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DATE: 12 October 2020

## COUNCIL

**Monday 12 October 2020**

### **4 QUESTIONS** (Pages 3 - 14)

The following replies to questions are now attached.

- (a) Questions from members of the public for written reply.
- (c) Questions from members of the Council for written reply.

***Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from***  
***<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>***

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### COUNCIL MEETING

12<sup>th</sup> October 2020

#### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR WRITTEN REPLY

**1. From David Marshall to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

How many applications has Bromley Council made for funding from the Department of Transport for sustainable travel? Please list these applications and share what response has been received to each of those applications, stating which have been granted funds and what was the reason for refusal for those not granted.

**Reply:**

The majority of the funding received for sustainable travel projects over recent years has been received from Transport for London. However, some funding was made available this summer directly from DfT - the maximum amount was relatively small at £100k and this was successfully bid for. The schemes this funding is being utilised for are a pedestrian refuge in Beckenham, an improvement to a pedestrian crossing and segregated cycle route in Crystal Palace.

**2. From David Marshall to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

Monitoring of air quality in Bromley, particularly PM2.5 has been unreliable. At times when our neighbours in Croydon and Lewisham reported high levels in mid-August, Bromley's reporting is absent. What action is being taken to correct this issue?

**Reply:**

There have been teething problems with the PM2.5 monitor installed this year, and both Kings College and the engineers who service the site have addressed outstanding issues.

**3. From Chris Phillips, Chairman, Friends of Croydon Road Recreation Ground, to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

With reference to the Croydon Road bandstand, and the reply to full Council on 20th July, how is work progressing to secure a Conservation Architect for the works?

**Reply:**

Whilst progress on the project has been regrettably slower than anticipated, due to a number of competing projects and associated delays, it is expected that, following agreement of the procurement route, that tendering will take place later this year, when market conditions will hopefully enable contractors to properly assess the project.

**4. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement**

I witnessed a menacing and threatening catalytic convertor theft recently. Such thefts have risen significantly in the last couple of years. How many licensed scrap dealers are there in the borough and how many have been inspected by Bromley Council in the last 24 months?

**Reply:**

Bromley has 7 Scrap Metal Dealers sites within the borough and all have been inspected in the last 12 months.

**5. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing**

What provisions will the Council be making to ensure existing users of the Beckenham Public Halls retain access on favourable terms when the building lease is disposed of? In particular safeguarding access to groups that regularly hire the halls in terms of affordability and accessible timetabling?

**Reply:**

The marketing of the site for a suitable operator will include provision of community use, which by the nature means on favourable terms that are accessible for the local community.

**6. From Stuart Benefield to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

What is the strategy to deal with the massive increase in traffic in Bromley, and how will this work alongside adjacent boroughs? Subjectively, I have noticed a huge increase in Bromley but there is also an objective increase throughout outer London - (<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/sep/15/road-congestion-levels-in-outer-london-higher-than-before-lockdown>)

**Reply:**

Due to reduced capacity on buses at present, for social distancing reasons, there are unfortunately likely to be an increased number of cars using our streets, depending on the level of homeworking. However, according to some measures, it is pleasing to see that traffic levels have fallen through September to a level more similar to that seen at the same time in previous years.

Although Bromley lost its LIP (Local Implementation Plan) funding budget for 2020/21, as did all other London boroughs, Bromley has managed to secure some funding for temporary measures to help people travel by foot and by bicycle, plus creating additional space around some busy bus stops. Bromley will continue to work with all key stakeholders in order to maximise the effectiveness of schemes. Bromley also continues to lobby for further funding to help deliver the ambitious targets set out in Bromley's LIP.

**7. From Stuart Benefield to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

How are the new schemes for cyclists/pedestrians, introduced following external funding, being monitored? How will their success be fed back to the original scheme funders such as TfL?

**Reply:**

Monitoring will be done in these ways –

- Usage of the route; this will be through observation or traffic count where necessary to see how the routes are being used. This is not necessarily in comparison to existing counts because some of the routes are newly introduced routes. There is existing usage data for some routes, such as for cyclists using Bromley Road.
- Safety; this will be monitored using the before and after collision records at the location. Again, this will be specific to cyclists and pedestrian collisions.
- Accessibility; although this cannot be measured, it will be monitored by observation on site to see if it is easier for cyclists and pedestrians to use the route.
- Social Distancing schemes in High Streets and other high footfall locations will be monitored by observation and by resident/visitor comments.

Routine meetings with TfL are undertaken, where scheme progress is monitored.

**8. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

Please tell us what progress has been made on the successful bids to TfL for funding for the “variety of measures around schools across the borough” (as you reported in July), and the “temporary cycle routes in and around Shortlands”.

**Reply:**

Five of six temporary school streets are now operational and a number of footway widening schemes around schools have also been installed. The sixth school street will be operational in a couple of weeks’ time. Temporary zebra crossings are also being installed at three locations over the next few weeks, subject to safety assessments being completed. The Department has also introduced social distancing signage around 114 schools across the Borough. A number of schools are also having part time 20mph signage installed during October and November.

In Shortlands, the new cycle routes are subject to ongoing consultation regarding some details of the design, with works on site having now started. The routes should be fully operational before Christmas.

**9. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

In January 2019 I asked a question at the Council Meeting about the dangerously narrow pavements that lead to Unicorn School and Langley Schools, plus highlighted the campaign for a weatherproof path across Harvington playing fields. Please would he tell us what contact has been made and what plans he has for easing the dangerous congestion on these routes, which makes social distancing impossible and road safety perilous.

**Reply:**

The Council's School Travel Planners have regular contact with Borough schools, including Langley Schools and Unicorn Primary. The issue of the footway width in South Eden Park Road and of a weatherproof path across the Harvington playing fields has not featured in the schools' Travel Plans.

**10. From Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

Congestion close to the schools on Tylney Road and Nightingale Lane and the risk to pedestrian safety now seems worse than pre-lockdown. What has happened to the promised pedestrian crossing and what other measures are planned to enable social distancing?

**Reply:**

A report came to Environment PDS Committee in March this year recommending a Zebra crossing for Homesdale Road, to assist pedestrians including children travelling to the several nearby schools. This was approved to be installed in 2020/21, funded from TfL's grant funding for walking schemes. Unfortunately, due to TfL requiring a bailout, all TfL funding for 2020/21 schemes and grants were cancelled in year and the project was unable to proceed.

Bromley put bids to TfL in June to introduce this zebra crossing as a temporary, emergency measure. This bid was not initially supported by TfL. However, TfL have in the last month agreed to fund a zebra crossing for this location and orders are being placed for the works to proceed as soon as possible.

**11. From Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

How many school streets are currently in place in the borough and how many more are planned? What is the timescale for those schemes?

**Reply:**

Five of six temporary school streets are now operational and a number of footway widening schemes around schools have also been installed. The sixth school street will be operational in a couple of weeks' time.

**12. From Suraj Gandecha to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

The introduction of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood in Crystal Palace by Croydon Council has caused chaos to local residents, a classic case of a good idea carried out badly without enough consultation. What steps have Bromley Council made to work with Croydon Council to improve the scheme and to inform local residents of those steps?

**Reply:**

Bromley has received much correspondence from local residents negatively impacted by the scheme that Croydon has introduced across the borough boundary, which has indeed created traffic chaos both on the main roads and in residential streets in this area. Bromley has asked Croydon to remove the road closures that have led to this situation, but Croydon have not agreed to do so. Issues across Borough Boundaries need to be referred to TfL and the Mayor for resolution. The matter has been taken up with TfL and the GLA, but as yet they have not asked Croydon to remove the offending closures.

Bromley has responded to residents to keep them informed of our efforts to have this damaging Low Traffic Neighbourhood reversed. Bromley has also sought to keep the press informed.

**13. From Suraj Gandecha to the Leader of the Council**

In August 2020 emails from different Bromley residents were sent to 58 Bromley Councillors. The email addresses of 3 councillors were invalid. Less than half of the councillors have replied to those emails (up to 28 Sept). Does the Leader of the Council feel this is an acceptable rate of response, and if not what is considered to be an acceptable rate?

**Reply:**

I would need to know what emails you are referring to prior to offering an opinion.

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**COUNCIL MEETING****12<sup>th</sup> October 2020****QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL FOR WRITTEN REPLY****1. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing**

Can the Portfolio Holder say how many additional units of accommodation have been introduced which are adapted for residents with serious mobility issues in the past two years?

**Reply:**

Since 2016 all new permitted units are required to meet M4(2) standard to accessible and adaptable dwellings and 10% must meet the M4(3) standard for wheelchair accessible units.

Adaptations were historically listed in a non-reportable format on the IT system. We have recently transitioned to a new IT system which will enable adaptation to be recorded in a reportable field going forward.

**2. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing:**

Following the work of Rob Vale's team recently, does Bromley Council now have a register of private landlords? If so, when will you be able to share the outcome of the work done and the cost of that work?

**Reply:**

The outcome and finances of this project was reported back to the Public Protection and Enforcement Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 Report ES19039.

There was no scope within the project to develop a database of all private landlords.

**3. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health**

Please provide details of any additional payments made to any of our contractors in respect of additional costs they have incurred in respect of COVID.

**Reply:**

For the duration of the first wave of COVID the Council put in place the following support arrangements for adult social care and support providers

- Payment on receipt of invoice. Invoice reconciliation or correction can take place over a longer period.
- Alternative payment mechanisms or frequency (such as moving to monthly payments where this is not already in place; or interim payments or advance payments).

- Block payments to providers, based on the past three months of invoicing (or other suitable mechanism), where otherwise payment would have been based on actual volumes (occupancy, hours, etc.) and invoice payments would normally have been reconciled to evidenced delivery.
- Where a provider is at risk, due to the short term liabilities arising from the COVID -19 period, continued payment (either based on current payment mechanisms or moving to block payments as appropriate) where there has been a reduction or cessation in service related to the Public Health situation (for example, learning disability day centres and transport providers).
- Additional payments (for example, lump sum or increased rates) to take into account evidenced additional costs related to the Public Health situation. For example, additional infection control costs or use of higher cost agency staff.
- Suspension, as appropriate, of performance related or KPI mechanisms or penalties within a contract, as well as flexibility in varying current specification requirements where required.
- 5% uplift made on top of the 2020/21 annual uplift agreed with providers for April, May and June fees for residents placed by the Council totalling c.£0.8m. Providers should also have received an uplift payment for any other residents placed by other councils who are living in care homes in Bromley.
- Free emergency PPE totalling c.£350k
- Distribution of the government's Infection Control Grant allocation for Bromley of c.£2.2m to all care homes in the borough and to contracted supported housing and extra care housing providers, with a further £2.4m to be distributed in the coming months.
- Providing a 6 month rent waiver to day centres totalling £36k

#### **4. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management**

Please provide a breakdown of the average cost of conducting a physical PDS Committee meeting and that of conducting the same meeting online.

#### **Reply:**

I am pleased to say that we have a full programme of PDS meetings again.

There will be different costs associated with different meetings. Virtual meetings are more resource intensive in terms of staff. It requires two Democratic Services officers to support and manage the meeting including managing the live stream and we usually have two or three members of the IT team supporting , one supporting the actual meeting and the others providing real time helpline support if members or officers have difficulties joining the meeting.

Both Democratic Services and IT are small teams and still have to undertake their usual roles during the working day. Virtual meetings have doubled the workload on evening meetings for

the Democratic Services Team and substantiality extended the working day for IT at a time when they also have to support a home based workforce and are delivering on the IT transformation programme. Therefore we are not just looking at financial cost we are looking mainly at the welfare impact on staff.

## **5. From Cllr Simon Jeal to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health**

With recent research suggesting that nationally, as few as 18% of people developing COVID19 symptoms are self-isolating, what actions are the Council's public health team taking to ensure that all Bromley residents understand and are following government guidelines?

### **Reply:**

Public Health team together with other Council departments have been engaged in numerous prevention and communication activities related to the management of Covid -19 pandemic. Below is the summary of these activities including those with general public.

#### **Businesses**

- Contact maintained with businesses by phone, email and letter to provide support and advice on safe return to business operations.
- Joint visits with police by licensing officers to target non-compliance of social distancing in licensed premises.
- Markings and reminders about social distancing in the high street.
- Posters for pubs and restaurants to display distributed directly and through the BIDS :
  - Basic prevention messages, including NHS Test and Trace
  - 'We are collecting your contact details.'
- Advice given and posters handed out to market traders –
  - Basic prevention messages, including NHS Test and Trace
  - Please don't handle the goods – just ask for help.
- Leaflet sent and handed out face-to-face
- Further work to interpret new government guidelines and update of leaflet.

#### **Schools**

- Continual messaging to Head Teachers through Education Matters as guidance changes.
- Letter to independent schools re infection control.
- Public Health Q&A sessions prior to start of the autumn term for Primary School and Secondary School Heads.
- Web Material signposting guidance for parents and carers.
- Covid-19 mailbox - individual questions answered by Public Health.
- School nurses offer individual help and guidance.
- Ongoing support and guidance by Education and Public Health as required.

#### **Care Homes**

- Ongoing Public Health advice on prevention in care homes/LD settings.
- Testing Programme in care homes – guidance in partnership with CCG.
- Ongoing PPE support and training for 'donning and doffing.'
- Questions to Covid-19 mailbox answered by Public Health.
- Visiting guide sent to homes, with information for residents online.

## **Travellers**

- Public Health Nurses using their relationships to deliver prevention messages, including NHS Test and Trace.
- Prevention advice shared through Star Lane site manager/Newsletter.
- Identifying trusted community leaders across all sites to help as advocates for prevention and NHS Test and Trace.
- Contact through GPs
- Bid for mobile testing unit if required.

## **Faith Groups and community leaders**

- Analysis undertaken to investigate, compile/update stakeholders.
- Work undertaken through Community Links to share basic prevention resources and advice, including NHS Test and Trace.
- Meeting set up for Charles Obazuaye and Ade Adetosoye to listen and build trust in the communities and share messages.
- Web material around test and trace – link to languages.

## **Homeless/HMOs**

- Work underway with Housing to identify the best methods of communication to homeless/identify stakeholders.
- Contact made with Foodbank, Bromley Shelter, Latch, Living Well and Hostels.
- Public Health nurses offer advice to landlords.

## **Young People**

- Exploring link with the Youth Service and Bromley Youth Council
- Analysing Mosaic data to find out how best to reach a younger audience.
- Schools competition to engage younger audiences.

## **General Public**

Stay Safe campaign is providing basic prevention advice supported by infographics using usual channels such as:

- website
- high street advertising sites
- businesses/BIDS
- local community groups
- partner channels
- news releases
- newsletters and
- social media.
- Stepped up social media re prevention and secondary messages including wearing of face coverings, contact tracing in pubs and restaurants – ‘If they don’t know, don’t go’ and how to spot a scam.
- Updated graphics – it has not gone away. Reinforced prevention: Hands, Face, Space.
- Download and use NHS App.

**6. From Cllr Kieran Terry to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services**

What actions have been taken to allow our local High Streets to provide a Covid-safe environment for customers so they feel safe to return to them? Please also provide a summary of actions taken to support social distancing outside shops.

**Reply:**

Thousands of social distancing signs and floor-stickers were installed in 33 shopping parades and town centres across the Borough by July. In normally busy shopping areas the signs were supplemented with barriers to allow additional footway space, both for pedestrian movement and to help accommodate suitable shops being able to utilise space outside their premises to trade, without obstructing pedestrians. This was achieved in the main town centres with support and guidance from the BIDS.

The barriers are reviewed each week and some have been relocated or removed. As the pandemic is unfortunately continuing, the Council and the BIDS are intending to install some more aesthetically pleasing planters in some locations to replace the slightly unattractive barriers initially used.

Since September, the Council has also deployed a small team of Covid-advisors, wearing high-visibility jackets, to add new "avoid-lockdown" stickers in shopping areas and to also speak with shoppers to offer advice and reassurance in respect to the Council's response to Covid-19.

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