

COUNCIL

24 July 2024

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

I Question from Fiona Moore, SE3, to Councillor Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability & Transport

The situation with Silvertown Tunnel (as I expect you agree) is deeply unsatisfactory. It's taking us in the opposite direction from the vision of Londoners breathing clean air, cargo bikes proliferating, and public transport and active travel prioritised. Eight lanes of traffic will be crossing the river at Greenwich, with no provision for cargo bikes or other small e-delivery vehicles and only the absurd cycle-bus for cyclists. HGV-heavy traffic will flow into already heavily polluted Newham, most affecting the more deprived populations. In the afternoon rush hour, four lanes of southbound traffic will try to cram themselves into two on our side of the Thames. At night, according to the tolling proposals, there will be no toll - worsening roadside noise levels and pollution for Greenwich residents near the A102. Proposed daytime HGV tolls would be lower than for the Dartford crossing.

I understand that the council favours repurposing some tunnel bores. Please could you explain your position on (a) repurposing, especially for cycling and cargo bikes, and (b) tolling; and (c) say how you will make your views known before the tolling consultation ends on September 3rd?

Reply -

I thank Fiona Moore for their question.

On 16 March 2022 a motion was submitted to Full Council, calling on the Mayor and TfL to pause work on the Silvertown Tunnel project immediately. The motion was agreed. The Council would support any move to re-purpose the tunnel to accommodate active travel. However, as part of the Development Consent Order, TfL does not have any obligation to do so.

Transport for London (TfL) has just begun a [consultation](#) on its proposals for user charge levels, discounts and exemptions, for the Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels.

We are working closely with TfL to understand their proposals and the evidence behind them. We are doing this through the consultation, the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group (which is required to be consulted on the proposals, by the Development Consent Order for the Tunnel) and separate discussions with their technical experts.

We will respond to their proposals once we have fully assessed them.

You can [have your say](#) until Tuesday, 3 September 2024 and we encourage everyone to do so. This is vital so that we (and TfL) can understand your views.

Clarification - Will you make your views/response to the Consultation known to the public?

Response from Councillor Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability and Transport.

The consultation is a public document anyway, but yes I am happy to make my response public.

Supplementary Question

Can you allay any fears at this stage that residents have regarding the potential of no tolling at night, potentially leading to high volumes of traffic.

Response from Councillor Averil Lekau, Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Sustainability and Transport.

I would not want to pre-empt the considered response, but I will take all concerns into account. There are some areas I can respond to and other I can't.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

2 **Question from George Edgar, SE3, to Councillor Aidan Smith, Cabinet Member for Planning, Estate Renewal and Development**

In September 2023 it was reported that Greenwich Council held £57 million of unspent Section 106 contributions. Can the Council confirm how much S106 and/or CIL funding remains uncollected, how much is collected but unspent, and what are the Council's plans to ensure full use is made of this important resource?

Reply -

I thank George Edgar for their question.

The Freedom of Information request that gathered this information and subsequently reported the amount of unspent Section 106 excluded an enquiry on how much of the available funding was already committed for upcoming projects. Over half of the Section 106 that is held by the Council has been formally committed or has been earmarked for projects that are being developed. As an example £10.8m of the affordable housing money that was detailed in the report is committed for Greenwich Builds Phase 2, a Council home building programme that will bring forward 1,000 new homes either through direct delivery or acquisitions by 2026. Similarly, the education S106 money is fully committed to delivering new school places by 2025, or to providing additional SEN places across a number of Greenwich school sites.

With regard to developer contributions that are yet to be collected, these payments are due to the Council based on agreed payment triggers, either set out in the Section 106 agreement (e.g. on completion or on occupation of certain number of units) or is based on the instalments policy and payment terms that is set out in the CIL Demand Notices. Currently there is the potential for Greenwich to receive up to £193m in S106, the timing of when this money will become due will depend on scheme delivery and the payment triggers set out in the Section 106 agreement. There is currently £3.7m due in CIL from Demand Notices that have been issued to sites that have commenced, with the payments due in accordance with the agreed instalment plan for each site.

In terms of the developer contributions that have been collected, but are unspent, this currently stands at £53.4m for S106 and £10.4m for CIL. However as stated previously much of this is either already committed or the Council are reviewing how best to prioritise these funds aligned with the Medium Term Financial Strategy, diverse capital programme and needs outlined in the published Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The contributions collected by the Royal Borough do not necessarily cover the full cost of the investment needed, and the Council therefore must take care when deciding how to allocate this scarce funding so as to maximise the benefit and mitigate the impact of development.

Supplementary Question

The response said that over half the section 106 funds held by the Council have been committed or earmarked. Does this mean that there is around 25 million pounds of Section 106 funds which is unspent and unallocated? What are the plans for allocating for using those?

Also can I clarify, Councillor Smith also referred to a thousand new, affordable homes to be “brought forward by 2026”. Can you clarify which affordability criteria that refers to and what exactly brought forward means in this context?

Response from Councillor Anthony Okereke, Leader of the Council.

At the last Annual meeting we split the responsibility for Section 106 and CIL funding between the Cabinet Members for both Finance and Planning so we could start to be more strategic about how we use the fund. The money comes in, in stages as a result of development and completion dates, so sometimes the amount allocated is not the same amount allocated in the bank now. We have set up an opportunity for the Cabinet Member for Finance to be looking into it further against how we use it during our Budget process and to make sure we use appropriately and in line with what is described agreement to ensure it honours that.

This is also reported in the CIL and Section 106 annual reports.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

3 Question from Karin Tearle, SE10, to Councillor Rachel Taggert-Ryan, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

Sivyer Transport based on Morden Wharf Road SE10 0NU breaks down aggregates on a part of the site that is located directly over the Thames Path. When the machinery is in operation, dust and particulate matter enter eyes and throat. Please can you provide the date of consent for a site that appears to be breaching environment regulations

And in considering this consent, did you refer to EA guidance, which identifies that due to its location and proximity to residential homes as well as users of the Thames Path, it should be fully enclosed?

In addition, how often does the Council carry out inspections of the site?

Reply -

I thank Karin Tearle for their question.

The use of the site for general industrial purposes was established under a Certificate of Lawfulness (Proposed) application, which was submitted in 2012. The operations that currently take place on the site fall within Use Class B2 and do not require planning permission. The Environment Agency have granted a permit for the site so that it can be used as a Non-Hazardous Waste Recycling and Aggregates Import Facilities (Ref. EPR/LP3395/VN) they are also responsible for inspecting the site to ensure compliance with any operating conditions within the permit and additionally any complaints relating to the operation of the site should also be directed to the Environment Agency to investigate.

The Council can inspect for statutory nuisance if a resident reports being affected from within their home by calling 020 8921 8921. The Council may then seek to visit the affected resident within their home to assess the nuisance and subject to officer findings, will consider if any further action is required.

If the reports relate to dust in the air whilst walking past the site then this should be referred to the EA directly by the person affected.

Supplementary Question.

My specific questions were not addressed, namely did you refer to EA guidance which identifies that the site should be enclosed and do you carry out inspections of the site?

Response from Councillor Rachel Taggart-Ryan, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement

The riverside is a major asset to the Borough and we work closely with the EA to address any problems. The Licensing of the site comes under the EA so it would be for them to carry out inspections and address any violations of the license. We will continue to share any concerns from residents with the EA.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4 Question from Karin Tearle, SE10, to Councillor Pat Slattery, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Neighbourhoods & Homelessness

I thank the Cabinet Member for Housing for providing a copy of the March 2023 Report on the investigation into the Orchard Estate tower blocks which highlighted the need for serious investment in block infrastructure. I have since asked for a copy of a later report carried out in 2024 to which the Cabinet member referred in her March Council 2024 reply to me but it has not been supplied.

Can she now supply me with that Report?

Reply –

I thank Karin Tearle for their question.

The Orchard Estate high rise blocks have been identified as a priority for refurbishment. This is part of the extensive capital investment currently being delivered to improve the homes of Royal Greenwich residents.

Royal Greenwich are currently working alongside industry specialists to form an encompassing schedule of works that considers the current condition. On completion of this exercise further information that explains the scope and rationale will be provided to residents as part of the overarching engagement plan for the area.

Supplementary Question

Does the report I refer to exist and if so can I have a copy?

Response from Councillor Anthony Okereke, Leader of the Council.

We are looking to see what we can do with the estate. We wouldn't usually make reports available to non-residents of the estate. The Council's focus is on how to support residents at the estates and make sure that the changes that are needed there, are delivered.

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PUBLIC QUESTIONS

5 Question from Stacy Smith, SE10, to Councillor Pat Slattery, Cabinet Member for Housing Management, Neighbourhoods & Homelessness

When I visited residents on the Orchard Estate I could see a number of major works in progress but not completed, such as wires above the doors yet to be connected to anything. These have been like this for some months. Can the council share what the timetable is for completing these works and when you will be updating tenants on this?

Reply -

I thank Stacy Smith, for their question.

Royal Greenwich have successfully delivered a significant amount of work to enhance the building components, safety and living environment for residents of the at the Orchard Estate blocks. This includes electrical works to individual dwellings and communal areas, fire detection and upgraded door entry systems.

The remainder of these works, as identified in the question, are part of a project to upgrade the electrical lateral mains and are due to be completed in September 2024.

Royal Greenwich remain committed to the continuing refurbishment of the Orchard Estate high rise blocks and are currently undergoing a process of surveying and scope development to inform a forthcoming programme of work.

Engagement with residents and leaseholders will be planned and undertaken to ensure that information is communicated in a meaningful way, and that feedback and comments are appropriately considered throughout the process.

Supplementary Question

Who do residents contact if the electrical work is not completed in September and how do these works fit into the long discussed forthcoming programme on work on the high rise blocks?

Response from Councillor Anthony Okereke, Leader of the Council.

It is worth noting that we have a £430million capital programme which is the largest this Council has ever delivered, so it is worth celebrating that. We are in constant communication with residents whenever we do any work. We go and engage with residents and Councillors are on hand to be able to contact us with any issues.