

QUESTIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ORAL REPLY

From Cllr Ian Dunn

1. Please provide an update on the implementation of the 15 Priority 1 recommendations in the recent Waste Services audit.

Reply

A full update will be provided at the next Audit Sub-Committee in November. Since taking up the post of PH, I have met with lead officers and good progress has been made in addressing the priorities identified in the report.

Supplementary Questions:

Do you think that this Committee is interested in the management of the largest contract within the Portfolio? The Chairman of the Contracts Sub-Committee reported that work was still ongoing on change control notices within this Portfolio did the Portfolio Holder have any comment on this.

Reply:

In response, the Portfolio Holder highlighted that Bromley had the second best recycling performance in outer London and one of the most cost effective contracts in London. This demonstrated that, although improvements were always achievable, the service was performing well and delivering a good service to residents. In response to the first question, the Portfolio Holder suggested it was up to the Committee when it chose to address scrutiny of contractors.

2. Please provide an update on the implementation of the 5 Priority 1 recommendations in the recent Street Works audit.

Reply

A full update will be provided at the next Audit Sub-Committee in November. Since taking up the post of PH, I have met with lead officers and good progress has been made in addressing the priorities identified in the report.

Supplementary Question:

Would the Portfolio Holder like to comment on the similarity between the recommendations made in this audit and the recommendations made in the

audit of waste services and indicate whether he believes this reflects any cultural issues within the Department?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder replied that both the contracts highlighted were high performing contracts and there had been no failure in the delivery of service delivered to residents.

Cllr Evans – Supplementary Question:

When was the audit report published as it appears that it will be almost a year before a response can be provided?

Reply:

The Waste Service audit was published at the end of last year and the Street works audit was published earlier this year. Following the audit an action plan had been developed and this action plan had received a high degree of scrutiny from the Audit Sub-Committee. The majority of the actions were implemented immediately; however the audit action plan then checks that the changes are actually part of the embedded process before marking as complete. Some aspects which only happen infrequently, such as the wavier process, might need to wait for the implementation of the action to be demonstrated. The recommendations that remain outstanding require input from other services, such as IT and legal; these will be actioned as soon as possible.

From Mr Richard Gibbons

1. Following publication of the 2016 road casualties data, would the Portfolio Holder consider revising the projected Total Injuries & Deaths (TID) statistics published in the Environment Portfolio Plan which have been somewhat misleading since 2014, implying our streets are safer than they were 10 years ago?

Reply

The Environment Portfolio Plan contains road casualty reduction targets, rather than projections, and although these are ambitious targets, in the longer term they are not unrealistic. The Borough sees a significant downward trend road casualty numbers, just like the nation as a whole; however, the individual numbers show perturbations not a continuous reduction. After a couple of recent years where the number of people injured on our streets has not decreased, but has sadly increased, this does nothing but drive the Council's determination to make sure we do not let up in our determination to do what is in the Council's powers and to work with partners (e.g. Traffic Police) to make our streets ever safer.

Supplementary Question:

The TID figures have increased as the number of cars registered in the Borough has increased. Does the Portfolio Holder agreed that reducing car dependency would reduce the number of accidents?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder stated that correlation did not necessarily imply causation and there were many different reasons for the accidents that occurred. The Portfolio Holder also reported that the majority of wear and tear that occurred on the Borough's roads was a result of HGVs.

2. Would the Portfolio Holder confirm how many requests there have been from residents for speed reduction measures on their streets, reported via FixMyStreet and other methods for 2014/15, 2015/16, and 2016/17, and how many requests have resulted in action being taken?

Reply

I would be happy to supply the information, but it will take time to pull together the data. Would Mr Gibbons like the information to be sent to him in written form at a later date?

Supplementary Question:

Mr Gibbons confirmed that he would like the information to be sent to him following the meeting and asked whether the Portfolio Holder condoned the actions of his fellow Councillors who sat on the Development Control Committee and had overturned the Officer recommendation concerning road safety in relation to the planning application for Buller's Wood School for Boys?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder reported that he was not at the meeting and could not therefore comment on what had happened at the meeting. However, the Portfolio Holder noted that the way in which the roads across the Borough were used had changed over time and the Portfolio Holder reported that he would be meeting with TfL to discuss bus routes in order to account for changes including new schools..

3. As part of the decluttering programme (Agenda 6b Report 3.13) would the Portfolio Holder consider a 30mph speed limit on the 7.8% of LBB maintained

roads that currently have higher speed limits, thereby reducing the number of signs needed wherever there is a change of speed, associated cost of maintenance, and consequent improvement in road safety?

Reply

I do not consider that this would be a suitable justification for considering changing speed limits. Bromley believes that speed limits should be set appropriately for the design and nature of the individual streets. Changes in speed limits alert drivers to hazards or a change of environment. For example, there are safety benefits in making it clear to drivers that their speed should be lower upon entering a village from a rural road, where a higher speed may have been safe. To simply set a standard speed limit of 30mph on every street in a diverse borough such as Bromley could well have the consequence of decreasing road safety. For example speed limits provide other road users with information on likely traffic speeds so they can behave accordingly. Roads without regularly spaced street lights would still require repeater speed limit signs, so the decluttering effect would be small. Justifying such a policy on grounds of clutter and cost would also have the implication of removing 20mph zones.

Supplementary Question:

Do you not agree that pedestrians are 5½ times more likely to be killed if they are in an accident with a car travelling at 40mph than in an accident with a car travelling at 30mph? Does the Council not have a moral duty to protect its vulnerable residents?

Reply:

The Portfolio Holder responded that he believed that road design was as important as speed limits and it was important that roads were designed in a manner which promoted safety e.g. Motorways were some of the safest roads in the country despite speed limits of 70mph.

QUESTIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR WRITTEN REPLY

From Colin Willetts

1. We understood from Councillor Nathan he had requested two bus stop hard standings in Chipperfield at the junction with Ravenscourt and opposite number 281, however, the latter has not been marked up - could you address this issue as elderly residents are still alighting centrally directly onto the grass verge?

Reply

An order has been placed to extend the hardstanding at the bus stop near the junction with Ravenscourt Road and opposite nos. 281/283 to accommodate dual door buses.

2. Would the Portfolio Holder consider via consultation a residents permit parking scheme in Page Heath Villas?

Reply

Page Heath Villas is just outside the current Bromley town centre CPZ. Large CPZs such as this are reviewed intermittently and Page Heath Villas will be considered next time a review is undertaken, which is likely to be in 2018 or 2019.

3. With regard to the alleyway adjacent 45 Ravensbury Road, could the Portfolio Holder i) replace top sections of missing cycle barriers at both alley ends? & via enforcement letter ii) for cutback of branch overhang obstructing alley from number 45?

Reply

The alley in question is not showing as LBB owned or a Public Right of Way. Officers are investigating with regard to the question and how it may be dealt with.