

COUNCIL MEETING – 11 July 2024

NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: A New Deal for Workers

Proposed by: Cllr Gary Heather

Seconded by: Cllr Sara Hyde

This council notes:

- The pandemic, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis has brought into sharp focus workplace power imbalances, and the impact of stagnant wages for over a decade as well as increasing job insecurity.
- Migrant workers are vital contributors to our society economically, socially and culturally and are as deserving of protection as any other worker, especially with rising in-work poverty and financial insecurity.
- Against the backdrop of the Conservative Government's hostile environment, government policy has seen domestic workers stripped of their labour rights, immigration enforcement prioritized, and the protections of this workforce placed within a trafficking network.
- Visa changes introduced in 2012 under David Cameron's administration formed part of the government's objective to reduce net migration by reducing the rights of migrants on various visa pathways, prohibiting workers from changing employers and no longer permitting workers to renew their visas.
- Migrant care workers are negatively impacted by low pay and casualisation, and changes to immigration rules preventing carers from bringing dependents puts these workers at higher risk of exploitation due to isolation and increased financial pressure.
- One in six households in the UK live in relative poverty, with high inflation causing a significant impact with rising food and fuel costs.
- Restrictive anti-trade union laws, most recently the Trade Union Act and the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act, have made it harder for unions to organise and stand up for their members. These restrictions mean workers are denied their fair share of the wealth they create, whilst a lack of collective representation has led to a race to the bottom.
- The right of unions to operate effectively in the workplace, in each sector of the economy, is vital for achieving fairness, dignity and democracy at work for all.

- Labour's New Deal for Working People, launched by Angela Rayner at Labour Conference 2021 and drawn up in partnership with Labour's affiliated unions, is a comprehensive plan to improve the lives of working people by strengthening individual and collective rights - repealing anti-trade union laws, including the Trade Union Act, and introducing new rights to help unions bargain, recruit, organise and win a better deal for their members.
- It includes commitments to establish a single enforcement body to enforce workers' rights, and take action against exploitation, including discriminatory practices against migrant workers.
- Labour's New Deal for Working people also commits to end fire and rehire; make work more flexible and family friendly; ban zero-hours contracts; strengthen trade union rights, raising pay and conditions and bring in Fair Pay agreements.
- The Labour Party has pledged to scrap the Trade Union Act within its first 100 days of government.

This Council further notes:

- The Labour Party's clear opposition to the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act, and the Leadership's promise to repeal it.
- Working people need better rights, stronger unions and a Labour Government to win the new deal at work they deserve.
- Previous motions passed in June 2022, July 2021, and July 2018 which placed emphasis on Islington as a welcoming borough for all residents, regardless of background and calling for us to become a Borough of Sanctuary. Subsequently, these motions have led to numerous letters being sent to government ministers to oppose the government's hostile policy towards migrant communities.
- In February, Islington Council gained Borough of Sanctuary status, recognising our long, proud history of welcoming people in need and our commitment to stand up for people's right to seek fulfilling lives for themselves and their families.
- In March, the council's new homecare contracts further implemented Unison's Ethical Care Charter to improve workers' pay and conditions in our borough, including 67% of providers committing to pay Occupational Sick Pay
- The motion proposed by Cllr Phil Graham opposing the Conservative government's Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill, which came into force in July last year.
- The letter sent by Cllr Bell-Bradford to then Minister for Enterprise, Markets and Small Business Kevin Hollinrake, outlining our opposition to the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Act and calling on the government to revoke the legislation.
- Islington Council's 'Join a Union' campaign in 2020 where the council became the first local authority to join forces with the TUC to promote a safe return to work by joining a union as the UK emerged from lockdown.

- Islington Council has committed to supporting trade unions and trade union membership, promoting the value of unionisation across the borough.
- The motion proposed by Cllr Ozdemir at Council in June 2022 which resolved to: “Support the RMT union and all other trade unions taking action this year to protect workers’ pensions and conditions, oppose job cuts and call for a proper pay rise”
- The incoming government should articulate a broad and positive vision to transform the world of work and must place this at the heart of its core narrative.

This Council resolves to:

- Welcome and support the Labour Party’s Green Paper on Employment Rights, and the party’s pledge to enshrine it in law within the first 100 days of the next Labour government.
 - Write to the newly elected government to amend the immigration rules for domestic migrant workers and reinstate the rights provided under the pre-2012 visa regime.
 - Call on the newly elected government to make issues around work, jobs, pay and rights for domestic migrant workers a core part of their narrative and vision.
 - Continue to work collaboratively with our Trade Unions who represent our Council workers and encourage union membership to Islington residents.
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Motion 2 – Unlocking the potential of local high streets.

Proposed by: Cllr Valerie Bossman-Quarshie

Seconded by: Cllr Martin Klute

This Council notes:

- Healthy and thriving high streets are essential for employment, shopping, and leisure but many shops and businesses were struggling even before the Covid pandemic: high street retail employment fell in more than three-quarters of local authorities between 2015 and 2018 according to the Office of National Statistics.
- The coronavirus pandemic accelerated what in many cases has been a longer trend of lower footfall and changing shopping habits: as the Portas Review a decade ago acknowledged, the form and function of many high streets needs to adapt if they are to survive.
- The Treasury Select Committee stated in 2019, the current system of Business Rates places an unfair burden on “bricks and mortar” businesses compared to online retailers, and the Business Rate system needs radical overhaul.
- There are 3,710 fewer fruit and veg shops butchers, and newsagents than there were in 2010.
- Since the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been an increase in the number of vacant units.

- The importance of Islington's nighttime economy, with a third of all spend in the borough happening at night.
- Across the United Kingdom, shoplifting is up by more than 30% in a single year, and there are persistent high levels of antisocial behaviour (ASB), with a third of the public witnessing or experiencing it in their local area in the last 12 months.
- Central Government has provided some much-needed support to tackle anti-social behaviour through the Safer Streets Fund, and that it is essential that the evaluation of these approaches to tackle ASB and public safety, is published as soon as possible.
- UK wide research has found that most people (48%) say they are most likely to encounter ASB in their town centre and that 29% say they are most likely to encounter anti-social behaviour around their local shops.

This Council further notes:

- Islington's high streets and town centres are the lifeblood of our communities and provide goods and services to residents and act as essential hubs for our diverse communities.
- Small businesses make up 98% of businesses in Islington and form an inherent part of Islington's character. The importance to the local economy means that they play an essential role in building inclusion and spreading wealth more evenly.
- Islington Council have brokered 400+ meaningful interventions that generate inclusive economy and/or social value outcomes.
- That due to the work of Islington, we have supported over 300 local businesses to become accredited by the London Living Wage Foundation.
- The success of the Safe Havens scheme, where businesses provide a safe space to anyone feeling threatened, and patrols from Park Guard and drug and alcohol outreach.
- The council were awarded funding from City University to create a Business Crime Reduction Partnership in Archway to tackle the issues affecting businesses, residents and commuters, mirroring some of the Business Improvement District work in Angel.
- Islington Council will be awarded funding for drugs service as part of the Government's long-term drugs strategy, 'From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives'. Islington's first year funding allocation is £850k and is expected to rise to £1.4m in year two and then £2.7m in year three, subject to confirmation each year.
- Tackling antisocial behaviour can't effectively be done with a one size fits all approach and notes the importance of the valuable work of tackling the root cause but also using enforcement tools where absolutely necessary.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Government to urge it to scrap business rates and replace them with a system which is fit for purpose and which levels the playing field between bricks and mortar businesses and online retail giants.
- Campaign to devolve funds like the Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund and other national funding pots, to give local

communities, councils and regions the ultimate say in how it is spent in their area.

- Explore what further local action can be taken to revive our high streets.
 - Make full use of s215 planning enforcement powers where empty units are attracting antisocial behaviour or creating an eyesore on the high street – and name and shame those premises which don't do their bit and are regularly subject to enforcement.
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Motion 3 – No to Live Facial Recognition in Islington

Proposed by: Cllr Jenny Kay

Seconded by: Cllr Jason Jackson

This Council notes:

- The use of Live Facial Recognition (LFR) surveillance has attracted worldwide condemnation for its intrusive nature, unreliability, and its potential to exacerbate racist outcomes in policing.
- The Metropolitan Police have been using LFR in public for years without any public or parliamentary debate.
- Facial recognition technology is not referenced in any legislation and has never been debated by Members of Parliament. The only parliamentary committee to analyse this technology in detail, the Science and Technology Committee in 2019, called for a stop to its use.
- Surveillance technology will always be used disproportionately against Black, Asian and ethnically minoritised communities and that the Metropolitan Police have often used LFR in ethnically diverse areas such as Notting Hill Carnival.
- That over 3000 people have been wrongly identified by LFR and that research has shown that LFR technology has an error rate of up to 35% when identifying Black women.
- The continued use of this form of surveillance risks creating tension between the police and the public, particularly in light of the Casey Report, as well as undermining the privacy and human rights of Islington's residents.
- The Metropolitan Police have twice deployed LFR in Islington (April and September 2023)

This Council further notes:

- Islington Council does not support the use of LFR technology anywhere in the borough.
- The Council Executive has raised objections to LFR at Full Council and has written to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, the Borough Commander and Superintendent outlining concerns over the deployment of LFR in Islington, its impact on residents, and the Council's objection to LFR.
- In March 2024, Lindsey Chiswick, the Met's Director of Intelligence, and Jamie Townsend, the Operational Lead for LFR at the Met, held an in-person session with Islington Councillors to discuss how the Met uses LFR.
- Since the publication 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. We are concerned that the Metropolitan Police's deployment of LFR threatens to damage this vital work in Islington.

This Council resolves to:

- Call for an immediate stop to the use of LFR surveillance in Islington.
 - Take no steps to acquire LFR technology anywhere in Islington.
 - Not allow LFR systems to be applied to any personal data for which Islington Council is the data controller.
 - To ask the Executive Member for Community Safety to write to the Mayor of London to ask that the Metropolitan Police, Transport for London and the other agencies he is responsible for to refrain from using LFR technology within Islington.
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Motion 4 – Retrofit over demolitions

Proposed by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

Seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

This Council notes:

- Construction is responsible for 25% of the UK's carbon emissions.
- That the needless demolition of usable buildings is bad for the planet.
- The Climate Change Committee has expressed concerns that the UK is not on course to meet legally binding targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.
- Whole Life Carbon assessments are a standard for calculating the greenhouse gases emitted throughout a building's lifecycle, from the raw materials used in construction, through to the electricity used to run the building, right up until the demolition and end of life treatment of the building's materials.
- The London Plan sets out a benchmark target and an aspirational target for Whole Life Carbon Assessments of new buildings.
- Islington Council set a target of being a net zero borough by 2030.

The Council further notes:

- The London Assembly's Retrofit vs Rebuild report, which made a series of recommendations in light of concerns over too many buildings in London being demolished wholesale:
 - The report recommends that the London Plan's benchmark and aspirational targets should be strengthened to match global targets.
 - It also recommends third party independent audit of Whole Life Carbon Assessments to avoid some of the controversies that have arisen over divergent standards and measures.
- The council has received a number of planning proposals where the Whole Life Carbon meets the benchmark standards, but not the aspirational target.
- Westminster, Camden and City of London Councils have all adopted an official retrofit first policy
- The government has failed to introduce national policy on Whole Life Carbon assessment standards and processes.

- That developers have said retrofitting faces financial hurdles, and that reduction of VAT rates would help.

The Council resolves to:

- Back a retrofit first approach in planning policy
 - Lobby the Mayor of London for stronger benchmarks on Whole Life Carbon in the London Plan
 - Lobby the Mayor and government for third party audits of Whole Life Carbon Assessments to be mandatory
 - To roll out carbon literacy training for relevant staff and councillors
 - To lobby the government for national standards on whole life carbon and a removal of VAT for the retrofit of buildings.
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Motion 5 – Addressing the housing crisis

Proposed by: Cllr Caroline Russell

Seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

This Council notes:

- Private rents in Islington rose to an average of £2,488 in May 2024, an annual
- increase of 15.0% from £2,163 in May 2023.
- The average rents rose in London (10.1%) over the same time period.
- According to Trust for London the median rent in Islington is 58% of the median pay.
- The Office for National Statistics says 2,006,690 social housing dwellings across the UK have been lost through Right to Buy schemes from April 1980 to March 2022.
- 41% of all council homes sold under the right to buy scheme are now being let on the private market, according to research by the New Economics Foundation.
- Over 15,000 people are on the council waiting list for a council home.
- That according to the latest government data, there were 11,880 no-fault eviction claims in London in the year to the end of March 2024, up 52% from 7,834 in the year to March 2023.
- Building new homes has become harder and harder, with rising interest costs and inflation.

The Council further notes:

- In the Mayor of London elections Sadiq Khan very clearly supported rent controls and the right to suspend Right to Buy for London.
- In the last year senior ministers in the new Labour government have dropped support for rent controls and scrapping Right to Buy.
- That Islington Council is buying back former council homes, after Green Assembly Members successfully lobbied the Mayor to provide £152 million in funding to London boroughs.

- That Islington is right at the heart of the housing crisis, with runaway rents, soaring house prices and finite space for new homes.
- Michael Gove's renters reform bill did not pass in the last government, and if it had it would have not addressed this crisis.
- That the Council has had to cancel a number of new build plans in face of the funding crisis.

The Council resolves to:

- To call on the new Labour government to give powers to the Mayor of London to work with councils, renters and landlords on a rent commission to address escalating rents and to work up a plan for rent controls in London.
 - To lobby the new government to be granted the powers to scrap or suspend Right to Buy.
 - To call for a new renters reform bill that scraps no fault evictions and gives tenants more rights in their homes.
 - To lobby the government for a new funding formula for new homes, that enables the council to build as close to 100% genuinely affordable homes as possible.
 - To call on the new Minister in the Ministry of Justice to lease or sell the 28 empty homes beside Pentonville Prison to Islington Council
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