

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF KINGSTON UPON THAMES**

**MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**29 APRIL 2021**

**(7:30 pm - 11:41 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
Rowena Bass	Katrina Lidbetter
Mark Beynon	Rebekah Moll
Fiona Boulton	Maria Netley
Olivia Boulton	Munir Ravalia
Tim Cobbett	Dave Ryder-Mills
David Cunningham	Anita Schaper
Emily Davey	Malcolm Self
Kevin Davis	Nicola Sheppard
Lorraine Dunstone	Chrisine Stuart
Mark Durrant	Sharron Falchikov-Sumner
Simon Edwards	John Sweeney
Sam Foulder-Hughes	Thay Thayalan
Ed Fram	Jon Tolley
Hilary Gander	Olly Wehring
Ian George	Diane White
Dennis Goodship	Annette Wookey
Liz Green	Yogan Yoganathan
Jaesung Ha	Sharon Young

\* Absent

**60. Minute's silence for HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh**

The Mayor invited Members to observe a minute's silence in memory of His Royal Highness, Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh.

**61. Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

**62. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Lorraine Dunstone and Simon Edwards declared interests in relation to item 11 which outlined the recommendations of the Response and Recovery Committee on the Cambridge Road Estate programme delivery. Both Members were Council representatives on the Joint Venture company and although they did not believe this gave rise to any conflict of interest they nevertheless left the meeting for the duration of the item and took no part in the proceedings thereon.

**63. Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 February 2021 were approved as a correct record.

**64. Mayor's Announcements**

The Mayor congratulated two Housing Officers, Jacqueline Farrier and Jane Mellard, who had been nominated for a commendation from the Metropolitan Police BCU Commander for their dedication and professionalism in ensuring the safety of the residents of the Borough, as well as their enthusiasm for partnership working with the Police and particularly for their work on the Cambridge Road Estate. It was noted that they had worked tirelessly to safeguard the most vulnerable and improve the lives of all the residents on the estate, building up outstanding levels of trust and confidence within the community.

It was announced that the Mayors Ball which had been provisionally scheduled to take place on 23rd April, would be cancelled. The Mayor extended her sincere thanks to those who had agreed to nevertheless donate the value of their ticket to the Mayors Charitable fund.

Members were reminded about the Mobile Mop Up project which had been running in the borough in partnership with Genuine Solutions. The Mayor was seeking 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.

**65. Petitions**

There were no petitions submitted.

**66. Public Questions**

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

**67. Motion**

In accordance with Procedure Rule 8(A)(5), the Council debated the following motion which was submitted on behalf of the Opposition Group of the Council

(Conservative Group), as proposed by Councillor Kevin Davis and seconded by Councillor David Cunningham.

“This council acknowledges that;

1. the Coronavirus pandemic has brought a sharp focus on the issue of public health and specifically the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Borough,
2. residents in Kingston are more healthy overall than the national or London population (measured using a variety of measures including life expectancy which is greater than the England average by 1.9 years for Kingston men and 1.4 years for Kingston women),
3. health outcomes and life expectancy in Kingston are generally good because of the overall affluence of the area
4. good overall health outcomes hide specific areas of deprivation where average life expectancy is not so good - Male life expectancy ranged from 77.1 years in Norbiton to 84.1 years in Tudor. Female life expectancy was also lowest in Norbiton (80.5 years) but highest in Old Malden (87.4 years)
5. since the start of the Go Cycle scheme in 2014 this council has made progress in the provision of healthy opportunities for short journeys and the use of exercise equipment in a small number of parks and in its support of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

This council believes that;

6. the pandemic has shown that there is significant demand and a new understanding of public health and the need for good access to open spaces as part of a healthy lifestyle,
7. access to public space and the enhancement of the public realm should be a priority for the council in supporting the greater health and wellbeing of residents.

This council resolves to;

8. encourage the provision of public exercise in our parks by working with businesses and exercise providers to licence a greater range of exercise and meditation classes,
9. explore with our adult education provider what additional health and fitness provision could be made through the established adult education provision and at a wider range of venues,
10. lobby the Royal Parks Agency to not introduce excessive car parking charges that could lead to the lessening of opportunities for public exercise by preventing access to the park by lower-income families and in any scheme ensure they do not penalise regular visits by families and dog walkers,
11. work with the Royal Parks Agency to find measures that will further enhance the enjoyment and access to exercise presented by the park without damaging the health and wellbeing of those Kingston residents living close to the park and impacted by its measures,
12. present a report to the Autumn 2021 meeting of the Place committee on the provision of public exercise equipment in a wider number of public locations,

- including wayside gardens, public parks and other areas with community access,
13. present a report to the Autumn 2021 meeting of the People committee establishing what further provision of public exercise equipment can be made to our publicly owned housing estates,
  14. require the provision of a replacement Kingfisher swimming pool through a single, stand-alone capital project, funded by borrowing, expedited at speed and at least by the deadline of Quarter 3 2023 set by the Response and Recovery Committee of 26 November 2020,
  15. repay the borrowing for the pool identified at 14, in due course, from the receipts derived from the subsequent development of the Cattle Market and Guildhall complex,
  16. require an annual report on the health and wellbeing of the borough to be presented to the full council with an action plan on the specific measures that the council will be taking in the future year to support residents and their public health.
  17. require a report be presented to the full council in the meeting immediately prior to Christmas 2021 so we can see progress on the measures outlined in this motion.”

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Caroline Kerr proposed an amendment to the motion, seconded by Councillor John Sweeney, which inserted the following:

**“This Council acknowledges that;**

1. the Coronavirus pandemic has brought a sharp focus on the issue of public health and specifically the health and wellbeing of the residents of the Borough,  
**Insert new points 2, 3 and 4 and reorder numbers:**
2.  
***the Health and Well-Being Board has identified the fight against obesity to be a major public health priority in the borough and we are committed to the whole systems approach to obesity;***
3.  
***exercise equipment in parks and estates are a small part of improving overall public health in Kingston. In order to tackle obesity and health inequalities a holistic approach that addresses housing, employment, diet, physical activity and mental health issues is required;***
4.  
***physical activity needs a range of approaches that include increasing confidence levels to use open spaces, investing in pathways and working with voluntary organisations to bring together social and active opportunities;”***
5. residents in Kingston are more healthy overall than the national or London population (measured using a variety of measures including life expectancy which is greater than the England average by 1.9 years for Kingston men and 1.4 years for Kingston women),
6. health outcomes and life expectancy in Kingston are generally good because of the overall affluence of the area
7. good overall health outcomes hide specific areas of

deprivation where average life expectancy is not so good - Male life expectancy ranged from 77.1 years in Norbiton to 84.1 years in Tudor. Female life expectancy was also lowest in Norbiton (80.5 years) but highest in Old Malden (87.4 years)

8. since the start of the Go Cycle scheme in 2014 this council has made progress in the provision of healthy opportunities for short journeys and the use of exercise equipment in a small number of parks and in its support of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

**This Council believes that;**

9. the pandemic has shown that there is significant demand and a new understanding of public health and the need for good access to open spaces as part of a healthy lifestyle;

10. access to public space and the enhancement of the public realm **Insert:** “*is*” **Delete:** “*should be*” a priority for the council in supporting the greater health and wellbeing of residents.

**This  
Council resolves to;**

11. **Insert:** “*continue to*” encourage the provision of public exercise in our parks by working with **Insert:** “*the community,*” businesses and exercise providers to license a greater range of exercise and meditation classes **Insert:** “*and other such activities as promote public health;*”

**Insert**

**new point 12 and renumber following points:**

“12. *Explore the provision of training and support for volunteers and leaders of community based sports activities to increase participation across the borough;*”

13.

**Insert:** “*continue to*” explore with our adult education provider what additional health and fitness provision could be made through the established adult education provision and at a wider range of venues,

14. **Insert:** “*continue to*” lobby the Royal Parks Agency to not introduce excessive car parking charges that could lead to the lessening of opportunities for public exercise by preventing access to the park by lower-income families and in any scheme ensure they do not penalise regular visits by families and dog walkers,

15. work with the Royal Parks Agency to find measures that will further enhance the enjoyment and access to exercise presented by the park without damaging the health and wellbeing of those Kingston residents living close to the park and impacted by its measures,

**Delete:** *old point 12 present a report to the Autumn 2021 meeting of the Place committee on the provision of public exercise equipment in a wider number of public locations, including wayside gardens, public parks and other areas with community access;*

**Delete:** *old point 13 present a report to the Autumn 2021 meeting of the People committee establishing what further provision of public exercise equipment can be made to our publicly owned housing estates*

**Insert**

**new point 16 and renumber:**

**“16. present a report to the Autumn 2021 meeting of the Place committee on investments and plans in place that provide an holistic approach to public health and address our health inequality priorities across the borough;”**

**17. Insert: “welcome the commitment to provide” a replacement Kingfisher swimming pool Insert: “as set out by the Response and Recovery Committee of 26 November 2020, expedited at speed for the deadline of Quarter 3 2023, subject to the business case which will be provided to the Response and Recovery Committee on 13 May 2021;”**

**Delete old points 14 and 15**

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**14.** require the provision of a replacement Kingfisher swimming pool through a single, stand-alone capital project, funded by borrowing, expedited at speed and at least by the deadline of Quarter 3 2023 set by the Response and Recovery Committee of 26 November 2020,

**15.** repay the borrowing for the pool identified at 14, in due course, from the receipts derived from the subsequent development of the Cattle Market and Guildhall complex,

**18. Insert: “continue to require” an annual report on the health and wellbeing of the borough to be presented Delete: “to full council Insert: “during the summer” with an action plan on the specific measures that the council will be taking in the future year to support residents and their public health Insert: “reporting to a future strategic committee;”**

**19.** require a report be presented to the full council Insert: “as part of the 2022/23 budget process” Delete: “in the meeting immediately prior to Christmas 2021” so we can see progress on the Insert:

**“Council’s public health priorities.”**

The meeting was adjourned for a short period to enable Members to read the amendment. Upon the resumption, following debate the amendment was put to the vote and carried, thereby forming the substantive motion.

For the purposes of clarification, a Point of Order raised in the private chat function of the virtual meeting by Councillor Katrina Lidbetter referred to the use of the term 'purdah' by Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner to describe the Pre-Election Period. Councillor Lidbetter subsequently confirmed that she did not intend to imply any form of racist intent on the part of Councillor Falchikov-Sumner, merely to explain that she felt the technical term "pre-election period" was preferable.

Voting:

For: Councillors Abraham, Archer, Bailey, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Davey, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulder-Hughes, Gander, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter,

Moll, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Wehring, White, Yoganathan and Young. (34)

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

Abstain: Councillors Tolley and Wookey (2).

Councillors Abbas was unable to vote due to technical difficulties.

After debate a vote was taken on the substantive motion:

Voting:

For: Councillors Abraham, Archer, Bailey, 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, Tolley, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (36)

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

Abstain: Councillor Falchikov-Sumner (1).

Councillors Abbas was unable to vote due to technical difficulties.

## 68. Member Questions

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

## 69. Constitutional Changes - Planning Arrangements

### Appendix A

Members considered a report, at Appendix A of the agenda, which set out proposed amendments to the Planning Protocol and Responsibility for Functions sections of the Council's Constitution following a review of the Council's procedures around the determination of planning applications. It was noted that a review had been conducted in order to facilitate better engagement with those committees with planning related functions.

The proposals set out in the report had been considered by each Neighbourhood Committee and the Development Control Committee during January 2021, prior to submission to Council on 29 April 2021. It was noted that a number of amendments and clarifications had been made as a response to comments and recommendations arising from dialogue with the respective committees and these were identified in the report, annexes and appendices.

**RESOLVED** that –

1. the revisions to Part 3A of the Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, in respect of the Neighbourhood Committees and Development Control Committee as set out at **Annexes 1 and 2** of the agenda respectively, and the revised Planning Protocol including Planning Procedure Rules at **Annex 3** of the agenda be approved;
2. Part 4A of the Constitution, Meeting Procedure Rules, be amended to cross reference with the detailed Planning Procedure Rules referenced in 1) above; and;
3. the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any further consequential minor changes arising from these proposals as may be required in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Planning Policy & Culture and Community and Governance.

Voting:

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

Against: Councillors Arora, Davis, Falchikov-Sumner, Fram, George, Hughes and Sheppard (7).

Abstain: Councillor Bass, Cunningham and Netley (3).

**70. Review of Constitutional Arrangements - Recommendations of the Response and Recovery Committee 25.03.21 Appendix B**

Members considered a report at Appendix B of the agenda, which set out recommendations of the Response and Recovery Committee held on 25 March 2021 that sought to streamline the Council's Strategic Committee structure, through a reduction in the number of Committees from five to three.

Members noted that the proposals were designed to better fit current and anticipated volumes of business, enhance the quality and effectiveness of the decision making process and increase the capacity of Members through the release of time for casework and training and development activities. It would also enable both Members and Officers to better focus on the achievement of corporate priorities.

It was noted that the three Committees, which would replace the established Strategic Committees and the temporary Committees operating during the Covid-19 pandemic, were based on the separation of functions into Place and People based

services together with a Committee with oversight of corporate resources and policy direction.

It was proposed that 13 Members would serve on each Committee rather than 11 with the existing structure, which would provide a total of 39 seats, thereby ensuring that almost all Members who might wish to serve on a Strategic Committee could do so while still achieving a reduction from the present total of 55 seats. The political proportionality requirements would be waived to provide sufficient seats to the Conservative Group with a view to all Opposition Spokespersons in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance being able to sit on the relevant Committee and also to enable a seat to be allocated to the Member representing the Green Party.

The report also set out a number of proposed changes to the Council's constitutional arrangements, including the Meeting Procedure Rules and Call-In Procedure Rules as well as a recommendation that the State of the Borough meeting no longer be a formal meeting of Council. A refresh of the Contract Regulations to ensure alignment with amendments to the Public Procurement Regulations following the withdrawal of the UK from the EU is also reported.

**RESOLVED** that –

1. the Corporate and Resources, Place and People Strategic Committees be established with the membership arrangements set out in paragraphs 22-26 and the terms of reference at **Annex 1** (of the agenda report) to replace the current Strategic Committees and the temporary Response and Recovery Committee and Culture, Housing, Planning and Environment Committee with effect from the commencement of the 2021/22 Municipal Year;
2. the rules of political proportionality be disapplied in respect of the seats allocated on the Strategic Committees as set out in paragraph 24.
3. the timetable of meetings for the 2021/22 Municipal Year, as set out at **Annex 2**, of the agenda report, be approved.
4. the Corporate Head of Democratic and Electoral Services, in consultation with the relevant Committee Chairs, be authorised to make any amendments to the timetable of meetings as prove to be necessary during the course of the Municipal Year;
5. the proposals set out at **Annexes 4 and 5** of the agenda report for changes to the constitutional arrangements and Contract Regulations be approved with effect from the commencement of the 2021/22 Municipal Year; and
6. the Monitoring Officer be authorised to make any further consequential minor changes arising from the proposals set out above as may be required, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Engagement

Voting:

Members were unanimously in favour of recommendation (2) with regards to political proportionality.

A vote was taken collectively on recommendations (1), (3), (4), (5), and (6) as follows:

For: Councillors Abbas, Abraham, Archer, Arora, Bailey, Bass, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Cunningham, Davey, Davis, Dunstone, Durrant, Edwards, Foulcher-Hughes, Fram, Gander, George, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Hughes, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Netley, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Sheppard, Stuart, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Tolley, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (46)

Against: None (0).

Abstain: Councillor Falchikov-Sumner (1).

**71. Cambridge Road Estate Programme Delivery - Appendix C  
Recommendations from the Response and Recovery Committee  
25.03.21**

Members considered a report at Appendix C of the agenda, which set out recommendations in relation to the use of Compulsory Purchase powers (CPO), as a last resort, to acquire land within the boundary of the proposed CPO1 area of the Cambridge Road Estate regeneration scheme, following consideration at the Response and Recovery Committee held on 25 March 2021.

It was noted that the majority of the Cambridge Road Estate was already in the ownership of the Council. However there were a number of third party interests that needed to be acquired in order to enable the regeneration to be delivered. The majority of these were dwellings that had been acquired through use of the right to buy with some limited commercial interests.

The Council had the power to make a Compulsory Purchase Order under Section 226 (1) (a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). This provided that the Council may exercise its statutory powers to compulsorily acquire land where it believed that such acquisition would facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement on or in relation to the land. In order to exercise that power, the Council would also be satisfied:

*“that the development, redevelopment or improvement is likely to contribute to the achievement of one or more of the following objectives: (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic wellbeing of their area; (b) the promotion or improvement of the social wellbeing of their area; (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental wellbeing of their area (Section 226 (1A).”*

Having considered the project requirements, programme duration and phasing it was not considered appropriate to make a single CPO covering the whole Estate. Instead there would be a series of CPOs, the first of which will be CPO1 which will focus on the earlier phases.

It was noted that the CPO would need to be confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Government (MHCLG), who would consider any objections to the making of the Order before reaching a decision.

**RESOLVED** that –

1. Subject to the Executive Director of Place being satisfied in relation to the progress of the planning application for the development, authorise the making of a CPO (“the Order”) under Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (“the 1990 Act”) to acquire the outstanding interests in the land shown edged red on the plan attached at Appendix 1 (“the Order Land”) and the submission of the Order to the Secretary of State for confirmation, and authorise the confirmation of the Order if the Council is given the power to do so by the Secretary of State under Section 14A of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981.
2. Authorise the Executive Director of Place, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to make any minor changes considered necessary to the Order Land and to finalise the Statement of Reasons to support the Order.
3. Authorise the Executive Director of Place, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to issue notices and carry out actions under Section 172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and where necessary, to enter on to land and carry out a survey of any land which the Council proposes to acquire compulsorily.
4. Authorise the Executive Director of Place, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health and following confirmation of the Order, to publish and serve notice of confirmation of the Order, together with notice of the Council’s intention to make a General Vesting Declaration (“GVD”), and to make one or more GVDs (and to serve all appropriate notices in connection therewith) or to serve notices to treat and notices of entry (as appropriate) in respect of the Order Land.
5. Authorise the use of powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to secure the removal of any apparatus of statutory undertakers or communication code operators from the land shown coloured pink on the Map.
6. Authorise the acquisition by agreement of all third party interests in and over the Order Land under Section 227 of the 1990 Act before or after confirmation of the Order and in respect of any new rights required for the development or use of the Order Land.
7. Authorise the Executive Director of Place, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to enter into agreements and to make undertakings, contracts and transfers on behalf of the Council with third parties with interests in the Order Land.

8. Authorise Executive Director of Place, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to reach agreement with parties otherwise affected by the Order in order to secure the withdrawal of objections to the confirmation of the Order, including but not limited to the creation of new rights, or the removal of any land from the Order, and to defend any proceedings challenging the making or confirmation of the Order.

Voting:

For: Councillors Abbas, Abraham, Archer, Arora, Bailey, Bass, Beynon, Fiona Boulton, Olivia Boulton, Cobbett, Cunningham, Davey, Davis, Durrant, Foulder-Hughes, Fram, Gander, George, Goodship, Green, Ha, Heap, Holt, Hughes, Kerr, Kirsch, Lidbetter, Moll, Netley, Ravalia, Ryder-Mills, Schaper, Self, Sheppard, Sweeney, Thayalan, Thompson, Tolley, Wehring, White, Wookey, Yoganathan and Young. (43)

Against: None (0).

Abstain: Councillor Falchikov-Sumner (1).

Councillor Christine Stuart left the meeting at the beginning of this item and therefore did not participate in the debate or vote.

Councillors Lorraine Dunstone and Simon Edwards did not participate in the debate or vote on the item for the reasons outlined in their declaration of interest.

## **72. Review of Emergency Decision Making Arrangements**

## **Appendix D**

Members considered a report which identified options for the delivery of meetings of the Council and its Committees upon the expiry of temporary Regulations which permitted meetings to take place virtually.

Members were informed by way of late material that in the days prior to the meeting the High Court had dismissed a claim that remote attendance at meetings was nevertheless still lawful under the established legislation. It would therefore be necessary for formal meetings of the Authority to resume in person.

Members examined options for the safe conduct of the Council's meetings in the period to July 2021. A series of measures set out in the late material to enable the return of face to face meetings with Covid-19 safety mitigations in place were approved.

**RESOLVED** that –

1. all Committees due to meet between 7 May and 21 June 2021 which are not time critical be rescheduled to a date after 21 June, at which point it is anticipated that they will be able to meet in person without restrictions. This would include the rescheduling of Council from 13 to 20 July;

2. the adjusted calendar of meetings for the period between May-July 2021 attached at Annex 1 to the agenda report be approved;
3. the Annual Meeting of Council on 18 May be held at the Guildhall with only the 12 Members sufficient to form a quorum present in person with Groups invited to nominate attendees based on their overall representation on the Council (ie: 10 seats for the Liberal Democrat Group and 2 seats for the Conservative Group)
4. a separate Mayor Making ceremony be held in the grounds of the Guildhall on 18 May, prior to the Annual Meeting;
5. a meeting of the Licensing Committee be held at the Guildhall immediately upon the rising of the Annual Meeting of Council with only the four members sufficient to form a quorum present in person with Groups invited to nominate attendees based on their overall representation on the Council (ie 3 seats for the Liberal Democrat Group and 1 seat for the Conservative Group);
6. those meetings of Committees which cannot be rescheduled be held on the dates proposed in the draft calendar of meetings for the 2021/22 Municipal Year considered by the Response and Recovery Committee on 25 March 2021 with the application of all risk mitigation measures as may be appropriate including those set out in paragraphs 25-26 of the agenda report;
7. The 20 July meeting of Council and other meetings which by virtue of the number of individuals who need to be in attendance cannot be accommodated in the Guildhall be held at suitable venues elsewhere in the Borough;
8. All meetings of Neighbourhood Committees prior to 31 July 2021 be held at the Guildhall;
9. all meetings of Council and Committees up to and including the July Council meeting continue to be live streamed;
10. the arrangements be further reviewed at the meeting of Council in July; and
11. the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, the Director of Public Health, the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition, be authorised to make any such adjustments to the arrangements set out above as may be required in the event of a material change in the public health situation.

Voting: Unanimous

Councillors Rowena Bass, Christine Stuart and Sharon Young were not in attendance for this item and therefore did not participate in the debate or vote.

### **73. Election of the Mayor for 2021/22**

At the Council meeting on 20 March 2001 it was agreed that, other than in an Election Year, the Mayor should be elected at the Ordinary Council meeting immediately preceding the Annual Meeting.

One nomination was submitted - from the Liberal Democrat Group - in the name of Councillor Sushila Abraham.

There being no other nominations, the Mayor duly declared Councillor Sushila Abraham elected as Mayor of the Royal Borough for the Municipal Year 2021/22.

[The formal installation of Councillor Abraham as Mayor would take place at a Mayor Making ceremony immediately prior to the Annual Meeting on 18 May.]

**74. Appointment of Honorary Tipstaff and Town Crier**

The Council considered the reappointment of Mr Michael Seigel to the position of Honorary Tipstaff and Town Crier for the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames for a three year term.

Mr Michael Seigel had been a Borough resident for 33 years with a background in the education sector in Kingston, including as Head Master of Rokeby School, and a record of community involvement within the Royal Borough over three decades, including chairing the Canbury Area Residents' Association (CARA) when it was first set up in 1991

**RESOLVED** that Mr Michael Seigel be re-appointed to the position of Honorary Tipstaff and Town Crier with effect from the Annual Council meeting on 18 May 2021 for a period of three years to expire on the date of the Annual Council meeting in 2024.

Voting: Unanimous

**75. Appointments of Members to Committees, Panels and other bodies** **Appendix E**

Members considered the appointment of the Leader of the Council, Councillor Caroline Kerr, as Chair to the Property Investment Company Shareholders' Committee and noted the terms of reference of the Committee as set out in Appendix E of the agenda.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Caroline Kerr to be appointed as Chair of the Property Investment Company Shareholders' Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

**76. Armed Forces Community Covenant - Information item**

Members noted that the Council customarily received an annual progress report on delivery of the Armed Forces Community Covenant in Kingston. However activity in relation to the Member Officer Group which had oversight of the Council's activities in respect of the Covenant had necessarily been reduced in the past 12 months due to the pandemic. A brief interim update on the work of the Group was therefore presented to Council. It was noted that a full report would be taken to the relevant Strategic Committee in the next Municipal Year 2021- 22.

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

There were no urgent items.

Signed.....Date.....  
Chair  
Signed:.....Date:  
The Mayor

## Responses to Council Questions - 29 April 2021

Question	From/ To	Response
<p><b>Lib Dem A</b></p> <p>“Following the tragic murder of Sarah Everard and the outpouring of public grief, it is really important that women and girls feel safe on our streets. What is the Council already doing, particularly on reporting of incidents and access to support services and what will we do in the future to work with our partners to engage and ensure this issue is given the highest priority?”</p> <p>16</p>	<p><b>By</b> Councillor Alison Holt</p> <p><b>To</b> Councillor Tim Cobbett , Portfolio Holder for Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is a high priority for RBK and we are committed to safeguarding and preventing harm. There is a lot of work already taking place to increase the reporting of incidents and ensuring access to support services. The Kingston Community Safety Team lead on the safeguarding aspects of VAWG by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Providing training to upskill professionals</li> <li>● Communications work with partners to raise awareness of support services</li> <li>● Partnership working around safeguarding concerns and risk management</li> <li>● Commissioning local VAWG support services including an Early Intervention Worker who supports 11 - 19 year old girls who have experienced gender based violence</li> <li>● Implementing a plan for the COVID-19 Pandemic and escalation of risk.</li> </ul> <p>We also want to better understand the extent of threatening or intimidating experiences of women and girls in public spaces, views on accessibility to support and ways in which safety can be improved. Alongside the existing work we will be carrying out a year long programme of work to address the safety of women and girls in the borough. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A borough wide survey</li> <li>● Development of a Kingston specific VAWG strategy.</li> <li>● Work with the local community to establish VAWG community forums.</li> <li>● Preventative work and education in schools and youth settings.</li> </ul> <p>RBK has confirmed their interest in the White Ribbon Accreditation. On international woman's day we launched our employee domestic abuse and sexual violence policy which is a key part of obtaining this.</p>

<p><b>Con A</b>          The Conservative Government has once again stepped in to rescue the finances of the Council, this time in relation to an inherent issue in the Dedicated Schools Grants which dates back to 2012. The Government's ongoing rescue package is dependent on the Council pumping in more money from the General Fund and making significant savings in the Dedicated Schools Grant. What happens if the savings are not made and the Government then rightly withholds the rescue funding?</p>	<p>From Cllr Rowena Bass to the Portfolio holder for Finance and commissioning, Cllr Andreas Kirsch</p>	<p>There is recognition at a national level by the DfE that funding for SEND services has not kept up with growing levels of need since 2014. Positively, the DfE have taken a number of steps to recognise and start to resolve the issue including commissioning a national review of support for children with SEND, providing year on year additional funding to all Local Authorities with high needs education responsibilities and engaging with a smaller number of local authorities to explore longer term solutions including additional safety valve funding. Kingston was in the first tranche of Local Authorities who have engaged with the DfE regarding longer term plans and safety valve funding to address historic funding shortfalls. These successful discussions led to an agreement that up to an additional £30m in grant funding will be made available subject to the Local Authority successfully implementing the improvements outlined in the borough's SEND Futures Plan.</p> <p>The SEND Futures Plan is the borough's partnership plan to both improve services for children and young people as well as to bring spending more into line with available funding. £12million (including the write off of the £3million advance) has already been received in recognition of the progress already made in improving the position. Successful implementation of the plan has been and will continue to be a key priority for the Local Authority. The Plan is challenging but we are confident that we have a good balance of ensuring we continue to support children and young people as well as improve the financial position.</p> <p>There is recognition by both the DfE and the Council that the Plan will need to be iterative in that it will be reviewed at least annually and updated to reflect progress made as well as changing context (e.g. levels of need). The Council will be submitting quarterly updates to the DfE and will also meet with the DfE at least annually. Where initial plans can not be achieved due to uncontrollable factors the Council will work with the DfE to identify alternative solutions.</p>
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<p><b>Lib Dem B</b></p> <p>“Due to the reduction in the number of Covid-19 cases and the easing of restrictions started on 12 April, can the Leader please outline what steps the Council has taken out of lockdown in terms of re opening the town centre, public buildings such as libraries and working with local businesses to help high streets reopen safely and monitoring visitor hotspots?”</p>	<p>By Councillor Lorraine Dunstone</p> <p>To Councillor Caroline Kerr, Leader of the Council</p>	<p>As stated in the Government roadmap, libraries could reopen from 12th April. We have additionally been following the guidance set out by the national public libraries body, Libraries Connected. Since 12th April we have been able to open 5 of our libraries - Kingston, Surbiton, New Malden, Hook and Tudor Drive with an offer of PC use, browsing and borrowing. The digital offer remains in place. There are plans underway to reopen Old Malden and Tolworth libraries by the summer. Since reopening on 12th April, residents borrowed over 6,500 items and we have seen 2,500 visits to our libraries.</p> <p>Officers from Regulatory Services have been visiting business and advising on best practice to keep premises COVID secure for workers and residents. They have been ensuring businesses understand the current legal requirements such as use of the NHS QR code for the Test and Trace scheme and the ‘Rule of Six’ for bookings, and wearing of face coverings. The principles of Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce have been used when talking to businesses and there has been a positive response from businesses to comply with best practice guidance. The team have also worked closely with public health to engage with businesses in ‘hotspot’ areas and encourage the take up of asymptomatic testing in the community, as well as support business in investigating and providing support for workplace outbreaks.</p> <p>The team have promoted the use of pavement licences to enable business to trade outdoors in line with government advice and processed 30 applications..</p> <p>The council has 3 covid marshals who are out and about in the town centre monitoring compliance and also advising people in the town centre to follow the advice of ‘Hands, Face, Space’. There is no legal requirement for people to wear face coverings outdoors, or to maintain social distancing and the marshals can only encourage people to observe this guidance.</p> <p>The re-opening group has in partnership with Kingston First been running support sessions for business to help with re-opening. This has been less in demand than previous re-openings as businesses now have experience in this area, but they still appreciate the ongoing support with ‘new issues’ this lockdown brings. Litter rounds have been scaled in both the town centre and the borough green spaces to deal with the large increase in takeaway and picnic waste.</p>
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<p><b>Con B</b> The Lib Dem manifesto of 2018 pledged to build 1,000 new council homes over the next four years. With a year to the deadline, how many homes have been built and how many do you predict will be completed by May 2022?</p> <p>61</p>	<p>From Cllr Roy Arora to the Portfolio holder for Planning policy and culture, Cllr Emily Davey</p>	<p>Firstly, I would like to clarify for the conservative group that our manifesto clearly states 'A Liberal Democrat Council will build 1,000 new homes'.</p> <p>The most up-to-date housing data available confirms that at least 1,100 net additional homes have been completed since May 2018 and that at least 2,000 net additional homes have been consented since May 2018.</p> <p>In relation to Council homes, 17 Council homes have been completed since May 2018. In addition 101 affordable homes have been consented through the Small Sites programme and 767 affordable homes will be coming forward shortly as part of the Cambridge Road Estate Renewal programme. In total, 885 Council homes have been completed or are in the pipeline.</p>
<p><b>Green A</b> Coombe Wood Golf Course is one of a number of Council owned sites that are at risk of losing their SINC status (sites of importance to nature conservation).</p> <p>A number of biodiversity issues have been raised in relation to the site including damage to the substantial badger site on the site, felling of trees and the erection of pole mounted nets that could interfere</p>	<p>To Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>You're referring to the independent review of the borough's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) which took place last year, and which resulted in six additional wildlife areas being formally recommended to receive SINC status. The review was initially guided by a local engagement exercise with community groups and ecological experts who helped put forward various sites for consideration for SINC status.</p> <p>SINCs form vital components of the ecological network and green corridor in the borough. The council is the landowner of Coombe Wood Golf Course and it is managed by the golf club. The Biodiversity Officer visited the site to assess the situation. While on site he had a conversation with their grounds maintenance staff who provided some background on their rationale for the structure's installation. The nets were of a significant size and the Biodiversity Officer's opinion was that they could result in a potential infringement of the Wildlife &amp;</p>

<p>with the sites bird population.</p> <p>In 2019 this council declared a Climate Emergency. Does the administration agree biodiversity should be enhanced on council owned land and with this in mind what actions have been taken to ensure all clauses within the leases for these sensitive sites are being fully adhered to</p>		<p>Countryside Act (1981), possibly having a detrimental impact to locally nesting birds.</p> <p>Since the visit the lease has been referred to, which has limited mention of ecologically related clauses. However, due to the tenant not going through the appropriate planning process and potential impacts to protected species legislation, I understand that RBK's Enforcement team has now engaged with the situation and requested that the nets be dismantled.</p> <p>I do agree biodiversity should be enhanced on council-owned land and the council will take every opportunity to engage and encourage more favourable management of the land at Coombe Wood Golf Course for the benefit of badgers and birds and any valuable and threatened species.</p>
<p><b><u>Lib Dem C</u></b>  “Could the Portfolio Holder for Leisure provide an update on the progress of plans for the rebuilding of the Kingfisher Leisure Centre?”</p>	<p>By  Councillor  Sharon Young</p> <p>To  Councillor John  Sweeney,  Portfolio Holder  for Leisure</p>	<p>A report to the Response &amp; Recovery Committee on the 13th May will provide an update on the progress of a replacement community leisure centre on the site of the existing Kingfisher Leisure Centre.</p>
<p><b><u>Con C</u></b>  Why have council environmental services declined under her watch to such an appalling level that one of the</p>	<p>From Cllr David  Cunningham to  the Portfolio  Holder for</p>	<p>Road gullies in Kingston are scheduled to be cleaned once every two years as a minimum by RBK's street cleaning contractors, Veolia. In addition, a special clean programme is undertaken each year, which targets those gullies that have been inaccessible due to parked cars. Residents can report blocked gullies to the council and Veolia is then instructed to clean</p>

<p>administrations own Councillors is now having to embark on a weekly cleanout of gully pots in their own ward to stop our roads flooding?</p> <p>21</p>	<p>Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>them out.</p> <p>Occasionally, once on site, our contractors find that gullies can't be cleaned because of tree roots, or if the gully has collapsed or is blocked by materials disposed in the vicinity. In these circumstances, they're referred to the highways team to arrange inspection and clearance or repair by the council's highways contractor.</p> <p>It's not an exact science that dictates when our often ageing underground infrastructure will fail, and I don't accept your analysis that environmental services have declined under my watch.</p> <p>On top of the council's proactive and reactive work, Norbiton residents appreciated Cllr Wehring's actions, which are simply an example of one councillor's hard work and connection to his community.</p>
<p><b>Public A</b> Covid has clearly had an impact on young people. For young people it is going to be more lasting including impact on work opportunities, impact on mental health, impact on physical health. CICC what to know what the council has in plan to help young people as we come out of lockdown? What is the plan post lockdown?</p>	<p>From: Junior Frank Ssuna</p> <p>Councillor Diane White, portfolio holder for Children's Services (inc education)</p>	<p>The Council has worked with Achieving for Children and our other partners to ensure that young people and their families are supported during the pandemic through our Kingston Stronger Together Hub. This has included providing support to families who may need some additional support because they are shielding due to health concerns, or because they are experiencing financial hardship, food insecurity or mental health challenges. We have learnt a lot from working alongside our partners in the Kingston Stronger Together Hub and so we are also taking a similar approach to supporting our residents in recovering from the pandemic. We have set up two recovery task forces, which bring together statutory services, businesses, voluntary sector organisations and community groups to help plan our recovery, especially for those residents (including children and young people) who have been most adversely affected by the pandemic. The economic recovery task force has a focus on helping more young people to get back into employment, which includes rolling out the Kickstart scheme in Kingston by providing more apprenticeship opportunities for young people aged 16 to 24. The communities task force has a particular focus on supporting young people's health and</p>

		<p>mental health and on supporting those families who are experiencing poverty, for example by developing the Holiday Food and Activity programme. We have also put in place additional support to help young people post-lockdown through our children's services provider, Achieving for Children, It is important that this support is targeted at those children, young people and families who need it, and so we are grateful that groups like the Children in Care Council and the Youth Council are helping us to develop this support and to decide how we use our resources most successfully.</p>
<p><b>Public B</b> The deadline for EU citizens to apply for Settled Status is 30th June 2021</p> <p>Other councils are taking active steps to contact EU residents e.g. Brighton &amp; Hove City Council have delivered a postcard to all addresses in the city, with a friendly message on the front, "We want EU citizens to stay in Brighton &amp; Hove", and information sources, including phone numbers, on the back. Boston and Cambridge councils are following the lead by sending information about the EUSS with the annual council tax bill this month.</p> <p>There are EU citizens in The Royal Borough of Kingston according to the Electoral Roll, but there may be others living in less formal circumstances such</p>	<p><b>From:</b> Maria Grazia Zingale</p> <p><b>To:</b> Councillor Tim Cobbett , Portfolio Holder for Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>We have been working hard to make sure that all of our residents who are eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (also known as the EUSS) are made aware of their rights and encouraged to apply. Examples of the many channels and methods we have utilised, and will continue to focus on to reach these residents ahead of the 30 June deadline, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A reminder to apply in every annual council tax statement delivered to all homes in the borough</li> <li>● Regular reminders in our business newsletter</li> <li>● Targeted social media advertising to engage with residents whose first language is not English</li> <li>● Regular promotions and supporting information included in a residents' newsletter, which reaches over 6,000 local residents</li> <li>● Sharing information via Kingston Council's social media channels</li> <li>● Providing promotional material and information to large local employers for display in workplaces</li> <li>● Supporting business organisations, including Kingston Chamber of Commerce to encourage local businesses to support eligible employees</li> <li>● Working with local schools to provide information to families</li> </ul> <p>It is this close working with stakeholders, local businesses, strategic partners and others that is helping us to maximise the reach of our messaging, providing key information to eligible Kingston residents, encouraging them to apply for EUSS and providing support and further</p>

as sub-lets, Houses in Multiple Occupation or agricultural accommodation.

Non-British EU citizens only have until 30 June this year to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme and receive either pre-settled status (limited leave to remain in the UK for 5 years) or settled status (indefinite leave to remain in the UK). The challenge we have in the UK is that there is no accurate estimate of the EU migrant population. The pandemic has also meant that many of the organisations who have supported EU citizens at risk, such as the homeless, or those with limited digital or English language skills, are limited in capacity and the type of outreach they can do. Additionally, some EU citizens are working in roles where they have no formal contact with employers or HR resources to tell them about the new rules, such as self-employed tradesmen workers in the app-based gig economy.

The consequences of not applying cannot be clearer from a legal point of view:

advice where necessary.

As we approach the deadline we will continue to use the channels that are available to us to encourage those who are at risk of becoming undocumented to apply before the 30th June.

Much of our activity is aimed at reaching residents across Kingston that are eligible for EUSS, but we recognise that local communities also have a role to play. Residents talking to eligible friends, family and neighbours about the importance of applying for EUSS by June 30th is one of the most effective ways of spreading the message, and we are encouraging residents and communities to support each other wherever possible to help ensure no one is left behind.

The council receives and scrutinises data on the numbers of EUSS applications that have been made by Kingston residents. As of the last available data (accurate to the end of December 2020), there have been 21,200 applications for Kingston residents. This has been matched against our electoral roll data which shows that there are just under 11,000 EU nationals living in Kingston who are registered to vote (however, electoral roll data excludes under 18s, who make up 12.6% of Kingston’s applications for EUSS).

This pattern is repeated across London. According to the GLA there are no reliable official estimates of population by nationality, and the number of applications to the EU Settlement Scheme in London is already higher than the available ONS estimate of EU population. However, evidence suggests that there are still EU nationals who have not made an application who are at risk of becoming undocumented.

The deadline for encouraging people to register to vote has now passed, but as part of the preparation for the election the council sent a household notification to all properties, which set out who was registered and how to register to vote if they weren’t already registered. Empty property notifications were sent out in March which informed people how to register if

those EU citizens who do not make a successful application by 30 June 2021 will become unlawfully resident in the UK and therefore can lose their jobs, rented properties and access to services. On a positive note, the UK Government has confirmed that EU citizens will still have the right to vote in the upcoming 2021 local elections.

Therefore, my question is: does the Council see the 2021 local elections as both an opportunity to inform EU citizens in the Royal Borough of Kingston that they can vote, how to register to vote, including by post, as well as remind them of the EU Settlement Scheme application deadline? If yes, what steps are being taken to reach out to EU citizen communities, in particular those at risk of being left out of mainstream channels of communication, and also to British residents who will include the employers and landlords who will need to be familiar with how EU citizens will have to prove their status after 30 June 2021?

they were a qualifying national (including EU), with a link to the registration website. It also gave the deadline to register to vote in the forthcoming May elections. We did not use this process to specifically target messaging at EU nationals in Kingston.

**QUESTIONS TO BE PROVIDED IN WRITING**

<p><b>Lib Dem D</b>          “How many electric vehicle charging points are there in the borough?”</p> <p>25</p>	<p>By          Councillor          Steph Archer</p> <p>To          Councillor          Hilary Gander,          Portfolio Holder          for Environment          and Sustainable          Travel</p>	<p>In Kingston there are both charging points that have been installed with the council’s direct involvement (on public highway) and those that are public but which the council has no involvement (e.g installed by supermarkets or developers).</p> <p>Public charging points with council involvement:</p> <p>There are 12 charging points in council public car parks.</p> <p>In relation to on-street charging points - lamp column (‘slow’) charging and Source London (‘fast’) charging points and Rapid charging points are all being installed</p> <p>Last year the below were installed:</p> <p>4 Rapid charging points, facilitated by TfL (installed late 2020)          11 Source London locations providing 17 charging points (dual or single), serving 26 dedicated bays (installed mid 2020)</p> <p>A further 9 Source London sites, 13 charging points (dual and single), serving 22 dedicated bays are being installed in May 2021</p> <p>93 lamp column ‘slow’ chargers are currently being installed, a number are already live and the remained will be live by June 2021</p> <p>By the end of the calendar year 2021 there are expected to be 145 on-street charging points</p>
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<p><b>Lib Dem E</b>          “What is the vaccine uptake of our health and care workers and how are we engaging with under vaccinated groups?”</p>	<p>By          Councillor Thay Thayalan</p> <p>To          Councillor Emily Davey,          Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="801 260 1361 448"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">% staff vaccinated to date reported</th> <th colspan="2">29-Apr</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Dose 1</th> <th>Dose 2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>RBK staff &amp; VCS care providers</td> <td>83%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Domiciliary care providers</td> <td>71%</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care Homes</td> <td>73%</td> <td>56%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>As dose 2 reporting is a recent addition to the reporting process, it’s likely that these figures are currently underreporting. These are reported weekly into the NHS Capacity Tracker for social care providers and are assessed as part of RBK’s Vaccination Programme. Kingston is in the top five of London boroughs for 1st dose staff coverage for domiciliary care providers, younger adults care homes, and our own staff &amp; non-registered care providers.</p> <p>Regarding Health Care workers, the proportion of people who are employed by Trusts in SWL is ~77% first dose, and Kingston Hospital is in line with that percentage uptake. Kingston Hospital has also been held up as good practice in terms of processes and is supporting another Trust with its vaccination programme.</p> <p>Engaging with underrepresented/ undervaccinated/ at risk groups.          The Council has been working with our NHS and community partners on communications, engagement activities and coordination of vaccine outreach delivery to encourage the take up of the COVID-19 vaccine across the borough. This has included detailed targeted work amongst underrepresented, socially excluded and at-risk groups in Kingston. Examples of this work include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comprehensive communications campaign across the borough</li> <li>● Community Champions Network to promote vaccinations</li> <li>● Outreach vaccinations to 6 homeless hostels and domestic violence refuge homes where there is shared accommodation and at-risk individuals are living.</li> <li>● Proactive telephone calls are being made to people known to the council as homeless</li> </ul>	% staff vaccinated to date reported	29-Apr		Dose 1	Dose 2	RBK staff & VCS care providers	83%	25%	Domiciliary care providers	71%	27%	Care Homes	73%	56%
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27

- Work is underway to support our NHS colleagues with reaching vulnerable patients on NHS lists who may have barriers to accessing services for example, due to language barriers
- The council has funded 23 community groups to undertake bespoke communication and engagement activities within their communities, particularly those who have vaccine hesitancy. This includes BAME groups (including Kingston Race Equality Council), disability groups, complex needs and homeless groups and areas of deprivation across the borough.
- We are also working in partnership with SWL CCG on targeted approaches around vaccine hesitancy. Existing groups will have further funding to focus on the under 50s to ensure barriers are addressed and an increase in take up particularly amongst:
  - Black African communities who have the highest hesitancy compared to other ethnic groups
  - Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities who have higher hesitancy than White British/Irish and Indian communities
  - Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, people experiencing homelessness and asylum seeker, refugee and migrant populations
  - Specific locations (including areas of deprivation)

Notes:

Funded community groups:

- 10 BAME groups covering a range of faith communities,
- 3 disability groups to undertake bespoke communication and engagement within their communities, particularly those who have vaccine hesitancy
- 2 complex needs (including homelessness)
- 1 faith group (Mosque)
- 4 areas of deprivation

**Con D**  
Reducing the number of interims

From Cllr  
Rowena Bass

Firstly, it is important to note that transformation projects often need specialists with different skill sets to the permanent workforce. There are roles that are not considered suitable for

employed by the council was a positive objective of the 2018 Lib Dem manifesto. Can the portfolio holder give the Council an update on how the Interim manager reduction programme started in 2018 is progressing across all departments and all programmes, how much was being spent in 2018 and how much is being spent today?

to the Portfolio holder for Finance and commissioning, Cllr Andreas Kirsch

permanent positions, as requirements are for time-limited projects. We therefore hire through an Interim route. Culturally, managing the temporary engagement of managerial and specialist roles was being undertaken at service levels, with a wide variance in the cost of Agency fees. The commercial mark-up to hiring all workers including senior and specialist resources was between 15-22% of pay. Since 2018, we have implemented a change of culture in determining when and how we engage all temporary workers. We have also carried out close monitoring of the appropriate use of temporary workers, which has been aligned with addressing the ongoing challenges of National skills shortages.

Government data is published on the UK Skill Shortage List, which is updated several times throughout the year and there is a noticeable lack of qualified workers in many crucial industries. The UK Employer Skills Survey (ESS) is one of the world's largest business surveys, with over 87,000 employers responding to the survey. This research provides a comprehensive source of intelligence on the skills challenges that UK employers face both within their existing workforces and when recruiting. Larger Private Sector companies are often out competing for sought-after and in-demand workers. The main reason for vacancies being hard to fill was the 'low number of applicants with the required skills.

There are specialisms within these professions which are the most sought after in the UK and demand is greater than the supply of resources. In 2018/19 overall, 5% of employers reported that they had skill-shortage vacancies and 13% of employers reported that they had skills gaps among their workforce. In 2017 skills gaps were also at 13% and there was an increase in the number of skill-shortage vacancies, with skill-shortages up from 22% to 24%. In terms of where these skills needs were felt most sharply, skill-shortage vacancy density was highest in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors, where 36% of vacancies were proving hard-to-fill because of applicants lacking the appropriate skills, qualifications or experience. At that time, by occupation, employers faced the greatest challenges in finding suitably skilled candidates for Skilled Trades positions, with nearly half of vacancies in these roles being skill

shortage vacancies (48%). Agency Spend in 2018/19 = £6,563,437.07 - of which 42% was off contract.

In the 2019/20 Financial Year and before the pandemic, employers reported just under 309,000 vacancies in 169 different professional occupations. 106,000 vacancies at professional level alone were considered hard to fill due to skills shortages. There is also the regional perspective to consider. London is, of course, a large business-oriented labour market and so it is not surprising that the capital's challenges are reflected by shortages in professional skills and occupations in large numbers. In line with the increase in skills shortage, agency spend in 2019/20 = £8,634,655 - of which 33% was off contract. All employers are struggling to recruit for quality assurance and regulatory professionals, Finance and investment analysts and advisers, Business, research, and administrative professionals Engineers across all industries, such as civil engineers, mechanical engineers and electrical engineers, IT and software development specialists and analysts, Environmental specialists, and Social Workers.

Matrix, our new temporary workforce solution Partner, provides comparisons with other London Boroughs. Agency Spend in 2020/21 = £10,298,341 - of which 25% was off contract. The agency spend for Boroughs of a similar size to RBK in the 2020/21 financial year are as follows:

- A North Outer London Borough - £17.2m
- A East Outer London Borough - £9.95m

Whilst the overall agency worker spend has increased, this is largely due to the number of transformation projects that have been underway in the last 2 - 3 years, which are the major contributor to the delivery of £14.6m of savings in the budget across 2020/21 and 2021/22.

In addition, the impact of Covid-19 has hugely affected the 2020-21 spend figures. The need to rapidly deploy staff into alternative roles has impacted on the cost of delivering our services

<p style="text-align: center;">30</p>		<p>and is aligned with a necessary delay in being able to progress permanent recruitment to some vacant roles in many areas across the council. The overall figure for 2020-21 includes extra workers across testing sites, social care and public health in order to fulfil the government instructed (and in many cases, funded) response to the pandemic. The total cost of funded agency staff for the Covid-19 emergency response in 2020-21 is £1,160,796m.</p> <p>The following shows that we have taken a proactive targeted approach to reducing off-contract spend (historically, often with a commercial mark-up of 15-22% of pay) to hiring all temporary workers, including senior and specialist resources on-contract (at a commercial mark-up of 10%): April 2020 - £337,180 off contract spend and Feb 2021 - £146,704 off contract spend.</p> <p>The figures above provide the total costs of all agency workers engaged both on and off the new standard RBK Corporate Contract. We have also introduced a new process in line with the award of contract to Matrix. The Matrix Partnership Solution has centralised the hiring of temporary workers, providing clearer oversight and consistency in agency fees at 10% of pay, as well as improved our capability to monitor and manage agency spend. Centralising hiring through technology has provided greater visibility and ensures compliance with the RBK Corporate Contract terms.</p> <p>In line with the implementation of the Matrix vendor managed service, there have been resources dedicated to changing our temporary hiring processes to ensure better value for money and greater corporate governance in the hiring and management of Agency Workers, Interims and Consultants. The change of culture is expected to continue to provide reductions as we monitor and address the challenges of skills shortage and the use of agency workers.</p>
<p><b>Con E</b> How much of the Lib Dem administrations Council Tax rise for 2021/2 was due to Brexit?</p>	<p>From Cllr Rowena Bass to the Portfolio holder for</p>	<p>The Council tax increase for 2021/22 was made in response to years of government funding reductions, ongoing demand led growth, alongside economic uncertainty arising from both Brexit and Covid-19. The additional council tax raised enabled a balanced budget to be set and reduce the level of savings that would otherwise have to be found.</p>

	<p>Finance and commissioning, Cllr Andreas Kirsch</p>	
<p><b>Con F</b>          With the Chief Executive of The Fircroft Trust having confirmed in writing (after the Budget council meeting) that your LibDem council had indeed 'kicked out' the charity from the Fircroft Centre with no prior consultation, can you please advise what progress has been made by RBK to find a suitable replacement building?</p>	<p>From Cllr Rowena Bass to the Portfolio holder for Finance and commissioning, Cllr Andreas Kirsch</p>	<p>Officers have been working in partnership with Fircroft Trust to provide them with the support necessary for them to continue to deliver their services whilst work is underway to assess the repairs required in the existing building for it to be safely occupied.</p>
<p><b>Corr G</b>          The Lib Dem manifesto of 2018 said the council would create “masterplans for suitable development sites, based on agreed design codes that prioritise inclusive and sustainable communities”. How many master plans and design codes will have been drafted and approved by May 2022?</p>	<p>From Cllr Roy Arora to the Portfolio holder for Planning policy and culture, Cllr Rebecca Moll</p>	<p>Since 2019, the council has developed adopted design guidance and masterplans for two of its major regeneration areas at the Cambridge Road Estate and Cocks Crescent working closely with the local community through an extensive co-design process. In February 2020, A design development brief for the Cocks Crescent major site mixed use redevelopment site in New Malden was adopted by the Council and continues to progress towards planning and implementation informed by a clear and sustainable master plan and design codes.</p> <p>The Cambridge Road Estate regeneration masterplan evolved using design codes over a period of approximately 18 months closely and effectively engaging local residents, businesses and strategic stakeholders resulting in the positive ballot outcome in March 2021 voted for by eligible residents on the estate. The conclusion of which has now informed a live major planning application due for consideration in the coming months.</p> <p>The council is also currently in the process of early stage engagement on its site wide master plans and design code/guidance with the local community for a number of its council owned</p>

		<p>strategic development sites in Kingston town centre, including the Kingfisher leisure centre and cattle market car park and also the Guildhall civic complex. Approximately 2,500 people have so far provided comments to date on proposals (April 2021) and these sites will also shape the masterplans and inform the Local Plans site allocations process, which will follow the GLAs Good Quality Homes for All Londoners guide and may result in design codes. In addition the Council has been developing a Small Sites Design Toolkit, whilst not a masterplan or code, it will help provide specific sustainable design guidance on developing small sites across the boroughs neighbourhoods as set out in the London Plan.</p> <p>The Council also recently submitted an expression of interest MHCLG for funding to create design code guidance and whilst unsuccessful, will continue to review and explore this as a tool. The Council's recent success in being awarded One Public Estate funding will result in the engagement with local people and the codesign of a new Tolworth Station Masterplan working with a number of community and business stakeholders and will likely propose sustainable and inclusive design codes.</p>
<p><u>Core H</u> By the time of the publication of the next Local Plan, it will have been more than a decade since the last plan; the core strategy. So much has changed in that time so why has the administration not prioritised a document that will help in protecting the Borough from overdevelopment, assuage the very many concerns of local residents and resolve the problems of the lack of homes for a five-year plan, instead of giving the appearance that the administration will do whatever the planning department or</p>	<p>From Cllr Roy Arora to the Portfolio holder for Planning policy and culture, Cllr Rebecca Moll</p>	<p>This administration is well aware of the importance of maintaining an up to date planning policy framework. Indeed, following the election of 2018 having inherited from the previous administration the somewhat dated Core Strategy prepared in 2012, this administration immediately embarked on the preparation of a new local plan. This administration is committed to delivery of a new Local Plan that will provide a robust policy context within which to manage development within the borough.</p> <p>In May 2019 the (Reg 18) early engagement was undertaken providing a clear intention to deliver a new Local Plan. This first stage of engagement was carried out before Covid and its impact, planning white paper, changes to housing targets, the council's climate emergency declaration. The last year has changed how we all view where we live.</p> <p>It is essential that we carry out more engagement to inform a new Local Plan that reflects the aspirations and concerns of residents and communities now - as we live with the experiences</p>

<p>developers tell them?</p>		<p>of Covid. We have an opportunity to carry out further engagement and hear from more people before the plan is taken to the next stage - that has got to be the right thing to do. The Local Plan shapes the future for the borough until 2041. We need to get it right.</p>
<p><b>Con I</b>                  In 2018 your administration campaigned and was elected on a platform of “Homes not towers”. How many houses of 2 or 3 storeys have been permitted since May 2018 and how many apartments? How many buildings above 6 storeys have been permitted compared to the period 2015 to 2018?                  33</p>	<p>From Cllr Roy Arora to the Portfolio holder for Planning policy and culture, Cllr Rebecca Moll</p>	<p>We do not currently hold up-to-date data on the number of houses and flats that have been approved. The data is collated by the GLA and they are in the process of launching a new data system called Planning London Datahub on which this data will be made available subsequently.</p> <p>In relation to the number of buildings above 6 storeys that have been approved since May 2015, the breakdown is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May 2015 to April 2018: 4 buildings</li> <li>• May 2018 to April 2021: 7 buildings</li> </ul> <p>N.B. Please note that these figures do not include revised applications to permissions that have already been granted, such as S73 permissions. These figures also do not include planning applications approved at committee, where a decision notice has not been issued due to ongoing negotiations relating to legal agreements or referrals to the Mayor of London.                  Tim Naylor</p>
<p><b>Con J</b>                  In their 2018 election manifesto, the administration pledged “increasing access to blood pressure testing in the workplace and providing public defibrillators across the borough.” What progress has been made?</p>	<p>From Cllr Ed Fram to the portfolio holder for adult social care, Cllr Fiona Boulton</p>	<p>Workplace Health programmes have continued to roll-out across the borough, with a focus on priorities identified by the workforce of these businesses. This has included a focus on the mental well-being of staff, alongside their physical health. The national ‘Know Your Numbers’ campaign, to encourage people to have their blood pressure checked, has been promoted across the borough, with workplaces in the borough engaging with this. The NHS Health Checks programme continues to be in operation, which includes a blood pressure check. It is aimed at those aged 40-74 years.</p> <p>All secondary schools in the borough, the Pupil Referral Unit, 13 primary schools and Kingston campus of South Thames college all have defibrillators. The majority of primary and</p>

		<p>infant schools who do not have their own know where they can access one in close proximity to their premises.</p> <p>Funding towards defibrillators is available to schools via the Children’s Safeguarding Board.</p> <p>Several voluntary and charity organisations have fund-raised or used their funds to purchase public access defibrillators for their local area / key venue in their area.</p> <p>All police aid vehicles and fire engines carry a defibrillator.</p> <p>The impact of the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent restrictions means that work to progress this area has been paused over the past 15 months.</p>
<p><b>Con K</b>          In your manifesto at the 2018 election, you pledged to “Support Express CIC to open an autistic centre in Tolworth.” When will it open and if it won’t why was this charity being let down in such a bad way and promises made to them broken?</p>	<p>From Cllr Maria Netley to the portfolio holder for Children’s Services (inc education), Cllr Diane White</p>	<p>Express CIC continues to successfully operate from its premises at Ewell Road in Tolworth. We are working with Express CIC to identify suitable larger premises to enable them to expand the valuable support they provide to young people with autistic spectrum conditions and their families. As these discussions are ongoing, it is not possible to provide a date when Express CIC may be able to move into larger premises.</p>
<p><b>Con L</b>          When will the Council introduce a Kingston Living Rent as promised in their election manifesto in 2018?</p>	<p>From Cllr Nicola Shepherd to the portfolio holder for Housing and Public Health, Cllr Emily Davy</p>	<p>The manifesto commitment is as follows:          "Investigate introducing a Kingston Living Rent for some of our own schemes, to enable private renters on lower salaries to have longer-term tenancies for greater stability".</p> <p>Following investigation we have not introduced a Kingston Living Rent on the council owned schemes currently in the pipeline as it is not viable, however it is still under consideration.</p>

<p><b><u>Con M</u></b> The council promised “no reduction in open space” in the new Cambridge Road Estate and a “ban on poor doors”. Why is that not being delivered?</p>	<p>From Cllr Nicola Shepherd to the portfolio holder for Housing and Public Health, Cllr Emily Davy</p>	<p>Subject to planning permission being granted, the proposed development at the Cambridge Road Estate would be wholly tenure blind with all units constructed to the same high standard and all blocks are mixed tenure. The proposal currently under consideration by the Planning Department would see an increase in public space in addition to a significant enhancement to the public open space, and would deliver open space that would provide a safe and stimulating environment, provide incidental and formal playspace, provide biodiversity net gains, would form an integral part of the community, and would be easily accessible for all.</p>
<p><b><u>Con N</u></b> When in the next 12 months do you plan to “Provide free residents parking permits to all-electric and hybrid cars and look at differential parking charges in Council car parks”?</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>As per this year’s MTFs proposals agreed at Budget Council, free residents permits for electric vehicles will be introduced from 1st May 2021. Options for further differential parking charges in car parks and on street (pay and display) are being researched and considered alongside a review of current and future car parking capacity and demand to inform pricing strategy going forward (see response to Con R as this cross references). Variable charging will rely on the use of new technology which will either require capital investment (for payment machines) or a further shift towards online payments.</p>
<p><b><u>Con O</u></b> The administration promised to “Trial installing green screens (vegetation that can remove some harmful air pollutants) at our worst affected schools to help reduce air pollution in the playground.” Given that air quality is so important for young people why does it appear nothing has happened on this issue and when will this be introduced?</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>Pollution modelling data from the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory indicates that there are no longer any schools in the borough where concentrations of nitrogen dioxide exceed the long-term exposure limit for this pollutant. However, the Council recognises that exposure to any concentration of air pollution can be detrimental human health, particularly that of children. In 2019 a green wall was installed at King Athelstan Primary School, Villiers Road.</p> <p>The top priority of the Council in this regard has been and must continue to be reducing emissions of air pollution across the borough and particularly in areas of high sensitivity, including near to schools.</p> <p>The Council's forthcoming Air Quality Action Plan 2021-26 (AQAP) contains three actions</p>

		<p>which will help reduce pollution specifically in and around schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plan commits to carrying out air quality audits at the most polluted schools in the borough in accordance with the methodology of the Greater London Authority toolkit. These audits will identify the key source of air pollution and will produce recommendations to mitigate their impact, which may include green walls if they are deemed appropriate.</li> <li>• A commitment to develop and promote a toolkit for schools about barrier planting to help protect playgrounds</li> <li>• The new plan also introduces an Active Travel Challenge within schools which is designed to promote the use of more sustainable travel to and from school, thereby reducing emissions across our road network and especially around schools.</li> </ul> <p>Finally, the Council will continue to bid for and implement school streets at appropriate schools. A recent GLA report found that school streets can reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations at schools by up to 23%.</p>
<p>36 <b>Con P</b> What is the additional tonnage being recycled by on-street recycling and how much of it still goes to recycling?</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>Whilst this arrangement has reduced RBK's overall waste disposal costs, limited recyclate material has been extracted in this way, due to the high levels of contaminant material, including liquids and dog waste, found within it.</p> <p>RBK is looking to undertake some pilots this year to trial alternative methods of capturing recyclable material from litter discarded on RBK's streets and parks.</p> <p>RBK is also rolling out a new mechanical street cleansing recycling contract this year; RBK produces around 1,500 tonnes of mechanical street cleansing waste per annum and the new service is estimated to be able to recycle in excess of 70% of the material delivered.</p>

		<p>The Council also awaits the introduction of the national deposit return scheme proposed by Government in 2019 which would rightly move towards cost recovery from businesses that produce disposal take-away products that make up the majority of street litter.</p>
<p><b>Con Q</b>          Since publishing the 2021 council draft budget proposals the portfolio holder for waste and recycling has u-tuned on policy after policy. Having reversed the Bin Tax we now have the embarrassing sight of the council reversing the charges for replacement waste bins to investigate a “possible issue with the quality of some household recycling containers”. Given residents have been complaining for years about the way waste bins were being damaged why has it taken till now to realise that better bins and more careful waste collection would save more money than charging residents a second time for bins they have already paid for with their Council Tax?</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>The recent quality issues raised relate specifically to the paper and card bins and an investigation is underway. As soon as this is complete, we will be able to update on the findings and any actions to be taken.</p> <p>All collection crews receive training in the handling and return of bins and they have all recently received refresher training on this.</p>
<p><b>Con R</b>          In light of the imminent closure of three town-centre car parks and the possibility of both the Cattle Market and Ashdown Road also removing parking can the portfolio holder tell us when the Council will be bringing forward a parking strategy</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr</p>	<p>The most recent strategy was adopted in 2005, including a 20 year action plan and a further strategy was developed in 2016. This piece of work identified that parking provision was likely over provided in the town centre, fragmented and not in the ideal locations to encourage better environmental or economic outcomes. Data collection and consultation on a broader 30 year Parking Strategy was ready to commence early in 2020 however it was recognised swiftly at the start of the Covid 19 pandemic that undertaking that work would have served no useful purpose at that time. A year on, we have of course not yet seen a full reopening of</p>

<p>for the town centre that was started over four years ago?</p>	<p>Hilary Gander</p>	<p>our workplaces and town centres and recognise that the long term impact on road user habits is an unknown. Officers are currently considering how best to deliver a fast but robust piece of work to sense check the 2016 work and inform decisions on our car park assets aligned with the Local Plan requirements and consultation this summer and principles of the Climate Emergency.</p> <p>It is also important that the Council strategy takes full account of private operated car parks. In recent weeks, government has announced its intention to make significant changes to legislation covering enforcement on private land; if brought forward, this will have a significant impact on the business model, and therefore what capacity and charging would look like in the immediate future.</p>
<p><b>Con S</b> In 2018 the administration promised to “Investigate installing lockable gates in back alleys to reduce opportunities for potential burglary.” Can the member now publish the results of that investigation and tell the Council how many lockable gates have been installed and where?</p>	<p>From Cllr David Cunningham to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>As a member of the Safer Kingston Partnership RBK works closely with partner agencies to monitor crime and antisocial behaviour in the borough and take appropriate action. We have worked closely with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the community to develop a better understanding of the key issues affecting local residents and developed a multi agency problem solving approach using evidence-based responses that target the underlying causes of any problems.</p> <p>Crime prevention must be proactive and the manifesto promise regarding the gating of alleyways can be an excellent example of how the partnership approach with the community, council and police can achieve such a positive result.</p> <p>In the past, burglary was rare compared with today and a criminal can use the alleyway unseen by day or by night. Household refuse is now collected from the front of the house and regular deliveries to the back of the house have become uncommon. Unfortunately it is the case that some alleyways have fallen into disrepair and additionally in some locations become blocked with fly tipping.</p>

		<p>For example, in my own ward, residents asked us for help with the alleyway that runs behind the shops in Richmond Road. On this occasion, we were able to allocate money from the Councillor Ward Funding Scheme which was used to provide a locked gate which provides additional security and put a stop to years of illegal fly tipping.</p> <p>I am also aware of discussions with the community on the Sunray Estate where there is a split in opinion on whether gated alleyways would help or not and there are ongoing conversations with some residents who do want them. I am not aware of any other current requests.</p>
<p><b>Con T</b> Your administration promised in 2018 to “Introduce a borough lottery, with all proceeds going to local charities and good causes.” When can those good causes expect to start receiving that money?</p>	<p>From Cllr Kevin Davis to the Leader of the Council, Cllr Caroline Kerr.</p>	<p>The council’s Corporate Plan includes the commitment to explore the feasibility of a lottery for Kingston, aiming to generate revenue for local good causes. This feasibility was completed in Winter 2019.</p> <p>A procurement exercise was then completed just prior to the start of the pandemic, and as such the launch of the lottery has been on hold for one year due to the need to focus activity and resource to support residents through the pandemic - also it was felt that it would not be appropriate to launch a lottery in the midst of a crisis response.</p> <p>The plan is to launch the lottery to our local good causes in June. This Good Cause launch aims to ensure that all of our local community groups know about the lottery and are signed up to benefit from it.</p> <p>Following the Good Causes launch, tickets will go on sale in July, with our first draw in August. Good causes that have signed up to the lottery will then start to receive money raised for them through the Kingston Community Lottery through a monthly payment.</p>
<p><b>Con U</b> Your administration promised in 2018 to “Hold Councillors to account for the way</p>	<p>From Cllr Kevin Davis to the Leader of the</p>	<p>This Administration stands by its promise but I must point out that your question is hypothetical at best and could be seen as vexatious insofar as you are surely already aware that the Ombudsman's report of 08.03.2021 found no 'wilful discrimination'.</p>

<p>they interact with members of the public. We will demand a high level of professional conduct and sanction councillors who fail to treat residents with respect and courtesy.” What actions should be taken against a Councillor who racially abuses a local child and should they stop being a Councillor?</p>	<p>Council, Cllr Caroline Kerr.</p>	<p>I am pleased to state that this external workplace complaint has been satisfactorily resolved without any intervention from the Administration or RBK officers.</p> <p>I am hopeful that the Ombudsman's conclusion will result in no further attempts to damage or defame the reputation of a councillor for political gain.</p>
<p><b>Con V</b> Why does the council consultation on the future of the Guildhall complex not give the option to keep the GH as a Council office, for public access to use council services and to attend council meetings? Why is the LD council using leading questions rather than attempting to find out what the residents of Kingston really think about this issue?</p>	<p>From Cllr Ian George to Cllr Tim Cobbett, Portfolio holder for Communication s, consultation and engagement.</p>	<p>The core focus of this initial stage of community and stakeholder engagement has been a ‘listening’ exercise to help the council understand the local communities’ priorities for the Kingfisher, Cattle Market car park and the Guildhall Complex.</p> <p>This engagement aimed to reach out as far as possible and give everyone an opportunity to find out about and feedback on the evolving proposals for these sites. Residents, students and visitors, interest groups, schools and businesses and other key stakeholders, of all ages and backgrounds have been engaged to find out what is important to them and what they would like to see on the sites. The initial listening exercise resulted in the council receiving in addition to 2,400 completed surveys, including more than 200 children’s surveys, as well as numerous emails and many telephone calls.</p> <p>As part of the listening exercise, respondents were asked for their views on appropriate uses for the Guildhall Complex. The survey was not specific to suggest uses for the Listed Guildhall building but instead focussed on what was most important to the local community when considering the future of the building, such as continued public access and improving energy efficiency. Suggested uses for the Guildhall Complex as a whole gave a number of options, including office/workspace as well as hotel use, events space and new homes. Respondents were also openly invited to suggest any other additional uses that they thought should be considered for the Guildhall Complex.</p>

		The high levels of feedback we have received during this initial stage of consultation will now help to inform the proposals as we move forward into the next stage of the Transform Kingston project; the feedback received from the local community will help positively shape these strategic sites and thus contribute to the economic recovery of the town centre, ensuring its prosperity for future generations.
<b>Con W</b> Why is Kingston council carrying out a consultation on public access to toilets after the administration forced through the closure of council-owned toilets in the recent budget? Surely this consultation should have taken place before this decision was taken by LD councillors.	From Cllr Ian George to Cllr Tim Cobbett, Portfolio holder for Communications, consultation and engagement.	The council's proposal to permanently close toilet facilities at four car park sites identified that there was a need to provide better and more up to date information of where public toilet locations can be found for all groups of people, and to make it easier for people to locate the closest toilet. Having a public toilet access strategy will provide a framework for the effective and coordinated provision of public toilets, and will explore any gaps in provision to ensure clean and accessible toilet facilities are available in the most appropriate locations across the Borough.

**Supplementary Questions**

Question	From/ To	Response
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<p><b><u>Supplementary (1)</u></b> Thank you Councillor Cobbett. I wanted to ask if he could pursue the accreditation of the Borough of the White Ribbon accreditation and all that entails?</p>	<p><b>From</b> Councillor Alison Holt</p> <p><b>To</b> Councillor Tim Cobbett , Portfolio Holder for Communities and Engagement</p>	<p><b><u>Response given on the night:</u></b> Thank you for your supplementary question. Just for those who are not aware who are following the proceedings, the White Ribbon accreditation is around organizations seeking targets for improving the experience for residents and service users. It also includes being an employer of choice for people who may have suffered from gender based violence or domestic violence including support for our staff. We recently set up a domestic abuse hotline for our staff as part of this work. The accreditation process involves the organisation getting measured against commitments and what you are doing in terms of working with your communities to try and end violence towards women. I am pleased to be able to confirm that this is something we have been actively talking about and I can confirm we will as Kingston Council pursue the White Ribbon Accreditation. I think that's a really important commitment and I am pleased to announce this tonight.</p>
<p><b><u>Supplementary (2)</u></b> What are you actually doing to enforce the terms of the lease at Coombe Wood Golf Course? I have seen a copy of the lease and there are several clauses in my opinion which it could be contravening. For example any tree is not allowed to be felled without the council's expressed permission. The tenant is also not allowed to make additional entrances into the site without the Council's permission, but a gate has been installed. They are also not allowed any structure or apply for planning permission without Council's permission.</p>	<p><b>From</b> Councillor Sharron Falchikov-Sumner</p> <p><b>To</b> Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>The matters raised in your question will be explored by the property function.</p>

<p>Surely we must demand the lease tenant must adhere to terms of the lease.</p> <p>Why have you not done anything to enforce the lease?</p>		
<p><b>Supplementary (3)</b></p> <p>A number of residents had contacted me with regards to blocked gulleys. We of course do a planned maintenance of gulleys each year as a Council but last year was a particularly wet year and we know when this happens gulleys get blocked more than usual.</p> <p>Please can you do a review and survey on this?</p>	<p>From Councillor David Cunningham to Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainable Transport, Cllr Hilary Gander</p>	<p>Wetter spells of weather are most likely to highlight those drains that are already blocked, as well as possible underlying issues (eg to do with capacity) with the Thames Water road drainage network; the Council would liaise with Thames Water on such issues. Surface water should drain away into our roadside gullies within 60 minutes of the rain ceasing. If a large amount of surface water is still evident after 60 minutes this could be due to tree roots, a collapsed outlet pipe, a capacity issue or a blockage in the Thames Water Sewer. If locations where this is occurring are identified and the gullies have been attended to by Veolia it is passed to the highways team who will arrange for a CCTV survey to identify the problem and arrange a repair of the gully or pass onto Thames Water to investigate their apparatus.</p> <p>As well as the scheduled clean of drains once every two years as a minimum by RBK's street cleaning contractors, Veolia, there is also a list of high priority gullies which are cleaned on an annual basis to help prevent flooding incidents. Where a flooding issue is reported and this is due to a blocked gully, Veolia will respond to these on an emergency basis. If they are unable to clean it out due to there being a physical defect with the drain, this is reported through to the Council for further inspection and survey work as required. In addition, as outlined in a previous response, a special clean programme is undertaken each year to target those gullies</p>

		<p>that have been inaccessible due to parked cars.</p>
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Residents are able to report blocked gullies through the Council's website and the Council will attend to the issue. In addition, Council officers undertaking routine inspections or attending to other matters in the community may observe gulley issues and will report these through the same mechanism for action.