

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

Question Number	Question asked by Councillor:	Subject
CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE, LEISURE AND SPORTS Councillor Oliver Lewis		
CQ039-18	Bains, J	Sporting Legacy
CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND RESOURCES Councillor Simon Hall		
CQ080-18	Creatura, M	Council Questions
CQ081-18	Hale, L	Ward Budgets

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Jeet Bains

Councillor Oliver Lewis

Question No. CQ039-18

You said in your 2014 manifesto 'A Labour council will seek to build a sporting legacy for our borough and its people'. What legacy have you created so far?

Reply

The Council have recently appointed Greenwich Leisure Limited to operate their Leisure Facilities and a number of outdoor spaces across the borough in an exciting 20 year partnership. Established in 1993, GLL is the largest UK-based charitable social enterprise delivering leisure, health and community services and started a new Leisure contract on 1st March 2018.

Alongside their core leisure and library divisions, they also operate in sport and legacy development, health intervention and education - as well as running the GLL Community Foundation focussed on supporting local projects and the GLL Sport Foundation; the largest independent athlete support programme in the UK, focussed on supporting today's and tomorrow's athletes.

On Thursday 14th June I was delighted to be invited to the wealth of young sporting talent event within Croydon which I found truly inspiring. Forty eight talented young athletes from Croydon will benefit from funding and will be supported through the GLL Sport Foundation (GSF), which is the largest independent athlete support programme in the UK. The athlete awards cover Olympic, Paralympic, Deaflympic, Special Olympic and Commonwealth sporting disciplines. With a staggering 90% of award recipients receiving no other sport funding and 72% of recipients being aged under 21, the GLL Sport Foundation has highlighted a vital funding gap for young talented athletes currently competing at National and International levels.

I am sure you will join me to wish our athletes every success during this funding programme.

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Mario Creatura

Councillor Simon Hall

Question No. CQ080-18

'In 2015 the Labour administration amended the Council constitution. Among the many changes enacted was an alteration in the procedure for councillors submitting 'council questions' – a device by which democratically elected representatives can scrutinise the administration and seek redress for our residents.

Before these changes were made, in advance of each full Council meeting councillors were able to send in a written question to the relevant Cabinet member from which they would be allowed to orally ask a follow up question. This not only engaged councillors in the questioning process thoroughly, but ensured data was gathered in advance of the meeting to improve the quality of the questions.

The changes in 2015 removed the requirement to submit written questions in advance. Instead councillors can ask questions at any time and receive a written reply within three weeks.

Could the Leader please answer the following questions:

1. How many written council questions were submitted by councillors to the Council each year between 2010-14?
2. How many written council questions were submitted by councillors to the Council each year between 2014-18?
3. On average how many oral questions were asked in Council meetings each year between 2010-2014?
4. How many council questions were submitted by councillors to the Council each year between 2014-18?
5. Of those written questions submitted by councillors between 2014-18, how many were from the Labour Group and how many from the Conservative Group?

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6. Of those written questions submitted by councillors between 2014-18, how many answers were successfully replied to within the three week stated deadline? Correspondingly, how many were late?'

Reply

Thank you for your question.

Unfortunately some of the assertions you have made in your question aren't factually accurate and I think that it is important to correct those at the outset.

The changes to the Council Question system were agreed unanimously by the Council on 23rd May 2016. Both political groups on the council worked together to develop the proposals, as part of a range of changes, to improve council meetings and enable greater public participation in them.

Those broader changes included:

- Enabling Councillors to question all Members of the Cabinet at every ordinary council meeting;
- Removing the requirement for Councillors to give written notice of their questions to Cabinet Members at Council meetings; and
- Increasing opportunities for residents to participate in the meeting, through public petition debates, an extended public question time and the removal of restrictive requirements to give notice well in advance of meetings.

You have also suggested that the old written question process allowed data to be gathered by Councillors in advance of Council meetings to improve the quality of questions. Again, this point isn't factually accurate as the answers were not circulated to those councillors asking questions in advance of Council meetings.

I should also add that, as you have personally submitted 20% of all written questions since we adopted the new arrangements, you have benefitted more than any other Councillor from being able to get answers to questions at any time of year.

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To answer your specific questions, the detail is as follows:

Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4

Municipal Year	Number of Oral Questions	Written Council Questions
2010-11	105	612
2011-12	152	531
2012-13	137	533
2013-14	154	700
2014-15	158	593
2015-16	95	549
New Constitutional Arrangements		
2016-17	134	176
2017-18	129	124

Question 5

	Submitted by Labour Councillors	Submitted by Conservative Group	Submitted by Mario Creatura
2014-2016*	378	764	21
2016-2018	39	261	58

Question 6

Between May 2014 and May 2016, all written questions received a response at the Council meeting and the three week response time did not apply.

Following the changes to the Constitution in May 2016, records have not been retained for response times for written questions before October 2016.

Municipal Year	Answered within 3 weeks	Answer after 3 weeks
2016-17 (partial record)	45	25
2017-18	32	70

QUESTIONS FOR CABINET MEMBERS

from Councillor Lynne Hale

Councillor Simon Hall

Question No. CQ081-18

Please could you advise whether councillors will be receiving Community Ward Budgets for 2018/19 and if so, what sum is being allocated.

Reply

I can confirm Members will be receiving community ward budgets for this financial year. Each member will receive £8k for 18/19. The details of the simplified application process will be circulated in the next few weeks and there is a training course for members on Tuesday 17 July.