

COUNCIL Minutes

Place

**Council Chamber - Town Hall, Wellington Street,
Woolwich SE18 6PW**

Date

Thursday 24 February 2022

Time

7.00 pm

Present

The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Leo Fletcher

Councillors:

Olu Babatola	David Gardner	Sarah Merrill
Sandra Bauer	Patricia Greenwell	Matthew Morrow
Linda Bird	Matt Hartley	Anthony Okereke
Stephen Brain	John Hills	Linda Perks
Geoffrey Brighty	Mark James	Denise Scott-McDonald
Clare Burke-McDonald	Adel Khairah	Pat Slattery
Angela Cornforth	Averil Lekau	Aidan Smith
Ann-Marie Cousins	Chris Lloyd	Jackie Smith
Charlie Davis	Mariam Lolavar	Roger Tester
Gary Dillon	Clive Mardner	Danny Thorpe
Spencer Drury	Dominic Mbang	Ivis Williams
John Fahy	Odette McGahey	Miranda Williams
Nigel Fletcher		

A webcast of the meeting of the Council is displayed on the Council's website <https://royalgreenwich.public-i.tv/core/portal/home> for a period of six months subsequent to the meeting.

Minutes

The Deputy Mayor reminded Council of the published Public Health advice and stated he would be adjourning the meeting for a short while after Item 11.

Item No.

1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were given for the Mayor, Councillor Denise Hyland.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Norman Adams, Matt Clare, Bill Freeman, Ian Hawking, Mick Hayes, Rajinder James, Sizwe James, Christine May, Maureen O'Mara and David Stanley

Apologies for lateness were given for Councillor Charlie Davis.

2 **Minutes**

Resolved –

That the minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 4 October 2021 be agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

3 **Mayor's Announcements**

On behalf of Council the Deputy Mayor extended thoughts and prayers to the people of Ukraine, and to residents of this borough, who were affected by the invasion.

4 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Angela Cornforth stated she would not take part in Item 14 as reference was made to the allowance of the Chief Whip in the proposed amendment.

Resolved –

- I. That the list of Councillors' memberships as Council appointed representatives on outside bodies, joint committees and school governing bodies is noted.

2. That the following declarations be noted: Councillors Leo Fletcher, Adel Khairah, and Ivis Williams declared an interest in agenda item 12, as council tenants.

5 Notice of Members wishing to exceed the 5 minute rule

The Deputy Mayor accepted a request for Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, to exceed the 5 minute rule in respect of Items 14 and 15.

6 Submission of Petitions

The following petitions were presented at the meeting:

Subject and Number of Signatures	Presenting Councillor	Lead Department
Stop West Hallows being used as a cut through to the A20 74 signatures	Matt Hartley	Directorate Communities, Environment and Central

7 Public Deputations on matters not otherwise on the agenda

The Deputy Mayor noted that there were no public deputations.

8 Public Questions

The Deputy Mayor stated that Council had received 9 written questions by members of the public. The questions and replies are attached as Appendix A to the minutes.

9 Questions from Members

The Deputy Mayor stated that 21 written questions had been received from Members of the Council. The questions and replies, together with the supplementary questions made during the meeting are attached as Appendix B to the minutes.

Under procedures for oral questions, the Deputy Mayor invited questions to Members of the Cabinet for response.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher sought confirmation from the Leader of the Council that Greenwich would welcome refugees from the conflict in Ukraine.

Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council, confirmed that they were ready to do all they could for those who were displaced. He felt that sanctions were not good enough and that the Government's response was disappointing and that it was not doing enough to stop the conflict.

Councillor Pat Greenwell requested that the Leader of the Council refrain from referring to her association with a charity in connection with the Wide Horizons site as it was totally inappropriate; he had made it clear that he was not interested in that charity and they had moved on from it. Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council, apologised for any offence caused; she had accused him of not being transparent, yet he had set out the facts and clearly she did not like that.

Councillor Aidan Smith asked the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport what other measures would the Council be taking to reduce traffic by 45 % over the next eight years. Councillor Sarah Merrill, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport emphasised that schools traffic made a massive contribution to emissions and congestion in the morning hence the importance of walking school buses. She indicated it was a difficult problem to address unless she got a lot of volunteers. She explained that Greenwich was talking to the road freight associations and liaising with TfL on how to direct freight. She stressed it was incumbent on all residents to stop using cars.

Councillor Charlie Davis asked the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement for an update on the collaborative policing project. Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement said they were ready to launch the scheme in early March, and that it would be called 'Beat Stop'. 40 venues had been signed up across the borough which included all of the libraries and leisure centres as well as some key businesses; they would not necessarily be for police officers to have meetings with members of the public it would be for them to recharge phones and get refreshments but members of the public could approach them. The Borough Commander was looking to showcase it across London.

10 Matters for early debate

The Deputy Mayor noted that no requests for matters to be taken early had been received.

11 Annual Audit Letter

The Deputy Mayor noted that the Annual Audit Letter had been considered by the Audit and Risk Management Panel the day before with no comments for the Council's consideration.

Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, moved the recommendations in the report.

The Deputy Mayor invited Iain Murray from the external auditor to address the Council.

Iain Murray, Key Audit Partner (Grant Thornton) informed Council that the report was in a new format following changes to the Code of Practice from the National Audit Office. He highlighted the report covered a period when the Council was dealing with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and they had looked at the arrangements that had had to change because of that. He drew Council's attention to the recommendations in Appendix B. He stated that there were no key concerns.

Councillor Chris Lloyd, Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Panel, thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Council's finance Officers and the external auditor for their diligence in looking after the Council's finances. Councillor Lloyd said the Panel acknowledged that the Council needed to keep a focus on the continuous improvement plan, the digital strategy and the future workforce strategy to ensure that overspends did not happen.

Resolved –

1. That the 2020/21 Annual Audit Letter be noted.
2. That the 2020/21 Annual Audit Letter was considered at the meeting of Audit & Risk Management on 23 February 2022 be noted.

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The Deputy Mayor adjourned the meeting at 8.05pm. The meeting recommenced at 8.20pm.

12 Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy & 2022-23 Budget and Rent Setting

The Deputy Mayor noted that Cabinet on 17 February had agreed to recommend that Council agrees the recommendations. The Deputy Mayor also noted that an addendum had been circulated the day before with the summary of two consultation events with Tenants.

Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing, moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Okereke highlighted the challenges the Council faced, including carbon-neutral goals, post Grenfell learning and legislation, the need for more quality affordable housing, and a lack of social housing vision from the government. He highlighted the difficulties residents faced with housing waiting lists and homelessness. He said the budget before them was their statement of intent to make sure they were prioritising those matters. He indicated that the weekly rental charge would be reinvested to ensure homes were kept to a decent Home Standard while also maintaining Greenwich position as a social landlord with one of the lowest rents in London; digitalization, a decrease in the service charge, investment to deal with garages, were also included. The budget was sustainable and demonstrated the Council's commitment to its tenants and leaseholders and their efforts to provide residents with an affordable home.

Councillor Spencer Drury, Conservative group spokesperson for Housing, noted the budget would impact on the lives of many thousands of their residents. He considered that the figures relating to garages did not add up, and that an issue was the allocation of the garages. He commented that many Councillors regularly had casework involving housing repairs not completed in a reasonable time. He commented that Scrutiny had looked at the matter of the repairs service and the situation was that repairs were still outstanding in huge numbers and residents found it hard to contact the repair service. Councillor Drury said the repair service was not fit for purpose and needed a complete overhaul and the HRA did not address it. Because the numbers did not add up and because it had the wrong priorities the Conservative group would not be supporting the recommendations.

In closing the debate, Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing, suggested that Councillor Drury was conflating things in relation to the garage figures but he would re-look at them. The report had gone through both Legal and Finance checks and they had confirmed the sustainability of this budget. Councillor Okereke acknowledged that the repairs service had been challenging. He noted that they had an ageing housing stock and had not been able to build for several years. The budget was a statement of intent, it highlighted a stock condition survey and the

investment that they would be placing into the repairs department and that they were seeking a digitalised service; it was work in progress. He added that he wanted to make sure homes were to a decent Home Standard. The report built on their achievement and set out the current work they would be progressing in the future.

The Deputy Mayor put the matter to the vote and with the majority group in favour and the minority group against it was

Resolved –

1. That the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy, as detailed in section 4 of the report be approved.
2. That the HRA budget proposals for 2022/23 detailed in the report be approved.
3. That it be agreed to follow the national rent policy, as set out in the Rent Standard and detailed in section 4.21 of the report, to increase rents by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) plus 1%, equating to 4.1%.
4. That the overall increase in the average weekly rental charge by £3.76 per week to an average rent per week of £95.42 (4.1%) as detailed in section 4.25 of the report be agreed.
5. That the overall decrease in the average weekly charge by £0.14 per week to £14.94 per week on Tenant Service Charges as detailed in 4.25 of the report be agreed.
6. That with effect from 1 April 2022, the resulting average rent in section 4.25 of the report Table Five be noted.
7. That an overall increase in garage rents in line with the rental increase of CPI plus 1% equating to 4.1% as detailed in section 4.23 of the report be agreed.
8. That the balanced HRA 2022/23 budget position in section 4.27 of the report Table Six be noted.
9. That the High Court decision in Royal Borough of Kingston-v- Moss in relation to historic water rates and agree to refund tenants as set out in section 4.36 of the report be noted and further that the potential financial exposure of the council as a result be noted

10. That Cabinet has been recommended to agree the use of revenue working balance surpluses to finance an enhanced Housing Capital Programme, details of which are contained in section 4.9 of the report be noted.

I3 Treasury Management and Capital Strategy 2022-23

The Deputy Mayor noted that the report had been considered by both Cabinet and the Audit and Risk Management Panel with no comments for the Council's consideration.

Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, moved the recommendations in the report.

The Deputy Mayor put the matter to the vote and it was unanimously

Resolved –

1. That the Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 as set out in appendix A be approved.; and that there were no comments from Cabinet or Audit and Risk Management Panel be noted.
2. That the disposal revocations set out in section 5 of the report be noted.
3. That the Capital Strategy for 2022/23 set out in appendix C of the report be approved.; and that there were no comments from Cabinet or Audit and Risk Management Panel be noted.
4. That the Prudential Indicators for the period 2020/21-2024/25 in appendix D of the report be agreed; and that there were no comments from Cabinet or Audit and Risk Management Panel be noted.
5. That the arrangements for determining the Minimum Revenue Provision for 2022/23 as set out in appendix E of the report be agreed; and that there were no comments from Cabinet or Audit and Risk Management Panel be noted.

I4 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022-23

The Deputy Mayor noted that Cabinet on 17 February had agreed to recommend that Council agrees the recommendations. The Deputy Mayor noted that an addendum had been circulated the day before with the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 February.

Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Perks indicated that the matter of the £150 payment to households in bands A to D was a separate matter for consideration. Councillor Perks informed Council that it was proposed to raise Council tax. The Council's hands were tied having received again a one year settlement from the government and a third of that was a one-off cash sum which could not be carried forward, all of which left little scope for financial forward planning. The government's settlement was very much predicated on the assumption that council taxes would have to rise and it was very difficult to present a balanced budget without raising Council tax. She advised the raise was below inflation. The Council's administration was conscious of the impact of rising inflation on the borough's residents and sought to do what they could to cushion the impact on families in greatest need. She detailed the measures proposed in the report. Councillor Perks informed Council that the GLA had decided that afternoon to increase its precept; that had no direct bearing on the report's recommendations but the Council was the collecting agent and so Members should bear that in mind in making their decision. Councillor Perks advised Council on what was being done with regard to maximising revenue collection from the Community Infrastructure Levy. Councillor Perks concluded that a balanced budget was being proposed and she thanked Finance Officers for their work.

Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council, addressed Council. Councillor Thorpe thanked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Director of Finance and all the other Officers involved. He said Council should be proud of their team who worked to ensure that the Council's finances were as stable as they could be. He noted the budget emerged from two years of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the full costs of that remained to be seen. Councillor Thorpe commented on the 12 years of Conservative government's cuts on public services and the effects that had on people. He emphasised that there was no guarantee that the financial difficulties local authorities faced would ease over the short term, while they continued to see substantial increases in demand for services. He drew attention to the cost of living crisis, and commented that London had the highest child poverty rate of anywhere in England and spoke of how the administration was helping address child hunger. Councillor Thorpe commented on the Conservative government's handling of financial matters and their effect on the borough's citizens. He highlighted the problem of debt that many residents now faced. Councillor Thorpe said that though it was not what they wanted they were now forced to raise Council tax following the actions of the Conservative government which he expounded upon. He added that the Deputy Mayor of London for Transport has been called back to the negotiating table by the government as the government sought to play political football with London's transport system, and indicated that public

transport needed a much stronger support package. He was proud that the budget was built upon the principles of building a fairer Greenwich, and that it invested in their community and supported communities and the vulnerable, which he detailed. He drew Members' attention to Table 14 on page 28 of the report and the savings proposals and said that residents could be assured that they were delivering value for money. He remarked in contrast on events in Bexley borough. Councillor Thorpe concluded that the administration was working to supporting residents during the cost of living crisis and the budget demonstrated their belief that a fairer Greenwich was possible.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher proposed an amendment. He thanked the Director of Finance and his team for this work, adding that they had validated the proposals in the proposed amendment. It was accepted that local authorities were in a challenging financial position as they were at the mercy of decisions taken in Whitehall but that that did not mean that Greenwich Council should abdicate responsibilities for decisions it could take. Councillor Fletcher commented that the position was better than had been previously forecast, and suggested the largest pressures were inflation and demographic change not reductions in government funding. He drew attention to the amounts of money provided by the government to deal with the pandemic. He detailed the proposals in the amendment as published.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Charlie Davis.

The amendment was not accepted by Councillor Linda Perks.

Councillors Jackie Smith, Aidan Smith, John Fahy, Chris Lloyd, David Gardner, Matthew Morrow, and Danny Thorpe spoke against the amendment. Comments were made about Conservative government policies and their financial effect on residents and the community, such as the cut to Universal Credit. It was emphasised that the vast majority of government financial support would cease the next year and that had to be taken into account. It was noted the same old ideas of scrapping the communications and trade union time were being reproduced. The Council had an extremely good industrial relations record, and it was noted what had recently happened in Bexley. With regard to police bases it pointed out that there were other places than Eltham, and it was a matter for the Police not the Council and so Conservative group was proposing to spend money on something they did not need to. It was remarked that the matter of external sponsorship would depend on who the sponsors were, as they did not want to be sponsored by certain Russians as the Conservative Party had been. There was strong objection expressed to the idea of Free Town Centre Parking as it was completely contrary to policy and the intention of getting people out of cars

to reduce carbon emissions and pollution. It was suggested this would mean residents coming in from neighbouring boroughs getting free parking while choking Greenwich children. It was felt it was subsidising car drivers. There was TfL evidence to suggest pedestrian public realm improvements led to fewer empty shops rather than free car parking. The parking would also require more money spent enforcing the free one hour.

Councillors Matt Hartley, Spencer Drury and Charlie Davis spoke in support of the amendment. It was felt that that the amendment tackled the cost of local politics and sought to improve Town Centre streets. The amendment went beyond the collaborative policing pilot in seeking a police base. The point of the Free Town Centre Parking was to support shops and prioritise the local economy at a time when there had been a massive change in the way people did their shopping, which was now more online. It was highlighted that there was free parking in Charlton and Woolwich but not in Eltham. The proposed increase to the Emergency Support Scheme would help more households across the borough. Under Item 15 they were also proposing freezing Council tax to help residents keep more of their money. It was commented that the Council tax support scheme in the budget had been previously proposed by the Conservative group and voted against by the Leader of the Council and the Labour group in 2018 and 2019; it was hoped then that if the amendment was rejected that the proposals might be considered for adoption and implementation in a future year.

The Deputy Mayor put the amendment to the vote and with the minority group in favour and the majority group against it was not agreed.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher hoped that in future some of the items would be adopted. He added that Conservative group were opposing raising Council Tax because it added to the burden on residents. He felt the opposition to the free parking was extraordinary as the proposal arose from conversations with residents and local businesses.

In closing the debate, Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, said the budget took into account the needs of their local residents in very difficult circumstances, and the government's settlement had put local authorities in the position where they had little choice but to raise Council Tax. They had a fiduciary duty of care to make sure that the budget was able to sustain services for the benefit of the residents on behalf of the residents who funded the Council; it was not felt that the proposed amendment stood up to scrutiny in that regard. The budget made plans to support those who needed help with bills and clothing children. The budget was sustainable, and Councillor Perks asked Members to support it.

The Deputy Mayor put the matter to the vote and with the majority group in favour and the minority group against it was

Resolved –

1. That the impact of over a decade of government austerity has led to the council facing around £150m of pressures over that period, when combined with huge demographic demands and price inflation it is challenging to set a balanced budget for each financial year (Section 4 of the report) be noted.
2. That the number of properties rated for council tax has grown by less than 1% year on year for the second consecutive year. (Section 8.24 of the report) be noted.
3. That the effect which Covid has had on employment, with a 7% increase in the number of working age claimants for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme since pre-Covid levels (Section 8.26 of the report) be noted.
4. That the impact be noted of the Government's Financial Settlement and related developments around the MTFS:
 - the Chancellor announced a one-year Settlement only for 2022/23, which allows certainty for a one-year period despite announcing 3 years spending plans for Government Departments
 - the loss of funding of £3.6m from the New Homes Bonus Scheme (Section 8.19 of the report)
 - a continuation of the break from the London wide Business Rates pooling arrangement for 2022/23 (Section 8.13 of the report)
 - the Schools funding position (Section 8.28 of the report)
5. That Greenwich investment decisions to provide for demographic and price pressures of £14.370m and waste and street service pressures of £1.700m (Section 9 of the report) be agreed.
6. That Cabinet has been recommended to agree the fees and charges for 2022/23 (Section 6.6 – Appendix A and B of the report) to the extent the functions are executive functions be noted.
7. That budgetary impact of previously agreed income / savings proposals of £8.7m in 2022/23 (Section 10 of the report) be noted.

8. That £3.862m one-off reduction in the 2022/23 Freedom Pass costs are used to support the 2022/23 budget (Section 8.41 of the report) be agreed.
9. That the £5.755m one off 2022/23 Services Grant is set aside to support any ongoing Covid financial pressures and the council's strategic plans for recovery and renewal (Section 9.5 of the report) be agreed.
10. That the use of one-off resources be agreed to fund:
 - the Ward Budget Scheme (up to £0.600m) (Section 9.6 of the report)
 - School uniform / clothing grants (up to £0.400m) (Section 9.2.12 of the report)
 - the Leisure offer (up to £0.200m) (Section 9.2.12 of the report)
11. That it be agreed to provide all current and new recipients of working age Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) during the financial year 2022-23 with a further reduction in their annual council tax bill of up to £175, under the Covid Hardship Fund, (through the use of discretionary powers under section 13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992) (Section 9.10 of the report).
12. That a forecasted reduction in the overall resourcing gap by 2025/26 to £21.5m (Section 15.15 of the report) be noted.
13. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2022/23 to 2025/26 as set out in this report and subsequently recommend to Council for approval be agreed:
 - the MTFS as per this report
 - that the borough element of council tax is raised by:
 - 1.00% adult social care precept
 - 1.99% main council tax rate
 - a balanced budget for 2022/23
14. That the potentially significant financial risks to the MTFS going forward (Section 15.17 of the report) be noted.
15. That the contribution that a Continuous Improvement programme will have upon the authority's residents and finances (Section 14 of the report) be noted.

16. That the outcome of the results of the public consultation between 17 January 2022 – 6 February 2022 (Section 16 of the report) be noted.
17. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of its meeting on 16 February 2022 and the response from Cabinet (Appendix C of the report) be noted.

15 Budget and Council Tax Setting 2022-23

The Deputy Mayor noted that Cabinet on 17 February had agreed to recommend that Council agreed the recommendations. The Deputy Mayor noted that an addendum had been circulated the day before with the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 16 February.

Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, moved the recommendations in the report.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher proposed an amendment. He clarified the proposed freeze was only in regard to Council Tax and not the social care precept.

The amendment was seconded by Councillor Charlie Davis.

The amendment was not accepted by Councillor Linda Perks.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher formally closed the debate on the amendment.

The Deputy Mayor put the amendment to the vote and with the minority group in favour and the majority group against it was not agreed.

Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, closed the debate.

In accordance with The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Chief Executive called a recorded vote for the decisions required.

Voting in favour of the decisions required: Councillors O. Babatola, S. Bauer, L. Bird, C. Burke-McDonald, A. Cornforth, A. Cousins, G. Dillon, J. Fahy, L. Fletcher, D. Gardner, M. James, A. Khaireh, A. Lekau, C. Lloyd, M. Lolavar, D. Mbang, O. McGahey, M. Morrow, A. Okereke, L. Perks, D. Scott-McDonald, P. Slattery, A. Smith, J. Smith, D. Thorpe, I. Williams and M. Williams.

Voting against the decisions required: G. Brighty, C. Davis, S. Drury, N. Fletcher, P. Greenwell, M. Hartley, J. Hills, and R. Tester.

No Members abstained from voting on the recommendations.

Resolved –

1. That it be agreed that the Council budget for 2022/23 as set out in the report be approved
2. That a 1.99% increase in the borough element of council tax in support of service delivery pressures be agreed
3. That an Adult Social Care precept of 1% be agreed
4. That the overall additional cost of 73p per week at Band D (Section 4 of the report) of decisions 1.2 and 1.3 be noted.
5. That the GLA precept for 2022/23 is due to increase by 8.8% (61p per week at Band D) (Section 4 of the report) be noted.
6. That the addition to the council tax in 2022/23 on the taxpayers in premises surrounding the garden in Gloucester Circus SE10 (Section 4 of the report) be agreed
7. That the overall council tax level and the relevant statutory calculations and resolutions (Section 4 and Appendix B of the report) be approved.
8. That the schools funding formula for use in 2022/23 as presented to Schools Forum on 12 January 2022 (Section 5 of the report) be agreed.
9. That the recommendation from the Audit and Risk Management Panel to Full Council for the submission of the form of acceptance notice to the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) to opt into the national auditor appointment arrangements for the audit years 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 (Section 6.7 of the report) be approved.
10. That the level of Dedicated Schools Grant for Education purposes and that the budget proposals for 2022/23 were agreed by the Schools Forum on 12 January 2022 (Section 5 of the report) be noted.
11. That the comments on financial standing, future risk and robustness of the budget process, including those specifically relating to the risk posed

by the possible changes in Local Government Funding (Section 6 / Appendix C of the report) be noted.

12. That the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16 February 2022 and the Cabinet's response on 17 February 2022 (Appendix D of the report) be noted.

16 Motion "School standards in Greenwich"

Councillor Nigel Fletcher moved the motion. He spoke on the motion as published.

In seconding the motion, Councillor Pat Greenwell recalled her experience with her own education and then as a teacher. She felt academies and free schools gave a greater accountability in education. It was accepted that not every academy performed better than every local authority school, but that academies made it easier to put in place factors to drive up standards and allow underperformance to be tackled when it occurred. She quoted to say that the biggest advantage of academies was collective responsibility, and she hoped that as a Council they could show collective responsibility throughout their education system.

Councillor Matthew Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, moved an amendment to the motion. He said the evidence was weak at best to claim that school standards had improved because of academization. He advised that their most improved secondary school was a community school, the best performance at key stage 5 was a community school, of the two best performing schools overall one was an academy the other a community school. The two schools that most required improvement were both academies. Most of their primary schools were community schools and the results showed they were excellent. He said structure did not determine standards. Good practice was shared across all their schools. Councillor Morrow thanked all school staff for their work, and for their effort during the pandemic. He said instead of structure the focus should be on supporting teachers

In seconding the motion, Councillor Linda Bird said diversity in education meant addressing the needs aspirations and enriching the lives of all young people in their community regardless of gender or cultural background it did not mean parents' choice of school. She commented on how the Greenwich family of schools had actually addressed diversity which had produced outstanding results especially in the primary phase.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher did not accept the amendment.

Councillors Jackie Smith and Danny Thorpe spoke in support of the amendment. Greenwich did not have a dogmatic approach. They worked in partnership with all schools including academies, and they did not treat academies differently to community schools. It was said it was a total myth that academies raised attainment, it was the local authorities' work with underperforming school which help raise standards. The reason academisation was resisted because they did not need government attacks on local authorities for the fantastic outcomes they achieved. The work schools had done to keep going during the pandemic was noted. They needed to be holding all schools to account to make sure that they provided the very best for children.

Councillor Nigel Fletcher closed the debate on the amendment. He said the motion congratulated all teachers and school leaders. He agreed that improvement was not directly related to structures, but it was a fact that what had changed from the time when they had regularly and consistently underperforming schools was the introduction of greater diversity of schools. He suggested that part of the success of their family of schools was that some members of that family had chosen to become academies and free schools. They were not saying academies and free schools were the only forward, only that there needed to be diversity in the provision of schools.

The Mayor put the amendment to the vote and with the majority group in favour and the minority group against it was agreed.

Councillor Matthew Morrow formally closed the debate.

The Mayor put the amended motion to the vote and with the majority group in favour and the minority group against it was

Resolved –

Council notes that schools staff in the Royal Borough of Greenwich have gone above and beyond in their service to the community during the pandemic. They remained open for pupils who needed to be at school and provided remote learning for others.

Council notes that this commitment to public service exists across all schools in Royal Greenwich, regardless of their structure or status. Our schools have a strong focus on standards of teaching, learning and the results that pupils can achieve. The government's ongoing commitment to imposing

changes of structure onto schools is essentially an ideological project which distracts from the work needed.

Council is committed to working with all schools to put the needs of pupils first and deliver the very best education possible.

The meeting closed at 10.21 pm

Chair

COUNCIL

24 FEBRUARY 2022

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

I **Question from Leanne Gellel, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport**

I previously asked [November 2021] to what extent the use of cycles had increased after the introduction of new cycle lanes in Charlton and Woolwich. The Cabinet Member stated that cycle use had increased 80% however she did not provide any details on the use of cycles prior to the new lanes introduction.

My question is what was the rate of cycle use prior to the introduction of these lanes, so that I can get some idea of the extent of cycle use overall as an 80% increase is only significant in absolute terms if the prior number was already significant?

Reply -

I thank Leanne Gellel for her question.

We previously stated that initial monitoring shows that between July and October, on average, 30-40 cyclists were using the route each hour (between 7am and 7pm), with up to 80 per hour at the busiest time.

Data from September and October 2016, before the route was introduced, shows approximately 960 cyclists using the route between 6am and 10pm. After the route was delivered counts of up to 1400 a day (6am – 10pm) were recorded in 2021 on Trafalgar Road. Cycling numbers change with seasonality and cycle counts averaged at 290 during December 2021 (6am-10pm) although this would have been affected by the work from home order and related omicron restrictions

An 80% increase in use since the route was introduced was not mentioned in this response and is not a figure we recognise.

No supplementary question

COUNCIL

24 FEBRUARY 2022

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

2 Question from Matt Browne, SE10, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult's Social Care

Does the Royal Borough of Greenwich accept a responsibility for the health of Greenwich residents?

Reply -

I thank Matt Browne for his question.

All local authorities have a responsibility for improving and protecting the health and wellbeing of residents. We do this through the provision of services for people who need care and support; through working closely in partnership with the NHS and other agencies to ensure that residents have good access to high quality health and care services to meet their needs; and through the wider roles we have that impact on health, such as housing, environment, education, and community safety.

Councils are also responsible for planning and commissioning public health services and activities, to prevent avoidable ill health and premature death. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the council has worked relentlessly to keep residents safe from the direct risks to health posed by the virus and from the indirect risks, caused by shielding, social isolation and the disruption to the economy, education, and livelihoods. The pandemic has highlighted the impact of social and economic inequalities on health risks and outcomes, with some groups in our populations being harder hit by COVID-19 than others. We are committed to working with our partners to address the underlying causes of health inequalities and to support all of our residents to thrive.

Supplementary Question -

A delegation of doctors have published a letter saying that the Silvertown tunnel will be a health hazard to residents; does the Council accept responsibility for failing to do everything in its power to oppose that tunnel which will worsen residents' health?

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Reply –

I haven't seen the letter so I don't think it would be my place to comment on that

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3 Question from Simon Pirani, SE18, to Councillor Linda Perks, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

I ask whichever Cabinet Member is responsible for legal matters, about the treatment of the recommendations of the Regeneration, Transport and Culture Scrutiny Panel (9 December), that the full Council call on the Mayor of London to pause and review the Silvertown tunnel project. At the Overview & Scrutiny committee meeting of the council on 16 February, the Chair, Councillor Lloyd, said, and stressed repeatedly, that he had received legal advice that, should the recommendations be endorsed and passed on to the full council, they would end up in a “constitutional dead end”. This advice was not available in the committee agenda. It had been given to Councillor Lloyd verbally, by two senior council legal officers. On the face of it, this legal advice appears to constitute a serious obstruction to democracy and the proper working of the council. As reported by Councillor Lloyd, it implies that the council, by discussing a scrutiny panel decision on a matter of vital public interest, the Silvertown tunnel project, would somehow fall outside the constitution.

In view of the implied danger to democracy, and in order to reassure the public that the council’s democratic functioning has not been impaired, will the Cabinet Member responsible for legal matters require that this legal advice is set down in writing and published in the shortest possible time? How quickly could this be done?

Reply –

I thank Simon Pirani for his question.

Specialist Counsel’s detailed legal advice is referred to in paragraph 6 of the report and was published in full in Appendix A. The Director of Legal & HR’s detailed legal and constitutional advice is set out at paragraph 7 of the report. There is nothing further to be published.

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Supplementary Question -

Why is the Council not taking every opportunity to discuss the question of the tunnel and to contact the Mayor of London and to express its opinion as it has a right and I would argue a duty to do?

Reply -

I'm aware that you have already raised these questions and more with the Director of Legal & HR; as I'm not qualified lawyer it's not appropriate for me to answer these questions but the Director of Legal & HR will be replying to you shortly

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4 Question from Maria Freeman, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment Sustainability and Transport

In [Public Questions for January 2022](#) residents asked about the impact of the introduction of LED lighting on our wildlife and the options for late night dimming. Residents in Plumstead reported concerns in January on “Plumstead People” Facebook Group, following the installation of new lighting. While the reduction in energy costs and CO2 consumption with the changeover is welcomed, has a robust environmental impact assessment been carried out in order to assess the impact on wildlife such as foxes, bats, birds and insects, given that there are reports of changing behaviours, and will you publish this? For example, did you review the recent research carried out by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology [LED streetlights reduce insect populations by 50% | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology \(ceh.ac.uk\)](#) [Street lighting has detrimental impacts on local insect populations \(science.org\)](#) Can you confirm that the recommended lumen level in operation in the borough is still higher than the recommended levels, even after the current “dimming” has been implemented?

5 Question from Deborah O'Boyle, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

Further to the answers provided by the Cabinet Member at the last Full Council meeting, relating to the installation of LED street lighting, it would appear:

- ILP recommends 3000 Kelvin warm white, as opposed to 4000 Kelvin neutral white and dimming TO 25% (rather than BY 30%) in areas frequented by bats;
- the contrast between those parts of the road directly illuminated by 4000 K neutral white and those parts not illuminated is such that the non-illuminated sections appear, to the human eye, as very dark (eg. pavements) or even pitch-black (eg. Winn’s Common) – exacerbated by many poorly-aligned LEDs and huge gaps between lampposts in some roads raising concerns relating to safety, both real and perceived;

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- 3000 K warm white can achieve the same level of illumination as 4000 neutral white;
- many countries are expected to install 2700 K as standard, with 2300 K in bat areas.

What is the expected cost for the fitting of 4000 K neutral white LEDs, realignment, installation of infill lampposts, fitting of shades etc. throughout the borough?

Combined Reply -

I thank Maria Freeman and Deborah O'Boyle for their questions.

As previously mentioned at the last meeting, safety for people, especially women, is also a very important factor in this.

I have already committed to further dimming and I am seeking further consultation from The Bat Conservation Society and we are in contact with the GWAG – Greenwich Wildlife Advisory Group.

No supplementary questions

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6 Question from Victoria Rance, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

As the council literature on carbon reduction states ‘Transport generated 31% of the borough’s total emissions in 2019. Almost all these transport emissions (95%) come from vehicles on our roads such as cars, vans and trucks.’

The council’s zero carbon target for 2030 aims to reduce car use in the borough by 45% with a 10% reduction in van and truck use. Are there any interim targets? Is new road building consistent with these aims?

Reply -

I thank Victoria Rance for her question.

The Carbon Neutral Plan does not set interim targets but it does set out clearly how we will monitor progress towards our 2030 target (see Annex 5 of the Plan).

Areas for mixed use development such as the Charlton Riverside include plans for new roads for buses and cyclists and this would be consistent with our Carbon Neutral Plan targets.

Supplementary Question -

Would you not agree that interim targets are a good idea?

Reply -

In theory; a lot is invested in targets but they were just figures on paper and actually what everyone needs to do is get out of their car. The switch to electric vehicles would still mean congestion which was also a problem they had to solve. I need the lobby groups to help, to volunteer to do school walking buses for example.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7. Question from Kate Middleton, SE10, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment Sustainability and Transport

What are the council doing to mitigate the massive detrimental impact of the Silvertown tunnel construction site and future operation of the tunnel that is designed to take massive container HGVs too large for Blackwall tunnel ,on the health of residents and children who attend schools and nurseries on Greenwich peninsula in the area described by AM Len Duvall as the mouth of the tunnel zone? So far the only published local mitigation seems to be for noise screening at Sieberts road some distance from the site. Please detail the mitigations that have been negotiated by Royal Borough of Greenwich - including any protection of children from HGV and construction operations given that Riverlinx have not been admitted to considerate contractor scheme and are not using FORS gold contractors for Earth moving from the Greenwich site - every vehicle accessing the site will be close passing St Mary Magdalene schools and nursery play areas and Millennium primary and nursery . given that TfL has not done air quality modelling, including particulate pollutants (notably pm2.5s) to assess the impact of the Silvertown tunnel on these Greenwich children what is RB Greenwich doing to protect the health of these children. Have you considered installing air purification and filtration systems in these schools as some parents are now requesting?

Reply -

I thank Kate Middleton for her question.

A number of actions are underway to ensure there is sufficient mitigation from any impacts of construction of the Silvertown Tunnel.

Riverlinx has placed counters on key roads near to both schools to count the vehicles and types of vehicles passing the school. They intend to have the analysis ready for the next Riverlinx Community Liaison Group meeting early next month.

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There is a Breathe London air quality sensor at the edge of the playground of Mary Magdalene School which is measuring PM2.5 and Nitrogen Dioxide. This has been in place since June 2021. Initial snapshot results appear to be in the 'low' range according to the government's 'Daily Air Quality Index' for Nitrogen Dioxide and PM2.5 particles. This data is freely available online.

There are also a number of diffusion tubes in the area and this data will be discussed at future Community Liaison Group meetings.

We are planning a site visit to both schools to look at what further measures can be put in place if necessary.

Supplementary Question -

What is the Council doing to mitigate the impacts of the Silvertown tunnel construction site and future operation of tunnel on the health of residents, and health of children who attend schools and nurseries on Greenwich peninsula ?

Reply -

Air pollution was being monitored at Mary Magdalene school playground, data was showing a low level, and there would a site visit to the schools.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

8 Question from Fiona Moore, SE3, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

How many Penalty Charge Notices has the Council issued for contraventions of the HGV weight limit in Romney Road in the last year?

Reply -

I thank Fiona Moore for her question.

In the 12-month period 01/02/2021 – 31/01/2022, 4,050 PCNs were issued at Romney Road to HGVs for contravening the Weight Limit.

Supplementary Question -

What is the Council going to do to actually prevent all these lorries going along Romney Road?

Reply -

The camera picks up every lorry that goes along there and while 4,050 a year sounds a lot that was about 11 a day between the hours of 6 am and 7 pm which was not a lot. I am informed by Officers than unless there were about 100 to 200 a day there was no need for extra measures.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

9 Question from Stewart Christie, SE18, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

I welcome the recent news that Plumstead Power Station will be brought back into use ahead of schedule.

How much has been spent on the original "business, event and workspace" proposal for Plumstead Power Station with Smart Mobility Living Lab, Architecture00, Studio Weave, LDA Design, Donald Insall Associates, make:good and others, including internal Council resources and officer time? Additionally, what is the breakdown for the source of these funds?

Reply –

I thank Stewart Christie for his question.

The Council submitted a bid to the GLA Good Growth Fund and successfully secured £2.51m of regeneration funding to be spent in Plumstead alongside RB Greenwich match funding of £2.51m. This was approved by Cabinet in March 2018.

This funding included an allocation of monies to support the regeneration of Plumstead Power Station. The Council appointed Architecture00 to lead a team of experts including Studio Weave, LDA Design, Donald Insall Associates and make:good to explore the best way to bring Plumstead Power Station back into use. Smart Mobility Living Ltd was not part of this process.

The Council undertook a number of structural and related surveys at the Power Station, being a grade II listed heritage building, which helped form part of the strategy developed up to RIBA Stage 2 to create a business, event and workspace hub. This strategy and underlying building information allowed the production of marketing information which was sent out to potential workspace providers and local businesses. This work showed that Mo-SyS had a keen interest in the Power Station.

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The cost of this initial work totalled £382,020 - all met from the Good Growth Fund, excluding internal officer time, which isn't accounted for at a project level. This cost should be seen in the context of securing around £4.5 million investment in an important Heritage Asset and ensuring that it has a real long-term use. Mo-Sys' proposals look to bring around 4,600SqM of space back into use – as well as upgrading external areas.

Critically, the project will help secure high-skill creative jobs in our Borough for many years to come.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

I Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration give an update on plans for the future of the Borough Hall in Greenwich?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

Submissions have been received from interested parties following the recent marketing of the Borough Halls. A decision is not anticipated until late Spring / early Summer which will allow time for consideration of these submissions.

Supplementary Question -

The building has recently been placed on the at risk register; will the Cabinet Member explain how she is going to give us greater confidence that this is going to be a more successful proposal and will there be much greater transparency this time on what the proposed use is going to be and more consultation on that before we reach the point of disposal?

Reply -

Wherever it is appropriate we will be transparent, where it is business sensitive we obviously will go by the rules of procurement. It's out to the market, once Officers have reviewed all the data and information they'll let Members know

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Does the Leader of the Council continue to support the current plans for the Silvertown Tunnel, and what representations has he himself made to TfL on the subject?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

The project dates back twenty years. There was an initial consultation in 2006 under the then Mayor Ken Livingstone. In 2012 London Mayor Boris Johnson told the London Assembly that "It is because we are ambitious for London that we are pushing ahead with new vehicular river crossings such as a tunnel at Silvertown."

Tory Transport Secretary Chris Grayling approved the project in 2018 and the current London Mayor obviously has also backed it.

I did write to the current Mayor Sadiq Khan last year asking him to consider pausing the project for review and he said that this was not possible.

My view of this project is that construction is already underway according to decisions taken by others in both the Labour and Conservative Parties in higher positions than me, a long time ago.

Supplementary Question -

Is the Leader in principle in favour of the Silvertown tunnel?

Reply -

You've read the answer. We respect the views of all residents and as the answer does set out this has been a project which predates all of us in this Chamber. If you'd like to send me the communications and representations that you have made to TfL I would be happy to take them up. I had been scheduled to meet with the Deputy Mayor of London with responsibility for

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transport to raise a whole number of issues but he has had to cancel due to the government's action.

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3 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities

Can the Cabinet Member reassure residents that Eltham Lights Up, with the usual lantern parade and evening entertainment on Eltham High Street, will take place next Christmas?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

With the up-coming election due in May, any decisions regarding events in December will be for the new administration to make. Additionally, until budgets are set, the events schedule for 2022/23 cannot be confirmed. Our events programme aims to be as inclusive and accessible as possible so that all our residents are able to celebrate with their friends and neighbours in the borough, this will remain a priority in any activities I am involved with in the future.

Supplementary Question -

Does he support the lights up with a parade this December?

Reply -

I can't predict the decisions of the new administration, but I am sure there would be something inclusive for residents and businesses.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

4 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

Can the Cabinet Member confirm what facility will be offered to community groups who currently use the AstroTurf at OneSpace?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

There is already a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Kidbrooke Village (Cator Park North), which is a polymeric surface composed of rubber granules bound with polyurethane, and suitable for all year-round use.

The MUGA is fully floodlit and provides a large space for tennis, netball, basketball and 5-a-side football.

The MUGA is bookable through TwistFizz CIC
<https://www.twistfizz.co.uk/locations/>.

The courts and pitches are offered for pay & play and can be booked on-line up to 7 days in advance via TwistFizz CIC. The MUGA will hosts some free supervised sessions for local young people to access to site. The space can also be hired locally by community groups to facilitate a range of sporting activities.

Supplementary Question -

Is the Council planning to reach out to any of the groups that have not moved over so they can offer them the facility following the closure of OneSpace?

Reply -

Please send details of any groups you know and Officers will be happy to help them out

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

5 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

Will the Cabinet Member confirm whether the Council will consider including a fit for purpose community facility in proposals for the former Thomas Tallis site to replace facilities due to be lost at OneSpace?

Reply –

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

You will already be aware that it is the Royal Borough of Greenwich's overarching objective to create a sustainable, thriving hub for community activity in a new facility in Peglar Square, Kidbrooke Village. This facility is currently being fitted out and a procurement exercise is underway to select an operator for this space. It is anticipated that the new facility will be open by the Summer 2022. The Trustees of One Space have been offered the opportunity to continue to use the existing community centre until June 2022.

The new Hub will comprise an integrated community and health centre, including the local GP Practice currently based on Elford Close. There will be dedicated community space including a large hall and rooms of various sizes for community activity, much in the same way that One Space currently operates.

The new hub will support both the existing and new local community and help residents access a range of services and engagement opportunities as part of the major regeneration of the area. To ensure continuity of service provision during the development and construction of the permanent Community Hub in Kidbrooke, the former Ferrier Youth Club building was made available to One Space on a temporary basis in 2012, as the land would not be required for development for some time.

The proposed new Greenwich Builds development at the former Thomas Tallis also contains facilities for community use, and the current programme anticipates this space being available in 2025/26.

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The Council is confident that residents of Kidbrooke Village and the surrounding areas will welcome the facilities available in the new Community Hub, and once a Community Centre operator has been selected that organisation will take up local engagement with residents.

Supplementary Question -

Is it possible for the Council to work with the developer and talk to them about making hot food and hot drinks preparation facilities available as that was something the charity relies on?

Reply -

My understanding is that there is supposed to be some sort of catering facility. OneSpace should engage directly with Officers on the matter. OneSpace can bid to be one of the providers.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Can the Leader confirm whether he has had any correspondence with Lewisham Council since he took the decision to cancel the proposed Horn Park LTN to discuss any potential solutions to the issue of displaced traffic from Lewisham's Lee LTN?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The report was clear that we will continue monitoring traffic levels. This will allow us to assess the impact of external changes on streets in the area, in particular, the effect of changes to the road network in neighbouring areas (including in the London Borough of Lewisham), and changes to travel patterns due to the Pandemic and subsequent recovery.

We will continue contact with the London Borough of Lewisham and will discuss any such changes in traffic patterns that may emerge with them as appropriate.

No supplementary question

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

7 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

Can the Cabinet Member confirm the cost of installing and removing the enforcement cameras on Rochester Way by the junction with Crookston Road? Additionally, can the Cabinet Member confirm the amount of revenue generated by this camera prior to it being removed?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

1. The cost of installation was £928.50
2. the cost of removal was £1,000 (which included a return to factory, inspection and service)
3. Revenue from PCNs issued at this location up to and including 31st January 2022 is £6,045

Supplementary Question -

Councillor Drury had been told only two notices had been issued which meant a discrepancy with the amount given as revenue from PCNs?

Reply -

I am not privy to the correspondence you have had with Officers, but based on what I have been told the figure given for revenue was accurate.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

8 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Mariam Lolavar, Cabinet Member for Business Economic Growth

Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the allocation of funding from the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant to local businesses within the Borough?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The Royal Borough has to date received funding of £1,356,039 from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy total in respect of the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant Scheme.

As of 21st February, £1,183,373 in grants has been awarded representing 300 individual payments.

The scheme closes for applications on Monday 28th February 2022 and all grant payments must be paid by the Royal Borough by 31st March 2022

Supplementary comment -

Councillor Davis thanked Councillor Lolavar, noting that other councils had not been quite as proactive as Greenwich.

Councillor Lolavar thanked Officers for efficiently allocating the grant. There was only a small amount left but that was expected to be allocated.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

9 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Mariam Lolavar, Cabinet Member for Business Economic Growth

Can the Cabinet Member confirm the breakdown by ward of where businesses who received funding from each of the Top-up Additional Restriction Grant schemes are based?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

Royal Borough of Greenwich has received 3 separate allocations of ARG Top Up between the period 5 January 2021 to 30 December 2021 of £2,557,804, £1,820,843 and £436,447 respectively.

As of 11 February 2022, a total value of £3,580,424 of grant payments had been awarded against a total grant allocation of £4,815,094, with 731 individual grant payments being made. Applications under the ARG schemes are currently being processed and all the remaining grant funding will be awarded by the 31 March 2022.

The table below provides a snapshot of the distribution of grant payments made by ward.

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Ward	Number of Grants Paid
Abbey Wood	17
Blackheath Westcombe	21
Charlton	26
Coldharbour and New Eltham	22
Eltham North	49
Eltham South	33
Eltham West	13
Glyndon	13
Greenwich West	130
Kidbrooke with Hornfair	6
Middle Park and Sutcliffe	5
Peninsula	67
Plumstead	49
Shooters Hill	14
Thamesmead Moorings	43
Woolwich Common	38
Woolwich Riverside	185
TOTAL	731

No supplementary question

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

10 Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

Recommendations have now been made following the recent CPZ review consultation for the Westcombe area. Can the Cabinet Member provide an up-date on when these will be progressed ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Geoffrey Brighty for his question.

The recommendations following the consultation will need to be formally reported. If changes to streets are required, the necessary Traffic Management Order will be advertised. Officers have informed me that they will seek permission to this in March 2022.

No supplementary question

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

11 Question from Councillor Geoffrey Brighty, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

In 2019 I arranged a meeting between Officers and representatives of the Westcombe Society to discuss whether an Article 4 directive would be an option in respect of the Westcombe Park Conservation Area. Various reasons have been given but three years on there appears to have been no progress in recommending whether to move to a public consultation. Could the Cabinet Member advise when Officers might be able to report back on this ?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Geoffrey Brighty for his question.

Going forward the main priority for the Policy Team is the progression of the new local plan. The current local plan is 7 years old and central government stipulates that local authorities must have a local plan that is less than 5 years old. Previous heritage policy focus and priorities have been the delivery of an expanded conservation area in Woolwich and two new conservation areas in Charlton Riverside. Following these designations the priority is the delivery of conservation area appraisals and management strategies (CAMS) for these conservation areas. Heritage policy work will focus on the local plan as a priority.

No supplementary question

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

12 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Council

Please can we have an update on the future of the former Wide Horizons site on Bexley Road?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

As explained previously, the Council is considering options to use the developed part of the site for SEND education purposes with the woodland retained for community use. This remains the current strategy and once developed further the proposal will be subject of a future report for consideration by Members. Timescales have not been firmed up yet, but it is likely that the report for the initial decision regarding the likely proposal and investment required will be brought forward in the second half of this calendar year.

Supplementary Question -

Can there be complete transparency about the future of this site from now on?

Reply -

I've been as transparent as possible. There was a difference between being transparent and you not liking the answer; you had wanted to flog it off to a Bexley charity.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

13 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing

How often are our tenancy blocks checked for issues such as fly tipping and problems with lighting?

Reply -

I thank Cllr Greenwell for her question.

The vast majority of our blocks are checked daily (Mon-Fri) for fly-tips, fire hazards, and other communal safety issues. There are a few small satellite blocks that are checked 3 times per week. We also have a skeleton team working Saturday and Sunday to check for fly-tips and fire hazards on our larger estates and tower blocks.

In addition to our checks, we offer a free bulky item removal service for tenants within estate blocks.

With regards to light checks, the caretakers undertake these on a weekly basis. The caretakers will change any blown bulbs found during the time of inspection. All faulty fittings are reported to the Repairs and Investment team.

The Caretaking Team also respond to any resident requests relating to fly-tipping and blown bulbs between our scheduled checks.

Supplementary Question -

Could you undertake a site visit to a particular block, as there were other issues?

Reply -

I will look into the case you mentioned and resolve it

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

14 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Mariam Lolavar, Cabinet Member for Business Economic Growth

It is refreshing to know that the 'Love your High Street' campaign has been launched in Eltham. We have been told that leaflets are to be distributed to local shops and businesses to invite them to become involved. Can we be assured that these premises will be visited in person, discussions and ideas shared. Engagement is vital?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

Royal Greenwich are pleased to have launched the **Love Your High Street** campaign which aims to get businesses on board, for the benefit of the town centre, maintaining its cleanliness and appeal.

Business engagement, forms a key part of this work and council officers will be visiting Eltham town centre businesses the week commencing 7th March 2022 to talk about the campaign, encourage sign-ups and will distribute "Love your High Street" window stickers for those that do. Businesses in this way, will be able to show their support, pride of place and commitment to helping to improve the environment, making it even more attractive to shoppers and visitors.

Supplementary Question -

I hope that myself and other Councillors will be able join with Officers when they go round the businesses and the shops?

Reply -

Yes we definitely want to get Councillors involved

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

15 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment Sustainability and Transport

I note Cllr Davis has already asked a question about the removal of enforcement cameras on the Rochester Way only a few days after the last Council meeting where I raised the issue of speeding on the same road with the Cabinet Member. What progress has the Cabinet Member made in dealing with the issue of speeding on the Rochester Way since the last meeting of Full Council?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The camera referred to by Cllr Davis is not a speed camera. Greenwich Council has never had a speed camera at this location and the enforcement of speed limits within the borough is the remit of the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London, not the council. The council does not have any speed enforcement powers.

That said, I can advise that we have raised this location with the police and have requested that Rochester Way be included in the Metropolitan Police Service Community Roadwatch programme

Supplementary Question -

Could the Cabinet Member suggest how the Community Roadwatch programme will reduce speeds?

Reply -

We are looking at reducing the speed limit on this piece of road but we have not had time to address it

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

16 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

At the last meeting of Full Council I raised the problems that the built out pavement on Westmount Road posed for cyclists. The Cabinet Member indicated she was aware of the issue and looking into it. Can I ask what progress she has made and what changes will be made reflecting the concerns raised by cyclists?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

Since the last Council meeting, I have spoken to cyclists, and officers and I am of the view that some amendments might need to be made.

Supplementary Question -

Can the Cabinet Member offer some insight into what particular changes to this feature will be made to make it safer for cyclists?

Reply -

I can't commit to what those measures would be, but two options Officers were looking at were either ramping it or cutting through it.

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MEMBERS QUESTIONS

17 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Mariam Lolavar, Cabinet Member for Business Economic Growth

At the last meeting of Full Council the Cabinet Member for Business and Economic Growth offered me a briefing note on the Additional Restrictions Grant but unfortunately I do not seem to have received it. Is it possible for her to arrange for it to be sent to me?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

A briefing has been prepared and will be sent

No supplementary question

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18 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

At the November meeting of Full Council, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport, in response to a question on the Eltham Controlled Parking Zone informed me that "A final report on the outcome of the consultation is currently being finalised for consideration by me". The subsequent follow up was a little confused with a suggestion that responses were in the public domain, which I do not believe is the case. Can the Cabinet Member provide an update on the proposals for the Eltham CPZ and when they are likely to be placed in the public domain?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The consultation results from the scheme have not yet been published and are not in the public domain. The report will outline the background to the parking scheme, the various consultations that have been undertaken over the years and the recent feedback from the statutory consultation.

This report will be published shortly and all directly affected residents and businesses will be notified of the outcome.

Supplementary Question -

Was there an actual date for that?

Reply -

I can't expand further on the answer given

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19 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Good Growth

I note that Manston Properties Limited have applied for prior approval to demolish the Eltham Police Station building. Can the Cabinet Member confirm what contact they have had with any relevant authority responsible for selling the building or with Manston Properties Limited about the future of the former Eltham Police Station? What vision does the Council have for the use of this building or the space it now occupies in the future?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The Council does not own the building and there has been no contact with the owners of the property in respect of their intention to either sell the building or their future intentions for the building or site. The Council is not aware of the owner's vision for the use of the building and would assess any future planning application on its planning merits at the point of submission or pre-application engagement. Planning Services has received a prior approval application for the demolition of Eltham Police Station Building (ref 22/0376/D1) and has until 2nd March 2022 to determine to prior application.

No supplementary question

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20 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

It is good to see that along with most other London Boroughs, there will be no charges imposed by RBG for residents who apply for road closures to host street parties on the Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend (June 4th and 5th) as long as applications are received by 23rd March. How many applications have been received for Platinum Jubilee Street Parties in the borough so far?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

We have received 20 applications to date and they quite widely spread throughout the borough.

No supplementary question

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21 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult's Social Care

In September 2021 Full Council unanimously passed a motion stating that:

“This Council believes that greater access to AEDs/PADs will save lives in the Royal Borough, and resolves to:

- work with local sporting and health organisations including Charlton Athletic to encourage greater provision of defibrillators at sports clubs and community centres.
- contact voluntary organisations, social clubs and hospitality venues to encourage them to sponsor the provision of defibrillators in public places.
- conduct an audit to establish the locations of existing defibrillators and identify public places where additional installations can be made, including outside Council buildings. “

Can the Cabinet Member please provide an update on the 3 actions outlined above? Has an audit to establish existing and potential defibrillator installations been started, and what engagement with local organisations by RBG on this issue since the motion was passed in September 2021?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

There is clear evidence that following cardiac arrest the prompt use of an automated defibrillator can improve survival rates to in excess of 50%. The Council recognises that for defibrillators to be effective, ambulance services need to know their location and they need to be easily accessible, this can be via a public access defibrillator or one located in a publicly accessible building.

We looked into the current position regarding any list or map of devices within the borough; no organisation has been identified which holds such a definitive list. The London Ambulance Service (LAS) does have a list, but it is out-dated and incomplete. Therefore, we reviewed it on the basis that it could form a baseline for the development of a new accurate list and interactive map. There is also a map of sites, including within the borough

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on the 'Heartsafe' website; an organisation which makes and sells devices. Again, this is incomplete and not up-to-date. However, together with the LAS data, these two sources have provided a useful starting point.

One national development which should assist with the need for more up-to-date and accurate data about the provision of these devices is under development. 'The Circuit' is a National Defibrillator Network which is attempting to map all defibrillators across the UK. It is planned that it will connect them directly and automatically to ambulance services. Its primary aim is to locate and register the UK's estimated 100,000 defibrillators, so that ambulance services can direct bystanders to their nearest defibrillator and increase a person's chances of survival. In the future, 'The Circuit' will be able to analyse location data and identify where more defibrillators are needed, providing a valuable source of intelligence about need.

We contacted every organisation on the LAS list and asked 3 questions:

1. Can you confirm that you have a defibrillator?
2. Can you confirm that it is publicly accessible, at least during your hours of business or when the building is open?
3. Is it registered with the British Heart Foundation/London Ambulance 'Circuit' Scheme which is the national network for defibrillators. See link for more information <https://www.thecircuit.uk/>

We had confirmation of 37 locations with a defibrillator and used this information to form a baseline list, which has been sent to the 'The Circuit' asking them to compare their information on the locations of defibrillators in the borough to see if they reconcile and to inform us of any additional locations they are aware of.

We have been unable to find a nationally agreed evidence base indicating the most effective locations for defibrillators. However, the Resuscitation Council suggests that they should be located in areas where Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrests (OHCA) have occurred in the last 3-5 years, places where physical activity takes place, such as gyms and leisure centres, and areas where large numbers of people tend to congregate such as transport hubs, busy shopping areas, sports venues etc.

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Recent research has shown that the choice of where to install defibrillators has been driven mainly by local ad-hoc initiatives rather than a more strategic approach. There is a risk, therefore, that publicly accessible defibrillators may be placed in more affluent areas with lower OHCA incidence.

Utilising the baseline list, taking account of the Resuscitation Council criteria and recent research we are planning to take the following approach:-

- Continue to work with the DRES Business Support Team to:
 - Explore the possibility of those businesses located in areas without a defibrillator sponsoring additional defibrillators.
 - Encourage all businesses with a defibrillator to register with 'The Circuit'
- Work with DRES and the Council's Communications Team to produce an accurate interactive map of the location of defibrillators that can be included, with information and publicity material on 'The Circuit', on the Council's website
- Continue to work with TFL to integrate their information into the Council's local map and criteria
- Develop local criteria to prioritise the location of new defibrillators or making existing ones more publicly accessible
- Work with local organisations, including Charlton Athletic to encourage greater provision of defibrillators including sponsorship opportunities
- Explore the possibility of commissioning more Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training for Council staff in Community and Children's Centres and partner organisations.

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Supplementary Question -

When is the online map mapping tool going to go live on the Council's website?

Reply -

As soon as I can I will let you know