

# **MINUTES OF MEETING Full Council HELD ON Monday, 20th November, 2023, 7.30 – 9.06pm**

## **PRESENT:**

**Councillors: Anna Abela, Gina Adamou, Peray Ahmet, Ibrahim Ali, Kaushika Amin, Emily Arkell, Dawn Barnes, Nicola Bartlett, John Bevan, Barbara Blake, Mark Blake, Zena Brabazon, Cathy Brennan, Lester Buxton (Mayor), Dana Carlin, Carroll, Luke Cawley-Harrison, Seema Chandwani, Lotte Collett, Pippa Connor, Eldridge Culverwell, Lucia das Neves, Isidoros Diakides, Erdal Dogan, George Dunstall, Sarah Elliott, Scott Emery, Ruth Gordon, Mark Grosskopf, Makbule Gunes, Mike Hakata, Holly Harrison-Mullane, Tammy Hymas, Emine Ibrahim, Marsha Isilar-Gosling, Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Sue Jameson, Adam Jogee, Cressida Johnson, Anna Lawton, Ahmed Mahbub, Mary Mason, Sean O'Donovan, Ajda Ovat, Sheila Peacock, Reg Rice, Alessandra Rossetti, Simmons-Safo, Joy Wallace, Elin Weston, Matt White, Sarah Williams and Alexandra Worrell**

## **37. FILMING AT MEETINGS**

The Mayor referred to the notice of filming at meetings and attendees noted this information.

## **38. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from:

Cllr Opoku

Cllr Worrell

Cllr da Costa

Cllr Stennett

Apologies for lateness were noted from Cllr Wallace.

## **39. TO ASK THE MAYOR TO CONSIDER THE ADMISSION OF ANY LATE ITEMS OF BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 100B OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

The following late business was AGREED to be received by the Mayor for the reasons set out below.

Item 9 - To Make Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies.

The reason for lateness was due to awaiting advice from the North London Waste Authority to inform the report and this was received after the publication of the summons.

Item 13 Questions and Written Answers

The reason for lateness was that notice of questions was not requested until 8 clear days before the meeting, following which the matters raised have to be researched and replies prepared to be given at the meeting.

Item 14 – Motions - The amendments to motions were not requested until 10am on the day of the Council meeting an amendment to Motion E had been received which has been published and distributed as a supplementary pack.

#### **40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

#### **41. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 17 JULY 2023 & 28 SEPTEMBER 2023**

##### **RESOLVED**

To approve the minutes of the Council meetings held on the 17<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 and 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 as a correct record of the meeting.

#### **42. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS AS THE MAYOR MAY LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL**

The Mayor expressed that everyone had been horrified by the immense suffering witnessed as a result of the events in Israel and Gaza over the last few weeks. He would lead the Council meeting in a minute's silence to pay respects for the thousands who had lost their lives, acknowledging that global events had huge local impacts in communities in Haringey - and that many members of the borough's communities were hurting and deeply worried here at home. He called for attendees to fall silent, and take time to reflect on the need to continue to pull together as one community in Haringey. Standing up against hate of any kind; and knowing that there is strength in our unity.

The meeting continued with a one minute silence.

The Mayor outlined that details of the mayoral events and activities undertaken in the 3 previous months had been emailed to all councillors.

#### **43. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

There were no matters to report on.

**44. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER AND HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES**

There were no matters to report on.

**45. TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES**

**RESOLVED**

That the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment, and Transport and Deputy Leader of the Council be re-appointed to the North London Waste Authority until the next annual full Council in May 2024.

**46. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING BODIES**

The Cabinet Member Children, Schools and Families **MOVED** the report and recommendations which sought Adoption of the Annual Youth Justice Plan.

**RESOLVED**

To adopt the Annual Youth Justice Plan 2023-2024 attached at appendix 2.

The Chair of Standards introduced the report which arose from the Standards Committee meeting held on the 31st of October 2023 and sought Full Council approval of amendments to the Council's Constitution to respond to the action arising from the Independent External Property Services Review that the delegated authority about the management of land be amended to reflect the corporate nature of the asset. The Chair of Standards **MOVED** the report and recommendations.

**RESOLVED**

To adopt the amendments to Part Three – Responsibilities for Functions, Section E – Scheme of Delegation - Section 2 General Delegation to Directors, Property matters as **set out at Appendix 5**.

**47. IMPROVING HARINGEY'S HOUSING REPAIRS SERVICE - LIBERAL DEMOCRAT DEBATE**

Cllr Barnes introduced the debate, outlining that it related to ongoing issues concerning the housing repairs. There had been over, an extended period, increased volume of councillor casework concerning repairs with even straightforward requests for repairs that should have been managed and resolved by the housing maintenance team requiring Councillor involvement and the debate sought to highlight this key issue for action.

Guest speakers, Mr. Robert Randall and Ms. Marianne Larios, local residents, were welcomed to the Council meeting.

Mr. Randall expressed his concerns about an ongoing issue involving major repair work at the Grove, Crouch End, where a significant crack on the wall in the main block had been identified. He detailed his experience of mis information about the decant and housing provision. This decanted process had been ongoing since July 2020 and he was initially told the repair work would take 6 to 10 weeks, and the timeline was later extended to 24 weeks. Mr. Randall highlighted challenges in contacting the repairs team to agree on a move date, with cancelled dates impacting him physically and mentally.

Ms. Larios shared her experience, and raised concerns about sewer gases being emitted into her property in Hillcrest Estate, Highgate. She emphasised that this issue persisted for nearly a year, and the repairs team had failed to identify the leaks. Ms. Larios expressed a lack of insight into the repair schedule, appointments, or an estimated timeframe. She spoke about her existing health issues and how this repairs issue was impacting her daily life and wellbeing.

The following Councillors spoke in the debate.

Cllr Ahmet thanked the residents for attending and was sorry to hear about their ongoing issues with the Housing repairs. She acknowledged the importance of improving the Housing Repairs Service and emphasised the Council's dedication to deliver a first-class service. She advocated for more collaboration, open conversations with residents. Homes for Haringey was brought back in house in June 2022 to address the need for providing the high-quality service expected by residents. She recognised operational issues, and the Council had established a Housing Improvement Board, led by Chief Executive Andy Donald, with significant progress reported.

Cllr Emery highlighted the Council's responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of its residents. He emphasised the fundamental duty to maintain the quality and safety of housing in the borough. He expressed residents' distress due to delays in addressing maintenance issues and administrative lapses. Serious concerns were raised about the quality of repairs, including incomplete work, careless craftsmanship, and a lack of follow-up to ensure adequate resolution. Cllr Emery stressed the potential risk to residents' safety and wellbeing, and contended that there was a lack of transparency from administration on repair progress and referred to residents' uncertainty about resolution timeframes. He concluded by urging immediate action to rectify the shortcomings in the housing repair system.

Cllr Dunstall highlighted that the Housing Improvement Board had been established in early 2023 and had a cross-party group of Councillors overseeing and scrutinising the Council's performance against the Housing Improvement Plan. He mentioned that the board met every 6 weeks, and was chaired by the Chief Executive, where proposed practices were discussed, officers received feedback on team performances, and key performance indicators outlined in the plan were reviewed. An additional funding injection of £2.8 million was allocated to the repairs service. The Board prioritised service transformation had launched a recruitment campaign to fill approximately 13 positions in the repairs team. Regular performance and contract management meetings with contractors were introduced to address ongoing issues. The Council

collaborated closely with the Ombudsman and the Regulator, who had expressed confidence in the Council's improvement plan.

Cllr Connor expressed concerns about the numerous emails received from residents regarding ongoing repair issues. Residents faced uncertainty about the status of their complaints due to a lack of response from the service. Despite her involvement, it took months to resolve some minor repair issues. Cllr Connor provided examples, including an elderly couple that had water leaking into their bedroom. They had been informed that it would take about a month for someone to assess the problem. She stressed the need for improved communication and formal guidelines for residents to understand each stage of the process.

Cllr Mahbub highlighted that the Council received 4400 homelessness applications last year. Despite aiming to deliver 3000 new Council homes by 2031, there would still be insufficient numbers of housing available, considering that there was an estimated 12,500 people on Haringey's housing waiting list. A shortage of family homes, particularly four-bedroom properties, contributed to overcrowding. The Council had made progress in addressing damp and mould since it had introduced a policy in April 2023, adopting a zero-tolerance approach. Cllr Mahbub concluded that building more social and affordable homes was essential to address the housing crisis and providing suitable housing for families.

Cllr Rossetti observed that Councillors had attempted to assist residents that faced difficult living conditions. She felt that housing services did not seem to be improved. She referred to recent case work examples that she had not received responses to. She highlighted issues such as a rat infestation due to waste relocation and a broken intercom at Albert Close. Cllr Rossetti stressed that such incidents were unacceptable for Haringey residents and emphasised the need for significant improvements to housing services.

Cllr Gordon addressed the pledge of constructing 3000 new Council homes by 2031. She highlighted Watts Close as an example of a scheme of 18 homes, receiving a Secure Gold Design Award. Cllr Gordon spoke about the importance of providing affordable, secure homes. Cllr Gordon mentioned a commitment to retrofitted stock. The Housing Strategy would be presented in December to Cabinet which would reaffirm the commitment to provide homes across all tenures.

Cllr Cawley – Harrison acknowledged positive steps in the past year to improve the Council's Housing service but noted that residents on the ground had not experienced these improvements. Communication, response times, and having proper repairs were cited as areas with ongoing issues, impacting residents physically and mentally. Cllr Cawley – Harrison suggested regular Councillor and Council staff case study review meeting as a potential improvement strategy.

Cllr Williams highlighted Council officers hard work during the pandemic and the subsequent backlog of cases. The Haringey Housing repairs service was undergoing transformation, with efforts to build trust with tenants and leaseholders. Data presented indicated positive trends in resident satisfaction, repair completion rates, and health and safety compliance. Cllr Williams stressed the collective underfunding of Councils by the government since 2010, creating a significant funding gap.

Councillor Barnes stated that despite 55,000 repairs carried out across the borough, residents who spoke during the debate hadn't experienced any repairs due to a lack of communication with service providers. She urged immediate action on cases heard during the debate. Councillor Barnes referred to the Housing Ombudsman's report in March 2023 which had referred to a culture of apathy and poor practice as central to the service failure. She stressed the need for a change in service culture, even as the construction of new homes continued.

**48. TO CONSIDER REQUESTS TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS AND/OR PETITIONS AND, IF APPROVED, TO RECEIVE THEM**

There were no deputations or petitions received for this meeting.

**49. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS, IF ANY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE NOS. 9 & 10**

The Mayor had accepted the responses to written questions admitted as late business and these were RECEIVED.

Oral questions one to six were then asked and responded to.

**50. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL RULES OF PROCEDURE NO. 13**

Motion D

Crisis in the Social Care Sector

Proposer: Councillor das Neves

The Cabinet Member for Health, Social Care, and Wellbeing presented motion D on addressing the crisis in the social care sector. She spoke about the anticipated local government funding statement, and how local authorities nationwide envisioned assistance for Councils in aiding the most vulnerable. Residents with care needs held a right to care, and the Council bore a duty to serve. Unfortunately, the Cabinet Member predicted that the funding would be insufficient to address regressive local taxation. She expressed dissatisfaction that this approach did not align with the government's responsibility to lead a fair, equitable, and quality-focused care system.

She spoke of fragmented social care funding and a government strategy, which was devoid of a long-term vision also failing to address staffing shortages. There had been thirteen years of cuts culminating in the safety net of care being dismantled, adversely impacting residents' lives. The Cabinet Member asserted that the situation could and should be different. She called for adequate preventative services, a social care system that valued and focused on training staff and properly compensated staff for their work. A long-term plan was needed that covered long-term needs rather than short-term solutions.

Secunder: Cllr Simmons-Safo

Councillor Simmons-Safo expressed pride in seconding this crucial motion. She hoped that it would instigate change in a system long overdue that needed to address the needs of individuals and required tailor-made services.

Cllr Simmons-Safo expressed that she had entered the Adult Social care profession with an innate desire to alter outcomes and spoke about growing up in Tottenham within a marginalised community, which had fuelled her inherent drive to enhance services for local people.

She spoke about working with young black people aged 16-25 with mental illness and referred to other ground-breaking projects to combat health inequality that she had seen and been part of. Cllr Simmons-Safo encouraged support for this motion, expressing that the sign of a civilized society lay in its ability to care for the most vulnerable.

Councillor Isilar-Gosling spoke on the motion and expressed a lack of optimism about receiving any positive news in the upcoming autumn statement, containing support for social care. She highlighted the chronic shortage of funding in social care, emphasising the need to give attention to this issue. She maintained an equal measure of scepticism and hope that long-term funding for social care would come forward. This was one of the most significant challenges in contemporary society. She criticised the government for not prioritising this matter and pointed out the irony that a comprehensive long-term plan could essentially pay for itself.

She advocated for a long-term plan that addressed both funding and workforce challenges, stressing the need for the chancellor to confront these issues in the upcoming autumn statement.

Cllr das Neves formally thanked the opposition for not amending the motion.

Following a vote on the original Motion D, this was AGREED

Proposer: Cllr das Neves

Seconder: Cllr Simmons-Safo

## **Crisis in the Social Care Sector**

### **This Council notes:**

Since 2010, Central Government's funding to English local authorities has reduced by approximately 30% on average and investment in social care has not increased sufficiently to meet the demands we see of an ageing population and of people living with more serious and multiple conditions for longer.

In addition, adult social care is facing further unprecedented challenges with its workforce recruitment and retention, alongside pressures from hospital discharge.

Each day, the Council provides 3,500 adult residents with care and support, with an additional 1,000 residents requiring other types of input. This can cost anywhere from £120 up to £6,000 a week for our most vulnerable residents with complex needs.

In the first quarter of 2023, an additional circa 300 adults were referred to Adult Social Care in Haringey. This number is increasing year on year and impacts our ability to properly fund their support. Nevertheless, it is our statutory duty to deliver this care.

The adult social care sector has been greatly impacted by the interest rate hikes caused by the disastrous Truss government's mini budget; the Government's failure to tackle rising energy costs, and staff shortages exacerbated by failed migration policy and a lack of long-term investment in training, development, and retention.

**This Council believes:**

**There is a crisis in the social care sector due to an absence of central government-led, long-term investment and an inadequate plan for the sector, its workforce, and support for local authorities and communities to deal with the demands on their services.**

The UK Government must urgently invest in and reform the social care sector, to enhance its ability to deal with future demand challenges; making social care more efficient and delivering the best and most dignified care by allowing users better access, and more choice and control over their support.

The UK Government must focus away from remedial and acute services, towards community-centred preventative models of care, support, housing, and assistive technology to aid independent living; tackle isolation and loneliness; and enable communities to deal with issues such as mental health support.

There is an urgent need to recruit and retain paid carers, support unpaid carers, and move the sector away from low pay, low recognition, and poor conditions, towards higher pay, better conditions and professional development, to end the workforce crisis currently facing the sector.

Any funding and investment for social care needs to be focused on a long-term, 10-year plan rather than piecemeal ad hoc grants which do not address the wider and future challenges of increasing demand and complexity of residents' needs, and prevent local authorities making long term plans.

**This Council resolves:**

To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to urge him to include a long-term funding plan for social care in the Autumn financial statement that focuses on enhancing the sectors' ability to deal with the complex and increasing demand on these vital services for those in our community.



Motion E:

### Abolish Garden Waste Charges

Cllr Scott Emery, proposed motion E, expressing that in 2017, he had opposed the introduction of the green waste charge, which halted the standard waste collection of leftover green waste. The Labour party, at that time, faced considerable opposition to this decision. He added that by 2019, the scheme had demonstrated a revenue shortfall and there had been local issues with residents having to dispose of waste by different means.

He referred to the recycling target in 2017 had been set at around 41%, but the actual result was 30%. Nevertheless, a new target of 38% by 2025 was established. In 2020, a Council report estimated that the introduction of a chargeable service further decreased the recycling rate by an additional 2%, causing frustration among residents. In his view, the charge proved ineffective in generating sufficient revenue and he contended contributed to a decline in Haringey's recycling rate, but the charges had continued.

Cllr Emery contended that the administration lacked dedication to reduce the recycling rate and called for garden waste charges to be abolished.

Councillor Barnes seconded the motion, and further opposed the current green waste charge, highlighting London recycling rates, as indicated by DEFRA in 2012, showed that Londoners recycled 34% of household waste, and this had decreased to 33% by 2022, with Haringey's rate falling below this average.

The introduction of the green waste charge in Haringey coincided with the decline in the borough's recycling rate, and this positioned it among the ten worst boroughs in London for recycling in 2022. Cllr Barnes added that, despite government cuts, other Councils such as Lambeth and Islington chose to maintain free services, demonstrating a commitment to environmental responsibility. The Labour amendment referenced Liberal Democrat-run boroughs outside London that began charging for garden waste, but these Councils had achieved high recycling rates above 40%. Councillor Barnes argued that Haringey's lack of progress in recycling made the garden waste charge indefensible.

A Council report in September highlighted that free collections could achieve participation rates of 80-90% in households with garden waste, compared to an estimated 35% for underpaid services. Despite declaring a climate emergency in 2019, the green waste charge continued. Cllr Barnes contended that this situation caused residents to resort to burning waste in gardens or making extra journeys to waste centres, contributing to air pollution and traffic. Councillor Barnes concluded that it was time to acknowledge the failure of the garden waste charge in Haringey, both financially and in serving the residents, and advocated its elimination.

Councillor Chandwani responded to the motion and outlined her amendment. She expressed confusion that the motion failed to acknowledge the reason for the introduction of the garden charges in 2017, which was linked, to the £20 billion cut from Council budgets. Councillor Chandwani argued that with a shrinking state,

providing a free garden waste collection becomes a challenge and many Councils, including those with a Liberal Democrat administration such as Richmond Upon-Thames, Sutton, and Kingston, charged for this service, with fees exceeding Haringey's.

Cllr Chandwani expressed that every Liberal Democrat Council in London not only charged for garden waste but also offered a reduced service at a higher cost than Haringey. She added that if this service were provided free in Haringey, it would incur an annual cost of between £800,000 to £1 million, including the need for £750,000 to supply households with new bins, extra trucks, and staff recruitment. While the government proposed free garden waste collection nationwide through the "Consistency of Collections" consultation (Simpler Recycling), recent developments indicated a potential backtrack on this commitment. Councillor Chandwani urged the government to uphold the consultation, and properly fund Councils without further impacting the budget.

In the presented motion, Councillor Chandwani highlighted that it advocated for free garden waste without specified funding, potentially exceeding £1 million in cost. Supporting the Labour motion meant continuing to pressure the government through the current consultation, benefitting not just Haringey but the entire country, with proper funding and without additional strain on the budget.

Cllr Dogan seconded the amendment.

Cllr Emery responded to the amendment, which referenced the top four boroughs in the NLWA, which was a group that consisted of only seven boroughs and suggested a need for higher aspirations. Councillor Emery appreciated the Cabinet Member's historical perspective but urged a focus on achievable goals within the current term. He acknowledged the mention of other Liberal Democrat boroughs in London and highlighted Sutton as the borough with the highest recycling rate in London. He expressed the belief that there was much to learn from other Liberal Democrat-run boroughs in terms of recycling practices and urged agreement of the motion without amendment.

Following a vote on the amendment on Motion E, the amendment was AGREED.

Following a vote on the motion as amended, this was AGREED.

#### Garden Waste Charges in Haringey

Proposer: Cllr Seema Chandwani

Secunder: Cllr Erdal Dogan

Council notes that:

- Austerity measures which began under the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition government led to a significant cut to the council's budget, resulting in approximately 30% decrease in our budget;
- Haringey introduced garden waste charges in 2017 when many councils in England began charging for garden waste to remove burdens on shrinking local

authority budgets including Liberal Democrat controlled Sutton Council who charge £80.52 a year; Liberal Democrat controlled Richmond Upon Thames council who charge £41 for a 6month service, and Liberal Democrat Kingston Council charge £86 a year.

- All three Liberal Democrat Council's provide a fortnightly collection as opposed to a weekly service in Haringey, and Haringey's charges are lower than all Liberal Democrat controlled councils in London.
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- The long awaited Government changes to recycling; now named "simpler recycling" sets out that all households must be eligible for a garden waste collection by 31 March 2026 and that where a collection is requested, local authorities can charge for the collection.

Officers in Haringey alongside most councils responded to the 2021 consultation on consistency in household and business recycling in England accepting that free garden waste is a great initiative but can only be achieved if we are given full cost recovery new burdens funding. However, it appears the UK Government may be u-turning on this commitment based on costs of implementing the scheme across England.

Council believes that:

- We must continue to put pressure on the UK Government to introduce fully funded statutory garden waste collections to increase recycling across the country.

Council resolves to:

Write to the UK Government on behalf of the council to support this request to provide the funding to deliver free garden waste services as initially proposed across the country.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair .....

Date .....