

Council Questions and Responses - 13 October 2020

Questions from Members

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

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

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

Questions from Members of Public

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

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

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

Questions from Members

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

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

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

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

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

			<p>principle of development rather than just coming forward with plans perceived as a fait accompli?</p> <p>All wards Councillors in the affected areas were consulted last year as the Council explored its own sites for this programme of development.</p> <p>Pre-planning consultation and engagement has been commensurate with the scale of the development proposed. The small sites programme consists of four sites, the largest of which, if planning is granted, would deliver 41 homes. Our engagement process met the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community of Involvement and residents were able to comment on all aspects of the development including both the principle of development and proposed plans. A full Statement of Community involvement has been prepared for each site and is publicly available on the Council's website.</p> <p>More broadly, the developments are in line with emerging policy H2 on small sites in the Draft London Plan which has been comprehensively consulted on by the Mayor over the last few years. It states that the delivery of small sites is a strategic priority due to the overall level of new homes which can be delivered in sustainable locations and sets targets for individual boroughs. <i>(Note: RBKuT's GLA target is 2,250 over a 10 year period to 2028/29)</i></p> <p>The Council has also consulted on its own small sites objectives through early engagement for the Draft Local Plan in May 2019.</p>
--	--	--	---

			<p>This, combined with the site specific consultation has delivered a comprehensive programme of engagement which has kept residents informed.</p> <p>By contrast, the regeneration of an entire estate such as CRE with the potential delivery of over 2,000 homes requires a different scale of engagement and included residents seeing their existing homes being demolished. This is not the case with the small sites programme. In addition as members are aware, the GLA and the administration were committed to ballot on that scheme. Grant funding from the GLA was essential to ensure the viability of the scheme and to secure the large, long term benefit regeneration will bring to the borough.</p>
Conservative (T)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Emily Davey	Having heard the views of residents through the planning application consultation, can the member outline what changes she instructed to be made to the small sites programme schemes in response to residents concerns?
Conservative (U)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Caroline Kerr	Can the Council Leader advise of the total contract amount for work given to all contractors without going out to tender, where the contractor is or includes either former or current LibDem councillors or activists?
Conservative (V)	Councillor Ian George	Councillor Hilary Gander	Why have the Kingston Hill cycle lane works taken two years, and when can residents expect it to be completed? Can the member also tell us when she expects to see the Park Road roundabout completed? as it has been left as an eyesore.

Responses to Member questions raised verbally:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Specific measures the University has put in place includes:

A) Support to follow COVID secure guidance:

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

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

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

For all students who need to self-isolate:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Responses to written Member Questions:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cambridge Road

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

Cumberland House

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

Roupell House

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

York Way

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

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

All sites:

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

Cambridge Road

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

Cumberland House:

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

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

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

Responses to Questions from Members of the Public:

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

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

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

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

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