



CROYDON COUNCIL MEETING: MONDAY 20 APRIL 2015
PUBLIC QUESTION TIME
WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

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

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

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

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

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

| Question Number | Question to Cabinet Member | Question From | Subject |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| PQ021- 15 | Cllr Bee | Dr Ginn | Renewable energy sources |
| PQ022- 15 | Cllr Hall | Mr Corline | Sharing resources |
| PQ023- 15 | Cllr Flemming | Mr Stevensen | Youth Clubs |
| PQ024- 15 | Cllr Watson | Mrs Jones | Europe Day |
| PQ025- 15 | Cllr Watson | Mr Weaving | Cycling on pavements |
| PQ026- 15 | Cllr Bee | Mr Paterson | Purley flood plane |

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|-----------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| PQ027- 15 | Cllr Watson | Mrs Ahmed | Croydon Communities Consortium |
| PQ028- 15 | Cllr Newman | Mr Gibbs | Lee Valley Park |
| PQ029- 15 | Cllr Newman | Mr Samuel | Public Participation |

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

From Dr Jay Ginn

Councillor Kathy Bee

Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment

Question No.

PQ021-15

To reduce fossil fuel use in the borough, will the council pursue opportunities to invest in renewable energy sources - in particular having solar panels installed on any suitable council buildings; and will the council, through publicity and advice, encourage individuals and organisations to do likewise?

Reply

The council agreed two action plans in 2010:-

- Climate Change Mitigation Action Plan : This sets out actions to reduce borough-wide CO₂ emissions by 34% by 2025
- Carbon Management Energy Efficiency Programme: this set out actions to reduce CO₂ emissions from council operations and schools by 25% by 2015.

The overall objective of both action plans is to reduce CO₂ emissions, rather than specifically to achieve this via renewable energy technologies. It is typically more cost effective to reduce CO₂ emissions through installing energy efficiency measures rather than installing renewables.

We take a similar approach in planning policies where developers must meet the following standards:-

- All new homes must achieve the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4
- New non-domestic buildings (above 500m²) must achieve BREEAM "Excellent"
- All major development must achieve a 40% reduction in CO₂ emissions beyond the Building Regulations (2010 standard)

This gives developers the flexibility to select the best design approach for their project and site. Adoption of renewable technology is almost always required to achieve these standards and in Croydon this has generally been solar PV.

Our own new build programmes must meet the same targets, and solar PV has often been specified to meet these targets:

- Bernard Weatherill House, achieved BREEAM "Excellent" with installation of around 40 kW(peak) of solar PV.
- PV installed on around 100 homes within the council new build programme
- School expansion programme – PV has been installed on new buildings

A programme of energy efficiency retro-fit works to corporate buildings and schools is

currently being delivered in Croydon, via the GLA RE:FIT “energy performance contract” which delivers guaranteed levels of energy savings. While the savings will be delivered by the most cost effective efficiency measures (e.g. replacement lighting, improved heating systems etc.) solar PV will be installed as part of this programme. Currently 49 kW(peak) is scheduled to be installed.

A high level feasibility study on installing solar PV on existing council housing has been undertaken. The council is also looking at options for how the cost of installing solar PV could be reduced by integrating these works within its planned maintenance and improvements programme for housing.

The council has not specifically promoted solar PV to residents, however it does promote energy efficiency and CO₂ reduction, and has delivered many schemes offering residents discounted (or in previous cases, free) energy saving measures (e.g. loft and cavity wall insulation).

From Mr Alan Corline

Councillor Simon Hall

Cabinet Member for Treasury & Finance

Question No.

PQ022-15

As Wandsworth and Richmond councils will be sharing their top officers and saving over £10 million with each council I would like to know if Croydon Council is going to save money as well and implement this with one of the neighbouring councils.

Reply

We have no plans to move to a model where we share officers in the way being proposed by Kingston and Wandsworth. Given Croydon is one of the largest London Boroughs; we believe that the opportunities from this type of arrangement are more limited.

We have however reviewed our senior management, with a view to having an organisation more focused on delivering to residents, even in these unprecedented challenging times, which is why we have created the three divisions.

As part of this review, we looked at our senior management costs and the restructure at the Director level of the organisation will deliver a saving of over £500,000 as well as operational benefits.

We will also continue to look for opportunities where sharing services with other boroughs makes sense for the residents of Croydon.

From Mr. Andrew Stevensen

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Learning

Question No.

PQ023-15

It seems that a number of youth clubs have closed or are closing in the Croydon area. What is the future for our Youth Services in Croydon?

Reply

Croydon has a strong direct delivery of services for young people and a large, vibrant and diverse voluntary and community provider sector which is supported by the Early Intervention Support Service and Croydon Voluntary Action.

Croydon Council currently has direct responsibility for four youth centres in Croydon (Goldcrest in New Addington, Samuel Coleridge Taylor Centre in South Norwood, Winterbourne in Thornton Heath and Waddon in Waddon) all of which are well used and have positive engagement from the local communities.

We also offer support and resources such as training and partnership networking to all providers of services to young people aged 5 -19 (up to 25 for young people with additional needs) which is being well used. A recent borough wide event to engage the voluntary and community sector providers was attended by over 60 professionals and volunteers working with young people in Croydon.

The Early Intervention Support Service delivers directly programmes in the following areas for young people:

- Youth forums, youth council and youth parliament
- Youth arts projects
- Learning difficulties and disability youth clubs
- Forest project
- Croydon adventure project including Duke of Edinburgh and outdoor activities
- Targeted group work for young people with self-identified needs including specialist sessions for young people who fall within an equalities group

The Early Intervention Support Service also commissions specialist services for young people including counselling, mental health support, LGBT+, young carers and drugs and alcohol specific services.

There are at least six community or trustee led youth centres in the borough delivering sessions and activities to young people (Whitehorse, Sir Philip Game, Timebridge, Purley, Croydon Youth Theatre Organisation and Addiscombe Boys and Girls club, Old Town youth club) and more than 40 other individual youth groups or organisations

running sessions weekly or monthly.

With regard to future plans, the Council is currently working with community groups which deliver youth services to explore how, together, we can further strengthen youth provision.

From Mrs. Gaetane Jones

Councillor Mark Watson

Cabinet Member for Safety & Justice

Question No.

PQ024-15

CALAT (Croydon Adult Learning & Training) are celebrating Europe Day on Saturday 9th May 2015 at the Clocktower Centre. This is a non-political event to celebrate Europe "United in Diversity".

Would the Council allow the European flag to fly outside the Clocktower Centre on that day?

We can provide the flag.

Reply

Thank you for your question. The answer is an absolute 'yes' and I am happy to make sure that this is arranged for you.

From Mr Colin Weaving

Councillor Mark Watson

Cabinet Member for Safety & Justice

Question No.

PQ025-15

According to the Daily Mail 17 March 2015, there is a plague of cycling on Croydon's pavements. What steps does our council intend to take to eradicate this?

Reply

We have searched the Daily Mail website for the article in question but have not been able to find it, however it is not our view that there is a plague of cycling on Croydon pavements. It is worth noting that we have a number of footways that are dual use, so the cyclist and pedestrian legally share the footway.

We did find an article from the 10th of March (not related to Croydon) where the Mail reported 'Last year cycling minister Robert Goodwill told police that cyclists should not be fined for mounting the pavement to avoid dangerous stretches of road. He urged police to remember official guidelines from 1999 which state that fines are not aimed at those using pavements out of 'fear of traffic', provided they show consideration for pedestrians.'

Enforcing against cycling on footways is a matter for the police and I am aware that they have conducted a number of high profile operations across London and in Croydon focussing on cycle and vehicle behaviour, which came as a result of the many cycling fatalities that have occurred recently in London. We are keen that the police maintain that pressure.

It is the view of this administration that more needs to be done to make cycling easier across the borough. It is worth noting that rates of cycling in Croydon are some of the lowest in London with only one percent of journeys made by bike. One of the ways we are trying to encourage safe and legal cycling is by offering free cycle training to Croydon children and adults, funding this to the tune of around £200,000 in 2014/15. Some of the people cycling on pavements may be doing so out of fear. Brake, the road safety charity, published in its Road Safety Week 2014 statistics bulletin, 17 November 2014 the National top 10 postcodes where drivers who have committed careless driving offences in 2013 reside. Second in Brake's national list was the Croydon post code CR0.

Particularly in and around the Metropolitan Centre we have an environment that is difficult to navigate by bike and in places dangerous. I know that the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment is determined to put this right, to deliver Quietways and other facilities to make on highway cycling safer and more enjoyable.

From Mr John Paterson

Councillor Kathy Bee

Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment

Question No.

PQ026-15

Can the council please tell us why they have built an underground car park at 449 Brighton Road Purley Oaks notwithstanding it is in an area designated as a flood plain on the Environment Agency website?

Reply

The redevelopment of 447 Brighton Road (there is no record of a 449 Brighton Road) was granted planning permission by the Secretary of State on appeal back in August 2009 and is now being implemented by Wandle and is now nearing completion. Whilst it is appreciated that there is a basement car park, the Environment Agency at the time appeared satisfied with the development, as long as proposals for Sustainable Urban Drainage solutions were incorporated as part of the proposals. They also required agreement to the finished ground floor slab levels being 0.6 metres above the highest part of the existing ground levels. These requirements were captured by planning conditions attached to the planning appeal decision.

From Mrs Bushra Ahmed

Councillor Mark Watson

Cabinet Member for Safety & Justice

Question No.

PQ027-15

FOI reveals Croydon Communities Consortium Chair Elizabeth Ash was asked to return their unspent council funding as of Dec 2014. What was the council's specific reason for reclaiming the funds?

Reply

The funding from the Council was to support an agreed 12 month programme of work from November 2013. This programme has been completed and, in accordance with standard policy, the Council has asked for the return of any unspent grant.

From Mr Nick Gibbs

Councillor Tony Newman

Leader of the Council

Question No. PQ028-15

Can the leader please list any members of the council and years that they served, on the Lee Valley Park Regional Authority?

Reply

Kathy Bee (Labour) - Non-Riparian Member appointed by London Councils in July 2014, representing London Borough of Croydon.

Whilst I recognise the tremendous work being undertaken to maintain and enhance the appeal of Lea Valley Park, this Labour administration's view is that the existing arrangements for financing the park's operations need to be reformed. It is no longer appropriate for this council to continue the current historic funding arrangements, particularly in light of the severe financial pressures that we are experiencing.

From Mr Mark Samuel

Councillor Tony Newman

Leader of the Council

Question No. PQ029-15

In the interests of furthering democracy in Croydon, will the leader consider increasing the time available and permit all ward councillors to engage directly with members of the public at question time?

Reply

This Labour administration is absolutely committed to making Council meetings more accessible to members of the public. Having made the meetings more transparent we now want to make them more open which will help to increase accountability. This is particularly pertinent in light of this administration's introduction of ward based community budgets.

I will ensure that Mr Samuel's suggestion is fed into the cross party review of how Council meetings are conducted for consideration, which is due to commence later this year.