

EXECUTIVE

24TH MARCH 2015

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) From Christopher Stevens, Governor, La Fontaine Academy, to the Portfolio Holder for Education

1. What is the shortfall in reception places projected each year over the next 5 years (2015-2020) in central Bromley, including Bromley Town Ward (planning area 4)?

Reply:

A table that illustrates the shortfall in reception places in Planning Area 4 (that includes Bromley Town Ward) between 2015/16 and 2020/21 will be sent to you (see below). The shortfalls are as shown in the table – this excludes La Fontaine school but includes a 5% uplift on the GLA figures.

| | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| GLA forecast | 559 | 551 | 553 | 559 | 562 | 565 |
| School Places (excluding La Fontaine) | 510 | 510 | 510 | 510 | 510 | 510 |
| Surplus/deficit in places | -49 | -41 | -43 | -49 | -52 | -55 |
| GLA Forecast 105% (plus 5% for local variations in need and parental preferences) | 587 | 578 | 581 | 587 | 590 | 593 |
| Surplus/deficit in places | -77 | -68 | -71 | -77 | -80 | -83 |

2. When does the Bromley Council expect to make a decision on current proposals for the upgrade of Havelock Road and the sharing of part of the grounds with La Fontaine Academy?

Reply:

By the end of the month.

Supplementary question:

Do we have your assurance that the Executive will decide before the “purdah” period starts?

Reply:

Yes.

3. What factors have been identified from the recent traffic surveys and does the data indicate any material impact on local traffic flow and parking that would arise from the proposal to use the Havelock site as a permanent location for La Fontaine Academy?

Reply:

The survey indicates that the presence of La Fontaine would have a moderate effect on some roads, and a more severe effect on other roads. There would be quite an impact at the "Dripping Tap" junction.

(2) From John Ince, Committee Member, Friends Forum, to the Portfolio Holder for Environment

As the proposal represents a departure for both the Council and the contractor, will there be a comprehensive evaluation with the proposed board and stakeholders of how the contract is working in respect of its impact on our parks and green spaces, as well as on Friends Groups and volunteers?

Reply:

Yes, there has to be a continued partnership arrangement if the proposals are approved today. The proposed Board will include Councillors, the friends Forum and representatives of individual Friends Groups, possibly on a rota basis. It must prioritise what the service provides and act as a critical friend. There will be testing times ahead and everyone involved in our parks has a part to play.

Supplementary Question:

Will the contractor be aware that the contract will be reviewed between the Friends Groups and the Council ? There are issues that the Friends Groups are not happy about – will the contractor be aware of this?

Reply:

This will be important reputation management for the contractor, and they will be aware of the issues. They will be expected to attend Board meetings, and it will be clear that they will be managed not just by Council officers but also by the Friends Groups.

(3) From David Wood, President of the Beckenham Society to the Portfolio Holder for Resources (questions asked in his absence by Mrs Pam Nottcutt, co-Chairman of the Beckenham Society)

1. Beckenham Green is a great asset in the St George's Conservation Area of the town and I seek to make this permanent. Whilst the Council owns the land self registering it will not alter that status and does not add any costs to the Council's budget so why has registration been declined?

Reply:

The Council's Development Control Committee considered your application for registration on the grounds that Beckenham Green had become an area of land

meeting the legal requirements for registration. For the reasons given in the report and by that Committee it was concluded that the legal tests for registration were not met but that the Council's Executive, on behalf of the Council as land owner, should consider whether to make a voluntary registration. I note from the original report to the Development Control Committee that the Council at its meeting on 27th July 1970 appropriated the land as public open space. Since this time the public have had a legal right to use the land. Members tonight will have to consider whether voluntary registration would really add anything to the public's current rights to enjoy the land.

Supplementary Question:

Does the Portfolio Holder realise that part of the land could be regarded as "brown" land that could be developed?

Reply:

This is clearly green open space.

2. It would seem that the public has right of access to the Green or has access by right. It has been argued that there is a subtle difference in the interpretation of these rights as the result of a legal case in Yorkshire. Is this the stumbling block in Beckenham's case as quite clearly the Green has been enjoyed by residents and visitors for 45 years?

Reply:

It would seem that the public has right of access to the Green or has access by right. It has been argued that there is a subtle difference in the interpretation of these rights as the result of a legal case in Yorkshire. Is this the stumbling block in Beckenham's case as quite clearly the Green has been enjoyed by residents and visitors for 45 years?

Supplementary Question:

Case law post-dates the application by Mr Wood. The case law is considered vexatious and a poor judgement.

Reply:

The Director of Resources explained that there were varying views about the North Yorkshire CC case.

3. The churchyard of St George's Parish Church adjoins the Green and the Rector and church council is supporting my case for registration as a Town Green. This surely raises the profile for the Council to take this simple step does it not?

Reply:

I think I have already answered this question. I am sure Members tonight will note the support for registration but they will also have to consider what it would add to the protection given to the land by virtue of its current ownership by the Council for use as public open space.