1. **Question asked by Wendy Clark to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee**

The council has stated that most of their budget is now allocated to care for the elderly and disabled.

Given that a high number of disabled and elderly are cared for by friends and family, who attend for anything between a few minutes to several days, and that these people relieve the Council of any further financial support, how are the council going to ensure a parking space is available where and when it is needed by these carers?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

Thank you, I think it's important to start by noting that the Council cannot ensure that parking space is available where and when it's needed because all road users have different requirements and there is simply too many cars for the amount of spaces we have on the road.

In areas where we don't have parking controls, as its common practice everywhere, it works on a first come first served basis and that will continue to be the case. And in areas where you have parking controls, like a CPZ, the Council offers is obviously restricted to Permit Holders but you also have Care Permits so we have two different types of Care Permits. All the details are on the Council Website, and we've made sure we keep them quite low because we know the important work that Carers do for their loved ones and for residents.

So if you had in mind a specific suggestion or there's more to that question I am more than happy to hear it and to consider it.

**Supplementary question asked by Wendy Clarke**

I am aware that permits are available but they do not address the problem because they are restricted for 3 hours in a bay that is not guaranteed. What response will you give if I suggest that it would be more prudent for the Carers to have access to parking similar to the Blue Badge Scheme but being restricted to the address of the person in the care?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

We would have to look at the details but I'm more than happy to have a conversation and look. I know when we met with Miss Ackland we did discuss different options with Councillor
Dombey and myself so I think it premature to make announcements in this forum without looking at the detail but we can certainly sit down and look at options.

**Supplementary question asked by Councillor Nick Mattey**

As much as we can have toing and froing, the rights the wrongs, the bays... The Carers are absolutely are primo important, you touched upon it, you could have gone a bit further, and I hope I know you will, you said you can look at the Carers Permits.

When Carers Permits are issued, they’re issued just to the specific road where the person receiving care lives. In the case of St. Helier Estate, there are some of the little places, I think, only have about four parking spaces anyway, so the chances of getting a bay in a restricted road for a specific carer are scant and far away.

You said you would look at the detail, I am offering your my time and service to look at the detail with you so we can get this right. Will you take me up on the offer to try and get the Carers Permit System sorted for the people that are doing a wonderful service for our residents?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

Yes.

2. **Question asked by Colin Keene to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee**

In the official written reply to a question accepted, but unable to be heard at the Council meeting on 28 January, Councillor Abellan stated that, at Stage 3 all residents will be provided with a more in-depth design for their street and will have the opportunity to consider formally the revised proposals and either accept or reject them, yet at the Scrutiny Meeting on 6 February he stated that a street-by-street 'referendum' would be out of the question - so what WILL be the precise process at Stage 3 and how will it be communicated to the residents?

**Reply by Councillor Abellan**

Thank you Mr Keene for your question and for the recent exchanges of emails over the past couple of weeks.

The Stage 3 process is essentially the statutory consultation that is required by law. It has a bit of a prescriptive format that happens in the world of traffic engineers but, at that stage, residents will have the opportunity to look at more, potentially an amended version, after looking at the results of the recent consultation and look at an even more in-depth design for the road, and then they will be able to respond in a similar way to the previous two consultations whether they support or reject the proposals. I believe that it has to be done in
writing, and it will be done online mostly, it’s just the normal format that we use for those consultations.

And just to touch on another point from your question, what I meant on scrutiny was that whilst we are consulting on a road by road basis, we really need to be careful to balance between making sure that as much as possible, we deliver what each road wants but have a strategic view as well of each scheme and each area.

What I wouldn't want to have, is a sort of ‘each road decides their own’ scheme and then you have a mis-match of different schemes and it would be very difficult to administer that, so I think it needs to be a balance of common sense using the expertise from our engineers and then look at the results from the consultation.

**Supplementary question asked by Mr Keene**

Yes, I am slightly re-assured when I hear that Councillor Abellan.

What I would like to know is, can you give us some time frames? Could you be a little more precise on how that Stage 3 consultation will actually occur, and the manner in which replies will actually be considered? Possibly will you accept, say a representative from a particular street, to cut down on numbers of replies?

I happen to live in a street where we are very close people. We've known one another for many years. I am sure one or two of us would only be too pleased to act for that street to cut down on time. We are all living in a state of limbo and I think the clock is quite important to us and we're rather concerned that something might just slip under the radar and we will be lumbered with something that nobody really wanted.

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

Sure, the normal way a statutory consultation of this nature would work is that I believe there has to be a notice in the local papers and there are notices on the lamp posts and sometimes letters to residents. Then I think its 21 days that the consultation lasts.

What we are quite keen to do is to have an engagement plan in the lead-up to that so that we do a bit more - it's what we've done since the start of the processes: do more than what's required, so make sure that we have a solid communications plan so that as many people as possible are aware that there is consultation and they just don't have to look at a lamp post.

We’re going to look at many other things that we’ve done in the last 12 months from maybe additional leaflets, extra letters, using the press, using drop-in public meetings, so on and so forth.

Timing: it's always been the end of March but what I think the point I would like to stress is: that for me, the most important thing is that we get it right, and that we don't want to rush anything and then realise later that it wasn't a good scheme. So if it means that we need to
take a tiny bit more time to make sure that we engage with more people and we discuss it with more residents and we digest it properly and make the necessary changes, we will do that.

We don't want to rush it and if I think there is a bit more flexibility then maybe some residents think, in terms of when we’re going to do the formal consultation, we’re not talking three or four months extra, but you know a few weeks could be... we could look at that.

I am quite keen to give everyone the chance to respond themselves. I think it's important that each individual has - it doesn't take that long. I think we would like to encourage everyone to respond and give their views so I would be more inclined to leaving it open as possible but if you have specific ideas in mind in terms of what you meant by one representative doing it on behalf of someone else, I guess if you were to write that within the consultation response that would be taken as a response for another resident I guess. I don't know - we are more than happy to look at that in more detail as well.

Reply by Mr Keene

Could you just briefly say when we are likely to see the new plan for a particular street - say ours for instance?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

Sure, we haven't seen the results yet, so the process will probably be: I will see the results, then colleagues will see the results, then we are going to brief ward Members over the affected wards, then we will have a communications plan - I would imagine in the next 4 to 6 weeks.

I know it's a bit stressful because we’re in between two consultations but there is a lot of work being done by our officers to make sure that we look at the responses from residents and make any necessary changes in areas where we need to - then present something that we have to also continue the consultation and the conversations with the residents. Presenting something that we are comfortable with as close as possible to what residents want.

Supplementary question asked by Councillor Jillian Green

Thank you Mr. Mayor. Councillor Abellan, you said very early on in your response that it's mainly done online. I think most of the people here that sit on committees with me know I am extremely concerned about those that do not have access to computers, especially the elderly. How are you going to address this problem?

It's a constant problem that comes up and it concerns me so much. So how do you envisage getting all this parking information from people that don't have computers? Thank you.

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan
Thank you, I think you raise a very good point and it's a point that you have made at different meetings and I think I am still waiting for a couple of your suggestions as well.

We will accept written responses as we have with previous consultations, I think we will need to try and reach out to those more vulnerable residents using as many different channels as we can - that’s why I think leaflet dropping and letters is probably the best way.

But we often rely on residents telling other residents and working with key community activists and key community leaders to spread the word and that's why the work that the Facebook group and other residents have put in has been quite useful. We don't always agree on some of the issues, but what we all agree on is that if we can spread the word so that people have a say we will do that. Again, if you have ideas, send them my way and we can discuss them.

3. Question asked by Charlie Mansell to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

The current Council Parking consultation had led to an interesting public debate over a range of issues including:

- Formal types of consultation that could operate
- Level of publicity for early stages of this process
- Applicability of purdah during single ward by-elections
- Scheduling and length of consultation periods
- Council engagement with residents through more fully utilising its various types of meetings
- Choice of venues the Council uses for meetings
- Utilising Council Meeting amendments to give an update on the current position in a consultation process

As a result of that debate the simple question to pose here is what lessons has the Council learned from its current Parking consultation as to how it engages residents on this issue in future?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

Yes, we have learned some lessons and we’re continuing to learn some lessons from the exercise and we are very keen to incorporate those lessons into future consultations on parking and other consultations as well.

I think some of the points your make are probably for officers and other Councillors, in terms of for example, choice of venues so on, but I on that one I agree the last venue was probably not the most adequate.
In terms of some of the lessons we've learned, I think things like the website is something we've been discussing - making sure that, for example, simple things like having no glitches when you're looking for a road, that those are checked before hand seems like an obvious one.

I think we can definitely improve the frequently asked questions (FQAs). There was some discussion on maybe adding a bit more detail in terms of the explanation of different schemes and how they work, which I accept. Things like a couple of more descriptions on the sheets when you are just about to download your map for your road would be helpful…

Again, more engagement, and early, on social media, can help in terms of the length of consultations. We can probably do a bit better at maybe keeping residents updated in between the first informal consultation and the second one - I think that is something that we agree, that maybe there was a bit too much of a gap in between the two.

I would be pushing for keeping the length of the second informal consultation as long as it was after we extended it, so giving residents a bit more time - which I think was appreciated. Many more lessons, but these are some of the lessons, just to give you a bit of a flavour of the discussions we've had in the last couple of weeks.

**Supplementary question asked by Mr Mansell**

I would like to thank Councillor Abellan for his response, and I would also like to thank Mr Mayor for your very helpful update on the purdah rules for by-elections because of course I was a bit worried from the previous one, that the whole of Brexit could be delayed by a parliamentary by-election.

What I wanted to ask and this is really my chance to try and get a second Labour comment in Councillor McCoy's blog, is to ask Councillor Abellan -

Would he consider the following good practice in future:

- obviously defining things as pre-consultation rather than consultation,
- a 75% response rate from rose before someone proceeds rather than 12% response rates,
- a plain English guide to CPZ operation, and
- a Council Facebook page on CPZs that the Council sets up rather than having to force residents to actually create their own Facebook group?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

Yes, just picking up on the points you made, I think the Council Facebook page idea is exactly what I meant by earlier engagement and more engagement on social media it's definitely something we've discussed.

The guide on the CPZ yes, that's exactly what I meant by more details online and in other forms about the types of schemes. I have looked at the schemes for hours and hours like
many others and we still have sometimes some questions so I can understand how for other people, that don't look at it in as much detail as we do, they can be confusing.

The main pre-consultation I spoke to officers about that and we had an interesting conversation. I'm not sure I think an informal consultation... a consultation is a consultation... I think the term pre-consultation was not the right one if you're consulting already so I'm not sure if would agree on that one.

75% response rate - I think the Brexit vote was the biggest democratic exercise we've had in our generation, at least we got a turn out of 72%, so I think you’re quite ambitious if you think were going to get 75% of people responding on a very exciting parking consultation. From speaking to officers we've never had anything more than 20% on consultations on this scale, and I think it would cost a lot of money to get to that point. It's more being comfortable that we have a good enough sample that the margin of error is correct and the statistical reliability bit is important so more than actual numbers. I think it's just the quality of the substance and feeling comfortable that the proposal is a good one so yeah... Do if you have a magical formula to get to 75% please share it.

Supplementary question asked by Councillor Tim Crowley

Thank you Mr Mayor and thank you Councillor Abellan. Touching on the answer to this and also to the previous question, you mentioned about the extending consultations and when they’re going to come in and when they’re not not coming in.

There seems to be an element of confusion in regards to the consultation that were in now going into Stage 3 and it's being said by various of your colleagues on social media sites that it has already been agreed to extend that into May, and that's being said on Facebook and on Twitter and other various media outlets.

Can you now confirm that, because Members on this side have not been informed of that, or is that just something that you’re hoping to do rather than is actually happening?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

I haven't seen those comments so I can't comment on those specifics.

What we are keen to do is give ourselves enough flexibility to consult residents properly in the run up to the Stage 3 consultation and we want to leave ourselves a bit of flexibility too if we need to take a bit more time to do so.

We have been asked by many, many people to either stop it or pause it or and so I think giving ourselves a bit more room to manoeuvre is good and it means that it's our intention to continue to engage, as opposed to passing something quickly behind closed doors that no-one notices.
We will take the time we need to get it right, and we will give residents a chance to see everything on the website once the changes have been made to the schemes - I know there will be some - and then in due course, we will have the Stage 3 consultation, as we know that that's the statutory one, and then we go into the implementation phase. I think it's just common sense.

4.  Question asked by Dave Triphook to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

I would like clarity and again raise the question of in my opinion, following a ‘junk mail’ parking consultation leaflet drop, via the Post Office, to 43000 households in Sutton (with a return rate of 12%) why Mr Abellan feels this is a true reflection of a ‘consultation’?

Surely this return figure alone is not what was expected and should have raised his concerns as to why the return rate was so low?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

Yes - I mean I think this touches a bit from the supplementary from Mr Mansell in the previous question.

I don't agree with the characterisation that you've made of the consultation process, I think we've done a lot more than what normally local authorities do in terms of consultation. It's an 18 month process with two informal consultations, one formal consultation, lots of engagement and so I've mentioned that in many meetings already so I won't repeat that.

From speaking to council officers that have done this here and in other authorities and other Councillors and officers from across London, it's not uncommon to get this type of response to a traffic highway related consultation. What we are keen to... and that's hopefully the message that you'll will pick up from all these questions... is that we're keen to consult and to hear from as many people as possible on the run up to Stage 3, that's why I am working with my colleagues so that they get out on the door steps and they have as many discussions as they can with residents and they continue the conversation and I think the upcoming weeks are going to be really important to make sure that we have those more calm ‘on the door steps conversations’ with residents to answer some of the questions they might have and hopefully, the best design possible.

Again, if the question had a specific number like the 75% figure we heard... but if that's the case, it would be very unlikely we would reach it and it would cost us a lot of money...

Supplementary question asked by Mr Triphook

I do [have a supplementary question] actually Mr Mayor and if you could just extend me a little latitude here:
Mr Abellan, the census back in 2011 - 95% of the United Kingdom completed and returned the letter that dropped through their letter[box] that day. Just a normal letter.

I will paraphrase on the front of it "not a circular important document sign here and return". You opened the letter, he completed it... the people who replied to that was 95% - that happens to be 23.5 million out of 25 million households.

Here's my question: had you used the same approach (letter through the door) and not a circular - complete and return the pre-paid envelope - now let's not forget you had already used the Post Office for Stage 1 and Stage 2... you got a 12% return and you think that's a reasonable return. I personally do not... had you adopted that process, do you not feel you would have a decent and better data set for analysis for your parking scheme? Because I feel that would have fallen at the first hurdle in that case.

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

I mean if we had a lot more money and we could get pre-paid envelopes and stuff like that we would definitely do it. We unfortunately... we don't have as much money as people might think in terms of austerity.

So yes, I would love for us to get more money to spend on pre-paid envelopes and so on and so forth. I don't know the specifics of the letter you are referring to. Again, if we had more money we would do all of those things.

On the letter.... the letter specifically said "Official decisions are being made on your street" - we did two of them and we put countless amount of leaflets mentioning the parking strategy, lots of engagements on social media and so on... of course we can improve.

Supplementary asked by Councillor Nick Mattey

Mr Mayor and Councillor Abellan my supplementary question is this:

The fact is, with these consultations, the Council knows the answer it wants to get and it works on the basis that if the questions are clouded and not clear it will get answers and it can then proceed with the way it wants.

Bearing in mind the impact that this is going to have on so many people, I would like to suggest that we do go for the pre-paid envelope solution and we stop using examples like Brexit and 12% and we go for a proper consultation.

It's going to cost some money, it may not give the answers that the Council want, but that's what the people want. Can we adopt that please? Thank you.

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan
I think that was more your opinion than a question, so my response is exactly the same as I gave.

Thank you, in between you giving your opinion, just a further comment on the previous question. The reason that it got to 95% is because you could get a fine of £1,000 because it's compulsory to fill in the census.

So we can't... I think it would be nonsensical to start fining residents if they don't reply to consultation. So the response to Councillor Mattey's opinion is exactly the same as I gave to the last resident.

5. **Question asked by Steve Alvarez to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee**

At the last Scrutiny Committee meeting you advised that 15 company registered N1 van renewal permits were denied within the current CPZ zones since 2016. You also said that you will wait for the results of Stage 2 to see how many residents have raised the issue before rethinking the policy. Did you make any effort at all to find out what negative impact these denials had on those 15 people and if so do you think it acceptable to deny someone their job?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

Thank you Mr Alvarez for the question and for the exchanges we've had over the last couple of weeks on this issue.

Just to clarify, at the Scrutiny meeting after speaking to officers, it was between 10-15 people affected. They've looked into it in more detail and the actual number was 10 - so just to put that on the record.

So 10 applications refused since November 2017 in the existing parking controls areas. In answer to your question: one of the first things I did when this issue was raised with me by both Councillors and members of the public like yourself, was to speak to officers to get the numbers on how many people had been refused in the existing parking controlled areas, and what the issues were. And then, if residents were able to find alternatives - and in the overwhelming majority of cases, residents were able to work with officers to get alternative solutions to park their N1 van close to their home.

**Supplementary question asked by Mr Alvarez**

As I have told you before: the van, my van, and whoever else drives a van - they have to take it home. If they don't take it home... if I don't take my van home, I will lose my job.

When my boss sees the tracker or the van isn't outside my house, he will take the van off me. What have you got in place for everyone who loses their job so their bills are paid, mortgages are paid and food is on the table?
Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

As I have said to you for the last couple of weeks, that is exactly the issues that we are discussing with officers.

As we expand, it's what I said at Scrutiny... as we expand any policy for areas we need to look at the detail and see the impact it might have in other areas because it is different circumstances so we're looking at different options and I have read carefully the letter you sent to the leader of the Council - so I know your specific case quite closely, and we have exchanged emails already and as I've said, I've offered, once we have had a chance to look at the details with our officers, to meet with you and continue the discussion.

Supplementary question asked by Councillor Neil Garrett

Thank you very much Mr Mayor. This is not a low budget exercise, this is nearly £2 million that's going on this parking consultation, and two years have been spent and I can't quite understand why, what is quite an obvious point that Mr Alvarez has made, hasn't already been thought about during those two years.

Why has that not already been thought about, isn't it obvious that if you ban certain types of van from quite a wide area all the people in that area are not going to be able to keep their job which involves a van?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

The very simple answer as I said earlier is it hasn't been an issue in the existing zone, he doesn't live in the existing zone. As we move forward if it becomes an issue and there is no alternative solutions, we're looking at options and will make changes if it has a massive impact on people.

6. Question asked by Robert Ede to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

This question is in regards to current parking consultations which are in progress throughout the London Borough of Sutton.

During the last Scrutiny Committee meeting, you admitted that the current plans will reduce the number of parking spaces in certain areas. You also said that you are currently doing street surveys road by road.

Who is carrying out these street surveys and why were they not done before you started Stage 2 so you could see whether the agencies plans at Stage 1 were workable or not before you sent the residents the plans?
APPENDIX A

You could have altered things at Stage 2 yourselves so that we could have our opinion but instead, you will be leaving it until Stage 3 where we will not be allowed to have an opinion at all?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

So just to clarify a few points from your question during the Scrutiny meeting: I did say that in some cases, during the hours of operation, there might be roads that have less spaces but that would not be affected for overnight parking.

It's also worth remembering that commuters and non-residents will in the majority of cases not be allowed in those zones, which will mean less cars parking on those roads during the day. In your question you say you won't be able to have an opinion at Stage 3 - as I've said many times tonight there will be a formal consultation where residents will be able to formally give their opinion on whether they reject or support the proposals.

Supplementary question by Robert Ede

Can I just say that's a traffic management order isn't it? So that is an order that essentially says either yes or no is that correct?

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

People will be able to respond on the road whether they support or reject the proposals.

Reply by Robert Ede

So we don't get a say in how it's working or any other options in that case....sorry this wasn't my supplementary so I will listen to your full answer.

Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan

So yes, so you will be consulted formally and properly at Stage 3. Officers have used comments from the different phases too and will use those comments to shape what will come to Stage 3, and this is not only... you know this exercise did not start in January 2018 - this is conversation, an initiative, that has been going on for many many years, that residents and Councillors have discussed for many many years, it's not something that just came out of nowhere.

So there is a lot of historical knowledge, there's a lot of complaints and a lot of expertise already within the Council, that's already been taken into account in the designs... so on the specific point on who carried the parking surveys it's a consultancy called Traffic Data Centre.

So you asked why we didn't go for the very detailed proposals at Stage 2. The logic of the consultation is that we start with a general question "did you have parking problems on your
road?” then we moved onto looking at area per area with specific schemes, and now we’re going to look at... after doing all the street surveys, is at the impact on the specific roads.

What I suspect might happen is that some roads will be taken out if there's a clear majority of people that don't want schemes on the road or in their area. I think it's a bit of a waste of time and money to do detailed street surveys on those roads if they are going to be taken out at Stage 3.

So what we'll look at now is whether the types of schemes are the correct ones for each area and the size of each scheme and that might change depending on the results from the Stage 2 consultation.

**Supplementary question asked by Robert Ede**

Thank you for your answer, and can I just say thank you for doing the last two questions as well it was the right thing to do. I just wanted to recap a little bit to a supplementary question that I had last time, the two questions that I put in at the meeting on the 28 January - we haven't had a response yet so... that's about two and a half weeks.

Now essentially, there's other schemes that don't take away parking space on the road - they keep money from the permits coming in. They're more cost effective to actually put in, it's a parking scheme which is a PPA which is without bays and yellow lines - that's a lot better for the residents.

Epsom zone M is 1.5 miles of road. Councillor Abellan was saying a small zone is ok which he's referring to Wallington North which is 1.3 miles. My question to him, now that there is a proven alternative that is better for the residents, in places that need a permit parking area, will that be considered for Stage 3? It's been done by Epsom Council... it's been done by Kingston Council very recently.

So would at Stage 3 level... would a PPA without bays and yellow lines be put forward as a proposal?

**Reply by Councillor Manuel Abellan**

I've seen your email and the content of it which has been passed to our officers, as you can imagine there's lots and lots of things that they’re doing at the moment - analysing 5,000 responses.

I asked them specifically to look at the Epsom scheme to see if they could be replicated and when I mentioned that we are looking at each scheme, whether it's the right one and the size of the schemes, these are exactly the type of discussions that we are having.

It appears in discussions with officers... it appears like it's a very simple solution to throw a PPA at a specific road or area but there's a lot of issues around enforcement and getting challenges at appeal and it's a tiny bit more complicated but I'd be more than happy in a
better setting to have a discussion with you in due course once I get a full detailed response from our officers, but those are the things we are looking at so it's... all of that is on the table.