

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING – 29 JUNE 2006

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At an ordinary meeting of the Council held at the Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1 2UD on Thursday, 29 June 2006 at 7.30pm.

Present:

The Mayor (Councillor Jyoti Vaja) in the Chair

ALLAN George	ECE Meral	PEASNELL Kelly
BELFORD Paula	EDWARDS Barry	PERRY Rupert
BERENT Anna	FIERAN-REED Emily	POLLING Ruth
BOFFA Donna	FOXSMITH Greg	RAY Marisha
BURGESS Janet	GILBERT John	SIDNELL Barbara
BURGESS Wally	GREENING Richard	SMITH Barbara
CHATTERJEE Natasha	HAMITOUCHE Mouna	SMITH Paul
CHOWDHURY Jilani	HULLS Daniel	SPALL Lisa
CONVERY Paul	ISMAIL Tracey	STACY Terry
CORNWELL Andrew	JAMIESON-BALL Rhodri	WATT Lucy
COUPLAND Joan	KASPRZYK Stefan	WATTS Richard
COUPLAND Shelley	KELLY Phil	WEST Catherine
DAWSON Katie	KEMPTON James	WILLIAMS Julia
DEBONO Theresa	KLUTE Martin	WILLOUGHBY Laura
DOOLAN Gary	MURRAY James	WOOLLEY Ursula
DUNLOP Fiona	O'SULLIVAN Michael	

1. MINUTES

Councillor Wally Burgess drew attention to minute 5(a) and questioned the accuracy of the use of the word “increase” in the final line of the answer.

The Mayor gave an undertaking to check whether the minute was accurate.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the use of the word “increase” in the final sentence of the reply to question (a) on page 5 of the minutes being checked for accuracy, the minutes of the Council held on 28th March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and the Mayor be authorised to sign them.

Chief Executive’s note: The minute was found to be inaccurate, and the final sentence should read “The number of meals delivered at home shows a slight reduction comparing 2000/01 to 2005/06 data.” The signed minute has been amended accordingly.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item 2)

(Chief Executive’s note: The Mayor had agreed that the Council should consider an urgent motion on “Indemnification of Costs” – see minute 3(ii))

The following decisions of interest were made.

The Mayor	Urgent motion: Indemnification of costs	Personal & prejudicial
Cllr. Kempton	“	Personal
Cllr. Watt	“	Personal & prejudicial
Cllr. Stacy	“	Personal
Cllr. Barbara Smith	“	Personal
Cllr. Willoughby	“	Personal
Cllr. Allan	“	Personal
Cllr. Polling	“	Personal
Cllr. Ray	“	Personal & prejudicial
Cllr. Cornwell	“	Personal & prejudicial
Cllr. Foxsmith	Motion 1: Arsenal FC planning application Motion 7: Arsenal Stadium transport arrangements	
Cllr. Edwards	“	Personal
Cllr. Perry	“	Personal
Cllr. Watts	Motion 10: Creating healthier schools	Personal

3. MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS (Item 3)

(i) Apologies for absence.

None.

(ii) Order of business

The Mayor announced that she had agreed to take 2 emergency motions – one on the Indemnification of Costs, and the other on the King’s Place fire. Copies of both had been laid round.

(iii) Opposition discussion items

Councillor Watts confirmed that the Opposition wished to debate the 2 emergency motions before 9.30pm.

(iv) Death of former Councillor Agnes Seeley

The Mayor reported the death of former Councillor Agnes Seeley who was Mayor of Islington in 1960/61.

(v) King's Place Incident

The Council noted that the Mayor had visited the Blessed Sacrament Church and the Mitre Pub on Monday and Tuesday to see the way Council staff were helping those caught up in the King's Place incident.

The incident had been managed with great professionalism by the Fire Brigade, and the Council agreed to thank all the emergency services and the Council's staff for their hard work, and to commiserate with those inconvenienced.

(vi) The World Cup

The Mayor reported that, exceptionally, she had asked that the England flag be flown on the Mayoral car and on the Town Hall.

4. PETITIONS (Item 4)

Petitions were received as follows:

Councillor Watts:	Children's play area at the corner of Blythwood Road and Holly Park Estate
Councillor J. Coupland:	Consultation with street traders at Highbury Corner
Councillor W. Burgess:	Funding support for community craft centres
Councillor West:	Parking in Trinder and Shaftesbury Roads
Councillor Doolan:	Home care services

These were referred to the appropriate director for action.

5 REPORT OF CHIEF WHIP (Item 5)

The report was laid round. The Mayor agreed to consider the report as it was necessary for appointments to be made in order that the Council could be represented on the bodies concerned.

In submitting the report, Councillors Polling and Watts made additional amendments which are contained in the resolution.

(i) Appointment of Council Representatives to Charitable and Other Outside Bodies

RESOLVED:

(a) That the following persons be appointed to serve on charitable and other outside bodies for the period indicated:

Clerkenwell Charities	Councillors Hamitouche and Ray – 4 year period expiring 01.09.2020
Richard Cloudesley	Councillors Perry and Convery for a 4 year period expiring 29.06.2010
United Charities	Councillor Shelley Coupland and Pat Haynes for a 4 year period expiring 31.08.2020

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St. Luke's Parochial Trust	Councillors Vaja and Convery
St. Sepulchre United Charities	Councillor Doolan and Joe Trotter – 4 years expiring 01.05.10
Reeves Foundation	Angela Brook for a 4 year period expiring 04.10.2010
Arsenal FC Steering Committee	Councillor Stacy – Lead Member for Communities Councillor Debono – Highbury West Ward Councillor Edwards – Holloway Ward Councillor Willoughby – Highbury East Ward
Dame Alice Owen Foundation	Councillors Kempton and Woolley Eleanor Schooling, Director of Education Services
London Metropolitan University	Councillor Barbara Smith
City and Islington College	Councillor Kempton

(b) That approval be given to the proposed reduction in the number of Islington Council representatives on the Cripplegate Foundation from three to two, but that the present nominees remain in position pending further advice from the Foundation.

(ii) Appointments to Committees etc.

RESOLVED:

That the following appointments etc. be made for the remainder of the current municipal year, or until successors are appointed:

Licensing Regulatory Committee	Councillors Allan, Berent and Joan Coupland as substitutes
Standards Committee	Councillors Polling and Kelly (informal substitutes)
Overview Committee	Councillor Dunlop to replace Councillor Fieran-Reed Councillor Spall as substitute
Regeneration Review Committee	Councillors Chowdhury, Shelley Coupland and Edwards as substitutes
Sustainability Review Committee	Councillor Fieran-Reed to replace Councillor Dunlop Councillors Doolan, Paul Smith and Watts as substitutes

Performance Review Committee	Councillors Greening and Sidnell as substitutes
School Organisation Committee	Councillors Debono, Murray and Watts as substitutes
Corporate Parenting Group	Councillors Joan Coupland and Hamitouche Councillor West as substitute
Schools Forum	Councillor Polling
Adoption Panel	Councillor Ismail to replace Councillor Boffa

6. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Item 6)

- (a) Gary Heather to Councillor Ursula Woolley, Executive Member for Children and Young People

What will the council be doing to comply with the Labour Government's new nutritional standards for school lunches, as well as food and drink served at other times of the day?

Reply:

As you know the new standards for school lunches come into force in September of this year and the Council has invested significantly this year to make improvements to the quality of school meals here in Islington.

The only two standards that we are not already complying with are the standards in respect of oily fish which is to be given at least once every 3 weeks and the requirement that there should be a fruit based pudding available every day and we have instructed Scolarest to put those last 2 in place for September.

Anything fromshould be offering fruit only to primary schools one day a week and we will be offering plain fresh fruit in addition to the fruit-based puddings every day.

The standards for food and drink served at other times of the day involve 4-7 year olds and.....daily, and the ready availability of drinking water. I can confirm that these standards will be implemented in all Islington schools from September.

Supplementary question:

It was a very brief answer to what I think is a very serious question. For example, back in 2005, CEA, the Council's education service provider criticised Scolarest in terms of what they were doing in schools, and you are probably aware that there was a survey of head teachers and the majority of those head teachers said that Scolarest's quality of food was very poor. It was identified that there was (interruption by Mayor).....

My supplementary question is that given what I believe and what a lot of people I've spoken to, including parents, believe is the very poor quality of service provided by Scolarest. Indeed very unsavoury food, but is the Council prepared when the contract comes up for renewal to consider other bidders and would one of those be possibly an in-house bid by the Council-owned staff? When the Council used to provide the school meals they actually won awards for it so I think that would be the route to go, certainly it should be considered and I wondered what your opinion is on that?

Reply:

Council officers are putting together a long list for bidding for the new contract and I understand they are doing quite well with that. I understand that we are not technically allowed to prevent Scolarest from taking part in this - I do not know whether they are actually interested in doing that or not - and we haven't ruled out encouraging an in-house bid - although that might be complicated.

(b) Terence Luke to Councillor Ursula Woolley, Executive Member for Children and Young People

Given the results of a recent survey on the poor nutritional and health standards in London's schools, are councillors not concerned that Islington achieved the dubious distinction of rating 33rd out of 33 London boroughs?

Reply:

I was also extremely concerned when I saw that report in the Evening Standard at the end of May and I know colleagues and officers here were as well.

I am pleased to announce that since we saw that statistical snapshot in the press,..... the number of our schools which have already achieved Healthy School Status has doubled to 25%. The national target which we set to achieve is that 50% of our schools achieve Healthy School Status by December this year. We are confident we will be able to do that

We are going to have 2 more personal, social and health education advisors and one healthy eating and cooking advisor in post in September and October respectively, and their job will be to help our schools make the modifications they need to meet all the Healthy Schools standards.

You probably know that achieving Healthy Schools Status involves meeting 41 criteria under 4 main headings, covering health in the broadest sense - personal, social and health education, healthy eating, physical activity and sport, and emotional health and well-being. It is actually the case that well before the time of reporting, many of our schools were meeting many of those criteria, and while I will.....extremely carefully to make sure we meet all our targets on schedule. I believe that this gives some reassurance that the picture painted by the report was certainly worse than the reality.

Supplementary question:

(Tape indecipherable in part). Will you consider the safety of the contract of Scolarest when it comes up for renewal next year? Will you seriously consider taking the contract away from Scolarest?

Reply:

There were two questions there. The question of whether I was really horrified - yes, I was really horrified - and you could ask my colleagues and senior officers here who know me, and the second question was to do with when the contract for school meals comes up for renewal. It will be an open tender process and we hope to get high quality, reputable bidders - and we haven't ruled out an in-house bid - but I do not know whether that would be the strongest case, but we haven't ruled it out yet.

(c) Martin Fisher to Councillor Marisha Ray, Executive Member for Performance and Community Safety

What is the Council's position regarding the proposed ID card scheme? Has the Council followed the example of other councils and passed a motion declining to co-operate with the introduction of ID cards unless compelled to do so by statute?

Reply:

Few people living in Islington will be pleased to hear that the Labour Government is spending money on an IT mega project where costs of billions of pounds double, spiral and even the London School of Economics estimates that costs will treble again before the project is completed. But this question is about no ordinary, everyday central government IT fiasco. This is about routinely treating the innocent as though they are guilty; about holding at least 50 pieces of information about them, to track them.

It is about sharing that information with public and private bodies without consent. It is about implementing a scheme which would be prohibited by the constitution in some countries, the like of which is known in no other country. It is about enabling technology which so easily could be used for discrimination that my genuine fear and belief is that it will be, and that this alone makes it morally repugnant and unethical and I hope not only to me but to you also.

It will be about paying a £1000 fine if you fail to notify that your address has changed once having a card is compulsory. It is about central government entering or updating information about you without your knowledge, and keeping it even after your death.

It is about undermining the bonds of trust in our community, for example, between doctor and patient. This question is about whether we trust a government which used powers we were told were intended to fight terrorists against people who peacefully voiced their dissent at a political party conference or are found carrying the popular, high circulation magazines.

In these circumstances, it is no wonder that the people of Islington join us today at the Town Hall to raise their concerns with their elected councillors both outside this meeting and within, and in this climate, a motion on ID cards is brought to Council for debate this evening. I believe we will be listening to Islington when we say 'no' to ID cards in this Chamber later this evening and that abstaining on such an important question is just not an option.

Supplementary question:

ID cards will not assist in the fight against crime and even David Blunkett says it will not assist in the fight against terrorism. Is there anything on tonight's agenda that an ID card would assist?

Reply:

Even ID cards' erstwhile supporters now call into question whether they will really help much in the fight against crime and terrorism as you said. With such opinions from people who have for years spoken in favour of ID cards far be it from me to contradict them, but at least their effectiveness diminishes as more money is spent. This is quite different for your Council's which is yielding savings of millions. I know from experience that throwing information together in a database and then trying to use it for a practical purpose, thinking of the practical purpose later, is an inefficient and topsy-turvy way of tackling issues. We bear witness to this when we hear of the billions of pounds being spent this way.

Far from assisting us with what we intend to achieve this evening, I believe that ID cards may well hamper us from building stronger communities, communities where we want to be trusted and to trust. This is very much a sledgehammer approach, and a very, very expensive one too.

(d) Tim Gordon to Councillor James Kempton, Leader of the Council

What does your much proclaimed new 'consensual' style of politics in Islington mean in practice for local people?

Reply:

When the Liberal Democrats took control of Islington Council in January 2000 it was a comprehensively failing organisation. The rubbish wasn't collected, phones weren't answered, and nothing seemed to work as it should. Our Council tax was the highest in London. Its waste and debts were legendary. For six years the Liberal Democrats made it our urgent priority to transform Islington Council - and we did it.

However, inevitably such a rapid improvement meant cutting some corners. Islington Council is now a very different organization. It works well, and when we take a decision to do something, it happens. The new 4 year term which began last month was always going to signal a change of focus. The new leadership has brought new emphasis to the drive to change. We intend to spend more time talking and listening to people in Islington. We have some vital decisions to take for our borough over the next few years and I want us to consult and listen and exchange views with as many people as possible as we do that. Building a consensus as to what is right for our borough in the future.

Consensus building means working with the Opposition in this Chamber - Labour and Green councillors. I want us to have sensible discussion before taking decisions. That won't be easy. I was very pleased for e.g. that I spent over an hour this morning talking to the Leader of the Opposition. I hope that I will be meeting the Leader of the Opposition and other colleagues next week, along with the Chief Executive and other officers. I think that's the right way forward for this Council. There will be many times during the course of the evening if you wonder whether it's possible to sit down and have sensible conversations again, but I want my party and my colleagues to have a more mature and grown-up dialogue about the people of Islington.

One of the things that we have learnt over the last six years is that even when you run the Council you can't have everything the way you want it. You have to work within other organisations' timescales, within what the government allows, and within what is physically possible. Running a Council means making hard choices - not always taking the best way forward you would like, in an ideal world it's sometimes about talking, the best way forward that is possible, in the circumstances we face. It will be a challenge to work together, but it's a challenge I'm up for and I hope colleagues on the opposite side of the Chamber are up for it too. Opposition councillors won't always get what they want - just as councillors on this side cannot always have what we would ideally like. Making this work is a challenge to us all and I hope we will all give it our best shot.

Our new style also means consulting more widely with the rest of Islington. This Council faces many important decisions - I want to share the options for those decisions with the people of Islington - the pros and the cons, and the job of balancing them, more widely. (Inaudible)

Finally, I just want to say something that 'Listening to Islington' is not. It does not mean that we can satisfy every Islington resident 100% over every decision the Council takes. That won't mean we haven't consulted and listened. There are 180,000 people who live in this borough, and we can't take account of the views of every one of them.

What I can promise we will do is to listen as widely as possible and to share the choices we face. My challenge - and hope - to the Opposition is that they will join us in making serious and constructive contributions to the debate about how we continue to improve services.

Supplementary question:

Consensus requires listening and I know that this affected a number of people in this room quite recently, including people like Emily Thornberry who spoke very strongly about the importance of listening. Now there's a website called 'It worked for you.com' which is a non-partisan website which looks at the quality of MPs and the work they do. I noted that on that website Emily Thornberry in returns on 'how well do they answer questions for constituents' comes out at 679th out of 687 MPs who were monitored. Which basically means that roughly 1 in 12 questions are unanswered.

(Interruptions by members and Mayor).....

The question I want to ask is how far do you see all elected members represented in Islington in one form or another moving forward in terms of listening to the people of Islington?

Reply:

I think the onus is on all of us to listen - it's on the people of this Council Chamber, it's on our elected MPs too. It's on all of us who seek to have a role in public life. We will be discussing later on how we on this side and people opposite.....public life to everybody, not just to the richest people. We will be discussing later on (interruptions)..... Our hope that will listen to the words of the House of Commons Committee on Standards and Privileges and their recent publication about what they call 'unfortunate, unwise and not to be condoned' recent actions in relation to seeking out headlines. I hope that the lesson will be for all of us in public life in Islington.

(e) Mr.L.Bhatt to Councillor Anna Berent, Chair of East Area Planning Sub-Committee

In approving the planning permission for the development of 37-49 Holloway Road to build a Tesco express and flats, did the Council follow the full required consultation procedure and if so, what area in the near vicinity was covered to notify and consult near-by independent retailers considering the adverse effect on their livelihoods?

Reply:

Councillor Anna Berent suggested that I answered this question because the actual Planning Committee which made the decision about the development at Highbury Corner was West Area Committee. Now that's the previous West Area Committee..... like James wants to have everybody listen because none of them are here - they all lost their seats and maybe they lost their seats because of some of the oddball planning decisions they made.

However, if we go to the first part of the question, in approving a planning permission for a development you ask was the correct consultation procedure carried out and I am reliably informed, and I believe them, that all legal requirements for consultation were carried out and in fact were exceeded in terms of numbers of letters sent out.

The second part of your question relates to the adverse effects in livelihoods and here there is a bit of a problem because the size of the development of the store is such that that doesn't become a planning consideration. If it were to be a massive Tesco superstore then that would be a planning matter because that would have an adverse effect on Nag's Head or whatever, but when it's a small store it doesn't. However, there are many other grounds to turn down that application and after your supplementary question I will outline those.

Supplementary question
(Inaudible)

Reply:

Basically this development was a block of flats above a store. The store was Tesco - a big name - but it was a Tesco Express which is the smallest of the Tesco stores. Now, for any retailer nearby, I can imagine that there would be concerns about competition, but unfortunately those aren't planning concerns to turn down this particular application.

However, what this particular Committee did, and it was quite bizarre in a way, is that when they allowed the application there were lots of other reasons to turn it down and notably there was the question of housing mix on the development. They didn't follow the London Plan which is 50% social housing on a development the size of this, they didn't even follow the Council's own policy of 35% social housing - they were sold on the idea of 25% social housing which is why this borough has failed in achieving the social housing numbers it should have done. This was typical of what that Committee did and I can assure you that, in the future, the West Area Planning Committee will ensure that proper consideration of these issues will be made.

There were also many other issues about the effect of the store on the flats and neighbours and there were many, many reasons to turn the application down but for whatever reasons, they decided to give them that planning permission.

Obviously, planning committees have to make a judgment, and in the future the West Area Committee will make judgments too, and maybe the electors will make judgments on the West Area Committee and those on other planning committees and on the Council and I think the democratic way here is that if you don't like the decisions made by your Council and your area committee, get shot of them and get some new people in.

(f) Mr. Abdul Matin to Councillor Terry Stacy, Executive Member for Housing and Communities

Will the Council hold a public inquiry into the decision to close the playground near Blythwood Road on the Holly Park Estate?

Reply:

The playground near Blythwood Road on the Holly Park Estate has been closed now for six years. An enquiry into the closure was carried out by the Deputy Chief Executive earlier this year in response to a petition presented by ex Councillor Sawyer to the February Council meeting, so I feel there would be no benefit of a public inquiry as you suggest.

It is clear that a number of complaints were raised regarding the use of the play area on the estate and the noise generated by games of football from residents of Blythwood Road. In addition a structural survey of the play area showed that substantial works were necessary. Officers from Homes for Islington are working with Groundwork and local residents, including I understand yourself, to try and find another location for play facilities on the estate and funding this has been agreed by the local housing panel for a feasibility study into this. This might be a new play area or located on the previous site. I am hopeful that a consensus on the location for new play facilities will be possible in the near future. I will monitor the situation closely.

Supplementary question:

I totally disagree that the question is..... May I ask the Council to put some supplementary comments to all the Council members? It would be very kind if you would confirm that you have received our petition and supplementary papers.

Can you take a minute or two just to look at the petition and the letter to the Chief Executive dated 21 June. It will be hard to see that actually..... Can I have about 5 minutes for everyone to just to (interruption by Mayor)

Before I question, I did a little summary to (interruption by Mayor)

It is very difficult. If you ask a question either those councillors or the person who replied today there is only one familiar with our petition because our petitions are..... What nearly 200 tenants are asking, out of 269, for is a public inquiry because we believe thatfailed to repair the children's playground when the cost was only £20,000.

Our second question is why did officers of Islington Council fail to take reasonable care in respect..... Within a reasonable time with minimal cost.

Our third question is - is there no-one on Islington borough Council for..... are guilty of corrupt and there is evidence of reasonable targets for our children's playground - then anybody can seriously and calculatedly allow one..... I'll tell what it is - sell it and make profit.

Finally, it is dangerous if you follow this procedure and a public inquiry is justified because of all the inconsistencies and..... for an example - Barnsbury Park - the gentleman said there was a conflict (stopped by Mayor)

Reply:(Inaudible)

(g) Andrea O'Halloran to Councillor Terry Stacy, Executive Member for Housing and Communities

What progress has the Council made in bringing Council houses up to the Decent Homes Standard?

Reply:

I am delighted to be able to provide a progress report on the Council and how it is delivering the Decent Homes Standard.

As you will know this programme is being led by our Partners in Homes for Islington. Most of the 2005/06 new programme has been delivered through 'main framework' contract with our partner contractors. The value of these contracts was £76.8m. Work has started on all these contracts and is due to complete by the end of 2006/07. In summary these contracts will deliver:

- Repairs and maintenance to 3876 properties
- New windows for 2600 homes
- 1958 roofs will be refurbished
- 2554 new kitchens will be installed
- 1693 properties will benefit from new bathrooms
- Electrical improvements will have been carried out to 2520 homes
- 1555 properties will have benefited from long overdue structural improvements
- 349 new doors would have been installed improving security.

Our target for the end of 2005/06 was to ensure that 51% of our stock is decent. This has been achieved. When Homes for Islington was set up in 2004 our target was to have 42% of our homes decent at this stage, so we are ahead of our original target.

(h) Danny Simani to Councillor John Gilbert, Executive Member for Adult Social Care

Education authorities are no longer providing a variety of craft training due to lack of funding by the Learning and Skills Council. A joint initiative by Disability Awareness Education and the Hilldrop Community Centre is already delivering training on a small scale which could expand and provide training in other crafts and horticulture to the various groups of the community, including older people and people with disabilities who might otherwise be unable to afford receiving these benefits and consequently become less active, less independent and less integrated in the community.

Will Islington Council give its full support by providing funding and suitable community premises to enable the continuation of these classes, perhaps through a social enterprise scheme?

Reply:

I am pleased to say that the Council already provides a range of craft training courses for Islington residents. The main project is our Construction Works programme delivered with financial support from the London Development Agency. Through this we provide training in plumbing, painting and decorating, carpentry, bricklaying and plastering. We have worked with over 350 people in the borough who have benefited from the project since it started in 2003, and working closely with major employers in the construction industry we have been able to support 149 unemployed people into construction-related jobs.

About 20 people with learning disabilities have so far benefited from our construction training project but we are also working with a training provider who specialises in providing wood-machining and cabinet-making training for people with disabilities.

We have also provided a horticulture course for local people based at the Ecology Centre which brought together our grounds maintenance contractor (Glendale), Islington Greenspace and Caxtons together with partners to support unemployed people and people with special needs taking the course. This included additional support for a number of people with learning disabilities who undertook the course. Of the 15 students who enrolled on this course 10 completed it and gained an NVQ Level 2 qualification in horticulture. Three of them now have permanent full time contracts with Glendale. This is in addition to training provided by our Greenspace Division specifically for people in the workforce with learning disabilities.

Finding the right solutions for people with special needs who need to acquire skills to participate in the labour market is very important and increasingly important issue for us. Over the next three years we will be working towards getting 180 Islington people off incapacity benefits and into work in order to achieve one of the reward targets in our Local Area Agreement.

I should also say that we are aware of the project which Mr. Simani refers to and are well linked to Hilldrop Community Centre. We already support its activities in a range of ways. Given the range of provision already available, providing funding for more premises may not be the most economical or effective way of responding to needs Mr. Simani refers to, but we will always be happy to have a dialogue with Disability Awareness Education and Hilldrop Community Centre about how they can become integrated into work of this kind going on across the borough.

Supplementary question:

As you are aware, statistics published by the National Census 2001, show the total number of people with disabilities in Islington, according to the figures I've compiled, as 59739 out of a total population of 185,000. Now comparing this figure with disabilities, I'm really surprised at the number of people you have been able to help in the past, which is only a drop in the ocean, compared to what is there, but it does give youand need this training.

Now out of this 59,000, 97% are without any active employment by virtue of their disability from the published figures by the National Census which I'm quoting.

Do you not agree that such community projects which we have started would benefit the entire population of Islington who have some form of disability or another?

Reply:

Yes, I do agree, but the construction works project will benefit people and that's why we're doing it. I don't know about the first figures you quoted, other than statistics can be misleading. But it is important and we are doing work on it with partners in the area.

Chief Executive's note: Following the answer to this question, the allocated 40 minutes for public questions expired, and written answers were supplied in respect of questions (i) and (j).

- (i) Jennifer Chan to Councillor Lucy Watt, Executive Member for the Environment

Will Islington Council be celebrating Car-Free Day this year and, if so, what sort of event(s) might we look forward to?

Reply:

Yes is the answer to the question. Islington will be celebrating Car Free Day on the 22nd September this year.

This council has long history of support for sustainable transport and its promotion through events such as Car Free Day. Our commitment to sustainable travel was acknowledged when the council was awarded Sustainable Transport Borough of the Year in 2005, and Transport Borough of the Year in 2006.

Sustainable Transport Week – called Good Going Week in London - will be held on 17 - 22 September 2006 and we are planning a number of promotional events during the week for alternative fuels, walking, cycling and public transport. Car Free Day, on September 22nd, is a highlight of the week. We are currently in the process of finalising our plans for the day. Details of the week will be published in the Islington Good Going Newsletter which is available to residents free of charge, by contacting the council's Green Travel Officer, Kathryn King. Details of the plans will also be available on the council's website nearer the time.

(j) Pat McCann to Councillor Andrew Cornwell, Executive Member for Finance.

How many Councillors and ex-Councillors purchased Council properties that were not locally advertised and how did they gain the knowledge to purchase them?

Reply:

I note that this question is entirely open-ended and does not distinguish between right to buy and other purchases. Neither does it define the dates in relation to which the information is sought.

Officers have checked records of non-right to buy sales since 2000 and have not noted any properties which have been bought by councillors or councillors who were members in the previous term other than at auction (one member). Details of auction sales are open to all members of the public.

7. THE ONE ISLINGTON CORPORATE PLAN (Item 7)

The Mayor agreed to consider the report as the final approved Plan was required to be submitted to the Government by the end of June.

Councillor Kempton, seconded by Councillor Stacy, moved the recommendations in the report.

Following debate, Councillors P. Smith, Ray, West, Greening, Berent, Convery, Allan, Watts, Kelly, Cornwell, the motion was put to the vote and declared CARRIED on the Mayor's casting vote.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the final Corporate Plan document, which includes information to meet statutory best value performance plan requirements, be endorsed.
- (b) That proposals for monitoring the plan be noted.

8. EMERGENCY MOTION: INDEMNIFICATION OF COSTS

As a consequence of her interest in this item, the Mayor asked the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Barbara Smith) to chair the meeting.

COUNCILLOR BARBARA SMITH IN THE CHAIR

The Mayor, Councillors Cornwell, Ray and Watt (in pursuance of their earlier declarations of interest) and the Chief Executive left the meeting.

Councillor West, seconded by Councillor Convery, moved the motion.

Councillor Kempton, seconded by Councillor Foxsmith, moved the following amendment:

Insert new point 1:

- "1. Council notes that in August 2002 then Labour Group Leader Mary Creagh made a complaint that Liberal Democrat councillors had planned to appoint Helen Bailey as Chief Executive for reasons of political bias and regardless of merit; following a three year investigation and a full hearing, in January 2006 a tribunal ruled that "it does not accept that any such plan existed", that "no criticism can be made of the decision to appoint Helen Bailey" (para 6.459) and that "the tribunal can see no basis upon which it would be open to it to conclude that anything other than an entirely appropriate decision was taken on 22 July 2002", (para. 6.462)"
- and re-number accordingly.

Insert at end of new point 2 (old point 1) "in which they were found innocent"

Insert new point 5 after new point 4 (old point 3):

- "5. Council believes that it is a fundamental principle of British Justice that it should not be possible to bankrupt someone by making allegations against them that are found to be wrong; and that breaching this would severely harm Islington by further deterring a wide cross-section of local society from engaging in public life."

And re-number accordingly.

In new point 6 (old point 4), replace 'first' with 'last', after 'compensation' insert "after

- (a) Contributing £29,500 from Liberal Democrat funds – a large sum for Islington Liberal Democrats, and considerably greater than they spent on the recent local election campaign

- (b) seeking recourse from all other possible sources, including
 - (i) the Standards Board, who have confirmed that if they had the power to reimburse the costs, they would have done so
 - (ii) the Government

and therefore accepts that payment by the Council under the Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 is the only alternative to the burden falling on the individuals themselves.”

and delete “their own party, nationally, regionally and locally, and without attempting to fundraise themselves to meet the costs”

Insert new point 7 after new point 6 (old point 4):

“7. Council notes that although the legislation creating the Standards Board gave the Board the power to reimburse the costs of those found innocent, this has not been possible simply because the relevant Minister has yet to sign the appropriate Order”

And renumber accordingly.

In new point 8 (old point 5), insert after ‘prolonged by the’, insert “mishandling of the case by the Standards Board, who subsequently apologised for this, saying in a press release on the 6th March 2006 “the Board concluded that the investigation should have been completed more quickly; aspects of the investigation could, and should, have been handled differently and better; prolonged uncertainty, for which the Board apologies.” And delete “the behaviour of former Councillors Hitchins and Dunn whose attempts to conceal facts from the Ethical Standards Officer were described as ‘reprehensible’”.

In new point 10 (old point 7), replace ‘condemns’ with ‘regrets’, replace ‘executive’s decision’ with ‘need’, insert ‘innocent’ between ‘the’ and ‘four former’, delete from ‘Liberal Democrat Administration’ to end and replace with “relevant minister of state to enact the Statutory Instrument required to allow the Standards Board to pay the costs, as would be more just and appropriate.”

After debate, Councillors Edwards, Jamieson-Ball, W. Burgess, P. Smith, Allan, Ece, Watts and reply on the amendment, the amendment was put to the vote and declared LOST.

The motion was then put to the vote and declared CARRIED – 23 members voting for, 20 against and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED:

1. Council notes Executive Report B2, entitled ‘Indemnification of Costs,’ which was approved by the 22nd June meeting of the Executive, and which proposes the payment of compensation to four former members of the authority, a sitting councillor and the Chief Executive, with respect to personal legal costs incurred during the course of the Standards Board investigation.

2. Council also notes

- i) That legal costs faced by former councillor Mary Creagh were met by the Labour Party and not the tax-payer.
- ii) The precedent set in 1986 when Labour councillors, after being cleared of charges resulting from an investigation started by SDP councillors, were responsible for paying their own legal fees. On this occasion, the Islington Labour Parties raised their own funds to pay the legal bills faced by the innocent councillors.

3. Council further notes that Islington Council has since taken out insurance for councillors which indemnifies members against legal costs, if they are cleared of the charges brought against them.
4. Council believes that the Liberal Democrat Administration is treating Islington's Council Tax payers as the 'first port of call' for compensation without first seeking recourse from their own Party, nationally, regionally and locally; and without attempting to fundraise themselves to meet the costs.
5. Council also believes that the investigation was prolonged by the behaviour of former councillors Hitchins and Dunn whose attempts to conceal facts from the Ethical Standards Officer were described as "reprehensible",
6. Council agrees with Councillor Kempton's remarks that it is "outrageous" that Islington's Council Tax payers should be asked to foot this bill.
7. Council condemns the Executive's decision to pay the legal costs of the four former councillors and the sitting councillor and calls on the Liberal Democrat Administration to find alternative sources of funding for the legal costs faced by its Party members.

COUNCILLOR JYOTI VAJA IN THE CHAIR

9. EMERGENCY MOTION: THE KING'S PLACE FIRE

Councillor Convery moved, duly seconded, the laid round motion, and in doing so thanked the Mayor, the Chief Executive and all staff involved for their efforts in connection with the emergency.

Councillor Kempton moved, duly seconded, the following amendment and paid tribute to all the emergency services.

1. In point 4, replace 'on the developer, Parabola Land, and their contractor, McAlpine, to publicly express their regret for the events, apologise for the considerable trouble caused and regardless of where any fault may lie, start making arrangements' with

'for an urgent investigation by the Fire Brigade that the lessons are learnt to ensure the future safety of residents in the area. Where negligence is proved, Council would expect those involved'

2. Insert at end of point 4, 'and'

3. In point 5 delete '5. On the same basis Council also calls on the developer and their contractor to make compensatory payments to'.

The amendment was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Council notes the serious fire at the construction site on York Way which led to the evacuation of a thousand residents from their homes, the closure of several schools in the area and massive disruption for passengers and commuters using King's Cross Station.

(b) Council extends its grateful thanks to Father Jim Kennedy and his team at Blessed Sacrament Church for providing safe lodging, at short notice, for people evacuated overnight, and also to the WRVS, St. Johns Ambulance and the Red Cross for their efforts keeping people fed and watered over the course of the evacuation.

(c) Council further commends Council officers, the London Fire Brigade and the Metropolitan Police Service for their implementation of emergency plans.

(d) Council calls for an urgent investigation by the Fire Brigade that the lessons are learnt to ensure the future safety of residents in the area. Where negligence is proved, Council will expect those involved to compensate residents inconvenienced by the fire and Kate Greenaway Nursery School, Blessed Sacrament and Copenhagen Primary Schools, for the disruption of their pupils' education.

10. CALLOVER

At 10.30 pm, in accordance with the Constitution, the following business was dealt with under the closure procedure. Motions were deemed to be formally moved.

11. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – DRAFT CORE STRATEGY (Item 8)

The Mayor stated that this was to be discussed at the Overview Committee. Councillor Watt moved, seconded by Councillor Allan, that the recommendation be deleted and substituted with the following recommendation:

“To approve in principle in Core Strategy (Appendix 1), subject to its consideration at a further meeting taking account of any changes, recommended by the Executive in light of the deliberations of the Council's Overview Committee.”

RESOLVED:

That the Core Strategy (Appendix 1) be approved in principle, subject to its consideration at a further meeting taking account of any changes recommended by the Executive in light of the deliberations of the Council's Overview Committee.

12. REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS (Item 9)

RESOLVED:

That the amendments to Section C of the Financial Regulations attached as Appendix A be approved.

13. BUDGET VIREMENTS (Item 10)

RESOLVED:

That the intra service virement in the sum of £664,000 relating to the Tracks Triangle Regeneration Scheme be approved.

14. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Item 11)

(a) Councillor Anna Berent to Councillor Lucy Watt, Executive Member for the Environment

The Lib Dem manifesto this year promised to introduce a 'local wire' solar energy generator to provide greener, more reliable and cheaper electricity to residents. Can you tell me how this would work, what time scale it's likely to take, and the contribution this will make to reducing carbon emissions?

Reply:

The "local wire" solar generator to power homes is an idea that comes from Woking Council, who have succeeded in cutting their carbon emissions by 20%, so would seem like a good leader to follow in this field. Developing city and community scale solutions to clean and green energy is at last a hot topic, and there is very recently (post manifesto) far more technical information around about the feasibility of what would work in a big city like London. In particular the GLA have done detailed studies which favour the development of CHP and biomass heating for large scale clean energy solutions in high density urban areas.

Islington is committed to significant carbon reduction. We will be using newly available technical information in developing our options for delivering on the Local Area Agreement carbon reduction target we are agreeing with the Government Office for London. The stringent planning requirement for 20% renewable energy in proposed major developments will also reduce our carbon emissions. The Sustainability Unit is currently leading on feasibility work for developing renewable energy projects and this will ensure that we develop projects which will deliver the best carbon saving.

(b) Councillor Ruth Polling to Councillor Marisha Ray, Executive Member for Performance and Community Safety

How many people are estimated to be affected by domestic violence in Islington, and how are the council and the police working together to reduce this?

Reply:

Domestic violence is a tragedy not only for the victims, but also for other often vulnerable family members who witness it or suspect it.

There are few accounts more harrowing than the memories of a bereaved mother whose daughter has been the victim of domestic violence.

While both men and women can be and are victims of domestic violence, globally it is the most common cause of death amongst women who are between nineteen and forty four years old.

In Britain as a whole one woman is killed every two to three days. Nationally it accounts for 17% of violent crime and almost a third of it starts or escalates during pregnancy.

The council and police are key partners who work together in the Domestic Violence Project team - a sub group of the Safer Islington Partnership.

The team prioritises the needs of survivors, the development of safe and accessible support and advocacy services, the support of children and young people, holding perpetrators accountable while reducing risk to survivors and the promotion of the cultural shift needed which reduces tolerance of domestic violence.

The Domestic Violence Strategy 2006 to 2009 gives more detail on the team's aims and tasks. The team is supported by the Domestic Violence Coordinator.

I will describe a few of the ways in which the team consisting of the council, the police and our other partners will continue to work together.

In the coming year the CEA Homesafe scheme will increase awareness of school age children and young people leading to increased identification and reporting of domestic violence increasing the chances further that it will be picked up on in our schools.

MARAC, the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, continues as a key part of identifying and responding to survivors who are at risk of harm.

The Home Shelter Scheme increases levels of security in survivors' own homes enabling them and their families to survive a continued threat to them when they are at greatest risk - a situation that may arise for example when an injunction is served on the perpetrator.

A new independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service for victims at high risk of harm is to be established as will a specialist service for children and young people affected by domestic violence.

These are just a few of the ways in which we aim to improve the chances of survivors.

All too often it is not known or known only to a few that a person is a survivor of domestic violence and those who find out what is taking place may not know how to report it without causing greater risk and therefore refrain from reporting it at all.

The Domestic Violence Project team has worked to provide support and training to many voluntary sector agencies and community groups on what domestic violence is, when suspicions should be raised that it may be taking place, how to support survivors and their families and how to report it.

Third party reporting as it is known is carried out with the consent of the survivor and is an important means of detecting this crime.

In the coming year, the council will be enable survivors and third parties to report incidents through Contact Islington providing an easy channel for such incidents to be logged.

All emergencies would of course be reported to the emergency services as usual.

If survivors do not want to be identified, third parties will be nevertheless able to notify Contact Islington that domestic violence has been brought to their attention providing us with greater information on the number of incidents taking place without giving details of the survivor.

A record of the incidents reported would be retained and can be used where necessary by survivors at a later date should they wish to take further action.

This facility is to be widely publicised to the many agencies who provide support to survivors of domestic violence and more generally to the wider public.

- (c) Councillor Paula Belford to Councillor Terry Stacy, Executive Member for Housing and Communities

What are you and the council doing to improve community relations and understanding for the many different faith groups in the borough?

Reply:

Under the leadership of my colleague Councillor Willoughby, the council took the initiative in setting up a Faiths Forum in Islington some five years ago in early 2001. The Forum was formally inaugurated with a high-profile launch in 2004 attended by around 50 different faith communities.

It has a steering group supported by council officers which meets regularly to progress its agenda with representatives from Islington's Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Baha'i communities, and I was very pleased to announce that we expect a representative of our Jewish communities to join them very soon. Since it was formed the group has been chaired first by a representative of the Muslim community and now a local Christian priest, our Anglican Borough Dean.

The council provides direct support for servicing and developing the network. We have also supported an application for Home Office funding which I am delighted to be able to report has been successful and has enabled the Forum to have its own independent resources for development.

As you will know, a key aim of the Council's One Islington vision is for Islington to be a "Place where people of all backgrounds are able to achieve their full potential and a borough of safe, thriving and active communities".

I am delighted to say the Forum has very much made its mark in improving community relations through the vital role it played in responding to the appalling events of September 2001 and July 2005. The Forum enabled faith communities in Islington to come together in their response to events, which could so easily have driven them apart. This response was expressed most clearly in the inter-faith service organised by the Forum in September last year to which representatives of all faith communities in Islington contributed on an equal basis, of which a number of staff and members past and present attended.

The Islington Faiths Forum is the principal network for the council and the voluntary and community sector more widely to engage with representatives of faith communities. Along with other networks of voluntary and community organisations, it is now part of the Islington Community Network, which feeds directly into the Islington Strategic Partnership. It is used as a basis for consultation and engagement by council officers. It was recently consulted, for example, on the development of the Local Area Agreement.

A good example of the way the Faiths Forum is connecting with the council, and one I am particularly proud of, is its involvement in the council's emergency planning process. We have trained members of the Forum in our procedures and the Forum will be an important part of rolling out our emergency plan should we ever need to do so. This will enable us to link with a wide range of community-based resources and volunteers if we need them. I believe this is being held up across the country as best practice.

(d) Councillor Richard Greening to Councillor James Kempton, Leader of the Council

Are you satisfied that it is safe for the Emirates Stadium to open given police concerns about conflict between pedestrians and cars in view of 22,000 additional fans arriving at and leaving the new stadium along routes such as Isledon Rd which are already known to be dangerous?

Reply:

The use and operation of the Emirates Stadium is subject to a Safety Certificate. To obtain a Safety Certificate, Arsenal Football Club will have to demonstrate to the Council's Public Protection Division that there are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure public safety. In reaching its decision on the number of visitors that the stadium and immediate area can safely accommodate, the Council will consult with key partners including the Police, Fire and Ambulance services. I understand that the Police will support the granting of the Safety Certificate if the proposed match day traffic management measures are put in place, and the recommendations of the Environment and Safety Audit are implemented.

Over the past year the Council has been working closely with the Police and Club to carry out an Environment and Safety Audit on the main pedestrian routes to the new stadium. This audit has been discussed with the Stadium Liaison Committee.

The Audit has identified a number of measures that are needed to ensure the safety of local residents and spectators, and to protect the amenity of the local environment. As a result, the Club will fund the following measures:

- 12 CCTV cameras to enable the Police to monitor spectator flows and behaviour;
- pedestrian signage to reduce the likelihood of spectators diverting into adjoining streets;
- footway improvements to remove trip hazards;
- pruning of overhanging trees and bushes; and
- some security measures for the Harvist Estate (although the precise nature of these measures is yet to be agreed).

In addition, there will be a substantial increase in the number of police officers deployed around the stadium on match days - this is likely to be more than double. Barriers will also be placed in some locations where there is a possibility that spectators may spill onto the road - these locations include Isledon Road.

The Club is also tied to a rigorous monitoring programme. This includes the monitoring of pedestrian movement before and after matches. Additional funding is also available from the Club to address any problems identified through this monitoring or via feedback from the local community. The Liaison Committee will also be consulted before any additional measures are implemented.

I will finish by re-iterating my first point. This is that the Stadium Safety Certificate will only be issued if the Police tell us that it is safe to do so.

(e) Councillor Theresa Debono to Councillor James Kempton, Leader of the Council

At the last Council Meeting you promised that in future the Council will be listening and consulting with the public. Despite this, the Council clearly ignored this promise and proposed the closures of 12 local streets on Arsenal match days without consulting with residents. Can you explain to the residents of Highbury why they were not consulted when this issue was being considered by the Council, the police and Arsenal for the past 18 months? Do you not think that the residents should also have been involved in such discussions?

Reply:

In May 2006, over 5,000 leaflets were sent out to all the occupiers within the area that would be directly affected by the proposals. The purpose of these leaflets was to notify local people about the proposed traffic management measures, and to tell them that the Council intended to make an Experimental Traffic Order.

However, as you are aware, Members have taken the view that, in this instance, the statutory consultation arrangements are totally inadequate and, at its meeting on 25 May 2006, the East Area Committee decided that a full public consultation exercise on the measures would be carried out. At that meeting, East Area Committee was informed that it would be able to make the decision on the traffic order.

Following the meeting a further 5,000 letters were sent out with comment cards, and an additional drop-in session was organised. The feedback from the consultation and the drop-in sessions has been analysed and reported to East Area Committee on 27 June 2006 and a decision made in public that took account of views and representations made at the meeting by members of the public and their directly elected representatives.

The Traffic Management Order agreed for the match day road closures is experimental and the Committee is committed to review the experimental arrangement after five home matches.

After the Stadium opens, we will continue to listen to local people through the usual channels, including in particular East Area Committee, and the Stadium Liaison Committee. The arrangements for the Stadium Liaison Committee are being reviewed as, in line with the Council's new priorities, I wish to make it more open and accountable to local people.

- (f) Councillor Gary Doolan to Councillor John Gilbert, Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care

Given the Lib Dems' newly found commitment to listening to people, will you therefore listen to the users of the Council's Home Care Service, and issue a guarantee that, if your plans are opposed, the service will not be privatised by your Administration?

Reply:

The Council is strongly committed to listening to Islington which naturally involves working closely with users and other stakeholders when we review ways of improving the quality and value for money of services. In relation to the council's home care service, we are looking at different options to deliver better value for money and good quality services.

Islington currently delivers its home care services through both an in-house team and a number of external providers. This mix of provision has been in place for many years; the in-house team currently provides about 25% of the boroughs' home care. We contract with a variety of external providers who deliver services in specific parts of the borough to ensure that care is provided in a responsive and reliable manner. Contractors also have an agreement with the Council to operate from an Islington based branch, thus increasing the likelihood that local people are employed. All provision including external and in-house has an average satisfaction rating of 94%. This is good and we are working in partnership with all providers to improve it yet further. A call monitoring system is currently being purchased and one of the aims of this system is to further improve the speed of care delivery.

In its 2005 annual performance assessment of Islington's social care services for adults, the Commission for Social Care Inspection identified our unit costs for home care as being above average for inner London and highlighted reducing these as an area for development.

Social Services have been working, over the last few months, to identify additional ways to improve quality and effectiveness of services as well as securing best value. Having consulted with a number of other boroughs we are further developing proposals that will strengthen the assessment period and to ensure intensive input in the first few weeks following referral. An effective response at this point can often increase the chances of recovering full independence. This approach is sometimes called the 'Gateway' or 'enablement' model. A final model of service and management arrangements has not yet been developed, and we will be considering the most appropriate way of delivering this service, either by in-house or external providers.

We will continue our work to improve the quality and value for money of services and to include service users in developing services and monitoring their effectiveness. Management of workload across providers including the in-house service to ensure a responsive, effective and value for money service is kept under constant review in order to ensure the service is able to meet current and future demands placed upon it.

(g) Councillor Lisa Spall to Councillor Marisha Ray, Executive Member for Community Safety and Performance

In the last twelve months, according to Metropolitan Police figures, gun-enabled crime in Islington has soared by over 67%, whereas it has fallen by 38% in Camden and 14% in Haringey. What initiatives are you pursuing, especially in light of the recent shooting on Upper Street and at Finsbury Park station, to reduce gun-enabled crime in our borough?

Reply:

The council is concerned about the general increase in violent crime across London and wants Islington to continue to have less violent crime than other boroughs. Gun crime in the borough fell from over 22 offences in August 2002 to a low of less than 5 in mid 2004. Since then the level has risen again slightly but is still well short of the level it was in 2002.

The recent, well publicised, incident in Islington is an example of the general increase in violent crimes across London. We have so far been able to maintain low levels of such incidents, but even one is one too many.

Gun enabled crime in Islington remains very, very rare indeed. It contributes to just 0.003% of total crimes committed in the borough – just one of every thirty five thousand or so crimes committed

The council works very closely with the police and other agencies to target offenders with a combination of support services and enforcement. There is work with young people in schools to raise their general awareness about the dangers of weapons and to challenge the concept of them needing weapons for self-defence.

We continue to work through our young people and youth offending services to identify where young people are at risk of becoming involved in violent behaviour and work with them in a number of ways to prevent and deter them.

The council and its partners will continue to explore the specific policing needs of every area and will use any available resources to tackle the problems.

The nature of media coverage means that news travel quickly, influence public opinion and can generate fear. It makes it even more important that we all continue to tackle these problems head on, while putting incidents that do occur, firmly into context.

- (h) Councillor Martin Klute to Councillor Lucy Watt, Executive Member for the Environment

Could the Council please identify the location or locations of the hectare of new green space created in the last year, and also the location or locations of the half hectare of public open space created to compensate for the area lost to private developers in Barnard Park?

Reply: (This question was held over for reply at the October meeting of the Council)

- (i) Councillor Martin Klute to Councillor Lucy Watt, Executive Member for the Environment

The excellent work carried out by Islington Boat Club with Islington's most deprived youngsters is under threat from British Waterways, who have plans to line City Road Basin with commercial moorings as part of the redevelopment of the basin. The maintenance of the open water space is essential to the continuation of Islington Boat Club's activities, and is protected under paragraph 31 of Government Planning Guidance PPG17, which states that "In considering planning applications for development near water, local authorities should ensure that access for sport and recreation purposes is not restricted". The proposed moorings (which would require planning permission) would be both a loss of public open water space to commercial interests, and would put an end to Islington Boat Club's ability to carry out its activities. Could the council please confirm that it will support Islington Boat Club in opposing British Waterways' plans?

Reply:

Councillor Klute, your question to Councillor Watt regarding the Islington Boat club has been passed to me as the member for Communities, which includes regeneration and community and voluntary sector.

I fully agree with the councillor that Islington Boat Club is a tremendous resource for the borough. The approved Masterplan for City Road Basin, when it comes to fruition, will provide the Club with much improved premises as well as, potentially, an additional income stream that will help ensure the Club's continuing operation. With regard to the use of the waterspace, I know that there has been a continuing dialogue between the Club and British Waterways. That dialogue has been informed by the council's own planning policies as well as the planning guidance to which the councillor refers and I am confident that a solution will be found that will enable the Club to continue to run all of its activities.

- (j) Councillor Phil Kelly to Councillor Lucy Watt, Executive Member for the Environment

What plans does the Council have to resurface within the next twelve months the carriageway in (a) Eburne Road, (b) Tollington Way (c) Cheverton Road (d) any other road or street in Islington which is not the responsibility of Transport for London and what plans does the Council have to re-lay within the next twelve months the pavements in (a) Eburne Road (b) Windsor Road (c) any other road or street in Islington which is not the responsibility of Transport for London?

Reply:

We have no plans to resurface Eburne Road, Tollington Way or Cheverton Road. However Cheverton Road is part of a study for a 20mph zone that may subsequently include elements of resurfacing.

Similarly, there are no plans to re-lay footways to Eburne Road or Windsor Road. Windsor Road is due to have new street lighting and small elements of re-paving are likely to be included.

Last year Islington invested £4.25million of capital in renewing its streets. All schemes were successfully delivered and major works included:

- Gillespie Road, St Thomas's Road, Dartmouth Park Hill, Liverpool Road, Old Street, Clerkenwell Road and Rosebery Avenue;
- In addition Islington received £1.2million from TfL to renew St Paul's Road and Balls Pond Road.

This year Islington will invest £1million of capital to renew our streets and the schemes are:

- Westbourne Road, Monnery Road, Canonbury Place, Hercules Place/Bowmans Mews and Dignum St/Culpeper Close;
- the footways of Islington Park Street and Theberton Street;
- preparatory works for Stroud Green Road and Brecknock Road and
- Islington will renew Junction Road with £700,000 of TfL funding.

(k) Councillor Catherine West to Councillor Ursula Woolley, Executive Member for Children and Young People

The Lib Dems privatised our school meals several years ago. We are all looking forward to an end to the Scolarest contract, which expires next year. Given that Islington's meals are amongst the least healthy in London, what vision do you have for our school meals once the Council's contract with Scolarest ends?

Reply: (This question was held over for reply at the October meeting of the Council)

(l) Councillor Natasha Chatterjee to Councillor Terry Stacy, Executive Member for Housing and Communities

Given that the Council is responsible for making sure the Arsenal keep to their planning commitments, can you please explain why Holloway Road station is to be closed before and after matches played at the new Emirates Stadium?

Reply:

1. London Underground is responsible for managing tube stations in London, and as you know, no investment can be made without their agreement and cooperation. There is no mechanism in place that enables the council to force London Underground to do something that it does not wish to do.

2. At present, Holloway Road station is served only by lifts and a spiral staircase. It was never designed for the large passenger flows that would be generated by the Emirates Stadium before and after matches. For this reason, just under £5 million was secured from Arsenal to fund capacity enhancement works at Holloway Road.
 3. When planning permission was passed for the stadium back in 2001, Transport for London expressed support for improvements at Holloway Road, funded by monies from the Arsenal 106 Agreement
 4. At the council's request, London Underground prepared a feasibility study looking at capacity improvements to Holloway Road, and concluded that the minimum cost of works that they would require at the station was around £60m. This figure did not allow for step free access to platform level, which was estimated to cost around a further £12m.
 5. The feasibility study concluded that the case for investment in Holloway Road station was very poor. On this basis, London Underground has stated that it is unlikely to ever consider funding capacity improvements at Holloway Road station. More recently, it has also stated that, even if the station were to be improved, it would be unable to operate as usual on match days due to limited train capacity on the Piccadilly Line i.e. trains would be crowded before they reached Holloway Road.
 6. London Underground has therefore told the council that it will introduce restrictions at the station on match days. It is not however anticipated that the station will be fully closed at any time.
 7. A knock-on effect of the match day restrictions at Holloway Road station is an increase in queuing at Highbury and Islington, Arsenal and Finsbury Park Stations.
 8. Clearly these restrictions will cause a great deal of inconvenience for local people. We have expressed our unhappiness about this and are disappointed with the line that TfL has taken. The former Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council lobbied very hard for the improvements to Holloway Road to be made, and I will continue to do so.
 9. In the mean time the council is also working with TfL and Arsenal's transport consultants to identify alternative uses for the £5 million, and this has been written into the draft Stadium Travel Plan.
 10. Upgrade studies for Finsbury Park and Highbury and Islington stations are also underway and initial indications are that the outcome of these studies is highly positive, and that improvements to both stations offer good value for money. However, decisions about future upgrades to both stations are unlikely to be made until the end of 2006. The earliest that either scheme could be delivered is 2010. However, I will continue to press for these improvements to be made at the earliest possible opportunity.
- (m) Councillor Janet Burgess to Councillor Andrew Cornwell, Executive Member for Finance

How much has the Council spent on consultants in each of the last five years?

Reply: (This question was held over for reply at the October meeting of the Council)

15. NOTICES OF MOTION (Item 12)

1. ARSENAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Councillor Dawson moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Greening.

Councillor Ece, duly seconded, moved an amendment deleting "East" after "determined by the" and insert "relevant", and before "Committee", insert "Planning Sub".

The amendment was CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to para.11.1.1(a) of Part 3 of the Constitution as amended, all planning applications relating to the Arsenal Development (including but not limited to, applications relating to the Highbury and Emirates Stadiums) shall henceforth be determined by the relevant Area Planning Sub-Committee (and not the Corporate Services Committee) whether or not they have, or may have, significant or strategic implications for the area.

2. NUCLEAR WASTE TRANSPORTATION THROUGH ISLINGTON

Councillor Cornwell moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Stacy.

Councillor Murray moved the following amendment:

At the first bullet point delete "Is" and replace with "Remains"

At the second bullet point, delete "Is" and replace with "Remains"

Insert the following as a new third and fourth bullet point and re-number the bullet points accordingly

- "Notes:
 - i) its existing policy on the transportation of nuclear waste through Islington, passed in 1982, and in 1989
 - ii) The campaign started by Jeremy Corbyn MP and former MP Chris Smith in 1983 to end the transportation of nuclear waste through Islington
 - iii) That Jeremy Corbyn MP and Emily Thornberry MP have recently signed an Early Day Motion praising the Mayor of London's work to undertake a risk assessment of the nuclear waste being transported through the capital
- Welcomes the Liberal Democrats late support of this campaign, albeit 24 years after Labour started it; and welcomes their u-turn since they opposed the policy, passed by Labour councillors, in 1989"

At re-numbered fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth bullet points insert "Continues" before "calls"

Delete final bullet point and replace with: "congratulates the Mayor of London for undertaking a risk assessment of the transport of nuclear waste on trains going through the capital; believes this practice to be inherently risky; and congratulates Greenpeace for their continuing campaign for the safety of everyone."

This amendment was accepted by Councillors Cornwell and Stacy, subject to the deletion of the second bullet point.

RESOLVED:

This Council:

- Remains concerned about the transportation of nuclear waste through Islington on the North London Rail line, and the risks to public health and of accidents or terrorist action posed by this;
- Remains concerned that any expansion of the nuclear industry in the UK would lead to even more nuclear waste being transported through our borough;
- Notes:
 - i) its existing policy on the transportation of nuclear waste through Islington, passed in 1982 and in 1989
 - ii) The campaign started by Jeremy Corbyn MP and former MP Chris Smith in 1983 to end the transportation of nuclear waste through Islington
 - iii) That Jeremy Corbyn MP and Emily Thornberry MP have recently signed an Early Day Motion supporting the Mayor of London's risk assessment of nuclear waste being transported through the capital and the work of Greenpeace in this field
- Continues calls for all future decisions about nuclear power to take full account of such safety issues;
- Continues calls on the Government to make an immediate commitment to ending the transportation of radioactive waste through population centres and end such transportations as soon as is practicable
- Continues calls for emergency services personnel to be adequately trained to deal with nuclear accidents involving the trains, and for plans for emergencies involving the shipments should be made publicly available and emergency planning departments told in advance of times of nuclear trains passing through their area;
- Continues calls for renewable energy and energy conservation programmes to be urgently expanded in this country to replace existing nuclear power stations when they come to the end of their operating lives;
- Congratulates the Mayor of London for undertaking a risk assessment of the transport of nuclear waste on trains going through the capital; believes this practice to be inherently risky; and congratulates Greenpeace for their continuing campaign for the safety of everyone

3. PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR ISLINGTON

Councillor Willoughby moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Fieran-Reid.

Councillor Greening, seconded by Councillor Convery, moved the following amendment:

“delete all after bullet point two and replace with

3. If these elections had been held using a system of proportional representation, there would be 17 Labour councillors, 15 Lib.Dem councillors, 8 Green councillors, 6 Conservative councillors and 2 councillors representation 'Other' parties."

The amendment was LOST.

RESOLVED:

Council notes:

1. The results of this year's local elections.
2. That these elections were held under a first past the post system.
3. If these elections had been held using a system of proportional representation there would be 6 Conservative councillors, 8 Green councillors, 17 Labour councillors and 17 Liberal Democrat councillors.
4. That the council in 2004 adopted a motion supporting a fair voting system of proportional representation in local government.
5. The Labour Group voted against this motion.

Council welcomes:

1. The calls from members of all parties in the council chamber at the 2006 annual council for proportional representation for local government as well as being pleased to note that the Scottish local elections in 2007 will be held under proportional representation.

This Council:

1. Confirms its commitment to proportional representation in local government.
2. Will write to the Secretary of State for Local Government to urge the government to reconsider introducing proportional representation for local government.

4. ID CARDS

Councillor Foxsmith moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Jamieson-Ball.

Councillor Edwards, seconded by Councillor Kelly, moved the following amendment:

"Delete para.5 of "This Council resolves to" and replace with:

5. Guarantee that residents who wish to use their ID cards as a means of identification when applying for, receiving or accessing Council services are not penalised or in any way obstructed for choosing this form of identification.

At para.6, delete "Chief Executive" and replace with "Leader of the Council".

This amendment was LOST.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes the Labour Government's ID Cards Bill and that it will have an effect upon all of the people of Islington. This Council believes:

- 1) that the disadvantages of such a scheme will outweigh any likely benefits to the people of Islington.
- 2) that the scheme will do little, if anything, to prevent terrorism, crime or fraud.
- 3) that the national database that underpins the identity card scheme may facilitate criminal fraud, terrorism and potential state abuses of human rights.
- 4) that the ID card and database proposals are likely to fundamentally alter the relationship between the state and the individual. According to Government estimates, the cost of such a scheme could reach £5.5 billion, with independent commentators predicting substantially higher costs. Islington residents will be required to pay an estimated £35 for a stand-alone ID card or £85 for a passport and ID card together.

This Council resolves to:

- 1) affiliate to the 'No2ID' campaign, which already includes MPs and several political parties
- 2) make representations at every possible stage, reiterating this Council's opposition to ID cards
- 3) take no part in any pilot scheme or feasibility work in relation to the introduction of the national identity cards
- 4) make it a policy of the council to ensure that national identity cards would not be required to access council services or benefits unless specifically required to do so by law
- 5) only co-operate with the national identity card scheme where to do otherwise would be unlawful
- 6) instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary expressing these views and asking him to reconsider the scheme.

5. EFFECTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS

Councillor Polling moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Dunlop.

RESOLVED:

This Council believes that the current format of full Council meetings does not provide the most effective forum for councillors and residents to debate the issues of most important to local people, and calls on the Overview Committee to initiate a scrutiny review into how full Council meetings could be made more effective for all.

6. LORRIES ON RESIDENTIAL ROADS

Councillor Stacy moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Kasprzyk.

Councillor Sidnell, duly seconded, moved the following amendment:

“At the final line add the following “and also calls on the Executive to implement a review of the condition of all the roads in Islington where the Council is responsible for their maintenance and carry out a prioritised programme of repairs with the worst roads repaired first.”

This was accepted by Councillor Stacy.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes that too many lorries are driving through residential roads in Islington even though they are not going to residents and businesses in the street and that this causes distressing noise and vibration and calls on the Executive to review the effectiveness of measures currently in place and bring forward measures to further deter lorries using residential streets, and by doing this make a significant improvement to the quality of life of local residents in the borough.

7. ARSENAL STADIUM TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Stacy moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Willoughby.

Councillor Debono moved the following amendment:

“Insert new para to ‘This Council notes’

5. That, as the planning authority, it shares responsibility for the current unsatisfactory transport arrangements to and from the new Arsenal Stadium.

At para.1 of ‘This Council’ add the following:

“and accepts its share of the blame for these improvements not going ahead.”

The amendment was LOST.

RESOLVED:

This Council notes:

1. The concerns of local residents about transport arrangements for supporters to and from the new Arsenal Stadium

2. That £5million was offered as part of the Arsenal Section 106 for Transport for London led improvements to Holloway Road Tube Station

3. Despite this, Transport for London and London Underground have chosen not to undertake any upgrading works to Holloway Road Tube Station and are proposing to close it on match days

4. The Council and its members from all political parties have lobbied Transport for London on this issue

This Council:

1. Expresses its disappointment that Transport for London has not accepted the £5million offered to them for improvements to Holloway Road Tube Station.
2. Will campaign alongside residents to ensure that Transport for London upgrade and improve the remaining three stations serving the New Stadium, Arsenal, Highbury & Islington and Finsbury Park, so that they provide high quality transport links for local residents and football fans alike.

8. ENCOURAGING LOCAL RECYCLING INITIATIVES

Councillor Murray moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Debono.

The motion was LOST.

9. SALE OF COPENHAGEN STREET SITE

Councillor Edwards moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Murray.

Councillor Watt, duly seconded, moved the following amendment:

After 'Liberal Democrat Administration', insert "of derelict buildings next to Barnard Park that were attracting fly tipping, pigeons and anti social behaviour, and the inclusion of a 1 meter strip of parkland to allow safe access to the site with full" and delete "of the community's parkland without"

Between 'with the' and 'community' insert 'local'

After 'community', delete "'s approval' and insert "including the Friends of Barnard Park, Sure Start, and the Tenants and Residents Association of the neighbouring housing estate."

In second paragraph, replace "resolves" with "notes"

After "That", delete "all funds gained from the sale of the Copenhagen Street site and the beer garden will be spent on the improvements to Barnard Park" and replace with "this decision was made by the Area Planning Sub Committee and implemented in the Section 106 agreement and that it would be inappropriate for Council to take away their devolved powers by changing their decision at full council"

The amendment was CARRIED on the Mayor's casting vote.

RESOLVED:

That Council notes the sale by the previous Liberal Democrat administration of derelict buildings next to Barnard Park that were attracting fly tipping, pigeons and anti social behaviour, and the inclusion of a 1 metre strip of parkland to allow safe access to the site, with full consultation with the local community including the Friends of Barnard Park, Sure Start, and the Tenants and Residents Association of the neighbouring housing estate.

That Council notes that this decision was made by the Area Planning Sub Committee and implemented in the Section 106 agreement and that it would be inappropriate for Council to take away their devolved powers by changing their decision at full council.-

10. CREATING HEALTHIER SCHOOLS FOR ISLINGTON CHILDREN

Councillor West moved the motion, seconded by Councillor Greening.

Councillor Woolley moved the following amendment.

1. Insert after 'Council notes' new points:

1. notes the significant efforts being undertaken by the Council and CEA to improve the quality of meals in Islington schools

2. Welcomes the additional half a million pounds invested in school meals in Islington by the Liberal Democrats in this year's annual Council budget

3. Welcomes the report of the Regeneration Review Committee, *Children Eating Well*, and the large number of specific and practical recommendations it makes for improving the nutrition of children in Islington; however regrets that no Labour members of the committee participated in this inquiry

4. Welcomes the efforts being made to improve the quality of school meals and bring schools up to standard under the Healthy Schools programme

2. In original point 1, replace 'Government is' with 'Government has made plenty of announcements about'; after 'school menus' delete 'and' and replace with 'but has provided precious few additional resources or practical solutions for doing so;'

3. Replace original point 4 with 'that the budgets and responsibility for school meals are by law devolved to the governing bodies of individual schools, not the Council, and that the Council is simply acting as agent for those schools that request it to do so;'

4. Delete original points 5-8

5. In original point 9 delete 'larger portions of' and replace 'will' with 'is likely to'

6. Amend original point 10 to read: 'what children eat should be carefully monitored by catering staff'

7. Delete original point 11

8. Under 'Council Resolves' in point 1 replace 'be diverted from the 'A1 Borough' Project to finance instead' with 'continue to be invested'; under sub-point (ii) replace 'an upgrade of' with 'improvements to'

9. In point 2 delete 'the Council should not renew its contract with Scolarest when it terminates next year and that'; replace 'should take place' with 'is already commencing for the new contract'; delete 'The Council should encourage an in house bid for this contract'

10. Insert at end of point 3 'and that this was one of the key recommendations of the recent scrutiny review; but that farming is unlikely to be a significant industry in Islington again in the foreseeable future and that opportunities for this are therefore inevitably limited'

11. In point 4 delete 'officers should be asked to investigate' and insert at end of point 'is an interesting idea which has both advantages and disadvantages which were explored in the scrutiny review'.

The amendment was CARRIED on the Mayor's casting vote.

RESOLVED:

That Council

1. Notes the significant efforts being undertaken by the Council and CEA to improve the quality of meals in Islington schools.
2. Welcomes the additional half a million pounds invested in school meals in Islington by the Liberal Democrats in this year's annual Council budget.
3. Welcomes the report of the Regeneration Review Committee, *Children Eating Well*, and the large number of specific and practical recommendations it makes for improving the nutrition of children in Islington; however regrets that no Labour members of the committee participated in this inquiry.
4. Welcomes the efforts being made to improve the quality of school meals and bring schools up to standard under the Healthy Schools programme.
5. Notes that the Government has made plenty of announcements about revolutionising school food by eliminating meals high in fat, sugar or salt from school menus, but has provided precious few additional resources or practical solutions for doing so; endorses the Government's move to both ban the sale of junk food in schools and make school meals more nutritious and balanced, starting from September of this year.
6. Notes that the Government has also introduced daily free fruit for all pupils aged 4 - 7 years.
7. Notes that Labour-run Greenwich Council has extended its healthy school meals menu, designed by Jamie Oliver, to all 56 of its schools.
8. Notes that the budgets and responsibility for school meals are by law devolved to the governing bodies of individual schools, not the Council, and that the Council is simply acting as agent for those schools that request it to do so.

Council believes:

9. That healthy food, served at lunchtime is likely to discourage children from snacking during the day.

10. That what children eat should be carefully monitored by catering staff.

Council resolves:

1. That funds should continue to be invested in:
 - i) training for school meals caterers
 - ii) improvements to school kitchens across the borough
 - iii) and a substantial increase in the amount spent on ingredients.
2. To note that a full tendering process is already commencing for the new contract.
3. That, wherever possible, ingredients for school meals should be from local, sustainable sources and that this was one of the key recommendations of the recent scrutiny review; but that farming is unlikely to be a significant industry in Islington again in the foreseeable future and that opportunities for this are therefore inevitably limited.
4. That a system to allow pupils to pay for meals by swipe-card, eliminating any stigma for pupils in receipt of free school meals is an interesting idea which has both advantages and disadvantages which were explored in the scrutiny review.

The meeting ended at 10.49pm.

MAYOR