

## RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS 27 March 2023

### 1. Cllr Barnes to Cllr Carlin

#### Question

We now know that Haringey referred itself to the Regulator for Social Housing in January 2023 due to a failure to meet statutory health and safety requirements in many council homes, creating the potential for “serious detriment” to tenants. When did officers first become aware of these issues?

#### Response

The Council commissioned an external audit to conduct a health check against our property compliance and the final health check report was received by the Council on 16th January 2023 which formed the basis for the self-referral.

Following a conversation with the regulator on 20th January, the Council referred itself to the Regulator of Social Housing on 23rd January 2023.

### 2. Cllr Emery to Cllr Hakata

#### Question

Liverpool has become the first city in the UK to commit to the Paris Climate Agreement for major live events, meaning they will only issue licences for concerts and festivals that agree to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% to help meet climate goals, including using a proportion of renewable energy to power the festival. Will Haringey commit to following Liverpool's lead on this issue for major events in Haringey?

#### Response

Liverpool's commitment to reducing live music events greenhouse gas emissions by 50% is commendable. Research released - which reports suggest formed the basis of Liverpool's decision – found that car travel to festivals made up a significant proportion of an event's climate emissions.

The study (from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at Manchester University) found that festivals could reduce their emissions significantly by reducing parking spaces hence limiting people driving to events. For events (including major ones) that take place in our parks, no customer car parking is available or offered and all attendees are encouraged to travel to events by foot or public transport.

Festival Republic/Live Nation – who have organised the likes of Wireless at Finsbury Park in recent years - are dedicated to protecting the environment and acting on the climate change emergency and work by the Live Nation Environmental Sustainability Charter - [www.livenation.co.uk/SustainabilityCharter](http://www.livenation.co.uk/SustainabilityCharter).

This charter identifies eight priority areas that make up their sustainability work: emissions and energy, resource use and waste (inc plastic), water, food, public engagement, procurement, transport and local impacts.

Discussions are already underway with Festival Republic to explore areas of continued improvement which includes looking at reducing the use of generators to power the events

and, for smaller event organisers, we have issued help and guidance through the Go Green Guide, to ensure that all events are as sustainable as they can be.

### **3. Cllr Connor to Cllr Williams**

#### **Question**

Fusion was recently sent official warning letters by Enfield Council, imposing financial penalties for breach of contract, and warning of a possible early termination of their contract. Given long running failures at the borough's Fusion-run leisure centres, has Haringey Council done similar?

#### **Response**

Our contract with Fusion allows us to cancel payments to them when they fail to provide services. Payments to Fusion are currently suspended, but when these resume deductions will be made. Fusion have been notified of this.

The Council's focus at present is on initially returning the 'dry side' of Tottenham Green Leisure Centre – Marcus Garvey library, the customer service centre, the nursery/creche and the gym areas – back into operation, potentially within the next month.

The next focus will be on returning the 'wet side' – the swimming pools – back into operation. The serving of warning letters of possible termination has not been necessary to elicit that restorative action.

### **4. Cllr Isilar-Gosling to Cllr Williams**

#### **Question**

The latest gender pay gap reported by the Local Government Association shows a 5.6% gender pay gap in Haringey, an increase on the previous year, despite women making up 58% of the Council workforce. What is Haringey doing to address this gap?

Response

#### **Response**

The Council operates an equality-proofed pay and grading scheme, which ensures that all employees, no matter what their protected characteristics, receive equal pay for work of equal value.

Women and men are paid the same for doing the same job. The most recent data (very recently published) shows that at all four pay quantiles measured, the council employs more women than men, and of the highest paid quartile, 59.5% are women.

On the preferred measure (the median), the pay gap has now been eliminated, reducing from 5% to 0%. We have recently reviewed our overall approach to equalities, diversity and inclusion, with the Chief Executive taking on a personal leadership role for this work, alongside the Director of Adults Health & Communities, to ensure key equalities principles, including equal pay for work of equal value, are maintained and fully embedded across the whole organisation.

On the mean average, the pay gap is falling over time too. While there was a small rise of 0.3% between 2021 and 2022 (which with a mean average can be caused by outliers), there was a significant drop between 2022 and 2023.

The mean average figures for the last four years are below:

2020: 6.9%

2021: 5.3%

2022: 5.6%

2023: 2.1%

## **5. Cllr da Costa to Cllr Hakata**

### **Question**

What additional active travel infrastructure, such as segregated cycle lanes, is the council planning to introduce alongside the LTNs, in order to give residents who wish to drive less, viable and safe travel alternatives in Haringey?

### **Response**

The 3 trial LTNs implemented in the borough were accompanied by a range of complementary measures to support active travel including School Streets, pedestrian crossings and bike hangars.

The Council has adopted an ambitious Walking and Cycling Action Plan setting out how it will enable more walking and cycling in the borough, in line with the Council's adopted Transport Strategy and to fulfil our ambitions to have a reputation for being a walking and cycling borough both regionally and nationally.

The Delivery Plan in the Walking and Cycling Action Plan sets out plans for new and enhanced cycling infrastructure across the borough as well as the delivery of a borough-wide trial dockless bike scheme (due for launch in Spring/Summer 2023). Segregated cycle lanes are a priority and feasibility studies are underway on a number of routes. This, together with planned investment to support walking, will help create safe and viable travel alternatives to the private motor vehicle.

## **6. Cllr Rossetti to Cllr Williams**

### **Question**

The latest statement of accounts for 2021-22 continues on past years' trends in reporting credit losses of £270 million, including £27 million of housing benefit overpayment and £29 million from parking loss. What is Haringey doing to drastically reduce these figures?

### **Response**

The £270m referred to is the gross debtors for 2021/22 and £275m for 2020/21. Debtor balances represents monies owed to the Council by other bodies/individuals which are yet to be received at year end.

The expected credit loss reported in the 2021/22 statement of accounts is £124m for 2021/22 and £123m for 2020/21. Credit losses are estimated potential cash shortfalls due to bodies/individuals not paying the Council what they owe.

What the Council is doing to reduce these figures is that it is constantly looking at various ways to recover its debts (most of which goes back several years before covid), including:

- Considering the Implementation of a new Debt Management system. This will increase debt management capacity through automation.
- Identifying and supporting vulnerable people in the community through a single view of debt.
- Improving the Invoice Dispute procedure to ensure customer disputed invoices are resolved within 7 days.

#### Parking

This represents the total financial value of all live penalty charge notices (PCN) that are currently going through the parking recovery process. This process has several stages, including where motorists may exercise their right to challenge, make formal representations or appeal a PCN. This number will therefore always be high. The Council has robust processes in place to recover parking income and is currently achieving a 65% recovery rate with an aim to increase this to 70%. The methodology used to calculate those collection levels, as well as targets, are also being reviewed to more accurately track performance. The current figures include PCNs that cannot be collected e.g. where the DVLA does not hold registered keeper details, as well as cases where charges will need to be waived due to exemptions, and other circumstances that can only be established through the representations/appeals process.

#### Housing Benefit Overpayments

Active HBOP recovery resumed from 2018 when the overall HBOP debt was around £38m. By April 2021 this had reduced to £30m and as of February 2023, the overall HBOP debt was £27m.

For info, there are two types of HBOP recovery, 'non-invoiced' and 'invoiced'. The Corporate Debt team deal with the latter which has reduced from £19m (April 2021) to £16.5m (February 2023). Non-invoiced HBOP is retained by the HB team to recover through ongoing entitlements which is usually more slow and steady. This cohort reduced by £500k in two years from April 2021 to February 2023.

The plan in Corporate Debt Management is to continue reducing the invoiced HBOP debt by deploying automations to boost customer engagement and cash collection which is already in play. In addition to this, we plan to use our new debt management system later this year [for invoiced HBOPs] which is expected to increase productivity and accelerate debt collection. We restructured the Corporate Debt team in April 2022 to enable resilience and meet the evolving needs of the service.

## 7. Cllr Cawley-Harrison to Cllr Hakata

### Question

Why are residents who request filtering of their road, such as the residents of Christchurch Road in Crouch End, being told that they cannot get much-needed changes to make their streets safer without prohibitively expensive traffic modelling being undertaken first, when the council has rolled out LTNs and school streets on a much larger scale without any such modelling taking place using experimental traffic orders?

### Response

In advance of three trial LTNs being implemented, the Council commissioned a high-level transport assessment for each LTN in order to understand the potential traffic impacts. These were published as part of the Cabinet papers when the trial LTNs were approved.

In relation to the implementation of individual isolated filters to deal with issues reported by residents, historic experience has been that this just results in the transfer of traffic issues

from one road to another with potential highways safety issues a consequence. Officers therefore take the view that the implementation of any traffic filters must be supported by robust traffic analysis. This is to understand what the likely traffic impacts would be and ensure that the changes do not result in any potential adverse safety impact on the highways network.