

COUNCIL MEETING: MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2016

WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL – Councillor Tony Newman		
CQ022	Thomas	Manifesto promises
CQ062	Khan S	Local Government funding
CQ063	Khan S	Food poverty
CQ065	Mann	Freedom of the Borough
CQ069	Rendle	Webcasting
CQ077	Ryan	Fire Brigade funding
CQ086	Wentworth	Government funding
CQ088	Lewis	Suggestions to the Chancellor
CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY & JOBS Councillor Toni Letts		
CQ034	Perry	Entertainment business closing
CQ035	Perry	Graffiti – investment in the Town
CQ052	Winborn	JSA
CQ071	Rendle	Supporting local businesses
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND TREASURY – Councillor Simon Hall		
CQ045	Pelling	Council Tax
CQ049	Cummings	Financial performance targets
CQ050	Cummings	Agency cost
CQ051	Cummings	Consultant spend
CQ058	Stranack	Consultancy and agency fees - Adult Services
CQ061	Shahul-Hameed	Revenue Support grant
DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN GREEN CROYDON – Councillor Stuart Collins		
CQ005	Bashford	Street cleaning
CQ016	Neal	Recycling
CQ024	Thomas	Fly tips
CQ039	Bird	Street cleaning - leaves
CQ041	Pollard T	Green Waste
CQ043	Pelling	Fly tipping success
CQ080	Audsley	Village system

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CQ081	Canning	Fly tipping
CABINET MEMBER FOR FAMILIES, HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE – Councillor Louisa Woodley		
CQ011	Hopley	Ombudsman complaints
CQ019	Bennett	Consultants in Adult Social Care
CQ025	Wright	Bed & Breakfast
CQ073	Clouder	Mental health issues
CQ074	Clouder	Junior doctors
DEPUTY LEADER (STATUTORY) AND CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES, REGENERATION AND PLANNING – Councillor Alison Butler		
CQ001	Pollard H	Local Plan re Fairfield Halls
CQ007	Bashford	Local Plan
CQ008	Creatura	Home building re Bed & Breakfast
CQ014	Neal	Starter Home initiative
CQ015	Neal	Selling homes
CQ020	Buttinger	Heritage site in the borough
CQ036	Perry	Local Plan
CQ064	Khan S	Council homes
CQ075	Clouder	Council estates
CQ078	Audsley	Housing crisis
CQ082	Canning	Questions re planning
CQ087	Lewis	House prices
CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT & ENVIRONMENT – Councillor Kathy Bee		
CQ010	Creatura	District centres free parking
CQ012	Hopley	Free parking
CQ013	Hopley	Parking charges
CQ021	Buttinger	Road Maintenance
CQ032	Bains	Coulsdon parking
CQ033	Thompson	Parking charges
CQ037	Bird	Manhole covers
CQ044	Pelling	Road improvements
CQ060	Shahul-Hameed	Vehicle removal service
CQ066	Mann	Tram network
CQ068	King	Lombard Roundabout
CQ072	Prince	Pollution levels
CQ076	Ryan	Crystal Palace tram extension
CQ085	Henson	Croydon commuters

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING – Councillor Alisa Flemming		
CQ026	Gatland	Key stage 2 results
CQ027	Gatland	Corporate Parenting
CQ028	Gatland	Vulnerable children
CQ030	O'Connell	Family Justice Centre
CQ038	Bird	School exclusions
CQ054	Brew	Woodcote Primary & Smitham Primary
CQ055	Brew	School places
CQ056	Stranack	Boarding School places
CQ057	Stranack	Medway Secure Training centre
CQ070	Rendle	Chaffinch Brook awards
CQ083	Canning	School places
CQ084	Wentworth	School places
CQ089	Kabir	Youth Services
CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORT Councillor Timothy Godfrey		
CQ002	Quadir	Fairfield Halls
CQ003	Quadir	Fairfield Halls
CQ004	Quadir	Libraries
CQ006	Bashford	Park gates
CQ009	Creatura	Zodiac Gymnastics Club
CQ017	Pollard H	Food Borough - Health
CQ018	Pollard H	Park around Minister
CQ023	Thomas	Graffiti
CQ042	Pollard T	Festival
CQ046	Hale	Fairfield Halls
CQ047	Hale	Victor numbers to Croydon
CQ048	Hale	Graffiti
CQ053	Winborn	Park Hill Park toilets
CQ079	Audsley	Cultural offer
CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITIES, SAFETY AND JUSTICE – Councillor Mark Watson		
CQ029	O'Connell	Stronger Communities Board
CQ031	O'Connell	Engagement with communities
CQ040	Pollard T	Graffiti removal

CQ022-16 from Councillor Phil Thomas

Councillor Tony Newman

Members of the Public have lost faith in Politicians because they say one thing at elections and another thing when elected. At the last Council Election you made a promise about Council tax. Are you going to keep the promise you made?

Reply

I thank Councillor Thomas for his question.

This Labour Administration kept its promise by freezing Council Tax in 2015. Your Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer has effectively imposed a 2% Adult Social Care Surcharge on local authorities. In effect the Government has transferred the burden of collecting tax to fund social care from itself and imposed it on local authorities. Despite the Government constantly moving the financial goalposts to suit the Tories' agenda, we have remained resolute in our commitment to delivering our manifesto. The list of pledges that this Labour Administration is delivering is long but I will remind you of some key ones:

- Council Tax freeze in 2015/16
- Don't Mess With Croydon - Cleaner streets with fly tippers now being prosecuted
- 20mph zones
- Accreditation as a London Living Wage Employer to address wage inequality
- Introduced of a Landlord Licensing Scheme to tackle rogue landlords and drive up standards in the private rented sector
- Establishing the Opportunity and Fairness Commission to increase fairness and reduce inequality
- Creating Playstreets
- Being an open and transparent Council, publishing Members' expenses and reintroducing webcasting at Council meetings
- Reducing the cost Bernard Weatherill House to council tax payers
- Putting arts and culture at the heart of regeneration and launching the Ambition festival
- Launching plans to revitalise Fairfield Halls and deliver a state of the art College facility
- A more attractive streetscene in our district centres and Croydon metropolitan centre with new paving, street furniture and tree planting
- Tackling domestic and sexual violence against women and girls
- Best Start for children
- Working with the government to achieve devolution through a Growth Zone for Croydon
- Increased employment opportunities by attracting new employers to Croydon
- Increasing the provision of affordable housing in new developments
- Delivering high quality school places and increasing the number of good and outstanding schools to record levels
- Establishing a Cultural Quarter
- Devolving funding for Ward budgets

In sharp contrast to the previous inaction of the local Conservatives, we will continue to work tirelessly to ensure that we deliver on our Ambitious for Croydon commitments to build a strong local economy, provide support for local jobs, fair and affordable housing for all and clean, safe streets across all of our borough.

CQ062-16 **from Councillor Shafi Khan**

Councillor Tony Newman

Can the Leader tell us what does the future hold for our Councils' finances as a result of the recent provisional local government funding settlement?

Reply

I thank Councillor Khan for his question.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for the four year period 2016/17 to 2019/20 announced by the Secretary of State for CLG on 17 December 2015 will have a significant impact on the council's financial position and continues the attack on local government who have taken a higher percentage cut since 2010 than the majority of the public sector.

This council will see a further 33.9% reduction in a Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) over four years which equates to £45m. The biggest reduction of £17.5m is in 2016/17.

No account has been taken on the population and demographic changes since 2012 when the formula for grant allocation was fixed. In fact the government have chosen to further protect inner London boroughs through a change to the formula. This impact's significantly on Croydon. We estimate the increased expenditure over the next four years as a result of those issues to be £20m.

The government has chosen to pass on the costs of a national crisis in adult social care funding to local council tax payers by way of a 2% levy on council tax payers. The message seems to be we recognise there is a national issue and local taxation increases are the answer.

It is also very disappointing that in the middle of January we still have no information on grant funding for Croydon in relation to Public Health, schools capital funding, Housing Benefit and Council Tax administration. On top of that we are still without clarity on our UASC grant of approximately £20m per annum from the home office for both 2015/16 and 2016/17.

In summary it remains a hugely unfair settlement for local government and Croydon. I will continue to lobby hard for a fairer settlement but at the same time we will ensure we remain ambitious and focused on the right priorities for the residents of Croydon.

CQ063-16 **from Councillor Shafi Khan**

Councillor Tony Newman

Although we are facing unprecedented budget cuts imposed by the Central Government and have to think very carefully about how every penny is spent, do you agree that, we need to do more for tackling food poverty?

Reply

I thank Councillor Khan for his question.

Despite Conservative Government cuts Croydon is proud of its record as a Food Flagship Borough. Tackling food poverty is an important priority for this Labour Administration and through Croydon Food Network we support a number of community organisations across the borough that operate food banks providing help to Croydon households experiencing food poverty.

Access to food support is via a referral system operated by each food bank. Key stakeholders are our welfare rights team, job centre, family justice centre and our family resilience teams who regularly refer clients to food banks for help.

In order to improve access to information and advice for local people experiencing food poverty the council has allocated funding to Croydon Food Network to support the establishment of a website.

Over the next year, food poverty is a key priority for the Food Flagship programme and the team are already working with Fare Share to offer free cereal to local schools and further discussions are taking place around supporting Croydon further.

I would add that food poverty is impacted by a range of other factors such as access to jobs, wage rates and housing costs. This Administration is delivering various key commitments that contribute towards lifting households out of poverty and improving the life chances of local people. Our achievements include:

- Gaining accreditation as a Living Wage Employer to help address wage inequality. This has resulted in higher household incomes for employees on the lowest wages.
- Doubling the proportion of affordable housing provided in new housing developments to 30%.
- Introduction of a Landlord Licensing Scheme which is driving up standards for tenants in the private rented sector.
- Achieving Growth Zone status to advance regeneration across the borough and deliver increased employment opportunities for local people.
- Establishing the Opportunity and Fairness Commission to help identify measures we can implement to increase fairness and shape a better future for everyone in Croydon.

CQ065-16 **from Councillor Stephen Mann**

Councillor Tony Newman

What is the current policy for awarding somebody the freedom of the London Borough of Croydon?

Reply

The Council has the power to grant a person the title of Freedom of the Borough. The records of previous awards indicate that the title is awarded in exceptional circumstances to “persons who have rendered extraordinary service to Croydon”.

The list of past recipients of the title include Lord Weatherill (a former Speaker of the Commons), Colonel McLelland (a former Representative Deputy Lieutenant), Lord Bowness (a former Leader of Croydon Council and a Life Peer), Bishop Wilfred Wood (a former Bishop of Croydon), former Councillors Adrian Dennis and Derek Loughborough, David Wechsler (a former Chief Executive of Croydon Council) and posthumously to Malcolm Wicks (a former MP for Croydon North).

CQ069-16 **from Councillor Andrew Rendle**

Councillor Tony Newman

Before Christmas the Autism Partnership Board met in this chamber to give evidence to the Fairness Commission. We held the event here so the proceedings could be web cast. We discussed among other things diagnosis, education, housing and job opportunities. Will the leader join with me in thanking members of the board and officers who have supported my work so tremendously since May 2014 and doesn't this show re-installing the web casting facilities was not just a luxury but a necessity for good governance.

Reply

I thank Councillor Rendle for his question.

I am very pleased with the excellent work being undertaken through the Autism Partnership Board to support individuals and families living with autism. I am delighted to join Councillor Rendle in extending thanks and appreciation to members of the board, officers, volunteers and everyone who has contributed to developing services to improve the lives of people on the autism spectrum.

I fully agree that far from being a luxury, reinstating webcasting of council meetings is essential for allowing local people greater access to information, increasing their ability to participate in the business of the council and to also hold us accountable.

CQ077-16 **from Councillor Pat Ryan**

Councillor Tony Newman

Would the Leader agree that the reduction in the Funding to the London Fire Brigade by Boris Johnson the Mayor of London for the coming years, will result in slower response times from the Fire Brigade, which could well danger lives?

Reply

I thank Councillor Ryan for his question.

The cuts imposed by the Conservative Mayor of London on both the fire and police services are a cause for grave concern for London as a whole. These cuts highlight the crucial role that the Mayor of London has in delivering community safety across the capital.

These cuts are two more reasons why this administration is looking forward to welcoming the election of Sadiq Khan as the next Labour Mayor of London.

CQ086-16

from Councillor John Wentworth

Councillor Tony Newman

In his Autumn Statement, the Chancellor asked local Councils to levy a 2% council tax precept to help address the national issue of funding adult social care for an aging population. This was followed by the local government funding settlement, which presumes that local councils will raise Council Tax by 3.75% every year for the next four years.

Does the Leader agree with me that:

- i) It is scandalous that the Conservative government is neglecting its taxation responsibilities and passing the buck onto local councils?

- ii) That any claims by the local conservative party that they wouldn't raise council tax are blown out of the water by their government's demands for continued council tax increases?

Reply

I thank Councillor Wentworth for his question.

I wholeheartedly agree that the Conservative Government is behaving in a scandalous manner by continually penalising the poorest and most vulnerable people in our society.

I am indeed appalled at the hypocrisy of local Conservative MPs who continue to support the ongoing draconian Government cuts imposed on the people of Croydon. Their attempt to disguise the true impact on Croydon of locally imposed taxes is nothing short of shameful. This hypocrisy is heightened by the failure of local Conservative politicians to take any responsibility for the reprehensible and harmful policies being implemented by their Government to the detriment of local people already struggling to survive the current harsh economic conditions.

CQ088-16 **from Councillor Oliver Lewis**

Councillor Tony Newman

As we start a new calendar year, what suggestions does the leader have for the Tory Chancellor when he might be considering his New Year resolutions?

Reply

I do wish the Chancellor a happy New Year. While the Chancellor has overseen sustained attacks on budgets across public services, where he has most recently failed in his duty as Chancellor is in allowing his Government colleagues to make repeated in-year budget cuts to local services. These actions lead to short term solutions and are entirely at odds with the principles of sound financial planning.

I would counsel the Chancellor to address this and to tackle the inequities in funding for local services that he has neglected to address over the past five years. I will of course remind him of this as we continue to campaign for fair funding that supports our innovative work in Croydon.

CQ034-16 **from Councillor Jason Perry**

Councillor Toni Letts

Is the Cabinet Member concerned that yet another entertainment establishment is closing in Croydon?

Reply

The Council has had no information from the building owners as to prospective occupiers of the premises formerly occupied by Tiger Tiger, however as and when a new occupier comes forward council officers will work with them regarding any licensing, planning or economic development issues that may need to be addressed.

Whilst a number of nightclubs have indeed closed in recent years the Council welcomes the new 'evening economy' that has emerged and is set to grow in the years ahead as various developments come forward. This will make the town centre a more appealing proposition for a wider range of groups from across the borough and beyond.

CQ035-16 **from Councillor Jason Perry**

Councillor Toni Letts

Does the Cabinet Member believe that graffiti is an attraction to inward investment?

Reply

‘Graffiti’ is a catch-all term that can be applied to a range of activities. Graffiti in its most pejorative sense – when undertaken illegally on public or private property, and used to convey offensive messages – is a negative phenomenon and the council works to remove speedily any such infringements and punish those responsible. This type of graffiti clearly does nothing to improve Croydon in the eyes on potential investors. However, some graffiti falls into the category of ‘street art’, and can enhance the look and feel of a local area and make a valid contribution to the cultural landscape, in turn adding to the appeal and cachet of that area.

The council will continue to work with local artists and groups to support appropriate forms of graffiti and street art in suitable locations.

CQ052-16 **from Councillor Susan Winborn**

Councillor Toni Letts

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the total JSA count for the London Borough of Croydon on a month to month basis from August 2015 and also detail the JSA count for 18-24 year olds also from August 2015.

Reply

Both categories of JSA claimant rates, that is total JSA, and the 18 - 24 JSA, showed an increase in August on July's figures. The 18 - 24 JSA claimant count increased by 4.8%.

Since then however, September through to November 2015 claimant figures have shown a positive downward trend. In the case of total JSA, the trend has been steady, whereas the 18 - 24 claimant rate reduction was more marked.

During the period August to September 2015, the net impact has been that there were 187 fewer total JSA claimants and 105 fewer 18- 24 year old claimants in Croydon i.e. more claimants signed off, than signed on.

Month 2015	Total JSA claimant count	% change on previous month	18- 24 JSA claimant count	% change on previous month
August	4,820	+ 1.8%	975	+ 4.8%
September	4,770	-1.0%	960	-1.5%
October	4,650	-2.5%	895	-6.8%
November	4,550	-2.2%	825	-7.8%

CQ071-16 **from Councillor Andrew Rendle**

Councillor Toni Letts

How is this council supporting small local businesses such as those on The Lower Addiscombe Road in Ashburton?

Reply

The Council and its partners adopts an holistic approach to business support. The Council aims to be a facilitator, enabler and in some cases the deliverer of interventions and services contributing towards strengthening the small local business base and sustaining small medium enterprise (SME) growth in the town centre and districts.

CQ045-16 **from Councillor Andrew Pelling**

Councillor Simon Hall

Further to CQ062-05 please could an update regarding the council's finances be provided in tabular form regarding the measurement in nominal and real terms (as adjusted by the RPI) the levels of the following items as of the financial year 1994-95 (as the base year using the April 1994 RPI) and each financial year from 2005-06 to 2016-17:

- Band D council tax rate including charges
- Band D council tax rate excluding charges
- Gross Revenue Expenditure
- Net Revenue Expenditure
- Total amount of Council Tax levied (LBC only)
- Total amount of Business Rate retained
- Total amount of Government Grants
- Total amount of other income
- Capital Expenditure by the Council
- Precepts (£ m)
- % of Council Tax to Gross Revenue Expenditure
- Taxbase (£m)
- Annual % increase in Taxbase
- Band D excluding charges (not including tax base increase year on year)

Reply

See attached spreadsheet (Appendix CQ045-16). This cannot be completed for 2016/17 until the budget is agreed by Council.

	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
COUNCIL TAX LEVELS																						
GLA Precept**	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	122.98	150.88	173.88	224.40	241.33	254.62	288.61	303.88	309.82	309.82	309.82	309.82	306.72	303.00	299.00
Band D including precept	515	527.00	575.00	593.00	624.70	691.93	758.39	807.72	823.87	853.53	1086.47	1165.14	1224.51	1301.94	1357.64	1405.63	1447.71	1467.56	1459.63	1456.83	1474.39	1470.39
Band D excluding precept	369.2	374.53	508.16	522.65	542.94	595.61	653.38	684.74	672.99	679.65	862.07	924.14	970.25	1013.33	1053.56	1095.81	1137.89	1150.11	1150.11	1150.11	1171.39	1171.39
TAX CHANGES																						
Croydon Council Increase		1.4%	35.7%	2.9%	3.9%	9.7%	9.7%	4.8%	-1.7%	1.0%	26.8%	7.2%	5.0%	4.4%	4.0%	4.0%	3.8%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	0.00%
GLA precept Increase									22.7%	15.2%	29.1%	7.5%	5.5%	13.3%	5.3%	1.95%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-1.00%	-1.21%	-1.32%
BUDGET CHANGES		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's																	
Gross Revenue Expenditure	333,999	463,209	487,894	511,370	511,939	527,864	555,843	552,569	581,017	627,014	695,059	874,584	817,146	856,832	796,435	848,904	952,743	982,392	1,016,623	1,069,860	1,147,101	1,052,506
Net cost of services	229,528	263,186	274,974	294,024	289,629	302,467	311,606	336,558	349,075	359,133	391,411	458,197	436,678	275,097	251,337	264,632	299,265	308,057	294,494	309,966	332,336	368,331
% change in net cost of services		14.7%	4.5%	6.9%	-1.5%	4.4%	3.0%	8.0%	3.7%	2.9%	9.0%	17.1%	-4.7%	-37.0%	-8.6%	5.3%	13.1%	2.9%	-4.4%	5.3%	7.2%	10.8%
FUNDING SOURCES		£m	£m	£m	£m																	
Croydon Council Tax Levy	43.7	44.3	60.5	62.6	65.0	72.6	80.2	84.8	83.4	85.0	108.0	113.9	120.6	125.4	130.9	138.1	143.4	146.5	147.2	148.5	126.1	129.3
% change		1.4%	36.4%	3.5%	3.9%	11.6%	10.4%	5.7%	-1.6%	1.9%	27.1%	5.5%	5.8%	4.0%	4.4%	5.5%	3.8%	2.2%	0.5%	0.9%	-15.1%	2.6%
Total amount of Government Grants	185.8	186.3	179.1	185.4	187.2	197.2	205.0	215.0	224.0	231.0	246.0	259.1	273.4	104.7	107.0	114.9	116.8	118.5	123.3	116.0	162.2	146.4
% change		0.3%	-3.9%	3.5%	1.0%	5.3%	4.0%	4.9%	4.2%	3.1%	6.5%	5.3%	5.5%	-61.7%	2.2%	7.4%	1.7%	1.5%	4.1%	-5.9%	39.8%	-9.7%
Total amount of other income	104.5	200.0	212.9	217.3	222.3	225.4	244.2	216.0	231.9	267.9	303.6	416.4	380.5	581.7	545.1	584.3	653.5	674.3	722.1	759.9	814.8	684.2
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE																						
Capital expenditure by the Council £m	41.0	56.6	35.8	37.6	33.5	33.3	25.9	30.1	36.4	25.0	23.4	54.3	68.8	64.1	63.3	66.1	70.9	148.7	193.8	168.9	193.09	181.86
% change		38.0%	-36.7%	5.0%	-10.9%	-0.6%	-22.2%	16.2%	20.9%	-31.3%	-6.4%	131.9%	26.7%	-6.8%	-1.2%	4.4%	7.3%	109.7%	30.3%	-12.8%	14.3%	-5.8%
TAXBASE																						
Taxbase	118,330	118,327	118,970	119,711	119,762	121,877	122,676	123,776	123,949	125,198	125,359	123,293	124,318	123,750	124,261	126,008	126,008	126,531	127,922	129,148	107,618	110,393
% change in taxbase		0.00%	0.54%	0.62%	0.04%	1.77%	0.66%	0.90%	0.14%	0.10%	0.13%	-1.65%	0.83%	-0.46%	0.41%	1.41%	0.00%	0.42%	1.10%	0.96%	-16.67%	2.58%

** From 2006/07 onwards GLA precept includes £20 for Olympic Precept

RPI	
April 1993	140.6
April 1994	144.2
April 1995	149.0
April 1996	152.6
April 1997	156.3
April 1998	162.6
April 1999	165.2
April 2000	170.1
April 2001	173.1
April 2002	175.7
April 2003	181.2
April 2004	185.7
April 2005	191.6
April 2006	198.1
April 2007	206.6
April 2008	214.8
April 2009	213.7
April 2010	228.8
April 2011	234.4
April 2012	242.5
April 2013	247.4
April 2014	253.9
April 2015	256.4

FIGURES REBASED TO APRIL 1995	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Band D including charges	515.00	513.84	542.58	546.37	561.95	598.31	645.46	667.64	669.19	683.02	843.03	882.17	1186.80	924.04	923.93	920.07	952.49	901.83	875.53	844.66	837.91	814.25
Band D excluding charges	369.20	365.18	479.51	481.55	488.40	515.02	556.08	565.99	546.63	543.87	668.91	699.70	711.99	719.20	716.99	717.28	748.65	706.75	689.87	666.83	665.71	648.67
Gross Revenue Expenditure	333,999	451,645	460,389	471,157	460,516	456,443	473,072	456,738	471,929	501,754	539,323	662,178	618,690	608,130	542,008	555,661	626,840	603,690	609,800	620,298	651,909	582,837
Net Revenue Expenditure	229,528	256,615	259,472	270,903	260,536	261,543	265,205	278,190	283,535	287,388	303,711	346,917	320,443	195,248	171,045	173,218	196,896	189,304	176,646	179,716	188,870	203,967
Croydon Council Tax Levy	43.7	43.21	57.05	57.65	58.49	62.77	68.22	70.06	67.74	68.02	83.80	86.27	88.50	89.00	89.08	90.40	94.35	90.03	88.29	86.10	71.64	71.61
Total amount of Government Grants	185.8	181.65	169.00	170.82	168.40	170.52	174.47	177.71	181.94	184.85	190.88	196.15	200.63	74.32	72.82	75.21	76.85	72.82	73.96	67.26	92.16	81.09
Total amount of other income	104.5	195.01	200.90	200.21	199.97	194.90	207.84	178.55	188.39	214.37	235.61	315.26	279.20	412.88	370.96	382.44	429.94	414.39	433.15	440.58	463.04	378.87
Capital expenditure by the Council	41.0	55.19	33.78	34.64	30.13	28.79	22.04	24.88	29.57	20.01	18.16	41.09	50.45	45.47	43.08	43.27	46.65	91.38	116.25	97.95	109.74	100.71

CQ049-16 **from Councillor Jason Cummings**

Councillor Simon Hall

The Ambitious For Croydon performance update presented to cabinet on the 18th January showed that none of the financial performance targets had been met for the second time running. When can we expect the council to start achieving some of these figures?

Reply

Our Ambitious For Croydon performance tables reflect challenging and ambitious targets in a very detailed framework, which did not exist under the previous administration. This is as part of our commitment to openness and transparency.

As stated at the Cabinet meeting on 18 January, it is clear that the trend is improving and, indeed, we are confident that some of these measures will be achieved by the end of the financial year, e.g. council tax collection. It is clear that, going forward, we will need to make sure that the targets reflect changes in the context, e.g. more people paying over 12 months rather than 10, agency staff being used for transformation projects rather than consultants.

CQ050-16 **from Councillor Jason Cummings**

Councillor Simon Hall

Can you please supply a breakdown of the cash spend on agency workers by department so far this financial year.

Reply

The table below sets out the 15/16 total spend, by department, on temporary agency workers up to 31 December 2015:

Department	Spend (£)
People	9,058,648
Place	1,634,347
Resources	3,631,608
Transformation and projects	1,367,836
TOTAL	15,692,439

So far this year the Council has spent almost £1million less on temporary agency workers filling establishment posts when compared to the same period last year (Qtr 1-3 14/15). This is a direct result of targeted permanent recruitment campaigns across the People department, as well as the introduction of even tighter controls over the hiring and management of temporary workers. This trend is expected to continue, given the ongoing controls and the completion of the Business Support restructure.

CQ051-16 from Councillor Jason Cummings

Councillor Simon Hall

What is the current cumulative spend on external consultants by the council this financial year?

Reply

Year	total	capital	revenue
	£	£	£
2012-13	20,368,630	13,222,527	7,146,103
2013-14	18,931,518	10,552,296	8,379,222
2014-15	17,049,575	9,227,584	7,821,991
2015-16 (year to date)	9,282,882	5,586,441	3,696,441

As can be seen, there has been a reduction in the spend on external consultants, notably in terms of revenue expenditure. This administration is committed to ensuring that external consultants are only used where there is a clear business case and alternatives, such as use of own staff, are not possible.

CQ058-16 **from Councillor Andy Stranack**

Councillor Simon Hall

How much money was spent by the Adult Social Services Department on consultancy and agency fees in the last year?

Reply

The 15/16 spend to date on temporary agency workers for the Adult Care division is £2,655,204.

The 2015/16 spend year to date on consultants is £144,311.

CQ061-16 from Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed

Councillor Simon Hall

How will the fall in revenue support grant by the current Tory government will affect the services to Croydon residents?

Reply

There is a £45million (34%) reduction in the main Government, in the face of increasing population and increasing demand on services. The biggest reduction is in the next year (16/17) - £18 million.

The Conservative government has continued the policy of the previous Conservative-led government of not recognising changes in need when allocating funding. Because the formula was frozen in 2012 and as we are a fast-growing borough, as things stand, by 2020, Croydon will be getting no government funding for one in five of its population. Putting to one side the past, the forecast population growth (together with an aging population) will add some £20 million to the Council's needs.

Forecast inflation adds another £20 million. And, even though we are in late January, there is a lack of certainty over some of the other funding streams – like public health, funding for new schools.

What is more, we do not fully know the implications of all sorts of other elements of the Autumn Statement or other legislative changes, but it is already clear that the changes made on welfare reform and housing will add to the Council's financial pressures.

There is a national adult social care funding crisis and Central Government is failing to fund it, rather it is leaving councils such as ours to be its tax collectors, with the 2% adult social care precept.

In terms of our overall strategy, we are :

- Looking at where devolution options provide a real opportunity
- Campaigning for a fairer settlement, both on individual items and overall, working with others where there is common interest
- Focusing on our growth agenda
- Building on our achievements, including investment in regeneration and London Living Wage
- Making tough but fair choices in the budget, including service innovation, reduced back office costs, increased income generation, better use of assets

This means that there are services that will cost more to residents, e.g. green waste, that some services will now be digital-only and that some other services have had to be scaled back, but no services have been stopped.

We continue to be ambitious for the people of Croydon, as witnessed by the announcements at Cabinet of working with Krept & Konan and OnSide YouthZone for the benefit of the children of the borough.

We will continue to be ambitious – and could do so much more if we had a fair settlement.

CQ005-16 **from Councillor Sara Bashford**

Councillor Stuart Collins

I am aware that the street cleaning in the South of the Borough has been cut much to the dismay of residents. Can you please list the roads or areas (by ward) which are now only cleaned every six weeks?

Reply

As Cllr Bashford knows the council has published the current street cleaning information on its website, it's an interactive map which can be located via this link <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/transportandstreets/streets/cleansing> on this webpage if you scroll down to the "downloads" section we also have a downloadable schedule, this schedule doesn't provide the list of roads in ward format so I have asked officers to put this together and ensure this is uploaded onto the councils website.

CQ016-16 from Councillor Michael Neal

Councillor Stuart Collins

Why has the recycling rate gone backwards in the first year of your administration?

Are you not committed to recycling? If you are what are you going to do to improve the recycling rate in 2016 /17?

Reply

Croydon like many other boroughs has seen the recycling rate gradually decrease since 2014, there are a number of contributing factors for this such as increase in Croydon's growing, transient and diverse population or contaminated recycling, whilst some people may make genuine mistakes when it came to their rubbish. As a council we are continuing to identify our low recycling hotspot areas and work with people who misunderstand or make mistakes when sorting their rubbish. As a last resort the council needs to be effective, using proportionate powers to take action against households or businesses which persistently or wilfully damage the local environment.

In a number of locations around the borough the service has rolled out a trial of dual recycling bins to assist recycling particularly for residents that live in flats above shops.

As part of the Village Approach and the bedding we are jointly setting out a plan which will include engagement and education to work with local communities, schools and forums and the local press with a view to focusing on minimising waste to landfill and maximising recycling where possible.

The council and residents can only do so much with boosting recycling as this only addressing half the problem. Retailers, manufacturers and caterers must do more to bring down the waste generated each year, where I can I will continue to actively lobby central government to ensure we all take more responsibility in managing waste.

The service Director and I have attended Local Government and trade conferences to glean ideas and share our initiatives to what is a UK wide challenge. During the course of the year we will continue to do so with a view to including many of the ideas that are shown to work to be included in the South London Waste Partnership contract.

CQ024-16 **from Councillor Phil Thomas**

Councillor Stuart Collins

Why have you failed to report in the January Cabinet report [Key outcomes-measuring performance] the number of fly tips ?

Reply

This is not one of the agreed 'Ambitious for Croydon' indicators. Agreed indicators for fly-tipping are:

The percentage of fly-tips removed within the specified time frame (48 hours)
The percentage of fly tip reports made electronically (App and My Croydon)

However, the number of fly-tips are reported each month in the Clean and Green dashboard and published on the Council web site and have been since November 2014. It is disappointing that it appears that neither you or your colleagues who turned up to the January Cabinet were aware of this despite the numerous occasions I have spoken about the dashboard or engaged with residents on social media about the statistics.

The Council through its performance management monitors a range of indicators. This includes a range of statutory indicators that are reported to central government.

The Ambitious for Croydon is a selection from all our indicators which currently best represent the key areas of policy focus for 2015/16. The number of **reported** flytips is not part of this but is reported separately and for public review on the website. The key issue for the Labour administration since taking power has been focusing on making the streets clean and removing fly-tips and this is the focus of the indicators chosen.

The issue of reducing fly tips is a UK wide issue, that needs a UK wide response, Croydon more than most are playing our part in this debate and will continue to argue for greater enforcement powers and a UK wide educational advertising campaign against fly tipping.

CQ039-16 **from Councillor Margaret Bird**

Councillor Stuart Collins

Since the introduction of the village system on 1 June we have seen a vast reduction in street cleaning in the south of the borough. This has resulted in leaves being left to rot on the streets of Coulsdon East. It is particularly bad opposite the Tudor Parade of shops and on Marlpit Avenue . When can the residents expect the autumn leaves, which have become compacted and as a consequence are very slippery, to be cleared?

Reply

I would like to confirm that there has been no change to the leaf clearing schedule for the borough and this was not affected by the introduction of the Village Approach.

Additional resources were engaged to carry out this task as have been done in previous years. The body of leaf clearing occurred between mid- October and the end of December 2015. In addition to the one mentioned in your question If there are any particular roads or areas which still remain or have not been reported these can be reported through MY ACCOUNT or A faster, smarter, better way to report issues to us using your smartphone - it's quick, free and easy to download. Get it now from www.croydon.gov.uk/app or your app store

Alternatively Councillors are free to e mail the Director Steve Iles who will of course raise any operational problems with Veolia where there is reason to believe a leaf sweep has not been carried out.

CQ041-16 **from Councillor Tim Pollard**

Councillor Stuart Collins

How many people have signed up for the proposed green waste 'paid-for' service to date?

Reply

The total number of residents who have expressed an interest in joining a chargeable green garden waste service is 10,016. Residents were asked to confirm the size and number of bins they would require and in total 11143 bins have been requested. The decision to delete the current service and introduce a chargeable service was taken on 19th January as a result of the budget cuts of 41%, a total of £90 million, from central government, the Council has had to make some difficult choices this is one of them.

As promised I wrote to the Chancellor regarding a fair deal for Croydon a copy of my letter is on line, as yet he has not replied.

However, I am pleased enough people have signed up and Croydon will continue to offer a garden waste service and officers are now working on ensuring the chargeable garden waste service commences on April 2016. It is expected that as we move forward with a chargeable service the number of residents wishing to join this service will increase.

CQ043-16 from Councillor Andrew Pelling

Councillor Stuart Collins

Would the Cabinet Member please provide

- a) an update on recent successes in combating fly-tipping in the Borough and
- b) advice on how residents might provide intelligence to the council on perpetrators of fly-tipping ?

Reply

There have been some fantastic successes in recent months. Nearly 400 FPNs have been issued for fly tipping and litter offences in the last three months alone and there have now been a total of 64 prosecutions through the courts.

We have carried out three different operations targeting Thornton High Street and its environs in the last few months. The operations resulted in a total of 104 Fixed Penalty Notices being issued and 125 Duty of Care visits to local shops to check their waste disposal licence. In addition we have identified locations where 32 additional receptacles can be placed for the flats above the shops which will create a waste collection point to reduce fly tipping in the area.

Portland Road is one of our key areas which we regularly patrol. A range of actions have been delivered here including serving notices on properties to get waste on private land cleared up, no fly-tipping signs were erected at various locations in the road including several adjoining junctions, vegetation has been cut back to improve accessibility for residents and shops/businesses have been visited to check waste disposal arrangements are in place.

Operations were held around London Road near West Croydon to target residential and trade waste problems. 14 FPNs were issued and visits to all shops were made to check waste disposal arrangements. Intelligence was also gathered regarding other issues in this area that has been passed on to the Environmental Health Team, Food Team, Parking Services and Police.

Another notable success is the seizure of four waste carrying vehicles in the last month. All have had waste in them and all have had leaflets in them advertising waste carrying businesses. One is suspected of being involved in long term fly tipping in the Borough and the waste on board has undoubtedly been prevented from being dumped illegally. Two of the vans have not been claimed so have been scrapped.

Residents have been providing us with more information since the start of the DMWC campaign and we have used it where we can, however, a lot of residents are unwilling to substantiate the allegations formally or have on occasion have provided us with CCTV which unfortunately does not give us anything to go on due to the quality of recording or distance from the offence – the best thing we can use is a vehicle registration number and if possible an agreement to give a formal witness statement outlining what has happened. Alternatively they can provide us with additional intelligence which can be processed confidentially via the many reporting channels especially in regards to non-licenced waste carrying vehicles as we can follow those up proactively without the need for a statement.

CQ080-16 **from Councillor Jamie Audsley**

Councillor Stuart Collins

Cllr Collins, how are you working with local residents and community organisations to hold the Veolia "Village" system to account and ensure a quality service standard is delivered?

Reply

Council officers, Veolia and I have undertaken a number of visits to local areas to meet with the public and key stakeholders regarding the village system, we have also completed a number of targeted clean-ups in both Croydon north and Croydon central areas. In addition to this the council senior officers have regular performance meetings with Veolia to ensure performance overall performance is driven up. The village system has bedded in and overall performance has improved, officers and Veolia are now working to ensure the Village Approach delivers a coherent joined up service to benefit the residents of Croydon.

The Council also welcomes the approach we have adopted in the Thornton Heath, Bensham area where we have worked with the Thornton Heath Community Action Team combining visits to the local traders, community clean ups and kept in touch with the local community to tackle issues. Through this forum we will also organise a meeting with Veolia representatives from the relative Village Teams to discuss and resolve any performance issues or initiatives.

CQ081-16 from Councillor Robert Canning

Councillor Stuart Collins

What steps are being taken to tackle the persistent problem of fly-tipping in Eland Place in Waddon ward?

Reply

We recently installed a CCTV camera facing in the direction of Waddon Road, which is focused on the regular fly-tip spot at the junction. Although we have captured footage of offences taking place this has yet to result in a prosecution as yet mainly because the footage doesn't help identify the culprits as easily as if they turned up with a vehicle with a number plate.

I am confident that we will gain more evidence and secure a prosecution in the near future following a schedule of night time surveillance of the area, as resources allow and we get some positive identification of the perpetrator(s).

Finally, we have a leaflet designed for the local area to go to local residents advising them not to fly tip and to seek information from anyone that knows who is doing it. This leaflet will go out this month and we will be following this up with further resident engagement in the coming weeks.

This local leaflet approach will be adopted in a number of other fly tip hotspot areas.

CQ011-16 from Councillor Yvette Hopley**Councillor Louisa Woodley**

It was noted at the last Adult Social Services Review Panel that the number of complaints to the Ombudsman had risen significantly. Most importantly the cases upheld rose during the period of 2014/15. I would be grateful for a comparative figure for the period 2013/14 against the increase of 2014/15.

Reply

The comment made by the Senior Complaint Resolution Officer at the last Adult Social Services Review Panel concerning the rise in complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) was a reflection of the national position rather than the position in Croydon. The officer explained that Croydon was bucking the national trend as the number of referrals to the LGO had actually decreased. There was, however, an increase in the percentage of complaints upheld by the LGO in 2014/15, although numbers were small.

In terms of complaints considered locally, while there was an increase of 6% in the number of upheld complaints considered through the statutory complaints procedure in 2014/15, there was a decrease of 1% if complaints considered through the statutory and non-statutory procedures are factored together.

The comparative data for the periods 2013/14 and 2014/15 is as follows:

	2013/14	2014/15
Complaints Considered Locally^[1]	111	99
Number of complaints upheld of partially upheld	46	40
% Upheld or Partially Upheld	41.4%	40.4%
Complaints Referred to the LGO	13	10
Number of complaints upheld of partially upheld	6	6
% Upheld or Partially Upheld	46.2%	60.0%

If you require any further information relating to complaints data, please contact Darren Shuster on Ext. 65685 or by email (darren.shuster@croydon.gov.uk).

^[1] This includes complaints considered through the statutory and non-statutory procedures.

CQ019-16 **from Councillor Susan Bennett**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the amount of money spent on contracts for Consultants in adult social care?

Reply

The amount is £144,311.

CQ025-16 from Councillor Chris Wright

Councillor Louisa Woodley

In answer to Question CQ450/15 on December 7th you acknowledge that you have had a reduction in Bed and Breakfast of 11% from 117 to 103 families. However many families are still beyond the 6 weeks. Can you therefore detail how many families are pending a decision and with the new initiatives you have set out, when do you expect these numbers to reduce significantly?

Reply

The new delivery model has now been in operation for 2 months at the initial results are very positive with 20% of new applicants being prevented from becoming homeless. However, the impact on these preventions will not be fully realised with a corresponding reduction in homeless applications as these new customers would not have hit the homelessness service until March this year, owing to the legal time frames with regard evictions and notice seeking possession.

The demand on the homelessness service remains high as it is across London. Currently there are 98 households over 6 weeks with 80 under investigation. Investigations are often complex as we need to establish the reason for homelessness as this affects whether the council has a legal responsibility to house. From the moment customers are placed in emergency accommodation and whilst cases are investigated we actively work with residents in helping find their own accommodation in the private rented sector. Whether a duty is accepted or not this is seen as the most effective way to assist residents in the longer term.

CQ073-16 **from Councillor Pat Clouder**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Would the cabinet member not agree with me that the Government's announcement for extra resources for women suffering with the mental strain of childcare, is welcome?

Would she also agree with me Government needs to provide additional resources for all people suffering with mental Health issues?

Reply

NHSE is making available additional funding of around £75m nationally which will be dedicated to support women with Mental Health perinatal support needs. Exact funding guidelines have not yet been received by Local Authority and CCG areas, but the local Transformation Plan has identified areas for improvement once the increased investment has been released. In Croydon, this will include development of a perinatal mental health strategy which will identify any gaps in provision for women who are acutely unwell and whose mental health needs could be met by community-based services it will also facilitate the provision of more training for GPs and Health Visitors so that they are better able to identify women with mild to moderate post-natal depression.

Mental Health services will need to sustain investment so that they meet the needs of a changing demographic, and are delivered earlier with a stronger focus on recovery and staying well to ensure a healthier and more resilient local population in Croydon. Local Mental health services have already received significant recent investment from Croydon CCG which includes £3.7m to stabilise the cost of in-patient provision and £1.5m for enhanced community services.

Significant investment has also been made by the CCG in Improved Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) mainly based in Primary Care. This is enabling Croydon to meet national access and recovery targets. Investment has also been made to develop a 24 hour Mental Health Support Line for service users and patients across the four SlaM areas, along with strengthening Early Intervention in Psychosis services to meet the national standards whereby people are seen within 2 weeks.

The scale of transformation and re-design is significant and is taking place against a backdrop which sees a move from reactive services to pro-active early intervention. Mental Health Service Users and carers will require on-going support from Croydon's integrated Health and social services joint teams to ensure the benefits from these changes can be fully realised and people are supported to make a good recovery with reduced risk of relapse.

CQ074-16 **from Councillor Pat Clouder**

Councillor Louisa Woodley

Would the cabinet member not agree with me that this Government is taking a “dangerous step” in confronting junior doctors at a time when the NHS faces existential challenges over its funding and long term care of the elderly?

Reply

This Administration, and I am sure all Croydon Councillors, values the important contribution made by junior doctors. I hope agreement can be reached to avoid further action.

We must remember that staffing gaps in other areas in the health service, such as nurses and occupational therapists, also needs to be addressed; in order to provide a full 24 hour service, health providers need a full range of staff.

CQ001-16 **from Councillor Helen Pollard**

Councillor Alison Butler

The Local Plan states that Fairfield Halls is a local cultural asset. How does the current administration reconcile that with the fact they are closing it and have no coherent plan for reopening it in future?

Reply

Delivering a high quality cultural offer in Croydon is high on our list of priorities and delivering a £30m refurbishment of Fairfield Halls in as short a period as possible is one way in which we are delivering on this. The work to the building is critical to safeguard this important cultural asset.

We are working with our partners on a programme of activity over the 2 year closure period to ensure there is continuity in cultural programming and offer in the borough. This includes building on the successful Ambition music festival which was held in July 2015. We are confident that with the right future offer and interim programming over the next 2 years, we can re-open the venue to attract both existing and new audiences.

CQ007-16 from Councillor Sara Bashford

Councillor Alison Butler

I received a standard response from Cllr Butler stating she would not extend the consultation on the Local Plan. I had raised the specific issue of residents in Shirley not having access to the plans in their library, which was acknowledged by officers. Can she please explain why 1) Shirley library did not have the relevant documents available for resident's to consult, particularly as they are the most severely affected by the proposals and 2) why she did not respond to my specific question and ignored the fact that the consultation was not fair to a specific group of people?

Reply

When the Spatial Planning Service was made aware that a possible issue regarding the availability of the Local Plan documents existed, an officer visited the library within the consultation period and discovered that the documents, although at the library with a memo to library staff with instructions for the consultation process, including how the documents were to be made available to the public, that the instructions had unfortunately not been followed. Although this only occurred at one location, in the future the Spatial Planning Service will follow delivery with a call to the library to confirm documents are being displayed as instructed. It is considered this did not prejudice the consultation as the Local Plan consultation was publicised as follows.

- Letter/email to all those on LDF (Local Plan) database
- Letter/email to Residents' Associations inviting them to the events
- On the Council's website and on the Local Plan webpages
- On the Council's Get Involved Platform
- On the Council's Streetlife and Twitter account
- Poster in each of the borough's libraries
- Local Member notification
- Site notices for all site allocations
- Press notice in the Croydon Guardian
- Through a press release

I am also aware that the local MP went out of his way to publicise the consultation, although unfortunately he has continued his trait of misrepresenting many aspects of the consultation and undertaken a scaremongering campaign amongst local communities. Councillor Bashford will of course be aware of this.

CQ008-16 from Councillor Mario Creatura

Councillor Alison Butler

Can you detail how long it will take to bring the 90 homes you state you have (under the empty homes programme) back into use to provide much needed homes for families still in bed and breakfast? How much accommodation have you secured to date for families in need (bed and breakfast) through the use of your "managing landlords and agents database" established through the landlord Licensing Scheme?

Reply

I am glad to note that Cllr. Creatura recognises the desperate need for new homes across the Borough. The 90 homes for 2015/16 building works will be completed by 31 March 2016 in accordance with the deadline set by the GLA. All properties should be occupied within 6 weeks of the 1st April 2016 during which period the owners will complete all decoration and furnishing and will finalise the letting contracts.

With regard to the landlord licensing scheme, I am sure that Cllr. Creatura recognises that it is very early days as yet given that the scheme is not yet 4 months old – we have received almost 25,000 property licence applications and are concentrating on issuing licences and ensuring that homes are of a decent standard. We are still compiling data relating to both properties and landlords. We will be advising landlords of our various schemes relating to us potentially utilising their properties to house families in need via regular newsletters and our landlords' forums, the first of which is planned for 24 February.

CQ014-16 from Councillor Michael Neal

Councillor Alison Butler

Do you welcome the new "Starter Home" and "Help to buy" initiative introduced by the Conservative Government, giving aspiration to those who wish to own their own home?

Reply

The Council supports policies and initiatives that make home ownership affordable to all of Croydon's residents, and that do not divert resources away from the provision of affordable rented housing for those not in a position to meet their housing needs in the private housing market.

While we await the detailed secondary legislation to in relation to starter homes our initial concerns are that this policy is likely to lead to a reduction in the supply of very much needed rented and intermediate affordable homes in Croydon. Also, the affordable element of the "Starter Home" product is not provided in perpetuity and therefore provides a "one off" benefit to those households able to afford to purchase properties priced up to £450,000 in London.

You will of course appreciate this is in no way "affordable" to the majority of residents in Croydon. Provision of starter homes is also exempt from S106 (affordable housing) contributions and from the Community Infrastructure Levy which will further reduce the resources available to provide genuinely affordable rented accommodation for local families that need them.

CQ015-16 from Councillor Michael Neal

Councillor Alison Butler

In relation to the Governments new initiative around selling "high value homes" The Conservatives estimate there are 210,000 'expensive' council properties in England, and that around 15,000 become vacant a year. They claim selling them would raise £4.5bn a year. The cash would be used to extend the Right to Buy to housing associations, including replacing homes on a 'one-for-one' basis. It would also be used to pay off debt attached to the sold properties and create a £1bn 'brownfield regeneration fund'

Could you detail how many homes may be sold giving the approximate value and number of each; 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, 3 bedroom, 4 bedroom and 5 bed room or more?

Reply

It is disappointing that Cllr. Neal has not raised concerns about the loss of the Council's housing stock desperately needed by the residents of Croydon. This policy could well mean the loss of our larger family homes and threaten the future welfare of the boroughs most vulnerable.

We have not yet received information from the government exactly how they will define "high value homes" and therefore will not be able to say how many homes may have to be sold. Indeed, local authorities might be given a sales value target which is not connected to the number of expensive properties. A data collection exercise is currently being carried out by the government and all stock holding authorities were required to submit by 23rd December 2015 details of all their stock and number of voids and reason for the previous three years (2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15).

The list of things the sale of "expensive" council properties is going to be able to do is ambitious to say the least and I note that in the past the Government has dramatically failed to replace properties on a one for one basis as promised. The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) recently carried out an analysis which concluded that this policy is *"likely to produce levels of sales some way below the original expectations. At the same time, funds raised by high-value area sales will not fully cover the cost of local authority (LA) replacements and the cost of discounts under an extended right to buy."* At the same time it will reduce investment and regeneration of the social housing stock, severely curtail the building of new council homes, and reduce valuable support services to services to council tenants.

CQ020-16 **from Councillor Jan Buttinger**

Councillor Alison Butler

Please detail how this administration looks after the Heritage aspects of this town.

Reply

Heritage protection is an important aspect of the work done by the Council's Planning and Strategic Transport Directorate. The Spatial Planning Service provides specialist advice and guidance on all aspects of heritage protection, both to members of the public and internal and external stakeholders. This work is largely undertaken by the Council's Conservation Officer, though input comes from across the Service.

The Council's commitment to preserving and enhancing heritage assets is set out in the Local Plan: Strategic Policies (adopted 2013) SP4.11-SP4.15 relating to Character, Conservation and Heritage.

SP4.11 The Council and its partners will promote the use of heritage assets and local character as a catalyst for regeneration and cohesion and to strengthen the sense of place.

SP4.12 The Council and its partners will respect, and optimise opportunities to enhance, Croydon's heritage assets, their setting and the historic landscape, including through high quality new development and public realm that respects the local character and is well integrated.

SP4.13 The Council and its partners will strengthen the protection of and promote improvements to the following heritage assets and their settings: a. Statutory Listed Buildings; b. Conservation Areas; c. Historic Parks and Gardens; d. Scheduled Monuments; e. Archaeological Priority Zones; f. Local List of Buildings; g. Local List of Historic Parks and Gardens; h. Local Areas of Special Character i. Local Designated Views; j. Croydon Panoramas; and k. Landmarks

SP4.14 The Council will maintain a regularly updated schedule of Croydon's designated heritage assets and locally listed heritage assets.

SP4.15 The Council and its partners will promote improvements to the accessibility of heritage assets to allow enjoyment of the historic environment for all.

All development proposals affecting identified designated and non-designated heritage assets are carefully considered against policies and guidance that forms part of the Croydon Local Plan.

In terms of more pro-active heritage protection, the Council has produced and adopted fifteen Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plans alongside an over-arching Conservation Area General Guidance Supplementary Planning Document. It is intended that similar documents for the remaining conservation areas will be carried out as soon as resources and programme allow. These documents are valuable tools for preserving character and providing information to clearly identify the significance of that area, providing a benchmark of understanding against which the effects of proposed change can be assessed and the future managed accordingly.

An output of the process of conservation area assessment is consideration as to whether conservation areas warrant the serving of Article 4 Directions that restrict certain aspects of permitted development rights that could harm special character. So far, Article 4 Directions have been served for two conservation areas that will help support their future protection.

Over the last few years, as part of the Croydon Local Plan, the Council has developed criteria for a new designation that will be known as 'Local Heritage Areas'. During public consultation in 2014, the Council sought recommendations from residents for potential new Local Heritage Areas. A full review of these, and of all existing Local Areas of Special Character, has been undertaken and formed part of the recent Local Plan consultation. Full details of this review are accessible within the Local Heritage Areas Evidence Base.

The Spatial Planning service keeps records of all proposed locally listed buildings, and will use this information to form the basis of a future review of the Council's Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historical Importance.

CQ036-16 **from Councillor Jason Perry**

Councillor Alison Butler

How many individual responses has the Council received to the recent Local Plan consultation?

Reply

The exact number of individual responses has not been established as the Spatial Planning Service are in the process of recording them onto the Consultation database, but it is estimated that approximately 7,000 responses have been received; however, some of these may be duplicates as some individuals have sent copies of letters by email as well as post.

CQ064-16 **from Councillor Shafi Khan**

Councillor Alison Butler

In 1979, 42% of Britons lived in council homes. Today that figure is just under 8%. Would the Cabinet member agree, by scrapping secure tenancies and bringing in a pay-to-stay scheme, the government's new housing bill could mark the end of a century-old dream?

Reply

It is hard to disagree with this argument, especially if you include the reforms included in the Housing and Planning Bill and the Welfare Reform and Work Bill. The combination of the requirements to sell high value council homes, to reduce social rents over the next four years, to promote "starter homes", which are exempt from s106 (affordable housing) contributions and CIL above affordable rent, and introduce "pay to stay" will place new and significant pressures on already insufficient provision of social housing desperately needed in this Borough.

These measures will reduce the supply of genuinely affordable rented homes for people in housing need, reduce the building of new council homes, end up "hollowing out" areas of the country unfortunate enough to have "high value" council housing with replacement homes unlikely to be in the same area, of the same size, type or tenure.

CQ075-16 **from Councillor Pat Clouder**

Councillor Alison Butler

Could the cabinet Member tell me how David Cameron's project to redevelop 100 of the worst council estates will benefit Croydon?

Reply

There are no further details regarding the Prime Minister's proposals beyond that said in his article in the Sunday Times on the 10th January 2016. It is not clear from this article how Croydon might be impacted from the proposal or if any area of Croydon would be identified.

When further details are announced regarding the proposals including information on eligibility criteria and how to access the funds (which average £1.4m per estate) then we will consider if the proposal is applicable to any area of Croydon and how any funding could be accessed. We would of course need assurance around the affordability of any future homes, and security of tenure for our current residents.

CQ078-16 **from Councillor Jamie Audsley**

Councillor Alison Butler

Cllr Butler, Croydon along with the rest of London is experiencing a housing crisis. What are your plans to address this crisis in 2016?

Reply

The evidence that London is experiencing a deepening housing crisis is very clear. House building over the past 30 years has failed to match increasing housing need driven by population growth. The Mayor of London estimates London needs more than 42,000 new homes a year built for the next 20 years, double the number currently being built. Lack of supply has put pressure on house prices and rents and places them out of reach of many ordinary working families. Homelessness and rough sleeping has been increasing in London since 2010, and the most common reason for a family being made homeless is now the loss of the private rented tenancy. The number of homeless households accommodated in temporary accommodation on 31 December 2015 in London increased by 10% compared to the previous year, and the average house price in Croydon (according to Hometrack) is £376,200 (which is over 10 times the average full time salary of a Croydon resident).

The Council made 10 clear commitments concerning homes in the borough which include:

- building more homes for local people,
- using the Council's planning powers to get the best out of the housing market,
- regenerating Croydon's council housing estates,
- driving up standards for tenants living in private rented homes through introducing a borough-wide selective licensing scheme,
- improving safety for vulnerable people living in private housing,
- supporting older and disabled people to live independently for as long as possible and engaging homeless people sleeping rough to offer a "hand-up" off the streets,
- improving conditions for homeless families placed in temporary accommodation,
- ensuring people feel safe in the place they live,
- developing strong thriving communities by working with our residents and partners, and
- setting up a holistic service for families facing homelessness – our 'People Gateway'.

These commitments include ensuring 1,900 new homes per year are started in the borough over the five years, setting up a housing development company backed by a revolving investment fund to build new homes ourselves, and increasing the affordable housing requirement to 50% of new homes built in the borough. The government's proposed reforms to reduce social housing rents by 1% per year over the next four years, and to force local authorities to sell their vacant high value homes to "pay for" the extended right to buy discounts and replacements, and to introduce starter homes as a form of affordable housing will have a significant impact on the supply of new affordable housing for rent, will restrict the Council's ability to regenerate its estates, and will not address the inadequate levels of housing supply overall in London.

CQ082-16 **from Councillor Robert Canning**

Councillor Alison Butler

Council Members who are not on the Planning Committee are currently prohibited from asking questions during pre-application presentations to the Planning Committee. In light of this Council's outstanding record on promoting openness and transparency, what consideration is being given to enable all councillors to ask questions at pre-application hearings in relation to proposals that would impact on their wards and residents?

Reply

There is recognition that Local Ward Members being able to pose questions of the applicant during pre-planning application presentations to Planning Committee might well be a useful addition to current Planning Committee engagement protocols. This issue will be further considered at the time the Council's Constitution is re-visited, ready for the beginning of the next Municipal Year.

CQ087-16 **from Councillor Oliver Lewis**

Councillor Alison Butler

The Croydon Advertiser recently ran with a headline that stated Croydon house prices had "Gone through the roof". This is great news for Croydon homeowners, but what is this council doing for those who are not home owners?

Reply

This Council is committed to the promotion and supply of new homes in this Borough, particularly those that are affordable. The current Local Plan – Croydon Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) – provides the planning policy context for the development of homes in sustainable locations and in a form that does not undermine the existing character and heritage of the borough. The plan anticipates the Croydon Opportunity Area, District Centres and other accessible locations will be the focus for development.

Furthermore, the Local Plan also promotes the delivery of affordable housing through use of a unique policy that stipulates a minimum level of affordable housing on larger sites (with ten or more new homes) to ensure that genuinely affordable homes are also built in Croydon.

The emerging Croydon Local Plan will allocate sites for development to promote housing supply. It has more emphasis on sustainable growth in the context of local character compared to the Unitary Development Plan and supports an evolution of lower density areas of the borough to encourage more sustainable development, supporting housing growth, including family homes with high quality private amenity space and creating and supporting local and neighbourhood centres. Across the borough growth will be accommodated through development that complements and enhances character through evolution without significant change to character, guided intensification in specific locations which currently have no one predominant character, focussed intensification in District Centres and some areas with good public transport accessibility and existing provision of local services. Policy will also continue to provide a supply of affordable homes.

As you rightly state, rising prices can be good news for home owners but not so good for those unable to access home ownership. Those who own homes also recognise the difficulties rising prices create for their friends, families and neighbours who face the prospect of never being able to access the housing market.

That is why, as a Labour administration, we have had a strong focus on ensuring that the Council is on the side of all local residents. We have:

- made Croydon a London Living Wage Borough
- invested in an Opportunity and Fairness commission
- increased the number of affordable homes required for new developments
- attracted new employers to the Borough
- established a jobs brokerage scheme to help jobs in Croydon go to local people
- established Value Croydon, to support Croydon's SMEs to win Council Contracts

- helped hundreds of people into employment through our innovative Gateway service

We will continue to ensure that all of our residents have the opportunity to share the benefits of Croydon's growth and regeneration.

CQ010-16 **from Councillor Mario Creatura**

Councillor Kathy Bee

'To support our local economies, our district centres will offer free parking for the first hour. This will not only make shopping easier for residents but will also support our local traders in difficult times.' These words can be found on page 15 of your 'Ambitious for Croydon' manifesto.

You have announced that you will be breaking this manifesto promise and reducing the free parking on Brighton Road in Coulsdon from 1 hour to 30 mins..

Why have you done this?

Reply

We have now had time to review the impact of this commitment and now know that this wouldn't offer the best use of our parking bays.

We have aligned Coulsdon with the rest of the borough to ensure fairness and consistency by offering 30 minutes free parking. This will encourage turnover of parking bays which is more beneficial to the local businesses.

CQ012-16 **from Councillor Yvette Hopley**

Councillor Kathy Bee

You have betrayed those who voted for you and broken your manifesto promise by not offering free parking for the first hour in district centres. I would ask that you reverse this decision and stand by your written word?

Reply

We have now had time to review the impact of this commitment and now know that this wouldn't offer the best use of our parking bays.

We have aligned Coulsdon with the rest of the borough to ensure consistency by offering 30 minutes free parking. This will encourage turnover of parking bays which is more beneficial to the local businesses.

CQ013-16 **from Councillor Yvette Hopley**

Councillor Kathy Bee

How confident are you that you will raise the £1m of expected revenue from the increased parking charges you intend inflicting on residents and visitors to the borough from 1 February 2016?

Reply

The main aim of the review of the parking charges was to simplify tariffs and have one set of parking charges for the town centre and a consistent arrangement for all the district centres and encourage shorter stays. The expected increase in revenue has been based on existing parking patterns remaining the same when the new tariff rolls out. We know that this won't stay exactly the same, but it does provide a good indication of the likely impact.

CQ021-16 **from Councillor Jan Buttinger**

Councillor Kathy Bee

From your papers I understand that you have made a 30% cut in the road maintenance budget.

Are you now just relying on Residents and Councillors to report problems with the carriage-way – pot-holes and so on?

Is there any proactive work or are there delays and reaction once the damage reaches a certain level?

Reply

The council does not just rely of residents and councillors reporting defects, it has an established Highways maintenance procedure to minimise the risk to all road users, this procedure is aligned to the well maintained highways guidance of best practice. We have a number of highways inspectors who undertake routine safety inspections across ALL the roads and footpaths in the borough, the frequency of inspections is dependent on the road hierarchy, but as a minimum these are six monthly. During these inspections if there are any defects that are likely to or reach our intervention levels repair orders are raised.

In conjunction with the routine safety inspections, the council has an annual proactive major works programme, this programme is developed using the latest technology of course visual inspections which identifies the overall condition of the roads surface and allows the authority to prioritise these works to meet the budget requirements.

CQ032-16 **from Councillor Jeet Bains**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Why does this Labour administration continue to make parking problems in Coulsdon West worse than they already are through their perverse planning decisions?

Reply

The main aim of the review of the parking charges was to make them fairer by simplifying tariffs and have one set of parking charges for the town centre and a consistent arrangement for all the district centres.

We have been consistent by offering 30 minutes free parking in district centres which will encourage turnover of parking bays which is more beneficial to the local businesses.

The London Plan, for the period 2015-2025, expects Croydon to deliver a minimum of 14,348 new residential units across the Borough with an annual monitoring target of 1,435 units. The London Plan also contains policy on parking standards. The parking standards within the London Plan for outer London Areas are currently being reviewed (through the Minor Alterations to the London Plan) as it has been recognised that the standards may not provide an appropriate quantum of car parking for areas with low public transport accessibility. The London Plan forms part of the Borough's Development Plan and planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan.

CQ033-16 **from Councillor James Thompson**

Councillor Kathy Bee

The risks highlighted in point 5.3.1. of the report you signed off increasing parking charges highlight that the present economic climate could lead to fewer vehicles visiting the borough and therefore could lead to a reduction in income. What is your view?

Reply

The main aim of the review of the parking charges was to simplify tariffs and have one set of parking charges for the town centre and a consistent arrangement for all the district centres.

There is a risk with any changes to parking charges which is what we pointed out in the report.

CQ037-16 **from Councillor Margaret Bird**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Can the Cabinet member give an update on what is being done to prevent manhole covers being lifted during heavy rainfall and sewage and water flooding homes in Caterham Drive and The Glade?

Reply

In prolonged, exceptionally heavy downpours, the drains and sewers which carry away surface water may not be able to cope, leading to localised temporary surface water flooding and sudden exceptional rainfall could cause sufficient pressure within their system causing the manhole cover to lift. Sewer manholes/ inspection chambers are owned by Thames Water (or the relevant Water Authority in that area).

If residents of Caterham Drive and The Glade are aware of surcharging manholes/ inspection chambers they should report the location immediately to the Highways Team, email: highwaysmaintenance@croydon.gov.uk or 020 8726 6000 who will arrange to remove any immediate risks and make arrangements with Thames Water (or the relevant Water Authority) to see if the covers can be bolted down.

If the surcharging manholes are within private property then Thames Water's advice is given below:

<http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/18384.htm>

CQ044-16 **from Councillor Andrew Pelling**

Councillor Kathy Bee

In the context of road environment improvements proposed for Waddon New Road and Rectory Grove I was pleased to receive an assurance from officers that the authority aspires to improve connections between Wandle Park and the Town Centre via the Minster under the Connected Croydon initiative. Does the Cabinet member feel that this aspiration is a worthy ambition for our council?

Reply

There are a number of interventions currently being developed to provide walking and cycling improvements in Old Town between the town centre and Wandle Park. This includes the Rectory Grove and Waddon New Road improvements you refer to below, as well as a number of other schemes being delivered under the 'Access to Wandle Park' project and the 'Pocket Places' project, both aimed at encouraging walking and cycling between Wandle Park and the town centre. In addition the Connect2 scheme is being developed which aims to create a cycle network connecting green spaces from the Wandle Valley to the Addington Hills. These are all being funded from a combination of GLA, TfL, the People's Health Lottery and LBC LIP and S106.

These projects support the recent significant investment to Wandle Park which has been transformed from a bland, green space to a delightful park complete with a restored river, new bandstand, playspace, skatepark and cafe. Pedestrian and cycling access to the park from Croydon Town Centre and West Croydon remains poor and many people are unaware the park exists. These schemes are aimed to encourage more residents and visitors to use the park.

The projects have all been developed based on components of the adopted Old Town Masterplan, which was funded by the GLA. This was formally consulted on in February and March 2014 and extensively informally consulted on during the document's development. The Old Town Masterplan was adopted as Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) at the end of 2014 and was used as the basis from which to secure external funding.

These schemes are all in line with Croydon's Sustainable Community Strategy 2013-18 which states the council's aim to improve the quality of Croydon's parks and green spaces, and to improve access and links to and through green spaces to encourage more physical activity including walking and cycling to enable the council to attract increased investment to help make Croydon a cycle friendly borough.

This administration is hugely ambitious about making Croydon a more liveable and people friendly place. This project is an example of us delivering on the ambition.

CQ060-16 from Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed

Councillor Kathy Bee

Since the ceasing of vehicle removal service, how many requests has the Council received from the residents and the service users to remove the dangerously parked vehicles?

Reply

The vehicle removal service ceased on 31 October 2015. We have an enforcement hotline where customers can call to report illegal parking or if their driveways are obstructed.

We have received approximately 200 calls (2 to 3 per day) for blocked driveways since the beginning of November and we send a Civil Enforcement Officer to the location. If the vehicle is illegally parked, we will issue a PCN. In our experience of dealing with these requests from the public, many of them cannot be enforced as either the vehicle they are reporting is not illegally parked i.e. parked near their driveway but not obstructing/blocking or the vehicle has gone when the officer arrives at the location. From past experience only 5 of these vehicles per week would have been removed. The removal service lost the council in excess of £150,000 per year.

If a vehicle is dangerously parked rather than illegally parked, this would be a matter for the police.

CQ066-16 **from Councillor Stephen Mann**

Councillor Kathy Bee

What work is being undertaken to ease congestion on the tram network in the East of the Borough?

Reply

TfL and Croydon Council are jointly working to deliver the 'Dingwall Loop', a second tram loop line in the Croydon town centre. The loop would utilise Dingwall Road and Lansdowne Road. It will enable some trams arriving from the east of the town centre to turn around and go back east more quickly by removing the need to go all the way around the existing town centre loop line. When the Dingwall loop first opens, TfL envisages the frequency on the New Addington branch increasing from 8 trams per hour to 10. However as the summary to TfL's 'Outline concepts for trams in South London' document states:

'We have a long-term plan in three phases to improve reliability and capacity across the network, and enable extensions to be builtDingwall Road Loop is a key building block of this, enabling us to gradually increase services to the east of Croydon without major impacts on buses, pedestrians & other road users in the town centre.'

CQ068-16 **from Councillor Stuart King**

Councillor Kathy Bee

What plans does the council have to improve safety at the Lombard Roundabout, in particular for pedestrians moving around this busy set of junctions?

Reply

The Lombard Roundabout forms part of the A23 Transport for London Road Network (TLRN), which is maintained and controlled by Transport for London (TfL). TfL is currently studying the A23 through Croydon including this roundabout. Key objectives are to improve movement and safety for all road users including pedestrians.

CQ072-16 from Councillor Joy Prince

Councillor Kathy Bee

In the light of reports that some places in London eg Putney have already reached maximum recommended pollution levels for the whole year, what are the latest readings from each of Croydon's air quality monitoring stations and how do those readings relate to recommended annual levels?

Reply

As part of the Air Quality Review and Assessment Process all Local Authorities in the UK are required to produce periodic Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) reports of air quality in their area. Each USA is intended to identify significant changes in air quality that may have occurred since the last report, which might lead to a risk of the air quality objectives being exceeded.

The London Borough of Croydon currently operates long-term automatic high quality continuous monitoring analysers at:

- Purley Way, Waddon (CR7): a roadside site on the boundary of former school grounds. This site measures nitrogen dioxide. The results from 2014 for nitrogen dioxide was 35 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^2$), this is below the air quality objective set at $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^2$. Although there is a high traffic throughput here this station does not behave like a normal roadside site, the area is fairly open meaning pollutants can disperse more readily.
- George Street (CR9): a roadside site in a commercial area, with public exposure mainly limited to people walking to and from East Croydon Station. It is also adjacent to tram-lines and hence there is less road traffic in the immediate vicinity than would otherwise be the case. In 2014 the annual mean for nitrogen dioxide was $45 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ which exceeds the air quality objective. The monitoring station has recently been relocated to the island along Wellesley Road and George Street.
- London Road, Norbury (CR5): a kerbside site in a street canyon location. A street canyon is where the road is narrow and high buildings leading to pollutants becoming trapped. The public exposure relates to the local shopping area, with some residential properties at 1st floor level and above. The last calculated annual mean here was $63 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ compared to the annual air quality objective of $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$
- Norbury Manor School, Norbury (CR8) we have recently installed an air quality monitoring station within the school grounds to measure particles less than $2.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^2$ in size, there is no data for this site yet as this is relatively new.

There been no significant changes to nitrogen dioxide levels monitored at these stations recently and have remained fairly level over a number of years.

In addition, Croydon monitors NO_2 using thirteen diffusion tubes at roadside/kerbside sites, and three at background/suburban sites. The NO_2 annual mean AQS objective of $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ was breached at all but one of the roadside locations however background locations continue to meet the objective. For some roadside sites annual mean NO_2 concentrations are close to or above $60 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ indicating possible exceedences of the hourly mean AQS objective.

The diffusion tube monitoring results indicate a downward trend in concentrations at a number of roadside sites over the last three years. However the results should be interpreted with caution, as a similar trend was not observed with the more accurate automatic monitors.

Putney High Street compared to Croydon air quality monitoring

With respect to the air pollution levels in Putney High Street the levels reached here are significantly higher than those recorded in Croydon. **Putney High Street (roadside)** in 2011 the annual mean was recorded as $115\mu\text{g}\text{m}^3$ where the air quality objective is $40\mu\text{g}\text{m}^3$ and for the hourly mean there were 2563 exceedences where the air quality objective is 18 exceedences.

The nearest similar site in Croydon is in London Road, Norbury, in 2011 the annual mean was $63\mu\text{g}\text{m}^3$ compared to the annual air quality objective of $40\mu\text{g}\text{m}^3$ and 12 exceedences of the hourly air quality objective where the objective is 18 exceedences.

Air Quality Action Plan

Tackling air pollution is vital to improve the health and quality of life of people who live in or visit Croydon, especially those who are vulnerable, such as children with asthma and older people with heart and respiratory diseases. In 2012 the Council produced a third air quality action plan for 2012-2017 which tackles emissions from road traffic, industry and homes. The Plan contains ten measures specifically aimed at delivering cleaner air in the borough.

These are:

- A. Low Emission Strategies
- B. Reducing pollution from idling vehicles
- C. Air Quality and Freight
- D. Cleaner Air 4 Schools
- E. Non road transport emissions
- F. airTEXT
- G. Encouraging Smarter Travel Behaviour
- H. Improving the Public Realm
- I. Low Emission Zones
- J. Air Quality on the Transport for London Road Network

CQ076-16 **from Councillor Pat Ryan**

Councillor Kathy Bee

A) Would the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation share with me the sense of anger and frustration which the residents of Upper Norwood Ward feel in being betrayed by Boris Johnson the Mayor of London who has not delivered on his promises of 2008 and 2012 in having the Tram Extension extended to Crystal Palace.

B) Would the Cabinet Member further agree that this Labour Council will work closely with a new Labour Mayor for London in ensuring that the Tram line is extended to Crystal Palace?

Reply

As both the Cabinet Member for Transport and a South Norwood Councillor I share the frustration of residents at Boris Johnson's total failure to deliver on his promise to extend the Tram to Crystal Palace. We are committed to working with a new Labour Mayor to realise this major infrastructure improvement for the Upper Norwood area which will greatly improve the connections between Crystal Palace and Croydon.

CQ085-16 **from Councillor Maddie Henson**

Councillor Kathy Bee

Croydon's two conservative MPs and Conservative GLA Member have failed miserably to get Croydon's central train stations moved into zone four. They have also failed to get the botched London Bridge works back on track, that continue to leave thousands of Croydon commuters facing chaos on the rails on an almost daily basis. Now we see that the Conservatives are also refusing to back the Labour London Mayoral Candidate, Sadiq Khan, in his pledge to freeze fares. Is it fair to say that the Conservatives don't care for Croydon's commuters?

Reply

I agree with the councillor entirely. Under a conservative Mayor and Government and two conservative MPs, Croydon's commuters continue to experience increasing fares and a lousy service, including a reduction in trains stopping at a number of Croydon stations. Only a Labour Mayor will put the needs of commuters first.

CQ026-16 **from Councillor Maria Gatland**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Could the Cabinet Member explain the contradiction between the Ofsted Report for some schools and their exam results particularly at Key Stage 2?

Reply

When a school is inspected by Ofsted it is not only the attainment of the last year group to have left the school that is taken in to account in terms of judging standards but also the progress being made by pupils across all year groups currently in the school. It is recognised that, where improvement is being made in a school this may take some time to be fully reflected in attainment at the end of a Key Stage. Additionally, the new Common Inspection Framework for schools places greater emphasis on the progress made by children as opposed to their attainment. Thus, depending on their starting points, it is possible for a pupil, or in some cases a cohort of children, to have made good progress whilst still attaining relatively low end of Key Stage results. Ofsted will also take into account the capacity within the leadership team of the school when making final judgements.

This indicates overall, that over recent years, leadership and management of primary schools in Croydon has improved significantly, that the progress that pupils make from their starting points is strong; it is to be expected that these indicators improve first prior to a significant impact on end of key stage attainment.

Councillor Alisa Flemming

How can the role of Corporate Parent be better understood by members of the Council?

Reply

The term *Corporate Parenting* covers the range of activities and services provided to Children Looked After by the council and its partners to keep them safe and to help them achieve good outcomes. The Children and Young Person's Act 2008 outlines the central responsibility that elected members have for ensuring good outcomes for Children Looked After, and at the core of this responsibility is the moral duty to provide the kind of support that any good parents would provide to their own children. Put simply, the role of the Corporate Parent is to be a good parent to Children Looked After, and to accept nothing less for the care and outcomes of Children Looked After, as they would accept for a child of their own. 'Real' parents watch over their children and ask questions of those providing for their health and education, and most importantly, they listen to what their children are telling them about their own experiences and aspirations.

In Croydon the Corporate Parenting Panel, chaired by the Lead Member, meets to ensure that there is active challenge of current performance and to drive change. The Corporate Parenting Panel receives regular data on how well the children in the care of the council are doing at school, in their health, and in their placements with foster carers or children's homes, as well as the accommodation and employment, education and training outcomes of care leavers. However, data and measurements tell only part of the story and it is important to hear from the children in our care directly. The Corporate Parenting Panel has initiated an approach challenging performance and driving change that now includes hearing directly, at every meeting, from the children and young people themselves, and from their foster carers, adoptive parents and social workers. This approach is providing a deep understanding of the experiences of Children Looked After and those caring for them and provides a place where their voices and stories can be heard by the Corporate Parent.

By reading the reports and minutes from the Corporate Parenting Panel, members can better understand the role of the Corporate Parent, and understand how well our children are doing and where improvement is needed. Members have come into politics to make a difference in people's lives for the better, and by being mindful of their role as Corporate Parent to the children in our care they can influence discussions and decisions across the whole council. For children, showing that you care is more important than saying that care, and getting involved in important events for Children Looked After like the annual awards ceremony is a way for members to obtain a better understanding of their role and to actively engage with our children. In addition, Council members may:

- Find out information about the outcomes for the children and young people for whom they are responsible. Always ask the question – 'would this be good enough for my child?'

- Make decisions about a range of services that will affect these children and young people.
- Listen to children and young people about their experiences.
- Be a champion for looked after children and care leavers, including celebrating their successes

Training is available for Council members regarding the role of Corporate Parenting. Officers will ensure that any future dates are circulated to all members.

CQ028-16

from Councillor Maria Gatland

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Is the Cabinet Member comfortable with the line being drawn between Children In Need and children with a Protection PLAN

Reply

The protection of vulnerable children is a key priority for the Council.

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts which make this clear, including specific duties in relation to children in two distinct categories; children in need (Section 17 Children Act 1989) and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm (Section 4 Children Act 1989).

This distinction, or indeed line, between children in need and children subject to child protection processes is further defined in the London Child Protection Procedures and the London Threshold Document (both published by the London Safeguarding Children's Board) and in the Governments Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015). These guidance documents set out the threshold considerations for local authorities undertaking either Section 17 Child in Need (CIN) assessments or Section 47 Child Protection (CP) investigations and assessment; they also set out clearly the process by which local authorities progress referrals regarding children found in their area from the point of contact through to assessment and the decision about the appropriate level of statutory intervention, if such intervention is necessary.

The local arrangements for the delivery of Children's Social Care here in Croydon have been developed in line with the relevant legislation, and key guidance referred to above. These local arrangements are frequently reviewed and updated in line with any changes in national guidance and policy. The most recent publication of Working Together in March 2015, has placed greater emphasis on the importance of Early Help and our local arrangements are being reviewed in line with this key change.

I attend our Local Children's Safeguarding Board, have observed the Child Protection Case Conference process, meet with staff and managers in key teams, and meet regularly with Mr Ian Lewis, Director of Child and Family Early Intervention and Children's Social Care. The Leader of the Council and I have met regularly with the independent Chair of Croydon Safeguarding Children Board to discuss any emerging issues from her oversight of our services. The Safeguarding Board has issued guidance to all professionals on how cases can be escalated where there is disagreement regarding the plan for a child who may be at risk.

Our Children in Need Project, which will seek to integrate social workers into multi-agency teams to work with families at an earlier stage will begin with a pilot which will form part of the Best Start service commencing in April 2016 and will maintain appropriate distinction between Child in Need and the Child Protection process.

CQ030-16 **from Councillor Steve O’Connell**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Would the Cabinet Member please detail the funding arrangements for the Family Justice Centre for this financial year and the next?

Reply

Our plans for the core budget for the direct services delivered at the Family Justice Centre are that the budget remains constant between 2015 and 2017, with no reduction in budget identified at the time of writing this response.

Additional funding was identified for 2015/2016 to build capacity in broader professional environments: this was by way of specific training in risk and vulnerability management and was directed at Children and Adults Social Care, the Police Service and Early Intervention services, including Children’s Centres. There was an in-year uplift in direct group work for women impacted by Domestic Abuse, in addition to this both delivery organisations (the Freedom Programme and Encounter Freedom) were given specialist support to look at their business plans and strategies for more sustainable futures.

FJC Budget

	2015/16	2016/17
	£’000	£’000
Prevention	234,271	301,192
Protection (£62,900 increase for capacity building in 15/16)	496,165	366,344
Provision	0	0
Partnership (£77,427 increase for capacity building in 15/16)	198,564	121,137
Total Expenditure	<u>929,000</u>	<u>788,673</u>

CQ038-16 **from Councillor Margaret Bird**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Exclusion from school can have a lifelong impact. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what is being done to prevent pupils from being excluded from schools?

Reply

The local authority takes a proactive approach to reducing exclusions in Croydon which includes the following:

- We have developed excellent relationships with schools which allow us to both support and challenge around the use of exclusion.
- We have prioritised having a helpful and responsive approach to schools which enables them to discuss individual cases and help resolve difficulties early
- We make smart use of data to target support where it is most needed as the exclusion rates are not uniform around the borough
- There is a Fair Access Panel at primary and secondary level, designed in partnership with Headteachers, to identify appropriate support for those pupils at risk of permanent exclusion. Where appropriate the panels identify managed moves to appropriate alternative provision or schools to avoid the need for permanent exclusion. The Fair Access Panel provides not only a forum for moving pupils between schools but a place where schools can share good practice, get advice and support from fellow school colleagues as well as other agencies such as the police, youth offending team, early help, social care, admissions and the special educational needs team.

These approaches are proving very successful and have resulted in permanent exclusion reducing significantly over the past few years, as set out in the recent school standards report considered at Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee.

This Labour administration is ambitious for its young people. We are committed to raising aspiration and supporting young people to enjoy their educational journey in a safe and positive way.

CQ054-16 from Councillor Simon Brew

Councillor Alisa Flemming

In the papers for the 18th January Cabinet meeting, there is an item concerning permanent expansion of Woodcote Primary & Smitham Primary schools.

In the Woodcote consultation, 78% of the responses were against expansion (265 out of 338)

In the Smitham consultation, 79% of the responses were also against permanent expansion (92 out of 117).

What is the point of this extensive consultation process where the results are tabulated by the ethnicity, gender, disability and even age of the respondent, if the majority opinion is ultimately to be ignored?

What account will be taken of the 840 signature petition to build a new school in Coulsdon?

Reply

I note that in framing the question, Cllr Brew has conflated the responses received in the informal engagement and the statutory consultation which results in higher numbers quoted as being 'against' than was the case.

The actual figures were:

Woodcote: 49% strongly against in informal engagement and 68% strongly against in statutory consultation.

Smitham: 58% strongly against in informal engagement and 57% strongly against in statutory consultation.

The Council's Cabinet Committee, as the decision maker, must consider all the responses to the consultation on the school expansion proposals and balance these responses with the Council's statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. It must also consider the educational standards at the schools in question.

As well as looking simply at the raw numbers and percentages of responses, it is also important for Cabinet to consider why stakeholders have stated that they are against expansion and whether these factors could be mitigated through the design, planning and build processes or with the effective management of the new space by school leaders.

The separate engagement and consultation outcomes reports append the Education Estates report and set out in detail the reasons why some stakeholders do not support the proposals. The mitigating factors are also set out.

In addition to these factors the report also addresses the feedback from some stakeholders who have set out their support for a new school in the area. This also

includes reference to the fact a petition has been signed and submitted. The report sets out why expanding existing good and outstanding schools in this particular area is preferable to building a new school at this time. This ensures that parents will have access to good or outstanding provision and matches supply to demand appropriately. The report also makes clear that in future, once we have a better picture of expected demand, the Council would consider supporting a free school application for this area.

CQ055-16 **from Councillor Simon Brew**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

In the papers for the cabinet meeting on 18th January (para 6.3 on page 55), there is a statement that the Council proposes to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places in the future by increasing reliance on attracting free schools to the Borough.

In the event that sufficient free school places are not attracted to the borough in time to meet the rising demand, what is the alternative plan B for providing these places in the future?

Reply

We have a proven track record of both attracting new providers into the borough and working with existing Academy providers to deliver excellent additional school places in the borough. Pupil place planning at a time of significant growth in demand is complex. The Council regularly brings back updated reports through Cabinet which enables flexibility, should changes to the supply strategy need to be made. By planning so far ahead, this gives the Council time to adjust its supply strategy if necessary.

CQ056-16

from Councillor Andy Stranack

Councillor Alisa Flemming

It is good to hear that Croydon Council is actively participating in Lord Nash's 'Boarding School Opportunity' initiative which aims to consider boarding school placements for vulnerable and looked after young people. It is widely acknowledged that, for some young people, boarding school (whether it be in an independent or state boarding school) can be a cost-effective means of giving a child stability when home life is difficult. Can the Cabinet Member tell me what progress is being made towards placing suitable Croydon young people in boarding and making the most of this resource to get the best possible outcomes for them?

Reply

Where a child is not looked after but may have additional learning needs, those needs are carefully considered through the preparation and consideration of an Education, Health and Care Plan. The Special Educational Needs Service then makes recommendations regarding the best possible way of addressing their needs. Whilst appropriate boarding provision may be considered, under both administrations, the Council has developed specialist provision within the borough and to provide appropriate support to families. We are fortunate to have high quality specialist schools in Croydon, which are all judged good or better by OFSTED, that are able to ensure that children with additional needs are able to meet their potential. Boarding school is necessary and appropriate in some cases: however, it is much more costly than local day provision. Croydon Council has achieved an appropriate balance of using boarding provision where necessary for specialist cases; and good quality local provision that also enables children and young people to be positively included in their local communities.

As Corporate Parents, we are committed to ensuring that looked after children receive the best possible education according to their needs.

The Corporate Parenting Panel on 13th January heard about the very positive work of the Virtual School for Looked After Children and we were also able to hear from children and a foster carer about their experiences of that support, and the opportunities it has opened up to them in the world of employment.

Where a boarding school placement would be in their interests, then such a provision will be considered. However, we are also mindful that many of our Looked After Children require the emotional support of foster care in order to help them with their earlier experiences. This is a vital component of improving their educational outcomes.

I believe strongly that all children should have access to outstanding education, and I am glad that this Labour administration remains committed to providing good and outstanding schools within the borough, that all young people are able to access.

CQ057-16 from Councillor Andy Stranack

Councillor Alisa Flemming

How many young people have been residents at Medway Secure Training Centre in the last 24 months? Are any Croydon young people current residents at the facility?

Reply

In the last 24 months 15 Croydon young people were resident in Medway: these were a mixture of sentenced and remanded young people who were awaiting trial/sentence. Currently there are 3 young people resident: One is on remand, and consequently is a looked after child; the other two are on a sentence and are not looked after.

Croydon Youth Offending Service has made a welfare visit to all 3 young people since the Panorama programme and the young people's case workers have spoken to their parents/carers. All the young people have been asked if they feel safe there. They reported that they have experienced no problems on the unit themselves and would not want to move. The young people said they all watched the Panorama programme.

The Youth Justice Board have increased the presence of YJB monitors at the centre and have also increased Barnardo's advocacy service which is now in the centre 6 days per week.

Croydon YOS was immediately contacted by the Youth Justice Board after the Panorama programme. We understand some members of staff at the Medway Centre have been suspended and Kent Police are investigating the allegations and, we believe, have made some arrests.

The Medway Safeguarding Board has written to the Croydon Safeguarding Board chair, as follows:

"Medway Council reported the issue to the Department for Education and the Inspectorates, and six inspectors attended the STC on Monday (11.1.16) and interviewed 20 of the children who are resident there – these children were chosen at random and are different to those identified by the BBC as these children are the subject of the immediate Police investigation.

Medway Council and the YJB have discussed the outcome of this visit with the Lead Inspectors and as a result of their feedback, as well as the other measures that have already been put in place, are both satisfied that it is safe for the STC to remain open. However, new placements are currently suspended while the impact of these events is assessed."

For the next month the YOS will be visiting the young people each week, and will support parents/carers with visits as required.

CQ070-16 from Councillor Andrew Rendle

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Will Cllr Flemming join me in congratulating all the staff and pupils of Chaffinch Brook who won the special school award at this year's staff awards?

Reply

I am delighted to join Cllr Rendle in congratulating the staff and pupils at Chaffinch Brook. Chaffinch Brook is part of the Beckmead Family of Schools, which Ofsted has judged to be good with outstanding features. In particular it found 'the development of a nurturing approach to looking after and managing pupils has provided a calm, warm and inclusive community where pupils feel safe and secure' and 'Staff have high expectations of pupils'.

The Special School Award recognises the considerable achievement of Chaffinch Brook in establishing, in just two years since it opened in September 2013, high quality provision for a cohort of children with very specialist learning needs. Pupils at the school have a diagnosis of ASD and related challenging behaviour. The curriculum includes individualised interventions in English and Maths, a social skills programme and a number of exciting activities such as swimming, forest skills and gymnastics. Class teams and therapists ensure that pupils have effective behaviour plans which support them to manage their behaviour in a small class environment and to make good academic progress.

CQ083-16 from Councillor Robert Canning

Councillor Alisa Flemming

How many (i) primary school and (ii) secondary school places are there currently in Waddon ward; and how many (i) primary school and (ii) secondary school age children currently live in Waddon ward?

Reply

Current primary and secondary school places in the Waddon Ward

- Three (3) primary schools, providing 1680 Reception to year 6 school places.
- Two (2) secondary schools, providing 1650 year 7 to year 11 school places.

Primary and secondary age children living in the borough

The table below outlines the number of children of primary and secondary school age in the Waddon ward based on the Greater London Authority (GLA) Ward Projections 2014:

Year	5-10 years (Primary)	11-18 years (Secondary)
2014	1,503	1,705
2015	1,574	1,727
2016	1,622	1,740

Source: GLA Ward Projections 2014: SHLAA-based, short term migration assumption, Capped Household Size model

Waddon is located within the central Croydon place planning area; the Council has a duty to ensure that our planning is able to accommodate future projection within all place planning areas.

CQ084-16 **from Councillor John Wentworth**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

At Cabinet it was recently agreed plans to deliver additional school places in Croydon. This comes on the back of last year's record number of children being offered places in one of their parents' top choices. You also entered into a ground breaking contract with the European Investment Bank to fund new school places, saving millions of pounds to Croydon Tax Payers in borrowing costs. Given that the demand for school places continues to rise, why won't the Conservative Government fund them in Croydon?

Reply

Despite the rise in the numbers of free schools, government funding for the growth in school places still does not match the demand, nationally. This is particularly the case in London, where growth in demand is particularly high. London local authorities continue to lobby government on this issue.

CQ089-16 **from Councillor Humayun Kabir**

Councillor Alisa Flemming

In contrast to the previous administration, who decimated youth services in the borough, this administration is actively investing in the future of our young people. What will the "On Side Youth Zone" bring to the North of the Borough?

Reply

The new centre will cater for children from across all parts of the borough, offering activities ranging from sports, music and dance a range of recreational opportunities and personal support for up to 3000 young people a week.

Up to 100 Volunteers will play a key role alongside 15 new fulltime and 35 part-time staff.

This is an exciting opportunity to engage more young people alongside Croydon's thriving community faith and voluntary sector.

It will, therefore:

- Provide a safe environment in which young people can take part in a wide range of sports, arts and music activities in which they can develop their personal and social skills and qualities needed for learning, work and the transition to adulthood
- Raise young people's aspirations, build their confidence and resilience and provide them with information that will assist them in making the right lifestyle choices – particularly in relation to substance misuse and involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improve young people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing
- Assist young people at risk of dropping out of learning to engage in activities that will enable them to reach their full potential
- Have the capacity to make a significant impact in their local communities, through improved community cohesion, a reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour, improved perceptions of the area
- Provide a real 'community' asset, which promotes and facilitates close partnership working.

CQ002-16 **from Councillor Badsha Quadir**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

At the recent Fairfield Scrutiny Meeting we heard that the Council would be committing £30 million to the re-development of Fairfield Halls. Please confirm this sum and provide a full breakdown of how the £30 million will be allocated and spent?

Reply

I am delighted that this Council is breaking the Conservative habit of promising a lot and delivering nothing when it comes to Fairfield Halls.

£30million will ensure that the Fairfield's future is saved for the next 50 years. A legacy that should have the support of both sides of this council.

Local Government has faced a reduction of over 40% in our grant since 2010. However despite these financial challenges and as you rightly state, the Council agreed a £30m investment in the halls at Cabinet on 20 October 2015 as part of the bold and ambitious plans for a new Cultural and Education Quarter in 2018.

This was confirmed at Scrutiny on 9 November. The £30m scheme was discussed at the Scrutiny meeting under Part B (confidential) part of the meeting. A detailed breakdown is not currently publicly available for reasons of commercial confidentiality.

CQ003-16 **from Councillor Badsha Quadir**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please could you advise whether there is any financial risk at all with regard to the Council's plans for the redevelopment of Fairfield and College Green.

Reply

I am delighted that this Council is breaking the Conservative habit of promising a lot and delivering nothing when it comes to Fairfield Halls.

Can I take it that the Conservative opposition to refurbishing the Fairfield Halls, and the failure of the previous conservative administration to do more than make grand promises about the Fairfield was entirely down to your inability to manage risk? Or was it that you had no real commitment to the long term future of the Fairfield Halls?

£30million will ensure that the Fairfields future is saved for the next 50 years. A legacy that should have the support of both sides of this council.

All development activity includes risk. One of the key objectives of the College Green development is to ensure that the net cost to the council of the £30m investment in Fairfield Halls scheme does not exceed the £12m capital allocation currently held for the project.

Based on detailed analysis undertaken by the multi-disciplinary consultant team, the excess development value from the scheme should allow us to achieve this objective.

The council is continually reviewing all funding options to finance the scheme to ensure we achieve value for money and minimise financial risk to the Council.

CQ004-16 **from Councillor Badsha Quadir**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please advise whether you have any plans to close or merge any of the Borough's libraries?

Reply

There are currently no plans to close or merge any of our borough libraries.

We are facing 56% of funding cuts over 8 years being imposed by government; but Croydon Council wants to minimise the impact on libraries by continuing to support our library network to deliver the services people want in a way they want to use them.

With our government funding declining and more residents' needs to serve, we must revisit how we run our business: we do need to consider how we best reshape our library provision for the future.

We want to ensure that more people are involved in developing and delivering their library and are shortly to undertake a public engagement to obtain the views of our community on how we provide a library service that delivers a 21st century service for all our residents.

I am committed to fighting to keep all of our Libraries open and to develop and invest in the service.

We have an excellent example at Upper Norwood Library Trust who are working to ensure that Upper Norwood keeps a Library service at a significantly reduced cost while utilising the library building more widely and more beneficially for the wider community.

I am keen to hear from any community groups or organisations that would like to work with us to help secure Library services for the long term.

CQ006-16 from Councillor Sara Bashford

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

There has been a lot of concern raised by residents who live near parks that gates are not being locked (I do not mean over the Christmas period). For example I have been told by residents that Addiscombe Railway Park is regularly being left unlocked. The reason I have been given by officers for this is that padlocks are being cut off. Residents do not agree with this.

Can you please tell me what you will do to ensure gates on all parks are locked as per the schedules shown on their gates?

Reply

There is a process in place for locking parks which is administered by Quadron Services the Councils Horticultural contractor. The locking times vary during the year and are displayed on the main gates to parks and can be found on the Councils website. The service has not received complaints about locking of parks other than at two specific sites locks are being removed by person or persons unknown to gain access.

I personally reported a gate at Addiscombe Railway Park that had unusually not been unlocked on a Monday morning.

Westow Park and in particular Addiscombe Railway park have caused particular problems with locks being vandalised or removed by persons unknown. As soon as we identify the contractor replaces locks when this occurs and has tried various measures including a different style of standard padlocks, stronger chains and padlocks to prevent this occurring. The councils enforcement team and the police have also been made aware of the issues and are working to try and capture the individual.

The situation at the park is being monitored while officers find alternative methods of securing the gates.

CQ009-16 **from Councillor Mario Creatura**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

The largely volunteer-run Zodiac Gymnastics club in Coulsdon has nearly 500 children who use the club regularly to train, helping many of my young residents to keep fit and healthy. Their lease is expiring in March and they currently have no new home to go to. What can you do to help them and protect this much-loved community group from closing permanently?

Reply

Thank you for bringing this to my attention

Clubs and gymnastic clubs in particular do have difficulties with venues due to their specific requirements and the best solution is for them to secure long term leases or ownership of venues.

Council recognises the importance of local groups such as the Zodiac Gymnastics Club and where possible it does work with them to try and assist.

This highlights the value and dedication of volunteers who keep so many activities going right across our borough.

Officers have already had some initial discussions with the Group and I will ask them to meet the Club to discuss the situation in more detail and see what assistance the Council can provide both short-term and in the future.

CQ017-16 from Councillor Helen Pollard

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Can the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport tell me what Croydon is doing as a 'London Food Borough'? How will this help the health and wellbeing of Croydon residents?

Reply

Croydon's Food Flagship has the ambitious goal of transforming the local food culture and as a consequence reducing levels of childhood obesity, raising educational attainment and, in the longer term, reducing levels of type 2 diabetes. Growing food, learning to cook healthier food, and understanding the importance of a balanced, nutritious diet are key elements of the Flagship.

We want children and their families to know how to grow and cook healthy food, and that this is an affordable option for them. Programme activities range from improving the food provision in schools, to working with businesses to pilot innovative community projects.

As a Food Flagship Borough, Croydon is:

- Encouraging a whole-school approach to healthy eating – focusing on breakfast clubs and lunchtimes and involving children in growing and cooking from reception onward
- Developing food businesses – providing support and opportunity to those groups and individuals who have innovative ideas for providing healthy food to their community
- Providing community grants – supporting and giving opportunities to those groups and individuals who have innovative ideas for growing and cooking healthy food
- Promoting community gardening projects – building communities' capacity for growing and optimise the potential of new growing areas in Croydon.

Croydon has a wealth of parks, open spaces, conservation lands, woods and allotments. The council has been working on a Parks review that will soon be ready for consultation. This review also includes work on the allotment estate, which I believe has huge potential to expand and enhance its long term impact on Croydon.

CQ018-16 **from Councillor Helen Pollard**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Can the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport tell me what plans there are for improving the park around the Minster that is currently a haven for drug users and other illicit activities? Will the war memorial be restored, as it is in poor repair? Will there be a thorough clear-up of the area around the memorial? How will he ensure that the park and memorial are maintained in an appropriate manner to provide a safe amenity for residents and respect the fallen in past wars?

Reply

The St John's Memorial Gardens to the south of the Minster and the Minster Green to the north of the Minster fall within the area covered by the Old Town Masterplan. The Old Town Masterplan was adopted as Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in 2014 and along with the Minster Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan sets planning guidance to support the heritage led regeneration of the Old Town area over the next 20 years.

St John's Memorial Gardens has recently benefitted from some capital investments from the GLA Pocket Parks fund, in line with the guidance set out in the Old Town Masterplan, including new paths, new litter bins and new planting. Changes were made to open up the space to improve sightlines and lighting was installed to make it feel more safe and accessible. Positive feedback has been received from the GLA and the Croydon Minster has reported a drop in ASB since the improvements were completed. The park is now maintained under the council's park maintenance contract and a cut back of overgrown vegetation has recently been instructed to keep the area tidy.

The council and the police work closely together to reduce crime and ASB and have dedicated teams that work in central Croydon. These teams can't patrol this area all of the time so we advise that all incidents are reported to the Police or the council to deal with. In addition, the council supports the Safer Streets Forum which is a multi-agency group sharing intelligence about known street drinkers and those with substance misuse issues. The group co-ordinates appropriate support to those willing to engage with support services and for those that refuse and persistently display anti-social behaviour then enforcement action is taken against them.

There is currently no funding available for the next phase of improvements as set out in the Masterplan, but this is a project set out in the Masterplan and is also supported by the Opportunity Area Planning Framework and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The intention is therefore there to deliver further improvements when funding becomes available.

In regards to the war memorial a report undertaken by a local building restoration, conservation and stonemasonry company in 2014, the memorial was cleaned and jointing was repaired. A request for further inspection to monitor deterioration will be made to the Facility Management Team.

Officers continue to explore potential external funding opportunities for such projects to improve Croydon's public realm and green spaces and to protect and enhance Croydon's cherished heritage assets such as the war memorial.

CQ023-16 **from Councillor Phil Thomas**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

What is graffiti? Art or Vandalism?

Reply

Graffiti is a catch-all term that can be applied to a range of activities. Graffiti in its most pejorative sense – when undertaken illegally on public or private property, and used to convey offensive messages – is a negative phenomenon and the council works to remove speedily any such infringements and punish those responsible, and graffiti clearly does nothing to improve Croydon in the eyes on potential investors. Some graffiti does however fall more into the category of ‘street art’, and can enhance the look and feel of a local area and make a valid contribution to the cultural landscape, in turn adding to the appeal and cachet of that area.

I am pleased that we are supporting the development of this art form, and enabling many talented people to showcase their work in Croydon through various initiatives and sites.

CQ042-16 **from Councillor Tim Pollard**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Do you intend to run another town centre festival next year and is this likely to be a recurring event?

Reply

I am pleased to confirm that the Labour administration has enormous ambition for our borough and that we celebrate the success of Ambition 2015 in returning a borough summer festival following the cancellation of the Croydon Summer Festival and Mela by the previous Conservative Administration who clearly had no ambition for our town and certainly no ambition for the cultural life of the borough.

We intend to build on that with a further festival in 2016, and in future years.

We have always been clear that Ambition Festival would change and develop over the years to reflect different interests and different opportunities that arise. It is important that the Festival is multi-disciplinary and is attractive to different audiences, as was the case with Ambition 2015 which included local music talent, household names, youth theatre, and international theatre.

Officers are currently in discussion with potential partners who could deliver the festival on the council's behalf, albeit that the involvement of local artists, communities and a range of artistic disciplines will remain an essential component of any event.

CQ046-16 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Re: Fairfield/College Green

When do you expect the planning application for Fairfield Halls/College Green to be submitted?

When do you expect contractors and developers to be in place and what processes will be used to appoint them?

At what stage will the operator model be determined and brought into the project?

Reply

The council are adopting a hybrid planning approach for the College Green site (including Fairfield Halls) with detail for the first phase of the scheme and outline for the remainder. The relevant applications for enabling works and development are due to be submitted from January 16.

It is anticipated that the first contractors will be in place by July 16. The procurement processes for each phase of works will be dependent on the specific delivery methodology for that phase.

The Council is currently working with Fairfield (Croydon) Limited regarding their transition planning, and a decision will be taken on the future operating model in due course.

CQ047-16 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Please can you advise how the Council assesses 'visitor' numbers to Croydon?

Reply

The council does not directly assess visitor numbers into Croydon.

The Croydon BID monitor footfall in the Town Centre and the Council may collate this information.

CQ048-16 **from Councillor Lynne Hale**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Re: Taberner House development site
Is the paintwork on the hoardings around the site art or graffiti?

Reply

The paintwork on the hoardings around the Taberner House Development Site is art. Graffiti is a catch-all term that can be applied to a range of activities. Graffiti in its most pejorative sense – when undertaken illegally on public or private property, and used to convey offensive messages – is a negative phenomenon and the council works to remove speedily any such infringements and punish those responsible, and graffiti clearly does nothing to improve Croydon in the eyes on potential investors. Some graffiti does however fall more into the category of ‘street art’, and can enhance the look and feel of a local area and make a valid contribution to the cultural landscape, in turn adding to the appeal and cachet of that area.

Below is my favourite piece from the Taberner House project.



The art in the Queen’s Gardens is in sharp contrast to the cultural vandalism of the previous Tory administration. Where you closed down the David Lean Cinema, closed down the Warehouse Theatre and sold off the Riesco collection, this Labour administration is putting arts and culture at the heart of Croydon’s regeneration and will continue to be ambitious for culture.

CQ053-16 **from Councillor Susan Winborn**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Could the Cabinet Member confirm that the toilets in Park Hill Park are scheduled to be modernised as they are currently in a very poor state of repair?

Reply

The toilets at Park Hill Recreation Ground have been identified as being in need of redecoration and improvements to include facilities for park visitors with disabilities or parents and carers with young children. Funding has been identified to carry out the work but we are in the process of looking at the project from a viewpoint of improving facilities within the Park generally which may have an impact on the future location of these facilities.

I am keen that we do this work properly and enhance the recreation ground overall for visitors of all ages.

I recognise Park Hill Recreation Ground as being important for the future health and vitality of the growing town centre.

CQ079-16 **from Councillor Jamie Audsley**

Councillor Timothy Godfrey

Cllr Godfrey, what plans are you developing to ensure a high quality cultural offer continues to be in place for the town centre and the wider borough during the planned closure of Fairfield Halls?

Reply

Delivering a high quality cultural offer in Croydon is high on our list of priorities and the refurbishment of Fairfield Halls in as short a period as possible is a key way in which we are delivering on this. Guaranteeing the future of the Fairfield Halls for the next 50 years is vital to ensure that Croydon has a balanced offer and is the destination of choice for inward investment, education etc.

The failure of the opposition to secure the future of the Fairfield Halls over the last 8 years and their work to dismantle the cultural offer in our borough must not be forgotten as they simply didn't understand that importance of culture in making Croydon a better place to live and work.

We are working with our partners on a programme of activity over the 2 year closure period to ensure there is continuity in cultural programming and offer in the borough. This includes building on the successful Ambition music festival which was held in July 2015. We are confident that with the right offer and programme and beyond over the next 2 years, we can re-open the venue to attract both existing and new audiences.

It is vital that we all remain highly ambitious for our cultural offer and work to animate all available spaces across the borough both during the temporary closure and following its reopening.

CQ029-16 from Councillor Steve O’Connell**Councillor Mark Watson**

Other than the Cabinet Member and myself as Shadow Cabinet Member kindly list the other members of the Stronger Communities Partnership Board.

Reply**STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP MEMBERSHIP**

NAME	Organisation
Bushra Ahmed	West Croydon Voice (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Risq Animasaun	Croydon Food Network
Melinda Ashford	Croydon Commitment
Rev Paul Barratt	Croydon Jubilee Church / Ecumenical Borough Dean
Jonathan Bob-Amara	Volunteer (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Harriet Butler	Homestart (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Paul Collins	Croydon Old Town Portas Team
Adrian Dennis	Croydon Disability Forum (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Nathan Elvery	Croydon Council, Chief Executive
Donald Forde	Crystal Palace Football Club Foundation
Sharon Godman	Croydon Council
Cllr Timothy Godfrey	Croydon Council, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport
Mumtaz Hassan	Muslim community representative
Ray Hautot	Mencap (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Michael Hewlett	Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
Sarah Ireland	Croydon Council
Cllr Matthew Kyeremeh	Croydon Council
Brian Longman	Safer Neighbourhoods
Cllr Vidhi Mohan	Croydon Council
Cllr Steve O’Connell	Croydon Council, Shadow Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice

Mayura Patel	Croydon Hindu Council
Steve Phaure	Croydon Voluntary Action, Chief Executive
Monique Rebeiro	Lives not Knives (Safer Neighbourhood Board)
Liz Sheppard-Jones	The Croydon Citizen
Marilyn Smithies	Tenant and Leaseholder Panel
Andy Tarrant/Deputy	Croydon Police, Borough Commander
Kathryn Uche	CAYSH (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Nero Ughwujabo	Croydon BME Forum, Chief Executive
Cllr Mark Watson	Croydon Council, Cabinet Member for Safety and Justice (Chair)
Ashley Wyllie	Future of Croydon (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Callton Young	CACFO (Croydon Voluntary Sector Alliance)
Kevin Zuchowski-Morrison	Rise Gallery – Recherche Fine Art Group

CQ031-16 **from Councillor Steve O'Connell**

Councillor Mark Watson

What steps are being taken to engage with and identify Leaders of, the emerging and less traditional communities in our Borough?

Reply

Regular Walkabouts take place in different areas of the borough in which the Cabinet member, Borough commander and a council officer attend to engage with the different people within those communities.

We have met with members of the Afghan community and representatives from the Albanian community (Shpresh) to talk about Albanian Youth issues in the town centre.

Some work has also been carried out with LGBT refugees and Asylum seekers (Rainbow across Borders group) and our interfaith events are also open to all and they are widely publicised to all communities.

CQ040-16 **from Councillor Tim Pollard**

Councillor Mark Watson

Please give the monthly numbers for graffiti removal in the metropolitan centre (or polling district FA2 if that is easier) in October, November and December 2015 and for the same three months in 2014.

Reply

The figures for Fairfield district FA2 are as follows:

October 2014 = 31 graffiti jobs
November 2014 = 56 graffiti jobs
December 2014 = 30 graffiti jobs

October 2015 = 55 graffiti jobs
November 2015 = 63 graffiti jobs.
December 2015 = 73 graffiti jobs