

COUNCIL MEETING**10TH DECEMBER 2018****QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR ORAL REPLY****1. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection & Enforcement**

The Home Office has recently published its Violence & Vulnerability (Locality) Review of Bromley. The review comes from a series of focus groups with agencies working in the field. Criticisms of the poor levels of service in Bromley are too numerous to list, but specific criticisms of this council include:

- *“Bromley is in denial about the problem it has with gangs and has been for years”*
- *“Bromley has no idea how to engage with the Afro Caribbean community around this issue”*
- *“There is still silo working with in the borough – in other boroughs staff know who to speak to, and they know who leads this agenda”*

The report’s summary concludes:

“It was not clear to most of those we talked to who owns this agenda and roles of various partnerships and agencies. This indicates an issue around communication and leadership that will need resolving in the form of a clear recognition of the problem, a strategy to tackle it and a clear operational plan shared between police, the local authority, social landlords, schools, health agencies and the voluntary and community sectors.”

Will the Portfolio Holder please give her response to this report?

2. From Cllr Ian Dunn to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education & Families

The internal audit report into Leaving Care dated 15 October 2018 gave limited assurance and had 6 priority 1 recommendations. What are the implications of this for our ongoing Ofsted Inspections, particularly given that Pathway Plans were found not to be being reviewed every six months as required?

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

Can you confirm that at least one of the Harris Academy Secondary Schools will only be accepting pupils from Harris Primary Schools? If so, can you advise which of the Harris Academies will be affected and when is this likely to happen?

4. From Cllr Josh King to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Which areas in Bromley benefit from street or pavement cleaning with high pressure water and / or scrubbing machines?

5. From Councillor Simon Jeal to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Is the Portfolio Holder aware that a number of crowd funding schemes for projects in the Borough are currently trying to achieve funding by the 17th December, including for Beckenham Green and a bridge to access the Crystal Palace Dinosaurs. Does the London Borough of Bromley support these schemes and would he encourage local residents and organisations to donate towards them?

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

Why, unlike in recent years, will there be no public meetings about the budget this year, where residents can ask questions of the portfolio holders?

7. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

On 12/12/18 Universal Credit is due to have completed its roll out throughout the country. As councillors one of the main issues we encounter is vulnerable residents unable to cope with the new payment structure. What is the Council doing to ensure residents do not slip into debt and face possible eviction.

8. From Cllr Simon Fawthrop to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

In relation to the written reply to my questions 10 and 11, would the Portfolio Holder please detail with a year by year summary of the extra costs this Authority would have had to bear, had it passed the 'alternative budget' proposals of the Labour Party opposition since 2002/3 to date, summarising:

(i) The financial effect such action would have had on the current level of the Council's useable reserves, accruing the extra deficit incurred (or gained) each year at the 'Base Rate' of that time.

(ii) The financial effect such action would have had on the Council's current budget deficit, ahead of preparing the budget for 2019/20?

9. From Councillor Angela Page to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement

How many CCTV cameras do the Council currently have and how is success measured?

10. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Leader of the Council

If he will make statement on the implications of the Local Government Settlement for 2019-20 for Bromley and on the plans to balance the budget in 2019-20 and subsequent years?

11. From Cllr Tony Owen to the Chairman of the Development Control Committee

How do you suggest the Council responds to the erratic and inconsistent planning appeal decisions, especially in the Petts Wood Area of Special Residential Character?

After recent 'rogue' decisions, especially three by one planning inspector, officers and planning sub-committees have no idea where things stand and how they should judge future applications.

12. From Cllr Nicky Dykes to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement

Could the Portfolio Holder please set out the representations made by the Council on the plans to merge Bromley's policing units with Sutton and Croydon? Can she provide an update?

13. From Cllr Angela Wilkins to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care & Health

The following failings were identified in a recent internal audit investigation of the Council's Adult Mental Health Contract with Oxleas:

- the contract has run for 14 years without review or variation to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose;
- performance measures are obsolete and there are no defined monitoring measures in place;
- there is no Mental Health Board in place;
- care package reviews for the majority of clients were overdue until recently.

In relation to Direct Payments, internal audit reported the following:

- direct payment terms and conditions were not being met;
- instances where there was no evidence that payments made were being used for purpose intended;
- evidence found of over-payments being made to clients;
- a number of DP5 forms missing.

Were you surprised by these findings?

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

Eight London Boroughs including Barnet and Hillingdon and Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling Districts in Kent have signed up to a Council Tax Protocol developed by the Local Government Association & Citizens Advice which asks that Councils:-

- Work with enforcement & advice agencies to help people pay their Council Tax bills while accessing debt advice,
- Endure all communications with residents about Council Tax is clear,
- Use the Standard Financial Statement when calculating repayment plans,
- Offer flexible payment arrangements to residents,
- Do not use enforcement agencies where a resident receives Council Tax support,
- Publish their policy on residents in vulnerable circumstances.

What consideration has Bromley given to signing up to this protocol?

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

What involvement has the London Borough of Bromley had with Harris Academy Kent House in respect of the maladministration over the annulled SATs results of some Year 6 pupils?

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

What proportion of waste collected for recycling in Bromley is sent overseas for processing?

17. From Cllr Simon Jeal to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation & Housing

This year, volunteers from the Bromley Homeless Shelter and local churches will be starting to run a second winter shelter in the Borough, to increase capacity to provide beds and meals to rough sleepers. How is the council's homeless strategy addressing the support needed for the increasing number of Bromley residents becoming homeless?

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

Bromley Council seems to be the only body in the country who do not consider that any planning needs to be done concerning Brexit. Why does the leader consider he knows better than the Local Government Association, the CBI, the NHS confederation, chambers of commerce and so on?

19. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education & Families

How much of a priority does the Portfolio Holder see Religious Education in Bromley and, in the light of Bromley being dominated by academies, what influence does he have on advising schools on syllabuses?

20. From Cllr Simon Fawthrop to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

What is the total number of employees for LBB (split by both full and part time not just FTE) and of those how many have the ability to work from home?

21. From Cllr Nicholas Bennett to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What requirements are in the current arrangements with Mytime Active to ensure health and safety training for poolside staff to ensure the following don't occur:

- (i) movement of heavy 25m swim lane markers whilst swimmers are in the lane;
- (ii) placing of metal lane marker holders so they project over the poolside;
- (iii) a single poolside member of staff being distracted from watching the pool whilst moving lane markers and other ancillary activities;
- (iv) removal of slip mats in changing rooms before all users have vacated the area?

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

Given that original proposals were to spend £1.3m on a few mirrored canopies planned for Bromley High St, exactly how much you are prepared to spend on them?

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

The Mayor of London has recently confirmed the location of twenty public water fountains to help reduce single use plastics with the added benefit of discouraging the consumption of high sugar carbonated drinks. Would the portfolio holder support similar water fountains in Bromley and does he have plans for any?

24. From Cllr Simon Jeal to the Leader of the Council

Please provide a summary of the events, campaigns and other initiatives the London Borough of Bromley plans to run, fund or support in 2019 to mark events such as LGBT History Month, Black History Month, Holocaust Memorial day, World Disabled Day, International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Human Rights Day.

25. From Cllr Kevin Brooks to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection & Enforcement

There have recently been violent stabbing and shootings in the North of the borough. In addressing this, what action is the Portfolio Holder undertaking to bring together the police and specialist services both within Bromley and across neighbouring boroughs?

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

For what reasons has the Commissioning Board been suspended and when will it resume scrutiny of Departmental proposals?