

Council Questions 8.6**LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON
QUESTIONS: STANDING ORDER 8.6****1. Question asked by Councillor Tim Foster to Councillor Ruth Dombey, Leader of the Council**

At the recent meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee, in support of a proposal for the induction of an Independent Person, enormous detail was provided with regard to the structure of the Audit & Governance Committee and its foundation in fairness and balance in party representation. Why is that same balance not applied to, for example, the Scrutiny Committee that has an oversight on Council business?

2. Question asked by Councillor Jane Pascoe to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

Installing a Changing Places toilet is a practical step through which public bodies can demonstrate that they are taking positive action to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, as outlined in the Disability Equality Duty. In the whole of Sutton, there is only one Changing Places toilet (at Sutton Station).

Will Sutton lead the way, and be proactive in ensuring that the forthcoming Changing Places legislation will be enshrined in our planning requirements at the earliest opportunity?

3. Question asked by Councillor James McDermott - Hill to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

What progress has been made regarding the development of Victoria House?

4. Question asked by Councillor Tom Drummond to Councillor Marian James, Chair of the People Committee

On 4 July a report was submitted to the People Committee by Cognus however Cognus did not attend. When asked why, the chair replied "what I can say to you is Cognus were invited to this meeting" however no reason for their absence was forthcoming, could the chair please tell us the reason for Cognus' absence?

5. Question asked by Councillor Peter Geiringer to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

Does this Council have powers to fine/prosecute drivers for "vehicle idling " outside schools and elsewhere?

6. Question asked by Councillor Nick Mattey to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of Housing, Economy & Business Committee

Given the considerable number of fires that have broken at Viridor facilities over the last few years and months. Can the council say why the council did not specify that the buildings operated by Viridor at its incinerator facility were fitted with a sprinkler system?

7. Question asked by Councillor Neil Garratt to Councillor Marian James, Chair of the People Committee

For September 2020 Sutton Council forecasts that for Year 7 entry to secondary school more than 300 Sutton children will not have a school place. That number will grow each year to 384 children without a place in September 2023. Councillor James stated this week that historically these forecasts have "proven very accurate". The proposed school at Rose Hill will provide only 240 of these places. The legal duty to plan school places rests with this Council, and the main obstacle to getting schools built has been this Council's failure to select sites in good time.

Conservatives have been warning of the pressing problem over school place planning in Sutton for 5 years, following a Council report in 2014 which stated that "the window is starting to close" to get the high school places we need built in time. In the end, the window did close and both schools are late, leaving hundreds of children starting their secondary school journey in temporary accommodation, while millions of pounds from school budgets is wasted building temporary schools which will later be demolished.

Is the Liberal Democrat administration satisfied that they have done all they can to ensure enough school places are available? Do you agree that the reason the schools are late is that this Liberal Democrat Council failed in its duty to select sites in time?

8. Question asked by Councillor Catherine Gray to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

The planning application for the Harris Academy at Belmont was deemed not to require an Environmental Impact Assessment as part of its planning application, despite being in a largely residential area with poor transport infrastructure. The applicant was the council. However, when the applicant for the proposed new school at Rosehill sought a screening opinion from the council, it was deemed that an Environmental Impact Assessment was required, despite the site being former Metropolitan Open Land and not in use, but with vastly superior transport infrastructure. Given the current and clearly stated opposition of the Sutton North councillors to this planning application, can we be assured that different standards are not being imposed on certain planning applications where the administration has indicated opposition?

I note that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has since overturned Sutton Council's inconsistent decision to request an Environmental Impact Assessment.

9. Question asked by Councillor James McDermott - Hill to Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member for Resources

Does the Council have any interest in the purchase and demolition of the North Cheam Sports and Social Club?

10. Question asked by Councillor Jane Pascoe to Councillor Marian James, Chair of the People Committee

Why has it been necessary to place The Acting Strategic Director of People Services on the Board of Cognus?

Please supply the makeup of the Board, including the additional members referred to at the People Committee of 4 July.

11. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

Given Viridor's facilities proximity to local homes and schools, what discussions has the council had with Viridor over why these fires have occurred and what steps will the council be discussing with Viridor to prevent further fires occurring at the Beddington incinerator site in the future?

12. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

The council has said it wants Sutton to become zero carbon. Over the last five years what measures, have the council taken to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the borough and what have been the reductions year on year in tonnes of carbon dioxide as a result of these measures ?

13. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

The council has started an ambitious programme of building social housing that is affordable, why is nobody yet living in these homes? What has caused the delays?

14. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Sunita Gordon, Lead Member for Resources

Some councils have been buying up commercial high street property and letting them out rent free to big retailers and taking a percentage of the retailers turnover over a certain threshold. With the move to online retailing and the threat of transfer pricing meaning the

threshold is never or barely exceeded for long periods. What assurances can the council take that it will not operate such schemes?

15. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

Sutton Council gave planning permission for 80 one bedroom and two bedroom flats to Barratts for its Felnax site, the council is committed to providing affordable housing. Despite this, the rental for these flats with free heat from SDEN is £575 and £725 a week respectively. What part do these flats play in the council's vision of making homes in Sutton affordable?

16. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Jayne McCoy, Chair of the Housing, Economy & Business Committee

What measures are in place for the families in other 725 homes on the site if they find that the cost for heating provided by SDEN are too high and represent poor value for money?

17. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

A woman was knocked down on the crossing in Beddington Lane close to its junction with Guy Road, on the 9 July, ambulances attended. Previously following a fatal accident this crossing was made light controlled. The council then removed the lights and said the crossing did not need lights indicating it was safe to cross because the speed limit was 20mph and cameras were in place. There are no cameras and there are no measures to limit speed effectively to 20mph. What is the council going to do to reinstate safe crossing on this stretch of road and prevent a fatality?

18. Question asked by Councillor Nick Matthey to Councillor Manuel Abellan, Chair of the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee

What evidence can the council provide to counter the suggestion that the removal of the light controlled crossing in Beddington Lane was purely a measure to increase traffic flow and reduce pollution, the danger posed to pedestrians was considered acceptable?