

COUNCIL MEETING – 27 FEBRUARY 2020

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

a **Councillor Gantly to Councillor Champion, Executive Member for Environment & Transport:**

Highbury East councillors are grateful to Cllr Champion for attending the recent Highbury East Ward Partnership, where Cllr Champion witnessed first hand the enormous enthusiasm for making Highbury East a low traffic neighbourhood. In view of this enthusiasm, and given the council has made budget provision for low traffic schemes, could Cllr Champion please share her plans for a low traffic neighbourhood in Highbury East?

b **Councillor Poyser to Councillor Watts, Leader of the Council:**

For how long will the European Flag fly from Islington Town Hall?

c **Councillor Turan to Councillor Diarmaid Ward, Executive Member for Housing and Development:**

Trees play a vital role in tackling the climate emergency and improving the air we breathe, as well as contributing to better mental health. We have just under 40,000 publically managed trees in Islington and the borough currently has a canopy cover of 25%, which is better than the London average of 21% and the UK urban average of 17%. I am incredibly proud of the canopy cover we currently have here and I'm glad we will be increasing this from 25% canopy cover in 2019 to 30% canopy cover by 2050 in alignment with the target of London to achieve 30% canopy cover, as part of the Council's commitment to clean up the air we breathe.

However, Islington also has a housing crisis and the only way to solve this crisis is to build more council homes. The Dixon Clark Court development in St Mary's will deliver 27 new council homes for local people. This scheme is a big step towards achieving our ambitious target of delivering 550 new council homes by 2022, as part of Islington's largest council house building programme in 30 years. Can Cllr Ward commit to ensuring that any lost trees at the Dixon Clark Court Site will be replaced nearby and see lead to a net gain of tree canopy cover across the borough.

d **Cllr Gill to Cllr Rowena Champion, Executive Member for Environment and Transport:**

Last year, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and committed to becoming a net zero carbon borough by 2030. Last week, I was delighted to see the Council publish its report on progress towards that goal so far, as well as the Council's capital investment proposals which will go some way to tackling the emergency we face. Toxic air pollution is a major worry for many of our residents and the work the Council is doing to improve air quality is welcome. The figures published recently that show air quality around our schools improving were encouraging and show the benefits of the School Streets scheme. I noted that one of the schools with higher levels of toxic air pollution was Yerbury Primary School in my St George's ward.

I was concerned recently to see the proposal put forward by Ocado for a delivery hub adjacent to the playground of Yerbury. All evidence shows that toxic air pollution is particularly harmful to the physical and mental development of children. Ocado's plans would mean hundreds of polluting vehicles driving along the boundary of the school every day, as well as the installation of a diesel tank and pumps to refuel the vehicles, increasing Islington's carbon emissions and harming air quality. In light of this, would you agree that the proposal put forward by Ocado, is irresponsible and flies in the face of everything the Council is trying to do to clean up our Borough's air quality.