

Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting 23 July 2018 - Pre-decision Questions for Cabinet on 25 July 2019

Agenda Item – 6.3 – Anti-idling designation in LBTH	
Questions	Response
What is the cost of rolling out the proposals? (E.g. marketing of scheme; training officers)	There is no specialised training required for officers. A procedure note for officers has been drafted – no additional enforcement costs, publicity being funded via the 'gold campaign' Breathe Clean.
What evidence is there from other boroughs that an anti-idling scheme is more effective than other schemes at cutting emissions? (E.g. promoting stopping engines at traffic lights)	No objective evidence only anecdotal. Unnecessary vehicle engine idling is a concern to residents. The ability to issue FPN will reassure residents that the Council takes this matter seriously. Over 50% Nitrogen Dioxide emissions in LBTH comes from transport sources, any measures to reduce this is a positive. The government in its recent Clean Air strategy consultation has held up anti-idling initiatives by some local authorities as examples of good initiatives to reduce air pollution.
If enforcement will be carried out within the existing enforcement revenue budget, is there currently extra capacity within the relevant service area team, and if not, what will the Council enforce less as a result of this additional work?	This work can be absorbed into existing system for issuing FPNs as it is anticipated that only a few FPNs will be issued. Other London boroughs that already enforce the regulations do not issue any FPNs as drivers comply with the request to turn engine off. They do however consider that, the ability to issue FPN adds weight to the request to turn off engine and therefore increases the level of cooperation. Enforcement will be targeted around schools and idling hotspots locations in the borough.

Agenda Item – 6.4 – Supporting the Local Economy - Social Value Framework	
Questions	Response
<p>Is it cabinet’s opinion that this framework directly creates additional social value that might not have been created at all without the framework, or does it simply increase the extent to which pre-existing social value is accounted for in the procurement process? Can we be confident that this won’t simply be a paper exercise by those bidding for contracts to list what would have happened anyway?</p>	<p>The Framework will help to broaden the scope of social value benefits that are better aligned to council’s strategic plan priorities and these will be formally quantified as a monetary value.</p> <p>The wider social value benefits secured are a contractual obligation and the development of the toolkit and training for officers will ensure a consistent approach to monitoring and reporting on the delivery and impact of the community benefits secured for local community.</p>
Agenda Item – 6.5 – Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme	
Questions	Response
<p>Why has the Mayor decided to use Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to help disabled non-dependents and other claimants in financial difficulty instead of establishing a dedicated Hardship Fund as was indicated at the Cabinet meeting in January 2017?</p>	<p>The report to Cabinet in January 2017 stated the following:</p> <p>“In order to recognise that there may be a number of people adversely affected by both changes to the LCTRS and other changes to the welfare system the Mayor has asked that an earmarked Tacking Poverty Reserve be created as mitigation against the overall effects associated with welfare changes. Dependent on the options chosen and therefore an assessment of the number of people affected and the potential risks, a sum of up to £5m has been provided in the Tacking Poverty Reserve; this sum will be reviewed and finalised in the February report</p>

	<p>recommending the budget to Full Council once the outcome from the LCTRS and other associated changes are known.”</p> <p>The Tackling Poverty Reserve was established to address a wide range of poverty related issues, rather than being limited to reducing the amount of council tax to be paid by those affected by the changes to the LCTRS. S13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 is specifically designed to act as a hardship fund to make discretionary hardship awards in the form of a council tax discount. It is also part of the council tax collection fund so is not a general fund revenue budget funded from reserves.</p>
<p>Which other London boroughs use the Minimum Income Floor to calculate entitlement to Council Tax Support for self-employed claimants?</p>	<p>This information is not readily available and would require resourcing to establish and confirm the individual scheme arrangements in place within each London LA.</p>
<p>Which other London Boroughs apply the Conservative Government’s two-child limit on allowances in their Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme?</p>	<p>This information is not readily available and would require resourcing to establish and confirm the individual scheme arrangements in place within each London LA.</p>
<p>Further to the discussion about the CTRS Hardship Fund in Cabinet in January 2017, how many non-CTRS households have been granted relief from Council Tax by Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992?</p>	<p>In 2017/18 there were 52 non CTRS cases awarded a discount under S13A.</p> <p>In 2018/19 there have been 56 non CTRS cases awarded a discount under S13A.</p> <p>All of the above cases were self-employed.</p>

Agenda Item – 6.6 – Supporting the Local Economy -Proposed criteria for granting Business Rate relief	
Questions	Response
Has any consideration been given to providing charities examples of how they can measure the monetary value of the tangible benefits of their services?	One of the key criteria is to ensure there is a benefit provided to local residents. This has not been translated into a measurement of the monetary value of that benefit as this may be difficult for some charities to calculate and may lead to inconsistency. If this is something that is raised as part of the consultation as something that would be considered useful we will consider how it may be possible, but it would not determine eligibility for rate relief.
Agenda Item – 6.7 – Site at 20 Alton Street	
Questions	Response
(para 3.6) How does this promote social well-being when the future use of the site will be by only one small part of the community (approximately 20% of Lansbury ward)? How will the Council ensure the new site is accessible by the whole community?	We understand that the group purchasing the site intend to offer a range of activities which will not necessarily be confined to the Lansbury Ward. The organisation is purchasing a long lease from the Council which will not only govern the relationship between the council and occupiers but will facilitate and permit sharing of the facility with other community groups through local hiring arrangements
(para 2.2) How is it protected under Town Planning for Community Use? The site is not protected in the Local Plan and no protection is shown on the Councils planning policy map. It is D1 space but to change it to another use simply requires planning approval which the Council has routinely done elsewhere?	Policy DM8 of the development plan protects and seeks to maintain D1 use of properties in the Borough. Additionally the lease includes user restrictions which strictly prohibit other non D1 use.
(para 6.4) What compensation is required to sell for residential purposes on an unrestricted freehold basis? How would this materially affect the value?	The informal view of planning colleagues is that the site is unlikely to be suitable for residential development. However if the purchasers of the long lease later wanted to develop the site for an alternative use outside

	of D1 then they could only do so if the Council provides its explicit agreement to vary the user restriction – for which we would seek to extract the additional value..
How was the value of this site determined?	The value was determined by an independent valuer for restrictive use of the site as a community facility and within D1 use.
Agenda Item – 6.10a – Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report	
Questions	Response
<p>Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 4 has this sentence <i>The Council has agreed an arrangement with the GLA to extend the period over which these right to buy receipts can be held and applied</i> I thought the Treasury were responsible for RTB receipts and that after 3 years if not spent had to be automatically returned to the Treasury? Is this sentence correct? How long can the GLA extend the period?</p>	RTB receipts unspent by boroughs within 3 years are paid to Treasury. Treasury then transfer to the GLA. The GLA offer is to ring-fence them for the borough for a further 3 years.
<p>Annex 2 Proposed Feasibility Studies - Does not include any of the studies etc. requested in the GLA Isle of Dogs and South Poplar Opportunity Area Planning Framework. Will these be added later?</p>	The feasibility studies are to identify solutions to ensure best use of council-owned assets in the general fund.
<p>Annex 4 Housing Capital Programme Phase 2 New Schemes 2017-2024 Adds up to 288 new homes by March 2023 but the Tower Hamlets Strategic Plan 2018-21 item 6.1b says "We are well on our way to delivering 1,000 new council homes with a further 1,000 in the pipeline". But if the pipeline is only 288 is there not a disconnect already? Is there another pipeline of projects?</p>	The new build programme is only part of the programme for the delivery of 1,000 new council homes which includes purchase of s106 properties, buy-backs of former council homes and delivery of modular homes and conversion of former community buildings for temporary accommodation. A similar number of new homes are in the phase 3 pipeline for which the consultation process will start early next year. The first 351 new council homes in phase 1, approved last year, are included in the 1,000 homes

