



## COUNCIL MEETING - 14 DECEMBER 2023

Councillors of the London Borough of Islington are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **14 December 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

**Acting Head of Paid Service**

### AGENDA

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• The Leader will address the Council;	
• The Leader of the Opposition will then be invited to respond.	
5. Petitions	

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Where a motion concerns an executive function, nothing passed can be actioned until approved by the Executive or an officer with the relevant delegated power.

Members have given notice that they intend to move the following motions in accordance with paragraph 20 in Part 4 of the Constitution:

1. A Call for Peace
2. Standing in solidarity with Islington's diverse community in times of conflict by supporting the cessation of hostilities on all sides
3. Protecting Islington's families through the Childcare Crisis

The Courts have made it clear that the Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it is considering these motions, even if they are motions without legal effect. There is not a general requirement for an equality impact assessment but regard should be had to the equality duty when considering motions.

The equality duty requires Council to have due regard to the need to:

- a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes it unlawful to discriminate etc on the grounds of a protected characteristic.
- b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).

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Despatched : 6 December 2023

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

### COUNCIL MEETING - 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

#### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 28 September 2023 at 7.30 pm.

#### Present:

Bell-Bradford	Hamdache	North
Bossmann-Quarshie	Hayes	Ogunro
Burgess	Heather	O'Halloran
Champion	Hyde	Pandor
Chapman	Ibrahim	Russell
Chowdhury	Jeapes	Shaikh
Clarke	Jegorovas-Armstrong	Staff
Comer-Schwartz	Kay	Turan
Convery	Khondoker	Ward
Craig	Khurana	Wayne
Croft	Mackmurdie	Weekes
Gallagher	McHugh	Williamson
Gilgunn	Nargund	Woolf
Gill	Nathan	Zammit
Graham	Ngongo	

#### The Mayor (Councillor Gary Heather) in the Chair

#### 247 MINUTES

##### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 July 2023 be agreed as a correct record and the Mayor be authorised to sign them.

#### 248 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations were received.

#### 249 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### (i) Apologies

From Cllr Poyser, Klute, Jackson, Cinko-Oner, Gallagher, Spall, O'Sullivan.

(ii) Order of business

The order of business was as per the Agenda.

(iii) Declaration of discussion items

No items were declared.

(iv) Mayor's announcements

The Mayor had attended numerous community festivals, celebrations, and events in the borough over recent months. They interacted with residents, celebrated achievements, and participated in various activities. Highlights of the Mayor's activities included joining Eid celebrations, attending football tournaments and sports awards, unveiling a plaque dedicated to Michael Collins, raising awareness about Bleed Control Kits, and working closely with Voluntary Action Islington to promote volunteering.

The Mayor had also supported students during A-level results day, attended award ceremonies recognising the efforts of council staff and carers, and engaged in various community events. These included the book launch of "Betwixt 2 Shores" by William Henry, about his life journey from Antigua to the UK and his experiences as a black man from the Windrush generation. The Mayor had also participated in walkabouts to promote civic pride in Nag's Head town centre, and had attended the Costermonger's Harvest Festival at Guildhall and St Mary-le-Bow Church with the London Pearly Kings and Queens.

The Mayor had invited Islington Young Mayor and Youth Council, who were in attendance this evening, to the Mayor's parlour in September to discuss their ideas for improving the borough from a young person's perspective.

The Mayor expressed their honour and enjoyment in serving as the Mayor of Islington during this time.

**250 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Leader was pleased to join the Mayor at Streets Fest and A Level results day recently, where they had seen the achievements and enthusiasm of young people.

The Leader expressed horror at the Prime Minister's recent announcement to weaken the government's climate emergency pledges, especially in the context of recent extreme weather events worldwide. The Leader highlighted incidents such as wildfires in Europe, a devastating American wildfire, flooding in Libya, and the UK September heatwave, emphasizing that the climate crisis was an urgent issue with immediate consequences. They criticized the Government for not taking sufficient action to combat climate change and noted the public health crisis in London due to poor air quality, which contributed to thousands of premature deaths and healthcare costs.

The Leader praised the council's actions, including the introduction of low-traffic neighbourhoods, school streets, and cycleways to promote walking and cycling. The

Leader noted the council's commitment to consult on and co-design Liveable Neighbourhoods, with the Mildmay Liveable Neighbourhood being the latest example. They emphasised that these initiatives not only benefited the environment but also saved lives, improved road safety, and supported local businesses.

The Leader concluded by reaffirming the Council's dedication to the well-being of its residents and their commitment to have taken radical actions to enhance the lives of the local community, in line with the Labour Group's manifesto vision of a fairer, greener, and safer Islington.

### Response from the Leader of the Opposition

The Leader of the Opposition began their response by celebrating the achievements of the Council, including: the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, that had allowed families and residents to safely cycle and walk around the borough; the new buildings at Highbury Fields, and in particular the new toilets; and the buying back of council homes to help residents, homeless people and refugees and ensuring everyone in Islington has a place to live.

The Leader of the Opposition disagreed with the decision to close Sobell Ice Rink, commenting that it was a service that had encouraged, particularly, young girls to get into sport and be active. The Leader of the Opposition noted that the planned replacement with a soft play centre doesn't offer this, and they wanted a facility that encouraged all to stay active. The Leader of the Opposition also commented on recycling rates falling to a new low of 27%. They wanted the council to look at new ways to encourage recycling and help save the planet.

## **251 PETITIONS**

No petitions were received.

## **252 PETITION DEBATE: SAVE SOBELL ICE RINK**

The Council debated the petition submitted to the previous meeting. It was noted this petition had received over 5000 signatures.

The Lead Petitioner introduced the petition and spoke for two minutes:

- The Petitioner expressed their disappointment and suggested that the consultation had not been fair.
- The Petitioner proposed that there was room for both the proposed Ninja Park and the ice rink in the Sobell Leisure Centre.
- The Petitioner suggested that the closure had disproportionate impact on minority groups and female sports and suggested that the council had not fully considered the impact of the decision.
- The Petitioner noted how long there has been an ice rink at the Sobell and commented on the potential loss of the rich and diverse history associated with Sobell Ice Rink.
- They concluded that closing Sobell Ice Rink was a significant loss for Islington's communities.

Councillor Turan moved the motion to debate the petition. Councillor Ngongo seconded. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong contributed to the debate. Councillor

Turan exercised their right to reply.

The following main points were made in the debate:

- In August 2022, Sobell Leisure Centre experienced major floods due to a Thames Water mains burst on Hornsey and Tollington Road, resulting in damage to the entire ground floor.
- After a thorough public consultation, the decision was made not to reinstate the Sobell ice rink.
- In May 2023, the Executive initiated a consultation to replace the lost facilities with a new offer aimed at increasing physical activity, especially among young people.
- The Council received a total of 1,003 responses during the six-week consultation period, with 54% of survey respondents reporting no impact if the ice rink was not reinstated.
- Alternative operators and usage models were explored, but none provided a viable solution for reinstating the ice rink.
- The Council mitigated the impact on most of the affected clubs, allocating them time at the Lee Valley regional facility. Plans were made to introduce holiday programmes for young people to access the regional facility through a sports development partner.
- The Council's new Islington Active Together Strategy aims to empower communities to be more physically active, with a focus on marginalised groups and individuals with long-term health conditions.
- Fun and enjoyable physical activities are seen as crucial in breaking down barriers, especially for children and young people.
- Anticipated usage levels for the new active zone are expected to rise significantly, benefiting a wider demographic of residents.
- For 13 years austerity has had a significant impact on the council budgets, and the ongoing cost of living crisis is threatening the budgets even further. The only way to tackle these issues is for central government to allocate more funding.
- The plan aims to provide young people with the best start in life, recognizing the importance of physical activity for various aspects of their well-being, including combating obesity, improving health, and enhancing mental health.
- Councillors emphasised the importance of physical activity, even in activities like soft play, for children's development, including coordination, fitness, and motor skills.
- A Green Party Councillor advised that they had proposed options for making the ice rink more efficient, such as heat recovery, to support a sustainable society.
- They raised concerns that the redevelopment plans not meeting the needs of residents, particularly young adults, and the loss of serious sports facilities.
- Targeted design sessions with local community groups representing minority ethnic communities, young women, low-income residents, and LGBTQ+ communities are planned to improve access and engagement.
- Plans involve better use of external space, including the car park, for multi-sports pitches and other uses with a specific focus on women and girls' participation.



- The financial impact of a £2.76 million deferred grant loss during the pandemic on leisure services is noted as a significant factor.

The motion to consider the petition was put to the vote and CARRIED.

**RESOLVED:**

That the petition be noted

**253 QUESTIONS FROM THE YOUTH COUNCIL**

Question (a) from Young Mayor Ameera Abdi to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

During the last 12 months the cost-of-living crisis has been adversely impacting Islington's families. What specific support can the council provide to young people to minimise this impact?

Response:

Thank you Ameera for your question. Working with organisations across the borough, our Labour-run Council has acted over the last year to support local people through the Tory cost of living crisis.

In 2022/23 we supported 420 young people (aged 18-25) into paid work, and a further 58 in the first quarter of this year (April – June 2023). Next month the council is opening two Youth Employment Hubs in Caledonian ward and Finsbury Park, providing young people with access to one-to-one careers guidance, employability skills training, opportunities to meet employers and support to look and apply for apprenticeships and jobs. This is all part of the Labour-run Council's manifesto commitment to support 5000 people into work, and creating an inclusive economy, which keeps wealth in Islington and uses its reach to provide better services for local people.

In addition, our Labour-run Council is providing Free School Meals for all primary school children as we have done since 2009, saving families around £440 per child every year, and last year the Council quadrupled the size of the childcare bursary scheme from £40,000 to £160,000 – and we are protecting it for 2023/24.

Supplementary Question:

How will you help those in secondary school and under working age to combat the cost-of-living crisis?

Response:

I will be very happy to meet with you to talk about this in more detail.

Question (b) from Deputy Young Mayor Areeb Ahmed to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young people and Families:

We recently meet the Police Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley at the community event held in the borough. How is the council working with the Police locally to improve

youth safety in the borough. Please provide examples to support our understanding of what is being done.

Response:

Thank you, Areeb, for your question. The Labour-run Council always works closely with the police to make our borough safer for local people, and especially our young people. We do this through regular meetings with the police where we discuss at-risk children, sometimes with other professionals such as social work. Another example of how this can be done is via the Safer Schools officers that exist in schools in the borough to ensure that children and young people are kept safe in and around school premises.

The Police and the Council also work together closely via a joint team called Islington Collaboration Action Network (I-CAN). This service supports children and young people who are at risk of exploitation. In our manifesto last year, Islington Labour committed to increasing our early intervention and prevention programmes, to identify at risk children, to mobilise support and prevent situations escalating.

Our Targeted Youth Support team works in the community to engage with young people and try to steer them away from crime. Our youth clubs give young people places to go and things to do, and we continue to protect these. There are more services offered by our partners in the borough, including Arsenal in the Community, Abianda and St Giles. I'm really proud that thanks for the work of our council, we have seen a 96% reduction in the number of Islington young people who committed a lower-level offence, were triaged and then diverted from the youth justice system.

Question (c) from YCllr Billy Diggin to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young people and Families:

With the recent changes affecting Platform Youth Hub, what plans are in place to ensure Islington's young people continue to have access to a vibrant youth offer?

Response:

Thank you, Billy, for your important question. Islington's Labour-run Council is committed to making our borough the best possible place to grow up and we know that providing places to go and things to do is vital to that goal. As a Council, we are committed to ensuring that high-quality youth work and engaging activities are available across the borough. The changes at Platform will deliver a high-quality place for local young people to learn creative skills. It also gives us an opportunity to ensure that support for young people in the north of the borough is the best it can be. Having engaged with young people in the area, we have put together a programme of activities including:

- A closed session for ex-users of Platform from 22nd September on Fridays
- An open access youth session on Wednesdays and Fridays at Highbury Roundhouse from 27th September
- A current offer for children aged 11-14 at Andover youth space on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- An Open access youth session age 11-18 at Elizabeth House on Mondays

- An open access youth session for young people 13+ at Whittington Park Community Association on Thursdays

We are also working on a new youth offer that will take place on the Elhorne estate on Tuesdays and Fridays. This is all in addition to the rich youth offer that we have across the borough and our wonderful youth spaces such as Lift, Soapbox and Rosebowl.

Our Council is passionate about making sure our young people have places to go and things to do, and I believe this new offer does that. Once again, thank you for your question.

Supplementary Question:

Do you believe the diminishing of Platform Youth Hub is because of the constant change of ownership?

Response:

I believe it took time for people to process the changes, but this gives a chance to benefit from new opportunity that the redesigned platform will bring. I think it's important to recognise that change has always been a part of the process.

Question (d) from Liberty Davies-Neil to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion.

Islington has always had a proud record of campaigning for human rights, how is the council showing solidarity for the women and girls facing challenges in some parts of the world?

Response:

Thank you for your question Liberty, The council does have a proud record of campaigning for human rights and equality and this is something that we continue to put at the forefront of our approach through our challenging inequality programme.

Whilst the council has very little power and influence on issues in other countries, we do stand in solidarity with women and girls facing challenges all around the world. We raise awareness of issues affecting women and girls through our challenging inequality events programme including through marking important events like International Women's Day and through council communications.

For those women and girls who come to Islington as Refugees seeking a better life, we do all we can to welcome them and ensure they have the support they need to live better lives free from the challenges they have left behind. Thank you for your question.

## **254 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Question (a) from Nick Collin to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

We have observed that the majority of Islington's tradespeople and small businesses, who rely, directly or indirectly, on cars and vans, have a serious concern that Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are bad for business. This is particularly as a result of longer journey times, congestion on boundary roads, limited parking and increased fines. Do you recognize this concern from the consultation carried out to date on the planned Barnsbury. Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood (LN), and how do you propose to address it?

Response:

Thank you for your question Nick. In our manifesto for the Local Elections last year, we committed to "co-design and consult on the introduction of Liveable Neighbourhoods across the borough" and our Transport Strategy, agreed in 2019 stated that we would create People Friendly Streets in local neighbourhoods where through traffic will be reduced to ensure that local neighbourhoods are more enjoyable places to live, and walk or cycle through. That is why we are delivering Liveable Neighbourhoods across the borough with current schemes in development in The Cally, Barnsbury and Laycock and Mildmay.

We want to make sure that we make Islington cleaner, greener and healthier, while also supporting local businesses to thrive. Our Council's Progressive Procurement Strategy means that we aim to use more of our council spending with local businesses and we work with local businesses in the design of our Liveable Neighbourhood schemes.

Many studies have shown that in the long term, where these schemes are implemented, business footfall increases as more people are walking and cycling, and popping into shops as they travel. For example, data from the Stoke Newington LTN in Hackney showed increased footfall and increased spending with local businesses along Church Street.

With regard to the impact on boundary roads, our own monitoring reports show that boundary road traffic volumes are minimally affected with an average of a 3% reduction across the borough. We have published extensive monitoring reports which are available to view on the council's website. We will continue to monitor traffic volumes as part of the development of future Liveable Neighbourhoods including Barnsbury and Laycock.

The development of schemes such as the Barnsbury and Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood include three phases of public engagement, we are currently within the second phase of this engagement and would welcome all comments and suggestions during this time from all residents and business. Engagement is currently open until Sunday, 22 October 2023.

Supplementary Question

Can you agree to meet with us face to face so we can explain in detail why we are so alarmed by the proposals? Can you also please explain how the new liveable neighbourhood relates to Council's stated aim of 'supporting local businesses to thrive'?

Response:

Yes, I am happy to meet with you and others. Many parts of Highbury have benefited from LTNs and liveable neighbourhoods already. We are now looking holistically at LTNs and liveable neighbourhoods rather than just small pockets as we were before. We have had to keep some routes open to vehicles, but we will be looking to improve these streets over time. This is a continuous process and will be adapting and improving overtime.

Question (b) from Pete Gilman to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

Islington's Labour council is to be congratulated for introducing free school meals for all primary school children. Would it be possible to extend this to secondary school children?

Response:

Thank you for your question Pete. We are proud that Islington's Labour-run council has been providing free school meals for all primary school children since 2009. This policy is particularly important for local families when we are experiencing a cost of living crisis like we are currently.

The Labour Mayor of London's announcement that he would be funding all primary school children in London to receive free school meals is very welcome. As this means some of the money we would usually spend on free school meals is being reimbursed, we are currently considering options for what we could fund additionally. Whether free school meals could be introduced from some or all year groups at secondary school is one of the considerations we are exploring.

However, this would be a significant cost both in terms of capital investment in secondary school catering facilities and in terms of funding for meals. It is not possible to make such a commitment at this stage, until there is clarity about the funding being available beyond summer 2024.

Supplementary Question:

Islington was congratulated for introducing free school meals for all primary school children despite the initial opposition to this, now other councils are following, please can you do the same to secondary school children and provide them with free school meals to stop our children going hungry?

Response:

We are pushing very hard to do this and improve the lives of children in the borough. We are constrained by the funding from central government. Please let's join together to lobby number 10 to do this and ensure our children are not going hungry.

Question (c) from Rebekah Kelly to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

The Mayor of London has recently pledged to fund school meals for primary school children in the whole of the city. Given that Islington Council already provides free school meals for primary school children. What will this budget now be used for?

Response:

Thank you for your question Rebekah. As I said in my previous answer, We are proud that Islington's Labour-run council has been providing free school meals for all primary school children since 2009 and welcome the news that the Labour Mayor of London is extending this offer to all of the capital.

Some of the funding is to be used to increase the school meal funding rate to primary schools as school meal prices are now significantly higher. The remainder of the money will be used to support families in financial hardship as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, and we are currently exploring a range of options on exactly how this will be achieved. Thank you again for your question.

Supplementary Question:

Children don't stop getting hungry in secondary school. Please can you extend the scheme to secondary schools even just for a year to help ease the pressures of the cost-of-living crisis. Also, it seems that school meals are decreasing in the quality, can this be investigated?

Response:

As previously stated, we will push for this but are restricted by budgets. We are happy to look into the quality and quantity of food provided but again we are restricted by funding from central government.

Question (d) from Ben Pearson to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

The council has accepted that the original roll out of motorcycle parking charges in February was not carried out correctly and has consequently agreed to cancel any parking fines which had not already been paid. However, the Council has refused to pay back the fines that have already been paid, despite accepting that they shouldn't have been given. Since the council has accepted that no fines should have been given at all in the first roll out will the council now agree to pay back all fines given?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Ben. The Council has confirmed in correspondence with campaign groups that all statutory requirements for the introduction of the £1 daily charge for motorcycles in the dedicated bays has been adhered to. The Council has never accepted that PCNs should not have been issued but committed to reviewing individual cases where necessary. Warning notices issued were for the first 2 weeks and a large amount of information distributed in regard to this change from the Council by SMS messaging, letters and information on the website, there is also adequate and complaint signage.

Supplementary Question:

The council cancelled fines for those that had been wrongly charged with motorcycle parking fines but won't refund those that had already paid. Please can you refund those that had been wrongly given?

Response:

Where people asked to us to review their fines we did, but we haven't repaid those that we haven't been asked to review.

Question (e) from Andrew Berry to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Care:

Can the council leader, confirm council policy, that all new council contracts will require the employer to have an occupational sick pay scheme and pay full sick pay to all staff (as and when needed) employed via such contracts and therefore working indirectly for LBI?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Andrew. We are currently out to procurement for our new Homecare contracts. The procurement strategy published in January 2023 clearly states an intention to move towards ensuring staff are paid Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) and we commit to reviewing this a year into the mobilisation of the contracts to assess whether it is viable and affordable. Alongside this the Procurement Strategy and tender documentation encourages potential providers to consider immediate implementation of OSP as part of their social value offer. A report will be provided once the procurement is completed as to whether any Providers have offered OSP as part of their social value offer.

Implementing OSP is not without challenge. Providers will have work across Boroughs, where a worker may work in a Borough that expects and pays for OSP and one that doesn't. This makes implementation exceptionally complex and could lead to non-compliance and therefore needs careful consideration.

Furthermore, it is estimated that implementing OSP at this stage would cost the Council £358k per year based unless it is capped at 5 days a year, which would cost the Council £254k.

As a Labour Council, we always want the best working conditions possible for staff working on behalf of the Council. As you'll be aware, Tory austerity has forced the council to make nearly £300 million of cuts to our budget since 2010, with more savings due next year. However, I will commit to look into whether this is possible at all in the coming months as we approach the procurement process.

Supplementary Question:

Do you accept that not paying full sick pay means people have to choose between staying home when unwell or putting food on the table? Going into work unwell can make others unwell and admitted to hospital, is that risk acceptable? Please reconsider.

Response:

Health care workers are very important to us; we are one of best councils when it comes to implementing the London living wage. We are seriously reconsidering and will be holding further meetings with various stakeholders to reconsider this however if we do find the funding it means it will have to come from another part of adult social care. This area is already overspending due to aging population, covid effects and many other reasons but we are looking into this.

Question (f) from Helen Strongman to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

We've been told by Peabody they will be paying £13m in community infrastructure levy related to the Holloway site. 50% of this will be allocated for strategic projects across the borough, 35% for local strategic projects, and 15% for 'local CiL' - other projects within the ward. Are these figures correct? Can they change?

We've also been told by Peabody that some of the local funds have already been earmarked. What decisions have been made about how these funds will be spent and how can the local community have a say? Please supply details in full.

Written Response:

the figure of £13 million is correct. However, the figure of £13 million does not include s106 funding and the Community Infrastructure Levy (known as CIL) payable to the Mayor of London. The percentage split that you have set out is also correct. This is how all CIL funds received by the council are allocated.

The 35% Local-Strategic CIL funds and 15% Local CIL funds are both allocated by Ward Councillors.

For the Holloway Prison site, we have made the decision that:

- 80% of the Local CIL and Local-Strategic CIL will be allocated by the Tufnell Park Ward Councillors; and
- 20% of the Local CIL and Local-Strategic CIL will be allocated by Holloway Ward Councillors.

This decision reflects the scale of the development and its likely impacts on the wider local area. In March 2022, the Executive decided to allocate up to £2.9 million of Strategic CIL to fund the fit-out costs of the Women's Building. However, this funding will only be paid if Peabody is unable to raise the funds for the fit-out costs itself. There are strict obligations in the s106 agreement appended to the planning consent. These obligations require Peabody to employ a fund raiser and do everything that it can to secure the fit out costs itself.

If this funding cannot be secured, the council will fund the fit-out costs from Strategic CIL. This decision will not therefore impact the CIL funding that is available for allocation by the Ward Councillors. This decision also reflects the fact that the Women's Building is intended to offer services to all women in the borough or even across a wider area.

Ward Councillors are asked to make decisions on how the local-strategic and local CIL generated from developments in their Wards is allocated. Potential projects that have been agreed via discussions with residents, businesses and community groups are set out in Ward Community Plans. These plans are available on our website.

Local people and organisations are therefore able to put forward their ideas about how CIL funds could be used. If you have suggestions, I'm sure your ward councillors would welcome your ideas on what this could be used for.

Thank you for your question Helen.

Question (g) from Fiona Bullman to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Care



Sports provision is a key component of helping young people in Islington achieve better futures. Research clearly shows the positive impact on school grades, physical health and mental health.

Sports is where children learn about teamwork, goalsetting and the pursuit of excellence in performance and other achievement-oriented behaviours—critical skills necessary for success in life. Interest in football is at an all-time high for girls, but there are limited opportunities to excel. One such opportunity is participation through schools and into the district system that operates across London and the England. District football allows children to represent Islington and compete with their peers in the other London boroughs. The Year 6 - Year 9 district boys teams regularly feature in the local paper.

Unfortunately, there is no funding available in Islington to run the existing Year 6 and Year 7 girls teams or to support the development of district football for girls in older age groups.

Last years, the first ever girls district team highlighted the enthusiasm and talent of Islington girls with over 50 girls attending trials and two trophies being won during a successful first season.

Just £2,500 per year will fund two teams, with training, training materials and match fees for a full season. Each team will give at least 15 girls an opportunity to play football at the highest local level and inspire further generations of girls to achieve. £83 per year for a girl to represent Islington across London and inspire other girls to engage in sports. Islington would like to at least keep the existing Year 6 and Year 7 girls district team going. Will the council financially support them?

Response:

Thank you for your question Fiona. Women and Girls football in Islington mirrors the rise and the growth in the National Game and we are very proud of its growth and achievements. We have been leading the way over the last decade in Women and Girls development programmes particularly at Whittington Park where we now have thriving women's leagues and Girl's development programmes that feed into Islington Borough Ladies women's programme that has over 7 teams. Islington is just about to launch its new sport and physical activity strategy in October to increase participation across our Borough and to support this relaunch and assist the sector to grow we are increasing the funding available this year to Sport Islington, which distributes grants across the Borough to aid this growth. We can share our funding page for you to apply. School funding normally sits outside Sport Islington's remit, however as this is outside of school time, we can assess this on its community benefit and would welcome your application as this is the pinnacle of a development programme.

Girl's football is also about to benefit from improvements taking place at Barnard Park and Bingfield Park as there will be more places to play and specific programmed hours for Women and Girls football allocated to their programmes at the outset to ensure long term growth.

If you could give your email address to me or one of the council officers outside the meeting, we can provide an application form and a link to the funding page for you to apply for funding for this.

As part of our strategy going forward, we will look at the long-term funding for girls district football in Islington so that we have a sustainable approach to future programmes going forward.

Supplementary Question:

Barriers still remain for girls' football; this must be resolved to give girls the same opportunity as boys. Will you agree to meet us to discuss this.

Response:

Yes, I am happy to meet with you, we want to keep the communication channels open and make sure this is fairer for girls.

The Mayor advised that the time for questions had expired and any remaining questions would receive a written response.

Question (h) from Jeremy Drew to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

I support the Council's plan for 50 bays for Dockless bikes by 2024. But to provide bays close to where they are needed, the number needs to be much higher. Camden already has over 200 bays for Dockless bikes and plans to have 300 by 2025. Could you please explain why so few are planned.

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Jeremy. The Council determined to make sure that the use of dockless e-bikes in Islington is as fair as possible for everyone who uses our roads and pavements.

Last year, nearly one-and-a-half million trips were taken on dockless bikes in the borough. This shows that the bikes are popular and research shows that they are being used by people who didn't previously cycle often.

But we also know that some users can leave them carelessly around the borough, blocking pavements and making it more difficult for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs to get around. That's why, over the summer, we announced plans to introduce a network of new dockless bike parking spaces, to help ensure that the borough's pavements are more welcoming and easier to use.

To tackle this the council will shortly be launching a pilot scheme of a minimum of six bays with a further 50 to follow by summer 2024. This pilot scheme will allow us to assess how well the scheme works, with a view to roll-out bays across the borough, so that everyone is close to a parking space and people can only park their bike in them. Thank you again for your question Jeremy.

Question (i) from Naomi to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Recent conversations with local residents and groups, as well as a poll, have shown that many believe that there is a need for services on the Holloway Park site that benefit everyone. The site will be home to over 3,000 new residents, who will have to share already stretched local amenities.

Peabody is proposing a large residents' lounge/space, measuring over 1,300 sqm. However, this will be a segregated space, exclusively for the use of the development's private residents.

This means that the residents of the 42% of the units that will be for social rent will be excluded from this space. What is the council's view on the proposed use of this space?

Written Response:

The development of the former Holloway Prison site includes 415 desperately needed new homes for social rent including 60 extra care homes.

It will also include a number of new community facilities to serve: the new residents of the development; local residents and the wider community. This includes a new Women's Building and over 10,000 square metres of greenspace and play space for children and young adults.

As noted in my previous answer, the development will also provide approximately £13 million in Community Infrastructure Levy payments. At least half of this sum will support the delivery of community infrastructure in the local area.

Under the terms of the section 106 agreement, Peabody must also agree a Community Engagement Plan with the council. This plan must set out how Peabody will promote the development of an inclusive community within the new development and promote its integration into the wider community of Tufnell Park and Holloway.

The s106 agreement requires a space of no less than 68 square metres within the residents' lounge to be made available for at least one day a week to all residents of the development and tenant/residents associations associated with the development free of charge. However, I agree with you that the lounge should be available to everyone who lives in the development. We pushed Peabody on this during the planning process and we will continue to urge them to make it available to all. Thank you for your question, Naomi.

**255 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Question (a) from Cllr Convery to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

The Council has signed Memoranda of Agreement with 3 hire e-bike operators since October 2021. Please will you set out the safety and conduct requirements of e-bike operators; and in total say how much financial contribution has been received by the Council from the 3 operators over the 2 financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23; and say how that funding has been allocated by the Council.

Response:

Thank you for your question, Paul. As you're aware, the Council determined to make sure that the use of dockless e-bikes in Islington is as fair as possible for everyone who uses our roads and pavements.

Last year, nearly one-and-a-half million trips were taken on dockless bikes in the borough. This shows that the bikes are popular and research shows that they are being used by people who didn't previously cycle often.

But we also know that some users can leave them carelessly around the borough, blocking pavements and making it more difficult for people who use wheelchairs and pushchairs to get around. That's why, over the summer, we announced plans to introduce a network of new dockless bike parking spaces, to help ensure that the borough's pavements are more welcoming and easier to use.

This means that we will introduce 50 spaces by the summer 2024, prioritising stations, shopping centres, and other busy areas, with a view to expanding on this in the future. Eventually the aim is to have a network across the borough, meaning that users can only park in designated bays.

With regard to the memorandum of understanding, the council is working very closely with the three hire bike operators to address concerns regarding the safety and conduct of the use of these hire bikes. This working relationship is particularly important because there is currently no legislation in place that gives clear powers to local authorities to licence and manage operators. The Department for Transport is planning to introduce new legislation that would allow local authorities to manage rental schemes (and enforce on issues such as parking), however we are still waiting for confirmation of the timetable for this legislation. Following a discussion at London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee, TfL and London boroughs will now also be exploring the design of one coordinated future scheme to manage dockless e-bikes (and e-scooters in boroughs that are part of the trial) in London, through a contract, to improve parking while increasing the quality and sustainability of services in London. In the meantime, the council is regulating its operators through Memorandum of Understandings which contain provisions that address safety and conduct requirements.

The Memorandum of Understandings commit our operators to specific safety specifications for all their bikes, including internal tracking devices, front and back lights, and company contact numbers clearly displayed. They also specify conduct requirements for the operators, including the removal of bikes if badly parked by the operator within a set timeframe and geo-fencing to create no parking zones where necessary. The council has worked with the operators to introduce no parking zones at a number of sensitive locations (e.g. alongside Central Library, immediately outside Highbury & Islington Station, at Highbury Corner public space, and immediately outside the entrances to Moorfields eye hospital, and the RNIB offices on Pentonville Road).

In total, the financial contribution that has been received by the council from the three operators over the two financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23 was £240,000 and this has been used to fund our work to create a Cleaner, Green and Healthier Islington.

Thank you again for your question Paul.

Supplementary Question:

Will you commit to publishing the memorandum of understanding (MoU) that outlines the relationship between the Council and the street bike operators, including their responsibilities and obligations, as well as specifying safety requirements and operational principles? Furthermore, could you provide transparency on how the £240,000 received from these bike operators over the last two years has been allocated or spent?

Response:

The £240,000 received from the bike operators for 2021-22 and 2022-23 is mostly directed toward staff working on the scheme, while the remainder is used in the Council's budget. As for the publication of the memorandum, I will try to get it published, but I cannot guarantee its immediate release, as I am unsure what will be allowed at this moment.

Question (b) from Cllr Convery to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

In the calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022 (part year), an FOI released by the Council in November 2022 revealed that PCNs charges totalling £10,821,870 were triggered by vehicle infractions associated with Islington's Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. Please will you describe the projects, services and investments that have been funded using that additional income?

Response:

The council is committed to making our borough a cleaner, greener, healthier place and a key part of that is delivering Liveable Neighbourhoods across the borough with current schemes in development in The Cally, Barnsbury and Laycock and Mildmay.

In our manifesto for the Local Elections last year, we committed to "co-design and consult on the introduction of Liveable Neighbourhoods across the borough" and our Transport Strategy, agreed in 2019 stated that we would create People Friendly Streets in local neighbourhoods where through traffic will be reduced to ensure that local neighbourhoods are more enjoyable places to live, and walk or cycle through.

Our range of people-friendly streets so far have reduced traffic both within and around the schemes, as well increasing the amount of people walking and cycling.

In an ideal world, we would make no money from these schemes as people wouldn't drive through the filters and traffic would be reduced. By law, the Council must ensure any money received from fines are re-invested in transport and environment-related projects, including highways investment, roads and footways, highways maintenance, environmental improvements, concessionary fares, and transport for pupils with special education needs. The money received from these schemes so far has supported our work to make Islington cleaner, greener, healthier place, improving our roads and pavements at the same time.

Supplementary Question:

Could you commit to providing a detailed breakdown of how the money allocated to the "highways, transport, and environmental improvement" category, which has seen a substantial increase from £4 million to £16 million, is being spent? Would you consider publishing this breakdown as an appendix to the next annual parking report to enhance transparency and inform the public about the utilisation of these funds?

Response:

I will speak to Cllr Ward about this and what you are asking us to do.

Question (c) from Cllr Burgess to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care.

Good social care depends on full staffing and continuity. Carers and service users often tell me about the importance of having the same carer or being able to speak to the same person. Could you tell me what Islington is doing about recruitment and retention in Social Care, and if you are concerned about staffing levels?

Response:

Thank you for your question Janet. Islington Council have always recognised the importance and value of social care workers and therefore having a well-trained and supported workforce is vital. Whilst recruitment and retention is a challenge locally and nationally, there are no specific provider concerns currently around vacancies. Our Health and Social Care Academy is well established, and creatively seeks to support the sector in growing a skilled, local workforce. The academy takes a proactive, coordinated, approach to address the needs and trends of residents and employers in Islington. Our local health and social care employment coaching, joint recruitment and careers events, community outreach and local training programmes are organised as a coherent local offer to recruit and retain local people. The academy has a current objective of recruiting 50 local people into the sector through iWork, the Council's employment support service. The annual job fair supports local providers to meet local people and match them to roles. iWork are also supporting potential applicants with literacy and numeracy skills, this gives local people more job opportunities as well as ensuring the sector attracts a diverse range of applicants that reflect our local population.

We know that good quality training and support enhances retention. The Council offer access to safeguarding training, 'lunch and learn' sessions and training at provider forums for staff support. The Nurses Group Supervision and Development Group, and the Care Home Managers group is also a forum where staff can gain peer to peer support and learning. Provider forums have guest speakers on a range of issues to support continuous learning in the sector.

We know that working conditions are also important for retention of staff, that's why we are working towards fully implementing the Ethical Care Charter, and all new contracts have LLW as a requirement. As we embed the homecare contracts, we will work with our providers to implement the Ethical Care Charter and other social value elements of the contracts to further strengthen the offer for the workforce. Thank you again for your question.

Supplementary Question:

It's great news that you're actively promoting local job applications with the London living wage and other benefits. It's vital for the community. Do you agree?

Response:

Yes, I agree, I would also like to add social care workers often face high levels of burnout, making it crucial to prioritise their well-being and provide support. The approach taken in the role emphasizes active listening to staff, regular supervision that focuses on their well-being, access to clinical support, and manageable casework. The investment in staff support is essential for staff retention, given the significant time and cost required for training. Additionally, the challenges posed by the cost of living in areas like Islington are acknowledged, and the commitment is to continue working with staff to be an attractive employer despite these challenges.

Question (d) from Cllr Jeapes to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

Thames Water has been foisted with a £2bn debt burden since the private equity venture capitalists outfit Macquarie, with offices in Islington, acquired Thames Water in 2006.

In this acquisition, £2.8bn of the borrowed amount was used to fund the purchase of Thames Water so incurring the debt repayments.

Despite saddling Thames Water with this considerable debt, Macquarie bank have taken between 15.5% and 19% a year from Thames Water for the benefit of Macquarie and the shareholders.

From [thisismoney.co.uk](https://thisismoney.co.uk) July 2023, "Macquarie did spend £11 billion, ladled on to customer bills, starting to modernise Victorian pipes. But under its ownership £2.7 billion was removed in dividends and a further £2 billion in loans. The pension fund deficit soared, and the debt pile swelled from £3.4 billion on acquisition to £10.8 billion when it sold its final stake a decade later."

Due to the perilous financial predicament that Thames Water now finds itself in, there are suggestions that we - Thames Water customers - will be expected to finance the shortfall with increased bills for our water use. This is a totally unacceptable suggestion particularly as the debts incurred were by this private equity outfit for their own and their shareholder's benefit.

Also, the scandalous activity of Macquarie should have been closely scrutinised by Ofwat, as this activity constitutes a transfer of undue risk to customers, as has now become apparent.

Macquarie have not performed according to their own corporate governance, they have not acted in the interests of London's community, "Macquarie's approach to corporate governance is to identify and realise opportunity for shareholders, clients, employees and communities." <https://www.macquarie.com/uk/en/about/company/corporate-governance.html>

Last year, this Council passed a motion calling for Thames Water to invest further in infrastructure to avoid disasters such as the flood that ruined the Sobell, and to call for the water industry to be brought back into public ownership.

Will Islington Council campaign along with other London Councils and the Mayor for London and call on the Government to thoroughly investigate the financial business

activities of Macquarie and write to Ofwat and the Government asking that water bills will not be increased to pay for the £10 billion Thames Water black hole?

Response:

Thank you, Clare, for your question. I think we are all aware that Thames Water has not been fit for purpose for some time.

As you say, last year, not long after the flood which caused such significant damage to the Sobell Leisure Centre, our council passed a motion calling for Thames Water to significantly increase its investment in infrastructure to avoid similar incidents taking place and to write to the Government calling for the water industry to be nationalised.

Sadly, since then, we have seen further leaks in Islington and across London, with no sign of nationalisation coming anytime soon. The financial situation Thames Water finds itself in is incredibly worrying and sadly indicative of the situation we see with many other utility companies.

As you say, it is unacceptable that the effects of Thames Water's private equity owners should lead to increased bills for local people in Islington. They didn't cause the debt Thames Water have and they shouldn't have to pay the penalty.

I would be more than happy to write to the Government, copying in Thames Water, setting out our opposition to bills being increased to pay for this debt and I will most certainly speak to my equivalent Executive Members in other councils across London to call for their support in this campaign and I would love for you to get involved too if you wish. Thank you again for your question.

Supplementary Question:

Could you please look into coordinating efforts with various local councils in London and other authorities, including members of the LGA, to campaign for a thorough investigation into the issues related to certain banks associated with privatised water companies like Thames Water and Southern Water? We want to ensure that ordinary people are not burdened with the financial consequences of these past actions and that a proper response is given from Ofwat and the government.

Response:

Yes, okay.

Question (e) from Cllr Staff to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion

Islington is proud to be a diverse and welcoming Borough especially for the most vulnerable and those in need of sanctuary. With this in mind can you provide an update on the progress we are making in becoming a fully accredited Borough of Sanctuary?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Heather. I'm proud that last year, our council passed a motion to become a Borough of Sanctuary. We are a council that welcomes refugees and migrants to make Islington their home and we celebrate this all year round.

The Council is making very good progress towards becoming an 'awarded member' of the City of Sanctuary Network, a rigorous accreditation process that will ensure the very best standards are achieved in support of refugees and migrants.



Sanctuary workshops with council staff, experts by experience and voluntary and community organisations have been completed from June to August 2023 to obtain feedback on priorities for Islington.

Research has been completed to evidence the array of work already undertaken by Islington to embed concepts of welcome safety and inclusion into council practice and engagement.

The next steps to complete accreditation are:

1. To agree and publish the Refugee and Migrant Strategy and 3-year plan, a pre-requisite to obtaining the 'Borough of Sanctuary' award.
2. To complete and submit the formal application to the City of Sanctuary Scheme for accreditation, with current achievements evidenced.

Oversight of the Refugee and Migrant Strategy and three-year plan will be provided by a Sanctuary Steering Group, which first convenes on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 with VCS, council and 'experts by experience' representation ensured. I also want to make sure you and your colleague as Migrants Champions, Cllr Ilkay Cinko-Oner, are fully involved with this process so I will be in touch with you to set this up shortly.

Finally, I would like to provide reassurance that the important work that makes Islington being a place of welcome and sanctuary for everyone never stops, even as formal accreditation for our work is sought. Even in the last few weeks, the council has been at the forefront of the response to homeless pressures caused by 7-day evictions for people awarded refugee status from Home Office asylum contingency hotels in Islington.

The insufficient eviction period – which should be as standard 56 days, not the Home Office target of 28 days, a target which the Home Office fails to honour- is making refugees and migrants destitute and homeless in Islington, after over 2 year's wait in hotel and dormitory style accommodation.

#### Supplementary Question

I would like to express my gratitude to Councillor Khondoker and the Council for their critical work in this area. Over the past week, we've witnessed distressing and factually incorrect remarks from the Home Secretary at the United Nations concerning migrants and refugees. It is deeply troubling that the government continues to demonize these vulnerable populations and is now targeting protected characteristics. Additionally, addressing the consequences of these policies falls upon local authorities, particularly in the context of homelessness reduction.

I appreciate the eloquence of Councillor Khondoker in highlighting the challenges in homelessness reduction, particularly for those facing issues obtaining biometric residence permits, accessing universal credit, and obtaining national insurance numbers. It is essential to dispel misconceptions, such as the belief that refugees or asylum seekers are preventing access to council housing, which is simply not true.

Can you confirm your commitment to applying continued pressure on the Home Secretary and the Department for Levelling Up to collaborate with local authorities

and cease the practice of blaming contractors and passing responsibility onto councils?

Response:

Thank you so much, Councillor Staff, for the passion and your effort and energy that you bring to the table and you pushing me so I can push the Council to continue to push the government. Thank you so much for being an active migrant's champion alongside your colleague on some of the important work that we're doing. The issues that we're having is many refugees and asylum seekers are becoming homeless.

I hear that officers in the housing department prepared well to help the 84 people already evicted and the further 45 who have been notified. With a potential 400 evictions expected, I have asked officers to provide an urgent brief of this work to ensure that the highest standards of response are in place. I will also be writing to the Secretary of State for the Home Department to raise my concerns for the treatment of refugees who should be better supported to start new lives in the UK. After all, we are an open borough and we welcome everyone here, wherever you're from. I am proud of the work we do in this area and thank you for your question, Heather.

Question (f) from Cllr Mackmurdie to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:

Although knife crime and youth violence in Islington has decreased year on year since 2018, we have also had tragic murders of young people in our borough. These are a stain on our society and a blatant waste of life. In the last year, from the tragedy in Highbury to the recent murders in Elthorne and Tollington, I must say the Council response has been extremely focused on helping the victims' families and supporting the community. I would like to ask how we are supporting parents of such horrific crimes? Is there any knowledge that they can give us to prevent such tragedies happening again?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Ben. Keeping our borough safe is a top priority for this council, and while we have seen improvements in the number of violent crime incidents in recent years, one injury or death is one too many and we are always determined to do more. The recent tragic deaths have been devastating for many in our community and we have worked hard to offer all the reassurances we can. Only this week, the Council Leader and I met the family of a young man who was murdered in the borough last month, to offer our deep condolences and hear from them about their tragic loss.

Engaging and empowering parents and carers, included those who have been directly affected by knife harm and the terrible murders of young people is an integral part of our approach to keeping young people safe in Islington. Examples of this include our work with the Love and Loss group and our Parental Support Project.

Islington Council worked with Jennifer Appleton and others to set up the Love and Loss group in 2016, to support bereaved families who have experienced the loss of a young family member as the result of murder. Love and Loss provides a monthly peer support group, offering therapeutic activities and a warm and compassionate environment to families, held at the Arsenal Community Hub. The families who

attend the Love and Loss group are deeply passionate about sharing their own experiences to help others.

The council's Parental Support Project has trained 11 Parent Empowerment Champions many of whom have children who have direct experience of knife crime and are involved in co-designing and delivering free online workshops with professionals to parents and carers across Islington and Camden. The Parental Support Project won the Children's Services Category in the national LGC Awards in June this year. Nearly 900 parents and carers have attended the online training and webinars since 2021.

This work, as well as other things we do, allows us to offer the best possible support and care to those affected by this terrible incident, as well as giving us vital information we can learn from to try and stop similar incidents happening in future. Thank you for your question.

Supplementary Question:

I would like to start by saying I am deeply sorry and saddened by the murder in Croydon and my thoughts go out to the family and community of Croydon. As for my question, can you confirm that the funding arranged through the Borough Investment Panel for the Parent Champions program has been approved and secured, allowing us to continue supporting the great work of the initiative?

Response:

In one word, yes, and massive thank you to you and your ward colleagues for the support that you've given for this important project.

The Mayor advised that the time for questions had expired and any remaining questions would receive a written response.

Question (g) from Cllr Weekes to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:

How is the Council working to ensure a safer night-time economy?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question at Full Council. As I was unable to answer in the chamber due to time, please accept this written response.

As you know, Islington has a diverse and thriving night-time economy which employs hundreds of people and brings many more to our borough as visitors. But we also know that many people don't feel safe when out and about at night, especially women and girls, and we always want to do more to change that.

You will be aware, in your role as Chair of Licensing, that the council delivers a range of activity in the night-time economy, most of which is funded by the Late-Night Levy (LNL) adopted in 2014. For example, the Parkguard Night Safe Team is a 4-person mobile patrol, including one medic which patrols Thursday to Sunday nights between 10pm and 6am aiming to tackle any possible issue before they occur, conduct welfare checks for anyone who could be in danger, support late night venues to stay safe and supporting the Police in their work to keep local people safe.

Furthermore, in 2019, the Council signed up to the Mayor of London's Women's Night Safety Charter. This aims to make London a city where all women feel confident and welcome at night, with guidance for businesses, charities and councils for better staff training and encouraging reporting of harassment. Our work in the night time economy focuses on keeping to our commitments and making it safer for women and girls.

We also fund two police licensing officers to manage and support police operational response to in the night time economy, including projects to tackle drink spiking, enforcing licensing decisions and preventing any escalation of incidents. We know there is always more to do and I would urge anyone who has concerns to get in touch.

Thank you again for your question and for all your hard work as Chair of Licensing.

Question (h) from Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Can the Council explain why it's become one of the very few authorities in the country to charge for electric powered two-wheelers parking?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Benali. It is fair to say that we are one of the authorities that has really started to look at how we can properly reflect the environmental impact of electric motor vehicles.

I am very pleased to say we were awarded the Inspiration Award at the British Parking Awards recently for our 7 band electric vehicle parking charges which reflects the difference impacts of the various Electric Vehicles, based on battery size. We understand that this is the first such scheme in Europe.

We do recognise that an e-powered two wheeler is less damaging to the environment than a comparable petrol PTW which is why we charge 50% of the cost of a petrol PTW.

Our transport strategy clearly prioritises active travel methods and public transport this is consistent with the Healthy Streets indicators.

Thank you again for your question and I hope all is well.

Question (i) from Cllr Zammit to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

We all know that it is important that local people are able to easily contact the Council when they need to, especially if something has gone wrong and they need support. In the past, I have been contacted by residents who have found it difficult to contact the council, with sometimes long wait times on the phone and a sub-optimal online offer. Can you tell me what is being done to improve this and ensure when residents need to get in touch with the council, they can?

Written Response:

We all know that local people want to see their council deliver basic services to the best of our ability and be able to easily get hold of us when they need us.

The Resident Experience Programme has been set up to ensure residents are at the centre of the way we run our services. We have set out to create consistent, simple & inclusive services redesigned to deliver the best outcomes for residents however they choose to contact us. It has a focus getting it right first time for residents contacting us and is delivering a number of significant improvements to make it easier to people to contact the Council.

To improve face to face contact, we have redesigned the Access Islington Hub at 222 Upper Street to make it more functional and welcoming for our residents, and we are launching new Access Islington hubs in the North and South of the borough to make it easier for residents to access our services nearer to where they live.

To improve telephone contact, we simplified our call routing and the options residents are presented with when they contact us by phone. This means that residents are getting through to someone is trained to help them with their query.

This has significantly improved the quality of calls, reduced repeat calls and the need to transfer our residents to various other teams in the council to resolve a simple query, with a 16% reduction in total call volumes, and wait times falling from 6 minutes to 2.

We know that most people want to use online services to access support nowadays, so we are we are working across the organisation to update the content on our website, making the web pages easy to navigate and more simple to use. The Council also intends to implement a new website that will support the ongoing transformation of our online services. So, we've got a lot done, but there a lot more to do.

I want to thank you, and also Cllrs Praful Nargund, Anjna Khurana and Gulcin Ozdemir for all your interest and input in making our resident experience as positive as it can be! Thank you very much again for your question Cllr Zammit.

Question (j) from Cllr North to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

The Islington Boat Club is a unique and essential part of the St Peters and Canalside Community, especially for young people in the area, and has recently reopened thanks to funding secured from developers locally. This funding ensured that vital maintenance works could take place and that activities could begin happening again. Will the council commit to working with the new operators to ensure young people continue to enjoy what the Boat Club has to offer?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Toby. I agree that the Islington Boat Club is a unique and essential and not just for St Peters and Canalside Ward but for the whole borough. It is the only place in Islington where local people can learn water-based sports. The Club also provides access to nature for local children and young people and is used by local groups of all ages.

I am therefore very excited that following vital maintenance works the Islington Boat Club building is now ready to reopen to local residents.

The council has invested £175,000 to improve the building and make it safe. This funding was allocated by you and your colleagues in St Peter's and Canalside Ward.

The boat club staff, volunteers and board members are delighted with the works and are excited to further develop the activities that they offer to the local community. The council is committed to working with the Islington Boat Club to ensure young people continue to enjoy what the Boat Club has to offer, and to support them with this objective, we are currently in the process of granting a new lease to the club. Thank you again for your question Toby.

Question (k) from Cllr Chowdhury to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Members for Homes and Communities:

The Thriving Neighbourhoods programme is a great initiative that allows local residents to suggest improvements in our local areas. It'll be great if you can update us with the number of improvement works that have occurred to date and how were residents able to feed into the process?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Jilani. During the Budget process for 2022/23, we committed to a £10 million investment programme to improve the communal areas on our estates. The Thriving Neighbourhoods programme shows our commitment to creating, greener, safer and more pleasant areas for local people to live.

As part of the programme, we sought ideas from local people on where they would like to see investment in their area. We received thousands of suggestions and earlier this year, we announced plans to move ahead with 215 projects. To date we have completed 95 success projects, including upgraded play areas, improving the accessibility and security of our estates, installing cycle shelters and new recycling bins and improving landscaping of communal green spaces.

Our engagement with local people included face to face drop ins, social media activity, an online survey and working with TRAs and ward councillors.

The programme has been such a success that we are aiming to launch a second round of funding early next year and I am excited to hear from our community about what they would like to see us do. We are also engaging with our schools as we are a child friendly borough. Last week, we opened two play areas on the Holly Park estate the difference it makes. We are getting request for outdoor gyms on our estates which is fantastic to see as we know many communities do not have gym membership and to have it on your doorstep. Thank you again for your question Jilani.

Question (l) from Cllr Russell to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

In light of Islington's recycling rates falling to 27% is it time for our borough to consider rolling out fortnightly residual waste collection with recycling collected weekly?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Caroline. Increasing recycling rates in the borough is a key part of our work to tackle the climate emergency. As a densely populated borough, it is difficult to do this, but we are determined to improve the rates we are seeing so far. We are investing in new recycling facilities and food waste recycling for flats above shops to try and encourage more people to recycle.

I do think that the density of Islington, and our commitment to making sure that the pavements are accessible makes this quite problematic when it comes to fortnightly collections but I am aware that this is thought to be a way of increasing recycling rates, so it is right that we do look at this. Our Waste Reduction Plan, agreed earlier this year, committed us to 'Explore the feasibility of weekly collections of dry recycling and food waste with fortnightly collections of residual waste' by March 2025.

We will look at other boroughs experiences and I am in touch with my colleagues across London. We will continue to monitor this and then take a decision on our own collections in due course. Thank you again for your question.

Question (m) from Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

How many Youth Engagement & Diversion Officers (YEDOs) work in Islington's local policing teams?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Ernestas. There are six Youth Engagement & Diversion Officers and one Sergeant in the team who sit in the team led by Neighbourhoods Superintendent Jack May-Robinson.

I can assure you that keeping young people safe is one of our top priorities as a council and we continue to do as much as we can to make that a reality. We have seen reductions in the number of violent crime incidents in the borough in recent years but one incident is one too many. Our Targeted Youth Support team works in the community to engage with young people and try to steer them away from crime. Our youth clubs give young people places to go and things to do, and we continue to protect these.

There are more services offered by our partners in the borough, including Arsenal in the Community, Abianda and St Giles. I'm really proud that thanks to the work of our council, we have seen a 96% reduction in the number of Islington young people who committed a lower-level offence. Many were triaged and then diverted from the youth justice system. Thank you again for your question Ernestas.

**256 ADOPTION OF LOCAL PLAN**

Councillor Ward moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Hamdache contributed to the discussion. Councillor Ward exercised their right to reply.

The recommendations were put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) It be noted that the Executive has recommended that Council adopts the new Local Plan;
- b) To adopt the new Local Plan (attached as Appendices 5-7 to the report) with the main modifications as set out in the Inspectors' report and appendices 1-4 to the report, as well as the Council's additional modifications as set out in appendix 10 to the report, and the new Policies Map attached as Appendix 8 to the report.
- c) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Director of Community Wealth Building, to prepare and publish an Adoption Statement in accordance with section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and all other necessary procedural requirements following adoption of the new Local Plan.
- d) That authority be delegated to the Corporate Direction of Community Wealth Building in consultation with the Executive Member of Finance, Planning and Performance to make any typographical amendments and other minor corrections to the new Local Plan documents as required prior to publication.
- e) It be noted that the current Local Plan, which consists of the Core Strategy (2011), Development Management Policies (2013), Site Allocations (2013) and Finsbury Local Plan (Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (2013), will be superseded in its entirety by the new Local Plan.
- f) It be noted that a consolidated version of the Integrated Impact Assessment which includes the Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment has been created and updated to consider the Inspectors' final modifications and was attached at Appendix 9 to the report.

**257 FLEXIBLE USE OF CAPITAL RECEIPTS STRATEGY**

Councillor Ward moved the recommendations in the report.

The recommendations were put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy for 2023/24 be approved, and it be noted that approving the strategy does not commit the council to using it.
- b) That responsibility for the adoption of the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy be delegated to the Section 151 Officer, if it is considered appropriate to do so at the end of the financial year in the context of the council's overall financial position.

**258 COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS REPORT**

The Mayor noted that a supplement to the report had been circulated.



Councillor Hyde moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Comer-Schwartz contributed to the discussion.

The recommendations were put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- a) That Victoria Lawson be appointed as the new Chief Executive of Islington Council;
- b) That Cllr Shaikh be appointed to the Finsbury Park Trust for a three year term until September 2026, or until a successor is appointed.
- c) That Cllr Khurana be appointed to the Fostering and Adoption Panel until the end of the municipal year, or until a successor is appointed.

**259 NOTICES OF MOTION**

Motion 1: A Metropolitan Police Service that Islington can trust.

Councillor Woolf moved the motion. Councillor Weekes seconded. Councillor Russell contributed to the discussion. Councillor Woolf exercised their right to reply.

The motion was put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- i. To urge the Met to accept the Casey Report in full – including the finding that the force is institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic.
- ii. To ensure our local Borough Commander agrees to:
  - o A 10-point action plan— practical, tangible actions, developed with our community, and implemented swiftly, in response to Baroness Casey’s report
  - o A Public Charter—outlining your commitments to neighbourhood policing in Islington.
  - o A Memorandum of Understanding—between the local authority and the BCU to ensure effective communication and accountability
  - o Public participation in policing— with effective ward panels that are representative and responsive; with Independent Advisory Groups that are empowered and supported; active engagement and collaboration with refugees, migrants, young people, minoritized groups and the Global Majority
  - o Children as children—for there never to be a horrific incident in Islington like that experienced by Child Q and for a strong commitment to prevention and diversion
  - o The highest standards—only the very best officers in our borough; rigorous SLT review, monitoring and oversight for any officer under investigation;

the very best training for Islington's police officers, including that suggested through Valerie's Law

- Stability and visibility—with an end to the carousel system; an end to high abstraction rates; more PCSOs and School Safety Officers: the very best SNTs in London
  - A swift response—to all incidents in Islington
  - Thorough investigations—with an improvement in outcomes for all crimes, including our priority areas such as an increase in sanction and detection rates for DV, plus watertight cases brought swiftly to the CPS
  - Clear communication—with the Victim's Code at the heart of what the Police does
  - A trauma-informed approach—so safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness and empowerment guide your approach and interactions
  - A joined-up approach—across boroughs, teams and partnerships
  - An anti-racist, anti-misogynistic, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic and anti-ableist force—with a laser focus on equality and inclusivity; an end to disproportionality and adultification; an active commitment to stamp out all forms of hate, misogyny, prejudice and discrimination
  - Policing by consent—earning and maintaining trust and confidence in our community by being embedded in our community, listening to our community and understanding our experiences and needs
- iii. To ensure our BCU Commander is accountable for the actions taken in our Borough, including those of central specialist units.
- iv. To continue to listen to local people through our Safer Spaces conversations, learning from residents where they feel least safe and make improvements
- v. To continue to support the safety of young people as outlined in our Youth Safety Strategy, which includes listening to and responding to the voices of young people
- vi. To continue to prioritise the reduction of Violence Against Women and Girls as outlined in our VAWG Strategy, which includes putting survivors centre stage
- vii. To continue to work in partnership to deliver on our Violence Reduction Strategy
- viii. To continue using innovative strategies and responses to organised crime groups, such as our I-CAN service
- ix. To work with our local BCU and partners across London to make tackling child exploitation a priority, with a view to tackling drug-related crime and serious violence
- x. To call on the Prime Minister to make child exploitation and serious violence a national priority.

Motions 2: Age Friendly Islington

A minor alteration to the proposed amendment was formally noted.

Councillor Burgess moved the motion. Councillor Ogunro seconded.

Councillors Hamdache and Gilgunn contributed to the discussion. Councillor Burgess exercised their right to reply.

The motion was put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- i. To join the UK Network of Age-friendly communities, recognising ourselves as an age-friendly borough, where Islington is a welcoming place to grow old in.
- ii. To retain the Older Person's Council Tax discount first introduced by Islington in 2010.
- iii. To write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for better regulation of private pensions.
- iv. To work with local businesses to encourage them to accept cash transactions, recognising the freedom, independence, and social inclusion that this provides older people in the borough.
- v. To continue working with our VCS community and other stakeholders to work on reducing digital exclusion in Islington.

Motion 3: Boycott the Anti-Boycott Bill

Councillor Hamdache moved the motion. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong seconded.

Councillor Bell-Bradford moved an amendment to the motion.

Councillor Convery contributed to the discussion. Councillor Hamdache exercised their right of reply.

The amendment was put to a vote and **CARRIED**. The amended motion was put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

**RESOLVED:**

- i. To write to the Prime Minister to share, and ask him to consider, the legal opinion published by the Labour Party on the rights of councils to boycott oppressive

regimes and illegal practices, emphasising the need for councils to make their own decisions on procurement and investment matters.

- ii. To continue to ensure that our own ethical procurement strategy doesn't include procuring goods and services produced by oppressive regimes.

#### Motion 4: Islington Child Friendly Community

Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong moved the motion. Councillor Hamdache seconded.

Councillor Ngongo moved an amendment to the motion. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong exercised their right of reply.

The amendment was put to a vote and **CARRIED**. The amended motion was put to the vote and **CARRIED**.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- i. To adopt the principles of the UNICEF Child Friendly Community programme in putting together our own Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to put the rights of children and young people at the centre of decision-making; amplify the voices of children and young people; and support them to access more opportunities.
- ii. To genuinely engage with children and young people through the creation of our Child-Friendly Islington strategy, to ensure that their voices are central to the development of the programme.
- iii. To use our Child-Friendly Islington programme to improve the conditions in which children and young people develop in Islington so that they are safer, healthier and happier. To do this by focusing on good quality housing, education, cultural and sporting activities, access to green space and play areas, and encouraging active travel.
- iv. To continue to demonstrate our commitment to the borough's children through the budget process by prioritising frontline services, investing in activities for young people and protecting the things that matter most to local young people.
- v. To ensure relevant council officers, such as social workers and housing officers, are aware and mindful of the need to put children's rights into practice and make sure the borough's children are considered in all decisions taken.
- vi. To work with local partners, such as the police and community organisations, to raise awareness of children's rights across the borough and put these into practice across the entire scope of services.

The meeting closed at 10.25 pm

**MAYOR**

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2023

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL

- a **YCllr Eva to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:**

We recently attended a Youth Debate organised by Islington Faith Forum and Islington Council. What measures has the Council taken in 2023 to minimize the impact of climate change and what plans are in place for next year?

- b **YCllr Areeb to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:**

How is the council supporting and reassuring young people from all faiths, to feel they are welcome to practice their faith freely in Islington

- c **YCllr Vincent to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:**

The Olympic Games will be held in Paris in 2024, what sporting, and leisure opportunities can Islington's young people look forward to participating in, next year?

- d **YCllr Ameera to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

We have enjoyed participating in events held during the "Standing together fortnight". This included promoting the youth night and sharing our views in recorded podcasts. What plans are in place to promote Safe Havens so more young people are aware of their locations and purpose?

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2023

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

a **James O’Doherty to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

Please explain the legal basis for parking e-bikes on pavements in Islington. I am asking for the explicit legal permission that e-bike companies have that allows the dumping on e-bikes on pavements. How does this reconcile with Rule 64 of the Highways Code which states “You MUST NOT cycle on a pavement.” I understand the need to promote cycling however why does the Council allow this kind of irresponsible dumping on pavements of e-bikes and why do resident have to deal this nonsense?

b **Rebekah Kelly to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

The latest proposals for the Barnsbury and Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood shows clear winners and losers, where some benefit from a "Liveable Neighbourhood" and some do not. How does this create a more equal borough?

c **Siobhan Cartwright to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

I’d like to address the problem re LTNs, road closures, left and right turn changes that are causing huge traffic jams on Islington main roads:

- Upper Street
- Holloway Road
- Seven Sisters Road
- Caledonian Road
- Tufnell Park Road

How are the emergency services expected to reach an emergency situation when the traffic is jammed throughout the day on the above roads listed above?

Emergency services are hampered by road and turning changes as none (to my knowledge) are indicated on GPS systems. Reliable GPS is absolutely vital for Emergency Service vehicles, along with access on ALL roads. Cars are unable to move out of their way due to traffic jams, cycle lanes and parked cars. Has there been enough consideration in the planning discussions re: Emergency Services response routes re: the latest road closures? It is apparent to anyone living, working, walking, driving and trying to navigate a way out of the latest traffic nightmare in Islington that planning consideration was not given to the points listed above.

**d Patricia Niclas to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

Regarding all the LTNs currently in operation and planned for the borough and the method for recording and presenting data and statistics for use in consultation results.

Please confirm whether such data recording has ever been carried out during school holidays and if so, when and which LTNs has this applied to and if data has been collected during school holidays would she agree that this data cannot be considered as a true reflection of actual traffic counts?

**e Antionette Fernandez to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities**

What support is given to smaller charities and CICs to bid for council funding and to deliver council services?

**f Rose McDonald to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance**

We're aware that the council and Peabody plan to put out a tender for the managing agent and operator of the Holloway women's space early next year. It's key that these are chosen with the unique character of the site and the ethos of the Supplementary Planning Document in mind. What support will be offered to smaller organisations, who may have less experience but may have a connection to HMP Holloway? How will the council ensure that the bidding process to manage and operate the space is transparent, widely publicised, and managed in a fair and equitable.

**g Susanne Lamido to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance**

The Community is really looking forward to seeing much needed council homes on the Holloway Park site. At least 40% of the flats will be sold privately. The last thing our community needs is a ghost development where flats are sold to overseas investors and remain empty for most of the year or let as Airbnb Peabody has offered assurances that private leases will stipulate that flats can not be sublet for periods of less than six months and flats can not be left empty for periods of more than six months. There are strong concerns that these assurances might not always be met: what power does the council have to ensure that they are?

**h Pete Gilman to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance**

Across Britain many local authorities are in a dire financial position with some rumoured to be close to bankruptcy, and Islington council is facing an almost impossible situation. The reason is the withdrawal of government funding from local authorities on a massive scale. With next year's probable change of government will Islington council, preferably in alliance with many other local authorities, press for the restoration of government funding?

**i Naomi Peck to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture, and Inclusion:**

It is my understanding that the only way that an Islington resident can ask a question at Full Council and be given a verbal response, along with the opportunity to ask a follow-up question is to attend in person. However, attending in person is simply not possible for many: those with caring responsibilities, those who work in the evenings, those who would find the formal setting challenging for all kinds of reasons, those who cannot afford the travel fare, those who do not feel safe leaving their homes in the evenings etc etc.

I know that the meetings are streamed but given that, since the pandemic, so many meetings in so many organisations are of a hybrid nature, does the Council not agree that it is somewhat behind the curve on this issue and it should implement a policy that offers an option for its residents to ask a question and optional follow-up question by Zoom (which seems to be the best option for meetings with external participants).

This would help to make the process a bit more inclusive than at present and this step towards an 'equalisation of access' would be in alignment with what seems to be a goal of the Council's Islington Together 2030 plan. If the Council does agree, could this policy be implemented by the next Full Council meeting?

**j Gill Shepherd to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

How aware is the Executive Member of the cumulative impact on boundary roads of more and more LTNs/LNs extruding traffic onto the same fixed number of boundary roads? This will shortly become a major problem for Upper Street and the Holloway Road if Barnsbury and Laycock LTN goes ahead. And if Highbury New Park goes ahead this will have massive impacts on St Paul's Road and the Blackstock Road.

**k David Twine to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

Climate Emergency UK assessed all UK councils on the actions they have taken towards net zero carbon and the findings were published in October 2023 - Council Climate Action Scorecards | Climate Emergency UK (councilclimatescorecards.uk). The assessment found that Islington scored more poorly than its neighbouring boroughs of Camden and Haringey for the following three questions on Buildings and Heating.

What lessons have the council learned from this Climate Emergency assessment for Buildings and Retrofit - especially in relation to at least matching, and ideally exceeding, what Camden and Haringey have achieved, and what actions will it take, and by when, to address these lessons?

**l Phillipa Dowswell to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families**

Whilst we, at the NEU, appreciate that the council has no wish to close any school in the borough, we are very concerned that the time for the proposed merger between Montem and Duncombe (which in practical terms is a closure of Montem) is too short for there to be time to explore alternative options. We are also concerned about the likelihood of academisation of our primary schools - Blessed Sacrament is already exploring this option. Will the council consider a longer time frame for consultation, ensure that the borough NEU reps are consulted at an early stage in any future changes, and will the council take a collaborative approach, involving all the schools in the borough, not just those with the lowest rolls? The Council and NEU should challenge the Department for Education on the school funding formula, to address the funding gap facing our schools.

**m Caz Royds to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

How is the Council responding to Islington's recycling rate falling from around 30% to 27%, and in the light of this fall will its representatives on the NLWA board press for an urgent exploration of the potential for advanced mixed waste sorting to extract recyclables from residual waste?

## COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2023

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**a Cllr McHugh to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

The Casey Report found the Met Police to be institutionally sexist, racist and homophobic. Cllr Woolf, we passed a motion calling on the Met to adopt and implement the Casey review at September Council. What have you done since September to push for policing that is fair and safe for people of all genders, races, and sexual orientations in Islington?

**b Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:**

Could the council spell out the total spend on drug and alcohol services from Islington Council each financial year since 2014, and the percentage of residents who successfully complete drug treatment?

**c Cllr Convery to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:**

Ensuring that children have the best possible start in life is vital in reducing inequalities and making sure that every single child can start school healthy and is not limited in reaching their potential. How is the Council using family hubs to ensure parents and children access the best wellbeing and developmental support in the crucial early years?

**d Cllr Chapman to Cllr Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy, and Jobs:**

Islington is filled with diverse organisations, making the borough a melting pot of opportunity for local people, however – these opportunities are not always accessed equally. What is the Council doing to ensure that employment opportunities are accessible to everyone?

e **Cllr Hayes to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:**

We know that Islington's Libraries are vital – they not only offer access to books but also to the internet, warm spaces, and community events. With winter coming up and the cost-of-living crisis continuing, what is the Council doing to make our libraries accessible and welcoming to all residents?

f **Cllr Clarke to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health, and Social Care:**

Islington GP Federation is an outstanding example of an organisation of GPs. It works for the people of Islington providing high standards of service, caring for and protecting Islington patients. Do you think all GP practices in Islington should be encouraged to become members of the federation?

g **Cllr Croft to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:**

Last year, Islington Council launched the Young Black Men and Mental Health Programme. Can you provide an update on how the programme is promoting wellbeing and tackling structural and institutional racism?

h **Cllr Ozdemir to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:**

The Halabja genocide was a tragic chemical massacre where thousands of innocent civilians died, and others were severely wounded. This moment in history is seared in the hearts and minds of the Kurdish community, of which there is a substantial population here in Islington. How will the Council commemorate this dreadful moment in history so we can learn lessons of the past and build a better future now?

i **Cllr Williamson to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

Tollington is now the second highest ward in the borough for reporting of drug issues and has had a 95% increase in the last 5 years of drug reports. However there has been little increase in on the ground resource. How will the council work with the police to ensure better resourcing so we can improve safety within the community?

j **Cllr Shaikh to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

In February 2020, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published a database of business enterprises involved in certain specified activities related to the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Database identifies 112 business enterprises involved in one or more activities that raised particular human rights concerns in a UN-led investigation. These companies are involved in serious human rights abuses.

Can you provide the full list of Islington Council's LGPF holdings, and can you confirm that Islington's LGPF, or any other investment activities, have no investments with the 112 OHCHR's listed business enterprises?

**k Cllr Ogunro to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:**

In 2017, we passed the motion to make Islington dementia friendly, and since then, we have been recognised by the Alzheimer's Society for our work in becoming a dementia-friendly borough. However, many of our residents are still unaware of the range of support available. Can you please give an update on what services the Council offers and what plans you have to increase awareness?

**l Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

Can you provide an update on the campaign for residence based voting rights?

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Community Wealth Building Department  
7 Newington Barrow Way,  
London,  
N7 7EP

Report of: Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Finance,  
Planning & Performance

Meeting of: Full Council

Date: 14 December 2023

Ward(s): All

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## Subject: The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. The Council Tax Support Scheme for 2023/24 was agreed by Council on 8 December 2022. The Scheme has to be agreed by full Council by the 11 March for each subsequent year.
- 1.2. Public consultation took place between the 18 July 2023 to 10 September 2023 on a new Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) for 2024/25.
- 1.3. This report sets out the results from the consultation and the recommendation to change the CTSS in 2024/25 to a banded scheme for working age households.
- 1.4. The Council is conducting this review at a time when we know many of our

households are struggling with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, although financial challenge is not new for many of these households. The recommended model will target resources at those most in need, including providing a 100% discount for our most financially vulnerable working age households, taking them out of paying any council tax.

- 1.5. The proposed changes are also designed to reflect the changing welfare benefits system, with more working age households moving on to universal credit. The recommended banded scheme will mean less frequent changes in CTSS entitlement for those households with variable earnings, reducing the volume of updated council tax bills and payment plans.
- 1.6. Any households dropping off of council tax support entitlement each month from April 2024 onwards will receive cost of living help. This will include benefit maximisation and signposting to various cost of living information to support their financial situation.
- 1.7. There is also a legal requirement to affirm on an annual basis the council tax discounts and exemptions for empty properties and the empty rates premium.
- 1.8. Subject to agreement, we expect a banded scheme to be simpler to administer and savings of £250k have been agreed to be delivered for 2024/25. The proposed saving would have no impact on the sums available for the core scheme.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To agree to adopt the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2024/25 as contained in appendix C. For working age households this is model three from the consultation (see appendix A). Model three provides the most overall total financial support to households of the three models that were part of the consultation. Model three was the preferred model with respondents to the consultation.
- 2.2. To retain the amendments to council tax agreed at full Council on 8 December 2022. With number four below updated to properties that have remained empty for over 1 year rather than 2 years. Number five updated to reflect that the bill has now been enacted. The council will charge the premium on second homes from the earliest date possible.
  1. Council tax exemption classes A (unoccupied and unfurnished property that requires or is undergoing major repairs) and C (unoccupied and unfurnished property) will have a discount of 0% for all cases.
  2. Council tax discount for second homes will be 0% in all cases.

3. Council tax discount for empty furnished lets will be 0% in all cases; and
  4. A premium will be charged at the maximum percentage allowed of 100% on the council tax of all properties that have remained empty for over 1 year but less than 5 years in all cases. A premium will be charged at the maximum percentage allowed of 200% on the council tax of all properties that have remained empty for over 5 years but less than 10 years in all cases. A premium will be charged at the maximum percentage allowed of 300% on the council tax of all properties that have remained empty for over 10 years in all cases.
  5. With effect from 1 April 2025, a premium will be charged at the maximum percentage allowed of 100% on the council tax for Second Homes (also known as "dwellings occupied periodically"). A Second Home is substantially furnished but is not the main or principal home of any resident.
- 2.3. To note that the savings of £250k attached to the implementation of a banded CTSS for 2024/25 will be delivered upon full implementation of the new CTSS policy.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Islington's CTSS is an important part of the safety net we offer to help support and protect low-income households. The CTSS reduces the amount of council tax a person has to pay based on an assessment made by Islington Council.
- 3.2. The Council's current CTSS protects older people in order that their Council Tax Support is broadly the same as they would have received in council tax benefit, being a 100% scheme. In 2022/23, for working age households, the Council reduced the cap from 8.5% to 5%. This increased from 91.5% to 95% the level of support they would have been entitled to under the old council tax benefit rules. This is the councils current CTSS for working age households.
- 3.3. The models consulted on propose working age banded schemes, taking account of net earnings to decide which band the household is placed in. All other income including welfare benefits are not counted in the calculation, other than to passport you to a band.
- 3.4. The detail on the modelling options that progressed to public consultation is shown in appendix A.

- 3.5. We pre-consulted with the Greater London Authority (GLA). The GLA confirmed that they were happy for our planned consultation to proceed. A public consultation has been completed between 18 July 2023 to 10 September 2023. The consultation was conducted via the Let's Talk Islington engagement tool. The consultation was advertised on the council website, on various council social media accounts and in various council bulletins. We also sent 2,000 letters randomly selected council tax registered account holders, 1,000 were sent to liable council tax accounts and 1,000 to those liable for council tax and in receipt of council tax support.
- 3.6. During the consultation there were 600 visits from people that clicked on the link. 428 aware visitors, meaning they visited the page. 57 informed visitors spent some time on the page or navigated in some way through the pages. There were 27 engaged visitors who completed and submitted a response to the consultation.
- 3.7. The full consultation responses are attached as appendix B.
- 3.8. In summary, 70.3% of responders either strongly agreed or agreed with the intention of proposing a new CTSS for 2024/25 that will increase the maximum support for working age households from 95% to 100%.
- 3.9. There were 85.2% of responders that strongly agreed or agreed with prioritising a 100% support level for working age households, with barriers to work like disability, limited capability to work or lone parent with a child under 5.
- 3.10. 88.9% of responders strongly agreed or agreed that the council tax support scheme should be simplified to reduce the number of in year changes to council tax bills for those households with fluctuating incomes.
- 3.11. 48.1% of responders strongly agreed or agreed that higher earnings bands should be applied to those households that contain couples and or children. Whilst 25.9% of responders either strongly disagreed or disagreed.
- 3.12. On the question of simplifying the non-dependant deduction to a standard £7.50 deduction for all adults in the household, 62.9% of responders either strongly agreed or agreed.
- 3.13. Responders were asked which is your preferred model for the CTSS for 2024/25. 51.9% preferred model three, 40.7% preferred model one and 7.4% of responders preferred model two.
- 3.14. An amount of £250k savings are attached to the implementation of a new CTSS for

2024/25. If the recommendation is approved and implemented, we expect the scheme to be simpler to administer, resulting in the saving being achieved through staffing efficiencies. The proposed saving would have no impact on the sums available for the core scheme.

- 3.15. A £50k saving has already been made early for 2023/24. The remaining £200k will be delivered for 2024/25 by reducing approximately six posts from the teams that administer housing benefit and council tax support.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1. Financial Implications

The council currently provides 95% CTS to low income working aged households. Under the proposed scheme, working-aged CTS recipients would now be moved into the new banded scheme which factors in net earnings. Older person age recipients will continue to receive 100% support.

The calculation assumes, for modelling purposes, a 4.99% rise in council tax in 2024/25, based on current government funding and MTFS assumptions, along with actual and estimated benefits uprating. The estimated overall CTS cost is volatile and contains a degree of uncertainty particularly in relation to the current economic climate and changes to inflation (which impact future benefits uprating).

The actual cost to the council in a given financial year depends on the actual level of council tax increase and actual working age caseloads. The CTS support for 2024/25, based on external modelling, is estimated to be £35.59m under the proposed scheme, of which council's share would be £27.07m.

#### **Summary of Estimated CTSS Costs in 2024/25 – Externally Modelled**

	<b>2024/25 Under Proposed Scheme £m</b>
Total Estimated CTS Costs	35.59
Islington Share (Based on Council Tax Share vs GLA)	27.07

Based on external modelling, it is anticipated that the proposed banded scheme will be broadly cost neutral when compared to the current scheme in which CTS is provided at 95% to working age claimants.

Any foregone/additional income because of an increase/decrease in the cost of CTS impacts the council's annual budget via the Collection Fund for council tax income.

It is assumed that the banded scheme will be simpler to administer and a £250k base saving will be included in the 2024/25 budget relating to staffing and administration costs. This saving will have no impact on the sums available for the core scheme.

### **Levelling Up and Regeneration Act Changes**

As part of Levelling Up and Regeneration Act for England, the council now has the legal power to charge premiums on empty properties and second homes (also known as dwellings occupied periodically). The Act enables local authority to charge a 100% premium on second homes and a 100% premium for properties empty and unfurnished for a period of between one and two years.

Billing authorities wishing to adopt any changes arising from the Act are required to make a council resolution confirming the requirement at least one year prior to the financial year in which the changes will come into effect. This means the earliest changes can be implemented is from 1 April 2025.

The proposed 100% premium for second homes from April 2025 would potentially generate additional council tax income. There are 249 properties currently classified as second homes (as at the latest data), which equates to approximately 308 properties in Band D terms. Based on an average Band D calculation, it is estimated that the second homes premium could generate additional council tax revenue of approximately £0.46m in 2025/26. This is based on the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) assumption that council tax will rise by 4.99% in 2024/25 and 1.99% in 2025/26.

It is worth highlighting there is a small risk associated with the estimated additional income, because of the uncertainty around the future disposal of second homes in Islington, which could fluctuate. In addition, the council's share of the estimated income is subject to future changes to council tax charges. The estimated additional income for 2025/26 will be factored into the 2025/26 budget and MTFS planning process, subject to the recommendation being agreed.

#### **4.2. Legal Implications**

The Council Tax Support Scheme is considered to be lawful. The requirement now is for full Council to agree the scheme for its continuing adoption from 1 April 2024 for the full 2024/25 council tax year.

The Council must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, which is integral to the Council's functions, and which is set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The equality implications of the proposed scheme for 2024/25 are detailed in section 4.4. and a full equality impact assessment must be completed as noted.

#### **4.3. Environmental implications and contributions to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

4.3.1 Not applicable

#### 4.4 **Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 4.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as appendix D.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 Given ongoing financial pressures for working age households and changes to the welfare benefits system, it is proposed that the CTSS moves to a banded model, including the potential for our most financially vulnerable working age households to receive a 100% discount. Detailed analysis has been conducted on six models and it was agreed to move forward to consultation on three of these models.
- 5.2 The results of the public consultation provide an overall majority of support for the detailed changes to the CTSS that we proposed. Model three was the preferred model with respondents to the consultation, receiving 51.9% support on which of the three models were preferred.
- 5.3 Model three provides the most overall total financial support to households of the three models that were part of the consultation. It increases the maximum support available to working age households from 95% to 100%. In our modelling, 45.1% of the working age households will receive 100% support, taking them out of paying any council tax. A further 33.1% of households will receive 95% support. Model three takes into account net earnings. Flat rate non-dependent deductions are introduced at £7.50 per week. Non-dependents receiving a passported benefit do not attract a deduction in this model.
- 5.4 Model three is the closest to cost neutral option of all the models. It increases total scheme costs by £45,342 in comparison to costs if the current scheme were to be retained into 2024/25.
- 5.5 Individual analysis of the 596 households that were identified as losing support in model three, reduces the number losing support to 373 households or 2% of the overall working age household caseload. In the 373 households, 113 of these can be described as having fluctuating earnings. Therefore, it is likely they could move on and off of council tax support as their earnings go up and down in the future. The remainder have current consistent earnings above the threshold level. Any households dropping off of council tax support will receive cost of living help, which will include benefit maximisation and signposting to various cost of living information to support their financial situation.

5.6 The £250k savings attached to the implementation of a new banded CTSS for 2024/25 will be delivered from staff savings, if the banded scheme is approved and implemented from 1 April 2024.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A: Banded scheme models consulted on

Appendix B: Consultation results

Appendix C: Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25

Appendix D Council Tax Support Scheme EQIA

**Final report clearance:**

Authorised by: Cllr Diarmaid Ward

Date: 15/11/23

Report Author: Robbie Rainbird – Assistant Director Community Financial Resilience

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## Appendix A

### Models 1, 2 and 3 that went to public consultation

- 1.1. Model 1 is a banded scheme (see table below), taking into account net earnings. Flat rate non-dependent deductions are introduced at £7.50 per week. Passported households in band 1 are on legacy benefits receiving PIP/DLA or households on UC with limited capability for work. Single parents with a child under 5. Band 2 are Jobseekers on JSA or UC, and households with zero earnings.

Bands 3-7 are for those working, placing them into a band based on their net earnings, all benefits income is ignored. There are additions to the earnings amounts for couples and children.

	Weekly earnings				
Band	Single	Couple addition	1 child addition	2+ children addition	Discount
1	Passported	Passported	Passported	Passported	100%
2	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	95%
3	£1-£25	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00	90%
4	£25-£80	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	75%
5	£80-£120	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	60%
6	£120-£160	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	40%
7	£160-£200	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	20%

- 1.2. The number of households that fall into each band in model 1 is illustrated in the table below.

Band	No. households	% households	% discount	Average weekly CTS
1	8,827	49.3	100	£29.86
2	5,677	31.7	95	£27.29
3	463	2.6	90	£27.86
4	965	5.4	75	£23.10
5	651	3.6	60	£18.53
6	515	2.9	40	£11.77
7	329	1.8	20	£5.96

Losing support	473	2.6	0	£0.00
Total	17,900			

1.3. Model 1 decreases total scheme costs by £0.18m in comparison to costs if the current scheme were to be retained into 2024/25. Average Council Tax Support for working age households under Model 1 decreases by 0.72% compared to the current scheme maintained into 2024/25. The increase in costs is driven by the increase in the maximum amount of support from 95% to 100% of council tax liability.

1.4. Model 2 is a banded scheme (see table below), taking into account net earnings. Flat rate non-dependent deductions are introduced at £7.50 per week.

Band 1 are passported households on legacy benefits receiving PIP/DLA or households on UC with limited capability for work. Single parents with a child under 5. Earnings level overrides passported status in this model. Band 2 are Jobseekers on JSA or UC, and households with zero earnings.

Bands 3-7 are for those working, placing them into a band based on their net earnings, all benefits income is ignored. There are additions to the earnings amounts for couples and children.

	Weekly earnings				
Band	Single	Couple addition	1 child addition	2+ children addition	Discount
1	Passported and £0 earnings	Passported	Passported	Passported	100%
2	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	95%
3	£1-£25	£25.00	£25.00	£25.00	90%
4	£25-£80	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	75%
5	£80-£120	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	60%
6	£120-£160	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	40%
7	£160-£200	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	20%

1.5. The number of households that fall into each band in model 2 is illustrated in the table below.

Band	No. households	% households	% discount	Average weekly CTS
1	8,311	46.4	100	£29.79
2	5,677	31.7	95	£27.29
3	642	3.6	90	£27.56
4	1,136	6.4	75	£23.04
5	717	4.0	60	£18.60
6	544	3.0	40	£11.88
7	357	2.0	20	£6.02
Losing support	516	2.9	0	£0.00
Total	17,900			

1.6. Model 2 decreases total scheme costs by £0.47m in comparison to costs if the current scheme were to be retained into 2024/25. Average Council Tax Support for working age households under Model 2 decreases by 2.11% compared to the current scheme maintained into 2024/25. The cost of the increase in the maximum amount of support from 95% to 100% of council tax liability is offset by decreases in support for households in other bands. Savings are made from model 1 as there are fewer households in band 1, as earnings override passporting in this model.

1.7. Model 3 is a banded scheme (see table below), taking into account net earnings. Flat rate non-dependent deductions are introduced at £7.50 per week. Non-dependents receiving a passported benefit do not attract a deduction in this model.

Band 1 are passported households on legacy benefits receiving PIP/DLA or households on UC with limited capability for work. Single parents with a child under 5. Earnings level overrides passported status in this model. Band 2 are Jobseekers on JSA or UC, and households with zero earnings.

Bands 3-7 are for those working, placing them into a band based on their net earnings, all benefits income is ignored. There are additions to the earnings amounts for couples and children.

	Weekly earnings				
Band	Single	Couple addition	1 child addition	2+ children addition	Discount
1	Passported and £0 earnings	Passported	Passported	Passported	100%
2	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	£0 earnings	95%
3	£1-£25	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	85%
4	£25-£80	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	75%
5	£80-£120	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	65%
6	£120-£160	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	50%
7	£160-£200	£40.00	£40.00	£80.00	35%

1.8. The number of households that fall into each band in model 3 is illustrated in the table below.

Band	No. households	% households	% discount	Average weekly CTS
1	8,072	45.1	100	£29.95
2	5,916	33.1	95	£27.96
3	842	4.7	85	£27.56
4	852	4.8	75	£23.42
5	709	4.0	65	£21.28
6	552	3.1	50	£15.67
7	361	2.0	35	£11.19
Losing support	596	3.3	0	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>17900</b>			

1.9. Model 3 increases total scheme costs by £45,342 in comparison to costs if the current scheme were to be retained into 2024/25. Average Council Tax Support for working age households under Model 3 increases by 0.21% compared to the current scheme maintained into 2024/25. The cost of the increase in the maximum amount of support from 95% to 100% of council tax liability is offset by decreases in support for households in work. Model 3 is the closest cost neutral option of all the models.

# Project Report

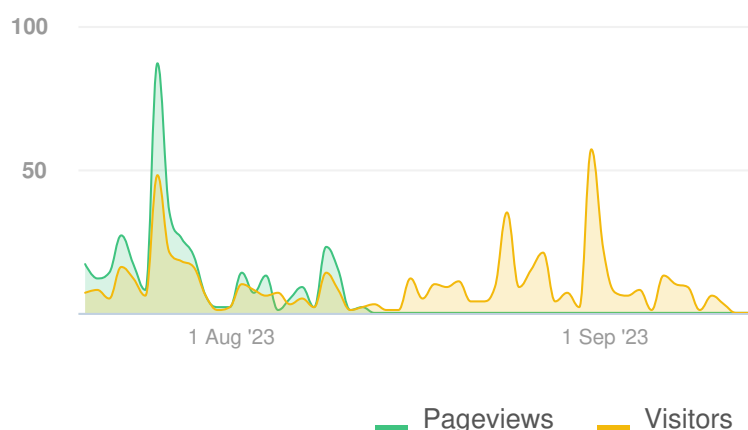
18 July 2023 - 11 September 2023

## Let's Talk Islington

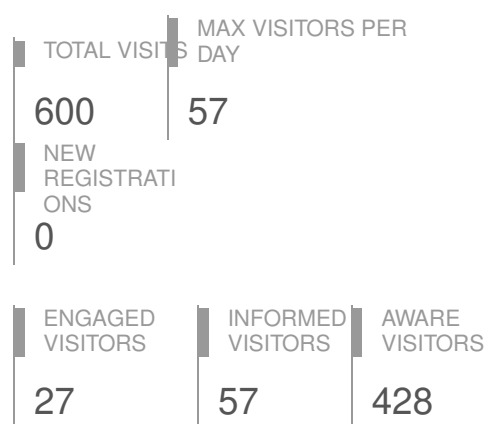
### Council Tax Support scheme consultation



#### Visitors Summary

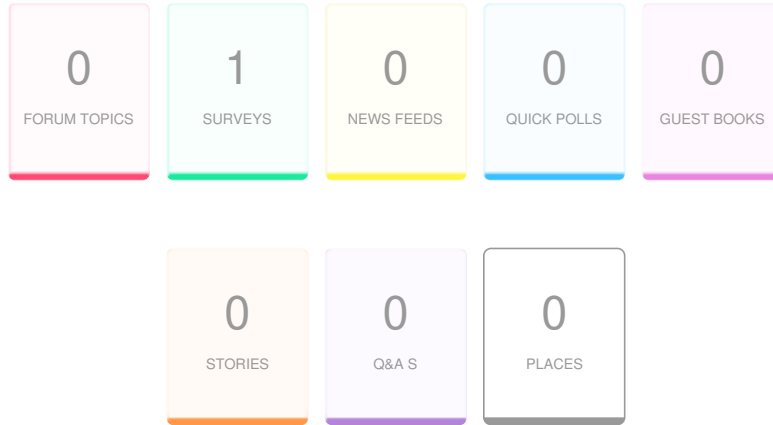


#### Highlights



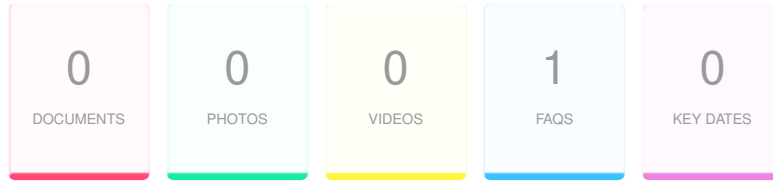
<b>Aware Participants</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>Engaged Participants</b>	<b>27</b>		
<b>Aware Actions Performed</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Engaged Actions Performed</b>	<b>Registered</b>	<b>Unverified</b>	<b>Anonymous</b>
Visited a Project or Tool Page	428	Contributed on Forums	0	0	0
<b>Informed Participants</b>	<b>57</b>	Participated in Surveys	1	0	26
<b>Informed Actions Performed</b>	<b>Participants</b>	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0
Viewed a video	0	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0
Viewed a photo	0	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0
Downloaded a document	0	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0
Visited the Key Dates page	1	Asked Questions	0	0	0
Visited an FAQ list Page	11	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0
Visited Instagram Page	0	Contributed to Ideas	0	0	0
Visited Multiple Project Pages	30				
Contributed to a tool (engaged)	27				

## ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



Tool Type	Engagement Tool Name	Tool Status	Visitors	Contributors		
				Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Survey Tool	Council Tax Support scheme 2024 consultation survey	Archived	48	1	0	26

## INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



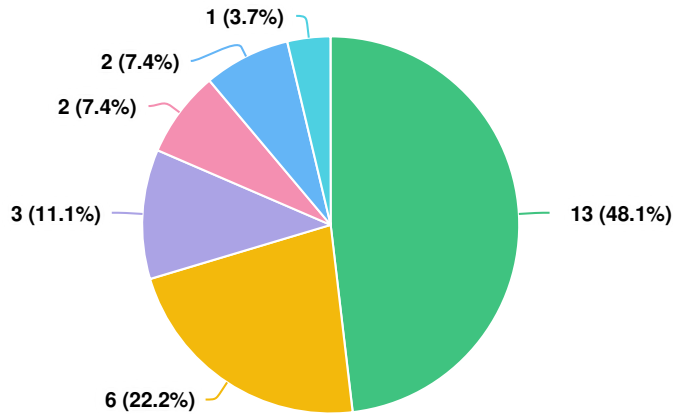
Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Faqs	faqs	11	15
Key Dates	Key Date	1	2

## ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

### Council Tax Support scheme 2024 consultation survey

Visitors <b>48</b>	Contributors <b>27</b>	CONTRIBUTIONS <b>27</b>
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Do you agree with the overall intention of proposing a new Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25 that will increase the ma...



#### Question options

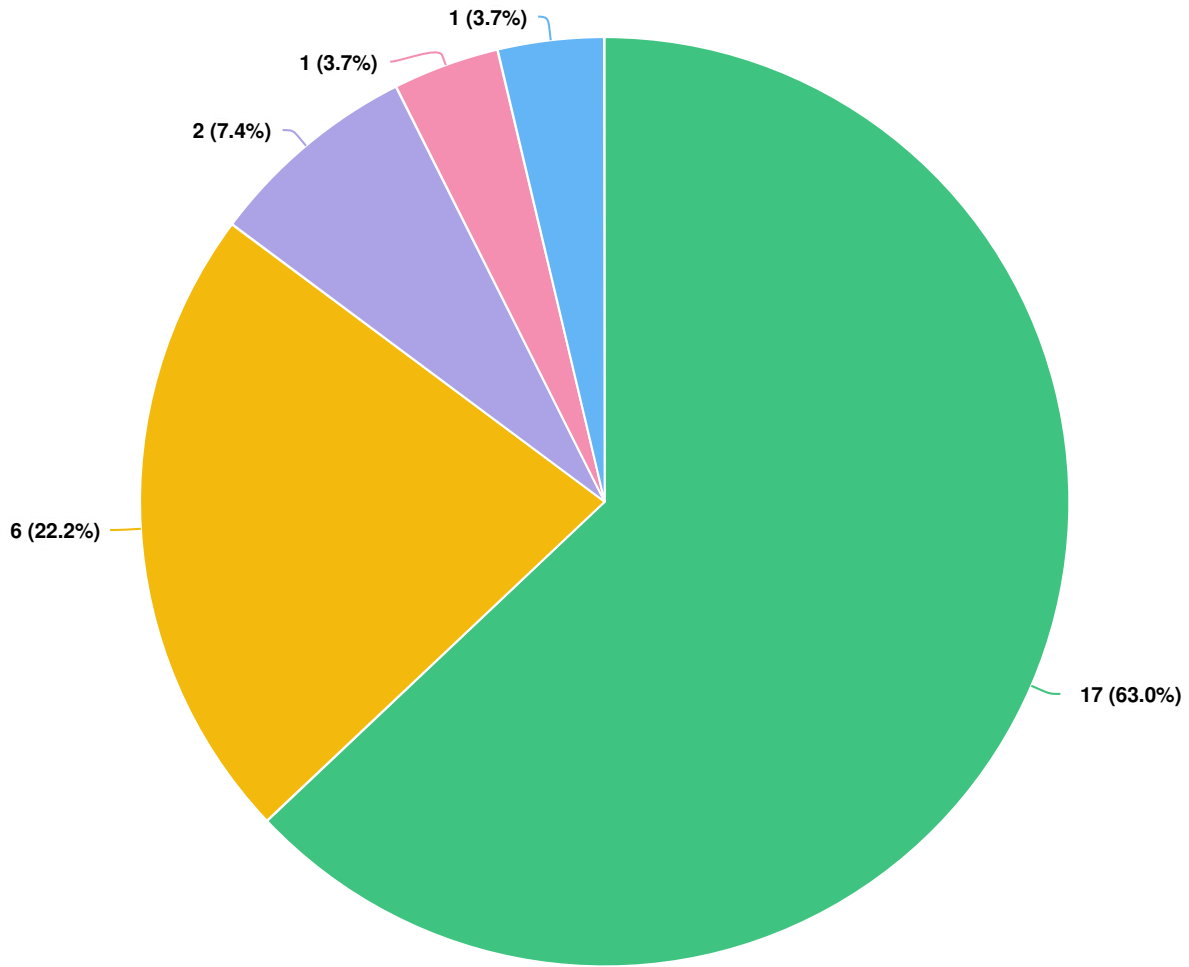
● Strongly agree ● Agree ● Neither agree nor disagree ● Disagree ● Strongly disagree ● Not sure

Mandatory Question (27 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question



**Do you agree that the 100% Council Tax Support (covering the entire Council Tax bill) should be prioritised for households who face barriers to work, such those with a disability, single parents with children aged under 5?**



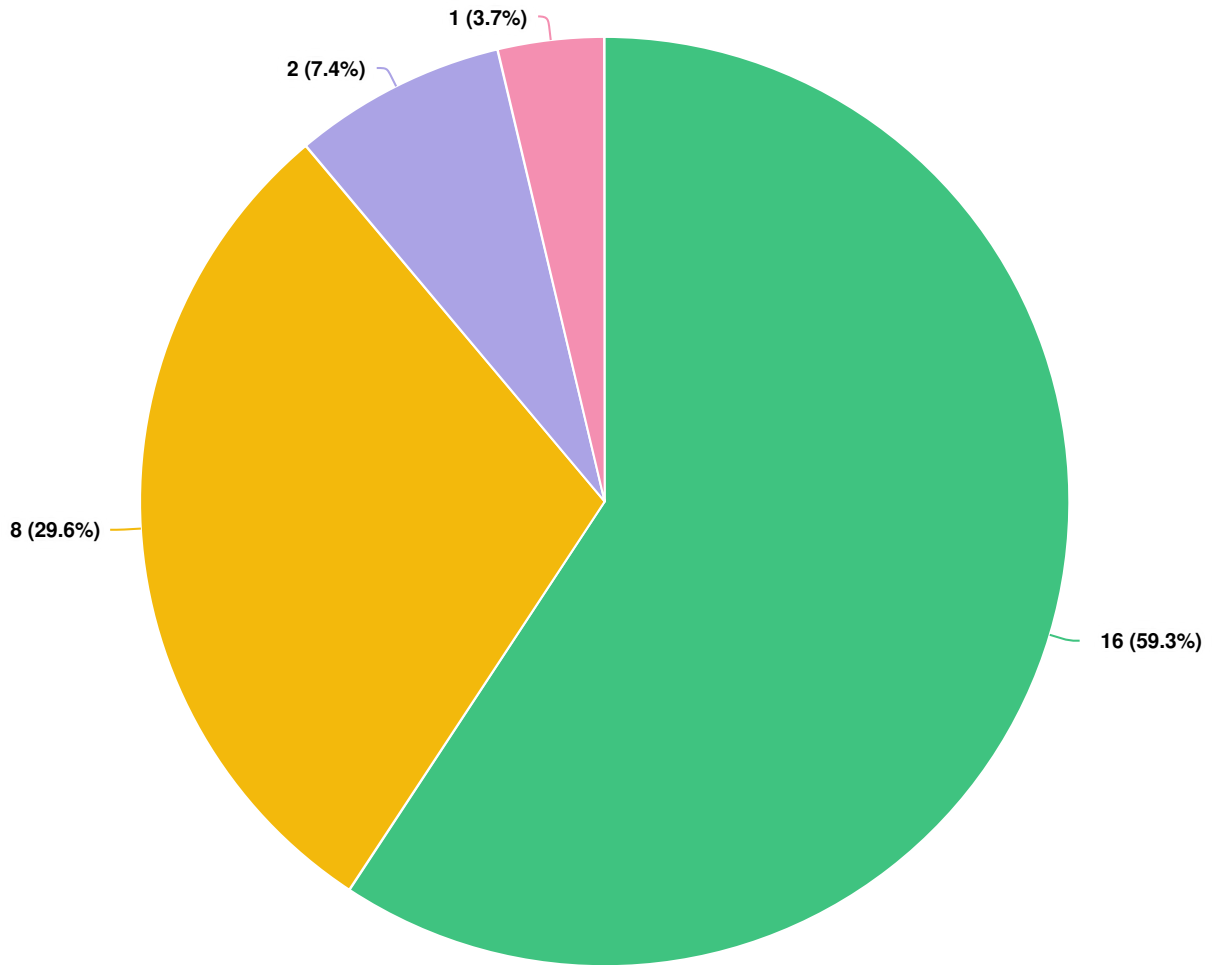
**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (27 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Do you agree that the Council Tax Support scheme should be simplified to reduce the number of in year changes to Council Tax bills for those households who may experience small changes to their income each month?**



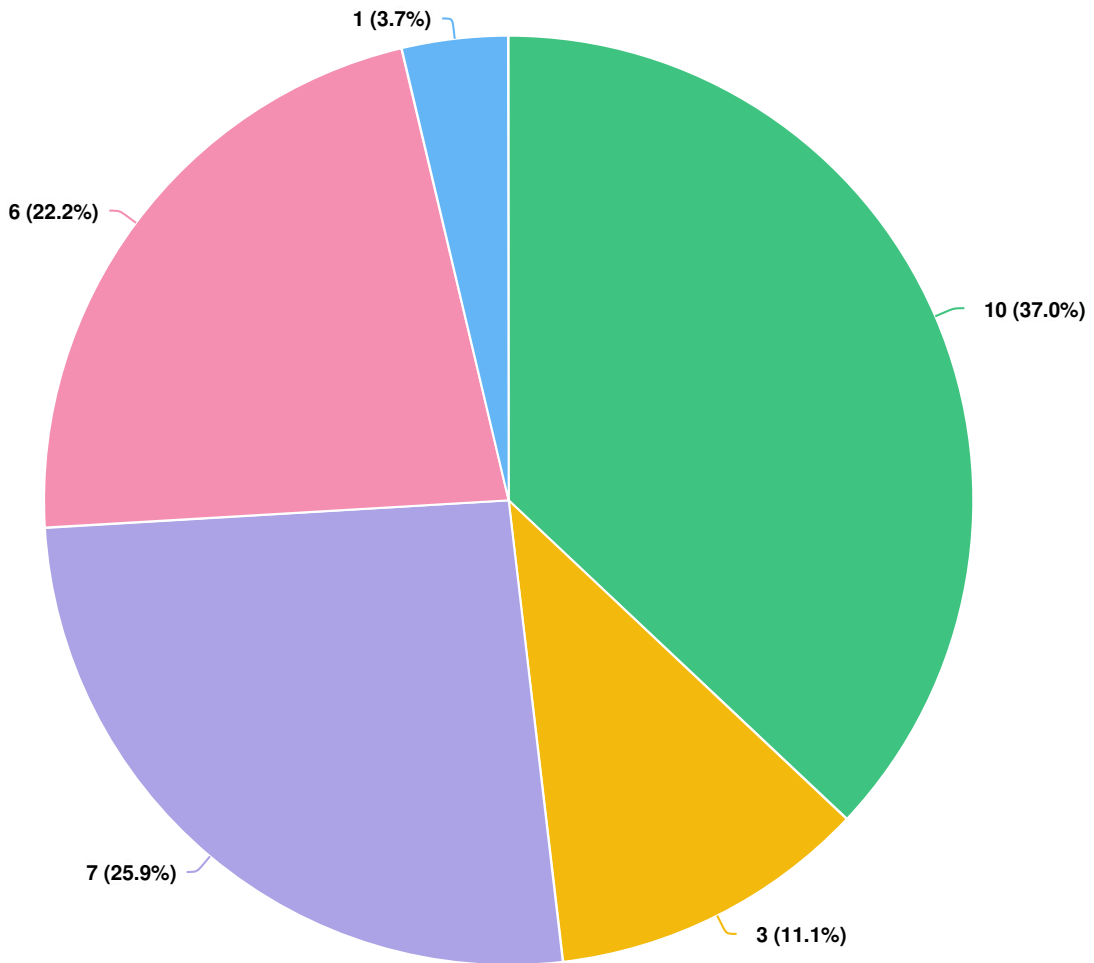
**Question options**

Strongly agree     Agree     Neither agree nor disagree     Strongly disagree

*Mandatory Question (27 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

**Do you agree that those households with couples and those with children should have a higher earnings allowance for each of the bands than those households who are single or who have no children?**



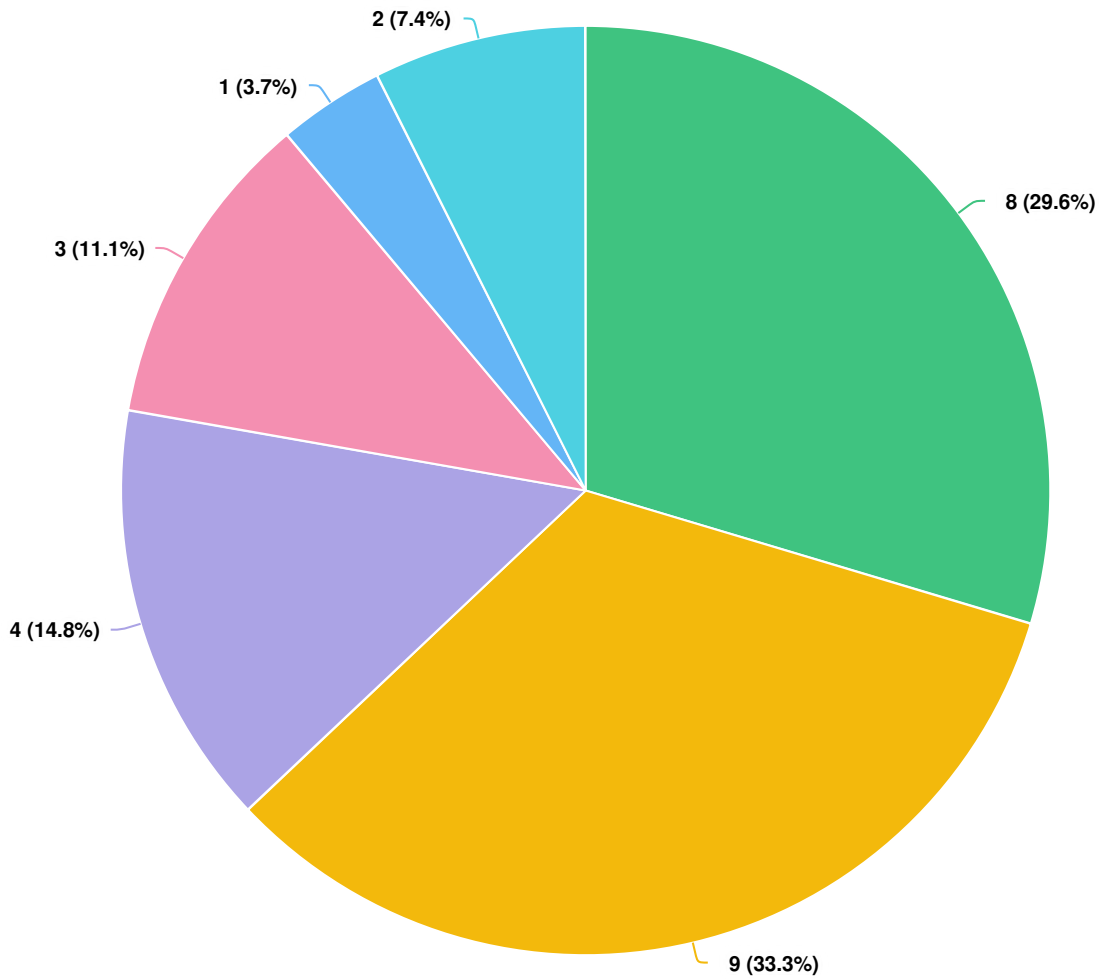
**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Mandatory Question (27 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Do you agree with simplifying the non-dependant deduction to a standard £7.50 deduction for all adults in the household?**



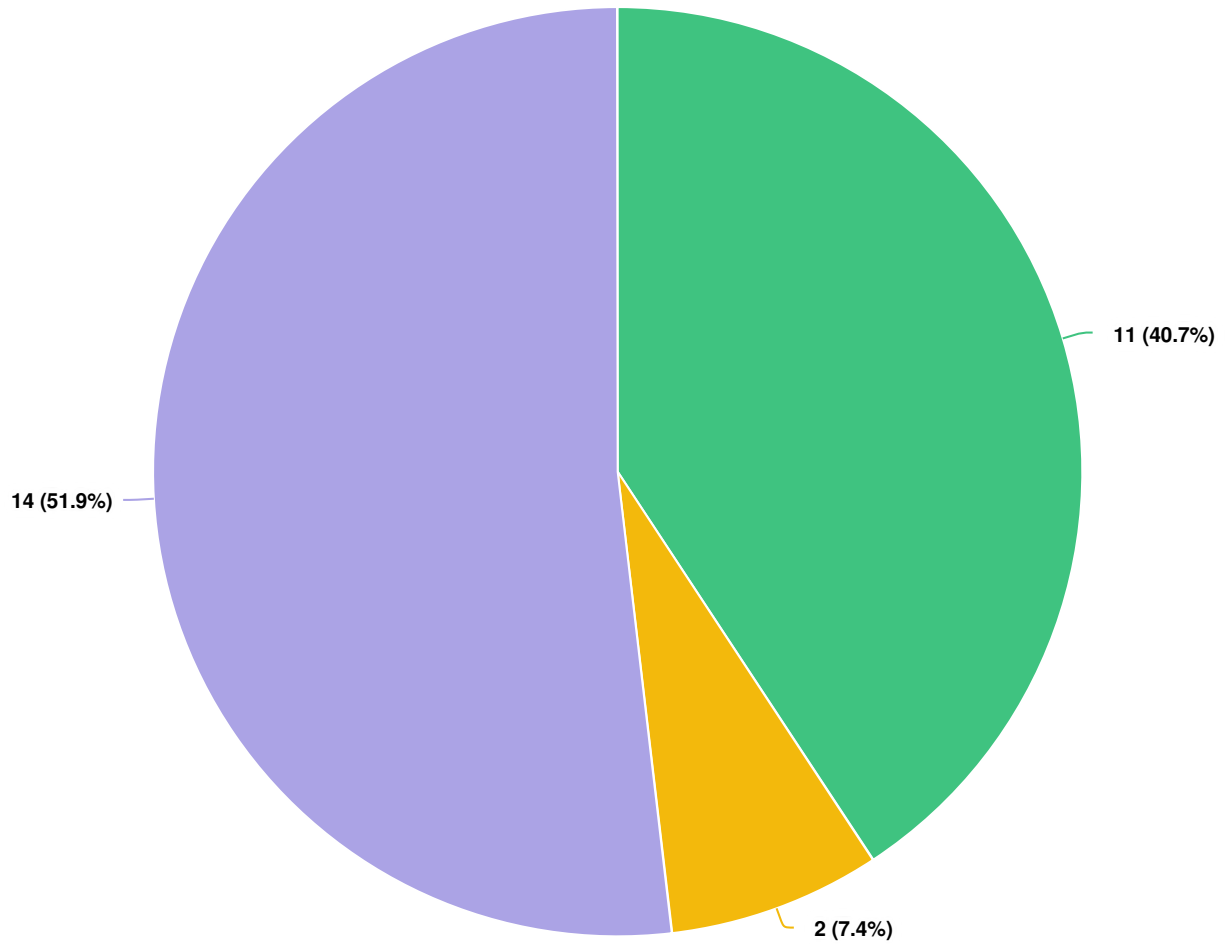
**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure

Mandatory Question (27 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

### Which is your preferred model for the Council Tax Scheme for 2024/25?



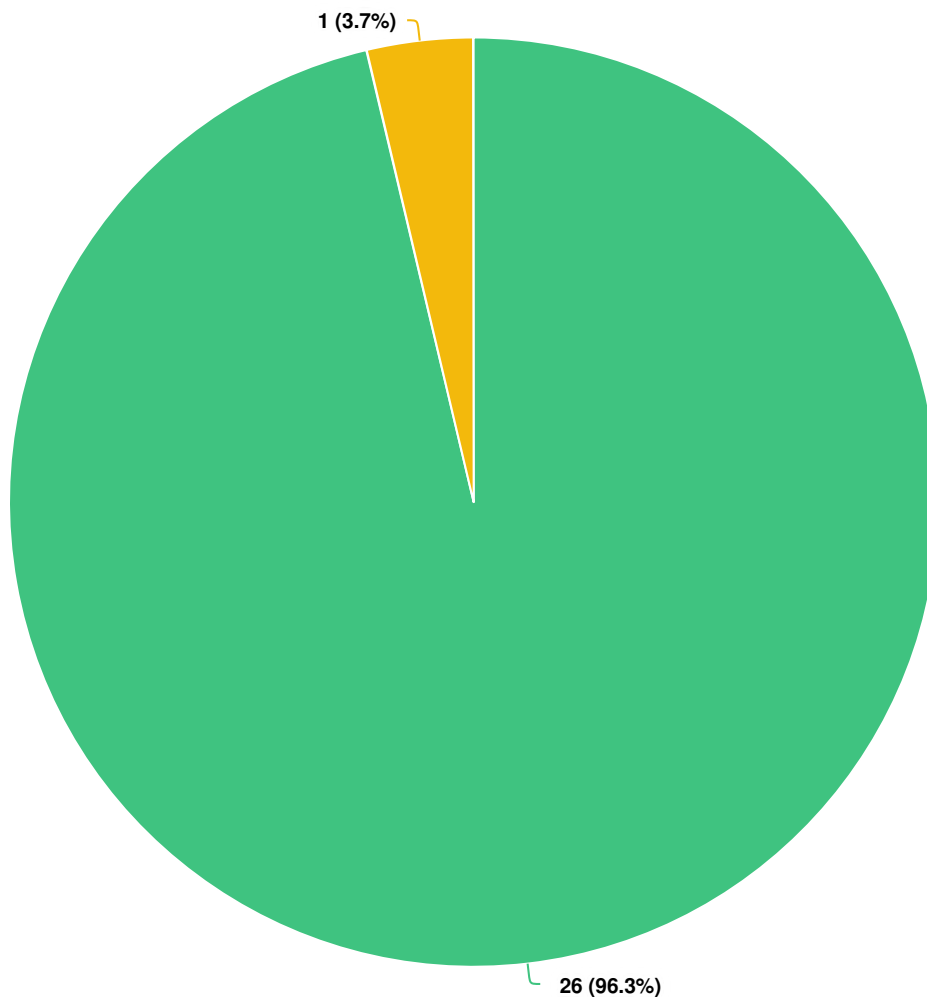
**Question options**

- Model one
- Model two
- Model three

*Mandatory Question (27 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or an organisation?



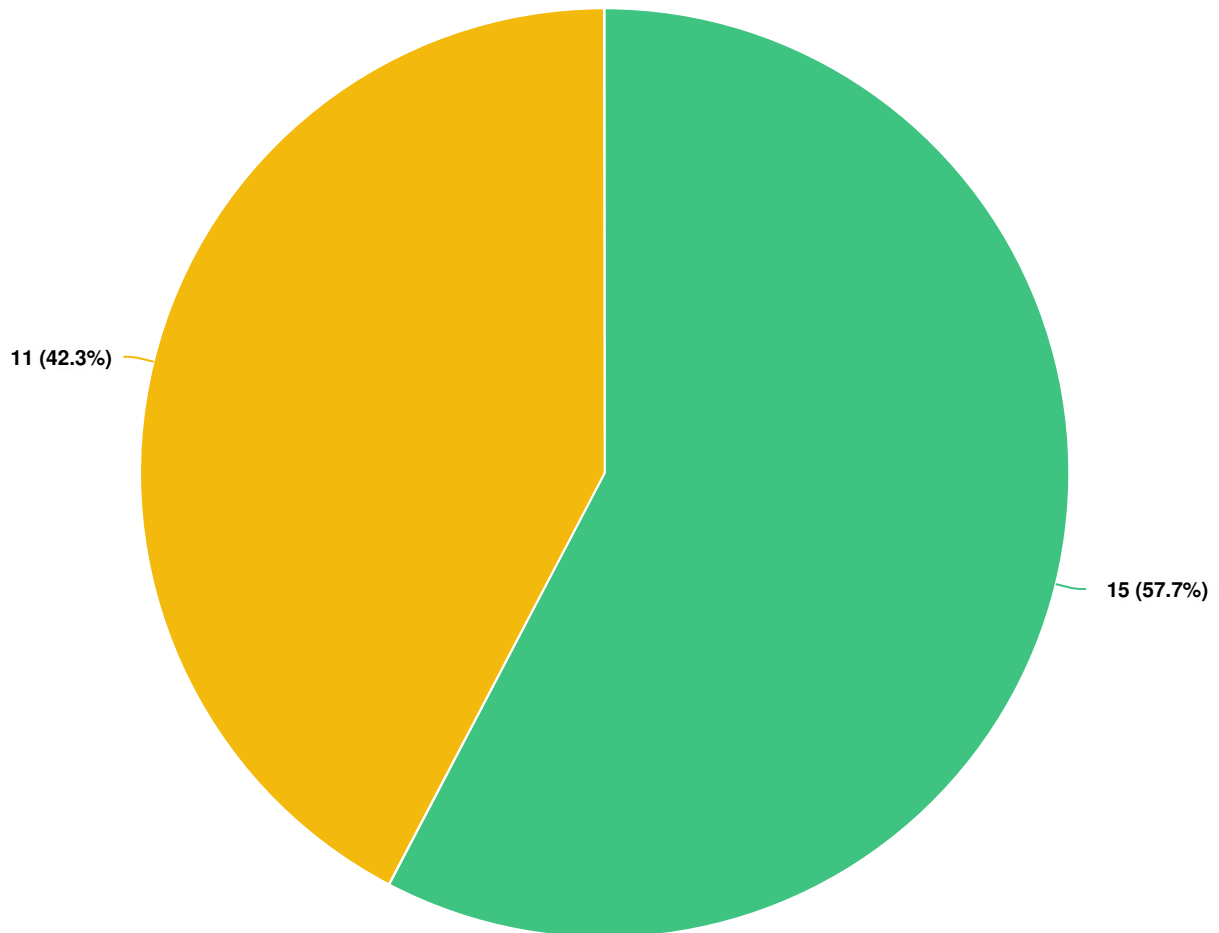
**Question options**

- An individual
- An organisation

*Mandatory Question (27 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Do you currently receive Council Tax Support?



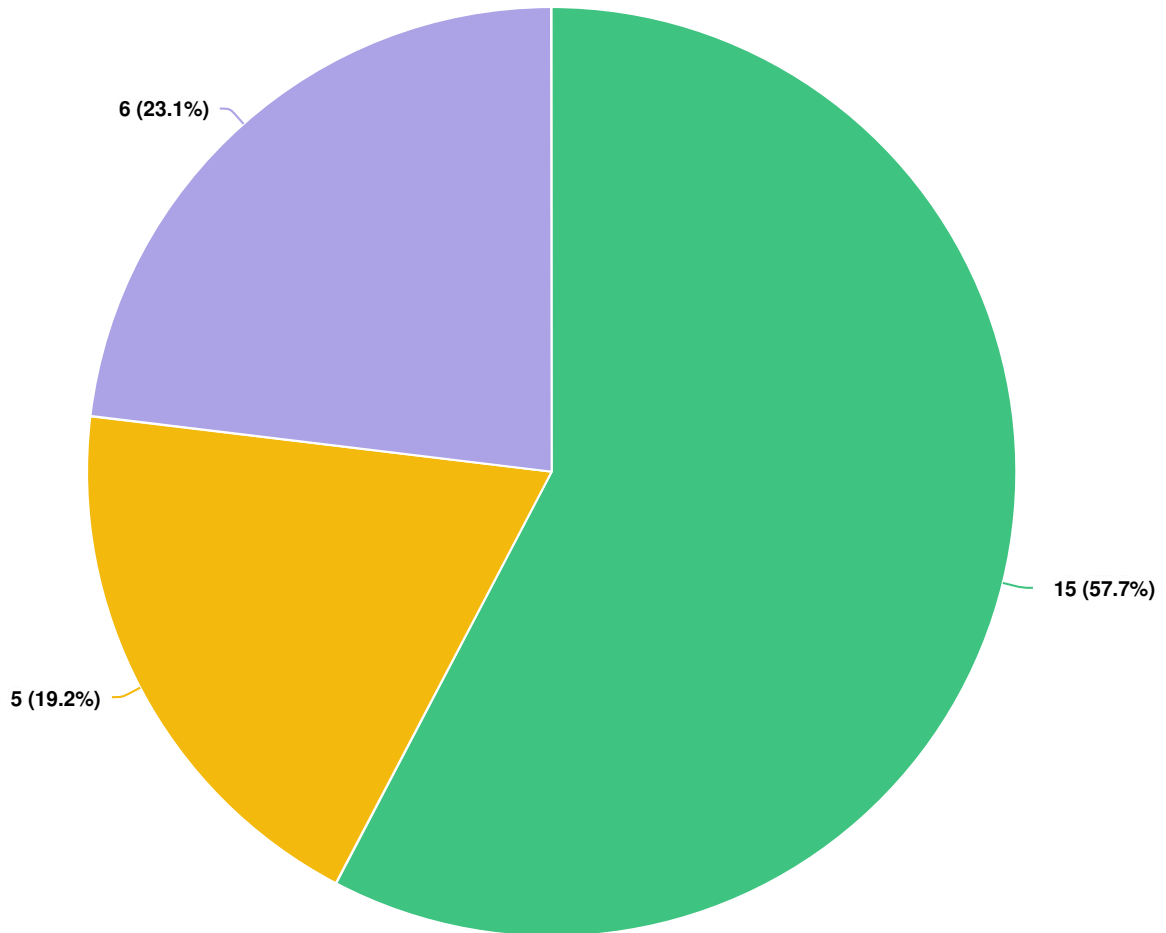
**Question options**

- Yes
- No

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Is your household:



#### Question options

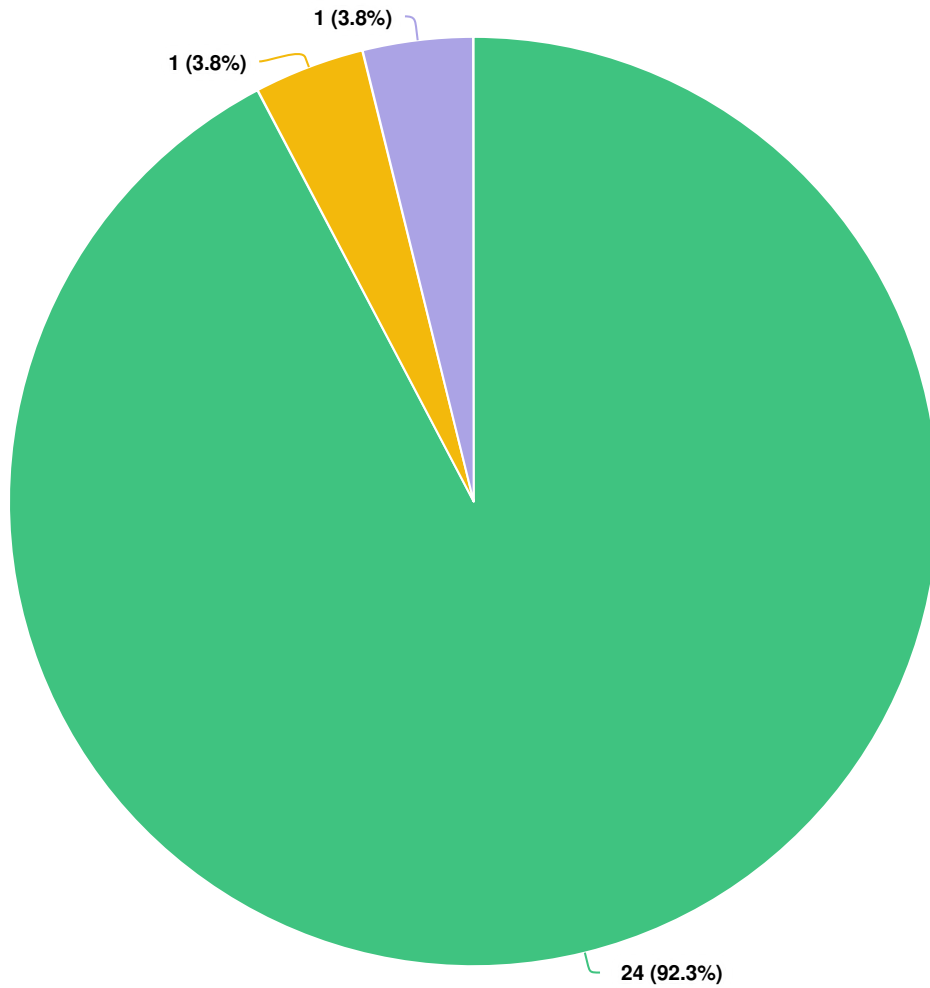
- Working age household
- State pension age household
- Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question



### Do you pay Council Tax to Islington Council?



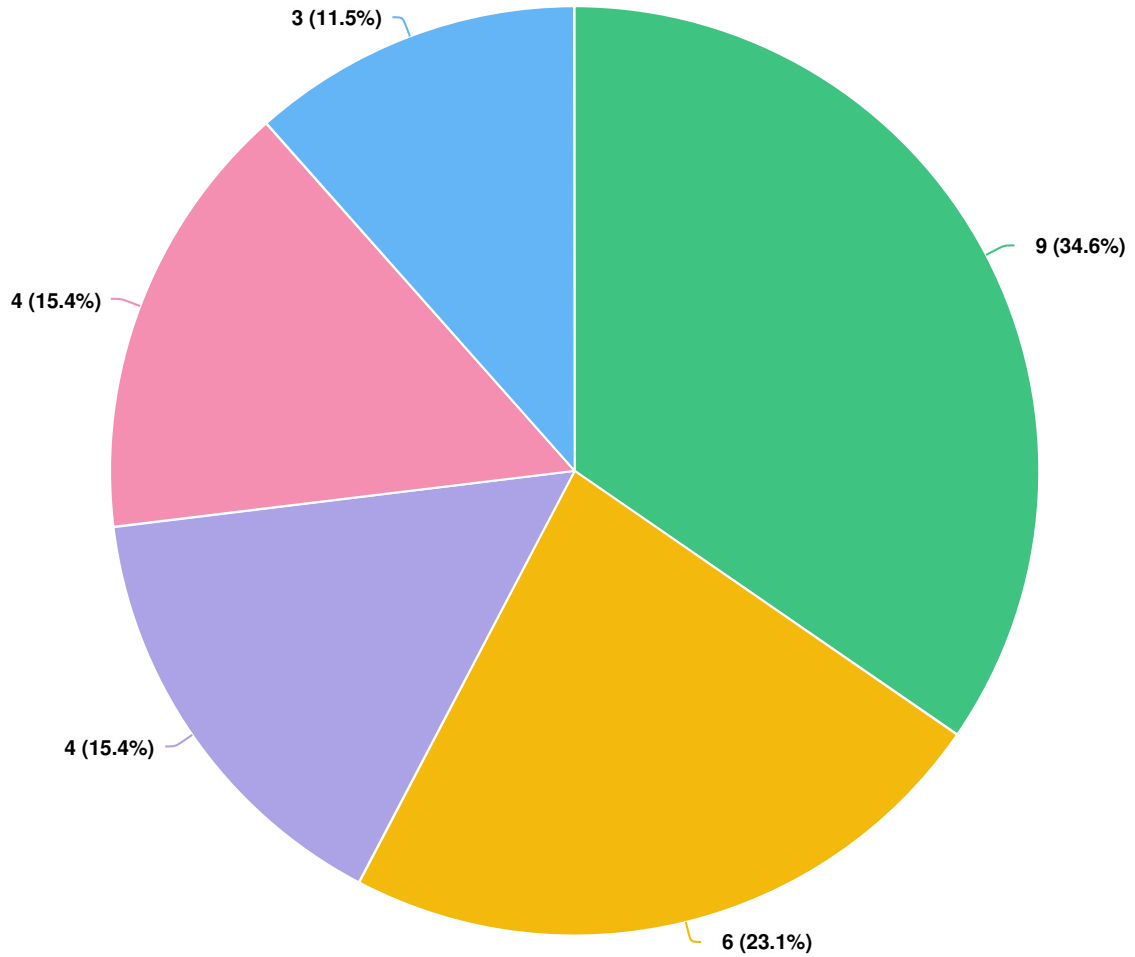
**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know/can not say

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### What are your current circumstances?



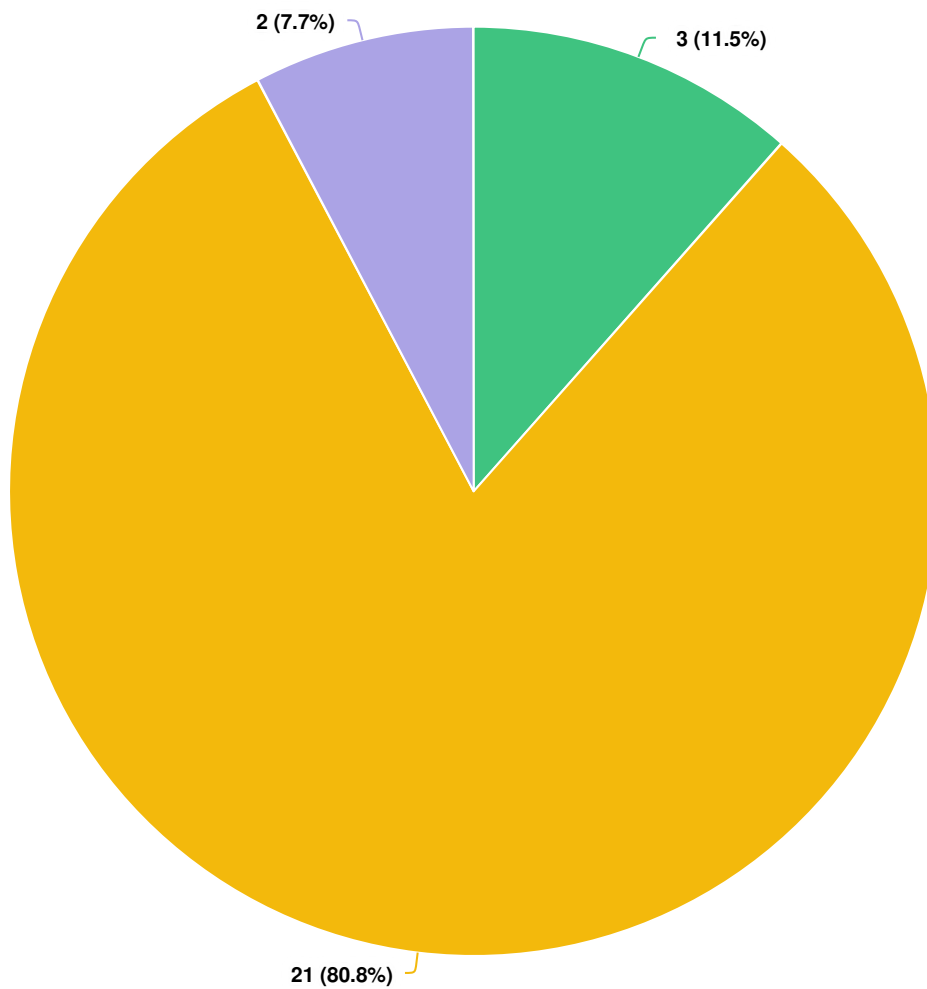
**Question options**

- Working, not in receipt of benefits
- Not working and in receipt of benefits
- Working and in receipt of benefits
- Retired
- Other (please specify)

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Do you have any other adults, apart from your partner, who live with you but are not dependant on you?**



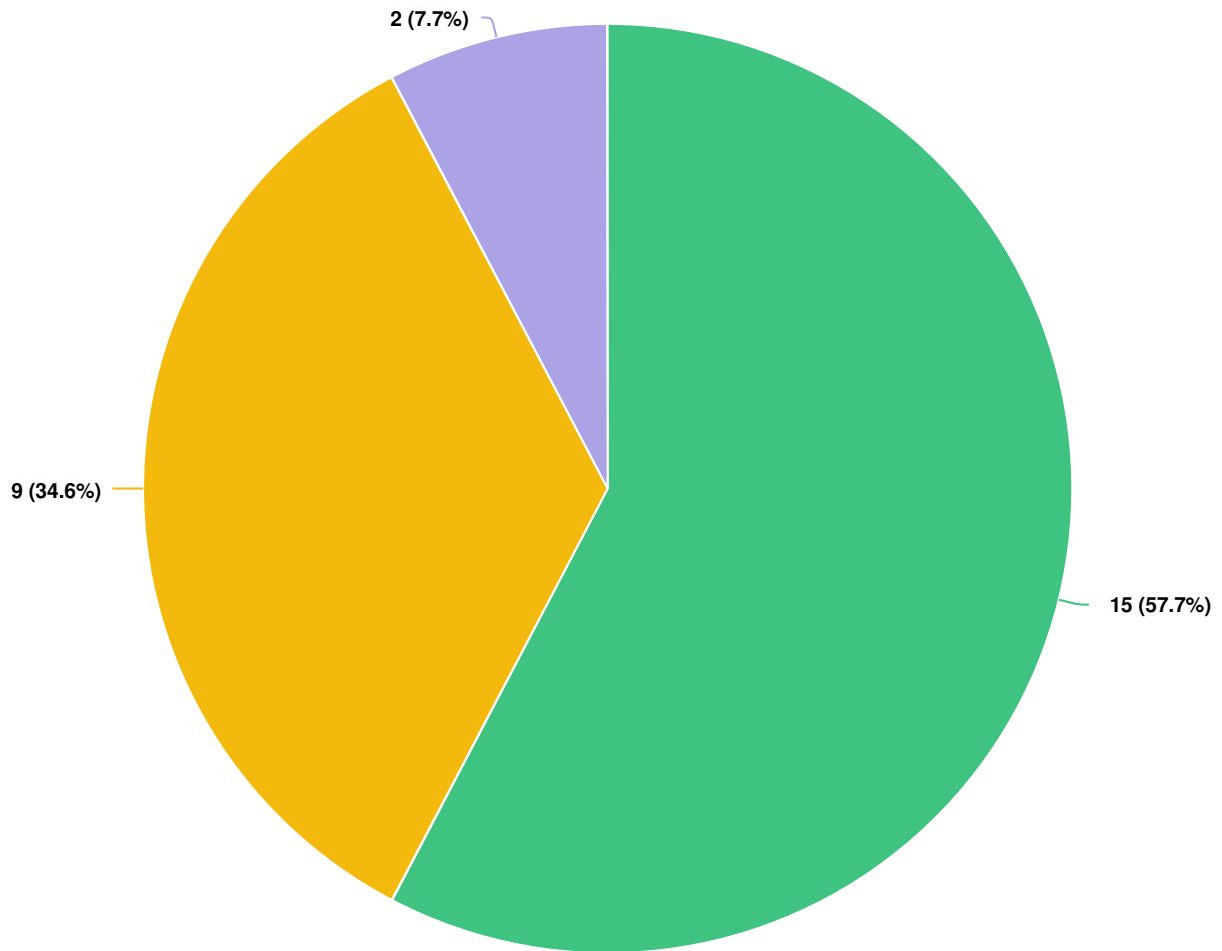
**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Gender: How would you describe your gender?



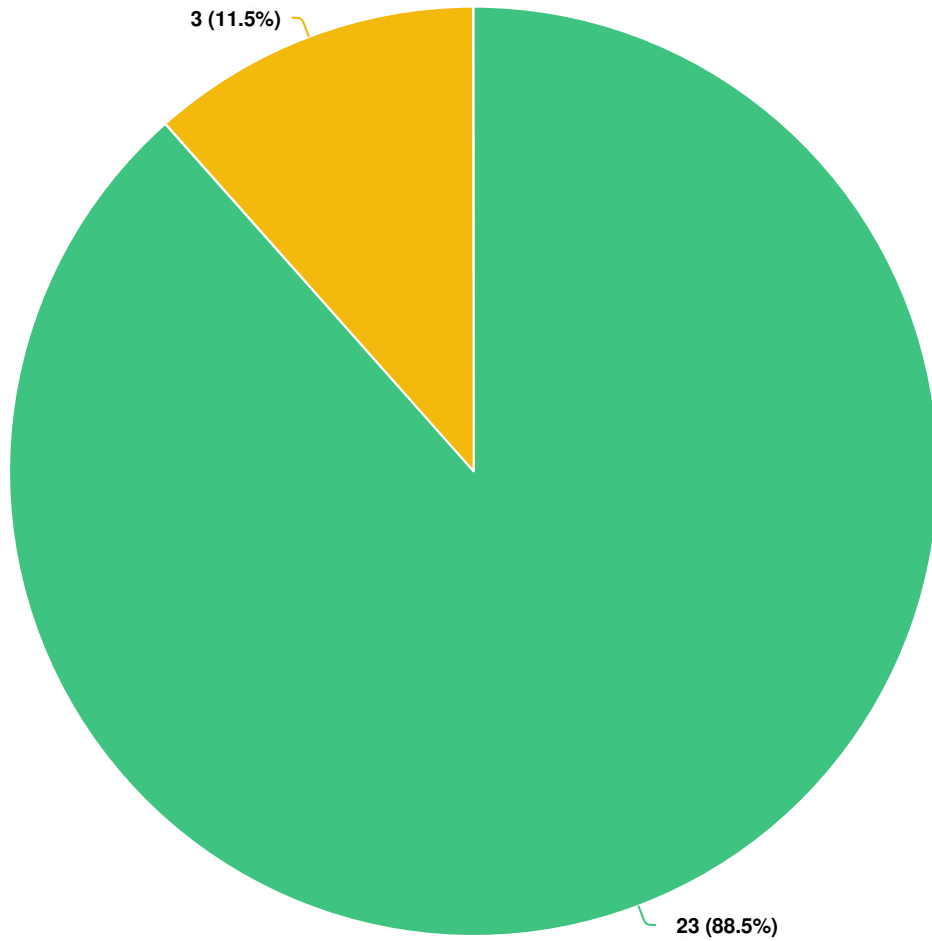
**Question options**

- Woman
- Man
- Prefer not to say

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Trans status or identity: Are you trans?



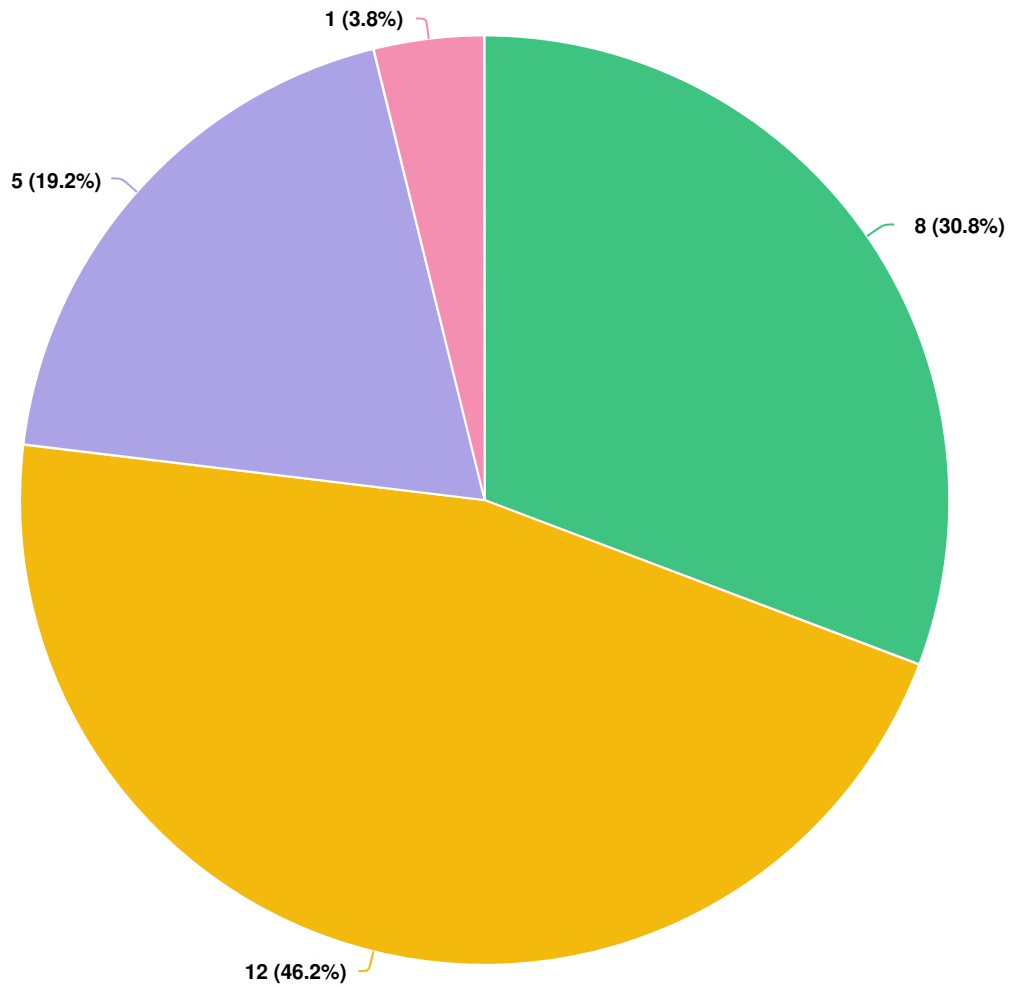
**Question options**

- No
- Prefer not to say

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Age: What is your age?



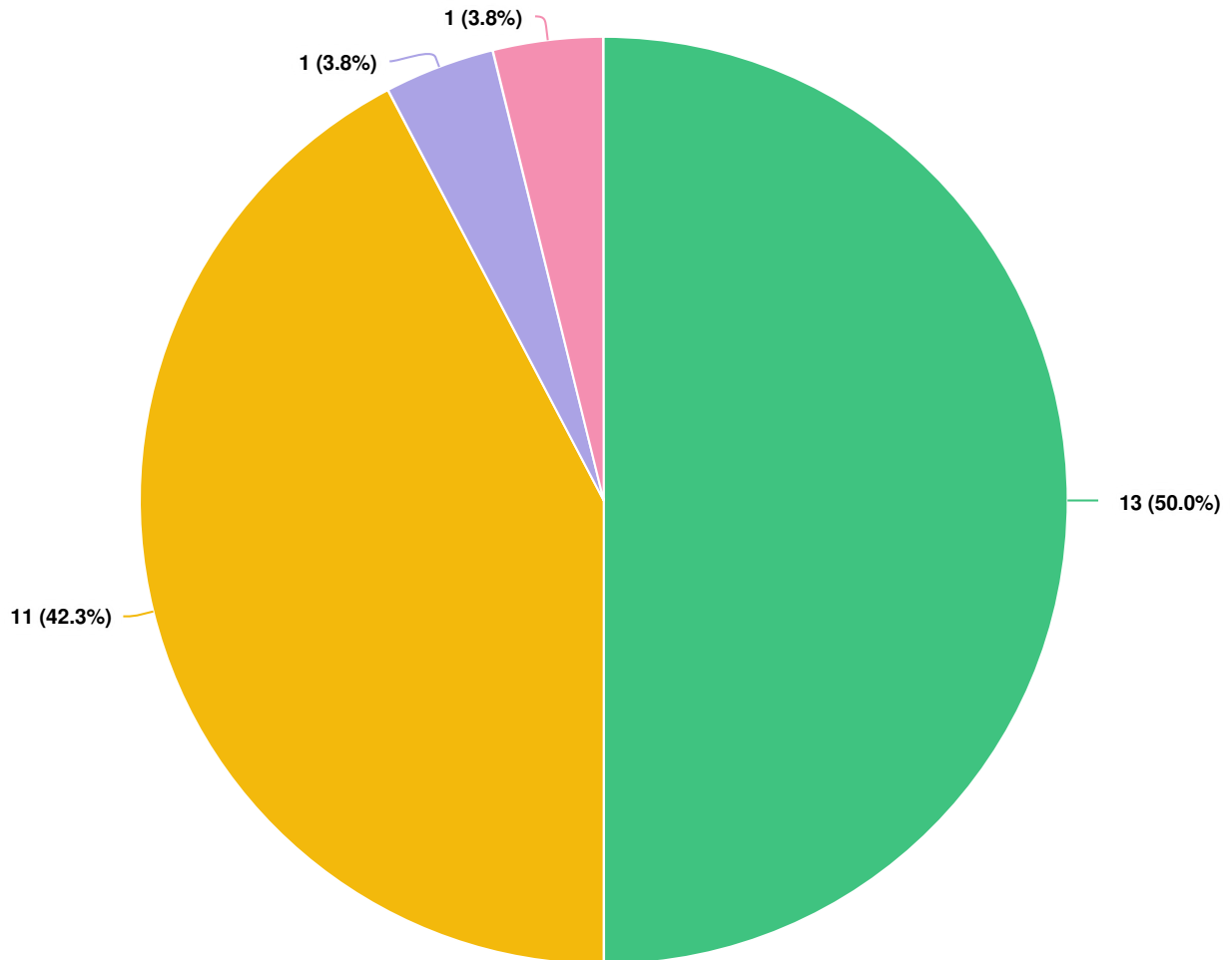
**Question options**

- 25-44
- 45-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Disability: Do you have any physical or mental health conditions, impairments or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?**



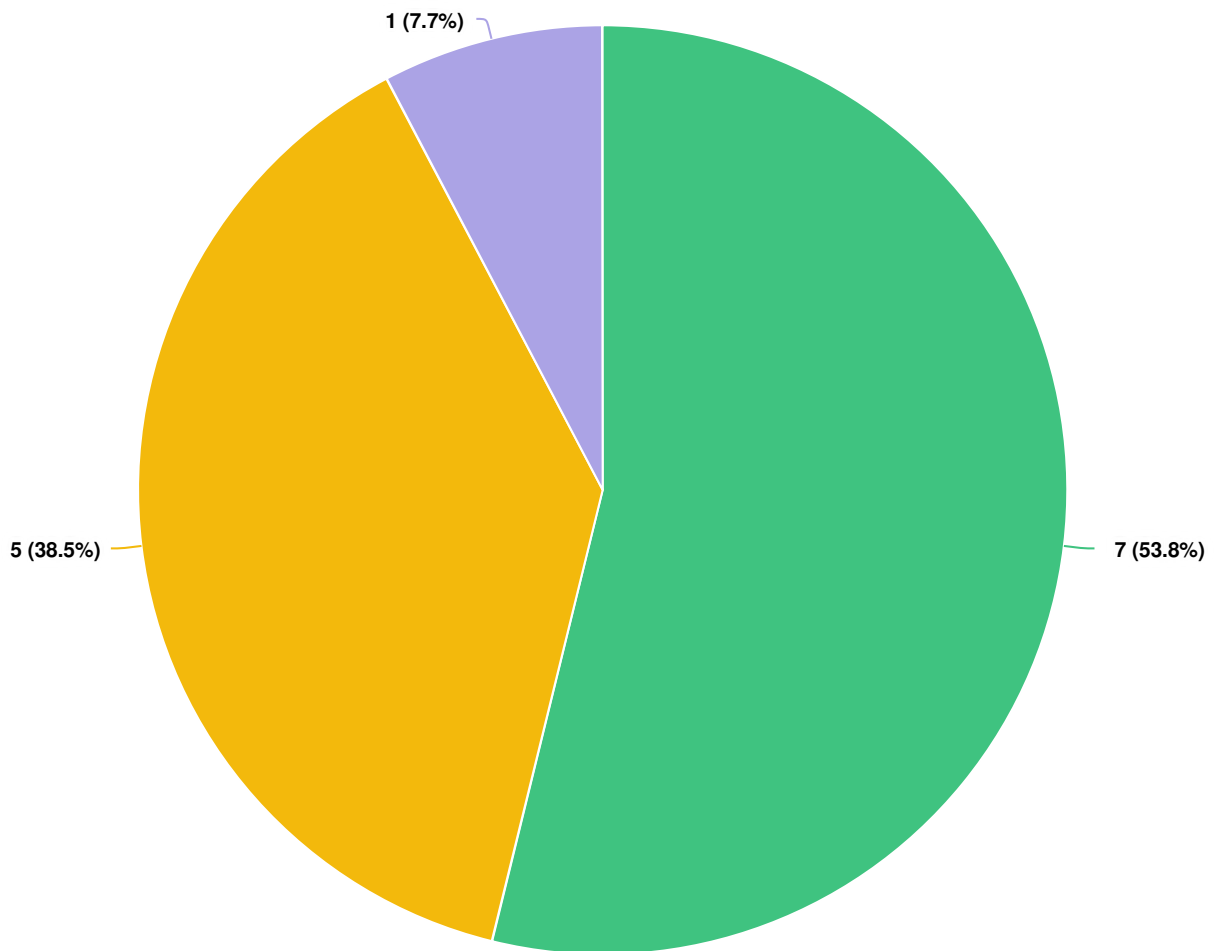
**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know
- Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

### Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?



**Question options**

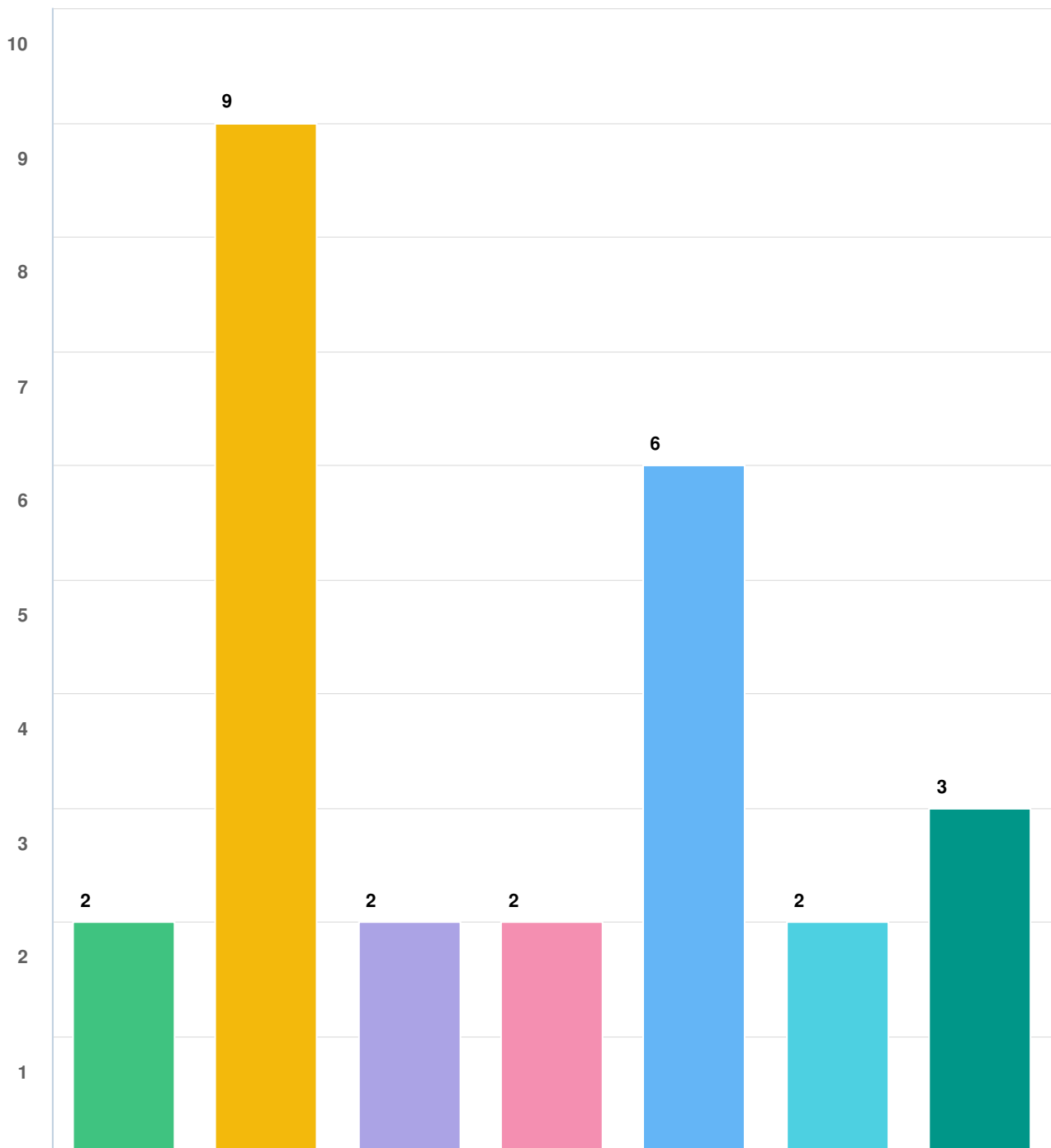
- Yes, a lot
- Yes, a little
- No

Mandatory Question (13 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question



Please select all that apply:



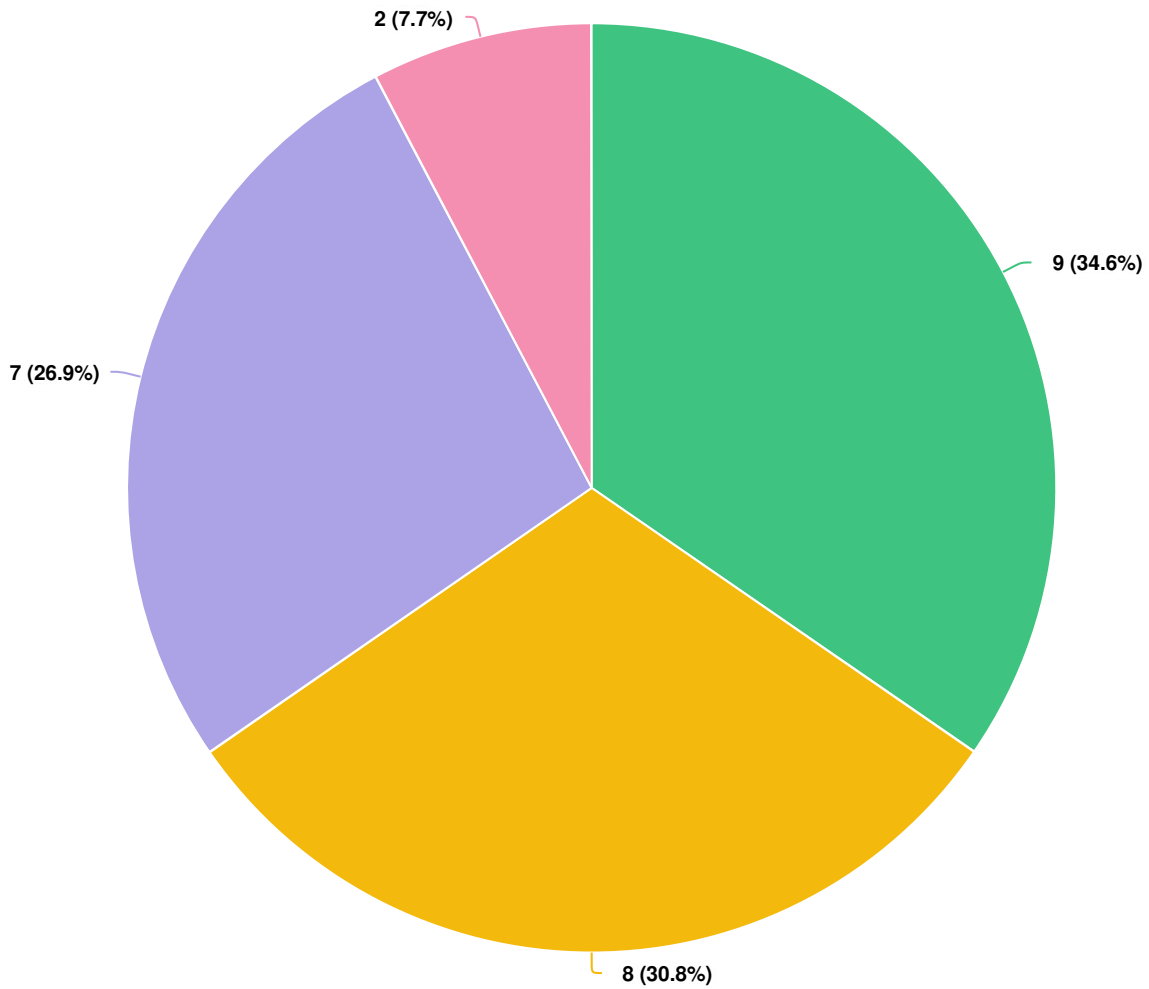
**Question options**

- Hearing (e.g. deafness or partial hearing)
- Physical (e.g. mobility or dexterity)
- Learning, understanding or concentrating
- Memory
- Mental health condition
- Non visible health condition (i.e. cancer, HIV)
- Other (please specify)

*Mandatory Question (13 response(s))*

*Question type: Checkbox Question*

### Religion or Belief: How would you describe your religion or belief?



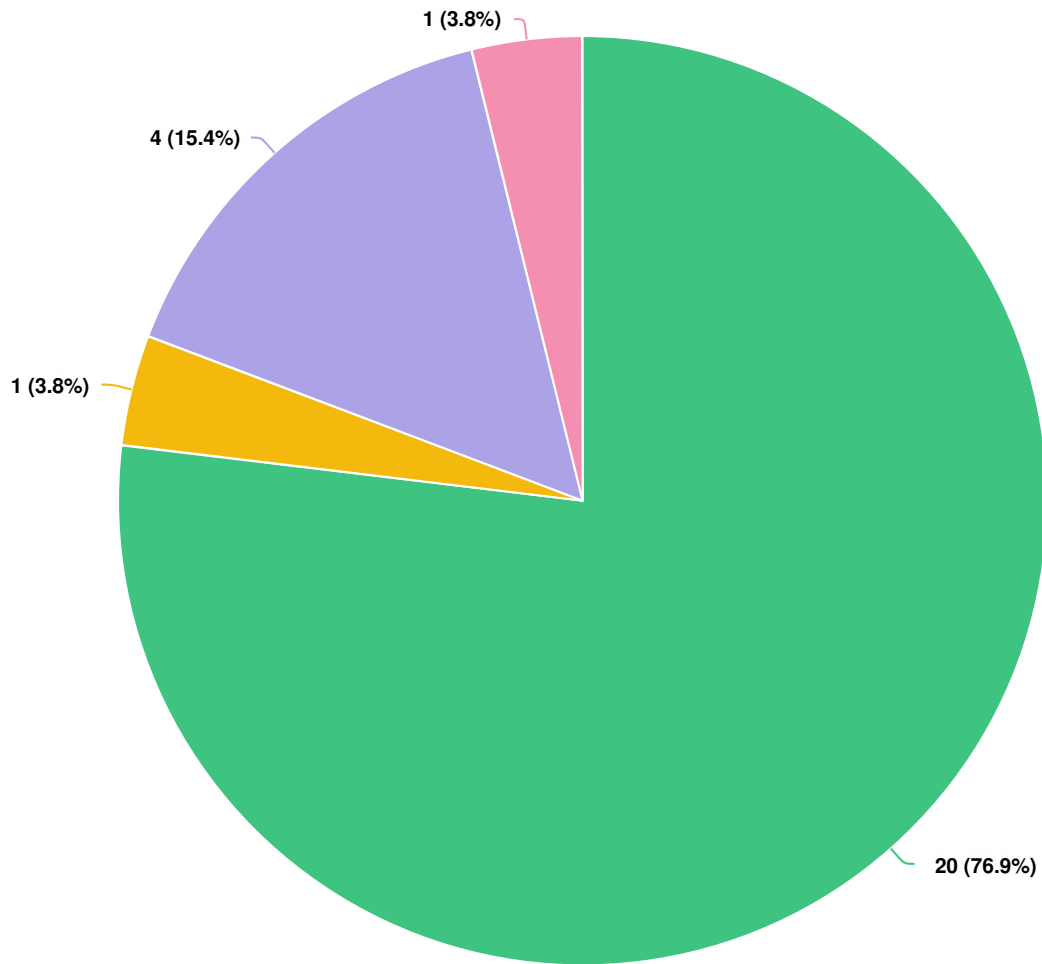
**Question options**

- Christian
- No religion
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

*Mandatory Question (26 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

### Sexual Orientation: How would you describe your sexual orientation?



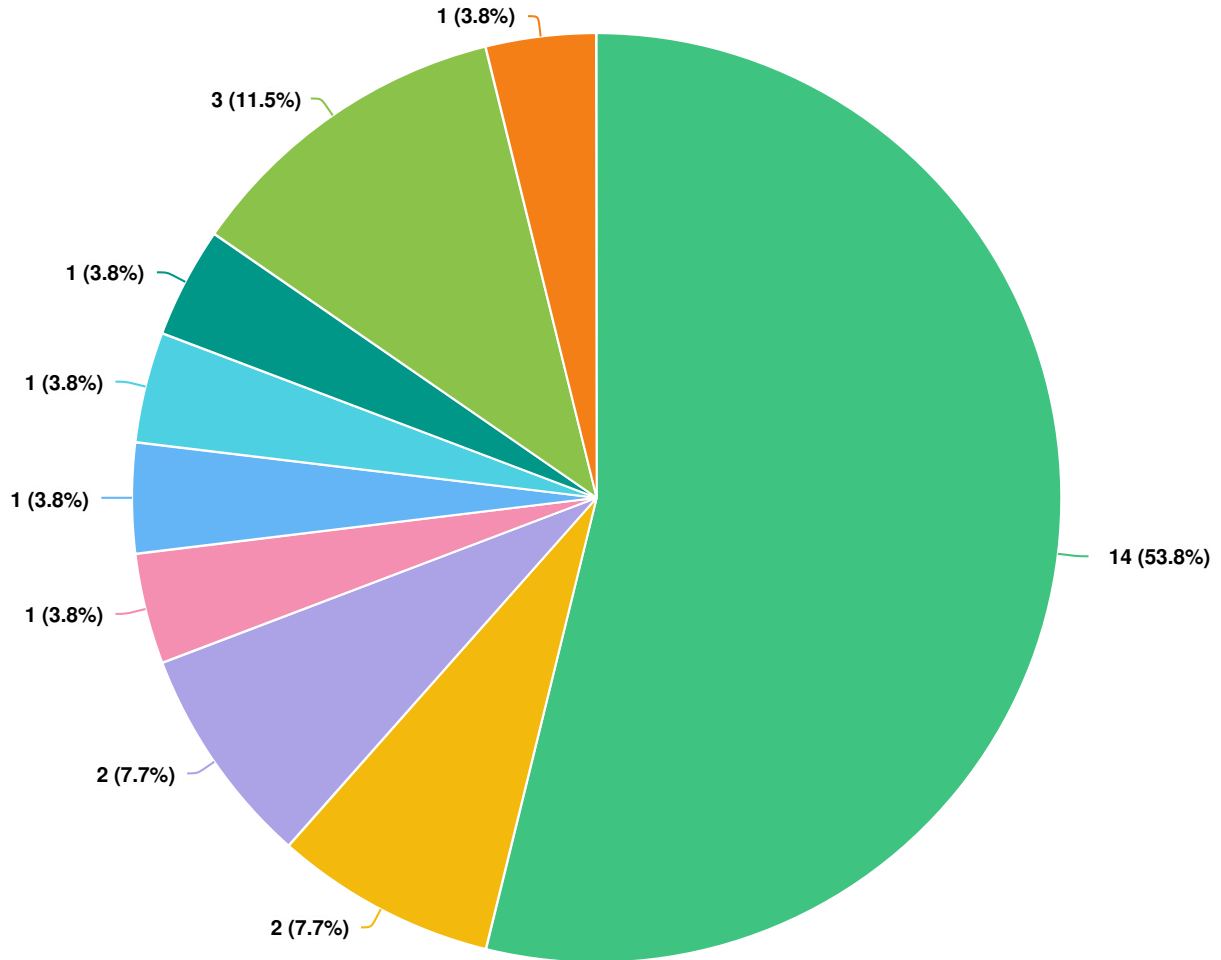
**Question options**

- Straight or Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Prefer not to say
- I use another term, please provide this here...

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Ethnicity: Please tick the appropriate box to describe your ethnic group or background.**



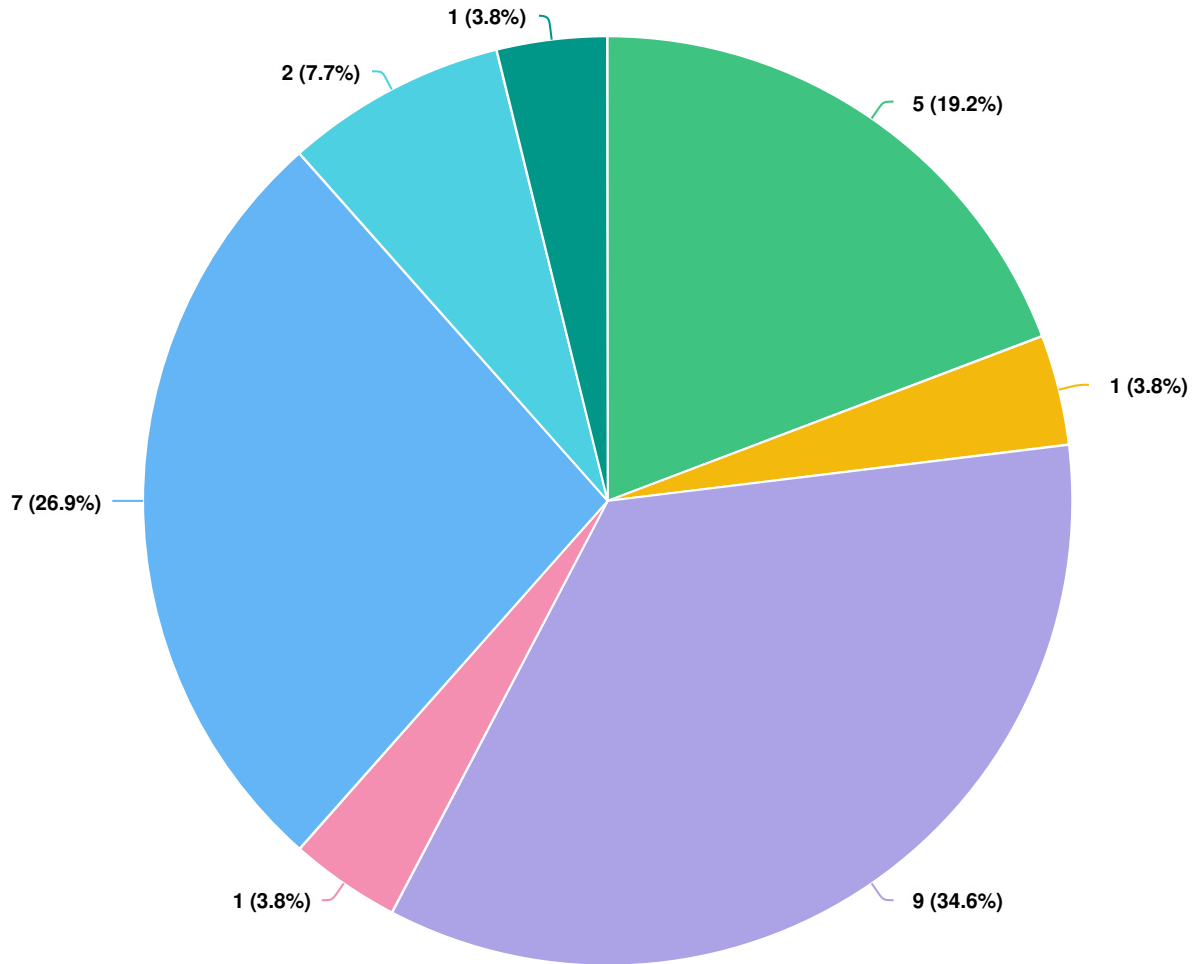
**Question options**

- White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
 ● White: Irish
● White: Greek/Greek Cypriot
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean
 ● Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian
- Black, Black British, Caribbean or African: Nigerian
 ● Black, Black British, Caribbean or African: Other African
- Prefer not to say
 ● Any other background (please specify)

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

### Location: What is your postcode?



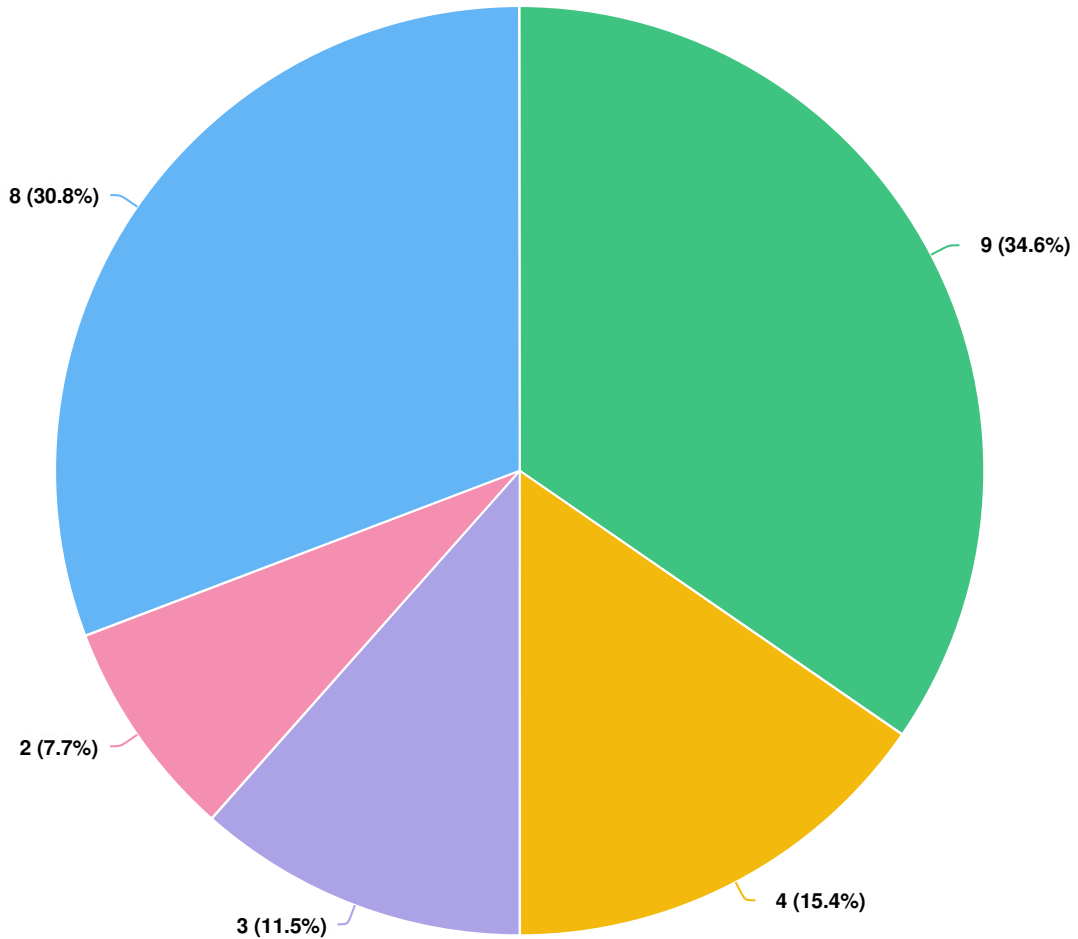
**Question options**

- N1
- N4
- N7
- N16
- N19
- Prefer not to say
- Other (e.g. I live or work in the borough)

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

### Income: What is your household income?



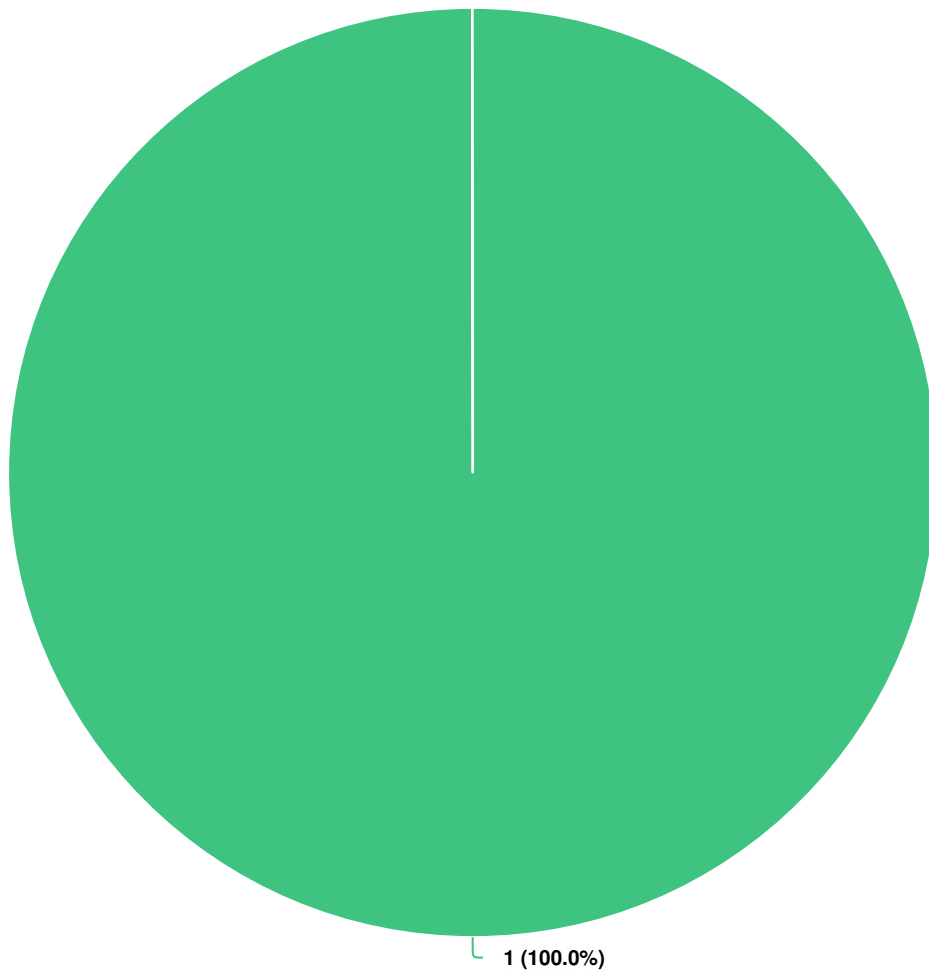
**Question options**

- Less than £20K
- £20-39K
- £40-59K
- £60-99K
- Prefer not to say

Mandatory Question (26 response(s))

Question type: Radio Button Question

**Are you responding to this consultation as a representative of any of following?**



**Question options**

- Voluntary Organisation

*Mandatory Question (1 response(s))*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

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Appendix C

# **London Borough of Islington**

## **Council Tax Support Scheme**

Draft for approval by Council on 14 December 2023

# Islington Council: Council Tax Support Scheme

## 1. This document and the law

This document is the London Borough of Islington's Council Tax Reduction Scheme, set out under section 13A (2) [substituted by clause 8 of the Local government finance Bill] of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

This scheme, referred to as Council Tax Support (CTS), has been agreed based on:

- the outcome of a public consultation exercise carried out in 2012, repeated in 2016, 2021 and 2023;
- the Equality Impact Assessment made in relation to the scheme and the subsequent Equality Impact Assessments carried out annually; and
- Considerations and decisions made annually by full Council.

## 2. Introduction

CTS reduces the amount of council tax a person has to pay based on an assessment made by Islington Council (the Council). As the Billing Authority, council tax is raised and charged by the Council and the CTS assessed by the Council can only be applied to council tax bills issued by the Council.

This scheme sets out rules for three classes of claimants. The amount of CTS shall be determined through means testing. As such the income and capital of the claimant and any partner or partners in the case of a polygamous couple in the household shall be taken into account. It is considered that eligibility for CTS is defined by the terms of the former Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme as set out in the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, the Social Security Administration Act 1992, the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006 and the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations 2001, the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012. These will hereafter be known as the Regulations and these Regulations set out how CTB was claimed, how it was calculated and how it was paid. This scheme proposes that the principles and methods set out in those Regulations be used to determine CTS, except where amendments are set out in this scheme or by statute under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and accompanying legislation. For the avoidance of doubt, where there is a difference or conflict between the Regulations and the Council's CTS scheme, then it is the Council's CTS scheme as set out here that will take precedence and be applied.

## 3. Making a claim

A claim must be made in respect of a person who is resident in the dwelling concerned, and liable for payment of council tax. A valid claim can be made by the person liable for council tax or by their appointed representative.

### 3.1 How to claim

**3.1.1** Except where paragraph 3.1.2 applies, an application shall be required for all new claims

from 1 April 2013. A person liable to pay council tax will be able to make a claim using any of the methods the Council provides for. Generally, claims can be made via telephone, email, the Council website, in writing or in person at Islington Council offices, or to the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and Jobcentres. Notification by the DWP that a person has claimed universal credit will be treated as an application for CTS. A valid claim must be accompanied by the necessary supporting evidence.

**3.1.2** For claimants entitled to the reduction in class 2 only (defined below), where it is possible for the Council to award CTS without application it shall do so. Indeed, for this provision an identification by the Council that a person would be entitled to this reduction by virtue of relevant detail already obtained by the Council may be enough to constitute a claim and to enable the award of a reduction. If a reduction cannot be awarded by the Council automatically under class 2, it shall be the duty of the person or persons with a council tax liability to claim this using the application process prescribed on the Islington Council website, and this application shall be required to be received in the council tax year for which the reduction applies.

## 4. Classes of reduction

**4.1** It is considered that the Council has 3 classes of reduction in its CTS scheme. The classes below also identify the persons that the reduction will cover.

**Class 1** – A person or persons of pension credit age has protection prescribed in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended). The council tax reduction shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of that Act.

**Class 2** – A person or persons with a council tax liability on 1 April 2024 and of state pension age or over shall be entitled to a minimum reduction of £100 per annum, unless the council tax liability is less than this, in which case it shall match the annual council tax liability.

**Class 3** – A person or persons not entitled to protection under class 1 who would be entitled to CTB based on the Regulations at 31 March 2013 will receive a maximum level of council tax support based on the net earned income of the applicant and their partner, if they have one, accounting for any children and the Income Band that they fall into, as per table 1 below.

Earned income will be calculated net of income tax, national insurance and 100% of pension contributions, there will be no other deductions.

Persons in receipt of Universal Credit will have their earned income calculated using the earnings verified on the Universal Credit award notification.

Weekly earnings					
Band	Single with no children	Single with one child / Couple with no children	Single with two children or more / Couple with one child	Couple with two children or more	Discount

1	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	100%
2	£0	£0	£0	£0	95%
3	£1-£25	£1-£65	£1-£105	£1-£145	85%
4	£25.01-£80	£65.01-£120	£105.01-£160	£145.01-£200	75%
5	£80.01-£120	£120.01-£160	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	65%
6	£120.01-£160	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	£240.01-£280	50%
7	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	£240.01-£280	£280.01-£320	35%

Persons who are passported, not working will fall into band 1 and receive 100% discount. Passported, not working means those on legacy benefits receiving Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, on Universal Credit with limited capability for work and single parents with zero earnings with a child aged under five years.

Persons who do not have any earned income and do not fall into band 1 will be placed in band 2.

Persons who have earned income will be placed into the band in which their weekly net earnings fall.

Persons' earnings will be updated as changes happen, however a new council tax bill will only be issued if a working age households' income changes the band meaning there will be change to their council tax bill within that year.

#### **4.2 Making changes to the dates for the classes of reduction**

For Class 2, the Council may substitute the date provided with a date of its choosing. This will enable the scheme to continue into future years. Any changes to dates shall be published on the website by 11 March of the year that immediately precedes the new council tax year to which the CTS shall apply.

#### **4.3 Making changes to the values for the classes of reduction**

For Class 2, for the minimum reduction the Council may substitute any amount it chooses, including £Nil. Should a change be made for a future council tax year, this shall be published on the website by 11 March of the year that immediately precedes the new council tax year to which the CTS shall apply.

For Class 3, amend the income bands capped at a 10% change.

#### **4.4 Administering the reduction**

For all Classes the reduction shall be made to the council tax liability in the council tax year that the CTS applies.

#### **4.5 Non-dependant deductions**

The non-dependant deductions for pensioners (Classes 1 and 2) are set out in the prescribed requirements regulations.

The non-dependant deductions for working age (Class 3) are set out in appendix A1.

### **5. Exceptions to the Regulations**

This scheme proposes that the principles and methods set out in the Regulations be used to determine CTS, except where amendments are set out in this scheme or by statute under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and accompanying legislation.

The exceptions to these Regulations (or clarifications) are set out below:

#### **5.1 Information and evidence**

The Council may accept any information or evidence that it sees fit to support a claim for CTS and may receive this in any way that it sees fit. As a guide, it shall publish what is expected on the Council's website. If all the information or evidence it needs is not submitted, the Council shall seek to make contact with the claimant once to obtain this. If the claimant does not reply or provide the information required within one month of the first contact made with or by the Council in relation to the application, the Council may decide to treat the claim as incomplete and refuse the CTS application. The Council may extend the one-month time limit if it thinks it is reasonable to give more time but, in any case, this shall not be extended beyond 3 months after the date of the first contact made with or by the Council in relation to the application.

#### **5.2 Treatment of income**

For the purpose of making an assessment under the CTS scheme, all income shall be treated in accordance with the Regulations. However, from time to time the Government may reform welfare benefits and introduce new benefits or replace them with equivalent benefits of a different name. Under the Regulations, some prescribed income is disregarded, some prescribed income has an impact on the premiums that can be applied to a person's applicable amount, and some prescribed income has an impact on the level of a non-dependant deduction(s) to be applied. In addition to this, some prescribed income passports a person to full entitlement to CTB, albeit subject to certain deductions such as a non-dependant deduction.

It is the intention of the Council for the CTS scheme, that where such income is replaced by the Government by an equivalent benefit or where new benefits are introduced, that these changes should be applied at the same time to CTS (or as soon as practicable thereafter) and attract the appropriate and equivalent income disregard, premium for the applicable amount and non-dependant deduction. It is also the intention to continue to passport an equivalent benefit to full entitlement to notional CTB to allow the CTS to be calculated.

To achieve this, when a new welfare benefit (income) is introduced by Government, the Council shall decide for the purposes of applying the Regulations:

- whether it should be disregarded; and/or
- the premium (if any) that it should attract; and/or
- the non-dependant deduction that should apply (if any); and/or
- whether it should be treated as income that would passport a person to full notional CTB entitlement.

Once the Council has decided how changes to other welfare benefits shall be treated for the purposes of applying the Regulations, the Council shall publish this detail on the Council website prior to the commencement of this new welfare benefit or as soon as practicable thereafter. Any changes will be summarised in Appendix A1.

The Regulations currently afford the Council the discretion to disregard war widows pension and war disablement allowance. The Council will continue to disregard this income for the purposes of assessing CTS.

Any payment from Islington Council through the Support Payment Scheme to non-recent child abuse survivors will be disregarded as both income and capital.

Universal Credit income will be treated in accordance with the Regulations and The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (England) Regulations 2012.

### **5.3 National changes to premiums, allowances, applicable amounts, disregards and deductions (the components)**

For the purpose of making an assessment under the CTS scheme, all the components shall be treated in accordance with the Regulations. However, from time to time the Government may reform welfare benefits and:

- introduce a new component;
- change the value of an existing component; or
- change the basis on which an existing component can be applied.

Where this happens, the Council will have the option immediately to make a change to the CTS scheme based on the treatment of a similar component in an equivalent national scheme. An equivalent national scheme means either the provisions that form the basis for assessment under Class 1 or the Housing Benefit General Regulations 1987 (as amended).

The Council shall determine how changes to the components in an equivalent national scheme will be treated for the purposes of assessing an award under Class 3, including the date that any change will take effect. The Council shall publish this detail on the Council website prior to the commencement of these changes or as soon as practicable thereafter. Changes published in previous years are summarised in Appendix A1.

From time to time, the components and some income will be subject to uprating by the government to reflect changes in the consumer price index. This scheme provides that the Council shall uprate all the components and income in accordance with the Government's uprating of the same or equivalent components (as identified by the Council) in the equivalent national scheme.

### **5.4 Payment of Council Tax Support for two homes**

The criteria for the award of Council Tax Support on two homes applies only in the following circumstances:

- Moved out of the home because of violence or fear of violence, council tax support can be paid for both homes, if intention to return home, for a period of up to 52 weeks.
- Awaiting disability adaptations on new home and unable to move in until these are carried out up to 4 weeks.
- Moved out within the last 4 weeks and still have to pay rent on old home (for council tax support this would be one day).

## **5.5 Decisions and notifications of decisions**

The Council shall make a decision on a claim within a reasonable timescale after receiving all required information and evidence. In order to inform a claimant of the decision, the Council shall send them a revised council tax bill showing the amount and period of the CTS award. The bill itself shall be formal notification of the CTS decision unless CTS is not awarded as a result of us deciding to treat the claim as incomplete or the person does not qualify for CTS, in which case a letter will be issued to the claimant. Claimants may request a statement of reasons to explain how the award was calculated. The council tax bill shall include a person's appeal rights, how they can request a statement of reasons and details of how to apply for further discretionary help from the Council Tax Welfare provision in the Resident Support Scheme. The claimant can elect to receive their bill by post or by using Islington's web portal 'My eAccount', also known as e-billing. For the avoidance of doubt, the requirements in the Regulations to notify a person of their CTB entitlement in a manner and including detail prescribed by those Regulations shall be revoked for the purposes of the CTS scheme.

## **5.6 How CTS will be paid**

All CTS will be 'paid' by crediting the amount of CTS against the claimant's council tax liability to reduce the bill. Should a bill that attracts a council tax reduction be in credit at the point that a council tax liability is ended, the Council may use that credit to reduce any other sum that is owed to the Council by that person.

## **5.7 Changes of circumstances**

The recipient of CTS or their appointee must notify the Council of any change to their household circumstances, income or capital that may affect the amount of CTS they are entitled to. Any change of circumstances must be reported within one calendar month of the change happening. Any change can be reported to Islington Council by telephone, email, via website or in writing. Supporting information may be required. Each material change shall result in a recalculation of CTS entitlement and a revised bill if appropriate.

A process for reviewing current CTS entitlement may be implemented by the Council. CTS may be reviewed at any time after its commencement. Failure of the claimant to fulfil any reasonable request made by the Council during a review of their CTS award shall result in the termination of that CTS award from the commencement date of the review.

## **5.8 Appeals**

If the claimant disagrees with the CTS award or non-award following a claim, they can request that the Council looks at this again (this is known as an application for revision). They must do

this within one month of the date of the council tax bill that shows the amount and period of their CTS or within one month of the date of their CTS non-qualification letter. If an appeal made by the same claimant about a housing benefit decision would also impact on CTS, the Council may also treat this as an appeal against CTS if it is made within one month of the date of the council tax bill that shows the amount and period of their CTS. The Council shall check if the decision is correct and inform the claimant of its decision in writing. If, the Council believes that its decision is correct or the claimant does not receive a response from the Council within 2 months, the claimant has another 2 months to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal where a final decision can be made. Any appeal against a decision regarding CTS will not mean that payments of council tax may be withheld. Payments must be made as they fall due and if an appeal is successful any additional CTS award shall be credited against the claimant's council tax liability at that time as directed.

## **5.9 Excess Benefit**

Regulation 82 and 83 of the CTB Regulations 2006 will not apply to this scheme. If following a recalculation of the entitlement to Council Tax Support, regardless of the cause for the need for that recalculation, if the chargeable amount of the council tax bill is greater than the previous notification, the council can bill the taxpayer for the difference. Payments must be made as they fall due.

## **6. General Provisions**

### **6.1 Council Tax Welfare Provision**

There is a welfare scheme available for council tax payers receiving CTS experiencing exceptional hardship. This is part of the Resident Support Scheme and the procedure for application is contained within the detail of the Resident Support Scheme approved by the Council's Executive.

### **6.2 Fraud**

The Council will investigate any case where it has reason to believe that an amount of CTS has been awarded as a result of a claim which is fraudulent in any respect. This will include any incidence of a claimant not notifying the Council of any change in household circumstances, income or capital that results in a higher reduction under the CTS scheme than a person is due.

### **6.3 Consultation**

The Council recognises its legal duty to consult should there be future changes to the scheme. However, from time to time the council will need to make minor changes to the practice and operation of the scheme and, should these occur, we will consult by way of publishing a notice on the Council's website during the last 2 weeks of January of the year that immediately precedes the new council tax year to which the CTS shall apply. A consultee shall then have until 31 January of that same year to respond to this notice. The Council officers delegated to operate the scheme will give due regard to this response.

### **6.4 Delegation**

The Council shall delegate the operation of this scheme to the Corporate Director of Community Wealth Building who will designate the appropriate officers to undertake this role. Currently, these officers are all based in the Community Financial Resilience Directorate of the Council's



Community Wealth Building Department.

### **6.5 CTS Scheme Agreement**

The CTS Scheme will be reviewed annually and subject to further agreement at Full Council prior to 11 March each year.

## **1. Changes to the Council Tax Support scheme**

This document details changes made to the London Borough of Islington's Council Tax Support scheme published on the council website in accordance with 4.2 of the scheme.

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/council-tax-support>

### **1.1 Temporary absence outside of Great Britain**

From 15 January 2017, the rules about getting Council Tax Support if a claimant goes abroad have changed to bring them in line with the changes in Housing Benefit rules to mirror the amendments to the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 as outlined in The Housing Benefit and State Pension Credit (Temporary Absence) (Amendment) Regulations 2016.

### **1.2 Restrictions on the amounts for children and qualifying young persons**

From 1 April 2017, the number of personal allowances, which can be included in the applicable amount for Council Tax Support in respect of children and qualifying young people, will be limited to no more than two children. This is in line with the Child Tax Credit restrictions announced in the Summer Budget of 2015, which in turn affect the applicable amounts for Housing Benefits as outlined in The Social Security (Restrictions on Amounts for Children and Qualifying Young Persons) Amendment Regulations 2017.

### 1.3 Non-dependant deductions Working Age

Non-dependant circumstances	Deduction
Aged 18 or over.	£7.50
Aged 18 or over and in receipt of Income Support, income-based Jobseekers Allowance, income-related Employment Support Allowance, Universal Credit with no earnings or Pension Credit Guarantee Credit.	Nil

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# Equalities Impact Assessment: Full Assessment

Before completing this form you should have completed an Equalities Screening Tool and had sign off from your Head of Service and the Fairness and Equality Team.

This Equality Impact Assessment should be completed where the Screening Tool identifies a potentially negative impact on one or more specific groups but it can also be used to highlight positive impacts.

## Summary of proposal

Name of proposal	Islington's Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme 2024-2025
Reference number (if applicable)	
Service Area	Community Financial Resilience
Date assessment completed	Oct 2023

Before completing the EQIA please read the guidance and FAQs. For further help and advice please contact [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk).

# 1. Please provide a summary of the proposal.

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

## **Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) 2024/25**

People on low incomes who cannot pay their Council Tax bill can receive council tax support (CTS) to help them.

As part of the Spending Review 2010, the Government announced that expenditure allocated to this localised scheme would be reduced by 10% from the subsidy previously provided for council tax benefit and any increase in expenditure above what is forecast by The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) from that point on must be funded locally by the Council. In 2013/14, the council received in the region of £2.9 million less to give out in support to claimants. This meant the council had to make savings or increase income to fund the shortfall. The Government also stipulated that people of pension credit age must be protected, which meant that the CTS reduction was directed exclusively at working age claimants and would have meant a reduction of around 18%-20% if the cuts were shared in equal proportions across all working age claimants. Originally, the Council chose to make up for this shortfall by introducing a standard reduction to all Council Tax Support recipients of 8.5%, by taking up the Government's offer of a temporary transitional grant and reducing the level of discounts that those with empty properties could apply for. The Government has subsequently withdrawn any transitional grant but the Council had decided to maintain the original level of support it provides to its CTS residents and funded this additional support wholly from its own funds. In 2022/23 the Council increased support for working age households by reducing the standard reduction to all Council Tax Support working age recipients to 5%.

## **Current scheme retained into 2024/25**

Maintaining the current scheme into 2024/25 would increase costs from £31.44m to £35.54m, an increase of £4.10m or 13.04%. The 2024/25 scheme was modelled with a 4.99% increase in council tax liability in 2023/24 and 2024/25. 40% of households on legacy benefits were migrated to Universal Credit. The large increase in costs is driven by the CT increase and benefit uprating of 10.1% for 2023/24 and 5.4% for 2024/25 (based on projected CPI inflation figures).

## **The aims and principles of the Council Tax Scheme (CTSS) as follows:**

The changes to the CTSS scheme only apply to working age households, households of pension credit age have protection prescribed in the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended). The council tax reduction shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of that Act.

A person or persons with a council tax liability on 1 April 2024 and of state pension age or over

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

shall be entitled to a minimum reduction of £100 per annum, unless the council tax liability is less than this, in which case it shall match the annual council tax liability.

### **Working Age CTSS new proposal**

To introduce a banded scheme for working age households which will reflect the changing welfare benefits system, with more working age households moving onto Universal Credit the new scheme will reduce the many changes in CTSS entitlement for those households with variable earnings, reducing the volume of updated council tax bills and payment plans.

The Council is conducting this review at a time when we know many of our households are struggling with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, although financial challenge is not new for many of these households. It is our intention to target resources at those most in need, including assessing the potential for a 100% discount for our most financially vulnerable working age households. The new scheme will increase or maintain support for our most financial vulnerable households but would also mean around 2% of current recipients would no longer receive support.

A person or persons not entitled to protection under class 1 who would be entitled to council tax benefit CTB based on the Regulations at 31 March 2013 will receive a maximum level of council tax support based on the net earned income of the applicant and their partner, if they have one, accounting for any children and the Income Band that they fall into, as per table 1 below.

Earned income will be calculated net of income tax, national insurance and 100% of pension contributions, there will be no other deductions.

Persons in receipt of Universal Credit will have their earned income calculated using the earnings verified on the Universal Credit award notification.

Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

**Weekly earnings**

Band	Single with no children	Single with one child / Couple with no children	Single with two children or more / Couple with one child	Couple with two children or more	Discount
1	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	Passported, not working	100%
2	£0	£0	£0	£0	95%
3	£1-£25	£1-£65	£1-£105	£1-£145	85%
4	£25.01-£80	£65.01-£120	£105.01-£160	£145.01-£200	75%
5	£80.01-£120	£120.01-£160	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	65%
6	£120.01-£160	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	£240.01-£280	50%
7	£160.01-£200	£200.01-£240	£240.01-£280	£280.01-£320	35%

Persons who are passported, not working will fall into band 1 and receive 100% discount. Passported benefit means if the person is not working and receiving Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, on Universal Credit with limited capability for work and single parents with zero earnings which a child aged under five years.

**Note:**

*Passported Benefit anyone in receipt of one of the following:*

- *Income Support*
- *Jobseekers Allowance (income-based)*
- *Employment and Support Allowance (income-related)*
- *Universal Credit*

**Legacy benefits** are being replaced by Universal Credit. There are six legacy benefits: *Income-based Jobseekers Allowance. Income-related Employment and Support Allowance. Income Support.*



Please provide:

- Context on how the service currently operates (if relevant) and the scope of suggested changes
- The intended beneficiaries and outcomes of the proposal
- Reference to any savings or income generation

Persons who do not have any earned income and do not fall into band 1 will be placed in band 2.

Persons who have earned income will be placed into the band in which their weekly net earnings fall.

Persons' earnings will be updated as changes happen, however a new council tax bill will only be issued if a working age households' income changes the band meaning there will be change to their council tax bill within that year.

45.1% of working age households will be passported to 100% support, taking them out of paying any council tax. A further 33.1% will receive 95% support.

An amount of £250k savings are attached to the implementation of a new CTSS for 2024/25. If the recommendation is approved and implemented, we expect the scheme to be simpler to administer, resulting in the saving being achieved through the administration of the scheme and staffing efficiencies. The proposed saving would have no impact on the sums available for the core scheme.

## 2. What impact will this change have on different groups of people?

Please consider:

- Whether the impact will predominantly be external or internal, or both?
- Who will be impacted – residents, service users, local communities, staff, or others?
- Broadly what will the impact be – reduced access to facilities or disruptions to journeys for example?

The impact of the CTSS will be both internal and external

Please consider:

- Whether the impact will predominantly be external or internal, or both?
- Who will be impacted – residents, service users, local communities, staff, or others?
- Broadly what will the impact be – reduced access to facilities or disruptions to journeys for example?

### **Internal**

Maintaining the current scheme into 2024/25 would increase costs from the current £31.44m to £35.54m, an increase of £4.10m or 13.04%. The large increase in costs is driven by the increase in council tax liability and the benefit uprating through to 2024/25. This scheme would cost £45k more per year than the current scheme in 2024/25. If a banded scheme is approved and implemented, we expect the scheme to be simpler to administer, resulting in the saving being achieved through staffing efficiencies. The proposed saving would have no impact on the sums available for the core scheme.

### **External**

Persons Working age residents entitled to council tax support who are in receipt of a passported benefit, not working will fall into band 1 and receive 100% discount.

Passported, not working means those on legacy benefits receiving Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, on Universal Credit with limited capability for work and single parents with zero earnings which a child aged under five years.

Persons who do not have any earned income and do not fall into band 1 will be placed in band 2.

Persons who have earned income will be placed into the band in which their weekly net earnings fall.

Persons' earnings will be updated as changes happen, however a new council tax bill will only be issued if a working age households' income changes the band meaning there will be change to their council tax bill within that year.

45.1% of working age households will be passported to 100% support, taking them out of paying any council tax. A further 33.1% will receive 95% support.

### 3. What impact will this change have on people with protected characteristics and/or from disadvantaged groups?

This section of the assessment looks in detail at the likely impacts of the proposed changes on different sections of our diverse community.

#### 3A. what data have you used to assess impacts?

Please provide:

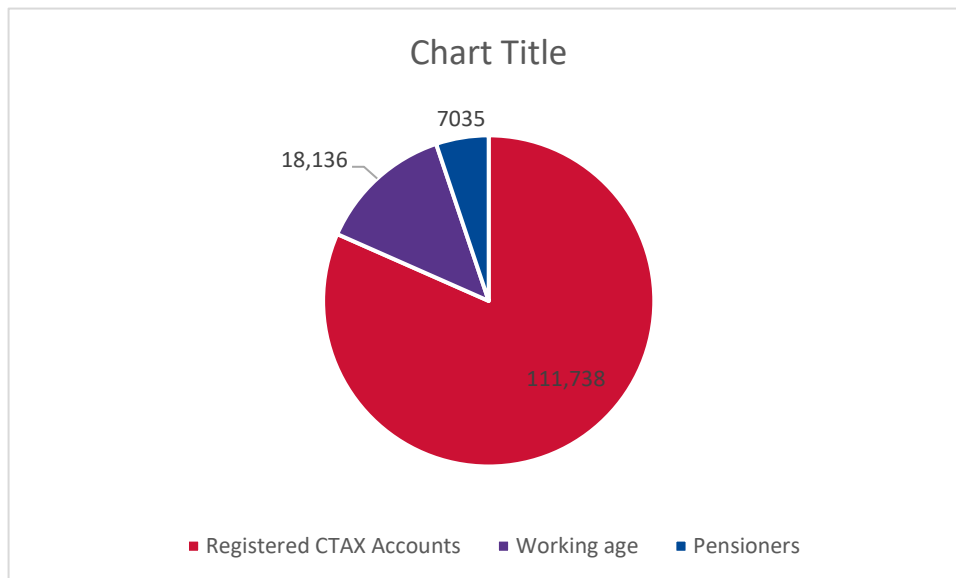
- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

To complete this analysis I have used the following information

- State of Equalities in Islington – Annual Report 2022

All Services Report – NEC Revs & Benefits System

**Population:** The number of registered accounts for council tax is over 111,738. The number that are in receipt of council tax support is 25,188 of which is 18,136 working age households.

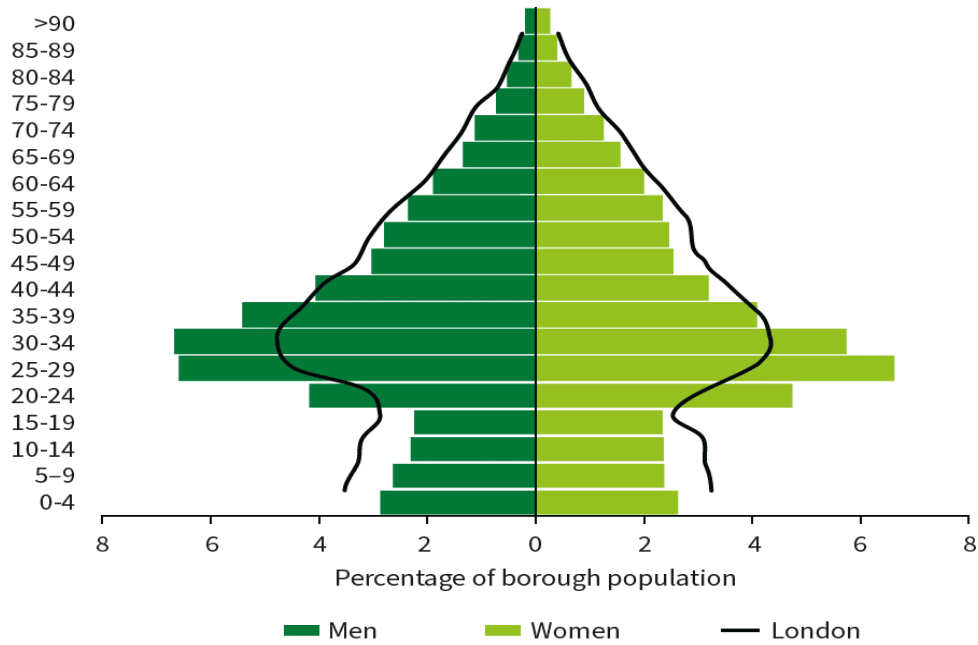


**Age:** Within Islington the resident population by age and sex is as below:

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

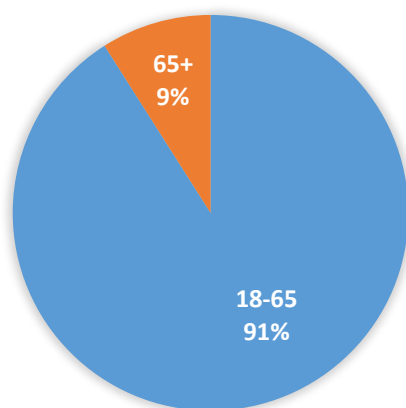
**Resident population of Islington, by sex and age group 2022 estimates**



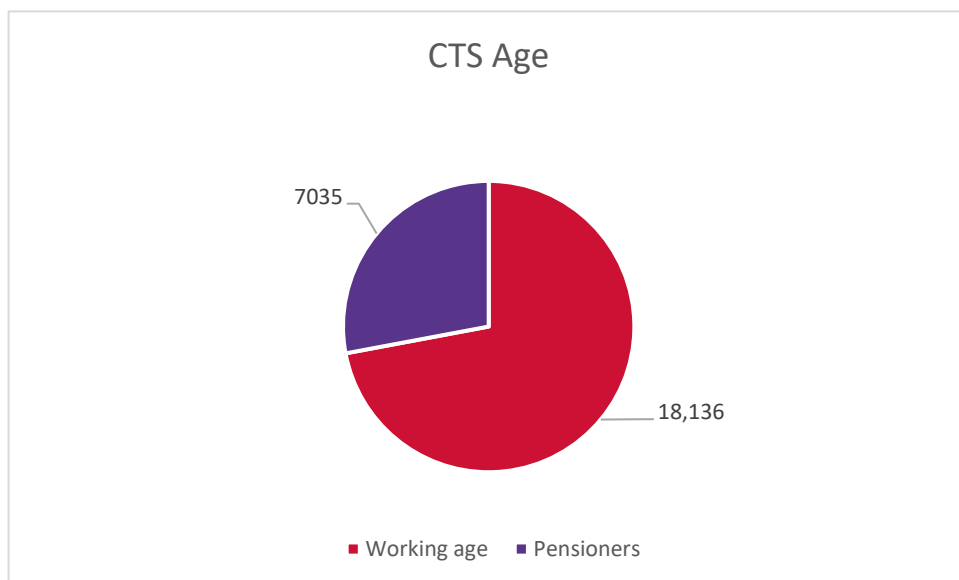
Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

### ISLINGTON POPULATION BY AGE GROUP



### CTS by age



The policy change will only impact the working age households.

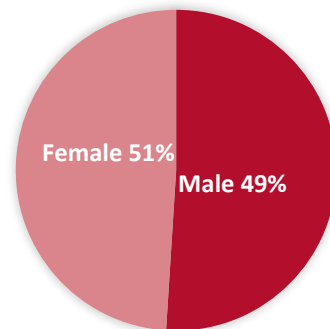
### Gender:

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

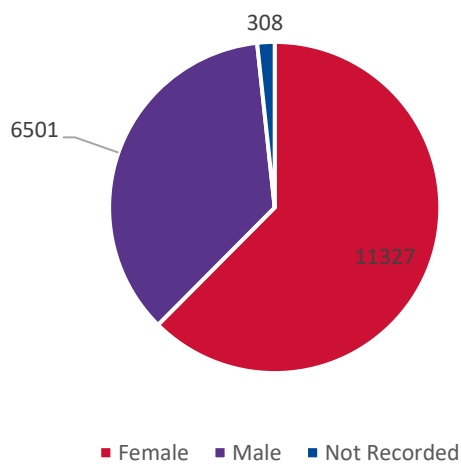
The gender of Islington residents is as follows

### ISLINGTON TOTAL POPULATION BY GENDER



The Gender of those receiving CTS is as below:

### Gender

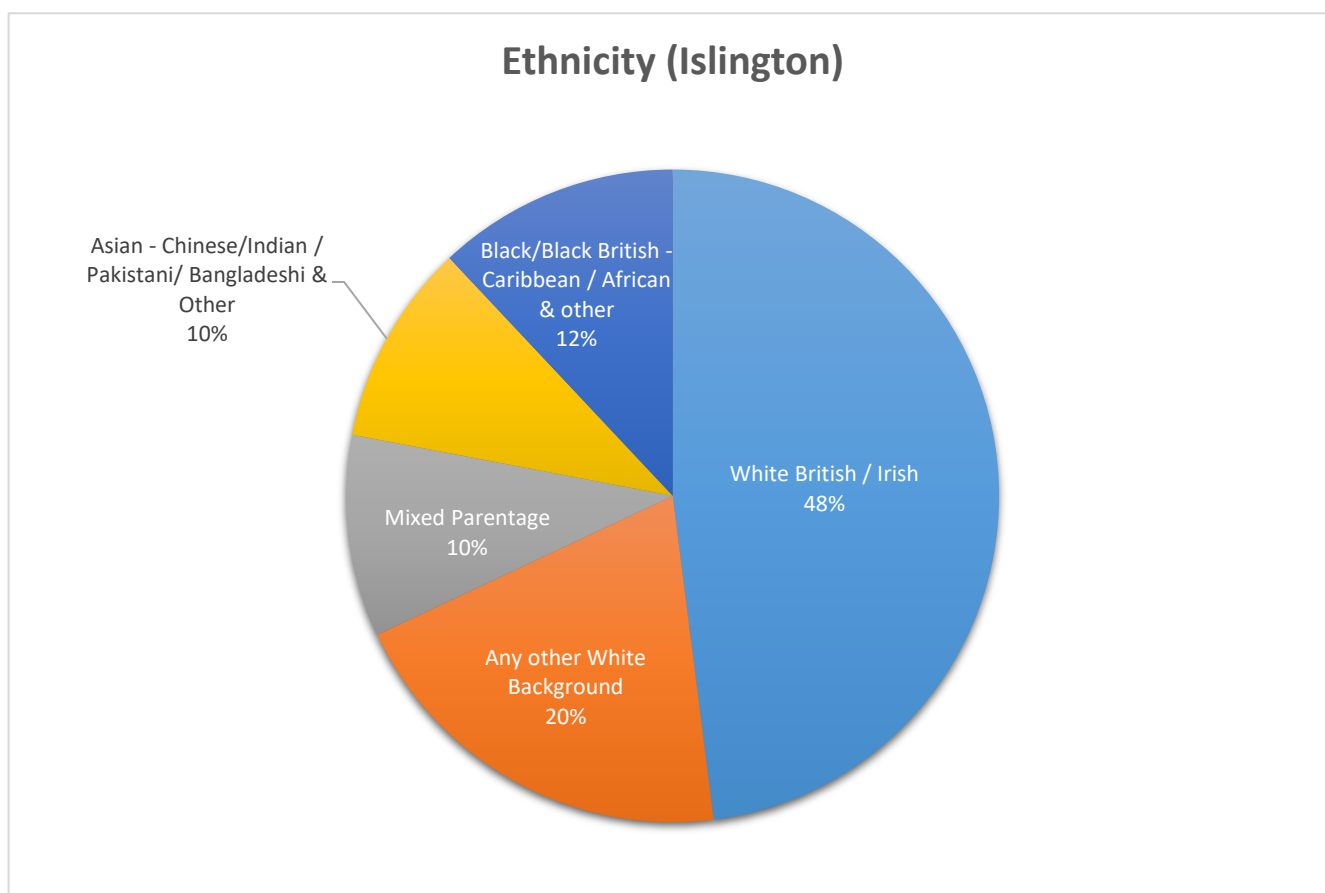


Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

## Ethnicity

The Ethnicity of the population of Islington is as follows



The Ethnicity of those receiving a CTS is as follows:

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

Ethnicity	Number recorded Working Age CTS recipients
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	420
Asian or Asian British: Indian	67
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	45
Asian or British : Any other Backgrnd	251
BANLADESH	31
BLACK	183
Black-Black British:African	1651
Black-Black British:Caribbean	867
Black-Black British:Other	257
CARIBBEAN	85
CHINESE	12
Chinese: Chinese	42
Chinese: Filipino	4
Chinese: Other	27
Chinese: Vietnamese	19
EUROPEAN	508
GAELIC	34
GREEK/CYPRIOT	14
INCLUDES MIXED PARENTAGE	346
INDIAN	12
Mixed :Any other mixed background	229
Mixed: White and Asian	63
Mixed: White and Black African	220
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	436
NOT KNOWN	1506
OTHER ASIAN	17
PAKISTANI	7
TURKISH	22
TURKISH/CYPRIOT	91
White: Any other White background	856
White: British	3864
White: Greek / Greek Cypriot	91
White: Irish	289

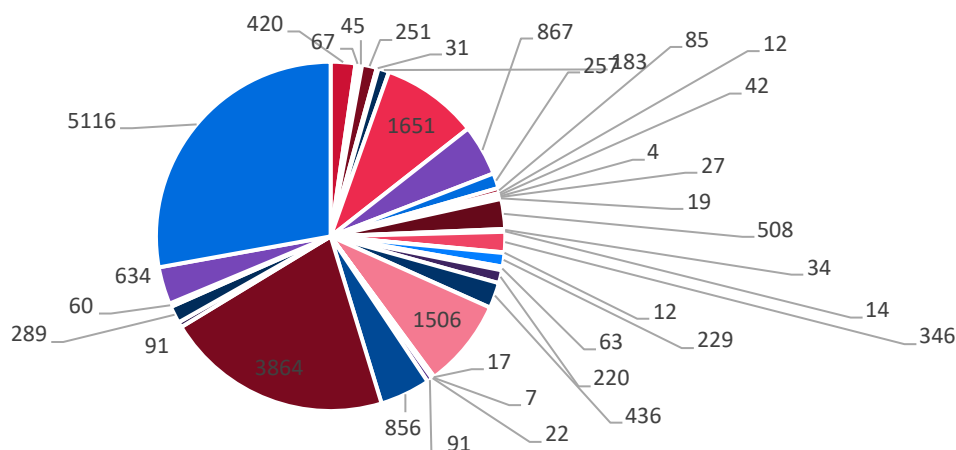


Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

White: Kurdish	60
White: Turkish / Turkish Cypriot	634
BLANKS(not recorded)	5116

Number recorded Working Age CTS recipients



- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or British: Any other Background
- BANLADESH
- BLACK
- Black-Black British:African
- Black-Black British:Caribbean
- Black-Black British:Other
- CARIBBEAN
- CHINESE
- Chinese: Chinese
- Chinese: Filipino
- Chinese: Other
- Chinese: Vietnamese
- EUROPEAN
- GAELIC
- GREEK/CYPRIOT
- INCLUDES MIXED PARENTAGE
- INDIAN
- Mixed: Any other mixed background
- Mixed: White and Asian
- Mixed: White and Black African
- Mixed: White and Black Caribbean
- NOT KNOWN
- OTHER ASIAN
- PAKISTANI
- TURKISH
- TURKISH/CYPRIOT
- White: Any other White background
- White: British
- White: Greek / Greek Cypriot
- White: Irish
- White: Kurdish
- White: Turkish / Turkish Cypriot
- BLANKS(not recorded)

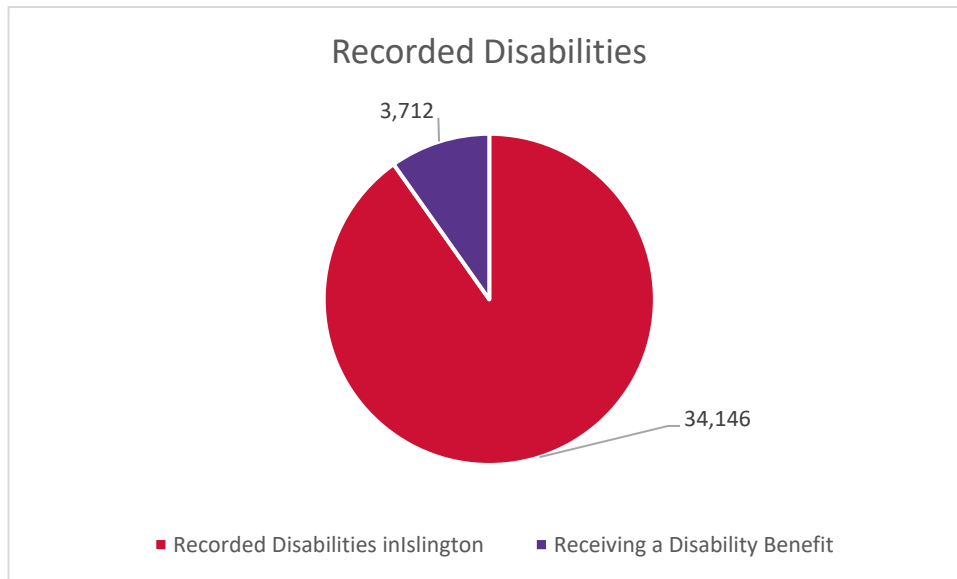
Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

### Disability

Within Islington population 14% of residents have a recorded disability.

For those receiving council tax support and in receipt of a disability benefit

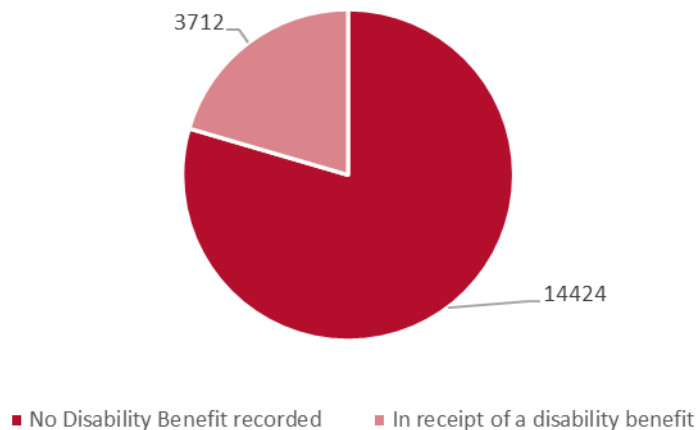


CTS with a disability

Please provide:

- Details of the evidence used to assess impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups (see guidance for help)
- A breakdown of service user demographics where possible
- Brief interpretation of findings

Disability Benefit



3B: Assess the impacts on people with protected characteristics and from disadvantaged groups in the table below.

Please first select whether the potential impact is positive, neutral, or negative and then provide details of the impacts and any mitigations or positive actions you will put in place.

Please use the following definitions as a guide:

Neutral – The proposal has no impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Positive – The proposal has a beneficial and desirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Negative – The proposal has a negative and undesirable impact on people with the identified protected characteristics

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Age	Positive	<p>Pension age household will not be impacted by this change.</p> <p>The minimum age for receiving CTS is linked to the minimum age for being liable for council tax which is 18 so residents younger than this will not be affected.</p> <p>Working age applicants currently falling in the protected category will receive 100% support which is an increase in their current level of support.</p> <p>For the remainder of the working age caseload the change could be a positive change if their income falls within the bands.</p>	<p>Only net earned income will be used in the calculation which will be net of income tax, national insurance and 100% of pension contributions. All other income including all benefits will be disregarded for the purposes of the CTSS other than passporting you to either band one or band two. For the 2% of households that will not be entitled to CTS or for any households that drop off of CTS beyond April 2024, we will engage with these households to provide income maximization and various cost of living advice.</p>

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Disability (include carers)	Positive and Negative	<p>The current scheme provides a maximum CTS of up to 95% for households falling the protected category this proposal will see their CTS increased to 100%</p> <p>Many of the households will fall into the protected category.</p> <p>Those that are working and receiving disability benefit might see their council tax reduced from 95% to one of the lower bands.</p>	<p>Only net earned income will be used in the calculation which will be net of income tax, national insurance and 100% of pension contributions. All other income including all benefits will be disregarded for the purposes of the CTSS other than passporting you to either band one or band two. For the 2% of households that will not be entitled to CTS or for any households that drop off of CTS beyond April 2024, we will engage with these households to provide income maximization and various cost of living advice.</p>

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Race or ethnicity	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	
Religion or belief (include no faith)	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	

Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Gender and gender reassignment (male, female, or non-binary)	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	
Maternity or pregnancy	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	



Characteristic or group	Positive/Neutral/Negative	What are the positive and/or negative impacts?	How will potential benefits be enhanced or negative impacts be eliminated or reduced?
Sex and sexual orientation	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	
Marriage or civil partnership	Neutral	The proposed change is not specifically targeted at this group.	

<p>Other Age (e.g. elderly) (e.g. people living in poverty, looked after children, people who are homeless or refugees)</p>	<p>Positive and Negative</p>	<p>The change to the CTSS is for working age only. Passported households on legacy benefits receiving PIP/DLA, households on Universal Credit with limited capability for work and single parents with a child under five into a 100% discount band. 45.1% of all households will receive 100% support taking them out of paying any council tax. Jobseekers are placed in band 2 with a 95% discount. Earnings override passported status. 33.1% of households will receive 95% support which is either the same or higher than they currently receive. The remaining 21.8% of households will be placed into a band based on the level of their net earnings. 2% of households will no longer be eligible for CTS.</p> <p>Pension age household will not be impacted by this change.</p>	<p>Only net earned income will be used in the calculation which will be net of income tax, national insurance and 100% of pension contributions. All other income including all benefits will be disregarded for the purposes of the CTSS other than passporting you to either band one or band two. For the 2% of households that will not be entitled to CTS or for any households that drop off of CTS beyond April 2024, we will engage with these households to provide income maximization and various cost of living advice.</p>
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## 4. How do you plan to mitigate negative impacts?

Please provide:

- An outline of actions and the expected outcomes
- Any governance and funding which will support these actions if relevant

Key impacts of the **proposal**:

- Since the Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) relates to the distribution of money based on criteria relating to low income then all working age households on low income who are liable for council tax are affected by this proposal.
- The means test for CTS will be that you are passported to a support band based on your benefits or your band will be determined by net earned income.
- For the 2% of households that will not be entitled to CTS or for any households that drop off of CTS beyond April 2024, we will engage with these households to provide income maximization and various cost of living advice.
- There is a welfare scheme available for council tax payers receiving CTS experiencing exceptional hardship. This is part of the Resident Support Scheme and the procedure for application is contained within the detail of the Resident Support Scheme approved by the Council's Executive.
- **Equality impacts** of the proposal:
  - The impact on all working age CTS claimants and potential claimants is that from April 2024 the banded scheme will apply. The impact on pension age CTS claimants is negligible as they have been protected from the proposal.
  - No other impacts specific to people with protected characteristics have emerged during the previous 12 months' operation of the CTS scheme.
  - No complaints or appeals specific to the CTS scheme have been received.

Safeguarding **risks** identified:

None

Potential Human Rights breaches identified:

None

Please provide:

- An outline of actions and the expected outcomes
- Any governance and funding which will support these actions if relevant

5. Please provide details of your consultation and/or engagement plans.

Please provide:

- Details of what steps you have taken or plan to take to consult or engage the whole community or specific groups affected by the proposal
- Who has been or will be consulted or engaged with
- Methods used or that will be used to engage or consult
- Key findings or feedback (if completed)

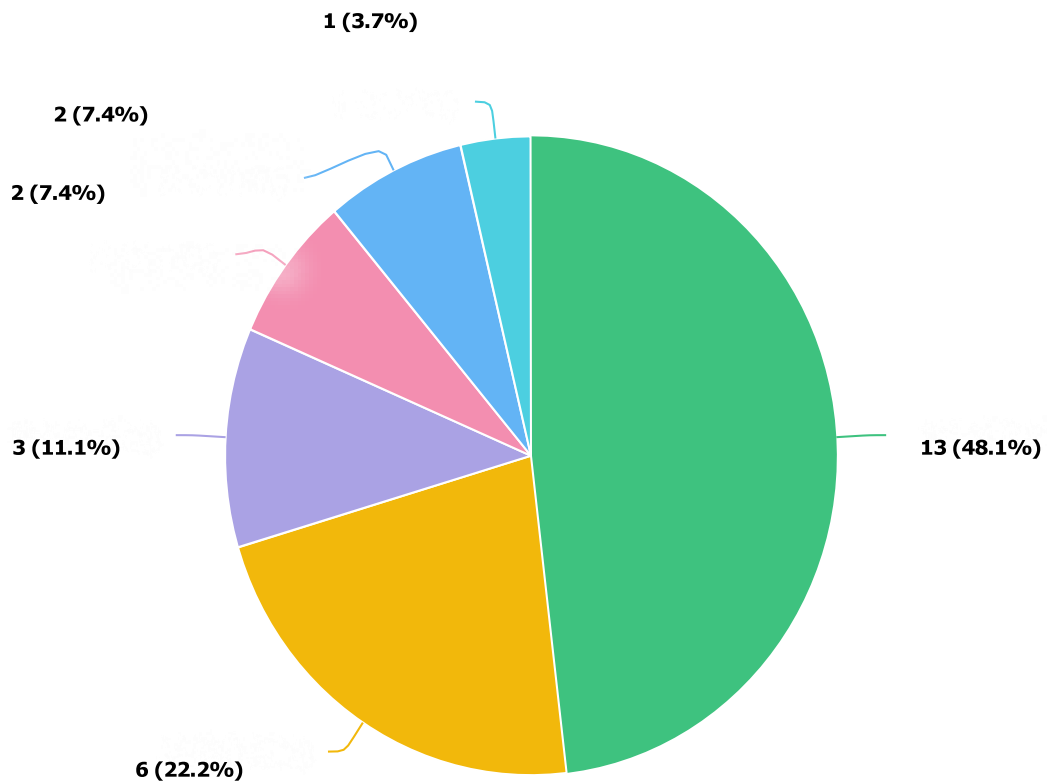
The proposed changes are designed to reflect the changing welfare benefits system, with more working age households moving on to universal credit. A banded scheme will mean less frequent changes in CTSS entitlement for those households with variable earnings, reducing the volume of updated council tax bills and payment plans.

A public consultation period took place between 18 July 2023 – 11 September 2023. This was an online consultation, advertised on Islington Website, social media Facebook and Twitter, various bulletins. We also sent 2,000 letters to council tax registered account holders, 1,000 were sent to liable council tax accounts and 1,000 to those liable for council tax and in receipt of council tax support.

From the Survey Results, there were 600 visits to the consultation, 57 informed visitors, 428 aware visitors and 27 engaged visitors.



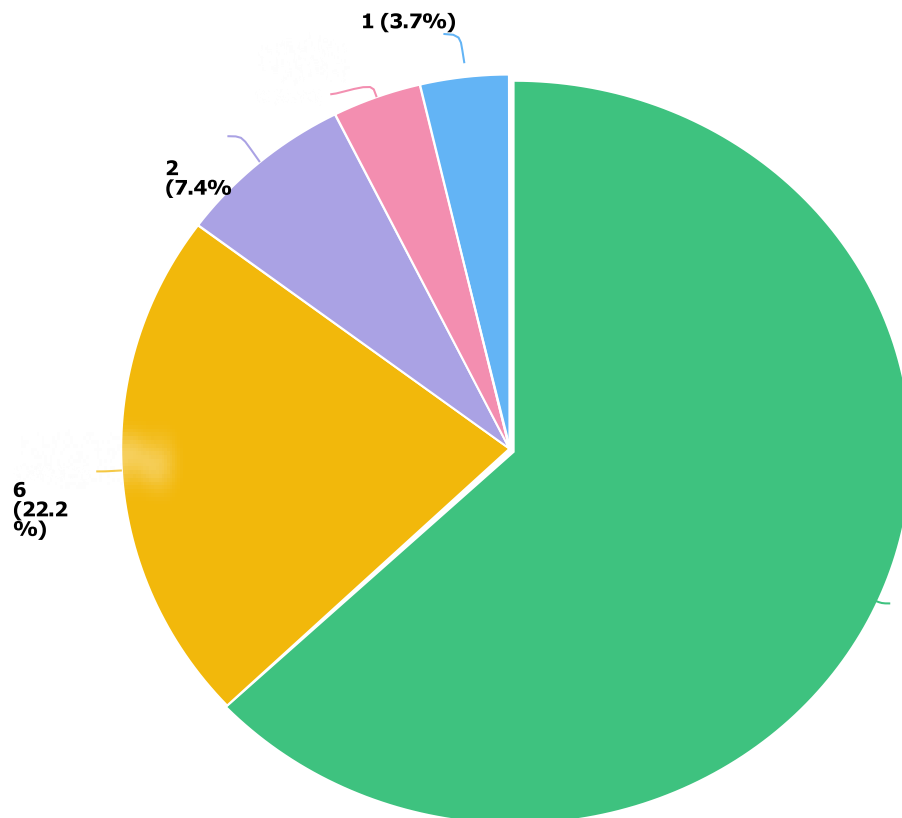
On the level of support for working age households 48.1% strongly agreed with the proposing a new Council Tax Scheme for 2024/25 22.2% agreed.



**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure

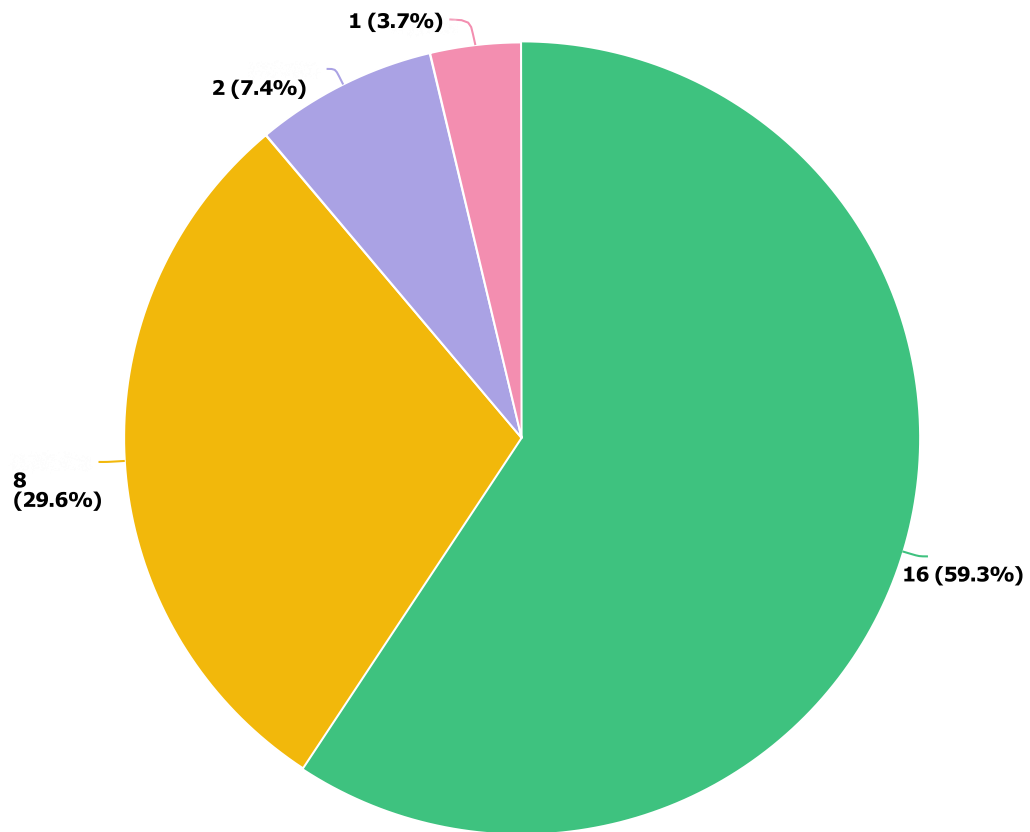
Proposing 100% Council Tax Support covering the entire bill prioritised for households who face barriers to work, such as those with a disability, single parents with children aged under 5 63% strongly agreed with his proposal and 22.2% agreed.



**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

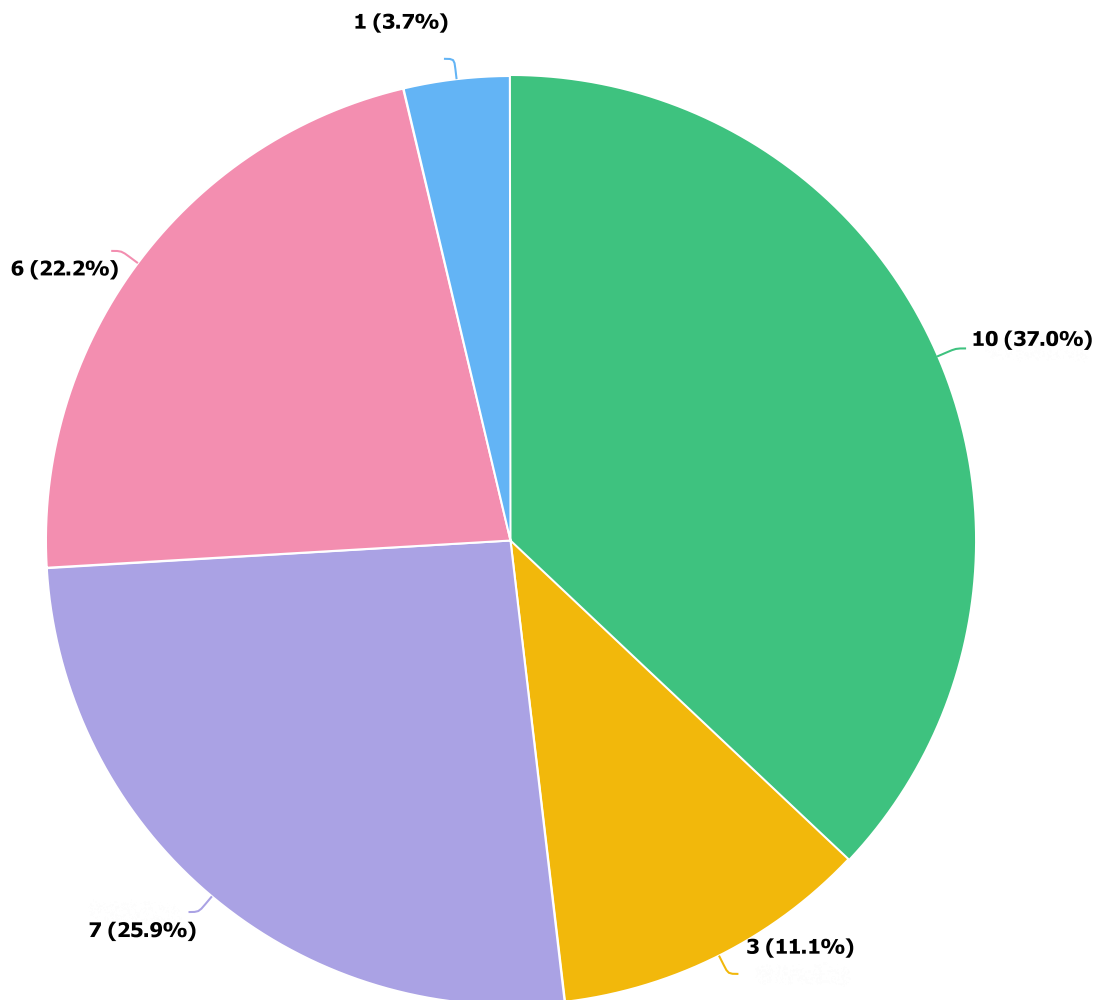
Simplifying the current scheme to reduce the number of in year changes to Council Tax bills for those households who may experience small changes to their income each month, 59.3% strongly agreed, 29.6% agreed.



**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Strongly disagree

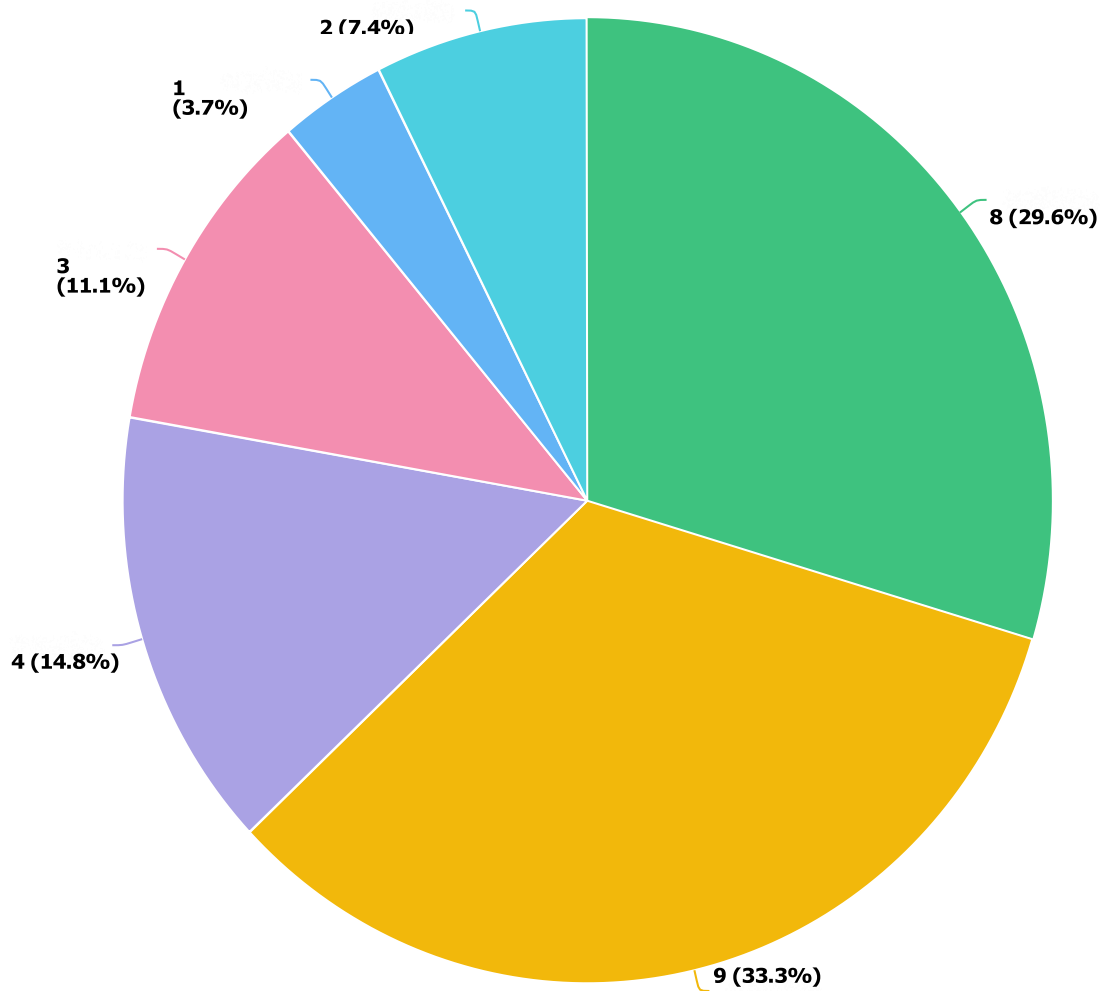
Households with couples and those with children should have a higher earnings allowance for each of the bands than those households who are single or who have no children, 37% strongly agreed, 11.1% agreed 25.9% neither agreed/disagreed.



**Question options**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Simplifying the non-dependent deduction to a standard £7.50 deduction for all adults in the household 29.6% strongly agreed, 33.3% agreed 14.8% neither agreed or disagreed.



**Question options**

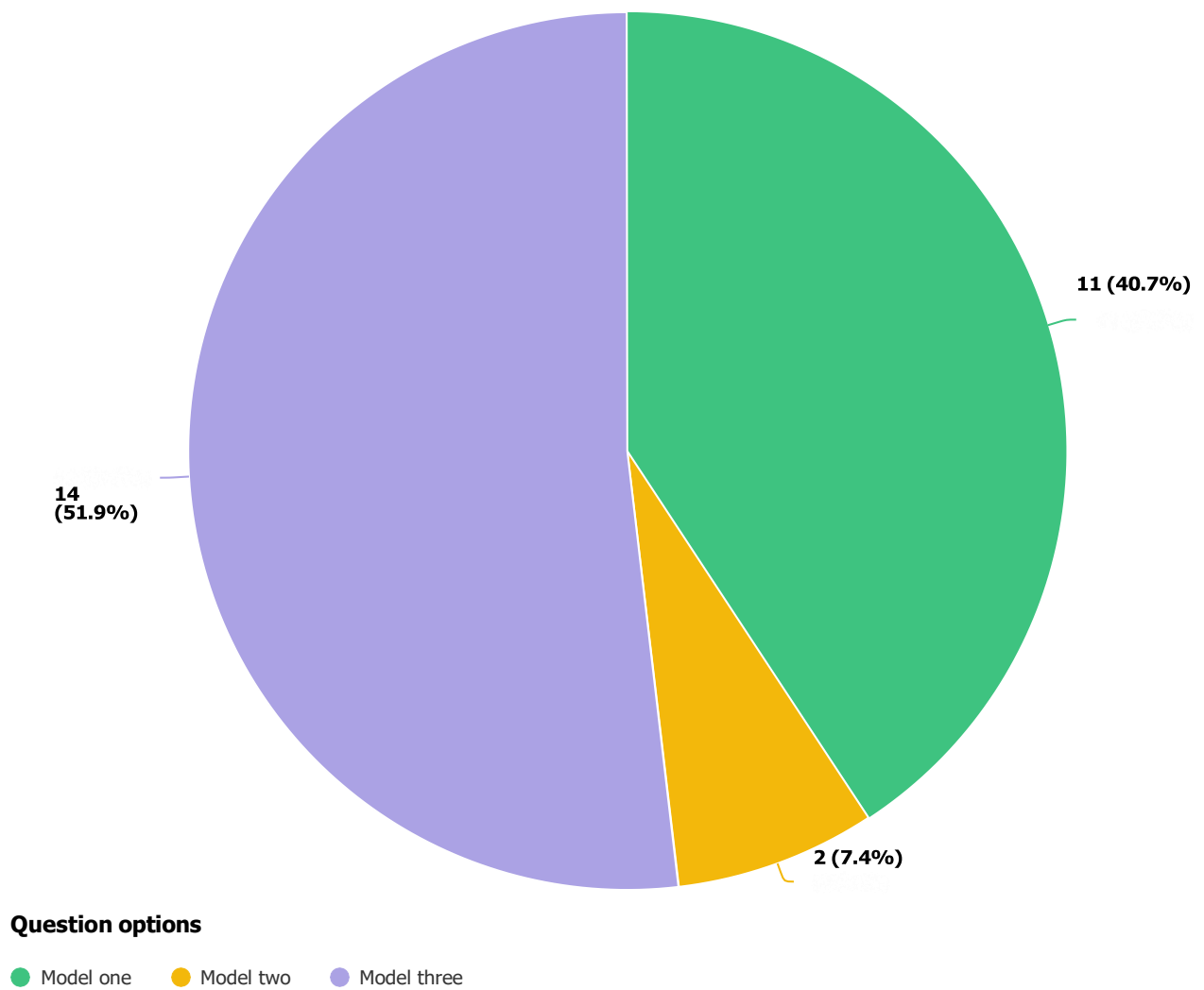
- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not sure

## Preferred Model for Council Tax Scheme for 2024/25

51.39% Model 3

40.7% Model 1

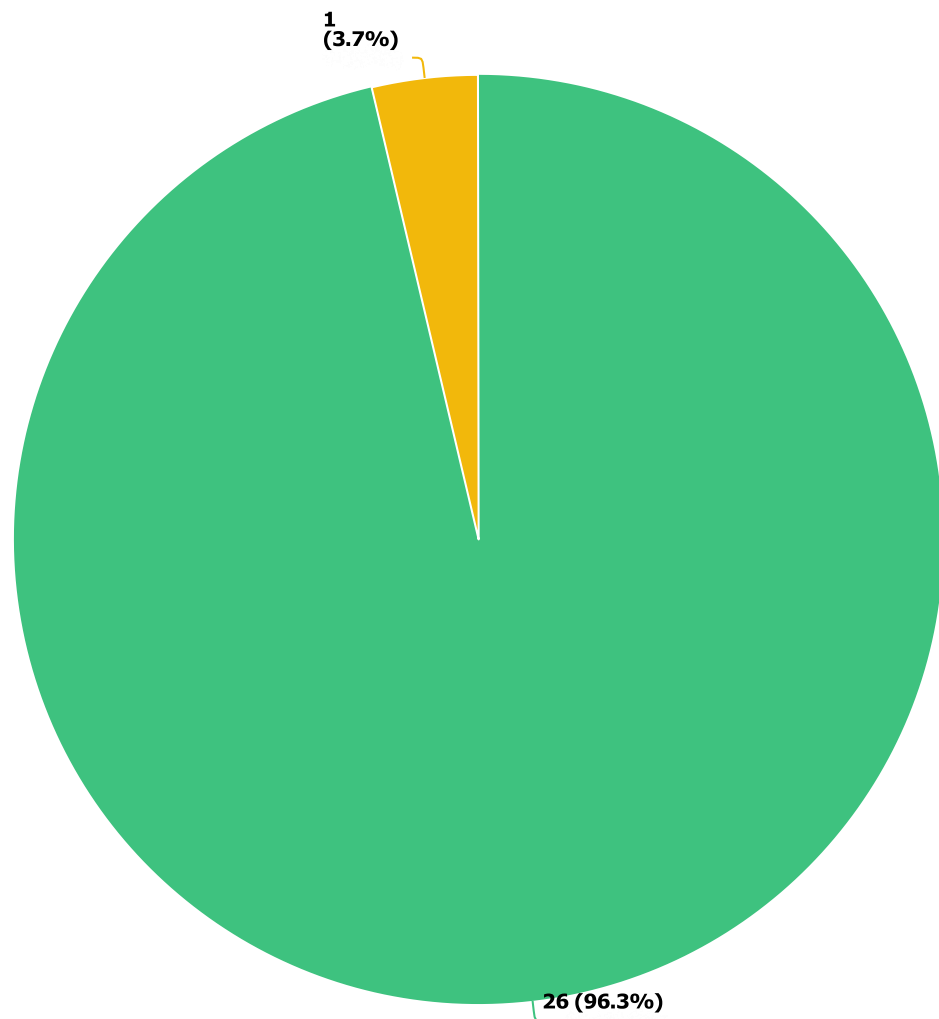
7.4% Model 2



## Responses to consultation as an individual or an organisation

96.3% Individual

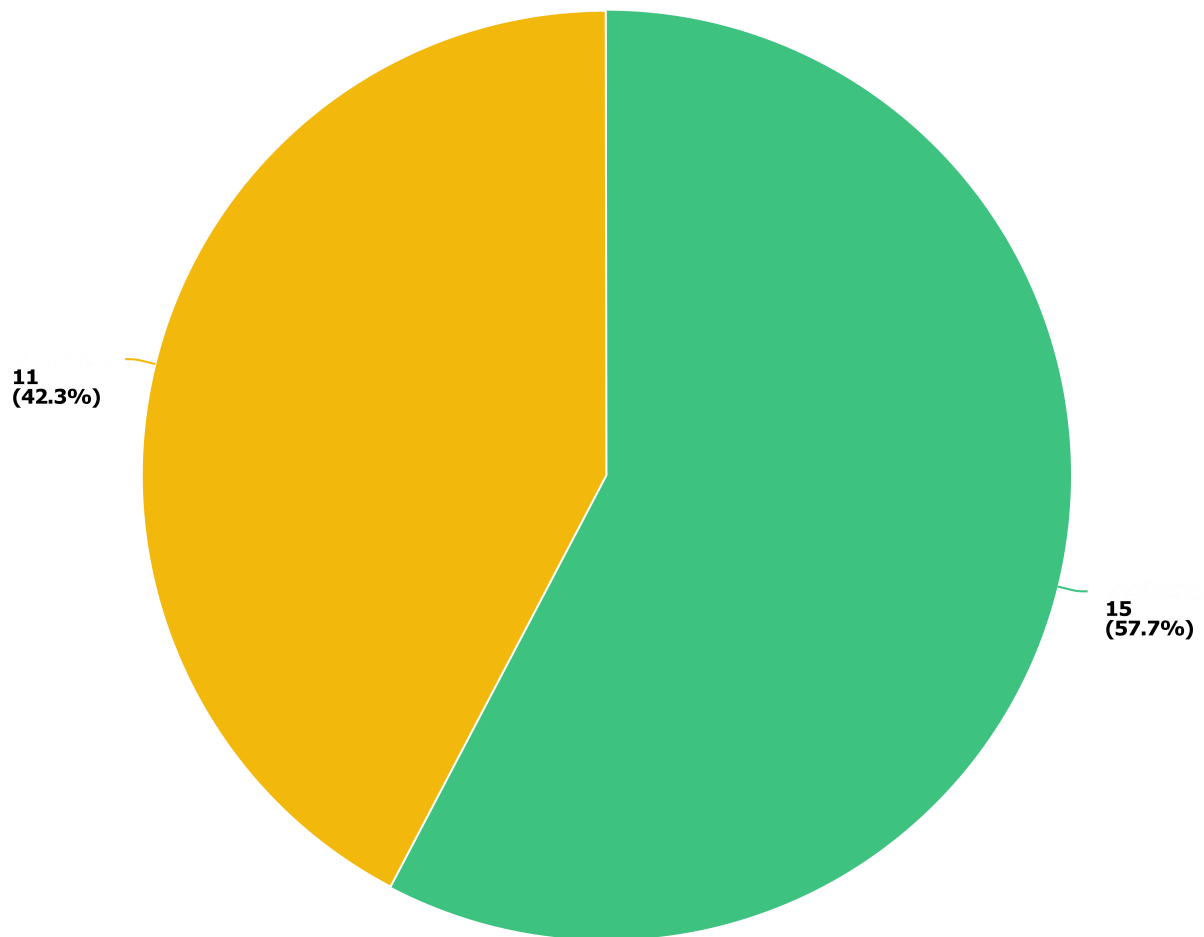
3.7% Organisation



### Question options

● An individual    ● An organisation

Responses from those that are currently in receipt of Council Tax Support 57.7% are in receipt of Council Tax Support 42.3% are not.



**Question options**

- Yes
- No

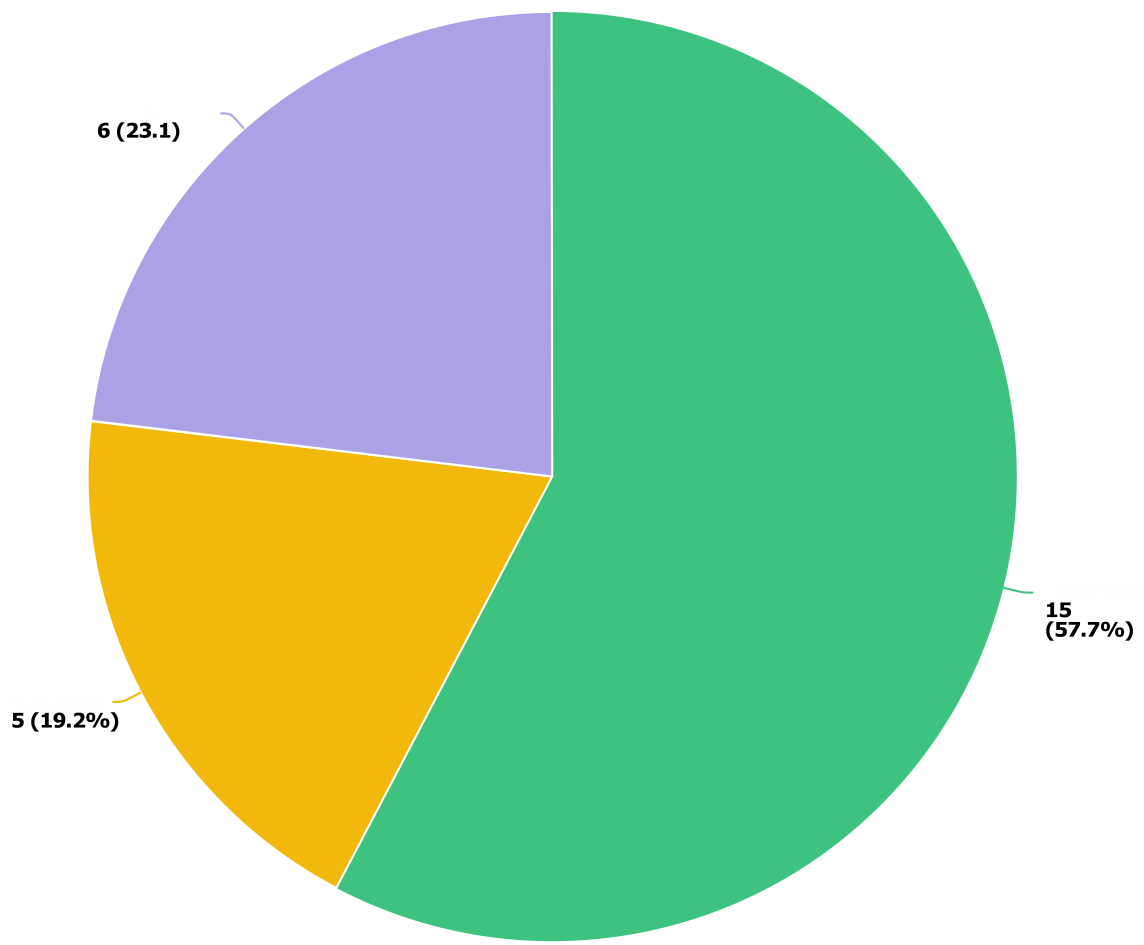


Responses from those:

Working Age household 57.7%

State Pension Age household 19.2%

Prefer not to Say 23.10%



**Question options**

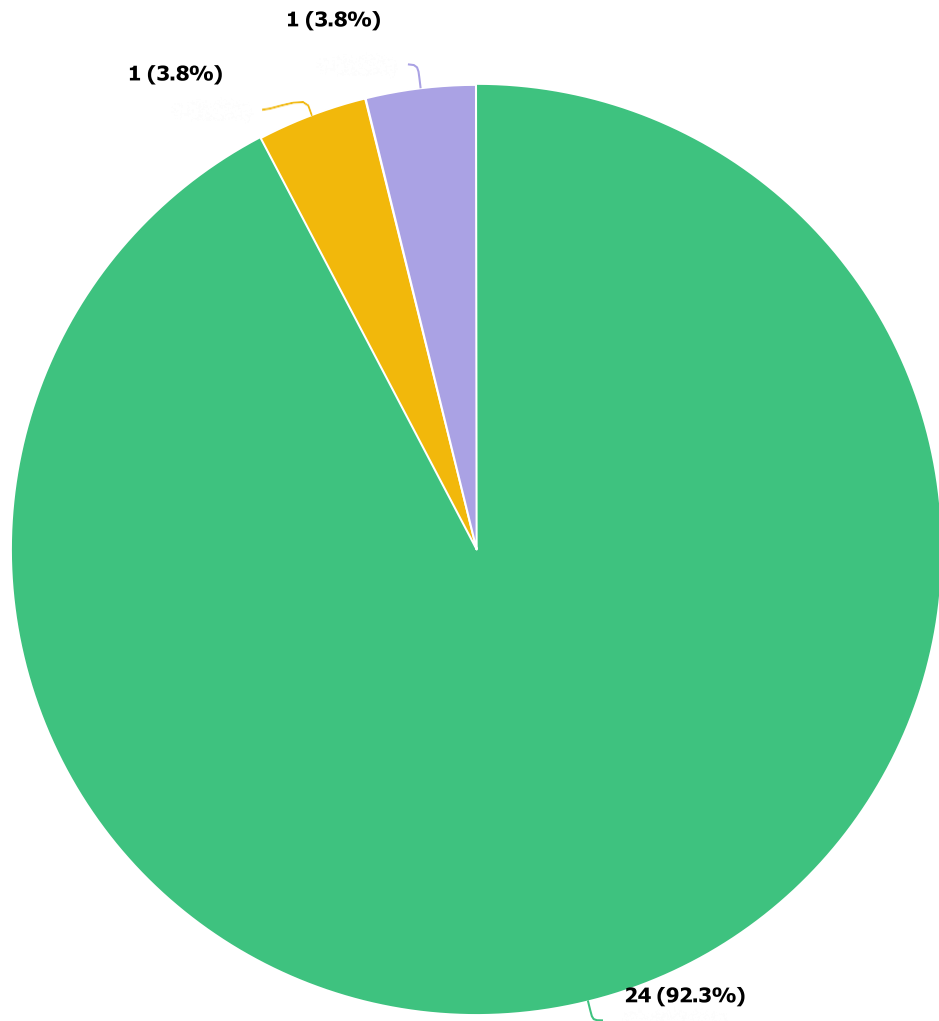
- Working age household
- State pension age household
- Prefer not to say

### Responses from those that pay council tax to Islington Council

92.3% Yes

3.8% No

3.8% Do not know/cannot say

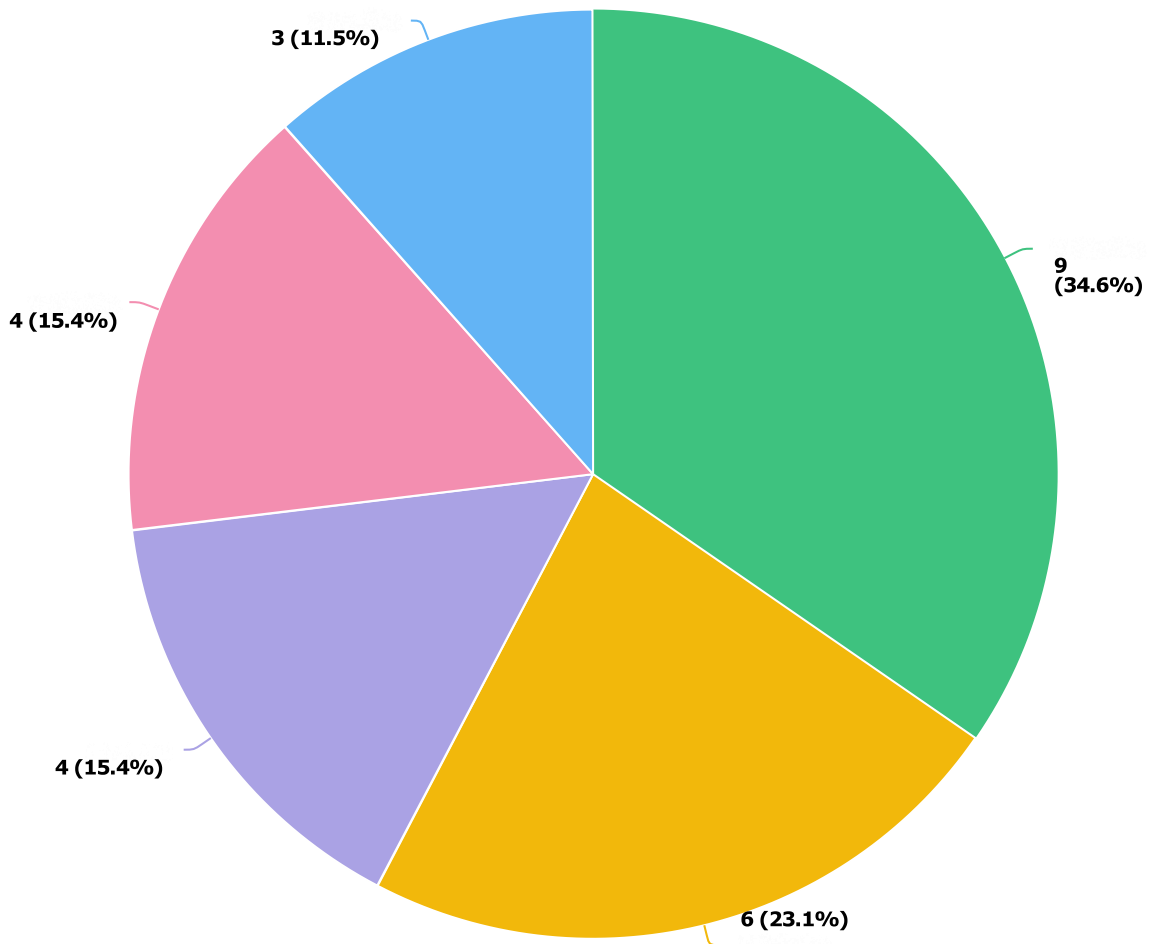


**Question options**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know/can not say

Current circumstances from those that responded

- 34.6% Working and not in receipt of benefits
- 23.1% Not working and in receipt of benefits
- 15.4% Working and in receipt of benefits
- 15.4% Retired
- 11.5% Other



**Question options**

- Working, not in receipt of benefits
- Not working and in receipt of benefits
- Working and in receipt of benefits
- Retired
- Other (please specify)

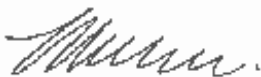
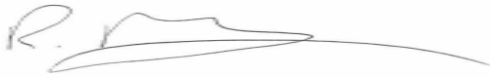
## 6. Once the proposal has been implemented, how will impacts be monitored and reviewed?

Please provide details in the table below.

Action	Responsible team or officer	Deadline
Initial review of CTS caseload	Robbie Rainbird	Sept 24
Annual review	Robbie Rainbird	Annually 25/26 onwards

Please send the completed EQIA to [equalities@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@islington.gov.uk) for quality checking by the Fairness and Equality Team. All Equality Impact Assessments must be attached with any report to a decision-making board and should be made publicly available on request.

This Equality Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.

Member	Name	Signed	Date
Staff member completing this form	Theresa Williams		12 Oct 2023
Fairness and Equality Team	Courtney Stephenson	<i>C Stephenson</i>	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2023
Director or Head of Service	Robbie Rainbird		23 Oct 2023



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Finance  
222 Upper Street  
London N1 1XR

Report of: Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Resources

Meeting of: Council

Date: 14 December 2023

Ward(s): All

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## Subject: Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report reviews the activities of the Council's Treasury Management function for the year period ended 31 March 2023. The financial year has been a challenging environment with volatile interest rate and gilt markets.
- 1.2. The Council's treasury function has been managing extreme interest rate volatility over the last year not seen since the global financial crisis. The authority has delivered strong investment returns on its assets and retains a low overall average borrowing rate, but any new borrowing will be undertaken at significant cost. The Council's reduce reserves limit the possibility for continued internal borrowing.
- 1.3. Over the reporting period, all treasury management (TM) activities have been carried out in accordance with the approved limits and the prudential indicators (PI) set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement. This is detailed in paragraphs 4.43 – 4.47.
- 1.4. Over the reporting period April 2022 to September 2022 there was one exception, the short-term borrowing indicator. 7% of the Authority's borrowing was due in under 12 months as opposed to the minimum 12% set out in the prudential indicators. Whilst this was technically a breach, this was in the financial interests of the organisational at the time. This breach was eliminated after securing short term borrowing of £20m. The indicators were also revised for 2023/24 to prevent this anomaly occurring again.
- 1.5. Treasury Management comprises:

- Managing the Council’s borrowing to ensure funding of the Council’s future capital programme is at optimal cost;
- Investing surplus cash balances arising from the day-to-day operations of the Council to obtain an optimal return while ensuring security of capital and liquidity.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. To note the Treasury outturn for the year.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 In February 2002, Islington Council adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice* (the CIPFA Code) which requires us to approve treasury management semi-annual and annual reports.
- 3.2 Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. This report fulfils the Authority’s legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
- 3.3 The 2021 Prudential Code includes a requirement for local authorities to provide a Capital Strategy, a summary document approved by full Council covering capital expenditure and financing, treasury management and non-treasury investments. The Council’s Capital Strategy, complying with CIPFA’s requirement, was approved by full Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.

## 4. Detailed Report

- 4.1 On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the Authority had net borrowing of £231.9m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. These factors are summarised in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1: Balance Sheet

	<b>31.3.23 Actual £m</b>
--	----------------------------------



General Fund CFR	190.703
PFI CFR	80.553
HRA CFR	463.593
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>734.849</b>
Less: *Other debt liabilities	(80.552)
<b>Loans CFR</b>	<b>654.297</b>
External borrowing	(285.606)
<b>Internal (over) borrowing</b>	<b>368.691</b>
Less: Usable reserves	(258.824)
Less: Working capital	122.039
<b>Net (Treasury Investments)/ Borrowing</b>	<b>231.906</b>

\* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

4.2 On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, the Council had net borrowing of £231.9m arising from its revenue and capital income and expenditure. The treasury management position as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, and the change over the financial year is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Treasury Management Summary

	<b>31.3.22 Balance £m</b>	<b>Movement £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Balance £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Rate %</b>
Long-term borrowing	264.274	1.332	265.606	4.05
Short-term borrowing	10.000	10.000	20.000	4.30
<b>Total borrowing</b>	<b>274.274</b>	<b>11.332</b>	<b>285.606</b>	<b>4.06</b>
Long-term investments	10.000	0.000	10.000	0.55
Short-term investments	115.500	(71.800)	43.700	1.40
<b>Total investments</b>	<b>125.500</b>	<b>71.800</b>	<b>53.700</b>	<b>2.71</b>
<b>Net [borrowing / investments]</b>	<b>148.774</b>	<b>(83.132)</b>	<b>231.906</b>	<b>1.35</b>

### **2022/23 Economic Background**

4.3 The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) sets monetary policy to meet the 2% inflation target, and in a way that helps to sustain growth and employment. At its meeting ending on 22 March 2023, the MPC voted by a majority of 7–2 to increase Bank Rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 4.25%. Two members preferred to maintain Bank Rate at 4%.

4.4 The Committee has voted to increase Bank Rate by 0.25 percentage points, to 4.25%, at this meeting. CPI inflation increased unexpectedly in the latest release, but it remains likely

to fall sharply over the rest of the year. Services inflation has been broadly in line with expectations. The labour market has remained tight, and the near-term paths of GDP and employment are likely to be somewhat stronger than expected previously. Although nominal wage growth has been weaker than expected, cost and price pressures have remained elevated.

- 4.5 Capital economist cited that, “by reducing the government’s debt interest payments, a big fall in interest rates in 2024 would provide scope for fiscal policy to become less tight ahead of a general election in 2024. While the problems in the global banking system are unlikely to lead to another Global Financial Crisis, they will amplify the effects of higher interest rates and contribute to a recession. Sticky inflation will force the Bank of England to keep interest rates at or above 4.25% this year, but we think rates will be cut by more than most expect next year, to 3.00%”.
- 4.6 Twelve-month CPI inflation fell from 10.5% in December to 10.1% in January but then rose to 10.4% in February, 0.6 percentage points higher than expected in the February Report. As a consequence, the exchange of open letters between the Governor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is being published alongside this monetary policy announcement.
- 4.7 Services CPI inflation was 6.6% in February, 0.1 percentage points weaker than expected at the time of the February Report, but food and core goods price inflation have been significantly stronger than projected. Most of the surprising strength in the core goods component was accounted for by higher clothing and footwear prices, which tend to be volatile and could therefore prove less persistent. Annual private sector regular earnings growth has eased, to 7% in the three months to January, 0.1 percentage points below the expectation in February.

**Arlingclose View (as at 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023):**

- 4.8 The BoE increased Bank Rate to 4.5% at its May meeting and in the accompanying Monetary Policy Report forecast inflation would continue to fall steadily, albeit signalling the substantial upside risks. We felt that there was a distinct likelihood that the renewed hawkish feel to the Committee’s decision-making would result in a further increase in Bank Rate at the June meeting, due to the concern about persistent inflation. Only two weeks after this, the April reading of annual headline CPI inflation, which was expected to fall to 8.2% from 10.1% as energy prices continued to ease, only fell to 8.7%.
- 4.9 Of greater concern was the rise in core CPI which jumped to 6.8% against predictions for remaining at 6.2%. As we expected, a rise to 4.75% in June is therefore almost a certainty, but financial markets immediately took the core inflation data as a sign the BoE would need to push rates even higher, potentially needing to go as high as 5.50%. While this position has softened very slightly, as shown below market implied pricing is currently forecasting

three further 25 basis point (0.25%) rate increases over the next three MPC meetings, suggesting the peak in Bank Rate could now be 5.25%.

## **Borrowing**

- 4.10 CIPFA's 2021 Prudential Code is clear that local authorities must not borrow to invest primarily for financial return and that it is not prudent for local authorities to make any investment or spending decisions that will increase the capital financing requirement, and so may lead to new borrowing, unless directly and primarily related to the functions of the Authority.
- 4.11 PWLB loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield; the Authority intends to avoid this activity in order to retain its access to PWLB loans.
- 4.12 The 2022/23 Treasury Management Strategy sets out an operational borrowing limit of £413.5m and maximum borrowing limit of £463.7m for the year. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March there is still a potential for the Council to borrow up to a further £127m, this level of borrowing has been revised due the current level of capital programme slippage. This matter is being closely monitored through the Council's 5-year capital programme model and the cash flow model.
- 4.13 As outlined in the treasury strategy, the Authority's chief objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required, with flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Authority's long-term plans change being a secondary objective. The Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.
- 4.14 The cost of both long and short-term borrowing rose dramatically over the year, with rates at the end of March around 2% - 4% higher than those at the beginning of April. Rate rises have been driven primarily by inflation and the need for central banks to control this by raising interest rates. Particularly dramatic rises were seen in September after Liz Truss' 'mini-budget' included unfunded tax cuts and additional borrowing to fund consumer energy price subsidies: over a twenty-four-hour period, some PWLB rates increased to 6%. Rates have now fallen from September peaks but remain volatile and well above recent historical norms. The PWLB 10-year maturity certainty rate stood at 4.33% at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 20 years at 4.70% and 30 years at 4.66%.
- 4.15 In keeping with these objectives, £20m new long-term borrowing was undertaken, while £18.67m of existing long-term loans allowed to mature without replacement, in addition to £40m of short-term borrowing £20m matured. This strategy enabled the Authority to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk.

- 4.16 The £20m of borrowing was undertaken in June, before the significant PWLB rate hikes, at a rate of 3.26% over 50 years. This proactive borrowing decision saved the authority £330k per annum in interest expense compared with the latest available rate of 4.91%. While the £30m was undertaken in March to facilitate the demand of the COVID repayment funding by central government. Most Local Authorities was affected by this repayment.
- 4.17 The Council has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme and an estimated borrowing requirement as determined by the Liability Benchmark which also considers usable reserves and working capital. Having considered the appropriate duration and structure of the Council's borrowing need based on realistic projections, the Council has not taken on any new long-term loans because of its considerable cash balance.
- 4.18 A new HRA PWLB rate of gilt yield plus 0.4% (0.4% below the currently available certainty rate) was announced on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023. This discounted rate is to support local authorities borrowing for Housing Revenue Accounts and the delivery of social housing and is expected to be available from June 2023, initially for a period of one year.

### **Borrowing Update**

- 4.19 The Authority currently holds £265.6 million of loans, a reduction of £8.67 million from the previous year, as in line with the strategy to borrow only if required hence use internal resources in lieu of borrowing despite the increase in rates, during the half year the Authority considered it to be more cost effective in the near term to either use internal resources and short to medium term borrowing to minimise the "cost of carry". Outstanding loans on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 are summarised in Table 3 overleaf:

Table 3: Borrowing Position

	<b>31.3.22 Balance £m</b>	<b>Net Movement £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Balance £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Weighted Average Rate %</b>	<b>31.3.23 Weighted Average Maturity (years)</b>
Public Works Loan Board	223.274	11.332	234.606	4.34	19.73
Banks (LOBO)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00
Banks (fixed-term)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00	0.00
Local authorities (long-term)	41.000	(10.000)	31.000	1.79	1.26
Local authorities (short-term)	10.000	(10.000)	20.000	4.30	0.08
<b>Total borrowing</b>	<b>274.274</b>	<b>(8.668)</b>	<b>285.606</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>15.80</b>

- 4.2 There remains a strong argument for diversifying funding sources, particularly if rates can be achieved on alternatives which are below gilt yields + 0.80%. The Authority will evaluate and pursue these lower cost solutions and opportunities with its advisor Arlingclose.

### **Forward starting loans**

- 4.21 To enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans with fixed interest rates of for the delivery of cash a specified future year date. The Authority has not actively pursued this option at this time and does not seem prudent with rates at their current levels.

### **Other Debt Activity**

- 4.22 After £4.5m repayment in 2022/23 of Private Finance Initiative liabilities, total debt other than borrowing stood at £77.6m on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

### **Treasury Investment Activity**

- 4.23 CIPFA revised TM Code defines treasury management investments as those which arise from the Authority's cash flows or treasury risk management activity that ultimately represents balances which need to be invested until the cash is required for use in the course of business.
- 4.24 The Council holds invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. During the year, the Authority's investment balances ranged between £54 and £120 million due to timing differences between income and expenditure. The Council earned Investment income of £1.131m for the period, an increase of over £880k over budget. The investment position is shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Treasury Investment Position

	<b>31.3.22 Balance £m</b>	<b>Net Movement £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Balance £m</b>	<b>31.3.23 Income Return %</b>
<b>Government (incl. local authorities)</b>	125.5	(71.8)	53.7	2.71
<b>MMF</b>	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>UK Banks</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total investments</b>	<b>125.5</b>	<b>(71.8)</b>	<b>53.7</b>	<b>2.71</b>

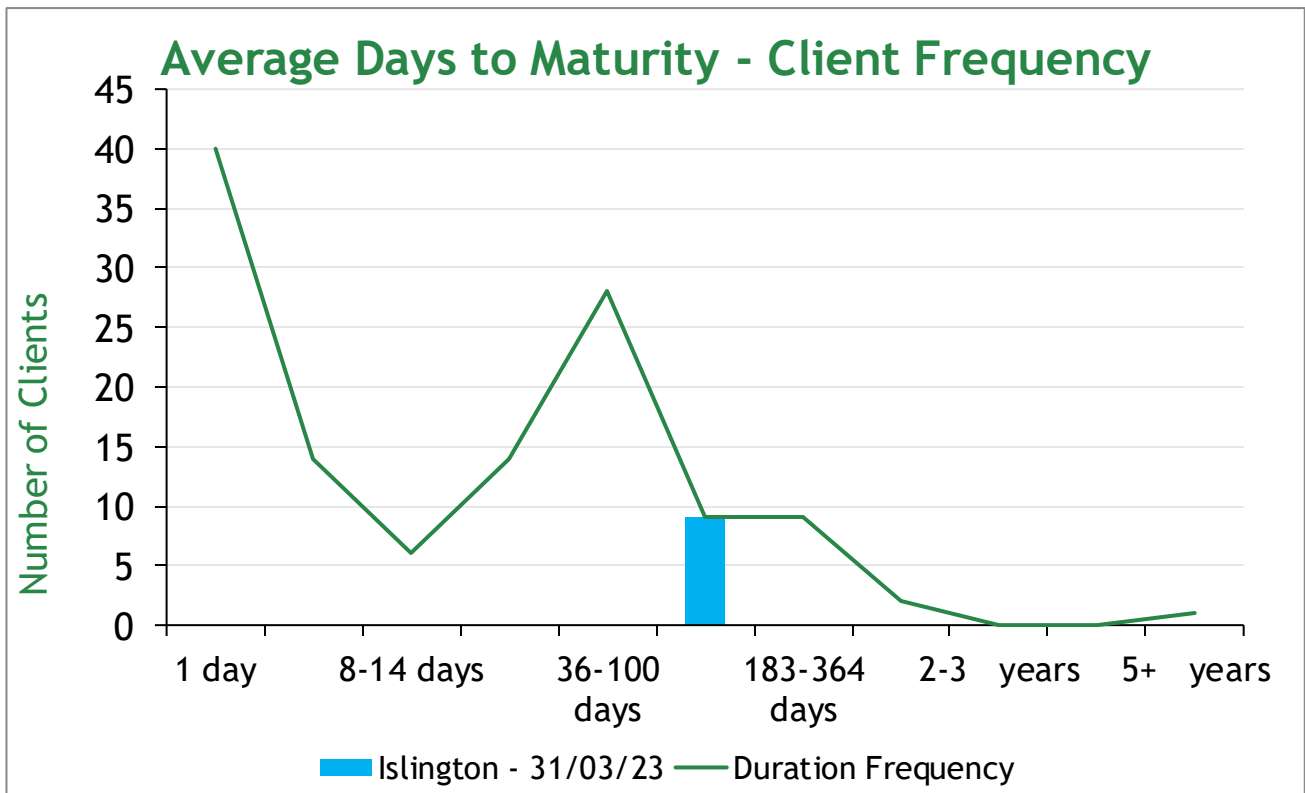
- 4.25 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its treasury investments before seeking the optimum rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing

money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

- 4.26 The increases in the Bank Rate over the period under review, and with the prospect of more increases to come, short-dated cash rates, which had ranged between 0.7% - 1.5% at the end of March, rose by around 1.5% for overnight/7-day maturities and by nearly 3.5% for 9-12 month maturities.
- 4.27 By end March 2023, the rates on DMADF deposits ranged between 4.05% and 4.15%. The return on the Council's sterling Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) Money Market Funds ranged between 0.06% - 0.55% p.a. in early April and between 0.50% and 4.25% at the end of March.
- 4.28 The progression of risk and return metrics are shown in the extracts from Arlingclose's quarterly investment benchmarking in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Investment Benchmarking – Treasury investments managed in-house

	<b>Credit Score</b>	<b>Credit Rating</b>	<b>Bail-in Exposure</b>	<b>Weighted Average Maturity (days)</b>	<b>Rate of Return %</b>
31.03.2022	4.28	AA-	0%	221	0.28
31.03.2023	4.73	A+	0%	179	2.71
<b>Similar LAs</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>A+</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>2.24</b>
<b>All Las</b>	<b>4.71</b>	<b>A+</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1.59</b>



## **Non-Treasury Investment**

- 4.29 The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised 2021 Treasury Management Code covers all the financial assets of the Authority as well as other non-financial assets which the Authority holds primarily for financial return. Investments that do not meet the definition of treasury management investments (i.e., management of surplus cash) are categorised as either for service purposes (made explicitly to further service objectives) and or for commercial purposes (made primarily for financial return).
- 4.30 Investment Guidance issued by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and Welsh Government also includes within the definition of investments all such assets held partially or wholly for financial return.
- 4.31 The Council lends money to its subsidiaries, local businesses, local charities, local residents and its employees to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth.
- 4.32 As at 31/03/2023, the Council had lent £0.639m (including accrued interest) to three private companies responsible for managing schools under the Building Schools for the Future programme (Transform Islington Phase 1 Holdings Limited, Transform Islington Phase 2 Holdings Limited and Transform Islington Limited). All loans were issued at market rates. Where loans are advanced at below market rates they are classed as 'soft loans. As at 31/3/2023 the Council had also issued around £1.302m of soft loans, mainly to employees (e.g., travel season ticket, gym membership, home computer loans).
- 4.33 The Council invests in the shares of its subsidiaries and local businesses to support local public services and stimulate local economic growth. The Council holds equity investments in Islington Limited (iCo), a wholly owned subsidiary providing local services, and minority (10%) equity investments in three private companies responsible for managing schools under the Building Schools for the Future programme (Transform Islington Phase 1 Holdings Limited, Transform Islington Phase 2 Holdings Limited and Transform Islington Limited). The fair value of these shares is nil, and the shares are not traded in an active market. The Council has no current plans to dispose any of these shareholdings.
- 4.34 The Council invests in local and regional, commercial property with the intention of making a profit that will be spent on local public services. The market value of all such properties as at 31/3/2023 was £43.6m. In 2022/23, rental income from investment property was £1.6m against direct operating expenditure arising from investment property of £0.3m.

## **Compliance**

- 4.35 The Corporate Director of Resources reports that all treasury management activities undertaken during the period complied fully with the CIPFA Code of Practice and the Authority's approved Treasury Management Strategy. Compliance with specific investment limits is demonstrated in table 7 below, with one exception. the short-term



borrowing indicator. 7% of the Authority's borrowing was due in under 12 months as opposed to the minimum 12% set out in the prudential indicators. This occurred from the period April – September 2022.

- 4.36 Compliance with the authorised limit and operational boundary for external debt is demonstrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Debt Limits

	H1 Forecasted	31.3.23 Actual	2022/23 Operational Boundary £m	2022/23 Authorised Limit £m	Complied? Yes/No
Borrowing	363.7	285.6	413.526	463.526	Yes
PFI and Finance Leases	82.36	82.36	83.461	88.461	Yes
<b>Total debt</b>	<b>446.06</b>	<b>367.96</b>	<b>496.987</b>	<b>552.021</b>	Yes

- 4.37 Since the operational boundary is a management tool for in-year monitoring it is not significant if the operational boundary is breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this is not counted as a compliance failure.

### Treasury Management Indicators

- 4.38 The Authority measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.
- 4.39 **Security:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Table 8: Credit Ratings

	31.3.23 Actual	2022/23 Target	Complied?
Portfolio average credit rating	A+	A+	Yes

- 4.40 **Liquidity:** The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling one-month period, without additional borrowing.

Table 9: Liquidity of investments

	<b>31.3.23 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Target</b>	<b>Complied?</b>
Total cash available within 1 months	£28m	£25m	Yes

- 4.41 **Interest Rate Exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interests was:

Table 10: Interest Rate risk (income)

<b>Interest rate risk indicator</b>	<b>31.3.23 Actual</b>	<b>2022/23 Limit</b>	<b>Complied?</b>
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>rise</u> in interest rates	£0.7m	£5.904m	Yes
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% <u>fall</u> in interest rates	£0.3m	£2.503m	Yes

- 4.42 The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investment will be replaced at current rates.

- 4.43 **Maturity Structure of Borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of all borrowing were:

Table 11: Maturity Structure

<b>Refinancing rate risk indicator</b>	<b>31.3.23 Actual</b>	<b>Upper Limit</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>	<b>Complied?</b>
Under 12 months	14%	100%	12%	Yes
12 months and within 24 months	10%	100%	5%	Yes
24 months and within 5 years	17%	100%	16%	Yes
5 years and within 10 years	10%	100%	7%	Yes
10 years and above	49%	100%	20%	Yes

- 4.44 Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

- 4.45 The period April to September 2023 the treasury indicators were in breach due to the minimum levels of short-term borrowing not being reached; this has been a deliberate strategic decision to the benefit of the Authority.

- 4.46 As in line with the strategy to borrow only if required, there was very little requirement to borrow due to the increased availability of internal resources.

4.47 Given the current volatile interest rate environment, officers have reviewed the indicators for 2023/24. A more suitable set of benchmarks have been used to appropriately manage refinancing risk without leading to adverse financial outcomes, which includes reducing the lower limit indicator to zero.

4.48 **Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority’s exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

Table 12: Amounts invested for more than one year

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Actual principal invested beyond year end	£10m	£10m	£0
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£30m	£20m	£20m
Complied?	Yes	Yes	Yes

## 5. Implications

### 5.1. Financial Implications

5.1.1. The report is wholly financial in nature.

### 5.2. Legal Implications

5.2.1. Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the CIPFA Code, which requires the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year and, as a minimum, a semi-annual and annual treasury outturn report. This report fulfils the Council’s legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.

5.2.2. In addition, Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that: “without prejudice to section 111, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”. Good Treasury Management supports the discharge of this responsibility.

### 5.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

5.3.1. There are no environmental considerations.

### 5.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

5.4.1. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or

minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

5.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report, as it does not impact individuals.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1: External context

Appendix 2: Arlingclose's Economic Outlook of 2022/23

**Final report clearance:**

Signed by:

**Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Resources**

Date: 21 November 2023

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## **Appendix 1**

### **External Context**

The war in Ukraine continued to keep global inflation above central bank targets and the UK economic outlook remained relatively weak with the chance of a mild recession. The economic backdrop during the January to March period continued to be characterised by high energy and commodity prices, high inflation, and the associated impact on household budgets and spending.

Central Bank rhetoric and actions remained consistent with combatting inflation. The Bank of England, US Federal Reserve, and European Central Bank all increased interest rates over the period, even in the face of potential economic slowdowns in those regions.

Starting the financial year at 5.5%, the annual CPI measure of UK inflation rose strongly to hit 10.1% in July and then 11.1% in October. Inflation remained high in subsequent months but appeared to be past the peak, before unexpectedly rising again in February. Annual headline CPI registered 10.4% in February, up from 10.1% in January, with the largest upward contributions coming from food and housing. RPI followed a similar pattern during the year, hitting 14.2% in October. In February RPI measured 13.8%, up from 13.4% in the previous month.

Following the decision by the UK government under Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt to reverse some of the support to household energy bills announced under Liz Truss, further support in the form of a cap on what energy suppliers could charge household was announced in the March Budget to run from April until end June 2023. Before the announcement, typical household bills had been due to rise to £3,000 a year from April.

The labour market remained tight albeit with some ongoing evidence of potential loosening at the end of the period. The unemployment rate 3mth/year eased from 3.8% April-June to 3.6% in the following quarter, before picking up again to 3.7% between October-December. The most recent information for the period December-February showed an unemployment rate of 3.7%.

The inactivity rate was 21.3% in the December-February quarter, slightly down from the 21.4% in the first quarter of the financial year. Nominal earnings were robust throughout the year, with earnings growth in December-February at as 5.7% for both total pay (including bonuses) and 6.5% for regular pay. Once adjusted for inflation, however, both measures were negative for that period and have been so throughout most of the year.

Despite household budgets remaining under pressure, consumer confidence rose to -36 in March, following readings of -38 and -45 in the previous two months, and much improved compared to the record-low of -49 in September. Quarterly GDP was soft through the year, registering a 0.1% gain in the April-June period, before contracting by (an upwardly revised) -0.1% in the subsequent quarter. For the October-December period was revised upwards to 0.1% (from 0.0%), illustrating a resilient but weak economic picture. The annual growth rate in Q4 was 0.6%.

### **The Global Economy & Financial Conditions**

Global growth is set to surpass previous predictions and inflation in advanced economies remains high. Wholesale gas and oil prices have declined, but financial markets have been volatile since the failure of Silicon Valley Bank and UBS's purchase of Credit Suisse. The Bank of England's Financial Policy Committee has briefed the MPC on recent banking sector developments and is confident that the UK banking system is well-prepared to support the economy under various scenarios, including higher interest rates. Bank wholesale funding costs have risen in advanced economies, and the MPC will keep a close watch on credit conditions' impact on households, businesses, and the overall economy.

## **UK Demand & Output**

The Spring Budget has introduced additional fiscal support that is projected to increase GDP by about 0.3% over the coming years, with a full assessment due in the May Monetary Policy Report. GDP is expected to increase in Q2 compared to the previously anticipated decline. The government's Energy Price Guarantee will remain at £2,500 for three more months from April, which could keep real household disposable income stable in the near term.

## **Labour market**

The labour market has remained tight, and the near-term paths of GDP and employment are likely to be somewhat stronger than previously expected. However, nominal wage growth has been weaker than expected, while cost and price pressures have remained elevated. These factors, including the tightness of labour market conditions and the behaviour of wage growth and services inflation, will be closely monitored. If there were to be evidence of more persistent pressures, then further tightening in monetary policy would be required.

## **Financial markets**

Uncertainty continued to be a key driver of financial market sentiment and bond yields remained relatively volatile due to concerns over elevated inflation and higher interest rates, as well as the likelihood of the UK entering a recession and for how long the Bank of England would continue to tighten monetary policy. Towards the end of the period, fears around the health of the banking system following the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank in the US and purchase of Credit Suisse by UBS caused further volatility.

Over the period the 5-year UK benchmark gilt yield rose from 1.41% to peak at 4.70% in September before ending the financial year at 3.36%. Over the same timeframe the 10-year gilt yield rose from 1.61% to peak at 4.51% before falling back to 3.49%, while the 20-year yield rose from 1.82% to 4.96% and then declined to 3.82%. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 2.24% over the period.

## **Credit review:**

Early in the period, Moody's affirmed the long-term rating of Guildford BC but revised the outlook to negative. The agency also downgraded Warrington BC and Transport for London.

In July Fitch revised the outlook on Standard Chartered and Bank of Nova Scotia from negative to stable and in the same month Moody's revised the outlook on Bayerische Landesbank to positive. In September S&P revised the outlook on the Greater London Authority to stable from negative and Fitch revised the outlook on HSBC to stable from negative.

The following month Fitch revised the outlook on the UK sovereign to negative from stable. Moody's made the same revision to the UK sovereign, following swiftly after with a similar move for a number of local authorities and UK banks including Barclays Bank, National Westminster Bank (and related entities) and Santander.

During the last few months of the reporting period there were only a handful of credit changes by the rating agencies, then in March the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) in the US quickly spilled over into worries of a wider banking crisis as Credit Suisse encountered further problems and was bought by UBS.

Credit Default Prices had been rising since the start of the period on the back of the invasion of Ukraine, and in the UK rose further in September/October at the time of the then-government's mini budget. After this, CDS prices had been falling, but the fallout from SVB caused a spike on the back of the heightened uncertainty. However, they had moderated somewhat by the end of the period as fears of contagion subsided, but many are still above their pre-March levels reflecting that some uncertainty remains.

On the back of this, Arlingclose reduced its recommended maximum duration limit for unsecured deposits for all UK and Non-UK banks/institutions on its counterparty list to 35 days as a precautionary measure. No changes were made to the names on the list.

As market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, as ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remains under constant review.

Local authorities remain under financial pressure, but Arlingclose continues to take a positive view of the sector, considering its credit strength to be high. Section 114 notices have been issued by only a handful of authorities with specific issues. While Arlingclose's advice for local authorities on its counterparty list remains unchanged, a degree caution is merited with certain authorities.

## Appendix 2

### Arlingclose's Economic Outlook of 2022/23 (based on 24th March 2023 interest rate forecast)

	Current	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26
<b>Official Bank Rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Central Case	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.00	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
<b>3-month money market rate</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
Central Case	4.50	4.40	4.40	4.35	4.15	4.10	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40
Downside risk	0.00	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
<b>5yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	3.11	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.10
Downside risk	0.00	-0.70	-0.90	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
<b>10yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	3.27	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20
Downside risk	0.00	-0.70	-0.90	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
<b>20yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	3.70	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85
Downside risk	0.00	-0.70	-0.90	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00
<b>50yr gilt yield</b>													
Upside risk	0.00	0.80	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Central Case	3.38	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
Downside risk	0.00	-0.70	-0.90	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00	-1.00

PWLB Standard Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 1.00%

PWLB Certainty Rate (Maturity Loans) = Gilt yield + 0.80%

The Bank of England increased the official Bank Rate to 4.25% during the financial year. From 0.75% in March 2022, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) pushed through rises at every subsequent meeting over the period, with recent hikes of 50bps in December and February and then 25bps in March, taking Bank Rate to 4.25%. March's rise was voted by a majority of 7-2, with two MPC members preferring to maintain Bank Rate at 4.0%. The Committee noted that inflationary pressures remain elevated with growth stronger than was expected in the February Monetary Policy Report. The February vote was also 7-2 in favour of a hike, and again with two members preferring to keep Bank Rate on hold.

The MPC will cut rates in the medium term to stimulate a stuttering UK economy but will be reluctant to do so until services inflation and wage growth ease. We see rate cuts in the first quarter of 2024 to a low of around 3% by 2025, although the timing and extent of rate cuts remains highly uncertain.

Arlingclose expects gilt yields to remain broadly steady over the medium term, although with continued volatility across shorter time periods. Gilt yields face pressures to both sides. While there are growing fears of a global decline in economic activity and an expectation of falling inflation rates, these downward effects on gilt yields will be partly offset by hawkish-leaning central bankers, BoE bond sales, and high government borrowing.





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**Homes and Neighbourhoods Directorate  
222 Upper Street, N1 1XR**

Report of: Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes, and Communities; and  
Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods

Meeting of: Full Council

Date: 14th December 2023

Ward(s): All electoral wards

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## Subject: Adjustment to the Capital Programme - Purchasing 410 Ex Right to Buy properties.

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report recommends the budget adjustments required to proceed with the purchase of 410 ex-Right to Buy properties within the borough. This is required by the Councils financial regulations following approval by Executive.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Allocation of Funding Programme agreed to fund the acquisition of 150 1, 2, and 3-bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties and a further 20 4-bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are eligible for the:

- Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (including eligible British Nationals under this scheme)
- the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy
- Ukraine Family Scheme
- Homes for Ukraine and Ukraine Extension Scheme.

In addition to this DLUHC have allocated funding for 70 1, 2 and 3-bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for homeless households with a local connection to Islington, together with 70 1, 2 and 3-bedroom properties for homeless people from Afghanistan.

Finally, the GLA have also allocated additional funding to Islington Council to purchase:

- 20 1-bedroom properties for people sleeping rough in Islington,

- 20 1-bedroom properties for people leaving the looked after care provision of Islington Council to prevent rough sleeping and homelessness, and;
- 60 2, 3 and 4-bedroom properties as part of the council's humanitarian work for people from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

The Council will also borrow £111,663,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the GLA & DLUHC enabling the maximisation of the purchasing programme.

- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to advise Full Council of the outcome of a capital funding bid made to the DLUH&C to purchase 410 Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are homeless from Afghanistan and Ukraine as part of the council's humanitarian housing response and for homeless households to reduce local housing pressures beyond those of the Afghan and Ukraine resettlement schemes. The intention is to provide better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by Islington Council, reduce emergency, temporary and bridging accommodation costs and to reduce impacts on the existing housing and homelessness systems as well as for those waiting for social housing.
- 1.3. The council is only able to secure funding under the various funding streams made available by Central Government and the purchase of these 410 properties cannot be allocated to wider non-Ukraine, and Afghanistan people or migrants from other countries and the funding must be directed to homeless people with a local connection to Islington. The council will purchase properties for homeless households with a local connection to Islington.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the addition to the capital programme funded by borrowing of £111,663,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the DLUHC and the GLA to enable the council to purchase 410 Ex Right to Buy properties.
- 2.2. To approve the addition to the capital programme funded by £102,316,260 allocated to Islington Council by the DLUHC and the GLA for the purchase of 410 Ex Right to Buy properties in Islington to accommodate homeless households with a local connection to Islington.
- 2.3. To note the two Executive reports attached to this report.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. Islington Council is currently accommodating 1,128 homeless households who are living in temporary accommodation. This is the highest level of households living in temporary accommodation for a considerable period due to a combination of the cost-of-living crisis, and the financial fallout of Brexit. This increase represents a 22% increase in the use of temporary accommodation in the last 12 months and this increase is placing significant financial pressure on the council.
- 3.2. During the last 12 months, Islington Council has witnessed an increase in homeless households living in temporary accommodation from 922 homeless households to 1128 an increase of 206 homeless households.
- 3.3. London has a proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need and the Mayor of London has made it clear that he wants to do everything in his power to support people from Ukraine and Afghanistan to establish a long-term future in the city.
- 3.4. Equally, Islington Council has a long and proud history of offering sanctuary to people in need, and therefore stands ready to help people from Ukraine and Afghanistan in every way we can.
- 3.5. Homeless households are now spending longer periods of time living in temporary accommodation due to the reduction of available council and housing association lettings, again because of the effects of the cost-of-living crisis and Brexit with homeless presentations increasing by 22% in the last 12 months. In addition to this, the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation continues to increase.
- 3.6. Islington Council accepts the provision of 410 additional properties purchased through the Ex-Right to Buy property programme will not the address all urgent needs. However, these properties will ensure homeless people have safe and secure accommodation locally in Islington to help with health improvements, education attainment for children and reduce the time spent in expensive and inappropriate temporary accommodation.
- 3.7. This funding will secure 410 Ex Right to Buy properties for people sleeping rough, homeless households and households from Afghanistan and Ukraine living in Islington and the surrounding areas as part of the council's humanitarian response, with all purchases resulting in the acquisition of Ex Islington Council Right to Buy properties.

- 3.8. The acquisition of these properties will ensure homeless households and people fleeing Ukraine and Afghanistan are provided with good quality accommodation locally in Islington to enhance community well-being.
- 3.9. The current crisis underlines the importance of this funding. But it is not only needed for those in expensive emergency temporary accommodation because of homelessness and the financial effects of the cost-of-living crisis. It is also required to provide longer-term homes for those who need, to live in Islington for employment reasons or to provide or receive support from family and friends.
- 3.10. The aim of the programme is to boost delivery of affordable accommodation for homeless households locally in Islington.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial Implications

- 4.1.1. This capital cost will be funded by a combination of GLA/DLUHC grant totalling £102,316,260 & HRA Borrowing totalling £111,528,000.
- 4.1.2. The increased charges for interest arising on the borrowing will be met from the net rent charged at the lower of 80% of market rent or relevant local housing allowance. This fully covers the cost to the council for the scheme.
- 4.1.3. Council approval is needed for capital adjustments which vary Departmental Allocations by more than £1m.

### 4.2 Legal Implications

- 4.2.1 The Council may meet housing need by acquiring properties within Islington (section 9 of the Housing Act 1985).
- 4.2.2 S208(1) of the Housing Act 1996 provides that so far as reasonably practicable the Council shall secure accommodation within Islington for people who are homeless or under threat of homelessness.
- 4.2.3 Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 sets out the local authorities' duties to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to homeless people or those threatened with homelessness.
- 4.2.4 The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 prescribe the classes of persons who are eligible or ineligible for homelessness assistance.

- 4.2.5 Regulation 5(m) sets out the eligibility criteria for Afghan refugees who have fled the Taliban and Regulations 5(n) and (o) sets out the eligibility criteria for Ukrainians who have fled the Russian invasion.
- 4.2.6 This property programme will increase the availability of accommodation within Islington that the Council can use to meet this statutory duty.
- 4.2.7 Executive granted the authority to enter into the following Grant Agreements.
- 4.2.8 The borrowing of £111,663,000 within the Housing Revenue Account is a Full Council decision as it varies the Directorate Allocations set within the council's existing budget.
- 4.2.9 Procurement rule 2.5.1 states that contracts exceeding £500,000 or were directed by the Director of Law and Governance, must be signed as a deed by Director of Law and Governance or their authorised representative.
- 4.2.10 Procurement Rule 19.1.7 states the Council's corporate seal is placed on any document that needs to be 'sealed and executed' as a deed, and that where a document does not need to be sealed, it is signed by two authorised officers.

### **4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

- 4.3.1 Purchasing 410 existing will contribute positively to the council's environmental commitment, by purchasing existing properties and improving/reducing the carbon outputs through the capital works programme and reducing the use of natural resources.

### **4.4 Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 4.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- 4.4.2 S149(3) provides that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

4.4.3 This programme will contribute positively to the council equality of opportunity principles, the Human Rights of individuals and the elimination of rough sleeping in Islington.

4.4.4 A Resident Impact Assessment was completed on the 21st of May 2021, and is attached to this report as Appendix one.

4.4.5 As a public authority, the council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way, which is incompatible with a Convention right. Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

## 5 Reasons for recommendations

5.1 Any increase to the Corporate Capital Resources of the Council of £1m is a decision for Full Council under the Financial Regulations. Executive have supported the adoption of the scheme and therefore Full Council approval is needed to implement the budget adjustments required to proceed.

5.2 To assist the council's commitment of ending homelessness in Islington whilst concurrently ensuring a robust humanitarian response to support refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine.

5.3 The council have established a project team to ensure this programme can be delivered. The project team provide regular weekly update to track performance and ensure a corporate approach is adopted.

5.4 The council have considered all options to deliver this programme and we have concluded the most appropriate framework to deliver these acquisitions is the existing framework.

5.5 The council considered partnering with a Registered Social Landlord to deliver this programme, but this would not offer greater benefits compared to the business-as-usual model.



- 5.6 The council will shortly be commencing a communications plan to contact all Leaseholders who own a former Islington Council property to ensure this programme is delivered.
- 5.7 As of the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 2023, the council have secured 33% of this Ex-Right to Buy programme. This is excellent performance considering the DLUH&C only provided confirmation of funding on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 2023.
- 5.8 It is recognised the delivery of this large programme will be a challenge for the council to achieve and all efforts will be made to deliver the maximum number of Ex Right to Buy properties. Therefore, the council will advise the DLUH&C that all reasonable endeavours will be made to deliver this programme, but additional time during the 2024/2025 financial year will be required to deliver 100% of the purchases.
- 5.9 The report supports the delivery of the Housing Strategy and the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy. This report is collectively owned by our public, private and voluntary sectors, to tackle Islington's biggest housing challenges.
- 5.10 Islington is proud of being a welcoming council that celebrates its diverse communities. We want Islington to be a more inclusive and equal and will be designing these principles into everything we do. Many of the challenges facing Islington affect people differently and will require tailored solutions to ensure the needs of all our residents are met. Therefore, the contents of this report will clearly support this key principle.
- 5.11 We will constantly review whether what we do, and how we do it, is the best way to deliver modern, efficient, and high-quality services that support residents to live independently, and to thrive. This report clearly supports this principle.
- 5.12 It is essential to ensure a mature project and programme delivery capability is deployed to deliver this important property purchase programme with regular reports produced for the benefit of elected members to help monitor our work. Consequently, monthly reports will primarily focus on the council's performance, looking at progress on actions and key performance indicators for what the council is responsible for delivering against each outcome relating to this property purchase programme. Frequent performance reporting will help to inform better delivery planning, and where necessary we will make changes if improvement is required or to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. These reports will be considered monthly at the Housing Directorate Delivery Board and the monthly Homes and Neighbourhoods Political Leadership Meetings.

5.13 The council is committed to working collaboratively with all residents and partners to deliver this important programme.

**Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 – Executive Report, July 2023
- Appendix 2 – Executive Report, October 2023
- Appendix 3 - Resident Impact Assessment

**Final report clearance:**

Authorised by:

**Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities; and  
Corporate Director of Homes and Neighbourhoods**

Date: 5 December 2023

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**Homes and Neighbourhoods Directorate  
222 Upper Street, N1 1XR**

Report of: Executive Member for Homes and Communities and  
Executive Member for Equalities, Culture, and Inclusion

**Meeting of: Executive**

**Date: 20 July 2023**

**Ward(s): All**

**SUBJECT: THE GLA/DLUH&C ALLOCATION OF FUNDING PROGRAMME TO ACQUIRE 40 X 1 BEDROOM, 20 X 2 BEDROOM, 20 X 3 BEDROOM AND 20 X 4 BEDROOM FORMER EX-RIGHT TO BUY PROPERTIES FOR PEOPLE CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG ADULTS, PEOPLE SLEEPING ROUGH, HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS AND THE AFGHANISTAN AND UKRAINIAN HUMANITARIAN HOUSING WORK**

## **1. Synopsis**

1.1 The aim of this report is to advise the Executive of the outcome of a capital funding bid made to the GLA and DLUH&C to purchase 40 X 1 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for care experienced young adults and people sleeping rough in Islington or the prevention of people sleeping rough, 20 x 2 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties 20 x 3 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties and 20 x 4 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are homeless from the Afghanistan and the Ukraine as part of the council's humanitarian housing work.

1.2 Islington Council is the first council in London to access this funding from the GLA.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 To approve the borrowing of £26,359,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the GLA/DLUH&C to enable the council to purchase 40 x 1 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties, for care experienced young adults and people sleeping rough in Islington or the prevention of people sleeping rough, 20 x 2 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties 20 x 3 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties and 20 x 4 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are homeless from Afghanistan and the Ukraine as part of the council's humanitarian housing work.

2.2 To note the capital funding totalling £20,591,000 allocated to Islington Council by the DLUH&C/GLA and to commence the purchase 40 x one bedroom former ex Right to Buy properties in Islington to accommodate homeless households with a local connection to Islington. In addition to this to note the capital funding allocated to Islington Council by

the DLUHC/GLA and to commence the purchase 20 x 2 bedroom, 20 x 3 bedroom and 20 x 4 bedroom former ex Right to Buy properties in Islington to accommodate people through the homeless and Ukraine/Afghanistan humanitarian housing work.

2.3 To note the funding and to commence the purchase of these properties immediately.

2.4 To approve the budget increases as outlined in 4.1.3

### **3. Background**

3.1 Islington Council is currently accommodating 1,058 homeless households who are living in temporary accommodation. This is the highest level of people living in temporary accommodation for a considerable period due to the cost-of-living crisis, and the financial fallout of Brexit

3.2 The number of homeless people living on the streets of Islington is at the lowest level since records commenced. However, in the last 12 months the council has accommodated 200 people who have slept on the streets of Islington and this pressure continues going forward. In addition to this Children's Services are facing unprecedented demand for accommodation provision for care experienced young adults. The latest GLA data shows a 21% increase in people sleeping rough on the streets of London. The increase from 8,329 people seen sleeping rough in London in 2021-22 to 10,053 sleeping rough in London in 2022-23, shows how the work at Islington Council is reducing rough sleeping at a time rough sleeping is increasing across London.

3.3 London has a proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need and the Mayor of London has made clear that he wants to do everything in his power to support people from Ukraine and Afghanistan to establish a long-term future in the city.

3.4 Islington Council has a long and proud history of offering sanctuary to people in need, and Islington Council stand ready to help people from Ukraine and Afghanistan in every way we can.

Islington Council pride themselves on being excellent corporate parents to our children in care and our young people who have left care. We operate on the principle "what would I do for my own child?" as laid out in legislation and guidance.

3.5 Homeless households are now spending longer periods of time living in temporary accommodation due to the reduction of available council and housing association lettings, again because of the effects of the cost-of-living crisis and Brexit with homeless presentations increasing by 20% in the last 12 months. In addition to this the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation continues to increase. Our care experienced young people are spending longer periods in supported accommodation and temporary accommodation that they no longer need to be in because of the lack of suitable secure accommodation for them.

3.6 Islington Council accepts the provision of 100 additional properties purchased through the Ex Right to Buy property programme will not the address all urgent needs. However, these properties will ensure homeless people have safe and secure accommodation in Islington to help with health improvements, education attainment for children and reduce the time spent in expensive and inappropriate temporary accommodation.

3.7 This funding will secure 20 x 1 bedroom properties for people leaving looked after care, 20 x 1 bedroom properties for people sleeping rough in Islington or the prevention of people sleeping rough. 20 x 2 bedroom properties 20 x 3 bedroom properties and 20 x 4 bedroom properties for homeless households from Ukraine and Afghanistan as part of the council's humanitarian work, with all purchases resulting in the acquisition of Ex Islington Council Right to Buy properties.

3.8 The acquisition of these properties will ensure care experienced young adults and homeless households and people fleeing Ukraine and Afghanistan are now provided with good quality accommodation locally in Islington to enhance community well-being.

3.9 The current crisis underlines the importance of this funding. But it is not only needed for those in expensive emergency temporary accommodation as a result of homelessness and the financial effects of the cost-of-living crisis. It is also required to provide longer-term homes for **care experienced young adults as per our duties to those who have been in care**, for those who need to live in Islington for employment reasons or to provide or receive support from family and friends.

3.10 The aim of the programme is to boost delivery of affordable accommodation for **care experienced young adults and** homeless households locally in Islington. The council will also receive revenue funding to provide Housing First support for the 40 x 1-bedroom properties totaling £1.2 million over the next three financial years.

#### 4.

##### 4.1 Financial implications:

4.1.1 Following protracted negotiations with the GLA driven by the GLA's stringent criteria in respect of the maximum grant they are willing to fund as a percentage of the capital cost of purchase price– the following grant funding arrangements have now been indicatively agreed with the GLA.

In summary the total indicative grant agreed to facilitate the purchase of 100 Ex RTB properties is £20,591,000 and the HRA Borrowing required is £26,359,000 as set out in the table below:

<b>TOTAL ALL Units</b>							
	Units	Purchase Price + Works	GLA Grant	% Grant	Affordable HRA Borrowing	TOTAL Resources	NET
1 BED	<b>40</b>	<b>£14,840,000</b>	<b>-£7,080,000</b>	48%	<b>-£7,760,000</b>	<b>-£14,840,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
2 BED	20	£9,470,000	-£3,788,000	40%	-£4,491,000	-£8,279,000	£1,191,000
3 BED	20	£9,820,000	-£3,928,000	40%	-£5,800,000	-£9,728,000	£92,000
4 BED	20	£12,820,000	-£5,795,000	45%	-£8,308,000	-£14,103,000	-£1,283,000
	<b>60</b>	<b>£32,110,000</b>	<b>-£13,511,000</b>		<b>-£18,599,000</b>	<b>-£32,110,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>£46,950,000</b>	<b>-£20,591,000</b>		<b>-£26,359,000</b>	<b>-£46,950,000</b>	<b>£0</b>

It should be noted that to comply with GLA maximum grant allowances of 40% for 2 and 3 beds there is a shortfall in available affordable HRA borrowing of £1.283m however to balance this shortfall the GLA have allowed us to increase the grant beyond the amount required for the 4 bed purchases. Importantly this does mean that we must deliver the 2/3/4 bed programme as a complete package, in other words we must purchase all the 4 beds to balance the position and not create a deficit in the HRA.

##### 4.1.2 Financial Viability Assessments:

To determine the minimum GLA grant required and the maximum level of HRA affordable borrowing the following financial modelling has been carried out.

The **2,3&4 beds viability assessment** breaks even based on a 30-year Net Present Value (NPV) model using a discount rate of 5.0%, this is a more cautious approach to modelling as it effectively incorporates a set aside for debt repayment as well as interest on borrowing.

The discount rate used was based on the prevailing PWLB 30-year maturity rate as at the end of April was 5.05% (the start of the bidding negotiations) after deducting the 20-basis point certainty allowance and the 40-basis point HRA concession which runs from

June 23 to June 24 and adding a 50-basis point buffer this took the interest rate to around 5%.

Since the end of April rates have risen by a further 0.5% (at 20-06-23 the PWLB 30-year maturity rate was 5.52%) leading to a required adjusted rate of 5.5% after deducting the 20-basis point certainty allowance and the 40-basis point HRA concession which runs from June 23 to June 24 and adding a 50-basis point buffer.

Unfortunately using an increased NPV discount rate of 5.5% increases the GLA grant requirement to above a level acceptable to the GLA.

However, using a 30-year 5.5% interest only model, which seeks to ensure that the net rent generated can cover the interest charges excluding debt repayment, indicates that the level of GLA grant agreed i.e. £13.511 means that we could reduce the level of borrowing that the model determines is affordable i.e. £18.599m by £3.421m.

It should however be noted that if we do not set aside funds to repay the debt over the 30-year term we would need to **sell around 21 of the 60** purchases to redeem the debt £18.599m at the end of the 30-year term (assuming annual house price increases of +2%).

The **1 bed bid viability assessment** using a 5% or 5.5% NPV model results in requiring a GLA grant rate of 55% or 58% respectively, of the capital cost.

This level of grant rate was rejected by the GLA.

However, because of the strategic importance to Children's Services in relation to increasing the supply of accommodation to young adults leaving care and the Housing need to provide accommodation for rough sleepers we submitted a GLA grant bid based on a 30-year 5.5% interest only model.

This model indicates that the net rent generated over 30 years can cover interest on £7.760m of borrowing and reduces the grant requirement to 48% of capital cost a rate that is acceptable to the GLA.

Again, it should be noted that by not setting aside funds to repay the debt over the 30-year term we would need to **sell potentially alternative stock to the value of 12 of the 40 properties** to redeem the debt £7.760m at the end of the 30-year term (assuming annual house price increases of +2%).

#### 4.1.3 Rents & Tenancy Type

The GLA have indicated that the terms of the agreement will require rents to be set at the LOWER of LHA rates or 80% of Market Rent.

Current comparisons using the ONS published market rent data in Islington to March 22 uplifted by inflation to March 23 are as follows.

	23-24 Islington LHA Rates	Per the ONS 80% of Market Rent to March 22 + Inflation 4.8% to March 23
1bed	£295.49	£287.12
2bed	£365.95	£373.99
3bed	£441.86	£474.41
4bed	£593.75	£643.70

Therefore, for the 1 beds 80% of Market Rent and for the 2,3 & 4 beds the LHA rates have been used in the viability modelling.

Furthermore, the 1 bed bid has been based on us offering “secure” tenancies to the clients offered this accommodation, which is likely to confer the “right to buy” albeit that the cost floor is likely to make purchasing prohibitive.

In addition, “secure” tenancies mean that the clients will be in receipt of universal credit (paid to the tenant in first instance) not housing benefit (paid to the authority) which may give rise to collection problems and the full range of housing management issues that arise from a tenant falling into arrears.

The level of rent charged is particularly pertinent to the young adults leaving care cohort as £287.12 per week would not be considered an affordable rent, albeit that it would be covered by universal credit.

However, consideration as to how a clients’ entitlement to universal credit is affected by earnings needs to be assessed. This is not so much an issue for Rough Sleepers but could very well be an Issue for young people leaving care.

Children’s Services and their finance support are currently assessing how this scheme can work for their service this includes assessing the impact of current accommodation costs versus the cost of subsidising their clients’ rent to a social rent level (plus SCs) which is for 1 beds around £131.71 per week (at 23-24) resulting in a required subsidy if the client’s rent was not covered by UC of £155.41 per week.

#### 4.1.4 Budgets HRA & GF

The Director of Housing Operations is confident all 100 purchases will be completed in 2023-24 as such:

##### HRA

An increase in the HRA **Capital Exp. Budget** provision is required in 2023-24 totalling ££46.9550m.

In terms of the HRA **Revenue Budget**, the cashflow position breaks even over 30 years however, there is a temporary net cashflow deficit in the first 10 years totalling £1.175m over 10 years, which is fully paid back over the subsequent 5 years as such the first full year impact will lead to a net cost of £187k to the HRA, as set out below. The cashflow position can be managed within the wider HRA & Business Plan.

Furthermore, if we achieve an interest charge on borrowing of less than 5.5% (noting that the current rate is 4.92%) then the cashflow deficit will reduce, in addition the modelling assumes LHA rents will be frozen for 3 years again if these are in fact uplifted again this would reduce the impact of the cashflow deficit.

Equally if savings can be made against housing management costs which have been included in the modelling on a linear unit cost basis, then again, the cashflow deficit could be reduced.

#### HRA EXP. Budgets

Housing Management & Response Repairs & Major Repairs £694,000

Interest Charges at 5.5% £1,450,000

#### HRA INCOME Budgets

Rent £1,957,000

NET Cost in the first FULL YR1 23-24 £187,000

The above will be included in full as part of the 2024-25 budget setting cycle however depending on the timing of the purchases during 2023-24 a percentage of all the Revenue budgets maybe required.

#### **GF**

The report indicates at point 3.10 that the Council will receive GLA revenue grant funding in the sum of £1.2m to provide Housing First support to the clients of the 40 1 bed programme.

#### **GF Savings**

Furthermore, these purchases should “in theory” contribute towards the delivery of the **HGF savings** requirement in the sum of around £200k (based on a net cost of Temp. Accommodation of on average £2.5k per year per household x 80 properties). However, it is far more likely that this programme will mitigate an overspend that would otherwise have occurred, as explained below:

- The cost of the 20 Rough Sleepers that would be moved to this new accommodation are currently supported by grant.
- The 60 TA purchases that would replace the use of nightly booked can only be achieved if the through put of TA cases does not increase and if current levels of grant are maintained – the current evidence suggests numbers are increasing and that beyond 2025 Govt. grant is not guaranteed.

Once **Children’s Services** have completed their assessment as referenced at 4.1.3 these purchases should also help to contribute towards the delivery of their savings requirement.

4.1.5 To avoid GLA grant claw back & for the Council to retain the full £20,591,000 GLA capital grant for the purchase of the 100 properties the service needs to be provided for 30 years. At the end of the 30-year term, if the service is no longer required or we wish to redeem the outstanding debt the Council would need to sell an estimated 21 properties and a further 12 properties of equivalent value to the 1 bed debt in order to repay the debt the remaining properties could be retained for general needs purposes & let at social rent.

4.1.6 There remains a risk that we cannot sustain the delivery of the service for the full 30-year period, this could arise for example if the demand for temporary accommodation declines over time or there is no longer a need for these properties.



4.1.7 In this event we would potentially have the option to sell. House prices in Islington have risen by around 15% over the last 5 years (to 2022) so it is not unreasonable to assume we could sell the dwellings if necessary & both repay the proportion of the grant claw back & redeem the outstanding debt. Alternatively, there is also the potential option to convert the 3 & 4 bed dwellings into smaller sized temporary accommodation provision for which ongoing long-term demand is anticipated.

## **4.2 Legal Implications:**

4.2.1 The Council may meet housing need by acquiring properties within Islington (section 9 of the Housing Act 1985).

The Council has legal duties under the Housing Act 1996(as amended) to help to secure/secure housing accommodation for people who are care experienced young adults, homeless or under threat of homelessness.

S208(1) of the Housing Act 1996 provides that so far as reasonably practicable the Council shall secure accommodation within Islington for people who are homeless or under threat of homelessness.

The Council has a duty under the Children Act 1989, 2004 and the Leaving Care Act 2000 to provide suitable accommodation for care experienced young adults

This property programme will increase the availability of accommodation within Islington that the Council can use to meet this statutory duty.

## **4.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:**

4.3.1 Purchasing 100 existing will contribute positively to the council's environmental commitment, by purchasing existing properties and improving/reducing the carbon outputs through the capital works programme and reducing the use of natural resources.

## **4.4 Resident Impact Assessment:**

4.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

4.4.2 S149(3) provides that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

4.4.3 This programme will contribute positively to the council equality of opportunity principles, the Human Rights of individuals and the elimination of rough sleeping in Islington.

4.4.4 A Resident Impact Assessment was completed on the 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021, and is attached to this report as Appendix one.

4.4.5 As a public authority, the council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way, which is incompatible with a Convention right.

Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

## 5. Reason for recommendations

- 5.1 To assist the council's commitment of ending homelessness in Islington and provide adequately for care experienced young adults.

Final report clearance:

**Authjorised by:** Councillor Una O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities  
Councillor Roulin Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture, and Inclusion

11 July 2023

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**Homes and Neighbourhoods Directorate**  
**222 Upper Street, N1 1XR**

Report of: Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities  
Cllr Khondoker Executive Member for Equalities, Culture, and Inclusion

Meeting of: Executive

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023

Ward(s): All electoral wards

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## Subject: Purchasing 310 Ex Right to Buy properties

**The DLUH&C Allocation of Funding Programme to acquire 150 X 1, 2, and 3 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties and a further 20 x 4 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are eligible for the**

- **Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (including eligible British Nationals under this scheme)**
- **the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy**
- **Ukraine Family Scheme**
- **Homes for Ukraine and the Ukraine Extension Scheme.**

**In addition to this the DLUH&C have allocated funding for 70 X 1, 2 and 3 bedroom Ex Right to Buy properties for homeless households and 70 X 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties for homeless people from Afghanistan.**

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. The aim of this report is to advise the Executive of the outcome of a capital funding bid made to the DLUH&C to purchase 310 Ex Right to Buy properties for people who are homeless from the Afghanistan and the Ukraine as part of the council's humanitarian housing response and for homeless households to reduce local housing pressures beyond those on Afghan resettlement schemes. The intention is to provide better quality temporary accommodation to families owed homelessness duties by Islington Council, reduce emergency, temporary and

bridging accommodation costs and to reduce impacts on the existing housing and homelessness systems as well as for those waiting for social housing.

- 1.2. Islington Council is the first council in London to access this funding from the DLUHC and 70 properties will be allocated to homeless households.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the borrowing of £85,304,000 within the Housing Revenue Account to supplement the funding provided by the DLUH&C to enable the council to purchase 310 Ex Right to Buy properties.
- 2.2. To note the capital funding of up to £81,725,260 allocated to Islington Council by the DLUH&C to enter into the grant agreements and to commence the purchasing of 310 Ex Right to Buy properties in Islington to accommodate homeless households with a local connection to Islington.
- 2.3. To note the funding and to commence the purchase of these properties immediately.
- 2.4. To approve the budget increases as outlined in 4.1.3

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Islington Council is currently accommodating 1,112 homeless households who are living in temporary accommodation. This is the highest level of households living in temporary accommodation for a considerable period due to a combination of the cost-of-living crisis, and the financial fallout of Brexit
- 3.2. During the last 12 months, Islington Council has witnessed an increase in homeless households living in temporary accommodation from 913 homeless households to 1112 an increase of 22% (199) households.
- 3.3. London has a proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need and the Mayor of London has made it clear that he wants to do everything in his power to support people from Ukraine and Afghanistan to establish a long-term future in the city.
- 3.4. Equally, Islington Council has a long and proud history of offering sanctuary to people in need, and therefore stands ready to help people from Ukraine and Afghanistan in every way we can.
- 3.5. Homeless households are now spending longer periods of time living in temporary accommodation due to the reduction of available council and housing association lettings, again because of the effects of the cost-of-living crisis and Brexit with homeless presentations increasing by 22% in the last 12 months. In addition to this the number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation continues to increase.
- 3.6. Islington Council accepts the provision of 310 additional properties purchased through the Ex Right to Buy property programme will not the address all urgent needs. However, these properties will ensure homeless people have safe and secure accommodation locally in Islington to help with health improvements,

education attainment for children and reduce the time spent in expensive and inappropriate temporary accommodation.

- 3.7. This funding will secure 310 Ex Right to Buy properties for homeless households and households from Afghanistan and Ukraine living in Islington and the surrounding areas as part of the council's humanitarian response, with all purchases resulting in the acquisition of Ex Islington Council Right to Buy properties.
- 3.8. The acquisition of these properties will ensure homeless households and people fleeing Ukraine and Afghanistan are provided with good quality accommodation locally in Islington to enhance community well-being.
- 3.9. The current crisis underlines the importance of this funding. But it is not only needed for those in expensive emergency temporary accommodation as a result of homelessness and the financial effects of the cost-of-living crisis. It is also required to provide longer-term homes for those who need, to live in Islington for employment reasons or to provide or receive support from family and friends.
- 3.10. The aim of the programme is to boost delivery of affordable accommodation for homeless households locally in Islington.

## 4. Implications

### Financial Implications

- 4.1.1. The DLUH&C Property Acquisition Grant Offer totalling £81,725,260m is broken down into 3 separate allocations in line with their MOUs - as follows:
  - LAHR1(1) 150 properties no specified bed sizes £31,800,000
  - LAHR1(2) 20 4 beds £9,885,260
  - LAHR2 140 properties £40,040,000

This is caveated as follows:

LAHR1(1) The grant across the portfolio cannot exceed 40% of the purchase price + legal fees + refurbishment costs + £20k per property.

LAHR1 (2) The grant across the portfolio cannot exceed 50% of the purchase price + legal fees + refurbishment cost + £20k per property.

LAHR2 The grant across the portfolio cannot exceed 40% of the purchase price + legal fees + refurbishment costs + £20k per property.

The financial modelling has been based on indicative likely purchase prices by bed size and estimated rents at 80% of market rent.

This indicates that we would be able to utilise the available grant funding which would require HRA Borrowing of £85,304,000 of HRA borrowing.

**Table 1**

BEDS	UNITS Purchased	Purchase Price	EST. 80% of Market Rent	<b>BORROWING</b>	<b>GROSS GRANT</b>
2	75	462,500	£377.33	<b>-£19,855,900</b>	<b>-£15,705,000</b>
3	75	475,000	£540.00	<b>-£20,778,400</b>	<b>-£16,095,000</b>
	<b>150</b>			<b>-£40,634,300</b>	<b>-£31,800,000</b>
4	20	625,000	£744.00	<b>-£6,022,900</b>	<b>-£6,810,000</b>
2	75	462,500	£377.33	<b>-£19,855,875</b>	<b>-£15,705,000</b>
3	55	475,000	£540.00	<b>-£15,138,475</b>	<b>-£11,902,000</b>
4	10	625,000	£744.00	<b>-£3,652,450</b>	<b>-£2,764,000</b>
	<b>140</b>			<b>-£38,646,800</b>	<b>-£30,371,000</b>
				<b>-£85,304,000</b>	<b>-£68,981,000</b>

**4.1.2. Financial Viability Assessments:**

The financial viability modelling has been based on a 30-year NPV approach using the following key criteria:

A discount rate of 5.65% aligned to the Council's cost of borrowing based on the PWLB 30-year rate at 12-09-23 5.73% less the certainty rate 0.20% less the HRA concession available to June 24 plus a buffer of 0.50%.

Purchase Prices based on the current market plus £10k-£15k refurbishment allocation.

Estimated rents at 80% of market rent; these are based on a desk top review of ex RTB market rents in Islington carried out by valuers at the end of Aug.23

**Table 2**

BEDS	Home.Co UK Ave Islington Market Rents (bst 14 days at 13-09-23) PCM	Home.Co UK Ave Islington Market Rents (bst 14 days at 13-09-23) P-WK	80% of Market Rent	<b>Ave. (Bottom-Mid-Top) Ex RTBs Valuers Desk Top Review 80% of Market Rent</b>	LHA Rate 23-24
1	£2,668	£616	£493	<b>£297.33</b>	£295.49
2	£3,832	£884	£707	<b>£377.33</b>	£365.92
3	£5,376	£1,241	£992	<b>£540.00</b>	£441.86
4	£8,116	£1,873	£1,498	<b>£744.00</b>	£593.75
5	£8,509	£1,964	£1,571		

- A one-off cost in relation to additional staffing resource to support valuers/legal & housing management in the sum of £200k.
- Running costs based on 23-24 budgets 100% Housing Management unit cost, caretaking & estate services loss of leaseholder income, £1k per property White

goods every 5 years, Repairs 100% unit cost 2 beds, 110% 3 beds & 120% 4 beds, MWs 0.8% of the building value.

- Inflation at +2% rents & running costs.

The financial viability NPV assessments indicate that the 2 beds viabilities are under pressure and produce negative (deficit) NPVs. However, if the proportion of 2 beds vs 3 & 4 beds purchases are managed appropriately, each portfolio generates an overall positive (surplus) NPV.

**Table 3**

BEDS	UNITS Purchased	Purchase Price	EST. 80% of Market Rent	NPV at 5.65% CR(red) = POSITIVE (Surplus) NPV & DR(black) = NEGATIVE (Deficit) NPV
2	75	462,500	£377.33	<b>£4,100,000</b>
3	75	475,000	£540.00	<b>-£5,436,000</b>
	150			<b>-£1,336,000</b>
4	20	625,000	£744.00	<b>-£4,299,000</b>
2	75	462,500	£377.33	<b>£4,100,000</b>
3	55	475,000	£540.00	<b>-£4,086,000</b>
4	10	625,000	£744.00	<b>-£1,509,000</b>
	140			<b>-£1,495,000</b>
				<b>-£7,130,000</b>

Based on delivering the purchases at the prices & rents set out in table 3 above, table 4 below sets out the cashflow position over 30 years if (as is the norm) the HRA takes out maturity borrowing at 5.65%.

All years generate a surplus cashflow and at year 30 all things being equal there should be a balance of £65m to repay 75% of the borrowing.

**Table 4**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>RENT</b>	<b>RUNNING COSTS</b>	<b>INTEREST Charges at 5.65%</b>	<b>NET C.Flow to Repay DEBT</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'0000
5	-£38,440.9	£11,501.0	£24,098.4	-£2,841.5
10	-£42,441.9	£12,698.1	£24,098.4	-£5,645.4
15	-£46,859.2	£14,019.7	£24,098.4	-£8,741.2
20	-£51,736.4	£15,478.9	£24,098.4	-£12,159.1
25	-£57,121.2	£17,089.9	£24,098.4	-£15,932.8
30	-£63,066.4	£18,868.7	£24,098.4	-£20,099.3
	<b>-£299,665.9</b>	<b>£89,656.3</b>	<b>£144,590.3</b>	<b>-£65,419.3</b>

#### **4.1.3. Rents & Tenancy Type**

As per Table 2, rents will be set at 80% of market rent in accordance with the rent standard and DLUH&Cs MOU's. The properties will be held in the HRA & let under licence i.e., not as secure tenancies.

Given the rent levels intended to be charged the Housing Department will need ensure that the clients placed in these properties are able to attract full housing benefit (UC does not apply if placed under homelessness legislation under licence), i.e., we need to ensure that the hours worked do not result in a withdrawal of HB.

The Corporate Director of Homes & Neighbourhoods has provided assurance that there is sufficient current and projected demand within the cohort of clients that will be entitled to full HB to fill this accommodation.

#### **4.1.4. Budgets HRA & GF**

The full year budget is set out below:

##### **HRA**

An increase in the HRA **Capital Exp. Budget** provision is required in 2023-24 totalling £154.285m for the purchase of 310 ex RTBs – it is unclear at this stage how many purchases will complete by 31-03-24.

##### HRA EXP. Budgets

Housing Management £977k

& Response Repairs £658k

Major Repairs £576k

Interest Charges at 5.65% £4.820m

##### HRA INCOME Budgets

Rent £7.387m

NET surplus first FULL YR1 23-24 £357k



The above will be included in full as part of the 2024-25 budget setting cycle however depending on the timing of the purchases during 2023-24 a percentage of all the Revenue budgets maybe required.

### **GF Savings**

These purchases should “in theory” contribute towards the delivery of HGF savings or the reduction in HGF homelessness over spends in future years in the sum of around £775k (based on a net cost of Temp. Accommodation of on average £2.5k per year per household x 310 properties).

- 4.1.5. To avoid DLUHC grant claw back & for the Council to retain the full capital grant for the purchase of the 310 properties the service needs to be provided for 30 years. At the end of the 30-year term, if the service is no longer required or we wish to redeem the outstanding debt and there was NO surplus set aside as referenced at 4.1.2 the Council would need to sell an estimated 97 properties to repay the debt. The remaining 213 properties could be retained for general needs purposes & let at social rents.
- 4.1.6. There remains a risk that we cannot sustain the delivery of the service for the full 30-year period, this could arise for example if the demand for temporary accommodation declines over time or there is no longer a need for these properties.
- 4.1.7. In this event we would potentially have the option to sell. House prices in Islington have risen by around 15% over the last 5 years (to 2022) so it is not unreasonable to assume we could sell the properties if necessary, repay the proportion of the grant claw back and redeem the outstanding debt. Alternatively, there is also the potential option to convert the 3 & 4 bed dwellings into smaller sized temporary accommodation provision for which ongoing long-term demand is anticipated.

## **4.2. Legal Implications**

- 4.2.1** The Council may meet housing need by acquiring properties within Islington (section 9 of the Housing Act 1985).

S208(1) of the Housing Act 1996 provides that so far as reasonably practicable the Council shall secure accommodation within Islington for people who are homeless or under threat of homelessness.

Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 sets out the local authorities’ duties to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to homeless people or those threatened with homelessness.

The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 prescribe the classes of persons who are eligible or ineligible for homelessness assistance.

Regulation 5(m) sets out the eligibility criteria for Afghan refugees who have fled the Taliban and Regulations 5(n) and (o) sets out the eligibility criteria for Ukrainians who have fled the Russian invasion.

This property programme will increase the availability of accommodation within Islington that the Council can use to meet this statutory duty.

This Report seeks authority to enter into the following Grant Agreements.

The Refugee Housing Programme (RHP) Capital Grant Agreement between the LBI and the GLA for £81,725,260 million pounds.

The total of the capital funding is for £81,725,260 and therefore is an Executive decision.

Procurement rule 2.5.1 states that contracts exceeding £500,000 or were directed by the Director of Law and Governance, must be signed as a deed by Director of Law and Governance or their authorised representative.

Procurement Rule 19.1.7 states the Council's corporate seal is placed on any document that needs to be 'sealed and executed' as a deed, and that where a document does not need to be sealed, it is signed by two authorised officers.

#### **4.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

- 4.3.1. Purchasing 310 existing will contribute positively to the council's environmental commitment, by purchasing existing properties and improving/reducing the carbon outputs through the capital works programme and reducing the use of natural resources.

#### **4.4. Equalities Impact Assessment**

- 4.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

- 4.4.2 S149(3) provides that having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it; and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- 4.4.3 This programme will contribute positively to the council equality of opportunity principles, the Human Rights of individuals and the elimination of rough sleeping in Islington.
- 4.4.4 A Resident Impact Assessment was completed on the 21st of May 2021, and is attached to this report as Appendix one.
- 4.4.5 As a public authority, the council must take account of the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and not act in a way, which is incompatible with a Convention right. Under Article 8, any interference with the right to respect for a person's private and family life and home must be proportionate and Article 14 requires that there must be no unjustified discrimination within the scope of human rights on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth, or other status.

## 5. Reasons for recommendations

- 5.1. To assist the council's commitment of ending homelessness in Islington whilst concurrently ensuring a robust humanitarian response to support refugees from Afghanistan and Ukraine.
- 5.2. The council have considered all options to deliver this programme and we have concluded the most appropriate framework to deliver these acquisitions is the existing framework.
- 5.3. The council considered partnering with a Registered Social Landlord to deliver this programme, but this would not offer greater benefits compared to the business as usual model.
- 5.4. The council will shortly be commencing a communications plan to contact all Leaseholders who own a former Islington Council property to ensure this programme is delivered.
- 5.5. As of the 14th of September 2023, the council have secured 19% of this programme

**Final report clearance:**

Authorised by:

Executive Member for Homes and Communities and  
Executive Member for Equalities, Culture, and Inclusion

Date: 9 October 2023

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## Resident Impact Assessment

### Service Area: Homes and Neighbourhoods

#### 1. What are the intended outcomes of this policy, function etc?

The overall aim of the Scheme is to ensure that social housing is allocated fairly and objectively to those in the greatest housing need.

#### 2. Resident Profile

Who is going to be impacted by this change i.e. residents/service users/tenants?

		<b>Borough profile</b>	<b>Housing Register</b>
		<b>Total: 206,285</b>	<b>Total: 14,003</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>58%</b>
	<b>Male</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>42%</b>
	<b>Other</b>		<b>0.1%</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Under 16</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>0%</b>
	<b>16-24</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>13%</b>
	<b>25-44</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>52%</b>
	<b>45-64</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>26%</b>
	<b>65+</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>Disability</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>24%</b>
	<b>Non-disabled</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>Sexual orientatio</b>	<b>LGBT</b>	<b>No data</b>	<b>6%</b>
	<b>Heterosexual/straight</b>	<b>No data</b>	<b>94%</b>
<b>Race</b>	<b>BME</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52%</b>
	<b>White</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Religion or belief</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>46%</b>
	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>25%</b>

	<b>Other</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>
	<b>No religion</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>24%</b>
	<b>Religion not stated</b>	<b>17%</b>	

### 3. Equality impacts

Many people are unable to secure appropriate accommodation without support. This is a major issue in Central London, where property prices and poverty levels are high. Ensuring people can access decent, suitable housing is a key priority for Islington Council. The Council also has a legal obligation to ensure certain groups are housed.

Social housing is a primary tool for tackling these issues. It provides accommodation to roughly 44% of Islington residents at below market rates. Demand for social housing in Islington far exceeds supply with more than 14,000 households on the Housing Register and approximately only 1,000 properties to let each year equating to about 7% of households on the Housing Register.

In cases where the Council has a legal obligation to house someone but is unable to do so immediately, it will use temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation is costly for the council, and represents greater instability for the housed family or individual.

The Council allocates social housing in accordance with its Housing Allocation Scheme. The scheme is developed in accordance with legislation and Government guidance.

**The Council's Housing Allocation Scheme lists the following guiding principles:**

- 1) A common housing register which will enable residents in housing need to access social housing across Islington;
- 2) To provide a high quality service to residents;
- 3) Meet the legal obligations of the Council, namely to give appropriate priority to residents who fall within the Housing Act "reasonable preference" categories;
- 4) Help prevent homelessness and offer realistic choice to those with a housing need
- 5) Improve local mobility across the London Borough of Islington;
- 6) To ensure that housing is allocated to those most in need or at risk and to ensure that, as far as possible, resources are targeted at local people;
- 7) To contribute to creating balanced and sustainable communities, promote the council's equality principles and be mindful of the communities we create;
- 8) To ensure that every resident is treated fairly and consistently irrespective of race and ethnicity, disability, gender/gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion and belief and age;
- 9) A Scheme that is simple to understand, transparent and is seen as fair and accountable by applicants and Islington residents generally;
- 10) It must comply with statutory rules set out under legislation and accompanying regulations and take into account Codes of Guidance issued by central government from time to time;
- 11) The housing allocation scheme contributes to ending homelessness and eliminating rough sleeping;
- 12) The scheme must complement the council's other responsibilities, for example meeting social care needs and minimising financial risk to the council.



Islington Council has a legal obligation to pay due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in the manner in which it carries out its functions. The three elements of the PSED are:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The protected characteristics which need to be considered are age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation. The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination also covers marriage and civil partnerships.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is carried out annually to ensure the Allocation Scheme is not inadvertently discriminating against any of the protected characteristics when compared to the profile of the Housing Register and the profile of the borough's population. The findings of the EQIA carried out at the end of 2020/21 found:

- In general, the profile of Islington's housing applicants and those allocated a new property is slightly younger, comprises more females, and includes more people of colour than the borough's population.
- While these groups are over-represented, relative to the borough's population, they are likely to be a consequence of dependent children contributing to a priority need decision, ethnic inequalities in the labour market and other factors that contribute to homelessness.
- Overall, there is no obvious indication of inequitable processing in the Housing allocations process.

The full report is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

The table below lists the proposed changes to the current Allocation Scheme and the anticipated equalities impact if any.

### Proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Scheme

Current wording	New wording	Expected equalities impact
<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register – Non-Residence</b></p> <p>People who are not resident in the borough on the date of application, and people who have lived in Islington for less than three out of the previous five years from the date they apply for housing, cannot join the housing register</p>	<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register-Non-Residence</b></p> <p>People who are not resident in the borough on the date of application and have not continuously lived in Islington for at least five years from the date they apply for housing cannot join the housing register</p>	<p><b>Neutral:</b></p> <p>This change could adversely impact on people who are more mobile. The disqualification is however mitigated by a considerable number of exceptions. Applications are considered on their individual circumstances and an applicant can request a review on disqualification from the housing register. We will carefully monitor the effect of this change.</p>

	<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register- non residence exception (p17)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving due to domestic abuse</li> </ul>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Women and single female parents are over-represented in this group.</p>
<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register - Unacceptable behaviour</b> Being the perpetrator of violent, coercive, or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough</p>	<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register - Unacceptable behaviour</b> (page 17) wording changed to expand scope Being the perpetrator of domestic abuse, violent, coercive, or controlling behaviour towards a resident of the borough.</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p>
<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register – Households with sufficient income or capital to meet their own housing need</b></p>	<p><b>Applicants who cannot join the housing register – Households who have sufficient financial resources to own or rent accommodation (page 18) - item7 wording changed regarding income.</b></p> <p>a) Applicants who have total savings, investments and/or assets of £ 16,000 or more b) Applicants whose households total gross income from all sources exceeds an annual income of £90,000.</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>This proposed change of wording seeks to clarify and define what constitutes sufficient financial resources so that the scheme is more transparent for all housing applicants.</p>
<p><b>Residence Points</b> Applicants must be resident in the borough for at least three out of the last five years from the date of application</p>	<p><b>Residence Points</b> 100 points are awarded to everyone who has been resident in the borough continuously for the last five years at the date of application</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b> Maintain points award for people who meet the residence criteria</p>
<p><b>Waiting time points</b> Points are calculated at 5% per year of housing needs</p>	<p><b>Waiting time points-</b> This section has been removed.</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> The purpose of this proposed change to the existing Scheme is to prevent applicants without</p>

<p>points (except residence points)</p>		<p>a significant housing need who have accrued a high level of waiting time points from leapfrogging applicants who are in severe housing need. Therefore, applicants with the same number of points will be prioritised for a letting based on time spent on the housing register.</p>
	<p><b>Dividing households (Page 21) additional wording</b></p> <p>A council tenant may request one or more separate properties for their authorised household members. The council will only agree to this request where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the tenant and the authorised household members move to one bedroom properties;</li> <li>• the number of one bedroom properties required does not exceed the number of bedrooms in the original larger home;</li> <li>• the tenant and household member to be re-housed simultaneously</li> </ul> <p>Shared residency of children Where children are subject to a shared residency arrangement the children are only considered to need one home of adequate size. Where either parent has a home of adequate size the remaining parent will be assessed as having overnight access only and no additional bedrooms will be agreed for the children.</p> <p>Households occupying more than one tenancy Where a family unit is not currently residing together the assessment will be based on the part of the household that</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>This proposed change is to clarify how this sort of request will be dealt with so is added to provide clarity and transparency.</p> <p>It is not expected that this change will have any negative impact to any protected group</p>

	occupies accommodation that provides them with the most suitable housing providing there is a reasonable expectation that they should reside together. The residency qualification will be based on that part of the household with the longest residency in the borough.	
<b>Medical points</b> Category A 150	<b>Medical points- (page 22)</b> Cat A 200 points (change to points award)	<b>Positive</b> Applicants who receive medical category A will have a disability or impairment that is severely impacted by their current housing and they would usually require a specific property type. It is expected that the additional points award will assist those with an acute and significant medical need to secure suitable housing more quickly.
<b>Welfare points</b> <b>Welfare A</b> Where the accommodation is required to meet the assessed needs of relevant children and other care leavers under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000.  <b>Welfare B</b>  Where an applicant or a member of their household has to move in order to be near a person to whom they give or receive care and support	<b>Welfare points (page 25-26)</b> <b>Welfare A</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child who has been assessed as in severe harm or fatality due to their accommodation as assessed by Children's Services.</li> <li>• Where there is a risk of a child within the applicant's household coming into Local Authority care or residential care due to their housing situation</li> </ul> <b>Welfare B</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where an applicant or a member of their household has to move in order to be near a person to whom they give or receive care and support. The applicant should be in receipt of Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payments at the middle or highest rate. The carer should normally be in receipt of carer's allowance or the applicant is</li> </ul>	<b>Neutral:</b>  No change to points awarded. Clarification on wording of examples

	<p>receiving a package of care following a social work assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child who has been assessed as in urgent risk of harm due to their accommodation as assessed by Children’s Services.</li> <li>• Where an applicant is experiencing a threat of violence, abuse or harassment that is impacting their living conditions</li> <li>• Where accommodation is required to meet the needs of a child as assessed in a Child in Need (CIN) plan</li> <li>• The applicant is living in such insanitary conditions that their welfare is prejudiced, and there are no remedies available to improve the conditions.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Management Transfers (page 27)</b></p> <p>These points are only awarded to council tenants where a move is necessary on management grounds. Points may be awarded as follows: 150 points may be awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where there is evidence to indicate that the tenant is currently at risk of serious harm from a third party perpetrator(s). For example, risk of possible homicide, serious injury, assault or abuse including domestic or sexual violence</li> <li>• where it can be evidenced that the risks can only be managed effectively by moving the tenant elsewhere</li> </ul>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>These points were previous awarded under welfare grounds.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where there is a corresponding safety plan in place setting out how the new address will be kept confidential, minimising the risks of the perpetrator (s) finding the victim/survivor</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Points awarded from previous Allocation Scheme (Retention Points )</b></p> <p>Applicants retain these points under previous Allocation schemes (2010 and 2013)</p>	<p><b>Points awarded from previous Allocation Scheme (Retention Points) (page 28)</b></p> <p><b>This section has been removed:</b></p> <p><b>Reason:</b> All applications to be re-assess and therefore these points will be no longer applicable</p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Our analysis has shown this will disproportionately affect older age groups aged over 45. However, those applicants have had time to use points secured under previous schemes in 2010 and 2013 to secure a move. Removing these points will make the Scheme clearer and more transparent for all applicants.</p>
<p><b>Relationship Breakdown</b></p> <p>Where a relationship has occurred between couples and one or both partners are an Islington council tenant.</p>	<p><b>Relationship Breakdown</b></p> <p><b>This section has been removed:</b></p> <p><b>Reason:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a growing increase in high needs single vulnerable applicants who require housing. This should be removed due to the severe shortage of social housing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>Analysis shows as expected that males will be affected more than females by this change. Very few applicants were able to secure social housing through this points allocation. Applicants experiencing relationship breakdown will be able to seek advice and assistance to secure a settled home as a result of the Homelessness Prevention Act and have a much greater and realistic chance of actually securing an alternative settled home.</p>
	<p><b>Domestic Abuse ( page 28)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants fleeing domestic violence and abuse that have been assessed by MARAC These applicants will be awarded <b>30 additional priority points</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Women and single female parents are over represented in this group.</p>

<p><b>New generation scheme:</b> Applicants must be living continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for at least three out of the last five years</p>	<p><b>New generation scheme (page28)</b> Applicants must have lived continuously as an agreed member of the household of an Islington resident for the five years prior to the date of application</p>	<p><b>Neutral:</b> It is not expected that this change will have negative impact to any protected group</p>
	<p><b>Prevention of homelessness (page 30)</b></p> <p>Applicants who were owed under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 a prevention duty (section 195(2)) or relief duty (section 189B (2)) who have accepted a private sector tenancy solution will be awarded <b>30 points.</b></p> <p>Applicants who would normally be offered a section 193 (2) main housing duty and who have accepted a private sector tenancy solution will be awarded <b>70 points.</b></p>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Women, single parents, people with a disability or impairment, people from a BAME background and younger people are over represented among those who make homeless applications when compared to the rest of the housing register and the general population.</p> <p>This points allocation will encourage homeless applicants to take up a housing option suitable for their needs and also allow them to remain on Islington’s housing register.</p>
<p><b>Applicants not bidding</b></p> <p>The council will review all applications where no bid has been placed on a regular basis. Applicants will be contacted to make sure that they understand how to bid and to ensure that they will be able to make future bids.</p> <p>Applicants who persistently bid and do not attend viewings and applicants who consistently accept and later refuse properties may be suspended from the list for 6 months.</p>	<p><b>Applicants not bidding (Page 36)</b></p> <p>The council will review all applications where no bid has been placed on a regular basis. Applicants will be contacted to make sure that they understand how to bid and to ensure that they will be able to make future bids.</p> <p><b>Applicants who:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• persistently bid and do not attend viewings</li> <li>• applicants who consistently accept and later refuse properties</li> <li>• or applicants who fail to bid for more than twelve months may be removed from the Housing Register.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>It is not expected that this proposed change will have a negative impact to any protected group.</p>

	<p>These applicants will be required to reapply if they consider they still have a housing need. Any decision to remove an applicant from the housing register is subject to review</p>	
<p><b>Supported choice</b></p> <p>Applicants agreed 2 offers of housing</p>	<p><b>Supported Choice (page 36)</b> Where supported choice lettings are made an applicant will be given access to the choice based lettings system for a minimum of four weeks. If they are not successful within this time they will be made an offer of a suitable property based on their assessed need for accommodation.</p>	<p><b>Neutral</b> Applicants selected for supported choice because they are unable to use the bidding system effectively will undergo a thorough suitability assessment to ensure that any offer made will meet their requirements. All final offers are subject to the reviews process which will ensure any offers made are suitable.</p>
<p><b>New homes Local Lettings Council Estate:</b> <b>Priority is given to:</b> Secure council tenants Household members of a secure council tenants Secure council tenants requesting a like for like transfer</p> <p><b>Ward Priority</b>  Secure social housing tenants Household members of secure social housing tenants ...</p> <p><b>Other new social housing</b> This will apply to either current social housing tenants or family members living with the tenants for the last 12 months</p>	<p><b>New Homes Local Lettings (page 40)</b> <b>Council Estate</b> <b>Priority is given to</b> Current secure council tenants who meet the bidding threshold</p> <p><b>Ward priority</b>  Assured/secure social housing tenants living in the ward where the new homes for social rent are built will be given priority when the new homes are let.</p> <p><b>Other new social housing</b> Applicants must be assured/secure council tenants living in the ward who meet the bidding threshold</p>	<p><b>Positive</b> The introduction of Lettings Plans for individual schemes will mean that although the overwhelming majority of lettings on new build properties will continue to be let to residents on the estate (or ward), some properties will be available for applicants who need to move area for safety reasons. Women are over represented among this group.</p>
<p><b>Intra Estate Transfer</b></p> <p>20% of available voids on estates are prioritise to tenants who live on the estate</p>	<p><b>Intra estate Transfer</b></p> <p><b>This section has been removed:</b></p> <p><b>Reason:</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral</b> This scheme has been superseded by local lettings policy on new build property.</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the severe shortage of housing and the increase demand in high needs cases.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Keyworker housing</b> Islington keyworkers (Social Workers, Teachers, Metropolitan police nurses working in Islington are awarded housing points to bid for a bedsitter or 1 bedroom accommodation on a non –secure let</p>	<p><b>Keyworker housing</b></p> <p><b>This section has been removed:</b></p> <p><b>Reason:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a growing increase in high needs single vulnerable applicants who require housing. This should be removed due to the severe shortage of social housing accommodation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p> <p>It is not expected that this proposed change will have a negative impact on any protected group.</p> <p>This was a scheme to encourage people to take up employment in the borough. There are low cost home ownership and intermediate rent opportunities available which are a more secure type of housing for these applicants.</p>
	<p><b>Supported housing move on new points allocation (page 20)</b></p> <p>100 points may be awarded to applicants in supported housing where it is in the council’s wider strategic interest for these applicants to move on from supported housing Examples where this may occur include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant is in supported accommodation that they no longer need and that the council urgently requires that accommodation for other applicants</li> <li>• The supported accommodation scheme is closing down or changing use</li> <li>• The applicant has multiple complex needs and has a demonstrable need for settled accommodation in borough which they cannot reasonably be expected to find for themselves in the near future</li> </ul>	<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>This will enable the council to make best use of limited supported housing for those who require it</p>
<p><b>Armed forces personnel</b></p>	<p><b>Armed forces personnel (p17)</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>

To serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service	To serving members or former members of the regular forces or reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service	

#### 4. Safeguarding and Human Rights impacts

##### a) Safeguarding risks and Human Rights breaches

Please describe any safeguarding risks for children or vulnerable adults AND any potential human rights breaches that may occur as a result of the proposal? Please refer to **section 4.8** of the [guidance](#) for more information.

If potential safeguarding and human rights risks are identified then **please contact equalities@islington.gov.uk to discuss further:**

#### 5. Action

How will you respond to the impacts that you have identified in sections 3 and 4, or address any gaps in data or information?

For more information on identifying actions that will limit the negative impact of the policy for protected groups see the [guidance](#).

Action	Responsible person or team	Deadline
There is very little consistent recording of disability, and there is relatively little recording of religion, marital status and sexual orientation. There may be value in improving recording of these factors, to further inform future work in this area.	Housing Needs	
Do more work to develop positive and meaningful interaction between immigrant groups and local communities to reduce negative stereotypes	VCS team	

Please send the completed RIA to [equalites@islington.gov.uk](mailto:equalites@islington.gov.uk) and also make it publicly available online along with the relevant policy or service change.

**This Resident Impact Assessment has been completed in accordance with the guidance and using appropriate evidence.**

**Staff member completing this form:**

**Head of Service or higher:**

Signed:



Signed: *Ramesh*

Date: 10/10/2022

Date: 10/10/2022

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Resources Department  
7 Newington Barrow Way, London N7 7EP

Report of: Monitoring Officer

Meeting of: Council

Date: 14 December 2023

Ward(s): N/A

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## Subject: Constitution Update

### 1. Synopsis

- 1.1. This report proposes an amendment to the Council's Constitution to ensure it reflects changes in legislation and council policy and remains fit for purpose.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the amendments to the Constitution as set out in the appendix to the report.

### 3. Background

Proposed amendments to the Constitution are described below and set out in the appendices to this report. Amendments are marked by crossing through in the case of deletions and by underlining in the case of additions.

- 3.1. Amendment to Part 5 – Licensing Sub-Committee Terms of Reference  
Additions are proposed to the Terms of Reference of the Licensing Sub-Committee to clarify the full range of applications under the Licensing Act 2003 which may be determined by the Sub-Committee
- 3.2. Amendments to Part 5 – Pensions Board Terms of Reference  
Necessary amendments are proposed to the terms of reference of the Pensions Board to clarify existing arrangements for membership and the payment of expenses and allowances.

3.3. Amendments to Part 7 – Members’ Allowances Scheme (Appendix B)

Following the confirmation of the Local Government Pay settlement for 2023/24, amendments are proposed to the Members’ Allowance Scheme to implement a 3.88% increase across all allowances payable under the scheme. It is the policy of the council that basic and special responsibility allowances are upgraded in line with the annual Local Government Pay settlement.

## 4. Implications

### 4.1. **Financial Implications**

The financial implications associated with the increase to the Members’ Allowances Scheme are set out in the appendix.

### 4.2. **Legal Implications**

The Council must keep its Constitution up to date (section 9P Local Government Act 2000).

### 4.3. **Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

There are no direct environmental implications resulting as a result of this report.

### 4.4. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report.

## 5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

### 5.1. This report proposes amendments to the Constitution to ensure that the document remains up to date and fit for purpose.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Amendments to Part 5 - Terms of Reference

Appendix B – Amendments to the Members' Allowances Scheme

**Background papers:** None

**Final report clearance:**

Authorised by:

**Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer**

Date: 6 December 2023

Report Author: Jonathan Moore, Deputy Head of Democratic Services and Governance

Tel: 020 7527 3308

Email: [Jonathan.Moore@islington.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Moore@islington.gov.uk)

## **Appendix A – Amendments to Part 5 – Terms of Reference**

### **(i) Amendments to Terms of Reference of the Licensing Sub-Committee**

#### **LICENSING SUB COMMITTEES**

##### **Composition**

The sub-committees shall comprise three members.

##### **Quorum**

The quorum of the sub-committee shall be three members.

##### **Terms of Reference**

##### **Licensing Act 2003**

To determine matters under the Licensing Act 2003 regarding personal licences, premises licences, club premises certificates, provisional statements, variation of the designated premises supervisor, interim authorities, police objections to temporary event notices and any applications requiring a hearing under the Act; including but not limited to the matters set out below:

1. To determine applications for personal licences where the police have served an objection notice or the applicant has an unspent conviction.
2. To determine if a personal licence should be suspended or revoked following convictions or immigration penalties imposed after the grant of the licence.
3. To determine applications for premises licences, club premises certificates and provisional statements where a relevant representation is made.
4. To determine applications to vary premises licences and club premises certificates where a relevant representation is made.
5. To determine applications to vary a designated premises supervisor where a police objection is received.
6. To determine applications for transfer of a premises licences where a police objection is received.
7. To determine applications to review premises licences and club premises certificates.
8. To determine applications for interim authorities where a police objection is received.
9. To determine an objection to a temporary event notice.



10. Decision to object when the Council is a consultee and not the relevant authority considering the application
11. Determination of applications to vary premises licences at community premises to include an alternative licence condition if there is a police objection

### **Gambling Act 2005**

10. To determine applications for premises licences and provisional statements where representations have been made and not withdrawn.
11. To determine applications for variation of premises licences where representations have been made and not withdrawn.
12. To determine applications for transfer of premises licences where representations from the Gambling Commission or responsible authorities are received.
13. To review a premises licence.
14. Application for club gaming/club machine permits where objections have been made and not withdrawn.
15. Cancellation of club gaming/club machine permits.
16. Decision to give a counter notice to a temporary use notice.

### **Schedule 3 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 as amended**

17. To determine applications for first grant of a sex establishment licence.
18. To determine renewal applications for a sex establishment licence if objections are received and not withdrawn.
19. To determine transfer applications for a sex establishment licence if objections are received and not withdrawn.

#### General

20. To determine any application or variation which is capable of being determined by officers but which the relevant Corporate Director considers appropriate for the Sub-Committee to consider.

#### Delegation to Officers

21. All functions under the Licensing Act 2003, the Gambling Act 2005 and schedule 3 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 as amended not within the terms of reference of the Licensing Sub-Committees or reserved to the Council at Part 3

Section 7 of the Constitution, other than the fixing of fees under the Gambling Act 2005, are delegated to officers as detailed in Part 3 and Appendix 2 of the Constitution.

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## **(ii) Amendments to Terms of Reference of the Pensions Board**

### **Employer Representatives**

No officer or elected member of the Administering Authority who is responsible for the discharge of any function of the Administering Authority under the Regulations may serve as a member of the Board

Employer representatives should be able to demonstrate their capacity to attend and complete the necessary preparation for meetings and participate in training as required.

A total of three ~~employee~~ employer representatives shall be appointed by the administering authority. These may be up to two elected members of the London Borough of Islington Council and up to two members of the other remaining employers within the Fund.

### **Expenses**

The Pension Fund does not pay for Board member expenses.

Board Members are entitled to claim reasonable travel and subsistence expenses from the Council.

For the avoidance of doubt, Board members shall not receive an annual allowance of any kind.

Councillors on the Board do not receive a member's allowance of any kind for this role.

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**Amendments to the Members' Allowances Scheme are set out in Appendix B**

**APPENDIX B**

**PART 7**

**MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES  
SCHEME**

# 1. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require authorities to make a scheme for the payment of allowances to Councillors.

Before making, amending or reworking its allowances scheme, the Council is required by virtue of section 19 of the 2003 Regulations to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel. The Council is not, however, bound to adopt all or any of the Panel's recommendations provided it has given them due consideration and is satisfied that it has justifiable reasons for not doing so.

Government Regulations do not limit the amount that can be paid under allowances schemes.

Any Member may by notice in writing to the Chief Executive, elect to forego any part of entitlement to an allowance under the scheme.

- 1.2 It was agreed by Council on 16 September 2003 that the basic and special responsibility allowances are upgraded in line with the annual Local Government Pay settlement.
- 1.3 If there are substantial changes to the Scheme, other than in relation to any change as a result of the Local Government Pay settlement, it will be submitted to budget Council for approval.
- 1.4 The scheme as approved provides for the following:

(a) **Basic Allowance**

A Basic Allowance payable equally to each Member for the financial year 2022-23 is ~~£12,242.14~~ £12,717.00. This is paid on a monthly basis rather than as a lump sum).

(b) **Special Responsibility Allowance**

Local authorities may make provision within the scheme for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowance and, if so, include a list of posts and the amount of SRA payable. This allowance is paid in addition to the Basic Allowance to those Members considered to bear additional responsibilities. Holders who are entitled to SRA for the period they hold the post must fall into one or more of the following groups.

- \* Acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority;
- \* Presiding at meetings of a committee or a sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee;
- \* Representing the authority at meetings of, or arranged by, any other body;
- \* Membership of a committee or a sub-committee of the authority which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods;

- \* Acting as the spokesman of a political group on a committee or sub-committee of the authority;
- \* Such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions that require of the member an amount of time and effort equal to or greater than would be required by any one of the above activities.

Where an SRA is paid and Members of the authority are divided into at least two political groups, SRA will be paid to at least one Councillor who is not a member of the controlling group provided that Member has a special responsibility as defined above.

No Councillor may receive more than one SRA.

The list of Special Responsibility Allowances is set out in **Appendix A**.

Special Responsibility Allowance and Basic Allowance will be paid pro rata to Councillors whose term of office begins or ends part way through the financial year. Similarly, if the scheme is amended so as to affect entitlement, the Allowance will be paid pro rata.

(c) **Allowances for the Independent person, co-optees on the Standards Committee, Audit Committee, Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and the Pension Board Independent Member**

**Independent and Co-opted members:**

An allowance per meeting is payable to the Independent person appointed under the Localism Act 2012 and to the co-optees on the Standards Committee, the Audit Committee and to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and the Pension Board Independent Member. This is calculated on the number of meetings per year and at a standard rate as follows:

Standards Committee

Independent Person ~~£131.27~~ £136.36 per meeting

Audit Committee and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Co-opted Members ~~£131.27~~ £136.36 per meeting

Pension Board

Independent Member ~~£131.27~~ £136.36 per meeting of the Pension Board and of the Pension Sub-Committee.

The Independent and Co-opted member allowances above, are paid by cheque at the end of each municipal year and it is the Independent Member's responsibility to declare this additional income. The Independent Person may also claim reasonable out of pocket expenses for tasks undertaken outside formal committee meetings. Any such claim shall be made to, and authorised by, the Director of Law and Governance.

(d) **Dependent Carers' Allowance**

A Dependent Carers' Allowance is payable to Councillors who, in order to undertake their duties as a Councillor, incur costs in arranging care for dependent relatives living with them. Dependent relatives are defined as children under the age of 15, elderly, disabled or unwell relatives who cannot be left alone (either temporarily or permanently). Payments will not normally be made to carers who are family members or persons resident at the Councillor's home.

The Carers' Allowance also includes costs associated with Councillors who themselves need the help of a carer in order for them to fulfil their duties as a Councillor.

The maximum rate for this allowance is ~~£11.95~~£13.15 per hour, based on the Living Wage Foundation's 'real living wage', to meet, or contribute towards the actual costs incurred in arranging care. The maximum period from which any one claim can be made is the duration of the meeting itself, plus ~~£11.95~~£13.15 as a contribution towards travelling time to and from the meeting venue.

## **2. TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES**

- 2.1 Travel expenses can be claimed to cover the cost of travelling to and from approved duties/conferences **outside** the borough (or within the borough in the case of non-councillor members of the Housing Scrutiny Committee). The amount claimed depends on the means of travel i.e.

Public transport	-	actual fare
Own vehicle	-	the current advisory fuel and mileage rate published by HMRC

Members can claim receipted expenses, up to a maximum value to be agreed by the Chief Whip for meals for approved duties lasting 4 or more hours away from your home or usual place of work. Alternatively members can claim a meal allowance in accordance with HMRC's benchmark scale rates. Details are set out in **Appendix B**.

## **3. BROADBAND EXPENSES**

- 3.1 The Scheme provides for the payment of the one-off connection charge to Broadband plus the monthly broadband rental up to the value of £25 per month.

## **4. PAYMENTS FOR OTHER BODIES**

- 4.1 The Local Government Association have their own Members' Allowances Scheme payable to those Members' of Executive and Scrutiny bodies of the Association.

## **5. CLAIMING THE ALLOWANCES**

- 5.1 Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances are paid automatically, once bank details, National Insurance, date of birth and home address are forwarded to the

Head of Democratic Services and Governance; all others are claimed by means of the appropriate forms, samples of which are attached at **Appendix C**.

- 5.2 Payments via the payroll system are made on a regular monthly cycle direct to your bank or building society account with a payslip being sent to you at the same time. Travel and Subsistence, if taxable, are paid through the payroll. Telephone and Dependent Carers' Allowances are paid through the payroll.
- 5.3 You should submit your claims for Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Carers' Allowance within **two** months of the duty undertaken. Broadband allowance payments need to be claimed either monthly or quarterly and should be accompanied by the relevant invoice.

Receipts **must** accompany all expenses claims, other than meal or mileage allowance claims.

## **6. RATES PAYABLE**

- 6.1 The rates for each allowance change from time to time, generally with effect from 1 April each year.

## **7. MATERNITY, PATERNITY AND SICKNESS LEAVE AND PAY**

### **7.1 Leave Periods**

- 7.1.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to 6 months' maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.
- 7.1.2 In addition, where the birth is premature, the Member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial 6 months.
- 7.1.3 In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.
- 7.1.4 Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks' paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).
- 7.1.5 A Member who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate such arrangements in terms of leave from Council.
- 7.1.6 Where both parents are Members leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.
- 7.1.7 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.

- 7.1.8 Any Member intending to take maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.
- 7.1.9 Any member taking maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

## **7.2 Basic Allowance**

- 7.2.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on maternity, paternity, adoption or sickness leave.

## **7.3 Special Responsibility Allowances**

- 7.3.1 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave.
- 7.3.2 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence that person shall receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.
- 7.3.3 The payment of Special Responsibility Allowances, whether to the primary SRA holder or a replacement, during a period of maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave shall continue for a period of six months, or until the date of the next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the date when the member taking leave is up for election (whichever is soonest). At such a point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for up to a further six month period
- 7.3.4 Should a Member appointed to replace the member on maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave already hold a remunerated position, the ordinary rules relating to payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance shall apply.
- 7.3.5 Unless the Member taking leave is removed from their post at an Annual Meeting of the Council whilst on leave, or unless the Group to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of their leave period to the same post, or to an alternative post with equivalent status and remuneration which they held before the leave began.

## **7.4 Attendance, Resigning from Office and Elections**

- 7.4.1 During an agreed period of maternity or paternity leave, and during sickness leave, where the latter is confirmed by a doctor's certificate, Members will not be required to attend committee meetings and their absence will therefore not be recorded and the '6 month rule' in Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 will not apply.
- 7.4.2 If a Member decides not to return at the end of their maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave they must notify the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.



7.4.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption or sickness leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the date that they leave office.

## **8. GENERAL**

A statutory register of all allowances paid to Members is open to inspection by any elector resident in the area. The Council are required to publish details of the Members' Allowances Scheme and of total payments made to each Member annually.

This is a general and by no means exhaustive statement of the law on these matters.

For any advice in relation to the Scheme please contact Democratic Services.

## APPENDIX A

### SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES 2022-23

<u>Band 4</u>	<u>Amount £</u>
Leader of the Council	<del>47,599.51</del> <u>49,446.37</u>
<u>Band 3</u>	
Executive Members	<del>37,165.52</del> <u>38,607.54</u>
<u>Band 2</u>	
Leader of the Opposition	<del>15,175.00</del> <u>15,763.79</u>
Chair of Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee	<del>8,510.38</del> <u>8,840.58</u>
Chief Whip	<del>5,669.51</del> <u>5,889.49</u>
<u>Band 1(a)</u>	
Chairs of Scrutiny Committees	<del>5,669.51</del> <u>5,889.49</u>
Chair of Licensing Committee	<del>5,669.51</del> <u>5,889.49</u>
Chair of Planning Committee	<del>5,669.51</del> <u>5,889.49</u>
<u>Band 1</u>	
Chair of Audit <u>and Risk</u> Committee	<del>3,403.54</del> <u>3,535.60</u>
Chair of Planning Sub Committee A	<del>3,403.54</del> <u>3,535.60</u>
Chair of Planning Sub Committee B	<del>3,403.54</del> <u>3,535.60</u>
Chair of <del>Personnel Sub</del> <u>Employment and Appointments</u> Committee	<del>3,403.54</del> <u>3,535.60</u>
Chair of Licensing Sub Committee A	<del>2,000.00</del> <u>2,077.60</u>
Chair of Licensing Sub Committee B	<del>2,000.00</del> <u>2,077.60</u>
Chair of Licensing Sub Committee C	<del>2,000.00</del> <u>2,077.60</u>
Chair of Licensing Sub Committee D	<del>2,000.00</del> <u>2,077.60</u>
Mayor	<del>5,946.47</del> <u>6,177.19</u>
Deputy Mayor	<del>1,142.45</del> <u>1,186.78</u>
Member of the Adoption and Fostering Panels	<del>6,804.02</del> <u>7,068.02</u>

Councillors are only entitled to claim one Special Responsibility Allowance. Any allowances marked with an asterisk above are therefore unclaimed.

## APPENDIX B

### PART 1

Rates of Travelling Allowances and provisions relating thereto:

1. (1) The rate of travel by **public transport** shall not exceed the amount of the ordinary standard fare.  
  
(2) The rate specified in the proceeding sub-paragraph may be increased by supplementary allowances not exceeding expenditure actually incurred on sleeping accommodation engaged by the member for an overnight rail journey
2. Mileage allowance payments for travel using a member's personal vehicle, shall not exceed the HMRC approved mileage rates available [here](#).
3. The rate of travel by **taxi-cab** or cab, in cases of urgency or where no public transport is readily available, shall not exceed, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid.
3. The rate of **travel by air** shall not exceed the rate applicable to travel by appropriate alternative means of transport.

Unless the saving in time is so substantial as to justify payment of the fare for travel by air, there may be paid an amount not exceeding;

(a) the ordinary standard fare by regular air service, or

(b) where no such service is available or in case of urgency, the fare actually paid by the member.

## PART 2

### Rates of Subsistence Allowance

1. (1) The rate of **subsistence allowance** shall not exceed the HMRC benchmark, available [here](#).  
  
(2) In the case of an **absence overnight** from the usual place of residence £100.00 and for such an absence overnight in London, or for the purposes of attendance at a conference (including or not including an annual meeting) of the Local Government Association or such other association of bodies as approved by the Chief Whip, £120..
  2. Any rate determined under paragraph 1(b) above shall be deemed to cover a continuous period of absence of 24 hours.
  3. The rates specified in paragraph 1 above shall not apply in respect of any **meal provided free of charge** by any authorities or body in respect of the meal or the period to which the allowance relates.
  4. Where **main meals (i.e. breakfast, lunch or dinner) are taken on trains** during a period for which there is an entitlement to a day subsistence allowance, the reasonable cost of the meals (including VAT), may be reimbursed in full.
-





# ISLINGTON

## CLAIM FOR TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

A Member of the Council is entitled to claim travelling and subsistence allowances as set out below:

### A. Travel Allowances:

Travel expenses can be claimed to cover the cost of travelling to and from approved duties/conferences **outside** the borough (or within the borough in the case of non-councillor members of the Housing Scrutiny Committee). The amount claimed depends on the means of travel i.e.:

Public Transport - actual fare

Own vehicle - Schedule of advisory rates set by HMRC.

Travel by taxi will only be paid in cases of urgency or where no public transport is reasonably available. The amount shall not exceed the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid.

### B. Subsistence:

Expenditure on meals, supported by a receipt or a 'meals' allowance for approved duties that last **4 or more hours**.

Expenditure on overnight stays will be reimbursed at the actual cost, up to the values listed above.

#### Receipts:

You should submit receipts/tickets for all travel and subsistence claims or invoices for payment direct to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance. You should submit all claims within **two** months of the duty undertaken.

**DEPENDENT CARERS' ALLOWANCE FORM (SEE PAGE 2 OF THIS FORM FOR DETAILS OF WHAT CAN BE CLAIMED)**

Meeting title	Date	Start time	Finish time	Travel Time	Allowance claimed £

**Declaration by Councillor:** I declare that I have incurred the above expenditure in respect of care for:  
 ..... who is my ..... Child's date of birth:.....  
(NAME OF CHILD/DEPENDENT) (RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD/DEPENDENT)  
 I confirm that the carer was not a member of my household and that the above statements are true and correct.

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PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVAL BY HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND CONFIRMATION THAT THE COUNCILLOR ABOVE ATTENDED THE MEETINGS LISTED:

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

For Office use only	
Date Received by Finance ___/___/___	Payroll Check No:.....
Claim checked by Head of Democratic Services	
Signed _____	Dated _____

## DEPENDENT CARERS' ALLOWANCE

### Dependent Carers' Allowance

A Dependent Carers' Allowance is payable to Councillors who, in order to undertake their duties as a Councillor, incur costs in arranging care for dependent relatives living with them. Dependent relatives are defined as children under the age of 15, elderly, disabled or unwell relatives who cannot be left alone (either temporarily or permanently). Payments will not normally be made to carers who are family members or persons resident at the Councillor's home.

The Carers' Allowance also includes costs associated with Councillors who themselves need the help of a carer in order for them to fulfil their duties as a Councillor.

The maximum rate for this allowance is ~~£10.75~~£13.15 -per hour, based on the Living Wage Foundation's 'real living wage', to meet, or contribute towards the actual costs incurred in arranging care. The maximum period from which any one claim can be made is the duration of the meeting itself, plus ~~£10.75~~£13.15 -as a contribution towards travelling time to and from the meeting venue.

You should submit your claim within **two** months of the duty undertaken.

#### **Please note:**

Claims can be met only if they result from an 'approved duty' as defined in Section 177(2) of the Local Government Act 1972. This includes attendance at meetings of the authority and its subsidiary bodies and the carrying out of any activity approved by the Authority.

If Members are unsure as to whether a proposed activity is covered under this criteria, they should refer the matter to the Head of Democratic Services.

The statements on the claim form are entirely the responsibility of the Member signing the certificate.



## COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2023

### COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS REPORT

#### OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENT: CLOUDESLEY CHARITY

- 1.1 To note that Cllr Williamson's term of office on the Board of the Cloudesley Charity is due to end in February 2024, and to re-appoint Cllr Williamson as the council's representative on the Board of the Cloudesley Charity for a period of four years, or until a successor is appointed.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1.2 That Cllr Williamson be re-appointed to the Board of the Cloudesley Charity from February 2024 for a period of 4 years, or until a successor is appointed.

Report authorised by:

**Alison Stuart**  
Director of Law and Governance & Monitoring Officer  
5 December 2023

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## **COUNCIL MEETING – 14 DECEMBER 2023**

### **NOTICES OF MOTION**

#### **Motion 1: A call for peace**

Proposed by: Cllr Caroline Russell

Seconded by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

#### **This council notes:**

- Across Islington, residents are horrified by the violent conflict in Israel and Palestine and are grief stricken at the loss of lives. Many, especially in Jewish, Muslim and Arab communities, are concerned for the safety of friends, family and work colleagues in the region.
- The loss of civilian life is heart-breaking and is in contravention of international law affecting all.
- The continued imprisonment of Israeli hostages and the collective punishment against Gazans civilians, with the withholding of water, food and power.
- There has been a worrying rise in antisemitic and islamophobic hate crime in Islington since the attacks on 7<sup>th</sup> October and the siege of Gaza.
- The brilliant work by faith and community leaders across the borough to hold our community together, provide solace for today and hope for the future.
- The Labour's King's Speech amendment calling for longer "humanitarian pauses" in Gaza fell after MPs voted against it 290 to 183.
- The SNP's King's Speech amendment calling for "all parties to agree to an immediate ceasefire" fell after MPs voted against it 294 to 125.
- A range of international humanitarian organisations have been calling for a ceasefire, including Oxfam, Save the Children, Medecins Sans Frontières, Muslim Aid, War on Want, War Child and Amnesty International.

**This council further notes:**

- There must be an immediate ceasefire to end the violence. Humanitarian aid and basic services must be immediately restored. Hostages must be immediately released.
- For too long the peace process has been abandoned. Instead, violence, injustice and unfairness have become normalised. A lasting peace can only be achieved with dialogue and negotiations, and every government should be using every avenue to encourage this to happen.
- The UK government has a unique role to play in reaching peace. We have a historical debt to the region through colonialisation. We are a UN Security Council member with the platform and power to influence the situation.
- There can be no place for hate in our borough. Islington must be a safe place for people of all faiths and nationalities. We must support people whose families and loved ones are caught up in this conflict and extend a special welcome to anyone fleeing war and persecution.

**This council resolves to:**

- Write to the UK Prime Minister to:
    - i. Call for an immediate ceasefire and an embargo on the sale of offensive weapons for this conflict.
    - ii. Call for a renewed peace process to establish a political settlement that guarantees freedom, justice and safety for both Israelis and Palestinians.
    - iii. Request central government funding to support community cohesion and peace-making at a local level.
  - Write to our local MPs and ask they use every avenue to pursue peace and to call for ceasefire now.
  - Work with partners to ensure safety for Islington's Muslim, Jewish, Arabic and all communities and to be ready to welcome refugees from Palestine.
  - Encourage interfaith and community groups to bid for funding, like Local Initiative Funding, to support community cohesion and peace-making.
-

## **Motion 2 – Standing in solidarity with Islington’s diverse community in times of conflict by supporting the cessation of hostilities on all sides**

Proposed by: Cllr Roulin Khondoker

Seconded by: Cllr Ilkay Cinko-Oner

Also supported by: Cllr John Woolf

### **This Council notes:**

- The pain and trauma caused by the conflict in Israel and Palestine, and expresses solidarity with local people who have loved ones in the affected region, in particular concerned with the rising number of civilian deaths and unacceptable number of children who have been killed.
- Many local people have been deeply affected by the conflict, which is why our focus continues to be on ensuring our borough remains the cohesive, welcoming place we all know and love, and that our diverse communities are safe, reassured and know that we are on their side.
- Islington is a diverse place, with different communities from all around the world that have made this borough their home. Nearly 40% of people who live in Islington were born outside the UK and even more have parents and grandparents who came to this country and made Islington their home.
- Our continued celebration of Islington’s diverse faiths and community groups.
- Prominent faith leaders from across Islington, as well as both of our local MPs and Islington councillors from all parties came together in November to remember those who lost their lives in conflict and recommit to aim for peace across the world.

### **This Council further notes:**

- There has been a vast increase in the number of hate crime incidents in Islington since the start of the conflict primarily incidents of antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- The support of Islington Faiths Forum with the organisation of a Peace Vigil in Islington Green in October, which was a chance for local faith leaders and representatives to come together, say prayers and mourn the loss of life we have seen during this conflict.
- The Council statement in November to mark Islamophobia Awareness Month, including the event held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> November, reaffirmed our commitment to stand united in the face of Islamophobia and antisemitism, and all forms of hate in our communities.
- The Council’s previous adoption of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims’ definition of Islamophobia in 2019 and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism in 2017.

- Over 300 organisations have signed the Islington Hate Crime Pledge, which is to allow individuals and organisations in the borough to support and participate in ongoing efforts to reduce hate crime in the area.

**This Council resolves to:**

- Support those in Islington with loved ones in the affected region by writing to the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to support calls - made by the Mayor of London, a number of trade unions including Unite and UNISON, the UN General Assembly, over 200 countries and many global humanitarian aid agencies - for an immediate cessation to hostilities in Israel and Palestine, including an immediate humanitarian ceasefire and the release of hostages on both sides. Also to support calls for an investigation by the International Criminal Court into alleged breaches of international law during this conflict and to begin a political process for permanent peace.
  - Continue to work with faith and community leaders from across Islington to preserve and celebrate our borough's diversity and cohesion, this will include working with the Islington Faiths Forum to organise an inter-faith event in early 2024, allowing people from all parts of Islington to come together and celebrate our community's shared values.
  - Further promote the work of the Council's Hate Crime Prevention Champions, encouraging more local people to take ownership and support our drive to tackle hate crime in Islington.
  - Continue to promote the work of Islington-based charities working to support those affected by the humanitarian crisis in Israel and Palestine.
-

### **Motion 3 – Protecting Islington’s families through the Childcare Crisis**

Proposed by: Cllr Michelline Ngongo

Seconded by: Cllr Toby North

#### **This Council notes:**

- Access to quality, affordable childcare is vital to support children’s early years development, as well as enabling parents to return to work or training.
- Since 2010, the cost of childcare has risen by over £2000 a year. This equates to a 44% increase, leaving parents in a catch 22 situation as childcare costs continue to rise, whilst statutory maternity pay is down by 3% in real terms and the TUC says the country is in the longest pay squeeze for 200 years.
- Rates of pay for childcare workers fail to recognise the vital work they do and the important contribution they make in children’s early years development and advancing their future life chances.
- There are now more than 2 children for every childcare place in England, with a 19% decline in the number of childcare providers since 2017.
- Recent data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the UK has the second most expensive childcare system in the world.
- A Trade Union Congress (TUC) poll of working parents with pre-school children – published in March of this year – revealed that one in three (32%) spend more than a third of their wages on childcare.
- Coupled with the cost of living crisis, one in four working London parents struggles to feed their family.
- Although the Department for Education announced the national average hourly funding rates on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023, local authorities still need time to calculate the outcome of this for local people, which means childcare providers won’t know their actual rates until January.
- Islington was one of the first councils in the country to provide free school meals to all maintained nursery and primary schools, supporting families in financial hardship and ensuring every child has a hot meal.

#### **This Council further notes:**

- In summer 2023 there were 239 early years settings providing childcare in Islington. This included 123 childminders on the Early Years Register and 116 group and school-based nurseries.
- Islington offers subsidised childcare at the cost of £5 million through 19 Children Centre nurseries across the borough and on a smaller scale to 11 community based voluntary sector nurseries, to allow them to offer affordable places to local parents.

- The subsidy applies to places for children living in Islington aged from 6 months where both parents are working or studying. 669 places are provided at subsidised rates for Islington-resident working families, who are charged on a sliding scale according to family income.
- The Council Budget for 2022/23 which quadrupled the size of the childcare bursary scheme to £160,000, enabling up to 300 more parents to afford to get back into work or training, and has been maintained since.
- Islington's Bright Start Strategy 2023-28 developed in partnership with maternity, early childhood services and parents and carers, sets out our ambitions, priorities and commitments around increasing accessibility, reach and inclusion and developing our workforce.
- Our Bright Start service supports families who need extra help through our Family Support Surgeries, food packages at community events and working with our partners to set up warm spaces.
- The roll out of Family Hubs, providing universal prevention and early intervention services for children, young people, and their families from conception to 19 (or 25 for those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)).
- Despite the Conservative government's announcement to expand 30 hours of "free childcare" scheme to all eligible children of working parents aged between nine months and two years by September 2025, this will only benefit working families, denying access to early childcare for our children from the lowest-income families and exacerbating inequalities from the moment a child enters the classroom.

**This Council resolves to:**

- Write to the Secretary of State for Education to call on the Government to:
  - work with childcare providers to ensure funding rates are increased in real terms and childcare workers are paid a decent living wage.
  - Provide universal free childcare for children over nine months old and support the Labour Party's policy of free breakfast clubs for all primary school children.
- Support the Labour Party's call to an immediate review into childcare if they are elected to government, including a review into SEND provisions.
- Continue to support parents and families with our family hubs, children's centres and other early years settings.
- Protect Islington Council's investment in the Childcare Bursary and continue to help Islington's disadvantaged families through our free school meals and school uniform grant.