

Written Questions

Question 1. Cllr Dawn Barnes to Cabinet Member for Corporate and Civic Services:

At the time of writing the post of Corporate and Civic Services has been vacant for 3 weeks. How does leaving a post responsible for libraries, leisure facilities and emergency planning vacant for a prolonged period during a pandemic serve the interests of the people of Haringey, and why have you, as leader, not moved swiftly to fill the position?

Answer:

The Leader has led Haringey's response to the COVID pandemic since March. During the recruitment period for a new Cabinet Member for Corporate and Civic Services in June, the Leader and Deputy Leader were briefed on the portfolio areas that fall under the post – including libraries, leisure, emergency planning, as well as enforcement and corporate resources – with an update on the service area, preparations for the easing of lockdown, and notification of upcoming decisions and/or issues.

Question 2. Cllr Luke Cawley-Harrison to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability:

Will the Cabinet Member agree to a temporary suspension or lowering of license fees associated with outdoor tables and chairs given the new Business and Planning Bill gives greater planning and licensing freedoms in this area, to aid hospitality businesses, and will the Cabinet Member give Ward Members the political and financial support to lead on plans to stimulate the successful reopening of their High Streets?

Answer

The Business and Planning Bill is expected to become law at the end of July. As the Bill currently stands the pavement licences will be statutory and therefore all relevant businesses will be able to apply with a lower fee of a maximum £100, so no suspension will be necessary. Officers are currently planning for the introduction of the Bill.

In addition, the Council's business support team is working hard to support businesses to re-open safely and successfully across the borough. More

information on the full range of business support, advice and information can be found here - <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/news-and-events/haringey-coronavirus-covid-19-updates/coronavirus-covid-19-business-update>

Question 3. Cllr Sakina Chenot to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families:

Can the Cabinet Member assure us that any pupils in Haringey who do not feel safe returning to school will continue to have access to good quality remote learning for as long as they need it?

Answer

Schools are conscious of the need to plan for an uncertain future. While the DfE has set out guidance to support a full return to school for all in September, schools recognise that there will be a period of adjustment before they return to something resembling school before COVID. To assist with this, they are focusing on models that include blended learning – using real and virtual learning together. Both this, and a realisation that we must also plan to be prepared for any further lockdown, no matter how small, and ensure that all children are in a position to learn going forward by whatever platform.

Question 4. Cllr Pippa Connor to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health:

Does the Cabinet Member agree that carers working on behalf of the Council deserve more than the statutory minimum level of sick pay?

Answer

We support improved pay and conditions (including enhanced sick pay) for all care workers. We have implemented the uplift of £2 for each care hour worked and are moving to London Living Wage implementation through the new dynamic purchasing system for semi-independent, supported living and home care categories agreed at the June Cabinet.

We would like to go further, however, the sector is chronically under-resourced, as highlighted by Sir Simon Stevens in his recent interview to mark the 72nd anniversary of the establishment of the NHS. This is something that needs to be addressed at the national level. We will continue to argue for proper funding for social care and improved pay and conditions for care workers.

Question 5. Cllr Nick da Costa to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategic Regeneration:

Could the Cabinet Member provide an estimate of the cost to the Council of in money and officer time of changing signage and publicity arising from the Government changing the “2 metre rule” to “1-metre plus”? Will the Government be refunding the Council for this waste?

Answer

The council has not had to change any signage as a result of amended social distancing guidelines. We were aware that the guidance was changing so any forward plans took this into account. The guidance still states you should aim for 2m wherever possible, so any signage that states 2m is still usable.

Question 6. Cllr Paul Dennison to the Cabinet Member for Finance and Strategic Regeneration:

Can the Cabinet Member reassure us that the Council will not have to issue a s.114 notice?

Answer

The Financial Impact of Covid-19 Update report to Cabinet on 16th June set out the estimated extent of the financial impact on the Council and the expectation that it would have a significant impact in the short, medium and long term. It also made clear, however, that the Council assumes that further Government grant will be forthcoming and taking this into account the Council expects to operate within its financial resources for this financial year.

Question 7. Cllr Josh Dixon to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families:

The recently completed report by AMAZE pushes for parents to draw a line under the past and that this be signified by a joint statement between the Council and parents. How does the fact that this was signed by just 6 of the 6397 Parent Carers in Haringey fit with the recent commitments to co-production and improvements in consultation with parents recently made at Scrutiny?

Answer

Haringey Children's Services are committed to improved communication, engagement, consultation and participation with the parents and carers of children with SEND. Please note that at the time of writing the AMAZE report has not been completed.

As part of various efforts to better improve engagement AMAZE were commissioned to work with parents, carers, service users and professionals to produce a report that would consider the barriers to, and ways to improve, engagement and coproduction with parents and carers of children with SEND.

As part of producing their report AMAZE engaged with over 100 parents, carers and professionals. As part of finalising their report AMAZE produced a draft of the headline findings and recommendations and held two consultation events on the 24th June. All stakeholders who have been involved in the consultation were invited to attend these consultation events regarding developing the final report.

I hope Cllr Dixon will join me in welcoming the Council's commitment to improved engagement with parents and carers and that we are looking at the future, of what services can be, rather than the past and how they have been.

Question 8. Cllr Scott Emery to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods:

Does the Cabinet Member agree that after 5 years it is time for the NLWA to consult again on the Edmonton Incinerator?

Answer

The North London Waste Authority is the responsible waste disposal authority that covers Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Islington, Hackney, Haringey and Waltham Forest. The NWLA is a public authority in its own right, engaging in consultation and conducting its business in an open and transparent manner in line with legislation. It has engaged in extensive consultation over the years regarding future plans for waste disposal for its area. This has included the formal process of achieving a Development Consent Order for the plans for the Edmonton EcoPark to secure waste disposal for its area of responsibility and meet long term statutory requirements for responsible waste disposal. These

plans include a new Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) to replace and improve the existing facility which is beyond its useful life. At a recent meeting (last month) of the NLWA Board, the NLWA reiterated its plans and reasoning for them. This was an open public meeting with input invited from various deputations and representative groups.

Question 9. Cllr Bob Hare to the Leader:

What % of London boroughs are intending to hold an AGM during the 2020/21 municipal year?

Answer

12.5% of London Boroughs are holding their AGM in 2021.

34% of London Boroughs have not indicated a date for their AGM

Question 10. Cllr Justin Hinchcliffe to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities:

With regards to the rules requiring dogs to be kept on a lead at all times in all parks and open spaces, when can dog owners and walkers expect to see this barking policy lifted?

Answer

This is a temporary tightening of rules that will be relaxed as soon as the medical situation improves and the threat of Coronavirus has diminished. The pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges for all members of society including dog owners, but this is a temporary measure and helps to protect the health of the owner of the dog and others.

Question 11. Cllr Liz Morris to the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families:

Will the Cabinet Member write a joint letter with me to the Secretary of State for Education calling for the provision of free school meal vouchers to eligible pupils during the school holidays to be made permanent?

Answer

Recent experience shows that what works in terms of putting pressure on Central Government on this issue is when a coalition of organisations including local authorities, the Children's Commissioner, charities, businesses and celebrities all come together to make the case. Haringey Council will continue to be part of such collective efforts going forward.

Question 12. Cllr Julia Ogiehor to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health:

Will the Cabinet Member be asking Public Health England (PHE) and the Joint Biosecurity Centre to conduct an in-depth investigation into the spread of coronavirus within Haringey so we can better understand its divergent impact on different communities?

Answer

We are not planning to ask PHE to do a specific piece of work on Haringey, but we will ask PHE to continue to look into these issues on a London-wide level. Many factors influencing the spread including in different ethnic groups have already been reported by PHE. We are looking at which of the national recommendations from PHE's Beyond the Data review of links between COVID risk and ethnicity we can implement at a local level.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf

At Haringey level we are looking to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on our diverse communities, and work on this is already in train. Including by North Middlesex Hospital who are carrying out an analysis of impact of COVID by deprivation and ethnicity. We are also planning to publish regular updates on current coronavirus cases and spread as part of our Local Outbreak Management Plan.

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/covid-19-local-outbreak-management-plan>

Question 13. Cllr Tammy Palmer to the Leader:

Would the Council be willing to consider legal action if the Government frustrates the legitimate financial expectations arising from the Secretary of

State for Housing, Communities and Local Government stating that “This government stands with local councils at this difficult time. Everyone needs to play their part to help the most vulnerable in society and support their local economy. The government will do whatever is necessary to support these efforts”?

Answer

The Council considers that the most effective route to securing the necessary funding to meet the financial implications on it from the Covid-19 crisis is via active participation in the dialogue on the level of grant between London Councils, the wider local government sector and central government.

We will continue to work with our local government partners.

Question 14. Cllr Viv Ross to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Equalities:

How much has Haringey Council spent on security and clean ups following traveller incursions on to Muswell Hill Playing Fields and Coldfall Woods in the last 5 years, broken down per year?

Answer

The costs are as follows:

Staff cleaning

- July 2020 £1,158
- July 2019 £694.73
- July 2018 £862.55

Materials/transport costs

- June 2020 – £150.00
- June 2019 - £83.37
- June 2018 - £103.51

Portable toilets – July 2020 only

- £1,147.20

Specialist/clean human faeces

- July 2019 only - £300.00

Vehicle removal – tbc – awaiting confirmation that it is not owned before scrappage.

Security infrastructure

- June 2020 - £5,000
- July 2019 - £14,000

Totals

2016 - Nil

2017 - Nil

2018 - £966

2019 - £15,000

2020 – £7,455

Question 15. Cllr Alessandra Rossetti to the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Civic Services:

We all know and value the cultural diversity our Borough can offer. According to the 2019 State of the Borough Haringey has over 120 venues where cultural activity takes place, and over 70 events occurring annually. There are over 2,700 creative and cultural industry (CCI) enterprises in Haringey, which are estimated to employ over 5,220 people and deliver nearly £211m of Gross Value Added. According to Haringey own data, creative industries are now Tottenham's fastest growing sector, experiencing growth of 127% over the last five years and accounting for 4,400 jobs and 660 businesses.

Some London Boroughs like Lambeth and Wandsworth have set up specific Arts and Culture Hardship or Grants funds to actively support the creative sector during these challenging times. Will Haringey ensure that the creative venues and artists that so much contribute to our economy will receive dedicated hardship fund and will Haringey actively work with art and music national organisation to channel some of the external funding here?

Answer

We recognise the significant positive impact arts and culture has both on the wellbeing and quality of life of local residents, and also on the local economy. The arts and culture sector is both a driver of creativity and a source of innovation and our local cultural assets host nationally and internationally renowned providers in this diverse field.

Since the very start of the pandemic, the Economic Development team has provided dedicated support to the creative sector, through 2 part-time team members in Economic Development who specialise in the creative sector. This has included:

- 1-to-1 support and advice to creative businesses and freelancers.
- Publication of a weekly newsletter highlighting opportunities and funding available to the sector. Sharing information, opportunities and promoting local creatives on social media.
- signposting to more than 70 grants and hardship funds available across crafts, music, fashion, visual arts, film, photography, the GLA's fund for creative workspace, and more.

The results have been positive with a high number of grants received. For example, the Arts Council England have just published the data of their Covid-19 grants. They distributed 65 million (10,000 grants in total) across England, in April-May-June. The average number of grants awarded per London borough is 97 (£223k). Haringey stats are impressive, with 201 successful grants (£467k). Only 5 London Boroughs count more than 200 successful Arts Council Covid-19 grant applicants: Haringey, Hackney, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. Haringey has more successful applicants than Camden and Westminster combined.

Very few local authorities have dedicated hardship funds for the creative and cultural sector as funding has not been made available for this.

- We are in a group with 6 other local authorities and the GLA as part of the Creative Enterprise Zone programme and have been exchanging intelligence and best practice. From this group, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Lewisham and Hounslow do not have a cultural sector hardship fund.
- Croydon has a 135k hardship fund for culture, which is repurposed money from their successful London Borough of Culture award.

- Wandsworth has a pre-existing grant programme for cultural organisations which they are using to support them through the pandemic
- As far as we are aware, Lambeth's Local Economy Hardship Fund (with a section on arts and culture) is their Discretionary Grant Fund.

We are working with the sector on a range of recovery planning initiatives.

We have been working with arts and culture venues in the borough through fortnightly meetings of the Culture Board to understand the implications of lockdown restrictions and their gradual easing and to support them to plan for reopening and continuation of their varied offers. Some settings have moved to deliver an online and virtual offer quickly, making a range of performances and activities available to the wider community others have focused on a physical reopening – all are committed to continuing to make a difference to local residents.

We have provided a comprehensive response to the DCMS's call for evidence on the consequences for the sector, which has been part of a resounding effort by the sector nationally to ensure central government recognises the soft power of arts and culture.

We were pleased to note the announcement made on 5 July of a £1.57 billion support package from the arts and culture and will be monitoring the developments closely to assist our local cultural sector in accessing further financial support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/157-billion-investment-to-protect-britains-world-class-cultural-arts-and-heritage-institutions>