

COUNCIL MEETING – 27 JUNE 2019

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

- a Councillor Clarke to Councillor O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development:

Congratulations to Cllr O'Halloran on becoming the Executive Member for Community Development. Islington has a proud record of supporting the voluntary sector with its grants programme when other boroughs have gone down the route of commissioning. Islington has also managed to sustain its many community centres throughout this period of massive government cuts to its budget.

The Voluntary sector and our community centres are both important assets in our community, can Cllr O'Halloran confirm that we as a council will continue our commitment to fund the Voluntary sector and our support of community centres?

- b Councillor Heather to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:

It is of great concern to me that since the year 2000, Land Registry data, as reported by the Islington Gazette, shows that 3,136 council houses bought under Right to Buy in Islington by former tenants have been re-sold at a collective profit of £861million. Tenants who purchased publicly funded and owned council homes made an average profit of £153,260 each. Forty-nine properties were bought from the local authority for less than £20,000 and later re-sold for a combined total of £11.7m.

This may be within the law, but it is wrong and immoral when we have over 14,000 households in Islington on the council's housing waiting list and the council has lost 70% of its funding from central government since 2010. And that is why the law on right to buy needs changing. To his credit, Cllr Diarmaid Ward, Islington Council's executive member for housing and development, is on the record as opposing the current right to buy laws as they "have hampered our council's ambitions to deliver council homes and genuinely affordable homes in the borough.

Given the critical nature of this issue for the council and its residents, can I ask if we can step-up our campaign to reform the wrongs of the right to buy laws?

- c Councillor Poyser to Councillor Hull, Executive Member for Finance, Performance & Community Safety:

Would councillor Hull like to support me in congratulating Islington Council, Haringey Council and TfL for co-operating in the construction of anti-suicide measures on Hornsey Lane Bridge this month?

- d Councillor Turan to Councillor Burgess, Executive Member for Health & Social Care:

I am very honoured to be the Mental Health Champion for our beautiful Islington and would like the opportunity to thank Cllr Janet Burgess for her hard work in helping to make Islington a fairer place.

According to the recent Islington CCG report, Islington has a higher prevalence of Serious Mental Illness (SMI) which is 1.5% compared to London (1.1%) and England (0.9%). Islington also has higher rates of hospital admission for mental ill health. It is anticipated that levels of mental ill-health might increase over the coming years due to a challenging economic environment, which I believe are significantly due to the politics of austerity by the government. What is Islington council doing to improve the determinants of mental health?

- e Councillor Russell to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:

Two years after the Grenfell Tower fire, are you confident that the council has resolved all outstanding issues of fire safety in council homes in the borough?

- f Councillor Russell to Councillor Una O'Halloran, Executive Member for Community Development:

Does this council recognise non binary identities in all its work?

- g Councillor Mackmurdie to Councillor Ward, Executive Member for Housing & Development:

How is insourcing of all possible housing services progressing? What options are being pursued to speed this up?