COUNCIL MEETING – 15 DECEMBER 2016

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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a   Councillor Poyser to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:

Could I congratulate the Council on its swift action acting as an honest broker in making available the empty Mount Carmel school to the nearby Whitehall Park Free School while the building work continues on the former Ashmount School Site.

As Councillor Ward is aware, there is now also the building of much-needed social housing taking place on that site. Would it be possible to give local residents, the parents of children at the school and the Islington people on our housing waiting list, some idea as to when the building on the site might be completed?

b   Councillor Jeapes to Councillor Watts, Leader of the Council:

The Social Mobility Commission has just produced a report that highlights low-income and middle-income families are being held back by deep social mobility problems in Britain.

This problem is starkly evident in Canonbury ward, where Council housing is situated cheek-by-jowl alongside million pound houses, which residents on the estates will never be able to afford.

The report describes the polarisation of the labour market where, "there are too few progression opportunities for workers, especially women, in the bottom half of the labour market", and that, "job growth in the British economy has shifted more towards low-skilled jobs compared with other European countries".

The report goes on to say, "Professional employment is growing but the potential it contains for a social mobility dividend is hindered by talent being recruited from too narrow a social pool". So what hope is there for the poor, working class residents of Islington?

The report is an indictment in the failure of Conservative Government policies to help the poor.

Could Cllr Watts give us reassurance that the Council is taking appropriate steps to improve social mobility in Islington?

c   Councillor Turan to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:

Housing is a hugely important issue for residents in my ward and I have received a great deal of correspondence from local people about how the Tenant Tax would have caused real problems.

I was delighted to hear that, after significant campaigning by this council and others, the Government will be dropping its planned unfair Tenant Tax, which would have affected people already struggling to make ends meet.

There are many other parts of the Housing and Planning Act which will be damaging for Islington. Please can you tell me what the council will do to challenge the remaining parts of the Government's legislation?

d   Councillor Heather to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:

Given that the former HMP Holloway site in Islington is public land, and that in the borough we have a severe shortage of council and social housing available at genuinely affordable rents, what can Islington Council do to ensure that this land is used for the benefit of the local community and is developed in partnership with the local community?

e   Councillor Andrews to Councillor Comer-Schwartz, Executive Member for Community Development:

Why has the Council taken the unprecedented decision to overturn the Licencing Sub-Committee decision to revoke the Fabric licence and has failed to: a) consult local people who live in the area; and b) have shown no confidence in its Licensing Sub-Committee, when the regulations state when the Police bring a Review on Crime and Disorder grounds and the conditions have been breached then the Sub-Committee should revoke the licence?

f   Councillor Russell to Councillor Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport:

Are you confident that Islington residents who use bikes for their job rather than a car have access to adequate on street cycle parking to enable them to carry out their work?

g   Councillor Russell to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:

Are you confident that block charges for housing repairs are being allocated fairly?