

QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES & GATEWAY SERVICES Councillor Alison Butler		
CQ123-18	Hale, L	Council Homes
CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT Councillor Oliver Lewis		
PQ095-18	Michael Theodorou	Excess of rubbish (rat infestation)
PQ098-18	Ann McEvaddy	Oversized Bins
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & REGENERATION Councillor Stuart King – Job Share (Acting)		
CQ118-18	Hale, L	Pre-Planning Application Advice
CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE & SPORT Councillor Oliver Lewis		
PQ089-18	Maura Keane	Fairfield Halls
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & RESOURCES Councillor Simon Hall		
CQ121-18	Hale, L	Prompt Payment Policy

CQ123-18 from Councillor Lynne Hale

Councillor Alison Butler

"Re: The Mayor of London's £1.67bn pot of money and Croydon's bid for funding to build Council homes.

1. Please can you advise the sum of money Croydon has bid for and
2. The number and type of Council properties which Croydon expect this to deliver"

Reply:

The Croydon bid was awarded £61.3m from the Mayor of London as part of the Building Council Homes for Londoners programme. This is to fund 888 homes, of which 467 are affordable rent and 421 are shared ownership.

PQ095-18 from Micheal Theodorou

Councillor Stuart Collins

I'm a resident in Russell Hill Parade Purley which for several weeks has endured a major infestation of rats feasting off a large pile (at least one skip) of rubbish dumped during the three week period when the Council failed to empty the bins. Additional to this, many of the residents are lacking the appropriate waste store facilities in the first instance, to include correct size & no of bins for both waste and recycling. I have lodged an official complaint and my local councillor has also reported these problems several times. Whilst the waste has since been collected (Thursday 4th October), we still need a resolution to the disposal of waste to include supplying the appropriate bins / allocating spaces for bin stores & making sure appropriate access is available. Access is imperative for both collection of waste and emergency services. Whilst I would recommend that a waste / traffic management plan needs to be put in place and addressed to all residents, I would like to know what you are going to do about it.

Supplementary question

Rats are also breeding in the derelict adjacent houses which front onto Foxley lane. The rats (15cm long) are multiplying daily and constitute a serious health hazard. I realise that dumps on private land are officially the responsibility of the landlord, but surely, as a public health and safety matter for both the residents and local food businesses, this doesn't absolve you from any responsibility? What are you going to do about it?

Reply

I can confirm that on the **28/09/2018** NSO's attended the affected area at Russel Hill Parade and witnessed the Flytip and the associated Rat Infestation. Enquiries are being undertaken to identify the owners of the three empty properties two of which are derelict properties where Fly tips were left and encouraging the continued infestation and potential nesting. On the 05/10/2018 the Fly tip removed by Veolia [Council Contractor] at our request

The NSO team will continue to make the requisite enquiries and to resolve the situation accordingly.

PQ098-18 from Ann McEvaddy**Councillor Stuart Collins**

Why have Croydon Council acted with total ignorance towards the Residents of Croydon imposing larger, oversized recycling bins without any consultation prior to the very, very rushed distribution?"

Reply

The distribution was not rushed at all, it took place over a 10 week timeframe which included contingency for slippage.

Specific consultation on the detail of the new contract wasn't possible due to the way the new contract was procured by the four boroughs under the South London Waste Partnership. Research into Croydon residents' views and perceptions of waste management helped the boroughs to agree on the broad principles and evaluation criteria for the new service before asking the market to offer the best solutions. This research showed strong and consistent support among Croydon residents for our drive to boost recycling and reduce landfill.

The most cost-effective and efficient solutions that came back through the procurement process made it clear that Croydon's existing twin stream approach to recycling (separating paper and card from other dry mixed recycling) was preferred. Changes to bin sizes and capacity were recommended to improve efficiencies, maximise the income we can get from selling recycled materials and keep our streets cleaner.

CQ118-18 from Councillor Lynne Hale

Councillor Stuart King, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport & Regeneration – Job Share (Acting)

Please outline the pre-application planning advice services which Croydon offers and the costs.

Please advise the number of applicants/developers who have engaged in Planning Performance Agreements with the Council over the past 4 years and the number of schemes involved for each applicant/developer.

Please advise the range of costs paid by applicants/developers for PPA's, outlining whether these are one off or annual/renewable sums to cover a range of schemes.

Reply

Please outline the pre-application planning advice services which Croydon offers and the costs.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifically encourages pre application engagement as a means of front-loading the planning application process, potentially improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. Moreover, it encourages the use of Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) where these might help facilitate a faster and more effective planning application engagement.

The Council has a Pre Application Guidance Note (which specifies a range of pre application costs) which can be viewed via the following link https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/Preapp%20Cust%20Advice%20Note%201_20.06.2018.pdf. Bespoke PPA fees are currently negotiated on a cases by case basis, although the local planning authority is in the process of amending the Pre Applications Guidance Note to provide more detail on likely associated PPA costs (across a range of development types) whilst recognising that fees will continue to vary, depending on scale and complexity of development proposed.

Please advise the number of applicants/developers who have engaged in Planning Performance Agreements with the Council over the past 4 years and the number of schemes involved for each applicant/developer.

The local planning authority enters into PPAs with a wide range of applicants (at both pre application and application stage) which might well involve a single large scale development or focus on a range of small scale developments submitted by the same applicant. The vast majority of these PPAs merely seek to agree and operate within a bespoke determination programme (rather than within the statutory period). Other PPAs include a financial element, which enables the local planning authority to manage the process more responsively, with additional resources being made available to backfill officer time spent on PPA schemes. This enables the obligations contained within the PPA to be fulfilled whilst ensuring no reduction in the quality of business as usual activities being offered to other applicants.

Over the last 4 years, the local planning authority has entered into approximately 273 PPAs covering a wide range of “major” developments (involving approximately 150 developers) although the vast majority of these included no PPA related fees.

Please advise the range of costs paid by applicants/developers for PPA’s, outlining whether these are one off or annual/renewable sums to cover a range of schemes.

PPA fees can only recover costs associated with the pre-app/application engagement and the fees are very much related to the scale and complexity of development and the level of service expected by the applicant and deliverable by the local planning authority. Fees can also cover bespoke officer engagement (negotiated as part of the PPA process) as well as the standard costs of pre application meetings (as specified by the Pre-Application Guidance Note). Costs can range from £100,000+ (for the largest pre application/application engagement processes) through to around £50,000 (where a PPA covers a number of smaller sites across a single development portfolio). In such cases, a further PPA might well be negotiated/extended as further sites come forward for consideration as part of the extended portfolio. Furthermore,

in a number of situations, PPA fees can be as little as £10,000 for a one-off “major” proposal (bearing in mind that the applicant is required to also pay the statutory planning application fee).

PQ089-18 from Maura Keane**Councillor Oliver Lewis**

I am concerned that the cultural assets the borough once had in the town centre are no longer available. The Warehouse Theatre was closed some years ago: it was loved and respected. Even Tom Stoppard was seen there. And there is absolutely no sign of the promised new 200 seater replacement. The refurbishment of the Fairfield Halls is not yet finished. It appeared to start two years after the amenity was closed (a complete waste), about the time it was scheduled for the works to be completed, I understand. Cultural amenities are not a "luxury": they play an important part in enhancing the sense of belonging to a society, with the benefits that brings. Box Park has given some a place to go but it is hardly upgrading the Borough. When will the Fairfield Halls reopen? And does the Council plan any further cultural amenities?

Reply

I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to this question and completely agree with the view that cultural amenities are not a luxury. This is borne out both in how we have placed culture in our Labour manifesto and where you will see it as a theme in the newly adopted Corporate Plan. Fairfield Halls will be hosting some showcase events from early as April next year and BHLive our new operator have some very exciting plans for the future of the venue with their full programme from September next year. The refurbishment of the Fairfield Halls is something that has been needed for years in Croydon and we are now actually making that happen.

Over the last two years we have been stepping up a cultural programme in the Borough and supporting a number of events as part of Croydon's cultural calendar and have seen attendances of thousands of local people. There are a number of other cultural amenities developing in our Borough: the Artist Studio Company opening Art house in the Grafton Quarter – over 100 studios and a gallery space, 'Conditions' a 14 studio and exhibition space on Gloucester Road, the Front Room - a small scale music venue in St George's Walk – and there are other plans in the pipeline that we are supporting for further venues and gallery spaces. We are also considering the future of our own Clocktower space and what is needed there to fit it for the future to ensure it matches up to the regeneration and new sites around it.

CQ121-18 from Councillor Lynne Hale**Councillor Simon Hall**

I understand that public sector buyers had to start publishing annual payment performance data after March 2016.

Please could you signpost me to Croydon Council's data.

Reply

Dear Cllr

Thank you for your question.

The information you have requested regarding payments to suppliers is detailed in the table below.

Prompt Payment Performance

In accordance with regulation 113 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, please see the information below on Croydon Council's prompt payment performance.

Financial Year	Percentage of valid and undisputed invoices paid within 30 days in accordance with regulation 113	The amount of interest paid to suppliers due to a breach of the requirement in regulation 113
2015/16	84.78%	£602.30

Financial Year	Percentage of valid and undisputed invoices paid within 30 days in	The amount of interest paid to suppliers due to a breach of the requirement in	The amount of interest liable to be paid to suppliers due to a breach of the requirement in
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	accordance with regulation 113	regulation 113	regulation 113
2016/17	87.70%	£ 3748.64	£379,449
2017/18	86.89%	£ 4459.06	£391,143

This information can also be found on our website at:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/democracy/budgets/prompt-payment-performance>

Prior to this formal requirement to publish information this data was included in our financial monitoring reports that were presented to Cabinet.