

COUNCIL

30 JANUARY 2019

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

I. **Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council**

Since his election as Leader, what discussions has the Leader of the Council had with the Mayor of London about the impact on local residents of the ULEZ extension to the South Circular?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

To help improve air quality, the Mayor of London is implementing an Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in central London from 8th April 2019. From 25th October 2021, the ULEZ will be expanded to include the inner London area bounded by the North and South Circular Roads.

Most vehicles including cars and vans will need to meet new, tighter exhaust emission standards or pay a daily charge to travel within the ULEZ.

Removing the dirtiest vehicles from our streets is a crucial part of protecting our residents and meeting the Royal Borough's Corporate Plan commitment to combatting poor air quality. As well as encouraging people to buy cleaner vehicles, the ULEZ will help make walking, cycling and public transport more attractive - by confronting drivers with more of the cost of their choices.

It is important that the ULEZ is implemented carefully – to avoid negative impacts on our residents. Officers are working with TfL officials to ensure the ULEZ extension is publicised effectively and early. Our residents need information to plan ahead. Our residents also need good alternatives to driving: walking, cycling and public transport. We are working with TfL and the Mayor, through the development of the new Local Implementation Plan for transport and a range of other measures, to ensure these options are improved.

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2. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

Can the Leader provide an update on plans to replace Better Together?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

There will be 2 rounds of Better Together meetings this year. The first 4 meetings will take place in March/April and a further 4 meetings will take place in October. The dates and venues for all 8 meetings will be announced next week along with the suggested themes for the first 4 meetings. We will also be seeking public suggestions for discussion themes.

We will be communicating all the dates and venues to residents, online, via social media and as an insert with their 2019/2020 Council Tax letters.

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3. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development

Can the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of how many votes were cast in each area in Round 2 of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

In total 1,398 residents voted for projects in Round 2 online and at one of the five voting boxes placed in Greenwich libraries. Residents were able to select up to three different projects within their neighbourhood area.

The table below provides a summary of the votes received.

Area	No. of residents that voted	No. of votes cast
Area 1: Eltham and Shooters Hill	812	1,982
Area 2: Blackheath and Greenwich	290	739
Area 3: Woolwich and Charlton	133	323
Area 4: Abbey Wood, Plumstead &Thamesmead	163	163
Total	1,398	3,207

A report will be submitted to Cabinet (Feb 2019) with the outcome of the second round of the GNGF.

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4. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

Can the Leader of the Council provide the latest breakdown of planned costs for the ward boundary review exercise between now and 2022?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

I can confirm that while conservative estimates of expenditure have been included in the work done so far, there are currently no planned costs at this stage. Once discussions with the Boundary Commission begin, this, along with a detailed action plan, will be addressed.

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5. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing

Council tenants who need to contact Contractors or Sub-contractors delivering repairs (often at the direction of the RBG contact centre) often find they are unable to speak to anyone on the phone due to restricted hours of customer service. These phone numbers are sometimes not free of charge, either. What assurances does the Council ask for from contractors and their subcontractors in relation to providing adequate customer service and information to residents?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

For responsive repairs, the vast majority of our work are carried out in house. Where a contractor is used, residents are informed, and we require the contractor to then contact the resident directly to book a convenient appointment, and supply both their office and supervisor contact details. We require our contractors for responsive works to be contacted between 8:30am and 5:30pm.

For major works and capital schemes, contractors are required to provide full contact details to residents, including those of the Project Manager and Resident Liaison Officer (RLO). Our usual approach for larger schemes would be for residents to contact the contractor's Resident Liaison Officer by phone, email, or face to face. The RLO will be based at the local site office.

As part of ensuring good communication, the RLO will visit residents and are required to host meetings to keep residents informed. Contractors are also required to provide a 24-hour emergency contact number.

Our major works team also publish their own contact details and there is a dedicated email address for major works.

All of our phone lines and contractor phone lines are charged at the standard rate for local calls or mobile calls.

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6. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Adult's Social Care, Health and Anti-Poverty

As the Cabinet Member is aware I expressed concerns before Christmas at low rate of participation in the flu jab programme from Council (and other) social care staff, and in our local NHS partner organisations. What was the final participation rate for Council social care staff?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

The latest report (December 2018) indicates that 650 Flu Vaccination vouchers have been issued across the Council to staff. This year the Flu vaccination programme was offered to all RBG staff.

Of the total vouchers issued, 109 (17%) have been distributed within Health and Adult Services, and 42 (6%) within Children's Services. This is an increase from 17/18, when a total of 93 Frontline staff were vaccinated from RBG.

Tesco Pharmacy is providing the vaccination, and vouchers can be redeemed until the end of February.

In addition, this year Children's Services has extended the Flu vaccination offer to all schools maintained by RBG. So far, 116 vouchers have been issued to 18 schools.

In regard to our local NHS partners, Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust has vaccinated 60.2% of its staff, and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, 25.1%. The Trusts are responsible for their own vaccination programme.

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7. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

What support and advice provision is there in the borough for male victims of domestic violence?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

The Council commissions the Greenwich Domestic Violence and Abuse service (GDVA) to provide the central point of contact for all victims of domestic abuse who seek advice and support, for which GDVA provides a telephone helpline and website and both of these assist male victims. The website has a page focussed on "Support for Male survivors of Domestic Abuse", which includes information on the "Men's Advice Line" which is a service specialising in supporting male victims. The Council's fortnightly partnership panel for high risk cases deals with male as well as female victims (including abuse within both intimate partner and family relationships). High risk victims are normally offered one-to-one support and safety planning with an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA). There are two providers of IDVAs in the borough (the Her Centre and Victim Support), who work in collaboration. Although the Her Centre works one-to-one only with female victims, the Victim Support service works with both genders and is able to support the high risk male victims referred to the MARAC (7.2% of referrals in 2017-18).

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8. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and the Third Sector

What was the Cabinet Member's assessment of the appeals process used for the new Third Sector Commissioning round?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

The 2019-2023 Third Sector Commissioning Framework was revamped for this new four-year cycle to take into account the Voluntary and Community Sector's request for a more transparent, collaborative and shorter application process.

I am pleased to say that we have listened and by working in partnership with the third sector we have significantly simplified the application process as well as hard wiring the principle of partnership working into the design and delivery of essential projects for the people of our borough.

Given the challenge presented to the VCS grants budget by the government cut of £1.4m annually, we have had to make the grants process work harder by encouraging more sharing of back office costs through the setting up of consortia applications.

Despite the pressure on funding there were three fewer appeals (eleven) in 2018 compared to the last funding round. Some organisations experienced tight deadlines in submitting their appeals – but we simplified the appeal to 500 words and most organisations had 7 days to submit their appeal.

In summary of the 64 organisations applying for funding via 99 applications, 50 separate organisations received funding. We are pleased that we are able to demonstrate our continuing commitment to the role of the voluntary sector in our communities and RBG's grants programme remains one of the largest in London at £2.93m annually.

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9. Question from Councillor Matt Hartley to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development

Is the Council compelled to transfer its local land charges data to the new gov.uk national register following the Infrastructure Act 2015? If so, when does the Council plan to do this and what impact will this have on the Council, and users of this information?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Hartley for his question.

Yes, we are compelled to transfer the local land charges register (LLCI only). We will still be processing larger parts of the register. Phase I of the new service will be rolled out with up to 26 local authorities' local land charges registers transferred to HM Land Registry by the end of 2019. The Royal Borough is not included in this phase.

The timing of future phases has not been decided yet and will be subject to decisions by Ministers. Because of the scale and complexity of the service change, this data migration could take up to 7 years.

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10. Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

Is there any update on reported talks with the University of Greenwich over the Avery Hill Mansion site?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Fletcher for his question.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is committed to retaining the Avery Hill campus as a site for education and preserving the Winter Gardens as a historical gem for all to enjoy.

We are currently in negotiations with the University of Greenwich about the site. This includes sensitive and confidential discussions to secure the investment that will be needed to ensure the Winter Gardens can grow and develop into a self-sustaining attraction moving forward.

The Winter Gardens are also registered as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The University of Greenwich will need to fully comply with the ACV regulations, including determining with their legal advisers whether the proposed transfer is exempt from the regulations or whether the Winter Gardens should be subject to the moratorium period during which only bids from community groups can be accepted.

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11. Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

What is the capital budget for parks and open spaces, and are there plans to use CIL and section 106 funds for improvement projects?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Fletcher for his question.

Parks, Estates and Open Spaces (PEOS) manages a large portfolio of land/assets on behalf of the Council but due to limited planned maintenance budget, work on Parks has been classified as low priority.

Whilst the PEOS Service has done well to maintain sites to a good standard, the limited planned maintenance funding available has led to some parks assets needing investment for improvement.

The Directorate of Regeneration Enterprise and Skills (DRES) are planning to carry out condition surveys of Council assets during 2019/20, including Parks and Open Spaces and this will help prioritise future planned maintenance funding.

In 2017 the Council adopted a Parks and Spaces Strategy and Action Plan that identified priorities for future investment. One of the aims of the Strategy was to secure external funding to help fund these priorities.

In 2018, PEOS secured:

- £72,000 Section 106 (S106) for improvements to Queenscroft Park Play Ground and repairs to some outdoor gym equipment.
- Worked in partnership with the Twinkle Part Trust to restore the pond in the park, with the Trust securing approximately £20,000 from Veolia Environment Trust and the Council contributing £6,600 from S106.
- Secured £177,000, S106 to help support development of a master plan and priorities for improvement to St. Alfège Park in 2019.

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- Secured funding from the Mayor of London's, Greener City fund for tree planting initiatives in parks and open spaces.

The PEOS Service will continue to review funding held in the Council's S106 account and seek opportunities to secure external funding to support improvements in Parks identified in the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy Action Plan.

In the first round of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund (funded from CIL) the Friends of Fairy Hill Park successfully secured £11,100 for improvements to the tennis court fencing in the park and contributed a further £3,600 themselves.

In the second round of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund, the PEOS Service supported groups to realise their ambitions for local parks by submitting bids. Eight of these applications have progressed to the public vote stage.

PEOS have also supported ward budget applications and small grant applications from Park Friends Groups and recently encouraged Friends Groups in the Woolwich Riverside Ward to apply for funding from the Woolwich Estates Community Projects Grants scheme.

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12. Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

Can the Cabinet Member kindly provide an up-date on how the consultation process will be carried out for the "Hills and Vales" proposals to cut off roads like Hyde Vale and Crooms Hill from the A2 and the area to be covered in that consultation?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Brighty for his question.

Once proposals for this area have been developed a public engagement will be held. The opportunity to comment will be publicised locally and materials and surveys will be available online. We will be encouraging as many as possible to have their say.

By making the engagement publically available online, involvement is not limited to a geographic area, as has traditionally been the case with paper based engagement methods. Information regarding this project is available on the Greenwich Liveable Neighbourhood page of the Council's website where people can subscribe for email updates as the project develops. Anyone subscribing will be informed when the engagement launches.

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13. Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

Is the Council making any progress in introducing food waste collections for blocks of flats?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Brighty for his question.

The provision of food waste collection is a standard requirement in all new developments as part of the planning application.

For existing blocks of flats, assessments are made on request and on a block-by-block basis. Difficulties exist in finding suitable siting arrangements on older developments and estates, where they are often sited externally. Unsuitable siting often leads to contamination within the organic waste stream.

Street Services have been working to improve waste facilities on the Barnfield Estate where plans are to build 8 mini-recycling centres across the estate later this year, which can accommodate bins for each of the waste streams Royal Greenwich collects. This includes the introduction of food waste bins, as well as, facilities for small WEEE (electrical) and textiles. The refurbishment of the Barnfield Estate will serve as a blueprint for food waste service expansion in other council estates as and when they are refurbished.

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14. Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

A Safe Drive Stay Alive road safety event is currently being promoted at the Greenwich Theatre aimed at sixth formers who will be either new drivers or passengers in a car with a new driver. Could a similar event be made available to younger teenagers? Meeting with a survivor or a bereaved parent might just provide a strong enough deterrent against joy riding.

Reply -

I thank Councillor Greenwell for her question.

Safe Drive Stay Alive is an amazing event for a young people who are at the age where they can begin to learn to drive. They watch a film of a crash in the local area, which has been specially prepared with roads and hospitals familiar to local students. Real emergency services personnel and family members of casualties step onto stage and share their experiences. It's an emotive technique, that is really effective at influencing behaviour on the road.

However, it is closely tailored to its audience. It is an extremely hard hitting performance and would not be suitable for younger people. As well as the risk of distress to younger attendees, there is evidence that going too heavy reduces the effectiveness of the road safety message. If people can't process and identify with the message, they filter it out.

We do a wide range of work with young people from reception onwards. The messages delivered build up as they get older and reflect their developing learning style. So, whilst Safe Drive Stay Alive isn't suitable for younger people, we do build up to the messages it provides from a younger age. Officers are exploring how more of the messages of Safe Drive Stay Alive can be adapted into our work with younger pupils.

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15. Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

I have received a number of complaints about the regular sight of dog mess on our local pavements and in our parks. What is the Council currently doing to combat this in the way of punishment and education?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Greenwell for her question.

The warden services is responsible for enforcing the control orders on dogs and are scheduled to patrol areas within the borough replacing and refreshing the dog signage on lampposts and having the pavements stencilled where complaints of dog related offences arise from.

Waste and streets are responsible for cleaning up dogs mess and are scheduled to clean roads and streets on a weekly basis.

Wardens and Park Rangers actively engage with dog walkers in our parks to address issues in relation to dog control and fouling. We ensure that there is adequate signage and offer free dog bags to dog walkers whilst out on patrols in parks and target any reported hotspot areas in the parks and open spaces across the borough. There has been an increase in professional dog walking activity in parks across the borough and believe this has contributed to increased reports of dog fouling. Park Ranger management are currently scoping the delivery of a Professional Dog Walking licence scheme to better manage and regulate the boroughs parks.

On the 20th October 2014 the former Dog control orders were superseded by a Public Spaces Protection Order which was introduced under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. PSPOs are intended to deal with a particular nuisance or problem in a particular area that is detrimental to the local community's quality of life, by imposing conditions on the use of that area which apply to everyone. They are designed to ensure the public can use and enjoy public spaces, safe from anti-social behaviour.

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Where offenders are witnessed breaching the PSPO the offenders will be issued with a fine that breaches this order, offering them an opportunity to avoid prosecution by paying a fine of £100. Wardens will issue a fine to someone who breaches these orders. However, we may decide to prosecute them instead, we may consider prosecuting someone rather than issuing a fine if they behave inappropriately towards our enforcement officers, or if they have previously been issued with a fine for similar behaviour.

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16. Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development

One of the objectives of the regeneration of Eltham High Street was to support the local economy and make Eltham a destination of choice. Has this been achieved?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Greenwell for her question.

One of the stated objectives within the Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvement Project, was to support the local economy and make Eltham a destination of choice. Based upon the Project Evaluation Survey published in 2018, this showed the £6.6m investment has made a positive contribution to the area, with the majority of respondents indicating that:

- The public realm scheme had made Eltham High Street and Passey Place a more pleasant environment
- The trees and street gardens had improved the street scene
- The wider footways had created a more pedestrian friendly place

The Retail and Leisure Study produced in August 2018 identified Eltham town centre as being in a 'healthy' state benefitting from new investment and development. It found that

- There is a below average vacancy rate level, indicating the centre is performing well
- There is a good convenience offer with the provision exceeding the national average in terms of units and floorspace.
- There is an adequate comparison offer that is broadly in line with the national average in terms of units and floorspace
- The environmental quality is good with a pleasant shopping environment and key areas such as Passey Place which provides an attractive open space for community events and the market.
- There is a high Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) and good accessibility throughout the centre.

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Royal Borough of Greenwich is committed to playing its part in helping to develop the potential that is evident in Eltham to successfully adapt to changing shopping habits and consumer preferences by:

- raising the quality and significantly broadening of the overall town centre 'visitor offer' (the mix of retail, culture, arts, leisure, public space and amenity)
- maximising the potential of the town's retail, historic and community assets; critical to retaining and enhancing the competitive edge of Eltham.

A successful, vibrant and attractive High Street is a key factor in creating a 'sense of place' amongst local communities. It also acts as a significant generator of wealth and employment for local communities and businesses.

The increase in footfall across Eltham Town Centre is testament that the high street remains a destination of choice for a significant number of residents and visitors. The development of the cinema complex which is due to be completed imminently, will further strengthen the High Street offer and provide a significant boost to Eltham's daytime and evening economy.

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17. Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

What are the legal issues around the display of A frames and shop goods being displayed on pavements?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Greenwell for her question.

In terms of Planning Enforcement, A Boards can be displayed on the forecourt of business premises without the requirement for express consent. These are subject to a number of size, siting and land ownership conditions and each situation would be considered on its own merits.

Shopkeepers who want to display goods on the pavement outside their business premises must apply for a street trading licence from the Street Trading and Markets Team. Shop front trading is only authorised when licence conditions and requirements are met. Conditions cover measurements of the area to trade from/ public liability insurance, commodities to be sold and or service, times and days applicable to the licence.

When the licence conditions have been established and met a street trading licence can then be granted by the Council pursuant to section 27(3) of the London Local Authorities Act 1990 as amended prescribing standard conditions applicable to shop front trading and tables and chairs under regulations and conditions made by the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

If a street trading licence is breached in anyway by a shopkeeper they can be fined and have their licence revoked and will no longer be able to trade outside their premises.

Any shopkeeper who displays their goods on pavements on public land outside their businesses without a licence can be fined or prosecuted.

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Shopkeepers who have their own private forecourt outside of their premises can trade on it without a licence, but cannot let out the space to another trader, unless that trader has a licence issued to them by the street trading and markets team for that purpose, the licence is for the sole use of the person named which specifies the location, position, commodities or service that may be sold, and the days and times that the licence holder may trade.

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18. Question from Councillor Matt Clare to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

TfL has recently announced that it is considering moving Victoria coach station to one site or several sites outside of central London. With almost all continental coaches passing through our borough via the A2 and A20 has the Council considered what options may not only improve pollution in our borough by shortening journeys but also potentially create employment and attract additional public transport investment?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Clare for his question.

TfL have confirmed that they will need to relocate Victoria Coach Station as the area is undergoing significant change. They say that no decisions have been made on a location and they are looking at a wide range of options across London that ensure the city is adequately served by coaches, while allowing them to operate more efficiently and reduce both pollution and road danger.

Based on media coverage I understand that TfL are in advanced pre-application discussions with Westminster City Council to relocate Victoria Coach Station to its Royal Oak site. This bears out the belief that TfL are only considering central London sites.

There is no indication that such a move will impact on coach flow through the borough. However I would note that the expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone to the South Circular in October 2021 is likely to have significant air quality benefits with regard to coaches as they will face a £100 daily charge unless they meet Euro VI emission standards.

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19. Question from Councillor Matt Clare to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

Would the Cabinet Member please give an update on the recruitment of permanent staff (as opposed to agency staff who could leave at any time) and current headcount versus target for parking enforcement across the borough?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Clare for his question.

We are committed to engaging staff on a permanent basis and ran a couple of rounds of recruitment last year. However this was with limited success as we were only able to make up for staff losses.

In light of the increasing focus on parking enforcement we have taken the short term measure of recruiting agency staff to bring us up to and above our establishment level of twenty-two CEOs as quickly as possible, with a current target of thirty-two. Nine agency staff are now with us, four more will start in the coming weeks and the agency are working to identify further candidates for the two remaining posts. Half a dozen agency staff are already issuing tickets and the more recent starters are undergoing beat training to familiarise them with the various CPZs and other parking restrictions.

We will monitor closely the impact the additional staff are having and assess whether this level of resource is sufficient or whether still more are needed to deliver the level of enforcement required. When this is established and the workforce strategy reassessment completed we will re-embark on permanent recruitment.

The parking enforcement team have worked hard to successfully integrate agency staff and maintain good morale so sudden departures of agency staff are not anticipated. However if it were to occur it is usually possible to recruit agency staff fairly quickly, whereas recruitment of permanent staff is a much longer process.

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20. Question from Councillor Matt Clare to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

When does the Council expect to have completed its borough wide 20 mph zone rollout in residential areas, first committed to in 2011?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Clare for his question.

The Council adopted its policy to roll-out 20mph zones in all residential streets following the Best Value Review in 2011. The two main constraints on the rate of roll-out are:

Firstly – availability of funding, which comes from TfL through the annual core LIP allocation;

Secondly - the high recent public demand for the modernisation of the existing older 20 mph zones, some of which in performance terms have higher vehicle speeds and casualty rates comparable to areas that have not yet been treated.

The original target for full borough 20 mph zone coverage was by 2023. However this can no longer be achieved due to the increased scale of the programme to include modernisations, and their prioritisation on safety grounds. Nevertheless all the worst performing older zones will be tackled within the next 3 years and the remaining residential streets will be completed by 2025.

Officers are also seeking any opportunity to identify alternative funding sources to the core LIP. These include opportunities presented by new development, where Section 106 planning contributions can assist in the delivery of nearby 20 mph zones.

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21. Question from Councillor Matt Clare to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and the Third Sector

Would the Cabinet Member please confirm the current financial value (in terms of £ revenue to the Council) and the length (years) of contractually committed tenancies for the “Woolwich cultural quarter”?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Clare for his question.

The Woolwich Creative District is set to deliver extensive job, training, education and cultural participation opportunities for the people of Woolwich and beyond. We are finalising our lease discussions with Punchdrunk and will be in a position to publish the details as part of our usual lease governance process.

As set out in the submission to the Regeneration, Transport and Culture Scrutiny Panel in November 2018 the revenue model for the Creative District is not based on income from the three anchor tenants it is instead based on the commercial rental of space to touring performing arts groups. This will allow the subsidy of reduced room hire rates to local community and cultural groups. The time split between commercial and community/cultural rental is 30:70 because at the core of the philosophy of the Creative District is the intent to increase public access to a site that otherwise would have reduced access if it had been turned into residential accommodation.

The business plan for the Creative District has been independently verified by two separate organisations and has been market tested with regard to the commercial rates and demand projections.

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22. Question from Councillor Matt Clare to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

Many London Boroughs, including neighbouring Lewisham, Bromley and Tower Hamlets*, participate in 'one way' or 'floating' hourly car and van hire schemes.

Parking and air quality are top issues for our residents. An effective one way car club scheme could see many (potentially older more polluting) vehicles taken off Greenwich roads and replaced by a smaller number of cleaner and safer car club vehicles.

At a minimum of £3,000 a year car ownership is a significant cost to households. Car club is a way of reducing those costs down to the £100s a year and avoiding painful one off bills like insurance, MoT and repairs.

Would the Cabinet Member agree that Greenwich needs to accelerate moves to its participation in 'one way' or 'floating' car hire ? Will she urge officers to get a good deal in place for Greenwich as soon as possible?

*The above 3 boroughs participate in the same scheme.

<https://www.zipcar.co.uk/flex/parking>

Reply -

I thank Councillor Clare for his question.

Car clubs are a great way to reduce car ownership and encourage more sustainable travel. As the question suggests, they can also help improve access to services for people who would struggle with the cost of running a car.

Floating car clubs allow you to pick-up and drop-off car club cars in different places – instead of requiring you to drop them back where you started. We have been considering how this model would work in Royal Greenwich and will explore the options of a floating car club as we procure a new operator for the standard 'back to base' model.

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23. Question from Councillor Roger Tester to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing

Could the Cabinet Member please advise how many times in the last year the Streetlink service has been used to refer rough sleepers to homeless services via its outreach team ?

Also, I was advised previously by an officer that the Council will at some point start its own homelessness outreach service for rough sleepers, can the Cabinet Member tell me when this is going to start or give an update ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Tester for his question.

There were 321 Streetlink referrals for RBG from April 2017 to March 2018. From April 2018 to date there have been 368 referrals. In response to your second question, we currently do not have any plans to start our own outreach service as we consider the current arrangements adequate. We continue to work with London Street Rescue and other key partners to address rough sleeping in the borough. Our Street Pop Intervention pilot project helps to address the visible issues of Anti-Social Behaviour linked to street drinking/drug use, exploitative begging and rough sleeping across RBG. The project tackles challenging issues as the people involved are part of a chaotic, complex and vulnerable community who need support to change their behaviour prior to (or alongside) any enforcement.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

24. Question from Councillor Charlie Davis to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

The service of removing Christmas trees is greatly valued by residents. How does the Council dispose of Christmas trees after collection?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Davis for his question.

The Christmas trees are collected as part of the green-top bin (garden and food waste) service and mixed with the organic material. These vehicles empty their contents in the organics bay at the Waste Transfer Station in Nathan Way and is then transported to an in-vessel composting ("IVC") plant in Cambridgeshire. It is then composted in an enclosed system, with accurate temperature and moisture control. The product is then matured in windrows. The final compost product is suitable for and used in agriculture.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

25. Question from Councillor Charlie Davis to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development

At the December Council Meeting, the Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development told me in a supplementary answer that the responses to the Council's "sprucing up Eltham High Street" had been "excellent". Would he be able to share these excellent responses with me? I have been unable to find them in the post-work consultation survey and report or when speaking to residents in my ward.

Reply -

I thank Councillor Davis for his question.

The Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements Project Evaluation Survey, completed over summer 2018, returned well over 1200 individual responses. This is an excellent response by residents and businesses and we are grateful to all those that took the time to send their views.

This excellent response rate has provided a great deal of very useful feedback.

Members will be aware that the Council has published a report, setting out in some detail, the outcome of the survey. This is freely available on the Council's website.

Very importantly, most respondents stated that the High Street looks much better than it did before, which is excellent.

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30 JANUARY 2019

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

26. Question from Councillor Charlie Davis to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

The Leader was recently quoted when discussing the Government's Future High Street Fund that "Woolwich would be the front-runner for that based on the criteria published by the government". What plans does the Leader have on ensuring that residents views and ideas are fully incorporated into any bid and that the project invokes positive sentiment from stakeholders?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Davis for his question.

The Future High Street Fund prospectus is looking for proposals that set out the challenges facing town centres and outline a strategic approach to delivering transformative change. The Fund provides a great opportunity to support the much needed investment in Woolwich Town Centre and support the Council's wider regeneration plans for Woolwich.

The High Street Fund is a two stage application process, commencing with an Expressions of Interest (EOI) submitted by 22 March 2019. Officers have commenced discussions with key stakeholders including landowners, businesses and residents. Stakeholders are sharing their initial thoughts around a proposal and where investment can best contribute to the development, vibrancy and diversification of uses in the Woolwich Town Centre. This includes among other things, market research carried out in July 2018, which captured the views of over 3,000 residents and visitors to Woolwich Town Centre.

If successful, and invited to submit a full application, then this would provide a further opportunity for consultation.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

27. Question from Councillor Charlie Davis to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

On the Council website, it is stated that the Council aim to “repair roads and pavements within 15 working days” of identifying a problem. Can the Cabinet Member tell me how many repair jobs were carried out in the last 12 months and last full financial year and the percentage of these that were completed within that 15-working day target?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Davis for his question.

In 2018 a total of 12,844 reactive highway maintenance repairs were carried out by the Council. The average time to complete these works was 19 working days.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

28. Question from Councillor Charlie Davis to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

What discussion have the Council had with TfL regarding the delays to the launch of the new Woolwich Ferries? Have TfL given the Council a definitive date for launch other than early February? And what explanation has TfL offered for the causes of the delay to the Council?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Davis for his question.

My transport team are in regular contact with TfL regarding the new ferry service. The Head of London River Services at TfL has said: "We're sorry that the launch of the new Woolwich ferries is taking longer than expected. We are undertaking extensive trials of the newer and less polluting ferries and docks to ensure they are ready for service and this has taken longer than anticipated. We will launch the new ferries in February subject to the completion of these trials."

TfL are unwilling to indicate a more precise date for reopening, nor the exact cause of the delays.

In the meantime the Council is implementing measures to monitor traffic congestion, delay and air quality to assess how these change when the ferry service recommences.

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30 JANUARY 2019

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

29. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

I note that in an answer to Councillor Nigel Fletcher during the December Council meeting the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement stated that “The Council provides no financial support for front line community policing in any part of the Borough.” ([Members Questions, #10](#)). However in January 2018 the Mayor of London stated in answer to a [question from a Labour GLA member](#) that Greenwich used the 'buy one get one free' deal for match funding to support extra police in the Borough and actually received 25 Officers as a result of this scheme. Can the Cabinet Member clarify the Council’s involvement in the Met Patrol Plus Scheme, the amount of funding contributed to it by the Council in recent years and whether the Council’s involvement is ongoing? Can she also clarify how she came to give such a misleading answer to Councillor Fletcher and every other member of the Council?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

I did not mislead the Council as none of the police officers funded by the Royal Borough are for front line community policing.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

30. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement

I note that the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime, [Sophie Linden has stated that the Met Patrol Plus scheme is being reviewed](#). I understand that in January 2018 this scheme helped to fund 25 Police Officers (FTE) in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. What representations has the Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Integrated Enforcement made to the Mayor of London, the Metropolitan Police or any other relevant body/individual about retaining this important policy which contributes to keeping Police Officers in our Borough?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

I have had extensive discussions with local senior police officers about the future of the Met Patrol Plus scheme. At present the police have made no decision about whether the scheme will continue beyond March 2019. The Council has made representations to both local senior police and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime urging them to preserve this important scheme into 2019/20 and beyond.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

31. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Denise Hyland, Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Apprenticeships

I note that Marks and Spencer announced another 17 store closures this month, with the intention of shutting at least another 45 by 2022. What contact has the Cabinet Member, or the Council more widely, had with Marks and Spencer to preserve their stores across the Borough and in particular in Eltham where it is the flagship store on our High Street?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

The recent announcement by Marks & Spencer concerning the latest round of store closures forms part of its five year plan to restructure the company. The department store and food retailer has indicated that it intends to shut down 100 shops by 2022 as part of its strategy to reshape the business and reduce costs by £350 million. It has been reported that M&S wants to move a third of its sales online by 2022 and plans to have fewer stores, but in more strategic locations.

There is no indication to date to suggest that the Eltham Store is earmarked for closure. Recent communication between the Council and the Eltham branch has confirmed that the store maintained a healthy level of sales, despite the challenging economic climate, and is set to have a continued presence on the High Street for the foreseeable future. The store has also been invited to provide any proposals that may contribute to enhancing the vitality of the area which would help to ensure their long term future in the town centre.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

32. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Public Realm and Transport

What proportion of potholes reported to the Council were repaired within two hours over each of the last three years?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

All reports of highway defects, including potholes, that might constitute a danger to highway users are inspected and assessed on site. The Council's repair is therefore determined by the trained highway inspectors.

Defects that are deemed to present the most serious of emergencies would be instructed for repair (or making safe / signing and guarding) within two hours of assessment but other "urgent" defects are instructed for repair (or making safe / signing and guarding) the next day.

Very few two hour repairs are raised. Accordingly, the below figures relate to both 2 and 24 hour repairs of all types of highway defects ordered:

2016/17	90% completed the next day
2017/18	92% completed the next day
2018/19	91% completed the next day (to date this year)

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

33. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing

Can the Cabinet Member for Housing confirm how many boilers in Council properties have been shut down completely when visited by either Gas Emergency services over each of the last two years? What have been the reasons for the shut downs of the boilers? I understand that once the Gas Emergency service has turned off the gas supply the Council should visit the same day to investigate - what proportion of the boilers shut down by the emergency services have been visited the same day for investigation? Is the proportion of boilers shut down by the Gas Emergency services similar to that shut down by Council services when they visit a property during the course of the working day?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

Fifty boilers have been shut down over the past two years. These will be due to potential risks to safety such as minor gas leaks or carbon monoxide alarms being triggered.

Gas Emergency Services will shut down the gas supply as part of making safe, and the Council's own engineers will visit within one day to assess. All such cases in the past two years have been visited the same day.

Where Gas Emergency Services attend, they will only make safe and as part of that, shut down the gas supply. For cases where the resident contacts the Council, our Engineers will attend, assess and where possible remedy the issue on site without the need for cessation of supply.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

34. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Growth and Strategic Development

I note that shortly before Christmas, the Royal Borough of Greenwich published the “Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements Project Evaluation Survey” which was conducted in summer 2018. The results of the survey suggested a certain level of dissatisfaction with the regeneration of Eltham High Street. What response does the Cabinet Member have to the results of the survey and has the survey been submitted to any part of the Greater London Authority for a further response?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

The Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements Project Evaluation Survey provided the Council some great feedback on the work completed.

Public response is a very important measure of scheme success and this is why the Council has been completely open and transparent in publishing the full outcome of the survey. Other measures of success will be longer term road safety statistics, traffic measures, healthy streets measures, visitor numbers and traders feedback.

Members will also fully appreciate that the Major High Street Schemes is only one aspect of the Eltham Masterplan, recognising the Council’s commitment and investment in the area.

I am delighted that the majority of residents provided a positive response to the survey but accept some adverse comments were raised. Where this is the case all feedback has been fully analysed.

Transport for London (TfL), rather than the GLA specifically, was the major funder of the improvements works. As such TfL is fully aware of the survey and has a copy of the report.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

35. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

At the [October meeting](#) of Full Council, the Leader of the Council indicated that while he did not think the lease on Hervey Road Sports Field had been signed, he was content to publish it once it was. Can the Leader confirm that the lease has been signed and as a result he will publish it?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question.

The lease for Hervey Road between RBG and Blackheath Rugby Club – has been signed by both parties. The lease becomes a formal legal document when both parties agree on the start date and this is added to the document by our acting solicitors.

A provisional date has been set for 10 February 2019 and will be dated by our solicitors in due course.

Blackheath Rugby Club will then register the Lease with the Land Registry and once done so will become a public document.

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MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

36. Question from Councillor Spencer Drury to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing

Can the Cabinet Member for Housing inform me:

- A. How many issues of Talk Housing were published in each of the last two years?
- B. Who Talk Housing is distributed to and what is the cost of delivering the newspaper style magazine?
- C. What is the cost of producing Talk Housing (including printing, writing articles and any other relevant costs)?
- D. Why does the Council choose not to include information on Council and Housing Association properties for rent in Talk Housing?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Drury for his question(s).

- A. Talk Housing is published quarterly and was launched in Autumn 2017. To-date 6 editions have been published.
- B. Talk Housing is currently distributed to Council tenants (approx. 20,000 addresses) and leaseholders (approx. 5000 addresses).
As Talk Housing is delivered with the quarterly rent statements sent to council tenants, and where possible with the leaseholder statements, there are usually no delivery costs involved. It has not always been possible to deliver Talk Housing with the Leaseholder statements (as these statements are only circulated twice a year) and the cost of separate delivery is £375 plus postage costs.
- C. The print and design cost for Issue 6 of Talk Housing (Winter 2018) was £3860 in total.
- D. Talk Housing is not distributed to the whole borough and is not produced frequently enough to usefully include timely information on Council and Housing Association properties for rent. Currently this information is included in Greenwich Information which is published fortnightly.