

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CABINET MEMBER FOR FAMILIES, HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE Councillor Jane Avis		
CQ092-18	Oviri, O	Carers
CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES & GATEWAY SERVICES Councillor Alison Butler		
CQ089-18	Bird, M	Tollers Estate
CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT & REGENERATION Councillor Stuart King - Job Share (Acting)		
CQ095-18	Canning, R	Blue Badge Statistics
CABINET MEMBER FOR CLEAN GREEN CROYDON Councillor Stuart Collins		
CQ017-18	Creatura, M	My Croydon App

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Oni Oviri

Councillor Jane Avis

Question No. CQ92-18

1. Both the carers centre in Katharine Street and the Help for Carers organisation have now closed. At council you eluded to the fact that new contracts would be taken up with the carers centre in George Street. Please could you confirm that is the case?
2. That leaves the question of short breaks for respite care. Yet another arrangement that you put in place that has collapsed. Please could you clarify who is providing these short breaks for families' carers supporting residents with complex needs?

Reply

1. Yes, this is correct, the new contract commenced on 1st July 2018 to ensure there was no break in service delivery.
2. Help for Carers was an organisation that worked across 4 south London boroughs and had an annual turnover of £1.7m. Croydon Council had invested £250,000 annually into this organisation and the contracts by themselves were self-sustaining in Croydon. The issues relating to Help for Carers' insolvency relate to other boroughs not fulfilling their contract pledges with the organisation. As a result the organisation could no longer continue, closing on 30th June 2018.

The short breaks previously provided by Help for Carers will now form part of the carer assessment which is undertaken by The Whitgift Foundation who run the Carers Support Centre on George Street. As a result, The Whitgift Foundation will allocate the respite hours to carers and allow them to choose their own provider, who will then invoice The Whitgift Foundation. This therefore increases choice and control for the carer. All 39 clients from the Help for Carers respite service have been contacted and have agreed to have their details passed to the new provider who will be making contact shortly to reschedule their respite hours.

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Margaret Bird

Councillor Alison Butler

Question No. CQ089-18

- 1) Can the cabinet member please confirm whether any fire risk assessments of the roof spaces in the flats on Tollers Estate in Old Coulsdon have taken place since the Grenfell disaster?
- 2) Have all the water tanks above the Tollers estate flats been checked for corrosion and made safe?

Reply

- 1) Like any responsible landlord, the Council has a requirement to ensure arrangements are in place for the provision of Fire Risk Assessments. The council ensures a FRA is carried out and in place for every block of flats which contains communal parts. These FRAs also need to be refreshed regularly or after major works involving alterations/refurbishment/structural changes.

The Council has approved the prioritisation of blocks which is based on a pre-determined weighted criteria agreed with the LFB. Out of 1096 blocks we currently have:

- 88 high priority
- 475 medium priority
- 176 low priority

As well as the more formal fire risk assessments, all blocks with communal areas are subject to weekly checks by the council's caretaking staff to identify and address issues as they arise. These will include, for example, checking communal areas for obstructions or combustible materials, and ensuring that fire doors are closed and fully operational. Any issues requiring follow-up action are logged with regular monitoring to ensure they are completed. Caretakers and other staff will, as a matter of course, provide advice to residents about any behaviour which poses risks for example leaving obstacles in fire escape/exit routes.

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

The blocks on the Tollers estate are of 3 storey brick structure with UPVC shiplap cladding, and as agreed with the LFB for fire risk assessments have a Type 1 assessment carried out. The last fire risk assessments were carried out in late 2016 and into 2017 and are being revisited between late summer 2018 and 2020.

A fire risk assessment of the roof spaces/loft area of the flats on the Tollers Lane Estate was not been carried out during the last Type 1 fire risk assessments. This is because access to the loft spaces in these blocks is from within the flats and not the communal areas and so under the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) they do not form part of any common area.

However, it is our intention under the new programme of fire risk assessments to check all roof spaces regardless of their classification as a 'common part' and to ensure there is adequate fire stopping in all blocks.

- 2) The council has engaged a specialist water testing company Goodwater Ltd to carry out inspection and testing on a yearly basis.

The cycle allows for inspection of the tank visually to check for damage or corrosion, water samples are taken for analysis and an allowance to temperature test undertaken at various properties. Should our specialist contractor Goodwater flag any issues such as unsafe temperatures we instruct the necessary remedial work be carried out as a priority by our responsive repairs contractor Axis. Should any tanks require replacing this work is passed to our general building contractor Mulalley as part of the replacement programme.

The last inspection of these water tanks did not raise any areas of concern and our records show that we have not had any enquiries or complaints concerning the water tanks at the blocks on the Tollers estate.

As part of the annual testing cycle Goodwater are due to attend and carry out the scheduled checks for Ellis Rd & Goodenough Way commencing on 1st of August.

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Robert Canning

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

Question No. CQ095-18

How many Blue Badges (Disabled Parking Permits) are currently issued to Croydon residents and how many cases of Blue Badge theft from motor vehicles parked on the Transport for London road network within the Borough have been recorded in each of the last five years?

Reply

Croydon has approximately 11,720 live Personal and Organisational Blue Badges on issue at present – this figure changes daily as badges expire, are withdrawn (for example on the death of the badge holder) or are issued.

The Department for Transport collates and publishes statistical data annually for all English issuing authorities.

I cannot give data showing the number of badges reported as stolen within the borough road network as data is not collected in this format. If data had been collected by location of theft it would include a number of badges issued by other authorities stolen within the borough when being used by residents who are visiting Croydon but would exclude badges issued to Croydon residents but stolen when being displayed outside of the borough.

Here is a table with data derived from the DfT datasets showing the numbers of blue badges issued by Croydon which have been reported stolen, together with the numbers of Croydon badges reported lost for the purpose of comparison. Data from 2017-18 has not been published yet. There are far more badges reported lost than stolen, and very few are ever returned to us by members of the public who find them in the street.

I hope the following data meets the need; I have attached a copy of DfT's data sets for lost/stolen badges for all English authorities if this helps.

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

Croydon Badges reported lost	Croydon badges reported stolen	Financial year
107	30	08/09
127	64	09/10
98	63	10/11
101	34	11/12
16	7	12/13
34	17	13/14
72	19	14/15
63	34	15/16
89	37	16/17

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Mario Creatura

Councillor Stuart Collins

Question No. CQ017-18

A resident tweeted:

'#ThorntonHeath #community #garden has been like this for days!! When are @VeoliaUK going to be booted? This is a disgrace and is undermining the efforts of many local people.' [Picture here: <https://twitter.com/grahamm118/status/964935174738898947>]

Another replied:

'This is Norbury Park at the moment. 😞☐ The bins need to be emptied more frequently, and need lids to stop the birds pulling all the rubbish out!' [Picture here: https://twitter.com/blod_wen/status/965287280742105090]

When asked by a third resident if they had used the MyCroydon app, the second resident confirmed she had stating:

'I did report it via the app, as I try to every time I'm reporting a similar issue. It's a bit hit & miss though, as the app doesn't always work.'

Cllr Timothy Godfrey, your Labour Cabinet colleague, joined in the thread recommending:

'Many thanks. Suggest you use the mysociety app instead. It's very good and you get confirmation from council contact centre. I chased it this am and should have all been cleared by now.'

My questions are:

Do you agree with Cllr Godfrey that residents should abandon the MyCroydon App for a better, alternative provider?

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

The MySociety App provides an official email confirmation of receipt. The MyCroydon App doesn't. Does the Council formally recognise one app is superior to the other?

Is your Administration investing time and money into ironing out the bugs the residents above have reported or deferring to the MySociety App?

What message do you think it sends to residents when your own Cabinet can't agree how residents should best report fly-tipping?

Reply

I believe the App did provide a suitable means for residents to report environmental issues to the council, I also believe the App wasn't perfect and needed to be developed further.

Rather than receiving a confirmation email like the Mysociety App the council's App provides a report history of issues reported so residents are able to check previous reports and thus a confirmation email is not necessary. I think it is important to maximise the ways in which residents can report issues to the council. The App is one of many ways to report issues to the council.

The good news is a new smartphone app, designed to make it easier to report fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles, graffiti and more has been launched by Croydon Council. The Don't Mess With Croydon app is a quick way of reporting problems directly to the right team in the council to get them fixed.

Reporting an issue is as simple as taking a photo on your phone, selecting the most appropriate option from more than 17 categories and dropping a pin on a map. The new app is built from the Love Clean Streets app which was created by a Croydon company and used by local authorities across the country.

The app is free to download from the App Store and Google Play Store.

Residents can still contact the council in person, online at www.croydon.gov.uk/doitonline/report-it or on the phone on 020 8726 6000.