



CROYDON COUNCIL MEETING: MONDAY 19 OCTOBER 2015
PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Welcome to a meeting of Croydon Council. Attached are the questions from the public and the replies which will be taken at this meeting.

WE WOULD ASK THAT YOU COLLECT THE PRINTED QUESTIONS/RESPONSES AND THEN MOVE INTO ROOM F4 ON THE FIRST FLOOR, RATHER THAN GO STRAIGHT TO THE PUBLIC GALLERY. A MEMBER OF STAFF WILL REGISTER YOUR NAME WHEN YOU ARRIVE IN THE ROOM SHOULD YOU WISH TO ASK A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION AND THEN ASK YOU TO PROCEED TO THE PUBLIC GALLERY.

Public Question time is usually towards the beginning on the meeting and the process for this item is as follows:

- ◆ The questions will be taken in the order in which they were received by the Council;
- ◆ The question and the reply will be taken as read;
- ◆ The person who asked the question, if present, will then be invited to ask a supplementary question, (if they wish) to clarify a point related to the reply they have been given in the written answer. The **length and detail of such a question should be brief** and at the discretion of the Mayor, allowing for the time available and the number of other questions which need to be dealt with;
- ◆ Public question time is limited strictly to **15 minutes** - if all the questions and answers have not been reached at the end of that time, the other replies will be taken as read and there will be no further opportunity for asking supplementary questions at that meeting; and
- ◆ Questions will not be carried over to the following meeting, but it is of course in order for questioners to ask another question on the same or another topic before the next meeting.

After the public question time you are very welcome to stay for the rest of the meeting

Question Number	Question to Cabinet Member	Question From	Subject
PQ41-15	Cllr Newman	Mr Collier	Committee System
PQ42-15	Cllr Newman	Dr Sharma	Boulders
PQ43-15	Cllr Bee	Mr Cooper	Air pollution
PQ44-15	Cllr Collins	Mr de Silva	Street cleaning
PQ45-15	Cllr Collins	Mr Ward	Fly tipping
PQ46-15	Cllr Butler	Mr Johnson	Empty properties

PQ47-15	Cllr Butler	Mr Creighton	Landlords Licensing Scheme
PQ48-15	Cllr Bee	Mrs Santosh-Expedith	Fiveways Flyover
PQ49-15	Cllr Newman	Mr Cartwright	Council guide
PQ50-15	Cllr Butler	Ms Glinska	New build Council properties
PQ51-15	Cllr Collins	Mr S Downes	Fly tip reports
PQ52-15	Cllr Hall	Mr T Downes	Register of electors
PQ53-15	Cllr Newman	Mr M Samuel	Missing Link

The attached replies are subject to oral amendment by the Cabinet Member or Committee Chair.

From Mr Peter Collier

Councillor Tony Newman

Leader of the Council

Question No.

PQ041-15

It is my understanding under the Localism Act 2011, that this Council has the opportunity to ask Elected Councillors if they would like to go back to the Committee system as it was in the past, therefore can I be advised if it will take place, if so when.

Reply

I can confirm that there are no plans to revert to the Committee system.

From Dr. Jagdish Sharma

Councillor Tony Newman

Leader of the Council

Question No.

PQ042-15

An ugly unshaped boulder has appeared on the corner of Morland Avenue. This rock on pavement is a hazard for people turning the corner. The brass plaque marking 50 years of Croydon becoming a borough tells of 19 more such rocks.

How much did this nonsense cost to tax payers?

Reply

These boulders were left in a pile in the vicinity of Central Parade, New Addington at considerable cost to local taxpayers. They have been saved and put to excellent use by Councillor Butler to mark the 50th anniversary of Croydon, for which there has been widespread praise.

From Mr. Austen Cooper

Councillor Kathy Bee

Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

Question No.

PQ043-15

Why was the air pollution monitoring station in George Street removed and when will it be replaced?

Reply

The existing Air Quality Monitoring Station in George Street was removed from its previous location on the corner of Wellesley Road as part of the East Croydon Interchange Public Realm project. One of the aims of the project was to improve pedestrian connectivity to and from the public transport interchange comprising of East Croydon train station, East Croydon tram stop and East Croydon bus station to the central metropolitan area. It was considered by the design team that the Air Quality Monitoring Station in its previous location hindered pedestrian connectivity and caused a potential blind spot for tram drivers travelling from the Wellesley Road tram stop towards the East Croydon tram stop. A new location for the Air Quality Monitoring Station was identified within the central pedestrian island of George St / Park Lane recessed within one of the new planters which would not impede pedestrian flow. We have also taken advantage of this work to house the equipment in a new cabinet which will be more aesthetically pleasing and will last longer than the existing one.

The new Air Quality Monitoring station is due to be installed into its new location by Friday 16th October 2015.

From Mr. Kevin de Silva

Councillor Stuart Collins

Cabinet Member for Clean, Green Croydon

Question No.

PQ044-15

Can the Council please explain the sharp decline in street cleanliness in recent months and the Council's failure to respond to repeated complaints about the issue?

Reply

The council has experienced a drop in standards of street cleanliness in some areas following the introduction of the new refuse collection rounds, while the focus of attention has been to ensure that collections returned to business as normal as quickly as possible.

Now that missed collections are below the reported rate before the introduction of the Village system Officers are ensuring that Veolia are now concentrating on bringing these back up to standard and a regime of both joint and independent inspections have been introduced to support this process with weekly meetings introduced to target hot spots and monitor progress.

Street Cleaning standards have been an issue in some areas since the cut of the afternoon cleans made in 2012, for the first time this Council has introduced these weekly meetings with the contractor and we will be expecting improvement over the coming months.

From **Mr Robert Ward**

Councillor **Stuart Collins**

Cabinet Member for Clean, Green Croydon

Question No.

PQ045-15

Performance on flytipping continues to deteriorate. July 2015 had the highest number of flytips (2191) since the Don't Mess with Croydon campaign started. The percentage cleared within 48 hours sank in August 2015 to 72.5%.

Something is not working. What is being done to change things?

Reply

Since 2014 there has been a change, as Cabinet Member for Clean and Green I am proud of the fact that under my watch we are making some significant improvements to the borough with the introduction of more communication channels available to residents such as MY Account and the Croydon App in addition to the Councils Contact Centre, it is now easier for residents to report issues to the council such as fly-tipping. It is therefore inevitable that a greater number of reports will be captured and recorded, the previous administration never made these stats public.

Clearance rates in 48 hours will ebb and flow depending on the pressures on our contractor, in this case they have just been through the introduction of the Village System which when introduced in any Borough will have had its teething problems. Now the missed collection rate recorded is lower than before the Village System, focus will again be on clearing fly tips and street cleaning.

You say the clearance rate in 48 hours has sunk, firstly it's gone down by only 7.5% but secondly overall it had gone up from the previous administrations dismal 3% performance, thirdly that dismal performance meant fly tips in hotspots being added to and of course only being counted as one fly tip.

It is never going to be easy for any Borough to tackle what has become a national issue in the face of Central Government cuts that are forcing Council's everywhere to cut the refuse, recycling services however here in Croydon we do have a Campaign Don't Mess with Croydon Take pride. Officers and contractors are working hard to improve the service and working with the enforcement teams to enforce and prosecute offenders, this year we have issued 534 FPNs since April and secured 45 prosecutions with a further 3 pending, a giant increase.

This Council has hugely improved its performance, there is however a long way to go, but unlike the previous administration we will never give up.

As a consequence of the government's continued approach to reducing the public sector deficit, principally through reductions in public expenditure, we as a borough continue to face significant reductions in our grant funding. As a result we took the decision to delete this discretionary service that residents pay for through their council tax, whether they use it or not.

Over the coming months residents will be encouraged to express an interest in being part of a new chargeable green garden waste service, which is expected to cost approximately £1.15 per week. Residents who choose to continue, or begin home composting of their green garden waste will be able to find some helpful advice on the council's web page, and residents who do not use the chargeable service will be able to continue to take their green garden waste free of charge to any of the council's three Household Reuse & Recycling Centres at Factory Lane, Purley Oaks or Fishers Farm.

From **Mr Mark Johnson**

Councillor **Alison Butler**

Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning

Question No.

PQ046-15

The Council devised a new campaign which includes the proposal to invest £0.5m to bring empty properties back in use in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Can the Cabinet member confirm how much of this budget has been spent to date and how many homes/properties under this scheme in 2015 have been made available for the people of Croydon?

Reply

To date the Council have approved grants for 11 homes, amounting to a commitment of £275,000. There are significant numbers of additional applications for grants, amounting to in excess of £2m and the budget will be fully committed within the next few months.

The grants are only paid upon completion of works, none of the approved projects have yet completed and no payments have yet been made from the 2015/16 budget. All homes offered a grant will be made available to the people of Croydon via one of the Housing Initiatives Team's letting schemes prior to the owner receiving the grant payment.

From **Mr Sean Creighton**

Councillor **Alison Butler**

Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning

Question No.

PQ047-15

As at end of 30 September how many landlords and lettings agents had registered on the licensing scheme, how many tenancies are covered by these licences, when will the licence register be publicly available, and how many tenanted homes are estimated not yet to be covered by a licence?

Reply

At the end of September we had received licence applications from 10,797 landlords and managing agents for a total of 23,347 properties. We estimate that there are approximately 30,000 to 32,000 privately rented properties within the borough which means that we have yet to receive applications for approximately 6,500 to 8,500 properties.

We are now processing the licences but will not begin to send these out until towards the end of November. As soon as licences are issued we will commence the register, which will then be available to the public, although it must be remembered that, particularly in the early days, the register will be updated on a daily basis.

From Mrs. Sara Santosh Expedith

Councillor Kathy Bee

Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment

Question No.

PQ048-15

How likely is the proposal for the Fiveways flyover going to be approved when the scheme itself will involve a substantial loss of green space, increase pollution and congestion in the area while failing to tackle the initial problem of traffic build up at the Fiveways junction?

Reply

TfL has just concluded its analysis of the consultation on the two options for Fiveways, and is near to concluding its technical assessment of those options. However at this stage a preferred option has not been selected. You are right to highlight the need to tackle the fundamental issue namely the demand for car use. Our Transport Vision (published earlier this year) sets out how we aim to enhance the alternatives to the car (particularly for short journeys) and to help people choose those alternatives.

From **Mr John Cartwright**

Councillor **Tony Newman**

Leader of the Council

Question No.

PQ049-15

The "Guide to the Annual Council Meeting" for 21st May 2015 states "Everyone including those in the public gallery who are able to stand will stand while the Mayor [...] takes her seat on the dais."

Why does this sentence incorrectly include the words "including those in the public gallery"?

Reply

The statement is correct. It is included for the avoidance of doubt that the word "Everyone" includes those in the public gallery. It is directory not mandatory.

From **Ms. Susan Glinska**

Councillor **Alison Butler**

Cabinet Member for Homes, Regeneration and Planning

Question No.

PQ050-15

How many new-build council houses or units of social housing have been started by Croydon Council since May 2014?

Reply

The current Council New Build Phase 4 programme comprises of 33 units of which 12 new homes have started on site since May 2014. All units apart from 2 units have been handed over and residents have moved in. The remaining 2 homes are due to be handed over this next week.

Looking forward, the Council is forecasting a step change increase in the number of new build homes delivered. A thorough review of surplus Council owned assets has been completed and technical due diligence of 70 council owned sites is currently being undertaken. The results of this work will help inform the programme from October 2015 onwards when design and planning work will commence on these sites as part of the expanded programme.

In relation to grant funding, the Council has secured affordable housing funding from the GLA for the delivery of 100 affordable homes as part of this programme to start on site no later than August 2016.

From **Mr Steven Downes**

Councillor **Stuart Collins**

Cabinet Member for Clean, Green Croydon

Question No.

PQ051-15

Please provide a list, for each elected councillor, of the number of incidents of fly-tipping and dumped rubbish that they have reported since May 2014, both (a) within their ward and (b) outside the ward which they represent.

Reply

It is not possible to provide the information requested. Councillors report fly tips in many different ways, including the Council's report it app, contact the council email address, the online reporting function and emails directly to officers requesting services, which is not possible to pull together into a single report.

What I can say is that from my own experience and that of my Deputy is that we have experienced an increase of e mails to ourselves regarding fly tips and several Cllrs have given us and Officers information that has led to fixed penalty fines and prosecutions.

From **Mr Tom Downes**

Councillor **Simon Hall**

Cabinet Member for Treasury & Finance

Question No.

PQ052-15

Please provide a list, by ward, of the total number of registered voters eligible to take part in local elections, as at May 22, 2014, and at October 1, 2015.

Reply

We are currently in the middle of the electoral registration canvass to publish a fully revised register of electors on 1 December. During the canvass period we do not publish monthly updates for the register for 1 October and 1 November. The figures below provide a comparison of electorates as at 1 September. Clearly, these figures are before the annual canvass which can see significant changes to the figures. The 1 December 2015 register will reflect the work, such as personal canvass, currently going on. I would urge any residents who believe they are not on the register to register online. This would include also 16 and 17 year olds who can register, so that they are able to vote as soon as they turn 18.

Ward	May 2014	September 2015
Addiscombe	11,776	11,815
Ashburton	10,745	11,033
Bensham Manor	10,975	11,292
Broad Green	12,107	12,943
Coulsdon East	9,519	9,665
Coulsdon West	10,311	10,572
Croham	11,132	11,472
Fairfield	11,970	12,680
Fieldway	7,100	7,382
Heathfield	10,094	10,250
Kenley	10,900	11,126
New Addington	7,387	7,540
Norbury	11,540	11,862
Purley	10,738	11,060
Sanderstead	9,756	10,003
Selhurst	11,529	12,028
Selsdon and Ballards	9,478	9,540
Shirley	10,751	10,993
South Norwood	11,459	11,971
Thornton Heath	10,738	11,340

Upper Norwood	11,265	11,742
Waddon	11,768	12,087
West Thornton	11,352	11,872
Woodside	10,934	11,426
Borough Total	255,324	263,694

From **Mr Mark Samuel**

Councillor **Tony Newman**

Leader of the Council

Question No.

PQ053-15

He talks a good talk, but can the leader explain his failed promise of the "missing link" given at the last Public Question time? Is this really his understanding of the "new politics" espoused by his leader?

Reply

I believe that your reference to the "missing link" relates to a web link to information on this council's website which was sent to you in response to PQ038-15. I do apologise if for any reason you weren't able to access the information via that link. Please use the following website address to access the information you previously requested.

<https://secure.croydon.gov.uk/akscroydon/users/public/admin/kab14.pl?operation=SUBMIT&meet=33&cmte=CAB&grpId=public&arc=1>