

COUNCIL MEETING – 11 JULY 2024

AMENDMENTS AND ALTERATIONS TO MOTIONS

Alteration to 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 antisocial 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.
- [There are very few vacant shops in Islington, which is assisting our Labour-run Council in justifying the need for our Article 4 Directions. As a Council, we can protect most shops in the borough on the basis that they are occupied and active and provide essential services to our local residents.](#)

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.
- [Note that the council is planning to adopt a comprehensive package of Article 4 Directions to protect local shops and small businesses across the borough.](#)
- [Write to the Government to set out our case for Article 4 Directions in Islington and set out our broader concerns about Class MA rights and ask for them to be abolished.](#)
- 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.
- ~~Acknowledge that Islington Council is intending to notify impacted landowners of its intention to adopt Article 4 Directions at the end of the month and will be notifying the new Secretary of State.~~

The altered motion would read as follows:

Alteration to 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.
- 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.
- 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 antisocial 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.
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- 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.
- There are very few vacant shops in Islington, which is assisting our Labour-run Council in justifying the need for our Article 4 Directions. As a Council, we can protect most shops in the borough on the basis that they are occupied and active and provide essential services to our local residents.

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.
- Note that the council is planning to adopt a comprehensive package of Article 4 Directions to protect local shops and small businesses across the borough.
- Write to the Government to set out our case for Article 4 Directions in Islington and set out our broader concerns about Class MA rights and ask for them to be abolished.
- 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.

Proposed Amendment to Motion 4 – Retrofit over demolitions

Motion proposed by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

Motion seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstong

Amendment moved by: Cllr Champion

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.~~ With the impact of climate change, such as hotter summers, councils such as ours need to look at opportunities for passive cooling through building design, as well as retrofit measures such as shading or shutters.
- 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.
- Islington Council are delivering a pioneering retrofit scheme to update the heating and water supply of Bevin Court, a grade 2 listed building. The retrofit scheme will see gas boilers replaced with environmentally friendly air source heat pumps (ASHP).

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 failed to introduce national policy on Whole Life Carbon assessment standards and processes.~~

- The council requires developers to comply with a Whole Life-cycle Carbon approach as set out in Policy S4 and a Circular Economy approach as set out in Policy S10 of the new Local Plan. Developers are also required to comply with Policy SI 1 and 2 of the London Plan and the GLA guidance on Whole Life-cycle Carbon Assessments and Circular Economy.
- The council intends to further clarify its whole life-cycle carbon policies in the forthcoming Climate Action and Net Zero Carbon SPD. Public consultation on the draft SPD will take place later this year.
- The challenges of enforcing a retro-fit first approach in a densely developed borough like Islington. Islington has a scarcity of land for development and often needs to maximise site capacity and bring forward higher density development to deliver new genuinely affordable homes and create an inclusive economy
- The Mayor of London's London Plan requires the largest developments in London to show how they have calculated and minimised carbon emissions from construction and the use of a building over its lifetime, including its demolition and disposal.
- The Mayor has also introduced a new requirement for developers to set out how they will support reductions in waste and carbon emissions by adopting greener practices, such as re-using and refurbishing existing materials and structures.
- That developers have said retrofitting faces financial hurdles, and that reduction of VAT rates would help.

The Council resolves to:

- Continue to require developers to undertake a retrofit first approach as set out in our planning policies and the London Plan.
- ~~Back a retrofit first approach in planning policy~~
- ~~Lobby the~~ Work with the Mayor of London for stronger benchmarks on Whole Life Carbon in the London Plan
- ~~Lobby~~ Work with the Mayor and government for third party audits of Whole Life Carbon Assessments to be mandatory
- ~~To roll out~~ Continue the council's carbon literacy training for relevant staff and councillors
- ~~To lobby the~~ Work with the government for national standards on whole life carbon and a removal of VAT for the retrofit of buildings.

The amended motion would read as follows:

Amended Motion 4 – Retrofit over demolitions

Motion proposed by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

Motion seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstong

Amendment moved by: Cllr Champion

This Council notes:

- Construction is responsible for 25% of the UK's carbon emissions.
- With the impact of climate change, such as hotter summers, councils such as ours need to look at opportunities for passive cooling through building design, as well as retrofit measures such as shading or shutters.
- 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.
- Islington Council are delivering a pioneering retrofit scheme to update the heating and water supply of Bevin Court, a grade 2 listed building. The retrofit scheme will see gas boilers replaced with environmentally friendly air source heat pumps (ASHP).

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.
- The council requires developers to comply with a Whole Life-cycle Carbon approach as set out in Policy S4 and a Circular Economy approach as set out in Policy S10 of the new Local Plan. Developers are also required to comply

with Policy SI 1 and 2 of the London Plan and the GLA guidance on Whole Life-cycle Carbon Assessments and Circular Economy.

- The council intends to further clarify its whole life-cycle carbon policies in the forthcoming Climate Action and Net Zero Carbon SPD. Public consultation on the draft SPD will take place later this year.
- The challenges of enforcing a retro-fit first approach in a densely developed borough like Islington. Islington has a scarcity of land for development and often needs to maximise site capacity and bring forward higher density development to deliver new genuinely affordable homes and create an inclusive economy
- The Mayor of London's London Plan requires the largest developments in London to show how they have calculated and minimised carbon emissions from construction and the use of a building over its lifetime, including its demolition and disposal.
- The Mayor has also introduced a new requirement for developers to set out how they will support reductions in waste and carbon emissions by adopting greener practices, such as re-using and refurbishing existing materials and structures.
- That developers have said retrofitting faces financial hurdles, and that reduction of VAT rates would help.

The Council resolves to:

- Continue to require developers to undertake a retrofit first approach as set out in our planning policies and the London Plan.
- Work with the Mayor of London for stronger benchmarks on Whole Life Carbon in the London Plan
- Work with the Mayor and government for third party audits of Whole Life Carbon Assessments to be mandatory
- Continue the council's carbon literacy training for relevant staff and councillors
- Work with the government for national standards on whole life carbon and a removal of VAT for the retrofit of buildings.

Proposed Amendment to Motion 5 – Addressing the housing crisis

Proposed by: Cllr Caroline Russell

Seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

Amendment moved by: Cllr Ward

Amendment also supported by: Cllr O'Halloran and Cllr Hayes

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 interest costs and inflation.~~ Due to the economic mismanagement of the previous Tory government resulting in rising interest rates and inflation, Islington Council has had to make the hard decision of refocusing our new build programme on the most deliverable projects.
- In Rachel Reeves first speech as Chancellor, she promised her government would:
 - ⊖ Restore mandatory housebuilding targets,
 - ⊖ Build 1.5m homes by the end of this parliament, including affordable and council homes
 - ⊖ Create a new taskforce to accelerate stalled housing sites
 - ⊖ Review planning applications previously turned down that could help the economy
 - ⊖ Reform the planning system to deliver infrastructure that our country needs

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.
- The Mayor has secured £4bn under the last Government to deliver affordable homes in London under the new Homes for Londoners: Affordable Homes

Programme 2021-2026. The Mayor of London has also pledged to complete 40,000 new homes by 2030.

- ~~In the last year senior ministers in the new Labour government have dropped support for rent controls and scrapping Right to Buy.~~ The new Labour government has pledged to prioritise the building of new social rented homes and better protect existing stock by reviewing the increased right to buy discounts introduced in 2012 and increasing protections on newly built social housing.
- ~~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.~~ Islington Council secured £82m from the then named Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to expand our buy-backs scheme with an additional 310 much needed ex-council homes, making it one of the largest in the country.
- That Islington is right at the heart of the housing crisis, with runaway rents, soaring house prices and finite space for new homes.
- Islington Council, and Islington South MP, Emily Thornberry, have tirelessly lobbied the previous Tory government to turn the vacant flats on Wellington Mews into desperately needed 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.~~
- Islington's Labour-run council is continuing to work towards our target of 750 new council homes by 2027 including Finsbury Leisure Centre as well as delivering social rent homes on the Holloway Prison site and the Barnsbury Estate.

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~~ Grant the Mayor of London the powers to scrap or suspend Right to Buy
 - ~~To call for a new renters~~ Initiate a new renters reform bill that scraps no fault evictions and gives tenants more rights in their homes.
 - ~~To lobby the government for~~ Create 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~~ Get the 28 empty 3 and 4 bedroom homes at Wellington Mews back into use as genuinely affordable homes for local families.

The amended motion would read as follows:

Amended Motion 5 – Addressing the housing crisis

Proposed by: Cllr Caroline Russell

Seconded by: Cllr Ernestas Jegorovas-Armstrong

Amendment moved by: Cllr Ward

Amendment also supported by: Cllr O'Halloran and Cllr Hayes

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- 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.
- Due to the economic mismanagement of the previous Tory government resulting in rising interest rates and inflation, Islington Council has had to make the hard decision of refocusing our new build programme on the most deliverable projects.
- In Rachel Reeves first speech as Chancellor, she promised her government would:
 - ⊖ Restore mandatory housebuilding targets,
 - ⊖ Build 1.5m homes by the end of this parliament, including affordable and council homes
 - ⊖ Create a new taskforce to accelerate stalled housing sites
 - ⊖ Review planning applications previously turned down that could help the economy
 - ⊖ Reform the planning system to deliver infrastructure that our country needs

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.
- The Mayor has secured £4bn under the last Government to deliver affordable homes in London under the new Homes for Londoners: Affordable Homes

Programme 2021-2026. The Mayor of London has also pledged to complete 40,000 new homes by 2030.

- The new Labour government has pledged to prioritise the building of new social rented homes and better protect existing stock by reviewing the increased right to buy discounts introduced in 2012 and increasing protections on newly built social housing.
- Islington Council secured £82m from the then named Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to expand our buy-backs scheme with an additional 310 much needed ex-council homes, making it one of the largest in the country.
- That Islington is right at the heart of the housing crisis, with runaway rents, soaring house prices and finite space for new homes.
- Islington Council, and Islington South MP, Emily Thornberry, have tirelessly lobbied the previous Tory government to turn the vacant flats on Wellington Mews into desperately needed homes.
- Islington's Labour-run council is continuing to work towards our target of 750 new council homes by 2027 including Finsbury Leisure Centre as well as delivering social rent homes on the Holloway Prison site and the Barnsbury Estate.

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 - Grant the Mayor of London the powers to scrap or suspend Right to Buy
 - Initiate a new renters reform bill that scraps no fault evictions and gives tenants more rights in their homes.
 - Create a new funding formula for new homes
 - Get the 28 empty 3 and 4 bedroom homes at Wellington Mews back into use as genuinely affordable homes for local families.