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TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL

Date: Wednesday, 16 October 2024

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3. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS	
This is an opportunity for Members of Council to ask the Mayor, Members of the Executive or the Chairs of any Committee or Sub-Committee a question on notice under Procedure Rule 10.2.	1 - 4

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Note: 4 questions have been submitted and are numbered in the order they were received, however, in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.4, they are listed for the meeting one question from each party at a time and in order of political balance.

Question 2 - Submitted by Councillor Zhi

“As the Bowdon Councillor representing the residents of Oldfield Brow, I am deeply concerned about the ongoing lack of action regarding road safety around Oldfield Brow School. At the Council meeting on 20th March, a petition was submitted and recognised requesting immediate safety measures for the area. Since then, despite the seriousness of the issue, no tangible action has been taken.

On 3 September, a car accident occurred on Taylor Road, close to the Oldfield Brow Primary School, necessitating the response of two first responder medical vehicles, an ambulance, and a police car. This incident highlights the urgency of addressing road safety concerns without further delay.

While I acknowledge that Oldfield Brow is now on the waiting list for the School Streets programme, this alone is insufficient. The Council must take immediate steps to mitigate the risks before another incident occurs. I am asking the Council for a clear and decisive update on what specific actions will be taken, and when, to ensure the safety of residents, parents, children, and the wider community in Oldfield Brow?”

Response

Road safety is a widespread concern and the Council would like to do more to provide physical measures on our roads to address resident’s concerns. Historically the Council received significant government funding for widespread highway capital projects, but regrettably this is no longer the case.

In order to prioritise action the Council monitors collision and casualty data across Trafford to identify any patterns of collisions where interventions can be justified to improve road safety. The collision history for the whole area of Oldfield Brow, including Taylor Road, has been analysed and there are no recorded collisions involving personal injury recorded over the latest 5 year period for which data is available from Greater Manchester Police (2019 – 2023). This is no reason to be complacent but this data does not provide a demonstrable requirement to take urgent intervention action when taking into context the whole Borough.

As you might expect, owing to the size and age of the road network, the Council receives many requests to introduce highway improvements such as lower speed limits, traffic calming, new pedestrian crossings, better footways and cycleways etc.

‘School Streets’ are being introduced as a means of addressing some safety concerns near schools. There is a growing demand for this type of treatment that restricts vehicular access to streets outside schools during opening and closing times. Owing to the number of schools that have shown interest in having a school street treatment there is priority list, and Oldfield Brow Primary School has been added to the list.

In the meantime, we have made an assessment of the existing provision of School warning signs and have identified where improvements can be undertaken. We anticipate carrying out the work in the next 2 – 3 months and will share detailed information with the school and local Members shortly.

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With regard to the parking around the school our parking enforcement officers do visit schools where resources permit and we will make the local neighbourhood police team aware of the concerns too.

Question 4 - Submitted by Councillor Ennis

“Given the government's decision to cut Winter Fuel Payments for many pensioners, does the council have plans to support local ‘warm spaces’ schemes this winter, as has been the case in previous years?”

Response

The Council remains committed to supporting all of its residents in need over the winter period and as such continues to support the brilliant work of our six community hubs, as well as the other voluntary and community organisations across Trafford. Our community settings will continue to offer a broad range of support across the winter months including drop in sessions and community activities.

In addition to the work happening in community we are currently in the process of distributing the recent allocation of the Household Support Fund with specific emphasis on how we support our older residents during the colder months.

We are also undertaking targeted activity to work with our older population to ensure they are assessed for Pension Credit. We have a dedicated Welfare Rights Advisor solely working on this activity to support pensioners to apply for pension credit via the Department of Work and Pensions.

We acknowledge that the winter months are always difficult for many of our residents. We will continue to link in with our community settings to understand any pressures that may emerge and we will respond accordingly as we have done in previous years.

Question 1 - Submitted by Councillor Coggins

“Can the Council confirm the latest figures on Trafford's carbon emissions as released by BEIS for 2022, show we had 3 years of carbon budget left at the end of 2022, and that as a result we have about 1 year left now, meaning we now have no real chance of meeting our carbon budget?”

Response

Statistics showing local authority greenhouse gas emissions are published every summer, two years in arrears. Data for 2022 was therefore published in summer 2024. This data shows that greenhouse gas emissions in the borough of Trafford in 2022 were 7.7% lower than in 2021 and 40.2% lower than in 2005. This represents a significant achievement.

The Tyndall Centre developed a carbon budget tool that estimates carbon budgets for local authority areas using a top-down method. It takes a global carbon budget that is consistent with meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement (keeping global temperature rises above pre-industrial levels to “well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C”) and allocates that first to global regions, then to the UK and then down to local authority level. This is one estimate of a possible ‘science-based’ carbon budget, but the methodology has significant uncertainty and is based on a large number of assumptions. It is therefore not a definitive view, but one possible approach to estimating a science-based carbon budget. It is also not necessarily a

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realistic emissions pathway – simply one view of what a ‘science-based’ carbon budget could look like.

The carbon budget that the Tyndall Centre proposes for Trafford is to “reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2041” and to “stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 9.5 million tonnes (MtCO₂) for the period of 2020 to 2100”. A Trafford Carbon Neutral Action Plan was developed and published in 2020 and sets out the actions necessary to achieve carbon neutrality. Key actions delivered so far include:

- Launch of Your Home Better & ECO4 (Home Energy Improvement support)
- Delivery of Be.EV Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure
- Launch of the Cycling, Walking & Wheeling strategy
- Working with the VCFSE sector to accelerate community level climate action
- Establishing the Bee Net Zero Trafford Park project
- Undertaking Local Area Energy Planning
- Installation of low carbon measures across the public estate
- Development of plans for a Civic Quarter Low Carbon Heat Network

However, addressing our climate crisis can only be achieved through working together across the Borough, the region and the national stage. Success in meeting our climate challenge relies significantly on individuals, organisations and government policy.

Thus far, cumulative carbon dioxide emissions in Trafford for the period 2020 to 2022 were 4.2 MtCO₂, so almost half of the Tyndall Centre carbon budget for Trafford for the period from 2020 to 2100. If we take the average annual rate of emissions reductions since 2005 (7.4%), continuing at this annual rate would result in Trafford using up the carbon budget calculated by the Tyndall Centre by 2027.

Even though it will clearly be very challenging to remain within the carbon budget (a situation which is true across all UK local authorities), we remain committed to working with our residents, businesses and partners in accelerating the GHG emissions reduction rate and meeting the 2038 carbon neutral target.

Question 3 - Submitted by Councillor Evans

“New Forest District Council have announced this month that all Council run car parks will be free at weekends in the run up to Christmas. This is to encourage shopping in the local area, and to support small local businesses to thrive.

In previous years, several Greater Manchester Councils, including Trafford, have made parking free in council run car parks after 3pm, to support local businesses. Last year both Wigan and Salford announced their Free After Three schemes.

Will Trafford Council be announcing a Free After Three scheme for Christmas this year?”

Response

Like last year, we will not be announcing a ‘free after three’ parking scheme in the lead up to the holiday season. We do encourage visits to our high streets and centres, relaying the offer of public transport, active travel and the use of our car parks throughout the year. We’ll regularly review our parking tariffs to help ensure they’re attractive to our customers.

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Our parking charges contribute to the upkeep, maintenance, and operation of our car parks and nearby realm. Reducing / eliminating parking charges after 1500 would reduce our revenue and affect the quality of service we're able to provide. The weeks leading up to the holiday season often sees an increase in visitors, offering free parking could worsen congestion for others. Additional costs relating to the administration and complexities with communicating the changes have also led to the decision.

We do offer year around free parking on a Sunday, to encourage visits to our centres – generally when there is more capacity to encourage visits. Regent Road car park is also available for shoppers who want to stay longer than 2 hours in Altrincham. Parking is also free after 5pm on street (in most places) and after 6pm in council car parks. Our website provides information on our locations and tariffs.