



**CROYDON COUNCIL MEETING: TUESDAY 15 JULY 2014**  
**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**  
**WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

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

IF YOU HAVE ASKED A QUESTION, PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN TO THE MEMBER OF STAFF WHO IS PRESENT IN THE PUBLIC GALLERY, THEN READ THE REPLY TO YOUR QUESTION AND INDICATE WHETHER YOU INTEND TO ASK A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION - a roving microphone will be available for that purpose.

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

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

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

Question Number	Question to Cabinet Member	Question From	Subject
PQ034	Councillor Woodley	Sudarsanan Kuttappan	Community relations
PQ035	Councillor Woodley	Sumeshumar Nadesan	Community relations
PQ036	Councillor Newman	Mark Samuel	Result of Poll
PQ037	Councillor Hall	Peter Collier	Bernard Weatherill House
PQ038	Councillor Woodley	Subash Sivadasan	Community relations
PQ039	Councillor Collins	Chris Sciberras	South London Waste Partnership

PQ040	Councillor Newman	Raj Rajendran	Cabinet Members
PQ041	Councillor Butler	Jonny Cope	Planning controls
PQ042	Councillor Bee	Michael Sidwell	Tram extension
PQ043	Councillor Collins	Sarah-Jane Sewell	Fly-tipping
PQ044	Councillor Collins	Luke Springthrope	Fly-tipping
PQ045	Councillor Godfrey	Gareth Streeter	Old Ashburton Library
PQ046	Councillor Flemming	Amy Pollard	Free Schools
PQ047	Councillor Newman	Bola Thomas	Old Ashburton Library
PQ048	Councillor Godfrey	Patricia Bonham	Cultural Offer
PQ049	Councillor Hall	John Cartwright	Overflow arrangements

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

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**From Mr. Sudarsanan Kuttappan**

**Councillor Louisa Woodley**

**Cabinet Member for People & Communities**

**Question No.**

**PQ034-14**

Can the Council encourage its newly elected Mayor to do something positively to bring harmony within her own community in Croydon, because she failed to do anything adequately to avoid a serious division in the community, or to resolve it, although she was a Councillor during the entire period?

**Reply**

The total budget for supporting voluntary sector infrastructure organisations remains at £380,000 with a further £293,000 for advice services provided by Croydon CAB. The new administration is considering the re-commissioning of these services and will be making an announcement in the near future.

I note at the recent Council elections our three Broad Green Councillors had the highest popular vote in the Borough.

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**From Mr. Sumeshkumar Nadesan**

**Councillor Louisa Woodley**

**Cabinet Member for People and Communities**

**Question No.**

**PQ035-14**

Could the Council please advise and encourage its newly elected Mayor to set an example and take initiative to resolve the division within her own community (Malayalee / Kerala community) in Croydon?

**Reply**

The Mayor is the borough's first citizen and represents Croydon at ceremonial and social engagements during the year. The role is strictly non-political and representative of every section of the community. It is particularly focused on cultivating a positive image of the borough and on enhancing the well-being of all its citizens.

Responsibility for bringing harmony to communities falls to all of us in Croydon. The Mayor and the Council are fully committed to building integrated, strong communities. The Council demonstrates this commitment by supporting a wide range of community events, faith events and community-capacity building activities. However, if there are divisions within any community the Council will welcome a conversation about these. Please contact Sharon Godman, the Council's Head of Communities, on 0208 726 600 extn 47034 or via email [sharon.godman@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.godman@croydon.gov.uk)

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**From Mr Mark Samuel**

**Councillor Tony Newman**

**Leader of the Council**

**Question No.**

**PQ036-14**

Can I welcome the leader into his new job and wish him and his outfit good luck?  
Would he please explain why, "Dated Tuesday 27 May 2014" and "Printed and published by the Local Returning Officer" etc., are missing from all but the declaration of result of poll for Woodside?

**Reply**

I thank Mr Samuel for his question.

The Returning Officer has informed me that the declaration of results can be collective official notice for all 24 wards. It follows then for the example you mention, that the date and the printed and published part of the results notice refers to all wards and not just Woodside.

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**From Mr Peter Collier**

**Councillor Simon Hall**

**Cabinet Member for Finance and Treasury**

**Question No.**

**PQ037-14**

Can I be advised please if there is going to be a external letter box fitted to the external wall of Bernard Weatherill House for after hours postal delivery by the residents of Croydon, like there was one fitted to the external wall near the public entrance of Taberner House?

**Reply**

After hours postal delivery is via Corporate Reception, where security personally receives and log post. Improved signage to the public to clarify will be installed.

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**From Mr Subash Sivadasan**

**Councillor Louisa Woodley**

**Cabinet Member for People and Communities.**

**Question No.**

**PQ038-14**

Could the Council please ensure its newly elected Mayor would set an example to all people of Croydon by treating everyone fairly irrespective of their religion, religious faith, gender, age, disability, race, sexuality, employment status, social status and educational or cultural background?

**Reply**

These are all values that Madam Mayor and I share.

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**From Mr Christopher Sciberras**

**Councillor Stuart Collins**

**Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon**

**Question No.**

**PQ039-14**

Could you provide a detailed breakdown of how much it will cost to withdraw from the South London Waste Partnership?

**Reply**

Thank you for your question and for Taking Pride in Croydon.

The previous administration has tied us into a contract which would potentially expose the Council to having to pay out tens of millions of pounds if it breaks the arrangements under the contract. This would be made up of payments to the contractor and also payments to our partner boroughs.

Officers have also stated that by pulling out of the South London Waste Partnership this would incur additional losses through not being able to take advantage of the financial benefits obtained through joint procurement and contracts.



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**From Mr Raj Rajendran**

**Councillor Tony Newman**

**Leader of the Council**

**Question No. PQ040-14**

Can the council please list the name of each Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member with his/her portfolio who is currently in full time or part time employment?

**Reply**

The information requested is held in the Members Register of Interest, which is currently in the process of being updated and once finalised will be published on-line. A hard copy of the register can be viewed by appointment, arranged through the Council's Director of Democratic and Legal Services.

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**From Mr Jonny Cope**

**Councillor Alison Butler**

**Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration  
Question No.**

**PQ041-14**

What is the Council's position on planning controls in a conservation area and how strictly must they be abided by?

### **Reply**

Any development that requires planning permission in a conservation area that is carried out without first obtaining the necessary consents is open to Planning Enforcement action. The Council's position on planning controls in conservation areas is set out in the '*Conservation Area General Guidance*' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), adopted April 2013.

The '*Conservation Area General Guidance*' SPD and supporting '*Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan*' SPDs provide guidance for development proposals in conservation areas in Croydon. Although these documents are guidance to support the policies relating to conservation areas in the Croydon Local Plan, they are a material consideration in the decision making process. Individual planning applications are judged on a case-by-case basis.

For further information on requirements for planning permission in conservation areas please contact the Council's Planning Technical Support team ([Development.Management@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Development.Management@croydon.gov.uk)).

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**From Mr Michael Sidwell**

**Councillor Kathy Bee**

**Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment**

**Question No.**

**PQ042-14**

Can you give us an update on your plans for the tram system in Croydon?

**Reply**

This administration is committed to fighting for extensions of the tram as they will bring Transport, Social and Economic benefits both to Croydon and the sub region. The Council has been working with TfL, the south London Partnership and other South London authorities to investigate possible funding mechanisms to deliver extensions to Crystal Palace and Sutton but unfortunately, TfL have not identified funding in their business plan for any Tramlink extensions, despite Boris Johnson's promises to deliver the extension to Crystal Palace. TFL are still considering the feasibility and merits of the respective scheme options.

I know that we are supported by Croydon and Sutton's Greater London Assembly member Steve O'Connell who is also putting pressure on Boris Johnson to make sure the tram line is extended to Sutton and Crystal Palace.

For the more immediate future, Tramlink has ordered four new trams as part of a £30m programme to deliver a 50 per cent increase in capacity on what is the busiest section of the network. The programme includes the replacement of a single line section with double tracks at Beddington Lane and an additional tram platform at Wimbledon station. This will greatly improve tram frequency, enabling a 5 minute service, reduce waiting times and increase reliability as well as making for a better passenger experience. It is great news for the Croydon economy. An additional 25,000 people will now have a journey time of less than 60 minutes to central Croydon.

The remaining major capacity constraint on the system is the loop line running through Croydon's town centre. Adjusting the way trams operate within the town centre is also important to achieving many of our aspirations for the public realm and walkability within the town centre. I am very pleased to say that funding is identified and we are working with TfL to develop a second line in the town centre to serve the commercial quarter. This will provide the additional capacity the network needs in order to continue to grow, and greatly support our aim of making the town centre an easier and enjoyable place to walk.

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**From Miss Sarah-Jane Sewell**

**Councillor Stuart Collins**

**Cabinet Member for Clean Green Croydon**

**Question No.**

**PQ043-14**

Fly-tipping is rife in Croydon; people don't seem to want to help to clear it up. What plans do you have to get residents to report cases of fly-tipping in Croydon to get it cleared up faster?

**Reply**

Thank you for your question and for Taking Pride in Croydon. The new Clean and Green approach is designed to make Croydon the cleanest and greenest borough in London, which will be achieved through the development of a new strategic and operational approach to tackle the issues of fly-tipping, recycling, street cleanliness and environmental enforcement supported by a new publicity campaign, '**Don't mess with Croydon: Take Pride**'.

The campaign has three objectives.

- **Education** – Informing residents and businesses of how they should be disposing of their waste and how they can support the Council in keeping Croydon clean
- **Enforcement** – Use of CCTV and other means to prosecute
- **Easy** – Make it simpler for residents to report and recycle

This will require new approaches and solutions to issues that have been an ongoing problem, together with the continuation of those interventions that have proved successful here and elsewhere. Actions will be developed and delivered over the first 100 days of the new administration. Actions include:

- The launch of the Don't Mess With Croydon media campaign
- 3 rapid reaction removal teams so that fly tips are now cleared within 48 hours, 7 days a week
- Site visits to problem areas with ward Councillors and officers agreeing long term solutions to problem locations
- New telephone number hotline and email address – [flytip@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:flytip@croydon.gov.uk)
- All staff and contractors reporting
- Eyesore garden project to tackle waste on private land

- FPN penalties up from £75 to £80
- The rollout of community champions to take ownership and pride in their area and assist the Council in keeping the Borough clean

The approach will be very much a partnership between the Council; its staff, partners and residents with the aim of keeping our Borough clean and for everyone to Take Pride in Croydon.

This approach applies to the whole of Croydon but there will be a particular emphasis on the worst affected areas. I will be regularly reviewing performance data to determine which roads and wards require specific attention and will be arranging site visits to find long term solutions. If there are problem locations in your area please let me know so that we can add these to the schedule for future visits

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**From Mr Luke Springthorpe**

**Councillor Stuart Collins**

**Cabinet Member Clean Green Croydon**

**Question No.**

**PQ044-14**

Can Cllr Collins please provide an update on how fixing fly-tipping in the North of the borough is going?

**Reply**

Thank you for your question and for Taking Pride in Croydon.

I have made several visits to fly tip hotspots in the North of the Borough with Council Enforcement Officers ( detailed below) these have led to us issuing several fixed penalty notices and Officers discussing with residents and traders potential solutions to the problems they face.

What I have discovered is that the problem of fly tipping this new Administration has been left to deal with is a huge one. Two of the new rapid reaction teams have dealt with numerous fly tips in the North and residents are giving us good feedback on the results , however there is a long way to go but it is early days.

Our long term campaign is as follows:

The new Clean and Green approach is designed to make Croydon the cleanest and greenest borough in London, which will be achieved through the development of a new strategic and operational approach to tackle the issues of fly-tipping, recycling, street cleanliness and environmental enforcement supported by a new publicity campaign, 'Don't mess with Croydon: Take Pride'.

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- The launch of the Don't Mess With Croydon media campaign
- 3 rapid reaction removal teams so that fly tips are now cleared within 48 hours,

7 days a week

- Site visits to problem areas with ward Councillors and officers agreeing long term solutions to problem locations, sites visited so far are as follows:-

- Station Road South Norwood
  - Granville Close and the car park at the rear of the old police station in Norbury
- Upper Norwood, Green Lane
- Founders Gardens
- Sunny Bank, Whitworth Road, South Norwood High Street
- (Ellery Road), Beaumont Road, (off Convent Hill) Crown Point Parade, and Green Lane Parade
- Green Lane Estate
- New telephone number hotline and email address – [flytip@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:flytip@croydon.gov.uk)
- All staff and contractors reporting
- Eyesore garden project to tackle waste on private land
- FPN penalties up from £75 to £80
- The rollout of community champions to take ownership and pride in their area and assist the Council in keeping the Borough clean

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This approach applies to the whole of Croydon but there will be a particular emphasis on the worst affected areas. I will be regularly reviewing performance data to determine which roads and wards require specific attention and will be arranging site visits to find long term solutions. Thank you again for your question.

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**From Mr Gareth Streeter**

**Councillor Timothy Godfrey**

**Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure and Sports**

**Question No.**

**PQ045-14**

Please can the council confirm their detailed plan for returning the former library building in Ashburton Park to community use?

**Reply**

Whilst we are at an early stage in our plans to revitalise the former Library and wider Park, Councillors will be working closely with the Friends of Ashburton Park, local community groups and local residents to ensure a bright future for this lovely building.



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**From Ms Amy Pollard**

**Councillor Alisa Flemming**

**Cabinet Member Children families and learning**

**Question No.**

**PQ046-14**

What is the new administrations policy on free schools in Croydon?

**Reply**

Nelson Mandela said "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world".

This is an ideal which I hold close to my heart and as such I am supportive of all types of educational establishments providing that they deliver real and positive change to individual's lives. Education changes lives. It transforms not just our minds, but it can steer ones moral compass and change an entire family's future. I am for any establishment that can truly deliver these ideals. Free schools are a potentially helpful addition to local capacity; my concerns however lay around the consistency and quality of some of the providers.

The problem with the policy put in place by the coalition government is that quality cannot be guaranteed. Because the Department for Education has not taken sufficient notice of local views and intelligence, this causes problems. For example, the primary free school allocated to Advance, which was initially due to open in Sept 2014, and then deferred by the DfE to 2015, has, in the last few weeks, been withdrawn by the DfE. This leaves the local authority to pick up the pieces in relation to its statutory duty to find sufficient school places. In this respect local Councils are left to respond to the fragmentation of policy caused by the coalition government.

Where we can be confident of the quality of provision, we welcome free schools to Croydon, because they add to the quality and diversity of provision and they help with our response to meeting the growth in demand for school places. I hold the same view in relation to academies.

I will ensure that we have a proactive approach to free schools and academies, ensuring that we work proactively with potential providers who we are confident will provide schools of choice for parents, encouraging such providers to work with us, and to bid to the DfE in line with our requirements to meet demand.

It is our goal to make every school a school of choice – meaning that wherever you live there will be a school nearby which you will be happy for your child to attend. I welcome your support in moving us forward in this aim and indeed in supporting parents and children's desires to obtain the best education possible.



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**From Bola Thomas**

**Councillor Tony Newman**

**Leader of the Council**

**Question No.**

**PQ047-14**

Can the Leader of the Council explain the reason he is going back on the agreement the Council reached with HGEO after going through the due process to assign the Lease Agreement for the Old Ashburton Library to them? .

**Reply**

Thank you for your question.

The Cabinet member for Leisure and Sport has decided that the arrangement made by the previous Conservative administration does not represent best value for the residents of Croydon. We are therefore exploring, including with yourselves, all available options with the local community, to ensure the best use and access to the facility for all local people.

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**From Ms Patricia Bonham**

**Councillor Timothy Godfrey**

**Cabinet Member Culture, Leisure and Sports**

**Question No.**

**PQ048-14**

What plans do you have to develop Croydon's cultural offer over the next few years?

**Reply**

This administration has made a commitment to support a cultural renaissance in Croydon over the next 4 years and we are "Ambitious for Culture". Cultural development will not only make our borough attractive and somewhere people will want to visit and live but is a key driver in the regeneration of Croydon.

We consider it is essential we are informed by what the community says are priorities for culture. In keeping with this approach on July 8<sup>th</sup> we held a successful community engagement seminar on culture. This was the first of a series of such seminars, the outcomes of which will be posted on the Council website.

Details of our plans will emerge over the coming months and will include a development of the cultural offer in the town centre. For example, we have already committed funds for a state of the art digital projection system at Fairfield Halls which will enable live streaming of cultural events as well as big screen film offering, promoted celebrations of the diverse cultural offer in Croydon as well as using regeneration and investment opportunities to develop the cultural infrastructure of the borough.

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**From John Cartwright**

**Councillor Simon Hall**

**Cabinet Member Finance and Treasury**

**Question No.**

**PQ049-14**

At the council meeting on 3rd June, why was the screen in the overflow room not set up to be working properly \*before\* the meeting by properly qualified technicians, instead of relying on two people who were out of their depth after the meeting had already started?

**Reply**

I thank Mr Cartwright for his question and share his disappointment that the facilities in overflow room were not working. The system had been checked in the morning of the meeting by properly qualified technicians who were the suppliers of the equipment, but unfortunately an error occurred when the system was restarted for the meeting when the technicians had left.

The fault in the relay to the overflow was later discovered to be a software issue which has now been resolved. The technician would not have been able to resolve the software issue if it had surfaced in the morning.

I would point out that the new administration has reintroduced webcasting which allows much more transparency and openness. It also means that were a problem to occur in the future, those in the overflow room would at least be able to view the event later.