

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1) Question from Miranda King

Please can the portfolio holder provide an update on the EV charging pilot? Is it still planned to install an EV charging point in Sheringham Road SE20 as mentioned in the appendices to previous council meetings? (Appendix 2 of <https://cds.bromley.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=76506>)

Response to Question 1

My apologies for the tardy response.

The procurement process for the EV on street charging pilot has proved more complex than originally envisaged. However, significant progress has been made recently and Sheringham Road (or the immediate vicinity) remains a priority location for the pilot scheme.

I will be launching the pilot on Monday, with the first installation in Wellsmoor Gardens, Bromley.

2) Question from Mary Daniels

Please can you advise the results of the statements of objection invited, following the amendment to the London Borough of Bromley (Off Street Parking Places) Consolidation Order, which was related to the committee's decision to remove cash payment machines for parking within the borough.

Response to Question 2:

427 objections were received in the public consultation, these objections were broken down into categories and reviewed by officers:

- Discrimination against the elderly ,222 / 52% of objections.
- There should be a choice of payment solutions, 55 / 13% of objections.
- Cannot use a smartphone 38 / 9% of objections.
- Only carry cash 26 / 6% of objections.
- Increase cost of using RingGo 23 / 5% of objections.
- Do not have a smart phone 21/ 5% of objections.
- No Phone 16 / 4% of objections.
- Bad Phone coverage 9 / 2% of objections.
- Other / do not want this / no internet 9 / 2% of objections.
- Ringo not reliable 8 / 2% of objections.

- Following the consultation, I received a detailed report recommending that the proposal to remove all pay and display machines be implemented and I agreed it. It was noted that some motorists may need further assistance in using the RingGo application and I therefore agreed drop-in sessions around the Borough.

3) Question from Ann Garrett (Bromley Friends of the Earth)

The Environmental Act 2021 sets out new additional duties for Local Authorities in respect of Biodiversity Net Gain [BNG]

What additional financial , staff and physical resources will be employed to deliver BNG ?

Will the Council use widespread widening of open space and grass verges to act as a corridor for biodiversity?

Response to Question 3:

The management and monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be undertaken through planning conditions and obligations where this relates to planning applications. The Council is also embarking on a review of the Local Plan and officers anticipate this will result in local policies for BNG and urban greening. In the meantime, the Bromley Biodiversity Plan 2021 – 2026 provides initial guidance on BNG.

Like all Local Authorities, the Council awaits information on the availability of additional funding to support the management of this new responsibility before we determine any further resources that may or may not be required.

The Council already manages several areas of naturalised grass in the borough and is currently trialling a new Nature Friendly Verges pilot at 11 sites across the borough, with a sustainable planting pilot also launching in the autumn. Whilst these management regimes are not suitable for all our greenspaces, we are working to identify any Council owned open spaces where BNG can be targeted with developer contributions for consideration as part of the emerging Sites Register.

4) Question from Harsha Kudumallige:

We have a lot of pothole related issues around here. The Council has allocated a funding of around £2.5M per year for fixing potholes and pavements as per the records. Was the start of the new financial year a factor – and if so why did repairs not start until 2 months after the start of the year? Why were there delays in fixing the potholes even though there were complaints being logged from March on the state of potholes around Texaco junction in Repton Road and Chelsfield station bend/Highway road junction? These junctions are serious congestion points and do not have a traffic control mechanism. Multiple, large potholes in these areas lead to severe congestion and may lead to unnecessary accidents for people unaware of these surroundings.

Response to Question 4:

In addition to the budget of £2.5 m for planned resurfacing, there is also a budget for reactive repairs.

There was no hiatus in repairs.

As noted in my report to the Committee, last winter's combination of snow, rain and ice, created potholes across the roads of the UK and the continent.

The number of repairs logged and completed can be seen in the appendix to my report and you will note the number has almost doubled since last year. Our contractor was unable to recruit further teams and in May I authorised the employment of a second contractor to help tackle the backlog. It is not possible to give a date for the repair of any one location.

5) Question from Myles Barrell

What are the contract management mechanisms in place between Bromley and its contractors to ensure the money spent on road surfacing works is correctly deployed. Specifically, what quality management is undertaken to review quality of both major pre-emptive resurfacing projects and pothole repairs, to ensure correct materials and techniques are used to prevent surfaces deteriorating mere days after works completion?

Response to Question 5:

The highway contracts include a detailed specification for all repairs.

Planned resurfacing projects are carefully supervised, with sample inspections being undertaken of all reactive repairs.

All works are guaranteed for a minimum of two years.

6) Question from Sue Sulis:

Bromley's Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

In response to our Public Question to the 25/01/23 ECSPDS querying its existence, the Portfolio Holder undertook to ensure that we were provided with a copy.

Her answer to yet another request for it to the 24/04/23 ECSPDS confirmed its publication. Will she now please send us a copy.

Response to Question 6:

A copy of Bromley's Surface Water Management Plan has now been provided by email to Sue Sulis.

7) Question from Stuart Davies:

Safety, actual and perceived, is at the heart of switching car use to increased cycling and walking. Do councillors accept that bold and potentially unpopular (to some) engineering interventions are essential to achieve greater participation in active travel, and what measures will they judge themselves against a year from now?

Response to Question 7

The Council has an extensive list of roads where evidence indicates that intervention will contribute to improved safety. These are prioritised and each year a number are included in our Local Implementation Plan. The aim is to maximise the budget to produce the best return for road safety.

8) Question from Ian Dunn:

Extrapolating the red line on the graph, para 3.9 of ES20295 suggests zero KSI Road Casualties in Bromley around 2030. Will the Portfolio Holder commit to achieve this, and what in addition to what the Council is doing now does he consider requires to be done to achieve it?

Response to Question 8

The Council will do all it can to reduce the number of people seriously injured on our streets. It is unrealistic to assume that no serious injuries will occur as there are many factors outside the control of the Council. The Road Safety Programme is based on sound evidential principles.

9) Question from Rajeev Thacker:

Section 4 of the Road Safety report is a single sentence stating that "Consideration is given when designing all schemes to the needs of all road user groups, including of those with disabilities." How is this absence of any detail appropriate, given that Public Sector Equality Duty clearly applies here?

Response to Question 9:

When a scheme is put forward for approval it includes, where appropriate, this information.

10) Question from Carolyn Heitmeyer:

Re: Road Safety.

Paragraphs 3.29 and 3.30 appear to justify the Council's policy of "no new 20 mph limits or zones" on grounds that they have "not been shown to reduce speeds sufficiently to impact on casualty rates". If that's the case, then why are other London Boroughs and Kent County Council introducing them?

Response to Question 10:

It is for each highway authority to decide which measures are appropriate. We do not believe that a blanket 20 MPH policy is justified or a good use of scarce resources. We do have several 20 MPH zones in busy High Streets and advisory 20 MPH limits outside schools at the start and end of the school day.

11) Question from Kerry Nash:

Re: Road Safety.

Paragraph 3.30 states that the Council will only install part time 20 mph limits outside schools, decided on merit, and in exceptional cases on High Streets. Why is it appropriate to limit the use of 20mph limits in these areas, which have heavy footfall by pedestrians and other vulnerable road users?

Response to Question 11:

By using 20 MPH zones where appropriate, rather than having a blanket policy, motorists are more likely to respond and drive in accordance with the speed limit. It is worth noting that the 30 MPH national limit was introduced in 1935 when there were 1.5 m vehicles and vehicle safety standards were rudimentary. There are now more than 41 million vehicles in the UK. In 1935 nearly 8,000 people died on UK roads, last year less than 1,700.

12) Question from James Rowe:

Re: Road Safety.

Paragraph 3.25 is the only place bike lanes are mentioned in the report. Noting that paragraphs 3.1 and 3.14 suggest cyclists "will be more vulnerable as road users" than those in a car, what is Bromley Council's position on segregated (i.e. protected) cycle lanes.

Response to Question 12:

In an ideal world, segregated cycle lanes with a barrier between the lane and the highway would be the norm, however, in an urban area, where road and buildings are long established, there are few roads where there is space for such lanes. They are often expensive to install. Where space permits, we have created on road cycle lanes, but sadly because of the historic nature of most of our road network, these tend to be piecemeal.

13) Question from Brendan Donegan:

Re: Road Safety.

Paragraph 3.10 of the road safety report mentions members of Environment Committee are interested in looking "separately" at "number of fatalities occurring." Will the Portfolio Holder for Transport commit to joining me in meeting family members of those who have been killed or suffered serious injuries on our Borough's roads?

Response to Question 13:

No.

Every road injury is a tragedy but the best way to improve road safety is by adhering to our policy of examining every location where there is a pattern of serious injuries and assessing whether there is an intervention which can help prevent them.

14) Question from Richard Gibbons:

Re. agenda item 13c Comprehensive Review of Road Safety in the London Borough of Bromley', report sections 3.8, 3.16 and 3.37.

Every crash matters to the people involved in or with a collision - family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, residents and passers-by - whether an incident results in fatal, serious, slight or no injuries.

Please expand table in 3.16 to show collisions with 'fatal', 'serious', and 'slight' casualties by age group and gender, split between 'rural' and 'urban' roads; and age and gender of driver where cause is attributed to 'excess speed', 'dangerous driving', 'losing control' and/or 'not paying attention'

Response to Question 14:

I can arrange for the full table of data to be made available to you in the form of a spreadsheet. Please let my Officers know which format you would like to receive the data (e.g., CSV).

15) Question from Alya Gribi:

Re: Road Safety:

Paragraph 3.37 lists factors attributed as main causes in the 141 fatalities on roads within Bromley since 2002. Would you agree that lower speeds would reduce the likelihood of every single one of these becoming a fatal incident and, if so, why do you oppose 20mph limits (paragraph 3.30)?

Response to Question 15:

I would not agree, as simply setting a lower speed limit does not necessarily lead to safer driving. A study commissioned by DfT entitled "20 mph Research Study Process and Impact Evaluation Headline Report November 2018" reports that:

"This study has found no significant safety outcome (in terms of collisions and casualties) in residential areas, based on the post implementation data available to date."

My experience as a Magistrate over more than 20 years, shows that unfortunately there are a large number of drivers who have not passed a test and are uninsured. They are involved disproportionately in more collisions. More resources in enforcement and deterrent would pay dividends in road safety terms.

Question 16 from Alexa Raha:

Re: Road Safety.

The only professional designation mentioned in the road safety report is "road traffic engineer". Road traffic engineers are trained to approach traffic and road safety from a particular perspective with a particular view of transport priorities. What other professional expertise informs this report?

Response to Question 16:

Our staff and consultants who design and oversee road safety projects in this Borough are highly qualified professionals with many years' experience. They take a holistic, evidential approach and do not have preconceived ideas.

Question 17 from Holly Steiner:

Re: Road Safety.

Paragraphs 3.3 and 3.21 of the road safety report note finite resources must be directed to where they will achieve best value.

Paragraph 3.30 states the Council will not install new 20 mph limits or zones. Please can you share the rationale / considerations / criteria for best value.

For example is there evidence 20 mph limits do not have an impact on casualty rates.

Response to Question 17:

A study commissioned by DfT entitled "20 mph Research Study Process and Impact Evaluation Headline Report November 2018" reports that:

"This study has found no significant safety outcome (in terms of collisions and casualties) in residential areas, based on the post implementation data available to date."

Spending large sums of money on a blanket 20 MPH policy is not, in my view, an effective use of the money I have available and would undermine respect for speed limits.

Question 18 from Stephanie Townsend:

Paragraph 3.6 of the road safety report mentions Bromley's transport plan LIP3, approved in 2019. Since then, Bromley has been near the bottom of the ranking in the annual Healthy Streets Scorecard, indicating comparatively little action to improve the health of Londoners. When will Bromley's transport plan be updated?

Response to Question 18:

Bromley does not recognise the value of most measures included in the Healthy Streets Scorecard.

Question 19 from Simon Day:

Has the service road around Pickhurst Primary schools been given the option of becoming a school street? What is being done to prevent:

- Rat running between Pickhurst Lane and Mead avoiding traffic lights.
- School drop off traffic, car parking & refreshment vendors vehicles blocking non-motorised access through bollards outside school.

- These bollards which allow "filtered permeability" i.e. stop cars but allow bicycles, pedestrians and so on.

Response to Question 19:

This question is disallowed as it was submitted after the time limit and does not relate directly to the detail of any report.

Question 20 from Angela Hulm:

Emissions from motor vehicles are the biggest source of air pollution in Bromley Borough and an important local obstacle to tackling climate change. Policies impacting traffic and road safety have the potential to reduce those emissions. Why is this point absent from the report?

Response to Question 20:

The report is a review of road safety measures.

Question 21 from Stephen McNairn:

Paragraphs 3.29 and 3.30 give the impression that the only tools available to the Council to discourage speeding are posters, vehicle activated signs, road markings and vertical deflection (humps and tables). The TfL report "Achieving Lower Speeds" also discusses horizontal treatments and narrowing carriageways. Are you aware of this report?

Response to Question 21:

Yes, I am aware of the TfL "toolkit" and chicanes and carriageway narrowing are considered on their merits where there are casualty cluster sites.

Question 22 from Johanna:

It is wonderful that no primary age children have been seriously hurt in the last few years, but why does paragraph 3.15 state "children of this age travel with parents"? A decade ago it was reported that 26% of primary age children in the Netherlands travel to school independently.

Response to Question 22

This statement is observational. The fact remains that the evidence leads us to focus our attention for road safety education on children in secondary schools.