

Date of Full Council meeting	Question/Petition	Response	
Wednesday 18 September 2024	<p><b>PETITION:</b> Motorists are taking advantage and speeding down Turpentine Lane at a dangerous speed, can the Council please help make this road safer by providing signage, speed camera or speed bumps to deter this extremely dangerous behaviour which has already caused accidents and there is great concern by local residents and the community regarding our safety. Over 300 local residents have signed the petition I present to you today to ask that the council take action. Peabody also agreed to install speed bumps along Peabody Avenue to address the speeding problem, but they still haven't actioned this work, which is also desperately needed. Will the Council support local residents by providing speed bumps and signage and work with Peabody to make our area safer?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality advised that Council officers have met and been in discussions with residents on the issues faced with Turpentine Lane. This information is being considered in developing options to calm traffic locally.</p> <p>The likely option would include 'virtual cushions' - examples can be seen on St Georges Drive, or installation of coloured high friction material at selected intervals (mimicking raised tables).</p> <p>The installation of measures to raise the carriageway had been considered but given the proximity of residential dwellings &lt;1.5m, this type of feature could generate issue with ground borne vibration.</p> <p>Council officers are working on this and more details will be provided in early October for comment he will ensure the information is shared with the resident.</p>	
Wednesday 18 September 2024	<p>I see what should be marvellous landmark buildings being torn down all over Westminster and replaced with characterless luxury flats which often stand practically empty. Why has Westminster allowed this rampant destruction of the city's history to take place and how many more of these luxury monstrosities do we need in this dire housing crisis? Why do you continue to allow this destructive, ahistorical practice to continue?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development stated that as a Council we are proud of our heritage and the exceptional quality of the built environment and do not support its 'rampant destruction'. He went on to say that much of Westminster is protected by conservation area status, with a very high number of listed buildings and this offers a significant level of protection to those buildings which contribute to the city's special character, history and economic attractiveness. The Council also recognise the urgent need to reduce the impact of redevelopment on climate change and recognise that in the past there has, on occasion, been redevelopment overly reliant on significant demolition. Contemporary assessment means that proposals have to be fully justified in terms of environmental impacts or public benefits.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member advised that the Council is therefore currently undertaking a partial review of the City Plan which has two key areas of focus – prioritising retrofit and strengthening opportunities for truly affordable housing. The Council's retrofit-first policy, one of the country's first retrofit policies, will require developers to consider the environmental impact of demolition and investigate options for retrofit prior to considering demolition, strengthening the Council's approach to this issue.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member advised that the Council is also committed to doing more to address the housing crisis and in particular want to support development where it will help deliver affordable housing for those most in need. The Council's new policy will therefore also require developers to help the Council meet increasing demand for more genuinely affordable housing.</p> <p>In order to deliver on this and other priorities the Cabinet Member also recognised there will always be occasions where some level of demolition is acceptable. However, the Council's approach is only to permit this where it has been fully justified and will deliver significant public benefits. The City Plan policy is in draft and will be subject to independent examination by a planning inspector and cannot be used in planning decision making until this process is complete. Once it has been finalised, the Council will be able to strengthen its response through planning policy, as set out.</p>	
Wednesday 18 September 2024	<p>Can something be done about bike riders jumping lights (especially at pedestrian crossings)? Crossing Bayswater Road while walking my dog to the Park feels like risking my life sometimes. Lime bikes, at full speed, racing through red lights.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality assured the resident that road safety was of the utmost priority to him.</p> <p>All cyclists, including Lime riders or any other bike hire users are required to follow the Highway Code and adhere to signals. Such offences are a breach of the Road Traffic Act (1988) and is under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). Reporting a road traffic offence to the MPS can be done via the MPS website and he encouraged the resident to do this when they witness an incident like the one they described.</p> <p>Westminster is working hard to manage the scourge of e-bikes on the streets by working with stakeholders, including TfL and bike operating companies, to find the most suitable solution for issues of poor rider behaviour in Westminster.</p> <p>The Council needs a proper regulatory framework to be brought forward from Government to bring forward legislation that would enable local councils to control the use of e-bikes and to allow them to act against bike companies and riders with poor behaviour.</p>	

<p>Wednesday 18 September 2024</p>	<p>Westminster Council has proposed to close Warwick Way to eastbound traffic from Belgrave Road with only one alternative route to Rochester Row (and to Westminster ) entailing a diversion five times longer through narrow side-streets and disrupting a key NHS Medical Centre.</p> <p>A Consultation was carried out in 2023; over 92% of those responding objected to the proposal. Local businesses similarly object along Warwick Way and Rochester Row, Residents Associations object, Councillors object.</p> <p>Why is the Council pursuing this proposal when the overwhelming viewpoint of residents and businesses in the area object to what I would describe as an unreasonable proposal?</p> <p>Will the Council pause on this proposal and consider alternatives that maintain a two-way vehicle use for Warwick Way accessing Pimlico?</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality advised that during the Covid-19 pandemic, a temporary al fresco scheme was implemented on Warwick Way and Churton Street, in summer 2020, to help the local hospitality businesses reopen after periods of lockdown.</p> <p>The Council carried out a survey on the continuation of the temporary scheme and a possible permanent scheme in 2021, which showed that over 83% of the residents and businesses were supportive of the proposals. An early Stage 1 informal public consultation was then undertaken for 8 weeks from 15th December 2022 to 9th February 2023. 722 responses showed overwhelming support for the Warwick Way proposal and the Churton Street proposal.</p> <p>The Traffic Management Order consultation sought views on specific traffic direction and kerbside controls. The Council received 972 pro forma objections, which were the same response and 146 individual objections. 8 neutral and 91 support individual responses were also received.</p> <p>Common concerns were around traffic displacement, air pollution and al fresco dining. The Council has responded comprehensively and shared all its background information to support their consideration and decision. Local diversion routes are 2-3 minutes additional journey time and are unlikely to be done via motor vehicle given the short nature of them, although they can be if required. Local councillors are supportive of the scheme, as is the Pimlico Neighbourhood Forum.</p> <p>On balance, the scheme delivers upon the Council's Fairer Westminster strategy in supporting local businesses, promoting active travel with the inclusion of a cycle lane and stands, improving accessibility and junction crossings, increasing street trees and improving the pedestrian experience. It is also supported by the Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's City Plan.</p> <p>Given the thorough consultation exercises, it is now time for delivery, having listened and responded to comments which the Council can include within the scheme.</p>	
<p>Wednesday 18 September 2024</p>	<p>I moved to London in 2018 and love to live in Westminster. I was lucky to rent my flat from a private landlord and in general we have a good relationship. Still, rents in Westminster are too high-especially one bedroom flats-and they are not even in a good condition. I do ask the Council and the Government to set rent limits for private landlords and these limits should be related to the standard of a flat. It's 2024 and energy prices are high:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-It's unbelievable landlords are not forced to install double or triple glazed windows in older buildings-this would reduce heating costs immensely.</li> <li>-It's as well unbelievable that many flats in converted terraced houses are zero insulated</li> </ul> <p>This must be reflected in rent prices! Landlords can not just increase rents because their mortgage got put up. People renting from private landlords need more protection/support and I kindly ask you to pay attention to this.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for Renters and Regeneration responded by stating that the Council recognises that private rents are very high across Westminster and are rising. Data (Hometrack) shows that the cost of a one bedroom flat in Westminster has gone up by 10% since April 2023 and 43% since April 2021. The price of rents is not an area where the Council has any powers however, although tenants have the right to challenge excessively high rent increases (if they are higher than other market rents) and the Council's Tenancy Relations service can help them with this.</p> <p>The Council's private housing team are at the forefront of ensuring rental accommodation is safe, free from hazards and well managed. This includes ensuring properties are energy efficient to reduce the impact of both cold in the winter months and excess heat in the summer. Where concerns about energy efficiency are identified, the Private Sector Housing Team have powers to ensure landlords take action to improve energy efficiency; this includes improving heating, ventilation, windows and insulation.</p> <p>The Council have recently recruited a dedicated energy efficiency enforcement officer to ensure that minimum energy efficiency standards are being met in rental accommodation and the Council are exploring how selective property licensing can be used to improve energy efficiency standards and how it can support landlords make improvements.</p> <p>There are often challenges in flats where walls and windows are under the control of the freeholder or where the building is listed. If a problem is identified the Council's team of Environmental Health Officers will determine the most practical solution to improve energy efficiency. As an example, it is quite common for Environmental Health Officers to require secondary window glazing in rented flats to reduce the amount of heat loss, particularly in listed buildings.</p> <p>The Council also provides a Home Energy Advice service to help make homes more energy-efficient and reduce residents' energy bills. Residents can book a visit from a Green Doctor to identify what measures can be taken to reduce the amount energy used and identify support that be provided.</p> <p>The Council fully supports the new Renters Rights Bill which should be enacted in the summer. This will abolish 'no fault' evictions, which means landlords can only evict tenants in certain circumstances and this should help them to challenge unfair rent increases and poor quality properties. The Bill also aims to improve housing quality by bringing in a new Decent Homes Standards for the private rented sector, with councils enforcing this, and to prevent 'bidding wars' for private rented properties so landlords or agents have to stick to a published rent for a property.</p>	
<p>Wednesday 18 September 2024</p>	<p>Why can't a permanent resolution be found to the issue of refuse from Clarence Gate/Glentworth Street being left/collected on Chagford Street? Glentworth Street is a wide street with pavements both sides whilst Chagford Street is a narrow street with a pavement on only one side.</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member for City Management and Air Quality explained that on Glentworth Street - the section between Melcombe St and Ivor Place – there is a very large mansion block called Clarence Gate Gardens.</p> <p>The general waste and recycling storage areas for this block are located at the back end of their building at lower basement level, leading to Chagford St and Siddons Lane. There is a historic agreement in place for the building porters and residents to present their waste on these side streets for collections, as the pavement on Glentworth Street is quite narrow and any waste being presented there would obstruct the flow of pedestrians.</p> <p>He believed that there has been a misunderstanding in the past few weeks between the residents of the block and the Council's waste contract officers about the number of waste collections in the area.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member has been informed that these waste collections are now occurring five days a week, which should help with the issue of waste accumulating on the street.</p> <p>He assured the resident that the Council wants to make it as easy as possible for all residents to dispose of their household waste responsibly and efficiently, and in this case this is the most effective method of waste disposal.</p>	