

MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

<p>Question 1</p>	<p>Cllr James Frecknall to ask Cllr Eric Buckmaster, Executive Member for Wellbeing:</p>
<p>In a recent publication by The Lancet, 1 in 6 young people reported mental health problems - an increase from 1 in 10 in 2017. This figure, based on results from England's Mental Health of Children and Young People Survey (MHCYP), brings into stark reality the often unseen impact of the pandemic on the youngest members of our society. Children with probable mental health problems are more than twice as likely to live in households newly falling behind with their bills, rent, or mortgage payments and that one in ten children and young people reported that during the pandemic their family did not have enough to eat or have had an increased reliance on foodbanks when compared with before the pandemic. While much of the responsibility of Child Mental Health commissioning rests with HCC, what help or support networks are available from East Hertfordshire District Council to help protect the mental health of our future generations?</p>	
<p>Question 2</p>	<p>Cllr Ben Crystall to ask Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:</p>
<p>According to figures in the latest East Herts Council analysis: "2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report for East Herts", in 2019 nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) levels breached the annual UK legal limit at numerous locations in and near to current AQMAs, namely: Hockerill Junction, Northgate End, Station Road and London Road in Bishop's Stortford; at Bell Street and London Road in Sawbridgeworth; and at Ware Road, Old Cross, North Road and West Street in Hertford. Some sites in Bishop's Stortford were more than 50% above the UK limit and at about half of the locations tested, the year-on-year trend in NO₂ concentrations is rising.</p>	

Although the 2020 figures are likely to be lower due to COVID, the latest DfT data shows that during September 2020, UK traffic levels reached pre-lockdown levels, so it is likely that we will return to usual traffic levels by summer. In addition our towns are seeing large numbers of new developments, bringing more gas boilers and more combustion engines.

Given these facts, what evidence do we have that council actions to reduce NO2 air pollution within AQMAs are effective? And is it time for the council to investigate innovative ideas to help reduce air pollution at targeted sites?

Question 3

Cllr Joseph Dumont to ask Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability:

There are three air quality management areas in East Herts, in Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth and Hertford respectively. The last available pollution readings are from 2019. Given that there has recently been a great deal of congestion in one of those areas due to a new development being built, it is imperative that we get real-time data or at the very least more regular updates regarding levels of air pollutants in these pollution hotspots. Increasing public awareness of this issue can also help change behaviour but we need more up to date data to do this effectively. Can I therefore ask if the council has any plans to improve air quality monitoring in the three AQMA areas and in the District as a whole, and if not, why not?

Question 4

Cllr Chris Wilson to ask Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability

In October 2019, I proposed a motion that, once amended, was passed unanimously regarding the provision of an On Demand or Demand Responsive Transport service for East Herts. I understand that there has been some progress towards achieving this aim and would be grateful if Cllr McAndrew could provide an update with regards to its progress and his opinion on why the District would benefit from it.

Question 5	Cllr Ian Devonshire to ask Cllr Graham McAndrew, Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability
Please can you give this council an update on the number of households that have signed up for the garden waste bin collections? Does this give any early indication on the total number of households that will subscribe by April and is this in line with the initial expectations?	
Question 6	Cllr Sophie Bell to ask Cllr Peter Boylan, Executive Member for Neighbourhoods
What is the council doing to ensure that housing associations continue to respond to the needs of their residents during the pandemic?	