

CABINET – THURSDAY 21 JANUARY 2021

AGENDA PART I

PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM 4)

Under Rule 16 of the Executive Procedure Rules members of the public may question the Executive and Portfolio Holders at meetings. There is a time limit of 15 minutes for the asking and answering of public questions.

1.

Questioner: Samantha Pali

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “I feel I live in a mini China by you imposing the LTN schemes upon us. My query to the London Mayor of 16th November has still not had a response 3 months later despite promises, nor did you call me back as promised last month. If you believe in democracy in Harrow, why did you, the leader of the council, block your ward councillors being able to have a free vote on this matter when I asked for one last month?”

2.

Questioner: Ian Farr

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “People have different opinions on Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes, and we want all to be able to express them in a fair and open way. But the abuse of councillors, council employees and those with opposing views has grown on social media and abuse of the democratic systems used needs addressing with further engagement planned. Many have disengaged due to this abuse and re-engagement is needed.

How will the Council Leader assure residents and restore confidence in the validation of resident engagement and measures to stop abuse of the system for the forthcoming LTN options engagement to allow fairness? Examples to date:

1. The TARSAP Committee meeting contained slanderous comments (despite the efforts of the chair) which had to be removed from the

recording. This must be stopped from happening again.

2. The Harrow Street Space Trials engagement site contains abusive comments, some being libellous. The site needs moderation and action taken (a request to remove examples in past week has been made)

3. The Harrow Street Space Trials engagement site is designed for easy use, only needing an email address and 4 clicks to add an entry with no comment. It allows multiple entries from one email address, and this has been abused to inflate numbers for those against (batches of 50 consecutive 'remove scheme' entries with no comments on 14 Jan, twice on 12 Jan and once on 11 Jan when looking at last week). At a minimum, please can this be taken into account on reports e.g. do not quote numbers or percentages. “

3. Atish Anand

Questioner:

Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment.

Asked of: "Will the consultation on the LTN include an option for the total removal of the LTNs"

Question:

4. Geoff Eldridge

Questioner: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Asked of: “Now you have decided to undertake a consultation in respect of the low Traffic Neighbourhoods could you please let me know what you

Question: anticipate the cost of this to be and how extensive will the consultation be?”

5.

Questioner: Heshma Shah

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “Now that you have finally agreed that a consultation is needed, will the consultation also consult all the surrounding roads of each LTN

that have also been negatively impacted and how will you set these boundaries, because when you did your very very limited consultation you left out thousands of residents who were going to be impacted by the scheme.”

6.

Questioner: Miep Golabi

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Question: “During the last TARSAP meeting some of the officers were talking about ANPR cameras. Instead of them why don't you install speed cameras and other traffic calming measures as the pro LTN's group are particularly complaining about large and speeding vehicles and the barriers haven't stopped this happening as I witness this on my daily walks and bicycle rides. You can then remove the barriers and widen the pavements where possible so that electric wheelchair users, scooters and novices cyclists can feel confident using them. This way all residents could benefit from these options and that would restore faith in the Council.”

7.

Questioner: Karen Jolliff

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “As part of the set-up of the LTN process I understand the council is required to do an Equality Impact Assessment report. I have seen the report dated the 7th July 2020, however i note the document properties shows it was created on 27th November 2020 and therefore it appears to be backdated. The scheme identified disadvantages to vulnerable groups and yet the scheme was still implemented. Can you confirm who signed off on this report and what date?”

8.

Questioner: Mike Williams

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “The Secretary of State for Housing has directed the Mayor of London to ensure that the forth coming London Plan has a tall buildings policy

that recognised that it was fair that local communities should be able to decide where they are built and in particular that the look and feel of outer London and the suburbs should be protected.

Specifically, we are concerned to understand if Harrow Council acknowledge the inappropriateness of tall buildings in suburban areas outside of the town centres and will reflect this when they consider planning applications?”

9.

Questioner: Karusha Thomas

Asked of: Councillor Adam Swersky, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources

Question: “The current economic impact of Covid-19 is devastating the lives of many residents and businesses in Harrow who rely on their cars for their livelihoods and day to day needs and may need their cars in the future to seek employment or start their own business to survive and many are already stressed about losing their jobs or are in fear of it due to being late because of traffic caused by road closures. Why then are you implementing a costly measure of road closures and ANPR cameras that attacks the livelihoods of stressed people, especially in central Harrow, and will cost them dearly in fines and lost income?”

10.

Questioner: Situl Kotecha

Asked of: Councillor Varsha Parmar, Portfolio Holder for Environment

Question: “A recent petition in favour of ltn02 had only 35 signatures as of Monday 18th January. The petition against the LTNs has over 5500 signatures, 80% of whom are confirmed Harrow residents.

Despite the clear objections to these schemes, the council continue to listen to a vocal minority.

The cost of a single ANPR camera is £20,000, how can you justify installing these cameras and wasting more taxpayer’s money when the majority of residents do not want these schemes?”

11.

Questioner: Natalie Tobert

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “I am a pensioner suffering from arthritis in my joints, and LTN04 means I can't reach my doctor easily, nor my physio for treatment, nor visit the park, nor go shopping without a hugely extended drive, which is not good for me due to compressed vertebrae in my spine. How do you advise me to live now, so this scheme helps me, rather than discriminates against me?”

12.

Questioner: Vishal Shah

Asked of: Councillor Graham Henson, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Strategy, Partnerships, Devolution & Customer Services

Question: “A petition was submitted, accepted and presented at the previous meeting Cabinet Council Meeting calling for the stepping down of 3 Headstone South Councillors, which had gathered over 500 signatures, a lot more than the 35 on the petition asking for the LTN's to remain in place. What steps have the council taken to address this and when do we expect to receive a response to this?”