

COUNCIL

24 FEBRUARY 2022

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

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

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

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

Reply -

I thank Leanne Gellel for her question.

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

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

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

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

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

Reply -

I thank Matt Browne for his question.

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

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

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

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

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

Reply –

I thank Simon Pirani for his question.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Combined Reply -

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reply –

I thank Victoria Rance for her question.

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

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

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

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

Reply -

I thank Kate Middleton for her question.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reply -

I thank Fiona Moore for her question.

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

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

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

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

Reply –

I thank Stewart Christie for his question.

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

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

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

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

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