

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**13 OCTOBER 2020**

**(7:30 pm - 11:18 pm)**

The Mayor (Councillor Margaret Thompson)  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Sushila Abraham)

Councillors

Zain Abbas	Lesley Heap
Sushila Abraham	Alison Holt
Steph Archer	Jason Hughes
Roy Arora	Caroline Kerr
Kim Bailey	Andreas Kirsch
Tricia Bamford	Katrina Lidbetter
Rowena Bass	Rebekah Moll
Mark Beynon	Maria Netley
Fiona Boulton	Munir Ravalia
Olivia Boulton	Dave Ryder-Mills
Tim Cobbett	Anita Schaper
David Cunningham	Malcolm Self
Emily Davey	Nicola Sheppard
Kevin Davis	Chris Stuart
Lorraine Dunstone	Sharron Falchikov-Sumner
Mark Durrant	John Sweeney
Simon Edwards	Thay Thayalan
Sam Foulder-Hughes	* Jon Tolley
Ed Fram	Olly Wehring
Hilary Gander	Diane White
Ian George	Annette Wookey
Dennis Goodship	Yogan Yoganathan
Liz Green	Sharon Young
Jaesung Ha	

\* Absent

Rabbi Rene Pfertzel opened the meeting with prayers.

**25. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jon Tolley.

**26. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**27. Minutes**

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 7 July 2020 were approved as a correct record.

**28. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor announced the sad passing of Honorary Alderman and former Councillor Peter Gray, who served as Mayor of the Borough in 1986-7. Councillors and officers joined the Mayor in expressing our condolences to Alderman Gray's family. The Mayor also acknowledged the sad passing of John Perry, who had served for many years as a Trustee of the Mayors Charity and was a Board Member for Kingston First. Councillors and officers joined the Mayor in expressing their condolences to John's family and friends. A minutes silence was observed in honour of both Honorary Alderman Gray and Mr Perry.

The Mayor congratulated Jamie Frost, a Maths teacher at Tiffins School, who has been named on a shortlist of the 10 most outstanding teachers in the world in the annual Global Teachers Prize competition, which was run in partnership with UNESCO.

It was explained that for the Mayor's Charity, fundraising efforts had continued despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic. A sponsored cycle ride to Brighton had recently raised more than £1,500 and both the Deputy Mayor and the Mayor were amongst those who had recently taken part in a half marathon completed over a fortnight. Anybody who wished to sponsor these activities were welcome to do so through Virgin Money Giving.

It was also announced that the date confirmed for the Mayor's Ball, subject to all the Covid related caveats, it could be held on Friday 23 April 2021. More details would follow nearer the time.

It was also confirmed that the Mobile Mop Up project which was run in the borough earlier in the year in partnership with Genuine Solutions would be returning after Christmas. Once again the Mayor would be asking for donations of unwanted mobile phones so that they could be reused or the parts recycled, with the Mayor's Charitable Trust continuing to benefit from the proceeds raised.

**29. Petitions**

Councillor Kevin Davis proposed that the requirement to give notice of the intention to submit a petition one day before the meeting be suspended on this occasion.

The Council unanimously agreed on this occasion to suspend the requirement to provide notice of a petition as outlined in the Petitions Scheme Part 4G of the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Kevin Davis presented a petition, signed by 124 residents, on the opposition to the installation of three Electric Vehicle Charging Points at Albemarle Gardens and West Bury Road and the request for alternatives to be considered.

It was confirmed that the petition would be dealt with in accordance with the Petition's Scheme as set out in the Council's Constitution.

### 30. Public Questions

In accordance with Procedure Rule 17(A) replies were given to Public Questions (as set out in **Annex 1** to the minutes) and supplementary questions (as set out in **Annex 2** to the minutes).

### 31. Motion: Consultation in the Royal Borough

In accordance with Procedure Rule 8(A)(5), the Council debated the following motion which was submitted on behalf of Opposition Group of the Council (Conservative Group), as amended in the late material and proposed by Councillor Jason Hughes and seconded by Councillor Ian George.

#### “Consultation in the Royal Borough

##### Background

Effective consultation is the lifeblood of healthy local democracy, not only in its delivery but also its public perception to honestly engender and maintain the trust of communities. Resident participation in decision-making is critical to the responsible and expedient delivery of local government services. This imperative extends beyond the ballot box every four years. It is a continuous journey of consultation and engagement to ensure that reflecting residents' priorities, achieving value for money and providing excellent service delivery are at the epicentre of the Royal Borough's activities.

To this end, words must be matched by deeds. The Royal Borough has more to do to reflect this aspiration and to make it a reality.

##### This Council notes: -

1. The fundamental difference between 'consultation' and 'engagement' as vital disciplines in local government, the former is a component of the latter, specifically it recognises that: -
  - a. Consultation involves obtaining residents' feedback on proposals as a *corollary* of engagement and should regularly consult communities on long, medium and short-term plans, to appropriately determine the Council's strategic direction, set its budgets and prioritise projects;
  - b. Engagement is the broader ongoing process of *sharing* information with residents and to seek feedback with the core objective of involving communities in the decision-making process, and that consultation is the *formal process* to meet the Council's statutory and regulatory requirements;
2. That trusted, effective and efficient consultation is needed now more than ever given the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic;
3. According to the Council's most recent Residents' Survey, the majority of residents *do not* believe that it seeks their views before taking decisions;
4. *Only a third* of residents believe that the Council acts on residents' concerns;

5. The majority of residents *do not* believe that the Council explains the decisions it takes;
6. The Council's Communities and Engagement Committee is a toothless body which does not look at, or provide oversight to, consultations in the Royal Borough;
7. The Council's approach to consultation is disparate and fragmented across council departments, lacking centralisation and a dedicated core with strategic focus;
8. The recent absence of any meaningful consultation with residents on the imposition of Low Traffic Neighbourhood trials;
9. The vast difference in quality of recent important consultation efforts, specifically on the Cambridge Road Estate and Cumberland House regeneration schemes, the latter of which is a primary poor example which has understandably shaken residents' confidence in the Royal Borough's consultation efforts.

**This Council resolves to: -**

1. Continually seek to adopt and exemplify best practice in consultation, by joining the Consultation Institute;
2. Conduct a comprehensive audit of the capabilities, competences and resources of all relevant committees and operations across council departments, including the training of relevant officers, committee chairmen and members;
3. Reconfigure the Communities and Engagement Committee to ensure that it examines, approves and reviews all consultations on significant Council activities in highways, parking and planning with the following thresholds set at: -
  - a. All highways, parking and traffic schemes in excess of £50,000 cost;
  - b. And all proposed residential developments exceeding ten new units;
4. Consolidate all consultation delivery by council officers into a dedicated and centralised 'Consultation Team', removing disparate and fragmented consultation delivery in individual departments with a view to making cost savings or cost neutrality;
5. Set up a Consultation Team which will be a part of the Chief Executive's Department, but with separate management arrangements from communications to reflect the different disciplines of consultation and engagement/communications;
6. Enhance the examination of the new consultation arrangements, as above, via a more comprehensive revamp of the Council's Residents' Survey and to review at the Communities and Engagement Committee, reporting back to Full Council, one year after adoption."

Councillor Tim Cobbett proposed and Councillor Hilary Gander seconded the following amendment to the Conservative motion:

**"Liberal Democrat Amendment  
Effective Consultation**

Effective consultation is the lifeblood of healthy local democracy, not only in its delivery but also its public perception to honestly engender and maintain the trust of communities. Resident participation in decision-making is critical to the responsible

and expedient delivery of local government services. This imperative extends beyond the ballot box every four years. It is a continuous journey of consultation and engagement to ensure that reflecting residents' priorities, achieving value for money and providing excellent service delivery are at the epicentre of the Royal Borough's activities.

**Delete "To this end, words must be matched by deeds. The Royal Borough has more to do to reflect this aspiration and to make it a reality."**

**This Council notes:**

1. The fundamental difference between 'consultation' and 'engagement' as vital disciplines in local government, the former is a component of the latter, specifically it recognises that: -
  - a. Consultation involves obtaining residents' feedback on proposals as a *corollary* of engagement and should regularly consult communities on long, medium and short-term plans, to appropriately determine the Council's strategic direction, set its budgets and prioritise projects;
  - b. Engagement is the broader ongoing process of *sharing* information with residents and to seek feedback with the core objective of involving communities in the decision-making process, and that consultation is the *formal process* to meet the Council's statutory and regulatory requirements;
2. That trusted, effective and efficient consultation is needed now more than ever giving the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic **Insert "which required an emergency response for several months and is still ongoing. Recent consultation with residents and our communities included:**
  - a. **a business survey on the impact of Covid-19 (took place over early summer, 956 residents looked at and 120 completed survey - insight used to shape and signpost to relevant support; )**
  - b. **a residents e-newsletter which has 6216 subscribers since in the last 9 months; and**
  - c. **the Kingston Residents' Covid Impact Survey (2.4k visits to the portal site and 898 completed surveys. The insight is being used to prioritise and plan to support residents. Follow up focus groups are planned.)"**

**Delete points 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. and Insert new points 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.**

3. **The Corporate Plan 2019 - 2023, 'Making Kingston Better, Together' outlines our ambition for community engagement/resident involvement and our intention which makes it clear that we want to improve community engagement;**
4. **The Community Engagement Framework 2019 - 2022 setting our goals to strengthen the relationship between the council and the community and actively encourages residents, businesses, students, voluntary and community groups to get involved;**
5. **The Let's Talk website which helps residents find and participate in discussions; a snapshot of recent consultations include:**
  - **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (6 month trial, new temporary measures, part of the Government's Emergency Active Travel scheme and TfL London Streetspace Plan;)**

- Have your say on the future of housing in the borough;
  - Reimagining Kingston's Libraries (*opened with an ideas capture feature on portal 1 Sept. 799 people have followed the link to the portal page and 49 ideas have been added by 39 people. Postcards being handed out at key locations to promote;*)
  - Winter tree planting (*241 applications this year;*)
  - School streets (*Following successful trial at Lovelace Primary School, 3 more schools added;*)
  - Early engagement for housing strategy (*giving residents an opportunity to have their say on what housing should be offered to residents, what types of housing are needed, and what we can do to improve the housing market in Kingston. Portal visits 933, 198 have responded. Drop-in sessions on 14 Oct. All feeding into drafting of the strategy which will be consulted on Nov-Jan;*)
  - Business e-newsletter received by 4101 since April 2020; and
6. The first Citizens' Assembly held on Air Quality which saw 38 randomly selected residents consider evidence on improving air quality in Kingston. The recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly will also be used to develop our response to the climate emergency, and other relevant strategies and policies such as the Air Quality Action Plan."
7. The engagement with residents of Cambridge Road Estate using a range of techniques to get views from all the community at community-wide events and exhibitions to more targeted activity including young people's ideas gather feedback from their peers, photo exhibitions, use of digital channels and individual conversations. (*CRE - 1,500 responses. Over 4,000 visits to the consultation on Let's Talk portal, 518 reached through street surveys. Ongoing engagement activity.*)

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Continually seek to adopt and exemplify best practice in consultation **Delete "by joining the Consultation Institute"** and insert : **"as we carry on seeking to improve. The Council is a member of the New Local Government Network (NLGN) and makes use of its free resources and networks which includes research, best practice, advice and leading edge thinking. Over the last year, council officers have attended workshops and events hosted by Nesta, RSA, NLGN, Involve and Bang the Table."**

**Delete original points 2. to 6. and insert new points 2. to 7.**

2. **"Pursue our new Community Engagement framework launched last autumn. Guidance and tools are available for staff to plan early and ensure engagement at the heart of the way the council operates by:**
  - a. **rolling out a programme to further embed engagement across all teams/roles that are involved with or responsible for any form of engagement from informing, consulting through to collaboration and decision making;**
  - b. **this is supported by a toolkit and training. We are also in the process of setting up a staff network on engagement. Each service will have an engagement champion and all champions will meet to share ongoing engagement work and share ideas on best practice;**

3. **Continue to send consultations on significant Council activities in highways, parking and planning to the relevant neighbourhood/strategic committee or delegated to a committee chair for approval;**
4. **Operate a networked model for consultation delivery that provides advice and guidance from a core central team to embed good practice across the council to the many teams that deliver some element of community engagement. This is supported by the network and the toolkit - this means that learning is shared in wider teams;**
5. **Support the common practice, across councils, to have Consultation and Communications working closely together. The corporate strategy and engagement function has expertise to support the organisation more effectively with its commitment of hard wiring community engagement into the decision making process;**
6. **Monitor resident feedback from complaints and consultation evaluation to monitor performance and take learnings to improve (alongside the annual residents survey which is one way of measuring satisfaction;) and**
7. **Commit to making it easier for residents to suggest their own ideas and not just respond to the council's ideas."**

A vote was taken on the amendment and this was carried to form the substantive motion.

Voting:

For: Councillors Abbas, Abraham, Archer, Bailey, Bamford, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Davey, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulcher-Hughes, Gander, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (37)

Against: Councillors Arora, Bass, Cunningham, Davis, Falchikov-Sumner, Fram, George, Hughes, Netley and Sheppard. (10).

Abstain: None. (0)

A vote was taken on the substantive motion as amended.

For: Councillors Abbas, Bailey, Bamford, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Davey, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulcher-Hughes, Gander, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (35)

Against: Councillors Abraham, Archer, and Falchikov-Sumner. (3).

Abstain: Councillors Arora, Bass, Cunningham, Davis, Fram, George, Hughes, Netley and Sheppard. (9)

**32. Member Questions**

In accordance with Procedural Rule 6 (1&2) replies were given to Member Questions (as set out in **Annex 1** to the minutes) and supplementary questions (as set out in **Annex 2** to the minutes).

**33. Terms of Reference of Strategic Committees**

**Resolved** that the amendments to the names and Terms of Reference of the Strategic Committees as set out below be approved:

<b>Function</b>	<b>Committee From</b>	<b>Committee To</b>
Covid Recovery (Economic Recovery Task Force)	New function	Finance & Regeneration
Covid Recovery (Community Task Force)	New function	Communities & Engagement
Equalities	Childrens & Adults Care & Education	Communities & Engagement
Human Resources	Finance & Regeneration	Communities & Engagement
Economic Development	Strategic Housing & Planning	Finance & Regeneration
Business and Skills	Strategic Housing & Planning	Finance & Regeneration
Culture, including the Museum, History Centre, Music Service and The Rose Theatre	Communities & Engagement	Place & Culture
Libraries	Communities & Engagement	Place & Culture
Public Health	Childrens and Adults Care & Education	Place & Culture

Voting: Unanimous

**34. Review of Emergency Decision Making Arrangements****Appendix A**

The Council considered a report which set out proposals on the adoption of revised arrangements for the operation of meetings of the Council and its Committees during the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

It was explained that the current public health situation did not allow for a return to meetings in person at the Guildhall. The latest Government guidance on the safe use of Council buildings continued to recommend that where meetings can take place digitally, without the need for face-to-face contact, they should do so. It was in any event not feasible to operate anything other than the smallest of Committee meetings within the Council Chamber while observing social distancing guidelines.

It was proposed that meetings of the Council and its Committees continue to take place virtually for the remainder of the Municipal Year. The Response and Recovery Committee would continue to meet on a monthly basis with responsibility for matters relating to the Council's Covid response and the functions of the Finance & Regeneration and Community Engagement Committees, both of which would remain in abeyance. The Childrens and Adults Care & Education Committee would be reinstated and a new temporary Culture, Housing, Environment and Planning Committee (CHEP) established to undertake the functions of the Environment & Sustainable Transport Committee and the Place & Culture Committee. All other Committees would resume a normal schedule of meetings where they have not already done so.

Councillor Falchikov-Sumner proposed an amendment to the recommendation and this was seconded by Councillor Kevin Davis to have a review mechanism of the decision making arrangements at every Full Council meeting. A vote was taken on the amendment and this motion fell.

Voting:

For: Councillors Arora, Bass, Bailey, Cunningham, Davis, Falchikov-Sumner, Fram, George, Hughes, Netley and Sheppard. (11).

Against: Councillors Abbas, Abraham, Archer, Bailey, Bamford, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Davey, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulcher-Hughes, Gander, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (36)

Abstain: None. (0)

**Resolved that -**

1. all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees take place virtually for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year;
2. the Culture, Housing, Environment and Planning Committee (CHEP) be established to discharge the functions of the Environment and Sustainable Transport and Place and Culture Committees for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year;
3. the membership of the CHEP Committee and any other consequential changes in Committee membership shall be as set out in the late material;
4. the Response and Recovery Committee shall continue to operate for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year in order to discharge the functions of the Finance and Regeneration and Community and Engagement Committees, to determine matters related to the Council's Covid 19 response, and to determine any urgent matter which falls within the remit of another Strategic Committee if it cannot wait until the next meeting of the Committee in question;
5. the Response and Recovery Committee and the CHEP Committee be classified as Strategic Committees and all relevant constitutional provisions, including call-in, applied thereto;
6. the Childrens and Adults Care and Education Committee recommence its schedule of meetings;
7. the calendar of meetings attached at **Annex 1** be adopted for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year;
8. Procedure Rules 17(B)(2) (public questions at meetings of Committees) and 17(C)(1&2) (Public speaking on agenda items at meetings of Committees) be modified as set out in paragraph 28 of the agenda report for the remainder of the 2020/21 Municipal Year; and
9. the foregoing arrangements be subject to the provisions for review set out in paragraphs 31 and 32 of the agenda report.

Voting:

For: Councillors Abbas, Abraham, Archer, Arora, Bailey, Bamford, Bass, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Cunningham, Davey, Davis, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulder-Hughes, Fram, Gander, George, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Hughes, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Netley, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Sheppard, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (45)

Against: None (0).

Abstain: Councillors Falchikov-Sumner (1)

Councillor Munir Ravalia did not vote due to technical difficulties.

**35. Repatriation of Powers from Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for South West London and Surrey County Council**

The Council reviewed a previous decision to delegate to the South West London and Surrey Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) the power of referral to the Secretary of State.

It was noted that the JHOSC had responsibility for responding to consultations on substantial service change affecting multiple boroughs across the area. It was concerned with consideration of the Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust's programme "Improving Healthcare together 2020-2030" through a Sub-Committee of the constituent Authorities.

In May 2018 the Council delegated to the JHOSC the statutory power to refer to the Secretary of State proposals for substantial development or variations to health services in respect of cross borough matters being considered by the Committee. However, it had subsequently become clear that most of the other participants in the JHOSC had not similarly delegated this function. Croydon, Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth had retained their individual power of referral. Surrey County Council initially delegated powers to the JHOSC but had now considered repatriating them.

Members considered that as there was no practical benefit in leaving this power vested in the JHOSC because it cannot be exercised on this basis, and that it was highly unlikely that the proposals being put forward in respect of the IHT programme would have a significant impact on the residents of this Borough, it was proposed that the Council rescind the earlier decision to delegate to the JHOSC its powers of referral to the Secretary of State.

**Resolved** that the Council's delegation to the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the power of referral to the Secretary of State in respect of matters being considered by that Committee, be rescinded and the powers repatriated to the Royal Borough of Kingston and to be exercised by the Health Overview Panel.

Voting: Unanimous

**36. Appointments of Members to Committees, Panels and other bodies**

Members considered the appointments to Committees panels and other bodies as set out in the late material.

**Resolved** that all members of the Conservative Group to be appointed as Substitute Members for all Committees of the Council except for the Health & Wellbeing Board where it will be all members of the Conservative Group not on the Health Overview Panel.

Voting: Unanimous

**37. Urgent Items authorised by the Mayor**

There were no urgent items.

**COUNCIL  
13 OCTOBER 2020**

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES**

Signed:.....Date:  
The Mayor

## Council Questions and Responses - 13 October 2020

### Questions from Members

Responses were given **verbally** at Council to the following:

	From	To	Question
Lib Dem (A)	Councillor Malcolm Self	Councillor Rebekah Moll	The Government's Planning White Paper will shake up the English Planning System. Will local people lose their voice in the process and will the new system deal with the climate crisis, deliver genuinely affordable homes, and improve biodiversity?
Lib Dem (B)	Councillor Mark Durrant	Councillor Andreas Kirsch	Prior to the coronavirus outbreak councils up and down the country were already in a tough financial position. How has the position in Kingston been worsened by the pandemic, and, as of yet, how much of the shortfall is central government planning to make up?
Lib Dem (C)	Councillor Christine Stuart	Councillor Caroline Kerr	What action is RBK taking to ensure that any resident can get a Covid test locally if the need should arise?
Conservative (A)	Councillor Rowena Bass	Councillor Emily Davey	The Council has now submitted planning applications for their small sites programme and informed residents that this needed to be done at speed in light of the GLA requirement to have work started on the ground in January 2021. Residents are furious at the shambolic way in which the Council has engaged and consulted them on this programme so can the member now tell us what conversations took place directly with the GLA to ask whether, in light of the Coronavirus crisis, the 2021 deadline could be moved? What was the date of those conversations and what did they say?

Conservative (B)	Councillor Kevin Davis	Councillor Emily Davey	Recent national press coverage has raised concerns about the prevalence and spread of Covid amongst University students. Can the member tell us the position in Kingston and what they have done to support the University in offering support, advice and services for students in Kingston? Can the member take this opportunity to reassure Kingston residents by explaining what plans the council has should there be a University outbreak?
Conservative (C)	Councillor David Cunningham	Councillor Hilary Gander	Could the member give a breakdown of the costs incurred for each of the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods individually and share with us what was the rationale and supporting data used for the selection of sites for both those implemented and those dumped before implementation? Will she publish the data and rationale for those decisions and tell us the criteria she will use to judge whether the schemes have been a success, or not?
Green (A)	Cllr Falchikov-Sumner	Cllr Caroline Kerr	Does the Leader agree Kingston Council should be championing transparency and fully complying with all laws and regulations relating to Freedom of Information Requests, the Environment Information Regulations and the publishing of transparency data (in line with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015)

## Questions from Members of Public

Responses were given **verbally** at Council to the following:

	From	To	Question
1	Cristina Gosney	Councillor Hilary Gander	Can you please let residents know when drains will be unblocked and trees pollarded. I live in Wolverton Avenue and it's been years since the drains were cleared, causing flooding of footpaths and the road when we have heavy rain the council must have a duty of care and indeed a rota for such things but the reality is nothing seems to happen. Trees also need attention.
2	Isabella Topley*	Councillor Diane White	What measures as a council will you take to ensure that the school students in our borough are able to continue learning effectively during the current situation/potential future lockdowns?
3	Adya Manoj	Councillor Diane White	The fluctuating removal and re-introduction of COVID restrictions has caused a huge increase in the number of young people experiencing poor mental health. What are you doing/do you plan to do to support young people whose mental health has suffered as a result of the sacrifices they have made to help combat this pandemic?
4	James Giles	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Does the Leader of the Council believe that it is incumbent upon both the Council and her administration to abide by and uphold the Standing Orders of this Royal Borough at all times?
5	Coral Russell	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Any decent person living in Kingston believes black and minority lives matter. Many do not support some objectives and tactics of the BLM Movement, or support a

			local Protest March in the midst of a pandemic. You spent 2 HOURS discussing BLM, produced nothing of specific value to Kingston, and allowed 2 MINUTES to discuss the Planning Application for Cumberland House, which directly affects Kingston. Do you agree this could be described as a misuse of Council time?
6	Justin Quirk	Councillor Rebekah Moll	The filter beds site at Seething Wells is being visibly, systematically destroyed by the current owners/developers. Trees have been destroyed, historic buildings on the site have fallen into disrepair and I have personally witnessed contractors in unmarked vehicles spraying pesticides on the site, which is a fragile, hugely important ecosystem for bats, birds and other wildlife. They are clearly trying to degrade and toxify the site to the point where building property on it becomes a formality. This could be transformed like eg Barnes Wetlands into a valuable, green community resource and a great asset for the borough, rather than the poisoned, degraded eyesore it is being turned into. Time is of the essence as each visit the contractors make to the site damages it further and kills more wildlife. What are the council doing to protect the site and how can they safeguard this area for the community?
7	Simon Bentham	Councillor Rebekah Moll	With the advent of new planning laws being/soon to be passed. How is RBK planning to preserve the history and charm of the Royal Borough and not let it fall foul of ugly housing projects that will cheapen and overwhelm the already stretched facilities of the local area?
8	Shelly Perera	Councillors Hilary Gander	Regarding Albert Road LTN, by how much has the traffic congestion increased on Hawks Road due to the Albert Road closure? Did the council take into consideration the increase in traffic and stationary traffic on Hawks Road that would result from the Albert Road closure and how that would impact pollution levels, increase journey times and petrol consumption?
9	Rukshana Bilimoria	Councillor Hilary Gander	What was the justification in changing King Charles Road which has always been a thoroughfare into a LTN?

## Questions from Members

Further Questions from Members where responses were given **in writing**:

	From	To	Question
Lib Dem (D)	Councillor Anita Schaper	Councillor Fiona Boulton	R&R Committee recently approved new commissioning frameworks for Care at Home and Learning Disability & Mental Health Supported Living. How will these help improve the way the council works, ensuring better value for money?
Lib Dem (E)	Councillor Olly Wehring	Councillor Hilary Gander	Some residents believe they have not been consulted about the trials of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods across Kingston. Could you clarify whether this is the case?
Conservative (D)	Councillor Nicola Sheppard	Councillor Emily Davey	In May 2018 you made a pledge to the voters on the Cambridge Estate: "Lib Dem to set up special inquiry if win Council back". You pledged to set up a "special inquiry into water bills and rents". In August 2018, in Council, you repeated that commitment and said that you "would announce the details of the inquiry in weeks". 120 weeks later the residents of the Cambridge Road have clearly been misled. At the October 2018 Council meeting, you told us that "The Council will be holding a meeting between Council officers, Thames Water, tenants and local representatives." to discuss this issue. Can the portfolio holder tell us when this meeting took place, who attended and what the actions arose from that meeting? Finally, can the portfolio holder now commit to an actual date when the inquiry will start and if that date is missed yet again will she offer to resign? If she cannot commit to a date can she explain why the Council and residents have been misled?

Conservative (E)	Councillor Rowena Bass	Councillor Andreas Kirsch	Can the member commit to giving detailed and transparent service line by service line details of how government money has been spent on the Coronavirus and when those figures will be released to the public? Can he also announce when he expects to be able to detail to all Councillors an emergency Coronavirus recovery budget for the year to March 2021, showing how any overspend will be bought into balance by the end of the year?
Conservative (F)	Councillor Kevin Davis	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Can the Leader tell us what meetings she has had personally with Unilever PLC, prior to their recent announcement, to negotiate their decision to consolidate their global business into a new campus in Kingston? Will the council, in light of the need to reshape our economy, be looking at reductions in business rates to encourage them to grow in the Borough?
Conservative (G)	Councillor David Cunningham	Councillor Hilary Gander (Councillor Kerr also has an interest re. assets)	Kingston Council has a long-standing lease on the Bittoms Car Park. Can the member confirm the status of the lease and make a commitment from the administration that they will not surrender the lease before its expiry?
Conservative (H)	Councillor Jason Hughes	Councillor John Sweeney (Cllr Rebekah Moll)	Can you categorically promise to the residents of Kingston that you will not support the closure of any library or disposal of any library buildings as a result of your library review?
Conservative (I)	Councillor Kevin Davis	Councillor Caroline Kerr	In February 2019 the Lib Dem Council put out a press release saying "Kingston Council gave the green light in March 2018 for the new £15m nursing home to be built. Once built, the 80 bed home will be run by a council owned independent operating company. Beds in the home will be

			available for Kingston residents who fund their own care as well as people whose care is paid for by the council.” The Council has now reneged on that pledge, broken a Lib Dem manifesto commitment and is using council land and money to fund a private sector care home. Will you apologise?
Conservative (J)	Councillor Kevin Davis	Councillor Caroline Kerr	It is now nearly a year since the Council held an event to support the introduction of the London Living Wage to all council contractors. To date, this has not happened. Can the member now commit to a deadline date by which they will ensure all staff working on council contracts will receive the London Living Wage and can they also confirm that the Council will no longer let any new contracts where contractors staff are not paid the London Living Wage from day one?
Conservative (K)	Councillor Ed Fram	Councillor Fiona Boulton	Can the member confirm that all staff working in the construction of the care home are in receipt of at least the London Living Wage? If not, why was this contract let in this manner?
Conservative (L)	Councillor Jason Hughes	Councillor John Sweeney (Cllr Andreas Kirsch)	Can the member confirm that all staff working on leisure contracts are now receiving the London Living Wage?
Conservative (M)	Councillor David Cunningham	Councillor Hilary Gander	Can the member confirm that all staff working on waste and recycling contracts are now receiving the London Living Wage?

Conservative (N)	Councillor Maria Netley	Councillor Diane White	Can the member confirm that all staff working under contracts in social care are in receipt of the London Living wage?
Conservative (O)	Councillor Rowena Bass	Councillor Tim Cobbett	Can the member confirm that all staff working on council sites in facilities management (especially the Guildhall security staff) are now all in receipt of the London Living Wage and if not, when will they receive their back dated pay rise?
Conservative (P)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Tim Cobbett	Residents are contacting Councillors with an increasing number of complaints from about basic statutory council services. Unfortunately, responses from the contact centre are sometimes taking much longer than acceptable. How is the Liberal Democrat Administration planning to address these reducing service levels to residents and get the council back on track?
Conservative (Q)	Councillor Rowena Bass	Councillor Tim Cobbett	Freedom of Information requests are taking longer to process and many appear over the statutory deadline of 20 days. Please would the member provide details of the percentage of FOI requests this year taking longer than 20 days, the number currently outstanding and the average time to respond? How will this be addressed?
Conservative (R)	Councillor Rowena Bass	Councillor John Sweeney  (Cllr Rebekah Moll)	Given the number of residential developments planned or approved in and near to the town centre - including the CRE redevelopment - what plans have the council to provide much-needed recreation facilities above those already provided by the council at the currently closed Kingfisher centre? Will the Lib Dem administration commit to implementing the Conservative leisure proposals outlining the basic need for 4 swimming pools across the Borough and update us on what progress has been made in achieving this aim.
Conservative (S)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Can the Leader of the Council tell us why, unlike the residents of the Cambridge Road Estate, residents of Cumberland House and Roupell House were not engaged in any pre-planning consultation about the

			<p>principle of development rather than just coming forward with plans perceived as a fait accompli?</p> <p>All wards Councillors in the affected areas were consulted last year as the Council explored its own sites for this programme of development.</p> <p>Pre-planning consultation and engagement has been commensurate with the scale of the development proposed. The small sites programme consists of four sites, the largest of which, if planning is granted, would deliver 41 homes. Our engagement process met the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community of Involvement and residents were able to comment on all aspects of the development including both the principle of development and proposed plans. A full Statement of Community involvement has been prepared for each site and is publicly available on the Council's website.</p> <p>More broadly, the developments are in line with emerging policy H2 on small sites in the Draft London Plan which has been comprehensively consulted on by the Mayor over the last few years. It states that the delivery of small sites is a strategic priority due to the overall level of new homes which can be delivered in sustainable locations and sets targets for individual boroughs. <i>(Note: RBKuT's GLA target is 2,250 over a 10 year period to 2028/29)</i></p> <p>The Council has also consulted on its own small sites objectives through early engagement for the Draft Local Plan in May 2019.</p>
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Conservative (T)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Emily Davey	Having heard the views of residents through the planning application consultation, can the member outline what changes she instructed to be made to the small sites programme schemes in response to residents concerns?
Conservative (U)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Can the Council Leader advise of the total contract amount for work given to all contractors without going out to tender, where the contractor is or includes either former or current LibDem councillors or activists?
Conservative (V)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Hilary Gander	Why have the Kingston Hill cycle lane works taken two years, and when can residents expect it to be completed? Can the member also tell us when she expects to see the Park Road roundabout completed? as it has been left as an eyesore.

## Responses to Member questions raised verbally:

Question	Response
Lib Dem (A)	<p>The government's White paper, Planning for the Future proposes that the community consultation at the planning application stage will be <i>“streamlined”</i> with a new emphasis on engagement at the plan-making stage. The determination of planning applications are proposed to be faster, giving more certainty with firm deadlines, thereby sticking to the established 8 or 13 week limits. There will be penalties for councils that fail to determine applications within the statutory time limits. Planning applications are to be shorter and more standardised, with just <i>“one key standardised planning statement of no more than 50 pages to justify the development proposals”</i>. The paper also proposes <i>“the delegation of detailed planning decisions to planning officers where the principle of development has been established, as detailed matters for consideration should be principally a matter for professional planning judgment”</i></p> <p>It is not possible to predict the nature and extent of the changes that will eventually emerge through the consultation process and the alterations and additions that may result. There has been much concern expressed about the limited detail contained within the White Paper regarding many of the proposals and therefore much speculation about perceived implications. Given the amount of interest and the considerable concern expressed from professional bodies and local authorities regarding the lack of detail and the practicalities of implementation at policy and procedural levels, it is possible that the final proposals may be quite different to those currently under consultation.</p> <p>It is not envisaged that the forthcoming legislative changes would emerge from parliament until spring/ summer 2021 at the earliest, following consideration of consultation responses and</p>

	<p>publishing of final proposals together with revisions to the NPPF. The White Paper places significant emphasis on the importance of the local plan in providing the policy context which nurtures growth and appropriately guides development that is responsive to the needs of the borough and our residents.</p>
<p>Lib Dem (B)</p>	<p>The coronavirus outbreak and associated lockdown and impact on our resident's personal finances has created a significant increase in cost as well as a loss of income. This is currently estimated to amount to more than £25m impact to the general fund this year. The grant funding provided, along with recovery of costs from the NHS and our income claim for lost sales fees and charges income reduces the net remaining impact to just over £4m which is being addressed through the delivery of in year savings and recruitment and expenditure restraint.</p>

	<p>During the current financial year there has also been an erosion of the income received from Council Tax and Business Rates due to financial hardship. This shortfall in the collection fund will need to be made up in future years budgets which are also likely to be affected by lower tax bases and continued increased demand for services. Any future local lockdowns or restrictions will also create increased financial pressure which currently cannot be quantified.</p>
Lib Dem (C)	<p>RBK is taking action on a number of fronts to ensure that residents with COVID-19 symptoms can get tested for COVID-19. Firstly, the borough has a detailed Communications and Engagement strategy on COVID-19, which includes promotion of the 'Got Symptoms, Get Tested' messaging. Messaging is going out to residents through print media, online marketing, banners, postcards, newsletters and other methods. The messaging is targeted at the various age groups in the borough. In addition, 20 community groups have been commissioned to support the Test and Trace messaging to residents across the borough, as part of wider work with the voluntary sector. The council has also worked closely with the care sector to support them in accessing national testing for staff and residents.</p> <p>We have also worked to increase provision of testing in the borough. Early on, Kingston was the first borough to facilitate testing for care home staff (through the national testing programme). The borough has a Regional test site located within it (Chessington) and the council has facilitated the regular mobile test site at the Cattle Market location, two days per week. Throughout August, the council worked with the DHSC to get a new 'Local Test Site' (walk through site) to be located in Kingston. This site, located behind Count Hall, opened on the weekend of the 26/27 September 2020. The purpose of this location was to make testing easy for those residents without car access (eg University students) and local residents.</p>
Conservative (A)	<p><i>(For reference: link to Cumberland House petition response</i>  <a href="https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89478/CumberlandHousePetitionResponseIW080920.pdf">https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89478/CumberlandHousePetitionResponseIW080920.pdf</a><i>)</i></p> <p>The Council, as applicant, remains confident that the consultation process undertaken complies with both the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Council's own Statement of</p>

Community Involvement (SCI). The Government is keen for the planning system to continue, and the engagement undertaken on all four sites has ensured that meaningful consultation was able to take place despite the restrictions on public gatherings imposed in response to Covid-19.

Consultation is taking place in a similar way across the country and measures were in place to ensure that people who are digitally excluded were able to comment. It also allowed people to be able to access the consultation materials and speak to team members at a time that suited them. The specific measures adopted allowed us to consult for longer and reach a larger audience than would have been the case through standard face to face consultation and include:

- Extensive notification of consultations including several flyers and newsletter by post, multiple online and press advertisements including the Surrey Comet and the Council's Facebook page and Twitter.
- Creation of a dedicated website, email address and phone line for each site which are still live and continue to be responded to.
- Live webinars were timed for both afternoon and evening periods.
- Presentations were also recorded and available to view on demand.
- Follow up calls and emails with a range of stakeholders where requested.

Whilst the GLA funding timescales are an important part of the programme, the need to keep the planning system moving, and to continue to make progress on delivering much needed homes, means that the consultation and engagement process would have taken place in this way anyway. Because we were able to deliver a compliant engagement process, we did not need to seek an extension for the funding.

It is unlikely that the restrictions on face to face consultation will be lifted anytime soon and the approach adopted means that we can continue to carry out effective and robust consultation and ensure residents' views are considered throughout the planning process.

	<p>Steve Quartermain the previous MHCLG Chief Planner (who retired earlier this year) wrote to LPA's with the following in March 2020:</p> <p><a href="https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875045/Chief_Planners_Newsletter_-_March_2020.pdf">https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875045/Chief_Planners_Newsletter_-_March_2020.pdf</a></p> <p><b>COVID-19 Advice Decision Making</b></p> <p><i>We understand that some councils are concerned about the implications of COVID19 for their capacity to process planning applications within statutory timescales. It is important that authorities continue to provide the best service possible in these stretching times and prioritise decision-making to ensure the planning system continues to function, especially where this will support the local economy.</i></p> <p><i>We ask you to take an innovative approach, using all options available to you to continue your service. We recognise that face-to-face events and meetings may have to be cancelled but we encourage you to explore every opportunity to use technology to ensure that discussions and consultations can go ahead. We also encourage you to consider delegating committee decisions where appropriate. The Government has confirmed that it will introduce legislation to allow council committee meetings to be held virtually for a temporary period, which we expect will allow planning committees to continue.</i></p>
Conservative (B)	<p>The council has been and continues to work closely with Kingston University to keep students and other residents safe. The University is a member of the Kingston 'Health Protection Forum', part of the Local Outbreak Control Plan governance. The RBK Communications team is working closely with Public Health and the University on messaging for students. While the University has in place a system to support students who need to self isolate as outlined below, the council has also offered the assistance of the Kingston Stronger Together Hub (for food and</p>

medicine deliveries) should this be needed. The council worked closely with the DHSC and Deloitte to put in place easily accessible walk-in free testing to be close to the University. The new 'Local Test Site' opened on the weekend of the 26/27 September 2020 and is located by County Hall.

Specific measures the University has put in place includes:

A) Support to follow COVID secure guidance:

- Information sent to new and returning students on COVID secure guidance covering the campuses and accommodation, and regular student bulletins
- Clear physical and digital signage across campuses on key messages regarding face covering, hand washing, social distancing and to not attend campus if you have symptoms or are awaiting the result of a COVID test and to alert the University immediately in such instances
- Digital communications shared through University intranet and student facing channels, examples include [this video](#) on return to campus and measures in place
- Welcome Ambassadors employed across each campus to remind and support students to adhere to COVID secure guidelines

B) Support for those in university halls who need to self-isolate:

- A concierge service for all new students who are required to quarantine following international travel which offers support for students with bedding, kitchen ware and food supplies. A similar service is also available for students who are required to self-isolate.
- Students are provided with appropriate sanitary products to make sure their spaces are kept thoroughly clean
- Students are able to receive food and other deliveries direct to their door if they are required to self-isolate
- Daily check-ups to ensure their health and wellbeing

For all students who need to self-isolate:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Virtual drop-ins for students on matters including mental health and money advice</li> <li>● Successful and well-used listening service since March 2020</li> <li>● Counselling for students is now offered remotely</li> </ul>
<p>Conservative (C)</p>	<p>The anticipated costs for each of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes is set out in the Annex that was considered alongside the report to the Response and Recovery Committee on 30 July 2020.</p> <p>Report:  <a href="https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89085/Street%20Space%20Programme.pdf">https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89085/Street%20Space%20Programme.pdf</a></p> <p>Annex 1:  <a href="https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89086/Street%20Space%20Programme%20-%20Annex%201.pdf">https://moderngov.kingston.gov.uk/documents/s89086/Street%20Space%20Programme%20-%20Annex%201.pdf</a></p> <p>For clarity, the list of funding allocations just for Low traffic neighbourhoods on a scheme basis are as follows:</p> <p>North Kingston (Kings Road area, Lower Ham Road) - £100,000          Albert Road - £42,000          Queens Road/Crescent Road width restrictions - £46,000          Roebuck Road/Mount Road - £39,000</p> <p>These budgets make provision for the design, delivery and monitoring of the projects, as well as construction and maintenance costs.</p> <p>Since the Committee there have been two significant changes to the allocated amounts, with the DfT Scheme being reduced to only cover the Lower Ham Road scheme, and with the remainder of the available funding from DfT reallocated to the King Charles Road LTN. This was because this area also received funding (from TfL rather than DfT) for width restrictions,</p>

and following consultation with ward councillors, it was decided to monitor the impact of the width restriction scheme before considering a further low traffic neighbourhood in Kings Road area. The second change was the decision not to proceed with the Mount Road/Roebuck Road area scheme in South of the Borough, and the unspent funding here is being utilised to provide an increased level of traffic and air quality monitoring across other projects within the programme, in agreement with TfL.

The amounts outlined in the report are budgets based on funding allocations received from DfT and TfL. Final outturn costs for the individual projects are not yet known.

The rationale for development of the proposals was based on a combination of factors which included knowledge of general enquiries and requests from councillors and residents/interested stakeholders, and developing/modifying proposals in areas with previously-planned LIP, Go-Cycle or Liveable Neighbourhood proposals, refined to ensure they would be deliverable against the new Streetspace agenda and within the timescales permitted by TfL and DfT.

The Go-Cycle and Liveable Neighbourhood proposals have been the subject of a range of engagement activities including public consultation events, engagement with ward councillors and attending Neighbourhood Committees. Whilst the borough had control over the bids that were submitted, we had no control on those that we received funding for as those decisions were made by TfL.

The aims and objectives of the proposals in the overall programme were and are to deliver measures to provide:

- Wider footways, to make social distancing easier
- Pop up cycle facilities,
- to create more space on the road for cyclists whilst maintaining social distancing
- Completing proposed cycle routes, particularly the Go Cycle projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reducing speed limits, with more 20mph zones and speed limits along residential roads to encourage safe and active travel</li> <li>● Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones by restricting motor vehicle access at certain times</li> <li>● Creating low traffic or traffic free neighbourhoods</li> <li>● Providing additional cycle parking facilities</li> </ul> <p>For the Low Traffic Neighbourhoods traffic surveys were carried out before the schemes were introduced on a range of roads near each scheme, and we will shortly be undertaking a range of ‘after’ surveys in the same locations. Once the data is analysed this will be published.</p> <p>We will also be assessing the impact on air quality (with the caveat that before data at different sites is variable).</p> <p>Another important factor will be community feedback. We are listening to what people think and continue to encourage responses via our Lets Talk portal.</p> <p>Any final decision on the future of the schemes will be based primarily on the above factors.</p>
<p>Green (A)</p>	<p>We are continuously trying to improve the Council’s transparency. In order to test and gain assurance on that compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code the Chief Executive has asked the Monitoring Officer to work with the Assistant Director Contracts and Commercial to conduct a review.</p>

## Responses to written Member Questions:

	Response
Lib Dem (D)	The Response and Recovery Committee approved the commencement of the procurement process for Care at Home and Supported Living. At the moment the council purchases these services via spot contracts and we do not have standard terms and conditions including consistent pricing and quality metrics. The new frameworks will introduce consistency of approach, clarity about how providers will be selected to provide services for them and people who use services, the length of time the frameworks will operate, and the pricing model. The council by introducing this hopes to attract new providers to work with Kingston increasing capacity, and provide improved sustainability and quality with our existing providers.
Lib Dem (E)	The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods recently introduced have been implemented using experimental powers. As such the consultation with residents takes place in parallel with the trial scheme being implemented. The advantage of this approach is that residents can express their views based on how the schemes are actually operating rather than something theoretical. Residents were informed of the proposals in advance, but not consulted. This approach is in line with that being recommended by both central government and Transport for London, and is common with how boroughs across London are approaching these projects. The timelines attached to funding for these projects, from both DfT and TfL, would have prevented a consultation in advance, which would have been our usual practice.
Con (D)	The opposition will recall starting the case of Kingston upon Thames v Moss in the last months of their administration. When the Liberal Democrats came into power they were informed of the existence of the case and that there were no contingency plans in place in the event that the case was lost. The opposition will recall that the Liberal Democrats put contingency plans for the loss of the case in place with provision in the budget for repaying tenants for excess water charging. In accordance with legal practice and advice all public discussion of water charges had to stop for fear of prejudicing the existing case. Now the case has been decided in favour of Mr Moss the

	contingency arrangements put in place by the Liberal Democrat administration will be implemented.
Con (E)	In June 2020 a report to the Response and Recovery committee set out the estimated financial impact of Coronavirus at a detailed level. Further update was provided alongside the Month 3 monitoring report in July and this will be updated again at the month 6 monitoring report in November. The month 3 monitoring report set out planned actions for expenditure restraint, recruitment restraint and the identification of in year savings in order to mitigate the financial pressures. These actions, combined with recovery of some income losses from sales, fees and charges through the government funding scheme has significantly reduced the impact in year. The month 6 monitoring report will set out any further actions required to bring the budget into balance by the end of the year.
Con (F)	<p>The Leader of the Council met with the Chief Executive of Unilever PLC once following the first public announcement of the company's potential relocation of the UK headquarters to Kingston in July 2020 . Since this time the Leader has also met Unilever once in her capacity as Chair of the Kingston Economic Recovery Task Force and has also recently attended a meeting with a Planning Officer and the proposed developers of the site, at which a representative of Unilever was present. The meeting was arranged to update Cllrs and Officers on the progress of the planning application submission. Relevant officers have accompanied the Leader at these meetings.</p> <p>The business rates system is designed and controlled nationally with extremely limited scope to make reductions locally for specific businesses or industries. Whilst reductions may encourage economic growth they would also reduce the level of income available to the Council to fund local services.</p> <p>Additional business rates relief was provided to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses under the government scheme, reducing bills to nil for these sectors for 2020/21 as a result of the pandemic. The Council has also successfully distributed approximately £30million of grants to support local businesses together with a package of free business support on offer.</p>

Con (G)	The Council do hold a long leasehold interest in Bittoms Car Park. Any decisions whether or not to retain that Leasehold interest will be commercially sensitive.
Con (H)	The libraries review is not about closing libraries - in fact it starts from the opposite position. The review aims to retain library buildings and maximise their role in the community - making them spaces that are accessible for as many people as possible, extending them beyond the current library service. The review is designed to help shape how those spaces can be used and to enable communities to maximise their benefits. The review aims to reimagine libraries as community spaces from which a range of cultural, heritage and other services can be delivered by RBK, partners and the community, building on the lessons learnt from the Kingston Stronger Together Hub and also the digital offer created in the last 6 months. As well as significant community engagement, the review is underpinned by data, understanding who are current library users are and who we are not reaching currently.
Con (I)	The dementia care nursing home was developed under the previous administration, and was developed without a detailed business case or take account of the Choice directive and its own placement policy at the time. The decisions made by that administration did not take into account the majority of complex dementia nursing care is funded through NHS Continuing health care, or that individuals under the Choice directive must be allowed to choose where they have their care. We enabled the dementia care nursing home to be built that will enable Kingsnton residents who fund their own care, or where they choose to pay a third party payment and those who are funded by the NHS if they choose to live in this home are able to do so. Where the council funds care it must always seek best value, and offer choice and this will continue to apply but we can not force people to live in a particular place.
Con (J)	The Council became an accredited Living Wage Employer at the end of September 2019, and as part of its accreditation, the Council committed to paying the London Living wage to all employed staff (or Living Wage outside London) and 72 contractors, with a further commitment to paying London Living Wage for the remaining 17 contractors over a period of three years ending in September 2022. This is the deadline by when those who had been contracted by the Council before the accreditation will be compliant with LLW. All new contracts over the value of £150k let by the Council from September 2019 are compliant with LLW requirements as this requirement is

	<p>built into the Council's contract terms and conditions and therefore are legally binding.</p> <p>The renewal of our accreditation was completed at the end of September 2020, demonstrating that significant progress has been made including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 20 additional suppliers confirmed compliance with LLW; 4 of those had a future commitment and the remaining 16 had the LLW implemented at the point of re-commissioning or a contract extension or variation.</li> <li>● A minimum of additional 1,081 contracted staff are paid LLW, of this 994 are full time staff. This represents a minimum of 68% increase from 1,582 recorded at the time of the accreditation, with a total of 2,663 contracted staff paid LLW.</li> <li>● LLW requirement is embedded through our procurement process and new contracts that the Council entered into since October 2020</li> <li>● LLW compliance is monitored through the contract management process and included within the Contract Management Scorecard for Tier 1 contracts</li> </ul> <p>RBK has been commended by the Foundation for advancing LLW agenda over the past year, and in the words of the Foundation "great to see how much improvement has been made, it is really encouraging to see as I know how difficult this can be for local authorities."</p>
Con (K)	<p>The construction contract was let in line with the Council's London Living Wage policy and includes a contractual requirement that all relevant staff employed or engaged in delivery of the contract, including any staff employed or engaged by any subcontractors, pay an equivalent hourly wage which is equal to or exceeds the London Living Wage.</p>
Con (L)	<p>The existing leisure contract expires in March 2026 and the Council has been in dialogue with the current contractor about the potential to introduce the living wage over the next three years. The Council agreed a staged implementation of LLW with the provider before the end of the expiry of the existing contract. A schedule of meetings has taken place to explore opportunities and agree a work plan, however since the COVID 19 Pandemic all leisure centres were mandated by the Government to close, and RBK and Places Leisure have had to enter COVID related contract negotiations and discussions on LLW implementation have been postponed.</p>

#Con (M)	<p>The Council has three waste contracts provided by Veolia that are compliant with LLW:  Veolia Waste Phase A Food Waste  Veolia Waste Phase A Handle and Haul  Veolia Waste Phase C Lot 1</p> <p>The Household Reuse and Recycling Centre contract with Veolia was recently varied and includes the commitment to pay LLW from April 2021. However, it should be noted that this was only recently approved by a partner borough and the partnership have not yet made the announcement as they expect to inform staff first.</p>
Con (N)	<p>There are three adult social care contracts ending in 2021 with a commitment to paying LLW through re-tendering. The Council published tenders in October 2020 to establish new frameworks for domiciliary care (£57m) and supported living (£41m) with new contracts to be in place by April 2021 for a term of up to 7 years. These contracts also include the provision for paying LLW. A fee uplift to all 18 homecare providers was agreed in response to Covid to allow for LLW payments and to encourage market sustainability. Significant work has also been undertaken to regularise the level of spot purchased spend in adult social care, particularly for low paid social care sectors, in line with our commitment to the LLW.</p>
Con (O)	<p>This is a contract where a commitment has been made to transition to LLW over the next three years. The current contract expires in September 2022 and LLW will be introduced as part of the review of the contract. Council officers have been in continued dialogue with ENGIE to identify opportunities to introduce LLW earlier where possible and these discussions continue.</p>
Con (P)	<p>The customer experience team monitors councillor enquiries and has a robust system in place to assign and track enquires from elected members. In Q2 we received 732 member enquiries which</p>

	<p>was a 41% increase compared to the 518 received in Q1. 82% of member enquiries were responded to on time in Q2 which was an increase from 75% responded to on time in Q1. For Q1 and Q2, we have responded to 79% of member enquiries within the target of 10 working days, the agreed target is to respond to over 80% of member enquiries within 10 working days. A review of the member enquiry process has started recently to improve response rates to over 80%.</p> <p>From 01/04/20 to date, average answer times in the contact centre is 4 minutes 21seconds which is an improvement on 2019/20 when the average time to answer was 4 minutes 42 seconds. The contact centre target is to answer calls within 5 minutes and is currently meeting its published target rate for response times.</p>
Con (Q)	<p>This year the Council has received 758 Freedom of Information requests. 39% of requests have taken longer than 20 days and 119 requests are still outstanding. Where we have responded to a request, the average response time is 18 days.</p> <p>FOI performance has been impacted by the need to focus on the Covid response. The Information Commissioner's Office contacted the Chief Executive in March setting out their measured, practical approach to compliance during the pandemic. This approach was echoed by the Council. Whilst we were unable to extend statutory timescales, officers were not expected to divert their attention from dealing with the pandemic to respond to requests, however, officers were encouraged to respond if able to do so.</p> <p>We do however accept that our performance needs improvement and steps are being taken to address this. A full review of the process has recently been undertaken and issues highlighted within this review will be addressed.</p>
Con (R)	<p>The Council has instructed a review of the Leisure Strategy which will provide an up to date assessment of the leisure facilities required across the Borough. The outcome of which will be presented to Committee in due course</p>
Con (S)	<p>Pre-planning consultation and engagement has been commensurate with the scale of the development proposed. The small sites programme consists of four sites, the largest of which, if</p>

	<p>planning is granted, would deliver 41 homes. Our engagement process met the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community of Involvement and residents were able to comment on all aspects of the development including both the principle of development and proposed plans. A full Statement of Community involvement has been prepared for each site and is publicly available on the Council's website. Details of the planning applications which have been submitted for each of the sites consulted on earlier in the year, will be presented to the relevant Neighbourhood Committees in November 2020.</p> <p>More broadly, the developments are in line with emerging policy H2 on small sites in the Draft London Plan which has been comprehensively consulted on by the Mayor over the last few years. It states that the delivery of small sites is a strategic priority due to the overall level of new homes which can be delivered in sustainable locations and sets targets for individual boroughs. (<i>Note: RBKuT's GLA target is 2,250 over a 10 year period to 2028/29</i>)</p> <p>The Council has also consulted on it's own small sites objectives through early engagement for the Draft Local Plan in May 2019.</p> <p>This, combined with the site specific consultation has delivered a comprehensive programme of engagement which has kept residents informed.</p> <p>By contrast, the regeneration of an entire estate with the potential delivery of over 2,000 homes requires a different scale of engagement. If funding is to be secured from the GLA this will include a ballot of existing residents. Grant funding is essential to ensure the viability of the scheme and to secure the large, long term benefit regeneration will bring to the borough.</p>
<p>Con (T)</p>	<p>As portfolio holder, I was kept abreast of the schemes as well as all the affected ward Cllrs. We undertook comprehensive engagement and as a result of listening to feedback and as part of the pre-planning process, changes have been made to all of the proposals. Across all of the sites,</p>

comments were received about both the height of the buildings and the number of homes proposed. We have worked closely with the architects and planning officers to make sure that both the height, and the number of homes are suitable for the site.

As portfolio holder for Housing, I am not involved in the planning process and the Council as the Local Planning Authority will follow due process in determining these applications.

I can however set out that as a direct result of comments made about individual schemes during the consultation, the following changes have been made to the plans:

#### **Cambridge Road**

- Responding to concerns about existing developments being used as a cut through, all pedestrian and vehicular access will now be via a single entrance on Cambridge Road.
- In response to concerns about overlooking, the facade has been amended to reduce the number of windows on the eastern elevation.

#### **Cumberland House**

- Parking proposals have been amended to include 11 parking spaces for existing residents. There will also be a space provided for a car club vehicle which can be accessed by all residents.
- The landscape plan has been revised to ensure that the existing play equipment is retained, this is in addition to the wider landscape improvements which are proposed.

#### **Roupell House**

- The alleyway between Florence Road and Lowther Road has been widened from 2.9m to 4m.
- Residents raised concerned about the impact of fly-tipping in the area, our Housing Management Team continue to clear this and look for longer term solutions for this on the existing estate.

**York Way**

- An additional three parking spaces have been provided for existing residents and there will also be a car club space which can be accessed by all residents.
- We are now retaining fenced garden areas with only a small reduction required to ensure service vehicles can be accommodated.

We have also consulted the Council's independent Design Review Panel (DRP). They have made the following recommendations which have been implemented:

**All sites:**

- Boundaries expanded to incorporate wider public benefits and upgrades
- Early ecology and Arboricultural assessments were undertaken, which were used to influence final design
- Robust options testing was utilised to determine the most appropriate built form for each site

**Cambridge Road**

- Access arrangements were refined and simplified (also brought up in community consultation)
- A setback was retained on the southern boundary to ensure future development of neighbouring properties (current potential is a school) was not jeopardised.
- Window design was re-visited to consider a balance between privacy, usability, ventilation and a pleasant living environment.

**Cumberland House:**

- Enhanced local benefits to the community incorporated, including formal and natural play space, enhanced open lawn space, formal edge planting and retention of existing trees where possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Considerable options testing was undertaken to limit the impact on the tree belt along the north-west boundary, and other trees to the north and entrance of the site.</li> <li>● Built form was simplified, to allow for a simple design set within existing landscaping, creating more positive spaces around the building and improving the relationships and setbacks to the existing Cumberland House dwellings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Roupell House:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The access point to the north of the site has been widened to improve site lines from north to south (Florence Road to Lowther Road). This was also brought up in community consultation</li> <li>● Street trees have been retained as much as possible</li> <li>● The eastern façade was revisited to ensure adequate articulation and visual interest</li> <li>● Additional boundary treatments incorporated to ensure adequate defensible space to ground floor units and delineation between private and public spaces</li> <li>● Additional soft landscaping incorporated to the boundary with the rear of Dale Court (eastern boundary)</li> <li>● Unit layout reconfigured to maximise the amount of dual aspect units.</li> </ul> <p><b>York Way</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Car parking re-located to the northern end of the site to enhance the proposed amenity spaces</li> <li>● Hard surfacing removed from near the base of the Willow Tree onsite, to ensure the root protection zone was not impacted</li> <li>● Extensive options testing of block design was undertaken post-DRP, to ensure the final proposal was the most suitable</li> <li>● Deck access along the north west was incorporated to maximise natural daylight into homes, with staggered balconies along the south elevation</li> </ul>
Con (U)	The Council encourages competitive tendering for all contract opportunities and this approach is

	<p>embedded in the Contract Regulations, which apply to contracts valued £150k and above. The Council does not retain a corporate record of the tendering route for contracts valued below £150k and is therefore not able to advise as to the total value of contracts that have been sourced via a direct award. The Council does not have details of companies that may include former or current councillors or activists. However, bidders and officers are required to identify any potential conflict of interest as part of the sourcing process and this would be reviewed to ascertain what action is appropriate.</p> <p>The Council's contract register is published here:  <a href="https://procontract.due-north.com/ContractsRegister/Index?p=2241eb95-058a-e511-80f7-000c29c9ba21&amp;v=1">https://procontract.due-north.com/ContractsRegister/Index?p=2241eb95-058a-e511-80f7-000c29c9ba21&amp;v=1</a></p>
<p>Con (V)</p>	<p>Following the outbreak of Covid-19, construction works on the Kingston to Kingston Vale Go Cycle project came to a halt for a period because workers were quarantined and building supplies were interrupted. Moreover, TfL withdrew all of the previously allocated budget for the Go Cycle programme and eventually replaced it with a different and significantly reduced funding allocation. This reduced funding has necessitated alterations across the Go Cycle programme.</p> <p>However the Kingston to Kingston Vale scheme is 95% complete and operational, with ongoing 'snagging' works and tweaks being undertaken in some locations along the route. The highway works at the Park Road roundabout are complete and the middle of the roundabout can be planted at the next opportunity.</p> <p>All of our revised plans and remaining works continue to require the approval of TfL at every stage, and this now takes place within the overall context and revised budgetary arrangements caused by Covid-19. We hope that TfL will provide the go-ahead to enable the works at Galsworthy Road and Queen's Road junctions to be undertaken at the end of the year. In the meantime our contractor is directed to visit the site regularly in order to keep it safe and clean.</p>

## Responses to Questions from Members of the Public:

Question	From	Response
1	Cristina Gosney	<p>Gully cleaning of drains across RBK is scheduled to be undertaken once every two years as a minimum. Since the drains were last cleaned out in Wolverton Avenue in 2016, parked cars have prevented drains from being accessed by the gully-sucking machine on subsequent scheduled visits. We are therefore arranging for the contractors to undertake an additional visit to clean out the drains immediately. If there are still drains that cannot be accessed and remain blocked, we will suspend parking bays accordingly to ensure that they can be attended to.</p> <p>With regards to tree works, Wolverton Avenue was inspected last year and is on this year's cyclical pruning schedule, so planned works should be completed within the next couple of months. The trees vary in size along the street so a mix of crown lifting and crown reduction works will be carried out.</p>
2	Isabella Topley	<p>The school improvement team in Achieving for Children has been working closely with all schools in the borough to support their risk assessments, their confidence to respond to positive Covid-19 cases, and to make sure that every school has a remote learning offer that can be mobilised if needed. Schools have been encouraged and supported to access national and local schemes which provide laptops and internet connectivity for every child who needs it to access virtual learning, and to assist pupils who may find engaging in home learning more challenging. Examples of local and national good practice are shared with school leaders through a twice weekly e-bulletin, as well as through regular training and support provided to all schools by experienced school improvement advisers.</p>
3	Adya Manoj	<p>The Council and Achieving for Children is working closely with our colleagues in the clinical commissioning group and health services to ensure there are appropriate and timely services to support children's and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. This is a priority in our shared Health and Care Plan. In response to the increasing number of children experiencing mental</p>

		<p>health challenges due to Covid-19, free access to the online live counselling service Kooth has been extended to all children and young people in the borough aged 11 years and over. In addition, Achieving for Children's emotional health service has developed an online resource hub to provide information, videos and online therapies for children, young people and their parents, covering issues such as anxiety and low mood. The service is also supporting children's and young people's emotional wellbeing in schools through a government-funded trailblazer programme which places mental health support teams into schools. The scheme is currently a pilot in 11 primary and secondary schools across the borough, but the resources developed through the pilot are being widely shared so that all schools have access to tried and tested mental health resources to support their pupils.</p>
4	James Giles	<p>Yes, together with any interpretation of the Procedure Rules by the Monitoring Officer and, in meetings, the Mayor or relevant Chairs</p> <p>In view of the need to reinstate Neighbourhood Committees at the earliest opportunity, it was agreed with the Neighbourhood Chairs that the September cycle of meetings should go ahead with as much of the usual public participation as it was practically possible to implement.</p> <p>Since advance notice is required in order to enable members of the public to participate in virtual meetings (so as to allow us to send links, ensure they have been received and tested and to brief on joining instructions and technical requirements) it was necessary to ask for speakers to register prior to the meeting. We also asked them to supply the question they wanted to ask in case technical issues during the meeting prevented them from logging in - we would then have ensured the question was read out on their behalf..</p> <p>While this varied slightly from the constitutional requirements it replicated the same provisions that apply to Strategic Committees held in the Guildhall and was agreed with the Monitoring Officer as a pragmatic solution in extraordinary circumstances which allowed us to mirror the normal arrangements for public participation as closely as possible. Had we not made this change we would not have been able to facilitate questions at all.</p> <p>You will see that on the agenda this evening there is a proposal to formally embed similar arrangements in the Constitution for so long as meetings have to be held virtually, though members of</p>

		<p>the public will not have to supply their full question in advance if they do not wish to do so.</p> <p>It was made clear at the Extraordinary Meeting of Council in May that the usual mechanisms for public participation in meetings would not be easy to facilitate in a virtual context but Officers committed to working towards the gradual reinstatement of as much public participation as possible as familiarity with the virtual meeting environment grew. We have done this to the point where we can now approve tonight the return in a virtual format of all means of public participation in meetings with the exception of speaking on agenda items - regrettably this is still not possible to offer because of the logistical and technical difficulties in managing large numbers of speakers within a virtual Meeting. We will though be happy to forward written comments to the Committee wherever its practicable to do so.</p>
5	Coral Russell	<p>Both Cumberland House and Black Lives Matters are important issues for residents of the Borough. They were, however, dealt with under quite separate constitutional mechanisms at the July Council meeting, designed with different purposes in mind. The organiser of the Cumberland House petition was allowed up to two minutes to submit the petition to the Council in accordance with our normal procedural rules. At that initial stage in the process the Council could not debate or comment on the detail of the petition but it would have done at a subsequent meeting if it had contained sufficient signatures to trigger a full and formal debate. Since it did not it received a detailed written response from Officers. The Black Lives Matters motion was a formal motion submitted for full debate and a Council resolution at that particular meeting and consequently more time was afforded to it.</p>
7	Justin Quirk	<p>The Seething Wells site is designated as Metropolitan Open Land, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, falls within a Conservation Area, and contains Locally Listed Buildings. The council is committed to making sure all work on the Seething Wells site is carried out in the correct manner and the site is closely monitored to ensure there are no breaches of planning control.</p>

		<p>Any evidence of habitats of protected species of wildlife being destroyed on site is a matter for the Metropolitan Police as, if this is the case, it is a legal matter and we would advise any residents who believe this to be the case to contact the police force.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Simon Bentham</p>	<p>The Council is currently in the process of producing a new local plan, the boroughs statutory development plan. Along with the London Plan and emerging neighbourhood plans an up to date local plan is required to set out our vision and strategy for economic growth and development of the borough and contains the policy context used in determining planning applications. The local plan is a plan for residents and communities and is based on the evidence based need emerging from population growth from within the borough.</p> <p>There is a pressing need for housing that is affordable for our future residents - our children and our children's children. The need for more housing brings with it the opportunity to build not just homes, but communities and with it to invigorate our residential and business capability. Safe communities that bring people together. Healthy communities with green open spaces. Communities that will transform the lives of the people who live here. We need to respond to our changing needs and as we prepare to meet these needs it is essential that new development respects the boroughs rich heritage and locally distinctive character.</p> <p>With the imperative of climate change, everything we plan, design and build should make our borough a more carbon-neutral place to live. Through innovative planning and design to promote sustainable living, soft landscaping and streets lined with trees, with plenty of open spaces to bring natural beauty and mitigate against the harmful effects of CO2 to encourage and enable active travel bringing further environmental benefits. Energy-efficient transport, less waste, cleaner air. Open spaces that connect people to our natural environment, so people can enjoy a better and more fulfilling and healthy leisure time.</p>

9	Shelly Perera	Monitoring of traffic levels on Hawks Road and other roads in the area will be undertaken in mid-October. This data will then be compared with 'before' data collected before the trial scheme was introduced. The council will publish this information as soon as is practicable. The scheme is a trial and we want to understand its impacts locally before taking any decision on whether it should become permanent. Because it is a trial scheme, we did not model the impacts before implementation.
10	Rukhshana Bilimoria	The council believes that a significant proportion of the traffic using King Charles Road is non-local traffic which is better suited to using main roads in the area. The council aims to reduce through motor traffic in residential areas to encourage cycling and walking and improve air quality. The scheme is experimental to test the impact of the change and gauge opinion from local people. The qualitative feedback during the trial will hopefully give us information on residents' observations and views on the type of road and its many features, including whether any behaviours have changed as a result of the modal filter, such as increased pedestrian usage or cycling in the area.

## Supplementary Council Questions &amp; Responses - 13 October 2020

	From	To	Public Supplementary Questions at Council
1	Cristina Gosney	Councillor Hilary Gander	<p>The residents have taken over planters on the road. Replaced with planter which has been good for the road but have problem with trees</p> <p>Are they going to be pollarded? If so, can this be done in a sustainable way without destroying the canopy and affecting the play of light through the leaves?</p> <p>Could you please make sure the vehicles covering the drains are moved or we find a way to move them?</p> <p>Put out bollards or fine them for being in that spot.</p>
2	James Giles	Councillor Caroline Kerr	<p>On 15 September the Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood Committee met, on 16th Kingston Town Neighbourhood</p> <p>On 17 September Surbiton Neighbourhood and on 23 South of the Borough.</p> <p>At all of those meetings residents were informed to submit their questions one working day in advance of the meeting which is a clear breach of the procedural rules and standing orders of this borough.</p> <p>What is the point of having standing orders if her administration on a whim will breach the standing orders and restrict public participation at public meetings of the Council?</p>
3	Justin Quirk	Councillor Rebekah Moll	<p>Are we going to have to sit back and watch the site being destroyed?</p> <p>- Can we meet up and talk about this?</p>
4	Simon Bentham	Councillor Rebekah Moll	<p>What happens with the services that the council provides with the amount of housing that is going to be increased you said 600 odd to 900 odd. Schools and hospitals are already stretched. What are the options then?</p>

## Member Questions to be answered in writing:

	From	Member Supplementary Questions
Lib Dem (B)	Councillor Mark Durrant  To Cllr Andreas Kirsch	Do you believe the central government is leaning on local gov to do the work here but not properly funding us for this?
Lib Dem (C)	Councillor Christine Stuart  To Cllr Caroline Kerr	The visually impaired community are obviously a very special case and I am aware officers are working on an arrangement for those cases.  How will separate arrangements can be implemented, possibly with nurses going to peoples houses?
Conservative (A)	Councillor Rowena Bass  To Cllr Rebekah Moll	I didn't get answer to original question so need full answer.  My supplementary is - During the summer playground equipment was removed from Cumberland house without informing residents, the warden or Ward Councillors causing much angst to residents.  We chased that up and officers report said: 'Cumberland house is a relatively high density estate. We understand the value of open spaces for people to enjoy particularly during the Covid Pandemic.  Given these examples of Poor consultation and administration are pushing through small sites programme at quick place  Can the Cllr Davey and the administration ensure Cumberland house residents concerns will be listened to and they will get a fair hearing and decision will not be predetermined.

Conservative (B)	Councillor Kevin Davis  To Cllr Emily Davey	Can the member tell us when the Council contact centre will be reopened so vulnerable residents and students will get information?  Response in writing
Conservative (C)	Councillor David Cunningham  To Cllr Hilary Gander	How will she judge how the Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes will be a success or not?
Green (A)	Cllr Falchikov-Sumner  To Cllr Caroline Kerr	<p>Awaiting written reply from last Council meeting on following question:</p> <p><b>Supplementary Question from Council on 7 July 2020</b></p> <p><i>Thank you for your response, however my question has not been answered. I very deliberately asked for information not just in relation to Contract Standing Orders but also the system of delegation for financing.</i></p> <p><i>Bearing in mind that I have shown on a number of occasions that the Council has waived procedures to commission work for prominent Liberal Democrat members and former and sitting Councillors. The Council has awarded work without any formal tendering process of competitive bidding and I have waited 6 months for a reply. Today I released information of £450k worth for Covid grants which have been appropriated without any oversight to companies that do not supply us at all.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore I ask the leader of the Council to Committee to two things:</i></p> <p><b><i>1. Bring back to Finance and Partnerships Committee the information on delegations.</i></b></p>

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		<p><b>2. Have these instances deferred to the external auditors.</b></p> <p>In which case could perhaps Cllr Kerr comment on some situations regarding three points -</p> <p>I myself have been given an incorrect FOI response where I was told a contract was awarded that was under £25k with no contract renewal.</p> <p>Then at the time later after 8 months of trying to get contract information the contract was of a value £64k.</p> <p>At the point of submitting the freedom of information request had already accumulated over £30k of invoices.</p> <p>Could you also comment on the fact on two occasions I Have made two requests under environmental information regulations on Cambridge Road Estate and Sinc Review</p> <p>The law is clear with regards to data transparency - Data held by any Council contractor or partner must be provided. Can you explain why contracts have not been published over £5000 since June 2019 and routinely not published on Council's website for over £500?</p> <p>Can we get a commitment to those points?</p>
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	From	To	Public Supplementary Questions responses
1	Cristina Gosney	Councillor Hilary Gander	<p>The London plane trees on Wolverton Avenue are scheduled for crown reductions as part of the Council's cyclical tree maintenance programme within Coombe Hill ward. The trees will be reduced to previous years pruning points in line with good arboricultural practice and management.</p> <p>Maintenance and pruning was due to be carried out in Coombe Hill ward April-August 2020, however this was delayed by Covid 19 restrictions. We have since resumed borough wide tree work and I anticipate that Coombe Hill ward will be completed within the next 3 months.</p>

			Parking bays will be suspended as required to ensure that all gullies can be accessed and cleaned out.
2	James Giles	Councillor Caroline Kerr	<p>We wanted to reinstate the Neighbourhood Committees at the earliest opportunity and so it was agreed with Neighbourhood Chairs that the cycle of meetings in September would go ahead and we would try to do it with as much public participation as practicably possible.</p> <p>As you will appreciate, advanced notice is required to allow people to participate in virtual meetings. That's to make sure officers can send them the links, to brief them on joining restrictions and any technical requirements. It was for that reason it was necessary to ask speakers to register before the meeting. We also asked them to supply the question they wanted to ask in advance of the meeting and that was in case any technical issues arose during the meeting which prevented them speaking for themselves. It meant that we could have ensured that the question was read out on their behalf.</p> <p>Now you are right that this varies slightly from the Constitutional requirements but it replicates the same provisions applied to Strategic Committees held in the Guildhall and it was agreed with the Monitoring Officer as a pragmatic solution in extraordinary circumstances, which allowed us to mirror the normal arrangements for public participation as closely as possible. Had we not made this change we would have not been able to facilitate questions at all.</p> <p>You will also see from the agenda this evening that there is also a proposal to formally imbed similar arrangements in the Constitution while meetings are held virtually and members of the public will not need to submit their full question in advance if they do not want to.</p>
3	Justin Quirk	Councillor Rebekah Moll	<p>As stated in the original response the Council has no statutory powers at its disposal with which to address the destruction of habitats of protected species of wildlife as it is protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The Council has ensured that the necessary planning policy measures are in place and monitors the site closely. Officers are currently assessing the situation to determine whether other measures are available through the planning process through which to further strengthen the protection of the biodiversity habitats on site.</p>

4	Simon Bentham	Councillor Rebekah Moll	As previously mentioned, in line with its statutory responsibilities the Council is currently preparing the new Local Plan (LP). The LP assesses the evidence based need for housing, jobs and the associated development required within the borough and sets out the spatial distribution of where and how these needs are to be met. In parallel and aligned with the LP preparation, the Council is also in the process of producing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). Working with agencies and stakeholders, the IDP assesses, identifies and prioritises the wider infrastructure required to support growth across the borough, when this will be required, how it is to be provided. The IDP also identifies the mechanisms, responsibilities and phasing of delivery and funding to align with the housing development trajectory over the lifetime of the plan. A proportion of the funding will come from planning obligations through CIL and s106 and other funding from agencies, statutory bodies, stakeholders and the Council responsible for specific provision. The purpose of the IDP is to identify need, priorities and the timing and phasing of delivery.
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	<b>Member Supplementary Questions responses</b>
Lib Dem(B)	At present the level of central government funding provided to support the Covid-19 response has been less than the financial impact caused by the pandemic. Some of this relates to additional responsibilities given to us by government (and some of those responsibilities come with additional funding) but in other instances the funding is insufficient to support the new activities or the financial pressure arises from a knock-on effect on other council activities such as the ability to deliver planned savings and so is not directly compensated for.
Lib Dem(C)	'A special arrangement has been put in place to assist residents with visual impairment, and who are unable to to visit the assisted testing offer at the Regional Testing Unit at Chessington World of Adventures, undertake a COVID-19 test in their own homes. Your Healthcare will provide a trained staff member to make a home visit to the home of the visually impaired resident to assist the resident to take the test and arrange for it to be collected. The council has worked with YourHealthcare and local residents and voluntary groups to put this arrangement in place.'

<p>Conservative(A)</p>	<p>A letter and survey has been sent to Cumberland House residents (and ward councillors) asking for residents' opinions about the replacement equipment on the existing playground.</p> <p>The one item of play equipment that was cordoned off and removed was done based on health and safety advice. The council employs an independent company to complete inspections of the play equipment and received a recommendation to replace the particular equipment. A letter of apology was sent to local residents because they were not informed prior to the decision to replace the one item, along with advice that theirs and their children's views will be sought before a replacement is put in place.</p> <p>The letters were sent out on 9th October and since the Councillor Bass has been in contact with the Resident Services Officer to thank her for being kept informed.</p>
<p>Conservative(B)</p>	<p>The Council Contact Centre has remained open and fully operational throughout covid 19. Since 01/04/20 the contact centre has answered over 75,000 calls from residents. We have requested that residents contact us via our website where possible to ensure the contact centre has capacity able to prioritise urgent and emergency calls as well as providing an additional Covid19 support line</p>
<p>Conservative(C)</p>	<p>The schemes will be assessed against a number of factors, predominantly traffic and air quality data on a number of roads in the surrounding area, compared with before the schemes were implemented, feedback received from the public and stakeholders, and any formal representations received in response to the traffic order consultation. Legally, there is no significance to the number of representations but the authority needs to have given each representation due consideration depending on its merits. Then, a view is taken on the overall success of the scheme and the council makes a decision on how to continue with each scheme. A successful scheme is one that has an overall positive impact on the local area.</p>
<p>Green(A)</p>	<p>Prior to the publication of the new Contract Regulations in October 2019, the Contract Standing Orders were in place. These only require a Waiver for contracts over £100k. Below this value contracts were entered into in accordance with the Financial Regulations which delegated authority to Assistance Directors/ Heads of Services for awards below £100k. If staff intended to seek exemption from the Contract Standing Orders for contracts below £100k they were required to complete a CSO Exemption form which was signed by their AD/Head of Service. As the authority to award was delegated to service level there was no corporate register of CSO exemption forms during this period and staff in the relevant service area were required to hold the completed form on file.</p>

The Delegated Decision form was introduced in November 2019 and we have a register listing all waivers from this period. In the period from November 2019 to 22 May 2020 there were 16 waivers approved for contracts below £150k. All waivers from this period were approved by the Corporate Head of Commissioning or the AD for Contracts & Commercial.

With regard to the publication of contracts valued £5000 and over to the contract register, we can confirm that an extensive data validation exercise has been undertaken since late 2019 to improve our compliance with the contract register. All of our contracts are published on the public contract register at the link below:

<https://procontract.due-north.com/ContractsRegister/Index?resetFilter=True&applyFilter=True&p=2241eb95-058a-e511-80f7-000c29c9ba21&v=1>

We recognise that there have been some issues with uploading the contracts transparency data to the Kingston Data website and we are taking urgent action to resolve this.

With regard to the two requests made:

- (1) Bring back to the Finance and Partnerships Committee the information on delegations.
- (2) Have these instances deferred to the external auditors.

There is no obligation to meet either of the requests. We could bring information on delegations to F&P, however as decisions under the value of £150k are executed by officers across the Council under the officer delegated powers provided under the Financial Scheme of Delegation, the responsibility sits with each Directorate to have a record of the decisions taken and to ensure compliance. It is therefore unclear how this requirement will be met unless the Council decides to allocate suitable corporate resources to support centralisation of the records for all purchases below £150K. The information held corporately on delegations includes those requiring a waiver to Annex 2 of the contract regulations since November 2019 when the refreshed contract regulations came in force.

No referral has been made to the external auditors as we have found no evidence of a breach of the financial scheme of delegation or annex 2 of the contract regulations. The audit team have completed a contracts audit in 2019 focusing on low value spend and actions identified by the audit team have been progressed and reported back to the audit.