

Questions Submitted for Council – 20 November 2024

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 3 - Submitted by Councillor Hancock

“Trafford Council's impending sale of the Jubilee Community Centre in Bowdon is regrettable to say the least, and it is a shame other options were not exhausted first. There is limited community space across the whole of Trafford, but community space is particularly limited in the south of Trafford.

Particular effort has, admirably, often been undertaken by the Council to ensure that, whatever other agreements are arrived at, there is continued community space in:

- Urmston (G H Carnall Centre)
- Stretford (Stretford Public Hall)
- Old Trafford (Old Trafford Sports Barn)

It should be noted that all those spaces aforementioned are in the north of the borough.

Whilst the tender document to the Jubilee Community Centre in Bowdon does include dimensions for a building, it is not clear that this building must be a community centre. This space is an essential community asset so can the Council please provide a commitment to residents that only offers of purchase that include plans for a community centre will be accepted?"

Response

Trafford Council is the freeholder of the site and is seeking offers from interested parties. Offers will be considered that:

- Include a new community centre as part of the development; and
- Provide for a residential development only.

The Council's principal objective is to generate a capital receipt for the site, but consideration will be given to the feasibility of retaining a community facility on the site as part of this process. Interested parties will be invited to submit proposals for the site and as part of this they will be able to present a package that includes the provision of a new community centre.

Question 1 - Submitted by Councillor Lepori

“Does the Executive Member for Finance believe that the social care sector will be better or worse off in Trafford following the Chancellor's first budget?”

Response

The Chancellor's Autumn Statement included reference to some additional specific funding for adult social care of £600m nationally. At the moment there is further work being undertaken to determine the basis that this will be allocated so we don't know the precise level the Council will receive.

It is expected though that a large proportion of any additional funding will be required to support the wage pressures providers will face in keeping pace with the Real and National Living wage levels which are now set to rise by 5% and 6.7% respectively.

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We also acknowledge that the sector will also face significant financial pressure caused by the changes to employers National Insurance contributions and we continue to lobby Government to mitigate any financial burden this creates.

Question 4 - Submitted by Councillor Evans

"I am asking the Leader of the Council, Councillor Ross, to provide clarification regarding the vetting procedures for the 296 single male migrants currently being housed at the Cresta Court, as referenced in recent communications from the MP for Altrincham and Sale West and this Council.

While assurances have been made that these individuals have undergone security checks, the majority of Altrincham residents have no confidence in these statements. Given the significant challenges involved in obtaining Overseas Criminal Record checks, particularly from countries with which the UK does not maintain strong diplomatic relations, coupled with the fact that up to 98% of arrivals are reported to have no passports or identification documents, these concerns are understandably amplified.

Could you please provide more detailed information on the specific checks and procedures that have been undertaken on these individuals to reassure the community and address the concerns raised by both residents and elected representatives?"

Response

This is a matter for the Home Office and I have asked officers to send it to them. Should we receive a response we will update our Frequently Asked Questions.

Question 2 - Submitted by Councillor Brophy

"Greater Manchester, is an area with one of the lowest number of EV charging points per 100,000 population in the UK. Additionally, the Northwest of England has a population with fewer driveways than the national average (53% compared to 40% nationwide) and therefore a greater need for public EV charging points.

Please would the relevant Executive member inform me of the measures Trafford Council is taking to install EV charging points across Trafford to promote the uptake of electric cars, particularly measures that could help residents who don't have a driveway?"

Response

Parking and charging availability are a key barrier to improving the uptake of electric vehicles (EV'S). We've worked hard to improve our offer but there is more to do.

When compared with GM and other districts, we've significantly higher rapid chargers per 100,000 population (46.7 compared with 16.3 at a GM level). We've made this possible through:

- Prioritising the installation of Electric Charge Points's in our car parks via council capital funding.
- Working with a private operator, Be.EV, to attract their investment in facilities across anticipated areas of high demand.
- Working with TfGM to develop and deliver the GM EV Strategy.

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Our distribution is predominantly destination charging along major trunk roads and we expect the demand for equitable and accessible public on street charging solutions to increase significantly. We're working to develop a proposal to trial on street and hub locations – required in Trafford. The proposal includes enabling infrastructure to allow residents to charge from specially adapted street furniture, where it is safe to do so. We expect deployment to start at trial locations (yet to be determined) in 2025, funding dependent.

Mass adoption of EV and other low emission vehicles, with lower running costs may also lead to an unsustainable increase in private vehicle mileage, impacting on levels of traffic congestion. Therefore as part of our work to improve air quality and health, we're also leading active travel projects and support regional public transport and active travel campaigns.