

**COUNCIL MEETING
13TH SEPTEMBER 2017
UNANSWERED QUESTIONS LETTER**

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Democratic & Central Services

Governance Services

1st Floor (West)

Civic Hall

Leeds LS1 1UR

Contact Name: Kevin Tomkinson

e-mail: Kevin.tomkinson@leeds.gov.uk

Direct Line: (0113) 37 88659

Your ref:

Our Ref: A61/kjt/quest

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To: All Members of Council

Dear Councillor

COUNCIL MEETING – 13TH SEPTEMBER 2017

At the above meeting, the thirty minutes of Question Time expired with questions 11 to 34 unanswered. Council Procedure Rule 11.6 requires that each Member of Council is sent responses to such questions.

Q11 Councillor S Bentley - Is the executive member aware that research from Age UK indicates that 25% of pensioners are struggling financially, despite being eligible for benefits such fuel and council tax relief, of which £3.5 billion goes unclaimed each year? Can she inform council what Leeds is doing to ensure that our pensioners are not in that parlous situation?

A In addition to the extensive advice and support provided to the elderly city wide through the Councils Advice Contract, the Welfare Rights Service assist older people directly with their Attendance Allowance and Pension Credit claims, assisting 3353 clients with their Attendance Allowance and 1123 clients with their Pension Credit last year. The Service also work closely with Care and Repair such that if they come across older people who they are assisting they will often also do a referral to the Welfare Rights Service for a full income check to ensure their household income is maximised.

The Welfare & Benefits Service (Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support) unit work closely with the DWP receiving applications from them for both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. The Service offers home visits where assistance with form completion is required and working with the Councils Fairer Charging Team (Adults) they also look at general benefit take up when they do home care checks making referrals back to the Welfare & Benefits Service where appropriate.

Specific to Council Tenants, there are specific Officers in Housing undertaking Benefit Adviser roles who help with benefit claims and queries such as pension credits, attendance allowance, carers allowance etc. They get referrals from Sheltered Support Officers (Wardens) and Housing Office/HUB staff and make appointments and do visits to complete pensioner benefits. The queries are often received via:

- Annual Home Visits
- Discussions about income with individual tenants
- Holding talks at sheltered complexes
- Regularly publicising on social media, posters and writing to tenants groups to advise of their service and how to access it.
- Attending debt forum meetings giving feedback on their services and linking in with other Council Directorates so they are aware.
- Attending Sheltered Support Officers meetings giving specific training to them about pensioner benefits.

The Council also operates a Local Welfare Support Scheme which supports vulnerable citizens, including pensioners, both in need of food and fuel as well as help with household items to help them maintain independent living.

The question is timely as it is Older Persons week commencing 2nd October 2017 and amongst other activities there are specific talks booked in at 9 sheltered complexes working with SAFER and Green Doctor giving out advice to pensioners.

Q12 Councillor R Grahame - Can the Executive Member update council on work to engage adults, particularly from disadvantaged communities, in skills training?

A In the last year, over 7,500 people living in Leeds have been supported to gain new skills on adult learning courses commissioned by the Council. Many of our programmes provide the skills needed for work and are focused on key sectors e.g. health and care, and retail and hospitality and or prepare people for further vocational study.

We delivered over a thousand courses in community settings and promoted these widely across all disadvantaged communities. Last year over 50% of our learners lived in the neighbourhoods in Leeds in the 20% most deprived nationally.

Learning Markets were held this week enabling local residents to see the wide range of courses on offer and taster sessions allowing them to experience the course before making a commitment and ensuring we maintain our very high retention and achievement rates.



Finding information on courses just got easier. www.leedsadultlearning.co.uk is a new web resource launched this week. It allows you to look up information on courses by subject or by postcode and includes an integrated journey planner to help you get there. You can view all this on your phone, I-pad or laptop and it is updated daily.

Q13 Councillor S Hamilton - Please can the Executive Member give an update on support offered by central government to fund fire safety improvements in Leeds' high rise blocks following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower?

A LCC officers and central government have had numerous communications regarding high rise fire safety since the tragedy of Grenfell Towers. To date these have focussed mainly on the condition and management of our tower blocks and what actions are, or need to be undertaken to safeguard residents, however a letter was received from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid MP, on 26 July which stated that:

“Our expectation is that, as a building owner responsible for your tenants, you will fund measures designed to make a building fire safe, and will draw on your existing resources to do so.... Where a local authority has concerns about funding essential fire safety measures, they should approach us as soon as possible to discuss their position.”

LCC has confirmed to Government that it had no owned blocks over a height of 23 metres containing the similar ACM cladding as Grenfell Towers, therefore there is no immediate pressure as a result of failed materials on LCC owned high rises. However, work is taking place to establish the Council's medium to long term investment strategy for high rise dwellings, following which a decision will be taken on funding for fire safety improvements, such as sprinkler systems. The Council will approach DCLG for support for these improvements, as they will come at the expense of other planned investments in the housing stock.

Q14 Councillor B Anderson - Would the Executive Member responsible for the Environment please advise Council why they consider it is acceptable to have vast amounts of litter strewn up and down our main carriageways and main routes into Leeds, particularly if we are aiming to win the bid for the European Capital of Culture and in the meantime attract visitors and businesses into Leeds?

A I don't particularly recognise the description given of vast amounts of litter on our main carriageways and routes into the city. However, I do recognise that there are problem hotspots, usually junctions and on certain stretches of road. This is part of a nationally recognised problem mainly caused by a thoughtless minority of people who carelessly throw litter from their vehicles.

We are working closely with Keep Britain Tidy on a number of issues and are looking to start a city wide campaign to tackle this problem of "car litter". As well as targeting specific problem locations, the campaign will involve residents and seek their help to challenge and change the behaviours of those who choose to litter our road sides. We will be encouraging people to send us 'dashcam' evidence of littering from cars and using social media to help get the message across that this anti-social and illegal behaviour is not acceptable in Leeds.



I look forward to support from Elected Members for the campaign when it is launched and plan to work closely with the 10 Environmental Champions to ensure the campaign has maximum impact and reach.

Q15 Councillor R Downes - Does the council have any plans to install modern 'recycling on the go' bins for plastic bottles and cans in Otley and Yeadon's town centres and parks?

A The Council has previously gone down the route of installing split bins around the City to enable the capture of the same materials that are collected for recycling in the kerbside green bins. This was of limited success, primarily due to a high level of contamination in the materials captured which largely negated any benefit, and therefore this scheme was discontinued.

The design of these types of recycling bin has evolved since this time, with separate containers for each recyclable material, including apertures designed to discourage them being used for general waste. However, the additional costs of providing, emptying and servicing the additional bins needs to be set against the benefit of a marginal increase in recycling.

When we recently introduced the 'Big Belly' solar powered compacting litter bins in the city centre, which have significantly reduced the frequency with which they need to be emptied and therefore the associated operational costs, we considered the possibility of making provision for recycling as well. However, our recycling contractors had reservations about accepting compacted recyclables, since this makes them difficult to process and separate effectively. Additional waste receptacles of this kind do also need to be appropriately designed and located so as not to detract from their surroundings depending on where they are placed, for example in parks, the city centre and the town centres.

Having said this, we do intend to update our position on 'recycling on the go', and will update our assessment of the available technical options and the value for money of introducing these facilities across the City.

Q16 Councillor G Hussain - Can the Executive Member for Health Wellbeing and Adults comment on the recent figures regarding smoking levels in Leeds – which show a cut by nearly a half over the last twenty five years?

A Smoking is the single biggest preventable cause of early death and ill health in our city. In addition smoking is the most significant preventable cause of health inequalities in Leeds. At the time of the launch in 1962 of Smoking & Health, the influential report by the Royal College of Physicians, around 70% of men and 40% of women in the UK smoked.

In 2004, 30% of adults in Leeds smoked, and through the efforts of many partners in the city, this rate has now dropped to 17.8%. This is a drop of around 59,000 smokers. Not only will those 59,000 people in Leeds have better health but will also be better off financially. A typical smoker, smoking 20 cigarettes a day will be almost £3,000 better off a year. For the 59,000 now non-smokers this means they are now not spending £171m per year on tobacco products.



There will also be saving for the NHS. Over the next five years we estimate that because of reduced GP and hospitals visits there will be a saving of £43m in total.

The progress in reducing the levels of smoking is to be commended. However, there must be no complacency and as part of the new Leeds Health & Care Plan the aim is to reduce smoking further to 13% of adults by 2020/21.

The Council will use all possible means to ensure young people do not take up smoking and to provide support to those who wish to quit.

We will continue to work with people throughout Leeds to support the Breathe 2025 campaign to ensure a smoke free generation for the future.

Q17 Councillor D Ragan - Would the Executive Member please update members on the council's recycling campaigns?

A We've delivered a wide programme of communication, engagement and education for residents over the last 18 months to support increased participation in recycling. This has focused on getting the basics right around what can be recycled, as well as trying some more innovative approaches.

Our 'invest to save' campaigns have included working with the private sector to draw in funding and industry expertise. To highlight some of our campaign work:

Our general recycling awareness campaign has provided information to all residents via a range of media to encourage recycling and to clarify what goes in the green bin. This has included the development of on-line tools, and includes the Leeds Bin App which provides notifications of collection days and details of your nearest recycling facility for every kind of material. The App has attracted 19,000 downloads since its launch last year;

Our 'Metal Matters' campaign saw us working with industry partners and securing match funding. While it's early to draw too many conclusion, the initial data indicates the beginnings of an increase in capture of tins, cans and foil in the green bins; In relation to glass, we have worked with M&S and British Glass in and around the Moortown areas to create a case study in the benefits of the industry, the retail sector and the local authority working together. The #RecyclingHero campaign saw new banks introduced at the Moortown M&S store, and resulted in a 12% increase on glass collected within this area of the City.

The innovative 'Green Up' tower block recycling incentive scheme has been running in seven Council multi-storey blocks for the last six months. The block that increases their recycling the most is incentivised with a monthly communal or individual prize. On average, around 25% of residents have signed up and we'll shortly be evaluating the impact of this scheme.

We have also continued our work with school children through our 'Young Recycling Advisor' scheme, and our programme of visits to the Veolia Recycling and Energy Recovery facility at Cross Green and to the Materials Recovery Facility in Beeston where all of our green bin materials are delivered for processing.



For the Autumn we have planned a city-wide campaign to encourage the recycling of paper and cardboard via the green bins, and are also trialling a more intensive locally focused glass recycling campaign to encourage people to use their nearest bottle bank. This will include testing whether the provision of a practical recycling box or bag will help residents make their trip to their local glass recycling facility.

In terms of results, in particular we have seen contamination in the green bins reduce by over 10% in the last 12 months compared to the period preceding this. Also, each tonne of recyclables diverted from the black bin, or contamination removed from the green bin, saves the Council £90-100 per tonne in disposal costs. Although securing recycling behaviour change will only be fully realised over the longer-term, it is encouraging to already see the beginnings of this positive trend in Leeds.

Q18 Councillor B Flynn - Is the Executive Member for Health, Well-being and Adults satisfied with the progress being made on the Leeds Health and Care Plan and the West Yorkshire and Harrogate STP?

A As Chair of the Health and Wellbeing board and Lead Member I'm involved in the development of the Leeds HCPlan. The HWB, after discussion with elected members and the community, has ensured the Plan is a community focused document that delivers the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and keeps the Leeds system focused on tackling health inequalities and improving services for people by building an approach based on integration and services working together and involving people.

There has been a lot of progress over the last year and we now have a strong plan that reflects our approach to intervening early, promoting independence and delivering better services in communities, GP surgeries and hospitals, alongside prevention activities.

We acknowledge the challenges we still have. Our City remains unequal and too many people live in poor health and die too soon from cancer and cardio-vascular problems. These issues are made harder due to pressures from real terms cuts to health and council budgets. Whilst cuts make it harder to achieve our goals they won't stop us trying. The Leeds Plan has been drafted by Leeds partners. It aligns with the STP in many places but is separate in many aspects. It offers a bottom up approach, building from our 13 neighbourhoods and prioritises integration and tackling health inequality.

Q19 Councillor S Bentley - Does the executive member feel that the length of time given in Leeds for pedestrians to cross the road at traffic lights is sufficient, given the recent NHS guidance that traffic lights should be altered so that the green man leaves more time for elderly people, the disabled and parents with prams to cross?

A The timings of traffic signals are set in accordance with established best practice and the advice of the Department for Transport. Whilst we are looking at the new draft



guidelines recently released by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and as reported in the media, it is important to reassure Members that the timings on pedestrian crossings have been regularly examined to ensure that the overall crossing times remain appropriate for the range of pedestrian users. This takes into account both the time which it is safe to start crossing the “green” signal to pedestrian and the clearance time which is either signified by a “red” signal at junctions or the “flashing” green signal on Pelican type crossings. The latter has sometimes caused confusion to pedestrians and is no longer used in new installations. New standards are in place. In this regard it is important to remember that the crossing time comprises two elements; the “green” signal period which signifies it is safe to start a crossing movement and the clearance period during which on most crossings a “red” signal is displayed to the pedestrians which signifies that they should not start to make a crossing. On newer signals the green man is placed on the pushbutton unit so the pedestrian cannot see it during the crossing period which avoids confusion leaving them to concentrate on their journey. Added to this on the latest Puffin type pedestrian crossings there is an option which can be used for extending the crossing period to assist slower moving pedestrians. Where specific issues are identified officers will always investigate the site circumstances and review timings.

Q20 Councillor R Stephenson - In the Council's justification for the East Leeds Orbital Road a reference is made to the East Leeds Transport Plan. When will this plan be published?

A While the ELOR is a major part of the delivery requirements for new housing in the East Leeds Extension we recognise the need for a comprehensive approach to provide for all modes of transport to encourage active travel modes and reduce the reliance on private vehicles as part of this strategic growth area.

There is a developing package of integrated measures to support walking and cycling, public transport improvements and local highway improvements, alongside the delivery of the ELOR, which would target benefits to residents of both new and existing neighbourhoods across East Leeds. The direction of this work has been shared during the public engagement associated with both ELOR and the East Leeds Extension.

These include the provision of new strategic cycle routes, start of work to bring forward a new rail halt and P&R facility at Thorpe Park, improvements to the existing Outer Ring Road and identification of bus route extensions that will deliver greater patronage from the new developments and opportunities to increase service frequencies.

The Council is bringing forward a Development Framework for the East Leeds Extension that will set out planning guidance and delivery co-ordination required from developers as their proposals come forward.

The Development Framework is to be published in its draft form in the Autumn and this will draw together formally the approach to transport and how the Council, WYCA, developers and transport providers will work together to deliver the required outcomes.

For Information:



The East Leeds Transport Strategy is referred to in the “Route Appraisal and Justification Statement” within the ELOR planning application.

Q21 Councillor S Golton - How long does it take on average for work to trees to be carried out following a request from members of public or councillors?

A All enquiries about trees are assessed and where appropriate inspected by a trained tree specialist to determine what, if any, work may be required. This is based on an inspection and risk assessment approach which allocates a category to each tree that defines the timescale applicable for any work that needs to be carried out. This in turn enables priorities to be determined in allocating resources to address issues identified. The main categories and timescales, where applicable, are as follows:

- Category 1: Emergency completed within 24 hours
- Category 2: Urgent completed within 7 working days
- Category 3A: developing risk completed within 6 months
- Category 3B: developing risk completed within 18 months
- Category 4: no unreasonable risks and therefore no mitigation required

The following table provides analysis of typical work carried out in a given year by each category identified above:

Category	Number
1	144
2	238
3A	951
3B	339
4	365
Total	2,037

This therefore means that there are 144 category 1 trees that were responded to within 24 hours and a further 238 category 2 which on average were completed within 7 working days. This leaves 951 category 3A trees and 339 category 3B trees which have target completion times of 6 months and 18 months respectively.

It is important to note that category 1 and 2 work is carried out first, before any lower category works are considered which can mean category 3 and 4 works are rescheduled as a result. Management of these lower category works is therefore based on identified risk in order to ensure that limited resources available are deployed to the maximum effect. In some cases category 3A work in particular may develop into a category 2 risk and therefore work is prioritised accordingly. Given the fluid dynamic of how risks develop on individual trees it is therefore very difficult to assess what might be called an average time to complete work across the whole tree spectrum.

Q22 Councillor G Wilkinson - Will the Executive Board Member for Regeneration, Transport and Planning please tell me why, when two Speed Indication Devices purchased from a developer's contribution were known to be in stock, it still took over 4 months before our street lighting contractors fitted them in Boston Spa High Street?



A This matter has been investigated by the service and regrettably in this instance there was a breakdown in communication between the team involved and the Council's street lighting contractor. It is recognised that this should have been dealt with more promptly and apologies have been offered for this lapse. Once the issue became fully apparent the SID signs were erected on High Street in Boston Spa at the earliest opportunity. I recognise that many of our services are working under considerable pressure and am pleased to say that they have learnt from this and revised communication procedures have been put in place to ensure such a situation does not recur in the future.

Q23 Councillor B Flynn - Can the Executive Member for Resources and Strategy advise me what financial and other support is available from this council for young, elite athletes and sportsmen and women in Leeds?

A The Council provides a wide range of opportunities for young people to be active and get involved in sporting opportunities, this can range from provision of Leisure and wellbeing centres (including the John Charles Centre for Sport), sports pitches and school sport facilities through to working with local clubs and schools. Our focus is predominantly on getting young people to be active but we also provide support for talented athletes working with National Governing Bodies of Sport, such as our Diving and swimming programmes through our Partnerships with Swim England and the City of Leeds Swim Club as well as British Diving and City of Leeds Diving Club. We also support a range of other clubs by providing subsidised facilities e.g. City Of Leeds Athletics Club (at John Charles) as well as working with partners across the city to develop sporting pathways e.g. Leeds Beckett and University of Leeds and British Triathlon to develop the Leeds Triathlon centre.

In addition to this type of investment the following is also available:

- Free access to LCC facilities for training, via the West Yorkshire "STARS" scheme. This is applicable citywide across all 17 city council leisure centres.

- small Individual and club grants available, distributed via the Leeds Sports Federation but funded by the Council.

- Active Leeds development team offer support to identify appropriate external funding opportunities for elite individual athletes and clubs (via NGB's, charities, Yorkshire Sport Foundation etc).

Q24 Councillor B Anderson - Can the Executive Member with responsibility for Planning tell me why the Council do not think it is necessary, in 21st century Leeds and in the interests of improving air quality, to condition every new/redeveloped filling station planning application to provide an electric charging point?

A The Council requires all new major development to address air quality effects arising from that development. This is enshrined in Policy AIR 1 of the adopted Natural Resources and Waste Local Plan 2013. The Policy states:

AIR 1 THE MANAGEMENT OF AIR QUALITY THROUGH DEVELOPMENT



All applications for major development will be required to incorporate low emission measures to ensure that the overall impact of proposals on air quality (including unpleasant odours) is mitigated.

Whilst this policy is not a specific requirement for electric vehicle charging points (EVCPs), EVCPs do provide an effective mechanism for addressing the policy requirement. Having regard to the Government's emphasis on viability and deliverability, the wording of the policy is intended to give developers flexibility on how they choose to meet the requirement to mitigate air quality impacts.

This policy applies across the whole of the Leeds district and Leeds City Council Environmental Health Officers are consultees on the proposed mitigation measures and advise whether or not the proposed measures are adequate. They consider the impact of air pollution from the proposed development and assess the effect of the existing air quality climate on the proposed development, thereby ensuring that any cumulative effect that could significantly impact on a development site is identified.

In December 2015 Leeds City Council's Executive Board endorsed the West Yorkshire Low Emissions Strategy including the West Yorkshire Air Quality & Planning Technical Guide which provides guidance to developers on how they can reduce air quality impacts arising from their development. This guidance can be used to provide advice to developers on the measures they can use to provide the mitigation required by Policy AIR 1.

The Council's Parking SPD includes a recommended provision of 1 charging point per unit for dwellings with dedicated parking and 1 charging point per 10 spaces for unallocated parking. Following consultation on the Issues and Options for the Core Strategy Review the Council are considering providing a specific EVCP Policy in the Core Strategy Review which would make the requirement in the SPD mandatory. The Council is currently collecting evidence and assessing the viability for the inclusion of such an EVCP policy in the Core Strategy Review.

Q25 Councillor B Anderson - Will the Leader of Council advise how long she thinks is acceptable for an officer to respond to an elected member's enquiry or question?

A There is currently no Council wide process in place for responding to member enquiries and therefore no written rules on response timescales. Departments such as Housing and Waste Management (who receive larger volumes of member contact) have internal process of acknowledging contact within 1 working day and responding within 10 working days. Formal complaints received from members are responded to in line with the standard complaints timescales of 3 working days for an acknowledgement and 15 working days for a response. It is intended however that as part of the broader Customer Relations service review, member contact will be reviewed and a process agreed to ensure consistency across the Council.

In terms of broader member/officer relationships, as a Council it is vital that these relationships function professionally and in line with the agreed codes of conduct and protocols that have been established. It is clear that on the whole this is what happens, and members and officers across the council live up to the very high standards of personal conduct demanded of them.



All officers in the council are expected to abide by the code of conduct for council employees and any breach of the code of conduct can lead to disciplinary action. The protocol on member/officer relations has also been produced to guide Members and officers of the Council in their relations with one another in such a way as to ensure the smooth running of the Council and to foster good working relationships.

This includes protocol for officers in using and sharing information appropriately and dealing with the public, councillors and other employees sympathetically, efficiently and without bias. If Councillor Anderson feels that officers have not conducted themselves in line with the code of conduct or protocol on member/officer relations then it could be deemed appropriate to follow the procedures outlined in the protocol to rectify the concern.

Q26 Councillor B Anderson - Will the Executive member with responsibility for Health, Wellbeing and Adults please advise members of Council why it took her until 7th September to advise Ward members of the Pharmacy Needs Assessment and the public consultation when the consultation started on 25th August?

A Developing the next Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment is the statutory responsibility of the Leeds Health & Well-being Board. The process has now begun with the intention of publication by the end of March 2018. A draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment will go out for a 60 day consultation following the agreement of the Health & Well-being Board in November 2017. In the meantime at the request of the Executive member for Health, Well Being and Adults, ward members have been given an early opportunity to provide local intelligence and contribute to the community survey, the results of which will be used to compile the draft Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment. Ward members will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment during the 60 day consultation planned for after the November Health & Wellbeing Board meeting.

Q27 Councillor B Anderson - Does the Executive member with responsibility for Trees agree that there is a problem in providing adequate resources to the team who deal with requests for tree maintenance where they are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order or they are in a conservation area?

A "Applications for tree works where trees are located in Conservation Areas or are subject to a Tree Preservation Order are dealt with by the Tree Officers within the Planning service. Along with other requests for tree advice and protection these are prioritised with clearly identified response standards. Currently the service is experiencing long term sickness absence which is impacting on capacity and service managers are seeking to address this."

Q28 Councillor C Anderson - Will the Executive Member responsible for Regeneration, Transport and Planning condemn the recent strikes by Northern Rail for two days on 1st and 4th September?

A Industrial action which inconveniences the public is always a matter of regret. It is disappointing that the current round of rail strikes is taking place and the unions and Northern Management have not managed to reach a resolution to their differences.



Our priority is to have a well managed public transport system which is efficient and in which both the travelling public and the staff themselves can have confidence. The Council would like to see the parties involved in this dispute redouble their efforts to quickly find the resolution that will end the disruption and allow services to return to normal and allow a return to the focus of providing the class leading rail services we all aspire to.

Q29 Councillor R Stephenson - Will the Leader of Council join me in giving support to the NFU's Back British Farming Day today?

A The Leeds countryside is one of the city's greatest assets and ensuring that the city remains one of the greenest and most attractive places to live in Europe is an important part of the council's ambition. Farming is also an important part of the Leeds economy and has a very proud history in many of our wards. Agriculture employs over 800 people in Leeds and the wider food and drink industry more than 3,500. As a council we are also proud to support initiatives such as Leeds Indie Food which showcases some of the best quality produce from local farming.

Supporting the NFU's Back British Farming Day is a great way to show our support as a council to our local farming communities and an opportunity to celebrate our area's natural beauty, and Members and colleagues should be encouraged to lend their support as Councillor Stephenson suggests.

Q30 Councillor B Anderson - Will the Executive member with responsibility for the Environment please consider instructing our Tree Officers to have some leeway in allowing our constituents' lives to be made brighter where they are suffering from overhanging trees making their lives a misery, all over the city?

A Resources are allocated on an inspection and risk assessment approach which allocates a category to each tree that defines the timescale applicable for any work that might be appropriate. This in turn enables priorities to be determined in allocating resources to address any issues identified. The main categories and timescales, where applicable, are as follows:

Category 1: Emergency completed within 24 hours
Category 2: Urgent completed within 7 working days
Category 3A: developing risk completed within 6 months
Category 3B: developing risk completed within 18 months
Category 4A: trees affecting health and wellbeing
Category 4B: trees affecting quality of life
Category 4: no unreasonable risks and therefore no mitigation required

Category 4A and 4B was originally introduced in April 2014 in response to concerns raised by council housing tenants that some trees in their gardens caused extreme shade or interference with TV/satellite signal that could pose a risk to health, wellbeing and quality of life. A decision was therefore taken to allocate £160k from the housing revenue account to address these issues under specified circumstances and subject to consultation with other residents that may be affected.

A report to the council's executive board in June 2016 approved a mechanism whereby the council can approve works on category 4A and 4B trees provided that the



interested party is prepared to fund all associated work. The criteria applied is the same as that used for trees in council house gardens and can enable private residents, local businesses or other organisations to pay for work should the issue be of sufficient concern.

Q31 Councillor M Robinson - Tom Forth, of ODI Leeds, discussed transport in the North of England recently and said on BBC News (22/8/17) "if I look at the data... I can tell you what the top priorities are, it's boring things like bus regulation ...cheaper ways to take the bus between local centres". With this in mind what is the administration doing to tackle these problems and help people who are not served by a good, local public transport system?

A I am grateful for this question because in many ways it sums up one of the main outcomes from the recent Transport Conversation in the city, relating to the £174m Leeds Project Transport Investment Programme; that is to say, the importance of bus services and the urgent need for significant improvements to be made to the level of service. To that end, the City Council is working with the Combined Authority and transport operators to develop a comprehensive package of investment in the public transport infrastructure, development of the bus services offer and major investment in new buses. This major programme complements the significant programmes already in place through the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund to invest in the wider and rail infrastructure through major schemes such as East Leeds Link Road, new rail stations and planned improvements to key transport hubs in the district alongside the wider investment in maintenance and improving traffic management, in urban traffic management control and traffic information systems.

Working in partnership with the major bus operators over the next four years the public transport programme will provide the real physical and service improvements needed in Leeds to realise the ambition of Bus Strategy by bringing real and tangible change to the experience of bus use across the city; this will include rethinking local services, with a headline target of transforming the public perception against a headline target of doubling bus patronage over the next ten years. The package includes a further expansion of park and ride provision at the successful Elland Road site (M621 West), a new site to the north of the city and a new site at Stourton adjacent to the M621 East which will complement the early success of the Elland Road and Temple Green site on the M1. The progression of work on three new rail stations, two of which include park and ride and investments to improve public access to three existing stations is also planned alongside the wider West Yorkshire programme for station access and parking improvements.

Q32 Councillor C Anderson - Will the Exec member for Health, Wellbeing and Adults please advise me of any safeguarding issues of any residents who moved from The Green to other residential homes, whilst they have been in their new setting?

A There have been two reported safeguarding incidents regarding ex-residents of the Green while in their new placements. A thorough review of the two incidents has been undertaken.



It is worth noting that as a city, we encourage the reporting of safeguarding alerts, as this provides an opportunity to ensure that people are safe and are being cared for in environments that are safe. The purpose of a safeguarding enquiry, which is the process that follows the receipt of an alert is to ensure people are as safe as they can be, that their outcomes are met, and if necessary that changes are made to the care being provided to ensure that the lessons are learned. Often when a safeguarding alert is looked into, it transpires that there was no abuse or fault in the care being provided. Every enquiry is used as an opportunity to review care and learn any lessons from the process, even when there has been no abuse or deliberate harm.

With regards to the two incidents that have been reported and investigated into the two ex-residents of the Green the safeguarding process established that there was no abuse or fault in the care provided.

It is not possible to provide any more information regarding these incidents as they may identify the resident of their family.

Q33 Councillor C Anderson - Will the Exec member with responsibility for Regeneration, Transport and Planning please tell me why there have been a number of phantom road closures in the city of late, where signs are up showing roads are closed when in fact they are not closed and free movement up and down those roads is unimpeded with no road works or other disturbance taking place?

A Leeds City Council receives in excess of 25,000 requests to work on the public highway each year, providing a challenge for our Network Management team to coordinate these works, whilst balancing the aspirations of the city in terms of economic growth and minimising the disruption to the travelling public. As part of the coordination of the network, a permit scheme is in operation for traffic sensitive roads within the City (approximately 30% of the total road network length of Leeds) where a works promoter (internal and external) must request to book road space and specify conditions to work.

The aggregate impact of different works are assessed and programmed to meet the needs of the various promoters to deliver their schemes on time, on budget, along with the increasing number of events taking place throughout the City. The permit scheme has ensured that we have a greater certainty who is working where and for how long, and all works are now published from our Streetworks register on www.roadworks.org, including road closures.

We are not aware of any the “phantom road closures” referred to. I would be grateful if Councillor Anderson could please provide any location details where these have been experienced within the city to allow officers to investigate the situation. I would anticipate that the signage may relate to road closures taking place within the city overnight to minimise disruption, however contractors should be ensuring that signage is not visible and turned around whilst the closure is not in operation during the day.



Q34 Councillor M Robinson - An increasing number of residents in the Harewood ward are reporting problems with the existing drainage network being inadequate. Will the Executive Board member please commit to reviewing the drainage network across the City and send a report to each Community Committee about the problems, planned works and areas of concerns in their respective areas?

A Across the city we have over 146,000 drainage gullies, the vast majority of these are connected to the public sewer system managed and maintained by Yorkshire water.

In July 2016 a two year programme to visit and clean, where ever possible, every gully in Leeds was started.

Following the transfer of the service to Highways and Transportation in the Summer we have continued this work and will be reporting progress in the quarterly Highway Maintenance bulletin to each of the Community Committees. This will include the number of gullies cleansed, the number that was found to be blocked or damaged, and the number that could not be cleaned due to the presence of parked cars or significant traffic management is required. For information gully cleansing work for the Harewood, and Adel and Wharfedale wards is due to commence in early October.

In the last couple of weeks we have experienced some very intense but thankfully short periods of rainfall. Nevertheless, these have led to a number of flooding issues being reported to us. Each of these reports will be followed up in order to understand why the flooding occurred and if there is anything we could do to prevent a re-occurrence. All investigatory work is prioritised, the highest priority being given to locations where there has been internal property flooding.

In addition to this work we have been granted £315k of funding through the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) to tackle some long standing highway flooding issues; and a further £420k has been secured from the Challenge Tranche 2A, to help tackle repairs to gullies on the Key Route Network which fall within the 30 year flood plan.

Unfortunately the city council is not the drainage authority for the area, and whilst I have the greatest sympathy for any of the citizens of Leeds who suffer a property flooding incident, or have to take an alternative route to avoid a flooded highway, any major review of the drainage network would have to be undertaken by Yorkshire Water.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Tomkinson
Principal Governance Officer



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