



COUNCIL MEETING - 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

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 **28 September 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

SC Biggs

Acting Head of Paid Service

AGENDA

	Page
1. Minutes	1 - 34
The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 July 2023.	

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

- | | | |
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| 6. | Petition Debate: Save Sobell Ice Rink | 35 - 36 |
| 7. | Questions from the Youth Council | 37 - 38 |
| 8. | Questions from Members of the Public | 39 - 42 |
| 9. | Questions from Members of the Council | 43 - 46 |
| 10. | Adoption of Local Plan | 47 - 54 |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appendices to this report have been circulated in a separate despatch. | |
| 11. | Flexible use of capital receipts strategy | 55 - 60 |
| 12. | Council Appointments Report | TO FOLLOW |

13. Notices of Motion

61 - 72

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: A Metropolitan Police Service that Islington can trust
- Motion 2: Age Friendly Islington
- Motion 3: Boycott the Anti-Boycott Bill
- Motion 4: Islington Child Friendly Community

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Despatched : 20 September 2023

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LONDON BOROUGH OF ISLINGTON

COUNCIL MEETING - 13 JULY 2023

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

At the meeting of the Council held at Council Chamber, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on 13 July 2023 at 7.30 pm.

Present:

Bell-Bradford	Graham	O'Halloran
Bossmann-Quarshie	Hamdache	O'Sullivan
Burgess	Hayes	Ogunro
Champion	Heather	Ozdemir
Chapman	Hyde	Pandor
Chowdhury	Ibrahim	Russell
Cinko-Oner	Jackson	Spall
Clarke	Jeapes	Staff
Comer-Schwartz	Jegorovas-Armstrong	Turan
Convery	Kay	Ward
Craig	Khondoker	Wayne
Croft	Khurana	Williamson
Gallagher	Klute	Woolf
Gilgunn	Mackmurdie	Weekes
Gill	Ngongo	Zammit

The Mayor (Councillor Gary Heather) in the Chair

233 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 March 2023 be agreed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

234 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations were received.

235 MAYORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors North, Poyser, McHugh, Weekes, Nathan, Gallagher, and Nargund

(ii) Order of Business

The order of business was as per the Agenda.

(iii) Declaration of Discussion Items

No items were declared.

(iv) Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor extended a warm welcome to the delegates from Angola attending the full council meeting. The Mayor reflected on their nine weeks in office, during which they attended numerous events. The Mayor expressed their gratitude to the staff in the Mayor's office for their support and teamwork. He also acknowledged the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for their valuable work.

The Mayor spoke of their collaboration with Voluntary Action Islington to improve volunteering opportunities in the borough. The Mayor reiterated their pledge to be a "Representative of the People" and highlighted their approach of addressing issues raised by residents by involving council officers.

The Mayor recounted their participation in various events, including those related to the Armed Forces Week, Refugee Week, and special moments like welcoming the 34th Islington Scouts and attending a charity football game.

The Mayor also recognised the significance of the 75th anniversaries of the NHS and the arrival of the Windrush generation, with flag-raising ceremonies and events to honour these milestones. Lastly, the Mayor mentioned attending an event hosted by the borough's previous Deputy Lieutenant and unveiled a memorial in memory of George Durack, a respected community activist.

236 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader began by expressing condolences for the tragic murders of Leonardo Reid and Klevi Shekaj in Archway, emphasising that violence has no place in the borough. They highlighted the council's ongoing efforts to support young people and steer them away from danger, acknowledging the reduction in serious violent incidents in recent years while recognising the need for further progress.

The murders occurred 15 years after the tragic murder of Ben Kinsella, prompting continued community efforts to combat violent crime. The council's investment in youth services and community safety initiatives, such as safe havens and knife bins, was praised. Charities and community groups were recognised for their vital work with at-risk individuals.

The Leader stressed that keeping people safe was a top priority but acknowledged that it required collective action, not just from Islington but also at the national level. The Leader mentioned the need for trust-building between the community and the police, highlighting concerns and the importance of diversity in the community. The government's failures, including austerity and the cost-of-living crisis, called for real

action to end youth violence. The council committed its efforts to protect the community while calling on others to step up and help.

The Leader of the Opposition responded, expressing their gratitude to the previous Leader of the Opposition. They highlighted their eight-years as the opposition and the work they had done over that time. The Leader of the Opposition hoped to be just half as insightful, thoughtful and good natured at the job.

The Leader of the Opposition addressed the issue of underrepresentation in local government for various groups, including women, ethnic minorities, disabled individuals, LGBTQ+ individuals, and younger people, especially in senior positions. The Leader of the Opposition stressed the importance of diverse representation.

The Leader of the Opposition noted their disappointment regarding the council not flying the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller (GRT) flag during Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller History Month. They mentioned their earlier request to commemorate the month and the positive community response. The Leader of the Opposition highlighted efforts to find GRT sites and the challenges of racism faced by the community, including offensive emails and graffiti.

The Leader of the Opposition expressed sympathy for the council's financial challenges and the cost of energy, however argued that the recent decision not to reinstate the Sobell ice rink did not make sense. They commented that the ice rink had a positive impact on youth engagement and physical activity. The Leader of the Opposition considered the consultation process to be one-sided and said it appeared that the council was not interested in listening to alternative ideas. The Leader of the Opposition called on the council to reconsider the decision, suggesting that alternative options like greening the rink and third-party providers had not been adequately explored.

237 PETITION DEBATE: STOP THE CUTS AT LAYCOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL DEAF PROVISION

The Council debated the petition submitted to the previous meeting. It was noted this petition had received over 2000 signatures.

The Lead Petitioner introduced the petition and spoke for two minutes:

- The deaf provision at Laycock School was at risk of severe budget cuts at the end of last year, which would have significantly affected the students relying on these services. The Lead Petitioner said that there was no effort to involve parents in the decision-making process, however a dedicated group of parents had intervened and helped to prevent significant cuts in services.
- However, there was ongoing concern that the cuts may persist and worsen in the future. Additionally, there are worries about a proposed plan to group year 6 students into three classes, which would neglect the needs of deaf children and place them back in mainstream classrooms.

Councillor Ngongo moved the motion to debate the petition. Councillor Chapman seconded. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong contributed to the debate. Councillor Ngongo exercised their right to reply.

The following main points were made in the debate:

- Education is highly valued in this borough. In January 2023, a meeting was held with parents to understand their needs and concerns, with a strong focus on listening to the parents' perspectives.
- A short-term and long-term approach was developed in collaboration with parents. In the short term, engagement with deaf experts led to the suspension of a plan. In the long term, a working group was proposed to work with parents and investigate effective strategies.
- The outcomes included: 1. Establishing clear communication, 2. Ensuring parental involvement in the focus group process, and 3. Maintaining specialist provisions.
- The Council recognised the vital role of Laycock School for deaf children and parents and expressed the importance of collaboration between parents and the council going forward, apologising for any previous lack of collaboration. The Council wanted to support the school's leadership to ensure these children don't lose those vital services.
- Due to government underfunding, 283 teachers had resigned in Islington, emphasising the need to retain experienced teachers.
- The council was actively working with teachers and advocating for increased funding from the central government to protect essential services and ensure the borough's education system flourished.

The motion to consider the petition was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the petition be noted

238 PETITION DEBATE: GREENER GRADE II LISTED AND CONSERVATION AREA HOMES

The Council debated the petition submitted to the previous meeting. It was noted this petition had received over 2000 signatures.

The Lead Petitioner introduced the petition and spoke for two minutes:

- Residents want to live in warmer homes that are more energy efficient. For this, these homes require solar panels, heat pumps and double glazing.
- The current planning system is often seen as unpredictable, restrictive, and slow. However, there is optimism regarding the upcoming release of the first draft of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), with hopes that it will broaden the scope of permissible changes and make these clearer.
- Residents have voiced three key requests:
 1. The new planning system should prioritise sustainability and conservation, recognising that, for instance, some listed homes lack the flexibility to implement double glazing, despite the presence of suitable infrastructure.
 2. Residents require clear and comprehensive guidance on the actions they can take to improve their homes.

3. A shift in planning practices could invigorate the local economy by creating job opportunities in the area.

Councillor Ward moved the motion to debate the petition. Councillor Clarke seconded. Councillor Russell contributed to the debate. Councillor Ngongo exercised their right to reply.

The following main points were made in the debate:

- Councillor Ward welcomed the petition and affirmed the council's commitment to achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030 and addressing the challenges of the cost of living and fuel poverty.
- Islington is home to numerous listed buildings and street properties, which pose challenges not only to private owners but also to the council.
- Earlier this year, planning permission was granted for retrofitting Bevan Court, a grade 2* listed building.
- Recognising the need to balance energy efficiency with preserving Islington's historic buildings, the council is developing its own Net Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This document will provide evidence-based guidance on retrofit measures, including those in conservation areas and listed buildings, and will clarify cases where planning permission is not required for certain retrofitting projects.
- The SPD will undergo two rounds of consultations, and additional workshops will follow.
- Given the escalating bills and the climate crisis, enhancing the energy efficiency of homes is a pressing concern. Clear and consistent guidance for residents regarding potential actions is imperative.
- Islington aims to contribute to achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2030, and the planning processes should support rather than hinder this goal.
- Changes in planning rules would stimulate the local economy and create much-needed job opportunities in the area.
- Although there is much work ahead in finalising the SPD, the council is committed to collaborating with residents to develop a robust document.

The motion to consider the petition was put to the vote and carried.

RESOLVED:

That the petition be noted.

239 PETITIONS

The Council received 4 petitions, as follows:

1. A petition from a young person titled 'Save Sobell Ice Rink';
2. A petition from Linda Scully titled 'Save the Isledon Village Estate', expressing concern about anti-social behaviour connected to the homeless hostel on Stacey Street.
3. A petition from Philip Tsaras titled 'Get Clerkenwell Design Week off our grass!' about the impact of the Clerkenwell Design Week event at Spa Fields and St James' Church Gardens.

4. A petition from Rachel Laverty about the construction impacts and other issues associated with the Holloway prison development.

240 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Question (a) from Rebekah Kelly to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

The DfT has recently announced that they would no longer fund Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, and the Mayor of London has admitted that some of the schemes are not perfect and should be tweaked or removed. Will Islington Council scale back their plans to create traffic filtering schemes on 70% of Islington's roads? And how will it be funded going forward?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Rebekah. Our Council is determined to create a cleaner, greener, healthier borough, where we help tackle the climate emergency and support local people to take up active methods of travel.

Since the people-friendly streets programme started in June 2020 it has contributed to the council's plans to transform the borough and our ambitions in multiple areas, including road danger reduction, cleaner air, and climate change; all objectives set out in our policies in the Islington Transport Strategy and Islington's Vision 2030 (Net Zero Carbon) Strategy.

The Council has listened to local people's concerns throughout, making changes where necessary, such as a new 'Home LTN' Blue Badge exemption policy trial in its low traffic neighbourhoods. As this is an important priority for the Council, most of these schemes, and any future schemes, will be funded from council and external grant funding where available. Thank you again for your question.

Supplementary Question:

Which ones need removing or tweaking, what is the success criteria, has every trial become permanent? There needs to be a call for data to be audited.

Response:

There had been one issue with the interim report for Highbury and we apologise for that. Any areas that needed tweaking have been tweaked.

Question (b) from Richard Rieser to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:

In light of the recent survey of accessibility of pavements I carried out in Mildmay, can the Council inform us what they are doing to ensure the multiple barriers identified, especially for disabled people, are being addressed across the borough?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Richard. We want to make Islington a more equal place and that includes ensuring that all local people can walk around the borough safely.

Improving our streets for all residents, particularly those who experience restrictions on their mobility, is a key objective for the council as part of our people-friendly pavements programme. This programme will include dropped kerbs, tactile paving and decluttering, to make the borough's pavements more accessible and inclusive for all.

We acknowledge the issues raised in your survey of pavement accessibility in Mildmay. Following our engagement on draft proposals for Mildmay Liveable Neighbourhood earlier this year, we are currently in the process of finalising designs for consultation on the scheme later this year. We are taking the recommendations into account as part of that process, so that we can identify locations to make accessibility improvements in Mildmay as part of the scheme.

Thank you once again for your important question Richard.

Supplementary Question:

Have the concerns raised during several consultations, where the needs of many individuals were seemingly overlooked in favour of bike riders, been addressed? Specifically, have measures been taken to address issues such as uncontrolled shrubbery, tree roots, and steep gradients on pathways, which pose challenges for pedestrians and individuals with impairments? Is the removal of these barriers being prioritized to ensure a more inclusive and accessible environment for all?

Response:

Thank you for raising all those points and we will take these into account as we develop the people friendly pavements.

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

In June 2019 the council declared a Climate Emergency. In November 2020 it published a Net Zero vision for 2030. Among other aims the plan was to phase out gas boilers in new-build homes. However, 4 years on, we can see the Climate Emergency not being taken seriously. The council is inexplicably building new homes on the Andover Estate that are heated with fossil fuel gas boilers. Why will these new homes be heated by fossil fuels and when do they plan to retrofit them with low carbon heat pumps?

Response:

Our Labour-run council is focused on tackling the housing and climate crises. The council is committed to tackling the climate emergency and has been phasing out the installation of gas-fuelled heating systems in its new homes, in accordance with the aims set out in our Vision 2030 strategy published in November 2020. Our project at Vorley Road in Archway is an example of the design standards to which our new homes will be built – continuing our track record of delivering high-quality, energy efficient homes with lower energy bills and less impact on the environment. Air source heat pumps will provide the heating and hot water, delivering lower operational carbon emissions in our borough and greater comfort to the occupants.

The new homes under construction on the Andover Estate, which will deliver 36 much needed new council homes for local people, were designed earlier, with planning permission secured in 2017 and construction underway in 2021. The development includes conversion of disused garages into new homes improving thermal performance for the whole building as well as improvements to greenspace on the estate for everyone to use.

The Council continues to invest in all of our homes to reduce carbon emissions and residents heating bills. Recent success includes two waves of Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund adding insulation and other solutions to properties below band C EPC rating bringing in £3.5 million grant for a wider £8 million investment scheme. The Council has also successfully bid for £700,000 Green Heat Networks Funding to install a low carbon heating system in Bevin Court. This shows that we are committed to tackling the climate emergency while also providing genuinely affordable homes in Islington.

Supplementary Question:

Your answer is incomplete, what is the date for the retrofit of the new council houses to take away the gas boilers? In July 2020 there was an application for the Andover estate to reset the energy strategy. There are a multitude of reasons as to why these gas boilers should be removed. Aside from failing to address the climate emergency, these boilers will also cause increased bills to residents, how much financial support will the council give to the residents with these boilers?

Response:

I am not prepared to delay the completion of council homes desperately needed by families in Islington to carry out this work. We are committed to ensure we have energy efficient homes across Islington with new builds and existing stock. I am glad you are showing enthusiasm and interest but please talk with your colleagues, as opposition councillors voted against the budget in February, including a retrofit programme a new council build programme, as well as £1Million fund to those struggling with bills.

Question (d) from Rose-Marie McDonald to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

Peabody is now including a second staircase in two of the tower blocks that will be constructed on the Holloway Prison site, in response to new fire safety requirements following the Grenfell Tower fire. What information do you have about the impact this will have on the social homes? How will this affect the size of the flats? Will the new flats still meet the needs of the 15,438 households on the waiting list, especially the needs of overcrowded families?

Response:

The Holloway Prison Site development will deliver hundreds of much-needed new genuinely affordable and social homes in the heart of our borough. We are pleased that Peabody has listened to the fire safety concerns, that I have personally raised with them, and the concerns of the local community and are now amending their proposals.

Two of these buildings are proposed in Phase 1 of the development and both buildings include social rented units, while a further building in Phase 3 would provide homes for shared ownership.

At present, the council's planning officers have not had sight of the amended proposals. We expect to see the amended plans over the Summer. Peabody has told us that they are hopeful that amendments to the plans will be limited to reductions in bedspaces rather than leading to the loss of whole homes or even bedrooms. The current scheme will deliver 60 per cent genuinely affordable housing including 415 desperately needed homes for social rent. We will do everything in our powers to ensure that Peabody holds good to this commitment in any amended scheme.

Supplementary Question:

Islington Council had to take Peabody to court before to deliver social housing, will they deliver this time? Let's make sure we deliver the best homes Islington ever had.

Response:

I am committed to make sure we get these answers, and I will make sure Peabody meet with everyone they need to and provide the answers we seek.

Question (e) from Tomas Fernandez Alfonso to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

We now know there will be changes to the Holloway plans to include a second staircase in two of the blocks. It's key that the community has the opportunity to fully scrutinise the new plans for the social housing and for the women's space - how will LBI/Peabody make sure this happens? What will the scope of the new planning application be? What aspects will and will not be considered. When will the consultation period open and when will it close?

Response:

I am pleased that Peabody has acted on my concerns and those of the local community. As I have said in response to the previous question, we are waiting for Peabody to submit amended plans and expect these to be submitted over the Summer. We have not yet had sight of the amended plans.

The amendment of the proposals to include a second staircase in three buildings will require a planning application to be submitted. Once received, the planning application and all submission documents including the amended plans, will be available to view on the council's planning webpages. Public consultation will take place in line with the council's procedures for consulting on planning applications and the relevant statutory procedures. Until such time as an application is received, we cannot say when public consultation will commence and close.

Supplementary Question:

The consultation process needs to be structured in a way that allows real views to be heard that have not been considered before. We as residents want to work with the Council to hold organisations such as Peabody to account.

Response:

I cannot say yet when the consultation will be, but I and other councillors will fight alongside you to hold Peabody to account.

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

In Islington Council's biodiversity action plan 2020 – 2025 you commit to: "Continually review use of pesticides and herbicides in public realm and housing and look to reduce where possible. Carry out trials for alternative chemical free weed removal options." In light of Lambeth Council going pesticide free what are the barriers to doing similar in Islington?

Response:

Protecting Islington's biodiversity is a top priority for our council. We have removed the use of herbicides in our parks and gardens with the extreme exception where invasive weeds are prevalent. There is no use of herbicides on tree bases or parklets and we have reduced its use on housing land. This is in conjunction with the council's biodiversity plan, agreed in 2020. As part of that plan, we are also aiming to increase Islington's biodiversity by introducing more green space, new parklets and planters across the borough. Our Islington Greener Together programme, working with the community to introduce and look after new green spaces, is a key part of this.

Supplementary Question:

How are you addressing those barriers to phasing out pesticide use to protect biodiversity in our borough?

Response:

We will keep looking at alternative methods and reviewing other options to maintain the right balance.

Question (g) from Ben Pearson to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

We know that walking and cycling, powered e-bicycles and public transport are specifically defined as sustainable transport modes by Islington Council, but electric motorcycles and mopeds currently are not. Electric motorcycles and mopeds don't contribute to congestion. Their air quality impacts from brake and tyre wear, and climate change impacts from manufacture and energy use, are similar to that of e-bicycles, lower than large e-cargo cycles, and far less than any public transport mode. Given these facts, it seems clear that electric motorcycles and mopeds would fit any definition of sustainable transport. On what criteria has the Council excluded electric motorcycles and mopeds from their list of sustainable modes, and what evidence do they have to support this?

Response:

Islington's Labour-run Council is determined to create a cleaner, greener, healthier borough, supporting more people to take up active forms of travel and help tackle the climate emergency.

The council's approach is to support and promote the use of walking, cycling and wheeling because of the multiple benefits these deliver.

The council encourages the use of regulated electric bikes including the electric bike hire schemes operating in the borough, however the larger electric motorcycles and mopeds are different to these as contribute more to poor air quality, create noise pollution and take up more road space when parked.

We recognise that electric motorcycles are more environmentally friendly than fossil fuel-powered vehicles and as a result, offer a lower parking permit price for owners of electric motorcycles and mopeds. However, we do believe it is right to charge something for these parking permits.

Supplementary Question:

I was asking about the criteria that underpins the councils' decisions that mopeds are not sustainable travel. The council is imposing baseless and irrational costs such as charging the same parking as an electric car for a 2-wheel vehicle. Does the council consider the lack of evidence for these charges an issue therefore will they be scrapping these charges?

Response:

Whether something is or isn't sustainable doesn't determine the charges and how these are treated by the council.

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

We are disappointed by the introduction, without prior consultation, of new parking charges for motorcycles in solo motorcycle bays where no charges had previously existed. Proper consultation is a vital part of Council decision making, in order to afford those affected fair opportunity to engage with the process, and to avoid unforeseen errors. For this reason, it is important that Councils make adequate efforts to advertise and reach out to groups likely to be affected. Does the Council regret not contacting motorcyclists or representative groups before the decision on charging was made, or advertising the proposal in such a way that responses from motorcyclists could have been considered prior to the decision?

Response:

As I mentioned in my previous answer, Islington's Labour-run Council is determined to create a cleaner, greener, healthier borough, supporting more people to take up active forms of travel and help tackle the climate emergency.

The council's approach is to support and promote the use of walking, cycling and wheeling because of the multiple benefits these deliver, and our parking permit policy is based on this.

As part of the statutory consultation process for a legal Traffic Management Order, a notice was published in the Islington Gazette and Tribune advising of the proposed £1 per day charge for Motorcycles in the dedicated motorcycle bays, the notice also advised that there was the standard 21 days for any objections to be submitted.

The decision to charge motorcycles £1 per day (reduced by 50% for Electric Motorbikes) was taken in response to the net zero carbon ambitions of the authority, Islington is very committed to providing a cleaner and healthier environment for our residents and promoting more sustainable and active modes of travel i.e., cycling and walking. We also offer Motorcycle annual, quarterly and monthly permits for these bays which would equate to 17p per day to park.

Supplementary Question:

There needs to be a suitable consultation on the new charges, councillors were refusing to meet with us which was disappointing. Does the lack of consultation mean these charges are baseless?

Response:

We have met and responded to many emails and have come to a fair and reasonable scheme.

Question (i) from Phil Edwards and Steve Jones to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Are councillors fully aware of reasons that Lambeth council removed GLL as managers of their sport and leisure facilities across their borough? What are councillors' views on GLL's management of Sobell ice rink, given the restricted opening hours compared to other rinks, and their lack of marketing?

Response:

GLL's leisure contract with Lambeth had a natural expiry date of April 2023, having been in place for 16 years, it was extended twice for an additional 6 years. After that, Lambeth opted to bring the services in-house at that time, which reflected the direction of travel the Council had taken with other previously outsourced services and that their contract with GLL was not providing best value. Alternatively, Islington Council's contract with GLL is one of the best in the country and brings in important revenue for the Council.

The ice rink at the Sobell was fully available for bookings, however, there hadn't been a demand for many daytime bookings. The ice was marketed to the community alongside all other Sobell activities and included in marketing materials. As part of the consultation, we have reviewed the operations of other rinks by specialist ice providers, those learnings and findings will be factored into the decision-making process over the future of the Sobell and whether there are different ways to operate the rink that might address the significant financial issues that have been set out regarding the future of the rink.

Supplementary Question:

Any good rink runs from 5am to 1-2am for the ice to be sustainable. The Sobell rink was not used like that. GLL Stratham was the same and the council had to invest thousands to put these wrongs right. Sport is good for the community and provides direction especially for young girls, please can you not let this investment go to waste?

Response:

Thank you, we have had a consultation and have had responses, we are looking at these and it will take time. The government has cut 70% of the council's budget and we have to fund services. We are trying our best to protect all sports in the borough, but this is hard with such a limited budget.

The Mayor advised that the time for questions had expired. The remaining questions received written responses, as follows:

Question (j) from Mahdis Farsi to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

In 2021 GLL received £50M of support from the UK Government and local councils, following £64M of support received in 2020. As of 31 Dec 2021, GLL had increased its accumulated cash balance to £33.4M. Despite this tremendous financial assistance, GLL does not appear to have managed these funds appropriately and have instead run the Sobell ice rink into the ground by not promoting or maintaining it, restricting the opening hours (even after the lifting of all covid restrictions but more importantly prior to the pandemic also) and simply not increasing the entrance fees. How comfortable are Islington councillors with the way GLL ran the ice rink given the Council's financial support to GLL over the last 3 years?

Written Response:

As part of its Covid support, the Council agreed with GLL to defer the rent for an agreed period. The Council met regularly with GLL's senior directors to understand their overall financial position as an organisation as well as the impact on the contract with Islington. The Council is satisfied that GLL have managed their finances effectively through an incredibly challenging period where overnight most of GLL's income stopped because of the pandemic. GLL has recovered effectively but still faces huge challenges with the cost of gas and electricity increasing two and a half fold. GLL are a charitable social enterprise and do not make profits. All surplus generated is applied solely to a general reserve for the continuation and development of the society. We do not accept that GLL has sought to run the ice rink into the ground. The flood was an unexpected event that has given us the opportunity to re-evaluate and re-think what the best offer for the Sobell is, given the challenges that we face. Thank you for your question and I hope our response clarifies the position.

Question (k) from Ola Sendecker to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

The annual carbon footprint of the rink was 125 tonnes, approximately the same as one return flight from London to Rome. This puts into perspective the real emitters of carbon, and carbon emissions are not a basis for the closure of this community sport infrastructure, which could be made more energy efficient. Given the rink could be run on renewable electricity, does the council consider the removal of a local community sport facility to be a fair decarbonisation strategy, particularly in the context of the continued proliferation of short haul flights?

Written Response:

You are correct that there are lots of other sources of carbon in society. Short haul flights as the example used is not something that Council has any control over, but this is. It is acknowledged that any new ice rink would have more energy efficient kit and that was considered as part of the key decision report. However, there remains the issue of financial sustainability as the principle driver of the increased costs of running the rink has been the increased cost of energy that remains high.

Question (l) from Pietro Barbagallo to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Fifty years ago, Sir Michael Sobell made a donation to establish a sports centre, including the ice rink, for the common good, social-purpose and wellbeing of the Islington community. We would like to ask the council what they think Sir Michael Sobell would want for the future of the sports centre.

Written Response:

The Council recognises the tremendous legacy of Sir Michael Sobell in enabling the establishment of the Sobell Sports and Leisure centre. Sir Michael's legacy was to establish a community leisure and recreational facility and sports centre, without specific reference to an ice rink. A lot has changed in 50 years both in the sports and leisure industry and the financial position of local authorities. As a Council we are determined to protect that legacy and ensure that the centre provides a wide range of activities and services to support all Islington's residents to be active. That means providing different ways for people to be active outside of traditional sports but also ensuring a sustainable financial future for the centre to ensure it is supporting the health and wellbeing of Islington's communities for the next 50 years as well.

Question (m) from Madeleine Beasley to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Meetings have taken place between the council and other experienced and lucrative Ice Rink operators who have shown interest in running Sobell Ice rink the same way they currently and successfully run other Ice Rinks in the UK. They are confident that Sobell can operate viably. What are the outcomes of these meetings and when will the results be made public?

Written Response:

The Council has met with two external, commercial operators and the Sobell Ice Skating Club and those discussions have given all parties a better understanding of some of the issues. It also visited an ice rink of similar size to gather more information about its programming, maintenance, and operations. The information and insight that officers have gained from these meetings were used to help inform the recommendations in the key decision report as part of the considerations for the future of the Sobell Leisure Centre. The Council has now made the decision to not re-instate the ice rink and proceed with the proposals for a new Active Zone and to work to develop a new programme of community sports and activities that are inclusive for all. The Council has published its comprehensive key decision report and supporting documents which we invite you to review.

Question (n) from Charlie Nevile to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for Equalities, Culture and Inclusion:

The council's EQIA report states that 74% of Sobell ice rink users are female, 60% are non-white, and 68% are younger than 30. This is far greater than the equivalent proportions within the general Islington population, so removing the rink would disproportionately affect young women and ethnic minorities. How does the council justify this social discrimination of removing the rink, and what evidence is there that teenage girls would prefer the proposed soft play facility?

Written Response:

Thank you, Charlie, for your important question. To clarify those figures, refer only to the learn to skate programme and not the wider casual skating which due to the nature of the bookings does not provide the demographic profile. We acknowledge that ice skating does have a higher use by female users.

The proposals are not a soft play facility, that is an element, significantly improving the previous soft play offer at the Sobell but a comprehensive Activity Zone, providing lots of opportunities to be active with trampolines, "ninja-warrior" style facilities, interactive sports pitches, and inflatables. This offer is more gender neutral, but the significantly greater capacity and engagement would lead to many more females and girls being active. We are still reviewing the outcome of the consultation, and no final decision has been made yet. Thank you for your question and I hope our response clarifies the position.

Question (o) from Lucy Facer to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Upper Street is a main A road designed to carry higher volumes of traffic in and out of the city. It has red routes, limited parking and is mainly commercial. Liverpool Road is a B road and classified by the Department of Transport as a minor road. In addition, it has a cycle lane and residential parking. It has 2600 residents living on or immediately adjacent to it, with a high proportion of vulnerable people who are more likely to suffer chronic illness due to high levels of air pollution: half are living in social housing, 17.6% are disabled, 1 in 5 are under 19 and 10% are 65 or over. There is also a large secondary school with a sports field directly facing the road. Residents have long been highlighting the high level of traffic volumes and the number of unhappy residents was noticeable at the Barnsbury and Laycock liveable neighbourhood zoom call. However, no action has been taken to address the traffic issues and residents continue to suffer from high levels of air pollution and dangerous junctions. Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers report feeling that the road space is dangerous and in particular junctions where all three meets. Although it is a wide road there are lots of users contending for space making it a hostile environment but most of all for pedestrians. The proposed Liveable Neighbourhood for Barnsbury and Laycock must address the issues of traffic on the road, greening and small interventions such as banning lorries are welcome but will only reduce traffic by 370 vehicles and will not address the issues. With traffic levels on Liverpool Road North higher than the adjacent section of Upper Street and only 33% of residents owning cars, we ask the council's Liveable Neighbourhood proposals are robust and take

bold action. Will the designs re-prioritise road users, filter traffic, invest in vulnerable residents, pedestrians and active travel?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Lucy. Our current programme of LTNs, school streets and cycleways aims to do this, with our future programme of Liveable Neighbourhoods aiming to extend this. The council is aware that there are existing traffic and safety concerns on Liverpool Road and across the Barnsbury and Laycock area, and we are taking this very seriously.

This is why the council has prioritised its work on the Barnsbury and Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood. A key part of this work, which is currently underway, is an assessment of how we should tackle those traffic and safety concerns. This will make a significant contribution towards our aim of ensuring that Islington is a cleaner, greener, and more welcoming borough.

The second phase of engagement on the emerging Barnsbury and Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood including Liverpool Road is planned for the autumn of this year. At that point there will be further discussion of the council's plans for the area, and we look forward to sharing a range of draft proposals and seeking input and comments from all residents, business and stakeholders.

Thank you for posing your question and I hope that my response clarifies the position.

Question (p) from Eve Norridge to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Given that other London Councils, for example Lambeth, have demonstrated that weeds in public spaces can be managed without the use of environmentally harmful pesticides such as glyphosate, why is Islington Council still spraying glyphosate in our streets, will the Council commit to ending this harmful practice and, if so by what date?

Written Response:

Biodiversity is one of our top priorities. That's why we have a really ambitious programme to increase trees, planting and parklets in our streets and this includes working with local people through Islington Greener Together and Trees for Streets. And we are looking at how we link areas to form wildlife corridors.

But as is always the case in Islington where space is so constrained, we have to do what we can to get the balance correct. In this case making sure our streets are clean of trip hazards and we maintain our pavements to make sure that they are accessible for people walking, wheeling and using other mobility aids is important too.

An officer has visited Lambeth, we remain of the view that currently the balance remains in favour of using a herbicide alongside other measures.

We are, however, continually reviewing what we can do to reduce our use. And it is the case that some of electric machines which are becoming available may assist us to go further. Saying that, we have taken significant steps so far. We do not use herbicides in our parks and greenspaces, except to tackle invasive weeds such as Japanese Knotweed.

We have reduced our use on housing estates, only using on hardstanding such the paved areas, where if left weeds can cause damage or present trip hazards and attract detritus. Caretakers do try to keep weeds down but that is very time consuming, and they have many demands on their time. To try to overcome that we are looking into the option of push along deweeder to see if that can assist. We use bicarbonate of soda and hoses on moss growth.

We have taken steps to reduce the amount used on the streets. We do not use herbicide on tree pits or parklets our street cleaners have hoes and brushes; we are trialling the use of mechanical brushes which may be effective in some areas and where residents wish to weed their own streets we will support them to do so. We are also looking at ways of increasing our support for community weeding.

However, there remains a need for weed removal and having looked at all options, we are very firmly of the view that the only sustainable alternative to herbicide is manual weeding, which is very time consuming, labour intensive and expensive. Budgets are under extreme pressure. Where we do use herbicide, we use a system which is targeted in that it uses lasers to locate the plants which greatly reduces the amount used and the area impacted. Thank you very much for your work in this area.

Question (q) from Caroline Royds to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

The NLWA has agreed to investigate the scope for Mixed Waste Sorting at its Edmonton site to maximise the recovery of recyclable materials before incineration. Could the Scrutiny Committee ask it report on progress, including any proposed actions?

Written Response:

Thank you, Caroline for your question. Our Council is determined to help tackle the climate emergency and increase recycling in the borough. Islington Labour's manifesto last year committed to reaching 40% recycling by 2030 and we are taking action to achieve that.

We are continuing to work with the North London Waste Authority to increase recycling in Islington and they will be a key part of us achieving our goals. The NLWA is currently undertaking waste service modelling work, which includes different collection scenarios. We will provide updates and progress reports as they come available, and work with the NLWA to implement changes where we can. I will also pass your question onto the Chair of the Environment Scrutiny Committee for their thoughts. Thank you for posing your question and I hope that my response clarifies the position.

Question (r) from Anne Bentham to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Regarding the closure of Sobell ice rink, given the internal emails showing that the outcome of the consultation has been pre-determined, when will the council be reopening a legitimate consultation?

Written Response:

The council is grateful for all the feedback it received during the consultation, which closed on the 7 July. We've worked hard to ensure that as many people as possible, from a broad range of backgrounds, took part in the consultation. This resulted in 1,003 people contributing to the consultation, and we would like to thank the community for really engaging with this process. The out-of-context email exchange that has been released relates to full and frank discussions about how local people and Sobell users could have the greatest say in the options available, while recognising the huge challenges associated with reinstating the ice rink. Following these discussions – which took place before the consultation began – the council decided to have a fuller consultation, which included the option of retaining the ice rink, so that it could better understand people's views before taking a final decision.

The consultation has helped us better understand what local people would like to see from their leisure centre and will help us to start to shape the programme of sports and activities. Our consultation and extensive engagement with the local community has highlighted how well-loved a facility the Sobell ice rink has been. While 54% of the people that responded to the consultation said they would not be impacted by the ice rink not being reinstated, 36% said they would be impacted – and we listened carefully to their feedback which will be built into the design of the new offer to mitigate some of these impacts. We've also explored a range of possible ways to reinstate the ice rink but unfortunately the Council did not consider any of these viable. For these reasons, we've taken the very difficult decision to not reinstate the ice rink.

Question (s) from Tamara Cizeika to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Islington has a canopy cover of 25% - significantly higher than the England average of 16% - but residents want us to go even further with more trees on our streets. They want trees planted more quickly and many would like to plant trees themselves, in empty tree pits. What is the Council doing to support residents with this please? And what can we tell residents who want to do it themselves?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Tamara. Islington Council is doing all it can to tackle the ongoing climate emergency, by planting new trees, and introducing school streets for example. The Islington Labour manifesto last year pledged to ensure a net gain of 600 trees in Islington each year, and we are progressing towards this goal.

Residents can be more directly involved in our tree planting programme. We have a partnership with Trees for Streets to provide a tree sponsorship scheme for the borough. Residents can go online and say where they would like to sponsor a tree, and during hot weather we often ask Islington residents to assist with watering freshly planted trees. Tree planting in the Highway needs to be done by qualified contractors. Not all empty tree pits can be replanted because of a range of factors and every planting location needs to be properly assessed first. Thank you for posing your question and I hope that my response clarifies the position.

Question (t) from Colin Keatley to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Many types of accommodation are unsuitable for people with long term needs. What opportunities are there for supporting people who do not want to live in residential, supported living or other formal care environments?

Written Response:

We always support people to live in accommodation that is right for them. In addition to residential homes and supported living, there is a service called Shared Lives where people can live independently as possible in a family home environment. It is a brilliant service that supports residents aged 16 and over to develop skills and meaningful friendships and relationships, living within their local communities.

Shared Lives carers are recruited from those communities. They are people who want to make a difference and give something back to their local area. Carers are paid for their time and supported by our team of co-ordinators. They all receive and can join a community of carers across Islington. The Islington service is seen pioneering as it provides opportunities for young people from the age of 16. While most of the people they support have Learning Disabilities, the Shared Lives team are also working in partnership with colleagues in Camden & Islington Mental Health Trust to extend the offer to people in recovery from mental ill-health.

Question (u) from Buffy Sharpe to Cllr Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs:

We know that there is a booming life sciences industry in London, with many hubs in the Islington area. While this is great for our borough and brings much needed well-paid jobs, how will the Council make sure that the jobs and wealth this brings benefits all parts of the Islington community, including the most disadvantaged?

Written Response:

Thank you, Buffy, for your question. We know Islington is home to world leading, growing industries. However, despite having these developments on the doorstep, the benefits of the knowledge economy are not shared with everyone – often disconnected from our local, diverse communities. Only 1 in 9 of the senior leaders in tech come from a Black, Asian or minority ethnic background, yet these residents make up over 40% of the population in London. In the Life Sciences sector, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British individuals occupy less than 1% of roles within the sector and just 9% of professionals are from a working-class background.

We are now working with central London boroughs to develop an inclusive programme for the Life Sciences sector. We have already secured nearly £1.5m to help local social impact businesses develop their services and products, so that they can benefit from this boom. We are also designing an apprenticeship programme so that new businesses coming to the borough can easily access our talented communities.

We have added a range of life science opportunities to our innovative 'World of Work' programme and are working with stakeholders to design clear career pathways for our young people into the sector. Through our planning process, we are negotiating a series of local benefits packages from the various Life Science developments – ranging from affordable workspace, skills programmes, guaranteed interview schemes, new jobs, and community innovation facilities. So far, over 1,200 people have participated in skills programmes, outreach events and world of work experiences; helped 60 people go into good jobs; and supported 13 people to start their own business. In this, 75% of participants from BAME backgrounds and over 60% of participants were female.

Through these types of progressive programmes, we will make sure to will open this exciting sector to our local people and local businesses.
Thank you for your question and I hope our response clarifies the position.

241 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

Islington has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with "dockless" electric bike operators including Lime (Uber) and Human Forest. What elements of the Memoranda provide the Council with control against irresponsible parking; is the Council prepared to enforce against irresponsible parking using such control; and is the Council prepared to enforce the provisions contained in the September 2018 TfL guide, "Dockless bike share code of practice For Operators in London"?

Response:

In the past year there have been 1.5m trips made by dockless hire bikes in Islington, and I believe this plays an important role in making Islington cleaner, greener and healthier working towards our Net Zero Carbon target. With the marked increase in trips last year, we have also seen an uplift in the number of poorly parked bikes causing very significant and understandable concerns amongst residents.

In the medium term, the council is looking at ways of managing this, making it fairer for those using the bikes and those using our pavements. This may include a system of designated parking spaces for dockless hire bikes to help maintain good pavement access.

On your question regarding what elements of the Memoranda provide the Council with control against irresponsible parking, the council has several mechanisms agreed within the memoranda with the three providers, Lime, Tier and Human Forest, to help address this issue.

When notified by the council or individuals, operators are required to remove bikes if badly parked within 1.5 hours between 7.00am and 10.00pm. Operators have a system to fine or ban users, which includes fines for inconsiderate parking, and parking in no parking zones. Operators have a geo-fence system to communicate where rentals can be ended and to prevent a build-up of bikes in an untidy and

unsafe manner in popular areas. The council also reserves the right to remove any bikes that cause an obstruction and/or that pose a health and safety risk.

On the second part of your question, yes, the council is using these controls to enforce against irresponsible parking. We work cooperatively with operators to address issues and they have been very responsive to the issues we've raised with them, for example creating geo-fenced no parking zones around the RNIB building on Pentonville Road, and most recently around Moorfields Eye Hospital.

The council meets with operators each month to discuss and address issues and concerns. We are now asking operators to proactively identify no parking zones at sensitive locations. To the final part of your question, the TfL Code of Practice (2018) does not contain any enforcement provisions that are not set out in our Memoranda with the operators. No operators have formally signed up to the Code, it is rather a set of expectations, whereas the operators have signed up to the memoranda with the council.

The TfL Code represents a reasonable set of base level expectations for dockless services but remains advisory as the bike and e-bike rental market remains unregulated.

Supplementary Question:

A small minority of users do not park these bikes in a responsible way. This causes disruption and has a big impact on those with disabilities and impairments. Why aren't we enforcing against pavement obstruction such as these dumped bikes. Camden and Westminster are doing something about it why aren't we now, instead of waiting a year.

Response:

Thank you. We have an officer working on it and are trying to roll it out as fast as we can.

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

Islington currently has no step free overground stations. This makes it extremely difficult for people with disabilities, parents and others to get around. Whilst I understand this is the responsibility of the Department for Transport (DfT), what is the Council doing to support the bid for Access for All funding to make Crouch Hill Station accessible?

Response:

The lack of step free overground stations in Islington is a huge issue that must be tackled urgently. People with disabilities, parents with pushchairs and many more people should be able to use our public transport but this means many cannot use their closest station. Improving accessibility at Crouch Hill Station remains a key priority for the council. However, this work is likely to require significant funding from TfL and Network Rail. The Department for Transport offers funding to support the delivery of accessibility changes to stations as part of their Access for All programme.

The council has previously asked the DfT to fund improvements at Crouch Hill station but unfortunately has not been successful with our bids.

In recent months, we have written to the Department for Transport calling for the funding to be granted, and the Islington Labour councillors for Tollington and Hillrise have been running a campaign to grow support locally.

We are continuing to push for improvements at Crouch Hill Station and in September 2022 the council submitted a joint bid with TfL to the DfT for the provision of two lifts at Crouch Hill station. This would offer step free access between the street and each platform. We expected to hear an announcement from central government in April this year, but this announcement has unfortunately been delayed.

Supplementary Question:

We are disappointed by DfT not to fund step free access at crouch end station. We have had hundreds of residents sign our petition for this. Please join us on writing to the DfT to demand this.

Response:

I will.

Question (c) from Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

It's positive news that the council is exploring third party operators for Sobell ice rink. Can you give us an update on how these conversations are going?

Response:

We know how important the Sobell Leisure Centre is to local people across the borough, and how devastating last year's flood and the resulting closure of the ground floor has been. It's really important that we ensure that the rebuilt centre provides a space that local people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy.

Like councils up and down the country, Islington Council is facing huge financial challenges – due to the cost of living crisis, the huge rise in energy prices, and more than a decade of austerity. That means that, like other councils, we're having to make difficult decisions.

While it has been a much-loved facility for many residents over the years, the number of visitors to the Sobell Leisure Centre ice rink are low compared to other facilities at the site, and the proposals that we have put forward will help attract more visitors to the site. Furthermore, the opening of larger facilities, such as the new double Olympic-sized rink at Lee Valley and the rink at Alexandra Palace, would have led to a further fall in numbers.

Throughout the consultation exercise, we've been clear that we're listening to local people, while also stating the challenges that reinstating the ice rink would pose. Regarding alternative operators for the ice rink, the Council has met with two external, commercial operators and the Sobell Ice Skating Club and those discussions have given all parties a better understanding of some of the issues. It

also visited an ice rink of similar size to gather more information about its programming, maintenance, and operations. There is no outcome from this yet. The information and insight that officers have gained from these meetings will be used to help inform the final decision on the future of the Sobell Leisure Centre in the coming weeks.

Supplementary Question:

I understand there is financial pressure. However, I thought the council would be more optimistic with an upcoming election. Do you not think that finances will improve under a Labour government?

Response (from Cllr Ward):

Over the past decade, our council has faced a substantial reduction of 70% in funding, leaving us with just 30% to run all services. Despite these challenging circumstances, we have remained committed to safeguarding essential front-line services. While we are dedicated to preserving sports programs, the current financial constraints necessitate difficult decisions. It was disappointing the opposition voted against our budget. Please work with us not against us in the future.

Question (d) from Cllr Russell to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:

How much compensation has the council paid out to council tenants and leaseholders each year since 2018 due to disrepair?

Response:

Ensuring our council tenants have the best possible homes is a top priority for our council. The service invested £42million in repairs and maintenance completing 88,000 repairs in 22-23. The council invests approximately £45m in addition to this improving homes through our capital program.

In a time of continuing government austerity which has seen us have to make £300 million of savings since 2010, we would love to invest even more in our repairs and maintenance programme but it isn't possible. We know that some residents have repairs that we don't manage fix in time and as a result, we pay compensation to those tenants.

The Council has paid an average of £130,000 per year in damages since 2018. An increase in recent years is seen to be due to a combination of increased workloads, resolving a number of historic PFI cases and an increase in claims farming. I am happy to forward a table of the exact amounts.

Islington along with other local authorities is seeing an increase in legal cases from claim management companies encouraging residents to submit and pursue disrepair claims. We want every resident to enjoy a decent home, so we are working hard to improve our repairs service and invest in our stock to prevent disrepair.

Supplementary Question:

£130,000 a year that could be better spent on upgrading systems for managing repairs. It is important the systems and processes work well. Can you try to shift that

investment instead of compensation so we can upgrade the systems to manage all the housing repair cases?

Response:

We are working to reduce these cases, but we cannot stop claim management companies encouraging residents to submit claims.

Question (e) from Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:

Under Estate Management the council states, "Your Estate Services team will inspect each estate thoroughly at various frequencies over a 12 month period for: cleaning standards, safety and repairs standards in communal areas" How many estates have had an estate inspection in 2022, how many have not had an inspection and what percentage is this of the whole number of estates applicable?

Response:

Ensuring our council tenants have the best possible homes is a top priority for our council. This is why we regularly inspect our estates to ensure they are clean, well-kept and any issues are addressed.

I'm proud to say that all council managed estates and purpose-built blocks received an inspection for cleaning, safety, and repairs during 2022. From 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022, we carried out a total of 15,313 inspections averaging 1,276 a month.

Supplementary Question:

I am proud of our estates too. When these scheduled checks are taking place can they be uploaded so not only councillors but residents can see when they have taken place?

Response:

Thank you. Residents also go out and do inspections and I am very proud of what our estate services teams do.

Question (f) from Cllr Staff to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:

What steps is the Council is taking to ensure LGBT+ residents and visitors to the borough continue to feel safe and welcome, including addressing incidents of LGBT+ hate crime?

Response:

Hate Crime has no place in Islington, and we support tough action against those who perpetrate hate and fear against marginalised communities.

We saw last month, during Pride Month, the impact our large LGBT+ community has in our borough and the we take their safety incredibly seriously.

We have a wide range of approaches we take to tackling hate crime and keeping people safe, including having over 300 safe havens and our regular safer spaces discussions.

We are also supporting the independent, community-led, Islington Hate Crime Forum to give communities a voice in how the council and police are tackling hate crime, we have developed the Hate Crime Prevention Champion scheme, where members of the community come together to tackle discrimination by raising awareness of hate crime, encouraging the reporting of hate crime and signposting victims to support services, and we encourage people who live, work and socialise in Islington to sign the Islington Hate Crime Pledge, to encourage everyone to unite against hate crime. We also work closely with the Metropolitan Police to understand the nature of hate crimes in Islington and with Forum+ to understand the nature of LGBT+ hate crimes in Islington and look at how we can improve our services to ensure victims feel listened to and supported. But there is always more we can do, and we are happy to work with anyone who is keen to tackle hate crime in our borough.

Supplementary Question:

How is the council working with the Police to improve this?

Response:

There have been a range of things. We are central to negotiations and consultations to the Met Police turn-around plan. When the Baroness Casey report landed, we demanded tangible action plan. We are the only Borough to have a 10-point action plan from the Police. There is a strong understanding with the Police that we are clear on expectations.

Question (g) from Cllr Bossman-Quarshie to Cllr Bell-Bradford, Executive Member for Inclusive Economy and Jobs:

Many people who rely on cash have a low income, or other vulnerability, including visible and invisible disabilities such as low motor skills. Since the pandemic, shops and services increasingly only accept cards as a method of payment and research by Which? showed 1 in 5 consumers have been stopped from making cash payments for items such as groceries, small purchases in shops and refreshments. How will the Council support an inclusive economy and encourage our local SMEs to accept cash from customers?

Response:

We know that many small, local businesses and some groups of residents prefer to use cash. It is easier to manage for a number of reasons and doesn't have the ability to eat into business profits in the same way as card payments, which incur fees.

The Bank of England noted in late 2022 that, while Covid has had a lasting impact, with some permanent shifts in payment habits towards digital payment methods, surprisingly cash use has proved resilient. This is promising. To underpin this resilience, we will commit to ensuring that council-run facilities and services continue to accept cash. We will also work with business groups to encourage local businesses to continue to accept cash. Digital payments just don't work for everyone. And if there is cash, people and small businesses are empowered.

The Mayor advised that the time for questions had expired and the remaining questions would receive a written response.

Question (h) from Cllr Cinko-Oner to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Member for Homes and Communities:

Over the last few months, we've seen how the cost-of-living crisis has made it difficult for people to heat their homes, causing issues with damp and mould. What is the Council doing to support people to reduce condensation and moisture in their homes, as well as reduce some of the financial strain they are currently facing?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Ilkay, this is a very important issue that the Council is doing lots of work to tackle.

The cost-of-living crisis and the issue of damp and mould go hand-in-hand. When money is tight, people put their heating on less, leading to more damp and mould issues.

The cause of damp and mould can be from a variety of factors such as fuel poverty. We are currently investigating current cases and three years of historical cases to identify which causes are most common on certain estates so resources can target assisting our tenants.

The council has been given over £3 million in Social Housing Decarbonisation funding to contribute to a £7.5million programme to invest in our street properties and harder-to-insulate homes making them easier for tenants to keep warm and free from damp and mould.

The council is also funding and working with SHINE and VCS groups to ensure the best advice and assistance is there for tenants.

I'm proud that our council is also investing in direct support for people to avoid them washing their clothes in their home and reducing the risk of damp and mould. The new free community launderette on the Andover Estate will help residents with cost of living, and help reduce damp and mould in homes. It has already had a lot of local people using it since it opened, and I hope many more will in the coming months.

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

Thames Water's disastrous flooding of the Sobell has resulted in the ice rink being destroyed, instead it is proposed that it will continue in a different form but still as the Islington people's sport centre. Is the planned extension of the activity area more sustainable economically and environmentally than continuing with an ice rink?

Written Response:

We're determined to create a more equal Islington, and we work hand-in-hand with local people so that they can help shape the borough they live in. We know how important the Sobell Leisure Centre is to local people, and we've run a major public consultation so that local people can help shape the future of the site.

While it has been a much-loved facility for many residents over the years, the number of visitors to the Sobell Leisure Centre ice rink is low compared to other facilities at the site. The opening of the new double Olympic-sized rink at Lee Valley and the new rink at Alexandra Palace would likely lead to a further fall in usage.

Like councils up and down the country, we're facing huge financial challenges from the cost-of-living crisis, the rise in energy prices, and more than a decade of austerity.

The proposals would see a significant increase in user numbers to the Sobell Centre enabling a wider range of people to be active more often. It would be a more financially viable facility as well because of the numbers of users it would attract. This would also support other community sports offers at the centre as new users are exposed to different programmes that are on offer.

Thank you for posing your question, I hope my response clarifies the position.

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

The Holloway Prison site development is underway, and residents have highlighted issues concerning noise and dust. What is the Council doing to hold the developer, Peabody to account and mitigate noise and pollution on the site so it doesn't affect nearby residents?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question Gulcin and for your continued support of your residents in Tufnell Park.

The Holloway Prison Site development will bring hundreds of much-needed new genuinely affordable and social homes to our borough, which I know we are both very excited to see.

We also know that large developments can be disruptive to local residents so, to ensure that the development is being carried out in accordance with the planning controls and national legislation, the council employs a Construction Monitoring Impact Officer. This officer regularly visits the site, has access to monitoring information and is in very regular dialogue with the developer and residents to manage any adverse impacts on the local area.

We are aware of recent incidents of noise and dust nuisance and have therefore met directly with the developer to set out expectations and address concerns.

A subsequent residents meeting was organised to ensure that issues could be raised directly with the developer, which we both attended. The developer has committed to further consultation with residents regarding noisy works. Additional monitoring has been provided at the site and further mitigation measures, including measures to address dust, have been implemented. The council has also underlined the importance of good communication with residents and transparency in relation to the sharing of monitoring data. In addition to this, the Council has served a formal notice on the developer under the Control of Pollution Act. This requires strict adherence to permitted construction hours, defines measures for reducing noise and vibration,

implements quiet periods during construction hours and requires appropriate liaison with residents.

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

The European flag is the flag which defends human rights and promotes European culture. Other European institutions - such as local governments - were encouraged to adopt the European flag, and thereby stand in solidarity with the ideals of European unity and defenders of human rights - freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law, promoting peace and stability. Therefore, please could we show the true colours of Islington and its people by flying the flag as we are Europeans and defenders of human rights and culture?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Clare. I completely agree that Islington is European and believes in the traditions of freedom, democracy, equality, and the rule of law, promoting peace and stability.

At the referendum in 2016, Islington voted to Remain with 75% of local people choosing to stay in the EU. I'm sure that this figure has increased since, having seen the disaster the Tories have made of Brexit. Sadly, while we would love to fly the European flag at certain times of the year, the Tory Government took the disgraceful decision of banning this in 2021. I know the GLA recently faced this problem when hoping to fly the flag on the anniversary of the referendum. The decision to ban the flying of the flag is in complete contradiction to the values of Islington and the EU, as you have stated.

Thank you for your question and I hope our response clarifies the position.

Question (l) from Cllr Bossman-Quarshie to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

In light of Child Q, what is the Council doing to ensure we are safeguarding young Black girls?

Written Response:

Thank you for your question, Val. We were all horrified by the Child Q incident which took place in Hackney last year and we are committed to ensuring our services are safe for all our young people, including young Black girls.

Following the publication of the review into the case, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership formulated an action plan based on the recommendations made in the report. This was used to analyse our local services and to ensure that we have effective services in place for Black girls and children from minority backgrounds.

As part of this, we have reinforced the responsibilities of practitioners to advocate for, and on behalf of, the children they are working with/who are in their care as part of their training. We also sought assurances from the Police regarding the amount of strip searches conducted in the education settings. Central North Police reviewed

their data and in 2020 there were 6 Stop & Searches in a school environment. In 2021 4 stop and search were conducted and there were none for 2022 or in 2023 so far.

Another of the recommendations was to develop an awareness raising programme across schools and colleges about stop and search activity by the police. Senior officers at Central North Police (who have specific responsibility for Safer Schools, YET officers) have ensured that all officers have been briefed about Child Q so that no Black girls in the borough are subjected to the same appalling treatment. School Safety Officers are also delivering workshops to Black girls and other children and young people about their rights and 'know your rights cards' are shared with young people to understand this area further.

In addition to this, the Council's Children's Services department is working hard to help safeguard Black girls from harm and exploitation. We commission two Young Women and Girls workers from the organisation Abianda, working alongside Council staff to safeguard and support young women and girls affected by criminal exploitation and violence. We also have a range of services in our Targeted Youth Support team aimed at young Black people to keep them safe.

I hope you are assured that we are working hard to ensure that nothing like this ever happens in Islington, and hopefully never happens again anywhere.

242 ARMED FORCES COVENANT - ANNUAL UPDATE

Councillor Comer-Schwartz moved the recommendations in the report. Councillor Spall Seconded. The recommendations were put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

To note activity over the past year to celebrate and support Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and their families.

243 STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL - UPDATED MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

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

RESOLVED:

- i. It be noted that the Code of Conduct for Members has been reviewed for compliance with the Local Government Association Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 and best practice;
- ii. That personal interests (in paragraph 12 "Declarations of Interests") be amended as detailed in tracked changes in Appendix A of the report, be agreed;
- iii. That the dispensations detailed in paragraphs 3.12 and 3.13 of the report, be granted to all members in respect of participation in discussion and voting at meetings, with immediate effect until the Annual Meeting following the next local elections in 2026, be agreed;

- iv. That future requests for individual dispensations in respect of statutory and non-statutory disclosable interests be submitted to the Standards Committee for determination.

244 CONSTITUTION UPDATE

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

RESOLVED:

- i. That the work of the Audit Committee and Standards Committee in reviewing the Constitution and Code of Conduct for Members and proposing revisions to ensure legal compliance and high ethical standards are maintained, be noted.
- ii. That the proposed revisions to Part 1 of the Constitution, detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, be adopted.
- iii. That the proposed revisions to the Articles in Part 2 of the Constitution detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, be adopted.
- iv. That the proposed revisions to Part 3 of the Constitution as detailed in Appendix 3 of the report, be adopted.
- v. That the revised Officer Employment Procedure Rules, which now incorporate the previously separate protocol document and the change to Dispensation arrangements in the Access to Information Rules, be adopted as detailed in Appendix 4 of the report.
- vi. That the revised Terms of Reference for the Audit Committee to establish it as the Audit and Risk Committee, including authority to revise and keep up to date the Council's Financial Regulations and Procurement Rules, be adopted as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- vii. That revised Terms of Reference for the Standards Committee be adopted, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- viii. That new Terms of Reference for the Pension Sub-Committee to establish it as a Pensions Committee appointed by the Council be adopted, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- ix. That new Terms of Reference for the Pensions Board be adopted, and to their addition to the Constitution be approved, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- x. That new Terms of Reference for the Personnel Sub-Committee be adopted, and to establish it as an Employment and Appointments Committee appointed by the Council, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- xi. That revised Terms of Reference for the Statutory Officer Grievance Committee and Appeals Committee be adopted, so that it only applies to the Chief Executive, as detailed in Appendix 5 of the report.
- xii. That the addition of the Code of Conduct for Employees, and the amendments to the Code of Conduct for Members, be agreed as detailed in Appendix 6 of the report.
- xiii. That the new organisation chart in Appendix 7 of the report be agreed.

- xiv. That the amendments to delegations and officer designations in the Appendices to the Constitution be agreed as detailed in Appendix 8 of the report.
- xv. It be noted that the re-appointment of the existing sub-committee members to the new committees will be confirmed in the Council Appointments Report, also on the agenda for this meeting.
- xvi. That a review of the Overview and Scrutiny function should be undertaken and will include revised Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Committees and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, be agreed.

245 COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS REPORT

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

RESOLVED:

- i. That Councillors Khurana, Burgess, Comer-Schwartz, Gill and Ward be appointed as members of the Employment and Appointments Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- ii. That Councillor Khurana be appointed as Chair of the Employment and Appointments Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- iii. That Councillors Kay, Poyser, Chowdhury, Jackson, Bell-Bradford, Champion, Khondoker, Ngongo, O'Halloran, Turan and Woolf be appointed as Substitute members of the Employment and Appointments Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- iv. That Councillors Convery, Ward, Gill and O'Sullivan be appointed as members of the Pensions Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- v. That Councillor Convery be appointed as Chair and Councillor Ward be appointed as Vice Chair of the Pensions Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- vi. That Councillors Kay and Mackmurdie be appointed as Substitute members of the Pensions Committee, with immediate effect, until Annual Council on 16 May 2024 or until a successor is appointed, be agreed.
- vii. That that Linzi Roberts-Egan, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service, is officially leaving the council on 30 July 2023, and is taking leave from 15 July onwards be noted.
- viii. That Stephen Biggs, Corporate Director – Community Wealth Building, will be deputising for the Chief Executive from 15 – 30 July be noted.
- ix. That Stephen Biggs be appointed as Acting Head of Paid Service with effect from 31 July 2023, until further notice, be agreed.
- x. That the acting up arrangements to cover the role of Corporate Director – Community Wealth Building from 4 July until further notice, be noted.

- xi. To appoint Alison Stuart as the Council's Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, with effect from her contractual start date, be agreed.

246 **NOTICES OF MOTION**

Motion 1: Divest from the Arms Trade

An alteration to the proposed amendment was formally noted.

Councillor Hamdache moved the motion. Councillor Russell seconded.

Councillor Convery moved an amendment to the motion. Councillor Hamdache exercised his right of reply.

The amendment was put to a vote and CARRIED. The amended motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

This Council resolves to continue our pension fund's development and adoption of responsible investment policies and recommends that the Pensions Committee proceeds with an upcoming three yearly review of the Fund's ethical investment framework. This already includes:

- Actively seeking to invest in companies that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise climate risk.
- Continue the adopted strategy to reduce the fund's carbon footprint to achieve the Paris Agreement target holding global warming to within 1.5 degrees Celsius.
- Allocate 15% of the fund (and extend to 20%) invested into renewable infrastructure, resulting already in an estimated 94,000 tonnes of CO2e reduction.
- Strongly urge the next Labour government to adopt a foreign and defence policy to restrict export licenses to prevent the sale of weaponry to autocratic and repressive regimes.

Motion 2: Anti-Strike Legislation

Councillor Graham moved the motion. Councillor Cinko-Oner seconded. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong contributed to the debate.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To defend the right of workers to strike
- (ii) Islington Council as an employer will do everything possible within its powers to protect employees right to strike.

- (iii) To write to the Government to oppose the changes that will restrict workers' right to strike.
- (iv) To show our full solidarity with striking workers, standing on the picket lines.
- (v) To continue to support the TUC's campaign to protect the right to strike.
- (vi) To continue to work collaboratively with our trade unions who represent our Council workers and encourage union membership to Islington residents.

Motion 3: Diverse Councils Declaration

An alteration to the motion was formally noted.

Councillor Bossman-Quarshie moved the motion. Councillor Chapman seconded. Councillor Hamdache contributed to the debate.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) Adopt The Co-Operative Party's Diverse Councils Declaration to increase diversity in our local government.

- (ii) Provide a clear public commitment to improving diversity in democracy.

- (iii) Set out a local Diverse Action Plan ahead of the next local elections, including:
 - Appoint Diversity Ambassadors for each political group on the council to work with each other and local party associations to encourage recruitment of candidates from under-represented groups.
 - Encourage and enable people from under-represented groups to stand for office through the provision of activities such as mentoring and shadowing programmes and information and learning events for people interested in standing as official candidates.
 - Proactive engagement and involvement with local community groups and partner organisations supporting and representing underrepresented groups.
 - Encourage all members and candidates to complete a candidates' and councillors' survey distributed at election time.
- (iv) Provide flexibility in council business by:
 - Regularly reviewing and staggering meeting times
 - Supporting remote attendance at meetings where it is lawful.
 - Agreeing recess periods to support councillors with caring or work commitments.
- (v) Continue to encourage members to take up allowances and salaries to which they are entitled, particularly any reimbursement for costs of care, so that all members receive fair remuneration for their work and that the role of member is not limited to those who can afford it.

- (vi) Ensure that councillors from under-represented groups are represented whenever possible in high profile, high influence roles.

Motion 4: Upholding the right to protest.

Councillor Russell moved the motion. Councillor Jegorovas-Armstrong seconded.

The motion was put to the vote and CARRIED.

RESOLVED:

- (i) Engage with the Camden and Islington Metropolitan Police Basic Command Unit to understand how they are upholding the right to peaceful protest.
- (ii) Work with community and civil society campaign groups in Islington to support their right to protest.
- (iii) Write to the Home Secretary in opposition to the Government's severe restriction of the right to protest.

The meeting closed at 10:29pm

MAYOR

COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

PETITION DEBATE

Motion to debate the petition: Save Sobell Ice Rink

Motion to be moved by: Cllr Nurullah Turan
Executive Member for Health and Social Care

This Council notes that:

- A petition was received at the Council meeting on 13 July 2023 which had over 2,000 signatures.
- Procedure Rule 19.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that, where a petition has received at least 2,000 signatures, then a debate on the petition shall be held, for up to 15 minutes, at the following ordinary Council meeting. The Lead Petitioner will be invited to re-introduce the petition at the meeting. Councillors will then be invited to consider the petition and debate the points raised.

This Council resolves to:

- Continue to encourage residents to participate in local democracy by carefully considering the points raised in the petition and to undertake the debate in a spirit of openness and transparency.
- Note the petition.

The text of the petition is set out overleaf.

Petition received at the 13 July 2023 meeting of the Council

Save Sobell Ice Rink

<https://www.change.org/p/save-sobell-ice-rink>

“Sobell Ice rink has helped me with my mental and physical health as it has others too. It is a fantastic public rink with reasonable prices for people to get into skating in all its wonderful forms. Im an ice hockey player who took alot of pleasure from playing at Sobell ice rink.

This petition I now realise means a whole lot more than that. To many people it means losing their jobs, social communities and a place to use the ice for mental and physical wellbeing. Please sign to help us have some power in getting it rebuilt. Thank you.“

5,166 signatures received.

COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL

a **Young Mayor Ameera Abdi to Cllr Comer-Schwartz, Leader of the Council:**

During the last 12 months the cost-of-living crisis has been adversely impacting Islington's families. What specific support can the council provide to young people to minimise this impact?

b **Deputy Young Mayor Areeb Ahmed to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:**

We recently meet the Police Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley at the community event held in the borough. How is the council working with the Police locally to improve youth safety in the borough. Please provide examples to support our understanding of what is being done.

c **YCllr Liberty Davies-Neil to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for**

With the recent changes affecting Platform Youth Hub, what plans are in place to ensure Islington's young people continue to have access to a vibrant youth offer?

d **YCllr Billy Diggin to Cllr Khondoker, Executive Member for**

Islington has always had a proud record of campaigning for human rights, how is the council showing solidarity for the women and girls facing challenges in some parts of the world?

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COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

a **Nick Collin to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

We have observed that the majority of Islington's tradespeople and small businesses, who rely, directly or indirectly, on cars and vans, have a serious concern that Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) are bad for business. This is particularly as a result of longer journey times, congestion on boundary roads, limited parking and increased fines. Do you recognize this concern from the consultation carried out to date on the planned Barnsbury, Laycock Liveable Neighbourhood (LN), and how do you propose to address it?

b **Pete Gilman to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families**

Islington's Labour council is to be congratulated for introducing free school meals for all primary school children. Would it be possible to extend this to secondary school children?

c **Rebekah Kelly to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families**

The Mayor of London has recently pledged to fund school meals for primary school children in the whole of the city. Given that Islington Council already provides free school meals for primary school children. What will this budget now be used for?

d **Ben Pearson to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport**

The council has accepted that the original roll out of motorcycle parking charges in February was not carried out correctly and has consequently agreed to cancel any parking fines which had not already been paid. However, the Council has refused to pay back the fines that have already been paid, despite accepting that they shouldn't have been given. Since the council has accepted that no fines should have been given at all in the first roll out will the council now agree to pay back all fines given?

e Andrew Berry to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Care

Can the council leader, confirm council policy, that all new council contracts will require the employer to have an occupational sick pay scheme and pay full sick pay to all staff (as and when needed) employed via such contracts and therefore working indirectly for LBI?

f Helen Strongman to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

We've been told by Peabody they will be paying £13m in community infrastructure levy related to the Holloway site. 50% of this will be allocated for strategic projects across the borough, 35% for local strategic projects, and 15% for 'local CiL' - other projects within the ward.

Are these figures correct? Can they change?

We've also been told by Peabody that some of the local funds have already been earmarked. What decisions have been made about how these funds will be spent and how can the local community have a say? Please supply details in full.

g Fiona Bullman to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Care

Sports provision is a key component of helping young people in Islington achieve better futures. Research clearly shows the positive impact on school grades, physical health and mental health.

Sports is where children learn about teamwork, goalsetting and the pursuit of excellence in performance and other achievement-oriented behaviours—critical skills necessary for success in life. Interest in football is at an all-time high for girls, but there are limited opportunities to excel. One such opportunity is participation through schools and into the district system that operates across London and the England. District football allows children to represent Islington and compete with their peers in the other London boroughs. The Year 6 - Year 9 district boys teams regularly feature in the local paper.

Unfortunately, there is no funding available in Islington to run the existing Year 6 and Year 7 girls teams or to support the development of district football for girls in older age groups.

Last years, the first ever girls district team highlighted the enthusiasm and talent of Islington girls with over 50 girls attending trials and two trophies being won during a successful first season.

Just £2,500 per year will fund two teams, with training, training materials and match fees for a full season. Each team will give at least 15 girls an opportunity to play football at the highest local level and inspire further generations of girls to achieve. £83 per year for a girl to represent Islington across London and inspire other girls to engage in sports. Islington would like to at least keep the existing Year 6 and Year 7 girls district team going. Will the council financially support them?

h Jeremy Drew to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport

I support the Council's plan for 50 bays for Dockless bikes by 2024. But to provide bays close to where they are needed, the number needs to be much higher. Camden already has over 200 bays for Dockless bikes and plans to have 300 by 2025. Could you please explain why so few are planned.

i Naomi to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Recent conversations with local residents and groups, as well as a poll, have shown that many believe that there is a need for services on the Holloway Park site that benefit everyone. The site will be home to over 3,000 new residents, who will have to share already stretched local amenities.

Peabody is proposing a large residents' lounge/space, measuring over 1,300 sqm. However, this will be a segregated space, exclusively for the use of the development's private residents.

This means that the residents of the 42% of the units that will be for social rent will be excluded from this space.

What is the council's view on the proposed use of this space?

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COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

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

The Council has signed Memoranda of Agreement with 3 hire e-bike operators since October 2021. Please will you set out the safety and conduct requirements of e-bike operators; and in total say how much financial contribution has been received by the Council from the 3 operators over the 2 financial years 2021-22 and 2022-23; and say how that funding has been allocated by the Council.

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

In the calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022 (part year), an FOI released by the Council in November 2022 revealed that PCNs charges totalling £10,821,870 were triggered by vehicle infractions associated with Islington's Low Traffic Neighbourhoods. Please will you describe the projects, services and investments that have been funded using that additional income?

c Cllr Burgess to Cllr Turan, Executive Member for Health and Social Care:

Good social care depends on full staffing and continuity. Carers and service users often tell me about the importance of having the same carer or being able to speak to the same person. Could you tell me what Islington is doing about recruitment and retention in Social Care, and if you are concerned about staffing levels?

d Cllr Jeapes to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Thames Water has been foisted with a £2bn debt burden since the private equity venture capitalists outfit Macquarie, with offices in Islington, acquired Thames Water in 2006.

In this acquisition, £2.8bn of the borrowed amount was used to fund the purchase of Thames Water so incurring the debt repayments.

Despite saddling Thames Water with this considerable debt, Macquarie bank have taken between 15.5% and 19% a year from Thames Water for the benefit of Macquarie and the shareholders.

From thisismoney.co.uk July 2023, "Macquarie did spend £11 billion, ladled on to customer bills, starting to modernise Victorian pipes. But under its ownership £2.7 billion was removed in dividends and a further £2 billion in loans. The pension fund deficit soared, and the debt pile swelled from £3.4 billion on acquisition to £10.8 billion when it sold its final stake a decade later."

Due to the perilous financial predicament that Thames Water now finds itself in, there are suggestions that we - Thames Water customers - will be expected to finance the shortfall with increased bills for our water use. This is a totally unacceptable suggestion particularly as the debts incurred were by this private equity outfit for their own and their shareholder's benefit.

Also, the scandalous activity of Macquarie should have been closely scrutinised by Ofwat, as this activity constitutes a transfer of undue risk to customers, as has now become apparent.

Macquarie have not performed according to their own corporate governance, they have not acted in the interests of London's community, "Macquarie's approach to corporate governance is to identify and realise opportunity for shareholders, clients, employees and communities." <https://www.macquarie.com/uk/en/about/company/corporate-governance.html>

Last year, this Council passed a motion calling for Thames Water to invest further in infrastructure to avoid disasters such as the flood that ruined the Sobell, and to call for the water industry to be brought back into public ownership.

Will Islington Council campaign along with other London Councils and the Mayor for London and call on the Government to thoroughly investigate the financial business activities of Macquarie and write to Ofwat and the Government asking that water bills will not be increased to pay for the £10 billion Thames Water black hole?

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

Islington is proud to be a diverse and welcoming Borough especially for the most vulnerable and those in need of sanctuary. With this in mind can you provide an update on the progress we are making in becoming a fully accredited Borough of Sanctuary?

f Cllr Mackmurdie to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:

Although knife crime and youth violence in Islington has decreased year on year since 2018, we have also had tragic murders of young people in our borough. These are a stain on our society and a blatant waste of life. In the last year, from the tragedy in Highbury to the recent murders in Elthorne and Tollington, I must say the Council response has been extremely focused on helping the victims' families and supporting the community. I would like to ask how we are supporting parents of such horrific crimes? Is there any knowledge that they can give us to prevent such tragedies happening again?

g Cllr Weekes to Cllr Woolf, Executive Member for Community Safety:

How is the Council working to ensure a safer night-time economy?

h Cllr Hamdache to Cllr Champion, Executive Member for Environment, Air Quality and Transport:

Can the Council explain why it's become one of the very few authorities in the country to charge for electric powered two-wheelers parking?

i Cllr Zammit to Cllr Ward, Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance:

We all know that it is important that local people are able to easily contact the Council when they need to, especially if something has gone wrong and they need support. In the past, I have been contacted by residents who have found it difficult to contact the council, with sometimes long wait times on the phone and a sub-optimal online offer. Can you tell me what is being done to improve this and ensure when residents need to get in touch with the council, they can?

j Cllr North to Cllr Ngongo, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families:

The Islington Boat Club is a unique and essential part of the St Peters and Canalside Community, especially for young people in the area, and has recently reopened thanks to funding secured from developers locally. This funding ensured that vital maintenance works could take place and that activities could begin happening again. Will the council commit to working with the new operators to ensure young people continue to enjoy what the Boat Club has to offer?

k Cllr Chowdhury to Cllr O'Halloran, Executive Members for Homes and Communities:

The Thriving Neighbourhoods programme is a great initiative that allows local residents to suggest improvements in our local areas. It'll be great if you can update us with the number of improvement works that have occurred to date and how were residents able to feed into the process?

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

In light of Islington's recycling rates falling to 27% is it time for our borough to consider rolling out fortnightly residual waste collection with recycling collected weekly?

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

How many Youth Engagement & Diversion Officers (YEDOs) work in Islington's local policing teams?

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Community Wealth Building
Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD

Report of: Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Meeting of: Full Council

Date: 28 September 2023

Wards: All

The appendices to this report have been circulated in a separate despatch of papers.

Subject: Adoption of new Local Plan

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The Council has prepared a new Local Plan. This is a set of documents that are used in making decisions on planning applications. It has the weight of the statutory development plan in planning law. The new Local Plan consists of three elements: the Strategic and Development Management Policies; Site Allocations; and Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan together with the Main Modifications and additional modifications detailed in the report (“the new Local Plan”).
- 1.2 The new Local Plan will guide development in the borough over the next 10-15 years and will play a vital role in helping deliver the council’s priorities including its social, economic and environmental objectives. It includes a robust, ambitious and innovative set of planning policies, with some key policy requirements going over and above the London Plan policies. For instance, the new Local Plan sets higher requirements for securing genuinely affordable housing. Similarly, Islington’s policies on tackling climate change go beyond the London Plan requirements in several ways, including in relation to energy efficiency and whole-life carbon.
- 1.3 The new Local Plan will play a critical role in delivering the missions set out in the Islington Together 2030 Plan and will support the council in creating a more equal future. For example:
 - **A Safe Place to Call Home** – the new Local Plan sets out ambitious and robust targets and policies to ensure that the council is able to secure genuinely affordable homes for local people, prioritising the provision of social rented housing in particular. This includes securing affordable homes on-site for major residential developments as well as financial contributions towards affordable housing for residential developments of less than 10 units. The new Local Plan also seeks to ensure that all new homes in the borough are accessible, inclusive, built to a high standard and relate positively to neighbouring residents and the local area. The new Local Plan directly helps with meeting acute housing need in the borough and reducing overcrowding, as well as enabling older and disabled residents to live independent lives.

- **Child Friendly Islington** – the new Local Plan ensures that new development and the wider environment are child friendly, by being inclusive and well connected, and by improving safety and promoting positive social contact to enable children to thrive. The new Local Plan: protects and provides social infrastructure such as schools, libraries and community centres; protects a range of spaces of all shapes and sizes, both soft and hard landscaped, where play and outdoor activity can occur; and ensures high quality housing with enough space for children and young people to lead healthy lives.
- **Fairer Together** – in addition to the delivery of genuinely affordable housing, which will help tackle inequality in the borough and improve the quality of life for residents, the new Local Plan also ensures social infrastructure is protected and the needs of different groups are considered to ensure that there is sufficient provision to meet community needs. The new Local Plan also contains policies which help to protect cultural facilities and provide for new cultural uses which can help local residents to access cultural and creative opportunities and build connections to local heritage.
- **Community Wealth Building** – the new Local Plan includes a range of policies focused on protecting and strengthening the diversity of local retail and employment areas including the borough’s town centres and maintaining a diverse network of small local businesses as well as identifying sufficient land to deliver a significant uplift in space for new businesses. It also includes stronger requirements for delivering affordable workspaces from new commercial space which play an important role in supporting local organisations and business as well as delivering social value. The new Local Plan therefore contributes to the creation of a more sustainable, inclusive local economy.
- **Greener Healthier Islington** – by ensuring that the built and natural environment of the borough is protected and enhanced and that all development contributes to the achievement of the Council’s net zero carbon, climate change and transport ambitions. The new Local Plan contains a range of policies which seek to promote positive health outcomes for example limiting direct adverse health impacts by restricting hot food takeaways near schools to help tackle childhood obesity. There are also a number of policies which protect and enhance the borough’s green infrastructure and biodiversity. Finally there are multiple robust policies through at the plan which help to tackle climate change and as well as mitigate its impacts.

1.4 The new Local Plan preparation process has taken several years and culminated in an Examination by Planning Inspectors appointed by the Secretary of State. The Independent Examination has now finished with the Planning Inspectors issuing their final report on 5 July 2023. The Inspectors found the new Local Plan to be ‘sound.’ This means it can be adopted by the Council with the changes (referred to as Main Modifications) set out by the Inspectors, which accompany their report. The changes set out by the Inspectors are binding on the Council. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will have full weight in decision making and replace the current Local Plan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To note that the Executive has recommended that Council adopts the new Local Plan.
- 2.2 To adopt the new Local Plan (attached as Appendices 5-7) with the main modifications as set out in the Inspectors' report and appendices 1-4 as well as the Council's additional modifications as set out in appendix 10 and the new, Policies Map attached as Appendix 8.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Community Wealth Building, to prepare and publish an Adoption Statement in accordance with section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and all other necessary procedural requirements following adoption of the new Local Plan.
- 2.4 To delegate authority to the Corporate Direction of Community Wealth Building in consultation with the Executive Member of Finance, Planning and Performance to make any typographical amendments and other minor corrections to the new Local Plan documents as required prior to publication.
- 2.5 To note that the current Local Plan, which consists of the Core Strategy (2011), Development Management Policies (2013), Site Allocations (2013) and Finsbury Local Plan (Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan (2013), will be superseded in its entirety by the new Local Plan.
- 2.6 To note that a consolidated version of the Integrated Impact Assessment which includes the Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Impact Assessment has been created and updated to consider the Inspectors' final modifications and is attached at Appendix 9.

3. Background

- 3.1 Each Local Planning Authority (LPA) is required to produce a Local Plan setting out the strategic planning priorities for its area, opportunities for development and clear land use policies on what will or will not be permitted and where. The Local Plan provides the basis for making decisions on planning applications together with other material planning considerations.
- 3.2 Islington's current Local Plan covers the period up to 2026 and includes four elements: the Core Strategy (2011), Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Finsbury Local Plan Development Plan Documents (DPDs) (all 2013). It was necessary to review the Local Plan to ensure that it is up to date in light of new evidence, and national and regional planning policy changes.
- 3.3 The new Local Plan consists of three documents: Strategic and Development Management Policies; Site Allocations; and Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan and covers the period up to 2036/37. As outlined above, implementation of the new Local Plan will play an important role in delivering the council's priorities and helping to create a more equal future for local people.

The Local Plan Process

- 3.4 The new Local Plan has been through a long process of production. This has included several rounds of consultation between 2016 and 2019. The plan was then submitted to the Secretary of State on 12 February 2020 to be Examined by independent Planning Inspectors. This examination process took several years, with consultation on pre-hearing Modifications taking place in spring 2021 and Examination Hearings taking place in September and October 2021. This was followed by further consultation on Main Modifications to the Local Plan in 2022, that included extensive additional changes. The Examination concluded with the issuing of the Inspectors report on 5 July 2023.

The Outcome of the Independent Examination

- 3.5 In their report the Inspectors found Islington's new Local Plan - meaning all three documents which comprise the Local Plan - to be 'sound' subject to changes (referred to as Main Modifications). The Main Modifications set out by the Inspectors are binding on the council. A 'sound' plan means it is compliant with planning legislation, policy and guidance. A Local Plan must be considered 'sound' in order for it to be formally adopted. In their report the Inspectors have amended some of the detailed wording and/or added consequential modifications to the Main Modifications – these are summarised in section 5 of the Integrated Impact Assessment.

Additional Modifications

- 3.6 In addition to the Main Modifications set out in the Inspectors' report and the additional minor changes previously published, some further minor amendments have been made to each document. This includes minor typographical corrections, factual updates, changes needed for consistency with other modifications and presentational amendments. These are summarised in Appendix 10.

Next Steps

- 3.7 After the new Local Plan has been adopted by the Council, a formal adoption process will be undertaken. This includes publishing an adoption notice and adoption statement for the Integrated Impact Assessment. Final designed-up and web content accessible version of each of the new Local Plan documents and the Policies Map will also be published within 6 weeks of the meeting of the Council. The current Local Plan will also be superseded.

4. Reasons for the Recommendations / Decision:

- 4.1 The Strategic and Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action plan are important statutory planning documents which together form the borough's new Local Plan. The documents have been subject to extensive consultation and have been found 'sound' at Independent Examination (subject to the Main Modifications).

- 4.2 It is recommended that the Council formally adopts the new Local Plan, and the accompanying Policies Map, following successful completion of the final stages of plan making.

5. Implications

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs of producing the Local Plan have been met through existing budgets within the Planning and Development division. The costs of producing the final versions of the Development Plan Documents and undertaking the adoption process will amount to approximately £10,000.

Legal Implications

- 5.2 The new Local Plan has been prepared in line with relevant planning regulations. The documents have been prepared and consulted on in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the council's Statement of Community Involvement.
- 5.3 Once adopted the three documents which form the new Local Plan (as set out in paragraph 3.3.) will be development plan documents. Alongside the London Plan and the North London Waste Plan these documents will constitute the development plan for the borough. Policy designations and site allocations contained in the three documents are reflected on the accompanying Policies Map, which also forms part of the development plan. The Council must have regard to the development plan when it determines planning applications and the determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.4 Upon adoption of the new Local Plan (as set out in paragraph 3.2) the existing Local Plan will be wholly superseded.
- 5.5 Under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 and Part 3 of the Council's Constitution, it is the function of the Executive to recommend to Council the adoption of Development Plan documents and the function of Full Council to adopt the Plan.

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

- 5.6 The new Local Plan is subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). This brings together into a single framework a number of assessments of the social, environmental and economic impact of planning policies. The IIA follows the prescribed structure for the Sustainability Appraisal process as the basis of the framework while incorporating Equalities Analysis (EqA) and a Health Impact Assessments (HIA). The process is iterative, with the sustainability of the new Local Plan and its potential environmental impacts considered at each stage of plan preparation. The new Local Plan proposes a number of policies to mitigate and prevent climate change, including policies which seek specific energy efficiency standards and which promote decentralised energy networks.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 5.7 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.
- 5.8 As part of the production of the new Local Plan, a contemporaneous process has been undertaken as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment (the IIA). This brings together into a single framework a number of assessments of the social, environmental and economic impact of planning policies. The IIA follows the prescribed structure for the Sustainability Appraisal process as the basis of the framework while incorporating Equalities Impact analysis as well. The relevant information from three IIA assessment documents prepared during the contemporaneous Local Plan production process have been consolidated into one report and are included at appendix 9 for ease of reference.
- 5.9 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. This has been updated to reflect the Inspectors' final recommendations, including the additional Modifications in relation to Gypsy and Traveller matters. The draft Local Plan policies, taken together and including proposed Modifications, are not considered discriminatory for people with any of the protected characteristics. Overall, there are unlikely to be negative impacts in relation to equality of opportunity and they are unlikely to have a negative impact on good relations between communities with protected characteristics. The intention of the new Local Plan is to address inequality within the boundaries of national and regional planning policy.

Appendices

- [Appendix 1 – Inspectors report](#)
- [Appendix 2: Strategic and Development Management Policies Main Modifications](#)
- [Appendix 3: Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan Main Modifications](#)
- [Appendix 4: Site Allocations Main Modifications](#)
- [Appendix 5: Local Plan Strategic and Development Management Policies](#)
- [Appendix 6: Local Plan Site Allocations](#)
- [Appendix 7: Local Plan Bunhill and Clerkenwell Area Action Plan](#)
- [Appendix 8: Local Plan Policies Map](#)
- [Appendix 9: Integrated Impact Assessment](#)
- Appendix 10: Summary of additional modifications

Final report clearance

Authorised by:

Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Date: 19 September 2023

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Report of: Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Meeting of: Full Council

Date: 28 September 2023

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. In December 2017, the Secretary of State announced the continuation of the capital receipts flexibility programme, which provides Local Authorities the freedom to use capital receipts generated from the sale of assets (except for Right to Buy disposals) to fund revenue costs arising from transformational revenue projects that deliver savings or service improvements. With extensions since, the current flexibility direction runs until 31 March 2025.
- 1.2. Normally, only expenditure qualifying as capital may be funded from these capital resources. The additional flexibility therefore provides the council with an alternative funding option to invest in schemes which deliver savings or improvements.
- 1.3. This report recommends the approval of a Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy for 2023/24 for the schemes detailed in **Section 4** of the report. Approving the strategy does not commit the council to using it. The Section 151 Officer will consider the optimal funding strategy based on the actual and forecast level of reserves at the end of the financial year.
- 1.4. The council has a number of high-cost transformation projects, and the current funding strategy is to utilise some of its earmarked reserves to meet this cost. Given significant uncertainty around the medium-term financial position and reserves projections, it is prudent for the council to have multiple options available to fund these costs. It should be noted that, at this stage, there are sufficient reserves to cover projected one-off expenditure on the known transformation projects over the medium term, partly as the medium-term financial strategy (MTFS) already assumes some replenishment of reserves. However, in the event of a significant overall depletion of reserves in a single year and/or deterioration in the financial outlook, the financial resilience of the council could be weakened whilst it waits for the schemes to 'pay back' through savings and reserves to be replenished over time.
- 1.5. By utilising the capital receipts flexibility, the capital receipts would no longer be available to finance capital expenditure. This gap in capital financing would need to be backfilled with an increase in the underlying need to borrow. The consequences would be that reserves are protected, but the council's borrowing and annual interest costs increase.
- 1.6. The council would not be reliant on making any additional disposals of assets as a result of this strategy, as it would relate to the use of existing available and forecast capital receipts.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy for 2023/24 and note that approving the strategy does not commit the council to using it.
- 2.2. To delegate responsibility for the adoption of the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts strategy to the Section 151 Officer, if it is considered appropriate to do so at the end of the financial year in the context of the council's overall financial position.

3. Process and Regulations

- 3.1. Before the council can flexibly use capital receipts it must prepare, publish, and maintain a 'flexible use of capital receipts strategy'. This must consider the impact of this flexibility on the affordability of borrowing by including updated prudential indicators. Full Council must approve this strategy before any qualifying expenditure is incurred. The current government directive allowing the flexible use of capital receipts ends on 31 March 2025.
- 3.2. Under the Flexible Capital Receipts guidance, the Secretary of State sets out that individual authorities are best placed to decide which expenditure projects are best to be funded by this method in local areas. The key criteria for expenditure to qualify is that the schemes must be designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years for any of the public sector delivery partners. Within this definition, it is for individual local authorities to decide whether a project qualifies for the flexibility'. The Guidance goes on to give examples of qualifying expenditure including: 'Funding the cost-of-service reconfiguration, restructuring or rationalisation (staff or non-staff), where this leads to ongoing efficiency savings or service transformation'.
- 3.3. Capital receipts used under the direction must be from genuine disposals (qualifying disposals). That is, disposals where the authority does not retain an interest, directly or indirectly, in the assets once the disposal has occurred.
- 3.4. Each authority should disclose the individual projects that would be funded or part-funded through the capital receipts flexibility to Full Council. This requirement can be satisfied as part of the annual budget setting process. The Guidance recommends that the council produces a 'flexible use of capital receipts strategy' setting out details of projects to be funded through flexible use of capital receipts be prepared prior to the start of each financial year. Failure to meet this requirement does not mean that an authority cannot access the flexibility in that year. However, in this instance, the 'flexible use of capital receipts strategy' should be presented to Full Council or the equivalent at the earliest possible opportunity in-year. The Guidance allows local authorities to update the strategy during the year.
- 3.5. It is a required condition of the direction that authorities must send details setting out their planned use of the flexibility to the Secretary of State, in advance of its use for each financial year. This is to make sure that the government is adequately sighted on the use of the flexibility and can monitor how it is used - it is not a process of approval.

4. Proposed Strategy – Flexible Use of Capital Receipts

- 4.1. The council currently has a number of transformation schemes with one-off budget implications. The potential use of Flexible Use of Capital Receipts is focused on the general fund impact of the schemes, where funding is currently assumed to be drawn from the earmarked Budget Strategy reserve. The proposed schemes, at this stage, are as follows:

Resident Experience Programme Phases 1 to 3

- 4.2. The Resident Experience Programme Funding Approval report agreed at the 20 April 2023 Executive set out the one-off revenue funding requirement. The scheme is intended to deliver service improvements and efficiencies in the way that our residents interact with us. This would include the greater and smarter use of omnichannel technology as well as our approach to direct resident interactions.
- 4.3. There is a £3.042m one-off revenue requirement in 2023/24 for Phases 1 and 2, of which the scheme financial implications assume that £987k is funded by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The remaining **£2.055m** is budgeted to be funded from the Budget Strategy reserve in 2023/24.
- 4.4. For Phase 3, running to June 2025, there is a £10m one-off funding requirement, with **£5m** assumed to be funded from the Budget Strategy reserve and the remaining 50% funded by the HRA. **The capital receipts flexibility ends on 31 March 2025, so some of the one-off expenditure for Phase 3 may not be covered.** The profiling of spend would be closely monitored and financing strategies updated as appropriate.

FutureWork Programme

- 4.5. The FutureWork Programme is a scheme looking at our accommodation strategy for our municipal buildings together with our technology offer increasing productivity and efficiency. There are recurring savings agreed of £1.7m so far with the scope for this to be higher. Funding Approval report agreed at the 20 April 2023 Executive set out a one-off revenue funding requirement in 2023/24 of **£7.749m** to be funded from the Budget Strategy reserve.

5. Rationale and Considerations

- 5.1. In the opinion of the Section 151 Officer the scheme expenditure for those programmes listed in **Section 4**, for the council to apply the 'flexible use of capital receipt strategy' freedom, qualifies on the basis that the expenditure would "...generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years...". The Guidance gives an example of a project that could generate qualifying expenditure as '...Driving a digital approach to the delivery of more efficient public services...' which describes quite closely the Resident Experience Programme.
- 5.2. The underlying rationale for the approval of the flexibility is to reduce the burden on the council's earmarked reserves, if needed, and therefore support the wider financial resilience of the council. In 2022/23, the council's General Fund earmarked and unallocated reserves decreased by £37.2m from £143.3m to £106.1m. Whilst a substantial proportion of this decrease in reserves was due to timing differences caused by COVID-19 funding, it was a higher decrease than other comparable authorities. As set out in the council's budget report, there is a need to replenish earmarked reserves to maintain financial resilience. The council's MTFs currently assumes an annual contribution of £4m to earmarked reserves to bolster the council's financial resilience over the medium term, although this is currently exceeded by forecast drawdowns from reserves.
- 5.3. Capital receipts are ordinarily used to support the funding of the council's capital programme. Re-directing capital receipts under a 'flexible use of capital receipts strategy' would therefore lead to a corresponding increase in the council's underlying need to borrow to fund its planned capital programme, and a significant, additional annual revenue cost of capital. The council would not be reliant on making any additional disposals of assets as a result of this strategy, as it would relate to the use of existing available and forecast capital receipts.

- 5.4. Based on an indicative £20m borrowing impact, this would equate to an estimated additional £2m per annum revenue cost of capital, split between £1m annual interest costs and £1m statutory provision for the repayment of debt ('minimum revenue provision'). This will need to be factored into the council's budget planning assumptions from 2024/25 (subject to phasing).

Alternative Option

- 5.5. An alternative course of action could be to replenish earmarked reserves by an additional £2.0m annually (on top of the existing £4m per annum budget for reserves replenishment and financial resilience). This would mean using the annual amount that we would be budgeting to service and repay the additional borrowing to instead increase the annual replenishment of reserves. Over the long term this alternative option could achieve the same outcome of replenishing reserves, albeit at a less expedited rate. This option should be considered when considering whether to utilise the flexible capital receipts policy at the end of the financial year. It would save an estimated £1m in annual interest charges compared to the option to use the capital receipts flexibility (again based on an indicative £20m increase in the council's underlying need to borrow).

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. Utilising the capital receipts flexibility would mean that the council's reserves would not decrease for the indicative £20m indicative cost of the transformation schemes. However, it would also lead to an increase in the council's underlying need to borrow for the capital programme. The estimated additional revenue cost of capital would be £2m per annum. This will need to be factored into the council's budget planning assumptions from 2024/25 alongside the savings that are expected to be generated from the transformation schemes.
- 6.2. Not utilising the flexibility would mean that there would be a decrease in the council's earmarked Budget Strategy reserve in respect of the transformation schemes. However, through the alternative option set out, this could instead be replenished over a longer period whilst avoiding an additional £1m in annual interest costs.
- 6.3. Approving the strategy in this report does not commit the council to adopting it. The Section 151 Officer will consider the optimal funding strategy, including the alternative option set out, based on available capital receipts and the actual and forecast level of reserves at the end of the financial year. This should consider any scope to re-purpose funding from other earmarked reserves to replenish the depletion of the Budget Strategy reserve. It should also weigh up the short and medium term need to protect reserves against the significant additional annual interest costs that could be incurred.

Impact on prudential indicators

- 6.4. No prudential indicators would be breached through a decision to implement the flexible use of capital receipts.
- 6.5. The prudential indicator for the revenue impact on interest rate risk would increase by a further £0.200m for every £20m of additional borrowing. This would mean that at £20m additional borrowing, the Upper Limit on a 1% rise in interest rates would be £2.800m rather than the £2.600m agreed by Full Council in March 2023. This represents an increase in interest rate risk as a result of additional borrowing.
- 6.6. The proportion of financing costs to net revenue stream would increase due to the increased borrowing. This will change the 2022/23 indicator from £4.654m to £5.754m which increases the proportion of revenue budget supporting borrowing costs from 1.8% to 2.2%. This increase in borrowing costs would be offset by corresponding revenue savings.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that: “without prejudice to section 111, every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs”. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 relates to the subsidiary powers of local authorities.
- 7.2. The Local Government Act 2003 (“the Act”), section 15(1) requires a local authority “... to have regard (a) to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify ...”.
- 7.3. The Statutory Guidance “Statutory Guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (updated)” published 11 March 2016 and last updated on 2 August 2022 is issued under section 15(1) of the Act. This is an updated direction and statutory guidance to extend the freedom for local authorities to use eligible capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of projects that deliver ongoing savings or improved efficiency. This direction revokes and replaces the direction of the same name issued on 4 April 2022.
- 7.4. Capital receipts are the money the council receives from asset sales, the use of which is normally restricted to funding other capital expenditure or paying off debt. The receipts cannot usually be used to fund revenue costs. The direction introduces a new restriction that authorities may not use the flexibility to fund discretionary redundancy payments i.e. those not necessarily incurred under statute. This does not affect other types of severance payments and, to be clear, does not restrict, including pension strain costs, which may still be qualifying expenditure.
- 7.5. The Direction allows authorities to use the proceeds from asset sales to fund the revenue costs of projects that will reduce costs, increase revenue, or support a more efficient provision of services. This is an extension of the flexibility that has been in place since 2016 and will allow this freedom to continue to 2024/25 to help authorities plan for the long-term.
- 7.6. This Direction clarifies that the capital receipts obtained must be disposals by the local authority outside the “group” structure. As introduced in the direction issued on 4 April 2022, this direction includes the requirement to submit the planned use of the flexibility in advance of use for each financial year. This condition can be met by sending the authority’s own strategy documents provided they contain the detail asked for in the direction. This is not an approval process; the information must be sent to ensure transparency and allow proper monitoring by central government.
- 7.7. It is the Section 151 Officer’s opinion that the approach described within this paper for the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts meets the definition required within the Statutory Guidance.
- 7.8. Full Council approval is required for the use of the capital receipts.

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

- 8.1. None arising from the content of this report.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment

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

Background Papers: None

Appendices: None

Authorised by:

Executive Member for Finance, Planning and Performance

Date: 20 September 2023

Responsible Officers:

David Hodgkinson, Director of Resources

Paul Clarke, Director of Finance

Report Author:

Paul Clarke, Director of Finance

Legal Implications Author:

Marie Rosenthal, Interim Director of Law and Governance



COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: A Metropolitan Police Service that Islington can trust

Moved by Cllr John Woolf

Seconded by Cllr Jason Jackson

This Council notes:

- The Baroness Casey Review into the Metropolitan Police demonstrates conclusively the scale and extent of the problems within the force and their impact on communities and victims. It paints a picture of a force that is institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic. It documents systematic failures about the way it has vetted and maintained professional standards, the support offered to vulnerable victims of rape and domestic abuse, and its record of safeguarding children and protecting the public. It highlights the hollowing out of local policing and disempowerment of local leaders.
- The review shows that the Government's cut in real terms funding for the Met over the last ten years – £700 million, 18% lower than the start of the previous decade - has had an adverse impact on neighbourhood policing. Sharp decreases in the rates of crimes solved and in measures of trust and confidence coincide with the period around 2017 and 2018 when police officer, staff, PCSO and Specials numbers were at their lowest and when the Joint Basic Command Units were introduced, which the Casey Review calls 'an austerity measure'.
- Whilst youth safety and knife crime are top priorities for young people, they have consistently told us, in surveys and in one-to-one settings, that they cannot fully trust the Police. The concerns relayed are more significant and prominent for children from Black and minoritised communities.
- In Islington, only 46% of people believe the Metropolitan Police is doing a good job and only 48% of people agree the police treat everyone fairly, regardless of who they are (MOPAC Public Attitudes Survey, Q4 2022/23).

- Stop and Search disproportionately affects Islington's Black residents, who make up 13.3% of the borough's population, but constitute 43.3% of subjects of stop and searches in the last 12 months.
- Local people rely on the Police to keep them safe and a good working relationship between local police and the council is vital. However, it is clear beyond any doubt that the Met requires nothing short of total reform to create the culturally competent police service that Londoners deserve. The Met must accept, as the Casey Review concluded, that it is institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic if it is to change.

This Council further notes:

- Since the culmination of the Casey Review, the Council's Executive has been working closely with the Borough Commander and Superintendent to agree a strong, local action plan to increase confidence and trust in the Police for local people.
- The willingness of the local Central North BCU to work co-operatively with the Council and local residents to agree and implement a strong action plan, attend cultural competency training, and the Just Fair Summits, plus the strong working relationship and the array of positive partnership work we currently undertake to make Islington safer.
- Given that the Met is 77% white and 70% male, and that half of officers do not live in the city they police, reform must begin with listening and understanding the lived experiences of our community. This includes those who have experienced discrimination and poor service, especially Black residents who have been under-protected and over-policed.
- Child exploitation is a serious issue which feeds into issues around organised crime, the drug trade and serious violence in London. We need a Police Service that acknowledges this, takes it seriously and has a plan to tackle it.
- Effective neighbourhood policing, including engagement with and visibility in communities and strong child-focused partnership working by the police with the council and other agencies, is essential if we are to tackle violence and the causes of violence – including poverty, domestic abuse and poor mental health
- Islington Council's work to make our borough a safer place, including over 300 safe havens, initiatives to tackle VAWG, knife bins that take thousands of weapons off our streets every year, and Safer Spaces discussions to find out where people feel unsafe, and improve it.

- In 2022/23, Islington saw a 34% reduction in knife crime offences and 9% reduction in youth violence compared to pre-pandemic levels. Also, due to the work of council services, 96% of Islington young people who committed a lower-level offence and were triaged and diverted from the youth justice system

This Council resolves to:

- Urge the Met to accept the Casey Report in full – including the finding that the force is institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic.
- Ensure our local Borough Commander agrees to:
 - A 10-point action plan— practical, tangible actions, developed with our community, and implemented swiftly, in response to Baroness Casey’s report
 - A Public Charter—outlining your commitments to neighbourhood policing in Islington.
 - A Memorandum of Understanding—between the local authority and the BCU to ensure effective communication and accountability
 - Public participation in policing— with effective ward panels that are representative and responsive; with Independent Advisory Groups that are empowered and supported; active engagement and collaboration with refugees, migrants, young people, minoritized groups and the Global Majority
 - Children as children—for there never to be a horrific incident in Islington like that experienced by Child Q and for a strong commitment to prevention and diversion
 - The highest standards—only the very best officers in our borough; rigorous SLT review, monitoring and oversight for any officer under investigation; the very best training for Islington’s police officers, including that suggested through Valerie’s Law
 - Stability and visibility —with an end to the carousel system; an end to high abstraction rates; more PCSOs and School Safety Officers: the very best SNTs in London
 - A swift response—to all incidents in Islington
 - Thorough investigations— with an improvement in outcomes for all crimes, including our priority areas such as an increase in sanction and detection rates for DV, plus watertight cases brought swiftly to the CPS
 - Clear communication—with the Victim’s Code at the heart of what the Police does
 - A trauma-informed approach— so safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness and empowerment guide your approach and interactions
 - A joined-up approach—across boroughs, teams and partnerships
 - An anti-racist, anti-misogynistic, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic and anti-ableist force— with a laser focus on equality and inclusivity; an end to

disproportionality and adultification; an active commitment to stamp out all forms of hate, misogyny, prejudice and discrimination

- Policing by consent— earning and maintaining trust and confidence in our community by being embedded in our community, listening to our community and understanding our experiences and needs

- Ensure our BCU Commander is accountable for the actions taken in our Borough, including those of central specialist units.

- Continue to listen to local people through our Safer Spaces conversations, learning from residents where they feel least safe and make improvements

- Continue to support the safety of young people as outlined in our Youth Safety Strategy, which includes listening to and responding to the voices of young people

- Continue to prioritise the reduction of Violence Against Women and Girls as outlined in our VAWG Strategy, which includes putting survivors centre stage

- Continue to work in partnership to deliver on our Violence Reduction Strategy

- Continue using innovative strategies and responses to organised crime groups, such as our I-CAN service

- Work with our local BCU and partners across London to make tackling child exploitation a priority, with a view to tackling drug-related crime and serious violence

- Call on the Prime Minister to make child exploitation and serious violence a national priority.

Motion 2: Age Friendly Islington

Moved by Cllr Janet Burgess

Seconded by Cllr Rosaline Ogunro

This Council notes:

- Islington is the 53rd most deprived local authority in England and the 6th most deprived in London. In 2020, 4415 (20%) of older residents lived in the most deprived areas of the borough, as this proportion was significantly higher when compared to younger adults.
- Islington also has the 4th highest levels of poverty affecting older people in London. As well as income deprivation, Islington's older people reported social isolation as a persistent challenge.
- In 2022, Islington had approximately 208,000 adult residents, of which 22,948 were older adults, aged 65 or above (11%). Islington has a significantly lower older population when compared to London (16%) and England (23%).
- Our older population aged 65+ is projected to grow most quickly (16% by 2026 and 35% by 2032), which equates to a growth of around 7,798 individuals over the next 10 years.
- Many factors can impact how we age. This includes:
 - Wider determinants – these are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which impact on people's health.
 - Healthy living – taking care of one's physical health, including eating nutritious foods, limiting alcohol intake, and smoking cessation.
 - Common conditions – conditions including physical or mental health and wellbeing, cognitive functioning and falls and fractures.
- Our ageing population is a primary driver of adult social care demand. Of the 22,948 older adults in Islington, 2,720 (11%) receive support from Adult Social Care. The majority of residents receiving support are older adults (53%).
- Of the 2,720 older people we support, 55% (1,494) received long-term support from the Council. Physical support, which includes access and mobility, and personal care support, was the most common primary support reason for older adults.
- The residents we support in Adult Social Care are significantly more likely to live in more deprived areas. 21% of the older residents we support live in the most deprived areas of Islington.

- The Government has continually failed to properly fund social care across the UK, leaving it to local authorities, despite austerity, to manage increasing demand and costs.
- State pensions are set for an 8.5 percent increase in April 2024 under the triple lock mechanism, with the new state pension set to rise just over £900 per year to over £11,500.
- The UK has one of the lowest rates of state pension in Europe and the decline of Defined Benefit workplace pension schemes means that the average UK pensioner has less to live on in retirement than in most other countries.
- As outlined in the [Institute for Fiscal Studies \(IFS\) report](#) on the case for a pensions review, there are a number of key challenges facing future generations of pensioners that threaten their living standards in retirement, and which, without policy action, mean many people are likely to face substantial financial difficulties in older age.

This Council further notes:

- Islington is committed to supporting older people to live healthy, purposeful, independent, connected and fulfilling lives. The Council commissions, funds and provides a range of provisions for older people in the borough, across health (including adult social care), housing, environment, transport, digital/assistive technology, and the community voluntary sector.
- The Council's Public Health team are currently running the 'Get Active' pilot to support those with long term conditions to become more motivated and confident in relation to engaging in physical activity. This links to our broader strategic ambition to increase uptake of physical activity as outlined in the [Active Together Strategy](#).
- Our collaborative work with Camden on [Parks for Health](#) which invests in our park spaces to improve the quality and accessibility of green spaces with a particular focus on improving wellbeing and supporting older age groups to be active and stay socially connected.
- Islington provides free swimming to Over 60's 7 days per week across our pools, we also have introduced Free Swimming Lessons for Over 60's.
- LBI has joint arrangements with the NHS – Whittington Health, Camden and Islington Foundation Trust (CIFT) and Islington Clinical Commissioning Group (ICCG) to support people's health and social care needs. In addition to all regular health services, such as primary care, mental health, community health and acute care, Islington has some specialist services to support older adults, including community activities and mental health support.

- Our People Friendly Streets initiative continues to improve the accessibility of the local built environment/public realm to improve accessibility and make public spaces more attractive to support active travel uptake for everyone, including older people in the borough.
- Islington is recognised by Alzheimer’s Society as a community working towards becoming dementia friendly.
- In February 2023, Islington’s Ecology Centre at Gillespie Park was recognised as being a dementia-friendly venue. At both the Ecology Centre and Caledonian Park, Islington Council has been running Health and Nature Walks which are open to all, but particularly focused on older people and are dementia friendly. Further partnership work is ongoing with Age UK, for example holding “Park Cuppa” events regularly at Caledonian Park and the Ecology Centre.
- The Freedom Pass scheme provides free travel on most of London’s public transport to older and eligible disabled London residents. In 2018/19, LBI contributed £11.5m to the Scheme and 23,000 Older People in Islington benefitted from Freedom Passes.
- Islington’s Dementia Strategy will outline the offer across the partnership for dementia prevention, diagnosis, post diagnostic care, living well with dementia and choice and control including at end of life. A Dementia Coordinator will be created to co-ordinate the implementation of the dementia strategy action plan.
- Islington’s Carers Strategy has been jointly developed with Age UK Islington who runs Islington Carers Hub. It has been coproduced with carers – 350 carers have contributed through engagement activities and a carers reference group has been utilised to coproduce the strategy.
- Islington works with local organisations and through specific programmes to reduce the impact of fuel poverty. Examples of local initiatives include the Bunhill Energy Centre and district-wide heat network, Warm Healthy Homes Programme, Seasonal Health Interventions Network (SHINE) and Angelic Energy.
- Adult Care Commissioned Services provided for older people in the borough that include Resident and Nursing Care Homes which meet the needs of residents who cannot remain in their own homes or in other accommodation-based services; specialist Housing (Extra Care) designed to meet the needs of older people with long-term conditions, and disabled people who may struggle to remain in their own home; Home Care covering a range of activities such as personal care, reablement, and support with medication; Islington Carers Hub; and Day Provision New Park Day Centre.

This Council resolves to:

- Join the UK Network of Age-friendly communities, recognising ourselves as an age-friendly borough, where Islington is a welcoming place to grow old in.
- Retain the Older Person's Council Tax discount first introduced by Islington in 2010.
- Write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for better regulation of private pensions.
- Work with local businesses to encourage them to accept cash transactions, recognising the freedom, independence, and social inclusion that this provides older people in the borough.
- Continue working with our VCS community and other stakeholders to work on reducing digital exclusion in Islington.

Motion 3: Boycott the Anti-Boycott Bill

Moved by Cllr Benali Hamdache

Seconded by Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

This Council notes:

- The “Economic Activity of Public Bodies (Overseas Matters) Bill”, otherwise known as the "anti-boycott bill", is slowly making its way through Parliament, and passed its second reading in July.
- The government’s planned anti-boycott bill poses a threat to local democracy, freedom of expression and civil society campaigns. It will shield states involved in practices that many people in this country find abhorrent, including genocide and occupation.
- If approved, the bill will restrict the ability of public bodies such as local authorities, universities, and some pension funds to make ethical decisions about investment and procurement. It will violate the rights of individual pension holders to invest their pensions in line with their values.
- A broad coalition of over seventy organisations including charities, trade unions, human rights and faith organisations are working publicly to stop the bill, alongside the Scottish government.
- Lisa Nandy, MP for Wigan, revealed that the Labour Party has taken legal advice over the bill, calling it “bad law” and stating that lawyers had raised concerns that the bill could lead the way for endless litigation in the courts over the practice of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS).

This Council further notes:

- BDS has a centuries-long tradition as a successful method of peaceful protest and local government has played its part in following this democratic political practice.
- BDS campaigns have been used by social movements to change the course of history for the better.
- Concerned members of the public and local authorities have championed BDS tactics in prominent campaigns such as the 1963 Bristol bus boycott, the rejection of sugar produced on slave plantations, led by nineteenth century British citizens, and divestment from fossil fuel companies. The best-known boycott was the campaign to end apartheid in South Africa.
- During the campaign to end South African apartheid, similar limitations were introduced. Nonetheless, millions of people, including local councils, continued their support for the movement.

- In 2016, a UK High Court ruled that the boycotts of Israeli settlement goods by local authorities in Leicester and Wales were not anti-Semitic, nor did they contravene laws on equality.
- Restricting the ability of local councils to engage in BDS is wrong. In a world where Uyghur's, undergoing ethnic cleansing, are forced to produce garments and commodities, where local government pension funds are invested in arms companies known to be complicit in violations of Palestinian human rights, and where Saudi Arabia, accused of crimes against humanity, is the world's largest oil exporter, we need these tactics to hold those complicit to account.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the leaders of the Labour and Conservative parties to share the legal opinion published by the Labour Party on the rights of councils to boycott oppressive regimes and illegal practices, emphasising the need for councils to retain the ability to engage in BDS campaigning.
- Review our own ethical procurement strategy to ensure that our goods and services are not produced by the world's oppressed peoples.

Motion 4: Islington Child Friendly Community

Moved by Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

Seconded by Cllr Benali Hamdache

This Council notes:

- That Lambeth council and Redbridge council have successfully applied to become UNICEF Child Friendly Communities.
- That the programme aims to create cities and communities in the UK where all children have a meaningful say in, and truly benefit from, the local decisions, services and spaces that shape their lives.
- That UNICEF provide training based to support councils to put children's rights in practice as part of a three-to-five-year journey towards recognition as a UNICEF UK Child Friendly Community.
- That embarking on this programme could rectify some of the challenges faced by children in Islington by improving and integrating services, adopting poverty reduction measures, and tackling discrimination.

This Council further notes:

- That many of Islington's children and young people are growing up in poverty; exposed to violent crime and high levels of air pollution.
- That Islington had one of the highest rates of child poverty in the country before the pandemic, with two-fifths of all children in Islington living below the poverty line.
- That children from Black and minority ethnic groups are more likely to be in poverty: 48% are now in poverty, compared with 25% of children in white British families. Structural racism results in Black children and young people being disproportionately affected by these disadvantages and that the impact of Covid-19 has been to worsen many existing problems and inequalities.
- That Islington has been taking steps in recent years to support and protect the wellbeing of children and young people, such as through the bold and ambitious Islington Together 2030 plan and its 5 missions, the 'Putting Children First' Education Plan 2030, and the Bright Start 2023-28 Strategy for all children in Islington to have the best start in life.
- That Islington council has listened to young people through the Fair Futures Commission and Let's Talk Islington.
- That Islington has a Youth Council and a Young Mayor and Deputy, with two members acting as Young People's Champions.

This Council resolves to:

- To apply to become a UNICEF Child Friendly Community, to put the rights of children and young people at the centre of decision-making; amplify the voices of children and young people; and support them to access more opportunities.
- To use this process to improve the conditions in which children and young people develop in Islington so that they are safer, healthier and happier. To do this by focusing on good quality housing, education, cultural and sporting activities, access to green space and play areas, and encouraging active travel.
- To demonstrate its commitment to its children through the budget process by examining how the budget impacts children and ensuring that children, and particularly disadvantaged children, get their fair share of resources.
- To give relevant council officers, such as social workers and housing officers, the opportunity to take UNICEF's training about putting children's rights into practice.
- To be open to working with local partners, such as the police and community organisations, to raise awareness of children's rights across the borough and put these into practice across the entire scope of services.
- To commit to working with partners to find sufficient investment to fund posts and activities to deliver these objectives.