



## COUNCIL MEETING - 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

Councillors of the London Borough of Islington are summoned to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on **22 September 2022 at 7.30 pm.**

**Chief Executive**

## AGENDA

**The meeting will start with a two minute silence following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.**

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|----|---|--------|
| 1. | Minutes   | 1 - 22 |
|    | The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 June 2022. |        |

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 2. | Declarations of Interest |
|----|--------------------------|

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest\*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

- \***(a) Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (b) Sponsorship** - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.
- (c) Contracts** - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.
- (d) Land** - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.
- (e) Licences** - Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.
- (f) Corporate tenancies** - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.
- (g) Securities** - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to **all** members present at the meeting.

### 3. Mayoral Announcements

- (i) Apologies
- (ii) Order of business
- (iii) Declaration of discussion items
- (iv) Mayor's announcements
- (v) Length of speeches

### 4. Leader's Announcements

- The Leader will address the Council
- The Leader of the Opposition will then be invited to respond

### 5. Petitions

6. Questions from Members of the Public 23 - 26

7. Questions from Members of the Council 27 - 30

### 8. Chief Whip's Report

9. Notices of Motion 31 - 36

Where a motion concerns an executive function, nothing passed can be actioned until approved by the Executive or an officer with the relevant delegated power.

- Motion 1: Declaration of cost of living emergency
- Motion 2: Bring water back into public ownership
- Motion 3: Cost of living crisis

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Despatched : 13 September 2022

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## 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
Bossmann-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 rools 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 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 on 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 to 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 lessons can 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 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 liked. 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 by 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 hangars 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 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 crueller, 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**

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### COUNCIL MEETING – 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

#### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

**a Rebekah Kelly Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

Between July and December last year, Islington Council ran the Safer Spaces consultation. I believe there was an insufficient amount of publicity and promotion to call it the largest community safety consultation of its kind. The results were broadcast in a series of community events at which the former Executive Member for Community Safety presented the Safe Haven scheme and stated the results of the consultation would be published and available, although I'm struggling to find evidence of this publication so am dubious of its existence.

Will the newly appointed Executive Member for Community Safety continue the Safe Haven scheme, working with communities to make the scheme effective, and actually hear our concerns?

**b Hilary Green to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

Is the planning department at Islington Council willing to undergo a public review of its policy on mansards, taking into consideration the complex needs and wishes of residents?

**c Max Campbell to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:**

Islington Boat Club provides vital services to the whole community from children, young people, the older generation and those with Special Educational Needs. It's closure over this summer has had a devastating effect.

In the last Council meeting in June, the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families stated that "Islington Boat Club has been closed due to failing a health and safety audit and needs significant repairs". However, upon investigation it seems that redevelopment was highlighted in Site Allocation from 2019. Why hasn't the Council helped more to keep the Boat Club open?

**d Helena Farstad to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

As part of the Dixon Clark Court negotiation process (when the site was occupied by tree protectors), one of the conditions for leaving the site was that Islington Council would hold a Citizen's Assembly on the Environmental Emergency in Islington. While not defined the idea was to focus on how to address the Housing Crisis in Islington alongside achieving the commitment of Net Zero Carbon by 2030.

The agreement was signed on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 and the occupation of which negotiation parties belonged, then ceased. Since that point, several attempts to get a confirmation on when such a Citizen's Assembly should be held has taken place. The Councillor has not yet responded providing any clarity on the matter and already two years have passed.

Is the Councillor intending to hold this promise, and if so, when will they deliver on it?

**e Leyla Boulton to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

The UK has signed the Paris Accord on climate change and enshrined its objective of carbon neutrality in law. Now, the double whammy of soaring energy bills and Russia's use of gas as a weapon of economic warfare make the development of renewables and increasing energy efficiency more urgent than ever before.

Islington's grade 2 listed properties are numerous and among the most energy-inefficient in the borough. Yet current planning regulations are preventing the landlords, tenants and residents of such homes from taking steps to radically reduce their carbon footprint, including the installation of solar panels and double-glazing.

For instance, a resident who installed sensitive double-glazing that is invisible from the street has been refused planning permission while secondary glazing on a neighbour's house, which is visible from the street, is allowed. Listed homes were mostly discouraged from joining the Mayor's now-closed Solar Together scheme on the grounds they would not get planning permission from Islington Council.

Councils such as Kensington & Chelsea are adapting their planning rules to help. With its strong record on the need to tackle climate change, will Islington Council quickly change planning regulations to facilitate the installation of solar panels and double-glazing on grade 2 listed homes and help make street properties in Islington warmer in winter and more affordable to heat for all tenants and residents?

**f Lucy Facer to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:**

100% of Islington exceeds the World Health Organisation's (WHO) air quality guidelines. The guidelines provide evidenced, health-based standards that cities should adopt. Last year, an estimated 74 people in Islington died from diseases caused by air pollution.

There is far-reaching evidence that shows how air pollution affects many aspects of health, even at low levels. Air pollution particles reach unborn babies through the placenta and children are being exposed daily to unsafe levels of air pollution on their journeys to school, the park or the local library.

Islington Clean Air Parents would like to know does the council have a comprehensive plan for the borough to meet WHO's air quality guidelines?

**g Zak Vora to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

Islington Council have once again failed to conduct adequate consultation, this time with the residents of Braitwaite House and Quaker Court, the residents most directly impacted by any potential development on the Podium and surrounding area behind Braithwaite House on Bunhill Row. Will the Council commit to a full and thorough consultation with defined thresholds for objections to nullify plans and, if it somehow passes these thresholds, commit to all properties being offered for social housing given the desperate need for such confirmed by the Council itself?

**h Claire Davies to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

Regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Banner Estate (Braithwaite house and Quaker Court EC1Y) for Private and social housing-

What steps have been take to fully investigate nearby alternative sites for redevelopment, namely the properties and sites in close proximity to the already densely populated Banner Estate, that have been left vacant, empty and disused for numerous years and could be feasible for compulsory purchase? For example the site at Oliver's Yard on City Road.

i **Pete Gilman to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:**

As a proportion of income rents in Britain are the highest in Europe and high rents are a major cause of poverty and deprivation. There is an understandable fear among council tenants that on top of the huge rise in the price of food and fuel we will see a huge rise in council rents in Islington.

Can the council give an assurance that there will be no such rise? In addition, many housing associations operating in Islington are planning big increases in rents and service charges. Can the council give an assurance it will use its power and influence to stop and/or curb such increases?



### COUNCIL MEETING – 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

#### QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

**a Cllr Poyser to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:**

On 13 August 2022, at 12.10am, Police attended a serious road traffic collision outside the Shell Garage on Hornsey Rise, N19, in Hillrise Ward. Four people were injured, one with life threatening injuries. Our deepest sympathies are with the families of the victims. Obviously the incident will be investigated by the relevant authorities and blame cannot be apportioned until this has happened

Some local residents that have cars on this road drive too fast. Is there anything Islington can do to make this stretch of road safer in future?

**b Cllr Convery to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:**

On Wednesday 17 August, heavy rainfall caused "flash" flooding in Islington on Upper Street and Pentonville Road at Kings Cross seemingly worsened by blocked drains on TfL roads. In the previous week, a Thames Water mains burst on Tollington Way caused extensive damage partly exacerbated by the slow speed at which drains could remove water.

With the risk of such extreme events recurring, please will you say whether Islington's preventative programme of gully maintenance will be adjusted to ensure that further episodes of very heavy rain do not cause flooding on Borough roads and residential streets?

**c Cllr Gallagher to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

The conservative government has spent 12 years making this unprecedented cost of living crisis through 12 years of deliberately planned austerity, attacking working people from all ages, backgrounds and all sectors. To add insult to this injury inflicted on normal working islingtonians and people across all of the UK, the average pay of FTSE 100 CEOs jumps by 39% - an inflation busting pay-rise which is at a rate of 109 times that of the average UK worker; energy firms make £170 billion excess profits. People are living in fear and despair at being unable to survive. Winter is coming. What can the council, our key partners and organisations do to prevent normal people from having to turn to crime to make ends meet, pay the daily bills or feed their families?

**d Cllr Gallagher to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:**

Has the Executive Member received the latest up-to-date figures on male suicide and suicide in general within the London Borough of Islington? Could he share with me and members what is the strategy to tackle male suicide within the borough and to have an integrated approach across all council services and departments to address this issue and prevent the cost of living crisis becoming a cost of life crisis?

**e Cllr Jackson to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:**

Black men are 17x more likely to develop severe mental health problems than any other group. They are also 4x more likely to be sectioned under the Mental Health Act. These stark statistics show us a focus on mental health for Black men is more important than ever before. Can the exec member tell me their plans to tackle and ensure Young Black Men can live well and access the support they need?

**f Cllr Heather to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:**

What action is being taken by the Council to protect renters, including private renters, in Islington amidst the cost of living crisis?

**g Cllr Chapman to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:**

We were delighted by the fantastic GCSE, A Level and vocational results this summer which significantly improved compared to 2019. What work is the Council doing to maintain these high standards in the years ahead?

**h Cllr Poyser to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:**

This summer has demonstrated the severity of the climate crisis we face and the urgency to respond. Coupled with the energy crisis, not only will our residents feel the impact through their bills, so too will our council buildings and schools. With this in mind, what steps are the council taking to retrofit and insulate our council buildings and schools?



i **Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

Can you give an update on the progress of expanding the selective licensing scheme for landlords operating in Finsbury Park and the positive impact that the scheme has had?

j **Cllr Russell to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:**

The papers to the Executive on 1st September showed that Council tenants and leaseholders living in the 57 council buildings with communal heating systems will be subject to escalating costs for heating and hot water. Can you set out how many buildings with communal heating systems are in each EPC category from A to F?

k **Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

Can you update us on the Safe Havens program? How many people have used a safe Haven in Islington?

l **Cllr McHugh to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:**

With fuel prices at near-record highs, the impact on our vital public and community transport providers is proving substantial. In particular, we were saddened to learn of the difficulties faced by HCT Group, a social enterprise, resulting in the withdrawal of the 812 community bus service and the forfeit of several TfL routes to for-profit competitors.

Given this, and the ongoing funding constraints faced by TfL as a consequence of Government austerity, what steps has the Council taken to protect our local transport services and support those residents affected by the cuts, and what further steps need to be taken to protect our transport network from rising costs over the coming months?

m **Cllr Russell to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:**

What is the Council's timeline for insulating and ventilating every council home in the borough?

n **Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:**

What has Islington Council and Islington schools planned for Anti-Bullying Week 2022 (Monday 14th - Friday 18th November)?

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## COUNCIL MEETING – 22 SEPTEMBER 2022

### NOTICES OF MOTION

#### **Motion 1: Declaration of cost of living emergency**

Moved by Cllr Saiqa Pandor

Seconded by Cllr Mick O'Sullivan

#### **This Council notes:**

- On 1 April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy price cap by 54%. This means that households across the UK would be experiencing anywhere between a £600 to £1000 increase in energy bills.
- In Islington, this could amount to a £631 increase, with the average gas and electric bill rising from £907 to £1,538.
- On 26 August 2022, Ofgem confirmed a further energy cap increase of 80% from Saturday 1 October. This means energy bills are expected to rise from £1,971 to £3,549 per year on typical usage.
- The rise in the energy price cap is significantly further than Ofgem's original prediction in May, which is what Central Government based its cost of living support package on.
- These continued rises will impact our most vulnerable families in the borough. To put this into context, we have 27,399 people in low-income households (on housing benefit or council tax support). 11,673 of our families are in fuel poverty, meaning the household's income after fuel expenditure would bring their income below the relative poverty line. The number of households in relative poverty now stands at 9,901 (as of July 2022).
- The rate of inflation – the price of goods and services – rose to 10.1% on 17 August 2022, hitting a new 40-year high. It is expected to remain high for the next two years – the Bank of England expects inflation will not reach its 2% target until the third quarter of 2024.
- In Islington, 905 businesses closed during the first quarter of this year (2022), the highest number since 2017. This was 27.6% higher than the average rate of closure since 2017. Although the 905 figure had fallen back by Q2 this year to 770, this was still the fourth highest number of closures out of the last 22 quarters since 2017.
- In the UK Government's Business Insights Survey for August 2022, 45.6% of businesses reported that input prices (all the costs that go into producing a good or service) had increased in July 2022, up from 16.3% at the end of May this year.

- The rising cost of energy is seen as the most important factor behind imminent input price rises expected by the largest group of businesses surveyed (44%). Rising energy costs are followed by over a third of businesses expecting price rises in raw materials (35.1%), and labour (34.4%).
- Unlike households, businesses are not protected by the energy price cap and government support is only planned for six months. As fixed rate deals come to an end in the latter part of this year, several businesses have reported energy bills scheduled to rise sixfold
- Wages are falling, in real terms, by more than since records began, with the latest figures showing real wages falling by 3%
- While Central Government has offered some help in September 2022, this will still see energy prices double for households this year and only offers support for businesses for six months
- The increased energy price cap, coupled with pre-existing inequalities that were magnified by the pandemic have resulted in local businesses and charities becoming 'warm havens' to support struggling families unable to eat and heat their homes. This will only put further economic pressure on our local organisations and businesses as they provide warmth for vulnerable people and families trying to shelve their own energy costs.

**This Council further notes:**

- In January 2022, Islington Council unveiled its budget to create a more equal Islington in the face of the cost of living crisis.
- The Budget invested an extra £676,000 into our Council Tax Support Scheme to further reduce the council tax bills of around 19,000 low-income working age households.
- It also quadrupled the size of the childcare bursary scheme to £160,000, enabling up to 300 more parents to afford to get back into work or training.
- Up to 4,000 small and medium-sized businesses in Islington have effectively had their Business Rates Bills cancelled out this year thanks to a £17 million council scheme designed to help those affected by the pandemic.
- In July 2022, a £2.6 million support scheme was announced by Islington Council to help families and households in the borough struggling to cope with the cost of living crisis.
- The work undertaken locally to become north London's first Living Wage Borough, has built a growing network of local employers paying at least the London Living Wage.
- The Council's inclusive approach to economic growth and support for microbusinesses through our affordable workspace programmes for tech, digital and creative start-ups, and targeted support for underrepresented groups.

**This Council resolves to declare a cost of living emergency, using our available resources to support our residents and local businesses:**

- We will make use of the of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund money to provide grant aid on energy costs

- Explore where improvements could be made in our own invoice payments to small businesses and freelancers. According to the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), around 50,000 businesses close every year due to late payments. We will therefore reduce our Prompt Payments from a 28 day period to a 14 day period.
- Promote a whistle-blowing service so in turn, we can report substantiated breaches to the Small Business Commissioner's Office and companies can be struck off the Prompt Payee register.
- As part of Social Value asks of a contractor, ask them to pay their supplies within 14 days, rather than 30 days of the Prompt Payment Code.
- Launch an internal hack-a-thon to encourage Council staff to shop local and highlight Shop Local alternatives to the big suppliers.
- Investigate potential for bulk buying of energy and facilitate local business consortia.
- Promote support the Council already offers through the Local Economies team, affordable workspaces, construction directory, and employment services, as well as grants available from Islington Sustainability Partnership (formerly ISEP).
- Run Business Rates workshops to ensure that businesses are paying the correct amount.
- Work with the BEIS Small Business Commissioner to consult on a package of support for small businesses in the borough.

**This Council resolves to build an inclusive local economy that works for all. We call on the Government to:**

- Secure our energy future and support a new generation of skilled green jobs by investing in a rapid rollout of renewables and storage technology, held in common ownership for the public good.
- Increase the National Minimum Wage to the level of the real Living Wage, as identified by the Living Wage Foundation
- Uplift Universal Credit and all other benefit payments in line with inflation
- Introduce universal free school meals for all children, as Islington Council has done for primary school children since 2009.
- Allow the Mayor of London to bring in rent controls, saving tenants money and supporting people through the cost of living crisis.
- Implement the official national opposition's proposal to freeze gas and electricity prices immediately to give people breathing space over the winter. This means the domestic energy price cap would stay at its current level of £1,971 from October to April rather than £2500 price cap announced by Prime Minister Liz Truss; it would mean no rise in household energy bills until April 2023 with pensioners and low to middle income families still receiving planned additional support with already elevated bills.
- Support a £1bn fund to help energy intensive industries with the higher cost of energy.
- Increase the business rates threshold for small business rates relief (from the current threshold of £15,000 to £25,000), to give SMEs a discount on their business rates bill for 2022/23, ahead of more fundamental reform proposed by the government.

## **Motion 2: Bring water back into public ownership**

Proposed by Cllr Fin Craig

Seconded by Cllr Praful Nargund

### **This Council notes:**

- The recent burst water pipe on Tollington Road which caused flooding and damage to homes and businesses in the local area, as well as Sobell Leisure Centre
- That there have been a number of burst water pipes on Offord Road in recent years, causing damage to properties and causing concern for local residents
- Thames Water's own figures show that it loses 24% of the water it supplies through leaks, almost 600 million litres per day
- The impact of the climate emergency and dry weather this summer which has led to low water levels across the UK
- Thames Water has implemented a hosepipe ban due to drought conditions across London and the South East
- Water companies have pumped raw sewage into Britain's seas and rivers for more than nine million hours since 2016, an increase of 2,553% over five years, according to the Labour Party's analysis of Environment Agency data
- Thames Water dumped raw sewage into rivers 5,028 times in 2021
- Increased raw sewage has led to safety warnings and closures at beaches across the UK this summer

### **This Council further notes:**

- In August 2022, Council Leader Kaya Comer-Schwartz wrote to Thames Water, following the Tollington Road burst, to call for increased investment in making our water pipes more resilient to avoid lost water
- The work of Islington Council's Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee to hold Thames Water to account
- In 1989, England and Wales became the first countries in the world to privatise its water system
- Water is a monopoly, meaning that customers have no choice who they get their water from
- Last year, Thames Water made an operating profit of £488 million, out of total revenues showing over £2 billion
- Water companies across the UK made £2.8 billion in profits in 2022
- Between 1989, when water companies were privatised, and 2015, water bills increased by 40% in real terms
- Polling suggests that 69% of the British public want water back in public hands

### **This Council resolves to:**

- Continue calling on Thames Water to invest further in water infrastructure to avoid the burst water pipes and leaks we have seen in Islington this summer
- Call on Thames Water, and all other water companies, to cease the release of raw sewage into seas and rivers, to keep our waters clean and safe
- Write to Central Government to ask for the water industry to be brought back into public ownership, delivering better services for the benefit of local people

### **Motion 3: Cost of living crisis**

Moved by Cllr Caroline Russell

Seconded by Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

#### **This Council notes:**

- The cost-of-Living crisis is affecting thousands of Islington households.
- The UK's rate of inflation jumped to 10.1 per cent in July, the first time it has registered a double-digit annual increase in more than four decades, with Bank of England projections pointing to inflation accelerating further later this year.
- Rising domestic energy and food price inflation will likely have a harmful effect on the health and well-being of Islington residents, with many people having to choose between heating and eating.
- Trussell Trust statistics show food bank use more than doubling in Islington from 2015 to this year with 5,784 parcels given out across the latest year.
- Inflation and uncertainty over the extent of business energy bill support is expected to affect employment opportunities for people living in Islington as businesses struggle to keep trading.
- Local Authorities have a duty of care to their citizens to promote and protect their well-being and to do what they can to prevent avoidable harm under the Care Act 2014.

#### **This Council further notes:**

- The help being provided to people through the Council's Resident Support Scheme, Here to Help scheme, Income Maximisation Team, and distribution of government grants to support people facing financial hardship.
- The SHINE programme pioneered in Islington, and now rolled out across London providing energy advice.
- The Council's Community Wealth Building offer for Economic Wellbeing to empower residents to build financial resilience, future proofed skills, and secure and retain good quality jobs.

#### **This Council resolves to:**

- Work with residents, NGOs and community groups to provide warm and welcoming spaces this winter on estates, in community centres and in other local facilities, where people can keep warm and comfortable and where they can receive council support and advice services to lessen the impact of food and fuel poverty.
- Promote union membership to Islington residents and work with unions and workers to ensure everyone working for Islington Council is fairly paid in the face of rising inflation and an escalating cost of living crisis.
- Develop a scheme to increase the Council's council tax reduction scheme to 100 per cent so that eligible households pay no council tax
- Set out a timetable to insulate remaining council properties without insulation along with a priority list for tackling the work

- Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions asking for restoration of the £20 Universal Credit uplift along with a further increase taking the uplift to £40.
- Write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy asking for reform of business rates to provide support for businesses struggling with uncapped energy bills.