



COUNCIL MEETING – 20 SEPTEMBER 2018

NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Single Use Plastic – Unflushables

Moved by Cllr Caroline Russell

This council notes:

- The recent report of the Environment Committee of the London Assembly on single-use plastic unflushables.
- That use of single use plastic disposable products is increasing. There has been a 25 percent increase in the use of wet wipes and fifty percent increase in the use of incontinence products over the last five years.
- That period pads and incontinence products contain up to 90 percent plastic and disposable nappies up to 50 percent.
- No period or incontinence product or wet wipe on the market disintegrates fully when flushed.
- Unflushables combine with fat in sewers forming blockages and fatbergs.
- Thames Water unclog five blockages an hour from London's sewers. These cause huge distress to people who are flooded with backed up sewage and cost Thames Water and ultimately Londoners £12 million per year to clear.

This council further notes:

- The significant cost and environmental damage caused by the inappropriate flushing of single use plastic items such as incontinence and period products, as well as disposable nappies and wet wipes.
- The important role borough councils have in London in educating and informing residents in order to reduce this environmental damage.
- The particular role of the council as an education authority and early years provider.
- That Islington already participates in the reusable nappy scheme offering new parents a voucher to buy reusable nappies worth the equivalent cost of sending an average baby's nappies to landfill.
- That while reusable nappies and reusable period products such as menstrual cups, period pants and washable pads can save people significant sums of money, people in nappy or period poverty may not have access to convenient washing facilities to make their use viable.

This council resolves:

- To work with head teachers to develop culturally sensitive period positive education as part of the Healthy Schools initiative; and to use period positive language to reduce stigma around menstruation enabling students to more easily discuss opportunities to cut the cost of managing their periods with reusable products and binning not flushing single use plastic wipes and period products.
- To use contact with parents through the council's Brightstart Early Years provision to raise awareness of the opportunity for people to save money via the council's reusable nappy voucher scheme and by using reusable period products; and to raise awareness of the importance of binning not flushing wetwipes and disposable period products.
- To provide "bin it, don't flush" it labels for toilet doors in schools and council buildings along with bins in men's toilets for single use plastic unflushable items.

Motion 2: Council Tax Relief

Moved by Cllr Caroline Russell

This council notes:

- That the Conservative government's local authority and welfare cuts have been an unprecedented and destructive attack on disabled people and society's poorest.
- That changes to disability benefits have affected disabled people's independence, well-being and security.
- That the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities described the behaviour of the Department for Work and Pensions as a "human catastrophe", violating the human rights of disabled people.
- That Universal Credit (UC) is being rolled out in Islington.
- That in UC trial areas, administrative errors have added, on average, an extra three weeks to the formal 35 day wait for an initial benefit payment.
- That, as revealed by a Freedom of Information request by the Observer Newspaper, one in three UC recipients are facing regular deductions from their benefit, because of having to pay back advance payments due to arrears in rent, council tax or utility bills.
- That Islington Council's Policy and Performance Committee is looking at the impact of UC on Islington residents, the council and other local services.

This council further notes:

- That in 2013 the Coalition government scrapped Council Tax Benefit and forced councils to implement their own council tax reduction schemes.
- That whilst Islington Council has laudably implemented a council tax reduction scheme that is more generous than many other councils, still many households are falling into arrears.
- In 2017 Camden Council decided to exempt the borough's poorest entirely from paying council tax, taking 12,000 households out of the tax.
- That Haringey Council is looking to reform council tax, investing £1.6 million to exempt 6,000 of the poorest households from council tax.
- That Islington Council has exempted care leavers and foster carers from paying council tax, recognising that exempting certain groups from paying council tax is worthwhile.

This council resolves:

- To review the Council Tax exemption scheme, to see whether a similar scheme to those in Haringey and Camden could be rolled out in Islington in time for this year's budget.

Motion 3: Protect per pupil funding and SEND funding in Islington Schools

Moved by Cllr Joe Caluori

Seconded by Cllr Vivien Cutler

This Council notes that:

- Islington students achieved the best-ever GCSE set of results in 2018, against a backdrop of tougher exams and a new grading system.
- 49 out of 52 schools in Islington face further funding cuts by central Government between now and 2020.
- Between 2015 and 2020, central Government funding for Islington schools will have been cut by an estimated £6.4 million. As a result, schools in Islington will have on average £309 less to spend on each pupil, which risks limiting pupils' ability to reach their full potential.
- Central Government's failure to invest any new money into local authorities' Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) budgets imposes further financial burdens on Islington's schools.
- Islington's schools have significantly improved and now rank in the top 20% for boosting pupils' attainment. In 2008, Islington ranked in the bottom 20 local areas in the country. However, ongoing central Government cuts risks undermining this progress.

This Council further notes:

- Almost half (48%) of Islington schools have had to cut staff between 2014 and 2017, and over half (58%) of Islington schools have seen an increase in their pupil/teacher ratio. Islington's schools face losing an estimated 99 teachers between 2015 and 2019.
- Islington's High Needs Block funding has had a shortfall of £2.3 million between 2016/17 and 2018/19. Further funding pressure is also expected this year.
- The Leader of Islington Council recently wrote to the Secretary of State for Education, along with 38 council leaders and union representatives, urging him to take action to ensure every child with SEND receives the support they need so they can thrive.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Secretary of State to urge him to reverse the £2.7 billion cuts to schools' budget in England, protect per-pupil funding in real terms and fully fund the pay increase for teachers recommended by the School Teachers' Review Body.
- Continue to work closely with Islington's SEND Forum to ensure the needs of Islington's SEND children are met.
- Work with parents, teachers, unions and the local community to make representations to Government to ensure Islington's schools receive the funding they need.