

COUNCIL MEETING – 2 NOVEMBER 2022

A. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. From local resident Dimitri Shvorob to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Can you please comment on your department recently spending £90,000 on two premium Land Rovers, while refusing to fund pedestrian crossings, costing £10,000-20,000 each?

2. From local resident Dimitri Shvorob to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Can you please share and contrast usage statistics for Bexley's children's centres before and after last year's "reconfiguration", which saw 4 out of 9 locations, mainly in the Borough's poorer areas, shuttered?

B. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

1. From Councillor Larry Ferguson to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

Does the Cabinet Member believe the impact of the Government's fiscal statement of 23rd September has made the Council's long-term financial position better or worse?

2. From Councillor Baljeet Singh Gill to Councillor Teresa O'Neill OBE, Leader of the Council:

Does the Leader and her group condemn all forms of racism?

3. From Councillor Andrew Curtois to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Can the Cabinet Member say what the impact of the 2021 strike by Unite Union - and backed entirely by Labour Councillors - has had on this Borough's recycling rate for 2021/22?

4. From Councillor Lisa Moore to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

I would like to ask the Cabinet Member for Education what impact the opening of the new Cleeve Meadow and Cornerstone Schools has had on SEN provision in Bexley.

5. From Councillor Anna Day to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

What representations have the Council made to the Secretary of State for Transport and Southeastern regarding the December timetable changes?

6. From Councillor Zainab Asunramu to Councillor Sue Gower MBE, Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing:

Would the Cabinet Member join me in congratulating the BAME Staff Network on the success of events they have held in October in celebrating Black History Month?

7. From Councillor Andy Dourmough to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

What action is being taken to support households with costs of living pressures?

8. From Councillor June Slaughter to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Would the Cabinet Member for Places set out the details of the new textile recycling scheme which has recently launched?

9. From Councillor Anna Day to Councillor Teresa O'Neill OBE, Leader of the Council:

Could the Leader of the Council confirm her intention to remain as Leader of the Council for the rest of the Municipal Year 2022/23?

10. From Councillor Larry Ferguson to Councillor Cafer Munur, Cabinet Member for Growth:

Could the Cabinet Member confirm the percentage of planning applications that hit the affordable housing requirements, as outlined in the Local Plan, which were approved in 2021/22?

11. From Councillor Caroline Newton to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Can the Cabinet Member for Education tell me what is the current performance level by the Council in completing Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) assessments within the target of 20 weeks?

12. From Councillor Janice Ward-Wilson to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Will the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please update us on the current position regarding availability and costs of residential placements?

13. From Councillor Daniel Francis to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

Given the current Prime Minister's statement on 14th October 2022 that "spending will grow less rapidly than previously planned", what is the Cabinet Member's estimate of the impact on the Council's future spending ability if this were to be seen in the grants which the Council receives?

14. From Councillor Daniel Francis to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Could the Cabinet Member confirm in which month of this Municipal Year he believes consultation will be undertaken with residents regarding the introduction of a Belvedere Controlled Parking Zone?

15. From Councillor Chris Taylor to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Will the Cabinet Member for Places join me in congratulating and thanking our Parks team and the Friends groups and volunteers whose work has resulted in Danson Park and Lesnes Abbey being voted as among the very best parks in London?

16. From Councillor Caroline Newton to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Following Black History Month, will the Cabinet Member please update us on the progress of the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) Action Plan within the service?

17. From Councillor Nicola Taylor to Councillor Cafer Munur, Cabinet Member for Growth:

Could the Cabinet Member give an assurance that despite the high tender costs of Erith Riverside Gardens which is under review, the much-needed play equipment will remain part of the project?

18. From Councillor Daniel Francis to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Could the Cabinet Member confirm in which month of this Municipal Year he believes consultation will be undertaken with residents regarding potential changes to the operation of the current Abbey Wood Controlled Parking Zone?

19. From Councillor James Hunt to Councillor Melvin Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services and Health:

Would the Cabinet Member agree that the new enhanced access to GP's will deliver better service for residents?

20. From Councillor Bola Carew to Councillor Melvin Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services and Health:

Is the Cabinet Member committed to supporting the Obesity Strategy?

21. From Councillor Nicola Taylor to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

Could the Cabinet Member please update Members on the impact of rising building costs, rising inflation, housing market slowdown on the projected dividend from BexleyCo post 2024/25?

22. From Councillor Anna Day to Councillor Melvin Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services and Health:

Could the Cabinet Member detail plans on how the Council will narrow the unacceptable gap and improve public health outcomes for people in the North of the Borough?

23. From Councillor Christine Catterall to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Can I ask the Cabinet Member for Education for an update on the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme organised by the London Borough of Bexley during the school summer holidays 2022?

24. From Councillor Andy Dourmough to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

What is the Cabinet Member's assessment of the impact on local government finances caused by global economic pressures?

25. From Councillor Zainab Asunramu to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please outline what the Council is doing to support care leavers during this cost-of-living crisis?

26. From Councillor Anna Day to Councillor Melvin Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services and Health:

Could the Cabinet Member detail how the mental health needs of residents will be met over the coming months, with the knowledge that there is already an increased waiting time for support and a cost-of-living crisis which is further impacting our residents' mental health?

27. From Councillor Peter Reader to Councillor David Leaf, Cabinet Member for Resources:

Can the Cabinet Member for Resources give an update on the rollout of the Council Tax Energy Rebate?

28. From Councillor Lisa Moore to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Will the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please tell us what percentage of care leavers are in suitable accommodation?

29. From Councillor Stefano Borella to Councillor Teresa O'Neill OBE, Leader of the Council:

Could the Leader update Members on how the fair funding review is going?

30. From Councillor Stefano Borella to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Could the Cabinet Member outline what arrangements were put in place to protect library staff and users during the recent disgraceful demonstrations organised by the far-right group 'patriotic alternative' against the well-supported drag queen story?

31. From Councillor Rags Sandhu to Councillor Cafer Munur, Cabinet Member for Growth:

Can the Cabinet Member for Growth update us on the success of the Night Markets in Bexleyheath?

32. From Councillor Mabel Ogundayo to Councillor Teresa O'Neill OBE, Leader of the Council:

Could the Leader please outline where in Bexley's budget "there is fat to be trimmed", as stated by Paul Scully MP, the government minister for Local Government?

33. From Councillor Mabel Ogundayo to Councillor Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Could the Cabinet Member explain why there is yet another delay to Thamesmead Library opening, whilst the rest of the building is fully functional?

34. From Councillor Esther Amaning to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Can the Cabinet Member confirm that ECHPs have been assessed on time, that other means to identify children with autism are highlighted in schools, so that there is no delay in having ECHPs completed?

35.From Councillor Esther Amaning to Councillor Melvin Seymour, Cabinet Member for Adults' Services and Health:

Could the Cabinet Member please evidence the support voluntary services are being given by the Local Authority to continue providing the mental health support to vulnerable residents of Bexley?

36.From Councillor Larry Ferguson to Peter Craske, Cabinet Member for Places:

Could the Cabinet Member assure me that cleaning schedules and resources to deal with rubbish and fly tipping are spread evenly across the whole of the Borough?

37.From Councillor Zainab Asunramu to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Will the Cabinet Member for Education update us on the way that the Council decides school transport applications for children with disabilities since the 2019 Ombudsman criticism?

38.From Councillor Esther Amaning to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Could the Cabinet Member please outline learnings the Council will be taking forward amidst complaints from parents of SEN children within schools, to ensure that parents' concerns are being addressed, in a timely and respectful manner?

39.From Councillor Zainab Asunramu to Councillor Richard Diment, Cabinet Member for Education:

Will the Cabinet Member for Education, tell us what assurances he gave to parents of King Henry School amidst the school's inadequate Ofsted ruling, and provide an update on the conversations he has had with Leigh Academies Trust with regards to a strategy for improvement?

40.From Councillor Wendy Perfect to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please outline the Council's process for ensuring the relevant agencies are notified when children in our care are reported missing?

41.From Councillor Zainab Asunramu to Councillor Philip Read, Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Could the Cabinet Member for Children's Services please update Members on the Council's approach to preventing young people in the Borough being groomed for County lines?