

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING - 8 JULY 2021

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 8 July 2021 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Bell-Bradford	Heather	O'Halloran
Bosman-Quarshie	Hyde	Poole
Clarke	Ismail	Russell
Comer-Schwartz	Jackson	Shaikh
Gallagher	Khurana	Turan
Gilgunn	Klute	Ward
Gill	Lukes	Williamson
Graham	Ngongo	
Hamitouche	North	

The Mayor (Councillor Troy Gallagher) in the Chair

137 **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Council paid tribute to Carmel Littleton, the Corporate Director – People, who sadly passed away the previous week. Carmel was remembered as a supportive and very hard-working colleague and dedicated public servant, whose commitment to children and families and contribution to children's services in Islington, was second to none. The Council expressed their condolences to Carmel's family and friends and held a moment of silence.

138 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20 May 2021 be agreed as a correct record and the Mayor be authorised to sign them.

139 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

140 **MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

(i) Apologies

No apologies for absence were received, however, the Mayor explained that not all members could attend because social distancing restrictions had significantly reduced the capacity of the Council Chamber.

(ii) Order of business

The Mayor advised that Item 9, Resolution to extend six month rule, had been removed from the agenda.

(iii) Declaration of discussion items

No items were declared.

(iv) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor announced that former councillor Kazim Khan had passed away and extended his condolences to his family, friends and loved ones.

The Mayor shared his reflections on his first six weeks as Mayor, in particular noting the work carried out in support of his charities ICAP, James' Place and forum+. The Mayor had held a number of meetings around how the borough can support their important work on mental health, suicide prevention and support for the LGBT community.

The Mayor said that it was fantastic to visit the pop-up Covid-19 vaccination clinic Emirates Stadium and thanked Arsenal FC and all the staff and volunteers for their contribution. Many thousands had received a vaccination during the event and the sense of community spirit was heartening.

The Mayor was delighted to attend the Windrush Day flag raising outside of the Town Hall. It was so important to recognise and remember the contribution of the Windrush generation to Islington, and never forget the challenges faced by the Windrush generation. It was important that the spirit and memories of the Windrush generation are captured.

The Mayor had attended the Armed Forces Day flag raising and thanked the Islington Veterans Association for their work in support of armed forces personnel. The Mayor also thanked Cllr Gary Poole, Armed Forces Champion, for his dedication and contribution.

The Mayor had attended the Cally Festival for the launch of the Freeling Street Pocket Park. It was a great event and the Mayor thanked all those involved and commented on the fantastic community spirit.

The Mayor had visited the Irish Embassy and had joined the Irish Ambassador for lunch as the first Irish Mayor of Islington. It was intended to hold events over the next year to support and recognise the contribution of the Irish community to Islington.

The Mayor noted the recent anniversary of the 2017 Finsbury Park terror attack. The Mayor said that the Council's thoughts were with the family of Makram Ali and we must never allow hate to divide us. There was no place for racism or hatred in the borough.

(v) Length of speeches

The Mayor reminded all councillors to stay within the permitted length for speeches.

141 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader spoke of her sadness at the passing of Carmel Littleton, who was loved and respected by so many. The Leader said that Carmel's family were in her prayers. Carmel was warm, kind, funny, smart and a gritty and unwavering commitment to improving the lives of the children and young people she worked with.

The Leader also wished to remember Tony Eastlake and Taylor Cox who had been tragically murdered. Both of these incidents had shaken the community and the Leader passed on her deepest condolences to their families.

The Leader said that her first few weeks in office had been busy and trying, but a real highlight had been attending the Windrush Day celebrations. It was a real honour to pay tribute to the Windrush community who had made a massive contribution to the borough. The Mayor thanked all involved in their event for their efforts.

The Leader thanked the Mayor for attending the mass vaccination events at the Emirates Stadium. The Leader had volunteered at the event and had spoken to many who were delighted to be getting their vaccine. It was fantastic to see council staff, NHS colleagues and others working together to vaccinate over 9,000 people over four days. The Leader commented on the importance of the NHS; it is there when we need it most, and we must be there for the NHS now. The Leader said that the Council supported the work of the NHS, however was concerned that the NHS was under threat from a dangerous government privatisation agenda. The Leader commented on Motion 2 on the agenda and said that the Council would reaffirm its commitment to defending the NHS this evening.

The Leader was delighted to welcome Cllr Gilgunn to the meeting, who had been elected in the Tollington ward by-election the previous week.

Finally, the Leader reflected on the success of the England football team in reaching the final of Euro 2020.

142 PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

143 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Due to COVID-19 safety procedures it was not possible to accommodate members of the public in the Council Chamber. There was no opportunity to ask supplementary questions or questions without notice and Procedure Rule 19.2 was suspended accordingly.

Question (a) from Helena Farstad to Cllr Comer-Schwartz, Leader of the Council:

Does the Councillor believe that we are headed towards a Sixth Mass extinction, putting the future of humanity at significant risk, because of our inaction to halt biodiversity loss and stop the increase in global temperatures?

Response:

As Leader of Islington Council, I am extremely concerned about the Climate Emergency and the impact it is having on our planet, which can be seen right now by the extreme heatwave in the west of the USA.

As you'll be aware, Islington Council declared a climate emergency on 27 June 2019 and we adopted our new Net Zero Carbon strategy in November 2020. Since 2012, we have cut emissions in the borough by 40% and seen the 12th highest decrease in emissions per person for any council area in the country. However, we know there is much more to do.

Tackling the climate crisis is a matter of social justice. Our strategy, 'Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030', sets out our plan for a fair and green future for local people, to reach net zero carbon Islington by 2030. It builds on our work so far to reach our net zero target, including energy efficient homes, affordable green electricity, lower energy costs, cleaner air and streets free of harmful emissions. We will be doing this by building more genuinely affordable homes for local people and getting local people into good, well-paid green jobs.

Our Biodiversity Action Plan for 2020-25, also sets out our strategy for protecting and improving the borough's biodiversity, which includes protecting Islington's network of green spaces, creating more areas of planting in parks, housing estates, and our built environment, and converting some areas of amenity grass in parks and housing estates into meadows.

We must continue to work together across our communities to do all we all can to tackle the Climate Emergency and push for real and radical change from Central Government, who frankly, are utterly failing to get to grips with this important issue.

Question (b) from Lucy Facer to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:

Toxic air is killing 25 people prematurely every day in London alone. Recent reports show air pollution is damaging male and female fertility and pollution particulates have even been found in fetuses. The largest single source of inner city toxic air (NO₂ and PM) is caused by vehicle movements. Does the councillor think it's time to for Islington to demonstrate it's commitment to its pedestrian priority policy by being the first borough to commit to being an anti-car borough, and leading the way in tackling air pollution issues?

As Councillor Champion was not present, the question was answered by Cllr Comer-Schwartz:

Thank you for your question. As you'll know, Islington Council is very concerned about the impact of toxic air pollution in our borough and we are taking action to tackle this. The most visible action we have taken so far is our people-friendly streets programme. Islington Council has introduced seven people-friendly street neighbourhood trials, creating cleaner, safer and healthier streets for local people.

The monitoring reports for the St Peter's, Canonbury East and Clerkenwell Green schemes have now been published and we have been extremely encouraged by the results. The number of vehicles speeding fell by an average of 88% within Canonbury East and traffic fell on local streets in St Peter's by 57%. On top of this, we also now have School Streets Scheme covering 36 primary schools, making the school gates safer and healthier.

In November 2020, the council adopted the Islington's Transport Strategy 2020 – 2041, with a vision of delivering a fairer, healthier, safer and greener transport environment. The strategy includes the target that 90% of trips made by Islington residents will be by walking, cycling and public transport.

We need to be honest, language like 'anti-car' simply doesn't help. We all must work together to engage with local people about the many benefits of choosing a different mode of transport rather than a private car, if they can. We as a council will continue to prioritise making it easier and safer for everyone to walk, cycle or wheel around our neighbourhoods.

Question (c) from Ernestas Jegorovas to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

The percentage of 16 & 17 Year old residents who are NEET or 'Not Known' has gone up, what is the council doing to urgently address this?

Response:

Thank you for your question. Young people are one of our top priorities. We know that lockdown didn't help this situation, but we as Islington Council never sit down

because our young people are our future, and we are focused on the future of our young people.

There has been increase of 0.1% in the number of young people NEET and a 0.6% increase in the number of 'unknown' young people; we couldn't reach them. Because of the national lockdown, our outreach workers were not able to visit them at home.

But we have a system to make sure we reach them, we have started to visit them at home, to know what is going on and to help them receive support.

Employment, education and training is the top of our agenda and we are working with schools in full collaboration to prevent any young person becoming NEET. We are also working with colleges to ensure they are working with young people on application forms and enrolment. If there is any young person at risk of becoming NEET we step in as soon as possible to give them all of the support they need.

We have a good system in place for this summer, we will be working in collaboration, giving one-to-one support to our young people. We will be working with young people through our local communities, youth hubs, and also 222 Upper Street will be open to them.

Islington Council cannot accept young people becoming NEET; we are determined to do everything we can to help them and to resolve this matter. I hope this reassures you that this is top of our agenda.

Question (d) from Benali Hamdache to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:

Mountgrove Road is in poor repair, with incredibly uneven surfacing that makes cycling and driving difficult. What plans does the council have to repair the road?

As Councillor Champion was not present, the question was answered by Cllr Comer-Schwartz:

This road is a boundary road maintained by Hackney Council. It merges into Riversdale Road at the Green lanes junction which is maintained by Islington. We will raise the issues with the carriageway surfacing with Hackney Council.

Question (e) from Saiqa Pandor to Cllr Shaikh, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy & Jobs:

What is the council doing to get local people back into work now that the lockdown is beginning to lift?

Response:

Thank you for your question. We are anticipating an increase in demand for our employment services when furlough ends in September.

We know that the pandemic has led to a rise in unemployment in Islington over this past year and Islington's in-house employment support service iWork has been working very hard with its partners to ensure that residents get the support they need. We've been doing a wide range of interventions I'd like to share a few of those with you; as I mentioned already we have an in-house employment support service iWork which continues to offer a one-to-one tailored coaching and mentoring support service to Islington residents looking for work. We've adapted the service during the pandemic so it's a blended service that is online as well. We haven't stopped the service during the pandemic.

During the lockdown restrictions iWork has been working with Islington Working which is our network of over 50 local employment support services. We have managed to support 988 unemployed residents back into work, surpassing our target.

We have also launched the Islington Working jobs portal in March this year; this is an online portal that connects local residents to local vacancies, we have 1,300 residents registered on the portal and 77 local employers. Recent analysis of that has shown that we have over 60% of users from black and minority ethnic community backgrounds and 65% are women. We are working with key priority sectors that have remained buoyant during the pandemic such as the health and social care sector. This month all three of the local NHS hospital trusts approached the team to help co-promote key roles, that includes 50 technician trainees at Moorfields Eye Hospital, 10 healthcare assistants at Whittington Hospital, and 20 roles at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

We are also helping residents into the tech and digital sector through our LIFT programme which is our own abbreviation for Leading Inclusive Futures Through Technology. It's a £7.4m programme in collaboration with Camden, Hackney and Tower Hamlets that seeks to target getting women and black and minority ethnic residents into the tech and digital sector.

To conclude, we anticipate that there will be an increased demand for employment services as the furlough scheme finishes at the end of September, we are working to ensure that we have recovery plans in place, and we are reviewing the services that we have at the moment to ensure they remain relevant. Partnership working continues to play a pivotal role in employment support services.

Question (f) from Ann Bradford to Cllr Lukes, Executive Member for Community Safety:

Having lived in the borough for many years, recently it appears that there have been quite a few episodes of violence locally. Women need to know they can feel safe

when out and about. What is the Council doing to ensure that women are not only safe in our borough, but feel safe too?

Response:

Thank you for thoughtful question. There are two parts to this; there is an issue about women's safety, and there's also the fear that women often feel when they're going out, and that in itself then limits our lives.

In Islington we take women's safety, in the home and out of it, very seriously. We are in the process of working with partner organisations to write a new strategy for tackling violence against women and girls which will build on some excellent work that we are already doing. We passed a motion at Full Council last year which called for making misogyny a hate crime, seeking to tackle toxic attitudes towards women and girls in the borough.

In 2020, in spite of the tight financial situation, Islington Council invested £2million in programmes focused on reducing violence towards women and girls. This included direct work with men who use violence, safety planning for children experiencing domestic abuse, and supporting victims affected by domestic violence. We also run programmes in schools to tackle violence against women and girls and sexual bullying because for women to feel safe men have to address their behaviour and step up, and that has to start from an early age.

We're also doing some practical things as well; Islington council this year as supporting Islington for Women to run a series of walks across the borough with different organisations. The next one is on 21 July from Hornsey Road Children's Centre and Platform. It's a chance for women to work together enjoy their neighbourhood but also think and talk about where they feel safe and where they don't, and why. Our Community Safety Officers and Police Officers walk with them and use these sessions as environmental audits to identify changes need to make us all feel safer.

In July we're launching the 'X marks the spot' campaign to ask every household in the borough where and when and why they don't feel safe in any area across Islington. Council officers will also work with key partners to develop area improvement plans particularly focusing on those changes identified by women as needed. We want women to enjoy being in Islington, to have fun and feel safe. We encourage and support licenced premises to sign up for the Mayor's Nightsafe Charter and train bar staff to better identify and support women who appear vulnerable or feel unsafe. One third of the premises in London signed up to this initiative are in Islington.

Working with partner organisations and businesses we have also set up over 100 safe havens on in the borough. They provide a place of safety on the local streets for anyone, including women; look out for the signs in local businesses, community centres and so on if you're in danger of if you feel threatened or harassed on the street.

Question (g) from Roderik Gonggrijp to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:

School Streets are of immense benefit to local communities as they protect children's lives as they make their way to and from school, encourage active travel rather than school runs by car and crucially improve air quality especially at the times most important during the day. Currently 36 of the 47 primary schools have a School Street schemes in place. However only 15 of these were consulted on prior, the remaining 21, like my local one at Tufnell Park Primary and The Bridge School were put in place as part the council's People Friendly Streets Programme with an 18-month Experimental Traffic Order. The School Streets are hugely popular with schools, parents and children.

Can the councillor assure parents that these schemes are not at risk when the 18-month period expires?

Response:

Thank you for your question. School Streets are an important part of the Council's drive to create cleaner, safer and healthier streets in Islington, including around the school gate. The acceleration of the delivery under our people-friendly streets scheme has delivered school streets as trials for 18 months initially. School Streets are a key commitment in both the Transport Strategy and the net zero carbon strategy and therefore the council fully intends to make the school streets a permanent fixture subject to monitoring and consultation.

The council has been monitoring the new School Streets and will be publishing monitoring results for each School Street in advance of the public consultation. The monitoring reports will reflect a before and after assessment of the trials using the following data: motorised traffic counts, speeds, cycling counts, and air quality data.

Question (h) from Jimmy Bell to Cllr Lukes, Executive Member for Community Safety:

As we are still responding to the pandemic and the infection numbers are rapidly rising nationally I would like to ask, what is Islington Council doing to help engage all parts of our community, both when responding to Covid and also to rolling out the vaccine locally? It is important every part of our community is contacted and encouraged to participate in order to make sure the response is the best it can be.

Response:

Thank you for your question. Councillor Ibrahim has also asked a question which will go into quite a lot of detail about vaccinations, so please look at that in conjunction with what I'm about to say.

We've already talked today about the amazing mass vaccination event that we organised in partnership with the NHS and Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium. Community engagement made that possible; thank you to the hundreds of volunteers over four days who helped guide, steward, support and help everyone who came to what was a really joyful expression of how we are all Islington and all working together to respond the pandemic.

We have been running vaccination pop up clinics in areas of low take-up in the Borough the, and this week, with the help of St Clement's Church in Bunhill, we've been running one and I'm glad to say that we're now extending that by two more days. We're also planning more in schools and other venues; so people will go to a place that's familiar to them, that is nearby and easy to access.

All these rely on real community engagement; we have to find the sites, we have to negotiate with them, we have to get cooperation from people running them, we have to publicise the site, recruit volunteers, run information desks and support the clinical staff. We can have another pop-up running very soon at the House on the Rock in partnership with a local pharmacy and the church.

It's not just about the vaccination effort, it's also about keeping everyone safe and supporting those who need it. Since the start of the pandemic we've been working with all our communities; it's my view that the willingness of so many of our staff to go above and beyond to find creative solutions to the unprecedented problems we faced, such as the We Are Islington helpline used by thousands of residents, has also allowed us to build and cement relationships with voluntary, community and faith organisations, and the mutual Aid groups that sprang up. By working together, creating honest and respectful relationships, we've been able to look after each other.

It's been a very worrying and sometimes frightening time for us all, and this has been compounded by the many ways in which this government has shown its contempt for the country, for the science, and for the truth, so it's even more important that we as a local council step up to the plate and look after our communities and work with them.

The community conversations that Cllr O'Halloran and I run are open to local organisations and offer clear and accurate information from our excellent Public Health team. These sessions ensure that there are real opportunities to be heard and to explore how we can all work together; they've been a model for other local authorities and I'm exploring how else we could use them here.

Question (i) from Vanessa Carson to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

What support are you giving to Young Minds in their campaign to fund mental health hubs in Islington?

Response:

Thank you for your question. While The Young Minds campaign is calling for a network of early support hubs across the country, I believe the Council's existing mental health offer for young people offers much of what is being asked, and even more.

In Islington we have a well-developed mental health offer for young people which was launched in September 2019 after consultation with local children, young people, families and professionals in Islington.

The local Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Transformation Plan had a strong focus on increasing access, equity and capacity, with an aim to ensure all children and young people reach the right service at the right time. This approach means we are able to meet the need of every child and young person with a strong focus on preventing mental health issues from escalating. We have worked with our local NHS and partners to increase capacity in our community services and launch a Central Point of Access approach for children and young people to access to access all social, emotional and mental health services in the same way.

Changes were also made to the core Whittington Health CAMHS service including new assessment and intervention pathways and a staff restructure. These changes have provided more consistency in clinical allocation, reducing the need for clients to have to tell their story more than once. Whereas previously most CAMHS appointments were held at one local health centre, more children and young people can now be seen in a range of community settings, including youth hubs and leisure centres, offering more choice and flexibility. This transformation of services for children and young people was awarded the Health Service Journal 'Highly Commended' Award for 'Integrated Care Partnership of the Year' and was a finalist for the Health and Local Government Partnership Award'.

We know that young people's mental health will have suffered further during the pandemic and these changes have meant our services can respond flexibly as issues arise.

Question (j) from John Ackers to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:

Policy 3C of Appendix One of the Islington Transport Strategy (draft) says the phasing out of resident and business parking permits for diesel and petrol vehicles by 2030 is being investigated. I very much welcome this because it would make the Council's zero carbon ambitions and intentions very clear.

Could the Council investigate phasing out new permits for the most polluting vehicles in Band M starting in 2023 and move up to Band A, the smallest vehicles, by 2030? Requests for replacement permits would also be declined but starting two years later (e.g. in 2025 for B and M). This avoids a single dramatic deadline. Exemptions could be considered for blue badge holders, key workers, and/or very low annual mileage

vehicles (as declared on MOT entries). Charges for residents parking permits for EVs should be ramped up over the same time frame.

As Councillor Champion was not present, the question was answered by Cllr Comer-Schwartz:

Thank you for your question John. Islington Council is determined to tackle toxic air pollution in our borough and one way of doing that is by reducing the amount of journeys made by the most polluting vehicles.

In November 2020, the council adopted the Islington Transport Strategy 2020 – 2041. The adopted strategy includes a commitment to reduce carbon emissions by supporting residents to switch to electric vehicles and to investigate the phasing out of resident and business parking permits for diesel and petrol vehicles by 2030.

The Council will consider all options when seeking to achieve these objectives, including working with and consulting local people to hear their views on the best way forward.

The Council is seeking to build on the pioneering emissions-based charging policy which has seen us as amongst the first councils to set parking permit charges based on vehicles' CO2 emissions, reducing the borough's impact on climate change. We are the first local authority to implement a parking permit surcharge for diesel vehicles and the first local authority to implement diesel surcharges throughout the borough's short stay parking spaces.

We are aware that it may be difficult for some people on low incomes to switch to alternative vehicles if they need to use their car and the Council will make a case for a fair system of subsidies and incentives for low-income groups which are genuinely reliant on cars to meet their mobility needs.

Despite their relative environmental benefits, electric vehicles are still motorised vehicles which contribute to road congestion, road safety issues and particulate pollution. Therefore, encouraging public and active transport, walking and cycling, remain the Council's top priority in terms of transport.

144 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Due to COVID-19 safety procedures it was not possible to accommodate all members of the Council in the Council Chamber. There was no opportunity to ask supplementary questions and Procedure Rule 19.2 was suspended accordingly.

Question (a) from Cllr Heather to Cllr Shaikh, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs:

I have been raising for some time now the problems being caused in the borough by the platform business model when it is used, in the main, to deliver fast food to customers' premises.

In my ward the activities of the moped delivery drivers who are used to provide this service late into the evening and early morning are causing anti-social behaviour and safety hazards for local residents and the public, including: noise, road traffic offences, unsafe driving, illegal parking, riding on the pavement, pollution, urination and defecation in public spaces, and fighting and threatening behaviour. This is proving a particular problem at the Nags Head Town Centre in relation to deliveries from the 24 hour McDonalds store in Seven Sisters Road, where the council is conducting a licence review due to the high level of complaints made by local residents and the Finsbury Park ward councillors.

The underlying cause of the problem here is the platform business delivery model being operated from business locations that do not have the infrastructure to provide the service without causing vast negative impacts on the people who live and shop in the surrounding area. There is also an issue in that the delivery drivers are not employed by the fast food stores themselves, making it very difficult for them to manage and control the drivers. It is very clear that currently the council do not have sufficient powers to regulate this type of business activity to protect the amenity and safety of residents and the public. And this business model operated in inappropriate locations also presents problems for the delivery drivers too.

What steps are the council taking to address these issues?

Response:

Thank you Cllr Heather for your question on this important issue, and thank you for your work in trying to resolve these issues for local residents.

The council is attempting to use the powers it has to encourage McDonald's on Seven Sisters Road to take responsibility for the management of the delivery of its food; as you'll be aware this is a problem caused by the gig economy and the business models developed by digital delivery platforms. The issues are complex as the sector is largely unregulated, so what's happening around McDonald's is a classic example of the difficulties we face. You've got a restaurant that wants to maintain profits, and an increased demand for takeaway food through lockdown, so they use delivery rider platforms. These platforms promise speedy delivery, contract riders on zero hour contracts using a pricing system which forces riders to be as quick as possible and encourage them to behave in ways that causes disruption in our local areas. In this scenario McDonald's make money, the platforms make money, but the riders are largely exploited. The people that are suffering here are largely local residents and delivery riders.

The council are trying to get the large restaurants to take responsibility and put in place proper management and communication systems. I know that Councillor Heather has been closely involved in these new measures in relation to McDonald's on Seven Sisters Road. The late night licence review which is supported by the local councillors and officers is one way which we are attempting to influence McDonald's to take more responsibility. Our community safety and licensing officers have put in place a number of measures that we expect McDonald's to meet. I've also met with

Uber in order to urge them to take responsibility for managing how their business model impacts on local areas, and also to push them to improve the employment rights, safety and conditions of riders.

Earlier this year, with Councillors Lukes and O'Halloran, I wrote a letter to the Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe on these matters to initiate a discussion to protect some of the most vulnerable workers in our cities, as well as to investigate the potential for a London-wide strategy on the licensing of delivery companies. This would allow Islington and other boroughs to develop codes of practice which would have a significant impact in highly residential London boroughs. I'm going to follow this up with the Deputy Mayor.

We're also trying to support the delivery riders. Many of you will be aware of the tragic murder of Takieddine Boudhane in Finsbury Park 18 months ago. With Jeremy Corbyn and John Hendy QC, we met with the delivery riders, and we were able to facilitate a meeting with International Workers GB Union. I'm pleased to say that we've helped them set up the Finsbury Park branch of the IWGB Union.

Finally, Islington Council is supporting Wings. This is a new ethical delivery company; it's a commitment for us to deliver a local economy that works for all. It's a co-operative, owned and run by delivery riders, and it guarantees all riders will be employed with the London Living Wage, it ensures job security, sick pay and benefits, and is the only delivery platform committed to using only zero emission vehicles. Its founders describe the company as good for riders, good for the environment, and good for society, and as a Council we are delighted that we can take this innovative step to support an alternative delivery platform that hopefully will work for all in Islington.

Question (b) from Cllr Russell to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:

Between 2014 and 2018 Islington Council bought and installed 2,700 Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) front doors from the now-dissolved Masterdor company, spending £3,400,000. The roll-out was halted in 2018 after safety concerns emerged in the wake of the Grenfell Tower disaster. Tests were carried out and results released by the government in February last year showed the fire resistance of the doors was only 15 minutes, as opposed to the 30 minutes advertised by the company. In February 2021 you told me that the front door replacement programme was delayed by the pandemic but that you had managed to replace 600 doors since the start of the pandemic and were working to catch-up.

What is the current total of doors replaced and what is the current expected completion date for replacing the non-compliant front doors?

Response:

Thank you for your question Cllr Russell and for your consistent focus on this issue in recent times. Resident safety is, and always has been, a priority for this council. We are working hard to replace the fire doors for local people as quickly as possible.

Sadly the pandemic has affected our fire door programme. A combination of residents' hesitancy to allow tradespersons to do work and also contractors furloughing staff has meant that there was a period last year when the work programme had to be paused. There are still some challenges in persuading some residents to allow this work to take place and we may have to consider legal action to gain access in some cases.

But, we have still managed to replace over 1,000 doors during the pandemic and will aim to catch up as far as possible. It is, however, likely that the overall programme will not now be completed until late 2022. It is also worth noting that around 800 doors that were not previously fitted with Masterdor products have also been replaced.

Question (c) from Cllr Russell to Cllr Comer-Schwartz, Leader of the Council:

Congratulations on your appointment as Leader of the Council. When you first became Leader you said: "I love Islington and will continue working hard to make our borough a fairer place by aspiring, improving and empowering Islington."

How will you do this and is there anything that you hope Islington residents will notice about the way you lead the council?"

Response:

Thank you for your congratulations Cllr Russell, it is much appreciated. It is has been a hectic but rewarding first seven weeks as Leader.

I am determined to continue the work of my predecessors in making Islington a fairer and more equal place for all. We have made radical changes over the past year, including our People-Friendly Streets programme which is making the borough a cleaner, safer, healthier place for local people and has seen us recognised as having the healthiest streets in London, only this week.

So, I am keen to build on those radical changes but also ensure we are listening to, engaging, and working with local people. I want to bring people with us and make changes with them, rather than to them. I want to ensure that local people feel like we are a Council that listens to them and acts on their concerns.

Question (d) from Cllr Nathan to Cllr Shaikh, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy & Jobs:

As the Council's Small Business, Co-ops and Social Enterprise Champion, I'm all too aware of the role Islington's night time and cultural venues play in the social and

economic well-being of our borough. However, they are the institutions which have suffered most from the Government's delay to the easing of Covid restrictions and the subsequent failure to offer financial support to affected businesses.

Can you let me know what the Council is doing to support these venues to survive during the current restrictions and then fully reopen when possible?

Response:

Thank you Councillor Nathan, it's a really important topic at the moment as the COVID restrictions are lifting and we're all assessing the impact on the economy.

As you highlight, the evening economy is a unique feature of the Islington economy, and it accounts for approximately 25,000 jobs in Islington. In 2017 Islington was one of the top five boroughs with the highest concentration of cultural and leisure activities work places, so the sector is really important to us and we're taking its support really seriously as well.

We know the sector has been impacted by the pandemic restrictions, and we know from recent government research that the events industry as a whole is managing between just 50 to 60 per cent of its 2019 turnover under the current restrictions. For this reason Islington Council has prioritised independent music and cultural venues including community pubs in a recent round of discretionary funding provided as part of the package of grant support for businesses. At the end of June we were able to award £1.8million in extra funding to almost 100 pubs and music, comedy, theatre and dance venues hit by ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

The borough's independent pubs and live venues are famous across London and beyond and they play a vital role in supporting many local jobs and businesses. While many businesses have been able to reopen, COVID-19 restrictions have and can continue to have a major impact on the hospitality sector and regardless of the recent government announcement to lift restrictions, we know that certain sectors will be impacted by levels of customer confidence. In light of this, and in recognition of the key role they play locally, we want to ensure continued support for the sector by offering one off grants of £15,000 to £30,000.

We want local people to enjoy these places safely and so our public protection and local economies teams are providing practical support to businesses and guidance on how to operate safely, as well as putting plans in place to support our local high streets.

The Council has been administering the additional restrictions grant which is a direct aid grant to businesses since December 2020. So far, the council has supported over a thousand businesses, to help them access over 1500, grants totalling more than £7million. We continue to lobby government to ask for more financial support for this sector and also our hospitality sector.

Finally, we're going to have to watch carefully how a lifting of restrictions works for the hospitality sector, but I can reassure you that we will continue to work closely with all of our partners in the sector to look to better understand their concerns and help them through this very difficult time.

Question (e) from Cllr Ibrahim to Cllr Lukes, Executive Member for Community Safety:

As a local Covid-19 Health Champion, I am very aware of the impact the pandemic has had on our borough. The NHS vaccine roll-out has shown the merits of genuine public services run for the benefit of local people.

However, we know that some communities in Islington have been slower to take-up the vaccine than others. Can you let me know what the Council is doing to increase uptake among these communities, as well as making vaccines as easily available as possible to keep Islington safe?

Response:

Thank you for your question, this is a vital issue for our communities. We know in the pandemic that no one is safe until we are all safe. We are also proud of the vaccine roll-out; it's not just an example of the NHS at its best, but it's also been a real partnership of the borough's local institutions, the voluntary sector and community groups, and the hundreds of residents and volunteers; all united in our determination to get everyone protected.

The mass event at the Emirates Stadium, in your ward, was an example of that. A team effort between Arsenal, the borough and the NHS. I want to thank you and all the councillors, many of them here, who volunteered for that. It was a huge success and showed how councillors can be community champions, working with hundreds more volunteers to keep Islington safe. We did it not just to get to 9,000 people vaccinated, but because we also thought that it would increase trust and awareness of the vaccination process for many other people. We know that this pandemic has exposed and multiplied the appalling inequalities in our borough and we are committed to tackling them. We regularly and frequently review all the data we have on vaccinations to identify where take up is lower, in which areas, in which communities, for which people. We then find people from those groups and we ask them and listen to them. I would like to thank them for their insights and commitment. We ask about the barriers they face, or their fears, and we find ways to address them.

For example, we have visited some Black owned and run businesses in the north of the borough to learn from them and ask for their help in promoting the health of their customers and communities. We listened to community and faith leaders and work with them; many of them have recorded short videos and other messages to use on social media to encourage everyone to get the protection they need.

The council is running pop-up vaccination clinics at key locations such as Finsbury Park Mosque and the House on the Rock, and also at easy to reach local venues to encourage take up, especially from people who might find it difficult to travel to larger busier centres. We engage with local people in Islington streets we distribute leaflets we run information desks.

Our community champions programme trains and supports people to talk to the people they know: friends, neighbours and family. We know some people find the booking system difficult, so we worked with the NHS to increase the number of drop-in appointments available, and also we've set up our We Are Islington helpline so that it can help people for anyone who needs help with booking on transport. This is not a discrete piece of work, it's a process, and we're committed to seeing it through to keep everyone safe.

Question (f) from Cllr Ismail to Cllr Gill, Executive Member for Finance and Performance, was withdrawn.

Question (g) from Cllr Ismail to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development, was withdrawn.

145 ANNUAL UPDATE ON THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

Councillor Poole moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Comer-Schwartz seconded. Councillor Russell contributed to the debate.

The recommendations were put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That the activity over the past year to celebrate and support Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and their families be noted.

146 RESOLUTION TO EXTEND SIX MONTH RULE

The Mayor advised that this item had been removed from the agenda.

147 CHIEF WHIP'S REPORT

Councillor Hyde moved the recommendations in the report.

The recommendations were put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Councillor Gilgunn be appointed to the Licensing Committee for the remainder of the municipal year or until a successor is appointed.
- (ii) That Councillor Gilgunn be appointed as a substitute member of the Planning Committee for the remainder of the municipal year or until a successor is appointed.

- (iii) That Councillor Gilgunn be appointed as a substitute member of the Housing Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year or until a successor is appointed.
- (iv) That Councillor Bossman-Quarshie be appointed to St Lukes Trustee Ltd until 29 June 2022 or until a successor is appointed.
- (v) That Councillor O'Halloran be appointed to Islington Community Chest Panel for the remainder of the municipal year or until a successor is appointed.

148 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

Motion 1: Making Islington a Borough of Sanctuary

Councillor Bell-Bradford moved the motion. Councillor Bossman-Quarshie seconded. Councillors Ismail and Russell contributed to the debate. Councillor Bell-Bradford exercised his right of reply.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To join a network of cities and towns which promote the inclusion and welfare of people who are fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and become a recognised "Borough of Sanctuary"
- (ii) To work with community groups to harness public support to help and support refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in Islington.
- (iii) To continue to celebrate the contribution of refugee and migrant communities to Islington.
- (iv) To continue to work with organisations in the borough who support refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the borough.
- (v) To challenge anti-refugee and anti-migrant attitudes wherever they are found.
- (vi) To 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.
- (vii) To work with local businesses and community partners to further tackle the digital divide, provide affordable access to online services and look at ways to donate IT devices locally to those in need, rather than scrapping them.

Motion 2: Keeping the NHS in public hands

Councillor Turan moved the motion. Councillor Khurana seconded. Councillors Ismail and Russell contributed to the debate. Councillor Turan exercised his right of reply.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To continue campaigning to keep the NHS in public hands and to stop the backdoor privatisation of NHS services, because public services are always best run in public hands
- (ii) To work with local MPs and the local CCG to stop any further Conservative Government selling off of local NHS services following Operose's takeover of 49 GP surgeries
- (iii) To continue supporting our local NHS services to roll-out the Covid-19 vaccine to local people and keep Islington safe
- (iv) To work with North Central London CCG to inform local people of the pooling of patient medical records and ensure patients are aware of how they can opt-out
- (v) To continue seeking to bring local services back in-house where possible, such as housing repairs, including Partners for Improvement
- (vi) To write to the Secretary of State for Health again, to set out local people's concerns regarding the Centene takeover of AT Medics and to call for local NHS services to be run for the benefit of the public, not for profit.

Motion 3: Making Islington Homes Safe and Secure

Councillor North moved the motion. Councillor Jackson seconded. Councillors Klute and Russell contributed to the debate. Councillor North exercised his right of reply.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) Continue pressure on Central Government, including working with our local MPs, to provide the necessary funding to make every building in Islington safe from dangerous cladding and other fire safety risks, at no cost to leaseholders
- (ii) Adopt the 10 asks of the End Our Cladding Scandal campaign
 1. Urgent removal of all dangerous cladding
 2. Building Safety Fund must cover all buildings
 3. Government should provide money up front & recover from responsible parties
 4. Social Housing providers must have full & equal access to fund
 5. Building owners must be honest with fire safety defects
 6. Government should cover cost of interim safety measures
 7. Government should act as insurer & underwrite premiums
 8. Replace EWS
 9. Mental health support must be offered to affected residents
 10. Protect residents from historic & future costs

- (iii) Adopt the sensible recommendation of the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee that the EWS1 process could be reformed to unlock the housing market whilst keeping residents safe
- (iv) To continue to support and advocate on behalf of residents who have been failed by this Tory government's failure to address the cladding and fire safety scandal.

Motion 4: Democratic participation and the coronavirus pandemic

Councillor Russell moved the motion. Councillor Gill contributed to the debate. Councillor Russell exercised her right of reply.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To ensure council meetings are inclusive, to write to Robert Jenrick MP Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government to request a change in the law to enable councils to resume holding fully hybrid meetings.
- (ii) To continue to broadcast Full Council and Committee meetings.
- (iii) Until the law is updated, to make every effort to enable participation of elected councillors and members of the public in our meetings with a cross party agreement about formal decision making.

Motion 5: Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill

Councillor Russell moved the motion. Councillor Clarke moved the amendment. Councillor Ismail contributed to the debate. Councillor Russell exercised her right of reply on the motion. Councillor Clarke exercised her right of reply on the amendment.

The amendment was put to the vote and CARRIED.

The motion as amended was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To support the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, by working with our local MPs to support this bill in Parliament, writing to the CEE Bill Alliance and calling on the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to back the Bill;
- (ii) To continue cross party work on climate with the UK100, and pledge to:
 - a. Continue to assess our largest impacts on climate change, prioritise where action needs to be taken and measure and monitor progress towards targets
 - b. Reduce our emissions at source and limit the use of carbon offsets as part of the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change;

- c. Continue cross party work to ensure Carbon Neutrality by 2030, including through joining lobbying calls of the UK100 partnership of local government
- d. Work with residents and our local business, third sector and public sector bodies to cut the 91% of emissions generated by non-Council sources in the borough, promoting and incentivising efforts to reduce their carbon footprint
- e. Campaign in the run-up to COP26 for an ambitious agreement that recognises the gravity of our situation and its disproportionate impact upon the least well-off, both at home and globally.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm

MAYOR