

LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING - 30 JUNE 2022

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 30 June 2022 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Bell-Bradford	Heather	Ogunro
Bossman-Quarshie	Hyde	Ozdemir
Champion	Ibrahim	Pandor
Chapman	Jackson	Poyser
Chowdhury	Jeapes	Russell
Cinko-Oner	Jegorovas-Armstrong	Shaikh
Clarke	Kay	Spall
Comer-Schwartz	Khurana	Staff
Convery	Klute	Turan
Croft	McHugh	Ward
Craig	Nathan	Weekes
Gilgunn	Nargund	Williamson
Gill	Ngongo	Woolf
Graham	North	Zammit
Hamdache	O'Halloran	
Hayes	O'Sullivan	

The Mayor () in the Chair

188 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 26 May 2022 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

189 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Several members had an interest in Motion 2, Save Islington's Buses, which were declared under the relevant agenda item.

190 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Burgess, Gallagher, Khondoker, Mackmurdie and Wayne.

(ii) Order of business

No changes were proposed to the order of business.

(iii) Declaration of discussion items

No items had been declared.

(iv) Mayoral announcements

The Mayor said that she had enjoyed her first month in office. The Mayor was very pleased to attend jubilee celebrations across the borough, including community events and street parties at St Lukes Community Centre, Hilldrop Community Centre, Islington Chinese Association, Fredrica Street, Half Moon Estate, Elthorne Estate, St Mary's Church, Caxton House and more. It was wonderful to see our communities come together to celebrate the jubilee. The Mayor thanked all of those involved in organising the events and making the jubilee weekend special.

The Mayor was also very pleased to attend Armed Forces Day celebrations. It is so important that we recognise those who have served in our Armed Forces. The Mayor thanked Islington Veterans Association and Peter McCafferty, the Borough's Pageantmaster, for organising these events.

The Mayor noted that she had enjoyed the Mayor Making ceremony and celebrations and that she looked forward to serving as Mayor for the coming year.

(v) Length of speeches

The Mayor reminded all councillors to take note of the timer and stay within the permitted length for speeches.

The Mayor also reminded all attendees that the meeting was being broadcast on the council's website.

191 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader thanked the Mayor and said she was pleased to join the Mayor at a number of events over the past month, including jubilee celebrations, and an inspiring event at the Town Hall, welcoming tradeswomen from around the world.

The Leader had attended a number of events to celebrate Refugee Week and Windrush Day. The Leader praised the work of the Council to welcome migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to the borough, and expressed concern at the

government's proposals to send asylum seekers to Rwanda. The Leader said she was proud to see a motion this evening to oppose these plans.

The Leader said her thoughts were with the family of the council's former Corporate Director of People, Carmel Littleton, who had passed away one year ago. The Leader reflected on her time working with Carmel, and said her proudest achievement since becoming Leader was ensuring that every young person entering Year 7 had access to a laptop or tablet. This was something that Carmel was also passionate about, and the Leader hoped she would be proud.

The Leader congratulated Fiona Monkman, one of the council's architects, who had recently been given the MJ Long Prize for Excellence in Practice for her work on the Centurion Close social housing block in Laycock ward. The Leader was proud Islington's social housing, and the Council had committed to building 1550 more genuinely affordable council homes over the next few years. The Leader said that the quality of these homes was as important as the quantity, and asked the Council to give a round of applause to Fiona for her work.

The Leader expressed concerns at proposed cuts to local bus services as a result of government cuts to Transport for London funding. In particular, the Number 4 bus which stretched from the north to south of the borough. The Leader was proud to join trade union colleagues on the steps of the Town Hall and also join them in central London in protest against these government cuts and the cost of living crisis, and to demand better funding for local government and public services, and better wages for working people. The Leader said that the Council would always oppose government cuts and noted that the Council would consider a motion opposing the bus cuts later in the evening.

The Leader of the Opposition responded. The Leader of the Opposition also expressed her support for the motion welcoming refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to Islington, and welcomed that the Opposition and Majority groups could work constructively and in collaboration on these issues.

The Leader of the Opposition said she supported the council's work to oppose bus cuts, in particular to the Number 4 bus. Cutting public transport at a time when we are seeking to reduce private car usage made no sense, and the opposition supported the motion submitted on this issue.

Finally, the Leader of the Opposition paid tribute to Charlie Kiss, a local campaigner and political activist, who had sadly died earlier in the month. Charlie was the first trans man to stand for parliament, in the Islington South and Finsbury constituency, and was well known to many members of the Council.

192 PETITIONS

Councillor Russell introduced a petition on behalf of a local resident, calling on the council to take steps to increase recycling facilities in public spaces.

193 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question (a) from Julien Etienne to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:

With a rapidly worsening climate crisis, Islington could soon experience an extreme heatwave such as that which affected British Columbia in Canada last Summer where temperatures came close to 50 degrees Celsius. The current Cool Spaces map lists no local indoor cool spaces in which Islington residents could take refuge in such an event. Does the Council have a plan to keep people safe in the event of a major heatwave?

As Julien was not present, the following written response was sent:

My response is that sadly, as the climate emergency worsens and Global temperatures continue to rise, we are likely to see more and more extreme weather events, including heatwaves. While we are focused on tackling the climate emergency, reducing emissions and improving air quality, we know that we also need to keep people safe in the knowledge these events will continue for some time.

Our Council's brilliant Emergency Planning team works with Public Health colleagues on a local protocol for severe weather; this includes actions which are linked to the Heatwave plan for England.

Some of the actions required include media alerts about keeping cool, supporting organisations to reduce unnecessary travel, reviewing safety of public events taking place, distributing information to high risk groups and mobilising community and voluntary support.

We are working on a number of measures to make Islington cooler and safer for people in extreme weather events. Our retrofitting scheme will help insulate council homes to make them cooler in the summer, our tree planting programme will add improve air quality and reduce temperatures, and our Greening the Borough project will add more green spaces for local people to enjoy and cool in, all year round.

This is something we are passionate about working on and will continue to do all we can to keep local people safe. Thank you again for your question.

Question (b) from Rebekah Kelly to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

Community safety is a serious concern for many residents, as most have been impacted in some way by crime or anti social behaviour. Would the £21,000 paid to change Islington Council's logo be better off spent toward tackling youth crime that is prevalent on the streets of Islington and what is the plan to address this issue?

Response:

Thank you for your question Rebekah. Keeping our borough and our young people safe is a top priority for this council.

Islington spends more than most other local authorities in the country on services that support young people. One of our local values is to keep young people safe, to keep them away from guns and violence. We are trying our best and we are working to help our young people, so they can access the services they need. This includes investing in youth clubs. We do have good resources across the borough and our young people are proud of everything we are giving to them.

We put children and young people at the centre of our core values. We have different types of activities at Platform, Lift and Rosebowl and our young people are able to access help there.

Regarding our logo and identity, we found that it was very difficult to apply it, especially in an online format. This had been in place since 2007. We used implementing the new logo as an opportunity to think about our core identity and values; that is why it includes the sign of equality. We want to promote an equal future for all in Islington; a strong community coming together for equality.

This new logo has not taken any funding away from our young people. Since 2010 the government have made a lot of cuts to our budget, however we are committed to serving young people, and make sure they are safe and secure is our top priority.

Supplementary question:

Thank you. The youth services you mention are not always inclusive of children with additional needs. I feel like the money spent on the logo may be better spent, particularly given the cuts and when services are not available to all. I appreciate the council's work in this area, but violence and anti-social behaviour affects all young people, and it isn't enough.

Response:

Thank you. We are serving all children and young people in this borough. We are trying to do our best and meet their needs.

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

I am asking this question on behalf of Low Traffic Islington (Barnsbury St. Mary's). Now that the May elections are over, we are pleased to see that the Council consists entirely of Councillors committed to the Policy of encouraging Sustainable Transport modes and reducing unnecessary motor vehicle usage and though traffic in our Borough by measures including the roll-out of Liveable Neighbourhoods. Our area suffers terribly from though traffic, and you may have seen the Green Hearts of support for action to be taken, particularly in places such as Offord Road.

Our group has already submitted ideas on how the area bounded by the A1, Caledonian Road and Pentonville Road can be made a more Liveable Neighbourhood and we are keen to contribute to the Engagement and Design

Process for our long-promised Low Traffic Neighbourhood. Please can you tell us when our Engagement and Design Process will start?

Response:

Thank you for your question, and thank you to the Low Traffic Islington (Barnsbury & St Mary's) group for their support for people-friendly streets. I know there is lots of interest in the area.

I do apologise that we have taken time to develop People Friendly Streets. This is due in part to challenges relating to the complex road network in the area; we do need to think about this one a little bit differently, and need to talk to people about that. It's also about the huge amount of work required in bringing in low traffic neighbourhoods, cycleways and school streets, not only implementation, but also the follow up work and consultations.

We absolutely intend to carry out public engagement later in 2022 to give local residents and businesses an opportunity to provide their views, we just need a bit more time.

Supplementary question:

Thank you. Could you indicate if the consultation will be in summer, autumn or winter, and also could you provide further detail on how the engagement and design process will be carried out?

Response:

Thank you. I can't. This is one of the first times we are doing full engagement first, and we have brought in someone to help us who has expertise in public engagement. We want this to be done as well as we possibly can, so people do not just feel involved, but actually are involved, for the best possible result. I appreciate your patience

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

North London papers including the Islington Gazette report that Secretary of State Michael Gove has instructed his department to look into the North London Waste Authority and its determination to expand incineration capacity in north London.

Gove says: "I have asked officials in the department to engage directly with NLWA and its external auditor Mazars to better understand the arrangements the authority has in place for decision making, including governance, scrutiny and external audit.... Alongside this, I have asked that we ascertain how NLWA are managing and delivering the [project].... I expect my officials to make comparisons to other waste authorities and large capital projects to provide assurance the NLWA are meeting the standards we would expect across the sector."

To support this investigation, the Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now (StEIN) coalition has written to Gove setting out 34 issues relating to the NLWA and in particular: issues related to the Edmonton incinerator contract (11 issues); issues related to Mazars' review of NLWA accounts (7 issues); NLWA governance issues (14 issues) and issues related to NLWA communications (2 issues).

For example:

- "An expert assessment shows the plant's emissions would be twice as bad [as landfill] for the environment from its first day of operation – and nearly 4 times as bad by the end of its operational life."
- "There will be insufficient waste to incinerate in Edmonton – whether from north London or elsewhere – due to enhanced Government legislation under the Environment Bill. Defra aims to halve residual waste by 2042."
- "NLWA efforts to borrow money for the Edmonton incinerator from the Treasury's Public Works Loan Board and the UK Municipal Bonds Agency (UKMBA) are based on misleading claims that the project qualifies as "green", although the EU and emerging UK taxonomies of sustainable finance exclude energy-from-waste incineration."
- "NLWA has dismissed the widely recognized need for pre-sorting technology to extract plastics and other recyclables from the incineration stream (pre-sorting reduces CO2 emissions and toxic air pollution, while simultaneously boosting recycling revenue and reducing waste arisings)."

What consideration has Islington Council given to the issues raised in the correspondence from the Secretary of State and StEIN?

Response:

Thank you for your question Ben. I think the difficulty we have is that we fundamentally don't agree on what is the best way forwards. I appreciate that people feel very strongly that we've got this wrong, but I can assure you we've given every single one of the points you raise careful consideration. It's actually been really helpful to have those challenges throughout this process. We do take these back and discuss with officers, but we remain of the view that the best way forward is to replace this aging and increasingly unreliable plant with a new state of the art energy-from-waste plant. It will have the possibility of retrofitting, including carbon capture, which would not be possible if we sent it to other waste plants.

We have read what has been put forward, and what has been heard in meetings. Despite our best efforts to reduce waste and increase recycling rates, there will still be considerable amounts of waste that we will need to dispose of for years to come. I remain confident that an energy recovery facility is the best way forwards. I regret saying that, as like you, I would very much like to see an economy that does not require the disposal of large quantities of waste, but that is the reality we face.

One of the reasons why we face that reality is we are way down the chain. The government are not doing what they need to do. We need to do everything we can to

reduce waste, but we do not have the tools at the moment, and it seems that we will not for years to come. What we have insisted on is a really high quality plant, and we need to make sure that is followed through. We have taken this very seriously, and the decision has not been taken lightly.

Supplementary question:

I'd like to congratulate Councillor Champion on being elected vice-chair of the waste authority. I am concerned about how the Waste Authority has behaved over recent years. We sometimes hear that the waste authority is accountable to the councils, but the councils appear to be uncritical and unquestioning in public.

Response:

I do understand the views you express, but I can assure you that is not the case. I appreciate that lots of the meetings go on behind closed doors. I will do my best. The plans that are going forward are in accordance with our values, that includes social value benefits, but also focusing on the climate emergency. We need a laser focus on reducing waste, and then re-use and recycling. We want to work together with communities on this in a collective and collaborative way. There is critical thinking going on, not just from politicians, but also officers. We all want to materially change the way that waste is dealt with in this country.

Question (e) from Jeremy Maher to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

We gather that Islington Council has now proposed two Councillors to represent Islington Council on the Board of the North London Waste Authority (NLWA). Could you kindly explain the process and reasonings for deciding who such members should be, including the following information:

- which persons are responsible for the selection process and, with whom else did they engage with in any discussions or voting regarding the decisions;
- exactly what qualifications, professional experiences and other skills were taken into consideration when deciding whom such members should be;
- once voted or otherwise confirmed as Islington Council's representatives upon the Board of NLWA, who exactly will they then be held accountable to ?

Response:

Thank you for your question. I am responding as Democratic Services falls under my portfolio.

The Council's representatives on the NLWA were elected at the Labour Group AGM earlier this year. That is a process which takes place on an annual basis.

Traditionally, the Council's representatives are the Executive Members responsible for Finance and Environment, as the NLWA is a key partner for both portfolios. This year, myself and Cllr Champion stood for the Board and we were selected by our fellow Labour councillors. We were then unanimously confirmed at the Annual Council meeting in May this year.

As ever, Cllr Champion and I are accountable to local people, the Islington electorate, as well as our fellow councillors and any relevant Scrutiny committees.

Supplementary question:

Firstly, I do want to emphasise that this is not any kind of personal slight. I have very high regard for the council's abilities and professionalism. However, I am not convinced that either councillor is best qualified and has sufficient experience for such highly specialised positions. Rather, it seems that the main qualification for being on the NLWA Board is that the person is elected as a councillor. The Board members are decided by a small few without reasons given to the public. The same applies to the board of London Energy Ltd. Some of the board members of London Energy Ltd are also on the board of NLWA, which appears to be a duality of interest.

Considering that the NLWA operate very much like a council in its own right, tasked with spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer money, and making decisions that have enormous environmental, health, employment and social impacts, surely the residents of the constituent boroughs should elect who chairs and sits on the Board, perhaps much like elections are held for the London Mayor and Assembly. Would Islington Council be open to proposing this suggestion to other members of the Board?

Response:

Thank you. I do appreciate and respect your views. I used to be the Executive Member for Housing and Development, I have no professional qualifications in housing or development. I am currently the Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance; I have no professional qualification in finance, planning or performance. You seem to be suggesting that someone on a democratic board needs technical and professional expertise. Respectfully, I disagree. We have expert officers who are here to advise us. The Council has paid staff to advise democratically elected councillors.

I am a strong believer in democratically elected local councillors, that's our representative system, and respectfully, I do think it's right that our elected councillors are the ones who sit on the Board.

194 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

Question (a) from Cllr Gilgunn to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

The current Tory cost of living crisis is having a severe impact on working people in Islington, with prices and bills rising but wages stagnating. Could you tell me what the Council is doing to help people during this difficult time?

Response:

Thank you very much for your question. The cost of living crisis is having a real impact on the lives of local people. We see it constantly in our inboxes and when we are out and about talking to people. This is the result of years of neglect from the government, including pay stagnation, austerity and failure to invest in renewable energy.

I was proud to join you at the trade union demonstration in central London a couple of weeks ago to say that We Demand Better in Islington and call for a proper pay rise, as well as help with the cost of living.

Despite the government failure to tackle this issue, the council provides an extensive range of support to tackle poverty and reduce inequality in Islington.

This year, we have put further investment into our Council Tax Support Scheme of £700,000 and childcare bursaries of £160k to help people save on their bills and get back into work.

Our Council continues to provide free school meals to all primary school children, saving families money every week, as well as protecting the School Uniform Grant and the Older People's discount on Council Tax.

We have distributed grant funding to help low-income households, we are currently distributing the council tax energy rebate and household support fund that will provide approximately £2.2m of support, to help residents with cost of living issues. Our IMAX team are helping residents claim over £5m of annual benefit entitlement in 2021/22 and we hope to achieve a similar figure in 2022/23.

While we will continue to do all we can to help, government austerity means we can't do as much as we would like. That is why we must keep the pressure on the government to deal with this crisis and stop local people having the make a choice between heating and eating.

Supplementary question:

Thank you. The cost of living crisis is going to have a huge impact on local authorities across the country. Families are facing increases, especially in heating bills, and as we approach winter the crisis is going to bite hard. How do we as councillors respond to these demands from casework in relation to the cost of living crisis?

Response:

All members in this chamber will have inboxes full from families asking for help who are being asked to choose between heating and eating. We have a proud history of fighting austerity and producing budgets that keep our frontline services open. We have continued our household support scheme, continued our childcare bursary, continued free school meals for all primary school children, and we will keep up that fight. I look forward to working with you on this.

Question (b) from Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

Does the Council agree with me that it is an outrage that the Planning Inspectorate have allowed a new housing development at Highbury Quadrant that only provides 28% affordable housing?

Response:

Thank you for your question. Yes, it is a complete outrage. We have 14,000 households on the housing register. Every councillor in this room has inboxes full of emails from residents who need a safe and genuinely affordable home. For the past 12 years, we have been focused on building safe, secure genuinely affordable homes for local people wherever we can, and we'll continue doing that for the next four years.

I agree that it is scandalous that the new development on the Highbury Quadrant has been waved through by the Planning Inspector acting on behalf of the Secretary of State. This has rode roughshod over our very necessary planning policy which requires 50% affordable homes on every development of ten units or more. We've been all the way to the High Court to ensure the development at Packhorse Road was 50% genuinely affordable housing, and I'm very happy with everyone in this room who was involved in the campaign to ensure we got 60% affordable housing at the Holloway site.

Despite the Council's best efforts, the Inspector did side with the developer, which is a travesty, but we will seek provide as much affordable housing as we can across the borough and tackle this housing crisis. I hope we can rely on you to support us every step of the way.

Supplementary question:

As a private renter who lives around the corner from the Highbury Quadrant estate, it's really disappointing to see such a prime part of land be consigned to luxury housing rather than the housing we know that local people desperately need. It is an outrage the government have allowed this to happen. Can we work together to call out the government for letting us all down on this development? Can we mobilise residents on this issue, as the government have made it so much harder to deal with this issue.

Response:

Yes, and let's go even further. Find me sites in your ward where you want to build affordable housing. We can talk to our New Build Team and make it happen.

Question (c) from Cllr Russell to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

With the benefit of hindsight, does the energy contract signed with SSE represent value for money?

Response:

Thank you for your question. The rising cost of energy prices is having a significant and detrimental impact on the lives of local people and organisations. We fear there is worse to come, and I think we can all agree that the government response has been totally inadequate.

Going back to the contract that you raise, the contract was a flexible arrangement, so the Council purchases its energy directly and continues to do so from the open market. At one time, that was recommended by central government as a way of saving money. In fact, in 2020/21, it saved over £2million.

As the contract ward criteria was 100% price, and based on the supplier providing the lowest fixed costs profit margin, it was considered a good deal at the time. As you would expect, there is a real focus on looking at what we can do now and council is developing revised purchase strategy. Building Managers are actively working to reduce the Council's energy consumption at the same time. I can promise you, we are very seriously looking at what we can do, and trying to work to reduce energy consumption at the same time.

Supplementary question:

Thank you, it is good to hear you are looking at reducing energy consumption. My supplementary question is related to communal heating systems, where tenants on estates are now having heat meters installed. What is the council doing to protect residents in the worst insulated blocks from rocketing energy bills now that there is an element of individual heat meters?

Response:

I think at the moment it's a relatively small number of people, I think it's something like 600, and it's something the government has required us to do. I have had a number of conversations about this, but I think it would be best for a written response to come from someone who has more detailed knowledge than I do.

Question (d) from Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Both Camden and Hackney councils have switched to fortnightly non-recyclable waste collections. Does the council see any benefit to following suit?

Response:

Thank you for your question. Yes, you're right. Both Hackney and Camden have switched recently. As I said before, we will continue to look at all the ways to increase our recycling rates in Islington, we have a commitment to increase our recycling rates to at least 40% by 2030.

Officers are looking at what's happened in neighbouring boroughs to see what to see what lessons can be could be learned. We are doing everything we can and will continue to look at all the options. At the moment the major focus is rolling out food waste recycling to estates and to improve communal recycling facilities on those estates, working with residents to do that this.

If we are to do this, we need to increase our resident engagement, which is why we're investing in a new dedicated recycling team as part of our Thriving Neighbourhoods programme. Not only will there be the infrastructure, but there but there will be the conversations, and support for behaviour change.

Supplementary question:

I remember standing here around ten years ago as a member of the public, congratulating Islington Council for their recycling rate of 33%, reaching that level for the first time ever. Ten years on, we are at 32%. I'm pleased that we have new ideas, but do we have a clear path towards 2040, and how soon can we increase this?

Response:

We face many challenges, including an increasing population and churn of population. Yes, we do have a recycling rate lower than outer London boroughs; this is not simple and does require a considerable investment in council services to improve. We have experienced cuts over the past ten years, which is perhaps why we haven't made the progress we would have lived. But we do have a very dedicated recycling team and I do think it is an achievement to keep it at those levels given the circumstances. We are absolutely not complacent, we need to do something differently, and we are looking at all the options.

Question (e) from Cllr Russell to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Is £28 a year too cheap for parking a Tesla?

Response:

I think the question really is, do I think we are correct to pursue a policy whereby more polluting vehicles pay the most for parking. And the answer is yes, I really do. I think the policies like ours, and of course the Mayor's ULEZ, has made a significant difference across London, but there is still a long way to go.

However, we have now seen a growth of larger electric vehicles, and these do come with other downsides; their size, tyre and brake pollution, and whole life emissions, which cannot be ignored.

We will look again at our policies, and look through the prism of Net Zero Carbon. The service is currently reviewing parking and permit changes.

Supplementary question:

Thank you. I'm really glad to hear that the council is reviewing the parking charges. CPRE London have done some really thoughtful work on parking policy for local authorities and they suggest that it should never be cheaper than £150 a year to park a car; that's £3 a week, which is less than 50p a day. They suggest that is the level that is needed to start to address the social and environmental and health consequences of parked cars in our city. Will you please look at work of CPRE London?

Response:

Thank you. While I agree we need to consider the environmental impact, we do need some balance in considering the financial impact on some people who are perhaps lower-paid and rely on older cars, which unfortunately do tend to be more polluting as well. We will take this up and look at this.

Question (f) from Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

At the current rate of building cycle hangars, in what year does the council project they will meet demand?

Response:

Providing safe and secure bicycle storage is important in enabling people to cycle more, that's why we've rolled out a large number of hangars. I'd like to thank the officers who have rolled out some 170 cycle hangers over the past year or so. It's a tremendous amount of work.

We have street hangars, but also a number of free places on our estates and that's also something that we need to continue to develop. We think our 400 bike hangars on the street are one of the highest number of bike hangars in London. Coming back to your question, we have committed to accelerating the current programme to make sure that demand is met. Officers are looking at what we can do to achieve that, and of course securing capital funding which will be necessary to put the hangars in place.

Supplementary question:

My understanding, based on the current speed, is that we will not meet projected demand by 2030, and that's without a single extra person requesting, so something has to change quite dramatically if we are to meet those targets.

I see empty spaces and places hangars could be located in Highbury Vale, and I do think our prices are some of the highest in London. I think there are opportunities for us to meet our targets and generate revenue and I'd urge us to meet that ambition, rather than the pace currently being delivered.

Response:

We are looking at this, however it does require a lot of capital expenditure. One reason we charge what we do is because it is cost neutral, which means we are in a better position to roll out hangars more quickly. We are looking at this, so watch this space. We are also investing in a computer system that will help to make this more efficient.

Question (g) from Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People & Families:

Why were Islington Boat Club premises temporarily shut?

Response:

Thank you for your question. Following concerns for the condition of the building, the council organised a survey to understand the issues with the building. For health and safety reasons, we cannot open the building until these issues are fixed. In the meantime, we are trying to put together a temporary solution so people can access the club, while longer term options are being explored.

Supplementary question:

Are you open to working with other boroughs to get this back up and running as quickly as possible? It is a very popular club that teaches people to swim, to canoe, to paddle, and this is important for the next generation.

Response:

We are trying our best to put a plan in place for this summer, and at the same time develop a long term strategy. Health and safety is important and we can't put our young people in the building at the moment, but I can assure you we are working to resolve it as quickly as possible.

Question (h) from Cllr Hayes to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

I was delighted to see Fiona Monkman of Islington Architects shortlisted for the MJ Long Prize for Excellence in Practice 2022 award recently, for the wonderful new social housing on Centurion Close in Islington. We are so proud of our social housing in Islington, can you tell me what the Council is doing to make sure we not only have as much social housing as possible but that it is on the highest possible standard?

Response:

Thank you for your question. I was really pleased to see Fiona Monkman win the MJ Long Prize for Excellence in Practice 2022, recognising her contribution to delivering high quality affordable homes for our residents over many years. We are very proud

to have in-house council architects. We are one of the few boroughs to retain that, but it is something we will continue.

Social housing is something we care about deeply in Islington. We are the third largest public landlord in the country and we are focused on making sure our new council homes, as well as our existing ones, are the best they can be.

In May, we were elected on a landslide majority yet again, with a promise to build 750 brand new council homes for local people in desperate need over the next four years. We are in the midst of a severe housing crisis and our residents need that now more than ever.

We have continued to build throughout the pandemic, despite the challenges we have faced, and I look forward to our residents moving into excellent new homes at Telfer House, Charles Simmons and on the Wedmore Estate later this year. I was proud to take members of the Council on a tour of our wonderful new homes at Telfer House last week.

High quality council homes is of so much importance. Our homes are designed to meet our net zero carbon emissions commitments, helping keep our residents fuel bills down, and go beyond the requirements of new stringent fire safety regulations, as well as ensuring good space, height, daylight and ventilation. Fiona's award shows that you don't have to choose between quantity and quality of social homes in our borough. We can have both.

Supplementary question:

Would you agree that in a male-dominated field, it is particularly pleasing to see an in-house woman architect win an award for her excellent work?

Response:

Absolutely. Islington Council was proud to host the Tradeswomen Building Bridges delegation from North America a couple of weeks ago, and that visit was all about encouraging young women into construction. It is 1% of the entire industry I believe, and that is a disgrace. I am proud of our work on good quality apprenticeships. We have ensured 51 good quality apprenticeships on the Holloway site, 30% of which must be allocated to women.

The Mayor announced that the time permitted for questions had ended and the following questions would receive a written response:

Question (i) from Cllr Craig to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

The particularly hot weather over the last couple of weeks has affected us all, with less well-off residents often feeling the greatest effects, living in less well-insulated homes, and more likely to be in work that involves greater physical strain, and more time outside. The Mayor of London recently issued a map of cooler places that Londoners could take shelter, and we know that these long spells of intense heat result in poor health and excess deaths.

As the frequency and severity of hot weather increases, what steps is the Council taking not only to tackle the climate emergency, but also to mitigate its impacts on those set to suffer the most?

Response:

I agree that the global and local rise in temperatures, and increased frequency of hot weather episodes is incredibly concerning. We know that it is vital we are focused on tackling the climate emergency, becoming a net zero carbon borough and improving air quality. But without that work being matched nationally and globally, we will still see increasing temperatures. So it is equally important that we put measures in place to protect local people.

Although Vision 2030 is focused on achieving a net zero carbon borough by 2030, many of the activities being delivered will contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change for our residents. For example, as part of our programme to deliver more than 750 new council homes, our new homes include measures such as solar shading where necessary and mechanical ventilation.

In our manifesto we were elected on in May, we committed to spending £10 million per year on retrofitting our councils homes, including improving the insulation of properties, so that we are keeping them warmer in winter and addressing fuel poverty, but also seeking to minimise the impacts of excess heat. It is also important we include our local environment, to cool temperatures and provide shade where needed.

Trees also have a cooling effect, which is important due to projected future temperature increases as a result of climate change, and have a positive impact on drainage and flood risk. We are going to plant at least 600 more trees than we lose every year, increasing Islington's canopy cover, and through our Greening the Borough initiative we are working to protect our green spaces and develop new ones such as a network of pocket parks in the public realm, and identify opportunities for new trees and/or sustainable urban drainage systems to alleviate flood risk. Our Council will continue to look at ways we can reduce temperatures, as well as mitigating the effects of the climate emergency.

Question (j) from Cllr Poyser to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:

With six years having now passed since the Brexit referendum, the Leave campaign's promises of prosperity, cheaper food, cheaper fuel and a fair migration system seem a very long way away. The latter is particularly striking, with the Government talking airily of 'Global Britain' in the aftermath of the result.

But what we've got is a migration system that's progressively crueler, more hostile and more deliberately difficult to navigate than ever before – whether for people in our own community here in Islington, or those fleeing persecution and conflict in Ukraine, Afghanistan and beyond. What steps is the Council taking to welcome those seeking a place of sanctuary in our borough, and to campaign for a migration system underpinned by fairness, compassion and humanity?

Response:

Islington is a place of sanctuary and welcome for all. We are proud of the Council's work we have been doing to welcome migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to the borough. In contrast to the failings of this government, we take an inclusive and compassionate approach to meeting need.

Islington is leading by example by delivering:

- An end to rough sleeping that includes targeted interventions for people facing immigration-based exclusions to services
- Use of statutory safeguarding duties to alleviate destitution faced by adults with care and support needs and families who have 'no recourse to public funds'
- Resettling 35 households / 180 people from Afghanistan in Islington
- Making the Homes for Ukraine scheme work, with up to 200 hosting arrangements expected in Islington and over 350 people to be welcomed through this programme

While the Brexit campaign and this Government have tried to make leaving the EU about sovereignty and a 'fair' immigration system, the disgusting, racist proposal to send asylum seekers to Rwanda shows Brexit for what it is. A plan to make Britain poorer, less welcoming and more isolated from the world. In Islington, we will continue support migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who wish to make our borough their home.

195 ISLINGTON ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT - ANNUAL UPDATE

Councillor Comer-Schwartz introduced the report.

The recommendations in the report were put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

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

196 CHIEF WHIP'S REPORT

Councillor Hyde moved the recommendation in the report.

The recommendation was put to a vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

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.

197 CONSTITUTION UPDATE

Councillor Hyde moved the recommendation in the report.

The recommendation was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

That the amendment to the Constitution be approved as set out in the report.

198 NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Fair Votes Now

The Mayor advised that a proposed amendment to the motion was circulated in the second despatch of papers.

The motion was moved by Councillor Hamdache. Councillor Russell seconded. Councillor Ward moved his amendment.

Councillor Hamdache exercised his right of reply on the motion. Councillor Ward exercised his 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 call for a national review of voting systems in all elections in England and UK elections;
- (ii) 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;
- (iii) To consult young people on their choice of voting system for Youth Council elections.

Motion 2: Save Islington's Buses

The Mayor advised that an alteration to the motion had been circulated in the second despatch of papers and this was formally noted.

The Mayor noted that the motion asked the Council to express its support for the RMT and all other trade unions taking industrial action this year. As the majority of councillors present were members of trade unions, those members held an interest in this motion, as detailed in the Council's register of interests.

Councillor Hyde moved that, under paragraph 14.2 of the Member Code of Conduct, a dispensation should be granted for those councillors to vote on a matter in which they hold an interest, otherwise the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great as to impede the transaction of the business. This was put to the vote and the dispensation was granted.

Councillor Ozdemir moved the motion. Councillor Convery seconded. Councillors Graham and Russell contributed to the debate.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) To campaign to save the Number 4 bus route and oppose cuts to bus routes in Islington;
- (iii) To work with the Mayor of London to increase the amount of local people walking, wheeling or cycling;
- (iv) To 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

The Mayor advised that an alteration to the motion had been circulated in the second despatch of papers and this was formally noted.

Councillor Cinko-Oner moved the motion. Councillors Staff and Jegorovas-Armstrong seconded.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) To 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;
- (iii) To 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;
- (iv) To 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.;
- (v) To share and develop educational resources for schools to support refugees, like Educational Above All (EAA) resources for Afghan and Ukrainian refugee children;
- (vi) To share resources with refugees and asylum seekers about the benefits of joining a trade union;
- (vii) To 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;

- (viii) To 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;
- (ix) 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.

Motion 4: Solidarity with Ukraine migrants in Islington

The Council formally noted that the motion had been withdrawn.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm

MAYOR