

WRITTEN Council Questions and Responses

1.Cllr Rossetti to Cllr Davies

Given recent reports in the national press about Fusion's failure to keep our leisure centres up to acceptable standards, what plans does the council have in place to ensure facilities are kept safe and hygienic, in line with what is set out in the relevant Leisure Management Contract?

Response

The leisure management contract with Fusion Lifestyle states that, at the leisure centres, there must be 'Maintenance of high levels of cleanliness throughout the facilities' and further that 'The level of cleanliness must be visibly acceptable at all times, taking due account of customer expectations, specific requirements of this Contract and all relevant hygiene and health and safety regulations, particularly in key areas such as changing rooms and toilets'

Monitoring by Leisure Service officers and customer perception clearly indicates that Fusion Lifestyle has not met contractual standards on some occasions recently. Fusion Lifestyle accepts this and as such has:

- Employed more cleaners
- Purchased new cleaning equipment
- Increased Veolia bin collections
- Reviewed daily staff work sheets to focus staff attention more keenly on cleaning
- Provided more senior management presence in the centres to support local staff and management to meet the standards consistently.

The Leisure Service is also increasing its monitoring of the leisure centres to assist Fusion Lifestyle to keep standards as high as possible and in line with contract expectations.

2.Cllr Cawley-Harrison to Cllr Hakata

Will the council commit to commencing a consultation on resolving the traffic problems on Christchurch Road, N8, such as via filtering one end of the road, a request that has been made by residents of the road for a significant amount of time?

Response

Following recent concerns raised, the Council has commissioned new surveys to understand the level and direction of traffic entering Christchurch Road as well as kerbside activity including parking. This will help in understanding who is using the street and when, following the implementation of the adjacent School Street that affects traffic movements on Haslemere Road and Waverley Road. It will aid the determination of next steps which may include further consultation. It is important to note that additional funding will be required, should any proposed changes come forward.

3. Cllr Emery to Cllr Hakata

The Gul-E electric charging system allows drivers to discreetly run a chargepoint cable from a home chargepoint unit to their vehicle on the street and is being trialled by Oxfordshire County Council. Will you commit to Haringey trialling this or a similar gully system?

Response

The Council is continually reviewing new EV charging infrastructure as these come to the marketplace.

We are aware of products like the Gul-E system that have been trialled in other authorities. Previous gully systems have failed due to issues such as street detritus getting into the gully and not easily cleaned, water becoming trapped within the gully, and the expectation that residents have the right to park on the other side of the gully.

However, we can see benefits in these types of systems, and we will continue to watch the trials in Oxford and take any learning from this and the performance of the technology. If applicable, we will trial the system in Haringey.

4.Cllr Connor to Cllr Gordon

Following the Local Government Ombudsman's report into decision-making on the Cranwood site, the council was forced to look again at how best to use the site and has now pushed through a new planning application. Do you think it was appropriate to make this decision when there was still a police investigation and an internal investigation into potential wrongdoing ongoing?

Response

The Council decided to postpone the planning decision for the Cranwood site as a result of the adverse finding from the Ombudsman in relation to the decision making around this project. We did so to ensure that the consideration of options for the site could take place in a genuine manner and be seen as such – even though our legal advice stated that we could have continued with the planning decision back in January.

In March, we took the Cranwood options paper to Cabinet – and the Local Government Ombudsman subsequently issued a letter of satisfaction with the actions taken by the Council.

5.Cllr Isilar-Gosling to Cllr Hakata

The Labour manifesto included a promise to introduce a borough-wide e-bike scheme, something Liberal Democrats have been calling for years. When can we expect such a scheme to finally come into operation?

Response

The Council has commenced market testing for a dockless bike/e-bike scheme and plans to introduce such a scheme as soon as possible in 2023.

The Council's recently-adopted Walking & Cycling Action Plan commits the Council to introducing such a scheme. The Council was one of the first in London to agree in principle to the making of a pan-London bylaw to regulate dockless vehicles on the highway and/or public places.

Whilst the benefits of such a bike hire scheme are clear, including removing barriers for people accessing cycling, the Council is conscious of legitimate concerns about bikes being left on footways which could be a danger to others and is keen that a scheme introduced in Haringey manages this carefully so that all residents can benefit.

6.Cllr Barnes to Cllr Ahmet

Please provide an update on the progress of the investigation into historic property dealings, including when we can expect it to be concluded?

Response

The investigator is focusing on the investigation into Cranwood and is in the process of arranging interviews with relevant parties. Once these are completed the investigator will review what further information is required.

7.Cllr da Costa to Cllr Jogee

Is Haringey Council planning to extend or make permanent the provision of street space for bars and restaurants in the borough - which have been invaluable in supporting local business in the post-covid economic recovery - when the current provision comes to an end in September?

Response

Through the Good Economy Recovery Plan programme, Economic Development officers have worked closely with Licensing and other colleagues to support business applications for pavement licenses when appropriate. In some cases this has included physical interventions to facilitate successful applications and to ensure the safe operation of outdoor spaces.

This collaborative working will of course continue moving forward, and support provided to businesses where necessary or appropriate.

With regards to the Licensing Regulations, in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the Business and Planning Act 2020 made temporary provision for a fast-track process to allow businesses selling food or drink to obtain authorisation from the local authority for the placement of furniture such as tables and chairs on highway adjacent to their premises a Pavement licence.

The Regulations are in force until 30th September 2022. However, there is regulation drafted to extend this by a further twelve months to 30th September 2023.

The previous date of 30th September 2022 will continue to apply in relation to any pavement licence applied for before the date these Regulations come into force, though the holder of such a licence may be able to apply for a further licence.

There is legislation currently going through Parliament to make the Pavement Licences permanent. It is currently at committee stage: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3155>

Some of the headline changes of note:

Amend the fee councils can charge applicants, increasing it from £100 to £350 for premises which already hold a pavement licence, and £500 for new applicants.

Extend the public consultation period and council determination period from 7 days to 14 days.

Extend the maximum duration of pavement licences from 1 year to 2 years. The length of a licence is however at the discretion of the local authority.

Provide that Pavement Licences can also be amended by the local authority with the consent of the licence holder if it is considered that the conditions on the licence are not being met.

Prohibit a local authority from granting a tables and chairs licence under the old regime (Highways Act 1980) if a pavement permit is capable of being granted under this Bill

Insert a new Enforcement schedule providing powers to the local authority to remove furniture if a premise is not abiding by its Pavement Licence conditions and hours.

The Council will seek to update its Pavement Licence conditions/policy once the Bill becomes law.