

Follow-up Written Answers from Overview and Scrutiny Committee 17 March 2022

Agenda Item 5

Place Portfolio Holders Update

Question 1 – Energy Efficiency - Members asked whether the Council would review lighting and the use of LED lights in newly constructed houses and extensions. It was confirmed that most homes already had LED lighting and that LED lighting was used as standard on new buildings. Building Control would need to be consulted regarding the use of LED lighting in extensions.

Members also asked about the installation of Electric Vehicle chargers in extensions; this question would also be answered after the meeting.

Written Answer

LED Lightbulbs and household extensions

Part L of the Building Regulations which covers carbon savings in development requires that any household extensions achieve at least 75% of its lighting from energy efficient bulbs. This can only apply to the extension and not the whole house. Proposals to retrofit energy efficient lighting in the rest of the property where an extension has been added have as yet not been included in the regulations. However, it should be mentioned that the availability of LED bulbs is now widespread and their takeup is being driven by strong market demand as householders seek to reduce their household bills and carbon emissions. Policy CCF2 of the DMP requires a 19% energy saving from Part L of the Building Regulations but only applies to new dwellings not extensions and so this essentially requires all new dwellings to have all lights as LED plus various other energy efficiency measures and inclusion of renewables.

Requirement to add EV charging point when household extension being undertaken
Policy TAP1 of the DMP requires new development to include electric vehicle charging points and aligns with the County Council's own guidance which includes the requirement for all new houses and 20% of flats or apartments. We have not historically included the requirement for a household extension to include a charging point which may appear onerous where the household does not own an electric vehicle. Furthermore, many household extensions are built under permitted development where no planning permission or conditions can be applied. However, it may be a matter where encouragement could be given through the use of informatives, particularly on applications for new garages.

Question 2 – Council Projects - Members would like to see the underlying financial outturn on the completion of projects.

Written Answer

The link below links to the Place Programmes Dashboard in the ModGov library. This shows information on council projects.

<https://reigate-bansteadintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s19436/03.%20March%20Place%20Programmes%20Dashboard.pdf>

Question 3 – Refuse, Recycling and Cleansing - Members referenced the recycling data stating that 58% had been reached for doorstep recycling and asked if the data could be broken down e.g., what is the recycling rate for household rubbish excluding garden waste. The Leader confirmed that the service was looking to provide a wider recycling service for flats and the Head of Neighbourhood Services could provide a more detailed written answer after the meeting.

Written Answer

Reigate and Banstead Council collected around 31,100t of recycling in FY 2021/22.

Composition was as follows :-

Garden waste 34% (10,500t).
Paper 23% (7,200t)
DMR (glass, plastics, cans) 22% (6,900t)
Food Waste 16% (5050t)
Textiles 1% (350t)
Sweepings 3% (800t)
Other 1% (300t)

This information is available to the public on the DEFRA website 'Wastedataflow'.

Question 4 - Refuse, Recycling and Cleansing – The Chair added that it would be helpful for ward Members to be informed which flats were included in the recycling programme and which flats remained to be addressed.

Written Answer

There are approximately 13,500 flats and properties with communal bin stores in the Borough. At the moment around 8,000 have access to full kerbside recycling services.

A database of flats is maintained by the Recycling Officer, the document is 'live' and is regularly updated as flats are added to the service. Details of recycling services

available to individual properties can be obtained directly from Ian on request, furthermore this affords Members the opportunity to be apprised of the latest contact between occupants, the freeholder and landlords.

New build and converted flats are added to the full kerbside service when they are first occupied.

Minute 79

Quarter 3 Performance Report 21/22

Question 1 – Affordable Housing Completion – The Project and Performance Team Leader would check the percentage of affordable housing on the RNIB site.

Written Answer

Colleagues in Planning have advised that there are affordable units at the RNIB site in Earlswood. The units are supported housing for RNIB and SeeAbility clients. Planning are currently in the process of confirming the progress on site and the total number of affordable completions therein. The original legal agreement details 25 supported units at the site, with 13 in Reigate and Banstead and 12 in Tandridge.

Minute 79

Quarter 3 Performance Report 21/22

Question 2 – KPI Benchmarking - Members enquired whether KPIs could be benchmarked against neighbouring boroughs. It was agreed that this should be possible, and the Projects and Performance Team would work with the Portfolio Holder to explore this.

Written Answer

The Project and Performance Team Leader would look to provide comparison of performance with other local authorities – including our neighbours – where the data exists and where it offers a meaningful comparison. There would be a need to establish whether the performance data exists publicly and, if not, whether our neighbouring authorities would be prepared to share it with us for the purpose of public benchmarking. This could take some time to achieve but the Project and Performance Team Leader has begun work on this issue.

Question 3 – Service Budgets - Members asked about the delay in capital spending on Beech House due to vacancies in the building, and its impact on the revenue budget. The Interim Head of Finance undertook to provide a more detailed follow-up written answer after the meeting.

Written Answer

The budget of £3.0 million was originally allocated in the Capital Programme in anticipation of a requirement for extensive refurbishment of Beech House when the sole tenant's lease was renewed. The budget was based on that tenant's requirements and included extensive improvements and refurbishment works.

Following the expiry of the lease (without extension following the pandemic) in 2021 the Property Team is now looking at a broader range of options for the site as part of wider asset management plans within the Financial Sustainability Programme.

A report that considers the options for the site going forward will be considered by CVESC when the options review is complete.

In the meantime, short-term lets are being offered to help reduce void costs wherever possible.

This capital programme slippage due to the delay in carrying out the works means that the borrowing to fund the works has also been delayed, resulting in a short-term reduced cost of interest on borrowing in the revenue budget compared to that originally anticipated when the treasury budgets were approved. Void costs and rent income shortfalls are being addressed as part of in-year budget management.