

Public Questions – March Council

1. Sedgley Park is a deprived area in terms of care and investment from the Council. I prefer to be positive so I celebrate our huge pavement, Knowing how glorious it could be but alas I'm not sure you've even done work in the pavement in the past - it doesn't look it! Not only is it uneven, goes from broken concrete to slabs and back, and has that's before you navigate carefully around the rubbish, overflowing bins and cars, shop signs and other hazards lying in wait. Summer is hell. We have no parking so there's little foot flow, yes people park illegally but the traffic flows as normal it has zero impact. Parking keeps our businesses viable, we've asked before to fix the pavement so we can park properly and have bin sheds and some state took to a shabby area but it's always rejected. My question is what will it take for sedgley park to be invested into when you absolutely have the funds for us! **Martine Vaizman**

If you can provide us with precise location(s) of concern within Sedgley Park the area Highway Inspector will be happy to meet with you on site to discuss your concerns and agree what action can be taken.

2. The Conservative group have been clear on the big issues this year, voting against the greenbelt-destroying Places for Everyone plan, the business-destroying Clean Air Zone, the taxi-trade-destroying Common Minimum Licensing Standards and the neighbourhood-destroying Accelerated Land Disposal land sell-offs.

Meanwhile, Labour in Elton have voted through the Places for Everyone plan, the Clean Air Zone, the Common Minimum Licensing Standards and the Accelerated Land Disposal schemes and have waited for public outrage and all-out elections to do a screeching u-turn on most of these. Can the Leader of the Council please clarify why anyone should see any shred of credibility left in this Labour administration?
Andrew Luxton

Places for Everyone

There is a statutory requirement for local authorities to have an up-to-date development plan in place that identifies enough land to accommodate new homes and jobs for a growing population.

Places for Everyone will help to deliver some of our key priorities. We want to see better homes, better jobs, and better transport for everyone in our boroughs; we want to make the best use of brownfield land while protecting green spaces including Green Belt land from unplanned development; we want development to happen in places where we want it, supported by necessary infrastructure and not be dictated by planning appeals that will result in unplanned and unmanaged development that doesn't include the infrastructure necessary to support growth.

As a long-term plan for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth it will enable us to build back from the COVID-19 pandemic and tackles the inequality experienced by so many of our communities.

In terms of housing, the starting point for housing targets is the Government's standard methodology for calculating Local Housing Needs (LHN). This is designed to provide local authorities with a clear and consistent understanding of the number of new homes needed in an area. The methodology uses the ONS 2014-based household projections.

For Bury, it gives a LHN target of 9,456 homes over the plan period (591 homes per year). As a joint plan, the PfE process allows for a redistribution of this baseline housing target across the nine Council areas meaning that Bury has been able to significantly reduce its housing target by over 2,000 and minimise the impact on the Green Belt.

CAZ

Like many areas across the country, there are illegal levels of air pollution on local roads across all ten local authority areas in Greater Manchester. Air pollution is a public health crisis that is linked to a range of very serious health conditions and contributes towards 1,200 deaths a year in Greater Manchester.

The original Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan was designed to comply with a legal direction from government issued before the coronavirus pandemic. Since then, there have been significant changes in the market for vehicles compliant with Clean Air Zone standards, particularly vans, and the cost of living has increased.

We're now working with government to deliver a new Clean Air Plan for Greater Manchester by July 2022.

Minimum Licencing Standards

Taxis and private hire services are a crucial part of our transport network. They provide an important service, particularly for those without access to a car and people who don't live or work near other parts of the public transport network.

Greater Manchester's taxi and private hire Minimum Licensing Standards are designed to make services safer and more customer-focused, with high environmental and accessibility standards. They are intended to give peace of mind to every customer that the vehicle, driver and operator have been checked to a high standard.

Accelerated Land Disposal

The Accelerated Land Disposal programme has been necessary to enable the Council to achieve its revenue savings targets through the Transformation Programme, as well as generate capital receipts that can enable other Council projects to be supported.

In some cases, the disposals will also support community groups to take on the management of property assets via community asset transfers. This will allow residents to continue to enjoy the benefits they provide to local communities. This will also support the Council's 'Let's Do It Real' strategy –

the work around the Neighbourhood Model and Team Bury's Community Wealth Building Framework.

3. The plans for Radcliffe Regeneration have now been made public. These have again raised many concerned residents as once again we have not been told the whole truth. We were 'led to believe' that the library space in the hub would be bigger, that is untrue. Current tenants of shops were told that they would be rehoused, they are now being told this is not going to happen. Does the council leader think it's acceptable to continue telling lies to residents in order to gain support for a badly thought out plan and an abuse of public money. **Judith Sheppard**

The proposed new library is significantly larger than the existing space which houses library services. Plans are on display in the Regeneration office in Radcliffe and via the Council website for anyone who wishes to view the design information. Room sizes are included on these plans. We encourage anyone with concerns regarding the proposed designs to contact the Regeneration Project Team, who will be able to address any confusion or mis-information.

Where appropriate, current tenants of the South Block on Dale Street are being supported by Council officers to relocate into alternative premises. This has proved challenging in Radcliffe, as most of the vacant retail space in the town centre is in private ownership, and some landlords have not been responsive when approached by the Council. This work is ongoing, as is our commitment to supporting these businesses. The updated construction programme has evidenced the need to create some temporary decant space, and again, Council officers are working with the effected businesses to ensure they are in agreement with the proposed plans and financially compensated.

The information we have shared is factually accurate. Our proposed construction programme is being guided by the results of thorough site investigations and surveys, logistics planning and co-ordination of wider construction works in the town. Moreover, planning our project work must be guided by what is demonstrably practical and safe. Expenditure of the project's capital budget is subject to rigorous monitoring and evaluation, and must continually demonstrate that robust due process has been followed in terms of compliant public sector procurement that offers value for money. Assessment of the cost plan and budget management is being undertaken internally, via the capital monitoring group and programme board, and externally by the DHLUC Levelling Up Fund Team

Supplementary question There is strong public feeling about the plans for the library building. I do not accept that the opinion to move the library facilities is supported by the majority of residents. Despite numerous objections why have residents once again been ignored? Another example are the proposals to use the basement of the market hall to host community events, civic and private functions. This is another badly thought-out plan, not what residents had in mind and is certainly not good use of public money. Does the councillor leader honestly

believe that the residents of Radcliffe should celebrate in a damp, cold, unlit, unsuitable and unsafe dungeon?

The Project Team are working hard to ensure that residents have the opportunity to review the proposals for the town centre and express their views. The Regeneration Office, located in the town center and open every Tuesday and Thursday, operates with an open door policy, whereby residents have free access to design information and members of the project team. The response thus far from the majority of visitors to the Regeneration office, and community groups engaged as part of the design development, has been positive. Comments and concerns relating to the existing library building are being considered as part of the feasibility work for the new enterprise centre. Every resident who has contacted the Regeneration Team has been offered a 1:1 meeting to discuss their specific concerns.

Proposals for the Market Basement have met the BCR threshold in representing value for money. The refurbishment work and planned backlog maintenance remediation, will ensure the space is structurally sound, wind and water tight; fully accessible and designed to meet all required building standards. An programme of cultural and community events is being developed and will be shared at the earliest opportunity. Whilst the current appearance and condition of the Market Basement can render it difficult to envisage how the refurbishment work will transform this space, we encourage residents to reserve judgement on the appearance of the basement, until developed designs are presented at the end of RIBA Stage Three in the coming months.

4. Could the council please do something about the crossings on bury new Road in Prestwich there are too many crossings can I ask that crossing outside the white horse pub be moved to the cross roads near Fairfax Road this would be safer crossing on Bury New Road ? **Andy Hay**

Pedestrian crossings are provided to assist vulnerable road users cross the road safely. They are provided where there is a desire line for pedestrians and where, without them they would struggle to cross the road due to the volume of traffic. Bury New Road is an A road which carries considerable traffic. But it also goes through Prestwich Town centre where there is considerable pedestrian traffic. In order for the pedestrians to move round the town centre in safety crossings are provided at locations where there is demand for pedestrians to cross the road. It is therefore not appropriate to remove pedestrian crossings from Prestwich as this would increase the danger for pedestrians.

The junction of Bury New Road and Fairfax Street had pedestrian crossing facilities across all arms of the junction so pedestrians have safe places to cross at this location also.

5. I have been approached by Ainsworth residents regarding the state of the unadopted road on Well Street. This road has a high volume of traffic on a daily basis due to school drop off. Residents are frustrated as the council promised to resurface the road as the state of the road has got understandably worse. When will the council honour their promise to the residents of Ainsworth. **Carol Bernstein**

I am not aware of any agreement that Bury Council has made to resurface Well Street, Ainsworth.

Well Street is not recorded as a highway maintainable at public expense, therefore we cannot commit any public expenditure to carrying out maintenance on it.

Highways such as this are generally the responsibility of a designated Street Manager, landowner or frontagers, which is a private matter for those interested to ascertain.

Submitted after the deadline:

The council announced in its recent budget £500,000 for new road safety initiatives. I know that Cllrs Charlotte Morris and Martin Hayes have been campaigning for a new road crossing on Tottington road in response to concerns raised by residents. Can the council confirm the projects that this money will fund and whether or not Tottington road will be included? Kyle Finnegan

Answer – A programme of road safety interventions is currently being drafted following confirmation of the funding allocation. Several locations across the borough are being considered for the introduction of pedestrian crossing facilities. These facilities may take the form of pedestrian refuge islands, zebra crossings or puffin crossings. The type of facility depends on the road environment, vehicle flows and pedestrian demand and whether there has been any recorded injury collisions. Tottington Road is being considered as part of this preliminary investigation work. As with all traffic management schemes consultation will need to take place with any properties that are affected by the proposals.