

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Can the Leader of the Council provide an update on the Council's Brexit Task Force, which he chairs, and which as of the Special Council meeting held last month was meeting "on a weekly basis to review progress on the Brexit preparations ... as Brexit approaches, the frequency of meetings [was] expected to increase, as well as the adoption of a Gold structure to coordinate the Council's activity"?

How many times has the Brexit Task Force met since the Special Council meeting, and what work has it carried out in that time?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The Council continues to call upon the Government to give the decision on any final deal back to the British people, through a 'People's Vote'.

We remain concerned about the impact a 'No Deal' situation would have on our residents and businesses, many of whom have already told us that Brexit is having a negative impact on their prospects.

The Brexit Task Force has met five times since the Special Council Meeting on 18 September, six weeks ago.

The wider political situation in relation to Brexit is extremely fluid at present, with limited information provided by the Government, which has complicated the Council's ability to prepare. The work carried out since 18 September includes:

- Reviewing the Council's data sharing arrangements in the event of a no-deal Brexit.
- Ensuring that all departmental Business Continuity Plans are up to date and are ready in case of post-Brexit disruption.

- Liaising with suppliers to determine how Brexit will affect the Council's supplies of items such as vehicle parts and fresh fruit and vegetables for school meals.
- Planning engagement activity with local businesses to help them prepare for Brexit.
- Working with large employers in the Borough to fully understand the effects of Brexit on their businesses.
- Planning communications with residents who may need to apply for Settled Status.
- Discussing measures to improve the Council's ability to collect nationality data for staff, in a manner that is both legally compliant and does not cause unnecessary distress.
- Monitoring the increase in far right/extreme right wing graffiti, which has included racist graffiti aimed at EU nationals, in the Borough, as well as ensuring that this graffiti is dealt with robustly and the perpetrators identified.
- Sharing information with NHS and Police partners to support the coordination of Brexit plans.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Can the Leader of the Council provide the cost to the council taxpayer of the Council's event, led by him as Leader, opposing Brexit held at IKEA Greenwich on Wednesday 23rd October, and details of from which budget this cost was met?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The total cost of the event was £848.50 and this paid from the Events team budget.

This Council has long called for the people of this country to have the final say on any Brexit deal through a People's Vote and the meeting only reaffirmed my view on how necessary this is.

We heard from leading businessmen and women in the borough who highlighted how the prospect of Brexit was already negatively impacting their businesses. We heard from service users who were concerned about how Brexit was already impacting the care that they received. We heard from local foodbank volunteers who highlighted that food donations were decreasing at a time when they were most needed due to people being worried about the impact of Brexit on food supply and food prices.

I hope Councillor Hartley will agree that the cost of the event is a small price to pay especially when compared to the price this country would pay if his Government pushes through a No Deal option.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

3 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Can the Cabinet Member for Finance provide a breakdown in table form of how the £270,000 allocated to the Council by the government for Brexit preparations has been spent?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The lack of certainty has impaired our ability to plan effectively for the utilisation of this funding. Once we have some certainty, we can give due consideration to how they can be deployed.

Spending to date is as follows:

Item	Amount
Assistance with Settlement Status for residents	£2,000
Total	£2,000

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Did the Leader of the Council receive any reply to his letter sent to the Mayor of London on the Tuesday 15th October 2019 regarding the Silvertown Tunnel project?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

Since my letter to the Mayor of London, asking him to pause work on the Silvertown Tunnel, we continue to have discussions to try and move this matter forward.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

In the Cabinet Paper proposing the Council's new Communications Strategy, the Council has conceded for the first time, that the Council's arguments in favour of *Greenwich Info* providing value for money "could be considered to be anecdotal".

Greenwich Info will now be reviewed "with two purposes in mind" - 1) to evaluate the current publication to understand how it is received by residents and what they gain from it, and 2) to use this information to improve the publication as necessary and to ensure that its cost is outweighed by its value.

Why is the scope of this review limited to "improving" *Greenwich Info*, and not open to considering whether it should be replaced by other, less costly means of communicating with residents?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The Communications Strategy stated that *all* evidence relating to *Greenwich Info* is anecdotal, including arguments against the publication too. It remains the Council's view that *Greenwich Info* is the currently the most cost effective way of delivering information about our services through the doors of our residents, but the research we will undertake will inform this opinion.

It also sets out how the Council already uses a mix of channels in order to keep our residents informed. Our Twitter account is in the top three of the most followed London council twitter accounts. The roll out of new website has seen an increase in both the number of page views and the number of interactions our residents have with the Council through our website. Our online engagement over the last year has resulted in huge increases in the responses we receive to our consultations.

Greenwich Info ensures that those residents who cannot, or do not, use computers, phones or tablets to engage the Council and have access to social housing, jobs and information about our services.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

How does the Leader intend for the recommendations of the forthcoming Overview & Scrutiny review of council communication (including *Greenwich Info*) to feed in to the Council's new Communications Strategy?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

It is difficult to say how the Council will respond to recommendations from a review which has not yet started.

However, any Communications Strategy is a living document, which is required to react to changes in how, to whom, or why the Council is communicating. I will happily consider any recommendations when they are made.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

7 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Following the establishment of the Council's new Procurement Strategy, what level of savings to the council taxpayer does the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources anticipate will result from its implementation?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

Our new procurement strategy and in particular our new social value policy are essential strides forward in our mission to bring about an inclusive economy and deliver Value for Money, using our spending power to help local and SME businesses.

This meeting of Council also sees a motion on Fair Tax, which will aim to ensure that businesses are paying their fair share of tax.

We are developing a new Medium Term Financial Strategy, to create a Fairer Greenwich and proposals around any savings measures will come from that work in due course.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

8 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

At the June Full Council meeting the Cabinet Member kindly committed to “publish quantifiable outcomes from [the council’s efforts] in the Budget Recovery Board”. Could she provide an update on the work of the Budget Recovery Board so far, including these quantifiable outcomes?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

Cabinet in November is due to receive an update on the council’s financial position, alongside work undertaken to reduce pressures, including proposals generated by the Budget Recovery Board.

I am pleased to report that we already have proposals in excess of £7m generated from this process and there will be more to come as we extend the reach of this deep dive to the remaining areas of the council.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

9 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on departments' progress in Q1 and Q2 of the 2019/20 year in achieving the £2.5 million / year back office efficiency savings agreed in this year's budget? The Cabinet Member previously expected to be able to "assess the effectiveness of these efforts" after the summer recess.

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

Departments were asked to make savings of £2.25m as part of the 2019/20 budget process. Progress by department will be reported by way of the November Cabinet report on the councils financial position. I am pleased to report that the vast majority of this sum is on target for delivery.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

10 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety

The Cabinet Member will be aware of the government's intention to amend the Domestic Abuse Bill to impose a legal duty on local authorities to ensure a minimum standard of support for victims of domestic abuse. What is her assessment of the Council's current work in this area - and specifically, has an assessment been made as to whether the Council is likely to meet the proposed legal duty?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The Safer Greenwich Partnership and Royal Greenwich are committed to creating an environment where all forms of Domestic Abuse are challenged, reported and dealt with appropriately. This not includes violence against Women & Girls (VAWG) but any form of abuse between intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

Royal Greenwich is welcoming of the impending statutory duty of the Domestic Abuse Bill and as a local authority will co-operate with the Pan London Partnership Board. The proposed allocated funding would be further utilised to acquire the resources to ensure the duty is met.

The current Royal Greenwich DVA commissioned services, coupled with the DAHA accreditation stands Royal Greenwich in good stead to meet the proposed statutory duty. The Council's draft Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2020-2025 also features the current and future work that will be undertaken to work with survivors of domestic abuse.

A new VAWG Strategy has also been developed for 2019-2021 which has four key priorities:

- Ensuring that all professionals have the skills, knowledge and confidence to identify and support/refer victims appropriately.

- Protecting and supporting victims giving priority to those who are high risk whilst also helping those in need of early intervention by encouraging victims to report and promoting services available.
- Raising awareness amongst the community, enabling people to understand the impact of violence against women and girls on families and communities and working together to challenge the culture of acceptance and repair the harm.
- Pursuing perpetrators through enforcement action whilst intervening to change the behaviour of perpetrators where it is appropriate and there is genuine motivation for change.

The VAWG strategic partnership is taking forward work to deliver on these four priorities.

One of the key projects that Royal Greenwich is taking forward for 2018/19 is the Housing Domestic Violence Response Improvement Project. Funding was obtained from Ministry of Housing and Local Government to improve the response to victims of Domestic Abuse who present to housing staff. This project provides a Domestic Violence Improvement Officer (DVIO), who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of improvements across the Housing Inclusion Service and Tenancy Services.

The DVIO is currently the project lead for the Council obtaining the DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation, which is seen as best practice in sustaining effective, appropriate and compassionate responses to DA victims. To achieve the accreditation, the Housing Services will undergo a rigorous assessment, by DAHA assessors, across eight priority areas, which include staff training, publicity awareness and risk and perpetrator management etc. Work is currently underway to review and revise the frontline policies and procedures across Housing Services through the project.

Currently there is a Steering Group working alongside the DVIO to ensure the work is established and undertaken across the Council and its key partners.

The Council aim to achieve accreditation by April 2020. In addition a full time Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) is in post, who is able to provide direct fast time responses to victims, whilst sharing skills and best practice to empower staff. Royal Greenwich has submitted a bid to Homeless Link to secure funding to continue the role of the IDVA for an additional year.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich also commissions a local domestic abuse service. There is the provision of 30 units of accommodation within the 4 refuges across the borough provided by Housing4Women (H4W). They support and enable victims of DA through the application of a Psychologically Informed Environment to address trauma, to improve their emotional wellbeing and promote healthier relationships. There is fully trained staff in all refuges and also support and safeguard children and young people and refer to specialist services, where trauma is significant.

The Her Centre provides an Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) service, which provides specialist advocates to support high risk victims of domestic abuse in order to keep victims and any children safe. This service assesses risk, provides support appropriate to the risk and supports victims through the criminal justice process. The service also provides information and signposting to a range of support services for victims and their families. The Her Centre is part of a co-ordinated community response in tackling DA crimes/incidents in Greenwich and effectively supports the MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) framework and is a key part of a referral pathway that involves cross referral protocols with statutory and other specialist agencies.

The Her Centre also assists the borough to promote wider education and awareness of the impact of domestic abuse and runs a significant number of groups and events, such as ESOL (English as a Second Language) classes, to engage and support women who could be affected by DA.

The Council also commissions Greenwich Domestic Violence and Abuse Services to provide a dedicated public advice telephone service and a website (<http://www.gdva.org.uk/>) that offers a victim-friendly portal to information and support services. These services are available for young women aged 16 years and over and also for men, who can be supported to access specialist services.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

11 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

I am grateful to the Cabinet Member for engaging fellow councillors from both parties in the development of the new Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan, agreed unanimously by Full Council in June. What plans does she have to consult and engage with residents, and interested local groups, on the Plan's contents? What timescales are attached to these plans?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The Evidence Base for the Carbon Neutral Plan will be presented to full Council in early 2020, together with the full timeline for the development of the Carbon Neutral Plan. The evidence base is essential both as the starting point for our carbon reduction trajectory and to identify those measures that will be most effective.

We will engage with residents throughout the first part of early through Better Together meetings, formal consultation and other channels. We will also engage with other relevant organisations through The Greenwich Partnership.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

12 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

The Opposition Group's amendment to the motion proposed at Full Council in June declaring a Climate Emergency added the requirement to develop the new Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan, and bring this back to a vote of Full Council in January 2020. The amendment was accepted and the amended motion was unanimously passed.

Could the Cabinet Member clarify why, given this, the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan appears in the Forward Plan as a decision to be made by Cabinet in January before the January Full Council meeting? Will she ensure the January 2020 vote we agreed in June takes place?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The Council has begun to quantify the pathways to delivering the 2030 Carbon Neutral Target.

Work on baseline data, quantifying pathways and setting targets is progressing according to plan. This will be presented to Full Council in early 2020.

This first stage report will:

- identify key areas of action that the Council can take and that are within its control;
- review the policy context and best practice; and
- identify the funding and resources required to reach the 2030 ambition.

Therefore, I confirm that the first stage report, setting out the Evidence Base and route map, will be presented to Full Council.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

13 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Adult's Social Care and Health

Could the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of social care debts owed by residents to the council in each year for the last 3 years? What processes are in place to 1) prevent social care debts arising in the first place, 2) collect social care debts when they do, and 3) provide appropriate support to residents who owe social care debts?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

		Outstanding Social Care Debts as at 30.09.2019		
Year	Residential		Non-Residential	
	No. Bills	Balance	No. Bills	Balance
16/17	119	£412,773.00	894	£162,968.00
17/18	153	£579,970.00	1240	£241,623.00
18/19	216	£1,359,212.00	2197	£439,754.00
TOTAL	488	£2,351,955.00	4331	£844,345.00

* **Noting** that £1.1m of the above sum is being repaid by way of instalments or secured through deferred payment and £0.7m relates to deceased clients.

I. What processes are in place to prevent social care debt arising in the first place

Initial Prevention is undertaken by the commissioning and business support team who have introduced a debt panel (debt team, financial assessment team and care team), from this they have gained experience on who does what and what to look out for if someone is in debt

-Training has been provided to all H&AS staff relating to the financial assessment process to ensure staff are aware of the process for assessing client contributions towards their care.

-Literature that is given to clients during the financial assessment has been reviewed and re written to ensure clients are fully aware of the need to be assessed and pay for their care from the outset of a care need being identified.

-Direct Debits are actively promoted when contributions are being assessed for new clients to prevent the possibility of debts accruing. Finance colleagues also actively promote Direct Debit for new clients who have not already provided a mandate when they receive their first invoice.

2. Collect Debts

Direct Debit is encouraged to set expectations of payment for care early in the process.

Council Officers in Finance are responsible for engaging with residents in receipt of invoices for care to ensure that payment of invoices are made promptly. Where a client accrues arrears, officers will arrange a repayment plan which takes the clients' personal circumstances into account. This allows the client to keep up to date with on-going contributions and gradually reduce the arrears over a period of time.

Automated invoicing is now in place, in part to allow officers to focus on contacting those clients who are not making regular payments. It is expected that 90 % of invoices will be raised automatically by the end of the December, thereby increasing the amount of time that staff can spend chasing debts and engaging with clients and their personal representatives.

High Value cases where payment is not forthcoming are now subject to a monthly Debt Recovery Panel, bringing multi-disciplinary professionals together to discuss complex cases so that a collaborative approach is developed, and cases are progressed, where litigation may not be possible, and this helps those who are identified as needing additional support or are not engaging regarding their arrears.

A deferred payment scheme is in place in 50 cases, thereby securing debts on property.

Deceased cases are now being managed in a different way to ensure early engagement with the executor or the family following the death of the client.

Lastly, cases are progressed and eventually taken to court when it is appropriate to do so.

3. provide appropriate support to residents who owe social care debts?

Where a client requires additional support, officers will liaise with family members, friends or support agencies to ensure the client receives the support they need. This may include further time before an arrangement can be made, a re-assessment if their circumstances have altered and referral to advice agencies for guidance regarding managing their debts (especially where they owe multiple debts). Where there are safeguarding concerns, these are addressed as soon as they are identified. Often this does not come to light until a number of invoices have gone unpaid.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

14 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

What is the Council's policy is on requiring pre-application public consultation by major development applicants?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

The Council's policy relating to pre-application consultation for major development proposals is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement adopted in December 2016. This is consistent with Government advice which acknowledges that although not mandatory (except in limited cases for example in relation to shale gas development) pre-application engagement is a collaborative process between a prospective applicant and other parties, which may include local communities. The extent to which local communities are involved at pre-application stage will vary on a case by case basis, and the level of engagement needs to be proportionate to the nature and scale of a proposed development.

The Statement of Community Involvement strongly encourages developers to involve the local community from an early stage and through a variety of forms, which may include local exhibitions, public meetings, circulation of leaflets or the creation of a well-publicised dedicated website, including a facility to make comments. Community involvement should ideally be sought in two stages. Firstly, views should be sought from interested groups on what may be appropriate for a site so that these comments can, wherever possible, be taken on board before the proposals are drawn up. Secondly, further views should be sought on the evolving proposals before a planning application is submitted, so that changes can be made in response before submission, and also so that people are already aware of the background and the proposals when the Royal Borough carries out public consultations on the planning application. Although not mandatory, the Council considers that good quality pre-application consultation can result in improved outcomes for the community and for this reason all planning applications for major development are required to be supported by a Statement of Community

Consultation. This is required to demonstrate how the applicant has complied with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement, including how the views of the local community have been sought and taken into account in the formulation of development proposals. Where no changes have been made the statement should explain why not.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Which services and departments of the Council fall within the Leader's direct responsibility as Cabinet Member for Community and Corporate Services?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I refer Councillor Fletcher to Appendix I of Item 7 of the Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019 that sets out the Cabinet Portfolios for 2019/20.

Could Councillor Fletcher share with me how many of the residents in his ward have actually raised this question with him, in person or by email, and when will the gesture politics of this Conservative Group end, and their role as an effective Opposition begin?

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

16 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor David Gardner, Cabinet Member for Public Realm

Can the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for the Public Realm list which services and departments of the Council fall within the responsibility of his Cabinet portfolio?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I refer Councillor Fletcher to Appendix I of Item 7 of the Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019 that sets out the Cabinet Portfolios for 2019/20.

Could Councillor Fletcher share with me how many of the residents in his ward have actually raised this question with him, in person or by email, and when will the gesture politics of this Conservative Group end, and their role as an effective Opposition begin?

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

17 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety

Can the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety list which services and departments of the Council fall within the responsibility of her Cabinet portfolio?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I refer Councillor Fletcher to Appendix I of Item 7 of the Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019 that sets out the Cabinet Portfolios for 2019/20.

Could Councillor Fletcher share with me how many of the residents in his ward have actually raised this question with him, in person or by email, and when will the gesture politics of this Conservative Group end, and their role as an effective Opposition begin?

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

18 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and the Third Sector

Can the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and the voluntary sector list which services and departments of the Council fall within the responsibility of her Cabinet portfolio?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I refer Councillor Fletcher to Appendix I of Item 7 of the Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019 that sets out the Cabinet Portfolios for 2019/20.

Could Councillor Fletcher share with me how many of the residents in his ward have actually raised this question with him, in person or by email, and when will the gesture politics of this Conservative Group end, and their role as an effective Opposition begin?

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

19 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

Can the Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport list which services and departments of the Council fall within the responsibility of her Cabinet portfolio?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I refer Councillor Fletcher to Appendix I of Item 7 of the Council Annual Meeting on Wednesday 15th May 2019 that sets out the Cabinet Portfolios for 2019/20.

Could Councillor Fletcher share with me how many of the residents in his ward have actually raised this question with him, in person or by email, and when will the gesture politics of this Conservative Group end, and their role as an effective Opposition begin?

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

20 Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety

Has the Council made any contact with the Department of Transport on the testing of acoustic cameras to detect and issue fines to vehicles that break legal noise limits and how this might be applied to roads in the Royal Borough of Greenwich?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Geoffrey Brighty for his question.

Noise has a serious effect on health and the Royal Borough is keen to minimise noise from transport. We are working to reduce the volume of noise-generating motorised traffic, by shifting the majority of trips to walking, cycling and public transport.

As noted in response to your previous question on the subject: officers are awaiting the results of the Department for Transport's tests of technology to measure vehicle noise. The tests are due to take seven months from their start in June, so we are not expecting results before the New Year.

Once those results are published, we will be able to explore what application they might feasibly have in Royal Greenwich and what action might be appropriate to support national efforts.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

21 Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

Should the Silvertown Tunnel be built can you confirm that the only route for construction traffic to and from the south of the tunnel would remain as the A102, the A2, the A2213, and the A20. Can you also confirm a “buffer” zone would be applied around the route and what mitigation measures would be applied for those areas that might be affected by noise and other impacts of construction traffic ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Geoffrey Brighty for his question.

The Development Consent Order that gives Transport for London permission to construct the Tunnel includes a Code of Construction Practice which defines construction routes. Any variance from the Code of Construction Practice would have to be agreed with the Council as local planning authority. It states that:

“Construction HGVs would be routed on the [Transport for London Road Network] and principal roads as far as possible, with local roads only used to directly access the worksites, local businesses and wharves used for the import and/or export of material by river. The principal routes to and from the worksites will be the A12, the A13, the A2 and the A102 with access between these routes and the worksite via Lower Lea Crossing, Blackwall Lane and Millennium Way.”

Before the development can be started Transport for London has to have a range of plans approved by the relevant planning authority (and the Environment Agency or the PLA in some cases). These include:

- An Air Quality Management Plan;
- A Construction Materials Management Plan (incorporating commitments to river transport);
- A Construction Traffic Management Plan;

- A Noise and Vibration Management Plan; and
- A Construction Environmental Management Plan.

These will all set help to set out how the impacts of construction traffic will be measured, minimised and mitigated.

The Royal Borough has been a leading voice in calling for Transport for London to properly manage and minimise its impact on Royal Greenwich if the Tunnel is constructed. We have:

- secured vital improvements to the proposals;
- expanded the contents of the Development Consent Order; and
- secured a separate legal agreement to deliver additional local mitigation measures.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

22 Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

A commitment was given to carry out the resident review/satisfaction survey for the Westcombe area CPZ firstly in summer and then during the autumn. We are well in to autumn now so can the Cabinet Member confirm the date for the survey ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Geoffrey Brighty for his question.

It is still anticipated that the satisfaction survey in the Westcombe CPZ area will be carried out this Autumn, albeit towards the end of November.

This further review in this area has largely arisen because of requests from residents on the periphery of the new controls in this zone experiencing displacement parking. Our consultation documents highlight the potential for displacement and residents are advised to consider this when responding to proposals about whether or not less onerous controls are introduced on their streets compared to those neighbouring them. The cost of undertaking these reviews is not insignificant and there is insufficient budget to repeatedly return to zones to undertake further consultations. Going forward it is unlikely that, after changes have been implemented, further reviews are undertaken within at least twenty-four months and this will be made clear in consultation material.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

23 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

The new Secretary of State for Transport has sent signals of being open to considering that suburban London train lines, such as our very own Southeastern, could be operated by TfL.

Opposition councillors wrote to him straight after his appointment to lobby for this. Would the Cabinet Member please confirm that the Council has done the same and will continue to lobby for TfL to operate services through our borough ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

It is pleasing to see the central government's opinion, on the rail franchising system in general and suburban London train services in particular, catch-up with what we have known, from experience, locally for some time.

The Royal Borough has been supportive of moves for TfL to take over and improve suburban London train services. We will continue to encourage and lobby for this.

I anticipate the planned new borough-wide Transport Strategy cementing and adding to this support, when it is developed next year.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

24 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

The Deputy Leader, myself and several other Councillors are on public record as condemning the unacceptable disruption of the DLR and Jubilee line last week, impacting many low paid working people, by seemingly fringe elements of Extinction Rebellion.

All of us share Extinction Rebellions aims and are very keen that everyone work together to make a decisive local contribution to helping addressing the Climate Emergency. However this must be done in a constructive manner.

What is the Leader's, and Cabinet's, stance on working with Extinction Rebellion while such costly, disruptive and ultimately environmentally damaging actions (through on the day traffic jams or shift from disrupted public transport) are carried out ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

We met with local Extinction Rebellions representatives, the discussions were helpful and positive. Extension Rebellion has succeeded in making climate change a priority at the highest level. That level of priority will help the Council deliver on its Climate Change Emergency declaration.

However, protest carries with it a duty to think about how any disruption it causes affects those caught up in it. Our public transport network is a lifeline for many of us: getting us to work, education and caring responsibilities. When it is disrupted, those with the least are affected most, particularly those working shifts or on zero hours contracts - who pay for the delay out of their wages. The highest paid - who emit the most carbon - generally have more flexible working conditions and won't feel the delay in the same way.

Protestors must consider who they affect.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

25 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Voluntary Sector

In Camden when felling a tree a sign giving a brief explanation is given (e.g. diseased) along with reassurance on when a replacement will be planted. This would be a great way to reduce queries to officers and could help advertise the council's new policy of residents funding street trees. Will the Council consider this?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

Parks and Housing routinely place notifications on high profile amenity trees before they are due for removal. For example, a notice was placed on a Horse Chestnut in the Woolwich Dockyard Estate earlier this year. We will continue to follow this protocol, to keep residents and concerned parties informed.

The Council has around 14,500 street trees and a scheme has recently been approved allowing local residents and businesses to fund and contribute to the costs of new street tree planting, as publicised on the Council's website. These trees provide a fantastic addition to our streets providing amenity, environmental benefits, air quality improvements and biodiversity. Whilst there are no hard and fast rules typically a street tree will last around 50 year.

Based on this natural cycle around 250 to 300 trees are removed annually and a similar or greater number are planted. The council has a well-established Street Tree Policy which is used to guide officer's decisions. As no street trees are removed unnecessarily we are reviewing the merit of erecting information signs prior to removal, noting that this would create a significant additional resource requirement at a time when there are significant funding pressures on Council services.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

26 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

A new consultation on the Bakerloo line extension is underway from TfL. Will the Cabinet Member please confirm that the Council has now removed its proposal of an (extremely unlikely) alternative route and is fully behind helping to secure the extension to Lewisham which is our best chance of securing any extension ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

Transport for London, has now selected it's preferred route for the Bakerloo Line extension and is consulting on how it develops that route.

We will respond to that consultation in due course.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

27 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Voluntary Sector

I understand that the Royal Borough of Greenwich now only rent out half size allotments to residents at a cost of £100 per half plot. What services are provided for this amount?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

Most of allotment sites are marked out with five-rod plots, 125 m², with a select number of ten-rod plots. The five-rod plots are popular and a more manageable plot size to many allotment holders. It can also provide additional plot availability, which assists in reducing the waiting time for new allotment holders. Ten-rod plots can be acquired when they become available.

We provide water, an entrance gate key, site security, accessible site representatives and repairs to the infrastructure, as required. The Parks team also undertake regular inspections of the allotment sites and hold an annual meeting with the site representatives.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

28 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety

How many of our schools have received hard hitting presentations from families affected by knife crime ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

The following programmes have been delivered in schools across Royal Greenwich:

- Growing Against Violence (GAV)
GAV is a dynamic life skills and violence resistance programme designed to increase pupils' resilience against becoming victims of violence and exploitation. Delivered to year group assemblies, this is a candid programme that challenges students to think about the decisions they make.

Since 1 April 2019 GAV has been delivered to:
240 students in 1 secondary school
180 students in 3 primary schools

- St Giles SOS+
Delivered by professionally trained individuals who have direct experience of the issues they are presenting. They provide credible, hard-hitting accounts of the realities of being in a gang and the associated violence. SOS+ is delivered to small groups of pupils deemed to be at high risk of involvement in gangs and serious youth violence.

Since 1 April 2019 SOS+ has been delivered:
7 targeted sessions across 3 schools involving 649 students

- Connect – Charlton Athletic Community Trust Programme
Delivered by professionally trained individuals who have direct experience of gangs, violence and exploitation to build resilience in pupils identified as being at high risk. Following group work, young people are offered individual mentoring.

Currently delivering in 3 schools and 3 alternative education provision.

To date:

817 young people engaged in lower level triage and support

51 young people received individual mentoring

In addition to the above four secondary schools are currently receiving:

- Crime Stoppers Fearless project sessions on the importance of disclosing information and how to do this anonymously; and
- Trident (the Police gangs task force participation team) deliver staff training to raise awareness on the signs and symbols of exploitation, county lines and grooming.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

29 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety

Could the Cabinet Member explain why the use of Safe Haven schemes are deemed to be unsuccessful?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

The Council has considered the possibility of introducing a Safe Havens scheme carefully. Whilst we are concerned about how effective Safe Havens are in protecting young people who need help, the principal concern that has led us not to develop a scheme in Royal Greenwich is the difficulty of sustaining Safe Havens in the years following introduction. A previous attempt by Citizens UK demonstrated these challenges.

To deliver an effective Safe haven scheme, staff and managers in the high street and community venues involved need to be aware of what it means and what is expected of them if a young person seeks help. Typically high staff turnover means that it would be necessary to deliver refresher training at least annually for the staff and managers at each Haven or risk a young person being turned away or receiving an inappropriate and possibly unsafe response.

Given the severe reduction in council funding and staff we are unable to maintain this level of commitment and unwilling to introduce a scheme that we cannot support properly.

The decision not to pursue the Safe Haven Scheme in Greenwich was taken not by the Council alone, but by the Safer Greenwich Partnership – our statutory Community Safety partnership which includes a range of stakeholders including the Metropolitan Police.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

30 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Air Quality, Sustainability and Transport

Over the summer Councillor Gardner pushed TfL to use the closure of the A2 to identify new sites for the planting of trees which might improve the look of these sections of road and soften the noise for neighbouring houses. Can the Cabinet Member confirm how many sites were identified by TfL and how many new trees have been planted as a result of his intervention?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

TfL have identified one site on the A2- plus 3 sites on the A205, 12 sites on the A20 and 2 sites on the A210- for tree planting on their road network within the Royal Borough. They plan to plant these trees between now and February 2020.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Over the summer and autumn period, representatives of the Progress Residents Association (PRA) have been in contact with Hyde Housing to attempt to address problems of graffiti and collapsed fencing on communal spaces around the estate. The response appears to have been lacklustre with fences remaining in a poor state and graffiti taking some time to clear. Given the Council has recently taken steps to deal with the problem of rogue landlords in the private sector, what steps does it intend to take to address a lack of commitment to maintaining good standards in properties and around estates from Housing Associations?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

It is appropriate that in the first instance Hyde Housing are given an opportunity to respond to service requests and this can also be followed up with a complaint. The Hyde Complaints policy states that operational teams will endeavour to respond to expressions of dissatisfaction within 48hrs. If a formal complaint is more appropriate then the timeline extends to not more than 20 working days.

The Directorate of Housing & Safer communities is keen to develop a closer strategic relationship with the largest Registered Providers (RPs) in the borough. Earlier this month was the inaugural meeting of the RP Community & Management Forum with a further meeting planned for January. The aim of the Forum is that it is an opportunity for the Directorate and RPs to work in a collaborative way, to address issues that affect all housing providers and to support the Royal Borough in meeting its wider community objectives. This Forum presents an opportunity to have a round table discussion and to develop some agreed standards.

The Policy & Performance Team keep a log of all casework relating to RPs and can produce reports to identify both the volume of concerns/complaints and undertake analysis on emerging issues or trends.

It is proposed that at a future RP Community & Management Forum casework is the round table topic and how issues that are not resolved internally through RPs own processes are dealt with when escalated as Members enquiries. This will enable the RPs to understand the extent of the issues, where there are themes to complaints/concerns to agree a consistent approach and to understand how the Directorate will address the concerns of Members acting for RP customers.

If there are specific casework issues where the Policy & Performance Team can potentially broker a solution through working with an individual RP we would happily take this forward.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

I note that in June 2019, Greenwich Council agreed to develop a plan to make itself carbon neutral by 2030. Can the Cabinet Member confirm how Greenwich Council intends to measure Greenwich Council's carbon output and what is the current level of carbon output based upon this measure?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

As stated in response to the related earlier question, the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan will cover the whole of Royal Greenwich. It will include:

- heating and electricity use by homes, business and industry;
- transportation emissions by all modes of transport; and
- other non-energy related emissions, such as landfills and refrigerant emissions.

Work on baseline data, quantifying pathways and setting targets is progressing according to plan. This will be presented to Full Council in early 2020. Establishing our current 'baseline' emissions is an important part of this work. I look forward to being able to share it once it is complete.

The scope of this analysis includes all sources of emissions for which data can be obtained. The Council's emissions are included in the scope of assessment. While they represent a small proportion of Royal Greenwich's total emissions, it is vital we understand the impact we have.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

33 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

I understand that Tower Hamlets have recently appointed a Biodiversity Officer and developed a Local Biodiversity Action Plan. Given concerns over this Council's failings with regard to biodiversity in spaces like the Hervey Road Sports Field, will the Cabinet Member commit to following Tower Hamlets lead and employing a dedicated Officer to lead the development of a Greenwich specific Biodiversity Action Plan to ensure wildlife and plants are preserved across the Borough?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The Council has a Biodiversity Action Plan (adopted Mar 2010) and it is considered that this document provides a framework for promoting biodiversity within the borough. In addition, the Local Plan provides protection of biodiverse habitats through the planning process.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

34 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

What due diligence did the Council carry out in leasing the unit on Eltham High Street to Pizza Express? What discussions has the Council had since the announcement Pizza Express were in discussion with their creditors due to financial difficulties? And what reassurances has the Council received about the future of the chain on the High Street?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

Cushman and Wakefield (CW), a national property consultancy, were appointed to identify tenants for the Eltham Cinema Development in December 2013. Following a full marketing campaign, CW recommended Pizza Express (PE) as a tenant due to their then strong covenant strength, brand and the increased investment value that this would bring to the Council's property. This resulted in an Agreement for Lease being entered into on 14th September 2016. The due diligence on their financial position was undertaken in mid-2016 approximately three years ago.

Since the most recent announcement that PE were in debt restructuring discussions, PE have not approached the Council. However, earlier this year when their financial position was first announced, PE advised Officers that they were continuing to open restaurants and had embarked on an internal modernisation process which they were rolling out across their estate, including at the new site in Eltham.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

35 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

Does the Cabinet Member agree that given uncertainty regarding a number of chains currently occupying units on Eltham High Street, and the continued impending development of what was originally earmarked as Orangery Square, that any responsible Council would either update the Eltham Masterplan or put in place a new Masterplan or guidance for the town centre?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

I am pleased to report that Eltham continues to be a successful high street with vacancy rates below London average and footfall figures increasing by 8.3% between 2016 and 2018. Eltham High Street has benefitted from Council investment in the new Eltham Cinema with two new restaurants and a Sky Bar and £6.5m million for public realm improvements, which provide a sense of place and enhance customer experience and the environment. During the course of the year a number of events were held to encourage people from the area and beyond to shop on Eltham High Street; and a final event is planned for Eltham Lights Up. These measures aim to increase footfall by 10% and maintain low shop vacancy rates at 4% - half London's average. This investment, together with a vibrant calendar of events is stimulating a leisure and night-time economy which will help the high street adapt and become more resilient in the face of changing shopping habits. The Council works in partnership with retailers to offer services to support business, including supporting Eltham Traders' Forum, and the local crime reduction partnership.

It is considered that the current SPD (adopted April 2012) provides a robust framework for development within the town centre and has guided development since it was adopted.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

36 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Housing

Does the Council keep a record of the percentage of the Council housing stock that would be considered well-insulated? And if so please may the Cabinet member share the results.

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The Council has focussed investment on those housing properties with poor energy performance, and replacing older heating systems with modern energy efficient ones. Outcomes include:

- All properties with cavity wall construction have been filled
- Targeted boiler replacement programmes based on energy rating of the property and or the current boiler
- Replacing communal boilers with modern energy efficient systems
- Exceeding the minimum standard for loft insulation when works are carried out (eg 300mm from the minimum of 270mm)
- Developing major projects to target estates and blocks that require external wall insulation (for example John Wilson Street, Earnest Dence and Flamstead)

We are currently reconciling the data we hold on energy performance to ensure we have one consistent record of the measures installed. This is due for completion by April 2020 and will support the Council's preparation of its long term Asset Management Strategy and investment programme.

We would be happy to share more detailed information once this exercise has been completed.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

37 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

What progress has been made to ensure the Council knows the nationality of all Council staff since the special meeting of Council in September?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

RBG continues to request and encourage staff to complete nationality data voluntarily, however to make this a mandatory requirement would be changing the legal basis under which we collect and use this information and raising Data Protection 2018 and GDPR concerns. Furthermore, nationality data is unverified information and not necessarily indicative of someone's right to work in the UK.

In line with advice from Government's website, organisations are not permitted to require EU, EEA or Swiss citizens to show their status under the EU Settlement Scheme or European temporary leave to remain until 1 January 2021. As such current legal advice is that RBG should not undertake this exercise until after Brexit has occurred.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

38 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and the Third Sector

Can the Cabinet Member confirm whether the proposed research and review with London Sport mentioned at June Council has been completed? Additionally, would she be able to confirm whether this information will go into a report, and if so when this report would be published and whether it would go to Cabinet or Scrutiny?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

As outlined in June, Sport and Leisure colleagues along with key partner providers were to meet with London Sport in the first phase of discussions and insight. This meeting took place in October and the following is underway:

- First stage review of workforce UK Coaching principles
- Finalise scoring of workforce principles
- Consider the need to consult with wider community partners
- Development of workforce plan
- Deliver workforce priority actions 2020-21

This is one of a number of linked actions in the Physical activity and Sport Action Plan adopted by Cabinet in May this year. I understand a review of the strategy to be conducted by officers is scheduled for April 2020, to ensure ongoing relevance to any emerging issues.

COUNCIL

30 OCTOBER 2019

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

39 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Christine Grice, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Can the Cabinet Member confirm that any addendum to financial arrangements with Blackheath Rugby Club has been agreed and signed off? Additionally, can he confirm any repayment holidays now no longer applying to the arrangement?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The Council is currently awaiting a revised Business plan from Blackheath Rugby Club. This is expected to be received soon, so that a final agreement can be reached on the revised payment schedule.