

QUESTIONS TO CABINET MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL Councillor Tony Newman		
CQ001-18	Andrew Pelling	Achievements
CQ006-18	Tim Pollard	Quality of Social Care
Cabinet MEMBER FOR HOMES, REGENERATION AND PLANNING (HRP) Councillor Alison Butler		
CQ003-18	Lynne Hale	Housing Statistics
PQ018-18	Srikant Alla	Citiscap Building

From Andrew Pelling

Councillor Tony Newman

Question No. CQ001-18

Please list the top 40 achievements of this excellent Labour council.

Reply

Under this Labour Administration, we celebrate more than 40 excellent achievements and this is despite dramatic funding cuts that has made us need to rethink how we work, yet put our residents, workers and visitors at the heart of what we do.

Homes, Regeneration & Planning

1. £1.4bn Croydon Partnership redevelopment of Whitgift Centre granted
2. Public realm developments completed in Central Parade, New Addington; nearing completion in Thornton Heath and South Norwood; and construction of a community and leisure centre under way in New Addington
3. Established Brick by Brick
4. Set up Croydon Affordable Homes charity to oversee limited liability partnerships to deliver 340 affordable rent homes without public subsidy, affordable for couples on the London Living Wage or Local Housing Allowance and let on longer tenancy agreements
5. Established Croydon Choice – the choice based lettings service that has advertised around 300 homes
6. Set up a selective licensing scheme, with 92% of the private rental housing stock licensed.
7. 275 empty homes returned to use between April 2015 and September 2017.
8. Purley Bid
9. Fairfield Halls £30m investment
10. Regeneration of Surrey Street

11. CPFC stay at Selhurst

12. New Addington bid

13. £9m on-site Youth Zone (April 2018)

14. Sprinklers retrofitted in council high rises

15. Co-op innovation network, Housing Commission on Community-led Housing

Economy & Jobs

16. Developed Croydon as a business destination:

- With 14,790 SME businesses now located in borough (790 above target for 2017/18 and employers moving to Croydon including HMRC in Ruskin Square
- support through Small Business Commission action plan,
- promoting Croydon as a place for business, providing events training and lobbying activities and highlighting business support through Croydon business week and the inaugural Croydon Year for Business in 2018
- discretionary business rates relief scheme launched offering up to 100% discounts to local small businesses: £77,000 of discretionary business rate relief since April 2017 supported 82 jobs: with support for small businesses; and Pub relief they will award £1.7m of relief to businesses within the borough in 2017/18

17. Secured a Growth Zone deal with GLA and TfL to retain half of new town centre business rates as well as £7m of Treasuring funding to underpin the delivery of a £350m infrastructure programme

18. Boxpark Croydon opened in October 2016 creating 50 jobs for local people, serving food and drink through 35 outlets and providing a venue for music and spoken word events

19. Launched 'Tomorrow' in May 2016, a state of the art tech business incubator and start-up space with GLA support

20. Set up Croydon Works jobs brokerage service

21. Council and Go on Croydon created 21 digital zones to promote digital inclusion and financial resilience

22. Good Employer Charter

23. CALAT (Croydon Adult Learning and Training) rated good by OfSTED

24. Adopted 'Value Croydon', the Council's approach to deliver social value through

using its purchasing power and relationships with contractors and wider partners

25. Secured social enterprise borough status through the council's commitment to support cooperatives, mutual and social enterprises

Transport & Environment

26. Delivered footway and carriage way improvements around East and West Croydon

27. A new bus station has been built at West Croydon interchange

28. Won Public Sector Award at Urban Design Awards for the Connected Croydon Programme.

29. Street lighting replacement programme completed, with 23,630 modern cost-efficient streetlights installed.

30. 20mph zones have been implemented in Areas 1, 2 and 3 across the borough with plans to extend it to Area 4 in January 2018 which will mean 80% of the borough is covered.

31. Set up Play Streets in Croydon to get more people active, have fun and build stronger communities

Culture Leisure & Sport

32. A revived cultural calendar with the establishment of an annual cultural festival; a music festival at Boxpark, an International Playwriting Festival, Pridefest, celebrating south London's LGBT+ community

33. Plans approved for a new Cultural Quarter

34. Set up a 'cultural partnership fund' (October 2016) offering matched funding to enable organisations to secure funding for a range of cultural projects from small festivals and theatre productions to educational schemes and public art initiatives

35. Parks and green spaces are thriving, with increased volunteer days and Friends of Parks groups- over 5,000 volunteer days in parks and 42 Friends groups

36. Over 300 hectares of conservation meadows have been managed for wildlife, with hay baled and used by local farmers. Over 450 tenants and their families are growing their own healthy food on six direct let allotment sites. The Council has supported the grazing of high value conservation sites to maintain biodiversity

37. Hosting the Pearl Izumi Men's Tour Series and Matrix Fitness Women's Grand Prix, two of Britain's main professional cycling events

38. Rescued our libraries following the collapse of Carillion

Finance & Treasury

39. Council Tax below inflation

40. Improved procurement policy

41. Reduced net cost per m² of council asset base from £218 (2014/15) to £177 (2016/17) through the sale of properties such as Jeannette Wallace House and letting BWH office space. The Council aims to reduce the net cost further to £141 in 2017/18

42. Increasing online access to services, with 29% of all customer contact online (up 5% in 2017/18) and transactions completed through My Account, with 180,000 registered for My Account, and 20,000 downloading My Croydon smartphone app), saving around £8m

43. Reduced in person visits reducing by 30% a year, yet providing support for people to gain digital skills. The Council received a LGC award after adopting technologies to make it easier for residents to access services online

Clean Green Croydon

44. 'Don't Mess with Croydon; Take Pride' campaign, to combine enforcement with encouraging local people to get involved in clear-ups

45. Set up Eyes and Ears to harness community action to work in partnership with the council's multi-skilled street based enforcement operatives to deal with environmental crimes, such as fly-tipping and graffiti, and anti-social behaviour.

46. Cleared 87% of fly-tips within 48 hours, exceeding the target of 80%

47. Invested £1.3m in street cleaning from new litter vacuums to installing 80 solar-powered BigBelly bins

48. Household recycling rates of 39.55%, higher than the London average (33.8%)

Children, Young People & Learning

49. Established Croydon Best start, a multi-agency model for improving universal and early intervention services for under-5s and their families

50. Built new schools and expanded existing schools in the largest school building programme in UK. This included new schools Oasis Academy Arena; Harris Primary, Purley Way; Heathfield Academy; and expanded schools Chipstead Valley, Heavers Farm and St John's Primary Schools, enabling the percentage of parents offered one of top 3 primary and secondary school choices to be above London averages and rising

51. 90% of secondary schools are Good or Outstanding, higher than both the London

and national averages

52. 'Choose Your Future' campaign launched, supporting young people in making the right decisions and offering opportunities

53. Established an apprenticeship programme to help local residents aged 16 and above kick-start their careers; the Council currently has 30 apprentices and plans to recruit at least 15 more to start in April 2018

Families, Health & Social Care

54. Established One Croydon Alliance, an integrated health and social care system for over 65s

55. Enabled more people to improve their independence through reablement in the community – 95.5% of older people discharged from hospital to their own home achieved independence above the London and national averages.

56. The Council's 'shared lives' programme, helping people with learning disabilities to live independently in the community, is growing and was recently rated 'Excellent' by CQC.

57. Developed the Gateway and Welfare Service which, by October 2017, had Helped more than 1,300 families avoid homelessness
Given budgeting support to over 10,000 people

58. Supported over 2,200 people on Universal Credit to improve their digital skills

59. Cut by £2m the cost to the council of giving people emergency accommodation though its proactive support to manage impact of welfare benefit changes and prevent homelessness reduced new placements of homeless families in B&B by 24% from a year ago

60. Launched the Live Well Croydon programme in 2016, among the first of its kind in the country

61. Achieved high smoking cessation rates – smoking prevalence among adults is 13.2%, well below London and national averages

62. Awarded Flagship Food Borough status in 2015 to pilot new approaches to reconnect individuals, families and communities with healthy eating, growing and cooking.

63. Launched new Food Hub in New Addington and Fieldway, London's first combined welfare and membership food shop, and developed early intervention

Communities, Safety and Justice

64. Relaunched Croydon's Credit Union, increasing its membership to over 4,750
65. Tackled domestic abuse and sexual violence through multi-agency work: with increased referrals to multi-agency risk assessment conferences
66. Operation Rosario 1 and 2 which tested hotel responses to protect children at risk of child sexual exploitation is now being rolled out across all borough commands by the Metropolitan Police Service as a good practice model - Croydon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is recognised as one of the most effective by the Metropolitan Police
67. Became a Living Wage Employer, paying all council employees at least the London Living Wage and working with suppliers to ensure they pay their employees the London Living Wage
68. Established a Good Employer Charter
69. Introduced community ward budgets
70. Launched community grants scheme to support community groups with grants of up to £5000 to develop active and inclusive communities, help people care for each other's health and wellbeing and tackle poverty and social exclusion
71. White Ribbon Campaign
72. In partnership with Go-on Croydon and Doteveryone, increased digital skills and access of residents, voluntary organisations and SMEs through training digital champions and recycling over 500 council computers to community organisations

Going forward, despite these successes, Croydon faces significant challenges. How we ensure we get the infrastructure funding we require, improve our air quality and public services to be fit for the 21st Century will be my priority post the forthcoming local elections.

From Tim Pollard

Councillor Tony Newman

Question No. CQ006-18

Did you meet with Catherine Doran to discuss her concerns about the quality of practice in social care in the immediate run up to or aftermath of her decision to resign as independent chair of CSCB?

Reply

Both myself and our cabinet member had regular conversations with Catherine. As a result of these and other discussions changes were made at senior levels within the council.

We have accepted our responsibility that the improvements we are now seeing in children's services did not happen as quickly as first anticipated.

However it is now time Councillor Pollard that you accept responsibility for the draconian cuts your government has inflicted on both children's and adult social services, and the damage this has caused both in Croydon and beyond.

From Councillor Lynne Hale

Councillor Alison Butler

Question No. CQ003-18

Please could you advise the following:

The number of homes granted planning consent since May 2014:

One bedroom
Two bedroom
Three bedroom
Four bedroom
Five bedrooms +

The number of these homes which are now occupied and liable to council tax:

One bedroom
Two bedroom
Three bedroom
Four bedroom
Five bedrooms +

Reply

The below outlines all residential permissions approved from May 2014 to 1st October 2017. Any approvals since 1st October 2017 are not captured as these are not currently on the London Development Database which is the source of data for the reports.

1. The number of homes granted planning consent since May 2014:
11,777 units

One bedroom – 6,260 units
Two bedroom – 3,672 units
Three bedroom – 1,260 units
Four bedroom – 446 units
Five bedrooms +134 units

It should be understood that as the question required approvals, this includes all permissions approved regardless of current status.

The report includes superseded, lapsed and those which are unbuilt, completed and under construction. Not every permission has been built and some are replaced by other permissions.

2. The number of these homes which are now occupied and liable to council tax:

One bedroom
Two bedroom
Three bedroom
Four bedroom
Five bedrooms +

There is no register held by the council that holds the number of bedrooms properties have. Whilst the number of proposed bedrooms is known at a planning stage, there are inherent difficulties with tracking the actual number of bedrooms within properties, due to the ease of splitting up rooms subsequently, and subjectively about what counts as a bedroom.

The number of additional homes which are now occupied and liable to council tax since May 2014 is 6,546 units.

From Srikant Alla

Councillor Alison Butler

Question No. PQ018-18

Good afternoon! I missed submitting my question by 1830 hrs on 29/01/2018 and thought attending in person would have allowed me the opportunity to ask my question but I was told that is not possible.

I would appreciate if you can consider my below question and provide me an answer over the next few days before end of day 5th February 2018.

Background - I have worked hard to buy my first home (flat) in Citiscape Croydon which is now declared having lot of non-complaint regulatory deviations whilst it was built and delivered. So in a way the builder got away with poor quality of build and selling poor building.

Question - Why is Croydon Council not stepping forward to take over Citiscape building that is recently all over the news for having Grenfell like Cladding and free it from the Clutches of the Freeholder and make the government responsible to pay for the Cladding replacement costs - thereby helping the leaseholders and removing such huge bill (c£31,300) that is being imposed on the leaseholders by the freeholder for replacement of Cladding.

The fact that the Citiscape building is owned by private individual leaseholder should not naturally assume that every leaseholder is having the capacity to payout such huge amount of money within short period of notice.

Reply

I am incredibly sorry to hear of your situation and that of many other residents in Croydon. We know that getting the building in better order as soon as possible is essential.

We've been in contact with a number of residents in Citiscape and we have liaised with both the fire brigade and the freeholder of the building as we want a resolution quickly. Your local MP, Steve Reed, has also taken up your cause with government and the media. On the advice of the fire brigade we are satisfied that the current safety measures that

have been put in place by the freeholder in agreement with the fire brigade are adequate in the interim period. However it is now important that there is agreement about the full level of works to be done.

There has been a case recently in Slough where the authority has taken over a building. That was done because of issues with the owners. Here in Croydon the owners are wanting to do the safety work and the fire service has confirmed that the building does not pose the same level of risk.

Although, we do not have the authority to insist that the Government pays for any improvement works required to this or the many other buildings found to have this type of cladding we strongly believe that the Government should step in and fund these works while negotiations over costs and responsibility are carried out. The Government have stated that the responsible person, be it the developer or building owner, should be responsible for the costs but have done nothing to make this happen. Unfortunately we simply do not have the means to cover these works, even on an interim basis. As a Council we will, alongside Steve Reed MP, continue to press the Government to take action and remove this huge financial burden and worry from leaseholders and of course will update you on progress.

We have carried out a detailed inspection of the building, as well as of many individual flats. To date the freeholder has engaged with us regarding the remedial works required and they have indicated they will ensure that the work is done as quickly as possible. Therefore as things stand at the moment, the council is not in a position to take further action but we will continue to lobby on your behalf.