

COUNCIL MEETING – 5 JULY 2018

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

Islington Council recently secured a High Court victory over a developer who was twice refused planning permission at the former Territorial Army site on Parkhurst Road, because the plans did not include enough genuinely affordable homes. This is a significant legal victory that will support this Council's plans to deliver more genuinely affordable homes for local people, including at the former Holloway Prison site. Can Cllr Ward explain what steps he and the Council are taking to ensure the precedent this judgement sets is recognised by the development industry and by government?

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

The former George Robey site in Finsbury Park Ward is the subject of negotiations between Islington Council's Planning Department and a private developer for a chain hotel to be built there. I have asked council officers if genuinely affordable homes could be built on the site, in accordance with council policy, but I have been informed this is not possible due to the location and size of the site. As there is enormous need for genuinely affordable homes in Finsbury Park Ward I am requesting your second opinion in this matter.

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

I know Cllr Ward will agree with me that it is unacceptable that anyone is forced to sleep rough on the streets, so I was concerned to find out that a couple of people had been seen sleeping on Highbury Fields. I know they are no longer there, and I know we are short of resources due to central government cuts, but could Cllr Ward provide an update on how this Council is supporting vulnerable rough sleepers, including those who may have no access to housing or benefits because of their migration status or rights to reside?

- d Councillor Khurana to Councillor Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport:

Crouch Hill station in Tollington currently has no step-free access to its platform, which makes it inaccessible to residents with disabilities and mobility issues. The Equality and Human Rights Commission identified access to public transport as a key barrier for disabled people in the UK. Do you agree that Transport for London and the Department for Transport should listen to the calls of local people, and those of my colleagues and I as local community champions, and bring forward plans to make Crouch Hill station accessible for all?

- e Councillor Convery to Councillor Caluori, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

Please outline how much money is being spent by the Council in Caledonian Ward on (a) general youth services; and (b) targeted youth services and other preventative measures aimed at reducing the high incidence of gang related crime and ASB.

- f Councillor Turan to Councillor Burgess, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Supporting local people to lead healthier lives is a key priority of this Council. Obesity costs the NHS alone £5.1 billion every year and obese individuals lose on average 12 years of their lives. In Islington, more than a fifth of children start primary school overweight and more than a third leave secondary school overweight. It is clear that the vast quantities of sugar in our modern diets is unhealthy and is contributing to this health crisis. Could Cllr Burgess provide an update on what the Council is doing to tackle obesity and what more can be done to tackle the high levels of sugar in people's diets?

- g Councillor Hyde to Councillor Burgess, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

The Roman Way Medical Centre, which serves 4,400 local patients, is due to close as one of the current GPs is retiring, the other GP proposes to move. As the GPs own the practice building, it will not be possible to continue providing NHS GP services from the current premises. Roman Way is a much-needed local GP surgery and the closure could particularly affect older and more vulnerable people, of whom there are many in the immediate vicinity. There is vociferous opposition to losing provision in this area from the residents. Working with Cllr Burgess and local people, the Caledonian ward councillors submitted a petition with 550 signatures calling for NHS England to provide a new NHS GP surgery for local people, or to ensure robust plans are in place to expand existing local NHS surgeries to ensure local people maintained good access to NHS services.

Now the NHS has delayed a decision on what to do next, will Cllr Burgess confirm that she will continue to work with us as local councillors to get the best outcome for local people, and can she confirm that this Council will always fight to protect the NHS and local people's ability to access NHS services?

- h Councillor Jeapes to Councillor Shaikh, Executive Member for Economic Development:

It has been just over one year since the unreasonably high increase in business rates on Islington's businesses, for instance, Canonbury (the N1 area) has suffered a 39% increase. This will have the greatest impact on residents on the lowest incomes and/or those in receipt of benefits, the very people that the Prime Minister, Theresa May, has said she wanted to help – the "JAM's" – "just about managing". For example, a small business like a laundrette burdened with a 39% tax increase will put up their prices to compensate, so putting more pressure on Islington's residents already struggling with this Conservative Government's austerity agenda.

I would like to know if the Council has an idea of how many businesses have been so affected by this tax increase that they have left Islington to find cheaper, more affordable premises or have just gone out of business? What are we doing to get the message across that Councils do not set the rate, but that this is yet another example of a Conservative Government that actually does not care about the majority of residents, and in particular, has really no idea about JAM?

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

Given the smoke damage and difficulty in exiting the building experienced by residents in 6-10 Aberdeen Park in the recent fire, how many front doors are non-compliant with fire regulations in council properties, tenanted and leasehold, in each ward?

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

The City of London has a pedestrian friendly Electric Vehicle (EV) charging policy that avoids any charging points or boxes being located on the pavement. Why has Islington Council allowed Source London to install EV charging equipment on the footway rather than on pavement build outs in the carriageway as has been done previously e.g. in Sherringham Rd?