The Mayor’s Chaplain, Reverend Luke Wickings of St Paul’s Church, Hook, opened the meeting with prayers.

**Mayor’s Police Award**

The Mayor presented the annual ‘Howard Jones’ Policing Award to Police Sergeant Luke McCusker, who was nominated by his commanding officer for ‘professionalism and dedication in working to ensure the safety and security of the people of Kingston’. The citation was read out by Chief Superintendent Sally Benatar, the BCU Commander for the South West London Police.
14. **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Roy Arora, Fiona Boult, Simon Edwards, Ian George, Jaesung Ha, Alison Holt, Anita Schaper, Thay Thayalan and Sharon Young. Apologies for lateness were submitted on behalf of Councillor John Sweeney.

15. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

16. **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2019 are confirmed as a correct record.

17. **Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor congratulated those who live or work in the Borough who had been recognised in the Queen’s Birthday Honours including Mary Louise Prince (a teacher in the Reading Centre, Kingston upon Thames, for services to Young People with Dyslexia in the borough).

The Mayor announced some dates for Members’ diaries as follows:

a) The annual cricket match between Kingston Race and Equalities Cricket Match and the Council to take place on Saturday, 20 July in Victoria Park, Balaclava Road, Surbiton at 1pm.

b) The Kingston Carnival (which is in its 19th Year) to take place in Kingston Town Centre on Sunday 1 September.

c) The Retiring Mayor’s Dinner for Councillor Thay Thayalan to take place on Monday 16 September at 7.30pm at the Holiday Inn, Portsmouth Road, KT6 5Q.

18. **Petitions**

18.1 There were four petitions submitted at the Council meeting as follows:

1. **Section 80 of Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (request for a Community Governance Review and a new Parish Council in New Malden)**

The petition which was submitted by Mr James Giles had 321 RBK postcode signatures and requested: ‘This petition is addressed to Kingston Council under Section 80 of Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. We the undersigned each being a local government elector for the area defined in the map (see [https://is.gd/tedOa8](https://is.gd/tedOa8)) call upon Kingston Council to conduct a Community Governance Review in accordance with its duties under Section 83 of the Act. Pursuant of Section 80(4) of the Act, we recommend in the strongest of terms the
Council designates the area defined by the line on the map a parishes area, and further recommend a Town Council be established for the proposed Parish, to be called New Malden Town Council.

(2) ‘Stop Secret Plans for Over Development in Kingston’ petition

The petition which was submitted by Ms Caroline Shah Scott had 1316 postcode signatures and requested: “Kingston Council and the GLA are trying to condemn The Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames to a future of high-density over-development that has been sneaked in behind residents’ backs.

‘Do we want to see Kingston’s neighbourhoods become dominated by many more, ugly, dense, high-rise towers? Is this the kind of development that is appropriate for the Royal Borough?

‘We were never asked. We still have time to act before our neighbourhoods and communities are destroyed before our eyes. Please help us to tell the Mayor of London and the Examiner in Public of the London Plan what has gone on and to save The Royal Borough from a future over which we have had no say.

‘The GLA is using an unsound document, Kingston Council’s “Direction of Travel”, planned secretly, without appropriate authority, and away from the scrutiny of council committee and residents, as the policy hook to support the designation of vast swathes of the Borough as an “Opportunity Area” in the new London Plan.

‘We need to expose the undemocratic and surreptitious way in which the Council cooked up these plans so that we can stop them and exercise our democratic right to influence the shape, form and scale that development will take place in all our neighbourhoods.

‘The GLA and Kingston council’s plans for Kingston to be designated with multiple “Opportunity Areas” are subject to independent Examination in Public for the London Plan in January 2019. We must get public recognition NOW for the fact that the Direction of Travel is unsound before the plans have been agreed.

We cannot rely on Kingston Council or the GLA to act in our interests. We need the people of Kingston, London and beyond to stand up for our democratic rights and say that enough is enough. Please support us before it is too late.”

(3) ‘Climate Emergency: Stop Demolition Extinction in Kingston’ petition

The petition which was submitted by Dr Phil Bevin had 569 postcode signatures including signatories from an online petition and requested:

“We the undersigned call upon Royal Borough of Kingston Council to thoroughly rethink its plan to demolish the Borough’s council estates and to opt for a much less environmentally and socially damaging programme of refurbishment. We respect the need for a democratic decision from residents. We also welcome the plans for a ballot but we urge the Council to act responsibly, recognise the Climate Emergency we face, and the overwhelming scientific evidence against demolition (see below). We demand that the Council recommend that residents vote no to demolition in the Cambridge Road Estate ballot, which - contrary to the Council’s current option of a second ballot - should be considered binding and final.

Why is this important? Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames will debate whether to declare a ‘Climate Emergency’ at its next Full Council meeting on 25/7/19. Meanwhile the Council is presently undertaking an environmentally and
socially disastrous plan to demolish its council estates and replace them with developments of huge density, which will result in a massive reduction of gardens and parkland. Development of the ‘Master Plan’ for Cambridge Road Estate (CRE) is already underway, and Sheephose Way and Kingsnympton Park estates will be ‘considered [...] once Cambridge Road Estate has progressed further.

Ecological disaster: There are around 180 trees on Cambridge Road Estate alone - around 125 of which the Council plans to cut down during demolition. These trees sustain the delicate ecology of the local area, which will be devastated by demolition. Local ecologist, Alison Fure, has made this clear to the council, adding that: “We have lost 12 million house sparrows since the 1970s. Populations continue to be fragile in some London boroughs, due to the fast pace and the amount of Total Footprint developments some councils have been prepared to accept. On the Cambridge Road Estate, there are approximately 50 house sparrows nesting predominantly on the elevations (tile cladding) or accessing faults in the roofline. Sparrows appear on the Section 41 list of priority species and the JNCC red list of conservation concern and can be deemed to be endangered. This means that they are a material consideration in the planning process.

Ecologists can assist, by identifying and replacing ALL the features that the birds are dependent on. This will never work if the equation is driven by density and profit. The planning team need to understand the needs of the species; the communal nature of the bird, the requirement for safe places to breed, squabble and dust bathe, the need for communication with other house sparrow colonies (so you are not constantly breeding with your brothers and sisters) and a healthy functioning environment full of insects and seeds (after all even seed eating birds require insects to feed their young). And of course these insects are provided by the 150 trees of more than 50 years in age some of which have had a CAVAT value of £48,000: see here for more info https://www.walk-with-jane.com/trees-and-the-environment, http://alisonfure.blogspot.com/2019/04/londons-house-sparrows-cambridge-road.html

Climate catastrophe: Adding to the impending destruction of Kingston’s habitats, demolition of the Royal Borough’s Council Estates will contribute massively towards Climate Change. Local biologist, Struan Dudman, points out that: “According to the United Nations, the manufacture of building materials makes up 11% of total global greenhouse gas emissions, which then becomes embodied carbon, locked into the buildings. Carbon emissions from ongoing uses, such as heating and electricity make up 28% of total global greenhouse gas emissions. This means that embodied carbon is 30% of the in-use lifetime carbon emissions from buildings, so embodied carbon matters about as much as energy efficiency and renewables. When demolition takes place, embodied carbon is released back into the atmosphere, which makes a big impact on Climate Change. Finally, construction accounts for almost 47% of total CO2 emissions in the UK; if we don’t need to build new properties then we shouldn’t do it. In terms of Kingston’s Council estates, and Cambridge Road Estate in Particular, an estimated 60,391 of CO2e will be released in regeneration, compared to 6,039 or less for refurbishment. To put this in perspective, regeneration will increase an amount of carbon equivalent to the annual emissions from 27,000 new homes, just to get 100 more social homes! It will take at least 10 years to demolish/rebuild the CRE. Over that period, 6,820 new social housing units are required under Sadiq Khan’s new London Plan in Kingston. 100 new “social” units out of 6,820 over a 10-year regeneration is a drop in the ocean, all at an appallingly high environmental cost:
It is important to note that all of the buildings on Cambridge Road Estate are safe, structurally sound and will remain so for at least the next 30 years: https://bit.ly/2KpFdVj

Social cleansing: Surveys by residents and campaigners show that an overwhelming majority of people living on Cambridge Road Estate do not want demolition; many would prefer the much more environmentally friendly option of refurbishing and renovating the estate’s existing buildings. This, in part, because they are worried about the possibility of not being able to return to the new estate, which will be densely packed with higher value flats, possibly with higher rents, even as green space is significantly reduced; out of one recent survey conducted by the organisers of this petition, of 59 residents, only 7 claimed to support the Council’s present plans.

The Alternative: There alternatives to demolition. In the past, the Council has confirmed that it can borrow at least £400,000,000 from the government’s Public Works Loans Board, for the refurbishment of its existing housing stock and for the construction of council housing without demolition: https://bit.ly/2Wn2DBX

(4) ‘Save The Rose Theatre’ petition

The petition which was submitted by Dr Phil Bevin had received 16,122 signatures online including over 500 RBK postcode signatures and requested:

“Due to Council cuts, the beloved Rose Theatre may be forced to close: the Council "will strip the Rose Theatre of its £265,000 annual funding by 2022 and will not replace a £147,000 bursary, which it paid the final instalment of this year”.”

This is at a time when the Council is ploughing millions into its reserves and raising its Councillors’ allowances. We the undersigned know that Kingston Council is not bankrupt; it has the money to save the Rose -- the cultural heart of Kingston -- and must not cut its funding.

I personally visit The Rose a lot with my wife. There have been some fantastic productions and it's a great night out that's affordable! It has strong connections to organisations across Kingston, including with the University.

It really is a centre of culture and would be a tragedy to lose it.”

*https://www.standard.co.uk/go/london/theatre/rose-theatre-kingston-closing-council-funding-sir-peter-hall-a4140701.html*

18.2 The Mayor indicated that the above petitions would be dealt with in accordance with the Council’s Petitions Scheme.
19. Deputations

The Council received five deputations of which notice had been submitted in advance in accordance with Standing Order no.17, as follows:

i) Waiver of Call-in – presented by Ms Caroline Shah

[Concern about the use of the urgency provisions in the Council’s Community Call in Procedure under which community call-in shall not apply to a decision ‘if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process to the implementation of that decision would seriously prejudice the Council’s or the public’s interests.’ The deputation considered that the community call in procedure should only be waived when the justification is without question, can be robustly evidenced and ‘is not caused by internal issues of the council’s own making’.

(ii) Investment Company – presented by Ms Caroline Shah

[Concern about the recommendations in the agenda in relation to “Incorporating a company structure containing a wholly-owned property investment company” for a number of reasons, including the significant risks arising from financial and management challenges across the Council’s current activities, the complex structures would need to be established to manage commercial property investments for which there was a concern that the Council does not currently have the skills, and that the current economic and political uncertainty in the UK could result in a prolonged downturn in the property market.]

(iii) Engagement’ – presented by Mr James Giles

[Concern about the Council’s engagement with the community and proposed constitutional changes including change of threshold for petitions to be debated at full Council. Request for high level of conduct from elected Members and information about his campaign (called ‘OurKingston’) for an Elected Mayor for the borough.]

(iv) Coalition Against Demolition – presented by Dr Phil Bevin

[Concern that opponents of demolition at Cambridge Road Estate had been criticised in a ‘Liberal Democrat press release’]

(v) Grove Ward – presented by Mr Bob Tyler

[Concern about Ward councillor representation for Grove Ward and request for a follow-up meeting on Neville House Yard]

20. Motion: Hate Crime

(1) In accordance with Standing Order No 8(A)(5), the Council debated the following motion which had been submitted by the Administration, with reference to Background Briefing Notes which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Motion was proposed by Councillor Mark Beynon and seconded by Councillor Sam Foulder-Hughes:
‘Liberal Democrat Administration Motion: Hate Crime

‘This Council notes:

- hate crime is a scourge on our society, which must be stamped out
- for many minority groups, public spaces such as public transport, have become less safe, with verbal and physical attacks driven by misogyny, homophobia and racism becoming more frequent
- hate crime levels have soared since the UK voted narrowly to leave the European Union in 2016
- there have been 316 recorded hate crimes in Kingston in the last 12 months
- Kingston ran a successful hate crime conference last month
- the Liberal Democrats, unlike the Conservatives, have accepted the All-Party Parliamentary Group working definition of Islamophobia

‘This Council believes:

- discrimination in all its forms and manifestations is not only immoral in itself but also undermines attempts at building the secure, prosperous, and decent society that we all want to live in
- there has been a lack of leadership across the national parties to confront discrimination

‘This Council resolves to:

- continue to work with Kingston Race & Equalities Council (KREC), Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL), and Kingston LGBT network on how we can combat hate crime
- formulate a Tackling Hate Crime policy for Kingston to demonstrate our commitment
- urge central government to reverse recent cuts to the police service in order to restore confidence that people from minority groups are safe on our streets
- continue to work with all religious institutions which are vulnerable to hate attacks
- fly the LGBT flag from the Guildhall during Pride month next year, in accordance with a new flag protocol.’

(2) The following amendment was moved by Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner, and seconded by Councillor Nicola Sheppard:

‘Add new paragraph before This Council resolves: This Council recognises the cultural importance and benefit to the wider population of collective festivals in bringing different parts of the community together to share understanding and experiences of different groups and individuals.’

‘Add in This Council resolves: (New bullet at end) ‘To organise from next year an annual Pride event in Kingston in a public arena such as the Market Place to bring together all the people of the borough in celebration of human life in all its forms and provide a platform to continue the fight for equality and to challenge prejudice.’

After debate, on being put to the vote, the above amendment was defeated.

Voting:

For: 1 Member of the Council (Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner)
Against: 31 Members of the Council (the Mayor, Councillor Margaret Thompson, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Munir Ravalia, and Councillors Olivia Boult, Zain Abbas, Stephanie Archer, Kim Bailey, Tricia Bamford, Rowena Bass, Mark Beynon, Olivia Boult, Tim Cobbett, Emily Davey, Lorraine Dunstone, Mark Durrant, Sam Foulder-Hughes, Hilary Gander, Dennis Goodship, Liz Green, Lesley Heap, Caroline Kerr, Andreas Kirsch, Katrina Lidbetter, Rebekah Moll, Dave Ryder-Mills, Malcolm Self, Christine Stuart, John Sweeney, Jon Tolley, Diane White, Annette Wookey, and Yogan Yoganathan)

Abstaining: 8 Members of the Council (Councillors Sushila Abraham, David Cunningham, Kevin Davis, Ed Fram, Jason Hughes, Maria Netley, Nicola Sheppard and Olly Wehring)

(3) The following amendment was moved by Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner and seconded by Councillor Kevin Davis:

‘Add in This Council Notes: ‘In October 2018 the Metropolitan Police’s Lead on Hate Crime, Superintendent Waheed Khan, confirmed the Met would also investigate as Hate Crimes attacks on victims not currently covered by the Equalities Act’s protected characteristics such as hair colour (red head) or lifestyle such as goths.

‘Add in This Council believes: (New bullet at end) ‘Kingston Council should be a trailblazer in rooting out discrimination and tackling hate crime in all its forms wherever and whenever it occurs in the Borough’

‘Add in This Council resolves (First bullet after ‘with’): ‘the Metropolitan Police’

(Second bullet after ‘Kingston’): ‘including characteristics outlined by the Metropolitan Police not included in the Equality Act such as hair colour and lifestyle’.

After debate, on being put to the vote, the above amendment was defeated.

Voting:

For: 1 Member of the Council (Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner)

Against: 24 Members of the Council (, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Munir Ravalia, and Councillors Zain Abbas, Stephanie Archer, Kim Bailey, Tricia Bamford, Rowena Bass, Mark Beynon, Tim Cobbett, Emily Davey, Lorraine Dunstone, Mark Durrant, Hilary Gander, Dennis Goodship, Liz Green, Lesley Heap, Jason Hughes, Caroline Kerr, Andreas Kirsch, Katrina Lidbetter, Rebekah Moll, Malcolm Self, Nicola Sheppard, Christine Stuart and John Sweeney.)

Abstaining: 14 Members of the Council (the Mayor, Councillor Margaret Thompson and Councillors Sushila Abraham, Olivia Boult, David Cunningham, Kevin Davis, Sam Foulder-Hughes, Ed Fram, Maria Netley, Dave Ryder-Mills, Jon Tolley, Olly Wehring, Diane White, Annette Wookey and Yogan Yoganathan)

(4) An amendment was moved by Councillor Kevin Davis, Leader of the Opposition, and seconded by Councillor Rowena Bass, the effect of which was to:

☐ delete the words ‘the Liberal Democrats, unlike the Conservatives, have accepted the All-Party Parliamentary Group working definition of Islamophobia’
substitute the following as the 3rd bullet point after ‘This Council resolves to’:
‘urge The Mayor of London to reverse recent cuts to the police service and Kingston Council to restore its local policing contribution in order to restore confidence that people from minority groups are safe on our streets.’

The Council adjourned from 9:25pm – 9:37pm to consider the above amendment.

On reconvening, Councillor Malcolm Self and Councillor Sam Foulder-Hughes indicated that, in the interests of seeking unanimity, they would be willing to support the amendment set out in (4) above if the words ‘and Kingston Council to restore its local policing contribution’ were withdrawn. Councillor Kevin Davis and Councillor David Cunningham agreed that they were willing for those words to be withdrawn.

On being put to the vote, the amendment in paragraph (4) above (subject to the amendment set out in paragraph (6) above) was agreed unanimously.

On being put to the vote, the substantive Motion was agreed unanimously – to read as follows:

‘This Council notes:
  • hate crime is a scourge on our society, which must be stamped out
  • for many minority groups, public spaces such as public transport, have become less safe, with verbal and physical attacks driven by misogyny, homophobia and racism becoming more frequent
  • hate crime levels have soared since the UK voted narrowly to leave the European Union in 2016
  • there have been 316 recorded hate crimes in Kingston in the last 12 months
  • Kingston ran a successful hate crime conference last month

‘This Council believes:
  • discrimination in all its forms and manifestations is not only immoral in itself but also undermines attempts at building the secure, prosperous, and decent society that we all want to live in
  • there has been a lack of leadership across the national parties to confront discrimination

‘This Council resolves to:
  • continue to work with Kingston Race & Equalities Council (KREC), Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL), and Kingston LGBT network on how we can combat hate crime
  • formulate a Tackling Hate Crime policy for Kingston to demonstrate our commitment
  • urge The Mayor of London to reverse recent cuts to the police service in order to restore confidence that people from minority groups are safe on our streets
  • continue to work with all religious institutions which are vulnerable to hate attacks
  • fly the LGBT flag from the Guildhall during Pride month next year, in accordance with a new flag protocol.’
21. Questions

In accordance with Standing Order 6 (1&2) replies were given to Council questions of which notice had been given, as follows:

By: Councillor Kevin Davis
To: Councillor John Sweeney, Chair of Licensing Committee

Does the Chair regret the decision to implement a complicated community grants scheme where licencing fees have been implemented for community groups that are paid through grants given by the Council? Does he agree this is wasteful of valuable resources and that we would be better to revert, like other Councils, to free licences for charities and community organisations who wish to raise funds?

Reply:

I think in answering this question, just having a look through, first of all, who receives grants from Kingston Council, we have examples for the last 12 months. We have: Friends of Berrylands Nature Reserve, Friends of the Fishponds, Friends of Queen’s Promenade, Friends of Kingston Road Rec., Chessington Community Garden, CREST Lunch Club, Kingston Churches Action Against Homelessness, Oxygen, various defibrillators for different premises, Canbury Band Stand, Kingston CRE’s Drop a Knife Save a Life campaign, Rose Walk Residents, Adopt a Station, the Royal Surbiton Marching Band, a youth charity called Yorda, Alpha Road Estate Children’s Party, and Anstee Bridge.

And the overriding point is that all of these sorts of groups are eligible to apply for community grants and the one thing they all have in common is that none of them need a street trading licence so what we have done to make the simple process much simpler is the officers have worked very hard to create a portal, a website, where if you are looking for a community grant, you can go there. It lays out the full process, all the documentation, things that you need to do, and then there is also someone there on the end of the phone to talk you through the process. So, for the vast majority, then of recipients, it isn’t complicated, it’s quite simple, it’s the same as it was before.

The only thing you need to do to receive these grants is to produce your Articles of Association, a bank statement and a set of annual accounts. This demonstrates to the Council and to any grant audit body, they understand where the money is going, it’s going where it’s supposed to go and the trustees of that group are running it properly. And that’s been the experience of various groups that I’ve got involved in. It is understood that when you apply for lottery funding, when you apply for grants, from all sorts of different organisations, that you have to produce the right paperwork and I’m sure you would join with me in agreeing that that is necessary.

Unfortunately, that wasn’t the case until we stepped into the Administration, so we had to maybe enforce some rules a little bit more rigorously and one of those is street trade licensing. I have worked with the officers and there is actually one thing as Chair of Licensing Committee that I must support and that is upholding the law of the land in relation to street trading. Unfortunately for us, and we have sought legal
opinions, from outside Kingston, the law makes no distinction between a charity trading on the street, raising funds, and someone who is commercially trading for their own profit so the law requires that they all have a licence. So I am working with the officers and we will hopefully be able to have resolved this, for a system and a fund that is available, as we passed the resolution at the Licensing Committee, where those organisations, and there are a few but not too many, who require for their fundraising efforts a street trading licence, that we will be able to support them because the law does not allow you to waive the license fee for anyone, as I am advised by the officers and I accept their advice. So the answer to your question is: it’s not complicated and we will fix the issue around street trading licences for those charity groups affected by that change of policy.

Supplementary:

I would just make the comment that Westminster Council has just implemented a new scheme where it’s free so it’s obviously not against the law as Westminster is one of the biggest licensing authorities in London. In your role as Chair, do you accept that you said to a member of the community who is here this evening, can I give you a piece of advice if you apply to any grant maker ‘don’t threaten to sue them and don’t come to me for help again, now I know what you’re really like. I hope you don’t waste too much officer time with your idiocy.’ Does the Chair believe that he is trying to ‘make Kingston Better Together’?

Reply:

Absolutely. On your first point, Kevin, you’re wrong about Westminster. The way the system in Westminster works is that the charities need to pay for their licence up front and then they need to request from an officer at Westminster for a refund and that is at the discretion of the officer in Westminster, so that is how the system works. I have been sent an email and I been shown how the policy works.

So, as I said, I am working with the officers and we will be able to announce the details of the policy which will exist with regards to the charities and street trading licences very soon. And, yes, with regard to all charity groups, I will say the same to every charity I deal with, the ones that I have helped have all managed to apply for their grants from Kingston without trouble and produce the required documentation. I have had one organisation who is refusing to comply with those requirements of the Council. I had a meeting with the individual where I outlined to him what those requirements are. That organisation has refused categorically to provide those requirements so I have informed that individual and that group that I can’t help them and that the constant request and demand for grant without completing the right application process that all the other organisations are required to complete means that they cannot be given a reward. And I hope that you will join with me in agreeing that, at these cash-strapped times for councils, we need to be diligent about all the money and if an organisation and its trustees cannot convince us or are unwilling to show us that they are using that money appropriately, then unfortunately the officers are right to either ask them to produce the correct money or deny a grant.
By:  Councillor Christine Stuart
To:  Councillor Kim Bailey, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

The Liberal Democrat manifesto promised to introduce a new ‘Changing Places’ toilet. May I congratulate everyone involved, especially the Bentall Centre, that it has been installed and officially opened. Could you tell me who will benefit from this Changing Place facility?

Reply:

Thank you for your question. For those that don’t know, the Changing Places facility is different from an accessible toilet in that it has more space and different equipment which makes it suitable for those with complex disabilities and is large enough to accommodate a wheelchair and one or two carers to handle the person who is using it. Those using the facilities include those with profound and multiple disabilities, people with conditions which may affect their movement such as cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis and motor neurone disease. Other people who may find the facility of use are those who suffer from head or spine disabilities, also those living with the effects of a stroke and older people who require assistance. It’s also suitable for ex-service personnel who have sustained injury.

By:  Councillor David Cunningham
To:  Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

The recent residents’ survey demonstrated that there are real concerns about the cleanliness of the streets of our Borough. Why have you failed to deliver on your pledge: “We had cleaner streets and we can again, so we will better monitor and scrutinise our contractors and put in place a named person to deal with complaints to provide the services we deserve.”?

Reply:

Littering is a big problem. The House of Commons Communities and Local Government paper just a few years ago, 2015, said on littering and fly-tipping said: ‘England is a litter-ridden country compared to most of Europe, North America and Japan.’

I don’t know why this is but it is a fact that we have to deal with it and it costs the taxpayer across the country over £700 million per year; that was 2015, so it costs a lot of money to clear up what people leave behind. So clearly it’s a problem and we have a DEFRA consultation that ran until May to try and make the producers of some of the waste packaging deal with their waste and pay the cost of dealing with their waste. And I hope this comes up with a deposit return scheme so we don’t have bottles and cans thrown away.

But in the meantime we have to deal with it. The recent residents’ survey (I think what you were looking at) indicated that 38% of residents responding considered that rubbish or litter lying around is a big or a fairly big problem. What was also within the survey was that 68% of residents are satisfied with the Borough’s Street Cleansing Service, and that number (68%) compares with the last residents’ survey,
under the Administration that you served under, when it was 44% satisfied with the street cleansing.

So all that says to me is that we have a problem – 38% of residents think that we have a big or fairly big problem but that we as a Council are dealing with it. They are happy that we are clearing up after people who do choose to litter.

We have recently entered into new contract arrangements for street cleansing on 1st April and within that there is an increased street cleaning resource in residential areas and we're introducing a more flexible approach, to target areas with higher levels of litter.

Standards will now be actively monitored by officers in our restructured Environment team within the Contracts service and enforced through a stringent set of performance measures.

If we need to have a named person, after we have put all of this in place, then we will do, but the fact that the percentage who are happy with street cleaning has gone up from 44% to 68% shows that we are actually doing a good job and the fact that we are doing a good job is also corroborated by an independent Street Cleaning Survey carried out last year which demonstrated that there over 97% of roads and public spaces in our borough are maintained at or above national standards of cleanliness.

Supplementary:

I’m pleased to hear from Cllr Gander about Japan. You learn an awful lot about geography in this Council – you hear about India and Japan. The point that I would obviously make is that the survey which is quite clear shows a more than 10% drop in the residents’ response that there is a big or fairly big problem to this. We’ve now heard a lot of other statistics but we can’t get away from the basic one which has been compared with other years. She says now that there’s going to be no named person as far as that is concerned so that is another thing in the Manifesto that they haven’t delivered on. This is a serious issue – just bandying statistics around is not satisfactory. You only have to go out and look at the street conditions in Kingston to know that there is a problem there. And it is a problem that is not being addressed. What is the name of the named person – or can she not tell me or has she abandoned the idea?

Reply:

As I said, if we need to appoint a named person we will do. We still have 3 years left to run on our Administration – it is a 4-year Administration as we keep reminding you. You’re ‘bandying statistics’ and I’m ‘bandying statistics’ – the way I see the statistics is that there is a problem with litter and we are taking it very seriously.
By:  Councillor Dave Ryder-Mills  
To:  Councillor Emily Davey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regeneration  

Leaflets have been going out on the Cambridge Road Estate and elsewhere, claiming that the Council wishes to demolish all of Kingston’s housing estates. Could the Portfolio Holder put residents’ minds on the King Henry Estate where I live (and elsewhere) at rest, and confirm that the leaflet is a lie?  

Reply:  
If I’m right you are referring to the latest leaflet in a series of rather excitable leaflets which have caused alarm and distress to residents on the Cambridge Estate to the extent that they have felt the need to contact the Police.  
I can assure you that the Council does not have any plans to demolish all the Council Estates in Kingston. The Council is aware of these colourful leaflets that are in circulation on the estate and is currently carrying out a programme of disseminating the facts in leaflets, posters and exhibitions and I would encourage all residents to attend them.

[The following question, which was called later in the order of questions, should have been called after the first two questions from each of the Party Groups and is therefore shown in its correct location within these Minutes.]

By:  Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner  
To:  Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport  

Question:  
What discussions have councillors and/or council officers had over proposals (whether fully formed or otherwise) to develop Tolworth Court Farm nature reserve?  

Reply:  
A number of local partners (such as community groups and sports clubs representatives), and councillors and officers took part recently in a broad discussion about all the green spaces in Tolworth to ensure they are preserved and maximised for community use.  
No actions or decisions have been taken as a result of this discussion. It was an opportunity for all to share views and ideas, and it was attended by many different groups and representatives.  
Regarding Tolworth Court Farm in particular, there have been high-level discussions between a natural burial provider and the Leader, and also Councillor Dunstone and Planning staff. So one meeting to discuss, in high level, what the natural burial provider wanted to talk about.  

Supplementary:  
Why on earth have you not made any reference to the meetings that Councillor John Sweeney has had with the natural burial company? He met with them last year in Spring, he lobbied me late Spring in front of witnesses, and I have text messages
from other organisations that say he has also attempted to or has lobbied them throughout the Summer months about this scheme. I’m also aware that other senior councillors have been aware of this proposal for some time. So my question is ‘why did it not feature in the amended updated Tolworth Area Plan? why did it not feature in the amended Issues and Options document? and, more importantly, why didn’t the Deputy Leader include it in his response to my question to full Council in December when I specifically asked ‘What conversations had been had regarding the development of Metropolitan Open Land in Tolworth’?

Reply:

The language you’re using about lobbying and behind closed doors really does not apply because there has been no planning application come forward. It’s inappropriate and it’s really not necessary because everything that we have been doing has been entirely open, shown by the fact that we have told you the conversation that we have had. No planning application has come forward. It is not a lobbying matter.

[Councillor Kevin Davis indicated that a question which Councillor Ian George had submitted for the Council meeting could be answered in writing as Councillor George had had to send apologies for the meeting.]

By: Councillor Patricia Bamford
To: Councillor Malcolm Self, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Economic Development

Question:

Things appear to have gone wrong in the planning department. What has been put in place to restore the service to a good standard?

Reply:

The planning department has fallen behind in dealing with their workload and, as a consequence, there are currently delays with the processing of some planning applications and requests for pre-application advice.

An Operational Action Plan has been put in place which focuses on making immediate changes to address the outstanding applications, and to better communicate the situation to our customers.

As part of this, we have already started to increase the level of staffing and we will continue to do so in order to quickly resolve the applications for which some of our customers have regrettably experienced delays. Updates will continue to be provided through the Council website and our customer contact centre.

Separately, the Council has also commissioned an external review of the Development Management service, and that is underway. This is looking at the underlying context of the department and will highlight recommendations for future changes within the service.
22. Incorporated Company Structure containing a Wholly-Owned Property Investment Company

At the Finance and Partnerships Committee meeting held on 27 June 2019 the Committee had considered a report seeking approval to establish a company structure, wholly owned by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, which will include a holding company and an investment company. The investment company (‘Invest Co’) is to be established for the purpose of investment in commercial property, to generate income returns. (These returns will be linked, transparently, to the Council's investment policy which is regularly revised.) The use of wholly owned local authority companies as a vehicle to deliver commercial activity is increasingly common, although, there is not a “one size fits all” model.

The Council considered a report from the Finance and Partnerships Committee with recommendations relating to the following matters:

- the final ‘Guildhall Capital Ltd Business Plan’ 2019/20 (circulated as exempt Annex 6 to the report)
- that a new, Shareholder Committee be established within the Council’s Constitutional arrangements (to provide Council oversight for all RBK company activities in future) and the Member appointments to that Committee
- authorisation to the Section 151 Officer (in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Opposition Spokesperson) to agree the most appropriate longer term financing solution for ‘Guildhall Capital Ltd’. And
- that arrangements are made to facilitate compliance with the proprietary controls explained in paragraph 26 of the report.

The full proposals, including the redacted Business Case, were attached to the report to Council at Annexes 1, 2a & 2b, 3, 4, 5, and exempt Annex 6.

The new Shareholder Committee will be a Committee of the Council established in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to:

- hold the company to account in order to ensure that the Council complies with its fiduciary duty to taxpayers to obtain value for money
- ensure that a prudent approach is applied so that the potential risks of any investment opportunity are fully evaluated, taking into account current and anticipated market conditions and comparison with yields on other forms of investment.

The Shareholder Committee will set out a clear policy on discharge of its responsibilities.

The terms of reference for the Shareholder Committee will be as follows:

- To receive reports, and timetables public reports to Finance and Partnerships Committee on how the companies are performing against their business plan and any matters which may adversely impact on the progress of the Company’s business and affairs.
- To set out triggers where it will intervene (e.g. refer to Finance and Partnerships, the requirement for reappointment of directors if there is no progress against the Business Plan for say 1 or 2 years, or if the company is dormant)
- To evaluate the impact of the companies.
To evaluate the companies’ performance in terms of its return on investment to be delivered to the Council
To approve such matters as require the consent of the Shareholder.
To make any recommendation to Council that the Company be wound up.
To make any recommendation to Council of the disposal of the Council’s shares in the Company.
To adopt and implement an annual audit framework which requires information from companies in which the Council is a shareholder or has an investment. This information will comprise the annual accounts, reports and statements that are required under the Companies Act 2006.

Normal provisions relating to Committee meetings, including Access to Information requirements regarding the publication of agendas and minutes and attendance of the press and public at meetings will apply to the Shareholder Committee.

The members nominated for appointment to the Shareholder Committee were as follows:

- Leader of the Council - Councillor Liz Green
- Portfolio Holder Finance - Councillor Alison Holt
- Councillor Hilary Gander
- Councillor Yogan Yoganathan
- Councillor Ed Fram (with Councillor David Cunningham as alternate)
- the Section 151 Officer as a non-voting advisory member of the Committee.

Resolved that -

1. the recommendations of the Finance and Partnerships Committee on 27 June 2019, as set out on page 1 of the report attached at Annex 1 to the report to the Council are approved;
2. the ‘Guildhall Capital’ Business Plan 2019/2020 attached to the report as exempt Annex 6 is approved;
3. authority is delegated to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Opposition Spokesperson, to agree the most appropriate longer term financing solutions, as detailed in paragraphs 21 - 23 of the report;
4. an RBK Shareholder Committee is established, in line with the operating arrangements set out in paragraphs 7 - 15 of the report (summarised above);
5. the Members listed above are appointed to the Shareholder Committee;
6. arrangements are made to facilitate compliance with the proprietary controls set out in paragraph 26 of the report; and
7. future annual business plan revision and any other variation to the Business Plan be approved by the Finance and Partnerships Committee.

Voting –

For: 35 Members of the Council (The Mayor, Councillor Margaret Thompson, the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Munir Ravalia, and Councillors Zain Abbas, Sushila Abraham, Stephanie Archer, Kim Bailey, Tricia Bamford, Mark Beynon, Olivia Boult, Tim Cobbett, David Cunningham, Emily Davey, Kevin Davis, Lorraine Dunstone, Mark Durrant, Sam Foulder-Hughes, Ed Fram, Lesley Heap, Hilary Gander, Dennis
Goodship, Liz Green, Caroline Kerr, Andreas Kirsch, Katrina Lidbetter, Rebekah Moll, Maria Netley, Dave Ryder-Mills, Malcolm Self, Christine Stuart, John Sweeney, Jon Tolley, Olly Wehring, Diane White, Annette Wookey, and Yogan Yoganathan.)
Abstaining: 4 Members of the Council (Councillors Rowena Bass, Jason Hughes, Nicola Sheppard, and Sharron Falchikov-Sumner)

23. **Appointments to Committees, Panels and other bodies**

**Resolved** that the following appointments to Committees, Panels and other bodies be approved:

(i) **South London Joint Committee on Waste Disposal**
Councillor Tim Cobbett (who is currently a substitute) to replace Councillor Liz Green as the second Council member on this Committee.

Councillor Dave Ryder Mills to be appointed as a substitute for the Joint Committee

(ii) **London Youth Games**
Councillor Diane White to replace Chris Hayes as representative on this outside body.

(iii) **Children’s and Adults’ Care and Education Committee**
Councillor Caroline Kerr to replace the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Munir Ravalia, on this Committee.

(iv) **South West London Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
Councillor Lesley Heap to replace Councillor Munir Ravalia, on this Committee

(v) **Scrutiny Panel**
Councillor John Sweeney to replace Councillor Christine Stuart on this Committee.

Voting - unanimous

24. **Approval of Member absence**

At its meeting on 24 April 2019 the Council approved the absence, on health grounds, of Councillor Fiona Boult until 10 July 2019, as it was anticipated that Councillor Boult would be absent from meetings of the Council for six months, on the grounds of ill-health.

The Council received a report notifying that Councillor Boult’s circumstances were such that she was likely to have to submit apologies for a further six month period. A letter to the Council from Councillor Fiona Boult was read to the Council which explained her circumstances.

**Resolved** that approval of absence, on health grounds, be given to Councillor Fiona Boult for a further period of absence until 9 January 2020.

Voting - unanimous
25. Waiver of the Community Call-In Procedure on Grounds of Urgency

The Council noted an information item submitted in accordance with the urgency provisions in the Council’s Community Call in Procedure. Community call-in shall not apply to a decision if any delay likely to be caused by the call in process to the implementation of that decision would seriously prejudice the Council’s or the public’s interests. Any decision considered urgent under these provisions must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

The Council noted that the Call-in requirements had been waived with respect to decisions taken at the Finance and Partnerships Committee meeting on 27 June 2019 in relation to securing a suitable provider for management and operations of the Exchange Workspace (and other workspaces opportunities in the borough as they arise), using the Open Procedure under the Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 (CCR16).

The reason for the urgency was that a Section 106 agreement with the property development company, St. George, was due to expire on 12 October 2019. In order to be able to meet the terms of the S106 agreement with regards the Exchange and to have identified a suitable workspace provider willing to offer acceptable financial terms, the Council would need to have commenced the formal tender process by 8 July 2019.

26. Urgent Items authorised by the Mayor

There was no urgent business authorised by the Mayor.

Signed……………………………………………………….Date………………

The Mayor
Written Replies to Council Questions

By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Malcolm Self, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Economic Development

Question:

The Lib Dem manifesto committed to building 1,000 homes before May 2022. At the Council meeting in July 2018 he clarified that this would be Council housing at a rate of 250 homes a year. A year on can he update us on progress and give details on how he intends to deliver the manifesto commitment before 2022?

Written reply:

The Council question asked by Cllr Arora in July 2018 asked why my party set a target in our manifesto of 250 homes per year which is even below the level expected in the London Plan we committed to in our own local plan in 2012 and significantly lower than the local need for housing of our residents. I replied that this pledge relates to Council led housing. I should point out that our commitment was to deliver 1,000 homes over the four year term of our Administration and did not specify that they would be delivered at a steady rate of 250 homes per year as perhaps implied by Cllr Arora’s question.

An Affordable Housing Programme, which will be built by the Council, has been scoped and will undergo detailed feasibility during the next 6 months. Phase 1 aims to deliver approximately 100 - 160 homes during 2021 and 2022. In addition Phase 2 of the programme aims to deliver up to a further 150 homes, delivery timescales for these homes are dependent on a range of factors. The Council has also partially funded the delivery of 60 new homes with Right to Buy receipts, 3 of these homes are completed, with the remainder due to be completed during the summer 2021. These homes will be available for applicants on the Housing Register.

The Cambridge Road Estate regeneration seeks to deliver approximately 2,000 new homes. This will include approximately 767 Council homes. The Council has ambitions to increase this number based on the viability of the scheme. As Members are aware, this is subject to a resident ballot in the Autumn 2019.

At the Strategic Housing and Planning Committee in July 2019 a Housing Delivery Test Action Plan was submitted for consideration. Within the assessment of the current position for housing delivery in the Borough, it highlights that there are currently about 1,000 homes of all types under construction across the borough. There are another 1,500 homes which have planning permission, but work hasn’t started to build them. The Council’s planning department, in accordance with both national government guidance and the measures included with the Housing Delivery Action plan, are seeking to ensure that when new planning permissions are granted that they are ‘deliverable’ in an attempt to boost the supply of housing.
By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Malcolm Self, Portfolio Holder for Planning Policy and Economic Development

Question:

Can the Member confirm that it is still Administration policy that there should not be built higher density housing developments near stations as he outlined at the July 2018 meeting?

Written reply:

The Council question asked by Cllr Arora in July 2018 was, “Does the new Administration support the delivery of Crossrail 2, funded by building more homes, especially higher density homes near stations?” I replied that the Administration supports the delivery of Crossrail 2. It does not believe that Crossrail 2 should be funded from housing developments near stations.

The above answer did not make comment on whether or not higher density housing developments should be built near stations.

By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:

Can you tell us the timetable for reviewing the Community Infrastructure Levy?

Written reply:

There is a requirement on Charging Authorities to keep their charging schedules under review and ensure that Community Infrastructure Levy charges remain appropriate over time as market conditions or infrastructure needs change. However, any revisions to the charging schedule, either in whole or in part, is a significant step that would need to follow a process of public examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Whilst the Government does not dictate when CIL reviews should take place, they do suggest that they should consider linking a review of their charging schedule to other changes, such as coordinating with a new Local Plan. RBK is at the beginning of the process to develop a new local plan and we are consulting with the public now to seek to undertake their views on where and how new development should go. Only once we have moved beyond this initial consultation process can we start to consider the details of the specific infrastructure requirements that might be involved.

There is recent legislation on the Community Infrastructure Levy and new regulations are intended to come into force on 1 September 2019. Some of the
changes involved the suggested lifting the pooling restriction that currently restricts councils in how they collect monies from multiple applications via section 106 legal agreements, and introducing a requirement for the council to publish Infrastructure Funding Statements from 31 December 2020. In light of these changes it is likely that any review of the Council’s Community Infrastructure Levy will also involve a review of our existing supplementary planning document on Planning Obligations which was last updated in 2017.

By:  Councillor David Cunningham
To:  Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:
When will you be exempting Electric and Hybrid vehicles from CPZ charges?

Written reply:
We are undertaking a Parking Review later this year including looking at options for incentivising clean vehicle purchases. We will report back findings to EAST early next year.

By:  Councillor David Cunningham
To:  Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:
The Councillor committed at the Council meeting in July 2018 to set up a cross-party working group to eliminate the use of pesticides in our contracts. Can the Member update the Council on this group’s work, when it has met and provide minutes of those meetings so that the public can see how seriously we are taking this issue?

Written reply:
The Council is taking the issue of pesticides seriously. Officers have undertaken research into the use of glyphosate to control weeds on public highway, parks, playgrounds, housing estates and corporate estate, looking at options for alternatives and experiences of other local authorities that have reduced or stopped chemical treatment of weeds. The preferred alternative method is one that uses hot foam to treat weeds - a trial is planned to test the effectiveness of this method in playgrounds and on street. Alternative methods and views of the community on how to manage weeds will also be considered in the commissioning process for renewal of the grounds and trees maintenance contract over the next few months. Now that this background work is well underway it will be useful to hold the first cross-party working group in the autumn.
By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:
When will Eden Street become a "Clean bus zone"?

Written reply:
The Leader and I attended a meeting with the Deputy Mayor for Transport earlier this year and raised this issue. TfL has since confirmed that their whole fleet will meet EURO VI (the current highest standard) by 30 September 2020. This standard is ULEZ-compliant.

From 2020, any new single deck buses bought or leased by TfL operators will be zero emission and from 2025, any new double deck buses bought or leased by TfL operators will be zero emission.

We continue to push TfL to supply clean buses for Eden Street at the earliest opportunity.

By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:
Will you commit to reconvene the Go Cycle cross-party members group?

Written reply:
We will hold the next Go Cycle cross-party working group in the autumn.

By: Councillor David Cunningham
To: Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport

Question:
When will you be consulting on a Kingston Community Dog Watch scheme?

Written reply:
We’re considering the feasibility of a new approach incorporating elements of a ‘Community Dog Watch’ scheme, whereby volunteers walking their dogs proactively engage in their area, particularly around the issue of dogs’ mess. It’s in its early stages and we will let you know more in due course.
By: Councillor Ian George
To: Councillor Tim Cobbett, Portfolio Holder for Engagement and Continuous Education

Question:

The number of people signing into the forum in each neighbourhood was as follows:
- Maldens and Coombe (3/6/19) - 33 residents
- Surbiton (10/6/19) - 22 residents
- Kingston Town (20/6/19) - 13 residents
- South of the Borough (26/6/19) - 42 residents

Feedback received from the South of the Borough forum suggests additional promotion of the event through a video posted to local residents on Facebook was successful in improving attendance. It also appeared to attract a more diverse audience and similar approaches will be used in planning future forums.

In total 110 residents attended the forums and 61 completed feedback forms. Attendees appeared supportive of the events with 80% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement that they would attend a similar event in the future (neither agree or disagree (or not stated) 10%, disagree/strongly disagree 10%).

Comments were generally positive, with constructive feedback focusing on the need to turn discussion into action and negative comments mainly around single issues rather than the event itself. Some residents were unhappy with the different format and expected a more structured event. Examples included:
- “Excellent event - would be good to have clarity over how the outputs will be used”
- “I wasn’t really sure what this was about before attending but it is a fantastic idea to generate input and feedback from the community”
- “I was expecting an introduction / talk but a worthwhile event”
- “I have hope, I feel energized, if all I talked about tonight comes into fruition. Woopee!! (sic)The Council reps here tonight appeared to care - and I feel they were "in touch" with what’s needed.”

Comments and ideas at the various tables at each forum are being written up and will be combined with those from other routes of engagement to inform the development of the Community Plan for each neighbourhood.

We will learn from what has been a positive start for the new community forums events so we can continue to improve future events.
By: Councillor Ian George
To: Councillor Tim Cobbett, Portfolio Holder for Engagement and Continuous Education

Question:
Can the Portfolio Holder for Engagement and Continuous Learning please advise why the results for question 14 (Crime and anti-social behaviour) of the Kingston Council Residents Survey were not mentioned in the recent RBK press release?

Written reply:
The press release does make reference to Crime and Anti Social Behaviour. It says: ‘The survey shows that reducing crime and antisocial behaviour is the single issue residents are most concerned about with nearly a third (31%) citing this as their top priority. Although the Metropolitan Police Service’s (MPS) annual crime data shows that Kingston is one of the safest boroughs in London in which to live and work, with the second lowest number of recorded crimes in London, the Council will continue to work with the police to keep the borough safe’.

By: Councillor Kevin Davis
To: Councillor Liz Green, Leader of the Council

Question:
The Lib Dem manifesto last year said you would; "Hold Councillors to account for the way they interact with members of the public. We will demand a high level of professional conduct, and sanction councillors who fail to treat residents with respect and courtesy." What action is the Leader considering taking against Members who behave discourteously to residents?

Written reply:
I welcome this question and the opportunity to restate this Administration’s commitment to maintaining an ethical culture and ethical practice across everything we do as a Council.

As I am sure Cllr Davis will agree, this requires leadership from all of us as councillors and in our various roles as political group leaders, committee chairs and local representatives. I hope Cllr Davis will support me in setting clear expectations of standards of behaviour in our work with local residents and each other. There will always be challenge and robust disagreement given our political differences but I expect the tone of any disagreement to be civil and constructive.

The Monitoring Officer has recently published her annual report on Member Conduct to the Governance, Audit and Standards Committee. This report shows that there are relatively few complaints alleging breach of the Code of Conduct by local residents. We are also renewing the appointment of the two Independent Persons who provide independent assurance in the handling of such complaints.
By: Councillor Kevin Davis  
To: Councillor Liz Green, Leader of the Council

Question:
Do you believe that your Administration’s recent confusion over community grants to pay fees for licensing is in accordance with your pledge to “Fully support all community-run activities, such as ‘fun days’, farmers markets and Kingston Carnival, by actively promoting them. Provide help and advice to reduce the bureaucratic red tape and costs for community groups.”?

Written reply:
We are taking action to make it easier for community groups to put on community events across the borough, whilst balancing the need for Council policies to be legally compliant with licensing legislation and our duty to help protect the public when it comes to goods sold on public land. All street trading requires a licence and a proposal for licensing fees for community events is currently being looked at. Any changes will be subject to consultation.

In addition, we have recently overhauled the process for gaining consent to put on community events in the borough, with clearer information on the Council’s website together with a step by step guide, checklist and single point of contact to make things easier for organisers. All checklists are linked in the relevant sections of the website to one page.

By: Councillor Jason Hughes  
To: Councillor Andreas Kirsch, Portfolio Holder for Community and Governance

Question:
Given that the Administration appears to have taken a decision to adopt a more aggressive approach to dealing with the contributions of residents at meetings can the Member tell us how he now defines the role of the public in decision making? How does this approach support the manifesto commitment: "We want everyone to help shape services and no one to be excluded"?

Written Reply:
Kingston Council remains at the forefront of best practice in its public participation arrangements at council meetings. However, participation at formal council meetings is just one way that residents can be involved in giving their views and shaping services. We are committed to supporting the active involvement of residents and stakeholders in a range of different ways, many of them in less formal settings. We are increasing the number of ways in which residents and other stakeholders have the opportunity to comment upon and help shape the formulation of policy and the approach to important decisions.
By: Councillor Rowena Bass
To: Councillor Alison Holt, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Contracts

Question:
In response to a manifesto commitment to “make the most of business opportunities to reduce the burden of first class services on Council tax payers”, the Member said: “The Administration has been working with officers to ensure that the Council maximises opportunities for increasing income streams where appropriate, as part of the reshaped Transformation Programme.” How much additional income has been realised as part of this programme?

Written reply:
The 2019/20 budget included income generation options of over £2.8m a year. We will continue to work with officers to identify further opportunities to generate income.

By: Councillor Rowena Bass
To: Councillor Alison Holt, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Contracts

Question:
Will the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Contracts request that the relevant Council Officers seek to make arrangements to enable residents who live in Private Roads to have the option of purchasing the maintenance services of Council contractors at no cost to the Council?

Written reply:
The Council already provides maintenance for private roads on Coombe Estate, and the property owners on the estate pay for this service to the Council. Maintenance is arranged, monitored and administered by the Council.

Options for provision of chargeable street cleaning, gully cleansing and grounds maintenance services can be explored on a case by case basis so long as the principle is recognised that any resource diverted is not subsidised by public money or likely to have a detrimental impact on current service provision.

By: Councillor Nicola Sheppard
To: Councillor Emily Davey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regeneration

Question:
When will you be introducing the Kingston Living Rent?

Written reply:
The introduction of a Kingston Living Rent will be considered as part of the wider development of a new Housing Strategy. Work on the Housing Strategy will commence in late October.
By:  Councillor Nicola Sheppard  
To:  Councillor Emily Davey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regeneration  

**Question:**  
Can you update the Council on the results of programmes you have introduced to tackle the scourge of homelessness?

**Written reply:**

A wide range of activity is being undertaken to tackle homelessness of which I will provide a brief summary to reply to this Council Question (a more detailed briefing to the Member can be provided on request):

- Under the Homeless Reduction Act, 2017 Community Housing delivers, amongst other services, a Housing Options Service which provides support, advice and prevention to Kingston residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

- The Council works closely with two homelessness charities, Kingston Churches Action on Homelessness, (KCAH) and SPEAR, to deliver a range of programmes and expert interventions.

- Government funding has been secured for programmes such as:
  - The Rough Sleeping Initiative to provide interventions for rough sleepers including the winter night shelters, temporary accommodation and additional outreach services
  - The Prevention Trailblazer project which focusses on early intervention to prevent homelessness occurring through the Fresh Start Scheme.
  - Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding in 2019 & 2020 to provide Navigators and Supported Lettings, officers working with SPEAR; and to procure accommodation through the private rented sector; and to support individuals with the most complex needs to move away from rough sleeping.

[Initial analysis of the successful preventions achieved show there were 451 preventions in Kingston in 2018/19 (the target was 450), achieved by cross agency working.]

In addition to the above:

- the Council is bidding to Public Health England, for funding for a Rough Sleeper Access to Health Services initiative, to target specialised health services for rough sleepers.

- Multi agency Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategies are currently being developed, for public consultation, which will shape the direction of travel over the next five years in the delivery of services to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. Elected members will be included in the consultation on these strategies.

- On Monday 1 July, the Council hosted a multi-agency summit to inform the cross Directorate and multi-agency Rough Sleeper strategy, which will focus on health and social care pathways, to deliver improved and targeted interventions for rough sleepers and those who have complex needs.
By: Councillor Nicola Sheppard
To: Councillor Emily Davey, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Regeneration

Question:
Can you update the Council on the Vulnerable Persons’ Refugee Scheme and what success you have had in settling new refugees since 2018?

Written reply:
We have resettled 40 individuals (12 families: 24 adults and 16 children) to date since March 2016. We have two properties in the pipeline which will resettle up to five individuals. We anticipate meeting the 50 individuals target in 19/20.

All individuals are receiving an integration package from Refugee Action Kingston. The families are making progress around key performance indicators such as learning English, gaining independence and volunteering with a view to seeking employment. Five individuals are in part-time employment and three individuals volunteering. The remaining are improving their English levels skills and seeking employment volunteering/ opportunities.

By: Councillor Maria Netley
To: Councillor Diane White, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services

Question:
The £1m you claimed in 2018 that you would restore to the school's budget has still not happened. When can schools expect to receive the money as part of your new approach to working with schools?

Written reply:
The Schools Forum agreed that this should be transferred from the schools block to the high needs block for special educational needs provision. There is no requirement to reinstate the amount back into the schools block and the report of the Education Commission recommends to the Schools Forum that it should annually consider transferring resources into the high needs block. Some of the high needs block goes straight back to schools for children with special educational needs. This Council and the Local Government Association recognise that the educational system needs more resources from Government into the Dedicated Schools Grant, particularly to increase the resource in the high needs block.
By: Councillor Maria Netley  
To: Councillor Diane White, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services  

Question:  
Can you update the Council on your meetings and discussions with Government ministers since the last Council meeting?

Written reply:  
There have been two meetings with Ministers since the last Council meeting which the Director of Children’s Services has attended where the need for more resources into the high needs block, and for schools generally, has been discussed. Three parents have taken the Secretary of State for Education and the Chancellor of the Exchequer to judicial review for lack of resources to fund the Children Act 2014, relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant.

By: Councillor Maria Netley  
To: Councillor Diane White, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services  

Question:  
What support is the Council giving in identifying a site for a new secondary school and where would the Lead Member prefer for it to be sited?

Written reply:  
The Council is actively working with the Department for Education to secure a site to support the Diocese of Southwark’s application for a voluntary-aided Church of England secondary school. Ideally, the site will be in Norbiton or Kingston as the increase in demand for Year 7 places in the last two years has predominantly been from within those areas, and that situation is forecast to continue.

By: Councillor Maria Netley  
To: Councillor Diane White, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services  

Question:  
When will you publish "a detailed study on predicted future demand for additional primary and secondary school places in Kingston"?

Written reply:  
The Council is committed to refreshing the School Place Planning Strategy, an update of which was last published in June 2017, once there is certainty in regard to the Diocese of Southwark’s application for a voluntary-aided Church of England secondary school and the establishment of GEMS Surbiton Academy, the primary free school which the Department for Education originally approved in 2014. Progress regarding both projects is expected in the autumn, so an update to the School Place Planning Strategy can then be scheduled for the 2020 Forward Plan.
By: Councillor Maria Netley  
To: Councillor Diane White, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services

**Question:**
Can you publish the timetable for letting a contract to run an Autism Centre in Tolworth?

**Written reply:**
The Council hopes to be in a position to provide further information in the autumn following work to identify our commissioning and support needs.

By: Councillor Ed Fram  
To: Councillor Kim Bailey, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

**Question:**
12 months ago her predecessor told the Council in relation to older people’s bed-based care that "The Council is currently reviewing its own site portfolio, and the availability of alternative sites to determine the most cost effective way to develop further bed capacity to meet projected demand". Can the Council be updated on progress in this regard and let us know which sites, other than the current Browns Road scheme, have been identified?

**Written reply:**
In the autumn of 2019 the Children’s and Adults’ Care and Education Committee will receive an update on arrangements for delivery of services in the dementia nursing home, and an update on the Council’s ambitions for the future.

By: Councillor Anita Schaper  
To: Councillor Kim Bailey, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care

**Question:**
Planning permission has now been given for the 80 bed dementia care home, which was promised in the Lib Dem manifesto. When is the home planned to open?

**Written reply:**
As indicated in my reply to a similar question from Councillor Ed Fram, in the autumn of 2019 the Children’s and Adults’ Care and Education Committee will receive an update on arrangements for delivery of services in the dementia nursing home, and an update on the Council’s ambitions for the future.
By: Councillor Steph Archer
To: Councillor Liz Green, Leader of the Council

Question:
What is the Leadership doing to lobby potential party leaders on the crisis in SEND funding?

Written reply:
We are committed to lobby for more resources to address the SEND funding crisis. We have backed the LGA campaign, and support the professional association of Chief Executives, Treasurers and Directors of Children’s Services in their lobbying activity. As joint chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, I have submitted the Board’s concerns to government and have backed the Schools Forum’s submission. We continue to work with Ed Davey MP who has been active on our behalf with the Department of Education. Officers continue to meet with DFE officials with our Transformation Plan and give evidence that the current arrangements for SEND are not funded appropriately. We note that 3 parents have referred the Secretary of State for Education and the Chancellor to judicial review for failing to fund the SEND changes in the Children Act 2014 and our experience supports their actions.