

Council

12th July 2021

Questions from members of the Public for Written Reply

1. From Anthony McPartlan to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Residents have previously been informed that pedestrian road crossings are only considered when people have been either killed or seriously injured in that particular location. This is despite several petitions attracting hundreds of signatures from concerned parents about their family's safety. Can the Council confirm what it takes to get road safety measures implemented in high risk areas before people get hurt?

Reply:

Level of risk is best assessed using historic casualty data. The Council has finite funds to allocate to casualty reduction schemes, so prioritises these funds to where they will save most injuries.

Pedestrian crossings can be used to address a particular pattern of road accidents involving pedestrians, or as part of a wider road safety scheme.

They can also be used simply to make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross a difficult road, but this needs to be assessed in respect to the number of vehicles and pedestrians using the road throughout the day. These counts and calculations are required to assess whether a crossing is needed and if so what type. The calculations also help the Council prioritise funding to improve the Borough's walking infrastructure, thus providing crossings where the need is greatest.

2. From Anthony McPartlan to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Government data* shows there is no sign of pedestrian and cyclist casualties decreasing in Bromley. Does the Council have a 'Vision Zero' strategy for road safety like Kent County Council and others? If not, why not?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras30-reported-casualties-in-road-accidents#casualties-by-type-of-casualty>

Reply:

Bromley has an excellent record of reducing injuries on our roads and aspires to make our roads completely safe for all. Considering the length of the roads in Bromley and the number of miles driven Bromley has achieved one of the lowest casualty rates in London. Bromley's Third Local Implementation Plan 2019 (LIP3) details the continuation of the Council's longstanding approach to target KSIs to reduce the most serious collisions on our roads. That approach includes a range of

targeted infrastructure improvements and behaviour change education programmes, to play its part in achieving a reducing number of all collisions. Our awarding winning young driver education programme reduced collisions in that age bracket which sees a higher-than-average number of collisions. That said, achieving such an ambitious target is not entirely within the Council's control. Changes in car design and driver training also play their part.

3. From John Eveson and Jackie Brewer, Sevenoaks Way Area Neighbourhood Watches, to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

What considerations have LBB traffic officers given to effects on Sevenoaks Way traffic (i.e. volumes, emergency services, safety, pollution) due to pending Lidl, Aldi and SGN developments (and increased volumes due to Nugent, McDonalds and Starbucks) - how do they plan to mitigate such effects as video evidence already indicates extensive congestion.

Reply:

The Nugent and McDonalds are existing developments and I do not at present have any information regarding Starbucks or SGN developments. There are proposals for a new Aldi & Lidl on Sevenoaks Way north of the Leasons Hill junction which officers reviewed. Traffic lights were introduced on the Nugent access and the Sevenoaks / Leasons Hill junction was reconfigured a couple of years ago to increase capacity. These changes were part of the Council's interventions along the length of the A224 from Orpington High Street to the A20 to improve traffic flow. Since their implementation traffic flow has improved. There were no specific measures included as part of the Aldi and Lidl applications.

Traffic flows fell initially during lockdown but have increased over recent times as people may be reluctant to return to public transport. Traffic levels are high in all parts of the Borough, which I hope will be a temporary phenomenon, but the Council will continue to monitor flows then identify and prioritise any changes required.

4. From Stuart Benefield to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Council promised to respond formally to the consultation about Green Spaces in June 2021. When can we expect this report?

Reply:

There were a large number of responses to the version for consultation and it is important to consider them and arrive at the right document. A response to the consultation will be made in the autumn 2021 to the Environment and Community Services PDS Committee.

5. From Stuart Benefield to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

As the Council's recycling rate has dropped to 47% for the year 2020-21 can the borough still claim to be the "second highest in London" as claimed in a leaflet from Conservative Councillors published in June 2021?

Reply:

In March 2021, the most up to date and audited dataset published by the Department of Food and Rural Affairs confirmed that Bromley Council has the second highest recycling rate in London. We are not complacent and aim to do better.

The recycling rate reporting in the Environment Portfolio Plan is the Council's real time unaudited recycling rate. Central government review and finalise Bromley's waste and recycling data to generate Bromley's official recycling rate. The trend from past years is that, following the review process, the Bromley official recycling rate is a couple of percentages higher than the unaudited recycling rate published in the Environment Portfolio Plan.

The pandemic has seen a significant increase in residual waste and recycling in Bromley with much more home working and with residents spending more time at home. It is likely that all other boroughs will have seen impacts on their waste and recycling, we wait to see the level of impact on recycling rates in other boroughs and therefore how our performance compares.

6. From Suraj Gandeche to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Does the Council monitor the number of private electric car owners there are in the borough? What is the current number and what increase is forecast? What is the current number of electric charging points across the borough and how many are planned?

Reply:

The Council does not monitor BEV (Battery Electric Vehicles) ownership, however DfT data for 2020 suggests that there was 1664 such vehicles owned in the Borough (804 for domestic use and 850 for use as private hire vehicles). Forecasted ownership levels for BEVs are estimated to be between 30000 and 70000 by 2030.

There are currently 42 EV charge points on Highway land and 26+ on land that is publicly accessible. The Council is currently producing an electric vehicle strategy that will inform future plans for publicly accessible charge points in the Borough.

Many residents have installed home charging points. Planning applications for multiple dwellings, in particular, are being given planning conditions requiring the installation of charge points in the parking bays.

7. From Suraj Gandechea to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Has Bromley Council any plans to replace the existing bus shelter for northbound routes 61, 261, 208, 358 etc. at Bromley South Station with an adequate provision for the travelling public and something which properly reflects the importance of this interchange?

Reply:

The Council does not have any responsibilities for providing bus shelters, that being down to TfL. We have, however, contacted TfL to see if they have any plans to replace the current shelter with a higher quality facility. The response is that the shelter was upgraded in 2016 and that no further improvements are planned at this time.

8. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

What is the current status of the development of the Churchill Quarter (Site G) - the joint venture between Countryside Properties and the London Borough of Bromley. Have the residents in Ethelbert Close - under planning blight for nearly 20 years - been kept informed?

Reply:

The Development Agreement entered into by the Council and Countryside in 2017 requires Countryside to submit a planning application that is deliverable and to this end Countryside have been working with the Council's Planning team to ensure that their scheme is deliverable from both a Planning and viability basis. The Council are considering at a Special Meeting of the Executive on 15 July a series of amendments to the Development Agreement with the outcome being that Countryside will be able to formally seek planning determination of their scheme during the Autumn. It is understood that Countryside are imminently about to launch a Public Information campaign regarding their scheme.

The Council have also appointed a dedicated Officer to liaise with residents whose contact details are provided below:

Martin Barrow, Martin.Barrow@bromley.gov.uk Phone Number: 020 8461 7559

9. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

The Council is offering grants of £2,000 to one-off home based businesses offered on a "first come first served" basis. How much in total is available in this fund and is this a fair way to allocate the money when the fund has not been well publicised?

Reply:

The value of this fund is £400k. The fund was advertised through the Council website, social media, press releases to local news outlets, the business e-bulletin, and the Business Support Task Force who promoted the scheme to their contacts. In summary, the scheme has been promoted widely and fairly. As of the 30th June we

had received 141 applications and 88 of these had been approved for payment so far.

10. From Rick Das to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Given research showing the popularity of School Streets amongst parents and local residents, is the Council considering any new school streets in the borough and if so where? Will the Council also be renewing existing School Streets given they are created with a validity of up to 18 months?

Reply:

At the current time we do not have local data on the popularity of School Streets with parents, local residents or other road users.

The Council is currently consulting on a trial School Street in Hayes. The outcome of the consultation and any subsequent trial will inform Council policy on School Streets going forward.

A review of the temporary School Streets in conjunction with the schools is underway and a decision on the future of these locations will be made in due course with a report going to a future meeting of the Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee.

11. From Rick Das to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

The Langley Park development was initially rejected by the Council over traffic concerns, then approved following ambitious active journey targets. As there have been no known attempts to address the already serious issues endangering pedestrians along South Eden Park Road, will the Council now revisit this decision?

Reply:

There is no opportunity for the Council to revisit planning decisions once they have been taken, however if there are specific matters of concern regarding highway safety please write to the Council and we can investigate whether any measures can be taken to address these.

12. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

In Feb/Mar 2021 the Council undertook a consultation on the future of the Albemarle Cycle Scheme. Did the Council send out any consultation letters to households directly, and if so how many letters were sent out and on what roads?

Reply:

As part of London's Cycleways programme the cycle route from Bromley Town Centre to Lower Sydenham was identified as being within the top 10% of routes in London for potential cycle demand. With reports going to the Environment PDS in 2016 and 2018 along with an online consultation in 2018 prior to the committee meeting. However, despite support for the route, previous route options did not proceed due to concerns over the standard of the cycleway.

The inclusion of the section of the Bromley Town Centre to Lower Sydenham cycle route relevant to The Shortlands Friendly Villages Project within the project had the potential to address the reasons for non-progression of the route.

Consultation on Shortlands Friendly Villages scheme (including part of the cycleway) included the distribution of 5,000 flyers to households within the Shortlands scheme area. Note that only the section of Albemarle Road between Bromley Road and Downs Bridge Road is within the Shortlands scheme area.

Prior to the introduction of experimental scheme in Albemarle Road letters were sent to residents in September 2020.

In the consultation exercises in February 2021 and June 2021, letters were sent to 3,000 residents.

Roads delivered to included:

Albemarle Road
The Avenue
Foxgrove Road
Foxgrove Avenue
Canterbury Close
St Georges Road
Bromley Road (between St Georges Road & Albemarle Road)
The Knoll
The Mead
Meadway
Downsbridge Road
The Gardens
Westgate Road
Lankton Close
Glendale Mews
The Heights
Dellfield Close
Springbourne Court
Mayfair Close
Repton Court
Apex Close
Olyffe Drive
Hazelhurst

13. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Are the Council aware of any problems experienced by the emergency services following the introduction of the Albemarle Road scheme and if not have they sought this information recently?

Reply:

Through both the Experimental Traffic Order and the recommended consultees identified by the TFL guidance on the London Streetspace proposals, consultation was conducted with the emergency services. In February 2021 prior to the changes approved at PDS on the 11th March 2021 the Police made the following comments: "Traffic lights at the junction of Westgate Road, I don't anticipate any issues with that. The one way system on Westgate Road over the bridge can remain, as the narrow bridge was causing a number of minor road rage issues over it. Since it has become one way, the number of near miss collisions has dropped immensely as vehicles did used to approach the bridge at speed".

No responses were received to the consultation in 2021 from the other emergency services. Since the scheme was installed in the autumn of 2020 the police had concerns about vehicles continuing to drive up Albemarle Road and as a consequence physical changes were made to the junction.

14. From David Marshall to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

In a recent leaflet, Conservative councillors have claimed that air quality is safe at all schools in the borough. Does Bromley Council agree with this claim given:

- a) the minimal monitoring that exists
- b) WHO believes there is no "safe" level of particulate matter pollution
- c) Bromley Council's own latest data shows NO₂ levels on Anerley Hill exceed WHO annual limit and less than 1 km away, on the same road, is Crystal Early Years Centre and James Dixon Primary School.

Reply:

In answer to parts A and B, all monitoring stations within London feed into the LLAQN network and the subsequent model. Based on actual monitoring London wide, a high degree of confidence can be had in the modelled data. Modelling has been widely used for many years and is very useful in predicting future trends. All data is subject to third party accreditation and modelled in accordance with guidance. This includes NO_x tubes and real time analysis.

There are many passive monitoring sites in the borough where air quality is measured near to sensitive receptors using NO_x tubes. This is added to by the inclusion with the borough of a real time monitor to add further to the Council's ability to monitor air quality.

The data provided by the GLA showed that no primary or secondary schools in Bromley were exposed to NO₂ concentration levels that exceeded annual limits.

In the London Environment Strategy 2018, the Mayor committed to meeting World Health Organisation recommended limits for PM_{2.5} by 2030. As such, Bromley is required to include a focus on PM_{2.5} in its AQAPs.

Modelled data from the GLA and Defra show Bromley as having some of the lowest levels of PM_{2.5} in London per weighted population, notwithstanding this, further efforts to reduce levels in Bromley are included in the Air Quality Action Plan.

In answer to C, please can you provide the source of the data so I can provide an answer.

15. From David Marshall to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Council recently reported that some proposed school streets are not going to proceed. Which schemes are going ahead, which are not, and what are the reasons for abandoning the schemes?

Reply:

One measure considered last year as an emergency response to the Covid pandemic was the use of temporary School Streets. These temporary School Streets were widely offered to schools, but after due consideration only six schools in the Borough chose to take on this approach to managing traffic around their premises within the very short timeframe offered in respect to funding and the commitment required by the schools to operate the school streets. Some schools preferred to have social distancing measures installed, such as widened footways.

A review of the temporary School Streets is underway and a decision on the future of these locations will be made in due course, after discussions with the schools involved. The schools with temporary School Street arrangements in place are: Clare House Primary, Harris Academy Crystal Palace, Harris Primary Orpington, St Mary Cray Academy, Pratts Bottom Primary, Poverest Primary.

The Council is currently consulting on a trial School Street in Hayes. The outcome of the consultation and any subsequent trial will inform Council policy on School Streets going forward.

16. From Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Traffic queuing to enter the Waldo Road recycling centre (tip) continues to be a problem at peak times. What measures are the Council taking to alleviate this problem?

Reply:

When comparing the period August to March, the vehicle numbers visiting the Waldo Road Reuse and Recycling Centre were 9% lower in 2020/21 than they were in 2019/20.

To reduce the traffic impact of the site, we are currently taking the following actions:

- Encouraging residents to look at the webcam that shows the queue to the site before making a decision to visit, with a view to conducting more publicity;
- Considering the use of one new Moving Traffic CCTV camera at the box junction in Homesdale Road;

- Reviewing traffic flow measures at the junction between Waldo Road and Homesdale Road with a traffic engineer;
- Reviewing the webcam that is used at the site and looking into whether there is a way to improve the view of Waldo Road;
- Continuing to provide comprehensive household waste and recycling services including bulky item and garden waste collection services to negate the need for residents to visit Waldo Road on a regular basis;
- Providing garden waste satellite sites during the peak growing season; and,
- Promoting our waste and recycling services through our bi-annual newsletter, Environment Matters, and recycling campaigns.

17. From Gail Hilder to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Council are now changing the one way system introduced on Albemarle Road. What road use data, if any, persuaded the Council to make this change?

Reply:

Albemarle Road between Westgate Road and Beckenham High Street reverting to two directional traffic was a decision following a recommendation by the Environment and Community Safety PDS Committee on the 11th March 2021. The Committee was provided with the results of the survey of 3,000 local households that showed the majority supported the continuation of the trial with the change in Albemarle Road from West Gate Road to Beckenham Green. It was made in response to concerns about additional traffic outside Harris Primary Academy Beckenham Green and Bromley Road. Traffic data was recorded before the changes were made and further monitoring will be conducted.

18. From Gail Hilder to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

What lessons can be learned from the Albemarle Road scheme?

Reply:

The Albemarle Road scheme remains an experimental scheme, a number of observations can be made at this time:

- The Albemarle Road and Bromley Road cycle schemes have been monitored for cyclists using the infrastructure and it is evident that there is a demand for cycling in the Borough.
- The design of the cycle lanes was in accordance with TFL recommended guidance. This use of vertical wands has however caused issues with street cleaning and will be taken into account in regard to best practice in future cycle schemes.
- The scheme was introduced using funding that required installation in a very short period of time and the guidance recognised that public consultation would have to be very limited. Greater public consultation is recognised as vital to keep the local community 'on board' with such schemes.

That public consultation with 3,000 households showed majority support from those responding to continue a modified experimental scheme. Indicating that trialling potentially contentious schemes has value and can have public support, but also avoids the costs and risks of either implementing a permanent scheme which might not achieve its aims or not knowing whether a scheme that may have benefits but also drawbacks might be successful.

19. From Stephen Wells to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Will the Council report back on any projects in the Transport Local Implementation Plan for 2019-2022 that have been successfully delivered? What is their definition of success in each instance?

Reply:

Depending upon the scale of each project, reports will be made to Councillors and made public on the website in respect to the efficacy of schemes. The measure of success will vary from scheme to scheme. For example, a safety scheme will be assessed on whether casualty numbers, especially serious injuries, fall in number over the following years.

20. From Stephen Wells to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Local Implementation Plan for Transport in Bromley runs from 2019-2022. Given the considerable changes to transport needs brought about by the pandemic, the government's overarching plans to reduce carbon levels in the UK and the increase in people working from home, do the Council have plans to start a full consultation with the public about people's transport needs?

Reply:

The Council will continue to assess locations where transport improvements might be made across the Borough, of whatever type, and public consultation will take place as each proposal is taken forward.

21. From Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

In a recent leaflet, the Conservative councillors claim that Bromley "is the London borough with the cleanest air" - how can they prove that with only one working live air quality monitor?

Reply:

All monitoring stations within London feed into the LLAQN network and the subsequent model. Based on actual monitoring London wide, a high degree of confidence can be had in the modelled data. Modelling has been widely used for many years and is very useful in predicting future trends. All data is subject to third party accreditation and modelled in accordance with guidance. This includes NOX tubes and real time analysis.

There are many passive monitoring sites in the borough where air quality is measured near to sensitive receptors using NOX tubes. This is added to by the inclusion with the borough of a real time monitor to add further to the Council's ability to monitor air quality.

22. From Graeme Casey to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The Council have recently installed a new pedestrian crossing near to Newstead Woods School - what was the KSI figure for the road before the crossing was installed?

Reply:

In the section of Crofton Road between Crofton Lane and Station Road there has been 1 serious collision recorded in the 3 year period up until the end of February 2021.

The parallel zebra crossing in Crofton Road, near to Newstead Avenue, has been installed as part of a TfL funded scheme to improve cycling and walking facilities in the vicinity of Orpington Station. Orpington Station seeing a very high concentration of pedestrians being the location of the second busiest station in the borough plus being in the vicinity of 5 schools, 2 being relevant to this crossing.

23. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

When was the decision taken to redeploy the Council's empty houses staff to other duties and for what reason? Why were the public not informed? How long will it take to deal with the backlog of empty homes work and how big is the backlog?

Reply:

The Empty Homes staff have not been redeployed to other duties. The role is currently vacant. The Job Description is being revised prior to recruitment. There is no backlog as other officers in the Housing Improvement Team have dealt with ongoing queries and necessary actions.

24. From Helen Alsworth to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

How does the Council finance its work on empty homes? Are there any grants available from central government for this type of work?

Reply:

Funding was available 2011-2015 via the Empty Homes Programme. Central Government has not made similar funding available since that programme ended. However some of the statutory measures open to the Council can be financed by placing a charge on the property so that the money can be recouped at a later stage. It is also worth noting that funding does come to the Council from the New Homes Bonus once a property is brought back into use.