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COUNCIL

Monday 6 December 2021

4 QUESTIONS AND REPLIES (Pages 3 - 42)

Questions and replies are attached as follows -

- (a) Questions from members of the public for oral reply.
- (b) Questions from members of the public for written reply.
- (c) Questions from members of the Council for oral reply.
- (d) Questions from members of the Council for written reply.
(Appendices D1 and D3 are to follow)

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

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Council - 6th December 2021

Questions from Members of the Public for Oral Reply

1. From Tony McPartlan to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Fly-tipping and poor street cleanliness is a continued problem in many areas but particularly around Southover in Plaistow and Sundridge ward. These are reported on FixMyStreet, but what preventative measures are the Council taking? Signage and posters simply aren't enough.

Reply:

All reports received will be directed straight through to our service provider and actioned in a timely manner according to contractual SLAs. Street cleansing outputs are monitored through our client officer team who undertake randomised inspections to ensure satisfactory standards are being achieved across the borough. The local officer for P&S will review and address any issues with the service provider to rectify any underperformance issues. Signage is deployed throughout the Borough as an initial educational tool raising awareness of the illegal depositing of waste. Fly-tips will be investigated to recover any identifying evidence that can lead to successful enforcement action being taken against the perpetrator. Further tools utilised to combat this Anti-Social Behaviour include installation of barriers to prevent deposit & the deployment of CCTV at known hotspots.

Supplementary Question:

In September the PDS Committee was informed about a 25% increase in fly-tipping. Is it time for a report on the various enforcement options?

Reply:

This is an issue of on-going concern, and some have attributed it to the closure of the Waste and Recycling Centres during lockdown. I am discussing this with the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement.

2. From Tony McPartlan to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

In Rangefield Road, the 20mph zone literally only covers the width of Burnt Ash School and doesn't cover any of the surrounding area. Is there any scope to expand the coverage of this and other 20mph zones around schools to keep children safe as they travel to and from school?

Reply:

The approach taken by the Borough is to focus such 20mph limits on the roads in the immediate vicinity of schools, so that drivers can easily see the purpose of the speed limit. It appears that drivers are more likely to adhere to speed limits, warning signs, speed-activated signs etc. when they are directly associated with the hazard, in this case the school and children travelling to it.

Supplementary Question:

These zones are designed only for the areas just outside schools – is it not more important to cover areas where children actually cross the road?

Reply:

Each school has a Travel Plan and we work with the schools – Travel Plans are driven by the schools, and we work with them to see what their local issues are.

3. From Alisa Igoe to the Leader of the Council

In addition to the “2 or 3 British families” mentioned at the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee on 13 October, could the Leader of the Council kindly tell me how many refugee families from Afghanistan Bromley Council have accepted and resettled through the two Afghan Resettlement Schemes between 18 October and today’s question deadline of 22 November, since his reply to a public question at full Council on 18 October.

Reply:

There has been no change to either Bromley’s position, or that of that of any other London Borough which I have been made aware of since 18th October. All concerned continue to await the Government’s ‘next steps’ and direction with very close interest

Supplementary Question:

It is disappointing that no councils have taken people from Afghanistan. Our borough is very wealthy, as the Treasury Management report shows. Despite the Government giving no indication of what will happen, should the Council not take it upon itself to invite Afghan families to join us here?

Reply:

There are schemes available for residents to host immigrants.

(The questions from Richard Seabrook and Jamie Devine were added to the list of questions for written reply.)

Council - 6th December 2021

Questions from Members of the Public for Written Reply

1. From Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

When will the Council implement the licensing of all houses in multiple occupation as recommended in the Council's housing strategy? What are the implications of rent repayment orders for unlicensed houses in multiple occupation?

Reply:

The Housing Act 2004 currently requires local housing authorities to license houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) if they accommodate more than five tenants in two or more households; this is called mandatory licensing, and is already in place. With regards to HMOs, in addition to the mandatory scheme, the Council has a discretionary power to introduce additional licensing for HMOs that fall outside the scope of the mandatory licensing scheme. The scope of an additional scheme varies between Councils, some schemes cover the whole borough whereas others cover smaller geographical areas. However, the Council may only make a discretionary designation for additional licensing if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector (e.g. more than 19%). As this is not the case in Bromley, additional licensing could not be applied borough wide.

In addition to the above, before any discretionary scheme can be introduced, the Council must be able to evidence that a significant proportion of the proposed HMOs are being poorly managed and are giving rise (or likely to give rise), to problems affecting the occupiers or members of the public. In addition, a Council must evidence that:

- any decision to implement an additional licensing scheme is consistent with the council's housing strategy,
- part of a coordinated approach for dealing with homelessness, empty homes and anti-social behaviour,
- there are no other courses of action available that might provide an effective remedy, and
- that the introduction of additional licensing will significantly assist in dealing with identified problems.

As such, a Council must have significant evidence at hand before it can introduce such a scheme, or it can face legal challenge. Additionally, should the council wish to introduce such a scheme, it must consult with everyone affected by the designation for a minimum of 10 weeks.

A Rent Repayment Order forces a landlord to refund up to 12 months' rent.
Rent Repayment Orders are awarded if:

- The property you are renting does not have a license
- The landlord has not complied with a council notice
- The tenant has been harassed or evicted without the correct court paperwork.

2. From Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

How much money is the Council losing through not implementing the empty homes premium? Will the Council review the effectiveness of its empty homes strategy and consult with the public?

Reply:

The Executive approved the introduction of the Empty Homes Premium (EHP) at their meeting on 27 November 2019 and the premium was introduced from 1 April 2020. For properties empty longer than two years a 50% is being levied, increasing to 100% once the property has been empty for five years. A copy of the report is available on the Council website.

On 13th January 2021 the Executive considered proposals to increase the Empty Homes Premium from April 2021 to the maximum premium permitted under the Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018. A public consultation exercise had been carried out, the results of which were set out in the report. Although Members considered that there was a strong case for increasing the premium it was considered that, given the impact of the pandemic, now was not the right time to do so. Details of the impact on income were also included in that report.

The reports and minutes are available on the Council website.

As part of the Transforming Bromley Agenda, we are reviewing the alignment of the service with the Council's Regeneration Team and are currently in the process of going to advert for staff to work specifically upon empty homes services. This work will also include reviewing the strategic approach to empty homes which will be consulted and reported on in due course.

3. From Peter Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement

How many criminal prosecutions and civil payment fines have been issued by the Council in the last two years and for what offences?

Reply:

The exact scope of your question is unclear, but information about prosecutions and fines is set out in Appendix 1.

4. From Peter Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What are the resource implications of licencing all houses in multiple occupation in Bromley and what legal decisions would be required?

Reply:

The Housing Act 2004 currently requires local housing authorities to license houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) if they accommodate more than five tenants in two or more households; this is called mandatory licensing, and is already in place. With regards to HMOs, in addition to the mandatory scheme, the Council has a discretionary power to introduce additional licensing for HMOs that fall outside the scope of the mandatory licensing scheme. The scope of an additional scheme varies between Councils, some schemes cover the whole borough whereas others cover smaller geographical areas. However, the Council may only make a discretionary designation for additional licensing if the area has a high proportion of property in the private rented sector (e.g. more than 19%). As this is not the case in Bromley, additional licensing could not be applied borough wide.

In addition to the above, before any discretionary scheme can be introduced, the Council must be able to evidence that a significant proportion of the proposed HMOs are being poorly managed and are giving rise (or likely to give rise), to problems affecting the occupiers or members of the public. In addition, a Council must evidence that:

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- there are no other courses of action available that might provide an effective remedy, and
- that the introduction of additional licensing will significantly assist in dealing with identified problems.

As such, a Council must have significant evidence at hand before it can introduce such a scheme, or it can face legal challenge. Additionally, should the council wish to introduce such a scheme, it must consult with everyone affected by the designation for a minimum of 10 weeks.

Prior to consideration, a feasibility study undertaken by consultants would be required to:

- fully establish the current number of homes that would fall within scope,

- evidence whether the evidence exists to support the support the introduction of an additional scheme,
- the full extent of the additional scheme (as the variables are numerous),
- the number of officers required to furnish the scheme, and
- whether the income generated would cover costs.

Authorities that have implemented discretionary schemes and which have undertaken the feasibility studies have indicated that the expense is considerable, and without the feasibility study it is not possible to state the resources needed.

5. From Angela Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

How do article 4 restrictions on houses in multiple occupation help the tenants of such properties? Please publish a list by ward of all houses in multiple occupation that are licensable but are not.

Reply:

HMOs that are operating with a mandatory license can be found here:

<https://searchapplications.bromley.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

Those houses that are licensable and are not covered by a license would be subject to possible legal action, as such, the provision of a list by ward would not be appropriate. Once made aware of an unlicensed HMO, the Council would seek to progress the license, or enforce accordingly.

6. From Angela Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

What is the Council's plan to reduce carbon emissions in residential housing whether it is rented or privately owned?

Reply:

The Carbon Management Team are delivering a variety of projects to help mitigate carbon emissions in the borough. Every project also seeks to realise as many co-benefits as possible (i.e. policies, or initiatives, which have a simultaneous positive impact on other objectives e.g. energy efficiency upgrades reducing bills, preventing carbon emissions and combatting fuel poverty.)

Over 50% of Bromley's borough wide emissions are attributed to the domestic sector, specifically through heating systems. Bromley is part of the South London Energy Efficiency Partnership (SLEEP) - which consists of all South London boroughs. The consortia collectively bids for regional and national funding on behalf of members to

facilitate advice and referrals. Working with our partners South East London Community Energy (SELCE), outreach works include the following -

Services for individual household include but are not limited to:

- advice on how to make your home energy efficient
- a telephone advice session (in person visits when permitted due to COVID-19)
- energy and water saving devices delivered to your home
- impartial advice and help on how to pay less for your electricity or gas
- provide support and debt advice
- support with national and regional home improvement grants and schemes
- referral to other sources of help

For community/voluntary groups, SELCE also offers:

- a 30-minute remote workshop providing groups with energy/water saving advice
- a socially-distant 5-minute shout out at a meeting or event (including regular attendance at meetings or events to give a short announcement about the free energy advice service and collect the details of those interested in benefiting.)

Although SELCE are happy to provide advice to anybody seeking it, fuel poverty affects the most vulnerable in society and therefore focus is particularly provided to the following groups:

- the elderly
- low-income families
- families with children under the age of 5
- people with a long-term health condition
- people with a disability (long or short-term)
- people with a cardiovascular disease
- people with a respiratory disease

The Council has also established a Green Recovery Working Group – a cross council group representing all relevant service areas which focuses on tackling sustainability issues to enable us to build back better as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Working with Housing, Regeneration, Planning and Public Health, the Carbon Management Team will develop and promote initiatives to enable: 1) the retrofitting of domestic properties to ensure increased energy efficiency, 2) the securing of low carbon buildings and infrastructure 3) opportunities for access to 100% renewable energy for the public and 4) building a Green Economy ensuring there is sufficient infrastructure to help deliver these initiatives.

7. From Richard E. Hart to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What are the implications of covid prevention in an overcrowded house in multiple occupation? Is this not a valid reason to extend the licensing of all houses in multiple occupation in the borough?

Reply:

The key implications are -

1. All residents should follow the general guidelines as to how to stay safe (link below)

Coronavirus: how to stay safe and help prevent the spread - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

1. If one resident develops Covid 19 symptoms, the whole house in multiple occupation should behave as a single household (link below)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/>

2. All shared areas should be cleaned regularly and ventilated. Below are a couple of links with further information:

Private renting: Houses in multiple occupation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Household overcrowding and the covid-19 outbreak - House of Commons Library (parliament.uk)

See question 1 above.

8. From Richard E. Hart to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Will the Council introduce an HMO licence checker scheme similar to what Westminster Council are running?

(Ref: propertyindustryeye.com/Westminster-launches-hmo-checker-to-help-combat-rogue-landlords/)

Reply:

Westminster operate both a selective licensing scheme and the mandatory licensing scheme. The scheme (HMO checker) simply allows the person searching to determine whether the dwelling in question should be licenced under the relevant scheme, or whether it requires licensing at all.

Bromley operates the mandatory scheme alone; as such a checker to determine the distinction between the 2 schemes is not relevant. The Council provides advice on the mandatory scheme here -

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/info/200069/houses_in_multiple_occupancy/1213/apply_for_an_hmo_licence

9. From Helen Brookfield to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What advice has the Council given to private tenants who have suffered harassment or unlawful eviction about rent repayment orders? When will the Council publish on its website information for the public about rent repayment orders?

Reply:

The Council's Housing Options team will take action to investigate allegations of harassment and unlawful eviction and take into consideration the individual circumstances presented in order to best advise the effected tenant.

The website is being updated to provide a link to guidance published by Shelter as this gives comprehensive and up to date advice on this matter.

10. From Helen Brookfield to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

When will the Council use its legal powers via a rent repayment order to reclaim any housing benefit paid to the owner of an unlicensed house in multiple occupation?

Reply:

The Council's Private Rented Enforcement Policy sets out that it will vigorously pursue anyone who is controlling or managing a licensable HMO without a license and, where appropriate, it will prosecute them or impose a civil penalty such as a rent repayment order to reclaim any housing benefit paid.

Each case will be determined on its individual merits and circumstances and the Council may decide not to prosecute the landlord or impose a civil penalty where the threat of such action results in the landlord fully cooperating with the Council to ensure the HMO is licensed as soon as practicable.

11. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Please can the Council list by ward all Houses in Multiple Occupation that do not have planning permission and should be licensed by the Council but are not? Will the owners be prosecuted for failing to obtain a license?

Reply:

From a Planning perspective the conversion of a residential dwelling into an HMO of 6 or less residents does not require planning permission and is 'permitted development' set down by the government in legislation. The Planning team do not hold a register or

list of HMOs which need but do not have planning permission but investigate these on a case-by-case basis as and when complaints are received about them.

The Council has recently considered an Article 4 Direction in respect of this particular permitted development. Such a Direction, where properly justified, can be used to remove specific permitted development rights. In respect of change of use to HMOs, Officers recommended a Borough wide non-immediate Direction with a 12-month delay. This was recently agreed by the Council and will therefore take effect across the Borough on 1st September 2022, however the committee also decided to impose an immediate Direction on Biggin Hill and Darwin wards, where they perceived that there was a more immediate threat to amenity. See item 277 at <https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&MId=7231&Ver=4>

The majority of HMOs in the Borough have 6 or less residents and therefore apart from in the Wards mentioned above do not currently require planning permission. Licensing is a separate matter from whether planning permission is required. Enforcement is a stepped approach and all decisions in respect of HMO licensing are taken in accordance with the Council's published policy and the appropriate legislation and guidance. In the past 4 years it has not been necessary to progress any cases to prosecution.

12. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

In the last 4 years, how many owners of HMOs have been prosecuted by the Council for failing to register their properties with the Council?

Reply:

Enforcement is a stepped approach and all decisions in respect of HMO licensing are taken in accordance with the Council's published policy and the appropriate legislation and guidance. In the past 4 years it has not been necessary to progress any cases to prosecution.

13. From Ruth McGregor to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What help will the Council give to private tenants and leaseholders at Lait House, Albemarle Road BR3 where all the flats have been served with a fire safety notice by the London Fire Brigade?

(See www.london-fire.gov.uk/community/public-notice/public-notice-detail/?id=6953)

Reply:

The Council has a protocol with the LFB, which determines the enforcement remit regarding the enforcement of fire safety between the two lead authorities. The LFB are responsible for the enforcement of fire safety within the common parts of purpose-built blocks of flats, and the associated notice is commensurate with the agreement. As such, from the perspective of the Public Protection service within the Directorate of Environment and Public Protection, there is no remit to provide assistance, and it will be the responsibility of the property management company to comply with the requirements stipulated within the notice.

14. From Ruth McGregor to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Will the flat owners of Lait House in Albemarle Road (which appear to include Cllr David Jeffreys) be able to let their properties to the Council to provide temporary accommodation, notwithstanding the fire safety notices?

Reply:

If someone wished to provide accommodation to the Council then due diligence would be carried out at the time of approach to ensure that the property met all current safety requirements prior to be taken on.

15. From Carole Dewar to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What savings in the cost of temporary accommodation would be achieved if an owner of an empty property in the borough leased the property to the Council to provide temporary accommodation for a homeless household?

Reply:

If an owner wished to lease the property for use as temporary accommodation, then this would only present a saving to the Council if the rental level charged by the owner, together with any associated administrative and grant funding costs, was less than the rental charge set by alternative providers of temporary accommodation.

16. From Carole Dewar to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

How many owners of empty properties owe the Council money, and will the Council apply for an order for sale to repay these debts and to make sure that such properties are brought back into use?

Reply:

The number of owners of empty properties with an outstanding balance on their Council Tax account is currently 2,262 however only 238 of these are classed as long-term empty and are therefore liable for the Empty Homes Premium; 36 of which are subject to recovery action.

The Council takes legal action in respect of all Council Tax debt where appropriate. We also consider on a case-by-case basis the appropriateness of obtaining a charging order and order for sale taking into account matters such as the value of the debt and amount of equity in the property. Empty properties where there is a debt due are included in this overall review.

17. From Richard Seabrook to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

How is the Council enforcing the requirement that privately rented properties must have an EPC rating of at least Band E?

Reply:

There are approximately 21000 privately rented homes within Bromley, there are currently insufficient council resources to enforce the minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) in all PR properties across the borough. The Carbon Management Team works with our domestic energy efficiency and advice partners to assist residents in saving money on their fuel bills, how they can improve their EPC and even provide an assumed EPC assessment if none exists. The Council also has access to housing stock software for assumed EPCs across the borough for a targeted outreach approach. The Council was successful in a tri-borough application for a 6-month MEES intelligence gathering officer which will eventually inform a business case for additional resources for enforcement. Consultation on the recruitment process is on-going. In addition, insulations standards are also considered when assessing HMO license applications.

18. From Richard Seabrook to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

How many exemption notices (with regard to EPC rating) of all types has the Council issued to landlords whose properties do not reach this standard, in the three financial years April 2018 to April 2021?

Reply:

The Council does not issue exemption notices under the Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. The regulations allow for landlords to register exemptions via the Government portal:

<https://prsregister.beis.gov.uk/NdsBeisUi/used-service-before>

Those premises registered are not automatically forwarded to the Private Rented Sector Housing Team or Trading Standards. There is no expectation for Councils to proactively check the validity of any exemptions applied for. Having said that, if a local authority believes a landlord has failed to fulfil their obligations under the MEES Regulations, they can serve the landlord with a compliance notice. No such notices have been issued.

19. From Jamie Devine to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Environment Committee wrote recently that it 'does not consider it appropriate to declare a climate emergency'. Does the Council not acknowledge that words from elected representatives on climate change have a role to play in communicating the seriousness of the matter to the public?

Reply:

This Council has declared its seriousness on this matter by setting its target on carbon neutrality for Council Activities by 2029 one of the most ambitious in London. This Council has always believed in actions not words.

20. From Jamie Devine to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Baroness Thatcher (a chemist) said 'We have come to realise that man's activities and numbers threaten to upset the biological balance which we have taken for granted and on which human life depends.' Does the Council acknowledge that climate change poses an existential threat to humanity?

Reply:

In terms of an existential threat to humanity, with humans successfully living across a wider range of climates, it depends on the degree of global warming. The impact on our lifestyles will occur sooner and should be our focus in-line with the ambitions of COP26.

Appendix 1 (Question 3)

Prosecution instructions were as follows for the period from 5th December 2019 to date:

Type of Prosecution	Number
Section 21 CSOPA 1970 misuse of blue badge (Badge declared lost or stolen)	28
Section 17 Greater London Council (GP) 1972 (Blue badge – none return of information driver of the vehicle)	25
Section 217 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Breach of untidy site notice)	7
Section 210 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Breach of tree preservation order)	1
Section 1 Fraud Act 2006 (Consumer protection – fraud)	2
Section 179 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Breach of enforcement notice)	7
CSDPA 1970 Consumer Protection (Trading Standards)	1
Section 80 Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Statutory Nuisance)	2
Section 117 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Wrongful Use of Disabled badge)	42
Section 33 Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Waste)	2
Section 75 Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (Breach of high hedge order)	1

Parking Fines issued on behalf of LB Bromley 2020 - 2022:

	Issues 2020	Issues 2021	Issues 2022
On Street	69,332	51,956	50,025
01: Parked in a Restricted Street during prescribed hours	11,563	10,599	8,788
02: Parked loading or unloading in restricted street	3,334	1,887	2,067
12: Parked in residents or shared use parking place	11,007	8,443	7,738
14: Parked in electric vehicle charging place	20	21	22
16: In permit space without valid permit	129	209	127
21: In a suspended bay/space	397	252	837
23: Designated class of vehicle restricted	566	452	462
25: In loading place in restricted hours no loading	3,715	2,796	2,868
26: Double parked not in a parking place	298	180	142
27: Parked adjacent to a dropped footway	1,187	894	809
31: Box Junction	0	2	1,957
32: Ignore Blue Sign Arrow	0	1	0
34J: Being in a Bus Lane	13,796	8,025	6,773
40: In disabled bay without clearly displayed valid badge	1,635	1,423	1,199
45: Stopped on a taxi rank	530	451	501
47: Parked on a restricted bus stop/stand	301	344	174
48: Stopped where prohibited (school)	1,010	690	658
49: Parked wholly or partly on a cycle track	2	2	0
55: Commercial vehicle contravention overnight ban	18	10	6
61: Heavy vehicle parked on footway (>7.5 TONS 1 W)	29	21	22
62: Parked with wheels not on carriageway	4,803	3,882	2,946
99: Stopped on pedestrian crossing and/or zig-zags	171	96	113
05: Parked after the expiry of paid-for time	2,539	1,250	1,602

06: Without clearly displayed P&D ticket (pay and display)	8,541	4,950	5,573
11: Parked without payment of the parking charge	1,339	3,725	3,118
19: Parked in a residents or shared use parking place	389	237	274
22: Re-parked within the restricted time period	3	1	1
24: Not within marking of bay or space	1,077	819	1,024
30: Parked for longer than permitted	933	292	221
63: Parked with engine running where prohibited	0	2	3
Off Street	9,910	5,554	6,448
70: Parked in a loading area during restricted hour	47	29	37
71: Parked in electric vehicle bay not charging	19	1	4
81: Parked in a restricted area in a car park	40	31	27
85: In permit bay without displaying valid permit	19	14	17
87: In disabled bay without disabled badge	232	207	227
91: In area not designated for class of vehicle	85	31	70
92: Parked causing an obstruction	4	9	6
73: Parked without payment of the parking charge	6,813	3,907	4,815
80: Parked for longer than maximum period permitted	4	6	0
82: Parked after expiry of time paid for	1,735	582	745
83: In P&D car park without displaying P&D ticket	567	543	172
84: Parked beyond time first purchased	2	0	0
86: Parked beyond the bay markings	342	194	326
93: Parked in a car park when closed	1	0	2

Trading Standards fines 2020-22:

The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work
Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc) Order 2014: Redress membership £7,500

The Consumer Rights Act 2015, sections 83-88: Relating to fees £9,500

The Client Money Protection Schemes for Property Agents (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc.) Regulations 2019: Relating to membership £17,500; transparency £8,000

Council - 6th December 2021

Questions from Members of the Council for oral reply

1. From Cllr Kieran Terry to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

In October the Council won a national award putting us best in the country for financial management of the Council's assets. What specific achievements were highlighted in gaining the award and what should other councils be able to learn from Bromley's success?

Reply:

To support key services, including for the most vulnerable, the Council produce an annual investment income of an estimated £13.8m per annum which comes from the strategy of property investments and other rent income alongside alternative treasury management arrangements.

We have received this prestigious Public Finance 2021 Achieving Excellence in Asset Management award which is highly regard in the public finance community. This was a national acknowledgement of the excellent work the Council has delivered on pension fund performance and treasury management.

The performance was outstanding. For the £1.4bn pension fund, the rankings put Bromley 1st over 5 and 10 years, and 2nd over 1 year, 3 years, 20 years and 30 years. This represents outstanding performance and as a result the fund is "fully funded" (110% at last actuarial valuation and subsequently increased to an estimated 130% plus) to reflect this outstanding performance. The net annual return in 2020/21 is 34.1% compared with a benchmark return of 23.6% (a difference of 10.5%.)

For Treasury Management the Council has delivered a net annual return in 2020/21 of 2.56%, compared with the bank base rate of 0.1%. Clearly in the top performance category compared with peers in the UK.

What does this mean for the Council's finances? The outstanding performance of the pension fund has reduced the Council's general fund costs by at least £6m per year. Whilst the Treasury Management performance has delivered additional income of over £4m per annum for the exceptional performance. This combination of additional income

and reducing employers' costs has enabled more money to be spent on key services and reduces the burden to council taxpayers.

This outstanding performance is not just a one off. The exception work has achieved recognition in the 2019 Public Finance Awards and for the last four years the Council has won two Local Authority Pension Fund Awards, was runner up in one year and a commendation in another year.

It is important that all Councils that administer pension funds and have treasury management resources, pay attention on these key financial areas to improve their overall finances, reduce cost to the council taxpayer and help protect key services. Some councils may see this as 'below the radar' but an organisation can make a real positive differences to its overall finances by ensuring adequate attention and innovation in these areas which can deliver substantial financial benefits within a risk framework.

Supplementary Question:

Does the Portfolio Holder agree that other Councils such as Lewisham and Croydon should take note of Bromley's financial position, and will he join me in thanking Cllr Keith Onslow, the Pensions Committee and Finance Officers for their effective management of the Pension Fund?

Reply:

I do agree and I thank those who have guided our pension fund so well.

2. From Cllr Kevin Kennedy-Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care & Health

Certain Care homes are on the verge of closure in Bromley due to being hit hard by the pandemic. Whilst the homes are independent, any closures would greatly affect the vulnerable residents and their families. What help is the Portfolio Holder willing to provide to Care Homes to ensure our elderly and vulnerable are protected.

Reply:

It is fair to say that across the Country the demand for Care Home beds has reduced, partly due to the number of people that sadly passed away during the pandemic, but also due to the fact that fewer people are wishing to move into homes because of the national coverage about the impact of covid.

In Bromley during the pandemic we saw the closure of one home, which was due to the retirement of the owner after many years of running the home and we are aware of one other home that is currently considering the viability of continuing in business.

The Council provided and continues to provide a high level of support to care homes which was recognized as part of our award from the MJ. Our relationship with providers

is good, we have maintained ongoing dialogue with them, providing advice, PPE, financial support and practical support and this has been recognized by the sector. This stands us in good stead as we move into the winter months.

Supplementary Question:

How does the Council monitor when care homes are at risk of closure, and support them? If a home does close what does the Council do to minimise the disruption to residents?

Reply:

I can circulate an appendix with further information after the meeting. Our officers do work with care homes to make sure that residents are looked after in these circumstances.

3. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Please explain:

- the frequent & long-standing absences of loo roll in Crystal Palace Park toilets?
- what you suggest park users do when faced with such absences?
- what skills and qualifications are required of contractors to replace a toilet seat?

Reply:

- The toilets are restocked at least daily all year as per idverde's contractual obligation, although we often do this three times a day due to anti-social behaviour and demand. During the summer months an attendant is at the Park between 10am and 6pm on weekends to ensure cleaning and restocking is done regularly enough. The issue is that the toilets remain open after the team have finished their shift and this is when the problems usually occur. The park is now often busy in the evening as more and more people are enjoying the features such as the redeveloped café and bar.
- The nearest toilet that is part of the Bromley Community Toilet scheme is at McDonalds, Penge High St.
- Contractors would need to be Council approved suppliers that have demonstrated their competence by having the required skills, knowledge, aptitude, training and experience to complete the tasks required of them.

Supplementary Question:

The toilets are serviced by idverde once a day, which is nowhere near adequate given the use of the Park, particularly during special events. Use of large fixed rollers rather than individual toilet rolls has been suggested, but the response was that the toilet roll holders would be stolen for scrap.

Reply:

I will ask idverde for a view on the toilet roll holders. The Crystal Palace Park Trust is taking over control of the Park and we can discuss these issues with them.

4. From Cllr Vanessa Allen to the Leader of the Council

Please explain why a Communications Plan purely for the planting of new trees is justified when the same do not exist for COVID grant applications and the recently announced Household Support Fund?

Reply:

When the Council is promoting its own policy initiatives, it can do so in a style and manner that it chooses to.

When the Council is promoting a Government initiative whilst distributing their Grant Funding, it needs to follow their guidance which is set out on the following website link for ease of clarity:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils/household-support-fund-final-guidance-for-county-councils-and-unitary-authorities-in-england>

I am very pleased to confirm that in addition to the five hundred or so Bromley households who have already benefited from the Government's generous provision of the Household Support Fund to date, further periodic advertising of the fund's availability remains planned ahead of its closure on 31st March 2022 to maximize its uptake by eligible applicants.

Supplementary Question:

Five hundred applications may have been made, but not all have been dealt with – more resources need to be put in.

Reply:

If you can identify any specific cases that have not been dealt with then please let the officers know in the morning.

5. From Cllr Josh King to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

Can the Portfolio Holder detail the progress made on successful applications to the Small Parades Initiative in the last 6 months and what plans are there to catch up any backlogs?

Reply:

As recently presented to the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee the Local Shopping Parades scheme has been severely impacted by Covid with staff seconded to work on the business grant programme. The challenging circumstances were raised as an issue internally in July and following this, a project officer is now working full-time to progress all live schemes. Since the end of October, the Head of Regeneration has been provided with weekly progress reports for all 18 parades to ensure that all live projects are attended to on a weekly basis to speed up progress going forward. As a consequence, progress has been made on the following schemes: Royal Parade, Belmont Parade, Rosehill Parade, The Pantiles, and Green Street Green.

Supplementary Question:

I accept that staff have been seconded, but can you assure us that they will be able to concentrate on the Parades Scheme in future?

Reply:

Yes, we can proceed more quickly now.

6. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

What lessons have you and the Council learned from the process for developing the recently approved Open Space Strategy?

Reply:

The main lessons that we have learned with developing the Open Space Strategy are as follows:

- Ensuring that we reach out to as wide a range of stakeholders as possible to ensure that the views of all the Bromley Community are heard when drafting the strategy.
- To be clearer as to the remit of the strategy with respect to the sites that it will apply to and the level of detail that it will go into in comparison to the delivery plans.
- Ensuring that we use language that is easy for everyone to understand and unambiguous terminology with regards to our intentions for the Open Space Portfolio.

Supplementary Question:

Can you explain the process?

Reply:

This has been looked at in great detail, and a press release was issued to clarify the terminology and ensure that it could not be misunderstood.

7. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

Can you please explain what the role is of the Council's representative on the Clarion Housing Group South London Regional Scrutiny Committee?

Reply:

The role is about wider scrutiny of Clarion's performance, and is not concerned with individual cases.

Supplementary Question:

I am surprised at this response. Our part of the borough has much social housing. I have had five holding replies from Clarion on the matters I raised at the last Council meeting.

Reply:

The performance of providers of socially rented housing providers is monitored by the Homes and Communities Agency (now Homes England and the Regulator of Social Housing) and the Housing Ombudsman. The Council cannot take action until these routes have been completed. I agree this is very bureaucratic and it is frustrating for me.

8. From Cllr Simon Jeal to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

The Friends of Cator Park and Alexandra Recreation Ground paid for a bench to be installed in April, could you please explain why Idverde have still not installed it?

Reply:

There have been two isolated instances where parts for specific bench designs were put on hold by the third-party supplier due to difficulties with ordering. There has also been a back log of work for our Infrastructure team to complete due to the difficulty in obtaining correct materials due to COVID and industry delays, and also increased infrastructure works during 2021. We can confirm that the bench in question will be installed by the end of the year. We apologise for any inconvenience caused and will update the Friends Group on the estimated time of installation for the bench.

Supplementary Question:

I can report that the bench was installed on Friday. This is good news, but the wait of eight months is not good. Why has performance been so poor on this and other occasions.

Reply:

The cases regarding the benches are due to Covid-19 and the supply problems with materials. This should not be happening in future.

9. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett MA JP to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

How many (i) dead dogs, (ii) dead cats were recovered in the last period for which records were available and what process is in place for notifying their owners?

Reply:

Between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, 976 enquiries were received under the 'Dead Animal' subject code. Whilst this subject does not differentiate cats and dogs with exact figures, a search has been undertaken to identify reports which reference 'cat' or 'dog' in the description which showed 65 cats and 6 dogs. Domestic animals collected are scanned for a microchip and wherever possible owners will be contacted. Where it is not possible to identify the owner, the Council publishes the details on our website for residents of missing animals to monitor. The latest report is of a ginger cat which was found on 20th November 2021.

(As Cllr Bennett was not present a written reply was provided.)

10. From Cllr Aisha Cuthbert to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

We've seen a number of recent questions from councillors regarding housing association properties. These concerns raised are from residents living in Clarion, Hyde, A2Dominion and Moat Housing properties. Could the Portfolio Holder please remind all Members what can be done to address residents' concerns regarding repairs since the Council has no direct involvement and no decision-making authority of any of these independent housing associations?

Reply:

The performance of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) is scrutinised by the Homes and Communities Agency and the Housing Ombudsman. In accordance with the Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement Policy, the Council will not normally take action against an RSL, unless the problem in question has been properly reported to the RSL, they have failed to take the appropriate action and the tenant has been to the Housing Ombudsman without a satisfactory result.

Supplementary Question:

Can we consider asking the Chairman of Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee whether this issue can be scrutinised by the Committee?

Reply:

I will do that.

11. From Cllr Kieran Terry to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

How much debt interest did the London Borough of Bromley pay during 2020 and 2021 to date? In answering please indicate how much debt the London Borough of Bromley carries and a comparison to other neighbouring local authorities.

Reply:

I have a table which illustrates this -

Interest Payments and Borrowing 2019/20 and 2020/21 (£k)

LA	2019/20		2020/21	
	Interest	Borrowing	Interest	Borrowing
Bexley	10,631	233,051	10,451	233,043
Bromley	0	0	0	0
Croydon	43,659	1,217,330	38,948	1,170,744
Greenwich	16,462	374,654	14,612	371,199
Lambeth	25,586	591,658	26,626	651,283
Lewisham	35,651	222,987	31,713	222,784
Southwark	37,060	627,634	29,825	683,989
Sutton	10,200	312,126	11,133	412,127

(Note: Data is not yet available for the period 01/04/21 to date.)

Last year, Croydon paid £39m in interest, and Sutton paid £11m. Bromley paid no interest.

Supplementary Question:

Does he agree that spending of £39m and £11m on debt interest is not acceptable?

Reply:

I do agree.

12. From Cllr Kevin Kennedy-Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Residents are expressing concern at the number of delivery scooters parking on the High Street bays outside McDonalds in Penge. This affects High Street trade and

includes a disabled bay which comes under Council responsibility. What action will the Portfolio Holder take to resolve this?

Reply:

Parking Services have instructed the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) to issue PCNs immediately to these delivery mopeds, however quite often when the CEOs arrive to enforce the vehicles move on and will return once the CEO has left the area. The Council are unable to issue via CCTV, therefore PCNs issued by CEOs are the only enforcement method available.

Parking Services are fully aware of this problem in Penge and other parts of the Borough and it is one that is shared by the majority of London Councils with the increased popularity of these services. Officers will be contacting the local Police to discuss a joint exercise to assist with the enforcement of these vehicles.

Supplementary Question:

This issue does indeed exist in us and many other boroughs. Can the Council address the delivery drivers issue directly?

Reply:

I have asked Legal to look at other avenues – I will keep you informed.

(At this point the time allowed for questions expired – the remaining questions received written replies.)

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

Will he please confirm the precise date when the UPS switch will be repaired and also provide details of expenditure to date on the 'man in the van' retained to oversee the faulty switch?

Reply:

The UPS switch was replaced on 27 November 2021. To date the Council has spent £117,700.80 on providing a contingency support to ensure that the Council's power supply is maintained on a 24 hour, 7 Days a week basis to support the Council's operations including server provision.

14. From Cllr Vanessa Allen to the Leader of the Council

Will the Leader instruct the Portfolio Holders to respond to emails from other councillors within a certain time, even if it is a holding reply pending further work?

Reply:

I know that they routinely do, but should you ever have or feel the need to chase a response, please by all means 'cc' me into it.

15. From Cllr Josh King to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

In the last year there have been delays to the planning application process. What improvements have been made to overcome these issues and are delays still occurring?

Reply:

There have been delays in processing applications over the past year and the team is in the process of resolving these delays. In addition to problems presented by the pandemic, staffing turnover issues and problems with processes have been identified and are being addressed and the delays are being reduced week on week at present, with a view to achieving target levels again early in the new year, although it should be noted that once validation delays are resolved this does take a few months to work through to determination times.

16. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Both the 2020 and 2021 surveys of public satisfaction with Grounds Maintenance in Bromley show that over 50% of respondents are dissatisfied with facilities in parks (i.e. drinking fountains and toilets). What action do you propose to take to rectify this? Will you institute a programme of installing drinking fountains in public parks, to reduce the use of plastic water bottles?

Reply:

All Park toilets are currently in the process of having a full condition survey to identify maintenance costs.

We review the public satisfaction surveys to identify areas for improvement and in the case of facilities in parks, further work will need to be undertaken to understand the public's priorities for facilities and the cost and benefits associated with each of them.

We will liaise with Thames Water if they are willing to expand their Drinking Fountains for London initiative locally.

17. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Fly-tipping is a major problem in Penge & Cator and many other wards in Bromley. Where there are 3 mixed glass recycling bins and only one for tins/plastic and one for cardboard/paper would you look at replacing one of the mixed glass bins for another paper or plastic and cans?

Reply:

All recycling banks in the Borough are swept and cleared of accumulations and fly-tipping materials every day before 9am. In some cases where persistent mis-use of the banks is common place, a second visit is carried out in the afternoon. Where heavy use is identified, and the volume of containers insufficient, in partnership with our service provider Veolia, we would determine if additional visits are feasible and/or if additional bring banks would remedy the situation. We would be happy to investigate replacing one or more containers with other varieties, depending on availability.

One of the actions taken this year to tackle fly tipping across the borough was the face-to-face engagement exercise as part of the 'Your Waste is Your Responsibility' campaign. One of the areas selected for this campaign was within the Penge and Cator ward. The results of the campaign were positive with a reduction in fly tipping of over 60% in this area. We plan to use temporary notices fixed to the banks over Christmas at all our recycling sites to remind residents not to leave any items on the ground surrounding them.

18. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett MA JP to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

How many instances of graffiti were removed in the Borough in the last year for which records are available?

Reply:

Graffiti enquiries between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 totalled 2,185 across all services (principally comprising of Street Environment and Parks & Greenspaces).

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Council - 6th December 2021

Questions from Members of the Council for Written Reply

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

What was LB Bromley's recycling rate in 2020-21 and how did we compare to other neighbouring boroughs?

Reply:

47.6% of Bromley's household waste was recycled in 2020/21. It is worth noting that this recycling rate has not been audited and verified by Central Government as yet, with the final national recycling dataset for 2020/21 expected to be published in December 2020/21.

Therefore, it is not possible to compare 2020/21 data with other local authorities.

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

How much waste did LB Bromley send to landfill between July and September 2021?

Reply:

0.03% or 12.6 tonnes of waste were sent to landfill between July and September 2021 of the 40,312 tonnes of waste and recycling managed by Bromley Council during the same period.

3. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

Please provide a breakdown of the Council's use of Agency Staff, showing person days and net cost, by month from April 2020 to as recently as figures are available, broken down by Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, other EHCS, ECS and other. Please also show the number of employees in FTE with the same breakdown.

Reply:

See Appendix 1 (to follow)

4. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Chairman of General Purposes and Licensing Committee

Please provide the total number of electors in each of the new wards, and also the number of electors in each new ward who have a postal vote.

Reply:

Unfortunately, we are unable at this stage of the process to provide the information the Councillor has requested.

The polling district review has been approved by Members, but we still need to input the details into our electoral management software in readiness for the publication of the revised register (on the new boundaries) on 1 February 2022.

This part of the process could not be done before the polling district boundaries were finalised. Furthermore, it will take some time to input the details and thoroughly check the data to ensure accuracy.

In the meantime, we can only work with the projected 2025 electorate figures used by the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) in regard to their (ward) review. These details were provided by the LGBC on their website and also in the Acting Returning Officer's initial proposals (published on the Council's website).

5. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

How much has been spent by the Council on the public realm of Bromley's town centre since 2014? Please provide a detailed breakdown.

Reply:

The capital records of outturn go back to 2017. Since 2017 £3,022,475 has been spent on Bromley High Street broken down as follows:

Sum of Amount	Financial Year				
Subjective No. & Name	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand Total
C001 - Contract Payments (Main Contractor)	344,722	1,106,160	1,113,046	169,476	2,733,403
C004 - Consultants Fees (Other)		28,434	54,543	100,861	183,838
C029 - Miscellaneous Expenses	65,953		7,220	400	73,573
C033 - Salaries	31,662				31,662
Grand Total	442,337	1,134,594	1,174,807	270,737	3,022,475

6. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning & Contract Management

In relation to government COVID funding for a) Local Support Grants and b) Winter Grants, please provide details of the following:

- The number of families receiving food vouchers and the average total value of vouchers given to each family;
- The number of households who received vouchers but were not identified as in receipt of the pupil premium or free school meals;
- The number of households and the average amount paid to them by a medium other than food vouchers.

Reply:

The Council does not hold data in the format requested. The Children, Education and Families Directorate has, through working in partnership with schools, supported approximately 9,000 pupils with £15 per week supermarket vouchers for each of the school holiday periods since Covid grant funding was introduced. Officers do not hold a

breakdown by numbers of families. Approximately 20% of the c9,000 pupils were supported through eligibility criteria other than Pupil Premium or Free School Meals, including those who are Children in Need.

Support has also been made available from the Housing Department, funded through the Covid grants for residents who have suffered financial hardship because of the coronavirus pandemic. Excluding the support of food vouchers, the total spend on other assistance has been c£285k between 804 people, for an average of approximately £355 per person.

In addition, our Early Intervention Services (EIS) staff have also supported the issuing of food parcels via the corporate COVID response team for many families.

EIS staff have not only provided some food parcels but have also provided other types of support to families such as children's activity packs, swap-shop clothing parcels, stationery sets for children returning to school, identification of children who could be eligible for support with the 'access to computers' initiative from the Department of Education.

Any family that we support in situations may potentially be eligible for practical support via Section 17 of the Children act. This support could include the practical provision of food if appropriate in emergency situations. We would not routinely keep a record of exactly how we spend s17 monies because this type of support is not uncommon. Where feasible we would also sign-post families to local charities or foodbanks for longer term support. All interventions would focus on ensuring that children and young people have access to appropriate types of food and in sufficient quantity.

7. From Cllr Josh King to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

How many visits to the area around Birkbeck Bridge have been made by the Council's staff and its contractors in the last 12 months to either clean pigeon waste or clear water from the blocked drains.

Reply:

Elmer's End Road is scheduled for a weekly carriageway cleanse and twice weekly footway cleanse. Outside of that intervening cleanses with a jet wash have been undertaken at the start of each month.

Regards drainage, there have been 4 visits by the service provider in the past 12 months that undertook drainage cleansing in this location. The most recent visit was overnight on 19th November 2021 and Highways are reviewing the outcome report.

8. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Can you give an update on the KSI figures by Bromley roads over the past 3 years?

Reply:

Officers are in the process of analysing collision casualty data and prioritising locations for potential safety schemes, based on a cost-benefit analysis, so that we can prevent the greatest number of casualties per pound spent. I have asked Officers to share this work with you as soon as possible, which should be in the next few weeks.

9. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education & Families

Can you advise the number and ethnicity of pupils who were permanently excluded from Bromley Schools over the past 2 years in comparison with the previous two years?

Reply:

Permanent exclusions have reduced by 42% when comparing the past 2 years, with the previous 2-year period. The rate of permanent exclusion in Bromley is now 0.04, which is 50% below the national average of 0.06. The Bromley rate of exclusion of all ethnic groups is at or below the national average. The attached table ([Appendix 2](#)) provides a breakdown of permanent exclusions by ethnicity with the national average comparator.

10. From Cllr Simon Jeal to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Could you please provide a monthly breakdown, covering the past four years up to the most recent month for which data is available, detailing:

- The number of people presenting to the council as homeless;
- The number of people the council placed into temporary or permanent accommodation following their presenting as homeless;
- The number of people who were placed in accommodation outside of the borough;
- The reasons why any resident who presented to the council as homeless was not placed in accommodation.

Reply:

	2019/20	2020/21	2021 / October 21
Number of Approaches	2081	1074	1918
New TA Placements	781	773	483
Proportion of new placements in Borough	27%	18%	22%

** please note that this information has been taken from a new Housing system introduced in 2019. Historic data can be retrieved although will require additional time to compile. All Housing statistics can also be found at www.gov.uk

There are a number of reasons that someone who presents as homeless may not be placed into temporary / or permanent accommodation.

- They may have accommodation available for their occupation in the immediate / short term, for example where a notice has been served but does not expire for some time.
- The Housing Options team may intervene and stave off an eviction, for example negotiation with a family member in the event of a parental / relative eviction.
- They may be offered but turn down an offer of either temporary / permanent accommodation.
- They may not be eligible for assistance i.e. because of their status or due to an existing connection with another Local Authority.

11. From Cllr Vanessa Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education & Families

Please provide details of how and when the remaining £435k of Holiday Activity & Food grant monies will be distributed.

Reply:

The Holiday Activities and Food programme has been a great success in Bromley, running for the first time in 2021, with positive feedback received from families and professionals.

Due to Covid restrictions and Public Health advice at the time, a scaled down programme was provided at Easter through our Youth Hubs. For our summer programme, Bromley was able to facilitate over 10,000 individual attendances by our eligible children, covering all of the Borough geographically, whilst targeting areas with

higher levels of deprivation. Additionally, we successfully applied to the DfE to release additional funding for our most vulnerable children and young people.

In accordance with the strict grant conditions, the Council does not receive a direct allocation and is only able to draw down grant retrospectively to cover eligible expenditure, up to a maximum figure. The Council has no discretion to provide HAF funds directly to families or allocate grants to other programmes and will draw down the maximum grant possible to provide our well received HAF programme.

Bromley's HAF winter programme has now been published, incorporating 14 experienced providers and an exciting range of activities for all ages and all wards of the Borough.

12. From Cllr Vanessa Allen to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health

Under grant monies for the clinically extremely vulnerable, how many households (or individuals) received food parcels in 2020-21 and how many additional/new staff were employed to distribute these parcels? During 2021-22, how many LBB staff were employed on the Shielding, Volunteering and Assistance Programme and how many new staff were recruited for this work?

Reply:

During 2020/21 under the shielding, volunteering and assistance programme, of the 21,903 clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) residents in Bromley, 3201 of them indicated a support need. Of those residents, the majority received a food parcel from the government directly during Wave 1 of the pandemic. A total of 259 households received food parcels provided by Bromley Council (either because their government supplied food parcel had not arrived on time or because of ongoing dietary needs that could not be met by the regular government supplied parcel).

No additional staff were employed to distribute these parcels – the delivery was made entirely through volunteers. LBB mobilised 1307 volunteers to support with food deliveries, grocery shopping, prescription collections and befriending.

A total of 140 LBB staff were at some point employed through informal secondments to the programme over the two waves, mostly on a part time basis of 1 or 2 days per week. No new staff were recruited for this work.

A proportion of the grant funding was provided through LBB to the Voluntary Sector (food support organisations) who were also delivering food parcels separately. A total of 155 referrals to the food organisations were made directly through the programme but many thousands of parcels were provided to vulnerable residents during the pandemic by the food support organisations.

13. From Cllr Ryan Thompson to the Leader of the Council/Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

Please provide a schedule of the Council's communications with Emma Raducanu in relation to consideration of awarding her the Freedom of the Borough.

Reply:

13 th September	LL emailed CH	Generally, about borough wanting to celebrate Emma and asking for discussion and feedback on the options.
17 th September	LL emailed CH	Generally, about borough wanting to celebrate Emma and asking for discussion and feedback on the options.
21 st September	CS wrote to ER	Generally, about borough wanting to celebrate Emma and asking for discussion and feedback on the options.
15 th October	LL emailed CH	Asking if they would like the Council to stop making contact with them on this matter as no responses had been received.
15 th October	CH emailed LL	First response, asking for more details.
15 th October	LL emailed CH	Detailing five suggestions: mural, Christmas lights switch on, ceremonial response, meet and greet with young people, or open bus tour.
18 th October	CH emailed LL	Confirm they are considering the most low-key options and asking for details on the Christmas lights switch on option.
19 th October	LL emailed CH	Switch on date confirmed.
20 th October	LL emailed CH	Confirming a ceremonial response to ER's achievements are being considered but that the Council wants to respect ER's views on how the borough celebrates her.
20 th October	CH emailed LL	Acknowledges and says will come back to us.
8 th November	LL emailed CH	Chasing whether ER turning on Christmas lights.

11 th November	CH emailed LL	Confirmed ER not available to turn on Christmas lights. No response on other options.
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14. From Cllr Ryan Thompson to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

Please provide examples of how and when the Council's social value policy and strategy have influenced or affected the commissioning of services.

Reply:

As set out in the Social Value Act (2012), consideration of social value is most effective at the pre-procurement stage in the design of the service. Prior to procurement, Officers must complete a Gateway report setting out the business case and key considerations for the proposed procurement. This report includes a requirement to set out how social value has been considered in both the design of the service and the proposed procurement – social value considerations should influence every proposed procurement.

An example would be the Primary and Secondary Intervention Service in which social value considerations influenced the design of the service, including the development of greater community based support to service users as well as strengthening the role and support to Bromley third sector providers. These considerations were set out in the subsequent specification and evaluation process.

Social value policy can also directly influence the evaluation and contract award process for each tender. The tender evaluation policy recommends that Officers consider social value when setting quality evaluation criteria, including where appropriate a specific question with suitable weighting.

Recent examples would include the tender for Environmental Services which included evaluation criteria on the economic, environmental and social sustainability impact of provider proposals, accounting for 10% of the overall marks, as well as being embedded (recycling, waste reduction) within other evaluation criteria. Similarly, the recent Supported Living for Adults with Learning Disabilities tender included specific evaluation criteria on the economic, social and environmental opportunities for added value and innovation within their proposals.

For lower value contracts, the Local Rules OK policy has even more impact, especially on the social value aim of supporting the local economy. Local Rules OK is a requirement to ensure, as far as possible, that a Request for Quotes process includes at least one Bromley based provider.

15. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

If he will show in graph form the amount of grant received from central government for each London Borough and the Council tax levied in band D for each London Borough in 2020-21?

Reply:

See [Appendix 3](#) (to follow).

16. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

How many tonnes of waste was recycled by the Council in the latest year for which records are available and what percentage of total waste this represents and it compares with each of the other London Boroughs?

Reply:

The up to date and published Government recycling data for 2019/20 is summarised below for Bromley and its neighbouring boroughs:

Council	Total Waste Recycled in 2019/20 (tonnes)	Household Recycling Rate 2019/20
Bromley	62804	50.90%
Bexley	51313	54.20%
Croydon	58419	49.20%
Lewisham	26106	26.60%
Southwark	38940	35.10%
Greenwich	34038	33.20%

DfE Data: Permanent Exclusions by Ethnicity 2016/17 to 2019/20 – Bromley and England

			Bromley				England			
			2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Ethnicity Group	Ethnicity Major Asian Total	Perm Excl.	1	1	0	1	310	361	366	254
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.03
	Ethnicity Major Black Total	Perm. Excl.	10	7	14	1	619	588	529	311
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.20	0.14	0.26	0.02	0.14	0.13	0.11	0.07
	Ethnicity Major Mixed Total	Perm. Excl.	11	41	6	1	635	745	658	427
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.21	0.12	0.11	0.02	0.14	0.16	0.13	0.08
	Ethnicity Major White Total	Perm. Excl.	43	19	28	18	5,897	5,945	6,038	3,882
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.06
	Ethnicity Minority Ethnic Pupil	Perm. Excl.	24	1	22	5	2,093	2,221	2,082	1,302
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.13	0.09	0.11	0.02	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.05
	Ethnicity Unclassified	Perm. Excl.	1	58	1	0	156	167	179	125
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.11	0.11	0.08	0.00	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.11
Total		Perm. Excl.	66	58	49	21	7,719	7,905	7,894	5,057
		Perm. Excl. (rate)	0.13	0.11	0.10	0.04	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.06

Number of perm. exclusions	90	76	71	26
Number of perm. exclusions (2-year total)	166		97	
Reduction in 2-year total (No.)			69	
Reduction in 2-year total (%)			42%	

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