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ISLINGTON

COUNCIL

30 June 2022

SECOND DESPATCH

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ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2022

REPORT OF THE CHIEF WHIP

1. MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS

(i) To note that Miss Helen Spall, who was appointed as the Mayor's Consort at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 26 June, is now appointed as Mayoress.

RECOMMENDED:

(i) That Miss Helen Spall be appointed as Mayoress for the remainder of Her Worship the Mayor of Islington Councillor Marian Spall's term of office.

Cllr Sara Hyde
Chief Whip

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Resources Department
7 Newington Barrow Way, London N7 7EP

Report of: Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Meeting of: Council

Date: 30 June 2022

Ward(s): N/A

Subject: Constitution Update

1. Synopsis

1.1. This report proposes an amendment to the Council's Constitution to ensure it reflects changes in legislation and council policy and remains fit for purpose.

2. Recommendations

2.1. To approve the amendment to the Constitution as set out in the report.

3. Background

3.1. An amendment to the Constitution is set out below. This is to update the rate paid for Dependent Carers' Allowance to reflect the latest increase in London Living Wage. Amendments are marked by crossing through in the case of deletions and by underlining in the case of additions.

3.2. <u>Amendment to Part 7 - Members' Allowances Scheme</u>

(d) Dependent Carers' Allowance

A Dependent Carers' Allowance is payable to Councillors who, in order to undertake their duties as a Councillor, incur costs in arranging care for dependent relatives living with them. Dependent relatives are defined as children under the age of 15, elderly, disabled or unwell relatives who cannot be left alone (either

temporarily or permanently). Payments will not normally be made to carers who are family members or persons resident at the Councillor's home. The Carers' Allowance also includes costs associated with Councillors who themselves need the help of a carer in order for them to fulfil their duties as a Councillor. The maximum rate for this allowance is ~~£10.75~~ £11.05 per hour, based on the Living Wage Foundation's 'real living wage', to meet, or contribute towards the actual costs incurred in arranging care. The maximum period from which any one claim can be made is the duration of the meeting itself, plus ~~£10.75~~ £11.05 as a contribution towards travelling time to and from the meeting venue.

4. Implications

4.1. **Financial Implications**

4.1.1. There are no direct material financial implications associated with the amendments to the Constitution as set out in this report. All costs associated with an increase in the allowances paid will be met from existing budgets.

4.2. **Legal Implications**

4.2.1. The Council must keep its Constitution up to date (section 9P Local Government Act 2000).

4.3. **Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030**

4.3.1. There are no direct environmental implications resulting as a result of this report.

4.4. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

4.4.1. The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

4.4.2. An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report, because there are no direct impacts on residents.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1. This report proposes an amendment to the Constitution to ensure that the document remains up to date and fit for purpose.

Appendices: None

Background papers: None

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Date:

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ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING – 30 JUNE 2022

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS AND ALTERATIONS TO MOTIONS

Motion 1: Fair votes now

Amendment submitted by Cllr Diarmaid Ward

This Council notes that:

- The Labour Party in government successfully implemented Proportional Representation to a number of elections, introducing PR into the London Assembly, in devolved government for Scotland and Wales and the Supplementary vote for the Mayoral elections.
- With the Welsh Senedd reviewing legislation on Single Transferable Vote for local councils, England looks likely to be the only part of the UK without any form of PR at local level.
- After the local elections in 2022 many local councils are currently run by the Conservative Party, despite a majority of voters choosing progressive parties.
- There is a growing movement of supporters for Proportional Representation, from unions like Unite to Labour members and CLPs.
- The last Labour Government put together the Jenkins Commission, which recommended the adoption of the AV+ voting system. This system is similar to how we vote for the London Assembly, giving voters local representatives and regional list members.
- This Conservative Government won a majority of seats, despite not winning a majority of the votes (43.6%) at the last election.
- This Government has also been waging a war against PR, stripping supplementary voting away from Mayoral elections.
- ~~The UK's First Past the Post voting system curtails voter choice and leaves millions feeling unrepresented by their elected representatives.~~

This Council believes:

- That these factors have contributed to dangerous levels of distrust and disillusionment with our democratic process, with more than half of British voters saying in response to one recent poll they would support a "strong leader willing to break the rules".
- That it is essential that faith is restored in our democratic system and that the public see Parliament as fairly reflecting their views.
- That there are many reasons people are disillusioned with politics, including politicians and institutions looking inwards, rather than focusing on issues that matter most to people's daily lives

- That our First Past the Post voting system is a significant barrier to restoring this faith and all but guarantees that the balance of opinion among the electorate is not reflected in Parliament and at local councils.
- That a system of Proportional Representation in which seats match votes and all votes count equally ~~would~~ could help to rebuild public trust by ensuring that all political views are represented in Parliament and at local councils in proportion to their level of public support.
- ~~That systems of Proportional Representation that maintain a constituency link are best, since they mean voters will still have local representatives. Single Transferable Vote and AV+ both fulfil this criteria.~~
- That no voting system is perfect and many forms of Proportional Representation lack the vital local link between elected representatives and their constituents
- That Proportional Representation voting systems risk giving legitimacy to extremists, for example a Proportional Representation system in the 2010 General Election would have given the British National Party 12 MPs and in 2015 would have given UKIP 82 seats

This Council resolves:

- To ~~make representations to Islington's two local MPs asking them to support Single Transferable Vote for electing local councils, AV+ for Westminster elections and the return of Supplementary Vote for Mayoral elections~~ call for a national review of voting systems in all elections in England and UK elections
- To oppose this Conservative Government's efforts to remove existing PR systems, and to write a letter to Priti Patel condemning the removal of the supplementary vote from London's elections for Mayor.
- To ~~use proportional systems in elections managed by Islington Council, for instance for the Youth Council via a ranked choice system~~ consult young people on their choice of voting system for Youth Council elections.

Motion 2: Save Islington's buses

Alteration to motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 23.7

Proposed by Cllr Gulcin Ozdemir
Seconded by Cllr Paul Convery

This Council notes:

- Public transport in Islington makes up almost a third of all journeys in the borough – second only to walking
- Buses are the cheapest, most accessible and most popular form of public transport in Islington
- Latest figures state that 16.6% of all journeys in Islington are made by bus, which is 43.2% of all public transport journeys in the borough
- The urgency with which the Council is tackling the climate emergency and the importance of public transport in reducing car use
- That it is estimated that switching just one journey in 25 from car to bus or coach can save 2 million tonnes of CO2, and that a fully laden double-decker bus can take the place of as many as 75 cars on the road
- Buses were responsible for only 3% of total greenhouse gas emissions by transport in the UK in 2019, with cars responsible for 68%
- Transport for London (TfL) is aiming for all buses in London to be zero emission by 2034, at the latest
- TfL is one of the only major transport networks in the world that doesn't receive a central government grant, since the Central Government cut it
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on TfL's fare income and the need for Central Government support to ensure the continuation of vital public transport links in London

This Council further notes:

- With Central Government delaying funding deals and only agreeing to short-term funding, TfL is being forced to look at cutting services to balance the books
- The proposals to cut the Number 4 route entirely and major cutbacks to the 214, 254, 259 and 476 would have a detrimental impact on local people's ability to move around the borough
- The loss of the Number 4 route in particular would severely impact residents in Junction and Tufnell Park wards, as well as those who need to attend Whittington Hospital
- The rerouting of the Number 214 bus would lead to the loss of the service for all of Islington. This would have a detrimental impact on the mobility of residents in the south of the borough, and could lead to school children needing to use multiple buses to get to school
- At least 1000 people have already signed the Islington Labour petition to Save our buses

This Council resolves to:

- Call on Central Government to agree a long-term funding deal with TfL that would protect public transport and active travel investment in London
- Campaign to save the Number 4 bus route and oppose cuts to bus routes in Islington
- Work with the Mayor of London to increase the amount of local people walking, wheeling or cycling
- Support the RMT union and all other trade unions taking action this year to protect workers' pensions and conditions, oppose job cuts and call for a proper pay rise

Motion 3: Welcoming refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to Islington

Alteration to motion submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 23.7

Moved by Cllr Ilkay Cinko-Oner
Seconded by Cllr Heather Staff and Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

This Council notes:

- The contribution of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to the Borough of Islington over many decades, making our borough their home and creating a diverse Islington community
- Central Government's continued cruel, inhumane treatment of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, including the 'Hostile Environment'
- The Government's cruel treatment of the Windrush Generation which has forced many Islington residents, including several who were born in the UK, to go through unnecessary amounts of distress, with some being deported.
- The Home Office report that found that "during the period 1950-1981, every single piece of immigration or citizenship legislation was designed at least in part to reduce the number of people with black or brown skin who were permitted to live and work in the UK", leading to the racist treatment of the Windrush Generation
- Islington's support for the country of Ukraine and its people during the current invasion
- The Government's shambolic handling of Ukrainian refugees in 2022, originally only allowing applications from refuge for those with family or business ties to the UK, and the slow pace with which it has allowed Ukrainian refugees to enter the country
- Central Government's shameful proposal to deport refugees and asylum seekers to Rwanda, rather than hearing their asylum claims and allowing people to make the UK their home
- This Government claims that those crossing in small boats are economic migrants, but its own figures show this to be false. The largest group (one in four, or 1,094) crossing the Channel in small boats in the first three months of the year were people fleeing Afghanistan.
- The difficulties faced by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including insecure work, lack of access to decent housing and digital exclusion

This Council further notes:

- In 2021, Islington Council committed to becoming a recognised 'Borough of Sanctuary', to be a welcoming place of safety for all and be somewhere that is proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution
- That in December 2020, Islington Council refused to co-operate with the Conservative Government's policy to make sleeping rough grounds for deportation
- The Council's recent celebrations of Refugee Week 2022 in which we publicly shared and celebrated the contribution of refugees and migrants in Islington

- That the Council supported 137 asylum and migrant households during the COVID 19 pandemic who have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) due to their immigration status, and is currently supporting 36 NRPF households under statutory 'safety net' duties. The Council receives no funding from Central Government to support these households
- That the Council has helped resettle 63 Syrian refugees since 2015, supported 65 Afghan refugees into permanent accommodation in Islington, with more to come and provided resettlement support to 185 Ukrainian refugees (including 40 children) across 110 active hosting arrangements in Islington
- The 'One Islington' approach which means that teams and departments across the Council work together to support refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in the borough
- In 2021, the Council worked with the Mayor of London to buy back 80 former right-to-buy homes, 20 of which will be family-sized homes reserved for Afghan refugees
- The event hosted by the Council in 2022 to celebrate Nowruz with our local community
- The support the Council has given to Ukrainian refugees in recent months, including brokering hosting arrangements, authorising cash payments, enrolling young people in schools and arranging an event to introduce them to local services

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Government to publicly oppose plans to send asylum seekers to Rwanda and to support welcoming all migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK
- Call on the Government to seek to expand safe and legal routes for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to come to the UK, properly fund local authorities so they can meet the diverse needs of the communities they serve and make legal aid available for immigration cases
- Write to Arsenal Football Club, asking them to reconsider their sponsorship with the Rwandan Government following its role in the UK Government's shameful proposals
- Continue welcoming all migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who wish to make Islington their home, in line with the council's pledge to be a borough of sanctuary.
- To share and develop educational resources for schools to support refugees, like Educational Above All (EAA) resources for Afghan and Ukrainian refugee children.
- To share resources with refugees and asylum seekers about the benefits of joining a trade union.
- Celebrate Independence Day of Ukraine on Wednesday 24th August with an event where refugees can meet relevant Islington Council Staff, ward councillors and partner organisations.

- Offer support to Ukrainian refugees who are hosted in Islington to ensure they have access to vital services and feel at home in our borough, and inform host residents of the opportunity to welcome refugees through Community Sponsorship.
- Continue to lobby the government to reform the No Recourse to Public Funds condition so that people are no longer blocked from fully participating in society for years while they wait for their status to be resolved. We will continue to put pressure on Central Government to put in place a fully-functional Windrush Compensation Scheme.

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