



COUNCIL MEETING – 8 DECEMBER 2022

NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Gambling Act Review

Proposed by: Cllr Angelo Weekes

Seconded by: Cllr Joe Croft

This Council notes:

- The government has promised to deliver a Gambling Act Review white paper, which seeks to amend our gambling laws, so they are fit for a digital age.
- The Gambling Act review has been in motion since late 2020, however various delays by the Tories, the main being the changes in personnel, with five different ministers overseeing the legislation, has meant outdated and insufficient laws failing to protect vulnerable gamblers.
- The Tories also delayed reform to the £2 cap for bets placed on fixed-odds betting machines, which have been linked to crippling debt, marriage and family breakdown and serious mental health issues. Originally due to come into force in April 2019, it was delayed to October 2019; the extra 6 months of delay allowed bookmakers to collect £900m from gamblers.
- Since August 2020, 19 Conservative MPs have taken almost £225,000 in wages and freebies from the gambling industry, demonstrating the attempt by the industry to influence the outcome of the Gambling Act review to their own advantage.
- The House of Lords Gambling Industry Select Committee found 60% of the profits from online gambling are coming from the 5% of consumers experiencing harm, with around half of the more than £6 billion in online gambler losses attributable to slots.
- The significant harms associated with gambling, not least mental health issues arising from this health-harming addictive activity.
- The Public Health England evidence review of gambling-related harms in England found that gender and poor mental health were the strongest indicators of gambling related harm:
 - men were 4.2 times more likely than women to be gambling at levels of elevated risk of harm
 - people identified as having some mental health issues were twice as likely to participate in harmful gambling than people with no mental health issues
 - those who indicated they had a mental health condition were 2.4 times more likely to be a gambler experiencing gambling-related harms

To ensure the government's objectives are met, this Council formally support all of the following reforms:

- The introduction of limits to stakes, prizes and speed of play online, as already exist for the same content found on venue-based machines. Online slots should be capped at £2 a spin, in line with Fixed Odds Betting Terminals in betting shops and machines found in other easily accessible gambling venues.
- A standardised threshold at which enhanced affordability checks take place for all licensed online gambling operators. We support the Social Market Foundation's recommendation that these checks should take place when a person's losses exceed £100 within a month.
- The introduction of a statutory levy on gambling operators for research, education and treatment that should be administered through an independent public body. This levy should initially be set at 1% of gross revenue but should be increased in line with need, in accordance with the 'polluter pays' principle.
- An end to gambling advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. Children should not be exposed to gambling advertising at all, and given the degree of harm which arises from online gambling, the sector should not be promoted in its current form. The government should emulate gambling advertising restrictions in Italy and Spain on public health grounds.
- The creation of a dedicated Gambling Ombudsman which would ensure consumers who have been treated unfairly by gambling operators are able to access a means for redress.
- Reform to the statutory 'aim to permit' so the local authorities have the power to reject premise license applications in the event that the licensing objectives of fair and open gambling, preventing gambling crime, and preventing gambling harm are less likely to be delivered with additional outlets.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Minister overseeing the Gambling Act Review, Paul Scully MP, informing him of our priorities for reform as reflected above and to ask the government to consider gambling a public health issue.
- Commence a proposal under the Sustainable Communities Act to push for legislative reform that will empower local authorities to better regulate gambling.
- Implement the reviewed and revised Gambling Premises Licensing Policy 2023-2025 (pending adoption by this Council). This robust policy will ensure applicants and operators whose premises are used for gambling have taken stringent steps to prevent gambling being a source of crime and disorder and to protect people from gambling related harm.

Motion 2: Right to Food

Proposed by: Cllr Una O'Halloran

Seconded by: Cllr Ruth Hayes

This Council notes:

- That we are seeing a crisis of food poverty which has now reached a tipping point for so many in our communities.
- The current cost of living crisis has thrust hundreds of thousands of people into poverty, with many having to decide between heating their homes and eating a meal.
- The national and international context have only served to exacerbate the problems impacting some of our most disadvantaged communities more acutely.
- The figures are devastating for one of the richest nations in the world and highlight the inequality of the UK in 2022.
- The need for food banks already being at a record high. Food banks in the Trussell Trust network gave out 2.1 million emergency food parcels between April 2021 and March 2022, a 14% rise compared to the same period in 2019/20.
- Additionally, a record 2.5 million parcels were distributed nationally during the pandemic years of 2020/21.

This Council further notes:

- The high rates of deprivation across our borough, with Islington having very high rates of child poverty at 38% and 28% of residents overall facing income-deprivation. We recognise the devastating impact that a perfect storm of soaring energy, food, and petrol prices plus below-inflation rises in wages and benefits has on our residents.
- Islington's Trussell Trust Food Bank distributed 5,784 food parcels, including 1,804 for children between April 2021 and March 2022, and that this was an increase of 1,121 parcels compared to the year before.
- Foodbank usage is just one aspect of the food support provided by community groups, which residents require, and that the need for local food support is only going to increase as we become further entrenched in the cost of living crisis.
- There is a need for drastic local action to protect our residents from the damaging effects of food insecurity.
- Our Community Wealth Building Team have been supporting residents via the Resident support scheme, distributing over £1.9m in grants between 2021/22.
- Between April-September 2022, a further £2.2m of support was distributed to residents via the Household Support Fund to support residents at the sharp end of the cost of living crisis. This included support to free-school-meal households, and low income households with children, covering the May half-term and summer holiday period. Support with fuel, food, and clothing of over £6,000 was provided by the Council.
- All pregnant women, breastfeeding mums and children under four years can receive Healthy Start vitamins. Co-ordinated in the borough by Islington's

Public Health team, the universal provision of Healthy Start vitamins goes above and beyond the current government offer which is limited to women that are pregnant and children under the age of one. Additionally, families in receipt of income support and where the child is under one may receive an £8.50 voucher, with pregnant women eligible for £4.25 a week, and an additional £4.24 for each child aged under one year.

- Since 2011, Islington Council have provided universal free school meals for nursery and primary school children in all maintained schools, and this has been a very effective policy that provides support in vital early years.
- The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme provides free food packages and activities to free school meal eligible children, operating during the Easter, Summer, and Winter holidays. Last summer, HAF delivered over 20,000 meals for people in need, 37% of the free school meal population.
- The Islington Food Partnership provides residents with information about community food services along with opportunities for residents to 'influence local food strategy services' such as through their 'Community Conversations' events.
- Islington Council's environmental team have been working alongside Octopus Community Network to utilise unused areas and turn them into growing spaces to tackle food poverty. Examples of this can be seen in the Hollins and McCall Estate in Tufnell Park, and the Andover Garden Squares in Finsbury Park ward.
- That after 12 years of austerity by Central Government which has led Islington Council being forced to make £281 million of budget savings, it is becoming even more difficult for the Council to offer the support it needs.

This Council resolves to:

- Become a Right to Food borough and to support the Right to Food Campaign's five demands to Government urging that these be delivered nationally as a matter of urgency. These demands are:
 1. **Universal free school meals.** No child should go hungry and the Right to Food campaign is calling for free school meals for every child.
 2. **Government to state how much of minimum wages and benefits (on which people are expected to live) is for food.** The Right to Food Campaign wants Government to reveal how much money is factored in for food when setting minimum/living wages and benefits.
 3. **Independent enforcement of legislation.** Right To Food legislation must be accompanied by oversight and enforcement powers granted to a new independent regulatory body that will hold Government to account.
 4. **Community Kitchens.** The Right to Food Campaign believes Community Kitchens provide a workable solution to food poverty. Government should fund dining clubs and 'meals-on-wheels' services for older people and others who are not able to shop and/or cook meals, school holiday meals for those most in need and cookery clubs for the wider community.
 5. **Ensured food security.** Government must ensure food security and take this into account when setting competition, planning, transport, local

government, and all other policy.

- Stand alongside our communities in the face of the cost-of-living crisis, demonstrating leadership in tackling food insecurity and going further than the Right to Food Campaigns demands on a local level by committing to Islington's upcoming Food Strategy 2023-28 as pledged in the Islington Labour manifesto for the 2022 Local Elections.

Motion 3: Solidarity with striking workers

Proposer Cllr Benali Hamdache

Seconder Cllr Caroline Russell

This Council notes:

- The UK is facing a wave of industrial action in the wake of rising inflation, a cost-of-living crisis and paltry pay offers
- That the Royal College of Nurses has announced strikes for the 15th and 20th December
- The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers has announced strikes on 13th, 14th, 16th and 17th December and on 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th January
- Major education unions in England are balloting their members on possible strike action over pay
- Over 70,000 staff at 150 universities across the UK took three days of strike action over attacks on pay, working conditions and pensions
- That unions already only resort to strikes after negotiations are exhausted
- That under Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights, everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of their interests
- That the Conservative government has consistently failed to offer adequate pay offers to workers and has repeatedly undermined the right to strike

This Council further notes:

- Islington Council has committed to supporting trade unions and trade union membership, promoting the value of unionisation across the borough
- That all over the country, workers are winning pay disputes and improved wages through the power of collective action
- The Conservative government is trying to undermine the right to strike by allowing agency workers to become strike-breakers
- That decades of anti-union laws have given us the tightest regulations on strikes in the advanced industrial world

This Council resolves to:

- Continue promoting union membership to Islington's residents and to work collaboratively with the unions representing the Council's workers
- Support the attendance of Islington's two MPs at picket lines in solidarity with striking workers

- Write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy in opposition to anti-trade union laws, like the banning of online ballots and strikebreaking agency workers
- Write to the Secretary of State for Justice in opposition to the proposed British Bill of Rights, that threatens the right of workers to organise collective action

Motion 4: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Accommodation Needs

Proposer Cllr Jegorovas-Armstrong
 Seconder Cllr Caroline Russell

This Council notes:

- In January 2019 the London Borough of Islington commissioned consultants to undertake a Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment study (GTAA) for the period 2020-2035.
- Consultations with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller households took place between February and April 2019. Households spoke about wanting to stay in Islington or nearby, whether on a site or in housing.
- There are no residential caravan sites occupied by members of the settled community or Travelling Showpeople located within Islington.
- The consultation concluded that ten Gypsy, Roma and Traveller permanent accommodation pitches are required in the borough.
- Policy H14 of the London Plan requires boroughs to meet the identified need for permanent Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pitches and include ten-year pitch targets in their Local Plans.
- The provision for permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches is included in the latest Islington Local Plan (February 2020).
- The site search process has been initiated as part of the council's ongoing housebuilding programme.
- The London Plan highlights that around 85% of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families in London have been forced to live in housing, or on roadside encampments due to overcrowding, or an unsuitability, or lack of availability of, pitches.
- The lack of legal permanent sites makes accessing key services and facilities much harder.
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families must be granted the right to a decent home that meets their needs, which for them entails sites to accommodate caravans.
- For many Gypsies, Roma and Travellers, living in a caravan is an essential part of their ethnic identity. Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are covered by the protected characteristic of race under the Equality Act 2010.

This Council further notes:

- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people have the worst outcomes of any ethnic group across a huge range of areas including access to suitable accommodation, healthcare, education, employment, financial services, policing, justice and probation.
- National and local policymakers have not provided for the services to support the needs of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people.

- A study carried out by The Traveller Movement (2017) found that 91% of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people had experienced discrimination because of their ethnicity and 77% had been victims of hate speech or a hate crime.
- The most common forms of hate speech and crime experienced include exclusion and discrimination from and within services, e.g., health, education (experienced by 94%), reinforcement of negative stereotypes (89%), social media abuse (87%) and media incitement to racial hatred (82%).
- Hate incidents begin early in life, with school children reporting feeling that they must hide that they are Gypsy, Roma or Traveller.
- Islington Council marks Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month during the month of June.

This Council resolves to:

- Continue to mark Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month every year to raise awareness of the prejudice faced by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.
- Use this month to amplify the voices of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community and raise awareness amongst Islington's residents about their unique history, culture and heritage.
- Share resources from, and promote the campaigns of, groups such as the Friends, Families and Travellers organisation, London Gypsies and Travellers, and The Traveller Movement.
- Address the inequalities that the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community face.
- Ensure that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers experience an inclusive, fair and understanding community in Islington.
- Actively nurture harmonious relations between the settled community and the residents of any future Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site in Islington.
- Provide sustainable, green and biodiverse sites with facilities that are well insulated, well ventilated and affordable to heat in winter.
- Provide effective site management for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites in the borough.
- Provide training to key staff in Islington schools around successful practice working with families from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds, including raising awareness around the culture and history of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.
- Encourage and support Islington schools in signing The Gypsy, Traveller, Roma, Showmen and Boaters' Pledge for Schools.
- Improve data collection around the experiences of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, in order to improve their outcomes across key social and economic indicators.