

**London Borough of Sutton  
Council: 7 March 2016  
Questions from Councillors  
Under Standing Order 8.6**

**1. Question asked by Councillor Graham Whitham to Councillor Simon Wales, Lead for Finance and Voluntary Sector**

Recognising the success of the road and pavement improvements outside Sutton railway station which have led to improved traffic flows; better located bus stops; recognised delivery van parking allocation, reducing road blockage by such vehicles and enhanced footpaths for pedestrians, would the lead member please indicate what provision will be made to introduce a 'way board' at the station for new visitors to the town, so they are able to locate their whereabouts and identify the facilities on offer?

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

Thank you Mr Mayor, and thank you Councillor Whitham for your comments and your question. The Sutton Station 'Interlith' as Transport for London (TfL) affectionately call them was installed on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February. This was the final piece of Legible London signage in Sutton town centre that have been installed over the past few months.

As we all know, Legible London is an easy-to-use signage system that presents information in a range of ways, including maps and directional information to help people find their way. The sign at Sutton Station, and elsewhere in the town centre, will make it easier for pedestrians to navigate their way from Sutton Station to the High Street and vice versa.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Graham Whitham**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank Councillor Wales for his response. Are there any other facilities that he thinks could usefully be incorporated or brought forward to enable the great success that this project is, to give even further information and make life easier both for residents and visitors to the borough?

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

Yes thank you, one of the early things we identified in the course of the project was that where people previously could get say the 470 or the 80 bus to different destinations, splitting the bus stops has meant that sometimes they have to cross the road. To counteract that, we've been talking with Southern Railway about installing countdown indicator boards within the station concourse so you'll know precisely which bus stop to go to, to get your train and we think this will be the final link in the information process to enable people to get to where they need to go.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:  
Councillors Questions  
7 March 2016**

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Richard Clifton**

Could I just ask this, I think that the Legible London signs with these maps, I think are a tremendous design innovation, you see them all over London now, and I was going to ask, would there be any mileage in all of us as councillors inviting our residents to nominate other places in Sutton where these signs could usefully be put? And you know, perhaps draw up a list and then see if there's some way of generating the funding to put these signs in?

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

I think there's a lot of merit in Councillor Clifton's suggestions. The ones that have gone in are virtually all in the town centre itself and they were discussed and the locations of them were discussed at the Sutton Local Committee. So if other local committees feel the need for signage directing people around their area then please approach through the council TfL for funding for them, these have all been funded by TfL through the station gateway scheme which came in with no cost to the council and on budget for the money we were spending. So it is TfL who fund them so we need to approach them for the funding.

**2. Question asked by Councillor Moira Butt to Councillor Jill Whitehead,  
Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee**

What procedures are you following to notify Mobile Library Staff when the decision was taken on 4th February at the E & N Meeting "To withdraw the Mobile Library service from 1 April 2016" relating to their future with Sutton Council?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

Thank you for your question. Due process was followed. Staff directly affected were notified in writing of the Committee decision taken on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and relevant trade unions were also notified.

A 30 day workforce consultation process is in progress for those staff directly affected by the closure of the Mobile Library Service. Feedback is sought on the proposals and a full offer of support through the process has been made, including the opportunity for one to one meetings.

Assimilation into other posts within the service area and expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy are all given due consideration.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Moira Butt**

Thank you Mr Mayor. I was a bit ashamed when I spoke to them on 29<sup>th</sup> February that they hadn't heard anything. I know you were saying about the consultation is going ahead but 25 days on after the meeting and they hadn't heard anything is

not good enough, you know, they work in this building, they could have got an answer from this building. Why not?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

I will seek an answer for you and responded outside of the meeting.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey**

What steps are going to be taken to contact people with reduced mobility who use the service to help them get access to books? Thank you.

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

We've already introduced the Housebound Service which is an enhanced service to elderly people who are in remote areas and to care homes and sheltered housing accommodation. We've already had a lot of people who've contacted us, wanting to be part of the service and they will be assessed to make sure that they are suitable for the service. So a lot of people have already contacted us and if you know of anyone in your ward that wants such a service then do let us know and we will see if they are suitable and meet the criteria.

**3. Question asked by Councillor Holly Ramsey to Councillor Jill Whitehead, Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee**

How much did the council's love food hate waste 'big freeze' exercise that took place in Sutton high street cost?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

The total cost of hosting the Big Freeze event was £4,950.

This formed part of our food waste minimisation campaign which is funded from our successful bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Holly Ramsey**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Considering only six people participated in the Big Freeze exercise, does Councillor Whitehead honestly and genuinely believe that spending £5000 of tax payers money was the right thing to do?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

Councillor Ramsey refers to a separate consultation, we actually had the Big Freeze tent up in Sutton High Street and various councillors including people on the front bench here all took their lunch time off to go and attend the Big Freeze event. This formed part of the Wrap charity scheme across the country and in fact we were lucky to follow in from ten other cities that had already taken the Big

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:  
Councillors Questions  
7 March 2016**

Freeze and these were Manchester, Belfast, Glasgow, Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle and Cardiff. So we were up there with the big cities of the United Kingdom. And in addition the London Waste and Recycling Board agreed the reduction of food waste as a campaign right across all London Boroughs for 2015-16 and this included boroughs run by different political parties. And I would just add on food waste minimisation that the South London Waste Partnership will be introducing weekly food waste collections across all four boroughs from next year or so, but food can be used in interesting ways to prevent it being wasted as the Big Freeze event proved. So it wasn't just the survey that you're referring to, the people who took the diary, we actually had the event in Sutton High Street and we had a lot of visitors which councillors who attended it will know, and we got a lot of useful information from it.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Tim Crowley**

Thank you Mr Mayor. Does the councillor realise that £4950 divided by six is £825 per person, I presume you do because I've just done the maths myself. And the other thing is, could you tell me if it was raining on the days that you had the big tent up in Sutton and the reason people went in there was because to get out of the rain rather than anything else, because I'm asking, let me finish, that I find it somewhat patronising to have to tell people how to do things with food. Did Councillor Whitehead have a grandmother who did not have a fridge and what did they do with it then?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

Actually I find it rather patronising being asked whether I can add up because I think I can add up. And in fact it wasn't raining on the day we had the big freeze event as my councillor colleagues will attest, it was actually fine and dry. And as for my grandmother, she's not here to answer that question.

**4. Question asked by Councillor Neil Garratt to Councillor Jill Whitehead, Chair of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee**

Regarding the One Planet Sutton goal of increasing the proportion of council staff travelling to work by sustainable means of transport, could the lead member explain a) what progress has been made on this so far, and b) whether she considers the current target ambitious?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

In 2011, 42% of Sutton staff travelled to work using sustainable modes of transport, which increased to 46.4% in 2013. In last year's staff travel survey, that's 2015 for Councillor Crowley's benefit, 50% of staff travelled to work using bus, train, walking or cycling modes. The target for 2017 is 52.5% which is ambitious but we are working hard to achieve it.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Neil Garratt**

The problem is we were at 54% when we started in 2009 so we've gone backwards, we're doing worse than when we started and we've lowered the target. We've failed to even hit that target and we're declaring it a success. I mean, honestly, does Councillor Whitehead think that people would have more respect for the One Planet Sutton process if the administration were just slightly more honest about how they're really doing against the targets?

**Reply by Councillor Jill Whitehead**

Councillor Garratt might be aware or maybe he's not aware that we introduced a sustainable transport strategy at E&N last year. And the purpose of that was to encourage greater use of public transport and to encourage the Crossrail, the Tram and the Overground to come to Sutton and improve bus services. Not only that but we've been working a lot on travel plans, not just school travel plans but travel to work plans. And Sutton Council is just one of those businesses in Sutton that is looking at travel to work plans. So all organisations in Sutton are required, for example, when a planning application comes to committee for school expansions, to look at how public transport can be used in a better and more enhanced way.

**5. Question asked by Councillor Tony Shields to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy and Business Committee**

The Market Traders at the north end of Sutton have been without electricity supply since before last Christmas.

Does this council understand the difficulties and loss of business experienced by traders, does this council not feel shame that traders are now actually running petrol generators and can it give an explanation why electrical supply has not been restored in a prompt and competent manner and when exactly works to fix the problem were ordered?

**Reply by Councillor Jayne McCoy**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Shields for your question. The council does indeed understand the difficulties experienced by businesses and traders and as a result has dedicated a large amount of its Opportunity Sutton resources to providing support, advice and help to small businesses in the borough.

I need to clarify that the electricity supply does not form part of the street trading licence paid for by the market traders in question. And what happened was that the electricity connection points were tested and found to be faulty due to water ingress and condensation and as a result the decision was taken by the Highways department to permanently disconnect the supply points and have them sealed.

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:  
Councillors Questions  
7 March 2016**

As an interim measure the Highways Department are assessing the suitability of using the existing feeder pillars to supply the markets traders with electricity, but this is at the Council's discretion and not part of the paid for service.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor Tony Shields**

Councillor McCoy thank you for your answer, but it is exactly the same answer I've been getting from Opportunity Sutton the High Street Manager etc. etc. I am a qualified electrician, I know what needs to be done in the high street, it is a very small amount of work to put the correct output boxes to prevent ingress of moisture. It is so frustrating, the market traders are low take people, they don't earn a lot of money, they rely on the electricity supply. From the days of yore the market has been an issue in Sutton. Sorry if I'm a bit long about this Mr Mayor but this is a basic simple plea to help the most, I can't say bottom end, but the cheapest traders going, are getting a computer says no attitude from this council. I'm, as a councillor, taking it up, I'm getting the computer says no attitude. I know almost nothing needs to be done to make this job right and to stop them running generators in the high street. My question is, somewhat out of frustration so would you please work with me, would you please use my expertise to get something sorted out for an electrical supply in the high street because these are just traders, they are not making a political point and they are not being listened to by a high street manager that doesn't listen? Can you help, can you allow me to help you?

**Reply by Councillor Jayne McCoy**

Thank you. I believe, Councillor Shields, you used to work in the fire service and you'll understand the health and safety issues here. There was a serious incident and I think prompted this. And our highways team have looked at this and these are not fit for purpose, they have to be stopped. The decision's been made and I don't know the background but what I do know is that one, it's the issue of whether it's essential for these traders. The traders are using it to play music, I think it was one or two traders using it to play music and to make some hot beverages, and not all the traders need the electricity. However we do know that a permanent solution is being sought by the highways department, they've asked for two quotes to replace the electricity supply. You say you know what needs doing, maybe you've submitted a quote, I don't know. But the council will need to carefully consider the costs before undertaking the work because as I say it's not covered by the traders licence, it's not a requirement. We're trying to do the best for them but as I say, times are tight and we have to look at the costs involved and the necessity of that supply. Thank you.

**6. Question asked by Councillor David Hicks to Councillor Simon Wales,  
Lead for Finance and Voluntary Sector**

The recent press release about the Youth Service highlights the point that non-statutory services are being cut.

It is clear that the administration has reviewed all non-statutory services to establish possible cost savings, following its previous announcements on budgetary management. Will Cllr Wales please provide a list of all non-statutory services and the amount spent on them, in descending order of cost?

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Hicks for your question. The administration is in the process of reviewing all services as part of the need to find savings across the council. This is an ongoing process and looks at a number of things when a service area undergoes a review. This includes whether it is a statutory service or not, and at what level would a minimum requirement be set at. However other factors such as whether a service is delivering intended outcomes and whether those outcomes could be achieved in a more cost effective way are also very important. There is no such list in the way that you describe but I would be happy to ask officers to produce something along those lines for you if you wish.

**Supplementary Question asked by Councillor David Hicks**

Could I just thank Councillor Wales for answering what would have been a very lengthy response and I look forward to receiving the list in due course. I welcome the fact also that part of the review is to look at the effectiveness of the services being considered and what they actually deliver to the public. Once we receive the list I think we would welcome the opportunity of discussing in public how those findings were arrived at. Thank you.

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

Yes, we are very much aware of the need to focus on outcomes to produce the right results and part of the commissioning process is to move into outcomes based or even asset based commissioning to make sure that we are generating the right results and the right savings and still producing targeted and focused services to residents. There is actually, I could have gone through the whole thing but there's a 4500 line spreadsheet issued by the Local Government Association (LGA), how much time have we got, half an hour left haven't we, showing where local authorities have a power, a duty of where that service is discretionary. And this ranges from abandoned shopping trolleys to zoos, I'll cut out everything else in between. So I shall get that and we can talk through the numbers in due course.

(**Note:** As Councillor McManus was not in attendance at the meeting the following written response was given after the meeting.)

**7. Question asked by Councillor Patrick McManus to Councillor Simon Wales, Deputy Leader of the Council**

Why was the wide CCTV mast at the intersection of Mulgrave Road and Brighton Road positioned through the first concrete slab of the multilevel traffic island,

**Appendix B to Council Minutes:  
Councillors Questions  
7 March 2016**

hence presenting a perilous obstruction in the field of vision of drivers attempting to turn on to Brighton Road? I ask this since there is an identical concrete slab to the immediate rear which would provide significantly more sagacious sanctuary for said mast.

**Reply by Councillor Simon Wales**

The location of the camera column was agreed through the Station Gateway Project Board, after advice from a specialist public realm consultant. The column allows the public Space CCTV camera mounted on it to function effectively and was fully assessed through the safety audit for the Station Gateway project. There have been no other concerns formally expressed about the location of the column, however the Council will keep this under review.