

EXECUTIVE

9 August 2023

Questions for Written Reply

1. From Mr Richard Hart to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What contributions have been received to the Council's carbon offsetting fund through the community infrastructure levy? Are you able to list ward by ward how this money has been spent in the last two years and when will this matter come before the Environment Committee?

Reply:

Contributions to Carbon Offsetting are secured as direct payments via the s106 mechanism rather than through the Community Infrastructure Levy. The charging of Carbon Offsets in Bromley is relatively new; funds began to be received in 2019, but not in significant numbers since 2021. Given the recent flow of such funds being received by the Council, firm spending proposals are still being formulated.

The Council regularly publishes details of all s106 sums received to Executive, Resources and Contracts Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee – the last being 23 November 2022 – which includes details of Carbon Offset payments. A list drawn from this data has been prepared detailing Carbon Offset contributions received and spent by ward. The amounts vary across wards depending on where development has taken place. It also should be noted that Carbon Offset payments generally are not limited to expenditure in a given ward or on a specific project – the schemes put forward for investment often serving an area much larger than where development has occurred. Expenditure of such funds is aligned to the Council's Carbon Offsetting Fund, which considers expenditure on a borough wide level, guided by the Council's Carbon Net Zero Action Plan.

2. From Ms Helen Brookfield the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What applications have been made by Bromley council and other local councils to the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero in the last two years for grants under the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund and what were the results of such applications?

Reply:

In Bromley, 94% of schools are academies and therefore are not under the control of the Council. It is therefore a matter for the relevant academy trust to determine whether the commercial model such as that being explored by Mytime in relation to Beckenham Spa meets their requirements.

Where the Council is making a capital investment in schools, officers do consider how to use that investment to maximise energy and carbon reduction benefits to the school.

10% of the Schools Condition Allocation capital grant received from the DfE is set aside for renewable technologies and may use S106 funding towards renewables at schools where this is available.

For 2023/24 programme, £39k has been set aside to support works at maintained schools. In addition, an in-principle CapEx contribution of £60k from S106 is available to support solar arrays at schools subject to the specific proposals meet carbon reduction criteria.

5. From Professor Alisoun Milne to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What monies has the council spent in identifying public buildings owned by the council that are suitable for solar panels or energy efficiency measures, what are these buildings and when will the council present a report to the relevant committee to develop this work?

Reply:

Officers have scheduled a carbon programme update report for the November 2023 meeting of the Environment & Community Services PDS Committee.

6. From Mr Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What has happened to the report that was due to be presented to the Environment Committee in June 2022 after a public question to the Executive on 9/02/22 on reducing CO2 emissions? When will the council present a committee report on working with the public to reduce carbon emissions?

Reply:

Officers have scheduled a carbon programme update report for the November 2023 meeting of the Environment & Community Services PDS Committee.

7. From Ms Zoe Williams to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What funding opportunities are available in this financial year to the council from central government to make public buildings (especially schools) climate change friendly; and will the council make such applications for schools in the borough and decarbonisation projects?

Reply:

The most significant funding available to public sector bodies is the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme which funds heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures within 'public sector and non-domestic buildings.'

In Bromley, 94% of schools are academies and therefore are not under the control of the Council. It is therefore a matter for the relevant academy trust to decide if they wish to bid for funding under this scheme.

For a comprehensive review of grant funding available, please use the government's 'find a grant' tool:

find-government-grants.service.gov.uk

8. From Mr Tim Riley to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What grants are available to the local council from either central government or the greater London authority to help tackle fuel poverty in the borough, what applications has the council made, what grant has been received and how has it been spent?

Reply:

In April 2023, the government awarded £12m from the Homes Upgrade Grant 2 to the GLA representing a consortium of London local authorities which includes Bromley Council. Further information is expected shortly on how residents living in eligible homes can access grant funding to install energy efficiency and low carbon upgrades.

The Council successfully bid to the Local Authority Delivery Scheme 2, with £920k set aside for retrofitting eligible domestic properties in the borough. The Council does not hold this money or make payments; this is coordinated by WarmWorks.

Bromley residents can also benefit from the Big London Energy Switch and secure better energy prices through collective purchasing.

9. From Ms Marilyn Luck to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

What progress has been made by the Council in reducing carbon emissions in residential housing (whether rented or privately owned) since the public question to the council meeting on 6.12.21?

Reply:

The Council successfully bid for funding under the Local Authority Delivery Scheme 2 which has made £920k available to low-income households or low energy performance homes in the borough.

Additionally, the Council is a member of the consortium network South London Energy Efficiency Partnership (SLEEP) which makes advice and practical help available to Bromley residents.

A free advice for Bromley residents is available through South London Healthy Homes. This includes a free winter home, financial and health support package for those most in need, including:

- energy efficiency advice
- Support for home improvement grant applications

The Council has also provided advice to residents on energy efficiency on its website: Energy - efficiency advice and assessment – London Borough of Bromley.

10. From Mr Richard Seabrook to the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability, Green Services & Open Spaces

Did the Council submit a report in May this year as required by the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, and if so, what progress did it record since the previous report?

Reply:

The HECA return guidance has not yet been published and therefore the deadline for the return of this information has not yet been set by the government, with confirmation on the deadline expected when the guidance is published later this year.