



CAMDEN COUNCIL ELECTIONS, 5 MAY 2022

QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

PLEASE FILL IN QUESTIONNAIRE (space expands as necessary)

and EMAIL RESPONSE to: info@brag.org.uk

by 17:00 on Monday 18 April 2022

What is your name?

FARRELL MONK

Which Camden ward do you wish to represent?

Bloomsbury

GENERAL

1	<p>Do you live in the ward you wish to represent? If not where?</p> <p>I live on the east side of Southampton Row, between Russell Square and Holborn tube stations. I could not be closer to the Bloomsbury Ward without being inside of it!</p>
2	<p>Do you support involving many more Councillors in all Council decision-making than under the Cabinet / Executive arrangement?</p> <p>Absolutely. Councillors represent the local community on their issues. Current set up means that councillors can only provide a certain amount of scrutiny from the people that represent the decisions that affect their constituents. The more representation we have across the decision-making process, the better it is for the people.</p>
3	<p>How would you improve telephone access to Camden's departments and officers?</p> <p>I am fully aware of the issues of the council telephone system, it is clear it requires improvement. I believe that although it</p>

would be difficult, the priority should be the areas where residents may not have the means to otherwise access key council facilities. For example, I am aware how much of an issue housing is and the living conditions of residents, therefore this would be one area to focus on.

HERITAGE

4 How would you promote enforcement of Planning and Conservation policies?

Attending the hustings organised by the Save Museum Street group has clearly outlined the unhappiness at the planning and conservation policies. Many residents have outlined that enforcement is a huge issue. Residents have been battling with the council and trouble makers for much longer than necessary when the council should be on their side. Conservation should be given a lot more resource given the historic nature of the area. I feel that there needs to be a more proactive approach from enforcement officers. Being clear in what is required from developers, residents and businesses about what exactly is expected from them and what happens if they fall foul.

Enforcement Officers can spend more time managing the people and process rather than spend more time catching up with complaints.

PLANNING / DEVELOPMENT

5 How would you improve scrutiny of Councillors' potential conflicts of interest, especially with regard to planning decisions?

We do not believe that Cabinet members should have a vote on the Planning Committee. Planning is a quasi-judicial function and any Cabinet members should have an advisory/observer status only.

6	<p>Should Planning Obligation funds (s106) for developments be allocated only after agreement with the local adjacent community?</p> <p>There is definitely a case for greater consultation with the community on the use of S106 (and CIL) funds. In areas where there are Neighbourhood Development Forums there is an existing requirement for consultation, but this often does not happen.</p>
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TRAFFIC / TRANSPORT

7	<p>Do you think there should be an independent review of the outcomes of Low traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in Camden?</p> <p>After hearing from local residents at the recent hustings about LTNs, it is clear that these LTNs are often introduced with out consulting the residents they affect.</p> <p>As we have said, it is always useful to review innovations after a while. It would be helpful to have a clear statement of the desired outcomes of each LTN before they are introduced. This would enable any review to take place against a clear set of criteria. Independent reviews could be helpful if the outcomes are contested.</p> <p>A Liberal Democrat Camden would engage all Camden schools in reducing school-run traffic, encouraging "walking buses", safe cycle and bus routes and "school streets" to tackle air pollution near schools.</p>
8	<p>Do you support increased pollution monitoring and regular publishing of results for areas of congestion?</p> <p>Of course! Especially in Bloomsbury. Congestion is a problem in our area and therefore pollution is too. Apart from the environmental impact, we should not forget the impact to resident's health as a result. We will push for more monitoring of pollution levels and aim to reduce them over time.</p>

9	<p>How will you reduce the negative impact of road closures and reduced numbers of bus stops on people with mobility issues?</p> <p>As someone who is a solely a public transport user, it is highly frustrating when bus stops are closed at short notice. This is only a small burden on myself, however. I can only imagine the huge impact this can have on people with mobility issues. Not forgetting the disruption on the lives of all transport users in the area.</p> <p>I, like the Liberal Democrats, supports any measure to safeguard the independence and inclusion of all people in society. Transport for all people is a large part of this and we seek to protect that, through all means. Whether it is discounted travel or freedom passes.</p> <p>I'd seek to work with TfL to improve access and increase visibility and notice of essential works to improve networks to minimise disruption.</p>
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CRIME

10	<p>Do you support monitored CCTV and increased police presence in your ward?</p> <p>Policing is not a council responsibility. However, understand crime is an issue for residents. Their feeling of safety is part of the Bloomsbury experience. I believe our focus should be on the causes of crime and stop it before it happens. Research has always suggested that deterrents and the 'fear of being caught' does little to deter crime. Of course more CCTV are essential to keeping us safer and would support that. However, we'd work with local groups, charities and other people to increase support for young people to increase their opportunities in life to deter them from committing any acts of crime of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>As a person that has worked for charities that work with young people for a long time, I am aware of the impact that these can have on education, aspiration building and their potential. I know what it takes to give a much brighter future to people to avoid crime and keep the area safer for all.</p>
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ENVIRONMENT

11	<p>What enforcement measures will you take to reduce littering and fly-tipping in your ward?</p> <p>It is clear from my experience of living on the high street how much fly tipping is an issue. It's everywhere. I've seen every form of furniture and appliances being discarded on our pavements. There needs to be a serious rethink of how rubbish is collected from these areas and enforcement of people who break the rules and make our beautiful neighbourhood dirty.</p> <p>Clearer information needs to be provided on the website and in council communications for residents to know what to do. I know first-hand how difficult it is as a relatively new tenant to understand what to do. Better visibility of the rules and the services should be made aware and clearer, stop the littering before it happens.</p>
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HOUSING

12	<p>How do you propose to tackle bad housing conditions in Council and private rented accommodation?</p> <p>Camden's housing tenants struggle with a failed repairs system. In 2021 the Housing Ombudsman found Camden to be the third worst social landlord in the country for tackling damp and mould, while leaseholders continue to be hit by high charges.</p> <p>A Liberal Democrat Camden would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overhaul the Council's failing housing repairs system, especially providing additional support for those unable to use the Council's online system• Set up a dedicated fund to support victims of the Building Safety Crisis in Camden's private rented sector• Take proactive action against negligent and exploitative landlords, especially in the poorest parts of our borough, and work with the voluntary and community sector to ensure advice is readily available to private renters and council leaseholders.
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COUNCIL SPENDING

13	<p>Would you support quarterly publishing of disbursements by the Council to third party service providers?</p> <p>I am always in favour of more transparency. We work for you. A review should take place.</p>
14	<p>Do you support allocation of Council expenditure being decided by a vote of all elected Councillors?</p> <p>This is the current council budget process.</p>
15	<p>Would you support giving the opinions of local residents and businesses a greater weighting in changes affecting their local area?</p> <p>Yes. I am totally with the Liberal Democrat policy of to restore Area Forums - regular community meetings led by local councillors - to engage more people in local issues and empower them to drive council decision-making.</p> <p>We would also establish a fund to enable communities and voluntary organisations to plan and deliver local actions to tackle climate change; open up the Camden Climate Citizen Panel and ask councillors to be leaders in engaging their communities to make local change.</p>
16	<p>How should the Council better support shops and small businesses in South Camden?</p> <p>The pandemic has affected many things in the area, many people have moved away. A lot of workers who were coming into our area every day are now, at least in a small part, working from home. This has had a large impact on the footfall in the area. We need to explore methods to encourage our residents to work from home and reduce travel outside of the area. This could include new co-working spaces, affordable childcare and partnership working with other boroughs where retail spaces span more than one borough.</p> <p>I also plan to work with local business including cafés and restaurants to encourage working and non-working residents</p>

to provide creative initiatives to get people moving around the area again. Create a better sense of community and provide the money flow to stay with in the area.

Liberal Democrat controlled Sutton Council have taken ownership of buildings, created new leisure spaces and introduced hybrid units where council services are combined in the same building as a cafe.

Thank you for answering our questionnaire
Please return by 17:00 on Monday, 18 April 2022
to
info@brag.org.uk

Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group
www.brag.org.uk