between December 2020 and February 2021.

The Catford Town Centre Framework was considered by the Council's Sustainable Development Select Committee on 30 June 2021, before being approved by Mayor and Cabinet at its meeting on 14 July 2021.

We are very proud to have developed a community-led vision for Catford that will support our ambition for Catford to become the greenest town centre in London, with new social homes, improved routes for walking and cycling, and more jobs and opportunities for local businesses.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 8

Priority 1

Question asked by: Adam Longbottom

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Please can the Council confirm the total cost spent on the recent concrete repair and refurbishment works to Milford Towers (circa 2018/2019), including all those associated with these works (professional fees, other contractual works etc). Online reports published by the contractor who carried out these works appear to be in the region of £1.6 million for their element alone. Further, can the council justify the proposal to now fully demolish Milford Towers after this expenditure and why has this been allowed to occur?

Reply

The total costs of works to Milford Towers including construction costs and fees was £1,690,059.

Milford Towers are managed by the Council's housing company, Lewisham Homes. As an arms-length management organisation (ALMO), Lewisham Homes are responsible for the management, maintenance and repair of housing stock within their portfolio.

Concrete repair works of this kind are not uncommon in a building of this age and were undertaken for reasons of health and safety. These were works identified following evidence of spalling concrete that could present a risk to the public and property. Further surveys revealed that areas of concrete were failing across the whole estate including areas over the Catford Shopping Centre. As a result, the works were considered to be essential and could not have been left until such time that the building can be fully vacated and demolished in order to provide new homes.

Previous consultation carried out with residents of Milford Towers found clear support for plans to demolish Milford Towers and provide new housing on this site. It is anticipated that this will provide a net increase of around 800 homes on site, providing more family-sized accommodation and new social homes for residents on the Council's housing waiting list.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 9

Priority 1

Question asked by: Paul Benson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

I live in Arngask Road, adjacent to Brownhill Road. Congestion on the South circular has increased as a result of this scheme. Has it been monitored in my road where I believe that as a result of the councils policy I experience greater pollution! If this is the case the council is liable legally and financially for their actions.

Reply

The vehicle flow and congestion on Brownhill Road has been in flux over the past 18 months due to restrictions being eased and tightened in response to the pandemic. TfL who have been monitoring congestion on the South Circular, have advised that traffic levels are returning to pre-pandemic levels but have not yet exceeded it.

Unfortunately, due to the timescales and expectations set by central government to introduce these schemes we were unable to carry out the full range of traffic studies and preparatory work that would usually be completed for such schemes, which includes data for Arngask Road. We do however have Air Quality data that was collected near 290 Brownhill Road, which details that in January 2020 (pre pandemic) NO₂ levels were 47.3µg/m³ and post introduction of the LTN (Jun 2020 to Mar 2021) has averaged 38.44µg/m³ and matching pre pandemic levels in January and March 2021.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 10

Priority 1

Question asked by: Julia Murphy

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

We have reaped some of what I consider to be the very few benefits of LTN because we live in Dallinger Rd. There are disadvantages, but over time we are becoming more accepting of the situation.

Just this week however we witnessed potentially very dangerous behaviour when in the space of two days , one large van and two large lorries, each delivering to us, halfway up the road, drove to the end of the road and then manoeuvred round to drive back down. Any child walking along (or adult for that matter) could easily have been injured as the size of the vehicles meant that they had to climb the curb.

Can it be made very clear that this mustn't happen? How, I don't know. The people living at the Manor Lane end of Dallinger must have to put up with this all the time. Is there any way round this?

Reply

It is an offence for vehicles to drive on the footway. Where locations of continual incidents of pavement driving offences are identified, officers will consider options to address this and will liaise with the Police as necessary.

A review of the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN is being carried out and these concerns will be taken into account when considering the next steps for the scheme. I would encourage you to respond to the public consultation that is currently being undertaken which can be accessed via the Council's website at www.lewisham.gov.uk/ltnconsultation.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 11

Priority 1

Question asked by: Theresia Satawijaya

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

I am a resident of Chalcroft Road, and I have a young child that attends Blackheath Prep. The changes made to road closures has already been a major disruption to our lives and has made school picks up more difficult.

I am asking that you reconsider any further changes to the LTN from the impact of a resident's perspective. How do you expect me to be able to make reasonable journeys to and from school? Furthermore, the most direct route to Lewisham Hospital has now been doubled in distance and time with the closure of Ennersdale Road. What would happen in the case of an emergency?

Reply

We have previously committed to reviewing the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) and are currently undertaking a public consultation on the scheme. I encourage you to share your views and experiences of this consultation and you can respond online at www.lewisham.gov.uk/ltnconsultation. The outcome of the review, including the responses received to the public consultation, will inform the future of the scheme. A decision will be taken by Mayor and Cabinet and is expected later this year.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 12

Priority 1

Question asked by: Rick Hebditch

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

The UK's Climate Change Committee have called for new gas boilers to be banned by 2033 in order for the UK to meet its 2050 target for net zero emissions. Lewisham's climate emergency has a target for Lewisham to have net zero emissions 20 years earlier than the UK in 2030. When will Lewisham ban installing or putting in replacement gas boilers in properties it owns or manages?

What formal mechanisms does the council have to review and evaluate projects or programmes after opening or operation and are lessons learnt identified and published?

Reply

Formal lessons learnt, review and evaluation of projects are done through project/programme governance as well as a set of cross-organisational thematic Boards where appropriate. Each Board is focused on achieving the outcomes of the theme and is chaired by a member of the Executive Management Team. In addition, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has set up a Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group which first met on 16 July 2021 and monitors the work of the Council through scrutiny. I will be keen to listen to what they bring forward.

Lewisham Council supports the work of the UK Climate Change Committee and particular the Committee's 2020 report on the role of local authorities as part of their work on the UK's Sixth Carbon budget, calling for more powers and resources for local authorities to deliver on climate change
<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/local-authorities-and-the-sixth-carbon-budget/>.

Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan is clear that delivery requires significant and sustained action by Government. The Government's Energy White Paper in 2020 signalled that further details on national plans to decarbonise heat would be set out in a Heat and Buildings Strategy that is yet to be published. In the meantime the Council is working closely with Lewisham Homes on plans to decarbonise heating across their stock and we have successfully accessed funding from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which will contribute towards decarbonising heating in a number of corporate buildings and schools.

While delivering on our climate commitments is a key priority the Council also has a duty to ensure schools can remain open, that buildings used by residents and staff are safe and that the Lewisham Homes' tenants can afford the cost of staying warm. The investment needed to switch from gas boilers to low carbon alternatives will be significant and requires taking a fabric first approach to improve the thermal performance of offices, schools and homes. Until the resources are available to deliver that investment it would be wrong to introduce a unilateral ban on repairing and replacing gas boilers. Nevertheless the Council recognises the need to decarbonise heating as being fundamental to meeting our ambitions on the climate emergency and we are working with London Councils, the Mayor of London and others to engage Government and financial institutions to bring about change. The council has recently introduced a new project and programme management framework, which involves the review of lessons learnt so they can be applied during the duration of a project as well as at the end.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 13

Priority 1

Question asked by: Phil Bridger

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

What is the rationale for free parking at council car parks, and the suspension of residents only parking, on Sundays? I have asked this question previously and not really received an answer. With particular reference to Clarendon Rise car park - this essentially turns the surrounding residential streets into a car park and seems to be contrary to low traffic neighbourhood principles as it draws traffic away from Lewisham multi-storey car (which you have to pay for on a Sunday) onto residential roads. The lack of parking enforcement means that people seem to be able to park where they like and get away with it (e.g parking in disabled bays, parking on street corners etc)

Reply

The Council intends to review its parking policy next year, which will take into account of the operational hours of car parks and CPZs. We will happy to contact you when the consultation is live so you will be able to feed in your views.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 14

Priority 1

Question asked by: Jane Martin

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

I'm writing to express my increasing concern over what has been happening over the past 6 months in the SE4 area, mainly along the main Brockley Road.

Speeding is becoming a major issue & has got far worse under lockdown. I find it very disappointing that after spending lots of money for improvement works to the main road in Crofton Park to help reduce speed the situation is now even worse than before!

My question is what are you as Mayor & the Council going to do about this dangerous speeding? It is only time before someone is going to get seriously hurt or killed.

A plan of action to slow down vehicles in the area is urgently needed - what is Lewisham's action plan?

Reply

I share your concerns in the reported increase in speeding in London when the coronavirus lockdown started. Road safety is a priority for the Council and we are currently monitoring speeds across the borough as part of our annual 20mph speed compliance monitoring programme. The results of these surveys will be used to inform where future interventions may be required.

Speed enforcement is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police, and as a result of resident concerns raised we have reported Brockley Road, Crofton Park for targeted enforcement activity.

We have also requested for a Community Roadwatch event to be carried out at this location. Community Roadwatch gives local residents the opportunity to work side by side with their local police teams, and use speed detection equipment to identify speeding vehicles in their communities. Warning letters will be issued where appropriate, and the information can help to inform the future activity of local police teams. To take part in Community Roadwatch, or to suggest a residential area where there are community concerns around speeding, contact CommunityRoadwatch@met.police.uk stating the borough you live in. Your enquiry will be forwarded to your local MPS Safer Transport Team, who will be in touch.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 15

Priority 1

Question asked by: Shola Aikoroje

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Do the Council vehicles go through the LTN routes or roads? If yes, why?

Has anyone bothered to check the level of pollution in the high streets and those areas vehicles were likely to divert to due to LTN and to compare it the results of what the pollution levels are now?

Has anyone measured the level of noise pollution on high streets and the areas the vehicles now use to avoid LTN roads before the LTN and now that LTN are in place in some areas?

Where is the letter from the central government to Lewisham Council to implement LTN without consultation? Why did Lewisham Council rush to implement it without consultation or warning signs on the roads at least for one month before the cameras were activated unlike some other Councils?

Why is that Lewisham Council has no regards for those who live and/or work in Lewisham? Is the narrowing or reduction of high street lane with unsightly bollards to create bicycle lanes not short sighted? How many bicycles actually use the lanes?

Do you know that LTN has led to more traffic in some roads, more CO, NO2 and noise pollution, more stress on drivers, lateness to schools and work, loss of businesses and ill health?

Reply

In May 2020 the Government set out its clear expectation that local authorities would reallocate road space to create space for walking and cycling and that schemes should be delivered within weeks. This was not a specific letter to Lewisham Council, but information that was issued to all highway authorities.

Monitoring has been undertaken to help us understand the impact of the Lewisham & Lee Green LTN. This includes undertaking traffic counts and air quality monitoring, as well as considering the views of residents. Information relating on the monitoring data is available online using the following links:

<https://lewishamcovidresidentialstreets.commonplace.is/proposals/lewisham-lee-green-ltn-monitoring>
www.lewisham.gov.uk/ltnconsultation

The Council continues to serve the community within the LTN and vehicles, such as refuse vehicles, continue to access roads within the LTN.

We have previously committed to reviewing the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) and are currently undertaking a public consultation on the scheme. I encourage you to share your views and experiences of this consultation and you can respond online at www.lewisham.gov.uk/ltnconsultation.

The scheme on the A21 using bollards to create cycle lanes has been delivered by TfL, as they are the highway authority for this road.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 16

Priority 1

Question asked by: Shaka Anderson

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Could the cabinet member responsible please explain what posts are politically restricted in Lewisham Homes? What measures would be in place for elected members of Lewisham Council if they work for Lewisham Homes? What do Councillor board members of Lewisham Homes and the Cabinet Member need to do to avoid conflicts of interests?

Reply

There is only one politically restricted post in Lewisham Homes which is the Chief Executive Officer of Lewisham Homes.

Lewisham Council's Constitution, updated in October 2020, can be found here:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/aboutthecouncil/how-council-is-run/our-constitution>.

This includes "Appendix 5 – Guidance Code for Members on Outside Bodies" which is appended to the Member Code of Conduct. This gives guidance to Members regarding potential conflict of interest in relation to their involvement with outside bodies, such as Lewisham Homes and how they are asked to contact the Director of Law (who is the Council's Monitoring Officer, details of her role is in the Constitution) if there are issues arising from their particular situation at any time.

Lewisham Council's Constitution also sets out the role of the Standards Committee which has been set up to promote the highest standards of conduct by the Mayor and all members of the Council.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 17

Priority 1

Question asked by: Natalie Berg

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

In relation to the council's LTN consultation, please can you explain how responses will be collated and assessed? There are concerns that the consultation, in its current state, is open to manipulation and I would like to understand how the council will ensure that responses are genuine.

Secondly, please can you explain how local schools are being consulted and whether the consultation is in line with DfT guidance (ie. Not listening to those who shout loudest, also taking into consideration the needs of children who are unable to take part in the consultation)?

Reply

The consultation is being conducted fully in line with guidance and best practice. The intention is to break down the consultation responses and present the results as a whole, results within the LTN, results outside the LTN in nearby areas, results across Lewisham and results outside the borough. We will do our utmost to ensure the responses analysed are as reliable as possible.

Schools in and around the LTN area have been sent the consultation material directly and have been requested to respond to the consultation and also raise awareness of the consultation through their communication channels.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 18

Priority 1

Question asked by: Michael Scriven

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

On what basis were the LTNs chosen?

Were pollution and traffic levels within the borough, in particular in the LTNs and the major roads, monitored before the LTNs were chosen and again afterwards?

If so will the Council publish the results, and if not why not?

Would the Council not agree that the introduction of traffic restrictions in some areas can only result in longer journey distances and considerable congestion on already overcrowded major roads? Examples of this are the A205 (South Circular), the A20 (Lee High Road) and the A2212 (Burnt Ash Hill/Baring Road) all of which have had extra delay and traffic since the introduction of the LTNs.

Would the Council reconsider the whole strategy with a target of air pollution reduction in the borough overall, not just a few cherry picked areas?

Reply

There was one low traffic neighbourhood introduced in Lewisham which was the Lewisham and Lee Green area. This was selected as a location for an LTN in part due to ongoing and consistent concerns raised with the Council by residents over a number of years about traffic congestion and speeds, as well as walking and cycling improvements.

The monitoring strategy for the LTN is available online as are the results of the interim monitoring undertaken to date. The public consultation currently being undertaken also includes some monitoring information, including air quality data.

Please see the following links:

<https://lewishamcovidresidentialstreets.commonplace.is/proposals/monitoring-strategy-lewisham-and-lee-green-update>

<https://lewishamcovidresidentialstreets.commonplace.is/proposals/lewisham-lee-green-ltn-monitoring>

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/ltnconsultation>

The Council's objective is to improve air quality across the borough, working with Transport for London. There has been a significant downward trend in air pollution across Lewisham over the past 6 years and the Council will continue to build on this through a range of measures, which includes measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 19

Priority 1

Question asked by: Clive Lees

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Andre Bourne

Question

What intention has the Council regarding the alignment of the footpath running across the former playing field of the former Goan Club?"

There is a footpath running across the land known as Goan Club, Ravensbourne Avenue, Beckenham, Kent. A few years ago, this path was stopped up by the then owner, but Lewisham forced the owner to reopen it. However, upon reopening, the path was reinstated with a different alignment, which strictly was incorrect. However, it is the view of Ravensbourne Valley Residents' Society that the current (incorrect) alignment is preferable to the old and we would therefore wish the current alignment to be formalised, if there are no other overriding considerations.

Reply

Rights-of-way over existing land are generally civil issues between private landowners. The Council is aware of the desire of those that use the path to retain the newer alignment and is supportive in principle. Officers are currently seeking legal advice in regard to how this might be achieved.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 20

Priority 1

Question asked by: John Keidan

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP) plays a key role in the Council's plans for a decarbonised future for the borough in response to the Climate Emergency it declared in 2019.

The Mayor and Cabinet will, however, be aware of widespread concern in Lewisham, and elsewhere in London, of the threat posed to air quality by the harmful emissions from incinerators such as SELCHP.

Proponents of a continued role for incinerators in the capital, and of the part they can play in combatting climate change, have argued elsewhere that harmful emissions do, indeed occur, but that are adequately filtered at source, to the extent that no danger is posed to local residents or to public health in general.

In this context, could the Council please state;

what their understanding is as to the level of harmful emissions released into the atmosphere by the operations of SELCHP;

in response to this Question, the data upon which that understanding is based; and

the source and status of any such data, so that it can be seen that it has been collected and/or audited independently of SELCHP's operating contractor, Veolia, or of any body associated with Veolia.

Reply

Emissions from South East London Combined Heat and Power (SELCHP) are regulated by the Environment Agency under the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC) regulations that set Emissions Limit Values (ELVs) as well as requirements to limit noise and odour from the site.

SELCHP's flues are fitted with Continuous Emissions Monitoring Systems (CEMS), which measure and record all emissions from the facility. It is a requirement of the Environment Agency's environmental permit to operate the site that these emissions do not exceed the specified half-hourly and daily average limits.

Monthly, quarterly and annual emissions reports are submitted to the Environment Agency (EA) for verification and annual tests are conducted by an Environment Agency accredited third party contractor, to ensure the validity of the monitoring equipment.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 21

Priority 1

Question asked by: Siobhan Armstong

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

As a very concerned parent of a small child at Beecroft Garden Primary I would like clarification of the measures planned to address the excessive speeding (40+ miles per hour), both in and outside of school hours, along Brockley Road between Ivy Road and Marnock Road, passing Beecroft. The excessive speeding and undertaking is so bad it caused bikes to mount the already narrow pavement, full of primary school children, worsening the situation. With at least 5 accidents with cars mounting the pavement at speed along or very near this stretch in the last few months, once at school drop off time, what are you planning to address this very serious situation before a child is killed or seriously injured? The planned school roads on either side will not address this.

Reply

Road safety is a priority for the Council and we are currently monitoring speeds across the borough as part of our annual 20mph speed compliance monitoring programme. The results of these surveys will be used to inform where future interventions may be required.

Speed enforcement is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police, and as a result of resident concerns raised we have reported Brockley Road, Crofton Park for targeted enforcement activity.

We have also requested for a Community Roadwatch event to be carried out at this location. Community Roadwatch gives local residents the opportunity to work side by side with their local police teams, and use speed detection equipment to identify speeding vehicles in their communities. Warning letters will be issued where appropriate, and the information can help to inform the future activity of local police teams. To take part in Community Roadwatch, or to suggest a residential area where there are community concerns around speeding, contact CommunityRoadwatch@met.police.uk stating the borough you live in. Your enquiry will be forwarded to your local MPS Safer Transport Team, who will be in touch.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 22

Priority 1

Question asked by: R Beck

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

In view of the high level of accidental violations at the Dermody Road LTN please explain why you consider the signage to be effective and why the “no motor vehicles” road marking has been placed where it is hidden from view to drivers approaching the junction without additional signage, and why there are no right turn only street signs and road markings directing traffic into Wisteria road when they have been used at the other LTN schemes in the borough?

Reply

We have continually reviewing our arrangements, including Dermody Road. Further changes were made in April 2021 to make the signs more prominent and encourage greater levels of compliance at this restriction. We increased the size of the signs on Dermody Road, added road markings to give a further visual deterrent and added informal signs on the approaches to advise of the restriction. Since these changes have been made we have seen a considerable improvement in the levels of compliance.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 23

Priority 1

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Andre Bourne

Question

Considering Lewisham's' borough of culture award in excess of £1m, would you put in a rainbow crossing costing £8k to celebrate the LGBTQ community?

I recognise that Lewisham promotes the LGBTQ community every year but it's not every year that we are a borough of culture and would mean that the council doesn't merely accept the LGBTQ community.

Reply

The LGBTQ community will of course play an important part in helping Lewisham to celebrate its borough of culture year and we recently commissioned the Metro Centre to carry out some targeted engagement so that we could better understand aspirations of community members. Before committing to any specific course of action we need to assess the feedback from that work and identify the best way to respond.

Current costs of installing a rainbow crossing are estimated at c. £11k but would be dependent on the condition of the road.

Advice from Transport for London is that rainbow crossings are generally no longer favoured due to concerns on their effect on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act - research suggesting that altering a crossing prevents some neuro-divergent people from being able to use the crossing.

We've also been consulting the LGBTQ community on what they would like and when we're allowed, we want Lewisham to have a physical presence at Pride.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 24

Priority 1

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

With reference to the Sydenham Ridge development, which was subject to Judicial Review, as organised by local residents Council;

In view of the judgements handed down by Mrs Justice Lang can the Council say whether it will be appealing to the High Court to overturn the judgements given?

If the High Court's judgements are accepted by the Council will they be taken into account by Lewisham Planning Department with reference to other planning applications where similar issues occur? Is this a matter for the legal department or the planning department, or both?

Reply

The Sydenham Ridge development, also known as the Mais House development, will deliver 110 new social homes, helping families on our housing waiting list.

Following the ruling in May, the planning application was subsequently submitted to the Strategic Planning Committee for determination, taking into account the issues identified in the ruling and ensuring that members of the committee had all of the information necessary to take an informed decision on the application.

The Council is reviewing procedure and internal processes in light of the judgement handed down, as well as other established case law, and will respond and adjust accordingly. The Council does not intend to appeal the judgement.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 25

Priority 1

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

How many households are currently on the Council's housing waiting list? How many people does the Council estimate that equates to? How many of those households could be accommodated in 2 bedroom flats? What type of accommodation is most in demand from people on the waiting list?

Reply

As of 13 July 2021 there are 10,079 households on the housing register. There are 31,122 household members recorded across those households. 3,624 of those households could be accommodated in a two-bedroom property under the Council's allocation policy. The most in demand type of accommodation on the housing register is two-bedroom accommodation.

As a Council, we are committed to increasing the supply of two-bedroom accommodation in our housing stock, whether through acquisitions or through our own house-building programme, Building for Lewisham, which is delivering new social homes for residents on our housing waiting list.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 26

Priority 1

Question asked by: Zaria Greenhill

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Since the Declaration of Climate Emergency of February 2019, there appears to be little public news of the relevant issues from the Council. To what extent is the wider communications staff of the Council encouraged or expected to use the means at their disposal (the website, social media and printed publications) to publicise the work of the Climate Resilience team or relevant advice and news to the Lewisham public?

Reply

Tackling the climate emergency remains a strategic communications priority for the Council. Since March 2020 our resources have understandably been focused on ensuring residents, partners and businesses are informed and engaged about the COVID-19 pandemic, test and trace and the vaccine programme, but work towards a Greener Lewisham remains at the heart of everything the Council does.

At the Council's AGM in May, the Mayor launched Future Lewisham: Our Borough's Recovery. A Greener Lewisham is one of four priorities which are guiding the Council's work as we recover from the many impacts of the pandemic. This means it is at the forefront of our communications planning and activities. Since the Council published its Climate Emergency Action Plan in March 2020 these activities have included:

- a double-page feature in the latest edition of our borough-wide publication, Lewisham Life <https://lewisham.gov.uk/-/media/files/imported/lewisham-life/lewishamlifsummer2021.ashx>;

- updates to the Council's climate emergency webpages <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/making-the-borough-carbon-neutral-by-2030-climate-emergency-declaration> to include guidance on practical steps as well as advice and information on waste and recycling <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/wasterecycle/waste-recycling-climate-emergency>;

- a stall at the Beckenham Place Park event in May 2021 <https://twitter.com/LewishamCouncil/status/1397175619167739909?s=20>;

- 8 updates to our climate emergency mailing list <https://r1.dotmailer-surveys.com/d7402e3-853umm12>;

- surveys with residents on carbon reduction priorities <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/making-the-borough-carbon-neutral-by-2030-climate-emergency-declaration/our-response-to-the-main-priorities-from-our-carbon-reduction-survey> and on schools climate engagement

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=4Q7UyJL6ukOh9lwu45U1Yfhoi8Uy1hVKiKq-QQjhV4NUOUJFOEVKQ1pKUjZEVJLT0IOUEpUQjMySy4u;>

- a series of social media posts across Instagram, Twitter and Facebook between February and May 2021 promoting the Solar Together group buying scheme;
- a twitter thread on climate actions during London Climate Action Week (26 June to 4 July 2021);
- an Instagram Live interview with the Young Mayor's team to discuss the Climate Emergency in July 2021.

We were hugely disappointed when the Lewisham Climate Summit had to be cancelled in March 2020 because of the COVID outbreak. However, there are many opportunities ahead for communications and engagement around the borough's important climate resilience work and messaging about how residents and businesses can support this, including the publication of our Air Quality Action Plan, our Waste Strategy, the run-up to COP26 and Lewisham's year as Borough of Culture in 2022.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 27

Priority 1

Question asked by: Lee Powell

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Neighbouring Bromley council in 1998 had a lower recycling rate than Lewisham. It now recycles 51% of household waste while Lewisham is at the bottom of London boroughs and recycles just 20%. Is the Mayor and councillor in charge of recycling going to talk to Bromley council and find out how their recycling rates are so much higher?

Reply

Officers from Lewisham Council attend regular local authority networking groups where performance, benchmarking and any impacts on environmental services are discussed.

Lewisham has improved the level of recycling from 17% in 2016/17 to 28% in 2020/21. As the housing tenures, ages and demographics in Lewisham and Bromley are different, the comparison in recycling rates is not straightforward. It is generally accepted that recycling is more difficult for residents in flats, of which there is a high proportion in Lewisham. These factors mean that achieving recycling levels comparable with outer London boroughs such as Bromley, which tend to have a lower proportion of flats, will be challenging.

There is still more work to be done to achieve regional and national targets, Officers are currently working on a new Waste Strategy that aims to manage Lewisham's waste sustainably and to contribute to the Council's priorities, one being to successfully make Lewisham greener.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 28

Priority 1

Question asked by: Billy Shah

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

The council is always telling us about the funding cuts they face. So please can you tell me how you can justify paying for a Labour political assistant to (according to the job advert) 'work directly with Labour councillors to help communicate their work to a range of audiences, write press releases, newsletters and blogs that have impact, and use visual and social media'?

Reply

A political assistant is a local government officer who supports a political group of councillors. The role is governed by the Local Government Act which specifies that each of the three largest political groups on a local authority is entitled to have a political assistant supporting them.

The purpose of the role is to help a political group to operate effectively by providing policy, political and administrative support to councillors. A political assistant works closely with colleagues in Scrutiny and Governance teams, ensures councillors receive papers and briefings on time, and services and supports meetings of councillors.

Lewisham Council has a majority of councillors in the Labour Group, therefore the local authority is entitled to have a political assistant to the Labour Group. The Council's constitution sets out that other political groups on Council would have a political assistant provided, in line with national legislation.

This is not a new post. The role is being advertised as the post has recently become vacant.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 29

Priority 1

Question asked by: Chris Maines

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

What monitoring of Air Quality is undertaken along the A2 in Lewisham?

What is the Air Quality on Blackheath Hill (between the Heath and the A2211) and what is the Council doing to reduce pollution along this stretch of road which has a high level of congestion ?

What monitoring of the change in Air Quality is planning along roads in Blackheath that will be adversely impacted by the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel ? What measures are planned to reduce the effect of increased traffic movement in Blackheath on Air Quality ?

Reply

Air Quality Monitoring is spread across the borough at strategic sites. There is monitoring alongside and around the A2 within the borough and this is mainly around junctions in the Deptford Area. The A2 and A2211, including Blackheath Hill, are red routes and is managed by TfL, rather than the Council.

Generally the air quality is Good to Fair in this area, though this depends on weather, traffic congestion and volume and other factors. You can download Lewisham's air-quality app, Lewisham Air, to get news and alerts about air quality. This app was created by Kings College London. Please see the link below.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/air-pollution/download-our-air-quality-app>

For more information on air quality, please see the link below.

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/environment/air-pollution/what-we-are-doing-to-improve-air-quality-in-lewisham>

With regards to the Silvertown Tunnel, TfL is leading is leading on this project and they have not indicated adverse air quality issues. Lewisham will continue to work with TfL to monitor the air quality as and when the new tunnel is constructed and commissioned.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 30

Priority 1

Question asked by: Cameron Fisher

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

The council's commitment to combatting the climate emergency can and should include the preservation of valuable mature trees. In view of this, we are very concerned about the threat of felling to two centennial oaks on public land in Moremead Close, SE6. We have been told that monitoring has been done and that felling is the only remaining option, but the documentation of analysis and monitoring has not been made available to the public.

Given the significant impact on the public, why have the documents for Moremead Close not been made available? These are the arborists' report, the soil analysis report and the monitoring report. If there are data protection issues regarding the identity of the plaintiff, please could these be redacted to comply with the law?

Reply

Lewisham Council stand firmly behind the Climate Emergency declaration we made in February 2019.

It is regrettable that despite the best efforts of our Tree Services team and the actions they have taken to save two oak trees implicated in subsidence of a nearby property in Moremead Road, we have been left with no option but to remove them. We understand why residents are upset, and want to reassure local people that removing these oaks is a last resort and not a decision that the council takes lightly. We recognise the many benefits that mature trees provide in terms of air quality, biodiversity, shading, flood prevention and visual amenity.

Protecting and nurturing trees is really important to us. We've planted more than 12,000 since 2018 - and we're absolutely committed to planting more.

Whilst we have every wish to be open and transparent and provide as much background information as possible, we are in the difficult position that we are unable to release third party information. The evidence provided by the third party's representatives is not owned by the Council and therefore we are legally unable to release this into the public domain. It is not just simply a case of withholding the claimant's name.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 31

Priority 1

Question asked by: Kate Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Kim Powell

Question

Over the last year many of the Catford high streets shops have closed. Catford is supposed to be the second city centre in the borough. We are being urged to shop local but there are now fewer and fewer places to shop.

What is the Council doing to encourage business back to Catford and what use of any Government grants, have they accessed for this purpose?

I notice there appears to be fairly recent information on grant funding for High streets launched in May of this year and updated in June. Will the Council be making use of these latest grants? Residents would be interested to know what the Council is doing to stop Catford looking like a ghost town. At present it is a very sad place.

Reply

Over the last 15 months the Council has allocated over 14,000 grants totalling £76m to local businesses, including those in Catford town centre. The Council continues to seek funding for improvements in the town centre and for business support. The Council has been successful in securing £1.65m for Catford from the GLA's Good Growth Fund and a further £1m from the Get Building fund. The Council has also been successful in securing an additional £1.7m in Government grants to support local businesses.

The Council is also looking at longer-term plans for Catford town centre. On 14 July 2021 Mayor & Cabinet approved the Catford Town Centre Framework. The document contains guiding principles for the future evolution and growth of Catford town centre and the immediate vicinity. The Framework will support, accords with and will energise the Council's post-pandemic recovery plans by providing a route to achieving inclusive regeneration.

The Framework document can be found via the following Link on Lewisham's website:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/catford-regeneration/catford-town-centre-framework>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 32

Priority 1

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Is Lewisham Council satisfied that a decision has been made by TfL to not install PM2.5 air monitoring facilities on any approach roads in Lewisham to the Silvertown Tunnel? Has any representations to TfL or the Mayor of London been made by Lewisham Council on the need Particulate Matter monitoring in Lewisham to assess the impact of the Silvertown road tunnel?

Reply

Representations have been made to TfL including requesting additional monitoring. TfL are still actively considering the possible monitoring of PM2.5 outside of the Development Consent Order (DCO). Lewisham is also considering additional monitoring (including the siting of one of the councils PM2.5 monitors), for example around the A2209 at Deptford where there may be a rise in traffic associated with the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 33

Priority 1

Question asked by: Cheryl McLeod

Relevant Directorate: Corporate Resources

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

On 6 July 2021 the Information Commissioner issued a Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) Decision notice, reference: IC-46840-T7M9, that says "the Commissioner has also concluded that the Council breached regulation 5(2) of EIR by not responding to the request within 20 working days and by belatedly disclosing parts of the requested information," will the Cabinet Member publish how many FOI and EIR requests have the Council received in the last five years broken down by year and what is the response time and how many requests have been referred to the ICO and how many complaints have been upheld or partially upheld and how many breaches have occurred?

Reply

We routinely aim to respond within 20 days but sometimes it is difficult due to the nature of the request and volume of information requested. We do our best to be as responsive as possible. Due to the pandemic officers have had to prioritise the COVID response which has unfortunately caused some delays. I am able to provide some data covering the last 2 years; unfortunately providing further information over 5 years or breaking it down further as requested would take a significant amount of time when staff are working so hard to recover from the Covid pandemic.

Over the last 2 years, the Council has received 9 formal ICO complaints.

Of these:

- 3 were dealt with informally and closed by the ICO with no decision notice issued;
- 2 had decision notices issued where the complaint was not upheld but confirmed that the Council had breached the timescales for issuing responses;
- 1 had a decision notice issued where the complaint was not upheld;
- 1 was withdrawn by the requester; and
- 2 are pending decisions from the ICO.

The information we have been able to gather and provide is as below:

Year	FOIs received	Responded to (< 20 days)
2019/20	1,656	1,237 (75%)
2020/21	161	128 (80%)
Year	EIRs received	Responded to (< 20 days)
2019/20	88	72 (82%)
2020/21	24	15 (63%)

The Council had previously added extra resource to speed up response times for FOI and EIR requests as can be seen in the initially very positive direction of travel.

However the pandemic has created an immense strain on the organisation as a whole with many staff transferred to the Council's emergency response. I hope that performance will once again improve as we recover from the pandemic.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 34

Priority 1

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Exactly how was the data assessed which appeared in the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN Review document recently published and delivered to the local community?

Will the Council also explain how speed levels were measured as there was no sign of measurement in Manor Lane Terrace, even before the road humps (traffic calming measures) were installed? Interestingly the Council already operates a 20mph limit on its roads. With lower traffic levels claimed along with slower speeds we have recently had traffic accidents (collisions of vehicles/persons) on Manor Lane Terrace which were unknown prior to the LTN. How can this be explained?

If this is an example of serious data collection, how could residents accept the validity of all the stats put forward in the public consultation document?

In view of the claimed reduction in traffic levels would the Council explain where it deduces the higher levels have migrated to?

Reply

The data collection was undertaken by pneumatic tubes installed on the road to capture information in relation to vehicle speed, flow and classification. This is a recognised and regularly used method across the country.

The surveys on Manor Lane Terrace were undertaken on the following dates: 25th-31st March 2019, 9th-15th October 2020 and 4th-10th February 2021. The data was then reviewed and averages calculated based on the findings which were then reported, and has been presented for residents in a clear and unbiased manner.

The Metropolitan Police collect data relating to collisions, which indicate that there has only been one recorded collision on Manor Lane Terrace in the last 5 years to December 2020 (the latest available data), which occurred in January 2020, prior to the LTN being introduced.

It is very difficult to deduce where the traffic levels have migrated to as travel behaviour has been influenced by a number of factors during the pandemic, including the easing and tightening of restrictions. Some trips may have been converted to other modes, some may be using the main roads, as they should opposed to local roads, and others may now be working from home so will no longer be commuting on these roads.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 35

Priority 1

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor John Paschoud

Question

Lewisham Council is proud of its accessibility policies, but fails to implement them in practice. The Strategic Planning Committee met on 29 June 2021, to reconsider the Mais House scheme. Socially distanced places were available in the council chamber, yet two objectors with mobility issues were forced to walk and climb the stairs to the public gallery, despite having pre-arranged places in the chamber. There they joined other objectors in being unable to follow the first half hour of the meeting, as the speaker was not working properly. Staff were aware of this, but did not alert the chair.

Please can the chair of strategic planning explain why he personally made the decision to deny them access to the chamber, even after being told of their mobility issues, and prearranged places, while discussing the matter with them in the lobbyists?

Reply

The present circumstances caused by the Covid pandemic have proved most challenging to Lewisham Council, and to most other public and private organisations, in adapting their normal operations and procedures to continue in fair and practical ways.

The Council Chamber has been assessed as the only space within the Civic Suite which can presently be used for meetings like the Strategic Planning Committee which met on 29 June 2021.

Seating for members of the public who have requested to attend in-person to observe meetings held in the Council Chamber is in the designated public gallery. Access to the public gallery is normally available by lift, as well as stairs. Both lifts leading up to the public gallery were working on the night of the SPC and members of the public including those with mobility issues were offered the option of using the lifts but the persons in question decided not to use them.

For Planning committee meetings, at the discretion of the chair and with the agreement of members of the committee, in addition to all the other channels by which representations can be made in support of or against the application being considered by members, it is customary to allow one or more speakers on behalf of objectors to address the committee for a fixed period of time, and then respond to

questions from members of the committee to clarify anything they may have mentioned. Such speakers are required to register and identify themselves in advance of the meeting. For practical reasons to enable those speakers to use the audio system in the Council Chamber, those pre-registered speakers (only) who had arrived and identified themselves to the clerk before the start of the meeting were admitted to the body of the Council Chamber.

The Chair of Strategic Planning always expects and hopes for the most civil and cooperative behaviour from all members of the public who wish to observe and participate in the democratic processes of the Council. During the course of the meeting on 29th June there was at least one attempt to interrupt the proceedings, by a person in the public gallery who was not pre-registered to speak, but this was dealt with by the chair and it did not prove necessary to remove the person involved from the public gallery.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 36

Priority 1

Question asked by: Alex Raha

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

In light of the Council confirming they are withdrawing the existing cycle loan scheme, can the Mayor and Cabinet commit to providing an alternative improved scheme (whether run by Council staff or by a third party) in order to meet its own corporate strategy, borough transport strategy, borough cycle strategy and climate emergency action plan?

Reply

We are in the process of launching a new and improved cycle loan scheme. The new scheme will include standard road and folding bikes but will now also offer cargo bikes, e-bikes, and adapted bikes. Following the success of the loan scheme it was felt that we should look to improve the scheme to be more inclusive and offer a wider selection of bikes to a wider audience.

The new scheme also offers the opportunity to offer reduced or discounted loans to particular groups where we would like to offer greater support, for example for inclusivity or health reasons.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 38

Priority 2

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

I had a issue voting at Hilly Fields recently whereby my wheelchair couldn't get in to vote because the step was too big. I did vote in the end because the guy managed to bring me my ballot and subsequently a woman security officer post it in the ballot box. They confirmed that they accepted the way I was voting and they promised that it would be different next time. it was a new polling station and they haven't worked out the logistics. This begs the question to what extent does the Council pre-empt possible issues like this? Clearly it should have been looked at before I came to vote.

Reply

I am extremely sorry to hear that you were not able to access the polling station to cast your vote inside a polling booth in the normal manner. All polling places are subject to requirements to be Disability Discrimination Act compliant. The Council's election team completed an assessment of this building in early 2020 and determined that the ramp was not sufficient. A longer ramp of a lower gradient was installed and after inspection was deemed to be compliant. I understand it was the doorway that was the problem for your wheelchair. Our inspector who visited the premises believed the door was of sufficient width, but clearly your experience has taught us otherwise. The election team will ensure the door is widened for the next election and if that is not possible, an alternative venue will be selected.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 39

Priority 2

Question asked by: Cheryl McLeod

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

When Lewisham Council took over the security of Lewisham Triangle neighbourhood Building with Guardians on the 13th April 2021, can the Cabinet Member disclose how much and the name of any security contractor? As this is Council Tax payers money please can the Cabinet Member identify the budget which is used?

Reply

The current round-the-clock security presence at 10 Wisteria Road was put in place to safeguard it from further squatting activity. This approach to securing a building is not typical of the form of security deployed across other Council assets, but was felt necessary in this case to prevent further squatting activity and protect the previous occupants' belongings, while the Council seeks to enable the return of the Lewisham Triangle Neighbourhood Association.

The security presence at the site is provided by a company called Lockfather. To date the cost of securing the site (which includes grill, CCTV and 24hr guarding) is approximately £39,200. The cost of securing this site, as with all other assets within the Council's commercial portfolio, is funded from income generated by the same portfolio.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 40

Priority 2

Question asked by: Adam Longbottom

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Please can the Council confirm the estimated carbon emissions cost for the demolition of Milford Towers / Catford Centre. Can they also state how this compares to the council's total annual carbon emissions from latest figures, as well as giving an estimated figure for the expected carbon emissions from the construction of the current proposals and how this would compare to a retrofit option. If some of these figures are not available, please can the Council provide those which are, Can they also give an explanation as to why the others have not yet been calculated to a level reflecting the current Stage of Works the project is at given the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019 and confirm when these figures are expected to be available.

Reply

The Catford Town Centre Framework, approved by Mayor and Cabinet on 14 July, is a long-term vision which sets out guiding principles for development in Catford over the coming decades. It reflects the Council's ambitions for Catford to become the greenest town centre in London. As part of the Council's commitment to tackling the Climate Emergency, all new developments and buildings in Catford will be sustainable in both their design and constructions.

Milford Towers sits within the site referred to as 'The Lanes' within the Framework Plan. An indicative phasing plan for this site can be found on Page 120 of the document and provides an indicative timeframe of 2029/30 for the delivery of this phase. This means it is currently too early to undertake detailed analysis of carbon emissions that would result from the demolition of Milford Towers and compare these with the benefits of the replacement housing that would seek to achieve low carbon emissions. This analysis will be undertaken closer to the time of construction along with a construction plan that will seek to minimise carbon emissions throughout the construction programme.

The full Catford Town Centre Framework document can be found via the following link on Lewisham's website -

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/regeneration/catford-regeneration/catford-town-centre-framework>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 41

Priority 2

Question asked by: Phil Bridger

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Please could we erect some signage at Clarendon Rise Car Park informing people where the nearest public toilets are? In the last 6 weeks, in broad daylight, I've seen 2 ladies and 1 man urinate in the car park and have caught a further two people trespassing and urinating on my property.

Reply

Lewisham Council are currently looking into erecting the appropriate signage pertaining to the location of public toilets over the coming months.

As well as public toilets, there are a number of 'community toilets' available to use at no cost inside local businesses, cafes, community centres and libraries who have signed up to the Lewisham Community Toilets scheme. More information and a map of available toilet facilities can be found here:

<https://www.lewishamlocal.com/community-toilets/>.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 42

Priority 2

Question asked by: Charles Reid

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

As the council is fully aware, during the initial Lee Green LTN implementation the traffic was so bad on Torridon Road that drivers diverted down to Verdant Lane. This was also brought up on one of the meetings which included a TfL representative in 2020. Table 2 of the monitoring report is reporting that there was a 20% reduction in traffic, however the table does not include Verdant Lane. How can a 20% reduction in traffic be claimed without including Verdant Lane?

Reply

The Council has presented the data it has available. If the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN had been introduced in usual times the Council would have undertaken full before and after monitoring and had data that was fully comparable. Due to the very tight timescales and expectations set by central government, councils were expected to rapidly introduce measures that would reallocate roadspace to walking and cycling without the full range of traffic studies and preparatory work that would normally be done for such measures. This unfortunately means we do not have a perfect set of monitoring data and this has been acknowledged.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 44

Priority 2

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

The projected rent from the Council's foray into the private rented sector through "Creekside Village East" (£255,000) equates to 0.102% of the Council's General Fund Income. What does the Council propose doing with the profit from this investment to provide genuinely affordable homes? What income would the Council receive if the 16 homes the Council expects to own in Creekside Village were let to people on the housing waiting list at a genuinely affordable rent?

Reply

The proposed development at Creekside Village East includes a number of benefits to the Council and community, including £13.6m for an extension to the Trinity Laban performing arts university, 59 shared ownership homes, an overage payment to be used towards the provision of affordable housing - currently estimated to be £500,000 - and around 1,045sqm of residential accommodation (which would broadly equate to 16 units, assuming a typical 65sqm two-bedroom property).

The Committee resolved to approve planning permission late last year and it will be a number of years before these homes will be available and an income received. While assumptions can be made on potential rental/sales income for use as either private or social housing, the net annual income is not yet known.

It has previously been anticipated that the Council would let out these properties on the open market at private rental levels, with rent controls, and direct income received would be put towards the delivery of genuinely affordable housing. Officers are currently exploring all options for the use of these properties to deliver the best outcome for residents. Further information on the assessment of these options and eventual recommendations will be made available in due course.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 45

Priority 2

Question asked by: Lee Powell

Relevant Directorate: Corporate Resources

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

Lewisham has the worst council tax collection rate in London (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2019-to-2020>). If Lewisham collected the average rate of council tax for London boroughs, how much extra revenue would Lewisham have?

Reply

The most recent Council Tax collection results published for the fiscal year ending March 2021 shows that Lewisham's position amongst London boroughs has risen by eight places above; Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Camden, Westminster, Lambeth, Brent, and Kensington & Chelsea.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2020-to-2021>

Lewisham's in-year collection percentage was 92.82%, the Inner London average collection rate was 91.86% and the London average was 94.31%. If Lewisham were to have achieved 94.31% in-year (within 12 months) an additional £1.9m would have been collected. On average Lewisham achieves the London average collection rate within 24 months.

It should be noted that comparing Council Tax collection results in this way does not provide an accurate reflection of the challenges each local authority may experience, owing to the diverse financial composition of their residents.

In addition, councils have the discretion to award local discounts and exemptions which reduce the Council Tax base and revenue to be collected within that authority alone. Furthermore, the Council Tax Reduction contribution by those in receipt of benefit varies across London, from nil contribution in some authorities to 25% in Lewisham, which is collectable from those most in need of financial support.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 46

Priority 2

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Lewisham Council's Planning Service Monitoring Report for 2019-2020 stated that its Section 106 balance of fund was £43.6 million and its CIL balance was £11.5 million. With such balances is it still the policy of Lewisham Council to refuse to implement the planning condition placed on the Barratt's housing development on the former Catford dogtrack and not install a pedestrian bridge linking Adenmore Road and Doggett Road? Has Lewisham Council ruled out completely the building of this much needed green infrastructure project and will it not consider revisiting the need for this project, in part to support the success of the school street now operating on Doggett Road and to help parents who wish to avoid walking along the South Circular with their children due to high levels of air pollution?

Reply

In September 2020, Mayor and Cabinet agreed to allocate £1,515,537 of S106 funding to deliver a programme of public realm and accessibility improvements to the Catford Station areas. This sum was originally proposed for the delivery of a footbridge between Doggett Road and the Barratt development on the former Catford Greyhound Stadium site, but could also be used to fund public realm improvements in the area under the terms of the S106 agreement.

This decision followed extensive design consultation between the various parties to establish whether the footbridge was deliverable. Design and costing studies revealed that the footbridge proposal was not realistic and could certainly not be delivered within the financial envelope envisaged by the S106 agreement.

For further details please refer to the Mayor and Cabinet report from 16 September 2020 – Catford Regeneration Programme Approval of Phase 1 (<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s74926/Catford%20Regeneration%20Approval%20of%20Phase%201.pdf>).

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 47

Priority 2

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

What has been the full cost to their taxpayers of The London Borough of Lewisham, for the plans for and the implementation of the LTN schemes established throughout the Borough, including their later revised schemes in all parts which have had them to the present day?

Reply

There has been one LTN scheme delivered in the borough, which is the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN. The cost of developing and delivering this scheme, including the amendments made in November 2020, has been met by funding received from TfL.

Approximately £276,000 has been spent on the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN. This spend includes the cost of implementing the LTN and also undertaking monitoring.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 48

Priority 2

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor John Paschoud

Question

Please can the Chair of Strategic Planning committee explain why he decided not to recuse himself from the Mais House case on 29th June, despite having been on the original planning committee, whose decision was decisively rejected by the High Court? Does the Chair recognise this as giving rise to concern about a possible conflict of interest?

Reply

The Judicial Review decision in Mais House quashed the prior decision of Planning Committee A to grant planning permission. It was a perfectly legitimate option for the Council, which is obliged to make Planning decisions in a timely manner for this matter to be brought back to the Council to be re-determined after rectifying the defects found in the quashed decision.

Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that a decision maker is not to be taken to have had, or appeared to have had, a closed mind when making the decision just because; (a) the decision maker had previously done anything that directly or indirectly indicated what view the decision maker took, or would or might take, in relation to a matter and (b) the matter was relevant to the decision.

There was no reason for the Chair or Cllr Walsh to recuse themselves from re-determining the matter at Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) because they had previously been involved in granting the planning permission that was quashed. Both councillors are members of the SPC and so act in that capacity to determine such matters on behalf of the council. They received legal advice prior to the SPC that provided they had come to re-determine the matter at the committee with an open mind, considering the new report presented to them and representations made at the committee, they were free to make a decision.

There has therefore not been a conflict of interest here.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 49

Priority 3

Question asked by: Andy Smith

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

Can the Council make sure that all accessibility requirements are made by a suitably qualified individual before a person actually votes ?

Reply

Councillors work with electoral officers to ensure every polling place in every ward meets the highest possible standards of accessibility. It is a requirement that all polling places are inspected for suitability as a polling place. Electoral officers have an inspection checklist developed in conjunction with experts on accessibility which they use to assess buildings. We are conducting a full review of all polling districts and places from August to December 2021 and part of that review includes a legal requirement to consult local people and groups with expertise in disability and accessibility.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 50

Priority 3

Question asked by: Cheryl McLeod

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

It seems Ladywell place pop-up housing will not be moving around the borough to tackle the homeless crisis as originally envisaged, therefore, can you advise how much this project costs to date? What are the maintenance costs to keep the building in situ? How much would it cost to dismantle the prefabricated building and how much will this cost to re-assemble it?

Reply

In January 2021, Mayor and Cabinet considered a report on the future of the PLACE/Ladywell building. The report sets out the feasibility work carried out in order to reach the recommendation that the PLACE/Ladywell building remain in-situ on a temporary basis while the land behind is developed to provide genuinely affordable permanent homes. The main report is publically available on the Council's website.

The estimated costs to dismantle and re-assemble the building is commercially sensitive information which could prejudice the Council in future negotiations if made publicly available.

The spend to date by the Council to construct PLACE/Ladywell and for subsequent remedial and upgrade works is circa £5.9m. As the landlord, the rental income from the 24 properties is paid to the Council. The average cost to the Council for a two-bedroom household in Nightly Paid (Temporary Accommodation paid for on a nightly basis, rather than weekly or monthly) accommodation is £6.9k per year. PLACE/Ladywell has therefore saved the Council approximately £166k per year in avoided nightly paid fees over the 4+ years since it was first occupied.

While the PLACE/Ladywell building is not moving to a new location at this time, it will continue to be used to provide 24 high-quality, self-contained, Council-owned, in-borough, temporary homes for residents who would otherwise be homeless.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 51

Priority 3

Question asked by: Adam Longbottom

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

The latest proposals for the station area show that the area approaching Catford Bridge Station along Doggett Road will now be fully pedestrianised - this a change to the reassurances the Council and design team previously gave at the last consultation events where it was confirmed this would not occur as it would not be appropriate for those living in the neighbouring streets. As such, please can the council confirm how residents living in the streets in the Victorian terraces to the north of this area (Holbeach, Nelgrade, Silvermere etc) will be able to access their homes via car once this has been done and if residential traffic will be allowed through from the South Circular to the south.

Has this impact of closing Doggett Road to traffic, as seems to now be proposed, been analysed fully as it seems short sighted forcing residents to use very limited access locations to the east on Wildfell Road and Bradgate Road, as well as making the junction with A21 becoming busier if no access from the south to these terraces will remain?

Reply

The proposals for the station area are to fully pedestrianise the station forecourt only (see Page 65, Label 11 in the Catford Town Centre Framework Plan). The illustration presents an aspiration to improve the environment for pedestrians to cross Doggett Road more safely, while vehicular access will still be retained. The different treatment to the paving shows the intention to improve the quality of the public realm for people and to calm traffic. Vehicular access to Doggett Road from Catford Road still remains, as demonstrated by the diagram on Page 51 of the Framework Plan.

I hope this provides reassurance that there is not a proposal to close Doggett Road to traffic and the vision is consistent with what has been discussed in previous consultation events.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 52

Priority 3

Question asked by: Charles Reid

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

On pages 15-18 of the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN Monitoring Report it states:

“June saw average bus journey times of 11 minutes, falling to around 8 minutes again in July when the original LTN scheme was introduced, until an increase of over 4 minutes in September when the schools reopened.” The graph shows an increase of approximately 34 minutes – why has it been reported as “over 4 minutes” as this is a gross mis-representation?

Reply

The data has been collected and supplied by TfL to review bus journey times. It is in days and weeks and has been presented in an unaltered fashion and shows all of the changes for clarity. An average is calculated from the ‘months’ available data.

Because of the way in which this information is collected the available information is not always consistent comparing one month to the next. For example, older buses not having recording equipment. Therefore an average is taken from the data available across the time frames that are being assessed.

The data provided was considered carefully and the figures used are the average increase over the course of the month and not a singular identified peak and as such the 34 minutes are a cumulative number.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 53

Priority 3

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Jonathan Slater

Question

It has been reported that Blackheath Village Library, as available in the Reminiscence Centre is re-opening, but only available for 8 hours a week, due to lack of volunteers. Is this the case? If it is what will the opening hours be?

Is this also proving a problem in other community libraries in LBL, if so which community libraries, and what is the outcome?

Will the council be monitoring the issue of opening hours and the effect of volunteer availability?

Reply

We are delighted to see that both community and hub libraries are gradually restarting to serve our residents.

On 14 June, Age Exchange reopened the library at the Reminiscence Centre on Tuesdays 10-12am and 2-4pm and Thursdays 9-11am and 2-4pm, for a total of 8 hours per week.

Many third sector organisations lost volunteers as a result of Covid, particularly if the cohort of volunteers included the most vulnerable in terms of age and heightened health risks. But we are aware that Age Exchange are recruiting more volunteers. More generally, apart from New Cross, all our community libraries are now open, albeit on reduced opening hours and services. The following webpage shows the current opening hours across the libraries.

https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/~/link.aspx?_id=223BB87F72A748028049FA73824A2CED&_z=z

We are not aware of specific issues with any other community library recruiting volunteers, and will continue to monitor the service provided by our partner organisations in community libraries, including opening hours and volunteer levels. Perhaps a note should be added to thank the partner organisations for all the work they have done over the last 18 months to support the love of books and reading in Lewisham.

As council and community libraries continue to cautiously increasing opening hours and services, details will be updated online at www.lewisham.gov.uk/libraries.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 54

Priority 3

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Mrs Justice Lang found that the Council had provided an incomplete picture to a planning committee that was considering an application. She also found that the Council had materially misled the committee. What has the Council done to check whether materially misleading information has been given to other planning committees?

Reply

The Sydenham Ridge development, also known as the Mais House development, will deliver 110 new social homes, helping families on our housing waiting list.

Following the ruling in May, the planning application was subsequently submitted to the Strategic Planning Committee for determination, taking into account the issues identified in the ruling and ensuring that members of the committee had all of the information necessary to take an informed decision on the application.

The Council is reviewing procedure and internal processes in light of the judgement handed down as well as other established case law, and will respond and adjust accordingly.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 55

Priority 3

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

In answer to question 28 on the 21 October 2020 Councillor Bell said stated that a footbridge linking Doggett Road and Adenmore Road would have led to residents of Catford incurring the cost of maintenance of the lift on the Adenmore Road side. What is the legal basis for such a statement? Does he not agree that a pedestrian bridge would surely benefit residents far further away from Adenmore Road and its costs of maintenance should fall on the wider public, as with other pedestrian bridges?

Reply

Developers of the Catford Green development, Barratt Homes, carried out an extensive design consultation with the Council to establish whether the footbridge was deliverable. Prolonged design and costing revealed that the bridge proposal was not realistic and could certainly not be achieved within the financial envelope envisaged by the Section 106 agreement. Providing a footbridge with an essential accessible ramp also proved to be impossible as the length of the ramp would have extended too far along Doggett Road to be a viable option.

Other design options were tested. One of these considered a footbridge with lift access at either end. However, the cost of this design would far exceed the available funding. A footbridge with lifts would also require significant annual expenditure for the Council to manage and maintain and residents on the Catford Green development would incur costs through their service charges for the maintenance of the lift on their side of the railway. This was determined through design conversations with Barratt at the time and was due to the different land ownerships on either side of the railway.

In September 2020, Mayor and Cabinet agreed to reallocate £1,515,537 of this S106 funding to deliver a programme of public realm and accessibility improvements to the Catford Station areas.

For further details please refer to the Mayor and Cabinet report from 16 September 2020 – Catford Regeneration Programme Approval of Phase 1 (<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s74926/Catford%20Regenerati on%20Approval%20of%20Phase%201.pdf>).

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 56

Priority 3

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor John Paschoud

Question

Can the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee please explain why he failed to intervene in Cllr Walsh's questioning of the Mais House objectors' spokesman? Cllr Walsh asked loaded questions about the objectors' motives, rather than about their actual concerns. Does he agree that it is inappropriate for Committee members to publicly humiliate objectors, suggesting that they are uncaring or selfish?

Reply

Cllr Walsh was asking questions and debating the matter as he saw fit on the night in order to be able to ensure that he was fully informed on the matter before reaching a decision on how he would vote. The chair did not find any reason to intervene on the night. There is no suggestion that in debating the matter, including asking questions of the objectors and indeed officers, Cllr Walsh was trying to 'publicly humiliate' anyone or insinuate that the objectors were being, 'uncaring' or 'selfish' and any such suggestion is incorrect and strongly refuted.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 57

Priority 4

Question asked by: Adam Longbottom

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Can the Council confirm that they will not remove all car / road access to those living in Rushey Green (Holbeach, Nelgarde, Silvermere, Brookdale Road) etc as this appears to be the Council's plan even if it is not intended through a number of projects recently? Though cycling is a positive, it seems to be at total expense of anything else.

Reply

The Council remains committed to delivering healthy neighbourhoods, as set out in the approved Transport Strategy and Local Implementation Plan. Healthy Neighbourhoods aim to improve air quality, reduce traffic and congestion and encourage active travel. Measures could include using interventions such as point closures, modal filters (traditionally road closures allowing pedestrians and cyclists to pass while stopping motorised traffic from doing so) and banned turns. However, it should be noted that vehicular access to all properties will be maintained. In addition there could be a series of other measures such as improved crossing points, contraflow cycling, cycle hangars, electric vehicle charging points, parklets, street trees and benches.

The Transport Strategy stated that the Healthy Neighbourhood areas will be re-prioritised at least every 2 years, using the latest available data. We are currently undertaking this process to develop the future programme and identify priority areas.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 58

Priority 4

Question asked by: Charles Reid

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

On pages 15-18 of the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN Monitoring Report it states

“As the original LTN launched in July, journey times returned to 10 minutes on average, increasing to around 17 minutes for the next few months” – This does not appear to be true as in July the graphs shows that it went up to over 14 minutes (higher levels than pre-covid times) and I cannot see how from looking at the graph over the following months it can be derived that the average is around 17 minutes – why has this been reported the way that it has?

Reply

The data has been collected and supplied by TfL to review bus journey times. It is in days and weeks and has been presented in an unaltered fashion and shows all of the changes for clarity. An average is calculated from the ‘months’ available data.

Because of the way in which this information is collected the available information is not always consistent comparing one month to the next. For example, older buses not having recording equipment. Therefore an average is taken from the data available across the time frames that are being assessed.

The averages provided are from the data available, which provides a more accurate indication as to the changes in time. The data has been presented in a similar way to the previous TfL report.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 59

Priority 4

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

Local residents have been asking on the Next Door site what has happened to the money raised from the Lee Green LTN from penalty notices issued. Will the council please release figures for the number of notices issued each month from July 2020 to the end of June 2021?

How much was raised each month and what is the total amount raised by the council for that year?

Has any of the money been spent, if so on what?

What plans does the council have for the use of the money it still holds, and any future fines collected?

Reply

The total net income for the past year was £2,188,976.

All fines related to parking and traffic restriction related income is spent on Concessionary fares, highways and transport and revenue contributions to capital in relation to footways and resurfacing.

Any future income from these sources will be spent on the above.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 60

Priority 4

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Children & Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

How many children of EU or EEA citizens are in the care of Lewisham Council?
How many young people who are children of EU or EEA nationals have recently left care? What proportion of both groups have had applications made to remain in the UK?

Reply

The Council is committed to protecting the rights of all EU and EEA Lewisham residents, especially children and young people in our care.

13 children of EU or EEA nationality are or have been in the care of Lewisham Council in the last 12 months. 3 children placed in care have had applications to remain submitted.

7 young people of EU or EEA nationality have left care in the last 12 months. 5 care leavers have had applications to remain submitted.

All remaining children and young people have already received settled status.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 61

Priority 4

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

In answer to question 110 on 21 October 2020 Councillor McGeevor stated that traffic counts in Bradgate Road and other roads had been undertaken by TfL to monitor the impact of the London Streetspace Programme delivered on the A21 on Lewisham roads. It was further stated that Lewisham officers will liaise with TfL to receive a copy of this data and will make the case to make it publicly available. After eight months has Lewisham Council been successful in receiving a copy of this data and persuading TfL to ensure that the data is published? Does Lewisham Council believe it is vital that local residents should be able to access such important data?

Reply

Lewisham officers have continued to liaise with TfL in relation to this scheme and they will be sharing the data with Lewisham. We recognise the importance of transparency when assessing the impact of schemes that have been delivered and have continued to make the case to TfL that the data collected should be publicly available. TfL are analysing the data presented and will actively consider sharing the information once completed.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 62

Priority 4

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor John Paschoud

Question

Please can the Chair of Strategic Planning explain the 29th June meeting's 'declarations of interest' involved members declaring they had been lobbied by objectors? This is unnecessary, and seems to suggest that there was something inappropriate about lobbying, when it is the absolute right of residents to do so, as seen in the 2020 Holborn Studios judgement.

Can he also explain why this suggestion was not corrected, and crucially, why these declarations were not balanced by those of lobbying from the City of London, the developers, or from Lewisham Council members or officers? There was also no declaration of the prior discussion of the case at closed Labour group meetings.

There was a distinctly partial appearance to the conduct of the committee, given the involvement of two members of the original planning Committee, whose decision had been overturned at the High Court. In light of this, will the Chair refer this to the Standards Committee?

Reply

Appendix 3- Protocol on Planning and Lobbying
LBC's constitution states on page 249

(8) Where a member has been lobbied he/she should report to the relevant committee that he/she has been lobbied and by whom. However, members must act in the public interest and not at the behest of any individual or interest. If the member feels that he/she no longer retains an open mind on the matter but that his/her impartiality has been compromised, he/she will need to decide whether to withdraw from the meeting.

- Cllrs on the night were complying with the constitution as they had been lobbied and stating by whom. Councillors would need to comply with the whole of the paragraph here and decide for themselves if to continue in the meeting, which they decided to.
- Contact from objectors about a scheme versus lobbying in objection to a scheme can be different. Where there has been a high level of contact with people

seeking a particular outcome to refuse, Members have been advised to declare that in the way they would lobbying in favour in the interests of transparency. There is no such thing as lobbying by officers – planning officers are required to make a recommendation. There was no lobbying or contact to SPC Members in advance of the committee meeting by the City of London. Had there have been, this would have been declared in the normal way.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 63

Priority 5

Question asked by: Adam Longbottom

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Can the Council confirm if they will ever reinstate the footbridge that was removed on Doggett Road which would greatly aid movement for pedestrians and cyclists avoid the need for them to have to go near the South Circular? It has been ascertained that it may not be feasible for this to be fully accessible, if so, has a case been considered for it to be as accessible as possible, and no worse than it previously was, in order to reinstate the historic connection the Council chose to remove?

Reply

Developers of the Catford Green development, Barratt Homes, carried out an extensive design consultation with the Council to establish whether the footbridge was deliverable. Prolonged design and costing revealed that the bridge proposal was not realistic and could certainly not be achieved within the financial envelope envisaged by the Section 106 agreement. Providing a footbridge with an essential accessible ramp also proved to be impossible as the length of the ramp would have extended too far along Doggett Road to be a viable option.

Other design options were tested. One of these considered a footbridge with lift access at either end. However, the cost of this design would far exceed the available funding. A footbridge with lifts would also require significant annual expenditure for the Council to manage and maintain and residents on the Catford Green development would incur costs through their service charges for the maintenance of the lift on their side of the railway. This was determined through design conversations with Barratt at the time and was due to the different land ownerships on either side of the railway.

In September 2020, Mayor and Cabinet agreed to reallocate £1,515,537 of this S106 funding to deliver a programme of public realm and accessibility improvements to the Catford Station areas.

For further details please refer to the Mayor and Cabinet report from 16 September 2020 – Catford Regeneration Programme Approval of Phase 1 (<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s74926/Catford%20Regeneration%20Approval%20of%20Phase%201.pdf>).

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 64

Priority 5

Question asked by: Charles Reid

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

The Lee Green LTN Monitoring report appears to be misleading. It has roads missing from some tables which the council is aware was inflicted with masses of traffic during the original LTN, it reports that on Ardgowan Road and Minard Road the traffic numbers went from 13226 to 8931 and 6143 to 4118 respectively between two LTN scheme's (Table 3) but fails to mention that as shown on Table 2, the pre-scheme data for Ardgowan Road is 291 vehicles which means that the October LTN scheme resulted in an increase of vehicles of 12,935 vehicles and an increase of 8,640 vehicles in the Revised Scheme and the pre-scheme data for Minard Road was 268 vehicles which means that the October LTN resulted in an increase of vehicles of 5,875 vehicles and an increase of 3,850 on Minard Road and yet the report totally fails to report these findings. The report makes no mention on how the data from near standstill traffic has been accounted for - a fact which the council is aware was experienced widely around the LTN. Table 4 is a table with no context and no explanation as to why only 5 locations are listed when the other tables list between 11 and 29 locations. The report does not explain why bus journey times on Hither Green Lane, Torridon Road and Lewisham High Street have been excluded from the report, but Lee High Road, Brownhill Road and Burnt Ash Hill have been included. The Air Quality monitoring of the South Circular only shows two locations which are approximately 1 mile away from the LTN and yet to my knowledge there is a diffusion tube location near the Torridon Road\Brownhill junction of which the data does not appear in the report – the traffic on Torridon Road during the first scheme was horrific. It appears that every finding in the report has been has been engineered to show the LTN schemes in as positive light as possible by omitting roads and bus routes, explaining graph findings such as in figure 4 which shows an increase in bus times of 34 minutes but worded it as an over 4 minute increase. Janet Daby MP is already using the findings in this report when responding to residents. The report has been published just at the same time that residents are being asked to take part in a consultation - The overall impression is that the council is manipulating the presentation of the report to show the LTN schemes as a success. If this is not the case, then what is the explanation for so many acts of omitted data, missing roads, not reporting on increased traffic and not reporting on standstill traffic?

Reply

Due to the timescales and expectations set by central government, councils were expected to rapidly introduce measures that would reallocate roadspace to walking and cycling which meant we were unable to carry out the full range of traffic studies and preparatory work that would normally be done for such measures. This means we don't have a perfect set of monitoring data.

The data has been shown to present the information recorded. Average recordings have been presented as this provides a more balanced view over a period of time. The data has been presented to be as transparent and balanced as possible. We recognise that some of the data may not match residents lived experiences. People can use this information, should they wish, to inform their response to the public consultation, which is open until 8 August 2021 and seeks feedback about peoples experience of the LTN.

The tables are presented separately as they were recorded at different locations on the respective roads. For some data we are able to make comparisons between pre-scheme, during the original scheme and the revised scheme. For other data comparisons are not possible, but the information collected has still be shared.

The Air Quality data shown for Brownhill Road in table 10 is the data for the site at 290 Brownhill Road, which is the nearest monitoring site to Torridon Road.

Standstill traffic would have still been captured by the surveys as they were in place for a consecutive seven day period and are activated by the pressure change when vehicles travel over the pneumatic tubes in the road.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 65

Priority 5

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie McGeevor

Question

How does the Council satisfy itself that recycling collected in Lewisham by the Council's contractor isn't simply dumped in other countries?

Reply

The Council reviews operation of recycling carefully, including any contractors used. Approximately 60% of Lewisham's recyclable material stays within the UK for reprocessing and the Council's contractor only works with Environment Agency accredited and licensed facilities.

When recyclable material is sent abroad, the contractor has a robust system of traceability with regard to its supply chain and receives documentation from the companies it works with, demonstrating that reprocessing has taken place. Lewisham works closely with the recycling contractor to ensure that the correct legislation and reprocessing procedures are followed, and the Council regularly audits documentation to ensure legal compliance on a monthly basis.

There is a strict legal framework overseen and audited by the Environment Agency within which our contractor works. The contractor is periodically audited by Lewisham staff and produces documentary evidence of the reprocessing and end destinations of recyclable material collected from Lewisham.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 66

Priority 5

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Andre Bourne

Question

It is excellent news that the Deptford's Wavelengths pool is saved, but the entire Leisure centre at The Bridge has been closed, with no plans for its future. Given this loss of sporting facilities for the Bell Green and its surrounding communities, please can the cabinet member explain why Lewisham is not trying harder to protect the sports facilities of the Livesey Memorial Hall? A sports pitch has failed to be registered as Metropolitan Open Land, despite being in sporting use since the 1890.

Can Cllr Andre Bourne please come to visit the Livesey, and meet the groups that are providing valuable activities for local teenagers? In particular, the St Andrew's boxing club is delivering an excellent 'knives down, gloves up' programme, and are holding a fun day on Saturday 24 July.

Reply

The Livesey Memorial Hall is privately owned and not a council facility. It remains in use as a functioning hall and can be hired by community groups. The building is a Grade II listed building and as such the council has a responsibility to work with the owner to ensure the building is kept in good condition. Listed Building Consent was granted in 2019 for works of repair and refurbishment to the Hall, to the War memorial in front of it, and to the boundary wall to address some cracking. Both of these structures are also grade II listed. These works have not yet been carried out. Given limited conservation resources the council is currently prioritising those buildings and structures currently on the Heritage at Risk Register. The Livesey Memorial Hall is not on the Heritage at Risk Register. However we will continue to monitor the situation and encourage the owners to proceed with the consented works.

With regard to Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), there are strict criteria that have to be met in order for land to be designated as MOL. As part of the Local Plan process the council appointed independent consultants ARUP, who are specialists in this field to carry out an MOL review. The open space associated with Livesey Hall was assessed but did not meet the criteria and was not recommended to be designated. I have asked officers to contact Livesey in order to learn more about the activities that take place there and how the Council can work more closely with them.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 67

Priority 6

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

The independent report into the murder in Sydenham of Daniel Morgan uncovered institutional corruption in the Met Police. It also found that the current Met Commissioner was responsible for delaying the production of documents, evidence and access to records. Has the Mayor raised any concerns with senior Met officers about police behaviour identified in the report? If so, with whom and what was their response?

Reply

The Mayor and I meet with the Borough Commander on a regular basis and this issue will be discussed with our new Borough Commander at our next meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 68

Priority 6

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

A small number of councillors have been using social media to belittle their constituents' opinions, and misrepresent their motives and actions in questioning council schemes. How does the council's social media policy attempt to control the use of secondary twitter accounts, in particular those that are anonymous? Do councillors have to declare their personal accounts?

@LewishamYimby is particularly offensive, making wild, trolling accusations against planning objectors. The content suggests they are a councillor; given the resignation of the Leo Pollock, Southwark cabinet member for planning, for trolling residents as @SouthwarkYimby, it would be good to establish some ground rules in this area.

Reply

Councillors are expected to adhere to provisions within the Constitution relating to the acceptable use of IT and regular training is provided including on the use of social media. The Council has no right to identify owners of social media accounts other than those we operate corporately. Councillors are not obliged to disclose their personal accounts.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 69

Priority 7

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

The aims of the Council's local democracy working group are said to include making the Council "more open, more transparent and more accountable". What lessons does Cllr Bonavia believe the Council can learn from a High Court's ruling that the Council had materially misled one of its planning committees? Does the Councillor agree with Cllr Bell that the "significant errors" identified by Mrs Justice Laing were "relatively minor issues"?

Reply

The Council is reviewing procedure and internal processes in light of the judgement handed down as well as other established case law, and will respond and adjust accordingly.

The successful grounds of challenge were in relation to procedural matters and were not in relation to the nature of the proposed development itself.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 70

Priority 7

Question asked by: julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Jimi Adefiranye

Question

In the interests of transparency and good governance, can the Chair of the Standards Committee explain whether there are any rules about senior Council Officers leaving the employment of the Council then taking up work with private companies, lobbyists or private or public sector bodies or other bodies corporate to contract with or otherwise lobby the Council? In the Civil Service rules on these matters are supervised by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments - are there any similar processes in local government particularly Lewisham Council?

(In the interests of transparency and good governance, can the Chair of Standards Committee disclose how many senior Council Officers have third party transactions with the Council and how many senior Officers have declared any conflicts of interests over the last five years.

In the interests of transparency and good governance, can the Chair of Standards Committee disclose how many councillors, and ex-councillors who sat on the council in the last five years, have declared any conflicts of interests over the last five years.

Reply

There are no general legal restrictions on ex-employees and local authorities are not subject to the Business Appointment Rules, applying to ex members of the Civil Service. The extent to which an employer can restrict the activities of an ex-employee is in any case limited under restraint of trade rules in the common law. Existing employees are required to comply with Lewisham's Employee Code of Conduct, which includes obligations to act with honesty, objectivity and integrity and to declare all relevant conflicts of interest. In procuring or awarding contracts existing employees are further required to comply with the requirements of the Council's Contract Procurement Rules, which are set out in the Constitution, available on the internet

No third party transactions between Council Officers and the Council have been recorded in the period specified. All Chief Officers have declared interests in the Annual Pay Statement prepared by the Head of Human Resources and in reports agreeing the process for the appointment of a Chief Executive.

There have been numerous declarations of interest by Councillors over this period. All are fully transparent by being contained in the minutes of individual meetings and

in the personal records of individual Councillors which are both readily available on the Council's website.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 71

Priority 8

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Having being granted Rule 6 status at the OLSPN school planning inquiry, representing a group of neighbours, why I am being refused information about Archdiocese of Southwark's appeal to the High Court?

From first pointing out the planning issues in July 2017, why have I been treated as a nuisance by council and officers? The fact it took so long for Lewisham to act, and the case escalated out of control is certainly not my fault. Please can I be updated with the case's progress?

Reply

At no point has the questioner been treated as a 'nuisance' nor has there been a refusal to provide information.

Lewisham Council officers have been in regular contact with all parties regarding the Archdiocese of Southwark's decision to seek a Judicial Review of the OLSPN School planning appeal decision. The role of the Council is as an interested party only and certain information can only be provided by the court. Lewisham Officers have provided the Rule 6 party with contact details for the High Court, and of several pro bono legal organisations and that may be able to assist in securing free or low costs legal representation where required.

The Rule 6 party's participation in Judicial Review is at their discretion and would be separate to the Local Authority's involvement in the case. Council officers will continue to update interested parties when there are relevant updates to give, but liaison must take place via the High Court who have the jurisdiction in this matter.

Note

Question 37 withdrawn because the questioner did not provide their name and could not be confirmed as a resident.

Question 43 removed because it is a duplicate of question 24.