



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 29
September 2021

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 1

Priority 1

Question asked by: Michelle Bryan

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Please can you come back to me on what is going to be done to make Brockley Road safer and stop speeding vehicles as well as help drivers manoeuvre the roads safely?

Reply

Road safety is a priority for the Council and a scheme has recently been delivered near Crofton Park Station, which made changes to this section of Brockley Road. Further works are also planned to the bus stops close to Beecroft Road junction as part of improvements to public transport. These measures also contribute to improving road safety along Brockley Road.

In addition, speeds in Brockley Road continue to be subject to annual monitoring as part of the wider 20mph speed compliance monitoring programme. The results of these surveys are used to inform where future interventions may be required. The most recent traffic surveys, which were undertaken in July 2021, recorded average speeds of between 20.9mph and 25.8mph. These results are being considered in the borough-wide context in order to prioritise locations that recorded the highest average speeds.

It should be noted that speed enforcement is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police. Speed checks will be carried out by a PCSO to ensure the speeds meet the operational baseline required for regular enforcement. If the speeds meet the baseline the Police will be tasked to carry out speed enforcement at this location. If the speeds do not meet the baseline regular Police enforcement is not a sustainable solution, however the location will be considered for Community Roadwatch (CRW). CRW gives residents the opportunity to work side by side with their police teams and use speed detection equipment to identify speeding vehicles in their communities.

Warning letters will be issued where appropriate. Members of the public concerned about speeding can contact the CRW team directly and request to volunteer - CommunityRoadwatch@met.police.uk – all contacts will be forwarded to the local MPS Safer Transport Team, who will be in touch to arrange a suitable time. Indeed Crofton Park councillors have taken part in this activity recently.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 2

Priority 1

Question asked by: Martin McKee

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Given that we are seeing an acceleration of climate change, with devastating impacts on human health and the natural world, is the Council still committed to implementing all of the actions set out in its Climate Emergency Action Plan? Given the urgency of the crisis, will it consider bringing forward the target dates for implementation?

Reply

Lewisham's Climate Emergency Action Plan was approved by Mayor and Cabinet on 11 March 2020 and sets out the Council's plans to deliver on the ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030. This is an ambitious and stretching target, and while it is in line with those set by many of the other local authorities that have made declarations, it is significantly more stretching than current UK Government targets.

Research commissioned by the Council in advance of the Action Plan estimated that the cost of achieving the target was at least £1.6bn. As the Council is responsible for less than 3% of the borough's measurable emissions it is clear that achieving the ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030 is not something the Council can deliver alone. That is why 'Inspiring, Influencing and Lobbying' was a key theme within Lewisham's Action Plan. The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), which the UK hosts in November, is an opportunity for all organisations and individuals to call for greater action at every level of society.

The Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, and the Action Plan that followed, were a recognition and response to the urgent need for action to cut carbon emissions. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, described by UN Secretary-General António Guterres as a "code red warning for humanity" is a further re-statement of the concerns that drove the Climate Emergency agenda back in 2019 when Lewisham Council first made its declaration. The Council has continued to seek new opportunities to deliver on the principles and objectives from the Climate Emergency Action Plan published in March 2020, responding to the changes brought about by the impact of COVID19 as well as new funding opportunities for investment in Council buildings, schools and housing. The response to the Climate Emergency is a fundamental part of our Future Lewisham programme for our borough's recovery from the pandemic, an opportunity to continue to embed action on climate change and the local environment across the Council's work.

Updates on the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan are scheduled to be discussed by the Sustainable Development Select Committee and Mayor and Cabinet before the end of the financial year. This will be an opportunity for the Council to set out how our plans have evolved since the Action Plan was published and our priorities going forward.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 3

Priority 1

Question asked by: Ian Leadbetter

Relevant Directorate: Corporate Resources

Member to reply: Councillor Amanda De Ryk

Question

- Is the council actively considering the issuing of a S114 notice, effectively declaring itself bankrupt?
- Is the council seeking a capitalisation direction from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to enable it to achieve a balanced budget in 2021/22?
- Is the council involved in formal or informal discussions with the MHCLG which may lead it to seek a capitalisation direction in the coming months?

Reply

The Council continually monitors its financial risks and I am confident that we have no need of issuing a s114 notice at this time. Furthermore, the Council is not seeking a capitalisation direction in respect of achieving a balanced budget for 2021/22. Nor is the Council currently involved in formal or informal discussions with the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government which may lead to the seeking of a capital direction in the coming months.

Local authorities have struggled after 10 years of funding cuts from central government. Lack of funding is not an issue unique to Lewisham. We are aware of Croydon Council last year declaring itself bankrupt. However, Lewisham Council has taken all reasonable steps to monitor financial risks to prevent this from happening.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 4

Priority 1

Question asked by: Clive Lees

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

What intention has the Council regarding the long-standing (1 year plus) water leak in Beckenham Place Park by the Westgate Road entrance?

Reply

Officers are aware of the leaking pipe and have established the source of the leak. Arrangements have been made for a contractor to visit site and repair the leaking pipe.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 5

Priority 1

Question asked by: Natalie Berg

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Lewisham has the lowest level of segregated cycling routes in inner London. The current manifesto commitment to provide a segregated cycling route from Downham to Deptford is therefore an extremely important one. What progress has been made on this and does the Mayor intend to honour the manifesto pledge? Please can you also share the timescales?

Reply

As part of our priorities to make Lewisham greener we have been working with TfL to provide a new segregated cycle route connecting Downham to Deptford. Unfortunately this work has been affected by the pandemic due to the impact on TfL finances and a number of TfL staff being furloughed.

Providing segregated facilities on this key route remains a Council priority and we will continue to work collaboratively with TfL on this project. This will be subject to a longer term funding agreement being secured between Government and TfL.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 6

Priority 1

Question asked by: Phil Bridger

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Albion Way notoriously has an issue with idling cars and taxis - vehicles waiting to pick people up from shopping trips to Lewisham Town centre rather than using the various car parks or walking etc.

Of the tens of vehicles, including taxis, that sit parked with engines idling on this road daily - how many tickets, year to date, have been issued by the council for this specific infringement?

Reply

I would like to thank Mr Bridger for raising this important question. Engine idling is a London-wide issue, which authorities are working towards tackling and enforcing against. It is common for motorists to drive away once they spot our Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO) so it can be challenging to enforce some vehicles. Furthermore, it is common practice for CEOs to observe and request motorists to switch off engines in the first instance. Only if the drivers do not take heed, a PCN will be issued, though on the whole motorists do comply.

The Council has issued 17 Penalty Charge Notices for parking with engine running where prohibited. CEOs regularly attend Albion Way and Council officers have requested that they focus on enhanced enforcement against idling.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 7

Priority 1

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

As elected members for the London borough of Lewisham (local councillors) sit on official Planning committees does the council ensure a certain level of training and education for such appointees?

Are the members of such committees hearing Planning Applications trained and educated in Planning Law, the National Policy Framework, the London Plan, the Lewisham Local Plan, Building Regulations and Design Codes?

What levels are expected to be attained in each case?

Who organises and carries out such training and ensures that councillors become fully cognisant of the affairs they are judging?

Reply

Elected members for planning committees are provided with training prior to sitting on Planning Committees with regular training provided covering relevant planning law and policies. These sessions are attended by Members and the Director of Planning, Head of Development Management and Senior Planning Lawyers. Members are also provided with briefings as legislation is updated.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 8

Priority 1

Question asked by: Karen Pratt

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

What is the timetable for decision-making concerning the Lee Green LTN and what criteria will be used by the Mayor in making any decision.

Reply

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 9

Priority 1

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

With reference to Q44 of the last Council meeting (207.21) and the Council's potential 16 properties in Creekside Village East, when is the review of all options concerning the properties expected to report? What is the remit of the review? When will the results be published? Will the review include a cost benefit analysis of letting the properties at a social rent over private sector rent?

Question 44 at the July council meeting: 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.

Reply

The developer is still finalising the s106 agreement and delivery is not anticipated until late 2023. It is therefore too far away to complete a full analysis and make a recommendation on use of the residential accommodation. When we get closer to delivery and handover, we will have a better understanding of rental income (both social and private) and demand for those particular units. We can then make a decision on use taking into account grant rates, build costs, the programme, and what is in the best interests of Lewisham residents.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 10

Priority 1

Question asked by: Joan Sakkas

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

I understand there has been an impact study on the surrounding roads where LTNs have been implemented. My particular concern is Lee Road and Blackheath Village. When were these undertaken and what are the results, so would like timings and dates?

In addition, the dates and timings of the alterations in Traffic light sequencing on the Lee Green/Eltham Road/Lee High Road?

Reply

We have implemented one trial Low Traffic Neighbourhood in the borough which is in the Lewisham and Lee Green area. Since this Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) has been implemented the Council has been undertaking monitoring to understand how the LTN is operating and its impact. This monitoring includes some roads adjacent to the LTN. The details and results of the monitoring undertaken is available on the Council's website at <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/roads-and-transport/tell-us-what-you-think-of-the-lewisham-and-lee-green-low-traffic-neighbourhood>.

In relation to the traffic signal changes, Transport for London is the traffic signal authority for London and this information has been requested from them.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 11

Priority 1

Question asked by: Kate Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

During the last few months there has been a rise of HMOs and other such intensive uses in Catford South. What is the Council doing to ensure these properties will be managed properly so ensuring the safety, welfare and amenity of both tenants and neighbours?

Reply

Currently, Lewisham has two licensing schemes, and one forthcoming scheme: National Mandatory Scheme – for properties with at least five people living in at least two households. There are some exceptions to this, such as properties managed by Registered Social Landlords and flats in large purpose built blocks.

Current Additional Scheme – for properties above commercial premises occupied by at least three people living in at least two households. Some of the flats in large purpose built blocks which are outside the National Mandatory Scheme fall into this. Forthcoming Additional Scheme - will be launched in October 2021, and will go live in April 2022. It will take in HMOs in the borough that are not covered by the mandatory scheme.

Licensed properties must conform to our licensing standards and every HMO is inspected before the licence is issued.

All HMO properties have to comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 (legislation.gov.uk), regardless of whether they are licensed. These cover safety and standards within the property, as well as issues like tidy gardens and adequate provision of bins.

The council's rogue landlord team can review evidence of poor management, investigate, and build a case for prosecution where this is necessary. The service can be contacted via rogue.landlords@lewisham.gov.uk and 0208 314 9285.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 12

Priority 1

Question asked by: Sarah Montgomery

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Why has Lewisham Council not included in its analysis data from all roads that border the Lee Green LTN where that data is available, such as Weigall Road, Horn Park Lane and will it commit to obtaining such data updating its assessment in the light of this?

Reply

The scheme was first introduced at short notice, in response to the pandemic, with the Government encouraging councils to urgently put measures like low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) in place.

Due to the timescales and expectations set by central government, councils did not have time to consult on these changes and were expected to rapidly introduce measures that would achieve these results, without the full range of traffic studies and preparatory work that would normally be done for such proposals. As such, we do not have a perfect set of monitoring data, but provided a summary of the data we have within the consultation as well as a more detailed monitoring report.

This data will be used with the consultation results, which are currently being analysed, and will form part of the formal review of the original and revised Lewisham and Lee Green LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 13

Priority 1

Question asked by: Andrew Brown

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Is the Council aware of the impact the revised Lewisham and Lee Green LTN is having on residents of Leahurst Road? Residents are experiencing higher traffic volumes, increased speeds and larger vehicles using the road. These factors are making the road more dangerous to pedestrians especially school children. What changes will the council be making to the scheme to address these problems?

Reply

The Council has recently undertaken a consultation with residents on the future of the LTN. This has included providing traffic and air quality data and a range of questions to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 14

Priority 1

Question asked by: Victoria Thompson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

There has been a huge increase in traffic down Leahurst Road in Hither Green since the revised LTN was implemented, particularly now schools have returned and there is a rise in commuting traffic again. There are 2 school streets on this road. What has been planned to reduce speeding and emissions past the 2 schools on this road?

Reply

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the LTN. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 15

Priority 1

Question asked by: Eric Kentley

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

According to the Council's consultation document regarding charging for motorcycle parking, Introducing motorcycle permits is expected to generate in the region of £40k income per annum, and the introduction of emission-based charging for short-stay parking is expected to generate £45k income in 2022/23.

Irrespective of any purported environmental benefits of creating a hostile environment for motorcycling, this seems optimistic. Could the Council provide details of how these estimates were arrived at and indicate whether, after the first year of operation, ratepayers will be expected to subsidise the scheme if the cost of running the charging regime is greater than the income?

Reply

The two figures of £40,000 for the proposed introduction of motorcycle permits and £45,000 for short stay parking charges is a budgetary figure only and is not a target. If the scheme is introduced and the income is lower than the estimated figure, ratepayers will not be expected to subsidise the figure. The key aims of the proposals to introduce both emissions-based permits for motorcycles and short stay parking charges are to align with the Council's target to be carbon neutral by 2030, and to reduce the amount of harmful pollutants within the borough. The proposals also aim to encourage the uptake of lesser polluting vehicles.

At the end of each financial year any deficit in the account shall be made good out of the general fund and any surplus must be either carried forward to the following year or applied for all or any of a number of specific purposes as specified in Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). This includes initiatives such as freedom passes for disabled people and people over 60.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 16

Priority 1

Question asked by: Diana Cashin

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

According to the Newshopper, on 26 February 2020 a motion was passed by Lewisham Council to launch a new approach to tackle fly-tipping.

The current waste management strategy consultation document makes very little reference to fly tipping (except to say there will be zero tolerance), so what exactly is this new approach, and how is its success being measured?

Reply

The motion passed in February 2020 was to investigate the cost of a new approach to tackle fly-tipping.

The Council is committed to tackling the small minority of people who engage in anti-social behaviour to the detriment of local people/communities.

A team of enforcement officers has been established to tackle enviro-crime including fly tipping which blights our streets and impacts on local people and businesses. The officers search rubbish to gather evidence which can result in the offender being issued with a fixed penalty notice (£400 for fly-tipping) or prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

The enforcement team have issued over 200 fixed penalty notices since July 2021 for a range of offences including fly tipping, litter and related offences. It is anticipated that the robust, pro-active enforcement approach will over time reduce the incidents of fly tipping in the borough. Income raised through the payment of fixed penalty notices is re-invested into the service.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 17

Priority 1

Question asked by: Tim Collingridge

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

For several years the council has been successfully rolling-out on-street bike storage facilities in the form of Bikehangers. These are normally funded via the TfL funded Local Implementation Plan (LIP). There is pent-up demand for more of these to be deployed across the borough with the ongoing need for Hangers being a regular feature in NCIL ward consultations e.g. in Lewisham Central, Perry Vale, Grove Park and Lee Green.

Can the Council confirm how much funding has been awarded by TfL in the current LIP which runs to December 2021? Would the Mayor also look at using additional funding sources to meet these current high levels of demand e.g. Highways Budget, LBL's Capital Programme or the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) for Air Quality Initiatives?

Reply

The funding requests that TfL received from boroughs for the LIP funding available to 11 December 2021 exceeded the amount available. In addition funding was only available for schemes that met specified criteria and priorities. Unfortunately this meant that Lewisham was not allocated any LIP funding for the secure cycle parking programme for this period.

However, at the start of the pandemic the roll out of cycle hangars was paused and we have been working with our provider to restart the delivery on site, which includes a further 29 cycle hangars across the borough. In addition, alternative sources of funding will be explored, such as section 106 funding, to deliver additional secure cycle parking facilities.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 18

Priority 1

Question asked by: William Phillips

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

The revised LTN which reopened Leahurst Road in SE13 has resulted in significant increased traffic, speeding and pollution (this was bore out in the councils own research).

Why has Leahurst Road (a highly residential road with 2 schools on it) bore the brunt of the LTN revised changes?

Who in Lewisham Council took the decision to reopen Leahurst Road and with what data points as a decision maker?

Why were the residents and schools on the road not consulted and allowed a decision on the revision?

Reply

The original scheme was implemented in July 2020. The Council listened to concerns raised by residents and responded to perceived increases in traffic levels and increased bus journey times and made changes to the LTN in November 2020, which opened some of the restrictions to traffic.

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the LTN. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 19

Priority 1

Question asked by: David Peet

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

I understand that Leahurst Road was allocated funding for new bicycle storage hangers. Please confirm when they are going to be installed and made available to the residents.

Reply

Lewisham Council is committed to promoting cycling through the increased provision of secure cycle parking across the borough. There is a secure cycle hanger planned for Longhurst Road, not Leahurst Road. A cycle hangar was requested for Leahurst Road but due to the criteria relating to access, safety, drainage and other elements, no suitable location near to where the request was made could be identified for a cycle hangar to be installed.

If further requests for a secure cycle hangar on Leahurst Road have been made, then they will be logged and considered for future delivery as part of the assessment and prioritisations of all requests, when funding is available. Given the previous unsuccessful request for Leahurst Road it may be that a site near to this road may be suitable to satisfy the demand and meet the relevant criteria.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 20

Priority 1

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

The LTN experiment in Lee Green Ward introduced without consultation to the locality was effected under what was described as 'Emergency Covid measures' has caused massive disruption to car-owning residents in the area attempting to drive from one part of the locality to another. This has forced local residents to add congestion to the already congested arterial roads such as Lee High Road adding unnecessary journey times, petrol usage and effluent increases by residents in the process.

Added to this, TfL decided to narrow the arterial roads by introducing a 24hr Bus Lane restriction on the approach to Lee Green Traffic Lighted junction with Burnt Ash Road.

This process has caused increased congestion leading to unnecessary additions to poor air quality and the release of even more dreaded green-house gasses than were present prior to the LTN being introduced.

Why are we still waiting for all these problems to be resolved, as the council assured residents remedies would be forthcoming?

When can residents in these areas be confident their representatives in Council will remove these local road barriers which are adding to pollution, ill-health and time-consuming journey-times whilst traversing relatively short distances within their Borough?

Reply

The Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) was first introduced in July 2020. At the time, in response to the pandemic, the Government was encouraging councils to urgently put measures like LTNs in place.

Due to the timescales and expectations set by central government, councils did not have time to consult on these changes and were expected to rapidly introduce measures that would achieve these results, without the full range of traffic studies and preparatory work that would normally be done for such proposals.

The scheme was implemented in July 2020. The Council listened to concerns raised by residents and responded to perceived increases in traffic levels and increased

bus journey times and made changes to the LTN in November 2020, which opened some of the restrictions to traffic.

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the LTN. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 23

Priority 1

Question asked by: Sian Hill

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

I live on Lee Road and I am very concerned about the level of traffic on the road and the resultant pollution and the speed at which the traffic travels (when it can).

The volume of traffic on Lee Road has increased over time (we have lived here for almost 30 years) but has become significantly worse since the introduction of the LTNs. What is the council's plan to alleviate the traffic and improve air quality specifically on Lee Road and surrounding larger roads? What does the council plan to do to enforce the speed restrictions on Lee Road and improve safety for residents?

Reply

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the one Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) in the borough which is in the Lewisham and Lee Green area. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

It should be noted that speed enforcement is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Police. Speed checks will be carried out by a PCSO to ensure the speeds meet the operational baseline required for regular enforcement. If the speeds meet the baseline the Police will be tasked to carry out speed enforcement at this location. If the speeds do not meet the baseline regular Police enforcement is not a sustainable solution, however the location will be considered for Community Roadwatch (CRW). CRW gives residents the opportunity to work side by side with their police teams and use speed detection equipment to identify speeding vehicles in their communities.

Warning letters will be issued where appropriate. Members of the public concerned about speeding can contact the CRW team directly and request to volunteer - CommunityRoadwatch@met.police.uk – all contacts will be forwarded to the local MPS Safer Transport Team, who will be in touch to arrange a suitable time.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 24

Priority 1

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

The Livesey Memorial Hall, consisting of three nationally listed structures and its sports grounds, is run as a sports and social club, and registered as an Asset of Community Value for the Bell Green area. Its landlord, Kier, are on the point of selling the Livesey to a property developer, despite the ACV protection. They wish to redevelop the sports grounds, which are incredibly precious, given the closure of The Bridge leisure centre. Please can I have assurances that Lewisham intends to protect this important community hall, and its sports grounds? Will the council support the local community in trying to ensure the Livesey thrives as a community resource? Is it willing to see a live music, performance and arts space lost, in Lewisham's year as Borough of Culture?

Reply

The Livesey Memorial Hall is a much loved and valued community space, recognised as an Asset of Community Value by the Council. Officers were made aware of a proposed sale of the building and have made contact with the owner. We are satisfied on the basis of the information provided by the owner that the sale is not one which requires formal notification to the Council nor would it give rise to the 'community right to bid'. It is understood that any proposed sale will include an ongoing lease which ensures the community use of the venue.

The Council will continue to support the community who want to see this important asset retained and available for their use.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 25

Priority 1

Question asked by: Adam Syed

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

By opening up the LTN, Leahurst Road has been sacrificed by Lewisham Council to be the relief road for major main roads. Traffic is certainly worse than when readings were taken in February and it'll likely continue to worsen as drivers get used to using it as a rat-run. This problem isn't going away. What measures will the Council take to reduce traffic and speed down this road, to protect the health and safety of their own residents and schoolchildren?

Secondly, this is clearly no longer an LTN. Why does the Council continue to refer to it as one?

Reply

The original scheme was implemented in July 2020. The Council listened to concerns raised by residents and responded to perceived increases in traffic levels and increased bus journey times and made changes to the trial Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) in Lewisham and Lee Green in November 2020, which opened some of the restrictions to people driving through the area.

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the LTN. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 26

Priority 1

Question asked by: Trina Lynskey

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Lewisham Council's webpage on Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) claims the council is "taking a pioneering move to make sure the most deprived areas in the borough get extra money". A table of the sums involved was presented in an 'NCIL Strategy' report to Mayor & Cabinet on 5/6/19 (P7).

Can the council explain why, if the aim of this scheme is to ensure the most deprived areas get "extra money", the six wealthiest wards (tier 1) contribute only £30,969.51, the 6 middle wards (Tier 2) contribute nothing but receive an additional £75,485.58 while the 6 most deprived wards (Tier 3) contribute £613,096.06 to this scheme?

Can the council explain how this NCIL scheme delivers on its objectives when only half of the most deprived wards in Lewisham (Bellingham, Downham, Whitefoot) receive "extra money" while Evelyn, New Cross and Rushey Green see reductions in excess of £100k with Lewisham's most deprived ward, Evelyn, losing £479,711.58 to the scheme?

Why are the most affluent wards in the borough (Lee Green, Catford South, Crofton Park) getting an overall increase in NCIL in what looks like a regressive policy using a blunt mechanism that redirects funding away from some of the most deprived communities not just in Lewisham but in the country?

Will the council publish an updated table similar to the one created in 2019 to take account of further CIL accrued since 2019

Reply

At its meeting on 5th June 2019 Mayor and Cabinet and subsequently on 24th July 2019, the Council approved Lewisham's Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) strategy.

This included approving the allocation of 25% of CIL collected to the NCIL process instead of the statutory minimum of 15%. This uplift of an additional 10% towards NCIL equated to an additional circa £928,000 (CIL receipts 2015/16-2017/18) being allocated by Lewisham Council to fund community projects.

At the above meetings M&C and Council also agreed on the redistribution strategy with a distribution of 50% collected in ward retained by the ward, 25% allocated

based on the ranking of wards by Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and 25% allocated to a borough wide fund.

This distribution was agreed following meetings with all members and the ward assembly group and was taken forward as an appropriate compromise to ensure a more even distribution of NCIL funding and an acknowledgement that the impact of development in Lewisham is not confined on a ward basis alone. Lewisham Council is the first local authority to allocate additional money to areas using a deprivation indicator.

An updated table was presented to Mayor and Cabinet at its meeting on the 14th September 2021.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 28

Priority 1

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Since 2008 there has been national planning guidance relating to the paving over of most front gardens. [pavingfrontgardens.pdf](#) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](#) Please set out (a) what steps Lewisham Council takes to promote awareness of this guidance especially as it can play a role in reducing flooding, and (b) the details of the enforcement action that has been taken in the recent years against any properties which have failed to observe this guidance. If Lewisham Council has records of the number of enforcement actions taken please state the specific number of cases in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Reply

Most works to hard pave front gardens are permitted development, outside of the control of the Council. In those instances where planning permission is required, the Council has an adopted Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2019) which provides best practice guidance for Lewisham residents. This sets out on page 85 that the Council will generally resist turning front gardens into areas of hard standing. If demonstrated to be acceptable, hard surfacing should be in permeable materials, which incorporate sustainable drainage systems.

No enforcement notices were issued between 2019-2021 for front gardens and hardstanding. An average of 3-4 cases are opened each year, with the advice being given to make a planning application, and that any paving should be permeable in order to be considered acceptable.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 30

Priority 1

Question asked by: Tom Parry

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

The Mayor recently announced £700k for the “Deptford Play Project”. What is the source of this funding? If it is Section 106 which developments has it come from? How will the funding be split across the three parks to benefit (Evelyn Green, Sayes Court Park, Folkestone Gardens)? Where can residents view a register of interests to ensure transparency in allocation of council funding?

Reply

I am pleased to confirm that a total of almost £720k has been released from various Section 106 planning agreements that will allow us to invest in new children’s play equipment and other facilities at:

Folkestone Gardens, £190k of Section 106 contributions were identified from:

- Faircharm Trading Estate, Creekside, SE8 3DX
- Kender Phase 4, New Cross
- 29 Pomeroy Street SE14 5BW
- 180 Brockley Road
- Lewisham Central "Public Realm Contribution"
- Land to the rear of 39-53 Honor Oak Road and 15-17A Tyson Road, Forest Hill, SE23 3AA

Sayes Court Park, £148k of Section 106 contributions were identified from:

- Convoys Wharf Development

Evelyn Green, £379k of Section 106 contributions were identified from:

- Cannon Wharf Business Centre, 35 Evelyn Street, London
- Marine Wharf West, Plough Way, London SE16 7UE
- Kender Phase 4
- 7-17 Yeoman Street
- Faircharm Trading Estate, Creekside, Deptford SE8 3DX
- The Deptford Project
- Tanner's Hill, London SE8
- Vacant land to the north and 54B Trundley's Road, Deptford SE8 5JG
- Hazelhurst Court, Beckenham Hill Road, Catford SE6 3AG
- Goldsmiths College
- 7-17 Yeoman Street

Evelyn Green is also set to benefit from an upgraded Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and a new outdoor gym that will offer opportunities for increased physical activity for citizens of all ages.

Section 106 funding is allocated by the Council's Regeneration Capital Project Delivery Board (RCPDB). This board is made up of senior Council officers who ensure that all section 106 allocations are made based on robust scrutiny of Project Initiation Documents (PID) and the relevant legal agreements as set out within each Section 106 agreement.

Information about the registers we keep and how to access them can be found on the council's website at:

<https://lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil/aboutthecouncil/access-to-information/freedom-of-information-act/publication-scheme/lists-and-registers>

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 31

Priority 1

Question asked by: Mark Moran

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Is it true that Lewisham Council are developing a play strategy in 2022? If so why are just 3 of Evelyn playgrounds suddenly being developed in haste before all playgrounds can benefit from a full strategy informed by the latest developments in play and sustainability? Why can't we have the best possible opportunities for Evelyn playgrounds and parks just like the rest of the borough?

Reply

Lewisham will be developing a Play Strategy in 2022. This strategy will provide us with a good understanding of the benefits and importance of play, and a clear picture of current play opportunities and spaces in the borough.

Developed in partnership with children, families and communities, we also aim for the strategy to set out what is important to us in Lewisham and how we will ensure equal opportunities of access to high quality play for all.

The scope of the strategy will go way beyond facilities in parks covering Children and Family Centres, schools, youth venues and adventure playgrounds and the many sports and activity clubs we have in the borough.

The playground improvements proposed for Evelyn Green, Sayes Court Park and Folkestone Gardens have been developed over considerable time and all work does not cease ahead of the strategy. These improvements have long been the aspiration of various local stakeholder groups including Deptford Folk, the Friends of Sayes Court Park, Evelyn Parents, Evelyn Estate TRA (ETRA) and the Borough's three Mayoresses.

Listening to these aspirations of the Evelyn community, officers have worked hard to identify the appropriate section106 planning agreements to allow us to make the proposed improvements and there is no desire to delay progress any longer and deprive the families who live in the area of the best opportunities to enjoy the new facilities as soon as reasonably possible.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 33

Priority 1

Question asked by: Cheryl McLeod

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

The valuations in the Council's 2020/21 accounts in relation to the Catford Regeneration Partnership Limited were carried out by Wilks Head and Eve Chartered Surveyors and Town Planners. The Council have said that their valuation report has been prepared under the terms and definitions set out in the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors RICS Valuation – Professional Standards issued in January 2014 (The Red Book), revised April 2015 and that they have concluded that a £2.122m increase in value from 2019/20 is justified, how is this statement justified? Will the Cabinet Member publish the report?

Reply

The report contains confidential and commercially sensitive information and therefore will not be published. The report, including the valuation, was prepared by qualified professional experts in this field and the council is confident in their expertise and conclusions.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 34

Priority 1

Question asked by: Georgia Smith

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

In January 2020 Lewisham enacted a Homes of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Article 4 Direction for Lewisham's southern wards (Bellingham, Downham, Grove Park and Whitefoot). This removed permitted development rights for the change of use of family homes into small HMOs (where between three and six unrelated people share basic amenities, such as a kitchen or bathroom).

Does Lewisham collect comprehensive data on the volume of HMOs in the north of the borough? How many HMOs are there in Evelyn Ward? Does the Council believe other private rented properties in Evelyn may be operating as HMOs? What proportion of street properties in Evelyn are HMOs? How many street properties have been converted to HMOs in Evelyn Ward in the last 24 months?

Evelyn and New Cross have the highest levels of deprivation in the borough, a relative scarcity of street level family homes, a near-total absence of controlled parking, and problems with the management of household waste and flytipping across both wards. The area is also undergoing development (primarily small flats unsuitable for families) at a scale that exceeds all other wards combined and that is placing increasing pressure on the area's public amenities. This development is occurring in the absence of a comprehensive masterplan.

The council can extend an HMO Article 4 Direction to the north of the borough if it believes the growth of HMOs presents a threat to local amenity or prejudices the proper planning of an area. Will the Council consult on introducing a non-immediate HMO Article 4 Direction in the north of the borough? Alternatively, in recognition of the scale and pace of development already underway, will the Council consider introducing an immediate Direction?

Reply

1) Lewisham collects data on the number of licensed properties in the borough. In Evelyn ward, there are currently 97 licensed properties, with 9 licenses in the system being processed.

2) Officers conducted a street survey in Evelyn pre lockdown, and this highlighted that there were a number of HMOs with three or four residents. This group of properties, along with HMOs of any size in large purpose built blocks of flats, are not licensable under any scheme in Lewisham at present. Lewisham Council will be

launching a further additional licensing scheme in October 2021 that will take in all of these properties throughout the borough once it goes live in April 2022.

3) The private rented sector (both HMO and self-contained privately rented housing) in Evelyn Ward is estimated to be 31.09% of all stock in our recent stock survey. We do not have comprehensive data showing which properties are HMOs in the north of the borough, or throughout the borough generally. It is part of the Licensing Team's duties to locate these properties and to raise housing and management standards by bringing them into licensing.

4) We do not collate information about street properties being converted. This is because these properties only become HMOs within the definition applied by Housing Act 2004 when they are occupied, and we have no power to deal with them before then. Further, this information is not collected as conversion to a small HMO is permitted development and developers can use private companies to provide the Building Control Certificate of Completion.

5) The Council will be updating the Borough wide HMO evidence base to see if there is a justification for an extended article 4 Direction. This is an involved piece of work, requiring the approval of the Secretary of State, but additional officer resource has been employed in the Planning Service to undertake this work. Due to the rules around financial compensation, the Council would be unable to introduce an immediate Article 4 Direction.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 36

Priority 1

Question asked by: Moira Kerrane

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Andre Bourne

Question

What was the total cost of the art installation along Woodpecker Road and Folkestone Gardens? How was it funded? Was there an open tendering process when and how did this take place were submissions from BAME or female artists considered?

Reply

The art installation has been delivered as part of the Deptford Parks Liveable Neighbourhood scheme, which is being funded by TfL Liveable Neighbourhood grant funding. The cost of the artist's commission was approximately £36,000. Work started on the production of the art work in November 2019. However, completion was affected by the pandemic and the impact on TfL funding, which resulted in Liveable Neighbourhood funding being suspended. The scheme was progressed when funding became available again. As the project was funded by TFL, there was no formal tendering process required.

The work was commissioned utilising framework agreements available to the Council.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 37

Priority 1

Question asked by: David Almond

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Lewisham Council has been heavily involved with the planning applications for Scott House. What are the next stages for its redevelopment, dates, times, scheduling?

Reply

The Scott House scheme is a private development being undertaken by the developer Buxton Homes. Lewisham Council's involvement with the Scott House planning application has been limited to its negotiation and assessment. The scheme has a three year planning permission but the Council have no specific details about the developer's detailed plans and scheduling for the construction at this stage.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 38

Priority 1

Question asked by: Sarah Gregory

Relevant Directorate: Children & Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Barnham

Question

The budget for school transport for children with special educational needs has been cut, leaving some children travelling in taxis with a driver and no escort. This is a serious safeguarding concern. Other children are now travelling for double the length of time indicated in government guidance. What plans does Lewisham have to ensure that children are transported to school safely and in compliance with this guidance?

Reply

The safety and wellbeing of our children and young people is paramount, not least in cases where they have special educational or health needs which merit particular support. In recent years, additional funding has been added to the SEN home to school travel assistance budget, to address increasing demand. Against that background, there is this year a small savings target against that higher level of spending. Even so, spending this year is expected to be 53% higher than the budget for last financial year.

Lewisham currently transports over 900 children and young people. Some of those young people who are of secondary school age will travel in taxis without an escort with a risk assessment in place. Promoting young people's independence is crucial to improving life opportunities. Many of these young people will progress onto independent travel training further enhancing their life opportunities. Any child or young person who requires an escort because of their special education or health needs will have an escort.

The travel co-ordination team aim for all travel assistance journeys to be within the statutory guidance (45 minutes for primary age and 75 minutes for secondary age). Some children and young people are travelling a significant distance from Lewisham to their school or college at rush hour and this can mean that at times journeys can take longer than the guidance suggests, usually due to traffic congestion. Whilst the guidance sets out best practice timescales it does acknowledge that for children with SEN and/or disabilities because their journeys may be more complex to keep within the recommended timescale may not always be possible. The aim is to have the majority of Lewisham children and young people educated in borough so children and young people are not having to travel a significant distance from their home to their school or college.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 39

Priority 2

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Corporate Resources

Member to reply: Councillor Kevin Bonavia

Question

Would the Council advise what are the times of opening to the public of Lewisham Town Hall and Laurence House are currently in view of earlier closures due to the Pandemic?

Have these times been clearly advertised and/or put on the Mayor's Alert programme?

Reply

Laurence House closed to the public in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and has remained closed throughout the pandemic. Work is currently underway to remodel the building to support the Council's new ways of working, ensuring it is COVID-secure and meets the needs of residents and our staff. We will ensure updates and information about this is shared with residents through the Council's communications channels, including the council website and emails to residents.

The Civic Suite has re-opened for council meetings held in public which are currently conducted with Covid-secure measures in place. The Old Town Hall is open and currently occupied by the NHS and a number of public sector and voluntary and community sector organisations

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 40

Priority 2

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

In the last 5 years how many planning applications approved by the Council have been the subject of a judicial review? How many of those judicial reviews were instigated by those who objected to the original application? Of the latter how many resulted in the approval being quashed by the High Court? In how many of the cases that were quashed did the presiding judge state that the Council had provided materially misleading information to a planning committee?

Reply

There have been 4 cases relating to planning applications approved by the Council subject to Judicial Review in the last 5 years. 3 of these cases were instigated by those who objected to the original application.

Of those 4 cases subject to Judicial Review, 2 decisions were quashed by the High Court.

Of those cases, 1 decision for the development at Mais House was quashed as the court considered that the Council had provided material which misled the Planning Committee. The 4 cases that have been subject to Judicial Review in the last 5 years make up a very small proportion of all planning applications the Council receives.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 41

Priority 2

Question asked by: Kate Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

As Councillors will be aware there has been, during the pandemic a rise in crime including drug dealing. In Catford South as in other areas this is a cause of much concern especially the problems related to dealers and users waiting for their drops and runners leaving their debris behind them. The police are working with the residents and keeping them informed. What active co-operation and co-ordination is there between the Council and the police and how effective is it?

Reply

The Council and the Police cooperate and coordinate across a huge range of activities ranging from formal meetings such as Safeguarding Boards to operational issues such as Safer Neighbourhood Teams engagement.

In addition, there are regular operational tasking meetings three times a week and, on a day to day basis, issues are addressed in partnership with the police. The exact impact of this coordination is difficult to accurately measure, but the Council and the Police have a good working partnership, assisting and supporting each other to address crime and antisocial behaviour.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 43

Priority 2

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

The Royal Borough of Greenwich have indicated they wish to extend the Santander cycle hire scheme into their borough.

Does Lewisham Council share the objective of extending the Santander cycle hire across the north of the borough, which if part of a wider expansion scheme to Greenwich would lead to a much welcome expansion of the scheme and provide a valuable alternative to car journeys in south east London so helping to reduce congestion and air pollution. Such an expansion would also maximise the benefits of the Cycleway 4.

If Lewisham Council does support an expansion of the Santander cycle hire scheme please set out what correspondence that the Mayor or any cabinet member has entered into with (a) TfL officers, (b) Heidi Alexander, the Deputy Mayor Transport, (c) Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, and (d) the leader or any cabinet member of Greenwich Council.

Reply

We recognise the potential benefits of extending the Santander cycle hire scheme to the north of the borough as part of a wider expansion . However, we also acknowledge the financial constraints that TfL are experiencing and the uncertainty of future funding. Therefore alternative sources of funding for any expansion would need to be identified.

Lewisham is committed to promoting cycling through our own bike-loan scheme, which has recently been improved, and are also exploring the potential for a dockless bike hire scheme to operate in the borough.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 44

Priority 2

Question asked by: Moira Kerrane

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Chris Best

Question

According to the NHS: "Alcohol contributes to a wide range of conditions including cardiovascular disease, cancer and liver disease, as well as harm from accidents, violence and self-harm". Lewisham Council is investing over £3m in the Catford Constitutional Club. Will Lewisham Council be investing in more pubs/bars across the borough in future? How much did Lewisham Council, as a public health authority, invest in services around alcohol related harm last year?

Reply

The Council invested £3.7m overall in an integrated treatment system for drugs and alcohol, £3.4m of which is a Public Health grant. The overall budget is integrated with drugs and alcohol and includes detox and rehabilitation, community services and hospital liaison. Around 1 in 3 service users in structured treatment has an alcohol need.

Pubs and bars are one element of our Evening and Night Time Economy Vision, agreed by the Mayor and Cabinet in June 2019. We are keen to also promote other evening and night time opportunities including cultural and leisure activities.

The hospitality sector is an important contributor to the Lewisham economy, providing around 6,000 direct jobs plus many more in the supply chains. The sector was hard hit by the economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The council provided significant support through direct grants, business advice and our Shop Safe, Shop Local campaign.

The funding you mention is combined GLA Good Growth/ LBL match funding to refurbish the former Catford Constitutional Club (CCC) and to deliver a planning application to enable the delivery of a mixed use site on the existing Thomas Lane car park to be known as Thomas Lane Yard.

The project aims to achieve significant outputs including, new jobs, apprenticeships, training and business support objectives as well as new public realm. The Thomas Lane Yard scheme can also deliver 100 new homes of which 50% would be affordable, 40 homes in all would be at social rent. In addition, the garden of the CCC would be set within the wider development site, integrating both spaces. The project is one of the first phases to be delivered of the wider Catford Town Centre Framework which sets the vision for the regeneration of Catford and will help guide and inform future planning applications for the town centre. Identified by the

Mayor of London as a Growth Opportunity Area, Catford has capacity to deliver 2,700 new homes over the next couple of decades.

Informed by over 3000 comments made by the public over a four year period, the Framework document was built on three pillars: a vibrant town centre; a green town centre; and an accessible town centre. People gave strong views on the wish for more day and night-time activity. In addition to this, there was a strong response to the closing of the CCC with many wishing for it to be re-opened as a pub. The Council are currently seeking a new operator for the CCC to ensure that they can inform design and take immediate occupation on completion of the refurbishment. The requirements of a new operator are heavily focussed on their ability to deliver a quality offer to include the social value and community support they can deliver beyond those delivered by the pub alone. With plans for additional useable areas of the building, we are seeking a new type of tenant with experience of successful delivery of this type of diverse offer.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 45

Priority 2

Question asked by: Peter Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

It is understood that Galliard Homes is intending to request, Planning Permission from The London Borough of Lewisham to re-develop the Leegate Centre site on the corner of Eltham Road and Burnt Ash Road - a major traffic junction at Lee Green.

Burnt Ash Road is an arterial feeder road to the South Circular, situated south of this junction. The proposal demands the destruction of the current site and in order to become viable some 600 housing units have been proposed.

Preliminary plans have shown a number of 15-storey tower blocks will be included in the proposed development in order to achieve viability.

In view of the current controversy of sub-standard building materials being used to create such major projects such as those found in the Grenfell Tower tragedy, what proposals has Lewisham's Planning Department in mind to ensure similar tragedies might be preventable by ensuring good quality high standard materials are used?

Furthermore the creation of such a major construction in such a major traffic route may well take at least 2 to 3 years to complete - causing major traffic impediments throughout its creation

Has the Council considered these probabilities?

Reply

The current scheme, which is yet to be formally submitted as a planning application, indicates a predominant use of facing brick within the development, with no provision of external cladding materials. The quality, suitability and appearance of facing materials would be considered during a formal planning application. The Council will of course prioritise the safety of future tenants.

In regard to traffic implications arising from construction works, the applicant would be expected to submit a Construction Logistics Plan that would consider the resultant impacts within the vicinity of the site. The details would be assessed by the Council's Highways officers.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 46

Priority 3

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Does the Cabinet Member for Housing & Planning agree that notwithstanding complex formulae, a social rent is typically between 50% and 60% of market rent? Does the Councillor agree that for the Council's prospective 16 flats in the Creekside development, the lower percentage means social rent would bring in about 0.051% of the Council's General Fund income down from 0.102% if rented in the private sector?

Reply

If the Council opts for the social rent option the rental income would not go into the General Fund, it will go into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). In any case, the analysis that needs to be undertaken is not simply about rental income, but whether private rental income will support the delivery of more than 16 social rented units over a period of time than having the units as social rented from the outset. In the longterm, the development at Creekside will deliver more affordable homes in Lewisham through the income the Council receives.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 47

Priority 3

Question asked by: Patricia Richardson

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

How does the recently published Lewisham Draft Air Quality Act tackle the problem of worsened air pollution on main roads such as Lee Road, Lee High Road, Burnt Ash Road, the South Circular, etc, caused by the Lee Green LTN? We have, yet again, as we have lost count of the different road works on the Lee High Road over the last 18 months, long queues of stationary traffic heading into Lewisham centre. Contrary to what we have been told in the past, no effort has been made to open blocked local roads to relieve this congestion which is damaging to local residents and the environment. Why is this?

Reply

The draft Air Quality Action Plan, which is being consulted on until the 28th September, aims to minimise emissions from new developments through planning and enforcement, expanding our sustainable transport infrastructure, raising public awareness of air pollution through school projects and links with local businesses, and working with the GLA and other London Boroughs on air quality initiatives. Since 2014, we have observed a significant downward trend in the levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, suggesting improved air quality.

With regards to the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN), its primary aim was to encourage people to walk and cycle more, and to do so safely whilst maintaining social distancing, as more of us were working from home and exercising and shopping in our local area. LTNs also aim to improve air quality and public health, reduce air and noise pollution and make roads safer, which are all in line with the Council's longer term aims for the whole borough. It aimed to achieve this by restricting access to some roads by people driving through, but keeping them accessible to all road users including people in cars and fully open to people walking or cycling.

The Council has recently undertaken a public consultation to seek the views of residents on the LTN. Traffic and air quality data was provided to residents and a range of questions were asked to gauge the views of residents.

The Council is currently analysing the consultation results, which form part of the formal review of the original and revised LTN, with recommendations on a way forward. The findings of the consultation along with a summary report will then be presented to Mayor and Cabinet in the coming months.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 48

Priority 2

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Given the air quality crisis in Lewisham, requiring a Air Quality Action Plan, please can the council take action on businesses who operate on permanent sites using generators? Fossil fuel generators are both polluting and extremely noisy, and are a nuisance on both grounds. Aldi's branch in Bell Green was found to be entirely powered by generators, rather than plugging into mains electricity. This was uncovered by neighbours, whose sleep was disrupted by the constant noise. Resident action on social media put pressure on Aldi, and after a year, they finally admitted the situation, and rectified it by plugging into the mains. Another case in Sydenham is of a supermarket near Cobbs Corner, whose generator has been disturbing the neighbours for many years. Can a new bylaw be introduced to ban this practice?

Reply

Businesses not connected to mains electricity in Lewisham are extremely rare. Where on-site generation equipment is authorised, Emissions Stage V standards are required to be met for both NOx and PM reduction and any planning application for generators would consider noise and air quality impacts, taking advice from the Council's Environmental Protection team.

The Aldi supermarket in Bell Green was the subject of a planning enforcement investigation in mid-2020 following a legal dispute that prevented the store's connection to the electricity grid. Following discussions with the Council, the matter was resolved without formal enforcement action and the unauthorised generators stationed outside the store were removed in October 2020. The store is now connected to the grid.

If local residents are aware of other sites where on site generation equipment is being utilised contrary to planning control or other regulatory requirements, they can make a planning enforcement complaint via Lewisham's website and the matter will be investigated.

With reference to a bylaw, the current rules are sufficient to control emissions from generators.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 49

Priority 3

Question asked by: Mark Morris

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

Is Lewisham Council supporting a public fireworks display near to the 5th November this year on Blackheath?

Reply

Blackheath Fireworks will not be taking place this year but we are hopeful to run them again in future years as we recognise it is a very popular local event in the community. The decision not to hold the Blackheath Fireworks this year was taken as part of the Council's programme of cuts in 2020/21 as a result of the ongoing reductions in Government funding.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 50

Priority 3

Question asked by: Moira Kerrane

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Have Lewisham Council put in any bids for London Mayors “Grow back greener” or Green and Resilient spaces Fund for Deptford north Lewisham.

Reply

The Council have supported Lewisham Homes and a Deptford based Tenants and Residents Association to submit an application to the Green and Resilient Spaces Fund, including the offer of the transfer of management of an area of open space.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 51

Priority 4

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Does the Council have a tenants' champion scheme along the lines of the one recently established in Merton LB to support tenants? Does the Council have a role in ensuring housing association tenants are being treated fairly? Does the Council have a role in monitoring the service charges levied by housing associations in Lewisham on leaseholders to make sure they are not being ripped off? If yes to either, how does the Council fulfil that role?

Reply

The Council does not have a tenants' champion scheme for renters and leaseholders in the housing association sector, such as those in place at LB Merton and LB Richmond upon Thames.

Housing associations, as responsible landlords, have the primary duty to ensure their tenants are treated fairly. All housing associations have their own resident engagement policies and complaints processes, and as such we encourage residents and leaseholders to ensure they use these processes fully.

The Council is committed to championing tenants' rights. We work with a range of housing associations to provide social housing to residents. We regularly meet with these housing associations operating in Lewisham to ensure accountability and work to resolve longstanding issues where necessary, including those brought to our attention by tenants. Housing associations are separate companies and own and manage their own housing stock in accordance with their own policies and procedures. The Council does unfortunately not have jurisdiction over the service charge setting policies for housing association properties but, through regular meetings, we lobby for fairer policies in the interests of tenants.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 52

Priority 3

Question asked by: Julia Webb

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Patrick Codd

Question

Given the air quality crisis in Lewisham, please can the council explain why Supersets has been allowed to continue polluting Catford by burning waste materials? Lewisham is both the local authority, and Supersets' landlord, and therefore is in a position to have acted promptly. A previous question produced the response that Supersets were only burning safe wood fuel. If this is so, why are they allowed to burn anything, just for heat? Residents are being dissuaded from using wood burning stoves, so why allow a business to do so? The only possible reason for the stove is to dispose of offcuts and rejected products, which are likely to have treatments or paintwork which make them likely to pollute. As the landlord, can the council explain why this has been allowed to happen for so long?

Reply

The Council does take these issues seriously and is aware of one registered complaint from earlier this year regarding a bonfire. This was dealt with by the Council in a timely manner. Supersets were advised about the requirement for activities on site to have no effect on residents and other businesses.

With regards to the issues the resident has raised, the Council will take appropriate action.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 53

Priority 5

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Who is leading the review of planning procedures and processes referred to in Q54 of the Council meeting on 21.07.21? What is the remit? When is it expected to report and when will the results be published?

Question 54 from July Council meeting:

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.

Reply

The review of planning procedures is being led by the Planning Service Head of Development Management, Michael Forrester. The remit is set around the transparency of the planning process, with consultation responses now published online and the publication of delegated officer reports happening imminently. While changes to internal procedures and practice will be actioned within the Planning Service, any changes to working practices requiring amendments to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement will be reported to Mayor and Cabinet and available for scrutiny in the usual way.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 55

Priority 6

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Is it the Council's standard practice to amend reports written by its officers to change the officers' conclusions before the report is presented to a planning committee?
Over the last 5 years how often has the Council amended the reports written by officers before the report is presented to a planning committee?

Reply

It is not standard practice to amend officer reports to change conclusions before a report is presented to planning committee and there are no known cases where this has happened. Where further submissions are made after the publication of a report for planning committee, it is standard practice for an addendum report to be prepared which is considered alongside the original officer report which remains unchanged. The implication of the question that the Council would willfully mislead a planning committee is preposterous and has no grounding in reality.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 56

Priority 7

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Maslin

Question

For the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny: Is the Chair at all concerned by a High Court judge's finding that the Council provided materially misleading information to one of its planning committees? Does the Chair feel that this finding merits investigation by Councillors who are not members of the Mayor's Cabinet?

Reply

Members from across the Council sit on planning committees and participate in decision making on planning applications. They have a good understanding of the tensions that can arise where communities do not agree with planning decisions and understand the role and remit of our dedicated planning officers.

Council officers are reviewing procedure and internal processes in light of the judgement recently handed down for Mais House, as well as as other established case law, and will respond and adjust accordingly. The remit is set around the transparency of the planning process, with consultation responses now published online and the publication of delegated officer reports happening imminently. While changes to internal procedures and practice will be actioned within the Planning Service, any changes to working practices requiring amendments to the Council's Statement of Community Involvement will be reported to Mayor and Cabinet and available for scrutiny in the usual way.

I am satisfied that this work led by officers plus future changes to improve transparency as part of the Local Democracy Review are the most appropriate course of action and that it is not necessary to review this matter at Overview and Scrutiny.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 57

Priority 8

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Paul Bell

Question

Did the Mayor Damien Egan originally come up with the idea of letting the Council's prospective properties in Creekside Village East at private sector rents?

Reply

No, the initial design and planning application for Creekside was developed prior to the current Mayor's election in 2018. 15% of the development will be affordable housing, negotiated up from the 10% initially offered by the developers. Due to the cost of extension, a higher proportion of affordable housing would be unfeasible for the developers. However, the Council will use the income from the private rent of the other units towards affordable housing schemes.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 58

Priority 9

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

Question

When the Mayor met the new police borough commander for the first time in July, did the Mayor raise concerns about institutionalised corruption in the Met? Did the Mayor refer to the current Commissioner's obstruction of the independent panel reviewing the investigation of the murder of Daniel Morgan in Sydenham?

Reply

The Mayor and senior officers met with the Borough Commander on 23 July for a private meeting. The Report of the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel was one of the matters discussed during the course of the meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTION NO. 59

Priority 10

Question asked by: Mark Bennett

Relevant Directorate: Chief Exec's

Member to reply: The Mayor, Damien Egan

Question

How often are people employed by the Council tasked with checking the Mayor's personal Twitter account and any of the other social media accounts that he personally uses?

Reply

No one is tasked with checking my personal media accounts.