

Questions Submitted for Council – 31 January 2024

Question 1 - Submitted by Councillor Chakraborty

“Getting a pelican crossing at the junction of Sinderland Road and the A56 has been a long-held aspiration of local residents. This is to enable a safe pedestrian crossing at this very busy junction which many residents find it difficult to navigate and where a number of accidents have already been caused.

I have written to One Trafford and Council Members many a time and the last correspondence confirmed that it has been put on a wish list grid. The site is indeed due for an upgrade to include pedestrian facilities. However, it is not clear yet when this upgrade will take place. A junction upgrade at this location does remain on the Council’s list of junction improvements.

Can the Council please provide an update on the progress towards a pelican crossing for the junction of Sinderland Road and the A56?”

Response

I am pleased to advise that Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) and Trafford Council have been successful with a first-round business case funding application via City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRSTS) for funding for a number of junction improvement schemes including a proposed junction upgrade at Manchester Road (A56), Sinderland Road and Salisbury Road. The scope of this work includes improved controlled pedestrian facilities for all arms of the junction.

Traffic counts and concept designs have been completed, with the final business case approve schedule to be completed in summer this year. If approved works can begin thereafter.

Council Officers are also working on developing a school crossing patrol policy which will assist the Council in prioritising and managing resources at School Crossing Patrol points across the borough.

Question 2 - Submitted by Councillor Evans

“Following the revelations of local authority and police failures in relation to child protection in Rochdale, and in light of Trafford's statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk, what assurances can the Executive Member for Children give me that the Council has done everything in its power to ensure trust in its children’s services is maintained and that parents across Trafford can have confidence in the council to protect our children's safety and welfare?”

And can the Executive Member assure us that there are no historic failures under investigation?”

Question 3 - Submitted by Councillor Duncan

“Serving as the Vice-Chair of the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee, I was shocked at the increase of drug misuse in our schools since 2019, quite shocking figures. What have the Council done over the last 3 years to help prevent this trend. And can the Council reassure residents of Trafford this trend will not continue?”

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Response

Early Break Young People and Family Service have worked closely with schools across the Trafford borough since 2019. Each school has a dedicated Early Break link worker to liaise with if they have any concerns around a pupils substance use or would like to refer into the service. Early Break also deliver substance misuse training to education professionals and deliver education sessions across our schools for young people to raise awareness of the associated harms and prevent young people needing the service in the first place.

As you can see within the children's scrutiny report, the number of young people in tier 3 treatment is lower than those referred into the service. Those who do not engage in tier 3 treatment will be offered tier 2 support. This serves as an early intervention to deliver general awareness and education around substances, to prevent the likelihood of young people becoming dependent on substances and requiring treatment. The numbers of referrals received are a testament to the hard work done by Early Break staff to engage young people at an early stage.

Trafford Council, with the support of Early Break continue to monitor any risks of new and emerging substances that may affect young people. An example of this is the additional investment to support Early Break and School Health teams to deliver a Trafford Youth Vaping Offer. This includes support to young people, parents and professionals. Details of this can be found in the poster attached. Trafford Council are also in the process of developing a joint strategic needs assessment for drugs and alcohol, this will help to better understand our unmet needs for Trafford young people and shape our commissioning decisions in the future.

Question 4 - Submitted by Councillor Paul

"Retail has suffered an incredibly bad Christmas sales period, with sales dropping to levels not seen since the middle of the pandemic. Retail sales fell 3.2% in December across the board.

It is encouraging that the government has managed to get inflation under control and has potentially avoided serious economic decline. However, there are still concerns surrounding inflation, interest rates, and the overall health of the economy.

It is astonishing that in this current context, the Council has decided to back a 'Buy Nothing New' campaign causing potential further damage to a struggling retail sector.

I am a big supporter of local independent trading - like the recently opened pet shop on Coppice Avenue and I urge everyone who is a pet lover to take a look at that shop. Shops like this would severally suffer if residents took up your suggestion. So, could the Council please let me and the residents of Manor Ward and indeed Trafford borough, know why they have supported buy nothing new for a month?"

Response

While the council supports our retail sector through these difficult times we also need to focus on what we throw away and trying to minimise wastage. "If everyone on Earth lived like people in the UK, we would need over two and a half planets to regenerate and absorb our waste. As a society, we need to move to a circular economy that wastes less and puts more value on the things we already have."

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The focus of the campaign is about reuse, repair and repurpose and moving away from throwing things away or recycling them. Ultimately, trying to move people up the waste hierarchy from recycling things to preventing waste in the first place. Most people engage in some waste prevention behaviours but not necessarily extensively. Most people associate waste more with what they throw away than with what they buy. The campaign seeks to change how people think about waste and make things last longer for one month in the year. While there might be a small effect to the retail sector ultimately the cost to the council of disposing of waste is approximately £16m per year that is literally being thrown away.

Question 5 - Submitted by Councillor Coggins

“Can the Council confirm that:

- the new Commemorative policy was signed off on 11/1/24 after the “Light up Trafford Town Halls for the children of Gaza” petition was submitted on 28/12/23?
- the Council’s policies did not dictate that timescale meaning that the Executive had the option to wait until after hearing and potentially acting on this petition?
- the new policy was not immediately implemented in the case of the Ukrainian flag which was still up at Trafford Town Hall (in contravention of section 3.5) on the evening of 26/1/24, sometime after the new policy came into effect?”

Question 6 - Submitted by Councillor Evans

“Schools Provision in Trafford

If polling is to be believed, the threat of a Labour Government is real. Thankfully polls are regularly wrong, however it is a serious threat that needs to be considered and contingency plans made. Given it is the national policy of the Labour party, presumably supported by Labour members in this chamber, to impose a 20% tax on education in the independent sector, **what provision for additional primary and secondary school places has the Council made on a contingency basis for the estimated 15-20% of independent school pupils, who would be pushed into the state sector as a direct result of this policy?** Labour’s school tax would have adverse effects on all children being educated in either sector not to mention the clear risk of any one of the local independent schools becoming unviable forcing even more demand on our inadequate provision here in Trafford.

How many meetings has the Executive Member for Children and Young People held with the many independent schools in Trafford and the numerous in neighbouring local authority areas to which parents from Trafford send their children, to assess the impact of the proposed Labour policy on the financial health and ongoing viability of these schools?”

Question 7 - Submitted by Councillor Spencer

“Can the council confirm how many endangered macaque monkeys were imported via Manchester Airport in 2023?”

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Question 8 - Submitted by Councillor Zhi

“Given the impact of the one-way system on Gorsey Lane on St Margaret’s Church and the various objections raised, can the Council please answer what, if any plans, there are to introduce an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order in order that current plans for Gorsey Lane and Dunham Road can be reassessed?”

Response

The short section of One-way with contra flow cycle lane on Gorsey Lane has been introduced as an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order that operates for a maximum of 18 months. By introducing these measures under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) gives an opportunity to assess the effectiveness over a minimum six-month period, whereupon changes can be made if concerns and/or objections are considered to be substantiated. Following this consultation period, a twelve-month review period allows Trafford Council the opportunity to assess the measures before deciding to make them permanent or not.

Question 9 - Submitted by Councillor Lepori

“With BRSK infrastructure roll out continuing across South Trafford, does the Council have information on where and when the next telegraph poles will be placed, as a rolling communication with BRSK?”

Response

The council currently has no forward planning information for BRSK as they are only required to submit streetworks application on a street by street basis 4- 6 weeks prior to the works. They are one of a number of companies working across the region. When there have been issues with their work, direct contact with BRSK representatives has not been an issue.

Question 10 - Submitted by Councillor Newgrosh

“Our Social Housing tenants account for some of the most vulnerable, and digitally excluded, residents of Trafford.

Ahead of the takeover of Trafford Housing Trust by London & Quadrant, on April 3rd 2023, in letters delivered to directly to the home of every THT tenant, and repeated in two presentations to us, their representatives, L&Q stated that there would be continued access to local services and staff.

Despite these repeated assurances, Sale Point has been closed to the public, and tenants can no longer go there for face to face meetings with L&Q staff.

At what point did the Council become aware of L&Q’s decision to withdraw their public facing presence from Trafford? What is the Council doing to ensure that the boroughs main social housing provider, L&Q, keep their promises to our residents on access and accountability?”