

COUNCIL MEETING – 12 December 2024

NOTICES OF MOTION

Motion 1: Winter Fuel Allowance

Proposed by: Cllr Matt Nathan

Seconded by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

This council notes:

- With deep concern the removal of automatic Winter Fuel Payments for those not on mean-tested benefits. Millions of Pensioners, including many in Islington, who should be on, or just miss out on qualifying, means-tested benefits are at risk as a result of this measure.
- That it is predicted that energy prices are set to rise and the change of policy could affect the health of two million pensioners (source: Age UK).
- According to Caroline Abrahams CBE, Charity Director at Age UK: "We strongly oppose the means-testing of Winter Fuel Payment (WFP) because our initial estimate is that as many as two million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it and will be in trouble as a result – yet at the other end of the spectrum well-off older people will scarcely notice the difference – a social injustice."
- The reason given by this Labour government for removing automatic Winter Fuel Payments is a £22bn funding black hole, but HMRC has admitted it is unable to recover £19bn unpaid tax.
- The State of Equalities in Islington 2023 report, states that 34% of Islington's 60+ population are living in income deprived households. This is the 4th highest proportion of people over 60 living in income deprived households relative to all other London Boroughs and the 5th highest nationally.

This Council further notes:

- That through the SHINE programme it has been endeavouring to reduce fuel poverty and help people stay warm and healthy. However, as the State of Equalities in Islington 2023 report states, "we know there is more we [the council] can do to support this highly valued group."
- The Labour government's targeting of pensioners as unfair and unnecessary and strongly opposes the continuation of austerity.

This Council resolves to:

- Request the Council Leader to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating Islington's strong belief that automatic Winter Fuel Payments should be reinstated.

- Ask the Council Leader to write to all Islington MPs, asking them to commit their public support to the reinstatement of the payments.
 - Work to promote the take up of Pension Credit to Islington residents ahead of the 21st December deadline.
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Motion 2 – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Proposed by: Cllr Benali Hamdache

Seconded by: Cllr Caroline Russell

This Council notes:

- In June 2019, Islington Council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards a target of net zero carbon by 2030.
- For 2022/2023 the average Islington household produced 350.1kg of waste every year, of which 27.7% is recycled, the lowest rate for fifteen years.
- Two thirds of all the carbon emissions relating to Islington residents and businesses, 1.4m tonnes, are related to the manufacture, transport, consumption and disposal of consumer goods outside Islington.
- Islington Council has a target of recycling 40 per cent of the household waste it collects and 75% of the commercial waste by 2030.
- Research from the LGA and YouGov found that 71 per cent of people believe supermarkets and retailers use too much packaging and that 85 per cent of people think companies should be required by Government to reduce the amount of packaging used.

This Council Further Notes:

- The Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) will see manufacturers charged a levy for the cost of recovering packaging material from 2026, with a goal to reduce unnecessary packaging.
- That Mary Creagh, the new Environment Secretary, announced that the delivery of the EPR system will now be “co-produced” by producers and manufacturers.
- Over half of London boroughs have moved to ending weekly non-recyclable waste collections, with Lambeth recently approving fortnightly collections to meet net zero targets.
- The 15 London boroughs that have implemented fortnightly collections to meet targets set in the Mayor of London’s environment strategy — which all London councils are signed up to — saw increases in their recycling rates.
- Research and trials by WRAP have found that weekly separate food waste collections alongside fortnightly residual collections have been shown to collect more food waste than those aligned to weekly residual collections.
- That the Council introduced a scheme for charging for garden waste, for £75 a year.

This Council resolves to:

- Scope a trial for fortnightly collection of non-recyclable residual waste in selected neighbourhoods to measure impact on recycling and savings made.
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- Work with the Local Government Association and request our new government to defend and strengthen the Packaging Extended Producer Responsibility.
 - Publish a review on the impact of charging for green waste, including green collection rates and unintended consequences like dumping and burning.
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Motion 3 – Homes for all: Ending homelessness and rough sleeping

Proposed by: Cllr Shreya Nanda

Seconded by: Cllr James Potts

This Council notes:

- In England, 358,370 households were assessed for homelessness, a 10.4% increase from the previous year.
- The number of people sleeping rough in London more than tripled between 2008/09 and 2020/21 from around 3,472 to 11,018.
- In 2021/22, the number of people sleeping rough fall back somewhat to 8,329 but it has increased again reaching 11,993 in 2023/24.
- The number of people seen sleeping rough in London increased in both 2019/20 and 2020/21, despite initiatives like “Everybody In” which aimed to ensure that people sleeping rough were adequately sheltered during the pandemic.
- Data from Trust for London shows that in 2023/24, 409 people were sleeping rough here in Islington. This is an increase from the 337 people rough sleepers identified in the previous year.
- The Women’s Rough Sleeping Census takes place each year to build evidence of the scale of need, understand experiences and identify what will be effective for women. Following the third annual women’s rough sleeping census across London in 2024, the census heard from almost 1000 women revealing how, when and where they rough sleep. Data collected confirms that
 - Women often sleep rough in ways that are not seen or validated by current methods
 - The number of women sleeping rough in London is significantly higher than previously evidenced
- The Mayor of London announced £4.8m for a new initiative called ‘Homes off the Streets’ which will provide 3,500 supported move-on homes for former rough sleepers. This expands on the ‘Clearing House’ programme with funding coming from the mayor’s £36.3m rough-sleeping budget.
- The Mayor is currently writing a new Rough Sleeping Plan of Action, and Solace, in partnership with Single Homeless Project, have released a report outlining 5 steps for change to contribute to the new plan of action. The proposed steps include rough sleeping responsiveness, improving data collection, ensuring equity and safety, integrating services, and focusing on prevention and intervention.
- 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 Autumn Budget confirmed £233 million in additional resource funding, taking the total homelessness spending to £1 billion in 2025-26. This funding will help to prevent rises in the number of families in temporary accommodation and help to prevent rough sleeping.
- There are currently 1,677 homeless households in Islington, being supported in temporary accommodation. These households account for 2,133 adults and 1,470 children living in temporary accommodation.
- In the last 12 months, Islington Council has purchased 327 Ex Right to Buy properties to be used as temporary accommodation.
- 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.

This Council Further Notes:

- The housing crisis we are witnessing is a result of significant pressures to the Council's housing market, including homelessness rates and housing costs.
- Over 16,500 households are on the waiting list for a council home.
- The long-term supply challenges coupled with ageing stock, has been compounded by a dramatic reduction in social housing numbers in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. This has placed those who need the most support under real and increasing pressure.
- In response to the emerging housing crisis, Islington Council produced a new homelessness prevention and rough sleeping strategy, developed in partnership with local stakeholders and residents.
- The council is currently reviewing all current housing policies and strategies to maximise the availability of housing across Islington
- Our new Homelessness Charter which outlines guiding principles concerning the rights of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Our new Private Sector Rented Charter sets our commitment to stand alongside private renters and work with private landlords to maintain and improve standards.
- In September, Islington Council obtained the Stonewall Housing Accreditation for our LGBTQ+ work for homeless households – one of only 14 housing organisations to obtain this accreditation.
- Through our prevention approach, over 700 homeless households have been prevented from becoming homeless in the last 12 months, one of the highest numbers of homeless preventions in England.
- The homeless outreach services operating in partnership with community groups and partners to provide proactive outreach and somewhere safe to go for rough sleepers
- Islington council received the largest capital and revenue grant allocations to end homelessness in England, allowing us to maximise available funding to the council and partners to reduce homelessness.

This Council resolves to:

- Declare a Housing Emergency; with 300,000 Londoners on housing waiting lists – demonstrating the true emergency nature of this issue: people are ending up in situations that are dangerous to their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing as a result of 14 years of Conservative failure.
- Ensure all relevant and appropriate partners are included and supported in resolving the housing emergency
- Promote a systems thinking culture across all providers and stakeholders involved in tackling and preventing homelessness
- Work with the government to eliminate rough sleeping and end homelessness.
- Lobby the government to provide additional funding to buy more ex right to buy properties to help address the local housing crisis.
- Seek to place homeless people into secure self-contained accommodation within 90 minutes travel time to Islington and refrain from using poor quality B&Bs.
- Reduce the use of unsuitable accommodation for homeless households and ensure that homeless households are not living in expensive and inappropriate hotels or bed and breakfast accommodation
- Continue the delivery of the Housing First model across Islington
- Work with partners to map the homeless support available across Islington to remove duplication and improve access to housing services
- Work with the Islington Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping forum and work with third sector partners to reduce the number of homeless households across Islington
- Identify a dedicated resource to work across housing and children and justice services to prevent homelessness, ensuring the principles of 'Tell Us Once Promise' are incorporated into the emergency response
- Improve data analysis and insight across homelessness and housing services

Motion 4 – A disability friendly Islington.

Proposed by: Cllr Nurullah Turan

Seconded by: Cllr Saiqa Pandor

This Council notes:

- Ensuring the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities – both visible and invisible – is a fundamental responsibility of society.
- Islington is a borough that stands for equality, for all protected characteristics and beyond.
- The National Disability Strategy (2021) aims to improve accessibility across the country focusing on transport, housing, employment and health services.
- The Access to Work Scheme and funding for specialist equipment are vital in helping individuals with disabilities enter and stay in work.
- The Equality Act 2010 protects disabled people from discrimination, and has played a key role in creating inclusive environments
- National campaigns such as 'This Abled Life' and 'Purple Light Up' have been instrumental in raising awareness about disability inclusion in the workplace and wider society.

- Since 2010, the UK has celebrated Disability History Month (14 November – 20 December) as a way of raising awareness and discussing the history of those living with disabilities. This year's theme is '**Disability Livelihood and Employment**'.
- Islington Council has worked tirelessly to improve physical accessibility with step-free access to public buildings and improved ramps, lifts and automatic doors in key areas
- A key part of our Greener, Healthier mission is to support everyone in our communities to lead healthy independent lives. An accessible environment and transport system is a key part of this.
- Islington Council is a Disability Confident Employer (Level 2) and our progress in this area of work was recently acknowledged at the [Excellence in People Management \(PPMA\) Awards](#). The Council is currently working towards making a submission for Level 3 Disability Confidence.
- Disability Action in Islington (DAI) led by disabled people themselves, plays an important role in ensuring that local services and infrastructure are designed to meet the needs of residents with disabilities.

This Council further notes:

- Adult Social Care (ASC) in Islington provides a comprehensive range of services to support people with disabilities, from early intervention and prevention to crisis support, developed in collaboration with residents. This includes borough-wide strategies, such as the [Carers Strategy](#), [Age Friendly](#), and [Dementia Friendly](#) initiatives.
- In November 2024, the Council Executive approved the first Adult Social Care Accommodation Strategy, which takes a whole council approach to improve care settings and prevent need, ensuring better use of resources.
- The Council is developing an All-age Autism Strategy in collaboration with health, social care, and voluntary sector partners, alongside an 'Integrated Front Door' team to streamline referrals and provide timely, person-centered responses to ensure residents receive early intervention and support.
- The Disability and Wellbeing Officer role has enhanced workplace adjustments, including a central budget for adjustments and equipment, reducing delays and stigma for disabled staff.
- The Council has strengthened stakeholder engagement through partnerships with internal teams, the Disability Staff Forum, and Trade Unions, supported by senior council officers, to drive actions for disabled staff. Training offerings have been expanded to include mandatory disability awareness and mental wellbeing training.
- Recruitment processes now include a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled applicants. Office design improvements, based on expert advice, have enhanced accessibility, including sit-stand desks, ergonomic equipment, and accessible meeting rooms.
- Initiatives launched include the Sunflower lanyard scheme, neurodiversity toolkit, and updated Workforce Passport for disabled staff and carers.
- The Council has robust planning policies to ensure all new developments are inclusive, with a specialist Inclusive Design Officer overseeing their implementation and providing guidance on improving Islington's streets, public spaces, and licensing applications.

- Although the Council has limited influence over older buildings, particularly historic ones, the Local Economies Service actively works with businesses to promote accessibility improvements, offering investment where possible.
- Since 2021, the Council has worked with AccessAble to create accessibility guides for key town centres like Archway, Caledonian Road, and Finsbury Park, helping disabled residents plan their visits.
- The Council is funding accessibility improvements for small businesses in Finsbury Park through training and grants, addressing accessibility issues in historic buildings and expanding to other areas as funding permits.
- Local Economy Officers regularly advise businesses on accessibility best practices, helping to resolve issues such as obstructed pathways or insufficient space for wheelchair users.
- The council has supported residents with Global Learning Disabilities into paid employment through tailored support, job retention strategies, employer guidance, and assistive technology to ensure smooth integration into work environments.
- As part of the LIFT initiative, the Neuropathways programme has helped neurodivergent individuals secure paid internships in software development and tech roles, and is developing a neurodiversity toolkit for employers, launching in early 2025, to support recruitment, onboarding, and progression.
- The Islington Transport Strategy (2019-2041) prioritizes a fair, accessible, and secure transport environment, aiming for a greener, healthier, and safer borough, with inclusivity at the core of all transport projects.
- Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) ensure that challenges faced by disabled people are addressed in transport and traffic schemes.
- The Council collaborates with stakeholders like TfL to improve disabled access to public transport, including funding bids for step-free station access and lobbying for more accessible services and against cuts to bus routes.

This Council resolves to:

- Promote a disability-friendly environment by enhancing accessibility, empowering residents with disabilities, and fostering inclusivity in public spaces, services, and workplaces, with a focus on universal design principles in new developments.
 - Work with local businesses and employers to accommodate disabled people through accessible spaces, staff training, and inclusive practices, while strengthening mental health and social care services for those with invisible disabilities.
 - Embed the voices of people with disabilities in decision-making processes, supporting grassroots organizations and forums to amplify their experiences, particularly in local planning, policy, and service delivery.
 - Collaborate with national initiatives, local authorities, and third-sector organizations to keep Islington at the forefront of disability equality and inclusion efforts.
 - Increase the employability support available to those people with disabilities who want to get into work, providing training for individuals and offering support to employers to make appropriate adjustments.
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Motion 5 – Giving refugees time to resettle

Proposed by: Cllr Heather Staff

Seconded by: Cllr Satnam Gill

This Council notes:

- The contribution of refugees and migrants to Islington, from Irish migrants in the 1700s, to the Windrush generation to those fleeing war and persecution in more recent years.
- In February, Islington's Labour-run Council was awarded Borough of Sanctuary status by City of Sanctuary UK.
- The challenges faced by refugees when they move to Islington due to the 28-day move on period.
- The 28-day period is often not enough time for refugees to successfully move on. Navigating a new culture, the housing system, the banking system and welfare systems are all highly complex situations.
- Since September 2023, 1138 refugees have moved out of Home Office accommodation in Islington, with 665 confirmed as having a positive decision.

This Council further notes:

- The Private Members Bill – titled Asylum Support Bill - sponsored by Baroness Lister of Burtersett, has its second reading on 13th December. A bill which would introduce a minimum period of 56 days after an asylum claim before support is withdrawn, an extension on the current 28 day 'move on period'.
- The work of prevention services – such as employment, benefits and housing support – are less effective without right to work or receive benefits.
- The need for us as a Labour-run local authority to identify and look after our diverse communities, and the essential service that we provide that identifies individuals in priority need as early as possible along with financial support and assisting with finding supported accommodation outside of London for refugees under the age of 35.
- As a local authority, we have placed 247 newly granted refugees in accommodation following a homeless approach to the Council.
- The importance of resettlement support and how it can reduce the need for emergency local authority services.

This Council resolves to:

- To continue to stand up for people's right to seek a safe home in Islington and a fulfilling life, regardless of background.
- Welcome that the newly formed Labour Government is looking to devolve asylum contracts to Local Authorities.
- Work with the Labour Government to continue to improve communication around the move on period and to share best practice with other local authorities as well as central government.