

## COUNCIL MEETING – 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

a **Cllr Convery to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:**

Please can you report on progress towards Islington Housing signing Wayleave Agreements with telecommunications infrastructure providers such as G Network and Community Fibre so that households on Islington Council's housing estates can benefit from the new generation of high speed 'fibre-to-the premises' broadband connection?

b **Cllr Poole to Cllr Comer-Schwartz, Leader of the Council:**

Will the Leader of the Council provide an update on efforts to save the Royal Northern War Memorial which is the only war memorial anywhere in this country on the at risk register.

c **Cllr Poyser to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development:**

Many thanks to Cllr Shaikh and everyone in getting a sculpture stuck in the basement of the Town Hall resurrected to its rightful place in our wonderful Peace Park in Hillrise. It shows our commitment to peace during this awful time with events in Afghanistan (the troop withdrawal was announced on the day of the unveiling) and it shows that socialists also want to raise statues where appropriate. I would particularly like to thank the Heritage Team for finding the sculpture, and also for ensuring that Bruce Kent and Jeremy Corbyn were there at the successful re-unveiling.

There is also a statue in the Elthorne Park proudly of African heritage. Would it possible for a plaque, or similar, to commemorate the name of that artist somewhere appropriate in the park?

**d Cllr Russell to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:**

I'm sure we can agree that the lack of government action to prepare for the return to school with improvements to ventilation in schools to mitigate against Covid infection is extremely worrying. Are you considering calling for mask wearing in schools for all secondary pupils in the absence of other mitigation measures?

**e Cllr Russell to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:**

I am aware of several estates in my ward that are overdue their cyclical (every seven years) maintenance works. I understand part of the delay was due to not having a procurement framework in place.

How many estates in Islington are now up to date with cyclical repairs and how many are overdue; and can you supply me with a written list of all council run estates in Islington with the date of their most recent cyclical works and the intended dates for future works?

**f Cllr Khondoker to Cllr Gill, Executive Member for Finance & Performance**

The Tory Government has overseen a crisis in social care for over a decade. On the steps of Downing Street in 2019, the Prime Minister assured us he had a plan to "fix the social care crisis once and for all". Two years later, we have a tax rise on working people which hits the least well-off the hardest and still no plan to fix the social care crisis. This is an issue which is harming some of the most vulnerable people in our society who need a functioning social care system to care for them now.

Does the Executive Member agree that rather than a tax rise on local people who are already struggling to make ends meet, the Tory Government should be finding inefficiencies in its own budget and taxing the most well-off people in our society more on wealth and dividends to fund a National Care Service, free at the point of use?

**g Cllr Hyde to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development:**

In Islington, we are proud of our diversity and welcome all those who wish to make our borough their home, as shown by our motion passed in July 2021 to become a recognised 'Borough of Sanctuary'.

Those fleeing Afghanistan recently have been through untold trauma and been forced to leave their homes for them and their family's safety. I'm proud that the Council has offered to welcome 15 Afghan families to our borough, supporting those households to settle in, get the support they need and integrate into our community. But at a time when the Council has had to make savings for over a decade, does the Executive Member agree that the Government should be fully funding this support for Afghan refugees?

**h Cllr Ismail to Cllr Comer-Schwartz, Leader of the Council:**

First, congratulations as the leader of Islington Council. It's become custom with Islington labour leaders to follow the same footsteps of the last leader since 2010. With Catherine West, we had the fairness commission, follow by Richard Watts, employment commission.

Will you be following the same with a new commission? As the health and economic impact of Coronavirus is yet to be unfolding, particularly, on families with children, young people and pensioners on low income suffer more, such as mental health, depression, loneliness and isolation is become daily reality for residents, so the Council can serve better, as our resources need to be more targeting the need.

**i Cllr Ismail to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development:**

This Council have been funding organisations, some do good work, others could do improvements as we roll funding again and again while others are left behind. The Black Caribbean review highlighted conducted between Feb and March 2021 by VSC with the Challenging Inequality team at the council and others have not been also address yet.

How do you see the Voluntary Community Sector to be more inclusively with tangible results and more stainable next around funding?

**j Cllr Clarke to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:**

The Holloway Prison Site is a once in a generation opportunity to build hundreds of new social homes in St George's and tackle the housing crisis in Islington, as well as increasing green space in the area.

What is the Council doing to ensure there are as many new social homes built on the site as possible?