

Council

11 December 2023

Questions from Members of the Public for Oral Reply

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

Please list the annual energy bill for each of the Council owned leisure centres, what plans are there to reduce the energy bills at these buildings, does the Council accept responsibility to make all these buildings completely climate change friendly and if not, why not?

Reply:

The energy bills for the leisure centres are paid for by Mytime Active who are consequently motivated to maximise energy efficiency to reduce costs and are currently investigating options for renewable energy provision, specifically at Beckenham Spa. The major works planned for the Walnuts and West Wickham leisure centres also include improvements to energy efficiency and a bid has been submitted for a grant to fund this.

Supplementary Question:

Mr Mckibbin asked whether the Portfolio Holder could speak to Mytime to investigate the slow progress at The Spa.

Reply:

Cllr Bear agreed to contact Mytime.

2. From Ju Owens to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

With the winter weather starting to bite, and the cost of living crisis increasing what provisions has Bromley Council put in place to ensure that no one is forced to sleep rough this winter; and that everyone found homeless is helped to find to secure and affordable housing?

Reply:

The Council works with partner agencies throughout the year to identify and engage with anyone found to be sleeping rough in the borough. The support provided includes access to accommodation, support with health matters and referrals to appropriate agencies. This proactive work throughout the year means that the numbers of people sleeping rough in the borough remain low and that new flow to the streets is responded to very quickly.

Supplementary Question:

Ms Owens asked whether the Council would be joining other councils, charities, businesses, community and faith groups in joining the Mayor of London's Rough Sleeping Charter?

Reply:

Cllr Bear responded that the Council would do its best to address rough sleeping with or without a charter and was making good progress. At the last survey, only one Bromley resident was found to be sleeping rough who was not previously known to services. The Charter had been created in collaboration with London Councils, reflects best practice across all London Boroughs and encourages other organisations to assist with tackling rough sleeping. The Council will review the Charter.

Supplementary Question from Cllr Simon Jeal:

Cllr Jeal asked how the monitoring and identification of rough sleepers worked – how this was counted and quantified?

Reply:

Cllr Bear explained that the number of rough sleepers was regularly monitored and as soon as a report of a new rough sleeper was received the outreach team was sent to investigate. Five people had been found sleeping rough at the last survey.

Supplementary Question from Cllr Alisa Igoe:

Cllr Igoe complained that she had emailed about a rough sleeper, but had not received a reply.

Reply:

Cllr Bear asked for the details to be sent to her and she would follow up. She added that usually a team was sent out the same night, but sometimes it was not possible to find the person.

Supplementary Question from Cllr Kathy Bance:

Cllr Bance asked where rough sleepers should be reported?

Reply:

Cllr Bear advised that reports should always be made to the Council's rough sleeper team, who could then refer to other agencies as appropriate.

Supplementary Question from Cllr Sam Webber:

Cllr Webber asked what support for rough sleepers was available at weekends?

Reply:

Cllr Bear explained that the outreach team worked 24/7 and every day of the year. Even where the Council did not have a duty of care the team would always try to assist and support as far as possible.