

## COUNCIL MEETING – 11 July 2024

### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

a **Cllr Janet Burgess to Cllr Flora Williamson, Executive Member for Health & Social Care:**

You are no doubt aware of the recent study, by the Institute for Social and Economic Research of the University of Essex, into the effect of giving free school meals to primary school children in the four London boroughs which had been doing this for some time (Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Newham and Islington). The then Labour opposition forced through this measure just before winning control of Islington Council in 2010, and it has been in operation ever since. Apart from the cost of living help to parents – which is considerable - there was an associated increase in reading. It suggested that by the age of 11, the impact was equivalent to approximately two weeks' additional progress in school. Additionally, levels of obesity were reduced by 7% to 11% among reception children in the four boroughs and for children in year six, who had been given free school meals for their entire time in primary school, there was a 5-8% reduction. This is a really important public health outcome. What further measures can be taken by the Public Health Department to reduce childhood obesity?

b **Cllr Benali Hamdache to Cllr Sheila Chapman, Executive Member for Equalities, Communities & Inclusion:**

It was announced that £50,000 of grant allocations for the Black Leaders Alliance was going unspent and was being drawn down. Could you let us know what that money was promised for, why it wasn't spent and how the council will deliver on the original promises of that money?

c **Cllr Caroline Russell to Cllr Rowena Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality & Transport**

Could you provide an update on your negotiations with Transport for London (TfL) on the redesign of the junction of Highbury Grove and St Paul's Rd?

d **Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Michelline Safi-Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Families:**

May we have an update on the child friendly strategy?

e **Cllr Saiqa Pandor to Cllr Flora Williamson, Executive Member for Health & Social Care:**

Arsenal Women will be playing 11 of their WCL games at the Emirates this season, which is a huge step forward for the women's game and its growth. How is the Council working with local partners, including the Arsenal to promote football as a sport to young women and girls growing up in Islington?

f **Cllr Sara Hyde to Cllr John Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

Numerous studies have shown the negative impact of gambling, and gambling addiction, on mental health, levels of antisocial behaviour and crime. In my ward on Caledonian Road we have 3 gambling venues, within 100 steps of each other. What is the Council doing to address the concerns raised by local residents about these premises and stop new gambling shops opening?

g **Cllr Roulin Khondoker to Cllr Rowena Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality & Transport:**

Keeping our pavements as clear and spacious as possible is imperative to providing a safe passage for those with mobility and visual impairments to use our streets safely. E-bikes have caused a huge disturbance to pavements and pathways when they are left parked or are abandoned in the middle of pavements. What is the update on progressing with holding e-bike operators to account to reduce and cease the practice of e-bikes being parked in the middle of pavements, and how soon will the public see any impact?

h **Cllr Heather Staff to Cllr Una O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods:**

At a time when funding and space for new housing is increasingly difficult, looking after our current housing stock is as important as building new ones. What is the council doing to improve the quality of our existing homes, so that they are resilient to common reoccurring issues such as mould and damp, cold, adaptive to climate change?

i **Cllr Roulin Khondoker to Cllr Santiago Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy, Culture & Jobs:**

Access into shops and buildings is a barrier for many people especially those with mobility issues, visual impairments and those with prams and young children. While this is a historic issue of urban and building design, what is the council doing themselves and to work with businesses and building owners in the borough to make their spaces mobility accessible especially so that those in wheelchairs can have equal access to the spaces that Islington have on offer, and what is the impact of the council's efforts?

**j Cllr Ilkay Cinko-Oner to Cllr Sheila Chapman, Executive Member for Equalities, Communities and Inclusion:**

What is the update on the provision of the Martin Luther King adventure play centre and the use of the outside space?

**k Cllr Mick Gilgunn to Cllr Diarmaid Ward, Executive Member for Finance and Performance:**

Neil Hayes, an Archway resident, tragically lost his life in a construction accident involving a hydraulic asphalt lorry in Goods Yard Camden on May 24th. The incident is currently under investigation by the HSE, and both his family and campaigners are eagerly awaiting the full report. Last year, there were 45 fatalities reported in the Construction industry alone, with a total of 135 work-related deaths across industries, excluding illnesses like asbestos-related cancer. The need for improved compensation for victims of diseases like Mesothelioma was highlighted on Mesothelioma action day on July 5th. The previous government's approach to health and safety at work was criticized for its deregulation stance, as highlighted by former Prime Minister David Cameron in 2012 who declared that "The health & safety culture is an albatross around the necks of big business". With a new government in place, there is a push to enhance safety measures, especially in areas like Islington with numerous infrastructure projects. How can we reverse the tide and improve our own HSE workplace inspections, and enforcements when necessary to ensure all our workers are working in a safe environment and involve the Trade unions in terms of health & safety and welfare at work at the procurement stage when drawing up contracts?

**l Cllr Ilkay Cinko-Oner to Cllr Sheila Chapman, Executive Member for Equalities, Communities and Inclusion:**

What has been the impact of Fairer Together for the public, including the newly set up Access Islington hubs?