

COUNCIL

Tabled Items

Place To be held remotely

Date Wednesday, 24 June 2020

Time 7:00 PM

Agenda

- 9 Public Questions**
Questions and Answers
- 10 Member Questions**
Questions and Answers
- 12 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report**
Amended Report
- 16 Meeting scheduling July 2020**
Updated Appendix

Date of Issue
Wednesday, 24
June 2020

Debbie Warren
Chief Executive

If you require further information about this meeting please contact the
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COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

I Question from Ashleigh Marsh, SE7, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

I have spoken to Melresearch, the company carrying out the Selective Licensing consultation survey for the Royal Borough of Greenwich, who tell me that the 'About You' optional questions - to promote equality of opportunity as set out by the Equality Act 2010 - have been agreed by the Council. Why has the Council not included a question on disability?

Reply -

I thank Ashleigh Marsh for her question.

The views of disabled people within Greenwich are extremely important to us. The Council does however apply judgement to which consultation questions are asked, and considers whether differences in protected characteristics are likely to have an impact on the way people will use or experience a proposed service, or in this case, a proposed scheme, and how they may engage with the consultation.

The Council always aims to achieve a balance between asking for too much or too little information, and this applies both to deciding which protected characteristics to monitor, and to the level of information collected about each of them.

Although we are unable to check the published consultation as it currently suspended, we did ask for this to include a disability related question within the 'about you' section. We will explore this issue before the consultation relaunches and apologise if this was missed or otherwise not obvious.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

2 **Question from Ashleigh Marsh, SE7, to Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement**

I have looked at the Selective Licensing Proposal in some detail. I find that the justifications for it are a mixture of analyses, some coming from a perspective of reducing undesirable tenant behaviour and some to limit undesirable landlord behaviour, a situation fraught with potential contradictions. Other mechanisms to prevent genuinely anti-social acts already exist.

Clearly there are economic as well as social considerations to the proposed Selective Licensing. Licensing risks extra costs being passed on to tenants by rent increases, or the removal of property from the rental market, for example. It is also clear that planning priorities local to the selected area continue to be dominated by large scale private building schemes.

Will the Council give positive weighting to analysing and prioritising the views of local tenants and community groups on the potential advantages or disadvantages of licensing, as compared with the privileged views of private and corporate landlords?

Reply -

I thank Ashleigh Marsh for her question.

We note your comments and recognise there are existing mechanisms to prevent anti-social acts. The introduction of licensing regimes, such as selective licensing, aim to further tackle anti-social behaviour arising from premises and encourage landlords to take appropriate responsibility. Selective licensing, in addition, also looks to drive up standards of private rented accommodation for tenants which is a key priority for the Council in terms of improving safety and quality of life for local residents.

When introducing selective licensing, the Council must by law engage in a meaningful consultation with those likely to be affected by the scheme. There is no legal provision for a positive scoring approach in favour of any one group of consultees. The consultation does however look to gather views to

help the Council make informed decisions and to best inform the delivery of any scheme introduced.

The consultation is currently paused due to the coronavirus pandemic but will be relaunched in the near future. We would really appreciate your views when this recommences.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

3 Question from Simon Pirani, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

The council's consultants, Element Energy, have stated that if consumption-based emissions reporting (that includes estimates of embedded emissions) were used, the estimates of the borough's greenhouse gas emissions in the council's Carbon Neutral Plan Evidence Base would probably be about 60% higher than they are (see Element Energy, Development of the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan, pages 44-45). The consultant's report further explains that the Scatter tool used by the Carbon Disclosure Project (supported by BEIS and the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change research), which includes much of the embedded emissions, estimates total emissions for the borough of about 1100kt of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2017, compared to the figure of 860kt of carbon dioxide equivalent used in the Evidence Base (paragraph 4.28). The accumulation of years of research on climate change and mitigation indicates that the whole picture, including embedded emissions of all kinds, needs to be borne in mind, in order to devise effective decarbonisation policies. Will the council therefore follow the example of numerous other councils, and, when working out detailed carbon budgets, use the Carbon Disclosure Project approach, assimilate the lessons of the work the Project has conducted, and seek advice from the Tyndall Centre?

Reply –

I thank Simon Pirani for his question.

It is vital that the Carbon Neutral Plan has an accurate picture of our emissions and considers all relevant issues. You will appreciate that embedded emissions are particularly complicated. The Carbon Neutral Plan will consider all available evidence and use the sources that best enable us to understand what we can do.

The SCATTER tool you mention only includes additional 'embedded' or 'upstream' emissions in the production of energy. It does not include the majority of embedded emissions, which are associated with goods and services produced elsewhere, in the UK and indeed abroad.

The other area of Scope 3 emissions, and one that needs significant behaviour change, is aviation emissions. At this point, there is no existing approach to estimate how many flights are taken by Royal Greenwich's residents. Instead of equally appointing aviation emissions to every Greenwich resident¹, we attributed air travel consistently with the GLA's modelling approach (by flight paths). This decision was taken as Aviation is not something that Local Government can effectively act upon in isolation.

Unfortunately, the challenge of addressing embedded emissions cannot be solved by picking an alternative tool. The Plan will use a range of measures and information to make it clear that everyday choices make significant difference to environmental impact of our lives.

We will work, with other Authorities through London Councils, on understanding the consumption-based emissions of the borough. Identifying the areas of influence that we have as a Council is key to designing effective policies. Those emissions we can directly control or have significant levers of influence are key in this respect, and these will form the priorities of the Carbon Neutral Plan.

We have been learning from the work of the Carbon Disclosure Project and have reviewed the calculated trajectories by Tyndall centre. Further, we will explore the reporting to Carbon Disclosure project as a means to increase transparency around the actions we take.

The Carbon Neutral Plan will empower residents and organisations across Royal Greenwich to change to more sustainable ways of living and working, based on the best sources of information we can draw on.

¹ Carbon Disclosure Methodology - Cruise impacts were allocated to LAs based on percentage of population, assuming that flying is uniformly distributed across the whole population.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4 Question from Dominic Johnson, SE3, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

Given that there are significant concerns over both the feasibility of some of the measures in the council's decarbonisation plan, as well as the level of ambition contained within it; and given the enormity of the task to decarbonise; will the council leader consider using a representative Citizen's Assembly to assist the council in scrutinising Element Energy's suggestions before implementing them?

Reply -

I thank Dominic Johnson for his question.

We are working on an engagement plan to make sure that communities have a clear voice in shaping the Plan.

We have already consulted with residents on what they see as the Top Priorities for the Carbon Neutral Plan.

Some of the areas of action require much more investigation and further detailed feasibility- that is the work that will continue. However, the scale of the climate emergency means considering only tried-and-measures would not be enough - we have to be more ambitious.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

5 Question from Caroline Werner, SE10, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

"Development of the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan - The Evidence Base" - Measures of energy saving through change of behaviour (as opposed to energy efficiency) are not addressed in the consultants report despite there might be considerable potential for reducing carbon emissions by such means. Why?

Reply -

I thank Caroline Werner for her question.

Behaviour change – changing how we travel, how we use energy, and what we eat - are all primary means of addressing rising emissions. The majority of ‘embedded’ emissions are directly linked to our consumption patterns: the type of things we buy; how we use them; and how much is wasted.

Emissions savings arising from behaviour change are modelled in the Plan for a number of significant areas. These include:

- The 45% decrease in vehicle kilometres travelled from the 2015 baseline¹.
- The behaviour change in use of energy in buildings (such as the use of controls), which has been factored into increases in thermal efficiency.

¹ p.64 of the Carbon Neutral Plan Evidence Base report.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

6 Question from Caroline Werner, SE10, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

"Development of the Greenwich Carbon Neutral Plan - The Evidence Base"
- I welcome that the council buys 100% renewable electrical power, as stated in the report. Which are the other sustainable procurement standards of the council or are they yet to be defined?

Reply -

I thank Caroline Werner for her question.

The Council has committed to reviewing its procurement practices, starting with higher spend contracts.

We will work to define specific requirements as we do this, such as:

- Certification (such as ISO standards and standards related to vehicle emissions); and
- Further elaboration of the Social Value weighting in our procurement decisions.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

7 Question from Celia Watson, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

I would like to know what the current plan is for the money that has been accumulated by Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106, particularly through CIL which is not ring-fenced, and will the council commit to timely publishing of data and documents relating to CIL/S106? As of the end of 2018/19 there was an available balance of £4million left over, before any extra funds accrued in 2019/20.

Background: From analysing the last published data from 2018/19, only 13% (£600k) of the available money was spent (excluding all money relating to Crossrail) and there is £4million left over in reserve.

Despite the financial year ending 2019/20 already behind us, financial data for this year has not been published, nor has the new 'annual statement' on priorities that replaced the old Section 123 that expired in September 2019. Nor can I find an up to date breakdown of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund (GNGF) grants for Round 3 (2019/20) that was supposed to be published in March 2020. My analysis of Round 1 and 2 data, shows that 41% was given to Neighbourhood 2 (Greenwich and Blackheath) and only 8% to Neighbourhood 4 (Plumstead, Thamesmead and Abbeywood).

The February 2020 Treasury Management Strategy document referred to a 'Digital Infrastructure project' under CIL but there is no information anywhere about what this is and how it came about.

There is also a reference to the Capital Board and a Transformation Board responsible for the management, scrutiny and strategy of CIL funds but I can't find any details, minutes, or reports published by the council.

Reply -

I thank Celia Watson for her question.

The Council will be publishing an Infrastructure Funding Statement for the year 2019/20 on the Council website in accordance with the regulations.

The allocation of the Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund (Round 3) has been impacted by COVID-19. A report has been prepared for July Cabinet to agree the allocation of Round 3 money.

The GNGF allocation procedures require that neighbourhood CIL collected in a neighbourhood area is spent within that same area. Area 2 has collected the largest amount of neighbourhood CIL, and has therefore received the greatest allocation. In Area 4 where little neighbourhood CIL has been collected, the Royal Borough has forward funded the pot to ensure that there has been a minimum of £30,000 available to spend in the 3 funding rounds to dates.

Digital Infrastructure Project was agreed at Cabinet in November 2019. The project will see the establishment of a Joint Venture to deliver fibre infrastructure within the Borough. The Cabinet report can be viewed under Agenda item 09 [here](#). The CIL contribution for Phase 1 is approximately £300k.

The Capital Board and a Transformation Board were originally proposed within the Corporate Capital Strategy Report agreed by Council in February 2019. The February 2020 iteration of the Capital Strategy revised the capital governance arrangements, which continue to be embedded (see [report](#)).

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

8 Question from Ruth Keel, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

Why have some of the roads directly off Plumstead common road (Erindale Terrace for example) been made into more pedestrian walkways, the road leading into the Slade (Garland Road) next to the Slade Cafe is currently having some alterations and these seem to make what is a really dangerous T junction crossing with traffic approaching from three different ways, now as I see it even more of a high risk area. Children use this junction to cross over the road and onto the pavement cross to Greenslade school and to the play park.

Can you provide the research and evidence to why by raising the road to the same height as the pavement this will be beneficial? I can foresee children not realising this is a road to cross and moving across on scooters, bikes and by foot without having a clearly defined pavement to stop at.

This is concerning to me and I would like to hear your views on this and how you will make this high risk, high traffic and high pedestrian use safer.

Reply -

I thank Ruth Keel for her question.

The Council is currently completing delivery of paused road safety improvements throughout sections of Plumstead Common Road , There are a range of speed reduction measures being implemented throughout and Continuous footways at junctions are being used to cater walking demand. Continuous footways are increasingly used in England and across London, they reinforce the Highway Code (rule 170) which states that drivers should give way to pedestrians crossing, when vehicles are turning into side roads. Their design encourages drivers to turn into side roads with caution and alongside these measures, a reduction in speed limit to 20mph in Plumstead Common Road, as well as the removal of parking at junctions has been actioned to improve visibility and safety.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

9 Question from Sheldon Allen, SE3, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

With RBG committing to #StreetSpaceLDN and showing an initiative to improve our streets, I would like to ask the Cabinet Lead what plans there are for improving the area around Blackheath Standard SE3?

This includes the immediate introduction of #StreetSpaceLDN, cycle wands and environmental improvements to Old Dover Road - including re-wilding of some of the RBG owned green space and tree planting.

Unfortunately, Blackheath Standard is always left out of the wealth of regeneration programs across the borough and we feel forgotten by council.

Will the Cabinet Member commit to working with local residents and stakeholders to develop a plan to make this a reality?

Reply -

I thank Sheldon Allen for his question.

The Council is undertaking feasibility work on potential cycle routes in the Blackheath Standard area to submit London Streetspace Programme funding bids.

Unfortunately, London Streetspace funding cannot be used to improve green spaces or for tree planting, because the focus is on enabling active travel and social distancing while public transport capacity is greatly reduced.

The Council is very happy to receive ideas from the community on what environmental improvements could be made so that potentially suitable funding sources can be explored in the future.

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ITEM NO: 9

24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

10 Question from Amorel Kennedy, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

How much of a priority will the council place on dealing with its promises to mitigate the impact of climate change in a post Covid world? How will it ensure its Carbon Neutral Plan does not become a forgotten document gathering dust on a shelf?"

Reply -

I thank Amorel Kennedy for her question.

Climate action is one of our key priorities as we approach the recovery stage.

The most vulnerable in our society would suffer most from the impacts of climate change. The pandemic has shown that we are only as safe as the most vulnerable in our community.

The recovery from the pandemic can - and must - have a climate focus. The things we need to do to tackle climate change, like energy efficiency and reducing car travel, are also needed to create economic resilience and reduce fuel poverty.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

11 Question from Karin Tearle, SE10, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

First of all congratulations to Cllr James on his new role as Cabinet Member for Environment Sustainability and Transport. At the full council meeting of Feb 26th 2020 Cllr Denise Scott Macdonald stated there existed data for the DCO submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and that a new set of data would be 'coming out shortly'. Did this previous data cover the following: particulate matter PM-PM10/PM2.5, oxides of nitrogen, benzene 1,3-butadiene and carbon monoxide and will this data highlight the damage HGVs will cause and increase the amount of PMs regardless of whether their engines are cleaner? And will the new data mentioned at that meeting cover particulates and substances afore-mentioned? is the monitoring data available online?

Reply -

I thank Karin Tearle for her question.

The Royal Borough is keen to ensure Transport for London (TfL) thoroughly delivers the requirements set out in the Development Consent Order (DCO), to manage Silvertown Tunnel's traffic impacts.

This includes it developing - and consulting the Royal Borough on - an Air Quality Management Plan. This must include TfL installing Nitrogen Dioxide monitors three years before the expected date of opening and producing annual monitoring reports. These reports must be reviewed by a firm of independent air quality experts. If they determine the Tunnel has caused a material worsening of air quality, at locations where there are exceedances of national air quality objectives, TfL must consult the Royal Borough on a scheme of air quality mitigation measures.

TfL is working towards the tunnel opening in 2025, so I expect new monitoring data to begin being collected in a few years' time.

The UK Government retained benzene, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide and lead in regulations for England. However, all of the objectives for these

pollutants have been met for several years and are well below the national air quality objectives in London. This means that London boroughs do not have to report on these pollutants, unless local circumstances indicate that these pollutants need to be addressed¹.

The Development Consent Order requires that the Air Quality Management Plan is made public. The baseline data TfL produced to support its DCO application is published on the Planning Inspectorate's webpage².

The Royal Borough will continue to monitor the performance of these requirements through its role on the 'Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group'.

¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/llaqm_technical_guidance_llaqm.tg_16.pdf

² <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/london/silvertown-tunnel/>

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

12 Question from Karin Tearle, SE10, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

With regards to Planning Application No 20/1653/G submitted by Tim Snell, is the Council solely responsible for authorising planning or will those boroughs also affected by the scheme be involved in this consultation process?

Reply -

I thank Karin Tearle for her question.

I confirm that The Royal Borough of Greenwich (RBG) is the sole planning authority which is responsible for deciding application no. 20/1653/G and there is no requirement to consult other boroughs.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

13 Question from Donna Range, SE2, to Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

What does the Council intend to do with the drug dealers and antisocial behaviour that is constant all night every night in plumstead gardens? The neighbourhood around the gardens are now severely fed up with it everynight -no point ringing police as the cars come and go within minutes but its constant all night? Partys in the park ,bbqs in the park at 2am the list is endless with the gardens

Reply -

I thank Donna Range for her question.

The Council is aware of the issues you have raised and are keen to address these in an integrated way with other enforcement teams and partners such as the Police.

Community Safety Enforcement Officers from the Safer Spaces team recently completed a letter drop in the local vicinity of Plumstead Gardens. These letters included a point of contact from the Safer Spaces Team and diary sheets for the residents to complete with temporal data (times & dates) of what they see and descriptions of who is responsible if known. All responses from residents will be used by the police and Safer Spaces team to inform proactive patrols and enforcement operations.

I believe you have also been contacted personally by the Community Safety Enforcement Supervisor for Plumstead. It was explained that a problem-solving process for Plumstead Gardens will be undertaken.

This process will comprise of a detailed analysis of issues occurring at Plumstead gardens and production of an action plan which will address environmental design issues and target harden the area. This may include more regular, legitimate use of the space, better lighting and repairing the cricket nets.

In addition, enforcement teams will focus on further activity to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This may include targeted enforcement at the times identified, working holistically with the local community using action days, or organising community litter picks etc to help 'take back' the space and reclaim ownership from those misusing the area.

As the concerns raised are also generally occurring outside of traditional working hours, the Safer Spaces team are planning shift changes to accommodate later evening patrols of Plumstead Gardens. Council Officers have also asked the Police to assist with additional patrols into the late evenings and early mornings.

I hope this provides reassurance these issues are being taken seriously.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

14 Question from Paul Billington, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

During the Transport Committee meeting of the London Assembly on 15 June, TfL did not rule out implementing “express buses” along existing routes if there is specific demand. This is as a result of the reductions in passenger capacity on double and single deck buses of 20 and 10 passengers respectively, due to COVID-19.

As a consequence of the lack of any other affordable, alternative public transport in Thamesmead, their residents are wholly reliant upon buses in order to get from A to B. Will the council commit to holding discussions with TfL about implementing an express 472 route to serve the points of Plumstead Station, Woolwich Market, Charlton Station and North Greenwich from Thamesmead, in order to help assist users and complement the existing route?

Reply –

I thank Paul Billington for his question.

The Royal Borough is working hard to make sure that our transport system supports a safe, inclusive and sustainable recovery from COVID-19. As I have described in answers to previous questions, we are implementing a range of measures across Royal Greenwich through our London Streetscape Programme. Many of these, like the emergency measures in Eltham, Greenwich and Woolwich town centres, will help people get back on buses safely.

We will work with and support Transport for London, in developing the public transport network to respond to the new challenges we face. Express services may be an option on Royal Greenwich’s longer bus routes - like the vital route mentioned between Thamesmead, Woolwich and North Greenwich- and we will raise this with TfL.

Due to the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public transport use, TfL’s revenues have been reduced significantly. It has had to agree a

short-term funding settlement with Central Government to keep public transport and other essential services running. TfL has reviewed all of its expenditure: leading to the pausing of many projects, the furloughing of many non-operational staff and boroughs having to 're-bid' for funding.

This means funding for bus services is also limited and will have to be prioritised carefully. The Royal Borough will continue to champion the need for the best services across Royal Greenwich. However, at this difficult time, priorities will have to be considered particularly carefully to get the best from what funding is available for Royal Greenwich.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

15 Question from Paul Billington, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

Are plans for the “school street” scheme, that took place at Haimo Primary last year, to be rolled out across other primary schools in the borough, especially in view of recent events?

Reply –

I thank Paul Billington for his question.

As part of our work to encourage safe, active and sustainable travel to school, we work with schools to create School Streets. A School Street is closed to motor vehicles at school drop-off and pick-up times.

We created our first four permanent School Streets - including Haimo School, and De Lucy, Gordon and St Joseph's schools. We reviewed feedback we received during the trial operation of these School Streets and a decision was made in November 2019 to make them permanent.

The need to maintain social distancing for the foreseeable future and the reduced capacity of public transport will have a profound influence on how we travel as lockdown restrictions are eased.

As well as working on major improvements to town centres and other key locations, we need to ensure pupils have space to walk, cycle and social distance safely as they return to school. To help us do this we are rapidly expanding our School Streets programme with new Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency School Street closures

The first of these started last Monday at Charlton Manor Primary School. It has provided a wonderful space for returning pupils to walk, cycle and social distance safely.

We are working with Invicta Primary School, Wyborne Primary School and others to create more School Streets soon.

Our School Streets webpage¹ provides more detail and is the best place to keep-up-to date on our fast-developing School Streets plans.

¹ https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200259/transport_and_travel/2047/school_streets

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

16 Question from Shaun Slator, SE18, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

How successful was the Business Advice Surgery held in Plumstead?
How/where was this advertised? Why did it close early?

Reply –

I thank Shaun Slator for his question.

I am pleased to say that the council's "Shop Safe" Campaign" to reopen the high streets to non-essential retailers has got off to a fantastic start. Through this business outreach activity, officers have been providing advice and support to retailers on how they can operate safely and create high street environments where social distancing can be maintained - to ensure the safety of customers and staff. Over 700 "Shop Safe" packs have been distributed to local businesses.

In relation to the pop up business surgeries in Plumstead, 125 businesses were sent letters providing them with information about the locations and times of the business outreach sessions. These details were also posted on the Council's Business Events webpage and also publicised through our social media platforms as well as via the Business E-alert service.

The business advice surgeries in Plumstead were held on the following of days at the Aberly Street Car Park;

- Tuesday 9th June - 11am to 2pm
- Thursday 11 June – 11am to 2pm
- Wednesday 17 June 12noon to 3pm

These surgeries are held outside and unfortunately, the surgery on the 17 June had to close 30 minutes early due to heavy rainfall.

In summary:

- Out of the 125 businesses which operate in Plumstead, 58 retailers have so far attended the 3 business advice surgeries. The guidance and “Shop Safe” packs have been well received by retailers.
- approximately 35% of businesses on Plumstead high street remain closed due to the restrictions relating to businesses providing personal care, hospitality or leisure services.
- In addition some businesses have furloughed staff and delayed their reopening to account for the planned return to work of their staff

Therefore, Shop Safe packs are being held back for when these businesses reopen and further advice surgery in Plumstead will be held with details of these promoted as above.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

17 Question from Shaun Slator, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

How much have the new LGBT pedestrian crossings cost and where has this been funded from?

Reply -

I thank Shaun Slator for his question.

The council first installed Pride Crossings on the Royal Boroughs streets in 2019 to help promote equality and diversity and to support Pride celebrations across London and beyond. The initiative was a huge success.

The decision was taken to repeat the Pride Crossings this year, at an increased number of sites, and in addition install the "Black Lives Matter" text on the pavement of General Gordon Square. This initiative has the similar aim of inclusivity and in standing in solidarity with those demanding equal rights and treatment.

Whilst the Black Lives Matter text was completed at no cost to the Council the cost to install all seven Pride Crossings was just under £14,000. This cost will be met from ward budgets and developer contributions.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

18 Question from Sadie Lawes-Wickwar, SE18, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

Back in October 2019 it was announced that Plumstead was a priority regeneration area and the Council had secured funding from the Mayor's Good Growth Fund to make improvements to Plumstead High Street. While the Covid-19 pandemic will understandably have delayed some of this work, improvements to Plumstead High Street are needed so the community can follow new safety guidelines and the area can begin to recover. For example, creating more space for pedestrians on pavements and ensuring roads are safe for cyclists. What are the Council's plans now for making such improvements?

Reply -

I thank Sadie Lawes-Wickwar for her question.

The Council is currently submitting bids to Transport for London (TfL) for London Streetspace funding to install temporary measures on our streets to respond to the transport challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This includes a bid for Plumstead High Street, to implement temporary measures to make social distancing easier and safer.

The Council has also submitted a bid for a temporary cycle route between Woolwich and Abbey Wood, which would include part of Plumstead High Street.

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24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

19 Question from Maria Freeman, SE18, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

In February 2020 a number of people asked questions about Silvertown Tunnel it was stated that there is “no legal avenue to oppose the Tunnel”. Does the Council not consider that in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the Climate Emergency, policy need has moved on, and this decision should be reversed? Shouldn't funding for this project be put to better use supporting our communities through the current economic situation and developing modal shifts in transport? Traffic and air quality will worsen in our Borough, mitigations are not clear, and there are recent evidence of reports (from the Queensferry Bridge) that new bridges increase traffic and do not necessarily bring about the benefits intended.

Reply -

I thank Maria Freeman for her question.

The Development Consent Order that allows Transport for London (TfL) to develop and operate the Silvertown Tunnel was made by the Secretary of State for Transport. There is no legal avenue for the Council to oppose the Tunnel at this stage.

The decision to continue the development of the Tunnel does not lie with the Royal Borough. That decision is made by the Mayor of London. The Labour Group wrote to the Mayor of London, asking him to pause work on the Silvertown Tunnel and review the alternative options. We are disappointed that the Mayor did not agree.

The affordability of the Silvertown Tunnel in the current environment is a question for the Mayor of London and TfL.

However, TfL has appointed a consortium to design, build, finance and maintain the Silvertown Tunnel. TfL will only start paying the consortium once the tunnel is open and it expects the user charge to fund those payments. If TfL stopped the Tunnel's development this would leave TfL with contractual and financial liabilities towards the consortium, and would not release the funding for other projects.

The Royal Borough will continue to be a leading voice calling TfL to minimise the negative impacts of the Silvertown Tunnel.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

20 Question from Matt Browne, SE10, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

It is becoming increasingly clear, post-COVID, that the Silvertown Tunnel Project, as proposed, will only do two things effectively; it will increase congestion through Greenwich and Lewisham, and it will suck £1.2bn out of the local economy and hand it to international banks and construction companies. Will you now work with your fellow Labour council leaders in Hackney, Newham, Lewisham, and Southwark to persuade the Mayor to either cancel the project, or alter it to build a 'New-Green Tunnel' - a single bore crossing for pedestrians, bikes, and e-cargo bikes - funded by a toll on the Blackwall Tunnel only (which will in itself significantly reduce congestion at Blackwall)?

Reply -

I thank Matt Browne for his question.

The Labour Group wrote to the Mayor of London, asking him to pause work on the Silvertown Tunnel, and review the alternative options to reduce congestion and pollution around the Blackwall Tunnel.

The Mayor did not agree. He explained the range of road-user charging, public transport and other options appraised. He reiterated his view that the Tunnel is the best option to address significant existing disruption, congestion and environmental impacts in the area.

The Development Consent Order places a number of binding requirements on TfL to manage and mitigate the Tunnel's traffic impact. TfL is also required to run at least 20 buses per hour in each direction through the tunnels during peak periods.

The existing problems of disruption, congestion and public transport connectivity will only get worse. A walking and cycling only solution would not address these issues.

As described in answer to the previous question, COVID-19 does not appear likely to affect the legal or financial position of the Silvertown Tunnel.

The Royal Borough will continue to work with other affected authorities through London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee. We will continue to call on TfL to minimise the negative impacts of the Silvertown Tunnel, and to maximise its benefits for public transport use.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

I Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Community

Will the Leader give further details of the arrangements for the review of statues and other monuments in the Borough, and how the criteria for making any proposals will be established?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I know that Councillors across the chamber will want to join with me in formally expressing our outrage at the killing of George Floyd in the United States. This senseless killing has highlighted the injustices suffered by Black People not only in the United States but here in Britain too. Hundreds of thousands of people have expressed their support for the Black Lives Matter movement and people have rightly looked at the disproportionalities that exist in our society in terms of the outcomes experienced by BAME communities. This disproportionality has been further highlighted by the high number of COVID-19 related deaths experienced by BAME communities.

The toppling of Edward Colston's statue in Bristol was symbolic and reminds us that inequality and racism in our society is systemic. We need to examine the cultural as well as the economic underpinnings of this inequality.

So that is why on 11th June I announced a review of the whole of our public realm to consider the relevance of statues, landmarks, place names, monuments and artefacts.

This review will be conducted by Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust working closely with council officers and additional external advisors as required. We anticipate that the review will be completed in stages with the principles governing our approach identified within two months. The key sites and locations will be mapped and recommendations for action made within four months.

No one wants to forget our history or rewrite the past but it is only right that we review our history and contextualise it with the values and principles we hold today – namely diversity, inclusion and equality.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

2 Question from Councillor Nigel Fletcher, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

What advice has been given to applicants on the preferred arrangements for conducting public consultations at pre-application and post-application stages during the current situation?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

I do understand that many residents would have preferred developers/applicants to have waited until it was possible to have some sort of proper exhibition and meeting as part of a consultation rather than the virtual ones that have been held. I know that there has also been some frustration about who was notified by developers and who wasn't. I understand and share some of this frustration.

Government guidance has been for developers/applicants to continue with consultations virtually.

The letter from the Chief Planning in March 2020 stated: "We ask you to take an innovative approach, using all options available to you to continue your service. We recognise that face-to-face events and meetings may have to be cancelled but we encourage you to explore every opportunity to use technology to ensure that discussions and consultations can go ahead.

At application stage the MHCLG has amended the regulations governing consultation to allow flexibility to take other steps to publicise applications if they cannot discharge the specific requirements for site notices, neighbour notifications or newspaper publicity. These steps include notifying people who are likely to have an interest in the application and indicating where further information about it can be viewed online. The use of social media and other electronic communications have also been permitted.

So far, the Council has undertaken its statutory consultations, which includes sending letters to neighbouring properties, putting up site notices and putting a notice in the press.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Will the Cabinet Member revisit the policy decision to cease the locking of parks in the Borough, and whether he will look at allowing Friends groups to take on this responsibility where possible?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Nigel Fletcher for his question.

The vast majority of the borough's parks are open and accessible 24 hours a day, but a small number are fenced and gated which allow them to be locked. Earlier this year we decided to leave open nine sites which had previously been locked at night. Following a number of incidents of vandalism and other antisocial behaviour we have now decided to lock these parks again between dusk and dawn. The decision has been made after discussion with the Greenwich Parks Forum, which represents the borough's friends of parks group and I would like to thank the Greenwich Parks Forum and all our friends groups for their advice and support.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

4 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

At February Council, the Leader mentioned in answer to a question that an updated version of the Site Allocations would go out for a six-week consultation in Spring 2020. Given events in the interim, this has understandably not happened. Can the Cabinet member give an indication on when she thinks the updated version will be ready to go to consultation?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The Town and Country Planning Regulations (England) 2012 requires that during consultation, a physical copy of the document is placed 'on Deposit' and available for inspection at the Council's principal office. With continuing restrictions on movement and gathering associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, it will not be possible to carry out the consultation until such restrictions are lifted. It is intended to take the updated Site Allocations Local Plan to Members in September with a view to commencing the consultation as soon as possible thereafter.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

5 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing

Can the Cabinet member confirm that any future Greenwich Builds developments will have a full virtual consultation, similar to the one recently carried out for the proposed development on Well Hall Road, alongside any physical exhibition (once these are allowed to resume)?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

At the moment we can only hold resident & stakeholder consultations & planning public consultations virtually.

We have conducted these using a system called Commonplace and we plan to continue using this or an equivalent for the foreseeable future. This approach is in its early stages but feedback so far has been positive.

As this develops there is no doubt that our approach will become more refined and we anticipate that some form of virtual engagement will be retained alongside physical exhibitions when allowed.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

6 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

How many commercial tenants of the Council were able to take up the three-month rent-free period offered by the Council? Additionally, what was the spread of these tenants across the Borough, and what industries do they operate in?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

As of 18th June 2020, a total of 59 Rent Concessions have been granted under the Covid-19 Rent Policy. Of these, 53 tenants have benefited from a 3 month rent free period due to enforced premises closure under Government legislation and 6 tenants were granted a partial rent free period concession.

These 59 concessions granted have been broken down by number of concessions granted - the figures showing the geographical spread by Ward across the Borough and the uses of the premises are set out in the tables below:

Wards	Concession
Abbey Wood	5
Blackheath Westcombe	5
Charlton	6
Coldharbour and New Eltham	3
Eltham North	0
Eltham South	13

Eltham West	0
Glyndon	1
Greenwich West	5
Kidbrooke with Hornfair	2
Middle Park and Sutcliffe	1
Peninsula	2
Plumstead	2
Shooters Hill	2
Thamesmead Moorings	0
Woolwich Common	2
Woolwich Riverside	10

Uses	Concessions
Arts & creative industries	3
Child Care/Nursery	3
Community/Sports	4
Financial Services (A2)	1
Fitness/Gym	1
Food/drink/hospitality	12
Hair/Beauty (inc Barber's)	10
Manufacturing & production	4
Printing and publishing	3
Retail - building trade	1
Retail - car sales	2
Retail - furnishing	2
Retail - general household	1

Retail - gifts	2
Retail - non essential foods	1
Retail - sports	1
Retail - florist	3
Vehicle Maintenance/Repair	5

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

7 Question from Councillor Charlie Davis, to Councillor Danny Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Leader of the Council

When does the Leader envisage the Council's Scrutiny Panels will be able to resume meeting? And what does he feel are the main hurdles that need to be overcome to do this?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Charlie Davis for his question.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met for a public meeting on 1st June and will be meeting again on 7th July.

Only urgent meetings such as Cabinet, Planning and Licensing have been held so far and it is anticipated that other panels and committees will be stood up in September.

As the Member will be aware, this has not been a time of 'business as usual' and council officers have been working extremely hard on keeping the Council running through these difficult times. As such, staff that would usually oversee the meetings were redeployed to work in the Crematorium, in the Borough Emergency Control Centre and on the Community Hub to ensure shielding residents had access to the support they needed. In doing so, I am grateful for their efforts.

The Chairs of Scrutiny Panels have put together their work programmes and agreed to run the next programme until May 2022 rather than May 2021 as would normally be the case to ensure that all issues can be looked at in the proper manner and are not rushed through.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

8 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Can the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of spending against the £3.2 million Covid-19 hardship funding that RBG originally received from central government? How much of this funding has been spent so far on 1) reducing existing Council Tax Support recipients' Council Tax liability, 2) meeting increased demand for Council Tax Support and 3) discretionary spending?

Secondly, an additional £63m round of Covid-19 hardship funding was announced by central government on 10th June - how much of this second round will Greenwich be awarded, and how will it be spent?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

Following the announcement of the Covid-19 Hardship Fund in March 2020, software houses were given the task of providing a fully automated solution for Local Authorities to apply a discount of up to £150 for all working age claimants in receipt of Local Council Tax Support in 2020-21. There were issues with the original solution provided by our software supplier so much so that they recommended Local Authorities to:

“wait for a revised solution before creating Hardship Fund payments. If you use the existing solution those payments will not be recognized later and will inevitably create additional manual work to adjust.”

They have announced that the revised software upgrade solution will be available by the end of June 2020 and allowing for a period of testing, the discount will be applied to all relevant Council Tax accounts by mid-July 2020. The software supplier supports around 40% of all local authorities.

As the Council agreed from 1 April 2020 to increase the maximum Local Council Tax support for working age claimants from 85% to 100%, many residents will not have a shortfall to pay towards their Council Tax. The

estimated spend in applying the discount is approximately £1.5m. Provision will also need to be made for any new working age Local Council Tax Support claims received in 2020/21.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) have issued guidance in respect of the COVID-19 Hardship Fund and have stated that it is for billing authorities to establish their own local approach to using any remaining grant to assist those in need. These may include, but are not restricted to:

- a) council tax relief using existing discretionary discount / hardship policies (adapted where necessary in order to capture those most likely to be affected by COVID-19)
- b) additional support outside the council tax system through Local Welfare or similar schemes
- c) a higher level of council tax reduction for those working age LCTS recipients whose annual liability exceeds £150.

It is prudent to wait for the software release following the large rise in new UC claimants during April / May and see how many new LCTS cases have been generated, to determine the level of funds left for welfare assistance under this grant stream.

On the second point regarding an additional £63m of Covid-19 hardship funding, we have yet to be advised of how much Greenwich will be awarded, nor any guidance on how it is to be spent.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

9 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

The Cabinet Member warned publicly in April that 2,000 residents had, at that point, cancelled their Council Tax direct debit since April 1st. I understand this was a gross figure (including, for example, changes of bank details) and that there are lots of variables at play - including financial difficulty, residents taking precautions against predicted future payment problems, increased numbers claiming Universal Credit and moving on to Council Tax Support, etc.

Can he provide an update on this situation (how many direct debits have been cancelled in total), and given the many complex factors above, can he provide any analysis that has been carried out on the various drivers behind this?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

In the three-month period from 1st March to 31st May 2020, 3201 Council Tax direct debits were cancelled.

As Cllr Hartley suggests in his question there are a range of potential factors behind the high number of cancellations we have seen. However, given the significant and ongoing Covid related pressures we face no specific analysis of this has been undertaken. Our priority is to support residents who are facing financial difficulty at this time and to ensure that anyone worried about making payments receive the advice and support they need.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

10 Question from Councillor Matt Hartley, to Councillor Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

Can the Cabinet Member provide a breakdown of Covid-19 relief grants paid out via RBG to local businesses from the £36.9 million originally received from central government for this purpose, broken down by grant type i.e. broken down into £10k grants for those eligible for Small Business Rate Relief, up-to-£25k grants for retail/leisure/hospitality?

Secondly, in May, a £617 million discretionary top up fund was announced by central government to provide grants to businesses who fell through the gaps in the original measures, for example, cafes in parks. How much of this top-up-funding did RBG receive, how much has been paid out, and to which categories of businesses?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Hartley for his question.

The following figures are as of 18th June 2020.

There are three discrete schemes in operation:

Scheme 1

Businesses in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief

(Rateable Value under £15,000 and in receipt of the relief) - £10,000 grant

The Council has awarded at total of £18.2m in grants

This represents 87% of eligible businesses.

Scheme 2

Businesses in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sector

(Rateable Value of over £15,000 but under £51,000) - £25,000 grant

The Council has awarded at total of £12.1m in grants

This represents 87% of eligible businesses.

Scheme 3

Businesses in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sector

(Rateable Value of under £15,000) - £10,000 grant

The Council has awarded a total of £2.8m in grants

This represents 78% of eligible businesses.

In total the Council has awarded £33.1m in grants to Greenwich businesses.

We are seeking to make further contact with those businesses who have yet to submit a grant application.

The national budget for the Discretionary Grant fund is £617m. The allocation to the Royal Borough of Greenwich is £1.863 million. The funding is targeted at businesses and charities which were not eligible for help from the Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Fund Grant and Small Business Grant Schemes. Specifically, the government expects councils to target the following types of businesses.

- Businesses in shared spaces
- Market traders
- Bed and breakfasts that pay council tax instead of business rates.
- Charities not eligible for a small business grant due to them receiving charitable rates relief.

In line with government guidance, businesses are required to apply for the funds and provide supporting evidence. The scheme will be launched in w/c 22 June. The opening of the scheme will be publicised on the council's website and via the business e-alerts. Therefore, no grants have been awarded. However, reports on grant payments provided will be made available. Mechanisms have been established to ensure applications can be processed quickly and payments made shortly after they have been approved - i.e. within 7 days of approval. We expect all payments to have been made by the end of July, which is in line with government guidance for councils.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

11 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

In light of reduced public transport capacity it is warming to see that the council is progressing a number of safe cycling routes and junction improvements. Clearly funding is a challenge with success of bids to TfL, the DfT etc. not guaranteed. What other funding options is the council looking at such as business, developer or crowdfunding?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

The Council is currently focused on securing as much funding as possible from Transport for London (TfL) and the Department for Transport (DfT) to deliver temporary measures to provide all residents with safe transport options while public transport capacity is severely limited.

Once we have been awarded funding we will be required to deliver as quickly as possible by both TfL and the DfT. This means we are unlikely to have capacity immediately to deliver additional schemes in the short-term.

We anticipate that we may have capacity to deliver further transport measures from the autumn, so will review funding options at that time.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

Greenwich remains one of the few councils in London to not enforce moving traffic regulations despite this being first discussed in 2014. What progress will be made in the coming months particularly given new road user conflicts and challenges?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

The Council has adopted the powers to enforce moving traffic contraventions by CCTV and all the legislative requirements have been passed. The Council is in the process of implementing a new back-office system and the provision of CCTV enforcement was included as part of the tender for that service. We are commencing with an initial tranche of twenty cameras positioned at a variety of locations around the borough and many of the cameras are now in place. However, the Covid 19 pandemic has impacted on the delivery of this project but the remaining issues should be resolved over coming weeks and cameras becoming operational as soon as possible.

A full communications exercise is being prepared to advise motorists of the commencement of enforcement and warning notices will be issued for a period of two weeks before Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

13 Question from Councillor Matt Clare, to Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities

In April the Leader quite rightly requested that if possible Councillors volunteer to assist on refuse collection rounds. At least two members of the opposition responded promptly yet our offer was not taken up. There are various other reports of people being available to volunteer while services were overstretched yet offers were not taken up. What are the learnings to ensure all talents and offers of support are used as the council continues to navigate through the Covid – 19 challenges ?

Reply –

I thank Councillor Matt Clare for his question.

Councillor Clare is correct that the Leader asked if it was possible for Councillors to volunteer on waste collection rounds. Unfortunately, due to the training required at a time that services were already under unprecedented pressure from the pandemic, as well as the limits on waste vehicle crews in vehicles due to the need to maintain social distancing, it was not possible to proceed with this.

A large number of Councillors volunteered through the Council's Community Hub, carrying out a range of activities including befriending, shopping on behalf of shielding individuals and collecting prescriptions, and I would like to thank all of the Councillors who volunteered.

I would like to say a big thank you to all of Councillors and other residents who have come forward to support our local residents. Due to large number of residents who volunteered, it has not been possible to find tasks for everyone who has volunteered.

Other volunteers have been involved in activities such as:

- the big leaflet drop, with 125k leaflets distributed within a week
- shopping
- picking up medicine

- befriending calls
- Dog Walking

In total, the Area Coordinators in the Community Hub mobilised over 1,200 volunteers, including councillors, who have donated over 28,000 hours of their time to support residents. This includes carrying out the following tasks, as of Sunday 21st June:

- 1,066 Shopping trips
- 247 regular befriending calls
- 1,905 tasks undertaken

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

14 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Miranda Williams, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult's Social Care

In these last few months many residents have been reliant on care workers who have provided them with not only their basic needs but in some cases their only contact with the outside world. How have the Care Companies we use coped during the pandemic?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

Many social care providers have been impacted financially through loss of income and the additional staffing and equipment costs incurred during the pandemic. The Council has provided short term funding to all care providers in the borough to offset these impacts and registered care homes will receive additional funding for infection control measures. The Council has supported providers with emergency supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); training and advice on infection control and recruitment of frontline homecare staff. More detail is available of the support to care homes on the Council's website. The path is Royal Greenwich > Coronavirus > Care homes

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

15 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities

We have all seen the way our parks and open spaces have suffered these last few months from a totally unacceptable amount of litter. I applaud the work already being done by our staff but we are still failing to get the message across and this has been highlighted by the pandemic. Can I have assurance that we can work together as soon as possible to prevent this scourge on our society?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

With restrictions on meeting in homes, pubs, community centres and other indoor spaces, our parks are more popular and important than ever.

We have actively been using the Council's social media to encourage people to take their litter home with them and officers from Parks and Safer Spaces have been carrying out patrols in some parks and open spaces to deter anti-social behaviour, including littering. We have also been fortunate that we have had support from some park friend groups and volunteers at some parks and open spaces that have assisted with litter picking. However, we recognise more needs to be done and you can be assured that we can continue to work together to try to prevent this problem by a combination public education and enforcement.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

16 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Matthew Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Are we providing sufficient PPE equipment to our schools to support their individual needs?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

In line with government guidance Schools are responsible for first attempting to source their own PPE equipment to support in situations where children may be symptomatic or have intimate care needs. However, to support our education settings the Council has provided PPE starter packs to over 290 different Greenwich settings including Schools and Early Years providers. The Council has also provided information on 12 different supply routes available for Schools to source PPE. The Council has also provided an emergency order form, so Schools are able to access Council emergency stocks in circumstances when they have been unable to directly source PPE.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

17 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Matthew Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

At the present time teachers in our schools are trying to cope with the phased back implementations and all the staffing issues around it especially providing sufficient staff to give virtual lessons for the children still working from home. Have we had feed back from schools regarding any staffing issues?

Reply –

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

The Director of Children’s Services and her team are in regular communication with all schools in Greenwich. School leaders have carefully planned the return of year groups to their schools and have included staff availability in this planning. They have completed risk assessments to ensure that the possible risks of returning year groups are minimised to both pupils and staff. Included in this risk assessment is staff availability and ensuring that all pupils’ needs are met. Leaders have based the order in which year groups will return, the rate at which groups of pupils return and the dates on which they do so on their risk assessment and thus ensured that they will have sufficient staff. School leaders have shared their risk assessments with Children’s Services and have been given feedback. Having assessed their individual situation, school leaders have identified the best way to ensure that virtual learning is still taking place. This includes:

- Using staff who are shielding or not yet in direct contact with pupils to plan and deliver this learning
- Having a rota of staff to plan and deliver the learning
- Using national resource websites and directing parents to the relevant lessons provided there.

School leaders have worked hard with staff groups and unions to ensure that anxiety is reduced and that they have sufficient staff to ensure that the maximum number of pupils are able to return.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

18 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Matthew Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Now that lockdown is being eased does the Council have plans to provide a programme of clubs and events that the children will be able to attend during the summer holidays?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

The Council has plans to deliver a range of activities this Summer through its Young Greenwich service. This includes Council funded activities and events around areas such as Sports and Fitness, Art and Fashion, Skills for Life and Business and Careers. These will be delivered by partners including Charlton Athletic Community Trust, Metro, Futureversity and others.

Funding allocated to the Summer programme of activities as part of Young Greenwich this year is approximately £72,627. In addition £205,000 of funding bids have been submitted to deliver additional youth provision during the Summer. Year round provision will also continue during the summer, this is funded through the overall Young Greenwich contract of £3,230,719 per annum.

As of 17/06/2020, current government guidance and that of the National Youth Agency (NYA) does not permit the delivery of group face to face sessions. However, the Council and partners will continue to review the offer in line with the latest government and NYA guidance and look to include face to face provision where this is permitted. Publicity is currently being finalised and will shortly be advertised online, in print and promoted through Greenwich Schools.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

19 Question from Councillor Pat Greenwell, to Councillor Matthew Morrow, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Could we have the figures please for Years 10 and 12 returning to school plus any concerns that have arisen since June 15th.

Reply -

I thank Councillor Pat Greenwell for her question.

Secondary schools have begun their face to face sessions with Year 10 and Year 12. Leaders have designed how they intend to do this in different ways depending on the physical layout of their buildings following a thorough risk assessment. Some schools have reported to us that they will have tutor groups with groups of up to 10 pupils at a time with a focus on particular subjects, other schools are planning to have part of a year group for a full or part day to cover a range of subjects.

Schools have not highlighted any difficulties and at a meeting with secondary Headteachers on the 19th June Headteachers described a very positive return for the wider group of students and that both pupils and staff were pleased to return to school.

We have collated information on attendance throughout the Covid- 19 pandemic. For the secondary schools of which we have received attendance returns for Years 10 and 12, in the first week of opening for the wider group of students, there have been on average 350 students attending each day across Years 10 and 12.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

20 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

In an email dated 14th May, Cllr Thorpe outlined an initial plan to facilitate social distancing and encourage more walking/cycling in the borough. In that plan, the Council made clear that its intention was to 'avoid a car-led recovery' and to encourage cycling and walking once the lockdown is eased. As a result of this plan, a range of restrictions on parking have been put in place across the Borough as temporary measures. Does the Cabinet Member intend on making any of the new restrictions on parking, changes to cycle lanes or any other new features permanent when the lockdown ends?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

Our focus has been on developing the emergency solutions Royal Greenwich needs to manage the CORVID-19 pandemic.

Where appropriate, we have used experimental traffic orders for these schemes, which are designed to allow measures to be tested, improved and/or made permanent. Many of the measures build on proposals in our Local Implementation Plan for Transport and they support our wider transport goals.

A period of rapid change is always a learning experience. We will consider whether any of the things we have done could have a permanent role in improving the way we travel carefully.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

21 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Adel Khaireh, Cabinet Member for Culture and Communities

As part of the Council's MTFS budget reduction for Parks, Estates and Open Spaces, it was decided that bowls club/organisations would become responsible for the self-management and maintenance of bowling greens from April 2021. Given this policy, will the Cabinet Member explain what maintenance of bowling greens will take place between now and April 2021?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The Parks Estates and Open Spaces (PEOS) Department are assigning gardeners to bring the bowling greens up to a good a standard of maintenance and will be carrying out grass cutting, watering and restoration of worn and damaged areas between now and the end of March 2021. The plan is that the bowling green playing surfaces will be in good condition at the point of transfer to self-management, to help support clubs and bowls organisations to take on the responsibility for future management and maintenance.

It is also planned that experienced officers from the PEOS grounds maintenance team will provide advice on green maintenance to bowls clubs and bowls organisations both pre and post transfer of the greens.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

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

For businesses on a section of Well Hall Road in my ward, which has recently been included in a new (longer) Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), the price of parking permits appears to have doubled from £200 to £400. Although the Council has offered a three month extension on the current parking permits, it seems clear to me that local shops operating in a post-lockdown environment are going to be struggling more than normal. Given the financial difficulties which firms across the Borough are going to face, will the Cabinet Member agree to postpone increases in business parking permit charges for any firms which are facing a doubling in costs until the next overall review of permit prices has been conducted?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

The price of business permits is dependent on the type of Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) the business is within. Those CPZs with relatively short hours of operation, such as the Eltham Station (E) CPZ, which is 11am to 12.30pm Monday to Friday, business permits are £200. In those zones which operate for a longer period, such as Eltham Central (EC) zone, which operates 9am to 5.30pm Monday to Saturday, business permits are £400.

We have during the COVID 19 pandemic offered businesses a three month extension of permits due to expire. However, resident and business permit charges contribute towards the overall enforcement and management costs of parking controls and the higher business permit charges are already in place in many parts of the borough. There are no plans at present to offer a further concession to businesses on Well Hall Road which isn't being offered elsewhere in the borough

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

23 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing

The Council's Service Charge requires Council tenants living in houses on estates to pay for some of the following services:

- a. Cleaning of communal areas, including external pathways, estate roads, grassed areas.
- b. Weed spraying
- c. Grounds maintenance - grass cutting, pruning of bushes and trees, general gardening and clearing of communal areas

Can the Cabinet Member confirm what proportion of privately owned homes on areas covered by the Service Charge are asked to contribute towards the services listed above?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

We currently have 4,972 leaseholders who pay service charges for Grounds Maintenance incorporating Weed Spraying, ride-on and hand mowing and other services. Litter picking and sweeping external estate are also included via the Estate Caretaking costs.

In 2008, the Royal Borough of Greenwich encouraged existing Freeholders to 'buy out' their service charges for a one-off fee which was based on their existing annual charge.

In addition to this, all new Right to Buy applicants would be offered the opportunity to do the same on completion. This was to help reduce Home Ownership Service's costs in managing and administering the service charges for the 920 properties, whereby the income generated did not significantly exceed the cost to process the invoices. The only exception was those properties that are connected to communal heating systems.

As a result of the above, we currently have a Freehold portfolio of 13 properties that are subject to service charges.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

24 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Sizwe James, Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Transport

In March, the Council advertised Traffic Management Orders (TMOs) related to the introduction of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Eltham. My understanding is that a report is normally published summarising the responses to these advertisements but I have not seen this or received confirmation of when the amended CPZs will be introduced. Can the Cabinet Member agree to publish the responses to the TMOs and confirm when the amended CPZs will be introduced?

Reply –

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

Following publication of Traffic Management Orders (TMOs) a report would only be required where objections have been received so a report isn't necessary in many instances. However, my understanding is that an objection has been received and therefore a decision report will be required in this instance. The Council constitution sets out how objections to TMOs are considered and we will proceed appropriately. I'm afraid I can't pre-empt the outcome of the decision and therefore am unable to give a date of when any changes will be implemented but Ward Councillors, residents and businesses will be advised of the outcome and subsequent actions.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

25 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Anthony Okereke, Cabinet Member for Housing

Leaseholders on the Strongbow Estate are being asked to contribute a substantial sum to replace a roof which is still within the guarantee period. Regardless of whether the company who supplied the original roof has gone out of business, does the Cabinet Member think it is right for the Council to re-charge leaseholders for a roof replacement when the responsibility for employing the original contractors rested with us?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

I understand from Officers that you asked a question at the Council Meeting in January 2018, where it was confirmed that the new roof system being tendered was a Bauder roof which comes with a 20 year manufacturer's guarantee. Bauder are an established roof manufacturer and the contractor (Breyer) who undertook the installation is an approved Bauder contractor.

The previous roof installed in 2005/6 was an asphalt roof, which would typically be expected to have approximately 15 years life before any significant works are required.

There are 36 residents who are affected, of which 19 are leaseholders. The recharges to leaseholders are an accurate apportionment of the costs incurred by the Council in replacing the roof in 2019 with the Bauder system. This is a better roof system than the traditional asphalt roof that was in place, and with an expected life of at least 20 years. The original contractor who installed the asphalt roof in 2005/6 has ceased trading, and there is no recourse available to the Council.

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

26 Question from Councillor Spencer Drury, to Councillor Chris Kirby, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Since its inception how many staff has the Royal Borough of Greenwich placed on the Government's furlough Scheme? Please can this answer be broken down by Department? How many staff remain on furlough currently?

Reply -

I thank Councillor Spencer Drury for his question.

RBG have not submitted Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) claims for RBG staff. Whilst the CJRS did not prevent a public body from claiming, the guidance stated that where employers receive public funding for staff costs, and that funding is continuing, it expected employers to use that money to continue to pay staff in the usual fashion – and correspondingly not furlough them. However, CJRS claims have been made for staff in Schools, these staff are School Breakfast / After School club workers which are predominately funded by parental contributions.

The following table confirms the number of staff placed on the Government's CJRS (Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme) – the table confirms the number of staff claimed for, by School, by month.

School Name	No of Staff APRIL	No of Staff MAY	No of Staff JUNE
Bannockburn	11	11	11
Bishop John Robinson	1	1	1
Boxgrove	0	4	4
Charlton Manor	4	4	4
Ealdham	3	3	3
Eglinton	5	5	5
Greenslade	4	4	0
Gordon	5	5	5
Haimo	5	5	5
Henwick	3	3	3
Heronsgate	9	9	9
Holy Family	5	5	5
Invicta	7	7	7
James Wolfe	13	13	13
Kidbrooke Park	0	3	3
Mulgrave	12	12	12
Plumcroft	8	8	8
Pound Park	6	6	6
Robert Owen	18	18	18
St Margarets	6	6	6
St Thomas More RC JMI	7	7	7
Wingfield	12	12	12
Total	144	151	147

COUNCIL

24 JUNE 2020

MEMBERS QUESTIONS

27 Question from Councillor John Fahy, to Councillor Sarah Merrill, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth

Can the Cabinet Member for Regeneration confirm what guidance if any has been issued by the Secretary of State regarding the extension of working hours on building sites in Greenwich and across the Country. If this is the case will she publish the document at the earliest opportunity

Reply -

I thank Councillor John Fahy for his question.

The following Ministerial Statement published on 13 May sets out the current position regarding construction:

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2020-05-13/HLWS230/>

**OVERVIEW
AND
SCRUTINY
ANNUAL
REPORT
2019 – 20**

Foreward by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019-20

Our Overview and Scrutiny work programme was agreed at the beginning of the municipal year in May 2019 and the main Committee and its six scrutiny panels have covered a wide range of topics.

The Council has had to make unprecedented budget savings in response to the government's austerity measures and Overview and Scrutiny has played, and will continue to play, an important role in examining budget proposals and putting forward recommendations to Cabinet.

Like so many other parts of our Council, the scrutiny function then had to work differently through the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to these pressures it was agreed that the work programme going forward will be rolled into the next municipal year as well creating an 18-month programme. This will mean that we will have the flexibility to add urgent and ad-hoc items as and when needed, especially considering the challenging financial outlook. We have also allowed for some dedicated sessions to look into the effects of Covid-19 on our community and on the Council. We will use these to examine our response and to form constructive feedback where possible.

Through 2019-20 the main Committee and its Panels have all focused on the many challenges facing the borough's residents, examples of which are shown on the following pages.

Public involvement in our reviews has been high and we have had an unprecedented number of ideas put forward for our new work programme 2020-21. I am very grateful for these valuable contributions and look forward to their continued participation.

Councillor Chris Lloyd

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2019-20

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprises the Chair with the Chairs of the six Scrutiny Panels and two Members from the Conservative Party. These are as follows:

Councillor Chris Lloyd	Chair (Labour)
Councillor John Fahy	Vice-Chair and Chair of Corporate Finance & Performance Scrutiny Panel (Labour)
Councillor Spencer Drury	(Conservative)
Councillor Matt Hartley	(Conservative)
Councillor Mark James	Chair of Healthier Communities & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel (Labour)
Councillor Adel Khaireh	Chair of Community Safety & Environment Scrutiny Panel (Labour)
Councillor Clive Mardner	Chair of Housing & Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel (Labour)
Councillor Gary Parker	Chair of Regeneration, Transport & Culture Scrutiny Panel (Labour)
Councillor Ivis Williams	Chair of Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel (Labour)

Membership of Scrutiny Panels 2019-20

<p>Children and Young People</p> <p>Ivis Williams (Chair) Labour Linda Bird Labour Angela Cornforth Labour Gary Dillon Labour Ann-Marie Cousins Labour Mariam Lolavar Labour Anthony Okereke Labour Patricia Greenwell Conservative</p>	<p>Community Safety and Environment</p> <p>Adel Khaireh (Chair) Tonia Ashikodi Angela Cornforth Labour Ann-Marie Cousins Labour Ian Hawking Labour Rajinder James Labour Clive Mardner Labour John Hills Conservative</p>
<p>Corporate Finance and Performance</p> <p>John Fahy (Chair) Labour Norman Adams Labour Mark James Labour Mehboob Khan Labour Matthew Morrow Labour Anthony Okereke Labour Ivis Williams Labour Nigel Fletcher Conservative</p>	<p>Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care</p> <p>Mark James (Chair) Olu Babatola Labour Ann-Marie Cousins Labour John Fahy Labour Mariam Lolavar Labour Dominic Mbang Labour Linda Perks Labour Matt Hartley Conservative Roger Tester Conservative</p>
<p>Housing and Anti-Poverty</p> <p>Clive Mardner (Chair) Tonia Ashikodi Leo Fletcher Labour Bill Freeman Labour Christine May Labour Dominic Mbang Labour David Stanley Labour Spencer Drury Conservative</p>	<p>Regeneration, Transport and Culture</p> <p>Gary Parker (Chair) Norman Adams Labour Angela Cornforth Labour Leo Fletcher Labour Linda Perks Labour Aidan Smith Labour David Stanley Labour Matt Clare Conservative Charlie Davis Conservative</p>

Introduction

Background to the Overview and Scrutiny Function

Councils are required by the Local Government Act 2000 to have one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their political management arrangements.

In Royal Greenwich we have:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel
- Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel
- Corporate Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel
- Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel
- Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel
- Regeneration, Transport and Culture Scrutiny Panel

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its panels:

- Monitor service delivery and performance
- Review policies and practices
- Make recommendations to Council on matters which affect the area or the public
- Carry out pre and post scrutiny of executive decisions and post scrutiny of non-executive decisions
- Hold executive (Cabinet) Members and Chief Officers to account
- Scrutinise public services provided by external organisations.

The Annual Work Programme

Within the Council's Constitution, it is Full Council that approves the annual scrutiny work programmed based on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations.

In the drawing up of the work programme for 2019-20, the Committee and its Panels took into account how they could assist in delivering the Council's priorities; address performance improvement in priority service areas; and address the concerns of local people. Members of the public were asked to submit their ideas for the work programme via Greenwich Info and the website.

Reports from the Committee and its Panels

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Chair – Councillor Chris Lloyd

It has been a busy year for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Issues that have been looked at include the following:

Council Consultation Process – this report was an update on the standardisation of consultation processes across the Council. O&S Committee recommended that the use of a Common Place platform should be considered whilst the procurement process was being undertaken. It also sought confirmation that ward councillors were always involved in any consultation that affected their ward.

Initial Review and Health Check of the Third Sector Commissioning Process – the Committee noted the outcomes of a survey reviewing the initial feedback from third sector organisations following the completion of the first phase of the Third Sector Commissioning Framework 2019-23. Undertaking this survey had been a recommendation from O&S and the results were largely positive. Officers advised however, that some key lessons for the future had been learnt, such as making more time available for the coproduction phase so that organisations had time to directly engage with service users. The VCS team will continue to monitor developments in grant giving programmes and will bring forward another more detailed paper in 2021 to advise on the shape and format of the 2023-27 grants application process.

Headline Equality Measures 2018-19 (HEMS) – Members put some very probing questions to officers showing the importance they place upon this issue. This report will continue to be an annual standing item on the O&S agenda.

Outside Bodies – this item had originally been brought to O&S last April following concerns raised about the lack of monitoring of Members' attendance and no evaluation being done on whether membership achieved any benefit to the Council. It was agreed that officers in Corporate Governance should regularly contact all outside bodies to request attendance details and where possible, obtain minutes. These details will be passed to the Whips. A report will also be brought to O&S on an annual basis updating the Committee on attendance and every member will be asked to fill out a short pro forma annually about their membership which will also be brought to O&S.

Improving Engagement, Governance and Accountability – this report was based on the requests of two Members who had put these items forward for the work programme. One of the questions raised was about how much pre-scrutiny is done in other London boroughs and this data has now been passed to the Committee members. Another issue raised was Scrutiny reporting to Council – this has now been agreed and the Chair will take an annual report to the last Full Council meeting of the year.

Meridian Home Start (MHS) – MHS were invited in to give an update and take questions from the Committee. They gave an update of the building work they have achieved so far and a briefing on what else was in the pipeline. Members asked for some additional information to be sent to them concerning their allocations policy and their equalities monitoring. They were also asked to give a written briefing about themselves to all councillors – which has now been done.

Apprenticeships – an annual report on apprenticeships is brought to O&S. The number of apprentices is relatively low and so O&S members suggested that a recommendation be put to Cabinet that performance on hiring apprentices should be added to the Directorate KPIs so that Directors are held to account about achieving their targets. The Chief Executive welcomed this proposal and it has now been put in place.

Agency and Interim Usage Q1 2019/20 – the figures for usage are brought to O&S every six months. The number is starting to decline and the Committee was advised that there is now a dedicated resource to look at agency assignments and how the number can be brought down further.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2020-21 – the Committee was asked to pre-scrutinise the proposals before being taken to Cabinet. Members had a very worthwhile debate and put some recommendations to Cabinet for change.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 – this is a standing item on the O&S agenda and is discussed regularly. The updates explain how the income is being spent and the latest report also gave an overview of some of the policy changes that have recently been introduced and affect how the planning obligations will be collected and spent going forward.

Council's Trading Companies, GS Plus and GSS – this is another standing item on the agenda for the Committee to be updated on an annual basis.

Forward Plan – The Council’s Forward Plan is reviewed at every meeting of O&S to identify whether there are issues relating to any upcoming decisions requiring scrutiny. Each panel is also asked to monitor the plan to scrutinise relevant decisions within their service areas.

For further information about the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, please contact:

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Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

Chair – Ivis Williams

The Panel received quarterly performance monitor updates on the progress in delivering the four fundamentals (Strong foundations, Prevention, Safe and Secure, Resilience and good mental health) in the Children and young People Plan 2017-2020.

The 2019/20 work programme was structured thematically which has allowed focused discussions on specific areas within its remit thereby facilitating effective scrutiny on matters of concern. The themes are as follows:

- School Place Planning
- Health and Wellbeing
- Safeguarding
- Children in our care
- Education Outcomes
- Education

The Panel reviews and monitors services delivered under the portfolio for Children's Services and Community Safety therefore the Chair works in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Community Safety and the Director of Children's Services.

As part of its work programme 19/20 the Panel has received and conducted pre-decision scrutiny on several reports:

The Panel jointly with Members of the Healthier Communities & Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel (HCASC) considered the Greenwich Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) noting the recommended next steps and provided input as part of pre-decision scrutiny to inform the CAMHS service re-design, including a 0-25 service. The Panel and HCASC also received an update on Start Well Greenwich noting and considering the plan and timeline for the commissioning of a range of services to support children aged 0-19 (up to 25 with SEND) and their families in the Borough.

The School Place Planning and Capital Programme 2019/20 – 2021/22 report was received for pre-decision scrutiny to which the Panel noted the considerations for Cabinet, the demand for places at Royal Greenwich schools, post 16 provision, and the action being taken by the Council.

The Panel also received a pre-decision scrutiny report on Special Guardianship Order Allowances making a recommendation to Cabinet for 'Option 1' of the three available options in the report for "the change to be brought in over a 12-month period in two stages in January 2020 and July 2020 with the first 50% accounted in January and the remainder 50% in July 2020." Further requesting that a report be brought back in 2020/21 updating the Panel on the impacts the implementation of changes have had on Special Guardians.

A task group was set up to conduct a review of Fixed Term Exclusions in Greenwich following an observed spike in the 2016/17 figures. The review is ongoing with an update expected to be received at the Panel meeting on 2 April 2020.

For further information about the work of this Panel please contact:

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Community Safety and Environment Scrutiny Panel

Chair – Adel Khaireh

2019/2020 Work Programme

The Panel has met 5 times, with a final meeting, for this municipal year at the end of April. The first meeting of the Panel received a report embracing the work of the 3 Cabinet Member updates;

- Community Safety & Integrated Enforcement.
- Air Quality and Public Realm
- Culture, Leisure and Third Sector.

Subsequent meetings have sought individual Cabinet Member comments and clarification on how the matters, being scrutinised by the Panel, were addressed as part of their Cabinet Portfolio. This provided the Scrutiny Panel with a relatable real time perspective.

In order to allow meaningful scrutiny of the matters being considered, every effort was made to ensure that the Panel had no more than two substantial reports to consider at any one meeting and that the matters be related. This has produced some interesting and intensive scrutiny with meaningful recommendations.

As part of the Panel's desire to gain first-hand information on aspects being reviewed a number of the meetings of the Panel in 2019-20 invited representatives from outside bodies and partners to address them. A good example of this was the meeting of 25 July 2019, which was attended by a number of 'Friends of Parks' representatives and resulted some proposed changes to Council practices in terms of information sharing and communication between the Council and Friends of Parks Groups.

Both Members and Officers have found this approach to be informative and beneficial in identifying what is working well and where areas, particularly of interdepartmental communication, require reviewing.

The Panel has a Statutory requirement to scrutinise the Safer Greenwich Partnership (SGP) and at the 19 September 2019 meeting an initial report was presented to the Board about the key priorities of the SGP and a further in-depth report looking at the work being undertaken around burglary is to be presented to the upcoming meeting of 1 April 2020.

In Depth Scrutiny Review of RBG's CCTV provision

At the meeting of 27 June 2019, the Scrutiny Panel confirmed the initial process for the undertaking of an In-Depth Scrutiny Review into RBG's CCTV services across the Borough to ensure that they are effective and to identify best practice in supporting the Councils Corporate Plan 2018-2022, particularly in relation to creating A Safer Greenwich. A smaller working team, of three Panel Members, was established to lead on this Review.

A number of fact finding visits and meetings have been held between the Review Panel Members and Officers in a number of Departments. The final review report with recommendations will be presented shortly after the final meeting in April. However, the review has already identified weakness in communication between Departments which have been addressed, such as the CCTV control room being considered a standard consultee as part of major planning applications which has now become standard working practice.

For further information about the work of this Panel, please contact:

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Corporate Finance and Performance

Chair – John Fahy

The Corporate Finance and Performance Scrutiny Panel undertakes to scrutinise various aspects of Council performance, across a number of directorates. These relate to aspects both to how the Council functions and to provision of public services.

Almost all the things that the Panel looks at come under the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.

A long standing topic for the Panel has been procurement. As part of the Council's constitution the Panel receives quarterly reports on contract exemptions and variations. The Panel has questioned why some these were taking place, and in particular the issue of re-tendering. Last year the Panel reviewed the procurement process. It is expected that the new Procurement Strategy, by introducing pre-procurement engagement and a more corporate approach, will tackle the issues arising in the exemptions and variations.

During 2019-2020 the Panel, in addition to the monitoring of the Advice and Benefits service performance, received additional reports on the introduction of Universal Credit. A concern is the effect it will have on the vulnerable. The Panel notes the work of the Universal Support Team and the Welfare Rights Service in helping claimants, wherever possible.

At the request of a resident the Panel agreed to undertake a review of customer services. This is a multifaceted area, and it is also an area which is undergoing change. The public experience issues about not getting responses, and so having to make repeated contact. Depending on what service is contacted there may be a number of reasons for this; there is no complete or singular corporate interface for customers. One change which will have a major impact for customers is the move to digital channels, as some service provision will be able to be dealt with online. Greater use of social media by the customers, is something that the Council needs to be cognisant of.

Among other matters the Panel the Panel looked at was the use of bailiffs, a topic which has been also raised in Council via Members' Questions. The Panel also looked at the Council's policy on 'sale of buildings and land / assets of community value / concessionary / peppercorn rents'.

Future Considerations

The Panel recognises that the Procurement Strategy will take some time to implement. It is suggested that the financial aspect of the Strategy could be monitored by the Panel, in a similar manner to the monitoring of Contract Standing Orders Exemptions and Variations. However, as well as the financial aspect the Strategy also has a Social Value element, and therefore consideration should be given as to how this might be monitored and whether by this Panel or another.

The Panel will continue to look at the performance of Advice and Benefits. Considering the emerging effects on some vulnerable people of Universal Credit it is suggested that aspect might be something that the Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel could consider.

Whilst the Panel's review of Customer Services has not been completed, it is clear that changes are ongoing with regard to ICT. The Panel should perhaps now consider Customer Services as an area of performance to be regularly scrutinised. As Customer Services is an area which obviously directly effects residents, perhaps consideration should be given to establish public user groups in conjunction with this, or at least an attempt should be made to get greater attendance by residents when this matter is looked at by the Panel.

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Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel

Chair – Mark James

The HCASC SP, as in previous years, had an ambitious work programme that included scrutiny of Health Partners. The meetings were held in a themed manner, which meant that officers and partners were not taken away from essential service delivery as they did not have to attend many or every meeting.

Panel heard from the Chief Executive of the Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Foundation Trust has attended meeting to provide the Panel with an update on priorities and how they have managed through times of greater demand, whilst delivering a quality service.

The Managing Director of the Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group was questioned about the regional CCG Mergers and the development of Greenwich's Primary Care Networks to ensure that Greenwich residents were not disadvantaged in any way.

This year, at the behest of Cabinet, the HCASC SP undertook pre-decision scrutiny of the proposals for Adult Special Care Charges. 2 additional, dedicated meetings were held in early January 2020, which provided an opportunity for Panel to hear from service users before drawing conclusions and recommendations for Cabinet to consider when making their decision. Panel found this to be a fruitful exercise, recording what residents had to say in a focused way which meant that they were able to influence the final decision.

During the course of the year, Health and Adult Services saw a change of Director. Panel are working closely with the new Director to understand department priorities, challenges and upcoming policy changes so that the work programme for 2020/21 can incorporate some of this, were possible.

For further information about this Panel, please contact:

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Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel

Chair – Clive Mardner

During the current municipal year, the Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel has considered the following:

Housing

1. Housing Contracts Procurement – Delivery and Value for Money

The Panel received a report outlining the approach to procurement taken by the Repairs and Investment Service (RIS) within the Housing and Safer Communities directorate

2. Homelessness Decision Making

The Panel received a report which set out information about the decisions made by officers to provide support for those people who the Council has a duty to help with regard to Homelessness. The report also included equalities data on those the service supports, and information on collaborative working between the Housing Inclusion Service (HIS) and Community Safety.

3. RBG's Council Housing Delivery Programme – Greenwich Builds

The Panel received a report on progress to date and next steps in relation to the Greenwich Builds programme.

4. Registered Providers

The Panel received a report detailing the topics affecting housing provision specific to Registered Providers, the work they carry out jointly with RBG, and their relationship with elected members.

Deep-Dive Review on Housing Repairs

This was conducted in recognition of a review on tenants' engagement that took place in April 2017. The review, and recommendations therein, will be concluded at the 12th March 2020 meeting of the Housing and Anti-Poverty Scrutiny Panel.

Anti-Poverty

1. Greenwich Migrant Hub
The Panel considered a report from Greenwich Migrant Hub about the support they provide to vulnerable families.

2. RBG's Social Mobility Strategy and Priorities
The Panel heard from the Director of Communities and Environment about the work of the Social Mobility Board and provided updates in relation to the 25 recommendations set out in the Social Mobility Delivery Plan.

The Panel will hold its last meeting in the municipal year on 14th April 2020 and will agree topics for consideration in 2020/21.

For further information about this Panel, please contact:

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Regeneration, Transport and Culture Scrutiny Panel

Chair – Gary Parker

The work programme for this Panel is varied due to the number of service areas within its remit which requires the inclusion of 4 cabinet portfolio updates, these are:

- Regeneration & Growth
- Culture, Leisure and the Third Sector
- Air Quality Sustainability & Transport
- Economy, Skills and Apprenticeships.

There are also 2 pre-decision scrutiny items, the “Economic Development Strategy” and “Borough Halls - Proposed disposal for Theatre usage”. The consideration of these items is dependent on when the decisions are ready to be taken to Cabinet, officers have been advised to include the pre-decision scrutiny as part of the decision timeline.

A time-limited review on community led regeneration was concluded in September 2019 with the final report presented by the project group, which included community group representatives. Subsequently an executive summary was produced and provided to all the community groups that had made representation. Once the recommendations and conclusions of the review were noted they were forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who formally requested a response from the Chief Executive in October 2019.

For further information about this Panel, please contact:

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The Scrutiny Function

In May 2019 the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government issued its long awaited Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities.

The Guidance recognised that each authority was best placed to know which scrutiny arrangements were most appropriate for their own individual circumstances but strongly urged all councils to cast a critical eye over their existing arrangements and above all ensure they embedded a culture that would allow overview and scrutiny to flourish.

It cites the most important things for effective overview and scrutiny as being that it should: -

- Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge;
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role;
and
- Drive improvement in public services.

Some alterations that Royal Borough of Greenwich has made in response to the guidance are:

- Regular meetings are now held between the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny and the Leader of the Council.
- To raise awareness of Scrutiny amongst all Members the Chair arranged for a trainer to come to Greenwich from the Centre for Public Scrutiny to give several sessions of bespoke training to all Members.
- The Chair will now be taking an annual scrutiny report to the last Full Council meeting of each municipal year.
- The Council continues to be a member of the London Scrutiny Network and the Centre for Public Scrutiny. Various training and development opportunities have been undertaken with them both by Members and Scrutiny Officers.

Decisions Called In 2019-20

Under the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to call in decisions made by the Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members and key decisions made by officers.

In 2019-20 no decisions were taken to the Scrutiny Call-in Sub-Committee although one decision was returned to the relevant Cabinet Member. Following her response, no further action was taken.

Councillor Call for Action 2019-20

One request was put in for a Councillor Call for Action but this was rejected by the Chief Executive on the grounds that the Start Well Greenwich decision had not been called in immediately after the Cabinet meeting where it was decided and further conversations could have been had with the Chief Officer or Cabinet Member responsible.

Meetings currently scheduled to be held remotely**1 Council**

Council	TBC 2020
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2 Cabinet

Cabinet	15 July 2020
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3 Planning

Planning Board	14 July 2020 28 July 2020
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Eltham and Kidbrooke Area	15 July 2020
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Greenwich Area	21 July 2020
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Woolwich and Thamesmead Area	23 July 2020
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4 Licensing

Licensing Sub-Committees	TBC 2020
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5 Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny	7 July 2020
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