

Response to Council Written Questions 14 March 2024

Cllr Isilar-Gosling to Cllr Chandwani

Haringey's recycling rate recently hit a 12 year low. With that in mind, how can we take the council's stated aim "to get to 50% [recycling rate], and be London's number one borough for recycling" remotely seriously?

Response

Haringey is still committed to working towards the GLA's 50% household recycling rate target by 2030 through our 'Destination 50%' plan.

If we look at our dry recycling rates for households (cans, paper, glass, metal, plastic bottles/tubs/trays, and cardboard), the 2022/23 recycling rate was the second highest across North London Waste Authorities and our garden tonnage is now at a level comparable with pre charging rates.

Our recently updated Reduction and Recycling Plan sets out our plans to meet the challenges faced to continue our journey to higher recycling rates and has several key recycling initiatives for the period 2023 – 2025 including:

- A recently launched partnership with TRAIID (Sept 2023) to provide a borough wide textile collection service,
- New kerbside small electrical collection service which started 12th Feb and development and implementation of a borough wide communications plan for behavioural change in relation to improving recycling rates.
- Improving the quality of the recycling we collect by making better container choices, implementing reversible lid bins, trialling pedal operated food waste bins which are easier and cleaner for people to use and ones which are wheelchair accessible.
- Meeting residents recycling needs is now easier since the launch of an online portal last year where new recycling containers can be ordered as required.

The current socio-economic climate has had an impact on waste and recycling rates over the last 3 years across London. Around twenty-four London boroughs in total have seen their recycling rates decrease since last year and London's recycling rate overall dropped 1.1% between 21/22 and 22/23.

In Haringey, waste volumes overall have been going down since 2017/18 (6.6% since 2017/18) which presents an environmentally and financially beneficial scenario as ultimately the overall goal should be around waste prevention. Limiting waste and focussing on reuse as well as recycling is in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy.

Changes in behaviour are believed to be affecting our waste tonnages and recycling rate. Consumer trends (less buying and less waste given the economic position) is likely to have affected the amount of recycling put out for collection. Meanwhile, manufacturers are changing packaging types and switching to lighter weight materials. All these measures target the materials that can be recycled rather than materials in the general waste stream, and we believe this has impacted our

recycling rate in recent years. In addition, we have also seen declines in the volumes of recycled materials allocated to Haringey from our partner Reuse & Recycling Centres (RRC) and recovery facilities (40% less tonnage in 2023/23 than 2018/19).

Whilst the Government continues to delay on the Collections and Packaging Reform (CPR), brought about through the Environment Bill, the council is unable to fully plan for the future of waste and recycling collection services. The changes set out in the CPR could significantly change the type of material which the Council collects, require us to collect material in specific ways and will provide funding for new services. Until we understand this more, it limits our ability to make changes now to meet our ambitious targets. However, the Council is currently undertaking a service review to model impacts of new impending legislative implementation; though the full impact and possible financial implications will not be known until effects are understood from new legislation due to be implemented from 2025.

Cllr da Costa to Cllr Jogee

Businesses on Archway Road are suffering from robberies virtually daily, and business owners feel unsafe in their own shops. What is the council doing to work with businesses like these and with police to tackle this rising issue?

Response

The Community Safety team works closely with the police, stakeholders and other key council services such as housing, public health, children's and voluntary and community groups (VCS) to reduce and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour in all wards in the borough. Often some wards are challenged more than others especially where there are spikes in criminality or ASB. In response we aim to deploy our collective resources to those areas either through referral to the councils Partnership Problem Solving Group and or in weekly discussion with our police colleagues.

In relation to Archway Road, Cllr Emery has recently brought some of the issues to our attention especially the robberies, littering, idling and other related issues linked to the commercial properties along the highway. We have reached out to police colleagues for updates on how they are addressing the spike in robberies that are taking place and are awaiting their response. Alongside this we are also planning to hold a Day of Action on Archway Road and have pencilled the 9th of May 2024 as the potential date when this will be carried out.

The Day of Action will involve the co-ordination of several internal and external services such as the local Police SNT officers, planning, highways, parking town centre colleagues, waste team etc who will carry out patrols, inspections, enforcement and licencing visits along Archway Road. Following this later this year we are also planning to have a week of action in Highgate ward which will see a similar approach to the day of action but over a seven-day period.

Cllr Barnes to Cllr Williams

17% of London properties are in conservation areas and yet it appears that current interpretations of conservation area guidelines mean that retrofitting is difficult or impossible for residents. A recent piece of casework has seen refusal on an outside wraparound insulation, which the resident has only suggested for the back and side of the property as he knew the front would be refused due to its location in a conservation area. It would add 10cm to the back and side of the property. It has been refused as if somebody were to stop on the main road and look down the back of the rows of properties, they might see the additional 10cm. I and the resident's legal advisor believe that the conservation area guidance can be interpreted to allow this to go ahead. I would like to know how the council intends to retrofit the various street council properties that are within conservation areas so private residents can learn how to address their properties as we try to address the climate crisis?

Response

The London Borough of Haringey has 28 Conservation Areas and we recognise the important opportunity for buildings in these areas to contribute to our climate objectives. The Council was one of the first London boroughs to declare a Climate Emergency (in March 2019) and subsequent to this (in March 2021) we published an ambitious Climate Change Action Plan which sets out a road map to be a net zero carbon borough by 2041. The Council has undertaken many initiatives to support householders in reducing carbon such as working with the Solar Together London project.

The Council's existing Local Plan, adopted in 2017, sets out policies on heritage and renewable energy which generally support measures to sustainably retrofit existing homes and non-residential buildings. As such retrofit projects in Conservation Areas are not precluded within Haringey and can be delivered successfully via planning. There has not been a refusal of permission for retrofitting at this site. The officers worked proactively with the applicant to find the optimum balance between the benefits of retrofitting the property and the preserving heritage in line with current local plan policies. The applicant then amended their proposal and the application was approved.

The First Steps Engagement on the New Local Plan considered how existing policies can be improved and we will be publishing a Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18) which will contain an ambitious suite of climate change policies, including an even more supportive policy on renewable energy.

The difficult balance of heritage and climate concerns is recognised nationally and the Government has recently amended the National Planning Policy Framework to give greater weight for supporting energy efficiency in existing buildings, and it has announced it will be consulting on a new National Development Management Policy on historic buildings including providing further guidance on energy efficiency. The Council has engaged with Historic England's consultation on its draft Advice Note on "Climate Change & Historic Building Adaption" specifically for this purpose.

With regard specifically to Council properties, the Council adopted its Council Housing Energy Action Plan in January 2023 with an initial 1,500 homes to benefit

from retrofitting to 2028. Following this, in November 2023, the Council approved the award of a contract for the 1st tranche of retrofitting Council housing stock.

Cllr Connor to Carlin

The current level of absences among Haringey staff due to sickness is more than 11 days per FTE, compared with under 8 days per FTE nationally. Why do you believe this is, and is work being done to try and reduce staff absences?

Responses

Sickness absence is measured on a rolling 12-month period. The latest data reported to the General Purposes Committee showed a sickness rate of 11.4 days per FTE in the 12 months to December 2023.

Whilst it is not possible to directly compare with other councils due to the differing services delivered in-house (Councils, such as Haringey, that deliver more frontline services in-house than others tend to have higher sickness rates due to the nature of the work), the London Councils benchmarking average for 2022/23 was 9.45 days.

The Haringey sickness absence rate rose sharply between 2021/22 and 2022/23, from 9.7 days to 11.6 days. Further analysis showed that this was attributable to the insourcing of Homes for Haringey, where there were higher absence rates. Management have had a clear focus on reducing absence.

We have a robust sickness management policy and employee absence is managed through a series of defined stages. Our focus is on reducing long term absence (defined as over 20 working days) as this is where the majority of our absence occurs (accepting that some level of long term absence is unavoidable) and particularly focussing on reducing absence due to stress, anxiety and mental ill health. We have launched a wellbeing hub on the intranet which contains a wide range of valuable resources, have a partnership with “able futures” which provides free counselling, and have a comprehensive employee assistance programme offer as well as a full occupational health service.

Whilst the level of absence does vary, we expect to be able to report a reducing level in future.

Cllr Emery to Cllr Chandwani

Residents of Hampstead Lane and the surrounding roads have long been asking for an end to the blight of long-term parking. Many residents have contacted the council to report they would be happy for a CPZ to be introduced; why hasn't the council actioned a consultation into this yet?

Response

We are receiving high volumes of requests for new parking controls and reviews to existing CPZs across the borough. The team are working through the requests, and are prioritising those where there is significant change to the neighbourhood or high demand from local residents and businesses.

We're happy to meet with ward Councillors to understand the specific issues, and to establish what has changed since the last consultation where residents and businesses showed a preference for not having parking controls.

Parking consultations are resource intensive and we do undertake a best value assessment in allocating areas to our programme. We encourage Ward Councillors who have local information to contribute to this assessment to shape our parking programme.

Cllr Rossetti to Cllr Hakata

Traffic chaos and dangerous driving in the Crescent Road area of Alexandra Park ward has been an issue for years. In July 2023 I was told that '*Haringey is exploring ways of resolving the traffic issues currently being experienced in Crescent Road and Palace Gates Road*', while in November 2023 I asked for an update and was told '*We will be progressing with a traffic and transport review of the area in the New Year. Residents, businesses and ward councillors will be fully engaged in this process which will analyse the main traffic and transport issues in the area and investigate the most appropriate interventions to overcome these*'. It is now March 2024 and there is no sign of anything happening. We cannot wait another year for the 18 month evaluation of Bounds Green LTN to take place to get action around Crescent Road, so when will the review of this area actually begin and what will it look like?

Response

Officers are in the process of preparing a resident engagement exercise as part of a Traffic and Transport Review for the Alexandra North Area, to fully understand the extent of the problem.

The engagement will include feedback from residents on some of the possible solutions to the issues they face in this area. This will help officers in designing potential solutions.

The engagement material is currently being reviewed, however due to the pre-election procedures it is unlikely the engagement will start until after the mayoral elections. Officers are happy to meet with Elected Members to discuss the engagement exercise before it goes live.

Cllr Cawley-Harrison to Cllr Hakata

It's been eight months since residents of Christchurch Road, Crouch End, brought a deputation to Full Council about the traffic issues on their street, and many years since they wrote to officers about it asking for something to be done, with a clear set of agreed solutions from their end. In response to their deputation you promised engagement with TfL and to look into the issue, but since then you haven't met once with residents and no progress has been made. When can residents expect anything

to be done to tackle the problem, or is the ongoing lack of action indicative of the fact that the council doesn't plan to do anything?

Response

Whilst the residents of Christchurch Road understandably wish to see traffic issues considered, this cannot be done without considering the consequences of isolated interventions. A full study looking at redistributing traffic flows across the whole network in the area would be required both to assess normal network operation as well as when incidents elsewhere mean Christchurch Road must be considered in the context of the Council's overall network management duty. It has not yet been possible to progress a comprehensive study with the level of officer resource currently available and the not insignificant financial cost of both that study and any network changes that might be considered appropriate. Consideration will be given to progressing preparatory work (such as gathering traffic data by placing automatic traffic counters on Christchurch Road and the surrounding network) in the next financial year, resources permitting.