

COUNCIL MEETING: MONDAY 20 JULY 2015

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

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CQ291	Robert Canning	Council meetings procedures review
CQ295	Andrew Pelling	RAF Croydon
CQ297	Andrew Pelling	Croydon's regeneration
CQ333	Phil Thomas	Class warfare'
CQ334	Lynne Hale	Community Ward Budgets
CQ344	Mario Creatura	Webcast viewing figures
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DEPUTY LEADER (STATUTORY) AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES, REGENERATION AND PLANNING – Councillor Alison Butler		
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Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
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CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT – Councillor Kathy Bee		
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Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
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CQ319	Steve O'Connell	Notifiable Offences
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CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT Councillor Timothy Godfrey		
CQ302	Pat Ryan	Highbury Community Centre
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CQ336	Lynne Hale	Ambition Festival
CQ348	Badsha Quadir	Upper Norwood Library

CQ283-15 **from Councillor Andrew Rendle**

Councillor Tony Newman

How has this administration opened up local democracy and improved the understanding of what we do as Councillors?

Reply

I thank Councillor Rendle for his question.

I am pleased to report that this administration has made good progress on this issue. Our successes include the introduction of webcasting of Council, Cabinet and Scrutiny meetings, launch of Ward Based Budgets enabling local communities to have a bigger say in spending on local projects that matter to them. We have also introduced measures that have enabled us to take key decisions relating to the Council's budget earlier than usual.

There is of course more to be done and we will shortly be setting up a cross party members working group to review current arrangements and consider what changes we can make to increase engagement with local people.

CQ288-15 **from Councillor Stephen Mann**

Councillor Tony Newman

Does more need to be done to improve the image of Croydon in the eyes of our neighbours?

Reply

I thank Councillor Mann for his question.

This administration is restoring Croydon's image which has suffered under the stewardship of successive Conservative Administrations.

I am proud to be able to say that this Labour Administration is making good progress in transforming Croydon from a sleepy dormitory suburb into a 21st century modern European city with vibrant district and town centres. Some examples of our delivery so far are:

- ✓ Growth Zone – Fairer Share of Funding
- ✓ London Living Wage
- ✓ Opportunity and Fairness Commission
- ✓ Financial Inclusion
- ✓ Council Tax Freeze
- ✓ Tackling Domestic Violence
- ✓ Croydon Promise
- ✓ 10 Economic Priorities
- ✓ Jobs Brokerage
- ✓ Flagship Food Borough
- ✓ Schools Mutual
- ✓ Saving Purley Pool
- ✓ Increasing Affordable Housing
- ✓ New Housing Delivery Vehicle
- ✓ Landlord Licensing Scheme
- ✓ Open and Transparent Council
- ✓ Ward Budgets
- ✓ Saving the Queen's Gardens
- ✓ Tackling Office to Residential Conversions
- ✓ Don't Mess With Croydon – Take Pride
- ✓ New Environmental Enforcement
- ✓ Digital by Design
- ✓ Ambition Festival
- ✓ Cultural Quarter
- ✓ West Croydon Regeneration
- ✓ 20mph Zones
- ✓ Best Start for Children
- ✓ New Equality and Inclusion Policy

Our record speaks for itself, however there is no room for complacency and we will continue to deliver tangible improvements for the benefit of local people.

CQ291-15 **from Councillor Robert Canning**

Councillor Tony Newman

What consideration has the Leader of the Council given to a review of the processes and procedures at Full Council meetings?

Reply

I thank Councillor Canning for his question.

Members from all sides and the public have expressed a desire for Council meetings to be more accessible and engaging for local people. We have listened to the feedback and will be setting up a cross party members working group in September to consider the issues and report back with recommendations. As part of our commitment to openness and transparency we will of course consult the people of Croydon to hear what changes they would like to see.

Speaking personally I would like to see shorter Council meetings with greater interaction with the community via social media, debating issues relevant to them.

CQ295-15 **from Councillor Andrew Pelling**

Councillor Tony Newman

This coming August 15th marks the 75th anniversary of the aerial bombing of RAF Croydon and its local environs, including Waddon, with 68 fatalities and 192 injured. Should we remember the victims?

Reply

I thank Councillor Pelling for his question.

It is right that we commemorate those who have suffered injury or lost their lives in war. It is for this reason that my administration has acted to restore the Arnhem link. I will give my full support to any initiative to erect an appropriate memorial in the area to commemorate victims of the aerial bombardment of Croydon.

CQ297-15 **from Councillor Andrew Pelling**

Councillor Tony Newman

The number of construction cranes to be seen from East Croydon station is an impressive sign for visitors to our town, revealing its new found regeneration. Is Croydon going places?

Reply

I thank Councillor Pelling for his question.

Evidence of regeneration is clearly visible right across the borough. I am proud of the fact that that our administration is successfully delivering the manifesto commitments we made to the people of Croydon, including a cleaner, safer borough, more affordable housing, a living wage and better employment opportunities. We will continue to do as much as possible to attract more inward investment and to ensure that local people benefit from the growth in the local economy.

CQ333-15 **from Councillor Phil Thomas**

Councillor Tony Newman

At the June Cabinet meeting one of your Councillors [Paul Scott] had a rant about people who live in the South of the Borough calling them privileged. Do you regret that Labour Councillors in Croydon have still not learnt the lessons of your defeat at the General Election by carrying on the class warfare against people who live in the leafy Centre and South?

Reply

Councillor Thomas, I'm afraid that the only rant I can recall at the Cabinet meeting in June was your ill-judged and ill-informed contribution to the debate on the success of the Don't Mess With Croydon campaign.

As the man who chose to end weekly bin collections in this Borough oversaw the dramatic rise in the blight of fly-tipping, I am delighted that the people of Croydon voted you out of office so that a Labour administration that cares about the whole of Croydon can get on with cleaning up your mess and restoring pride and ambition to all our streets.

CQ334-15 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Tony Newman

Should councillors wish to pool their Community Ward Budget money with contributions from other local organisations to put on public events, will the events be covered by the Council's public liability insurance?

Reply

I am pleased to confirm that there is no exclusion per se for activities funded by the community ward budget under our public liability insurance. Effectively the public liability insurance covers the legal liability of the authority for the 'usual activities' of the Council, but this is defined quite widely to include community events. The main question to ask is whether Croydon (as the funder) is the lead body for the activity.

On the assumption that the Council is the lead body, the main consideration is that a proper risk assessment is completed for the event or activity, which should be copied to the Council's insurance and resilience team. Corporate health and safety may be able to assist.

Depending on the nature of the activity the Council may want to check the insurance arrangements of the other partners.

CQ344-15 **from Councillor Mario Creatura**

Councillor Tony Newman

Could the Council Leader please detail the online viewing figures for Council and Cabinet meetings since live-streaming was re-introduced last year? How many people have viewed each Council and Cabinet meeting?

Reply

I thank Councillor Creatura for his question.

I am pleased to confirm that between September 2014 and June 2015 there were a total of 16,678 viewings of full council, cabinet and scrutiny & strategic overview committee meetings. These figures demonstrate a healthy interest amongst local people in the business of the Council. The key point to bear in mind is that the aim of webcasting our meetings has always been the pursuit of greater openness and transparency, which is critical to our commitment to ensuring that we can be held accountable to local people.

CQ350-15 **from Councillor Shafi Khan**

Councillor Tony Newman

The Tory government has been slashing off the Council funding year on year forcing local authorities to make efficiency savings. But as we all know that the scope for further efficiencies is limited and the move to make even deeper cuts are purely dogmatic. Would the Leader agree with me that the Government needs to protect public services provided by the local councils and ensure adequate funding is available to deliver descent quality services?

Reply

I thank Councillor Khan for his question.

Under the Conservative led Coalition Government this Council suffered cuts in central government grant of 45.8% between April 2011 and March 2016. We know that the current Conservative Government plan to implement further substantial cuts for the remainder of this decade. It is clear that further cuts will decimate essential services that the poorest and most vulnerable people in the community rely on for their survival. It is also clear that the Conservative Government has little regard for the welfare of the poorest in our society.

This Labour administration is proud that despite these challenging and demanding conditions, we have in our first year in office delivered a balanced budget, frozen Council Tax and provide high quality services to local people. To enable us to continue to meet the needs of local people we are calling on the Government to deliver fairer funding to outer London boroughs such as Croydon and to devolve meaningful powers and financial responsibility in order that we can secure a more sustainable future for our community.

CQ312-15 **from Councillor Dudley Mead**

Councillor Alison Butler

How many of the 41 part built council dwellings you took over on May 22 2014 have been completed?

Reply

The current Council New Build programme comprises two phases (Phase 3 & 4) comprising of 74 properties.

Despite considerable problems caused by the external consultants and one of the contractors appointed by the previous administration, 21 properties have been completed to date with all remaining properties due for phased completions in July and August.

In addition to these 74 homes, we will commence work on a new programme of council house building for which funding is fully committed through a mixture of HRA, Right to Buy receipts and affordable housing grant provided by the GLA. This will deliver a further 100 homes across 17 sites, with completion by 2018.

However, as we have previously emphasised, we are not content with maintaining historic levels of housing delivery and intend to significantly extend the new build programme in future years.

A review of all council-owned sites (housing and non-housing land) has been undertaken, and we have now identified a variety of sites which have the potential to meet housing need. We are currently undertaking detailed due diligence on these sites and working up a funding and delivery model which will ensure that these new high quality homes are developed efficiently.

This work will enable a very significant increase in the pace of housing delivery over the next few years.

CQ313-15 **from Councillor Dudley Mead**

Councillor Alison Butler

When you took over in May last year officers had told me that there were about 850 empty properties in the borough i.e. those not occupied for more than 6 months. Judging by the statistics presented to the June cabinet you were unable to give current numbers. Have your officers stopped collecting the data?

Reply

Officers continue to actively monitor and manage the number of empty properties within Croydon.

As you are aware, we are now reporting on the number of homes brought back into use, which is an important outcome for our residents, rather than noting the number of properties that remain empty.

In a time of housing need, our continued emphasis in this area is ensuring that we secure the best outcome for the residents of Croydon.

CQ345-15 **from Councillor Mario Creatura**

Councillor Alison Butler

Will the Cabinet Member please detail the total number of private rented sector landlords that have been contacted by the Council with information about your Selective Licensing scheme and how many PRS properties this covers?

Reply

Following the decision to implement the Croydon Private Rented Property the Council have publicised that decision in accordance with the statutory requirements and individual letters have been sent to 24,737 landlords and agents to advise them of the Scheme using information gained from council tax records and other in-house databases.

In addition to this the Council is further raising awareness through the following activities:

Updated Web content at www.croydon.gov.uk/betterplacetorent
Web banner on council home page
Adverts in Croydon guardian
Adverts in neighbouring borough newspapers and the Metro
Poster on our JC Decaux sites (end July and end August)
Digital advertising on Purley Way billboard
Your Croydon e-magazine
Weekly e-bulletin Press releases
Emails to residents associations and community groups
Posters and digital adverts in council buildings
A5 flyer door to door distribution
Cinema poster advertising
Bus back advertising
Email footer on council emails
Social media

Census information indicates that there are potentially 30,472 private rented sector properties in the borough.

We expect additional landlords to respond to the publicity campaign about the Scheme, and enforcement officers will be proactively working to identify any previously unknown privately rented properties.

CQ346-15 **from Councillor Mario Creatura**

Councillor Alison Butler

Will the Cabinet Member please explain the latest status of the 'Queen's Garden' development? When does she expect construction to commence?

Reply

As agreed by Cabinet on 13th July, the Taberner House scheme and related improvements to Queen's Gardens is now set to be delivered by the council's newly-launched development company. It will as a result be able to provide more affordable housing, more open space and a better financial return.

The development company will work with a private sector development partner and will build the scheme across four blocks instead of five, providing significantly more green space in The Queen's Gardens.

As well as giving the council greater control over the scheme, the new development company approach is expected to more than double the council's forecast financial return.

By taking a more proactive approach and delivering schemes through our development company, the council will be able to secure profit that would previously have gone elsewhere.

The revised plans for the Taberner House site are due to be submitted for planning permission later this year with construction work expected to begin on site early next year.

CQ351-15 **from Councillor Shafi Khan**

Councillor Alison Butler

It is pleasing to see that, a great number of newly built flats are available in Croydon. But it is equally disappointing to see that the number of affordable homes is becoming scarce. Can the Cabinet member assure us that the Council would monitor and check with rigour the viability assessment used by the construction industry to stop reducing the number of affordable homes?

Reply

Council planning policy seeks to deliver a mix of housing units, including both flatted accommodation as well as single family dwelling homes. Affordable housing policy applies to housing proposals that exceed the affordable housing threshold (10 units of accommodation). Scheme viability is a consideration and factor when determining the capacity of a scheme to provide affordable housing.

This Administration is absolutely committed to maximising the supply of affordable housing and will use all means at its disposal to do so.

CQ353-15 **from Councillor Pat Clouder**

Councillor Alison Butler

Could the cabinet member tell me what affect this Governments new vacant building credit means for housing in Croydon?

Reply

Vacant Building Credit (VBC) was announced by the Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Brandon Lewis) in November 2014. It came into force in December 2014 through an amendment to the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). A further NPPG amendment was made in March 2015 and is the current guidance for the application of VBC.

The VBC enables the developer to be offered a financial incentive. This typically forms a reduction in affordable housing contribution equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the relevant vacant building.

There are two matters the Council can have regard to when deciding whether to apply VBC to a development. The first is whether the building has been made vacant for the sole purpose of securing VBC; the second is whether an extant permission or a recently expired permission exists for a development substantially the same.

This council is extremely concerned that Vacant Building Credit along with Permitted Development introduced by the Government and imposed on Local Authorities will have a damaging effect on the supply of affordable homes for the people of Croydon.

CQ331-15 from Councillor Phil Thomas

Councillor Stuart Collins

How many residents have complained about their rubbish & recycling not being picked up in the last 3 months?

Reply

The Council's collection service has significantly changed with the introduction of the Village Style service. The new service commenced in June. There has been an increase in the number of complaints during the bedding-in period.

Additional resources have been brought in to support this transition which has enabled the service provider to respond to the increase.

I have summarised below for you details of the total number of collections for all landfill, recycling and associated waste services for March, April & May together with the information for June together with the total number of scheduled collections undertaken during June.

Total number of non-collections all services

April 2015	-	1,236
May 2015	-	1,322
June 2015	-	8,211

For June 2015 a total of **2,396,698** scheduled collections were completed.

The percentage service failure for June 2015 in respect of reported missed collections of **8,211** equated to **0.342%**

CQ332-15 **from Councillor Phil Thomas**

Councillor Stuart Collins

As you have abandoned all opposition to the Beddington Lane ERF without so much as a whimper will you now apologise to the people of Croydon for all the promises you made like withdrawing from the SLWP and stopping the facility going ahead?

Reply

This Administration remains opposed to the technology proposed and has said so at numerous SLWP meetings. We also successfully argued that the public be allowed to ask questions and wrote to the Leader of Sutton Council expressing concerns. If there should be any apology it should come from you for tying this Administration into the contract in the first instance and it is you that believes in Incineration.

Our Administration has investigated the options to legally withdraw from the contract for the management and treatment of municipal waste for both Croydon and the partnering boroughs of the South London Waste Partnership.

The contract was awarded to Viridor in November 2012 and Notice To Proceed with building their proposed Energy Recovery Facility at their Beddington Farmlands site in Sutton has recently been issued following a legal challenge on the proposed waste management solution.

The liabilities associated with withdrawing from this 25 year contract with Viridor by Croydon are significant, and would have placed additional financial pressures on the authority if the Administration instructed the withdrawal from this strategic contract, at a time when the council is managing reduced funding thanks to austerity cuts.

Croydon are the Contracting Authority for this contract and would be liable for all costs associated with withdrawing from this contract both from the private sector and also from each of the partnering boroughs who have financially invested in the procurement process.

The planning permission was granted by Sutton Council, they are the planning authority and Viridor are going ahead, so it is this Administrations task to now get the best deal we possibly can for Croydon's residents both in financial terms and in terms of ensuring stringent health & safety guidelines are met and kept to.

CQ339-15 from Councillor Margaret Bird

Councillor Stuart Collins

Can the cabinet member tell me how much the change to the Village system of rubbish collection has cost the Council in officer time over missed collections and how many complaints has the Council had from residents who are failing to get a service they are paying their Council tax to get?

Reply

In respect of officer time and charges, it is an integral part of officers' roles and responsibilities to implement service changes and therefore there are no additional costs associated with the contract management team.

I have summarised below for you details of the total number of collections for all landfill, recycling and associated waste services for March, April & May together with the information for June together with the total number of scheduled collections undertaken during June.

Total number of non-collections all services

March 2015	-	949
April 2015	-	1,236
May 2015	-	1,322
June 2015	-	8,211

For June 2015 a total of **2,396,698** scheduled collections were completed.

The percentage service failure for June 2015 in respect of reported missed collections of **8,211** equated to **0.342%**

CQ352-15

from Councillor Shafi Khan

Councillor Stuart Collins

Would the Cabinet Member update us about the new initiatives he has introduced to improve the cleanliness of the streets and to tackle the fly tipping across the borough?

Reply

Thank you for your question. It was good to be able to promote what the Council are doing at the two recent Norbury resident's association meetings and to see Norbury residents embracing the campaign.

The council continues to encourage residents to report all illegally deposited waste on public footways and highways within their environments, and currently around 85% of all reported fly tips are removed within 48 Hours.

In addition the council has installed new dual recycling/landfill bins at locations where residents living in flats above shops had no access to either recycling bins or a landfill storage area, and extra dual bins are proposed to be installed at agreed locations during the next two months.

We recruited a specific post Street Champion coordinator charged with establishing Street Champion schemes across the borough to focus on supporting residents to tackle localised litter, graffiti and other environmental issues. Over 200 Street Champions have been recruited, taking part in community clean ups. We've also been active with community groups and residents associations to organise clean-ups and promoting the alleygate scheme.

The Don't Mess With Croydon campaign successfully underpins all of our proactive activities and has become identified with a number of successful outcomes. There is a dedicated email and hotline for reporting flytips: flytip@croydon.gov.uk / 020 8604 7000, and flytips can be reported via the free My Croydon smartphone app or by My Account.

We have had two recent court days for Litter enforcement. The first garnered 7 successful convictions and the most recent earlier this week had 18 successful convictions which included dog fouling for the first time.

We have undertaken numerous targeted operations in the last 12 months with other departments and agencies focusing on fly-tipping and Trade Waste breaches. As a consequence we have seen a reduction in complaints from the targeted areas and an increase in the applications for commercial trade waste agreements.

We also put in place significant measures to stop illegal encampments resulting in fly tips and this has seen a marked improvement on the amount spent on clearing fly tips to this point last year.

CQ354-15 from Councillor Pat Clouder

Councillor Stuart Collins

Could the cabinet member tell me how many times CCTV has been used in the North to prosecute Fly tippers in the last year?

Reply

CCTV is used extensively in our work to tackle fly tipping. The Council has a variety of different equipment and it is a valuable tool in enforcing against offenders.

We have deployed our 2 CCTV cars regularly across the Borough in the last 6 months since we obtained them, predominantly in the North of the Borough.

We have approximately 10 lamp post mounted cameras, which are static and are in place at hot spot locations.

We also have a number of trails cameras (small camouflaged battery operated units) which can be deployed flexibly around the Borough.

As a result of using CCTV approximately 5 FPNs have been issued in combination with finding evidence in dumped rubbish within camera range. These are not prosecutions as such, but are a form of enforcement action.

On one occasion after a fly tip was reported in Granville Gardens last year, the camera there was reviewed and the car responsible was identified. Enquiries were made and the car disappeared. We then obtained a warrant for the vehicle based on the camera footage. We will seize the vehicle involved if it ever turns up anywhere again and will look to prosecute the owner when identified.

We have used private footage from residents CCTV systems as well on several occasions and have several investigations ongoing at the moment where private CCTV has captured the offending. Unfortunately, witnesses are often understandably unwilling to give us a statement, and there has also been issues with the quality of some of the footage supplied which renders it unusable.

We frequently identify offences using our CCTV equipment but this does not always result in a successful prosecution as we need to be able to identify who the offender is. However, the team deploy signs as well as cameras to hotspot areas. Where this is the case there is often a reduction in fly tipping in the area, which suggests that the cameras have a deterrent effect as well as the potential to provide evidence where it does occur.

We are continuing to review and refresh the equipment we have and are moving cameras around on a weekly basis as we receive intelligence of offences taking place.

CQ277-15 from Councillor Sara Bashford

Councillor Simon Hall

With regard to the Cabinet paper dated 22nd June 2015 relating to the design and development of Fishers Farm, the paper at 3.3 states (although badly worded) that the scheme will only take place if a suitable location to site Fishers Farm is found.

1. Can Cllr Hall please tell me which sites the Council owns that are suitable and being considered as the replacement site?
2. Can Cllr Hall please tell me which sites the Council doesn't own that are being considered as the replacement site?
3. If there are no sites under consideration, why is work being planned and paid for that may not take place?
4. The Labour group promised the project would only go ahead if a suitable site could be found for the recycling centre. Is this promise still valid?

Reply

The previous administration spent eight years talking about but not delivering regeneration for New Addington. This administration is committed to delivery and I would hope that the opposition would support this.

The opposition has chosen to indulge in scare-mongering regarding Fishers Farm. I can reaffirm the commitment we made (and detailed in the report to which you refer) that Fishers Farm will only be developed for housing once a suitable location for a Household Refuse and Recycling Centre has been found.

At this stage, and given the potential commercial sensitivities for the council, I cannot go through a list of possible sites. However, we believe that a suitable site can be found which is why it is appropriate to pursue the work regarding housing at Fishers Farm, especially given the overcrowding in New Addington and the desire for people to remain local.

CQ294-15 **from Councillor Joy Prince**

Councillor Simon Hall

In relation to the council's reorganisation into three departments, are any posts being filled externally, which ones, and where are they being advertised?

Reply

The following Director posts have been filled externally.

- Director of Adult Social Care and 0-65 Disability Service,
- Director of District Centres and Regeneration
- Director of Housing Need

And the following tier 1 post is currently still being advertised:

- Director of Planning and Strategic Transport

All posts have been advertised via the Council's website; and in addition a specialist agency experienced in recruiting to senior level posts has been engaged.

CQ299-15 **from Councillor David Wood**

Councillor Simon Hall

Given the intense need for the council to make the most of its resources in the current climate, what work is being done to creatively maximise use of its existing assets? Assets such as Heathfield House, which might be marketed as a wedding venue for example, raising valuable revenue?

Reply

You are right that getting the best out of the council's assets is a key part of our Financial Strategy. One of the key opportunities that I believe will lead to additional income for the council in the short to medium term is the further rationalisation of our office accommodation with the support of improvements in our technology and the renting out of space in BWH. We are actively exploring a number of opportunities with both private and public sector partners.

Heathfield House is one of a number of assets we are looking at currently to see if we improve its use and raise additional income.

CQ341-15 **from Councillor Jason Cummings**

Councillor Simon Hall

In the background report to Agenda Item 14 of the Cabinet meeting on 22nd June section 4.2 states

The redevelopment of Central Parade has also been assessed as one of 18 priority sites in the Council's Strategic Sites Review which has developed proposals for investment by the Council's new Revolving Investment Fund.

What are the other 17 sites referred to?

Reply

The Strategic Sites review was undertaken as part of the work on the Growth Promise which went to Cabinet in September last year. The purpose of the work was to identify those sites either in the ownership of the council or third parties that had most potential to be developed and support the objectives of the Growth Promise, in line with the proactive approach set out in our Ambitious For Croydon manifesto. Central Parade was one of those sites. The identification of the other sites which were part of the review is deemed as being commercially sensitive and not in the best interests of the council as they could be subject to future commercial arrangements.

CQ342-15 **from Councillor Jason Cummings**

Councillor Simon Hall

The July Financial review states that “Local taxation increases will be kept at or below inflation.” However, this administration was elected on a promise to not increase council tax for 2 years. Can you confirm that council tax will not rise during this period?

Reply

We made clear during the 2014 election campaign that there would be no council tax increase in the first two years of our administration, 2014/15 and 2015/16. We have delivered on this promise. Decisions on council tax for future years will be considered as part of the budget decisions we make.

CQ343-15 **from Councillor Jason Cummings**

Councillor Simon Hall

The £17m allocated in the capital programme for the regeneration of New Addington was previously only going to be used for Central Parade. Is some of this money now going to fund housing on the Fishers Farm site and if so by how much has the amount being used on Central Parade been reduced.

Reply

The programme is to support the delivery of the overall programme for regenerating New Addington town centre. Any potential expenditure on housing would be funded from the RIF and delivered by the Development Company we have created.

CQ305-15 **from Councillor Yvette Hopley**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

I understand that 65 Independent Living Fund recipients are going through a social services transfer process which needs to be finished by the end of July 2015. Please could you provide the total amount of the allocated funding for the ILF and the funding to be received by these residents once transferred to LBC?

Reply

For 2015/16 the Council will receive £793,497.60 ILF funding, with effect from 1 July 2015, which is the date on which the Council has responsibility for the 65 ILF recipients. This funding has been calculated by the ILF as sufficient for the remaining nine months of the 2015/16 financial year, less a 5% attrition rate. This funding will be used to pay for social care for these service users.

CQ306-15 **from Councillor Yvette Hopley**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

At the GPAC meeting and presentation of the care act one of the key risks of implementing the Care Act and importantly the ability to carry out care assessments is the IT systems not being ready in time. With the unknown pressure of additional assessments could you confirm that systems are in place to ensure providers and associated bodies will be "up and running" so that assessments can be processed?

Reply

Significant work is taking place to ensure the systems are in place to ensure that the IT systems are in place in time for implementation of the Council's April 2016 responsibilities which came about as a result of implementation of phase 2 of the Care Act. Officers are working with the IT provider to achieve two IT system upgrades to the adult social care electronic system AIS during 2015/16, which will give the Council the IT functionality to meet our duties under the Care Act for 2016. Previous AIS system changes were successfully implemented in 2014 to ensure that we were ready to fulfil our Care Act duties from April 2015.

CQ307-15 **from Councillor Yvette Hopley**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Can you confirm that those residents who are trying to renew their blue badges will receive them in a timely manner?

Reply

The travel service team have confirmed that we aim to ensure that all residents who continue to qualify receive their renewal blue badges before the old one expires. To help our customers to act promptly, courtesy reminders are sent by the national badge production unit three months before the current badge expires. These reminders may be sent by SMS, email or post depending on the customers' preference.

Each month travel services receive between 200 and 300 renewal badge applications. The amount of time taken to process these applications can vary, depending on whether the applicant qualifies without the need for reassessment (e.g. those who are registered blind or are in receipt of a passport benefit such as higher rate mobility component) or whether an assessment is required. Assessment interviews are carried out by telephone, at a face to face appointment here at Bernard Weatherill House, or exceptionally during a home visit to the applicant.

The service aims to turn around applications promptly. Currently the Occupational Therapist are averaging a turnaround time of less than 1 working day for urgent applications (terminal illness, etc) and 9 working days for all other referrals. The service target to process and production is no less than 10 working days with current performance at 99% year to date.

The actual badges supplied to customers are produced and dispatched nationally by the Government's national supplier Northgate. Unfortunately, badge production has been adversely affected over the past few weeks as printing was suspended while the national badge production unit was relocated. At the time of writing we have been advised that the backlog should be cleared within 2 weeks. We are actively monitoring our applications to identify those more vulnerable, to ensure they fast track whilst delays are redressed.

CQ308-15 **from Councillor Margaret Mead**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Can the Cabinet member please give details of the services for each of the proposed 12 savings items and also their individual amounts which total £4,314,000? £2m of these savings are at high risk of not being achieved. What actions are you taking to address this situation?

Reply

The table below details the twelve 2015/16 savings items for the People and Communities Portfolio. This was presented to Cabinet as part of the Budget Setting Paper in February 2015.

Of these savings £2m has been identified as being difficult to achieve. This relates to Adult Care Placement costs as a result of demand continuing to rise and the cases becoming more complex.

Work is being undertaken by the service to adjust in-year budgets to reduce expenditure where we can, to off-set the additional costs. For example through:

- Further efficiencies in re-ablement, learning disability supported living care packages, transitions.
- Identification of where allocated funding is not needed, e.g. not all of the growth for Deprivation of Liberty assessments is now needed.

<u>Detail</u>	<u>£m Saving</u>
<u>Commercial Negotiations :-</u> - Special Sheltered Care UK - contract negotiations - Meals on Wheels - procurement efficiencies and increased income - PD Garwood - Day Service Contract Negotiations - PFI - Organisation restructure at Eldon Housing & energy savings - Older People Commissioning - St Christophers Hospice / End of Life - Integrated Framework Agreement - Supported Housing Efficiencies - retendering of contracts - Learning Disabilities Integrated Framework (IFA) - Learning Disability Supported Living. Systematic review of all clients supported in 24 hr placements - Older People with Physical Disabilities Personal Care Integrated Framework (IFA)	(0.947)
Commercial Negotiations - with all care homes	(0.500)
<u>Redesign of Internal Services</u> - Needs and Asset Assessment redesign to meet care act requirements - Shared Lives - review scheme as an alternative to more expensive options - Transport costs - service redesign to reduce costs - Mental Health – Ashburton Road. Review of services provided at this site - Learning Disability independent Living Officers - redesign of service provision - Careline Plus contract and service review - Sensory Impairment Team - review of service provision	(0.957)
<u>Redesign of External Services</u> - Stroke - renegotiation of external contract - Special Sheltered conversion to extra care provision - Learning Disability Day Services - service review	(0.090)
QIPP - Develop joint QIPP/Council efficiency programme to have a more coordinated approach to delivery of agreed efficiencies / cost improvements etc across organisations.	(0.240)
DAAT - services funded fomr Public Health Budget	(0.200)
LATC -as a result of reduced unit costs through higher volumes generated by an increase in the number of contracts.	(0.300)
<u>Community Resources - People.</u> Using community resources more efficiently. Includes increasing information and advice to improve resilience. The use of community physical assets and ABCD type initiatives.	(0.390)
Integrated Mental Health - Housing Benefit for S117 clients	(0.100)
Short term Reablement - Expansion of short term reablement service to increase the proportion of older people, referred to the council with social care needs, who will be enabled to regain skills and confidence in carrying out daily living tasks resulting in a reduced need for social care services.	(0.307)

<u>Detail</u>	<u>£m Saving</u>
Resilience & Transition to Adults - reduction in transition Costs for 18 - 25 yr olds LD & PD. Focused social work with young adults (18 to 25 years old) and their families to implement “progression” type care and support plans that will help each young person to continue to learn new skills, to engage with their local community and to live a normal life (with support as needed), thus achieving a gradual reduction in the amount of paid social care support needed.	(0.155)
Delete Executive Director's post	(0.128)
	(4.314)

CQ309-15 **from Councillor Margaret Mead**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

The outturn summary for 2014/15 shows an overspend of £7,779,000 for the People Department. Can the Cabinet Member please give a breakdown of this figure, as previously shown in the Quarter 3 summary for 2014/15, which included detailed adult social care services, the individual amounts and the reasons for the overspends?

Reply

The 2014/15 final outturn for People Department is detailed on the attached excel spreadsheet.

This information was also presented to the General Purposes and Audit Committee on the 24th June 2015, along with the outturn figures for Place and Resources Departments.

Department
SFF Head of Finance

PEOPLE
Lisa Taylor

Division	Variation 2014/15 (Budget to Outturn) £000	Reason for Variation from Budget	Variance as at Cabinet February 2015 £000	Reason for Variation from February 2015 Cabinet Report
CFL Central	542	Change in Regulations Budget gap created due to changes to the rules of what overheads can be charged to DSG	486	Increased costs of complaints staff above expectations
CIN	-147	Over-achievement in Income Over-achievement of Income for asylum seekers and public health	408	Over-achievement in income / recruitment of permanent staff instead of agency staff has improved above expectations
LAC	3,648	Placement Demand Demand against the Independent Fostering Agency placement budget No Recourse to public funds Accommodation costs for children with no recourse to public funds Staffing Increased use of agency and Business Support staff Allowances Increases in allowances paid (adoption and special guardianship)	2,866	Agency staff and Business Support recharges were higher than anticipated / Home Office income was less than anticipated
Early Intervention Support Services	-1,843	Demand Underspend on commissioned 2 year old places at childrens centres Substitution of Funding Use of DSG to fund some core services Vacancies A number of vacancies have been withheld	1,737	Over-achievement on grant income
Safeguarding	696	Agency Staffing Costs Agency Premium paid to staff covering vacancies	408	Under achievement of Home Office income
CALAT	161	Recharge Costs Management and Business Support costs higher than anticipated	169	
Libraries & Culture	32	Health and Safety Costs Statutory Inspection costs on Fairfield Halls higher than anticipated	-11	Statutory Inspection costs on FFH higher than anticipated
Partnership	-92	Over-achievement in Income	-32	Income overachievement
SEN	238	Special Educational Needs Transport Costs SEN Transport (the overspend on transport was higher than the figure disclosed for the department as it was offset by in-year contingency and reserves which are not available next year)	1727	Re-alignment of contingency and reserves against the transport overspend
Children's Social Care Central	-6		-100	Underspend transferred to LAC
Learning and Improvement	-122	Staffing Costs Under on pension and severance budgets Carbon Allowance Costs Carbon allowance credit provided against a 13/14 accrual	0	Under on pension and severance budgets and carbon allowance credit provided
School Improvement	-8		-1	
Other Minor Variances	17			
Admissions	159	Staffing Consultancy, Agency and Business Support costs higher than anticipated Income Income under achievement	-71	Consultancy, Agency and Business Support costs higher than anticipated / Income under achievement
Commissioning		Mental Health Services The overspend pressures falls within two main areas:- (a) Staffing : Additional staffing recharge from health of £36k ; (b) Care Packages : a net overspend of £473k is attributable to this area of spend as a result of underlying demand pressures, however this was mitigated by (£160k) underspend within Social inclusion from additional one-off Public Health funding.		Mental Health Services The movement from Quarter 3 is attributable to:- (a) Staffing: Additional £31k recharge from SLAM for staffing costs, (b) Care Packages: Increase in package costs of £17k over and above the Quarter 3 projections.
	350		303	
	-252	Joint Commissioning Learning Disabilities A number of Staff positions were held vacant through the year. The Senior Joint Commissioning Manager post was recruited mid way through the year, resulting in delays to a number of projects (including some not commencing as originally planned by year end).	-158	Joint Commissioning Learning Disabilities It had been expected for contributions to be made towards projects led by the Mental Health teams, some of which did not happen in year. Additionally, contribution towards legal and care packages costs in Personal support were less than originally anticipated by year end.

Division	Variation 2014/15 (Budget to Outturn) £000	Reason for Variation from Budget	Variance as at Cabinet February 2015 £000	Reason for Variation from February 2015 Cabinet Report
		Commissioning Vulnerable Adults and Supported Living The 3 year programme of contract re-negotiations for Supporting People has been more successful than initially anticipated, delivering savings earlier than anticipated. These had been expected to commence in 2015/16.		Commissioning Vulnerable Adults and Supported Living Some of the 2015-16 efficiencies from contract negotiations were started earlier than expected, delivering some realisable savings in 2014/15 (earlier than expected).
	-149		-117	
		Director of Commissioning Staffing: Although positions held vacant during the year contributed to the underspend for the area, additional recharges to the CCG to co-fund the Director of ICU also had a positive impact on the outturn position. Supplies & Services: Despite Advocacy costs being less than originally forecast, there is an underlying pressure of £99k in Professional Services due to increased demand for the services.		Director of Commissioning The expected costs of the Advocacy Services were lower than had been anticipated.
	-139		-119	
		Commissioning Older People & Physical Disability The variation from budget is related to the following:- 1. Care UK Contract: This service area is experiencing increasing pressure due in part to people living longer, as well as increased level of need from an ageing population, resulting in the Extra-care/sheltered schemes and Residential Schemes overspending by £334k and £139k respectively. 2. Equipment Budget: This is a pooled budget operated with health, however increasing use from health coupled with a decreasing budget has resulted in £570k overspend. Analysis of the 2014-15 activity highlighted the partners' input to the budget as not aligned with usage, creating a significant cost pressure on social care. Discussions have begun to review existing arrangements, with a view to agreeing a more equitable budget (and partner contribution) that is better aligned with usage and activity between the parties. 3. Meals Service: volume reductions has resulted in increased cost to the Council with an overspend of £29k . 4. Access Ability Centre: (£246k) underspend from increased contributions from clients and other third parties. 5. Physical Disabilities SLAs and Other Commissioned services: (£476k) underspend due to savings from contract negotiations with external providers. 6. Other SLAs & Projects: (£126k) underspend from savings from negotiations with providers and delays in the delivery of Commissioned Projects.;		Commissioning Older People & Physical Disability The reduction in the overspend in this area is due to the following : 1. Care UK Contract: we achieved higher than expected income from client contributions, plus the Authority was able to make a substantial recharge to the CCG for free nursing care. 2. Equipment budget: The Final expenditure report from LATC was lower than anticipated by approx. £300k , due in part to the year end reduction in demand and LATC improving the management of equipment recycling (for which a rebate is given to the partners).
	173		464	
		Commissioning Specialist Services: Primary reasons for the Underspend include: 1. Social Inclusion: (£52k) underspend primarily due to additional £71k one-off funding from Public Health for HIV support. 2. No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF): (£193k) underspend due to improvement within Home Office procedures, resulting in a late reduction in the number of clients requiring assistance. Additionally, the Non Recourse team successfully secured joint funding for a number of long term cases.		Commissioning Specialist Services Reduction between Quarter's 3 and 4 is mainly due: 1. Social Inclusion: Additional £71k one-off funding from Public Health towards HIV Support No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF): 1. 18 clients being granted leave to remain in January, the Quarter 3 forecast had been modelled on a monthly average of 1 client being granted leave to remain and thus not require further support. 2. Also the Home Office settled an outstanding dispute to fund the support of clients which had been in dispute for over a year.
	-245		-181	
	-80	Other minor variances under £100k	-148	Other minor variances under £100k

Division	Variation 2014/15 (Budget to Outturn) £000	Reason for Variation from Budget	Variance as at Cabinet February 2015 £000	Reason for Variation from February 2015 Cabinet Report
Personal Support		<p>Assessment and Case Management, Social Work and Safeguarding Care Packages</p> <p>This is the primary area of the Department's expenditure, and highlights the underlying pressure on the Authority's cost of care, especially within Domiciliary Care budgets. This is a result of increased numbers of very frail older people being discharged from hospital and the impact of Ordinary Residence cases, with Croydon becoming responsible for people living in the borough, but placed by another Authority. Increased use of more Community based services will invariably contribute to the pressures but should generate gains relative to placements. Areas of significant variance include:-</p> <p>Care Packages:</p> <p>1. Learning Disabilities (LD): £3,935k overspend due to continuing pressure from high cost clients, both existing and Transitioning from Children's services</p> <p>2. Older Persons (OP): (£426k) underspend as a result of greater focus on using more community based services and only using Residential /Nursing placements where it is necessary. This, in conjunction with the Reablement strategy, has contributed to improved management of the care cost for the client group. Additionally, to help alleviate the pressure we have received an additional £400K from the Department of Health towards winter pressures care packages.</p>		<p>Assessment and Case Management, Social Work and Safeguarding Care Packages</p> <p>The primary reason for movement between Quarter 3 and 4 include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removal of £575k for unachieved efficiency plans. 2. Reduction of £162k in residential care income due to clients in PFI Care Homes on block beds being coded to incorrect service areas. 3. £179k increase in nursing care for Older People and Learning Disabilities clients, some of which relates to backdated payments. 4. £196k increase in LD Supported Living due to increase in new clients and backdated payments in Period 10 5. £223k increase in LD transport costs recharged from Special Educational Needs in Period 12 6. £64k reduction in Learning Disabilities day care clients income due to reassessment of clients. 7. £140k increase in residential care relating to current and backdated payments. 8. £97k increase in direct payments relating to new clients with current and backdated package costs. 9. Accrual of £109k care package for new clients within Physical Disabilities. 10. Additional funding of (£500k) from Public Health for 'Independence for Older People'
	4,738		3,484	
		<p>Social Work & Safeguarding</p> <p>Staffing Expenses: Social Work Teams - Although there was a recruitment drive in the summer, the overspend relates to locums who have not yet been replaced by permanent staff. The service has also needed to employ additional locums to assist with the continuing growth in demand and complexity of safeguarding referrals and investigations and in responding to the needs of vulnerable adults with complex needs, including people discharged from prison.</p>		<p>Social Work & Safeguarding</p> <p>Insignificant Movement</p>
	565		592	
		<p>Professional Standards:</p> <p>This is reporting an overspend of £195k, due to a High Court judgement in March 2014. The judgement has placed additional responsibilities on Local authorities nationally to ensure vulnerable people are not deprived of their freedom in a care setting, resulting in increased demand for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) assessments to be completed by trained Best Interest Assessors (BIA). An in-house shortage of the relevant skilled BIAs has resulted in the need to commission additional BIA assessments from external agencies, as well as increased requirement for reports from S12 doctors and Advocacy Services. Increased referrals have been made to the authority, with over 300 assessments undertaken in 2014/15 compared to 46 in 2013/14. The overspend falls into 2 main categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staffing: £71k overspend 2. Payments to Providers: £123k for payments to S12 Doctors and Advocacy services from external providers 		<p>Professional Standards:</p> <p>Insignificant movement</p>
	195		197	
		<p>Occupational Therapy Pooled Budget</p> <p>Staffing Expenses: (£462k) under spend due to vacancies on the Pooled Budget.</p> <p>Other Running Costs: (£7k) underspend reflecting the reduced operational capacity due to vacancies.</p>		<p>Occupational Therapy Pooled Budget</p> <p>The increase in the underspend reflects the proportion of the share of underspend arising from the OT pooled budget.</p>
	-470		-141	
		<p>Early Interventions & Reablement</p> <p>Staffing Expenses: (£13k) underspend due to vacancies.</p> <p>Income: (£203k) underspend from additional (£120k) grant towards Delayed discharges and (£83k) increased income from clients and recharges</p> <p>Other Running costs: (£39k) underspend from operations and payments to third party suppliers.</p>		<p>Early Interventions & Reablement</p> <p>The increase in underspend by year end is attributable to staff vacancies in the area.</p>
	-254		-175	

Division	Variation 2014/15 (Budget to Outturn) £000	Reason for Variation from Budget	Variance as at Cabinet February 2015 £000	Reason for Variation from February 2015 Cabinet Report
		<u>Mental Health Older Adults Day Services</u> The under spend is due to underlying savings in operational costs including:- Staffing Expenses: (£104k) underspend due to staffing vacancies Income: (£40k) underspend due to increased client contribution. Third Party Payments: (£58k) underspend in payments to third parties Other Running Costs: (£83k) underspend in both Transport and Supplies & Services -284		<u>Mental Health Older Adults Day Services</u> Insignificant movement
		<u>Assessment & Case Management Team</u> The net overspend is attributable to the following reasons:- Staffing Expenses: £66k overspend due to using locum staff to cover both vacancies, Supplies and Services: £398k overspend due primarily to increased legal costs. Recharge Income - (£14k) underspend due to additional contributions from other service areas. Other Running Costs: (£36k) underspend from controlling expenditure 295		<u>Assessment & Case Management</u> The continued use of Locums beyond the original timeframe envisaged. There were additional accruals for legal costs relating to five different care packages in Physical Disability.
		<u>Sheltered Housing</u> The underspend is mainly due to budgeted contract costs for the CarelinePlus service where the contracts are no longer applicable. -113		<u>Sheltered Housing</u> Insignificant movement
		<u>Provider Relations & Brokerage</u> Income: Originally anticipated Income from Capital of £46k and £61k from other service areas were not processed to support under pressure areas. Other Running Costs: Net overspend of £12k on other operational costs. 119		<u>Provider Relations & Brokerage</u>
		-12 Other minor variances under £100k		84 Other minor variances under £100k
Directorate		<u>Directorate</u> The overspend is due to not recovering costs from anticipated recharges, agreed as part of management decision to support other under pressure budget areas . 67		<u>Directorate</u> The movement between Quarters 3 and 4 is due to not recovering costs from anticipated recharges, agreed as part of management decision to support other under pressure budget areas . -242
Totals	7779		7658	

CQ310-15 from Councillor Margaret Mead

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Early intervention is known to bring lasting benefits for all those who suffer mental health disorders, especially children. Can the Cabinet member state what is the current waiting time for an appointment with CAMHS for a child?

Reply

Specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in Croydon are provided by the South London and Maudsley (SLaM). The primary commissioner for these services is Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), through the overall block contract for mental health services for clients of all ages in the borough. As such, accountability and responsibility sits with our NHS partners.

Nonetheless, our local strategy is to work with the CCG and all other key local partners through the Integrated Commissioning Unit to seek to improve the full range of services which impact on children's emotional wellbeing in the borough. This programme is being delivered as part of the review of Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for the Children and Families Partnership, with the aim of ensuring that all children and young people in Croydon can access mental health support in an effective and timely way.

The Council does commission a number of voluntary sector organisations to provide both advocacy and counselling for young people at an earlier stage of intervention than specialist CAMH services. The former services offer flexible, solution focused counselling and support. The waiting time to access these services is normally 2-3 weeks; although if a young person is distressed, they will make arrangements to see them the same week.

For specialist or acute mental health services, waiting times vary according to the degree of urgency for each case, which is assessed by senior clinicians in SLaM and reviewed when new information is forthcoming.

As reported by SLaM all teams see urgent cases within 7 days. For example, those experiencing early onset psychosis will be assessed within 48 hours. Children and young people with an acute eating disorder (Body Mass Index below 16) will be seen within 7 days.

SLaM reports that for mental health conditions such as anxiety or depression, the waiting time from referral to assessment for the specialist CAMHS service is 13.1 weeks. Waiting times for the Children Looked After and Youth Offending services provided by SLaM respectively are 6.3 and 1.6 weeks.

We continue to work with the mental health trust to consider how specialist treatment can be made more expedient and responsive to children and young people with mental health needs.

CQ311-15 from Councillor Dudley Mead

Councillor Louisa Woodley

In the year to May 2015 homelessness has risen by over 30%, what are you doing to reverse this trend?

Reply

Levels of homelessness in Croydon have increased, with 880 households accepted as homeless in 2014/15 compared to 762 the year before. The causes of homelessness are complicated and interlinked, and include structural economic and housing market factors, and individual vulnerabilities. Housing market trends (including lack of housing supply and private landlords increasing reluctance to let to households receiving benefits) and housing policies have a direct impact on homelessness. Welfare policies also have a direct impact in mitigating the effect of structural economic and housing market factors.

The newly elected government has committed to further welfare reforms, including, making an additional £12bn saving from the overall welfare budget, reducing the household benefit cap to £23,000 (with exemptions for those receiving Disability Living Allowance or the Personal Independence Payment), retaining the housing benefit reduction in respect of under-occupancy (widely known as the “Bedroom Tax”) and freezing working age benefits for two years. While welfare policies act to mitigate the impact of economic structural factors driving homelessness, lowering the welfare “safety net” as proposed has the opposite effect and places more people in difficult situations, with a potential further impact on homelessness.

The Council has a range of innovative and ambitious projects underway to increase the supply of housing and support those families affected by homelessness which include:

- **Single Gateway to access support services:** developing an innovative preventative approach to tackling homelessness which takes a holistic multi-agency approach focusing on financial stability, work-readiness, and sustainable housing solutions. In the first 8 weeks of pilot over 250 households were worked with in a more joined up way, with over 100 action and budget plans completed over £25,000 in housing benefits credits secured and over £220,000 in additional annual household income secured. In this cohort at least 10 families were prevented from being evicted, and their financial resilience made more secure. .
- **Increasing supplies of temporary accommodation and restraining costs:** including investing in the Real Lettings Property Fund (£30 million), securing leases on empty properties brought back into use, developing a lodgings scheme for young homeless parents, expanding the Council’s “offer” to private landlords (including Croybond, Croylease, market rent incentives, and a guaranteed rent scheme), leasing Concord and Sycamore Houses providing a further 190 units of Temporary Accommodation locally. We have also been

working with other boroughs on emergency let accommodation rates in London.

- **Increasing housing supply:** the Council's new build scheme, funded by the GLA 2015-18 affordable homes programme, will provide 300 new homes for Croydon residents. Our ambitious Growth Plan will deliver 9,500 housing starts and 16,000 new jobs in Croydon over next 5 years. The Council has increased the affordable housing requirement to 50% outside the Opportunity Area in central Croydon, which will substantially increase affordable housing delivery. The Council's Selective Licensing scheme will not only improve conditions in private sector, but also provides an exemption for landlords prepared to offer properties as accommodation for homeless households through the Croylease scheme.

CQ355-15 **from Councillor Pat Clouder**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Would the cabinet member not agree with me that Labour's new approach to public health launched in January 2015 is a central part of Labour's plan to improve families' health and ensure the NHS remains affordable and sustainable for an ageing society.

Reply

We take our new public health responsibilities seriously. Improving health and well-being should be at the heart of everything the council does. These are a few of many examples of how we are addressing in Croydon the principles for public health set out in 'Protecting Children, Empowering All: Labour's New Approach to Public Health in the 21st Century'

Principle 1: For children, we will take decisive action to give each child a healthier start in life

- One of our first actions was to enable local residents to set up Play streets. Modern life makes it much harder to be physically active and many of our children and young people are not getting sufficient activity to stay strong, fit, healthy and happy. We are creating public spaces in Croydon which encourage children to play, walk and cycle safely.
- Croydon is one of two Food Flagship boroughs in London. Through the Flagship we aim to give all our children a good start in life by tackling the barriers to a healthy diet. We want to achieve a sustained downward trend in levels of childhood and adult obesity; reverse the growth in cases of malnutrition; and increase the proportion of children eating healthily.
- We have signed up to the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control. Two thirds of adult smokers took up smoking as children. By signing the Declaration we have made an explicit commitment to protect our children from the harm caused by smoking.
- Improving health outcomes for children is a strategic priority: The Health and Well-Being Board Strategy has a theme on giving children the best start in life and the Children and Families Partnership has, as one of its priorities, 'reduce childhood obesity', with a sub-group working specifically on this objective.

Principle 2: For adults, we will place a new emphasis on empowerment to make healthier choices

- This year we launched Don't Bottle It Up, a website that offers people a quick and simple way to assess their alcohol consumption, give information on safer drinking and where to go for support.

- Croydon Council is leading by example in promoting mental health in the workplace. We have been awarded London Healthy Workplace Charter status. As part of our bid we developed a healthy workplace strategy and action plan promoting good mental health in our workforce.
- NHS Health Checks give local residents the opportunity to assess their risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some forms of dementia. By identifying their risk factors they can be supported to make changes to their lifestyles and, where appropriate, referred to services to help them lose weight, give up smoking, and become more active.
- Through redesigning local sexual health and contraceptive services we are working to tackle inequalities in access, quantity and quality of sexual health services across the borough and to promote better linkages between contraceptive and sexual health services.
- As well as supporting personal responsibility, there is much more that we can do to help communities look after each other. Through the Heart Town we have worked with London Ambulance Service to promote the Shockingly Easy Campaign. Having a defibrillator within easy reach of someone having a cardiac arrest can often mean the difference between life and death. So far, the campaign has led to 24 newly accredited defibrillators in local businesses and work places and another 11 new defibrillators purchased but yet to be accredited.

CQ282-15 **from Councillor Maddie Henson**

Councillor Kathy Bee

There are regular problems with build-up of traffic at the bottom of Shirley Road, which causes pressure on many of the smaller residential roads, could the cabinet member agree with me that this junction would benefit from having the phasing on the lights checked and also potentially a yellow box.

Reply

I do agree that this junction would benefit from being reviewed. Our highway engineers will liaise with Transport for London over the phasing of the traffic lights to see if there are any changes that would improve capacity. We shall also investigate the benefits in providing a yellow box at this location, which may help to reduce the likelihood of queuing traffic disrupting traffic flows.

CQ285-15 **from Councillor Andrew Rendle**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Plans for traffic calming measure on Bingham Road have been requested for years by residents. Under this administration plans have been drawn up and we will soon see them in reality. Can you join me in thanking the officers and members of ASPRA who have worked with me to make this happen?

Reply

A number of measures are due to be introduced shortly along Bingham Road and I would agree with your comments that thanks are due to both ward councillors and council officers for all their efforts in bringing these initiatives to fruition.

CQ290-15 **from Councillor Stephen Mann**

Councillor Kathy Bee

To what extent is securing modal shift crucial to the future of Croydon's connectivity?

Reply

Croydon is growing. What we are not doing is building more space, including road space. Croydon only functions because the majority of journeys are made by means other than the private car. If Croydon is to continue to function and liveability be maintained or hopefully improved, we must further help people to choose to walk and cycle for shorter journeys (the majority of journeys we make) and to choose public transport. Croydon's rail, tram and bus routes, and hub status ensures that it is one of the most connected and accessible places in outer London. This is a strength we must ensure we build on.

CQ296-15 **from Councillor Andrew Pelling**

Councillor Kathy Bee

What was the authority's response to TfL's second public consultation on the Tramlink Dingwall Road loop?

Reply

The Council is engaging with TfL about the Dingwall Loop Tram extension on an ongoing basis, at both an officer and a political level. The opportunity of the second public consultation was taken to restate the borough's position and register formally with TfL a number of issues with the proposals as they stand.

The Council agrees that the Dingwall Loop has the potential to deliver additional capacity and resilience to the tram network in the short to medium term, provided that the scheme incorporates measures to ensure its compatibility with our overall objectives for the metropolitan centre, including the Connected Croydon programme.

The Dingwall Loop tram extension must therefore support our goal of creating a more positive environment for all those who live, work or visit central Croydon. In practice this means the Loop must deliver high quality public realm using appropriate materials, and Trams on the extension itself need to be operated in a way that does not impact negatively on pedestrians and cyclists.

In its response the Council also made clear the need for TfL to engage fully with local residents and businesses to fully understand the impact of the Dingwall Loop extension and its construction. In particular we alerted TfL to concerns about how bus routes and bus stops in the town centre will be impacted, and we have urged TfL to consult on the detail of this in the future.

CQ300-15 from Councillor Stuart King

Councillor Kathy Bee

Mitcham Road is residential along its route, with parked cars on both sides of the road, but is designated an A road and carries a large traffic capacity. Is the cabinet member aware that there are no alternatives to this road for cyclists travelling towards Mitcham as the road passes through Mitcham Common and other routes would be very indirect? Is the cabinet member also aware that the cycle lanes along its route are very low quality, running in the door zone of parked cars and disappearing at traffic islands when they are needed most? What plans does the cabinet member have to address cycle safety in this road, and is the introduction of protected space for cycling amongst them?

Reply

Yes I am fully aware that the cycle lanes in Mitcham Road do not meet modern standards.

The Streets and Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee has considered a draft of a new cycle strategy, a version of which should be going to public consultation in the Autumn. As well as Quietways, that draft proposes 'Cycle Highways' with some segregation and /or semi-segregation on certain busier roads, including the Mitcham Road. The cycle facilities on Mitcham Road need upgrading if we are to deliver a 'Cycle Highway'. There is a potential bypass route using quieter streets to the east of Mitcham Road. However, this too requires investment as it currently can only be cycled from southeast to northwest and thus is not shown on the TfL Cycle Route map.

With regards to what plans are currently being considered, I can confirm a feasibility has been undertaken on the section north west of Lombard Roundabout. TfL consultants and TfL's Cycling Principal Technical Specialist have been asked to look at the Roundabout itself, as soon as this work is completed we will have a better idea as to what practical steps we can use to introduce cycling along this road.

CQ301-15 **from Councillor Matthew Kyeremeh**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Could the Cabinet Member give us an interim update on the 20mph process and any timelines?

Reply

A majority of residents support council plans to introduce 20mph speed limits on roads in the north of the borough. Residents, businesses and local groups were asked to give their views about introducing them in streets in parts of South Norwood, Selhurst, Bensham Manor, Thornton Heath and Upper Norwood.

I announced the results of the consultation at Cabinet on Monday 13 July, 2015, the results were that 52.5% of respondents were in favour of reduced speed limits. Out of the 2320 responses, 46.4% were opposed to and 1.1% undecided.

The council is now carrying out a detailed analysis of feedback it has received from residents with a view to progressing to a formal consultation period. If approved the scheme could be implemented over the winter months and be operational by April next year.

Cabinet decided in March to ask people across the borough if they want the new speed limits, with the north being consulted first before the council asks people in other areas of Croydon from next year extensive 20 mph speed limits help cut the risk of accidents, cut congestion and pollution levels, encourage less car use and discourage rat-running in quieter streets.

I am delighted that a majority of residents in the north of the borough want to see reduced speed limits on their roads to make them safer. We will continue to consider residents feedback about our plans, which we believe will help improve the lives of thousands of residents by putting an end to speeding in residential roads.

CQ304-15 **from Councillor Pat Ryan**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Would the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment agree with me that the tram extension to Crystal Palace is critical? Not only will this important transport plan make a much needed environmental pact but will be a major boost to the local economy of South Norwood and Upper Norwood. Will she therefore join with me in stressing the urgency of the matter to the next Mayor of London whomever he or she may be?

Reply

You are correct in that a potential Tram extension to Crystal Palace remains a Council priority which will support socio-economic growth in Croydon. Crystal Palace is an important local district, bordering four London boroughs. The proposed Tram route may improve transport connectivity, not just in South and Upper Norwood, but across South London, and provide better opportunities for new and existing businesses, access to jobs and scope for wider regeneration and development within Croydon.

Extending the Tram will provide additional capacity that is vital to the network, whilst encouraging greater numbers of residents to choose a more sustainable mode of transportation through Croydon and to other points on the network.

Council officers are currently preparing a high level Business Case to promote the extension to Crystal Palace. There is an officers' meeting to be convened shortly, to ensure the promotion of a Tram Extension to Crystal Palace is robust.

Once this officers' meeting has been held, the business case will be presented to TfL and the Mayor, by the Autumn 2015.

CQ321-15 **from Councillor Steve O'Connell**

Councillor Kathy Bee

The Norbury Avenue Closure has caused considerable inconvenience to residents. Can you tell me how much consultation was carried out beforehand and also how much advance notice residents received please?

Reply

We can experience inconvenience from the impact of traffic in many different ways – as drivers it can slow us down through congestion, as residents or pedestrians we experience noise, pollution and an environment dominated by cars. Speeding cars in residential roads are extremely intimidating for pedestrians and cyclists. Each additional motorist causes inconvenience to all others as they add to congestion and delay. However the consequences of our current car use are wider and more severe, impacting on the street environment and perceptions of safety, preventing many from choosing to cycle or walk. This in turn is severely curtailing our children's independent mobility and generally contributing to sedentary lifestyles with resulting health problems and costs. In recent years, Croydon, under a Tory administration, has shown almost no movement towards the London Mayor's cycling target (a target the Councillor will recall the London Assembly Transport Committee recommended doubling). This administration intends to remedy this poor performance. The trial closures are in part to support delivery of the Mayor of London's Waterloo to Croydon Quietway, as a means of helping more choose to cycle, and to locally support the Road Hierarchy in the 2013 Croydon Local Plan Policies Map. In seeking to improve the environment within Norbury Avenue, those drivers previously using it as a (often high speed) cut through as part of their drive to work etc, may be inconvenienced in the short term but hopefully may decide to travel differently.

For an outline of the prior consultation, I refer to my answer to Cllr Mohan's question.

CQ327-15 from Councillor Vidhi Mohan

Councillor Kathy Bee

Could the Cabinet Member explain in detail the consultation that was undertaken with local residents before she passed the order for the Trial Road Closure on Norbury Avenue?

Reply

The closures have been introduced on a trial basis under an Experimental Traffic Order. , Sustrans has been engaged to work with residents and other stakeholders before and during the experiment to gather views as to the nature of trial to undertake, the effectiveness of the trial and how the trial might be adjusted or supplemented.

In March, Sustrans walked the area with a PCSO talking to residents they met about traffic conditions particularly in Norbury Avenue and how the environment might be improved. They also attended a parents' evening at Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College, setting up a stand and engaging with parents. They additionally spent four hours in Norbury Avenue with maps talking to residents about their views and ideas. This engagement process was curtailed by the pre-election period and began in earnest straight after the election. Sustrans leafleted each house on Norbury Avenue, Kensington Avenue, Buckingham Avenue, Buckingham Gardens, Highbury Avenue, Westminster Avenue, County Road, Windsor Road, Camden Gardens, Camden Way, Sandfield Road, Sandfield Gardens, Coates Close, Wychwood Avenue and Bedser Close, advising of the process and how to be involved. It also advised of the information/engagement Blog site that has been established. The leaflet was also emailed to schools, residents Associations, churches and other groups in the area, with promotional text asking them to include this information in their newsletters and notices.

Posters were put up outside St James the Great Primary School, Kensington Avenue Primary School and Norbury Manor Business and Enterprise College, with details of events on them. Sustrans held four drop in sessions, on street, in a community centre and in a school across the area. The best attended attracting over fifty participants. As well as engaging with the schools, Sustrans also contacted local and Croydon wide groups / organisations. The emergency services were met by Sustrans and written to formally by the Council. Public notices were published in the local press and on-street advising of the making of the experimental order and how to formally respond. Two weeks before the order came into operation, large yellow signs were attached to street lights advising when the closures would come into effect.

This is a trial, and the engagement I have outlined is just the start. Sustrans and officers have continued to engage with residents and others, and will continue to do so.

Despite the curtailing of the initial engagement process somewhat by the pre-election period, it was decided to maintain momentum and support the Mayor of London keep to his timetable for achieving one of his first Quietways.

The process for making Experimental Traffic Orders does not include a formal prior opportunity for members of the public to make representations. But as you can see from the explanation above, extensive informal consultation has taken place. Formal representation can be made during the first six months of operation of the Experimental Order.

CQ328-15 **from Councillor Vidhi Mohan**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Could the Cabinet Member detail the amount of time she and other Labour councillors spent is getting signatures from residents in favour of the Council's proposals to introduce 20mph zones in certain parts of the Borough?

Reply

Bringing in 20 mph speed limits where residents want them was a manifesto commitment for this administration, reflecting the many requests we have had from constituents to bring in 20 mph . Naturally, ward members were reminding residents that we are fulfilling this commitment and encouraging them to respond to the opinion seeking survey.

A 'Yes' campaign was run by local residents who strongly support the campaign and a No campaign was run by a Coulsdon resident.

CQ340-15 from Councillor Margaret Bird

Councillor Kathy Bee

Can the cabinet member tell me why it is taking months for rattily manhole covers to be repaired/replaced given the amount of distress caused to nearby residents given the constant noise?

Reply

The Croydon's highway has embedded in its roads all types of inspection covers and apparatus. Some of the apparatus belongs to the Council whilst the majority of apparatus has been installed by utility companies. Under the New Road and Streetworks Act 1991 Section 81 utility companies has a duty of care to maintain their apparatus and where an highway inspector comes across defective apparatus raises a Section 81 notice on the utility. Where the apparatus is dangerous then utility companies have up to 4 hours to make safe but if non dangerous they have 10 days to inspect the defect.

Unfortunately some utility companies do not consider noisy inspection covers as dangerous apparatus and it is up to the local authority to make representation on behalf of their residents that noise levels are being breached continuously and are injurious to health. If reasonably argued this usually prompts a site visit from the utility company, notwithstanding if the council feels that the response is not forthcoming, it can temporary tarmac over the cover and recharge the utility citing the unreasonable length of time they are taking to progress the defect. If Cllr Bird can provide locations of the inspection covers in question I will ask officers to liaise with the appropriate utility companies.

Where Highways can wholly influence outcomes and it is confirmed early on that the offending inspection cover is the Council's responsibility then a task order will be raised for remedial works, but where the inspection cover belongs to a utility then the council is subjected to the vagaries of utility companies in their responses to Section 81 notices.

CQ347-15 **from Councillor Simon Brew**

Councillor Kathy Bee

The Purley multi-story car park lifts were not working on 7 July, even though a floor indicator light glowed when the call button was pressed. A prominent notice advised me to call Interserve to report lift faults, and when I did so, I was advised that the lifts had been withdrawn from service in Dec 2014.

Why were the lifts withdrawn from service and when will they be fixed?

Why are there no notices on every floor indicating that the lifts are out of service?

Reply

The lifts were withdrawn as they had come to the end of their life and were regularly out of service. The lifts were over 30 years old and parts for them were hard to find and the decision to shut them down was driven by this fact. However there are stairs and pedestrian walkways for customers to use and we have recently installed 6 parent & toddler bays on level 3 to enable easier access for parents with young children.

There were notices placed on each floor to inform customers that the lifts are out of service. We will replace any that may have been removed.

CQ349-15 **from Councillor Badsha Quadir**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Please can you tell me whether the lifts to Purley car park adjacent to Purley pool, are fully operational?

Reply

The lifts in Purley car park are not fully operational, they have been removed from service due to their age and the increasing difficulty to obtain replacement parts.

CQ284-15

from Councillor Andrew Rendle

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Will the cabinet member join me in congratulating all the staff and pupils in our special schools? And shouldn't we be very proud that 100% of them are judged good or outstanding by OFSTED.

Reply

I am more than happy to join you in these congratulations which are richly deserved. We are grateful for the excellent quality work of the dedicated and expert leadership and staff teams in our special schools who contribute so much to the lives of some of our most needy children. This is demonstrated, and acknowledged in many ways:

Bensham Manor has recently been awarded flagship status for the prestigious Inclusion Quality Mark.

Chaffinch Brook, which has only been open for two years has already established itself as a centre of excellence to support primary pupils with autism and associated challenging behaviour. It is held in high regard by parents.

Beckmead offers a supportive and nurturing environment enabling pupils struggling within the mainstream school to develop confidence, resilience and self-esteem to re-engage positively with learning and achieve.

At St. Nicholas they not only tailor packages of support to develop key communication and core skills for primary pupils with significant cognitive delays and other associated needs such as autism but are also successful in delivering outreach support to develop inclusive practice in Croydon primary schools.

St. Giles's proactive commitment with a range of partners to secure the best possible outcomes for primary, secondary and post 16 pupils with complex medical needs and profound and multiple learning difficulties includes offering a rich curriculum with a range of extra-curricular activities, such as the panathlon (competitive sporting opportunities for disabled children) which has led to team success in national competitions. St Giles pupils are also performing in the launch of the Ambition Festival.

At Priory, a school for secondary pupils with severe learning difficulties, there is clear commitment to providing a curriculum which supports transition to adulthood, providing a balance between an academic curriculum and life skills. The school excels in using the creative arts to encourage engagement and provide a motivating context for learning.

At Red Gates, a primary school for pupils with severe learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties and autism, staff use their high level of specialist expertise effectively to support communication, including signing and a range of other technology. Red Gates, like Bensham Manor, is a flagship school for the Inclusion Quality Mark.

CQ286-15 **from Councillor Stuart King**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Can the cabinet member please list for each of the borough's primary schools

a) the number of school places available for the 2015/16 academic year

b) the number of first choice applications received by each of these schools

Reply

a)

The number of reception places available at the borough's primary schools for the 2015/16 academic year is 5340.

A list of primary schools with their published admission numbers is attached.

b)

A list of primary schools with their number of first preference reception applications is attached.

Total number of places available at Croydon primary schools for reception 2015 first round intake and number of first preferences

Primary/Infant School/Academy	School PAN	First Preference applications
Aerodrome Primary Academy	60	80
All Saints CofE Primary School	60	36
Applegarth Academy	60	23
Ark Oval Primary Academy	90	71
Atwood Primary Academy	60	77
Beaumont Primary School	30	55
Beulah Infants	90	50
Broadmead Primary Academy	90	34
Castle Hill Academy	60	36
Chestnut Park Primary School	90	15
Chipstead Valley Primary Academy	90	156
Christ Church CofE Primary School (Purley)	60	48
Coulsdon CofE Primary School	30	31
Courtwood Primary School	30	33
Cypress Primary School	90	104
David Livingstone Primary Academy	30	34
Davidson Primary School	60	44
Downsview Primary and Nursery School	90	65
Ecclesbourne Primary - Pegasus Academy Trust	60	71
Elmwood Infant School	120	130
Fairchildes Primary Academy	60	86
Forest Academy	90	37
Forestdale Primary School	60	60
Gilbert Scott Primary School	30	25
Gonville Academy	90	67
Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School	30	29
Greenvale Primary School	30	49
Gresham Primary School	30	40
Harris Kenley	60	39
Harris Primary Academy Benson	60	31
Harris Primary Academy Haling Park	60	31
Heathfield Academy	60	4
Heavers Farm Primary School	120	81
Howard Primary School	60	61
Kenley Primary School	30	15
Kensington Avenue Primary School	90	77
Keston Primary School	60	72
Kingsley Primary School	120	80
Margaret Roper Catholic Primary School	30	46
Monks Orchard Primary School and Nursery	90	74
New Valley Primary	30	7
Norbury Manor Primary School	90	51
Oasis Academy Byron	30	20
Oasis Academy Ryelands	60	33
Oasis Academy Shirley Park	120	98
Orchard Way Primary School	30	30
Parish Church C of E Nursery & Infant School	120	142
Park Hill Infant School	90	154
Paxton Academy Sports and Science Specialist	90	22
Purley Oaks Primary School	90	44
Regina Coeli RC Primary School	60	46
Ridgeway Primary School	90	128
Robert Fitzroy Academy	120	78
Rockmount Primary School	60	87
Rowdown Primary	60	23
Selsdon Primary and Nursery School	90	46
Smitham Primary School	60	65
South Norwood Primary School	60	47
St Aidan's Catholic Primary School	30	36
St Chad's Catholic Primary School	60	51
St Cyprian's Greek Orthodox Primary Academy	60	50
St James The Great RC Primary and Nursery School	60	97
St John's CofE Primary School	30	71
St Joseph's RC Infant School	60	32
St Marks CofE Primary	30	18
St Mary's Catholic Infant School	60	82
St Peter's Primary School	60	80
St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School	60	86
The Crescent Primary School	90	89
The Hayes Primary School	60	90
West Thornton Academy	150	135
Whitehorse Manor Infant - Pegasus Academy Trust	120	160
Winterbourne Infant & Nursery School	150	122
Wolsey Infant School	90	73
Woodcote Primary School	90	67
Woodside Primary School	120	104
Total PAN	5340	

Footnotes:

PAN - Published admissions number

CQ287-15 from Councillor Stuart King

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Using current Diocesan baptismal figures what projection has the council made for demand for the Roman Catholic primary school places in the Borough in the next five years? What plans does the council have to meet that demand?

Reply

Increasing demand

Every year we project the number of pupils that will need school places in Croydon in future years. In areas where projected demand for places is greater than supply, we set out a Supply Strategy to meet this demand. The most recent strategy was agreed by Cabinet in January 2015.

The Catholic Diocese does not provide the LA with their Baptismal figures and, in line with other authorities, we do not project demand for faith places separately.

If it is established that additional places are required in an area, we identify where additional places will be delivered within existing schools in Croydon by considering a number of factors. These include schools standards, the popularity of the school, deliverability and projected cost. When Catholic schools best meet these requirements, the Head and Chair of Governors will be approached to discuss the principle of expansion.

The Council has actively worked with the diocese to develop a collaborative approach which is open to the expansion of Catholic schools. The invitation to work with the Council in this way remains open to the diocese, and the Council will continue to give this message.

Our parental preference data provides the demand information for specific schools. Currently there are places available in Catholic schools in every year group.

CQ289-15 **from Councillor Stephen Mann**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

On a recent visit to Coulsdon CALAT it was observed that the buildings are in a poor state of repair with holes in the floor. What is being done to ensure our disabled learners at this facility are not using second rate facilities?

Reply

The safety, comfort and easy access to our facilities is our number one priority for CALAT learners. There are currently a couple of problems in the flooring in the studio and workshop at the Coulsdon centre.

InterserveFM the council's FM provider has attended the site and assessed the repairs that are required. These will take place in the summer period when there are no classes taking place. There are no safety or access issues for any learners including those with disabilities due to the location of the problems.

All our buildings are maintained to ensure safe occupation and so all customers and service users can receive the services being delivered. The centre is maintained as part of the total facilities management (TFM) contract with InterserveFM.

CALAT Coulsdon is one of our older centres and some of the facilities may be in need of some modernisation. The council will seek any opportunities possible to improve the facilities such as those presented through regeneration in the area.

CQ292-15 **from Councillor Robert Canning**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

How many schools in Croydon are currently carrying vacancies for qualified music teachers?

Reply

The Council does not hold information centrally on vacancies in individual schools.

However, I am proud of the thriving Music and Arts Service in Croydon, which, over the past year has worked with 8 secondary and 70 primary schools in the Borough. This service, under the leadership of Graeme Smith, who is also the national Chair of Music Mark, the UK Association for Music Education, brings expert guidance to schools in addition to providing numerous instrumental and vocal groups, concerts and individual music lessons to hundreds of our children and young people.

CQ298-15 from Councillor David Wood

Councillor Alisa Flemming

What work is being undertaken to support primary schools and other organisations that wish to expand, or to open new schools, to meet the acute shortage of secondary places in the north of the borough?

Reply

Increasing demand

Every year we project the number of pupils that will need school places in Croydon in future years. In areas where projected demand for places is greater than supply, we set out a Supply Strategy to meet this demand. The most recent strategy was published in January 2015.

Expanding existing schools

Where it is identified that additional demand will be met by expanding existing community schools, statutory consultation is undertaken by the local authority. In the case of academies or other own admitting authority schools, expert advice on this process is available from the LA, as required. Once the principle of expansion is agreed, in accordance with the statutory guidance, the LA will deliver the places. Support is given throughout this process.

New schools

- **Academies:** The Education Act 2011 changed the arrangements for establishing new schools and introduced section 6A (the academy/free school presumption) to the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Where a LA thinks there is a need for a new school in its area it must seek proposals to establish an academy or free school. We seek to work with the highest quality providers to deliver places in the areas of demand.
- **Free Schools:** whilst free schools are agreed and funded directly from central government, the Council seeks to influence the market by working with potential providers to inform them about our levels of need, and the expectations we have in Croydon about high quality provision. Where relevant, we will work with the Education Funding Agency to find sites.

CQ314-15 from Councillor Maria Gatland

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Could Cllr Flemming explain why teenage pregnancies are rising once again in Croydon?

Reply

Croydon responded very well to improve teenage pregnancy from the very high rates that existed, in 1997, to bring the performance in line with the national average over the course of subsequent years.

However, over the past two years teenage pregnancy rates in Croydon appear to be rising. In Q1 of 2014, the under-18 conception rate (actual) was 31.50 per 1000 girls aged 15-17 years of age and equated to 55 conceptions. This reflected an increase of 13.7% from the same point in 2013. The rolling quarterly average conception rate for Q1-2014 was 33.4 per 1000 girls aged 15-17 years of age. It should be noted that rolling quarterly average data has shown consistent increases over the last five quarters and this trend upwards is statistically significant. That is, we are 95% certain that the rates are increasing rather than this observed increase being a random fluctuation.

Reasons for this observation could relate to changes in the effectiveness of services targeting young people at risk of teenage pregnancy or changes to wider determinants known to be associated with an increase in teenage pregnancy. However, due to the effect that small increases in the number of teenage pregnancies have on the overall picture and the delay in receiving the data for analysis, it is difficult to identify specific reasons for such an increase, at this point.

Croydon Council continues to target evidence based interventions at young people at risk of teenage pregnancy. The young people's sexual health team delivers high quality programmes in schools and colleges and targeted health services are in place to offer dedicated contraception services for young people.

The current re-design of the local sexual health services offers an opportunity for a review of these services with improved integration and targeting of interventions. These developments are guided by up to date intelligence on local needs and with an input from the young people themselves.

CQ315-15 **from Councillor Maria Gatland**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Does the Cabinet Member agree with the proposed measures to deal with coasting schools?

Reply

We all support improved standards in our schools and the Council has, under both the last administration and this, been proactive in supporting and challenging schools to improve. Greatly improved OFSTED outcomes in our schools are testament to the effectiveness of this work, particularly for schools that were previously judged to “require improvement”. In practical terms, therefore, we in Croydon have already been identifying and improving our “coasting schools”, for example through the work undertaken by link advisers to schools.

The new proposed definition of “coasting” schools will be particularly challenging, especially during a period of reform which includes a new, more challenging curriculum, new Key Stage 2 assessments, more rigorous GCSE examinations and new ways of scoring progress and attainment.

The proposed definition is that a school will be deemed coasting when they fall below a new ‘coasting’ level for 3 years. In 2014 and 2015 that level will be set at 60% of pupils achieving 5 good GCSEs **or** an above-average proportion of pupils making unacceptable progress. From 2016, the level will be set based on Progress 8 - the new accountability measure, which shows how much progress pupils in a particular school make between the end of primary school and their GCSEs.

At primary level, the definition will apply to those schools who have seen fewer than 85% of children achieving an acceptable secondary-ready standard in reading, writing and maths over the course of 3 years, **and** who have seen insufficient pupil progress.

The thresholds outlined by the DfE are high, but I welcome the fact that the judgement about whether or not a school is coasting is a judgement that will be made over time, based on three years of data, and not based on a single OFSTED judgement. I am also pleased to see that the proposed definition includes an emphasis on the progress being made by children. This will challenge all schools to ensure they are adding value to children’s education, regardless of their starting points, including the most able.

CQ316-15 **from Councillor Maria Gatland**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Could the Cabinet Member outline the arrangements for "Return from Missing" interviews for children who have been missing from home?

Reply

The arrangements in Croydon for Return Home Interviews for Missing Children are:

When police and Children Social Care are notified that a missing child has been recovered the child's name is passed on to the Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Coordinator who allocates a specialist worker from the NSPCC and Safer-London's joint 'Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Team'. Coordinated and managed by Croydon Children Social Care Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team the Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Team are voluntary sector employed social workers specially trained to provide missing return home interviews.

This team will make contact with the young person and offer them a time to meet within 72 hours of their return from a missing episode. The team is mandated to meet with the young person up to three times at a place and a time that is convenient to the young person. A member of this team will complete a Return Home Interview report and circulate this to the allocated social worker. The report is uploaded to the Child's record. This team has the capacity to offer Return Home Interviews to all Croydon Looked After Children and children who are subject to a Child Protection Plan or Multi-Agency Protection Plan for CSE who live in the community. The information from the return home interview is used to inform the care planning for each child. A quarterly analysis of return home interviews is also completed and analysed for patterns.

Children and young people have the right to decline a return home interview and so it is standard police operating procedure that all children who go missing receive a 'welfare check from a police officer'.

CQ317-15 **from Councillor Luke Clancy**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Could the Cabinet Member tell me the percentage of disadvantaged children identified as gifted at 11 years achieve three A levels.

Reply

Datasets do not enable us to identify children identified as “gifted” at the age of 11 and track their achievement through to A-level qualifications. National testing at the end of Key Stage 2 (age 11), which now allows children to attain at Level 6 (expected attainment for children aged 14), had not yet been introduced for those children who have now completed their A-levels. These tests were introduced in 2012. As a result it will be 2019 before these children will be sitting A-levels.

CQ318-15 **from Councillor Simon Brew**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Could the Cabinet Member please tell me the number of children/young people currently identified as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation in Croydon?

Reply

There are 32 young people currently identified as at risk of or subject to child sexual exploitation in Croydon.

CQ324-15 **from Councillor Andy Stranack**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

I am sure the Cabinet member would join with me in congratulating the staff and pupils at Quest Academy on achieving a 'good' Ofsted Report. Unfortunately the school is still unable to make full use of its fantastic new facilities as the old Selsdon High School has still to be demolished. Can the Cabinet Member confirm when the demolition and landscaping work at the school will be completed and what is the cost of removing the 'asbestos filled' building?

Reply

The 'Good' Ofsted Report is indeed a fantastic achievement by the School especially in the first year after transitioning to the new school building.

In September 2014 Croydon Council and Wates Construction completed the handover of the new build Quest Academy and new build Monk's Hill Sports Centre. The second phase of the contract was to demolish the existing school building and replace with new entrance footpath to the new school and landscaping.

This second phase was due to commence from August 2014 and complete in March 2015. Demolition surveys were carried out and completed in October 2014. Further surveys were carried out from January 2015 and completed in May 2015.

The Council is now working with the Contractor to restart the programme of demolition works to conclude the second phase of the contract.

I would like to assure the Councillor that whilst the council works with the contractor to complete the demolition works the Academy is able to continue delivering a full educational curriculum to its pupils.

CQ325-15

from Councillor Andy Stranack

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Can the Cabinet Member explain what action a head teacher at a local school should take if they believe that an unaccompanied asylum seeker has given a false age to gain access to secondary education in Croydon?

Reply

The head teacher should firstly establish which local authority is looking after the child. Some children are placed within Croydon by other local authorities. If the child is looked after by any other authority they should contact the allocated social worker to raise their concerns.

If the child is looked after by London Borough of Croydon, the Head Teacher should raise their concerns with the allocated social worker. If the Head Teacher or Designated Teacher for Looked After Children does not know who the allocated social worker is they should contact the Head of Service for Looked After Children, Paul Chadwick.

The Head Teacher can then convey their reasons for believing that the child has given false information regarding their age.

Social Care considers if it is appropriate to undertake a formal age assessment. Age assessments are undertaken where there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has given a false age to the Home Office on making their application for asylum. This is a specialist process following an established format based on legal advice. Establishing a definite age is difficult and will often result in presentation to a court. Some asylum seekers will have documentation but many will not.

CQ330-15 **from Councillor Simon Brew**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Following the recent consultation exercise, when will the cabinet member make the decision whether to expand Christchurch Primary School, Montpelier Road, Purley?

Reply

The representation (formal consultation) period for the proposal to permanently expand Christ Church C of E Primary School ended on 10 June 2015.

In line with the School Organisation guidance, the Council must decide on the proposal within two months of the end of the representation period (or decision defaults to the School Adjudicator).

A delegated decision on the proposal to expand Christ Church C of E Primary School will be made in due course in line with the requirements set out in the guidance. The Council has published its intention to make a decision in the forward plan.

The governing body and senior leaders at the school are supportive of the proposal to expand the school. The majority of other respondents to the consultation were either 'strongly in favour' or 'in favour' of the proposed expansion.

CQ337-15 **from Councillor Donald Speakman**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Will the Cabinet member please discuss with TFL the provision of 'Student' buses travelling North to South in the morning and South to North in the afternoon? The re-designation of some buses to provide this service should not require additional funds. Such a service will enhance pupil security and reduce overcrowding on normal service buses.

Reply

I understand the Councillor made this suggestion at the last meeting of the Public Transport Liaison Panel. I will reiterate the suggestion to TfL and relay the response.

CQ338-15 **from Councillor Margaret Bird**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Can the Cabinet Member give me details of work with neighbouring boroughs on Child Sexual Exploitation?

Reply

The work is both operational and strategic.

Operationally we operate our Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Panel that reviews all cases where children are considered to be at risk of or subject to CSE. The lead police officer for CSE attends and it is his / her role to liaise with their opposite number in the identified Local Authority to ensure police are aware of risks.

The allocated social worker for any child placed by other boroughs in Croydon known to be at risk of CSE is invited to Croydon MASE where we review the protect plan and ensure agencies are working together to safeguard the child.

Similarly in relation to missing children in care placed by other boroughs in Croydon some of these young people are at risk of CSE. Again each time a child goes missing their placing authority is notified.

The lead officer for combating CSE attends bi-monthly liaison meetings with her opposite numbers from Bromley, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton and Southwark where we identify patterns, share intelligence and develop practice.

Croydon was involved recently in a complex police operation across boroughs to identify CSE, in which Croydon developed an investigative methodology that has now been accepted as best practice and adopted nationally by the Police.

Strategically, we have been involved in developing a best practice methodology with Safer-London which is being disseminated across other authorities. Our partnership with Safer-London provides us with best practice in working with CSE and supporting our most vulnerable of children. We also have similar important partnerships with the charity Missing People and NSPCC.

CQ276-15

from Councillor Sara Bashford

Councillor Toni Letts

Cllr Letts at the Cabinet meeting on 22nd June said that Biggin Hill airport had been given extended operating hours. Can she please explain why she said this as no agreement has been reached and it a decision for Bromley Council's Executive not Croydon Council.

Reply

The extension of the operating hours present opportunities for Croydon residents and our economy both in terms of potential additional jobs, and additional inward investment.

CQ278-15 **from Councillor Susan Winborn**

Councillor Toni Letts

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the total JSA count for the London Borough of Croydon since February 2015? Could she also detail the JSA count for 18 to 24 year olds also from February 2015?

Reply

Total JSA Claimant Count 2015.	Number of Claimants.	% change on previous month.
February	4,865	N/A
March	4,745	-2.4%
April	4,760	+0.3%
May	4,705	-1.2%

The Total JSA claimant count for Croydon from February to May 2015 has displayed a steady reduction apart from a small 0.3% increase in April. May figures resumed a downward trend.

18 to 24 JSA Claimant Count 2015.	Number of Claimants.	% change on previous month.
February	1,035	N/A
March	990	-4.35%
April	950	-4.0%
May	915	-3.7%

Apart from a 4.0% increase in the number of 18- 24 year olds claiming JSA in February 2015 (due to the end of temporary employment) subsequent months have displayed a consistent fall in JSA claims.

CQ279-15 from Councillor Luke Clancy

Councillor Toni Letts

How much did Croydon Council's sponsorship of the cycling event on June 2 cost the town? Exactly what was this money used to subsidise? Please supply an itemised list of what the total was spent on.

Reply

On Tuesday, June 2, 2015, Croydon Town centre hosted the men's Pearl Izumi Tour Series and women's Matrix Fitness Grand Prix cycle races.

The net cost to the Council was £1,721

Costs of the cycle races to the Council comprised:

Race Fee £60,000 – This includes race and competitor organisation consistent with a world class event, complying with all international racing regulations, all barriers and race infrastructure (podium, start gantry etc.), insurance, TV production costs, national publicity.

Marketing and communications £ 31,771 - This includes, design and production of advertising materials and route branding, sponsorship raising and liaison (cash and in kind) advance warnings, individual communications with every occupier along the route, VIP hospitality, event programme, photography and videography.

Route preparations £10,000 - This includes temporary covering of tram tracks to a standard suitable for high speed cycle racing, temporary removal and reinstatement of street furniture, implementation of road closures, ballast for start gantry, race day highways support crew

Security and Stewards £4,000 – This included SIA licensed security staff, road closure stewards, crossing point stewards and volunteer steward expenses

First Aid £1500 - provided by Red Cross

The total cost to the council of all the above was £107,721

This cost was offset by income of £106,000 comprising £16,000 commercial direct cash sponsorship and £90,000 TfL Local Transport Funding earmarked to promote sustainable and healthier travel.

In addition a number of other services were provided at nil cost to the council through sponsorship deals. These include:

EM Highways and Keir - All design and consents for covering of tram tracks, highways repairs, trial installation of works prior to event, supervision of contractors' works, traffic Management and implementation of temporary road closures.

Veolia – cleansing before and after event and provision of 8 officers on the day as cleansing wardens

Quadron - flowers and dressing of podium

Fairfield Halls - use of the Fairfield conference facility all day for rider changing, registration, briefing and team parking

Community volunteers – over 50 volunteer marshals and stewards on the day contributing in excess of 300 hours volunteer hours.

CQ280-15 **from Councillor Luke Clancy**

Councillor Toni Letts

What post-event analysis has been done to establish the benefits of paying to host the one night cycling event in Croydon Town Centre on June 2? What measurable extra footfall did the event bring to benefit Croydon businesses? What benchmarks did you use to establish whether this was a good use of public money?

Reply

Sweetspot Event Group, the overall race organisers, are undertaking a full and independent economic impact assessment of the event. This will follow the principles set out in HM Treasury's 'Green Book' Appraisal and Evaluation Guidance and Event Impact Guidance.

The impact assessment will include assessment of number of spectators, destinations travelled from, length of stay, average spend, TV viewing figures and other media coverage, including social media, national and regional and local press coverage.

The evaluation is expected to report towards the end of July and will feed into a full de-brief with stakeholders about the event.

CQ323-15 **from Councillor Andy Stranack**

Councillor Toni Letts

Given the significant financial pressures the council is under and cuts to services, why is £800,000 being spent over the next 5 years renting units at the forthcoming Boypark development? How can this be justified?

Reply

The Boypark Croydon scheme is one of the most exciting developments in the town centre and it has already had a major impact in improving the perception of Croydon. It will provide 240 new jobs, deliver a year-long event calendar to bring customers and businesses to the area and generating a benefit to Croydon of more than £5m GVA per annum.

The London Borough of Croydon is intending to rent these units to provide start up 'pop up' space to enable some of the most exciting entrepreneurs in Croydon a chance to trial a store in Boypark. This will provide a 5 year resource for people to start and grow businesses in Croydon in one of the best retail locations in London and with the benefit of all the Boypark services, including access to state of the art online sales platforms and PR and marketing support. From the experience of the Shoreditch site, we expect a high number of these businesses to succeed and take full time premises within Boypark Croydon.

As the leaseholder, the Council will also have the ability to sub-let these units if there is high demand for commercial units. In this event, the all costs would be fully met by the sub-tenant.

CQ275-15

from Councillor Sara Bashford

Councillor Mark Watson

I am advised that this Council's Policy regarding fly-posting of adverts on highways railing is such that they are removed as they can cause visual impairment to road users. In the past voluntary groups and schools have had their advertising banners removed. I have noticed that Council events - cycling race and the Ambition Festival- are being advertised on highway railings. Can Cllr Bee please explain why there is one rule for council promoted events and another for charities, schools, churches and voluntary groups?

Reply

The Council's Environmental Enforcement Policy (February 2015) says that we are able to take action in a number of ways either by formal or informal actions regarding posters and banners. The Council can and often do remove posters that do not have consent and are not on private property. Posters that are generally removed without hesitation are:

- Posters that are purely for commercial gain that do not have any permission
- Posters that do not pertain to community events or are deemed to be causing obstruction or impairment
- Posters that do not have any formal/deemed consent and do not appear to be managed or controlled (any type, not on private property)

Posters that may be permitted -

Posters that benefit from temporary deemed consent are for voluntary / community / charity events providing that they have requested permission to put them up and have submitted a plan or map outlining where they are and when they will be removed.

However, these will still be subject to removal if they are deemed to be dangerous or causing any sort of obstruction or impairment or have not been put up as part of a planned event or if they have been up for a long period which may require more formal consent through Planning.

The Ambition Festival and cycling event posters were given permission before they were erected, in line with the policy set out above.

CQ293-15

from Councillor Robert Canning

Councillor Mark Watson

What action is the Council and its partners taking to tackle the problem of street drinking in Old Town, particularly around Croydon Minster, in contravention of the ban on street drinking in this part of Croydon?

Reply

There is a multi-agency approach to tackling street drinking across the borough and we have seen some success in tackling this problem recently and a reduced numbers of complaints. Activity is coordinated through the Safer Streets initiative, which is a multi-agency project that aims to support and help street drinkers through outreach and access to treatment but will follow up with enforcement for those that fail to engage and continue to cause problems.

There is currently a no drinking zone that covers Old Town, which means that people are required to hand over alcohol in their possession when requested to do so by a police officer. Council Area Enforcement officers also have the power to confiscate alcohol in a no drinking zone. Failure to surrender alcohol on request may result in an arrest. The area around Croydon Minster is known as a location for street drinking and is regularly patrolled by both police and council officers. Individuals identified to be drinking at this location are then referred into the Safer Streets initiative mentioned above.

We also try to tackle the issue through licensing. The council introduced a local scheme, encouraging local retailers not to sell super strength alcohol to individuals within the drinking ban zone. Many retailers engaged, but this is a voluntary scheme, so not all retailers comply but we do try to engage with off licences to remind them of the issues that are being caused through continuing to sell super strength alcohol.

Finally, the council was given new powers recently through the Anti-Social Behaviour, Policing and Crime Act 2014. Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) were introduced as part of this and replace the previous no drinking zone legislation. This new power is much more flexible than the previous legislation and can be used to restrict any type of behaviour in a defined area where there is evidence that is causing nuisance, alarm or distress. We are currently putting in place a PSPO for the town centre, including Old Town, that will give both the police and council powers to tackle a broader range of ASB rather than just focusing on the public consumption of alcohol.

CQ319-15 **from Councillor Steve O'Connell**

Councillor Mark Watson

Can you give me the Total Notifiable Offences figures for Croydon June to May, for 11/12, 12/13, 13/14, 14/15 please.

Reply

June to May 11/12 = 32,709

June to May 12/13 = 30,326

June to May 13 /14 = 27,950

June to May 14/15 = 29,239¹

¹ The data for June 2015 will not be released before July 15th 2015. Therefore, an estimated figure for June has been generated.

CQ320-15 **from Councillor Steve O'Connell**

Councillor Mark Watson

Can you give me a breakdown in detail of the 15/16 Safety and Justice savings items please?

Reply

The savings items approved by cabinet on 17th February 2015 for Safety and Justice were as follows:-

Review of licence fees and increases in income from the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and fly tipping - £108k.

A reduction in the Safer Croydon Partnership project budget of £25k.

Review of staffing structures in Community Safety - £196k. These relate to deletion of the Head of Regulatory Services post and a vacant back office post in the anti-social behaviour team.

Re-tendering of CCTV maintenance and fibre transmissions contracts has saved £22k. This includes re-tendering the contract for the maintenance of all of the CCTV equipment and a contract with BT for the leasing of the fibres (cables) connecting the CCTV cameras to the control room.

In addition, there will be savings arising from the early implementation of the Eyes and Ears project but these are still to be confirmed.

CQ326-15

from Councillor Richard Chatterjee

Councillor Mark Watson

On the proposed merging of NH Housing Wardens and AEO's, could the Cabinet Member please confirm whether the coverage and service on the estates will be maintained, and provide further details on this.

Reply

Yes, the new Eyes and Ear project will provide the right level of service to Estates. The project will result in:

1. A single unified enforcement and street based service that will be better able to problem solve in the community especially with regard to protecting the environment and preventing Anti-Social behaviour issues so that the borough is a safer & cleaner place to live and work. Up to 40+ officers will work as 5 area based teams who will develop & maintain good relationships with local people & communities across the whole Borough including those on Housing estates. As each area's requirements will be different and vary, the allocation of officers will be flexible enough to meet local needs.
2. An enhanced Outreach provision with Housing (HRA) emphasis which will maximise the use of local play and youth services to develop children and young peoples' resilience & independence, and to develop community confidence & access to appropriate services. The Play & Youth Outreach team of 7 officers will ensure that children & young people can access high quality play and youth provision; work in partnership with schools, families, local services and community groups to meet local needs; be attentive to needs especially for those at risk to ensure access to services & early help support. The 2 Community Outreach officers will work with residents to identify needs, support/assist, signpost & work 1 to 1 with vulnerable residents; tackle social isolation and promote healthy outcomes; work/engage with community groups such as at sheltered blocks.

CQ329-15 **from Councillor Vidhi Mohan**

Councillor Mark Watson

Could the Cabinet Member tell me how many responses has the Fairness Commission had from young people as part of its "Show Us What's Unfair" campaign?

Reply

The "Show us What's Unfair" competition is one of a range of activities that the Young Opportunity and Fairness Commission are undertaking.

The competition does not close until the end of July. Further information on the submissions will be available on the Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission website.

<http://www.opportunitycroydon.org/>

The competition is being widely promoted through social media, posters at schools, youth clubs and churches, flyers distributed by members of the Young Opportunity and Fairness Commission, information on blogs, press releases, information shared with local schools and colleges.

CQ302-15 **from Councillor Pat Ryan**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Would the Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Sport agree with me that the Highbury Community Centre should be made available for usage by the local Community Groups and young people as soon as possible?

Reply

The building is currently occupied by a day nursery under the terms of a 15 year lease from 2008. The lease does provide for the property to be hired out to suitable community organisations outside of nursery operating hours subject to the Councils approval regarding the community group and fees charged.

Council officers will be raising this issue and ensuring that there is an appropriate identified way to book such uses with the tenant in the next couple of weeks and I will keep you up to date with progress.

CQ303-15 **from Councillor Pat Ryan**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Will the Cabinet Member for Culture Leisure and Sport assure me that he will continue campaigning so as the Crystal Palace Sport Centre is continued to be used as a local, National and International Sports Centre.

Reply

The Crystal Palace National Sports Centre is very important to the whole of South London and is still very much the spiritual home of athletics. I am very much aware that any redevelopment would put huge strain on sports facilities elsewhere. London is a growing city and we need to protect our sporting facilities and our sporting heritage.

Separately to this we are at an early stage looking at what improvements we can make at South Norwood Arena to provide first rate facilities for all levels of sport and physical activity.

CQ322-15 from Councillor Badsha Quadir

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Could the cabinet member provide the information. how much a Muslim burial would cost in London Borough of Croydon compared to other Borough's such as Bromley, Merton, Sutton and Tandridge?

Reply

Croydon provides more choice than neighbouring boroughs, with varying charges. For new graves Croydon's costs are higher than our neighbouring boroughs. The reason for this is many authorities have chosen to subsidise their cemeteries to keep the costs artificially low, although this is now beginning to change. Croydon made a conscious decision several years ago to reflect the true cost of maintaining a grave and reflecting this maintenance in its grave prices at all sites.

New graves are only available at Greenlawns Memorial Park, an American style cemetery with a significantly higher standard of grounds maintenance than that offered by the neighbouring boroughs shown above resulting in higher operating costs.

To increase choice and, in consultation with Croydon Mosque and Islamic Centre, reclaimed graves have been made available at Queens Road Cemetery. These are priced accordingly with the cost being lower than the cost of graves in Merton, Sutton and Bromley and second only to Bandon Hill (jointly run by Sutton and Croydon). In addition to this Queens Road Cemetery is very close to Croydon Mosque, which was considered more convenient for some residents.

Costs are listed below:

Authority	Cost of new grave	Cost of reclaimed grave
Croydon	£4320	£2545
Bromley	£3808	Not offered
Sutton	£3670	Not offered
Bandon Hill Cemetery	n/a	£1800
Merton	£3510	Not offered
*Tandridge	£1431	Not offered

* Tandridge have no new graves available and are unable to reclaim graves. We are told they are currently working with local churches using what little space there is left, beyond this their customers are using neighbouring authorities.

It has been the policy of the council for many years to pursue extra grave space and the council has pursued this as an extension to Greenlawns, but has run into planning difficulties. It is therefore important that we continue to try and expand our burial facilities in order that we can meet the demand from residents, including particular religious requirements in the long term.

CQ335-15 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please advise what progress has been made in setting up the Users Group at Purley Pool?

Reply

The Council welcomes the opportunity to work with users of the Purley pool. The Head of Facilities Management has been in contact with the Purley Pool group and confirmed the Council's willingness to work with the group to enable its surveyors to be on site when the survey of the pool takes place.

The Council is in the process of commissioning a survey by independent consultants to assess and report on the condition of the building services and plant. This survey is planned to take place towards the end of July and will take approximately one week on site.

Once the date and details of the survey have been confirmed, the Council will write to the Purley Pool group to seek confirmation of their involvement and explore additional ways in which the group can be involved.

Whilst we will endeavour to give the group full involvement in the survey, it will not be possible for them to have full access as this will require the installation and use of specialist access equipment and they will not be covered by the consultant's insurance. Both the Council and the consultants have a legal responsibility to ensure the survey work is carried out in accordance with strict CDM Regulations and general duties under section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Alternatively, the group is welcome to commission its own professional team to undertake a survey separately from the Council's independent consultants. However, it may not be cost-effective for the group to do this given that it will be duplicating the survey commissioned by the Council.

The results of the survey will be shared with the user group and councillors.

CQ336-15 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please may I have an update on the budget for the Ambition Festival?

Reply

It is now only a few days till we launch Ambition 2015, and I would like to place on record my thanks to the core officer team led by John Bownas and the large number of partners in Croydon who are working to make it a success.

Already festival season has been a huge success across the borough and this festival will be a great way to celebrate all that is good about our borough and how Ambitious the people of Croydon are.

An initial budget of £150,000 was made available in the summer of 2014 to deliver the festival in July 2015.

Out of this a full-time festival manager post was created as a secondment opportunity and the role was filled in October 2014.

An additional budget allocation of £50k has been made to provide both a contingency sum and a capital budget which is to be used to purchase equipment for future use and that can also be used by other community events to reduce their hire costs. Additional income has been generated through sponsorship and a commercial arrangement with the market operator.

The current anticipated expenditure across artist fees, marketing, production and security is contained within this available budget.

CQ348-15 **from Councillor Badsha Quadir**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please may I have an update on Upper Norwood Library?

Reply

Upper Norwood Library continues to be delivered jointly funded by Croydon Council and Lambeth. I am happy to confirm that we are match-funding Lambeth again this year, providing funding of £125K. This increased funding from Croydon is enabling an increase in the opening hours of the library.

In addition, the Councils continue to work with the Upper Norwood Library Trust with a view to transferring the service to them in the future.

At the request of Upper Norwood Library Trust the two boroughs have agreed a three year funding package as well as transfer of the building.

We are fully committed to Upper Norwood Library and very much hope that the opposition are now realising the error of their ways in trying to close down this much loved Library. Even in the very difficult financial predicament that the Tory Government has put Croydon into, we continue to work to make very difficult financial choices work for local communities. We are not prepared to walk away from key institutions like Upper Norwood Library, even though we are not in a position to fund them in the same way as we would have liked to.