

QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

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| CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING Councillor Alisa Flemming | | |
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From Councillor Margaret Bird

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Question No. CQ023-18

In your 2014 manifesto you said 'We will set up a scheme to support local residents who want to create play streets in their neighbourhood'. How many play streets have been designated?'

Reply

Play streets are resident led initiatives which the Council supports through the practical process of closing the road but also with advice and guidance. We have supported play streets in eleven roads in Croydon.

There have been some notable successes. For the second year running Love Lane, Woodside became London Play Street of the Year. The Play Street in Brampton Road, Addiscombe was also shortlisted. This is organised by Robert Fitzroy Academy and is held once a month on a Friday after school bringing the residents and the school together.

In 2017 residents also organised 'Epic' play streets in College Road. Children and residents from several of our play streets came together in a Town Centre location.

From Councillor Simon Brew

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Question No. CQ026-18

You said in your 2014 manifesto “We will work with Croydon Tech City to support the creation of Code Clubs in all our primary schools so as to give Croydon children a head start in learning about computing.”

- 1) How many primary schools do we have, and how many of them now have a code club?

- 2) When will Code Clubs be available in those primary schools that don't currently have a Code Club?

Reply

Since the last election in May 2014 the National Curriculum was updated to make coding a compulsory part of the curriculum. This means that all children have access to lessons in coding.

The Local Authority does not hold central information on which out of school clubs are offered in schools, and these vary from term to term.

From Councillor Sue Bennett

Councillor Alisa Flemming

Question No. CQ047-18

In your 2014 manifesto you said that 'we will establish a 'free breakfast' scheme to meet the needs of our Croydon parents and children' have you done that?

Reply

Currently, 103 of the 109 Croydon schools (primary & secondary) offer a breakfast club or breakfast provision and this has increased from 89 in 2014.

During a review of breakfast club provision in 2015, it was found that many Croydon clubs were not providing a menu that was nutritionally adequate for pupils and that in many cases the food and drink offered was high in sugar and fat. It was therefore decided that a training and support programme would be prioritised, in order to ensure that the food available was meeting the needs of the pupils attending. The support could also therefore be tailored to individual school needs and focus on those with the highest levels of pupils claiming a free school meal.

Over the past 3 years, schools have been able to access the following:

- Free training to improve their provision – targeted at schools with highest FSM %
- Free support visits with 1-1 guidance given about making improvements
- New Croydon Breakfast Club menu guidance – for all schools to follow
- Free cereal distributed by FareShare London, enabling 25 schools to offer breakfast free of charge
- Support to access external funding sources from Magic Breakfast, Gregg's Foundation, Kellogg's, ASDA

Foundation and Awards for all, to enable them to provide free breakfasts for vulnerable pupils

- Support to use Pupil Premium funding to enable targeted pupils to receive a free breakfast

Key achievements since 2015

- 76 schools have attended breakfast club training and all changed their menus to reflect the local guidance
- Most Croydon schools offer a free breakfast to their most vulnerable pupils
- Clubs are now providing healthier food choices and promoting water and milk only (in primary schools)

Example Good News Stories

Fairchildes Primary School offer a family breakfast Club with all family members invited and able to eat at no or little cost.

Meridian High School offer £1.50 worth of free breakfast to free school meal eligible pupils

Orchard Park High School have just launched (Nov '17) a free breakfast scheme feeding 200 pupils a day, who weren't eating before the initiative.

Howard Primary School and **Heavers Farm Primary School** offer free porridge and cereal pots in the playground before school, for all pupils.

All support will continue to be available to schools going forward.

From Councillor Simon Brew

Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed

Question No. CQ025-18

You said in your 2014 manifesto 'Labour will work with providers to make Croydon a fully Wi-Fi-enabled borough. We want everyone to be able to connect to the web for free in main shopping and business areas.' Can they now do so?

Reply

Free public WiFi is available in Council service buildings and libraries and the Council has been piloting a free public WiFi project in Surrey Street.

The Council has also engaged with various outdoor WiFi providers and spoken to other local authorities about their experience of deploying outdoor public WiFi. However the business model for outdoor public WiFi networks is less clear than anticipated and different than that for mobile networks. It is often driven by targeted advertising and paid access beyond an initial cap. The fast changing technology landscape is

also to be considered and the Council is looking at more integrated and efficient solutions allowing for the right level of connectivity for the benefit of citizens, businesses and visitors now and in the future.

Nevertheless, with the expected growth in footfall in central Croydon associated with the retail development and that around the West and East Croydon stations, the Council is further exploring the commercial business case for additional WiFi.

From Councillor Mario Creatura

Councillor Manju Shahul-Hameed

Question No. CQ051-18

Over the last few years, Coulsdon West councillors have used their community ward budget to fund the Christmas lights in Coulsdon Town. This has been done in many other wards across the borough including Thornton Heath and Old Coulsdon.

They are immensely popular, and we are proud to have been able to help our community in this way.

I have just been informed that Skanska have written to the organisers of the Coulsdon Yulefest to demand payment for the electricity for running the festive lights. This has come as a complete surprise to the team of volunteers who make no profit when putting up these lights and running the festival.

All monies raised go to funding the running of the festival, the putting on of entertainment and publicising our town which serves to benefit the local economy and wider community spirit.

In five years of putting the lights up, the volunteers have never been asked to pay for the electricity. The Skanska representative has said that historic payments are not required, but that in future this is changing.

The estimate for the bill is some £200 - a very small sum for the Council but a huge amount for local fundraisers who give up much of their year to arrange our annual festival.

I would like to ask:

- Do you feel it's right that community volunteers should be asked to fund the cost of the electricity for Christmas lights?
- The historic waiver implies that the payment is new, and only recently has come into force. Was this with your knowledge and consent?
- Could you please investigate and detail the reasons for Skanska implementing this community levy?
- Dozens of residents' groups across the borough spend thousands of hours a year putting on free events, festivals and meetings to help stimulate their local area. They are the very fabric that makes Croydon the place we all love. What message do you feel it sends that the Council's contractor is adding further barriers to those groups wanting to help their neighbourhoods?
- Will you please do all that you can to stop these charges going forward?

The fundraising is a yearly slog - anything the Council can do to remove this disincentive then that would be very welcome by my residents.'

Reply

I would like to thank Cllr Creatura for his question, the council under the conservative administration cut the festive lighting budget and therefore the council ceased providing the service approximately 9 years ago . As part of the negotiations of the street lighting PFI which started in 2011 the council has managed to incorporate the ability to attached festive decorations to our street lights. Since the council stopped providing this service It has been the case that the community, Business Improvement Districts and or more recently community ward budgets have been required to cover the cost for purchasing, hire of festive lights and the energy consumption. This was previously communicated to organisers but I am aware that some of the more recent groups may not have received written confirmation last year regarding energy cost.

The street lighting team and Skanska have written to all organisers to confirm they are responsible for the energy consumed as part of providing festive lights.

Unfortunately the council are not able to fund this due to central government cuts, but councillors can consider using their community ward budget to support festive lighting if they consider it a priority for their wards.

From Councillor Steven Hollands

Councillor Stuart Collins

Question No. CQ022-18

In your 2014 manifesto you said: 'We will do more to reuse or recycle items such as white goods, furniture, clothes and bedding'. What have you done to achieve this?

Reply

Croydon currently offers a textile recycling service to all kerbside properties in the borough. From September 2018, the kerbside collection service will be extended to include batteries too. There will also be additional capacity for paper recycling, with the boxes being replaced by a wheeled bin wherever suitable.

There is a separate reuse area set aside for high quality reusable items at the household waste and recycling centres, and white goods from the bulky waste collection service are separated on site before being collected for recycling. The HRRCs recycle over 70% of all waste brought in, and customer satisfaction ratings are around 98%.

From Stuart Millson

Councillor Stuart King

Question No. PQ014-18

There is a road sign on the eastbound carriageway of Barclay Road, just off the Park Street roundabout, pointing cars in the direction of Central Croydon car parks. Which car park is this sign pointing to, and what route would a driver have to take to get there?

Reply

I would like to thank Stuart Millson for his question, the sign being referred to relates to Fairfield Car Park which has closed due to the refurbishment of Fairfield Halls, Officers have arranged for this sign to be removed and it is anticipated this will be completed in the next 2-4weeks.