

## **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.

### Supplementary Question/Response

A supplementary question was about Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Councillor Duncan enquired how long this would take to set up and how would it identify the unmet needs, and are extra staff being employed to do it?

The Substance Use and Alcohol Needs Assessment is underway and is intended to be completed as a draft for consultation by the end of March and finalised for publication on the JSNA website we hope by May, taking into account the pre-election period. It is being led by the Public Health Team including the Public Health Intelligence Team. Though we have not employed staff specifically for the needs assessment, the additional national Grant received for drug and alcohol treatment enhancements did allow us to recruit a Band 6 commissioning officer last year on a temporary basis. She has worked with our permanent members of staff on this project (as well as core work on the grant implementation), overseen by the lead Consultant and Public Health Commissioning Manager.

The Needs Assessment utilises national, Greater Manchester and Trafford data and intelligence, where available, and supplements quantitative data (numbers) with qualitative insight and context which we are continuing to gather now. The national data includes estimates of unmet need though the local insight is critical to understand the accuracy of this and the implications for service improvements. The Trafford Alcohol, Substance Misuse and Gambling Partnership (TASMGP), which is Chaired by Public Health and reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board and soon to the Community Safety Partnership, has fed in to the Needs Assessment and provided valuable insight into different organisational perspectives. This includes work with the voluntary sector, links to the neighbourhood networks which we are mid-way through visiting to consult on this, statutory services, housing providers, children's services and our specialist drug and alcohol providers. We are also exploring alongside mental health and wellbeing leads, the co-occurrence of mental

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health and substance use issues and the opportunities to improve our response. We are currently in the stage of consulting with a wider range of stakeholders; strategic groups, staff, residents and service users and welcome any suggestions for groups or people to speak to whilst it is still in development or to sharing findings and support implementation, which will be overseen by the TASMGP.

In terms of the general population we have worked with Healthwatch to release a public-facing short survey on alcohol use and access to support, to identify any themes to look into further. The JSNA work so far has highlighted some gaps in recording of the prevalence of substance use and the needs of some populations which the report will highlight so that partners can make improvements in future. These, and other, recommendations will form part of a wider action plan for improvements in services, awareness and prevention, which is being developed alongside the JSNA project, under the TASMGP. The JSNA and action plan will inform commissioning decisions in the coming years including the main treatment provider contract and the use of the national supplementary Grant, though there are specific requirements in terms of the spending of this.

### **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 severely 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.”

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.

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### **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?”

#### Response

The Import of live animals into the UK are regulated by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) – which is part of Defra. Local Authorities have no regulatory involvement in this process.

Any import of live animals has to be notified to the APHA, using the Import of products, animals, food and feed system (IPAFFS). The importer must send notification in IPAFFS at least one working day before the consignment is due to arrive in the UK.

APHA will carry out identity and physical checks on imports of live animals and germplasm at their destination based on assessments of biosecurity and public health risks.

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The Council is currently seeking further detail on the numbers and species of animals imported and I will provide an update to Cllr Spencer once that is available.

Note: Further to the response provided at the meeting, a response was subsequently received from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), where unfortunately the Agency was unable to provide the numbers of animals imported. A copy of their response is detailed below:

### Supplementary Response from APHA

Thank you for your query. Unfortunately we are unable to provide figures.

Please see below for some information given to the journalist who wrote the Manchester Mill piece, in case useful.

How does DEFRA make arrangements for live monkeys to be transported into the UK? Is it true that animals have to be quarantined at the airport?

- To clarify, commercially contracted transporters are responsible for the arrangements and welfare provisions rather than Defra. Detailed provisions for the international transportation of animals are available from International Air Transport Association. Welfare checks are made as part of official import controls at the point of entry to the UK.
- To import primates into the UK, an establishment must apply to APHA for a licence.
- The conditions of the import licence require that the animal(s) must be imported to an APHA Approved Establishment and quarantined.
- The approval requires that a veterinarian is contracted to oversee the surveillance and disease monitoring of all animals at an approved establishment. APHA veterinarians undertake regular audit visits to approved establishments.

For how long have live macaque monkeys been transported into Manchester Airport?

- For security reasons Defra do not comment on the entry point or specifics for research animals.

How do you respond to the view that transporting monkeys in your cargo holds causes them immense distress and suffering? Does DEFRA have any moral reservations about allowing live macaque monkeys to be transported like this?

- The safety and welfare of the animals is given prime importance before approval to transport the animals is granted and legislation protects all animals from being transported in a way likely to cause injury or suffering.
- Carriers are required to ensure that food and water is provided according to journey duration whilst air quality and quantity, temperature and pressure is maintained.
- It is often the case, that animals will travel better in the hold instead of the aircraft cabin, because it is quieter, and they will be resting in a darkened environment.

### **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?”

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### Response

The short section of One-way with contra flow cycle lane on Gorse 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?"