



## **Questions from the Opposition and Other Non-Cabinet Members**

**Full Council – 26 November 2018**

**1. Question from Councillor Thomas Stephens to Councillor Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning**

What steps are Brent Council taking to secure a more regular rail service between Central London and Sudbury & Harrow Road Station?

**Response:**

In our Long Term Transport Strategy we made a commitment 'to increase accessibility and mobility in Brent by public transport through securing new services, more capacity and greater service frequencies on appropriate routes from Public Transport Operators'. This takes a number of forms, and in respect of the Chiltern line, is focussed on lobbying the transport provider to try and secure improvements to services and their infrastructure.

Through the Public Transport Forum the frequency of Chiltern services is being raised and lobbied for. The forum is attended by Councillors, Brent Council officers and key stakeholder representatives, including disability groups. The Chiltern franchise is an agenda item at the Public Transport Forum to be held on 26 November 2018.

Our Local Implementation Plan (LIP3) sets out how Brent will deliver the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) at a local level. It is currently out to public and key stakeholders for consultation, closing on the 30<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr Stephen's question will be included as a formal consultation response on the LIP3 for consideration as part of finalising the content for LIP3. It is not currently part of the LIP3 as this document sets out how Brent will deliver transport improvements within its control to meet the Mayor's aim and outcomes from the MTS using funding received from Transport for London and other secured funding; as we do not provide the train service ourselves, it is not a scheme that we can implement.

## **2. Question from Councillor Claudia Hector to Councillor Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning**

What actions is the Lead Member taking to ensure that local residents can have more of a say in what street furniture is installed (or on occasion removed) on their own streets?

### **Response:**

I have been working with Senior Managers within Regeneration and Environment to embed our neighbourhood approach to work with local residents and businesses to identify and resolve local issues. Our Neighbourhood Managers have responsibility for dealing with requests and enquiries regarding the installation, relocation, removal, refurbishment or repair of council owned street furniture such as bins, benches, or cycle stands, both on the public highway or in parks and open spaces.

Street furniture is often provided or renewed a part of a regeneration or highways improvement scheme, which is subject to public consultation with local residents' groups, affected residents and businesses and other stakeholders such as Transport for London and the Metropolitan Police Service. This consultation process provides local residents have a say on the proposals. Benches are sometimes provided when sponsored by members of the public, and we will work with local residents to agree suitable locations.

To improve our public realm we would normally wish to regulate the types and number of items that are installed to create an environment that is accessible and free of street clutter. Our Town Centre Managers and Neighbourhood Managers have recently identified 72 locations in Willesden, Neasden, Harlesden and Church End where street furniture is either unnecessary or in poor condition and needs to be repaired or replaced. A programme is currently being drawn up to deliver this work.

Recent examples where we have taken into account the views of affected residents and businesses include Kingsbury Road and The Hyde.

**3. Question from Councillor Lia Colacicco to Councillor Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning**

Cement production accounts for over 5% of all human Carbon output. What is the Lead Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning doing to encourage architects and developers to use sustainable construction methods and green technology in new homes?

**Response:**

We apply the London Plan policy and also have a new one in our emerging plan.

Our new policy (BSUI1 - Creating A Resilient And Efficient Brent) sets out that, amongst other things, all major developments must include a Sustainability Statement demonstrating how sustainable design and construction methods have been used to enable the development to mitigate and adapt to climate change over its intended lifetime. All major non-residential development to achieve a BREEAM standard of 'Excellent'.

Our newly adopted SDP1 design guide states that "The use of durable and attractive materials is essential in order to create development that is appealing, robust and sustainable and fits in with local character".

The Mayor's SPG on sustainable construction requires the use of materials that minimise the use of resources, are sustainably sourced, do not cause harm to health and are robust, and consider during construction how materials will be managed through the waste hierarchy i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle. The Sustainability Statement that we require will need to set out how this is being addressed.

On energy, draft London Plan policy SI2 requires major development to be net zero-carbon, in line with the energy hierarchy be lean (use less energy), be clean (use local energy sources and clean energy) and be green (use renewables on-site). Our policy adds a locally specific element to this policy by identifying locations for decentralised energy systems. We require an Energy Assessment to be submitted for major developments detailing how this will be achieved.

#### 4. Question from Councillor Reg Colwill to Councillor Shama Tatler, Lead Member for Regeneration, Highways and Planning

The Borough is full of dangerous potholes and cracked pavements. Can the Lead Member please provide a timetable as to when the works to repair these will be carried out in order to make our roads and pavements safe?

##### **Response:**

The day-to-day business of the highways department is to keep the highway safe. Through our Reactive Maintenance programme we will inspect our highway network and repair defects (potholes, tree root intrusion etc.) considered to pose the greatest risk to the public. As highway inspectors have been brought back in-house from 1st November 2018, officers have more control about where and when repairs are done.

Every year in "Pothole Season" (from January to March), there is an increase in the number of potholes being reported. This was made a lot worse by last winter's severe weather speeding up deterioration of road surfaces. All highway authorities are experiencing similar problems and this year we are committed to increasing resources and investment over the period November- April to provide some resilience against the weather conditions. During this period, along with our normal reactive maintenance programme we will also be delivering:

- **A Targeted patching programme on A roads, in November to December** - for strategic locations identified as "at risk" of rapid deterioration from freeze / thaw conditions.
- **A Find and Fix programme , from January to March, will respond** where roads have with multiple defects appearing. The contractor will start at one end of the road and work their way along, repairing all defects as they go.

Following this summers' successful work, we will also deliver another borough-wide programme of Injection Patching from May to July 2019, to repair potholes on local roads. Through this method we are achieving on average 65 pothole repairs a day, which compares very favourably against the traditional method where on average 25 potholes a day are treated.

I am also pleased to announce that Brent has been awarded £660,000 from the £420m pothole repair initiative announced in the budget, though this has to be delivered to a very tight timescale and must be finished by the end of March 2019. Officers are currently drawing up options to deliver this programme.