

Council

18th October 2021

Questions from members of the public for Written Reply

1. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

A large number of applications have and continue to be received for installation of 5G masts (and their antecedents) on public land and footpaths. Where the Council owns the land or has a relevant interest in it, does it receive any rent from these companies and if so, is the rent comparable to rent that would be paid on private property?

Reply:

Where the Council has granted a property agreement in respect of the installation of telecommunication equipment on property both occupied by the Council and within its freehold ownership, a rent would be negotiated. This negotiation of rent would be no different from that undertaken in respect of private property.

2. From Chloe-Jane Ross to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Does the Council have any policies or influence to require developers to consider siting 5G masts within larger developments (where they can be installed incongruously). And if not can such be implemented?

Reply:

All telecommunications development which requires planning permission (some smaller works such as additional antennae do not) is considered with regard to Policy 89 of the Bromley Local Plan which requires as follows:

Telecommunications Development

In a development involving telecommunication mast, base station or apparatus, applicants will be required to demonstrate that:

a - the possibility of using an existing building, mast or other structure has been explored and proved to be unsuccessful,

b - where the proposal is on or near a school or college, the relevant body of the school or college has been consulted,

c - there is a need for the proposed development,

d - the equipment meets the International Commission on Nonionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines on the limitation of exposure of the general public to electro-magnetic field,

e - regard has been given to locating a site which causes least visual impact subject to operational needs,

f - any adverse impact on the character, appearance and amenity of the area or those of the building on which it is to be mounted has been minimised, and

g - the design, siting and landscaping minimises the visual impact of the development and uses screening by trees or other landscaping or technologies to camouflage telecommunications apparatus, where appropriate.

3. From Sam Webber to the Portfolio Holder for Adult Care and Health

Could the relevant Portfolio Holder confirm the cost of printing and distributing the '*Special edition update*' covering the COVID-19 pandemic and the help available to all who needed it, especially the most vulnerable, which was distributed in the Summer of 2020?

Was this publication sent out to all residents of the borough via Royal Mail or an alternative provider?

Reply:

£25,285.54.

It was sent out via an alternative provider to the Royal Mail.

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

What money has the Council obtained from the London Mayor to help deal with homelessness in Bromley in the last 2 years? Has the Council applied for funding to buy back former Council properties following the announcement on 21 June 2021 by Sadiq Khan?

Reply:

Funding directly related to homelessness services is administered by central government through DLUHC (formerly MHCLG).

For 2020/21 the Council obtained £3.957M and in 2021/22 has obtained £4,243m in relation to homelessness and rough sleeping support grants.

The response to your next question sets out the GLA funding secured under the 'Homes for Londoners Programme' for new housing supply. This programme is part of the overall affordable homes programme which includes the buy back element. Bromley has not directly bid at this stage for funds specific to the buy back element as this was not considered, at this stage, to offer the best value. Where opportunities do arise to 'buy back' former social housing units this can be facilitated through the existing housing acquisition scheme that the Council has entered into with Orchard and Shipman.

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

What type of applications does the Government's Community Housing fund support and from whom? Please supply details of any Council applications to this fund to increase housing supply in the borough.

Reply:

The Community Housing Fund which closed in 2020 aimed to support an increase in housing supply in England (excluding London) by increasing the number of additional homes delivered by the community-led housing sector. A separate programme for London was delivered by the Greater London Authority 'Homes for Londoners', which was applicable to Bromley. I am pleased to confirm that Bromley has successfully bid to the GLA for funding under this scheme and has already secured £8.5m of funding towards housing sites being delivered currently, with a further £25m being made available over the next few years.

6. From Carol Denyer to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

The smell of rotting waste at Waldo Road has become particularly unpleasant this year. Is any household waste, food waste or garden waste left on site for more than 24 hours? What is the agreed timescale - Veolia are required to keep to?

Reply:

Veolia are required to ensure that waste and recycling are transferred to their end destination for treatment to avoid any breach in their environmental permit. On average waste and recycling is removed within 24 hours of it being delivered. The odour we did experience over the summer was linked to the green garden waste, it was not linked to either household waste or food waste.

A number of actions are taken to minimise odour including activating odour control devices across the site and encouraging residents and businesses to undertake activities that would help us reduce the amount of waste that requires management through for example promotion of home compost units, encouraging the use of reusable bottles/cups, our food for thought campaign.

Waldo Road has been visited by the regulator, the Environment Agency in recent times. The Environment Agency were satisfied Veolia were moving waste in a timely manner and that Veolia had sufficient odour control devices at Waldo Road.

7. From Carol Denyer to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

I am concerned about the health risks to residents near Waldo Rd and the employees of Veolia. What particulates and/or airborne gases do Veolia measure and where is this monitoring data available to view? If not publicly available, please supply the monitoring data for the 12 months to 31 July 2021.

Reply:

There is no on-site treatment of recycling and waste brought to the Waldo Road site. As such in accordance with the Environmental Permit, legislation and Environment Agency Guidance there is no requirement for air quality monitoring at the site. Therefore, there is no monitoring data that can be supplied that specifically relates to this site.

The site operates a dust control system, to ensure that any dust is suppressed.

8. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

You have previously indicated that a traffic engineer would visit Holmesdale Road BR2 in September - what was the outcome of this visit and what steps are being considered to alleviate the traffic chaos in Holmesdale Road, particularly when traffic is queuing to use the Waldo Road recycling centre?

Reply:

The conclusion from the traffic officer was that enforcing the existing yellow box junction could help to improve flow but there are no viable infrastructure changes to alleviate possible congestion. The yellow box junction is suitable for enforcement and a CCTV camera has been ordered. However due to infrastructure reasons this is unlikely to be operative until January 2022.

9. From Julie Ireland to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Rates of fly tipping have increased everywhere during the pandemic, and Bromley's rate has increased by approximately 25%. Residents expect the Council to catch, fine and prosecute persistent fly-tippers. What steps have Bromley Council taken to improve monitoring in fly tipping hot spots, how many cases have been prosecuted in the last 12 months, what was the cost of those prosecutions and what was the outcome of those prosecutions including financial recompense for Bromley Council?

Reply:

The rise in fly tipping has been a national issue over the past 12 months, within Bromley we have looked at various initiatives to combat this anti-social behaviour.

The team deployed surveillance equipment at two known hotspots to try to catch those responsible for fly tipping. This targeted approach resulted in the Enforcement Team issuing 24 written warnings and 2 Fixed Penalty notices. A further 32 written warnings and 6 Fixed Penalty Notices were issued for other fly tipping offences throughout the Borough.

One prosecution case was heard in April 2021, which resulted in the court proving the case. The individual was fined £660 (also full Council costs of £458 being awarded). There is one further case awaiting trial.

Norse assisted the service by running a 'Your Waste is Your Responsibility' anti fly-tipping campaign in Penge. The project was aimed at educating residents about, and their responsibility for, legitimate disposal of their waste. A few intervention activities were delivered to help decrease fly-tipping. A total of 313 residents were directly engaged with, bespoke leaflets were delivered to 1,410 properties in target roads, letters were sent to businesses on Maple Road, fly-tipping posters were installed in hot spot locations, and 'this is a fly-tip' stickers were placed on fly-tips.

A new manager has been appointed to the Neighbourhood Enforcement Team. Dean Laws brings a wealth of experience which will be utilised to further the team's work against fly tipping.

10. From Stuart Benefield to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

On 31 August it was reported in the media that LBB had entered into an investment agreement with Pension Insurance Corporation (PIC) to add 300 homes to the Council's emergency housing portfolio. Please provide details of this deal including where the houses will be located, who will be providing them, who will be running them and how they will be paid for?

Reply:

The Executive report of 10th February 2021 provides details in relation to this property acquisition scheme. The full report can be accessed via the following link: [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Executive, 10/02/2021 18:30 \(bromley.gov.uk\)](#)

11. From Stuart Benefield to the Leader of the Council

How many refugees from Afghanistan have Bromley Council agreed to offer homes to?

Reply:

The distribution of Afghani refugees both nationally and regionally remains under discussion between all 32+1 London Boroughs, meaning that it isn't possible to advise anybody of an agreed number at this time.

12. From Suraj Gandecha to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

In July 2021 the charity Quaker Social Action undertook a "mystery shopping" investigation into local authorities' approach to public health funerals and Bromley Council were found to be one of the worst performing councils for the absence of or inaccuracy of information provided both online, in person and by phone. What steps have the Council taken to ensure that they are fulfilling their statutory role and ensure that improvements are made in enabling bereaved people to receive the right support when they need it?

Reply:

The Council are fulfilling their statutory duty in relation to Public Health Funerals and our contractors Liberata provide a high level of service which is in line with the Government's good practice guidance.

However, following the publication of the Quaker Social Action report, the following action has been taken to ensure improvements are made to the information provided by the Council:

1. A communication has been issued to all Call Centre advisors to ensure that all calls relating to Public Health Funerals are being correctly transferred to the appropriate team.
2. The information provided on Bromley's website has been reviewed and is being revised to provide additional information on the service the Council provides as well as signposting for other support that is available.

13. From Suraj Gandecha to the Chairman of General Purposes and Licensing Committee

In its annual report for the year to 31 March 2021 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) identified Bromley as the 2nd worst performing borough in

London, with the ombudsman upholding 26 complaints from Bromley Residents. Please provide an analysis of these 26 cases including the service being complained about, the nature of the complaint and the action taken to rectify the resident's grievance. Please also explain what steps have been taken by the Council to ensure that residents receive a better service in the future.

Reply:

Bromley was subject of 38 investigations by the Ombudsman during the financial year 2020/21. Of the 38 complaints 26 were upheld against the Council (68%). Fewer complaints were upheld against Bromley Council than the London average of 72%. This places Bromley 11th best in London, it should also be noted that 26 complaints equate to 0.08 complaints upheld per 1000 residents.

Detailed information on each Ombudsman complaint, whether upheld or not, is published in anonymised form on the LGSCO's own website. Details of the 26 complaints upheld against the Council can be found here

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/Decisions/SearchResults?t=both&fd=2020-04-01&td=2021-03-31&dc=u%2B&aname=Bromley&atype=L&sortOrder=ascending>

When a complaint is upheld, the LGSCO can make two kinds of recommendations – those to remedy any specific remedial action to the complainant, and those to address wider systemic concerns. The latter contributes toward the Council's policy of continual improvement to the services it provides to its residents.

Each decision identifies the action felt appropriate, the LGSCO reports LB Bromley as having a 100% compliance rate in implementing recommendations and remedial action.

14. From Alisa Igoe to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services

Are Council, as was mentioned at a committee I observed, continuing to dim street lighting from 10pm, is this in every ward and if so, in response to the violent assault in SE London recently, will you be discontinuing this, to provide women and girls of Bromley with maximum night lighting to improve their safety?

Reply:

The Council currently has a dimming programme for all LED columns within the borough. This results in a reduction in our Carbon emissions plus reduced energy costs and. The dimming programme, reflects the footfall and starts at 60 % from 10pm to 1am, 50% from 1am to 6am and back up to 75% from 6am. As it stands the council is not looking to change the dimming programme for lamp columns. This programme has been reviewed a number of times following its initial trial.

15. From Jeremy Adams to the Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Families

The government announced on Sept 30th that, this month, it will make £500 million available for councils to support vulnerable households to pay for essentials. Can Bromley Council commit to devoting all funds it receives under this scheme to the people of Bromley this winter?

Reply:

We are committed to use the monies to ensure they are allocated to support vulnerable residents. This can include, for example, food vouchers and other means of direct financial support. We have received draft grant conditions and information and are awaiting final grant conditions. Bromley's allocation is £1.87m with monies ring fenced. This money will be allocated to vulnerable residents in accordance with the finalised guidance when received.