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COUNCIL

Monday 11 March 2024

5 **QUESTIONS** (Pages 3 - 8)

The replies to the following questions for written reply are attached.

(b) Questions from members of the public for written reply.

(d) Questions from members of the Council for written reply.

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

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Council

11 March 2024

Questions from Members of the Public for Written Reply

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

I welcome the partnership between the Council and the London Mayor on tackling empty properties. Will the Council prioritise the 3 large properties in the Beckenham area which have been empty for well over 10 years?

Reply:

An information report was published in January on the Council's approach to Empty Homes. This report can be found here: [Report No \(bromley.gov.uk\)](https://www.bromley.gov.uk/reports-and-accounts/empty-homes-report)

The team is currently collating data to inform the approach to empty homes and prioritisation, particularly given the opportunities of the CHAPs programme. The Beckenham properties will be reviewed as part of this process.

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Council

11 March 2024

Questions from Members of the Council for Written Reply

1. From Councillor Tony Owen to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety

To ask the Portfolio Holder if he will list all the borough roads with 20 MPH speed limits, the date they were introduced and their rationale and if he will review their utility?

Reply:

A list is being prepared and I will then consider whether the limits are appropriate and any reversion to 30 MPH will be brought to the PDS committee in the first instance.

2. From Councillor Tony Owen to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety

To ask the Portfolio Holder if he will list all roads with humps, when they were installed and the rationale for their installation and whether he review their utility.

Reply:

The Council does not hold a definitive list of streets with road humps but I have asked that one be produced. With the exception of the speed table in Loop Road, Chislehurst, and some in two town centres, all road humps have been in place for over 20 years.

I question the utility of street humps as the police, fire brigade, ambulance service and Transport for London have objected to the proliferation of road humps and raised tables because of the increase in attendance times for emergency calls and discomfort and possible injury to their passengers. Road humps and raised tables can also lead to complaints from local residents about increased noise and vibration from traffic.

Once a definitive list has been produced a report will be produced for Member's consideration as to the future of use of humps at each location where they have been installed.

3. From Councillor Will Connolly to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Since the changes to service for Flats recycling for service improvements, have reports of missed collections risen or reduced in numbers and what measures are being taken to address any ongoing issues at addresses that frequently report missed collections?

Reply:

As part of our ongoing commitment to improve collection service delivery, changes to the communal flats recycling service were introduced from the 16th October 2023.

These changes are part of the Environment and Community Services Portfolio Plan for 2024/25 under priority 2 as listed below -

Reduce the environmental impact caused by the management of waste in Bromley, with a focus on optimising waste collection routes and reducing vehicle and equipment emissions.

There has been a reduction of 63% missed bins reported for the flats paper service and a reduction of 88% missed bins reported for the flats mixed recycling service since the 1st November (first full month of service change) to the 27th February (date of writing.)

With any change to schedules, whilst the collection teams familiarise themselves with new bin store locations (which is particularly relevant to the flats service), repeat missed bins are tracked and identified through our recording systems.

Via the crew's ECHO system (a route, address logistics and recording system) specific addresses, roads, or locations can be highlighted to the collection teams in circumstances that require emphasizing.

The ECHO system will behaviour check for any other missed collection for the same service for the last six collections. If a missed collection has been recorded, the system will create a 'task' for the crew, and highlight the address in question. For repeat missed collections recorded from reports by the public, the address is highlighted blue on the crew's 'in cab' Echo tablet mounted on the dashboard.

There has been a reduction in repeat missed bins of 76% for the flats paper service and a reduction of 75% for the flats mixed recycling service since the 1st of November (first full month of service change) to the 27th of February (date of writing.)

4. From Councillor Alisa Igoe to the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety

HGVs which service a Plaistow ward supermarket need to reverse into the store's car park, to be able to exit. The Council has provided additional double yellow lines however I am still receiving complaints of the danger to pedestrians and vehicles. Would the Portfolio Holder agree to officers meeting me and the store staff on site to solve this issue?

Reply:

If Cllr Igoe identifies the supermarket to which she is referring, I would, of course, be happy for an officer to meet her and the store management on site. Please contact the Assistant Director for Highways about the precise nature of the concern, so he can ensure the most appropriate officer attends.

5. From Councillor Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Can the Portfolio Holder help residents of Lownds Court in Bromley hold their new freeholders (The Alaskan Permanent Fund / APF) and managing agents (Prior Estates) to account, given the 3 blocks (comprising 20 flats) was recently sold off by the Council when the remaining 50% of The Glades was sold off to the APF.

Residents who are leaseholders wish to ask about the APF about the possibility of buying the freehold of their properties and wish to hold the agents to account over a lift which has been out of order for months and the sinking fund, to which all leaseholders contribute each year.

Neither organisation is currently being responsive to residents.

Reply:

The Council cannot intervene as we have sold our interest in the property however we can provide the contact details for the professional advisors to The Alaskan Permanent Fund.

6. From Councillor Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

Will the Portfolio Holder ensure that all new trees planted in Council maintained parks by LBB staff or idverde, are properly maintained from now on? Could he confirm if any such planted trees in Queen's Gardens in Bromley have had to be replaced?

Reply:

All newly planted trees in parks or on the streets receive an aftercare programme which includes 50l of water weekly during the summer months.

Officers reported in September 2023 that the overall mortality rate for newly planted trees in 2021/22 and 2022/23 is 10% which is a favourable statistic against the national average for street trees of 30%.

I am aware that there was a tree that had to be removed because of storm damage in January 2024. This will be replaced in the next planting season.

Our records indicate that there are no failed newly planted trees within the past three years at this location. The establishment period for new trees is three years with monitoring undertaken throughout the growing season, next scheduled for early spring 2024.

Any trees which fail to establish during this period will be replaced in the following planting season.