

MINUTES OF MEETING Full Council HELD ON Thursday, 14th March, 2024, 7.30pm

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, Liam Carroll, Luke Cawley-Harrison, Lotte Collett, Pippa Connor, Eldridge Culverwell, Lucia das Neves, Isidoros Diakides, Erdal Dogan, George Dunstall, Scott Emery, Ruth Gordon, Mark Grosskopf, Makbule Gunes, Mike Hakata, Tammy Hymas, Emine Ibrahim, Thayahlan Iyngkaran, Adam Jogee, Cressida Johnson, Anna Lawton, Mary Mason, Khaled Moyeed, Sean O'Donovan, Felicia Opoku, Ajda Ovat, Sheila Peacock, Reg Rice, Alessandra Rossetti, Michelle Simmons-Safo, Anne Stennett, Joy Wallace, Elin Weston, Matt White, Sarah Williams and Alexandra Worrell

70. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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

71. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following Councillors provided apologies for absence:

Cllr Isilar Gosling
Cllr da Costa
Cllr Chandwani
Cllr Jameson
Cllr Mahbub
Cllr Harrison - Mullane

72. 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 Mayor agreed the admission of the following late items of business that could not be available earlier and needed to be dealt with at this meeting.

- Item 5 -Minutes of the Budget Full Council meeting held on the 4th of March 2024. These were late as the agenda publication was two days after the

meeting and there was a need to finalise the minutes and to agree and sign the minutes at this meeting.

- Item 9 – Reports from Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and Standards Committee. The reason for lateness was due to the Cabinet meeting taking place after the publication of papers and there was need for Cabinet to agree the Community Safety Strategy as a Policy Framework document for adoption by Full Council.
- The annual report from Scrutiny was delayed allowing finalisation of the report and information included from recent meetings.
- The Standards Committee had met one day before the publication of Full Council papers and there was a need to allow finalisation of the report that included the Member Allowance Scheme for 2024/25 and which needed to be agreed by Full Council before the 31st of March. The report also contained changes to Council Standing Orders and Full Council Protocol for adoption in this municipal year and implementation at the close of the Annual Meeting in May.
- 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.

73. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest put forward.

74. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 4TH OF MARCH 2024

RESOLVED

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 4th of March 2024.

75. TO RECEIVE SUCH COMMUNICATIONS AS THE MAYOR MAY LAY BEFORE THE COUNCIL

The Mayor advised the meeting that he had emailed his communications to Members prior to the meeting. He spoke about the sad loss of former Mayor, dear friend, and community colleague, Stephen Mann. The Mayor gave the Council's condolences to Stephen's family and wife, former Mayor Jennifer Mann, who was watching the meeting online.

Cllr Peray Ahmet, Leader of the Council spoke in memory of former Mayor, Stephen Mann.

The Leader of the Council paid tribute to former Mayor Stephen Mann, an ex-Councillor, lifelong trade unionist, husband, father, grandfather, and a friend to so many. She informed the meeting that Stephen Mann was a real working-class hero born and bred in North London, leading to his love of the Arsenal football club. Although, whilst Mayor he diligently attended meetings with Tottenham Hotspurs and kept it very civil as that was the kind of man Stephen Mann was. Councillor Ahmet spoke about her friendship with Stephen as a ward colleague in Noel Park, and how they had laughed, cried, and campaigned together and that there had been no one better to do this with.

The Leader spoke about Stephen being an amazing and very kind man, who championed Haringey and was ever present even when he stopped being Mayor and a Councillor, he was always celebrating what was great about the wonderful borough of Haringey. She advised that he would be very much missed, and his memory would live on and that her thoughts remained with Jennifer, Clare, Kevin and all those who knew and loved him and that they would remain a major part of the Haringey family.

Cllr Adam Jogee, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion, also spoke in memory of former Mayor, Stephen Mann.

The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion was pleased to be able to say a few words in memory of his former colleague Stephen Mann. His thoughts were with Jennifer, their family, children, and grandchildren. Councillor Jogee spoke about Stephen always being willing to offer a hand, a word of advice and support to those around him. Stephen was described as very much a local boy from his first days in Finsbury Park, Crouch End, and his beloved Hornsey.

Councillor Jogee spoke about Stephen's love for his community and how he was a proud trade unionist and a champion and defender of working people all his life. There was more to understand more about his wonderful life through his book. Councillor Jogee informed the meeting that it was impossible to think about Stephen without thinking about Jennifer, they were always together and a total unit, he noted how diligently Stephen stood by her side during her serious health issues. He expressed how the couple brought commitment, elegance, and style to the Mayoralty.

Councillor Jogee expressed that at the end of his life, Councillor Mann had told loved ones that they should be 'Slow to anger and quick to forgive' and the meaning of life is to spread joy. Councillor Jogee noted that Councillor Mann spread so much joy throughout his life and this was evident by the number of people who attended his funeral.

As part of this item, the Mayor spoke of the recent passing of Elizabeth Balgobin, Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London.

Elizabeth had lived in Seven Sisters and on appointment as Deputy Lieutenant of Greater London in February 2022, had joined Peter Baker and Bibi Khan as part of the Haringey Team. Elizabeth had attended several civic and Lieutenancy events in her relatively short time in the role. The Council noted that Elizabeth, also had worked in a

range of senior roles in UK charities during a career of more than three decades and had a number of key roles in the Voluntary sector. She was most recently chair of Voice4Change England, which advocated for the black and minoritised voluntary and community sector. There had been numerous tributes paid to Elizabeth on social media which showed how highly regarded she was in the voluntary sector and her passion for social justice and compassion for those in need would be sorely missed.

When about to stand for a minute's silence, Cllr Peacock spoke of the recent passing of former Councillor Brian Salinger who had served two terms as a Councillor in Haringey from 1982 and then moved to Barnet where he was elected as a Councillor there, stepping down in 2018.

The Council observed a one-minute silence in memory of former Mayor, Stephen Mann, Deputy Lieutenant Elizabeth Balgobin, and former Haringey Councillor Brian Salinger.

76. TO RECEIVE THE REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Director for Culture Strategy and Engagement introduced the report which sought the Council's agreement to designate the statutory role of Section 151 Officer to Josephine Lyseight for the period commencing of 1 April to 26th of May 2024. This was to cover the intervening period from Jon Warlow leaving the Council on the 31st of March and until Taryn Eves took up this designation and Director of Finance post on the 27th of May 2024.

The Chief Whip MOVED the recommendations, and it was,

RESOLVED

To designate the statutory role of Section 151 Officer to Josephine Lyseight for the period of 01 April to 26 May 2024.

The Mayor advised the meeting that the Council Calendar of meetings for 2024/25 which was listed as part of this item would go forward to the May Annual Council meeting as there is a need for further consultation on the final committee dates with political groups and to limit any Committee membership clashes.

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

The Monitoring Officer had no matters to report on.

78. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM THE FOLLOWING BODIES

The Mayor advised that there were 4 reports to consider as part of this item, a report from Audit Committee, the Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and a report from the Standards Committee.

Audit Committee

The Mayor called on Councillor Dogan, Chair of Audit Committee, to move his report and recommendations on the appointment of independent advisers to the Audit Committee.

Cllr Dogan, Chair of Audit, introduced his report which sought approval of the inclusion of two independent non – voting members on the Audit Committee. This was in line with paragraph 2 of the Committee Procedure Rules contained in Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution, and the full Council was asked to approve the appointments and their allowance payment. The Chair of Audit Committee **MOVED** the recommendations, and it was,

RESOLVED

1. To approve the appointment of the two independent non – voting advisors, Reene Deba and Reeyaz Jacobs a period of 4 years commencing on 1 October 2023 and ending on 30 September 2027.
2. To approve that each independent adviser receives an allowance of £1,250.00 per annum.

Cabinet

Councillor Jogee, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Community Cohesion introduced the report which sought adoption of the Community Safety Strategy as part of the Council’s Policy Framework in accordance with Article 4.01 of the Council’s Constitution. The Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Community Cohesion **MOVED** the recommendations, and it was,

RESOLVED

1. To approve the Community Safety Strategy as part of the Council’s Policy Framework.
2. To delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Safer Stronger Communities, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Cohesion to make any minor amendments to the Community Safety Strategy and to agree and publish an annual action plan.
3. To note that the Climate Community Safety and Culture scrutiny Panel have no changes to the Community safety strategy and recommend Cabinet note their comments set out below at paragraph 13 in accordance with Part four Section E paragraph 2.2 of the Council’s Constitution.

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report

Cllr White, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny introduced the 2023/24 Annual Report which provided a detailed run through of the areas scrutinised by the Committee and Panels in the body of the report. He highlighted that detailed scrutiny recommendations helped the executive to present a balanced budget for approval at Full Council on 4th March. The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny MOVED the report and was,

RESOLVED

To receive the 2023/24 Annual Scrutiny Report.

The Mayor further invited Cllr Ali, Chair of Standards to introduce his report with recommendations on the Members Allowances Scheme 2024/25 and changes to Council Standing Orders and Full Council Protocol.

Standards Committee

Cllr Ali, Chair of the Standards Committee introduced his report which set out recommendations on the Members Allowances Scheme 2024/25 and changes to Council Standing Orders and the Full Council Protocol. The Chair of Standards Committee MOVED the recommendations, and it was,

RESOLVED

1. To revoke the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 as of 31 March 2024.
2. To consider the proposed changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme 2024/2025 set out at **Appendix 3**.
3. To APPROVE the new Members' Allowances Scheme for the Municipal year 2024/25, **as set out in Appendix 4**.
4. To NOTE the updated carers form attached at **Appendix 5**.
5. To NOTE the track changes to the Full Council Protocol attached at **Appendix 7**.
6. To AGREE the final Full Council Protocol attached at Appendix 8.
7. To NOTE the resultant changes and additions in yellow to the Council procedure rules set out at Appendix 9.
8. To AGREE the adoption of the final Council Procedure Rules set out at Appendix 10 to take effect from the **close** of the Annual Council meeting on the 20th of May 2024.

79. THIRTEENTH ANNUAL CARBON REPORT

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment and Transport introduced the report which set out details on the latest carbon emissions dataset for 2021, which was due to a two-year delay in processing the data. The report contextualised the 2021 carbon performance for 2021. The Annual Carbon Report also reported on all relevant carbon reduction projects delivered across the borough in the calendar year 2023.

In response to questions from Cllr Emery and Cllr Mason, the following information was provided:

- The need to tackle climate was seen as an urgent priority every year. In terms of the 2014 targets, this was the target for the whole borough, and it was very challenging for the borough to achieve the targets set. It was highlighted that Haringey had met its 2021 targets in reducing emissions and was also the second lowest rebound borough in the country. The Council had been working more closely with residents to ensure that there would be more emission reductions at a greater pace and scale in the years to come.
- The Haringey Climate Partnership programme was set to be launched on 16th of May 2024. This programme would aim to look at community combined with the Council's priorities. There would be a hybrid meeting where wide range of people involved in projects across the borough would be able to attend and there would be further communications ahead of the launch.

RESOLVED

1. That the Thirteenth Annual Carbon Report (2023) attached as Appendix 1 be published.
2. To agree that Councillors and the Council continue to support carbon reduction and lead action in their community, promoting the importance of reducing carbon emissions whilst increasing prosperity.
3. That the future projects outlined in the Annual Carbon Report and that have been agreed through the HCCAP continue to be delivered, where funding is available or has already been agreed, and that further opportunities to reduce carbon emissions are identified and pursued.

80. MAYORAL DEBATE: CELEBRATING HARINGEY THROUGH SPORT AND THE ARTS.

The Mayor outlined the process for the debate and further introduced the debate, celebrating Haringey through sports and the arts. The debate topic had also coincided with the borough winning the bid for London borough of Culture for 2027. The Mayor commended the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communities, Culture and Leisure and Officer team for their work on the bid and achieving this award.

The Mayor spoke about the amazing performances he had seen in his Mayoral year both on stage and on the pitch and that one of the proudest moments was going to the London Youth Games and bringing the trophy back to Haringey for a second year in a

row. He thanked Burk Gravis and Michael Omojudi, their coaches and also the whole team for the hard work, not only in the last two years but in the last two decades.

The Mayor continued to speak of his personal experience of taking part in London Youth Games and representing the borough as a young person and also having the opportunity to play a musical instrument, supported by the Haringey Music service. These experiences had provided confidence discipline and access to training skills that were required in all aspects of life.

The Mayor continued to refer to the borough's winning bid as borough of culture for 2027 and highlighted the history of the borough as a rebel borough, rebelling on section 28, standing up to the National Front and having the first black Council leader in Europe.

The Mayor concluded that provision of extracurricular activities such as music and sport provided the opportunity to young people to perform and play and enabled them to develop skills but also lead happy and healthy lives.

The Mayor welcomed Burk Gravis, accompanied by Michael Omojudi, who were speaking about the importance of sport for young people and the Haringey Athletics Team. The Mayor also welcomed Daniel Earley, Head of Haringey Music Service who would be speaking about the music service and the importance of extracurricular activity for young people.

Burk Gravis provided the historical background to Haringey's involvement in the London Youth Games and how steady and significant process had been made by the borough culminating in winning the games over the last two years. This was testament to the hard work of the coaches and foundation to continue seeking funding and support to participate in these games which were one of the biggest youth competitions in Europe. Burk felt that more could be done by the Council to recognise these achievements and better communicate their significance to the community and more widely in London. He urged the Council to promote and support the foundation that enabled participation in the games and to come along to the sporting events to show their support and engagement to the amazing young people of the borough.

Daniel Early, Head of Music, echoed that the borough should be proud of young people in the borough and spoke about the extracurricular activities of music supporting improved social, mental and physical health and helping students' problem-solving skills. Music activities were inclusive, diverse and reflected a wide range of cultures and in 'Haringey this included performing on non-western instruments and in different types of music.

Daniel Early spoke about music activities bringing people together supporting confidence and attendance at school with higher educational achievement enhancements to young people's CVs, providing skills that they will develop in later life, including transferable skills.

Daniel Early referred to the work and achievements of the Haringey Music service and partnership working. There was excellent organisational support, and this enabled the

service to take young musicians on tour. Also, there was access to support for families that needed that financial help with subsidies for music lessons, instrument hire and attendance at ensembles. The service provided music making opportunities all over the borough and welcomed Councillors to attend any of the young musicians' concerts that took place across the borough. Information on these concerts were published on the website.

The Mayor thanked the speakers for their contributions and before starting the debate there would be a short video on the Haringey's award as the Borough of Culture for 2027.

At this point in the meeting, there was a disturbance in the public gallery and the Mayor, in accordance with CSO 23.1, warned the member of the public interrupting the proceedings to stop and continued to provide a further warning which was not adhered to, further interruptions continued, and the Mayor asked the area to be cleared in accordance with CSO 23.2.

The Mayor continued to adjourn the meeting to allow the area of the public gallery to be cleared.

After a short period, the Mayor resumed the meeting, and the video clip was shared on Haringey's award as borough of Culture for 2027.

Cllr Ahmet, Leader of the Council, referred to the interruption of the meeting and that intimidatory and disruptive behaviour that made Councillors feel unsafe was not acceptable and would not be tolerated.

The Leader of the Council continued to describe the incredible moment for the Council winning the London Borough of Culture in 2027. The claimed title 'Rebel Borough' summed up the essence of Haringey and the thriving culture and talent within the borough. The Leader remarked that austerity had decimated arts and culture across the UK, however, culture and creativity always remained a core part within Haringey's local communities. This win would allow the Council to showcase its creativity and would ensure that residents of all ages and backgrounds could access activities and opportunities. A vital £1.3 million had been obtained specifically for funding a year of events in 2027. Thanks was extended to the London Mayor Sadiq Khan and the GLA who made this possible. The Leader was grateful for the work of the Culture team, the Cabinet lead and new assistant directors who had steered the borough towards this success.

Cllr Emery commented on the freedom to protest, and Cllr Williams responded by highlighting the incident in a Council building where there had been a protest and senior officer faced intimidatory and threatening behaviour.

Cllr Emery continued to speak on the debate topic and the thriving creative scene in Highgate, and that Jackson's Lane Arts Centre was coming up to its 50th anniversary. This was a place which captured emerging talent from the area. Cllr Emery also highlighted The Gatehouse, an award-winning theatre, which was now being managed by young people which was a brilliant example of how young creative talent

could be nurtured. Across the country this was rare, half of UK musicians earned under £14,000 and participation in creative fields of schools had dropped by 50%. The Liberal Democrats had come up with a plan to help, this involved restoration of funding for education, removing barriers to musicians touring the EU and most importantly, a levy on large venue ticket sales to fund grass roots venues.

Cllr Brennan highlighted that it was important, as a community, to help start young people's involvement in art. She considered that involvement in the arts for young people was very important for the development of a well-rounded, happy attitude to life. It was important for opportunities to be accessible and provided for all. Cllr Brennan referred to ongoing projects, such as the Bernie Grants Centre that had hosted Northeast London Youth choirs, and a free summer art school. Jackson's Lane ran a free youth circus course across Haringey and Alexandra Palace ran a performing arts school, which provided bursaries. Bruce Castle Museum worked tirelessly with schools to enhance their understanding of local heritage. In the future, she looked forward to working with the Friends of Muswell Hill Library to include new innovative projects for young people.

Cllr Rossetti referred to London Borough Culture awards win, and she hoped that this would prompt Haringey to formulate a cultural strategy for the borough. She asked members specifically to help residents fulfil their potential and achieve the maximum benefit from the culture and sports provisions in the borough. She also noted that the Council should commit to preserve cultural heritage. It was flagged that library services should not be reduced and should continue to provide the same level of access to books, music, and community events. Tennis court access should be kept free, and parks and pavements accessible, with the damage and impact from overbearing events and pavement parking minimised.

Cllr Abela referred to the recent scrutiny review that was conducted of young people's participation in physical activity in Haringey. Sport England told the review panel that 45% of young people in London did 60 minutes of activity a day, a figure that was even lower in Haringey, according to a 2022 questionnaire. Across the country, far fewer girls than boys met the national medical officers weekly physical activity recommendations, a difference that was starker for girls from BAME backgrounds. While Haringey's two back-to-back victories in the London Youth games should be celebrated, there was still work to do to widen youth access to sport. As a Council, the holiday activities programme provided children eligible for free school meals with free access to basketball, badminton, volleyball, and a host of other sports. By taking the courageous step of bringing leisure services in house, the Council would ensure young people across the borough could access high quality gyms and pools. Haringey's voluntary organisations, the Selby Trust, offered an all-girl's boxing class, there was also the London Mets, which was one of seven clubs offering baseball training for young women.

Cllr Collett spoke about the inclusive youth programme that would utilise as many community spaces as possible across the borough was important. The latest library model was an excellent example of how this could be achieved. She highlighted that Youth Arts created genuine and lasting links amongst residents. Collaborative work allowed young people to find common ground and develop genuine community cohesion. Extracurricular provisions for young talent was imperative. Alexandra

Palace's creative learning programme with youth companies Creative Network and Biblio Buzz were both great assets for this borough. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel identified that sport and leisure needed to be linked up across the borough, the same needed to happen for young people in the arts.

Cllr Amin, spoke about how the Haringey activities and food programme was taken up by 27% of children and young people compared to the national average of 23%. Cllr Spoke about the Alexandra Park football team which was one of the most successful youth clubs in the country, fielding huge numbers of boy's and girl's teams. In Northumberland Park, Project 2020 had been delivering programmes which included weekly fitness sessions, these had over 30 young people attending, many of whom did not participate in sporting activities in school. Project 2020 had received a sponsorship from Gym Box to invest in an Outdoor Gym which would be completed soon.

Cllr Hymas spoke about the archives at Bruce Castle Museum and was recently delighted to join the Mayor to talk about Haringey's pioneering gay and lesbian unit, and there were parallels in history with rising anti trans hatred and demonstrated that investment in the arts in Haringey was essential for protecting the identity and the culture of groups. Cllr Hymas highlighted that according to research by the Performing Arts Union Equity, austerity had meant that Councils were spending 40% less on arts per person than they did in 2010. In Haringey, there was an alarming trend of live music venues threatened with closure due to rising costs; hence the importance of the borough's designation as the London Borough of Culture 2027.

Cllr Arkell, Cabinet member for Culture, Communities and Leisure, responded to the debate, stating that it was important to ensure children and young people in Haringey had access to arts, culture, and leisure. The Council's goal was to break down barriers and ensure those sectors were open to everyone, this would unlock talent borough wide. She thanked Burk Gravis for the London Youth games win and the Haringey Music Service for their work, these services contributed to young people in sporting and musical activities. There were big ambitions to put culture and creativity at the heart of everything done as a Council. She thanked everyone who had helped make the bid a success and looked forward to the delivery of a year of arts, creativity, music, culture and much more. The Council would be insourcing leisure services on 2nd October and through this, services and classes would be provided that residents wanted. Activities would be joint up in leisure centres with programmes of activity in Green Flag award-winning parks and green spaces across the borough.

The Mayor thanked all participants in the debate and the speakers for coming along to the meeting.

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

The Mayor announced that the Full Council would receive a Deputation from Mr Jim Edwards who requested that Haringey Council become a plant-based Council. The Mayor noted that Mr Edwards was accompanied by Phillipa Stock, Ruby Slay and Billy Nichols. Mr Edwards introduced himself and informed the meeting that he was from Plant Based Councils and lived in Wood Green. He informed the meeting that in

March 2021 Haringey Council promised to get to net Zero by 2027 and included, developing processes around vegetarian and vegan food to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions caused by animal agriculture.

Mr Edwards expressed that in March 2023 he spoke at a Full Council meeting where he asked if the Council would fulfil its net zero commitments by ensuring that catering at internal meetings and events was fully plant-based. He advised that there was support for internal plant-based catering, but it was unclear if any steps had been taken to implement the request.

Mr Edwards noted that 2023 was the hottest year on record and between 11-17% of greenhouse emissions came from animal agriculture, he advised meat and dairy were the primary causes of biodiversity loss globally. Mr Edwards noted that if Londoners reduced meat intake by 70%, it would cut London's consumption-based emissions by 20%.

Mr Edwards continued to highlight that plant-based catering produced the lowest emissions of any food, and plant-based agriculture was more efficient and allowed land to be rewilded drawing down even more carbon. Mr Edwards expressed that it was the most inclusive type of food and explained that other London Boroughs including Lewisham and Enfield had already committed to fully plant-based catering for internal meetings and events, and Camden was considering the same. Mr Edwards informed Full Council that Oxfordshire City, Oxfordshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, Norwich City, Exeter City, Faversham Town Council and Hythe Council had made similar commitments.

Mr Edwards urged the Council to fulfil the commitment made in 2021 and commit to plant-based catering.

The Mayor invited the Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment and Transportation and Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Mike Hakata to respond.

Councillor Hakata thanked Mr Edwards for his deputation. In response to the deputation, Councillor Hakata explained that Haringey Council was committed to addressing the climate emergency and achieving its ambitious net-zero targets. He noted that transitioning from energy-intensive disposable materials to more sustainable materials was another crucial aspect of its efforts.

Councillor Hakata expressed that the Council wanted to focus on reduction as part of adjusting and transition, and it aimed to develop comprehensive guidance on sustainable food and drink, emphasising the importance of reducing overall consumption and waste. He explained that in line with the Council's commitment to sustainable food practices, Haringey Council had funded the local free microgreens and aquaponics, living under one sun, a community-led, agriculture-led initiative. He advised that the project demonstrated the Council's support for local sustainable food production and highlighted the importance of community engagement in achieving its climate goals and promoting locally grown and minimal processed foods.

Councillor Hakata had an ambition to see the project upscaled and replicated throughout the borough. He advised to be successful the Council needed to bring everyone with them and be ambitious and focused on achievable and meaningful results. He felt that if the Council demonstrated the benefits of swapping some choices with sustainable choices it would have a better chance of success. Councillor

Hakata noted the great local vegan caterers and that the Council had been using them at more and more Council events and its work with schools on plant-based menus.

Councillor Hakata advised that he firmly believed that climate and social justice were intensively linked, and the Council aimed to build a fairer greener borough and accelerate progress to a sustainable future. Addressing Mr Edwards, Councillor Hakata noted that he welcomed further discussion on how the Council could work together to achieve these goals and address any concerns or ideas for working towards achieving its goal. He expressed the importance of bringing everyone on board, noting that such important behaviour change programmes should focus on reduction rather than complete elimination.

The Mayor thanked the deputation for attending the meeting.

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

There were two public questions from residents, Luke Heppenstall-West and Ella Maby.

Public Question 1

Does Haringey Council recognise that there is substantial evidence, from Citizens Advice, The Children's Society, and Policy in Practice, that using private enforcement agents can have a significantly negative impact on residents, via a) adding additional debts to those who are already struggling to pay, and b) increased stress because of harassment and intimidation, and c) significant likelihood of the instructed bailiffs acting outside of the rules which govern their behaviour?

Response

Enforcement agents should always be a last resort. Councils needed to be better supported by the Government through better regulation, guidance and funding; so it would be easier to recover money. In Haringey, the decision to refer a case to enforcement agents would only take place after several actions, specially designed to identify residents who were struggling to pay their Council tax. This included being sent several letters, all of which included information of debt and financial advice organisations to prevent enforcement action, and many did contact the Council at that stage to wage a repayment plan.

Haringey would never use enforcement agents for Council tax debt vulnerable residents, it was important for residents to get in touch at that stage and any further campaigning on this would be useful. Haringey was one of few Councils that automatically gave Council tax support to some residents on low incomes without them having to apply for it. last year, the Council helped 2500 families in this way and Council were actively improving pension incomes, this would help hundreds of

residents to get pension credit. Help and support was offered to anyone suffering financial hardship and anyone who had difficulty paying their Council tax could find support and advice on the Council website, or alternatively by calling Council helplines. The cases which were referred to enforcement agents did not include anyone on Council tax reduction schemes but include people we cannot be contact with. Any phone calls made were monitored and recorded. The visits were also recorded, and the performance of agents was closely managed. Enforcement agents were all court certified and if they were found to be acting outside of the rules, they could lose their court certification and clear that a last resort.

Public Question 2

What actions has Haringey Council taken regarding considering and acting toward ending the use of private bailiff (enforcement agent) companies for collecting Council tax debts in Haringey?

Response

Haringey Council recognised that many people were struggling to pay their Council tax and their other bills. The Council also recognised that Council tax was a regressive policy, designed service to let Council know if having difficulty . This tax paid for the services that residents relied on and needed. Cllr Carlin explained that she would like to see services funded in a fairer way but did not have the power to change this. In Haringey, officers were doing everything they could to mitigate the problems caused by this tax by putting in place all the aforementioned measures. The Ethical Debt Reduction Policy was bought in in early 2021, this meant that the Council would not use enforcement agents against low-income households for Council Tax. The definition of low income was if they were eligible for out of state tax reduction scheme, this was a means tested definition and government definition of low income. Since the policy came into force, no residents on CTRS have had enforcement action taken against them. The Council offered help to residents through the here to help scheme, which included financial support and advice. The Council also worked closely with partner organisations who offered independent advice on debt to residents.

Clarification question In the last half year following April last year, the latest data available bailiff use has increased the level it was at before the ethical debt reduction policy. Is the Council aware of this? And what does it plan to do?

Although these numbers had went up, it was primarily made-up of landlords who weren't paying Council tax and of residents who had moved out of the borough. Some of those residents did not owe Council tax, but unfortunately had moved without any communication and then suddenly appeared to stop paying. If an enforcement agent encountered a vulnerable resident, they would be instructed to immediately return the case to the Council.

A few years ago, enforcement agents would impose charges; for example, if the resident was not at home. That was now severely limited and due to this, it was not in their interests to continuously enforce. A lot of these cases would come back to the Council, either if residents could not pay, if a vulnerable resident was being dealt with or if the resident could not be reached. In these instances, other means would be

used. So, the data that was referred to, was a blanket number which didn't provide further context.

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

Council Oral questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 were asked and responded to. In relation to question 5, it was AGREED that CSO 10.6 apply.

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

Motion F: Protecting Haringey's Libraries and increasing library footfall and revenue.

Councillor Connor proposed a motion aimed at safeguarding Haringey's Libraries and increasing its footfall and revenue. She highlighted the exceptional returns libraries offered as low-cost investments with substantial social, economic, and cultural benefits for communities. She pointed out a significant surge in public engagement during the Council's budget consultation, where an overwhelming 85% of respondents expressed opposition to proposed library cuts. Councillor Connor felt that the budget proceeded virtually unchanged and lacked a comprehensive library strategy.

Councillor Connor proposed reallocating these resources to sustain public services. She emphasised the need to maintain libraries fully operational and enhance their offering, and favoured collaboration with local Friends Groups and residents to co-design initiatives. Councillor Connor highlighted the need to protect libraries not just for the present year but also averting future budgetary cuts. Councillor Connor explained that the motion outlined a range of strategies to increase library revenue and footfall while preserving the intrinsic essence of libraries. She expressed disappointment in the Labour party's amendment to the motion, which she felt omitted these essential ideas despite the motion's commitment to explore them. Councillor Connor urged the administration to reconsider its decisions regarding library funding, urging support for the motion to ensure Haringey's libraries remained fully operational. In doing so, she appealed to the administration's sense of responsibility in making choices that prioritised community wellbeing.

Councillor Rossetti seconded the motion and reiterated assurances that library cuts could be avoided at the administration's discretion. She urged support for the motion, emphasising the need to reverse service reductions and maximise existing investments. Councillor Rossetti called on the administration to take a pragmatic stance and support the motion without amendments.

Councillor Arkell moved the amendment to the motion and highlighted that this was more grounded than the original motion. She highlighted that the amended motion provided comprehensive plans for safeguarding Haringey's libraries and ensuring their continued operation. Councillor Arkell addressed the opposition party's claims about

the administration's priorities and stated that they often mislead residents by attributing changes in library services without accounting for Liberal Democrat-enabled Tory austerity. However, she proudly noted that despite financial challenges, Haringey had managed to keep all nine libraries operational, unlike other cities such as Nottingham and Birmingham, which faced significant closures.

Cllr Arkell reiterated the importance of accurate information and challenged the spread of misinformation about the administration's proposals. Councillor Arkell underscored Haringey Labour's commitment to maintaining library services and highlighted the contrast with other cities facing extensive library closures.

Cllr Arkell highlighted the core objective which involved engagement with residents in shaping a sustainable library strategy for future generations. The 2024/2025 budget process had been challenging due to austerity, rising costs, and increased demand for a variety of Council services. Despite financial constraints Haringey Council had chosen to prioritise libraries as vital community hubs. The amended motion aimed to maximise library use, engage residents, and ensure long-term service viability. Councillor Arkell also highlighted that the Labour Group had revised the proposals based on resident input and countered opposition claims against this.

Councillor Bartlett seconded the amendment to the motion and sought clarity from Councillor Connor regarding any plans to close the libraries.

Councillor Connor, responded to the amendment and clarified that she agreed the administration did not plan to close libraries entirely, but they did propose reducing opening hours. She emphasised that this reduction would lead to lower service quality, job losses, and exclusion of library users. The proposed cuts also extended beyond this year, with further reductions planned in the Council's budget over the next few years. Councillor Connor was concerned that residents would question whether the Council intended to protect libraries by maintaining full opening hours or proceed with the proposed cuts.

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

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

Protecting and shaping Haringey's Libraries with residents and making sure they are fit for the future

Proposer: Cllr Arkell

Seconder: Cllr Bartlett

Councilnotes:

- That over 500 responses were received to the 2024/25 budget consultation, many of which were regarding proposed changes to our library services, and multiple representations were made by residents which all informed the next steps in a challenging budget process.

- That there are no plans to close any libraries in Haringey and that none have closed in the Borough since the Conservative – Liberal Democrat coalition inflicted austerity on the UK in 2010, despite 800 closing nationally.
- That in 2014, Haringey Council was forced by the Liberal Democrat enabled Tory austerity policies imposed on it to more effectively and efficiently use its finite resources, which led to closing the mobile library service in Haringey and retain only the housebound part of the service for its most vulnerable users.
- That in 2016, Haringey Council listened to residents and reversed plans to close Highgate Library and Muswell Hill Library.
- Since 2018, the Council has invested £4.9m in library buildings and facilities, to increase library use, accessibility and footfall.
- That cuts to some Council services are unavoidable and difficult but necessary as we are £143m worse off in real terms per year than we were before the Conservative Liberal Democrat Coalition's austerity measures, and demand on adults and children's social care and temporary accommodation services, are extremely high and rising.
- In developing the library strategy, we will work with residents, friend's groups and staff to identify opportunities to expand the number of services which can be delivered from libraries, improve footfall and increase the number of library users in the borough.
- In December 2023, before the budget consultation was launched, a range of options were explored and discussed at Cabinet to mitigate any changes to libraries. Three proposals were consulted on and after listening to resident responses, proposals were amended to reflect their views.
- An extensive equalities impact assessment was completed for the MTFS budget to identify potential equalities implications. A full equalities assessment will be completed for each library and we will work within legal duties to understand the equality impacts of the proposals.
- Any changes to our libraries will be shaped and co-designed with residents, friends groups and staff to inform a library strategy that safeguards libraries for the future.

Council believes:

- Libraries are the only way that many children living in the borough have access to books, the only place for many of Haringey's young people to study to ensure that they can maximise their full potential in life and that is why we are keeping them open, have invested heavily in them and will be working with young people as part of our library strategy to ensure libraries are shaped so that they will want to use them;
- Libraries provide essential internet access for those without it, especially those that are jobseekers, elderly, or living in financial hardship; and that's why investing £4.9m in our libraries to make them more attractive, accessible and better resourced to support vulnerable groups across Haringey.
- Libraries provide a warm and safe space for many residents that would otherwise not have one, and so help prevent loneliness and poor health; and that is why we have used them as warm spaces in the winter months, especially during the cost of living crisis fuelled by austerity measures.

- Libraries are an open-door arts and events venue, providing a vital community space for a large number of events and local groups, and we look forward to enhancing and utilising these spaces more.
- That instead of cuts and reduced hours of access, the Council could have taken the decision to close libraries but didn't because we value libraries as much as our residents do.
- Some areas of our libraries have not been utilised as much as anticipated for many reasons, including limited funding, resources, take up from residents, and the global pandemic in 2020 that prevented our ability to open libraries during lockdowns because we needed safeguard our residents.
- That libraries are a public space and community hub which are primed to facilitate events, activities, debates, music, arts, poetry and culture, celebrating the rich diversity that residents have to offer and exciting opportunities that will come from hosting the London Borough of Culture in 2027 which libraries will play a key role in its delivery.
- We will maximise the offer our libraries can make to residents, by increasing their usage putting libraries on a sustainable footing, shaping a long-term plan with residents to safeguard the service for the future.

Council resolves:

- To continue to support and protect the most vulnerable residents in Haringey and ensure our libraries remain open.
- To work with residents, friends groups and staff to create sustainable and future-proof libraries that are at the heart of our communities.
- To work with our libraries staff, residents and friend's groups to ensure we capture all ideas and co-produce the library strategy with them, and work with our communication team and other platforms, so we can publicise this widely and engage interested residents to get involved and help to shape the service they want to see, use and enjoy.
- To publish a consultation and engagement timeline which sets out how residents, friends groups and staff can contribute to the development of the strategy.
- That a full Equalities Impact Assessment will take place for each library as part of the development of the library strategy which will inform any changes made to ensure we work within our legal duties by understanding and minimising the impact of the proposals on the most vulnerable and to make sure our libraries remain accessible.
- In developing the library strategy there is consideration of a wide-range of options which will focus on increasing usage, footfall and income, utilisation of library spaces, and listen to residents as we shape an accessible and sustainable library service that is safeguarded for future generations.

Motion G - Celebrating Haringey Works and its work creating good jobs for residents.

Councillor Gordon proposed a motion to celebrate Haringey Works and its efforts in creating quality employment opportunities for residents. She emphasised the

importance of meaningful employment in the borough, acknowledging the high levels of unemployment and the necessity for well-paid jobs. Councillor Gordon highlighted the limitations of traditional job centres and noted their focus on quick placements rather than holistic support for job seekers. She expressed her belief in finding suitable employment that aligns with individuals' skills, passions, and societal contributions.

Councillor Gordon shared success stories from Haringey Works, including a transition into art therapy for a talented artist and mother, and meaningful employment for a young man with learning difficulties at the London Zoo. These examples showcased the people-centred approach of Haringey Works, which fostered confidence and facilitated personal and professional growth for residents. Since April 2023, 1,500 people had registered with Haringey Works, with 532 residents successfully employed at London Living Wage.

Councillor Brabazon seconded the motion and highlighted the significance of lesser-known services like Haringey Works and Haringey Learns. She felt these services played a vital role in borough regeneration and social development, and offered support for job placements, internships, and comprehensive employment assistance. She stressed the importance of celebrating such services that supported residents in finding and sustainable employment such as supported internships for people with disabilities. These initiatives contributed significantly to the borough's overall growth and prosperity.

There were no amendments received for the motion and no speakers for the debate and following a vote, the original motion was AGREED.

Celebrating Haringey Works and its work creating good jobs for residents

Proposer: Cllr Ruth Gordon

Seconder: Cllr Zena Brabazon

This Council notes that:

- Haringey Council is committed to creating a fairer and greener local economy that builds on local creativity to harness Haringey's strengths;
- As the Council's free business recruitment service, Haringey Works liaises closely with businesses looking to recruit as well as individuals searching for employment;
- We are determined to increase the number of good job opportunities locally and support our business community to reach their full potential;
- Opportunity Haringey will allow us to build on the borough's economic strengths, address inequalities and take us another step closer to realising our ambition for a fairer and greener Haringey;
- As part of Opportunity Haringey, Haringey Works is highly effective at expanding residents' job opportunities and getting residents into or back into work;
- Haringey Works helps residents of Haringey into sustainable employment. We work closely with residents, partners and businesses to provide pathways into jobs across a broad range of sectors.

This Council believes that:

- Decent, well-paid, and fulfilling work for our residents is a key to prosperity and wellbeing for residents, and vital for supporting Haringey's 12,000+ businesses;
- JobCentre Plus is not fit for purpose and dozens of different Government schemes since the 1970s have failed to tackle long-term and youth unemployment;
- Councils are ideally placed to understand the requirements of local employers and to create opportunities for skills and training to service the local economy;
- The UK government needs to properly fund local employment support services. Empowering Councils by devolving jobs and skills support services to local authorities would mean that they can apply their local knowledge to create good jobs, address skill shortages and provide training. An adequately funded service run locally can ensure that high standards are set for good sustainable job creation and career path development;
- Haringey Works is the ideal framework for a local-needs focused approach to finding employment for those who need it, and for responding to the recruitment and skills requirements of our diverse business community.

This Council resolves to:

- Write to the Minister of State for Work and Pensions asking the Government to properly fund local employment services, and to consider a localised model, such as Haringey's, as a blueprint for an employment and skills framework.
- Write to the Shadow Minister for Work and Pensions to invite them to visit Haringey Works.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date