

REPORT TO:	COUNCIL 29 MARCH 2021
SUBJECT:	CROYDON QUESTION TIME: A) PUBLIC QUESTIONS B) LEADER AND CABINET QUESTIONS
LEAD OFFICER:	Jacqueline Harris Baker, Executive Director Resources and Monitoring Officer
WARDS:	ALL
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: The business reports of the Leader and Cabinet are prepared in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules at Part 4A of the Constitution.	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the process for:
- a) public questions; and
 - b) questions to the Leader and Cabinet from Councillors.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Part 4A of the Constitution details the process that allows for the Leader and Cabinet Members to take oral questions. Question Time is split into two parts; public questions and Councillors' questions to the Leader and Cabinet.

Public Questions

- 2.2 Public questions can be asked of the Leader or Cabinet Members on issues of policy at the Meeting as set out within the Constitution Part 4A, Sections 3.12 – 3.15. Any questions of a purely factual or of a detailed nature that cannot be answered on the evening shall be noted and shall receive a written response within three weeks following the meeting. The responses shall be published on the Council's website.
- 2.3 Public Questions shall only be taken at Ordinary Council meetings and shall be allocated a total time of 30 minutes. This timeframe shall include both the questions and responses by the relevant Cabinet Members or Leader.
- 2.4 The Mayor has absolute discretion to decline to allow any question to be dealt with under this procedure on the grounds that it addresses matters that would be inappropriate to consider at the meeting, including where the questions being asked are repetitive or have already been addressed.

- 2.5 Following advice from the Government and Public Health England to enforce social distancing and prevent the spread of Coronavirus, it is not possible at the current time to hold public meetings in the Town Hall. The Coronavirus Act 2020 passed on 25 March 2020 and subsequent regulations have made it possible for Councils to hold virtual meetings. As a result, Members of the Public are unable to ask questions from the public gallery in the Council Chamber.
- 2.6 However, in accordance with Part 4A, paragraph 3.15(ii), the Mayor may also accept questions from Members of the Public submitted by email to the designated email address by 12 noon on the Friday prior to an ordinary Council meeting. The Mayor will put questions received by email to the Leader or the relevant Cabinet Member and, where a number of questions are received on the same subject, the Mayor may put a summary of those questions instead.

Leader and Cabinet Questions:

- 2.7 This item is to enable Members to ask questions of the Leader and Cabinet on issues of policy. Any questions of a purely factual or of a detailed nature that cannot be answered on the evening shall be noted and shall receive a written response within three weeks following the meeting. The responses shall be published on the Council's website.
- 2.8 Questions which relate to a current planning or licensing matter or any matter relating to an individual or entity in respect of which that individual or entity has a right of recourse to a review or right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment shall not be permitted. In addition, questions shall not be received or responded to where they pertain to anticipated or ongoing litigation, conciliation or mediation or any employment or personnel related issues or disputes.
- 2.9 The Leader shall be the first to respond to questions under this item and the total time allocated to questions by Members to, and responses from the Leader, shall be 15 minutes. The first two minutes of the Leader's 15 minute slot may be used by the Leader to make any announcements.
- 2.10 Cabinet Members, divided up into three 'pools' of three Members each, shall thereafter respond to questions by other Members of the Council. The total time allocated to each 'pool' of Cabinet Members shall be 30 minutes. The three Cabinet Members shall each be permitted to use two minutes of this 30 minute slot to make announcements.
- 2.11 The 'pools' for this meeting will be as follows:

Pool 1

Name	Portfolio
Oliver Lewis	Cabinet Member for Culture & Regeneration
Alisa Flemming	Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Learning
Janet Campbell	Cabinet Member for Families, Health & Social Care

Pool 2

Name	Portfolio
Patricia Hay-Justice	Cabinet Member for Homes
Manju Shahul-Hameed	Cabinet Member for Communities, Safety & Business Recovery

Pool 3

Name	Portfolio
Stuart King	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Croydon Renewal
Muhammad Ali	Cabinet Member for Sustainable Croydon
Callton Young	Cabinet Member for Resources & Financial Governance

- 2.12 Representatives of political groups may give advance notice to the Council Solicitor by 12 noon on the Friday preceding an ordinary Council Meeting, the names of the first two Members of their respective political group that they wish the Mayor to call to ask a question of each Member of the Cabinet, including the Leader of the Council.
- 2.13 After those Members have been called, the Mayor will call Members that indicate they have a question, with a presumption of inviting questions from as many different Members as possible. Each Member asking a question will also be allowed to ask a supplementary questions.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None