

EALING COUNCIL
WRITTEN COUNCIL QUESTIONS: TUESDAY, 25 APRIL 2023

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1. QUESTIONS TO – DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Q No.	From Cllr	Question	Background
8	Gallant	<p>The portfolio holder will be aware that the rise in demand for fast food deliveries has resulted in a marked increase in solo motorcycle contraventions, Boroughwide. Riders are brazenly riding through traffic barriers. Is the portfolio holder planning to wait until a serious incident occurs before taking enforcement action against this practice?</p>	Earl McKenzie
		<p>The safety of our residents and all road users is a top priority for the council. While many are considerate while cycling, driving and parking, the borough has seen an increase in complaints regarding solo motorcycles.</p> <p>The council is already working to tackle this issue, through enforcement but also by working closely with Deliveroo, Uber Eats and Just Eat. Ealing officers are also conducting joint operations with the police in hot spot areas.</p> <p>The council is aware of various locations across the borough where motorcycles drive through prohibited areas. Council teams are ensuring that these vehicles are caught and issues with a Penalty Charge Notice.</p> <p>If you or your constituents have particular concerns about a specific location in your ward please let me know.</p> <p>It is important to note that although the rise in popularity of food delivery apps has brought more solo motorcycle and moped drivers to the borough, the council is not aware of any collisions with pedestrians resulting from a driver ignoring a traffic barrier.</p> <p>The council will continue to take this issue seriously and to enforce against dangerous driving.</p>	

Q No.	From Cllr	Question	Background

2. QUESTIONS TO – CABINET MEMBER FOR GOOD GROWTH

Q No.	From Cllr	Question	Background
9	Zissimos	The Council will be concerned to learn about the Hammersmith Riverside Trust going into administration. This appears to have been mainly due to a fall in revenue because of COVID and the Trust’s inability to pay for the increased loans needed to cover the resulting deficit in its balance sheet. In view of the similar problems faced by the Victoria Hall Trust, together with the liability for legal costs of the Tribunal hearing, will the Council please indicate what level of debt it now expects the Trust balance sheet to include for the coming year, inclusive of Tribunal legal costs.	Adam Whalley
		<p>While the situation with the Hammersmith Riverside Trust may have some points of comparison with that faced by the Victoria Hall Trust, it would not be appropriate for this council to comment in any detail on it.</p> <p>With specific reference to the Victoria Hall Trust (the Trust), the draft accounts for the 2021-22 reporting year indicate a cumulative deficit position of £482,180 over a 4 year period beginning 2018-19.</p> <p>The report was published and is publicly available here.</p> <p>A further update on the Trust’s accounting position (inclusive of any costs to be borne by the charity associated with participating in the Charity Commission Tribunal) will be brought to the Victoria Hall Trust Committee and then published in due course.</p>	
10	Zissimos	How will the Victoria Hall deficit be underwritten and what is the projected cost of servicing it?	Adam Whalley

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		In this specific instance, the council is proposing to treat the Victoria Hall Trust deficit as a zero-interest loan from the council (acting in a corporate capacity) to the charity, with zero cost to the Trust in servicing the loan.	
11	Zissimos	Is Vistry still the Council's development partner for the Perceval House redevelopment scheme?	Andy Parsons
		Cllr Zissimos is referred to the extensive communications issued on 20 April regarding the council's plans for Perceval House, and to the message she received from the Leader of the Council, via officers, to inform and brief her and her colleagues about the project. https://www.aroundealing.com/news/community-perceval-house/	
12	Hersch	Many councils around the country seem to be ditching the planning / building targets set by government for new housing stating various difficulties from costs, workforces to opposition of residents. Where does Ealing council stand on this, what are the latest forecasts for new housing and what is the likelihood of the council achieving these?	Steve Barton
		Ealing, as all London boroughs, is subject to a binding 10 year housing target. For Ealing this is 21,570 units to be delivered between 2019/20 and 2028/29. The figure is based primarily upon demonstrated development capacity and is tested at each London Plan review, most recently in 2020. The existence of the London Plan, the last remaining regional plan in England, reflects the mutual dependency of London Boroughs and also their exceptional housing needs. This target is also verified by the Local Housing Needs Assessment (formerly the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, or SHMA) which identified that 50% of this should be delivered as affordable housing. Ealing's work on the Inclusive Economy Study confirms that this level of affordable provision is essential, not just to ensure decent living conditions, but also to deliver good jobs and decent living incomes.	

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		<p>This housing target remains a test of all local plan making and is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. A local plan that fails to meet this target would fail, or more likely be subject to binding alterations, at examination. Failure to deliver against present the housing targets set by central Government would compromise the ability of elected members to decide upon planning applications and would downgrade the planning protections offered by greenbelt and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) policies.</p> <p>Government continues to require that local planning authority performance be tested against housing delivery, as opposed to housing capacity, and this beyond the control of Ealing or any other Council. Unfortunately, many factors completely beyond the council's control impact housing delivery, most notably challenging market conditions. These challenges are exacerbated by Brexit, the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, as well as rampant inflation and national economic mismanagement. Unless there is a rapid and significant change in market conditions, housing delivery is projected to fall to less than half of the Government's target in England.</p> <p>The council is acutely aware of the housing pressures faced by local residents, and is determined to build the new affordable homes that are so desperately needed. Ealing is leading London in terms of council homebuilding, and is consistently among the top performing boroughs in London for new, genuinely affordable homes.</p>	
13	Malcolm	What is the up to date spend from the Council on activities including consultants for the Local Plan?	Nigel McCurdy / Steve Barton
		Total Spend as at 25 Apr 2023 is £1.173m. Given the magnitude and extent of the work which goes into the production of a Local Plan, it is not uncommon that a Planning Authority would have to invest significant resources into its production. This includes a substantial number of externally commissioned evidence base reports,	

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		which are both labour-intensive and require technically qualified experts to provide input.											
14	Malcolm	When does Ealing Council plan to produce its next Authorities' Monitoring Report (AMR)?	Nigel McCurdy / Steve Barton										
		A new AMR report, covering reporting years 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22 will likely be completed within the next 12 months. This will incorporate the latest iterations of the 5-year housing land supply (5YHLS) position statement and Housing Trajectory. An up to date AMR will be a requirement of the Local Plan Regulation 19 consultation.											
15	Ball	What has been the total cost to the Council to date of the Victoria Hall hotel scheme, broken down into categories including project management, legal costs (both internal and external), relocation of officers/services, lost revenue and any indemnity or other sums paid to Mastcraft?	Adam Whalley										
		<p>The total cost to date is £2,923,264.</p> <p>High level breakdown of total cost</p> <table> <tr> <td>Victoria Hall Trust</td> <td>£110,152 (proportion of tribunal costs to be borne by the Victoria Hall Trust is still to be confirmed)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Legal costs</td> <td>£227,157</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PMO</td> <td>£398,759</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relocation of services</td> <td>£1,929,695</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Property Advisors</td> <td>£177,109</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other costs</td> <td>£80,392</td> </tr> </table>		Victoria Hall Trust	£110,152 (proportion of tribunal costs to be borne by the Victoria Hall Trust is still to be confirmed)	Legal costs	£227,157	PMO	£398,759	Relocation of services	£1,929,695	Property Advisors	£177,109
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		<p>No payments have been made to Mastcraft.</p> <p>It should be noted that service relocation costs (including, for example, the relocation of the CCTV control room) have benefitted and will continue to benefit the council regardless of the outcome of the Tribunal.</p>	
16	Ball	<p>How much is planned to be spent as part of the Perceval house scheme specifically on construction of and fitting out of office space for Ealing Council?</p> <p>Cllr Ball is referred to the extensive communications issued on 20 April regarding the council's plans for Perceval House, and to the message he received from the Leader of the Council, via officers, to inform and brief him and his colleagues about the project. https://www.aroundealing.com/news/community-perceval-house/</p> <p>As outlined, as the council is only just beginning the consultation process on the future plans for Perceval House. Therefore, the information requested is not yet available.</p>	Andy Parsons
17	Young	<p>When will the formal consultation stage of the Conservation Area Review take place?</p>	Steve Barton
		It is anticipated that this will commence in June 2023.	

3. QUESTIONS TO – CABINET MEMBER FOR INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

Q No.	From Cllr	Question	Background
18	Ball	<p>What has been the total spend on removing and replacing officers at director level and above since the current Leader assumed office? Please include the costs of redundancy payments and also the agency and internal recruitment process costs.</p>	Sue Evans
		<p>The spend on redundancy payments (including pension strain costs), settlement payments and recruitment costs was £890,657.</p> <p>It is important to note in this instance that all redundancy payments were at the statutory level, based on length of service and final salary, and that no special severance payments were made.</p> <p>As outlined in the Council Plan, the council recognised that it needed to change as an organisation to remain meaningful to local residents and to deliver on the outcomes they want to see. The new Strategic Leadership Team exemplifies Ealling’s ambitious plans. They are now almost all in post, with the final members set to join over the summer.</p> <p>All decisions regarding matters relating to Chief Officers of the council, whether in relation to loss of office or recruitment, are matters for the Chief Officer Panel. Every decision relating to Chief Officers has been presented and discussed at Chief Officer Panels, at which the Official Opposition has been present. Since the current Leader of the Opposition has attended the Chief Officer Panel, all decisions have been agreed by consensus.</p>	

4. QUESTIONS TO – CABINET MEMBER FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Q No.	From Cllr	Question	Background
17	Ball	<p>Will LBE be bidding for the community pool funding scheme successfully lobbied for by the Lib Dem leader of Portsmouth Council for Acton Pool and is the Gurnell replacement project also eligible or does it only apply to currently open pools?</p>	<p>Adam Whalley / Chris Bunting</p>
		<p>As previously outlined in discussions about this important and exciting project, the council will explore bids for funding from multiple sources. The council’s approach to funding for the new, improved Gurnell Leisure Centre is outlined in the published Cabinet Report, and in published communications about the project (here).</p> <p>The full details of the Swimming Pool Support Fund process have not been released to date. Officers will continue to monitor it in the event that the Gurnell Leisure Centre project is eligible for support.</p>	