

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY

MINUTES

of the proceedings of the Meeting of the
Council of the Borough
held at 7.00 pm on 7 December 2020

Present:

**The Worshipful the Mayor
Councillor Hannah Gray**

**The Deputy Mayor
Councillor Stephen Wells**

Councillors

Gareth Allatt	Peter Fortune	Tony Owen
Vanessa Allen	Kira Gabbert	Angela Page
Graham Arthur	Will Harmer	Chris Pierce
Kathy Bance MBE	Christine Harris	Neil Reddin FCCA
Yvonne Bear	Colin Hitchins	Will Rowlands
Julian Benington	Samaris Huntington-	Michael Rutherford
Nicholas Bennett MA J.P.	Thresher	Richard Scoates
Kim Botting FRSA	William Huntington-	Suraj Sharma
Mike Botting	Thresher	Colin Smith
Katy Boughey	Simon Jeal	Diane Smith
Mark Brock	David Jefferys	Gary Stevens
Kevin Brooks	Charles Joel	Melanie Stevens
David Cartwright QFSM	Josh King	Harry Stranger
Mary Cooke	Kate Lymer	Michael Tickner
Aisha Cuthbert	Christopher Marlow	Pauline Tunncliffe
Ian Dunn	Robert Mcilveen	Michael Turner
Nicky Dykes	Russell Mellor	Angela Wilkins
Judi Ellis	Alexa Michael	
Robert Evans	Peter Morgan	
Simon Fawthrop	Keith Onslow	

The meeting was opened with prayers

In the Chair
The Mayor
Councillor Hannah Gray

222 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marina Ahmad, Peter Dean and Kieran Terry. Councillor Russell Mellor submitted apologies for attending late.

223 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

**224 To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on
12th October 2020**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2020 be confirmed.

225 Questions

Thirty-two questions had been received from members of the public for written reply. The questions, with the answers given, are set out in Appendix A to these minutes.

Fifteen questions had been received from members of the Council for oral reply, plus one for urgent reply. The questions, with the replies given, are set out in Appendix B to these minutes.

Six questions had been received from members of the Council for written reply. The questions, with the answers given, are set out in Appendix C to these minutes.

**226 To consider any statements that may be made by the Leader
of the Council, Portfolio Holders or Chairmen of Committees.**

(1) Property Disposals

A statement from Councillor Graham Arthur, Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management, had been requested by Councillors Ian Dunn and Angela Wilkins on the status of the £30m property disposal programme approved by the Leader in September 2020, and when it would be provided to Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee for Scrutiny.

Councillor Arthur emphasised that the decision had been made with the support of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee. Work had begun to identify properties for disposal and there would be quarterly reports to the Executive. Any disposals of individual properties would need to be agreed by the Executive following scrutiny by the relevant PDS Committee. In response to a question from Councillor Simon Jeal, Councillor Arthur confirmed that ward councillors would be consulted before potential disposals were considered by PDS Committees.

(2) Covid-19

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Colin Smith, made a statement on the Covid-19 situation. He emphasised the vital importance of all Councillors

carrying out their community champion role to encourage residents to stick rigidly to the rules. Bromley had consistently seen below average levels of infection compared to the rest of London, but, like the rest of outer south London, daily infection rates were now rising again. With the winter-flu period approaching it was crucial that Councillors kept transmitting the message of sticking to the rules.

In response to a question from Councillor Colin Hitchins, the Leader confirmed that communications support was available to support the Council's message on Covid-19 and individual Councillors seeking communications advice. However, he was concerned that, with everyone so tired of the situation, the number of people prepared to ignore the rules was growing and both the general messages and the personal touch of individual communication were needed.

The Leader also confirmed that, following discussions with Conservative members of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee, he had decided that the scheduled meeting of the Executive on 13th January 2021 would take place online. Councillor Simon Fawthrop added that he also hoped to see oral replies to public questions re-instated. Councillor Angela Wilkins, while welcoming the re-introduction of oral replies to public questions, queried whether it was appropriate for the chairman of the Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee to be making such a statement. The Leader responded that he too welcomed the re-instatement of oral replies.

227 Council Tax Support/Reduction Scheme 2021/22
Report CSD20124

An amendment to add the following changes was moved by Councillor Simon Jeal and seconded by Councillor Vanessa Allen -

(1) That looked after young people within the borough, up to the age of twenty five, shall be exempt from 100% of Council tax for their first two years of independent living.

(2) That in view of the economic downturn and job losses as a result of the COVID pandemic and the hardship this has caused to many Bromley residents, the existence of the hardship fund shall be proactively communicated to all those in receipt of council tax support, housing benefit and universal credit.

The proposed amendment was LOST.

A motion to approve the Council Tax Support/Reduction Scheme 2021/22 was moved by Councillor Graham Arthur, seconded by Councillor Colin Smith and **CARRIED**.

228 Housing Finances
Report CSD20125

A motion to approve a capital estimate of £1,764k for the three housing schemes, and to approve revised financing of the schemes as set out in the report, including an internal loan from the General Fund to the Housing Revenue Account of £7,453k, was moved by Councillor Peter Morgan, seconded by Councillor Colin Smith and **CARRIED**.

229 Treasury Management - Quarter 2 Performance 2020/21 and Mid Year Review
Report CSD20126

A motion to note the report and approve changes to the 2020/21 prudential indicators, as set out in Annex B1 to the report, was moved by Councillor Graham Arthur, seconded by Councillor Colin Smith and **CARRIED**.

230 Review of Financial Regulations
Report CSD20127

A motion to approve the updated Financial Regulations and Financial Regulations for Schools was moved by Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe, seconded by Councillor Stephen Wells, and **CARRIED**.

231 Local Pension Board - Annual Report 2020
Report CSD20128

A motion to receive and note the Local Pension Board Annual Report 2020 was moved by Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe, seconded by Councillor Stephen Wells and **CARRIED**.

232 To consider Motions of which notice has been given.

(1) Free School Meals

The following motion was moved by Councillor Kevin Brooks and seconded by Councillor Simon Jeal -

“Bromley Council congratulates Marcus Rashford on his successful campaign to ensure children eligible for free school meals are provided for over the holidays. We give thanks to local residents, groups and businesses for their amazing efforts to prevent children going hungry over the October half term and welcome the Government’s U-turn to commit to providing funding to prevent children going hungry over Christmas.

We fully accept the Council’s responsibility in leading on efforts to ensure child food poverty is eliminated across our borough, and to achieve this ask that the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families establishes a taskforce, for the Council to work with local charities, food banks and other voluntary organisations to develop and deliver a strategy to tackle the longer

term causes of child food poverty and ensure no child in our borough goes hungry.”

The following Members voted in favour of the motion -

Councillors Vanessa Allen, Kathy Bance, Kevin Brooks, Ian Dunn, Simon Jeal, Josh King and Angela Wilkins. (7)

The following Members voted against the motion -

Councillors Gareth Allatt, Graham Arthur, Yvonne Bear, Julian Benington, Nicholas Bennett, Kim Botting, Mike Botting, Katy Boughey, Mark Brock, David Cartwright, Mary Cooke, Aisha Cuthbert, Nicky Dykes, Judi Ellis, Robert Evans, Simon Fawthrop, Peter Fortune, Kira Gabbert, Will Harmer, Christine Harris, Colin Hitchins, Samaris Huntington-Thresher, William Huntington-Thresher, David Jefferys, Charles Joel, Kate Lymer, Christopher Marlow, Robert Mcilveen, Russell Mellor, Alexa Michael, Peter Morgan, Keith Onslow, Tony Owen, Angela Page, Chris Pierce, Neil Reddin, Will Rowlands, Michael Rutherford, Richard Scoates, Suraj Sharma, Colin Smith, Diane Smith, Gary Stevens, Melanie Stevens, Harry Stranger, Michael Tickner, Pauline Tunncliffe, Michael Turner and Stephen Wells. (49)

The Mayor, Councillor Hannah Gray, abstained.

The motion was **LOST**.

(2) Covid-19 Arrangements

The following motion was moved by Councillor Angela Wilkins and seconded by Councillor Ian Dunn -

“This Council’s Urgency Committee put arrangements in place in response to COVID19 in March, and subsequently agreed that these arrangements would be reviewed in June.

This review did not happen.

The Council therefore calls for an immediate meeting of its Urgency Committee (to take place before Christmas) in order to conduct this review and to consider priority matters such as the facilitation of members of the public asking oral questions & supplementary questions at all Council or committee meetings.”

The motion was **LOST**.

233 The Mayor's announcements and communications.

The Mayor thanked Members who had attended Remembrance Day Ceremonies on behalf of the Borough.

The Mayor invited Members to attend the online Magic Evening on 17th December and reminded Members about the prize draw to win a Spitfire flight – no Member had yet succeeded in selling ten tickets and claiming a free ticket. She also thanked Councillor David Jefferys for his donation.

The Mayor reminded Members about her column in “Orpington Life” magazine, the Mayor’s Newsletter, the BR6 magazine and her podcasts.

Sadly, there was no Carol Concert this year, but the Mayor was grateful that she would be attending the Kris Kringle Service at St John the Evangelist Church in Bromley.

The Meeting ended at 9.22 pm

Mayor

COUNCIL MEETING

7th December 2020

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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

According to the Sunday times magazine of 15/11/2020 a fire destroyed the low-rise building at Richmond House on 9 September 2019 in approximately 11 minutes. The building lacked adequate internal compartmentation which was believed to be due to the deregulation of building inspection.

What assurances can the Council give about the quality of building control inspections in Bromley in residential properties?

Reply:

The Building Regulations are meant to be administered and checked whether undertaken by a Local Authority or Approved Inspector. Grenfell brought an issue in relation to fire safety to light and we have had a minor amendment to the regulations introduced last year and a new draft Fire Safety Bill has been published by the government indicating the way they wish to move forward. The main issues with regards to high rise buildings is that any building over 18 metres in height now has to come through a local authority and not an Approved Inspector. There have been other improvements in the fire boarding to be approved on the outside of a structure as well as the total wall construction which should be non-combustible.

The Council's Building Control team deals with all applications to the best of its abilities to ensure that all developments meet the requirements of the legislation in place at that time.

2. From Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement

Please supply details of when leading councillors met with the Borough Commander of the London Fire Brigade in the last 12 months to discuss fire safety issues in residential properties in the Borough and please supply details of the Council's strategy to deal with improving fire safety standards in residential properties in the borough?

Reply:

Councillors and Senior Officers have met with the Borough Commander of the London Fire Brigade on a number of occasions, including as part of the Safer Bromley Partnership, with these meetings held in public and overall numbers not recorded. As generally homeowners and landlords are responsible for fire safety within their own residential property, it is not a matter which is discussed with the

London Fire Brigade, with the Council's statutory role limited in such matters to a relatively small number of scenarios.

3. From Richard Gibbons to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Re. £11.8m Highway Investment, approved by Council 12 December 2016
<https://cde.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s50044404/Enc.%205%20for%20Capital%20Programme.pdf>

Would Portfolio Holder kindly confirm how much has been spent on footway maintenance to date; how much remains to be invested; and provide a list of footways and rights of way (footpaths, bridleways, byways) that have benefitted from investment, and if any budgeted/scheduled maintenance remains outstanding?

Reply:

The highway investment project is nearing completion and a total of 151 footways have been resurfaced at a total cost of £3,450,000. Co-ordination issues have delayed works in three other roads; Centre Common Road, Valley Road and Queen Anne Avenue, which we will look to complete in the New Year. The capital budget is fully committed, and full details of the roads and footways resurfaced can be found in the previously approved reports.

4. From Richard Gibbons to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Re. Rights of Way Improvement Plan (revised), 1 November 2007
https://www.bromley.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1715/rights_of_way_improvement_plan.pdf

Would Portfolio Holder kindly provide an update and current status for each recommended actions listed in Table 8.1 (pages 45-54); amounts expended; and actions that have and will be taken to inform residents of 1 January 2026 cut-off date for recording rights of way on definitive map(s)?

Reply:

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan was originally published in 2007, and the improvement and maintenance priorities detailed in Table 8.1 were aspirational rather than a planned programme.

The document stated that while Bromley Council has a statutory duty under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to publish a RoWIP, they do not have to implement it within a specific timescale. Unfortunately, no funds have since been allocated to Highway Authorities in London for this purpose. Maintenance and management tasks (Policy 4) will continue to be funded from existing allocations and the Council will endeavour to source additional funding for future improvements.

Applications for Definitive Map Modification Orders are being considered in preparation for the 2026 cut-off. Details of this process will be discussed with residents and other interested parties when requested, although Bromley Council do not consider it will be necessary to advertise this change in legislation.

5. From Richard Seabrook to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Is a private developer adopting the upper part of the unmade section of The Avenue in Beckenham? If so, what will this adoption involve and at what cost to the Council and residents?

Reply:

The Avenue, Beckenham is currently an unadopted public highway, and there are no plans for any parts of this road to be adopted by the Council. A resident may, with the owner's consent, maintain or improve an unadopted highway, but even if this was done to an adoptable standard the Council would not adopt a short length of a road in isolation.

6. From Richard Seabrook to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How does the Council ensure the needs of children with particular dietary requirements (for example due to religious considerations) are respected in the provision of free school meals?

Reply:

Academy Trusts and school governors are responsible for the provision of school food, including free school meals. Under Government guidance, schools should make reasonable adjustments for pupils with particular requirements, for example to reflect medical, dietary and cultural needs.

The Council provides support and guidance to any Bromley school that requires it.

7. From Emma Martin, Chair, Bromley Brighter Beginnings, to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

Could you please confirm the exact amount that Bromley Council has been allocated from the Government's Covid 19 Winter Grant, which departments will be receiving a portion of the funds and how much money they will each receive?

Reply:

The Council will receive £754k for the COVID-19 winter Grant.

£605k will go to Education.

£149k will go to the Hardship Fund in Housing.

8. From Emma Martin, Chair, Bromley Brighter Beginnings, to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Can the Council please confirm that Bromley's portion of the Covid 19 Winter Grant will be used to ensure every child registered for free school meals in the London

Borough of Bromley will receive a voucher to cover the value of those meals during the Christmas holidays?

Reply:

Yes, families who are eligible will be offered vouchers.

9. From Patricia Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Were the Covid-19 Defra grants given to Bromley meant to provide welfare relief solely to Children in Social Care or more broadly to people struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19?

Reply:

No. The Defra grant provided Councils with discretion on how to identify and support those most in need. The funding was required to be spent within 12 weeks.

In line with the grant conditions, the full grant of 279K was split between the shielding and assistance programme in Adult Social Care (£119k) and Children's Social Care (£260k).

10. From Patricia Morgan to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How many children in Bromley received any direct support from the Covid-19 Defra grants?

Reply:

It is not possible to directly disaggregate this data. Children's Social Care currently has 2,400 open cases, YOS has 109 young people it is supporting and Bromley Children's Project has 900 children it is supporting. The Defra grant was used additionally to the funding provided through financial assistance to children in need under S17 of the Children Act. All the children known have been supported throughout this pandemic with food, essentials and other support including but not exclusive to emotional wellbeing, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, substance misuse and other factors.

11. From Will Conway to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

CYP PDS Committee, 10 November 2020: Bromley Council was awarded £279,772.15 in Defra grants "to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19. When asked what the Council had used the Defra grants for, they stated that the funds went to Children in Social Care. I am concerned that this money may have been spent on things that it was already the Council's duty to provide and not the extra needs occasioned by the pandemic which the grant was intended to address.

How many children in Bromley are currently recognised as "Children in Social Care"?

Reply:

Children known to Children's Social Care include children in need or in need of protection. Currently there are:

CSC open cases 2,400
YOS 109
Bromley Children's Project 900

12. From Clare Owen to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Does the Council know how many families in Bromley are receiving direct support from Bromley Brighter Beginnings, Bromley Relief, Bromley Food Bank and Bromley Homeless Shelter Advice Service?

Reply:

These are not Council organisations and will need to be contacted directly for the most accurate figures. The Council refer to numerous organisations and carefully monitor internal statistics and direct help and support where required.

13. From Lauren Brown to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

In what ways are Bromley Council exercising their Safeguarding Duties towards Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Children, particularly the duty to promote emotional wellbeing, confidence and a positive identity during this time?

Reply:

Children's Social Care which includes Early Intervention and Family Support Services and YOS ensures that all children are safeguarded in accordance with the Pan London and Working Together to Safeguard children policies without fear or favour. This includes those young people from a range of diverse backgrounds ensuring they supported well, and this includes children and their families with disabilities, mental health, physical and emotional; CSE and exposure to domestic violence and substance misuse.

14. From Verity Susman to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How many of the cohort of children in Bromley in receipt of free school meals at the time the Covid-19 Defra grant was provided, received support funded by the Covid-19 Defra grant?

Reply:

The Defra grant was not provided for meals in the holiday. It was required to be spent to support families before the October half term.

It is not possible to directly disaggregate this data. Children's Social Care currently has 2,400 open cases, YOS has 109 young people it is supporting and Bromley Children's Project has 900 children it is supporting. The Defra grant was used additionally to the funding provided through financial assistance to children in need

under S17 of the Children Act. All the children known have been supported throughout this pandemic with food, essentials and other support including but not exclusive to emotional wellbeing, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, substance misuse and other factors.

15. From Verity Susman to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

What amount (if any) of the Covid-19 Defra grant was spent on statutory services?

Reply:

All of the Defra Grant was used for C-19 purposes and not on statutory services.

16. From Sally Bywater to the to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Would the Council not agree that it would have been more appropriate to issue multiple press releases through its social media platforms promoting help for vulnerable families and children all year round, rather than just the one on 25th October and why were there 5 posts on Halloween safety on the Council Facebook page and only two (same day) for the emergency number for family support?

Reply:

It would be and is more appropriate to continue supporting the most vulnerable families and children, which is precisely what we are doing. We will continue to monitor and reflect on what we do and the services we provide, making improvements where we can, as we will with any of our services. Our message that we are here to consistently support families and children is the right one and we are reminding families of this in different ways. In fact, our feedback from families facing difficult circumstances is that they are not picking up messages on social media and on the assumption they have online access at all, then valuable data is kept understandably for other matters including to maintain school contact and the like.

17. From Sally Bywater to the to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

By which communication means is the Council proposing to directly contact all families in the borough who are entitled to free school meals, to provide them with food vouchers over the Christmas holidays, by which date this will be achieved and how much it will cost the Council?

Reply:

The Council is working with schools to provide vouchers for vulnerable children, including all those eligible for Pupil Premium in time for the Christmas holiday period. It is anticipated that the Council will use approximately £585k of grant funding to meet this cost.

18. From Alisa Igoe to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Reference: Portfolio Holder's written answer to a public question at Children, Education and Families PDS Committee meeting on 10 November 2020.

The Portfolio Holder stated: "5,896 pupils eligible for a free school meal ... Spring 2020 Census" and "updated data not available until Autumn Census". This is a substantial increase on figures for 2019 which were approximately 4,500. What was the exact 2019 figure please and on which date will updated data be published?

Reply:

There were 5,232 pupils eligible for free school meals at the Spring Census 2019. Updated Census data will be published by early 2021.

19. From Alisa Igoe to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Reference: Department of Education statement 16 November: £170m Covid Winter Grant Scheme "Local authorities have local ties and knowledge, making them best placed to identify and help those children and families most in need"

Would you kindly confirm Bromley Council will, as the statement says, "identify" and approach families directly, to provide Christmas holiday food vouchers, rather than requiring families eligible for free school meals to call the MASH telephone line, as happened over October half term?

Reply:

The guidance does not stipulate that the Council should contact families directly. The Council is working with schools to provide support for vulnerable children, including all those eligible for Pupil Premium in time for the Christmas holiday period.

The MASH number is for families who are not known and require support and help and we do this all year round.

20. From Edward Bywater to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How did the Covid-19 Defra funds of £100,000 for extra carers differentiate from the Covid-19 Defra funds for £119,000 that went for assistance and shielding support?

Reply:

£119k was allocated to Adult Social Care to operate the Shielding and Assistance Programme.

The funding of £160k provided to Children's Social Care included the £100K which was required and used to support those families with children with complex disabilities where short breaks and the residential unit managed by the CCG was closed due to Covid-19 – those health staff were deployed to front line NHS services. This increase in care was to prevent breakdown in families and children entering public care.

21. From Edward Bywater to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Will Council list the £18,000 worth of equipment for children it purchased with the Covid-19 Defra grants?

Reply:

Breakdown attached – appendix 1.

22. From Mrs Anne Clark to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Could you tell me exactly how many families in Bromley directly received a service or food vouchers from the Covid-19 Defra grant? Hopefully this will include the Christmas holidays.

Reply:

It is not possible to directly disaggregate this data. Children's Social Care currently has 2,400 open cases, YOS has 109 young people it is supporting and Bromley Children's Project has 900 children it is supporting. The Defra grant was used additionally to the funding provided through financial assistance to children in need under S17 of the Children Act. All the children known have been supported throughout this pandemic with food, essentials and other support including but not exclusive to emotional wellbeing, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, substance misuse and other factors.

The Covid Winter Fund will be used by the Council to provide support to families through Bromley schools, including over the Christmas period.

23. From Mrs Anne Clarke to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Would the Council explain details of the £ 30,000 Defra grant spent on "staffing and training?"

Reply:

The grant provided for two extra staff in the referral and assessment team to support vulnerable families who do not meet the statutory threshold and to support a sustainable solution to identify families who are most in need.

£5k was used to fund the graded care profile to support the professional network to identify emerging needs due to the impact of lockdown – in accordance with the grant criteria.

24. From James Hamilton to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

At the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee, it was stated that Bromley Council had been awarded £279,000 in DEFRA funding. Was any of this used to pay for services the Council had already committed to spend within Children's Services before 23 March 2020, and was any of this spend on statutory services?

Reply:

No, the use of the grant was Covid-19 related and used to support families during this period.

25. From James Hamilton to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How many people in Bromley directly received a service or a food voucher funded by the Covid-19 DEFRA grant?

Reply:

It is not possible to directly disaggregate this data. Children's Social Care currently has 2,400 open cases, YOS has 109 young people it is supporting and Bromley Children's Project has 900 children it is supporting. The Defra grant was used additionally to the funding provided through financial assistance to children in need under S17 of the Children Act. All the children known have been supported throughout this pandemic with food, essentials and other support including but not exclusive to emotional wellbeing, Mental Health, Domestic Violence, substance misuse and other factors.

26. From Hanna Walton to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

How many children in Bromley who currently qualify for Free School Meals receive funding from the Covid-19 Defra grants?

Reply:

The Defra grant was not provided for free school meals and was required to be spent to support families within 12 weeks, which was before the October half term.

27. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Has the take up of free school meals in Bromley increased during 2020? Can the Council estimate the increase and break it down by schools?

Reply:

Updated Census data is expected by January 2021. I would expect a moderate increase on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals since the last Census data in Spring 2020.

28. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

The Government has stated an intention to tackle the issue of child food poverty, and I want to ask the Council if Bromley Council intends to develop a strategy to meet this need locally?

Reply:

The Council already works with partners across the Borough and coordinates on a strategic level to improve outcomes for children and young people across a range of issues.

29. From Maxim Rowlands to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Does the Council know how many Bromley schools currently run food banks for their families?

Reply:

All Bromley schools work to support families in hardship and do an excellent job of doing this. Many have hardship policies and provide a range of support, including access to food. Some will work in partnership with local organisations and other schools have elected to make provision within the school. We do not record a breakdown of this.

30. From Laura Vogel to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Children, Education and Families PDS Committee Minutes from 10 November, (19) Portfolio Holder's Update:

"Those parents in need of extra support were encouraged to call the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) helpline so their call could be screened to ensure they received the correct support. The Portfolio Holder explained that individuals often rung for one thing when actually, in conversation with a qualified social worker, the reason was discovered to be different. For example, someone could ring the number asking for advice but actually trying to report abuse, domestic violence or mental health concerns."

Does the Council consider it appropriate that Bromley only publicised the MASH safeguarding telephone number as the appropriate channel for parents to approach the Council for food provisions during the October half term and how many Bromley staff were manning the line at any one time?

Reply:

Yes. The number was updated to ensure that any caller who wished to contact children social care would go through the MASH – this relates to no wrong door – families can often ring this number on a ruse of information when in fact they are disclosing DV or other issues and qualified social workers are best placed to make judgement on this. Families have complimented the service in supporting them and picking up issues in confidence when there is a safeguarding issue.

CSC has 7 teams in the Referral and Assessment Team made up of 5 social workers and a team manager in each and therefore resource was available to support the MASH line, together with 2 extra social workers as extra capacity through the Covid-19 funding to support any increase. 40 qualified social workers and admin support in total.

31. From Laura Vogel to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Would the Council not have considered it more appropriate to issue a dedicated telephone number (as other Councils did) for families requesting food vouchers for the October half term, rather than only providing the MASH safeguarding number, which may have made families hesitate if they simply wanted to request vouchers to which they were entitled, yet thought they would be talking to a social worker?

Reply:

No.

We have had a high number of compliments from families contacting our MASH line stating that not only did they receive support but in many cases they received advice and guidance including some families who confirmed they rang on the premise of food vouchers but were actually suffering domestic violence and were able to use this as a reason to contact services.

32. From Liz Thomas to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

Bromley Council was awarded £279,772.15 in DEFRA grants to 'support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to Covid-19. When asked what the Council had used the DEFRA grant for, they stated that the funds went to children in social care. The funds were allocated on the basis of population, weighted by the English index of Multiple Deprivation. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-emergency-assistance-grant-for-food-and-essential-supplies>

What is Bromley's English Index of Multiple deprivation and was this entire group covered in the disbursement of the Covid-19 DWFEA grants?

Reply:

In line with the grant conditions, the full Defra grant of 279K was split between the shielding and assistance programme in Adult Social Care (£119k) and Children's Social Care (£260k).

The English Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas. 39 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation are combined and weighted to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation, these domains include Income, Employment, Education, Health, Crime, Barriers to Housing, Living Environment. LSOA level outputs are often aggregated and used to describe relative deprivation for higher-level administrative geographies, such as local authority districts. Bromley is ranked 230th out of 317 local authorities in the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, with the 1st being most deprived. Twenty-three thousand children live in the worse 20% Lower-layer Super Output Areas in Bromley, these

areas are Bromley Common and Keston, Cray Valley East and West, Crystal Palace, Mottingham and Chislehurst North, Orpington, Penge and Cator.

Appendix 1 (Question 21)

Service Area	Item	Rationale	Unit Price	# Units	Cost £	Sub total £	£'000
Equipment							
EIFS	Marquee/Gazebos	To enable socially distanced outside events	£459.00	4	1,840		
EIFS	Board Games for All Ages		£100.00	1	100		
EIFS	Language and Numeracy packs		£100.00	1	100		
EIFS	Personal and emotional skills Games		£100.00	1	100		
EIFS	Sports Equipment		£500.00	1	500		
EIFS	Tablets and Apps	Cognitive educational activities	£550.00	1	550		
EIFS	Camera Equipment and Training	To enable online storytelling and activities	£1,000.00	1	1,000		
YOS	Outdoor Sports Equipment	To encourage physical activity	£1,500.00	1	1,500		
YOS	Art Materials	Individual art sets required due to C-19, to allow CYP to try something relaxing	£2,000.00	1	2,000		
YOS	Laptops and a Colour Printer	To assist with job applications and NEET activity	£2,500.00	1	2,500		
CLA/LCT	Camera Equipment	For socially distanced photography project and film project on race and identity	£6,000.00	1	6,000		
Fostering	Equipment for CLA Football Team		£500.00	1	500.00	500	
Fostering	New Equipment for THRIVE (Therapy Service)		£1,000.00	1	1,000.00	17,690	18

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COUNCIL MEETING

7th December 2020

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR ORAL REPLY

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

What is the debt and any interest paid by council taxpayers in Bromley compared with neighbouring boroughs?

Reply:

The figures have been circulated (see Appendix 1.) What they show is the fundamental truth, which is as old as time, that if you live within your means you do not become hostage to your lenders. It is entirely sensible to borrow to finance investment on occasion to secure future yields, but not to subsidise income or to avoid taking hard spending decisions. The policies of our Council, established over many years, of innovation and prudence, have stood us in good stead. Releasing our housing stock, outsourcing our leisure services, partnership working with a variety of specialist providers – they have all contributed, but the core is prudence, living within your means, taking the tough decisions early and all these have been the key.

Supplementary Question:

The figures show that Bromley has no debt and no interest charges. Neighbouring Croydon has £1.5bn of debt and neighbouring Lewisham has £46m interest charges, which are charged to the Council tax payer each year – I believe it is over £700 per Council Tax payer. What conclusions does he draw between the behaviour of neighbouring boroughs and Bromley?

Reply:

Fundamentally, for me, it is a betrayal of trust. To rack up debts of £1,500m and to saddle the next generation with an annual debt being 20% of their Council tax just to service that debt is something that needs to be answered for. I think that people who are in a position of trust are handling moneys that are given to them in trust by their residents, and if they betray that trust then I think they deserve a come-uppance.

Additional Supplementary Question from Cllr Angela Wilkins:

In what category, and how would you describe, the London Borough of Bexley, given their particular problems at the moment?

Reply:

To be very clear in what I am saying, I do not believe that incompetence and betrayal is the province of any particular party. I think that it crosses all parties and if you look at some councillors, be they Northamptonshire or if you look at the way that Bexley currently have got issues I think that everybody needs to look at the way they are running their business and ask whether they are living within their means and if they

are showing true innovation and true prudence. I do not think that is the province of any particular party.

2. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Leader of the Council

Many London Boroughs have spent close to £1m on contact tracing. Apparently Bromley's expenditure on this work is extremely low because existing staff have been diverted to it. This is a tribute to our staff, but what work isn't being done as a consequence and what is the financial "opportunity cost" of this to the Council?

Reply:

The short answer to both of those questions is none. There is a fantastic story underpinning the local arrangements which should be showcased. Whilst other boroughs have indeed reached directly for taxpayer's cash to hire-in additional resource, in Bromley the challenge has been taken up by fifty-six volunteers drawn from amongst our existing workforce in addition to their other duties, all of whom are keen and eager to serve far over and above what is ordinarily expected of them out of commitment and dedication to the local community that over 60% of Bromley staff call their home. I know from discussing this phenomena at length with the Chief Executive that, especially building as it does on the Council's staggering army of four and a half thousand rapidly assembled volunteers in response to wave 1 of the pandemic, many other London boroughs sit in awe of those accomplishments. I also know that I am not alone amongst Members in feeling very proud of the length the Council staff are going to during these unprecedented times to help see us through this ongoing crisis, and I thank all those involved on behalf of all Members.

Supplementary Question:

Please accept that this is in no way a criticism of our staff – I applaud our staff and accept that they are working way beyond their normal jobs, but that is the very point. I would like to know how many staff you have actually talked to, because a number of them will openly tell you that they are not able to do their day jobs, and that is clearly costing the Council. I was asking the question how much the financial opportunity cost was, which has not been answered, and can I also ask if any of these staff have been compelled to work outside their normal hours to try to do their day jobs alongside the work in response to Covid?

Reply:

I do not know what part of none Councillor Wilkins did not think the answer to the was was, but let me repeat it for her. The Chief Executive is very clear, the staff are happily volunteering to perform these extra functions, not least because many of the Council staff live here, which rather sets us out as a borough and makes them very special. It is a borderline unique attribute of Bromley's which I am very proud to be a part of.

(At this point Cllr Wilkins protested that her question had not been answered, and in a point of personal explanation requested that the Leader should not patronise her.)

3. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing:

In the past three months two papers, for the Redevelopment of Chislehurst Library and the Energy Services Contract were initially published as Part 2 (Confidential) only, in spite of substantial public interest in both of these papers. It was only after significant pressure from Councillors and members of the public that Part 1 (Public) versions were published, containing the vast majority of information in the original papers.

Why were these Part 1 (Public) papers not published with the original meeting agendas?

Reply:

In both cases the contents of the papers related to commercially sensitive information regarding pricing and bid submissions which are normally debated in a Part 2 format. Following publication of the reports the position was reviewed and it was decided that in both cases the decisions in principle could be taken in a Part 1 format and subsequently Part 1 Reports were issued. This model is regularly applied to contract reports and a similar approach is now being taken for property reports. It should be noted that it is an officer decision to decide whether or not to place a report in Part 1 or Part 2 and a Member decision on whether it considers the report in Part 1 or Part 2.

Supplementary Question:

Why were these public papers not published initially, and what are you going to do to make sure that this does not happen again?

Reply:

As far as the last part of that is concerned, I answered that in my original answer, and we have said that in the future a similar approach of trying to put it all in part 1 is being taken for property reports. Why wasn't it part 1 in the first place? It was an officer decision, they made that decision – if we make it again we will make a different decision.

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

Could the Portfolio Holder please explain on what basis the eligibility criteria for applications to the Bromley Welfare Fund were set and when they were last renewed?

Reply:

The Welfare Fund eligibility criteria was adopted by the Executive in October 2019 to provide essential household items to set up home in the community for those households who are on low income and/or experiencing financial hardship who could not otherwise afford essential household items. The Scheme has been kept under annual review to ensure effective use of funds to support those most vulnerable financially excluded households as this is a finite pot of money – as such no material

changes have been made to the eligibility criteria during this time. The full policy setting out eligibility criteria can be found on our website:

https://www.bromley.gov.uk/downloads/file/1634/bromley_welfare_fund

Supplementary Question:

Is he aware that many families are ineligible to claim under the Welfare Fund on the basis that they have lived in the property for longer than eight weeks, and if appliances like cookers and fridges break down they cannot be covered by the Welfare Fund. Would he commit to reviewing this eligibility criteria particularly on the basis that under current circumstances the pandemic is creating great hardship for families in the borough?

Reply:

I will commit to do that – I will speak to my officers and see if there is any basis to make it better for them.

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

One of my recent caseworks concerned an elderly couple who are now homeless because they refused to be relocated from Penge to Gravesend. Can the Council's policy be amended to ensure elderly local residents are not moved away from their support networks to these remote locations?

Reply:

Sadly I cannot make an absolute guarantee. There is an insufficient supply of affordable, local, self-contained temporary accommodation. Taking into account all known and relevant facts officers will endeavour and do endeavour to place all households within, or as close as possible to, the London Borough of Bromley. Our approach is set out in our Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy (link to the website below). Due to the numbers of households requiring temporary accommodation, whilst we make every effort to keep all vulnerable people as close as possible to their existing family and friends and to place every applicant in borough as we would wish it is not always possible and it would not be practical to amend the policy in the manner suggested as we do not have access to sufficient accommodation to deliver on such an approach. We hope that our Housing Strategy will be instrumental in helping us on the supply side by increasing the number of affordable homes that are delivered in the borough. We also continue to focus on taking preventative action to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place wherever possible.

<https://cde.bromley.gov.uk/documents/s50035837/App.%20for%20Updated%20Temporary%20Accommodation%20Procurement%20Strategy%20and%20Placement%20Policy.pdf>

Supplementary Question:

How many authorisation levels are required before making such remote, one-only offers to Bromley residents of all ages?

Reply:

I do not know the answer to that question, but I will discover and let you know by email.

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

Given the Government's announcement that the purchase of new petrol and diesel cars will be banned from 2030 what is the Council doing to accelerate the provision of publicly accessible charging points for electric vehicles?

Reply:

Following the initial issues caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council will shortly be restarting its installation programme for public electric vehicle charging points. Locations will be decided based on demand and projected usage in conjunction with the Council's preferred delivery partner – Source London.

The Council will also continue to work in conjunction with Transport for London and strive to install 'Rapid' charge points when possible and where appropriate. This follows the successful deployment of such points in Nichol Lane, Bromley, Main Road, Biggin Hill and Maple Road Penge.

However, as with all emerging and fast-moving technologies, the Council is fully aware of potential obsolescence and bears this in mind with all schemes. Especially given the Government's recent announcement and the impact this is likely to have on existing fuel providers. It is worth noting for instance that Source London's parent company Bluepoint, has recently been purchased by Total.

Supplementary Question:

Does the Portfolio Holder agree that having public charging points is important to the future of the borough so that it is a destination for shopping and business and not somewhere which people pass through, and that the provision of a variety of charging points, including trickle and rapid are provided?

Reply:

I think as you alluded to there are different reasons for different types of charging points, but in particular for people who might visit the borough to have charge points. We have rapid charge points, the fast charge points installed by Bluepoint, however a number of points installed some years ago seem to be unused, probably due to the obsolescence issue that I previously mentioned.

Additional Supplementary question from Cllr Simon Fawthrop:

Is the Portfolio Holder aware that Cllr King, on numerous occasions when there has been applications at Planning Committees to provide electric car charging points, has voted against?

Reply:

I was not particularly aware of them.

7. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Environment & Community Services

Would the Portfolio Holder please outline the Council's strategy on leaf clearance? Are there multiple clearances or is the policy to wait until all leaves have fallen?

Reply:

The Council has an established methodology for autumn leaf clearance that has been developed over a number of years. This programme involves the Service Provider, Veolia, who clear leafing from the borough's highways as part of their street cleaning duties, and idverde who clear leafing from greenspaces and local parks. Both service providers have pre-prepared programmes of leafing removal that are agreed with client officers in preparation for the seasons event.

During the autumn months, Veolia employ additional seasonal resources over a 12-week period, that work in conjunction with and are supplementary to the routine street cleansing operations. The programme is drawn up in a dynamic manner, utilising datasets from previous leafing programmes, and information from our Arboriculture team regarding streets with tree canopy coverage that was based upon an aerial photography exercise which captured trees on both public and private land. With local knowledge fed in from our Neighbourhood Officers and public/Member enquiries, the programmes of leafing removal are reviewed annually to ensure it is as up to date as possible. Dependent on local needs, some streets will have several attendances across the period, subject to the anticipated timing of their expected leaf fall. So far this season over a thousand tonnes of leafing material has been collected for recycling.

Supplementary Question:

This came from an enquiry from a resident living in Oakfield Road in Penge. They had been indoors in the lock-in, and they said that they had not seen anyone go down their road collecting any leaves for over month – I wondered whether you felt this was usual, especially as when I visited the road leaves were clogging up the drains?

Reply:

As I indicated, we do have a programme that is supplementary to street cleansing. Typically, depending on the road and the number of trees, leaves are collected by the normal street cleansing operation and some by additional rounds, based on the tree canopy, to collect the largest bulk of leaves.

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

Has the Portfolio Holder read the report in the Economics and Human Biology Journal which demonstrates that cycle lanes are on the whole poor value for money, and that if spending increased at the same rate for the next 10 years there would only be a 1% increase in commuter cycling.

Reply:

Thank you for drawing my attention to this paper. I am now aware of the paper and so far have read the summary. I note that one of the paper's conclusions was that "More research is necessary to determine whether such investment in cycling infrastructure constitutes good or equitable value for money." Another conclusion was that there was a strong correlation between spend on cycle infrastructure and increases in commuter cycling, arriving at a figure of less than £5K per additional commuter cycling. As Cllr Fawthrop and I regularly state when commenting on reliance of PTALs in planning, of course commuting is not the only reason residents and visitors travel and we also support residents to travel for essentials and leisure. Many of our LIP funded schemes are not just aimed at cyclists but also at pedestrians which was not considered in this report.

Given the many suggestions that there will be a new normal following this pandemic, it would be particularly brave to predict future trends even based on past data.

In the summer the Government published "Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking", which sets out a comprehensive, long term vision. This may well form part of a future Environment and Community Services PDS Policy Development activity so it is directed to be most relevant to our Borough.

There needs to be a balanced investment in our streets as we all rely on them for our travel.

Supplementary Question:

Just putting in context that reply, has he also read the recent report from Wandsworth Council that shows that where they introduced low traffic neighbourhoods, on eleven cases out of eleven when they took the low traffic neighbourhoods away air pollution actually got better?

Reply:

I am aware of that research. I do note the comment; I also note that some of the warnings that were linked to that data related to the limited period of time that the data was collected. There are many reasons why any borough will implement road schemes and air pollution may be one of them but not the only one, bearing in mind that there is road safety, amongst others.

Additional Supplementary Question from Cllr Ian Dunn:

Is the Portfolio Holder aware that there is other research that shows that cycle schemes give very strong returns to society and I would like to ask what he is going to do to ensure that Bromley gets as much money as possible to enhance the cycling facilities in the borough for the benefit of our residents?

Reply:

As Councillor Dunn knows, as he sits on Environment and Community Services PDS Committee, it is not only down to myself it is up to the policy development activity of this borough to determine which schemes are most appropriate for the London Borough of Bromley context. We have always developed schemes which are

supported by Members and fit our London Borough of Bromley context and that will continue to be the case.

Urgent question from Cllr Melanie Stevens to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

In light of the Government's announcements on 23 November, can the Portfolio Holder explain what he is doing to find the reasonable and short term sum of money, £5K per month, requested by Mytime Active to re-open the Biggin Hill swimming pool.

The re-opening of the pool surely fits within the Government's policy particularly relating to obesity, and this administration's strategy of maintaining and supporting the health and well being of local communities. This community extends and includes Darwin Ward, parts of Bromley Common & Keston Ward and Chelsfield & Pratts Bottom Ward as well as Biggin Hill Ward.

Reply:

This is obviously an important issue and that is why an urgent question has been allowed. Mytime have undertaken a review of the financial implications of Lockdown 2.0 and new arrangements for phased re-opening under recently announced tier 2 restrictions. The impact of COVID has had a significant impact upon all leisure providers and the outlook still remains uncertain. At this stage I confirm that there is no specific request for financial support in relation to the reopening of any particular site and Mytime are currently working to plan a phased re-opening for all sites. However any wider request for support across the leisure portfolio as a whole may come forward in due course for consideration and is likely to continue to be reviewed due to the uncertainty and changing nature of the current situation.

Supplementary Question:

Can you confirm there is no foreseeable date on which the pool at Biggin Hill will be re-opening?

Reply:

They have given us a date, but due to all the uncertainties I hesitate to announce it in public to give people false hope. I am extremely hopeful that it will not be too long.

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

What consultation did Transport for London and neighbouring local authorities undertake with the Council regarding the closure of streets and the narrowing of roads during the summer of 2020?

Reply:

In the Summer of 2020, Transport for London did not undertake any consultation with the London Borough of Bromley, save to inform us that they were to be introducing social distancing measures in West Wickham High Street, which forms part of the Transport for London Road Network.

Bromley was also informed, rather than consulted, by the London Borough of Croydon that they were introducing a Low Traffic Neighbourhood on the border with Bromley in Crystal Palace.

Supplementary Question:

Is the Portfolio Holder aware that it was the combined efforts of the ward councillors and Gareth Bacon, our GLA Member, that got the barriers removed from certain parts of West Wickham High Street after they had put them up firstly by one of our electric charging points and secondly blocking off the disabled bays. Can he explain how it helps cyclists to narrow the roads so that they are put into closer proximity to other vehicles?

Reply:

It is not really for me to explain how TfL came to that decision. Their decision-making is often quite mysterious, as we have seen throughout the summer. I do believe that TfL were responsive to adjusting the scheme in West Wickham High Street in certain respects. I would correct him that it was not one of our charging points – it was one of TfL's own charging points, but the point is well made.

Additional supplementary question from Cllr Angela Wilkins:

Would the Portfolio Holder agree with me and recognise that TfL are only responsible for their own roads, so consulting is not really a relevant question – it is somewhat spurious. In the case of Crystal Palace, would he also agree with me that the only road for which TfL are responsible is the A212 and none of Bromley's roads that form part of that category are part of the low traffic neighbourhood in that area?

Reply:

We would normally expect TfL to consult us before they implement changes on their roads, not least because of the impact that it may have on our roads. TfL do typically consult us, for example, before making changes at particular lights. As far as TfL roads outside our borough are concerned, that is not something that I am fully familiar with as the only two roads in our borough are the A232 and the A21.

Cllr Colin Smith added that Cllr Wilkins' point that the Croydon roads immediately adjacent to the Bromley roads that are affected is taken. I think she overlooks the fact that Fox Hill is in both boroughs so it is not true to say that no Bromley roads are included in the low traffic neighbourhood put in by Croydon with no consultation.

(At this point the time allowed for questions expired and written replies were provided for the remainder of the questions.)

10. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health

Is this Council going to be one of those trialling mass testing?

Reply:

Officers have confirmed that Bromley is a local authority participating in the pilot of the "Asymptomatic Targeted Testing Programme."

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

Information provided at the November meeting of the Environment & Community Services PDS Committee showed no downward movement in the number of people killed or seriously injured on Bromley's roads over the last three years. What will the Portfolio Holder do to get this number moving firmly downwards in the coming years?

Reply:

The long-term trend remains downward, with the council's education and engineering programmes supporting this. The award-winning education programme will continue to target road users, particularly the most vulnerable, whilst engineering measures have focussed on casualty cluster sites where maximum collisions might be prevented.

I agree that after three years of little downward movement in the number of serious road injuries in the Borough, there is no room for complacency and the Council's Traffic and Road Safety teams will be continuing to focus on maximising casualty reduction. Sadly, this lack of downward movement in the number of serious injuries and deaths on the roads, over recent years, is also reflected nationally and across London.

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

Following the Government's announcement of an additional £175 million for councils to provide walking and cycling infrastructure, how does Bromley Council plan to consult local communities, as required as part of the conditions for schemes, and when will this consultation process begin?

Reply:

The Council continues to invest in targeted walking and cycling infrastructure and will continue to consult affected residents and road users as part of each proposal, to ensure that the best solutions are implemented. This may mean that some schemes take many months to come to fruition, but Bromley would rather install schemes that will be well used and supported.

In respect to the recently installed emergency active travel measures, these are experimental in nature which means that the consultation for these is very much ongoing.

13. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Leader of the Council

The Metropolitan Police are taking bold steps to recruit more black police officers and ensure that institutional racism is wiped out in the police force. Can you advise if Bromley Council are undertaking any work or additional training to ensure that the diversity of our communities are reflected?

Reply:

I can advise that Bromley Council employs ~24% of its staff from BAME communities compared to ~ 22% of the population.

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

Will the Portfolio Holder endorse the End our Cladding Campaign organised by Inside Housing and The Sunday Times?

<https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/end-our-cladding-scandal-campaign-relaunches-with-10-step-plan-to-tackle-mounting-crisis-68020>

Reply:

We are not about to join a national pressure group or endorse a campaign but we are supportive of local residents facing this situation. It is a matter of public record that the Council was in contact with Government to ask for funding for local residents to enable cladding to be removed, which did come forward. As Bromley Town Councillors are aware, the Council has kept in contact with their local residents about this and Sir Bob Neill MP has continued to raise this matter in parliament, which is the correct forum for this matter to be discussed.

15. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health

Over the last few years and accelerated under Covid, the number of respite centres in Bromley has dramatically decreased. While praise must go to Bromley Well, they have been overwhelmed and therefore their support is limited. What are the Council doing to improve respite for the large number of Bromley Carers?

Reply:

I am not familiar with the assertion that Bromley Well is overwhelmed and limited in the support they can offer. As with everyone else they are certainly busy in responding to the pressures of Covid but no one from Bromley Well has advised officers that they are overwhelmed.

It is right to say that recent changes have led to a reduction in the number of day centres providing respite for older people and adults with disabilities. Prior to Covid our residents who use these services, whether funded by the Council or whether self-funding, were increasingly choosing not to use day centres in favour of other forms of respite and short breaks.

I do however accept that the closure of buildings-based day and respite services due to Covid has put pressure on carers and that some carers are finding it difficult. In response to the Covid pressures which have clearly compounded this difficulty the Council has acted to support residents and respite providers in a number of ways:

- Carers and residents have been offered and taken up Direct Payments so they might purchase respite support independently and away from indoor group activities.

- Providers with block contracts to deliver respite services have continued to be paid whilst their day centres are closed.
- In all cases respite and other day support providers have continued to keep in touch with their customers and deliver a range of support where possible to carers and those they care for.

For Members information I asked the Director of Adult Services and the Director of Public Health several weeks ago to support the reopening of day centres on a limited basis in order that respite support can be provided along with support to people who might otherwise be living in isolation. This will be subject to providers being able to meet standards set by the Director of Public Health and will be in line with the government guidance on Covid published last month.

Looking to the future the Council has a number of plans in train to develop respite services. These will be developed with people that currently use services, their carers and providers.

Appendix 1 (question 1)

Total Debt by London Borough Council as at 30/9/20

	Borough	Total Debt £000
1	Croydon	1,521,501
2	Barking & Dagenham	946,746
3	Enfield	927,884
4	Newham	818,202
5	Southwark	809,134
6	Ealing	663,400
7	Lambeth	591,658
8	Haringey	514,443
9	Brent	508,679
10	Harrow	422,261
11	Barnet	394,080
12	Greenwich	378,109
13	Islington	370,109
14	Waltham Forest	351,558
15	Redbridge	330,740
16	Sutton	329,521
17	Camden	329,436
18	Kingston upon Thames	307,376
19	Hillingdon	290,568
20	Hammersmith & Fulham	283,142
21	Kensington & Chelsea	263,832
22	Havering	240,585
23	Bexley	227,971
24	Westminster	221,166
25	Lewisham	213,120
26	Hounslow	205,850
27	Richmond upon Thames	134,048
28	Hackney	121,886
29	Merton	113,010
30	Tower Hamlets	72,289
31	Wandsworth	61,456
32	Bromley	0

Source: MHCLG Quarterly Statistics

Total External Interest Paid during 2018-19¹

Borough	Interest Paid £000
1 Newham	46,668
2 Lewisham	26,796
3 Lambeth	26,183
4 Ealing	23,369
5 Croydon	22,639
6 Tower Hamlets	21,907
7 Waltham Forest	20,925
8 Brent	20,680
9 Harrow	19,542
10 Barking & Dagenham	19,529
11 Greenwich	16,695
12 Haringey	16,249
13 Kensington & Chelsea	11,776
14 Kingston upon Thames	10,887
15 Bexley	9,982
16 Hounslow	9,142
17 Redbridge	9,109
18 Havering	7,802
19 Hackney	7,789
20 Enfield	7,604
21 Southwark	6,863
22 Merton	6,315
23 Barnet	5,011
24 Wandsworth	4,945
25 Richmond upon Thames	4,360
26 Islington	3,031
27 Hillingdon	1,695
28 Westminster	1,381
29 Hammersmith & Fulham	1,291
30 Sutton	940
31 Camden	711
32 Bromley	0

Source: MHCLG Quarterly Statistics

¹ This is the last year for which a full dataset is currently available

COUNCIL MEETING

7th December 2020

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR WRITTEN REPLY

1. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett MA JP to the Leader of the Council

Following the announcement of plans for H M The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 whether he will consider modest grants to local groups who organise events to celebrate the occasion?

Reply:

Subject to the views of other Members, I would certainly be inclined to mark the occasion myself.

Forgoing the fees for temporary street closures to host street parties for applications received in time by a specified date, most certainly.

Ideas beyond that might be something worthy of considering on a case by case basis too.

2. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett MA JP to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal Recreation and Housing

Pursuant to my question at the Renewal, Recreation and Housing PDS Committee on November 9th what is the position regarding the construction of housing on the Station Road Car Park in West Wickham?

Reply:

A contract for site plans has just been commissioned, with detailed design options like to be ready for March 2021.

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

Please provide a breakdown of the Council's use of Agency Staff, showing person days and net cost, by month from April 2019 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:

Please see the attached document - [Appendix 1](#).

4. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

Please provide the total number of Planning Applications received for 2019 and 2020 (to date) broken down by ward, showing the number of normal Planning Applications, the number relating to Permitted Development and the number related to tree work.

Reply:

The information requested is provided below. Unfortunately it is not possible to provide a breakdown at ward level at this stage in respect of the wider planning applications– this issue had already been identified and work planned for further development on the IT system to enable such reports to be generated going forward.

2019:

Total planning applications received: 2921

Total planning applications received in first 3 quarters of calendar year: 2283

Total Tree applications received: 924

Permitted development applications 2019:

Bickley	11
Biggin Hill	7
Bromley Common and Keston	14
Bromley Town	24
Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom	18
Chislehurst	12
Clock House	21
Copers Cope	24
Cray Valley East	9
Cray Valley West	22
Crystal Palace	4
Darwin	13
Farnborough & Crofton	9
Hayes & Coney Hall	8
Kelsey & Eden Park	31
Mottingham & Chislehurst North	8
Orpington	11
Penge & Cator	16
Petts Wood & Knoll	17
Plaistow & Sundridge	19
Shortlands	5
West Wickham	17
Total	320

2020:

Total planning applications received in first 3 quarters of calendar year: 2047

Total Tree applications received: (up to 03/12/2020): 1033

Permitted Development Applications 2020 (up to 03/12/2020)

Bickley	12
Biggin Hill	5
Bromley Common and Keston	18
Bromley Town	25
Chelsfield and Pratts Bottom	11
Chislehurst	12
Clock House	23
Copers Cope	26
Cray Valley East	13
Cray Valley West	17
Crystal Palace	4
Darwin	12
Farnborough & Crofton	13
Hayes & Coney Hall	11
Kelsey & Eden Park	31
Mottingham & Chislehurst North	5
Orpington	17
Penge & Cator	27
Petts Wood & Knoll	11
Plaistow & Sundridge	15
Shortlands	7
West Wickham	16
Total	331

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

What is Bromley Council doing to ensure that all Grade 1 and Grade 2 listed buildings in the borough are properly maintained?

Reply:

Please see the attached document - Appendix 2.

6. From Cllr Kathy Bance MBE to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

A resident submitted photos of Bromley trees that had not been adequately maintained. Can you confirm that all our trees have been inspected during this year despite Covid?

Reply:

Covid-19 did impact our tree planting programme. In relation to the submitted photos of young trees we have concluded a borough wide survey of all trees planted within the past 10 years. This has resulted in the creation of a works programme to resolve issues. In addition, we are updating our young tree maintenance and tree planting procedures to ensure better care is given while our trees establish in the future, which should avoid this particular issue reoccurring.

Regarding general tree inspections, this is a rolling process wherein we survey approximately one third of the borough's trees each year as set out in our Tree Management Strategy. This surveying is undertaken primarily in winter when other seasonal demands on the service abate. As the schedule year runs from April-March we will have a clearer picture in terms of performance in the new financial year.

Appendix 1 (Question 3)

Year	Date	Month	Group Name	Calc. Days	Hours	Ave. Daily Rate	Net Amount	VAT Amount	Gross Amount	Employee FTE as at last day of month
2019	4	April	1. Adult Social Care	1,072.36	7,721.00	223.45	239,623.30	47,924.76	287,548.06	191.92
2019	4	April	2. Childrens Social Care	1,414.41	10,183.75	306.60	433,651.40	86,730.23	520,381.63	326.39
2019	4	April	3. Other ECHS	279.38	2,011.50	487.57	136,215.09	27,243.02	163,458.11	336.18
2019	4	April	4. ECS	728.40	5,244.50	175.72	127,995.12	25,599.15	153,594.27	246.48
2019	4	April	5. Other	195.17	1,405.25	196.11	38,275.09	7,655.04	45,930.13	162.82
2019	5	May	1. Adult Social Care	1,358.13	9,778.50	221.48	300,799.84	60,160.03	360,959.87	194.46
2019	5	May	2. Childrens Social Care	1,727.19	12,435.75	298.58	515,708.11	103,141.72	618,849.83	331.42
2019	5	May	3. Other ECHS	408.26	2,939.50	414.87	169,377.28	33,875.53	203,252.81	340.88
2019	5	May	4. ECS	857.60	6,174.75	191.21	163,982.62	32,796.64	196,779.26	244.91
2019	5	May	5. Other	290.66	2,092.75	203.76	59,225.45	11,845.07	71,070.52	163.62
2019	6	June	1. Adult Social Care	1,109.20	7,986.25	227.48	252,317.10	50,463.50	302,780.60	194.86
2019	6	June	2. Childrens Social Care	1,352.29	9,736.50	289.93	392,068.64	78,413.72	470,482.36	333.14
2019	6	June	3. Other ECHS	285.10	2,052.75	380.08	108,363.70	21,672.81	130,036.51	343.17
2019	6	June	4. ECS	760.83	5,478.00	154.39	117,467.34	23,493.60	140,960.94	247.08
2019	6	June	5. Other	312.95	2,253.25	188.26	58,917.49	11,783.49	70,700.98	161.04
2019	7	July	1. Adult Social Care	1,115.63	8,032.50	220.98	246,530.01	49,306.04	295,836.05	192.61
2019	7	July	2. Childrens Social Care	1,318.68	9,494.50	295.42	389,559.97	77,911.97	467,471.94	333.95
2019	7	July	3. Other ECHS	339.20	2,442.25	309.09	104,842.81	20,968.56	125,811.37	347.55
2019	7	July	4. ECS	756.60	5,447.50	179.04	135,458.35	27,091.84	162,550.19	248.19
2019	7	July	5. Other	338.26	2,435.50	176.94	59,853.72	11,970.77	71,824.49	161.04
2019	8	August	1. Adult Social Care	1,181.56	8,507.25	220.11	260,077.05	52,015.45	312,092.50	195.11
2019	8	August	2. Childrens Social Care	1,653.02	11,901.75	292.63	483,719.60	96,743.91	580,463.51	339.89
2019	8	August	3. Other ECHS	348.40	2,508.50	274.84	95,754.82	19,150.94	114,905.76	345.25
2019	8	August	4. ECS	974.58	7,017.00	166.36	162,132.95	32,426.68	194,559.63	247.81
2019	8	August	5. Other	366.11	2,636.00	192.55	70,496.12	14,099.31	84,595.43	160.89
2019	9	September	1. Adult Social Care	886.46	6,382.50	223.10	197,771.66	39,554.34	237,326.00	208.43
2019	9	September	2. Childrens Social Care	1,201.32	8,649.50	283.23	340,248.58	68,049.69	408,298.27	349.62
2019	9	September	3. Other ECHS	269.24	1,938.50	316.01	85,082.06	17,016.42	102,098.48	338.26
2019	9	September	4. ECS	698.44	5,028.75	177.75	124,149.84	24,830.07	148,979.91	250.21
2019	9	September	5. Other	234.97	1,691.75	198.00	46,522.23	9,304.53	55,826.76	161.14
2019	10	October	1. Adult Social Care	803.58	5,785.75	219.71	176,555.55	35,311.13	211,866.68	212.42
2019	10	October	2. Childrens Social Care	1,078.75	7,767.00	280.19	302,252.91	60,450.58	362,703.49	350.53
2019	10	October	3. Other ECHS	283.33	2,040.00	258.81	73,329.03	14,665.86	87,994.89	341.12
2019	10	October	4. ECS	856.81	6,169.00	177.04	151,685.63	30,337.32	182,022.95	248.63
2019	10	October	5. Other	251.74	1,812.50	223.46	56,254.16	11,250.89	67,505.05	157.84
2019	11	November	1. Adult Social Care	871.04	6,271.50	221.76	193,165.86	38,633.22	231,799.08	215.14
2019	11	November	2. Childrens Social Care	1,361.08	9,799.75	278.56	379,141.21	75,828.22	454,969.43	345.94
2019	11	November	3. Other ECHS	369.44	2,660.00	282.93	104,527.63	20,905.45	125,433.08	344.13
2019	11	November	4. ECS	1,054.06	7,589.25	179.23	188,921.00	37,784.39	226,705.39	249.42
2019	11	November	5. Other	407.95	2,937.25	212.43	86,662.01	17,332.46	103,994.47	162.52
2019	12	December	1. Adult Social Care	692.05	4,982.75	217.45	150,486.60	30,097.38	180,583.98	228.07
2019	12	December	2. Childrens Social Care	1,255.59	9,040.25	305.31	383,343.10	76,668.72	460,011.82	343.49
2019	12	December	3. Other ECHS	236.77	1,704.75	296.09	70,105.66	14,021.15	84,126.81	344.59
2019	12	December	4. ECS	822.64	5,923.00	210.86	173,463.09	34,692.68	208,155.77	241.48
2019	12	December	5. Other	341.11	2,456.00	281.70	96,091.54	19,218.33	115,309.87	166.14
2020	1	January	1. Adult Social Care	664.38	4,783.50	217.47	144,484.83	28,897.01	173,381.84	233.57
2020	1	January	2. Childrens Social Care	1,149.86	8,279.00	279.35	321,219.30	64,243.86	385,463.16	358.49
2020	1	January	3. Other ECHS	262.95	1,893.25	288.20	75,783.61	15,156.76	90,940.37	345.28
2020	1	January	4. ECS	806.88	5,809.50	188.85	152,377.34	30,475.63	182,852.97	244.12
2020	1	January	5. Other	367.64	2,647.00	224.66	82,593.69	16,518.83	99,112.52	162.42

2020	2	February	1. Adult Social Care	674.86	4,859.00	221.62	149,560.34	29,912.12	179,472.46	232.2
2020	2	February	2. Childrens Social Care	1,017.85	7,328.50	281.93	286,956.59	57,391.31	344,347.90	357.05
2020	2	February	3. Other ECHS	299.27	2,154.75	272.70	81,612.18	16,322.42	97,934.60	345.83
2020	2	February	4. ECS	801.74	5,772.50	188.87	151,427.20	30,285.54	181,712.74	243.12
2020	2	February	5. Other	373.92	2,692.25	229.55	85,833.36	17,166.68	103,000.04	164.25
2020	3	March	1. Adult Social Care	633.06	4,558.00	219.84	139,173.15	27,834.67	167,007.82	233.48
2020	3	March	2. Childrens Social Care	1,019.58	7,341.00	279.44	284,910.93	56,982.18	341,893.11	358.05
2020	3	March	3. Other ECHS	370.03	2,664.25	270.20	99,984.86	19,996.96	119,981.82	350.28
2020	3	March	4. ECS	745.83	5,370.00	186.11	138,810.50	27,762.23	166,572.73	244.62
2020	3	March	5. Other	346.01	2,491.25	237.19	82,069.37	16,413.87	98,483.24	164.25
2020	4	April	1. Adult Social Care	556.42	4,006.25	243.92	135,721.44	27,144.35	162,865.79	235
2020	4	April	2. Childrens Social Care	908.72	6,542.75	290.03	263,556.53	52,711.33	316,267.86	359.79
2020	4	April	3. Other ECHS	332.53	2,394.25	258.63	86,004.26	17,200.87	103,205.13	351.42
2020	4	April	4. ECS	594.83	4,282.75	193.35	115,012.01	23,002.28	138,014.29	247.26
2020	4	April	5. Other	336.81	2,425.00	245.65	82,736.77	16,547.29	99,284.06	165.82
2020	5	May	1. Adult Social Care	667.53	4,806.25	243.33	162,433.11	32,486.67	194,919.78	237
2020	5	May	2. Childrens Social Care	1,107.50	7,974.00	288.26	319,242.52	63,848.52	383,091.04	358.16
2020	5	May	3. Other ECHS	363.65	2,618.25	248.99	90,543.07	18,108.65	108,651.72	353.98
2020	5	May	4. ECS	726.08	5,227.75	189.61	137,671.51	27,534.40	165,205.91	247.48
2020	5	May	5. Other	400.56	2,884.00	255.93	102,513.10	20,502.70	123,015.80	169.82
2020	6	June	1. Adult Social Care	520.63	3,748.50	244.22	127,145.70	25,429.10	152,574.80	238
2020	6	June	2. Childrens Social Care	1,142.53	8,226.25	289.47	330,735.23	66,147.08	396,882.31	359.16
2020	6	June	3. Other ECHS	231.88	1,669.50	320.77	74,379.21	14,875.87	89,255.08	354.7
2020	6	June	4. ECS	568.13	4,090.50	194.80	110,672.19	22,134.54	132,806.73	249.11
2020	6	June	5. Other	333.99	2,404.75	246.20	82,227.60	16,445.52	98,673.12	169.18
2020	7	July	1. Adult Social Care	767.78	5,528.00	236.50	181,579.37	36,315.85	217,895.22	238
2020	7	July	2. Childrens Social Care	1,361.04	9,799.50	289.07	393,435.94	78,687.17	472,123.11	359.16
2020	7	July	3. Other ECHS	163.54	1,177.50	407.68	66,672.50	13,334.52	80,007.02	354.7
2020	7	July	4. ECS	778.92	5,608.25	193.08	150,391.30	30,078.34	180,469.64	249.11
2020	7	July	5. Other	414.97	2,987.75	271.29	112,575.41	22,515.08	135,090.49	169.18
2020	8	August	1. Adult Social Care	495.38	3,566.75	235.61	116,718.15	23,343.63	140,061.78	243.02
2020	8	August	2. Childrens Social Care	985.80	7,097.75	289.31	285,201.69	57,040.34	342,242.03	358.84
2020	8	August	3. Other ECHS	91.25	657.00	430.22	39,257.59	7,851.55	47,109.14	359.01
2020	8	August	4. ECS	479.34	3,451.25	200.91	96,302.17	19,260.48	115,562.65	252.48
2020	8	August	5. Other	380.52	2,739.75	277.88	105,738.47	21,147.69	126,886.16	165.7
2020	9	September	1. Adult Social Care	519.38	3,739.50	239.70	124,494.10	24,898.85	149,392.95	243.77
2020	9	September	2. Childrens Social Care	1,009.93	7,271.50	290.82	293,708.34	58,741.72	352,450.06	358.31
2020	9	September	3. Other ECHS	141.18	1,016.50	338.58	47,800.87	9,560.18	57,361.05	363.11
2020	9	September	4. ECS	513.13	3,694.50	197.07	101,120.22	20,224.12	121,344.34	251.03
2020	9	September	5. Other	307.12	2,211.25	277.40	85,194.24	17,038.88	102,233.12	173.12
2020	10	October	1. Adult Social Care	264.93	1,907.50	241.02	63,852.34	12,770.49	76,622.83	242.77
2020	10	October	2. Childrens Social Care	465.59	3,352.25	296.04	137,834.64	27,566.92	165,401.56	362.7
2020	10	October	3. Other ECHS	91.08	655.75	293.78	26,756.66	5,351.34	32,108.00	361.57
2020	10	October	4. ECS	210.03	1,512.25	189.13	39,724.22	7,944.83	47,669.05	252.81
2020	10	October	5. Other	182.15	1,311.50	276.05	50,282.75	10,056.59	60,339.34	171.69

Appendix 2 (Question 5)

Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Listed Building Consent is required for all works of demolition, alteration or extension to a listed building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

The requirement applies to all types of works and to all parts of those buildings covered by the listing protection (possibly including attached and curtilage buildings or other structures), provided the works affect the character of the building as a building of special interest.

It is a criminal offence not to seek consent when it is required. Not knowing a building is listed is not a defence to any criminal proceedings. A defence is available if the works were urgently necessary in the interests of health and safety.

There are three types of listed status for buildings in England and Wales:

- Grade I: buildings of exceptional interest.
- Grade II*: particularly important buildings of more than special interest.
- Grade II: buildings that are of special interest, warranting every effort to preserve them.

The Historic England National Heritage List for England¹ shows that Bromley has a total of 412 Listed Buildings, including eight Grade I Listed Buildings in Bromley, 23 grade II* and 381 Grade II Listed Buildings.

The owners of listed buildings are under no legal obligation to maintain their property in a good state of repair; even though it is in their interests to do so.

Individual Councils throughout England do not have a statutory duty to compile lists of Listed Buildings that are at risk or in need of maintenance within their area; however, there are a range of statutory enforcement powers at their disposal including section 215 Notices, Urgent Works Notices, Repairs Notices and other statutory enforcement tools and powers under the various Housing, Planning and Building Acts, to secure the future of historic buildings². It should be noted that these statutory enforcement powers mainly apply to empty properties.

Historic England maintain a 'Heritage at Risk' register³ of heritage assets (including Listed Buildings, that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. In conjunction with Historic England, the Conservation Officer is currently involved in several heritage at risk projects, including a large-scale heritage at risk project at Crystal Palace working with colleagues in Regeneration to secure the future of the Park.

¹ Accessed here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

²The Historic England document 'Stopping the Rot' provides useful detail on the powers available. It can be accessed here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/stoppingtherot/>

³ Accessed here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/advanced-search>

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